

## **Beyond The Lane**

Not the best of weather forecasts yet again, strong winds and rain in store, what happened to summer? Did say whatever the weather though, so off to Plank Lane it was.

Got there bang on time, just after nine, to find 4 others ready and waiting, hadn't expected anyone if truth be known so hadn't got a route in mind. Improvisation time Harold, Jim H had rode up from Wigan along the canal, or got blown here should I say, would that have any bearing on where to go, you bet. How many times have we rode into a headwind thinking it will be easier on the way back, how many times has the wind changed direction and we've still been faced with it coming back, nearly every time. Taking no chances today, Westerly wind blowing so Eastward bound it was.

Just as we started so did the rain, going to one of those days. Canal towpath past home to Marsland Green Lane, bikes probably know their own way by now. Leaving the canal it was a short stretch of farm track and the East Lanc's cycle-path as far as Chaddock Lane, (Queens Head Pub or what was). Made our through the housing estate and more track to pick up the canal at Booths Hall, usual route from here through Worsley and into Monton to pick up NCN 55, stopping of course at the Station Platform for mid ride coffee's. Rain had stopped by this time as well and the sun had decided to make an appearance, couldn't have timed it better.

Break over we got on our way once more, nice steady climb along the 55 in the direction of Little Hulton. The 55 afforded us some much-appreciated shelter from the prevailing wind, nice when it works out like that! Little Hulton reached it was a nice downhill run along Cleggs Lane, Peel Lane and Mort Lane as we negotiated our way back to the East Lanc's and once more Marsland Green Lane back to the canal.

The headwind hadn't altered (might have known it) and if anything was blowing stronger, no way to avoid it so just had to grin and bear it for the last few miles back to Plank Lane. One of us, namely me, didn't have to grin and bear it for very long, Butts Bridge soon came into view, that being my cue to bail out and leave the rest to soldier on. Farewells exchanged Ray, Joyce, Caroline and Jim H continued their journey back to the swing-bridge, three way spilt from this point, Caroline the short journey back to Lowton, Ray & Joyce the comfort of the car back to Billinge, leaving Jim H to navigate his way back to Wigan. He did make good use of the tailwind earlier, now was payback time headwind all the way back. Just recently completed a Coast-to-Coast ride so the LL Canal would be child's play for him.

Another very pleasant outing accompanied by some great company as always, spent nearly three and a half hours in the saddle (for me anyway) and enjoyed every minute of it.

Next Sunday were going to try and find Sale Water Park, hope to see a few more of you make the effort if at all possible, weather permitting of course. 9:00am at the Swing-bridge, see you next week!!!!