



# stepping up a gear

report and  
recommendations  
one year on

Many people  
already **cycle** in  
Manchester.

Manchester City  
Council aims to  
be the **Greenest  
City in the UK**  
and to tackle  
**congestion**.

Cycling produces  
**no pollution** and  
takes up little  
**road space**.

Many **more  
people want to  
cycle**, but are  
looking to the  
Council to **take a  
lead** in making  
conditions more  
cycle-friendly.

**LOVE  
YOUR  
BIKE  
.ORG**

# report

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This report marks the first anniversary of the Love Your Bike campaign, delivered by Manchester Friends of the Earth, with creative work from Creative Concern and with launch funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund supported through the Local Strategic Partnership.

The campaign has elicited a clear response: many people recognise the many benefits of cycling but feel that more needs to be done to make it a more attractive option in Manchester. There are already positive improvements as illustrated on page 4, such as improved cycle route signage and city centre cycle parking and the proposed Fallowfield cycle route upgrade. The evidence from cyclists in this report not only justifies these developments, but also calls for a bolder and even more comprehensive approach.

Our message is simple: Manchester City Council has a clear opportunity. Should it seize it, the City and its citizens will reap many benefits, from the quality of our environment, to the health of our people and our bid to become the UK's greenest city.

Many people in Manchester already cycle and, despite the issues as seen from the saddle, enjoy it immensely and recommend it passionately. Many others have responded on the Love Your Bike Website and said that they want to cycle but feel, for various reasons, that cycling in Manchester is not currently an attractive enough option. This feedback has been collected and summarised in this report, and leads us to issue the following positive challenges:

1. Materially improve and expand the cycle lane network in Manchester so cyclists feel confident on the City's roads.
2. Design junctions so that the safety of cyclists is preserved and the flow of their journey not interrupted.
3. Act to inform, make aware and where necessary enforce the law so that other road users are aware of the needs of cyclists.
4. Provide quality cycle parking and, with the police, ensure that cycle crime is reduced and the fear of cycle crime reduced further.
5. Improve access to stations, secure storage, and the carriage of bikes on public transport, to give cyclists the confidence that they can use their bikes as one part of more complex journeys.
6. Work within the Council's powers to achieve the twin aims of reducing traffic and increasing cycling.

Cycling offers many benefits and is an opportunity to tackle some of the biggest issues facing Manchester.

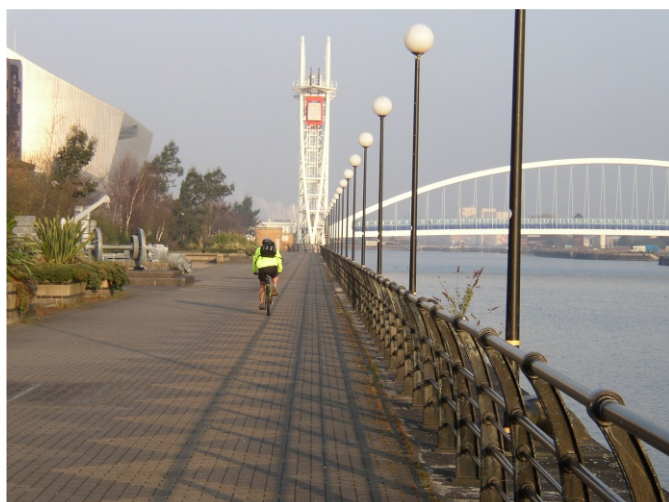
We challenge the Council to 'step up a gear' and further invest in the facilities and infrastructure that will help make cycling the transport of choice for the many.

Love Your Bike,  
Manchester Friends of the Earth



# opportunity: a cycling city

Examples of good practice highlighted by visitors to [www.loveyourbike.org](http://www.loveyourbike.org)



# challenges: better conditions

The following pages summarise data collected through the website [www.loveyourbike.org](http://www.loveyourbike.org).

We invited cycle-commuters to tell us about their journey to work, or if visitors did not commute into Manchester by cycle, we invited them to tell us the primary reason why not and what would need to change for them to do so.

Given the questions we were posing, unsurprisingly, the majority of messages related to things which people want to change, and therefore might be viewed negatively or taken to suggest that Manchester is not a cycle-friendly city. However, in the vast majority of cases the comments indicate that people want to start cycling, but feel unable to.

Until the Council takes a lead to deliver a better environment for cycling, there remains a latent demand waiting to be tapped.

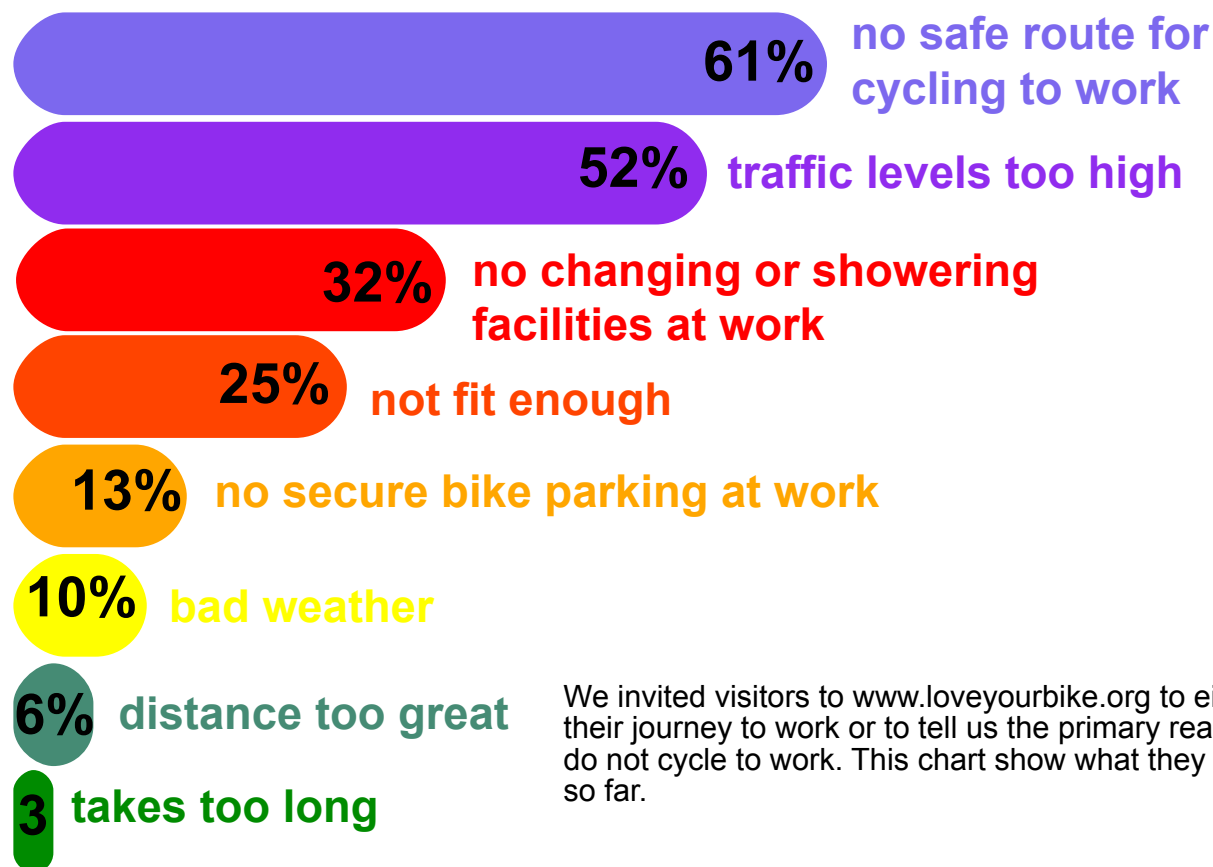
This report cannot be more than a window on an ever-evolving information source.

Since the beginning of the campaign, over 200 cyclists and would be cyclists have used the site to record their cycle routes and journeys in the city and leave additional comments.

We developed the interactive Google mapping facility to record this and expanded this to include catalogues of hot spots and black spots. One year on, this report is a snapshot of that data and we refer the reader to [www.loveyourbike.org](http://www.loveyourbike.org) to view the latest information and the details of the locations of problem areas.

We call on the Council and its officers to rise to the challenges set out in this document and deliver the improvements that will make Manchester a cycle-friendly city.

# why don't you **cycle more?**



We invited visitors to [www.loveyourbike.org](http://www.loveyourbike.org) to either describe their journey to work or to tell us the primary reason why they do not cycle to work. This chart shows what they have told us so far.

The top two concerns, Cycle Routes and Traffic Levels, are both areas that the Council has power to address and the third concern is something that it can influence through its work on green travel plans. Only 10% of respondents cited weather as a significant reason they didn't cycle to work. Love Your Bike is about getting people to cycle more often, not necessarily for every journey, and it does not rain every day in Manchester.

Only six per cent of respondents stated that their commuting distance was actually too far. This indicates that there is scope for many more people to cycle more journeys if the roads are made more hospitable.

As for the quarter of respondents who felt they were not currently fit enough to cycle to work: we prescribe a routine course of cycling!

These response figures are separate and additional to all those cyclists who have entered their routes into our sophisticated mapping facility, noting hot spots, black spots and giving guidance to other cyclists about how to tackle difficult stretches of road.



# challenges: road space

*The Fallowfield Loop is great but of limited use for commuters - what Manchester needs is a similar dedicated cycle track that goes in and out of Central Manchester (rather than across South Manchester).*

*The cycle path just runs out and drops you into the traffic. The alternate cycle path takes you back on yourself and under the bridge alongside the canal. This is very dark and feels very unsafe from a personal safety point of view. A crossing at this point would allow cyclists to cross to the other side of the road where a cycle path is provided.*

Princess Parkway - where northbound cycle path joins the road.

*Very busy road, very busy pavement, road not wide enough to manoeuvre effectively. Well-signed alternative route is probably the best option.*

Stockport Road (A6) - Longsight Centre, both directions

*Cars tend to use the (single) lane in front of the traffic lights as two lanes, thus squeezing cyclists off the road (or performing other dangerous acts). How to improve: Narrowing the lane by adding a "green cycle lane" on the left, similar to further along the same road.*

Higher Cambridge Street - Junction with Booth Street W (southbound)

top: This contraflow cycle lane has attracted some criticism due mainly to inadequate signage.

left: It is not clear where this cycle lane ends.

right: When cycle lanes are too narrow they can detract from safety rather than promote it.



Cyclists are not obliged to cycle on cycle lanes, but where they are provided good cycle lanes have the potential to improve safety and to make the road more attractive to cycle on.

The number one concern for respondents on the Love Your Bike website was the quality of the road. Many cyclists expressed frustration at the overall quality of cycle lanes in Manchester. Examples of poor practice include:

- unfeasibly narrow cycle lanes;
- lanes clashing with car parking and bus stops;
- lanes with a poor quality of road surface, littered and affected by broken glass, or with potholes and dangerous drainage fittings;
- lanes of a design that forces the cyclist into conflict with car users and bus drivers.

Much has already been written regarding the design of cycle lanes and the sharing of road space, and there are already extensive demonstrations of best practice including some within the City. We would particularly draw your attention to the "Review of Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road Cycle Route" by Rob Marshall, Cycling England Advisory Service, March

# challenges: road space

## Recommendations

The existing network of cycle lanes needs to be enhanced significantly in quality, both in terms of fundamental design and ongoing maintenance. All cycle lanes must be up to the minimum width as indicated in national guidelines. Inadequately wide lanes put the cyclist in danger.

The network of cycle lanes needs to be enhanced significantly in terms of safety. Dangerous features such as potholes, debris, and damage need to be removed and repaired rapidly should they re-occur. The edge of the road, where cyclists are expected to ride, is often where such hazards accumulate and are slowest to be addressed.

The existing and expanded cycle network needs to be more effectively advertised to potential users and labelled with directional signage, distance markers and information about intersections.

*'Cycle lane provided but broken glass, lake-sized puddles and uneven ground.'*

*'The design of most cycle lanes is appalling when they just fade away.'*

*'The cycle lanes that do exist are mostly very poor (just cover the grids at the side of the road) and have been created as 'lip service' to the cyclist and government targets by planners who clearly don't cycle.'*



photo: some cyclists felt in danger from vehicles turning across the cycle lane to turn left and not giving way

The challenge to the Council is to materially **improve and expand the cycle lane network** in Manchester so its coverage and quality is such that it makes cyclists **feel confident on the city's roads.**



# challenges: junctions

*'Left-turning cars leave no room for cyclists. Many cyclists get around the problem by cycling on the pavement.'*

(Upper Chorlton Road)

*'Oncoming traffic turning right ignores cyclists who have a green light. They seem to think they only have to give way to oncoming cars.'*

*'As is standard the cycle lane stops at the lights and doesn't continue until after the junction. However, the cycle lane doesn't pick up on the other side of the junction but a little down the road... leaving cyclists travelling in a spot that motorists want to accelerate through as they hug the kerb rushing away from the lights.'*

(A6 London Road)

*'The roundabout is possibly one of the best set-ups for cycling in Manchester unless you want to travel out along Chester Road, in which case the cycle lane just spits you out onto Chester Road at a junction, forcing you to stop and wait for a space in the traffic.'*

The safety of cyclists at junctions was of particular concern to the users of our website, many of whom speak from personal experience. The two overwhelming problems were conflicts between cyclists going straight on whilst other traffic turned left, and being unable to move into a right-turning lane due to very fast moving traffic.

## Recommendations

The road layout at junctions should be designed with the safety of all road users in mind, whilst recognizing also that cyclists are likely to be most vulnerable group using the junction.

The design of junctions where drivers need to turn left in front of cyclists came in for particular focus from website respondents. Cyclists are particularly vulnerable to other road users "outbraking" them in the approach to the junction and then cutting across the cycle lane forcing the cyclist onto the pedestrian pavement.



left: where does the cycle path end?

right: a parked car in a cycle lane makes a junction more dangerous

The challenge to the Council is to design junctions so that the **safety** of cyclists is preserved and the **flow** of their journey **not interrupted**.

# challenges: road users

*Last year I planned to cycle to work, but found (after nearly being knocked off my bike) cars and lorries showed a total disregard for cyclists. This was a very scary experience and I decided that dicing with death was not a good way to start or finish my working day.*

*Pedestrians come from all directions... from buses and trams... they are squeezed into a small space between a gated playground and a sunken garden... the cycle path snakes its way around the playground in the same small space... because of the high walls of the playground, cyclists can't see pedestrians and vice versa.*  
Outside Central Library

*I frequently cycle along Burton Road between Langford Road and Nell Lane, which can be stressful due to the number of parked cars affecting space and visibility.*

*Cars make two car lanes, where the road markings only indicate one car lane and one cycle lane, the effect being the second lane of cars blocks the cycle lane, and prevents cyclists reaching the advanced stopping line.*

*Rusholme, which particularly after 5pm is... busy, badly policed and full of people parking and driving dangerously...*

*A56 queuing traffic... blocking the cycle lane on the bridge over the Mersey.*

*Cyclists [should not be] jumping lights or riding on pavements.*

Many cyclist concerns recorded on the website related to the behaviour of other road users.

## Pedestrians

The main issue cited regarding pedestrians was that they tend to walk into the path of cyclists without looking, forcing cycle users to swerve, often into motor traffic. The poor design of some cycle lanes means that pedestrians do not necessarily recognise the cycle lane.

## Car and Bus Drivers

Many respondents cited dicing with cars as one of the most significant challenges to cycling in the city. Although public transport is something most cyclists support, the danger posed by poorly trained bus drivers also came in for criticism. Problems mentioned include cars driving or parking in cycle lanes, cars turning left across a cyclist, and insufficient room being given to cyclists when overtaking. At times this is due to a lack of consideration, at times a lack of understanding and at times insufficient legal enforcement.

The need for better understanding of the Highway Code and appreciation of the use of shared road and the need for driver education was widely cited.

## Cyclists

Equally it was acknowledged that not every cyclist is blameless, as the final quote illustrates...

Bad planning makes pedestrians and cyclists share small space with low visibility.



## Recommendations

Instigate publicity to educate other road users about their legal requirements with respect to cyclists.

Enforce the relevant laws consistently and effectively to ensure that cycle lanes are kept clear from obstructions.

Improve the quality and coverage of signage for cycle lanes.

**The challenge to the Council is to act within its powers to inform, make aware and where necessary enforce so that other road users are aware of the needs of cyclists.**

# challenges: cycle parking

*I'm scared of leaving my bike at the station as I think it will get stolen or damaged.*

*All along the shopping and restaurant district on Beech Road (both directions) there is no reasonable place to lock up a bike, and this in a bit of the city that aspires to a certain eco-lefty, or at least youthful, vibe. Put in some bike racks like the really excellent ones found in the City centre, near the Deansgate end of the pedestrianised bit of King Street.*

*Knowing that bicycles left around the Brunswick Street / Oxford Road area fastened to proper railings could be left without vandalism at least overnight.*

*Tracking down information on where I can safely and securely park my bike during the day is proving to be bloody difficult.*

12 stands but only room for 6 bikes.



A number of respondents were concerned about the provision of cycle parking and storage in the City. If questioned, it is unlikely that more than a handful of car commuters have ever had their car stolen or even vandalised in Manchester City Centre. In contrast almost every regular cyclist has either had their bike stolen or vandalised, or knows someone who has, often more than once. If commuting by cycle in Manchester is to become any more than a minority activity, this situation must be addressed.

There has been a noticeable improvement in dedicated cycle storage within the City in recent years but this is still of very poor quality away from the City Centre.

On the City streets best practice should be applied to the design of cycle racks. In London, the Design Against Crime Research Centre together with the Metropolitan Police have trialled new cycle rack designs and evidenced that these more modern designs make cycle theft significantly harder and provide an aesthetically more attractive environment for pedestrians.

According to recent media reports, Manchester has a reputation for bike crime.

## Recommendations

Investigate current best practice in cycle parking design and to use the findings to inform plans to make the cycle network more secure.

Insist that all developments have cycle parking that is more than adequate for their current needs, in order to allow scope for growth.

Survey all district centres, shopping locations, leisure facilities and educational establishments to ensure that they have generous amounts of cycle storage.

Provide supervised or camera monitored storage or lockers at major transport interchanges to encourage multi-modal transport use.

**The challenge to the Council is to provide quality cycle parking and, in partnership with the police, to ensure that cycle crime is reduced and that this is publicised to further reduce the fear of cycle crime.**



# challenges: integration

*I cycle to work once or twice a week as it's quite far. I would definitely cycle every day if I could take the bike with me on the bus.*

*Generally, I would use my bike all the time if I could take it with me on the tram mainly, but also on the bus and train.*

A number of comments were made regarding the integration of cycling with public transport. This would allow seamless longer distance journeys into and across the city and a number of respondents indicated that the opportunity to make cycling one part of a multi-modal journey would mean that they would cycle more often.

There are four particularly significant issues:

The provision for secure (supervised, camera monitored or secure locker) cycle parking at Metrolink, train and bus stations is poor, right across Greater Manchester.

It is not easy to integrate cycling with bus journeys as with little parking provision at stations, other than by using folding bikes, it is not practical to carry bikes on buses.

The operators of the Metrolink system do not allow the carriage of conventional bicycles at all, even when trams are largely empty in the off-peak hours. In contrast, London Underground allows passengers to take bikes onto most sections of the system, even in the heart of the city such as on the Circle, District and Hammersmith and City lines, during off-peak hours.

In addition, the cycle lane system makes it very hard to travel from east to west within the City, particularly approaching and leaving Piccadilly station.



When cycle parking is good it gets used, but when it is not, cyclists would rather use railings.



**The challenge to the Council is, by improving **access** to stations, providing **secure storage**, and facilitating the **carriage** of bikes on public transport, to give cyclists the confidence that they can use their bikes as one part of a multi-modal journey.**

# challenges: less cars, more bikes

*Less smoke from buses - get stuck behind a C-registered 'Magic Bus' and your lungs know about it.*

*I am scared to hell by the bus drivers on Wilmslow Road.*

*I have spent many years travelling up and down the Wilmslow Road corridor on buses and witnessed daily the harassment of cyclists by bus drivers. Saying that, cycle lanes are improving things.*

Many respondents felt that increasing levels of traffic made cycling difficult, unsafe, unattractive or all three.

Traffic was the third most concerning aspect of cycling in Manchester. Many respondents are concerned about the volume of traffic sharing the road with cyclists. These concerns include the obvious hazard posed by large numbers of moving motor vehicles, but also the physical obstruction, interruption of journey and hazard created by parked, stationary, and very slow moving cars, buses and lorries and also the effect on air quality which stationary traffic poses and the pollution to which rush-hour cyclists in particular are exposed.

The vast majority of respondents said that the cycling experience would be improved if there was a reduction in the level of traffic, and that more people would switch to cycling if there was less traffic, but obviously increased levels of cycling will of itself reduce levels of traffic.

This demonstrates a virtuous circle: that positive investment and action by the Council to increase levels of cycling will reduce levels of traffic, thus increasing levels of cycling, thus reducing levels of traffic still further... and so on...

One area that came in for particular criticism was the Wilmslow Road / Rusholme corridor. Because of the large student population this is one of the most heavily used cycle corridors, but because of the deregulated bus system also disproportionately used by buses, some of which are ageing and highly polluting. In addition, the fierce competition for passengers along the Wilmslow Road bus routes results in aggressive and in some cases careless and even dangerous driving by bus drivers.



## Recommendations

Review the speed limits along the problem routes and ensure they are enforced and that cycle-safe traffic calming measures are extended.

Examine the potentially positive aspects of the road pricing strategies being encouraged by central government.

Within its powers, the council should address the excessive number of buses along the Wilmslow Road corridor, enforce driving standards, and address the air quality issue.

**The challenge to the Council is working within its powers to achieve its twin aims of reducing traffic and increasing cycling.**



# campaigning with feeling

Love Your Bike is an awareness raising campaign promoting sustainable transport in Manchester. The campaign was set up by Manchester Friends of the Earth in order to establish cycling as one of the transport options of choice to benefit the environment, economy, health and quality of life in Manchester. The initial part of the campaign received funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund under its aim of reducing single passenger car journeys into the City Centre during commuter times.

Manchester is a large conurbation and most areas are well served by public transport but the city centre, and the main arterial routes are still packed with cars during the morning and evening rush hour periods. Commuting by bicycle was chosen as the campaign focus due to the multiple benefits of cycling instead of driving and the potential of making the campaign positive, engaging and fun.

The campaign was launched on 21st March 2006. Its main aim was to promote the concept of commuting by cycle and also the ways in which our travel choices can have positive impacts:

- the beneficial effects of daily exercise on health;
- stress reduction through exercise and better use of time/avoidance of traffic jams;
- financial savings from leaving the car at home, free parking, no fuel costs;
- benefits to the city and environment from fewer cars and less congestion.

It was important that the message delivered was positive to promote the idea that alternatives to driving are better choices and not just environmentally friendly choices.

Almost 100 cyclists attended the launch on the main roundabout at the junction of the A56 Chester Road and Deansgate, which connects to Manchester's cycle lane network. Councillor Neil Swannick attended the press call to demonstrate the Council's support for the campaign.





# expressing our love



## on billboards...

22 billboards were used citywide to display the 'Fast Lane Fat Lane' image. Positioned along roads where traffic is busy and cycling is possible, these used humour to get across the simple message that by cycling you 'Burn Calories, Save Money, Get There on Time'. The billboards were displayed for a total of two weeks in the city centre, coinciding with other publicity, including printed and electronic media.

## on buses...

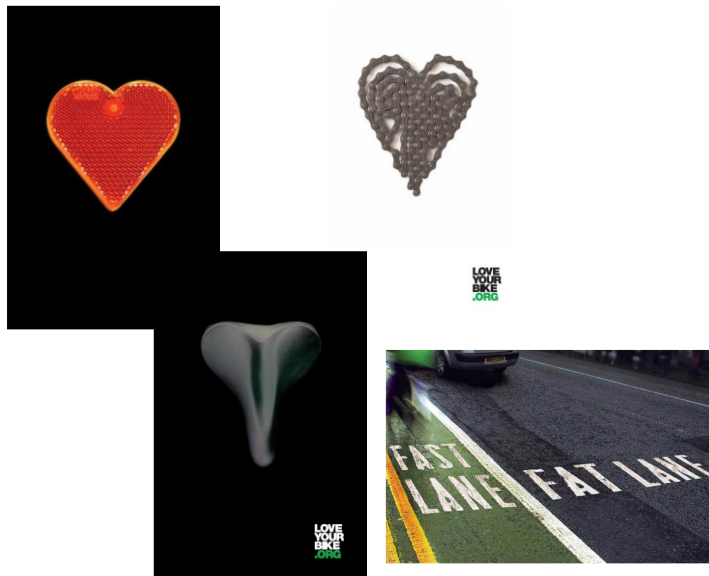
100 buses carried the Love Your Bike message. Car users stuck behind them on busy bus routes would have plenty of time to absorb the positive message and may even have seen cycles whizz by on the left, hammering home the message that in traffic the cycle lane often really is the fast lane. These adverts ran for a minimum of four weeks, with many remaining well into the summer.



## on cyclists...

Fluorescent cycle vests with the Love Your Bike website address printed boldly on the back were printed up before the campaign launch and given to cyclists on the morning of the 21st March. Actually, there were so many cyclists that we ran out of the vests. Cyclists then went their separate ways into the busy traffic, forming a real life demonstration of cycling as a fun and fast way of getting around the city. Since then, we've been selling the vests on the website. One year on, the vests are still to be seen on Manchester's roads.

# expressing our love



## on postcards and posters...

Thousands of eye-catching postcards were printed up, in four designs. These were distributed wherever we thought commuters might pick them up: cafes, newsagents, hairdressers, cinemas, pubs... They carried key facts about cycling and the website address. Some were simply blank on the reverse so that people could send them to their friends. 200 A4 posters were distributed and displayed in business windows in these locations, with the attractive heart-shaped reflector design.

## on the web...

The campaign website was set up to provide further information and resources and be an ongoing focus of the campaign. It featured:

- frequently asked questions about cycling;
- a Love Your Bike "Love Quiz";
- special offers at 18 cycle shops and outlets across the city for shoppers referring to the Love Your Bike campaign;
- an interactive mapping section designed to allow new and current cyclists to map their cycle route, to provide feedback as to its suitability for commuting and share advice and experiences;
- a questionnaire for those who are reluctant to start cycling – and crucially what needs to change before they will start cycling.

**LOVE  
YOUR  
BIKE  
.ORG**

## in the media...

Since its launch LYB has received wide media coverage, locally, nationally and internationally.

The launch itself was attended by BBC Radio Manchester, Channel M, and the Manchester Evening News, with some of the reporters acting a 'guinea pig' commuters. It was also covered by local radio stations such as Century FM and All FM and local print newspapers, including the Bury Times, Oldham Chronicle and the Prestwich and Whitefield Guide.

National coverage has included an article in Earthmatters magazine and sites such as the Energy Saving Trust, Community News Wire, British Cycling, and Bike for All. One year on, the campaign website was recently referred to in a Guardian feature on cycling in British cities.

Internationally, coverage was surprisingly diverse. The campaign has featured in the USA in Transport Magazine 'Urban Transportation Monitor' and on websites in many languages and countries including Bulgaria, The Netherlands, Chile, Portugal and Brazil. Cycling in Manchester and the 'Fast Lane Fat Lane' image has captured the imagination in each of these countries.



# recognition for the campaign

## Earthmovers

In September 2006 Love Your Bike won the "Communicating Powerfully" Earthmover Award from Friends of the Earth England Wales and Northern Ireland. This award is presented annually at Friends of the Earth's Local Groups Conference and is intended to reward and highlight good practice in local campaigning.

## Green Awards

Love Your Bike also won the national Best Integrated Campaign under £100k Award at the Green Awards in London in November 2006, beating stiff competition from The Mayor of London and Transport for London and the Marine Stewardship Council. Manchester Friends of the Earth was recognised in particular for its advertising campaign, which "creatively achieved its aims and objectives by leveraging a single idea across multiple media channels (e.g. advertising, direct marketing, digital media etc.) to illustrate some aspect of sustainability."

## City Cycling Website

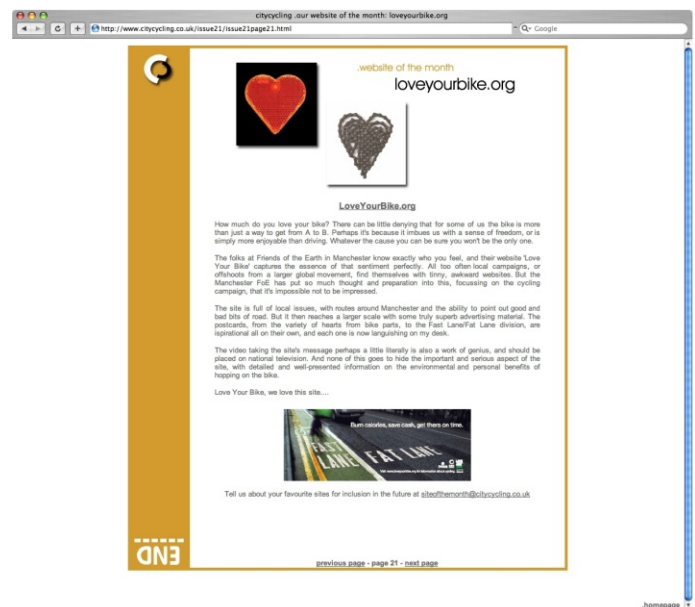
www.citycycling.co.uk awarded the campaign "Website of the Month" status in March 2007, commenting that: 'All too often local campaigns, or offshoots from a larger global movement, find themselves with tinny, awkward websites. But Manchester FoE has put so much thought and preparation into this, focussing on the cycling campaign, that it's impossible not to be impressed.... The site is full of local issues, with routes around Manchester and the ability to point out good and bad bits of road. But it then reaches a larger scale with some truly superb advertising material. The postcards, from a variety of hearts from bike parts to the Fast Lane Fat Lane division, are inspirational all on their own...'



Graeme Sherriff,  
Jonathan Whitehead,  
Dave Coleman and  
Alice Nicolay with  
Manchester FoE's  
Earthmovers Award.



Dave Coleman  
receives the Group's  
national Green Award  
from TV's Penny  
Poyser at the Guildhall  
in London.



citycycling.co.uk  
featuring Love Your  
Bike as website of  
the month



I have some of my best ideas when I'm cycling along - it just clears my mind and makes me happy. Some of the best days out with the kids have been gentle rides... everyone has great places to explore on their doorstep.

Maggie Wynn

I love my bike because cycling gives me healthy exercise without taking any time out of my day.

Philippa Browning

I love my bike because it is the one thing in my life that saves me time and pays for itself!

Paul D'Ambra

I love my bikes because they are my main form of exercise and transport.

Guy Lancaster

The reasons why I love my bike are that it carries me fast down the hills and is a reliable, silent companion that shares my adventures.

Julie Kenworthy

I love my bike because it's fast and fun and frees my mind on the way into town. There is no other means of transportation that gets me to work as quickly as the bike. By the way, it's not true that it always rains in Manchester!

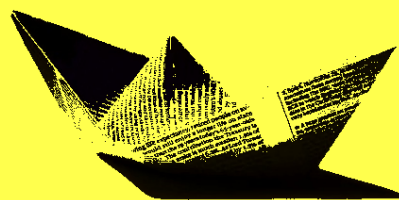
Carsten Timmerman

I love my bike because it gives me freedom, exercise and fun.

Clive Mingham

# Why Manchester Loves Its Bikes





**GREENAWARDS<sup>®</sup>**  
FOR CREATIVITY IN SUSTAINABILITY

**WINNER 2006**

Manchester Friends of the Earth  
March 2007