

Denis stepped up to the plate and agreed to lead this week's ride from Trencherfield. There was quite a gathering on the car park as we prepared for the off. Fran was a very late withdrawal as he had a chain problem and decided to bob round to the Community Workshop rather than risk the ride. Nevertheless, 26 of us took part in the ride. There were a few groans when Denis outlined the route that was taking us up to Hall Green via and climbing up to Ashurst Beacon. Emma must have wondered what she had let herself in for on her first ride and it wasn't going to be the easiest of returns for Clive who was still recovering from a recent throat operation.

We made our way past the DW Stadium and through Martland Park to Kitt Green, forming a snake-like trail along the way. We then advanced up to Orrell Post and on to Tontine before climbing Alma Hill. After several steady climbs everyone had a few minutes rest and chat outside the Britannia before heading on to the ascent up to the Prince William at Ashurst Beacon. There was a slight incident on the tricky roundabouts at Hall Green where Joyce ended up coming off her bike when she had to come to a sudden stop. We need to be wary of these two roundabouts on future rides. Everyone completed the climb up to the beacon without stopping so there was a little celebration outside the Prince William – the pub was shut or otherwise one or two of the party might have been tempted for further celebrations inside!

When the celebrations had subsided, Denis led us on the comfortable downhill journey to Parbold where we joined the canal for the trip back to our start point. Christine found the last few miles tough going as her front brake pads were catching but she continued to complete the ride with a steady whistling sound from her front wheel to keep her company. The canal bank from Parbold to Crooke Village is notorious for being muddy but the recent good weather had done a good job of drying it out making for a pleasant and easy ride back.

Well done to everyone who completed the 17 miles ride and big thanks to Denis for leading and giving Jim T a break. Those hills weren't too bad after all!