

It was a bitter cold and drizzly morning but fourteen of us turned out on our weekly ride from Trencherfield, including eleven brave souls backing up from the longer ride to White Coppice on the previous day. Len was the leader on this ride and he wasn't too popular when he outlined the route which included cycling over Billinge Lump. His assurance that the hills would not be too difficult wasn't convincing anyone in the group.

We set out passing Wigan Pier and on to the DW Stadium where it became apparent that Phil had a problem with the hydraulics on his front brake. After advice from Jim H he decided to continue on the ride. We made our way through Worsley Hall and across Pemberton to reach Leopold Street. As we reached the top of the street we had our first incident on the ride. A female driver had parked on the wrong side of the road and pulled out of her parking space towards Len who immediately braked. Denis was then forced to brake and Tony G ran into the back of him. Tony came off worst with a bang on the knee but was fit enough to continue.

As we made our way up towards Billinge Lump we had our first puncture. Len, who had a front puncture the day before, got the double up with a thorn in his rear tyre. Then we proceeded to climb the Lump. Everyone made it to the top without any stopping – a good effort all round. We proceeded down the hill which Phil found tricky as his front brake had packed in altogether. We passed through Billinge and then onwards to North Ashton where Brian picked up a rear puncture. The rest of the ride took us to Bamfurlong where we joined the canal for the run back to Trencherfield. Just under 17 miles this ride and the hills were not as bad as we had expected. Thanks to Len for taking up the leader's role.