

## Liverpool Loop

Just Denis & myself up for the days Reccy, must be either keen or stupid. Leave that for you to decide. First part of the route took us through Bryn into Garswood on quiet roads, across the fields to Billinge (did this part earlier in the week and it was fine, some heavy rain had changed that though, ask Denis he had slick tyre on! Will modify this section depending on the weather) Billinge to Crank, down past Fairfield Hospital to Windle Island, East Lanc's cycle path to Knowsley including a minor detour to check access down another road. Knowsley Lane into the outskirts of Huyton before using some estate roads to come out near the National Wildflower Centre in Court Hey Park for our elevenses stop and comfort break.

Short section of estate roads led us to the Loop Line section of the Trans Pennine Trail; this was the cue for Denis to assume the lead, to be honest he'd been at the front for most of the journey (surprisingly enough) Knew this part of the route though, so the lead was justified. Halewood then Speke next up followed by Hale Village and the Wellington Pub for lunch, (for Denis anyway, food got the thumbs up!) Alongside the Mersey Estuary and into Widnes scaling the dreaded steps on the way, crossed under the Bridge and back to the river before encountering a diversion. Work has commenced on the new river crossing resulting in the closure of a significant section of the trail, led us through the centre more or less before we picked up some more cycle path leading us back to the trail. Diversion will be in place for the foreseeable future so will have to bear that in mind when we do the ride.

Back on track we headed for Warrington and the Sankey Valley Trail, neither of us had ridden this before but accompanied by some pre-prepared notes and directions Denis led the way, only problem was I had the notes, sound familiar! Majority of the tracks we encountered through the Warrington section were Tarmac and in excellent condition, followed a stretch of water for most of the way, teeming with Swans and other wildlife. Track changed to compacted gravel as we left Warrington, crossed under the M62 near to Winwick, before heading out into the fields towards Newton and Earlestown. Track became a bit puddly (pardon the description) in sections as we made our way to Common Road at the far end of Earlestown bordering on Burtonwood. Short uphill section of road led us to farm tracks that took us across to Grange Valley in Haydock (near to Tesco and Aldi) Cycle path led us to Lymewood Farm near the East Lanc's before roads took over once again leading us through Ashton Cross and Downall Green to Landgate Lane and back to the Three Sisters.

Great variety of scenery and surfaces, one or two missed turnings and subsequent corrections, all in all a very pleasant ride, sun threatened to shine all day but only made a serious attempt for the last few miles. Approx 53 mile round trip but may adapt to avoid a few of the busier roads.

All we need to do now is get it on the calendar and see if we can get some of you interested! Would say it was within most of your capabilities, no serious hills to negotiate, Garswood to Billinge being the hardest, rest of the route is generally flat-ish!

Let me know if you're up for it.