

It was a lovely, crisp Spring morning for the deferred cycle ride at Sale Water Park. Maybe the mention on the website of poor ground conditions in November had frightened one or two off but we still had a healthy turnout of 14 cyclists. Sue, our newest member, was attending her first ride as was our guest, Gary.

Jim T led us away from the start point and we were soon on the banks of the Mersey – seemed a bit funny close to Manchester! We soon discovered that ground conditions were fine and we barely saw a puddle throughout the ride – not one for the Mud Club this ride. We had travelled a couple of miles before Thelma found she had a puncture. Denis and Alan got stuck in and soon had her spare fitted. Thelma then awarded the punctured inner tube to Alan. She says she doesn't trust an inner tube once it's had a puncture – in other words she's got plenty money.

We hit the usual problem again on this ride as Jim's Garmin was again playing up so we had to stop several times when he had strayed slightly off course. We also had a couple of instances where footpaths were being upgraded and we had to seek assistance with a diversion. There was just one hilly section on the outward section of the 21 miles route which took us through Northenden, Didsbury, Heaton Mersey, Burnage and Levenshulme before taking the Fallowfield Loop back to Sale.

There were numerous scenic tracks along the route which includes a section of the Trans Pennine Way. All in all, it was another delightful ride and not too difficult for Sue and Gary on their first outing. The ride ended perfectly with refreshments in the open air at Jackson's Boat pub alongside the Mersey. Let's hope for many more days like this in the year ahead.