

Manchester International

Property Issue



Peter Saville Manchester's Creative Director

Revolutionary road

Kate Feld talks to Peter Saville about the £2.5bn plans to develop Manchester's 'knowledge corridor'

SOMETHING HAS BEEN BOTHERING Peter Saville, Manchester's Creative Director, ever since he was a student in the city some thirty-odd years ago. What can be done about Oxford Road? Home to the largest university campus in Western Europe and myriad cultural organisations, Oxford Road is the origin of Manchester's reputation as a hotbed of creativity and innovation. It's the street where Karl Marx thought up Communist theory, where the atom was mapped and the computer was born. But for all that, the area recently renamed 'the Corridor' has long been regarded as Manchester city centre's poor cousin.

"The values of future Manchester are annexed away down a road that certainly doesn't induce natural footfall," says Saville. "It's an ironic situation, because it's got two universities, the Whitworth Art Gallery, Cornerhouse and the hospital and yet you can visit Manchester for a couple of days without

being aware that it's right down the road."

Thankfully there is a monumental shift underway, one that looks set to put Oxford Road, and the surrounding area, front and centre. The Corridor Manchester partnership, an alliance between public institutions and private companies, has started work on the overhaul of the 240-hectare corridor that stretches from Whitworth Park to St. Peter's Square. The first partnership of its kind in the UK, Corridor Manchester will oversee capital investment in the Oxford Road area that is predicted to be worth £2.5 billion. This will drive a programme of development that revitalises under-utilised land and buildings and secures major infrastructure improvements. It is pretty ambitious stuff.

The Corridor plays a crucial part in Manchester's knowledge economy. Along its length are businesses and organisations that employ 18 percent of Manchester's total work-

force. The hospital and universities are at the heart of an extensive network of scientific and bio-tech companies, innovation businesses and R&D units. Together, they generate £2.8 billion (22.5% of the city's Gross Value Added, or GVA), while over 40% of activity is classed as knowledge intensive, almost double the national average.

"Cities are about what they give the world, not what they take from it," says Saville. "The Corridor is the avenue of 21st century Manchester, with education and intelligence as the new products of the city." The partnership's aggressive plans will build on the area's natural strengths and use strategic investment to ensure that, by 2020, the Corridor generates £4.8 billion GVA and supports a workforce of 77,000.

Change is already afoot. Manchester City Council recently announced plans to create

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Focus on Brazil

As the largest domestic market in South America, likely to eclipse both France and Britain by 2014, it is unsurprising that economic intelligence is pointing towards Brazil as an opportunity for long-term gain. Ben East talks to economist Baron Frankal about emerging trade and business links.

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Metrolink Expansion

Manchester's light rail system is set to treble in size with a £1 billion expansion that will see Ashton, Oldham and Rochdale town centres linked with the city centre, and a southern extension that will reach out to Manchester Airport.

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Competitively Green

Mark Hillsdon outlines a radical new scheme that promises to transform the construction industry and give both investors and developers a competitive edge in the global marketplace.

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Today's Events

Visit the Manchester stand at B1.00 to see presentations at 10.45am on transport, with David Leather of GMPTE and Jackie Potter of Corridor Manchester, and at 3.45pm on regeneration, with Michael Oglesby, Chair of MIDAS, and Mike Hollows from the NWDA.

Spinningfields

With the opening of the newly re-developed People's History Museum attracting record numbers of visitors, Spinningfields is reinforcing its position as much more than just a business district.

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Community Blues

Sarah Lynch, managing director of Manchester City Football Club's flagship City in the Community programme, looks to a growing focus on health that is encouraging hard-to-reach groups to access the services they need to improve their well-being.

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Rio de Janeiro from the air

Making the most of new markets

Ben East looks at Manchester's strategy for developing trade and business links among emerging economies

AS THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY CONTINUES, there is a growing sense that it will be sustained by the emerging economies. Whilst it might be easier to rely on established markets for short term gain, economic intelligence points towards South America, China and the Middle East as the places for those with an eye on long term gain. And Manchester is leading the way in not just looking at these new markets, but actively, in partnership with UKTI, making links with them.

New Economy, one of a family of development commissions that underpins economic development within the Manchester city region, provides the research and strategic direction necessary to develop such links. Manchester has already had success in Abu Dhabi and China, and Brazil is the latest country to receive its attention. It is perhaps unsurprising: Brazil has the largest domestic market in South America, and in 2014 is likely to become the world's fifth biggest economy - eclipsing both France and Britain. On top of that, it is already growing at an annualised rate of five percent.

Synergies

"Once we identified Brazil as a target, we looked at the synergies between the Brazilian economy and the Manchester economy to uncover the exact opportunities," says Director of Economic Strategy at New Economy, Baron Frankal. "There is no point in just sending unprepared politicians to Brazil. Instead, we operate in an extremely targeted and precise manner. It is all about trying to match companies that already do - or could - have an interest, working with them and incentivising them to get involved with Brazil."

Indeed, Manchester already has a toe-

hold in the South American country. In the aerospace sector, a number of Greater Manchester companies supply Brazil's largest aircraft manufacturer, Embraer, while chemicals company Byotrol is considering opening a factory there. There is also massive potential in financial and professional services, while the biomedical sector - which traditionally has a strong presence in Manchester - is another as yet untapped market. "These are the sort of areas where we think we can build bridges," says Frankal. "If we put the investment in now it will pay significant dividends in the coming years."

Long term planning

That Manchester, has succeeded in developing trade links within new markets is down to meticulous long term planning. Frankal says its work in Brazil is based on the experience the city has gained working on similar tie-ups with Abu Dhabi and China. The primary lesson, he says, is that no two countries are the same.

"You have to be focused. There's absolutely no point in just turning up at a place and seeing what's going on. You've really got to do your homework and employ people on the ground in, say, Brazil. And we make those contacts first."

"Take research and development in science. Manchester's big comparative advantage is that it's the place outside London and the South East of England for that sector. There are links to be made there with Brazil, but what you quickly find is that they approach research and development very differently. It is essentially carried out by government and public universities - so it's public sector but a very different public sector to how we'd understand it."

"The way to approach that is to un-

cover the government and university connections that we need to make. And of course we involve Manchester's universities in that. Having that wider city region family as we do in Manchester, all working together to achieve the same ends, means we can always find the right partner to work with."

Frankal is happy to admit that these are difficult markets for any city region to crack. But he firmly believes that it's worth it, that those who make lasting links stand to make the greatest gains. And compared to other city regions, Manchester's success rate is extremely high, thanks in no small part to the infrastructure that has been set up through New Economy, as well as organisations such as inward investment agency, MIDAS, UKTI and the Northwest Regional Development Agency.

"We have in effect a big machine that works together, with a committed and business-focused leadership," he says. "That, along with our experience in established markets, is a huge advantage. For example, we have a 'soft landing' service which is about encouraging enterprising Chinese businesses to come over here and establish themselves. With proven successes in China and new activity in South East Asia, we intend to expand that to Brazil." Indeed, the experience with China has been so successful that New Economy recently hosted 20 middle managers from the Fujian province. They weren't in Manchester to talk about investment, but to learn about how a successful city region works.

"It is from those contacts that relationships are built," says Frankal. "You have to understand the market - and the message we're really trying to convey is that we're in it for the long haul."

Manchester has sights on high-speed rail

JOURNEY TIMES BETWEEN Manchester and London would be cut to just 75 minutes if proposals for a high-speed rail network - announced by the UK Government earlier this month - comes to fruition.

The ambitious, 335-mile long track would see trains reach 250mph and afford space for some 1,000 passengers.

Phase 1

Whilst phase one of the scheme only reaches as far north as Birmingham, Lord Adonis, the secretary of state for transport, has also unveiled a blueprint for a wider network, with a Y-shaped route splitting off from Birmingham to go westwards to Manchester and east to Sheffield and Leeds.

Formal planning for the route from Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds will be completed next summer, with a consultation to follow in 2012.

The Rt Hon Lord Andrew Adonis, secretary of state for transport, said: "Travel and trade between Britain's major population and economic centres are the lifeblood of our economy and society. They require transport networks which have high capacity, are efficient and sustainable."

Commitment

Sir Richard Leese, leader of Manchester City Council, said: "We are totally committed to improving transport here in Manchester, as well as to and from the city. This is a unique cross-party collaboration bringing together Labour, Lib Dem, Conservative and SNP led cities to champion for the creation of a High Speed Rail Network which, we believe, will further the city's economic benefits and improve interconnectivity with major cities across the UK and near mainland Europe."

"Not only will this be beneficial to Manchester and other major cities as tourist destinations, it will enhance the country's reputation internationally as a world-class centre for business, as well as permitting faster, more sustainable travel between UK cities."

Delta

Delta will be restarting its Manchester - JFK service on 2nd May 2010.

THE DAILY FLIGHT IS returning in time for additional capacity for the busy May half term and Summer holidays.

Delta Airlines this year marked 18 years' of non-stop Manchester-Atlanta service. Today, Delta flies daily from Manchester to Atlanta and New York's JFK airport and in the last year has transported around 235,000 passengers from the Northwest of England to the United States.

Delta's services to Atlanta and New York JFK offer passengers travelling from Manchester access to hundreds of onward destinations in the US and beyond. Top destinations for customers include: Orlando, Tampa, Las Vegas, Miami, Los Angeles and San Francisco.



Corridor Manchester a crucial part of Manchester's knowledge economy

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9,000 new jobs and 5 million square feet of new commercial space in the Civic Quarter, restore the city's monumental Town Hall and Central Library and reinvent the Theatre Royal as a home for the acclaimed Library Theatre Company - a total investment of £165 million over the next four years. Saville also considers plans to establish a Northern outpost of the Royal Opera House at the nearby Palace Theatre as "a very significant development" for the area.

As Saville knows as well as any communications designer, the way a place looks invariably effects how it is perceived, and the Corridor could use some help.

"Because of the rather disappointing pragmatism that seems to have gone into the development of Oxford Road over the last 25 years, it's like a utility street," he says.

Substantial road works aimed at thinning out traffic, making the area more hos-

pitable for pedestrians and cyclists, alongside improved lighting and public realm works are all in the pipeline, and will, it seems, have a significant impact.

But it's not just about making things look good. Saville talks about unlocking the energy and vitality already there to draw people to the area; the need to convey the excitement inherent in a place where so much is actually happening.

"Ultimately, the Corridor should be the place visitors to Manchester have to experience, in the same way that people say 'Oh, if you're in Barcelona you have to walk down the Ramblas,'" says Saville.

Other changes may be less visible, but no less revolutionary. Over the next year, the Corridor will pilot the first phase of next generation fibre broadband in Manchester: 1,000 homes and 500 businesses will be directly connected to new fibre optic cables that will increase broadband speeds to 100 mbps and create a true open access network. The Corridor's research

and cultural businesses "will benefit significantly," says Dave Moutrey, Director of digital arts organisation, Cornerhouse. "Cultural organisations need to be ready to respond when next generation broadband becomes widely available and we see the next Facebook or Twitter emerge," continues Moutrey. "So the Digitisation project is a vital platform for experimentation and innovation in the cultural sector. I can't wait!"

Saville sees buy-in from organisations like Cornerhouse and the universities as crucial to the venture's success. "There is a rationale for reinvention, but we can't just reinvent Oxford Road, we've got to reinvent the landscape, and the organisations within the whole of the Corridor need to feel part of that," he says.

"The Corridor is the thread that joins together all these people." With a strong shared vision and the investment to back it up, look out for big changes in the Corridor in the years ahead.

The facts: Manchester's knowledge economy

- Every year, Manchester's universities produce more than 20,000 graduates, over 1,500 postgrads and almost 700 PhDs
- There are 19 universities or higher education institutions within an hour's drive of Manchester
- Employment in Manchester's knowledge-based industries has increased 121% since 1981
- Some 55,000 people work along the Oxford Road Corridor; 18% of the city's workforce
- The Corridor Manchester partnership is led by The University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Manchester City Council



Metrolink Manchester's light rail system

Manchester's Metrolink gets the green light on £1bn expansion

THE METROLINK, Manchester's light rail system that handles 20 million journeys every year, is on track to treble in size thanks to a £1 billion investment.

The Metrolink already serves the city centre and surrounding towns in Greater Manchester, and has grown steadily since its launch in 1992. Recent investment, however, has seen substantial sums spent on new trams, tracks, ticket machines and major station improvements. Most importantly, the light rail system is expanding its network, adding in new lines to Ashton-under-Lyne, East Didsbury, Manchester Airport, Oldham and Rochdale town centres and installing a second line across the city centre.

One of the early beneficiaries will be MediaCityUK, the new northern home of the BBC at Salford Quays. The media hub will be served by its own station, an extension to the existing line out to the Quays

- the station is due to open this summer ahead of MediaCityUK's launch in 2011.

In all, 40 brand new trams, 27 new stops, 229 new ticket machines and 20 miles of additional track will be added. Much of the work to upgrade existing tracks and trams has already been completed, while construction of new and extended lines is scheduled to take place from 2010-2012.

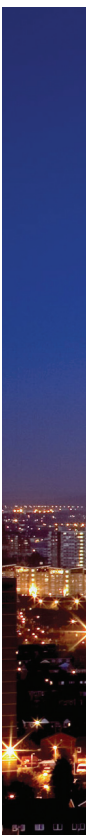
Once the scheme is complete the Metrolink will have trebled its capacity, making it the largest light rail system in the UK. The impact on Manchester as a whole will be huge: with twice as many trams running across the city centre, it is predicted that the network's additional capacity will take five million car journeys off local roads every year. Daily passenger trips, meanwhile, will increase from 55,000 to over 90,000, making a significant contribution to Manchester's low carbon plans.



Civil Justice Centre award winning part of the Spinningfields development



Manchester



Cityscape



Manchester Town Hall clock tower

Eyewitness Manchester

Art and Culture takes on the world



Beetham Tower home of the Hilton Hotel Manchester



Manchester at night



David Miliband launches the first low carbon economic area for the built environment

Going green - Manchester invests in low carbon technology

Mark Hillsdon finds Manchester at the centre of a radical new scheme that promises to transform the construction industry

WHILE THE UK AS A WHOLE has signed up to tackling climate change, Manchester has gone a step further - by becoming the country's first Low Carbon Economic Area (LCEA) for the Built Environment. This five year programme, one of the largest initiatives of its type in the world, will see major investment into new environmental technologies and help thousands of homes and offices across the city region cut their energy consumption.

The premise of the scheme is simple. Commercial and domestic buildings will be subject to environmental 'retrofitting': improvements to insulation and the introduction of small-scale renewable technologies and 'smart meters' will enable both businesses and homeowners to monitor and reduce their energy usage.

And while the scheme is good for the environment (saving around six million tonnes of carbon), it brings with it economic benefits. It is estimated, for example, that the project as a whole will boost the Manchester economy by around £650 million.

Part of the scheme's remit is to look at commercial space, with the retrofitting programme likely to be applied to offices across the city. It means that Manchester-based businesses will be better placed to meet the new Carbon Reduction Commitment, recent government legislation that penalises high-energy users.

"If we are to rise to the twin challenges of climate change and energy security,

then the solutions must be closely connected to other agendas, such as those of regeneration and sustainable economic development," says Keith Davidson of Manchester's Environment Commission.

"Residents will enjoy warmer homes and lower energy bills, while businesses will benefit from rejuvenated, healthy buildings."

It is no coincidence that Manchester was chosen by the UK government to pilot the scheme. The city is renowned for its groundbreaking research into low carbon technologies.

It is, for example, home to the UK's leading research centre in this area, the School of the Built Environment at The University of Salford, and a 'low carbon laboratory' is being set up as part of the scheme, designed to take advantage of exactly these research strengths.

"Over the next five years we are set to become a world leader and this brings with it a range of benefits," says Steve Turner, Head of Carbon Economy at New Economy, the organisation that promotes economic growth in the city region.

"We are already finding that LCEA status gives us a position on the front row in terms of attracting investment, and we anticipate significant overseas interest because foreign companies now know that there is a market here to develop low carbon products and services within the built environment."

But the city also has an enviable track

record in delivering large-scale regeneration projects, from the redevelopment of Salford Quays, soon to become the new northern HQ of the BBC, to the wholesale reconstruction of East Manchester, a 1,900-hectare regeneration zone now home to one of Europe's leading sports complexes. Keith Davidson believes that the ability to roll out regeneration initiatives of this scale can only be good news for developers looking to invest in Manchester's built environment.

"Not only will we be developing this new technology in Manchester, but we will be trialling and using it as well. On top of that, as Manchester will become the UK hub for built environment projects of this nature, investors in the city will have access to the best financial packages, products and specialist workers."

As the threat of climate change becomes ever more apparent, and building and regeneration projects are required to focus further on energy efficiency, the work being pioneered in Manchester will have a huge impact both at home and abroad. "More and more developers are going to be penalised for constructing energy inefficient buildings," says Turner.

"What we are doing here in Manchester is trying to reduce these penalties by linking up the supply chain, giving support to develop the right kinds of products and training the local workforce. Ultimately, it will give investors and developers a competitive edge in a global marketplace."



Spinningfields at leisure

ANDREW STOKES SPOKE YESTERDAY ABOUT the importance of cultural ambition in Manchester, and mentioned the recently reopened People's History Museum as one of the city's many cultural assets. The £12.5m redevelopment included the construction of an entirely new wing alongside the overhaul of the Grade II listed Pump House. "This is a museum that matters to everyone," says Deputy Director Andy Pearce. "It tells the story of the march towards British democracy - it's the only place in the UK that does that."

The building itself is a showstopper. Made of Corten steel, its striking rusty facade provides a contrast to its glass-and-steel or Portland stone neighbours. And form follows function: the museum's largely windowless upper floors are wrapped in steel to provide the climate-controlled home for its collection. The ground floor is, however, glass-fronted, enticing passers-by inside and providing the building's hub. "The change from the ground floor, which is light and airy, to the darker museum area, is deliberate. It creates the sense of an Aladdin's cave," says Pearce.

The Museum forms a key element within the cultural offering of Spinningfields, an area of the city that rises along the banks of the River Irwell. Well known as Manchester's premium financial and professional district, Spinningfields has of late become as well known for its leisure offering as its grade A office buildings. Restaurants such as Giraffe, Carluccio's, Gourmet Burger Kitchen and Wagamama offer reliably good food, and Allied London has recently announced the imminent launch of its new retail centre.

With the first phase of Spinningfields complete, attention has now turned to The Avenue. Opening later this year, which will be Manchester's first centralised destination for international luxury brands. Retailers such as Brooks Brothers, Mulberry and Flannels populate The Avenue, while the stunning design of the flagship Armani Store means it will fast become one of the city's landmark buildings.

Number 1 Crown Square, a new flagship store at the western end of The Avenue will be completed in summer 2010, while other plans include the Manchester Hotel, a premiere four/five star hotel scheduled to open in winter 2011, and 2 and 3 Hardman Boulevard, a new 10 storey office building designed to bridge the civic and public areas of Spinningfields and due for completion in 2012.

Paul Simpson, Managing Director of Visit Manchester, says "the plans that are in place for this core area of Manchester will greatly improve the city's offer as a high-end retail, leisure and cultural destination. It really will mean that Manchester has the full package."

Review of yesterday's events at MIPIM

MIPIM 2010 got off to a great start for Manchester yesterday, with the unveiling of the stand, which was widely proclaimed to be the best ever.

"NOT ONLY IS THIS THE BEST STAND Manchester has ever had," said Tom Bloxham, "I also believe that it's the best stand MIPIM has ever seen." However, yesterday was just the start and delegates visiting the stand today will discover a completely different experience.

Yesterday's stand sessions were also well received, and both were incredibly well attended, despite the fact that MIPIM remains a somewhat quieter affair this year than it was a few years ago.

In the morning, Chris Farrow from Central Salford spoke about the ongoing developments at MediaCityUK, which is proceeding ahead of schedule, with residential developments and the core transport infrastructure all set for completion within the next few months.

Chris was followed by Peter Saville, who gave an overview of the Sharp Project, featured in yesterday's edition of Manchester International. He also explained why, in his eyes, such developments are so

important: "creativity doesn't happen in isolation, it happens when you bump into people that you didn't expect to meet. Sue Woodward's definition of the Sharp Project, as a creative campus, is exactly what we need in order to develop creative talent."

The afternoon stand session featured Tom Bloxham of Urban Splash, in a show-stopping suit, and Andrew Stokes of Marketing Manchester, outlining the importance of culture to the development of an international city.

Bloxham, who is also Chairman of the Manchester International Festival, outlined why Manchester's cultural offering was of great importance to property developers:

"Not only is it good for business, for the company image, for the economy but perhaps most importantly it's fun."

Andrew Stokes of Marketing Manchester spoke about the city's aim to create a culturally distinctive world class city. He suggested that the city must continue to focus

on creating a more innovative, more ambitious sector as well as better exploiting and promoting its existing cultural assets.

"Manchester's ambition will only be achieved by continuing to foster new ways of partnership working across the public and private sectors."

Andrew also outlined plans to establish a Cultural Commissioning Fund that is designed to support the commissioning of innovative new work from artists and cultural organisations. Saville stepped up again at the end to make a final point: "Culture is the fuel of an intelligence economy."

In addition to providing a platform for daily events, the stand has also gone interactive this year, trawling the twittersphere and pulling in a live feed of everything that's being said about Manchester and MIPIM.

You can follow the partnership at mcrmpim, or add your own thoughts and comments by sending a message with the hash tag mcrmpim.



Peter Saville and Tom Bloxham





City in the Community Manchester City Football Club's flagship programme

You got me singing the blues

Mark Hillsdon speaks to Manchester City Football Club to find out how an international team remains rooted in its local community

FOR NEARLY 25 YEARS, Manchester City has been blazing a trail. In 1986, it was one of six football clubs in the Northwest to launch a community scheme designed to give something back to local people. Today, its City in the Community programme (CITC) is still going strong, reaching some 200,000 people a year through a range of ambitious and innovative programmes.

When CITC was launched, the club was still at its old Maine Road ground in Manchester's Moss Side district. Since then it has moved into the City of Manchester Stadium, a state-of-the-art stadium that was the scene of the successful 2002 Commonwealth Games and forms part of the internationally respected Sportcity complex. Although the club rent the ground from Manchester City Council, its links with the Town Hall go much deeper, explains CITC's new Managing Director, Sarah Lynch. "Manchester City Council is a key partner in the majority of the community work we deliver," she explains. "We have always worked closely together to tackle key community issues in the city."

Some of the most successful CITC programmes link with social inclusion proj-

ects such as Kickz, which involves up to 300 young people. On the weekend nights when it runs, local anti-social behaviour drops by nearly a third. CITC also works closely with Manchester City Council to provide free football opportunities for young people, as well as initiatives that use football to improve school attendance and reduce truancy.

In 2008, the club was bought by investors from Abu Dhabi, and was immediately propelled to the top of football's rich list. Despite its new global status, however, there has been no let up in the club's community programme. "The club and its owners very much believe in a community ethos and giving something back," says Lynch. "We believe our community work can make a real difference to people's lives, whether it's giving them access to activities they wouldn't ordinarily be able to do, or offering them the opportunity to develop self-confidence and social skills."

The health side of the club's community work is also growing. In 2007, Manchester City became the first professional club in the country to have its own NHS Health Trainer, a healthcare professional

who works with other CITC staff to help members of the community to become more physically active and healthy. Since then, the club has taken on two further part-time Health Trainers to work on a variety of programmes, including tackling worklessness (and resultant child poverty) in deprived areas of the city. "Through football, we are encouraging hard-to-reach groups to access the necessary services they need to improve their overall health and wellbeing," says Lynch.

Elsewhere, the club operates purchasing and employment policies to ensure that it buys and recruits locally where possible. Discounted match tickets are also regularly made available to people living within a mile radius of the ground. "We are constantly looking at ways in which we can help our local communities with the key issues they face, and to give them access to our games," says Lynch.

"Football, along with music, will always be part of the cultural fabric and make-up of Manchester life. Football clubs have always been central to their local community and football as a sport can definitely act as a key driver for social change."

Jon Matthews completes charity cycle

THERE ARE EASIER WAYS to get to Cannes but two colleagues from Manchester based HKR Architects are feeling pretty pleased with themselves after biking down from the UK.

Jon Matthews and John Crellin joined the annual charity bike ride covering the 1500km in six days.

And while most of the riders were content to do it in relays, hats off to John who biked the entire journey spending 14 hours a day in the saddle.

Jon said: "It goes without saying that he is very very fit and a very keen cyclist! For me nine hours a day was quite enough!

"But we had a tail wind all the way down and sunny days around 15degrees so it was perfect cycling weather and really enjoyable, a great atmosphere and bonhomie.

"There were quite a few of us from Manchester and we sort of teamed up to be the noisy northerners at the back of the support bus!"

The bike ride has raised more than nine hundred thousand pounds since it began six years ago and organisers are hoping that this year's efforts will have pushed the total passed the landmark million.

The arrival of 80 riders freewheeling down the Croisette is quite something and caused a stir on the Manchester stand where it coincided with the afternoon's presentation and caused a rush to the balcony.

Jon said: "It's a hard slog up the hill outside Cannes but then you drop down and the ceremonial ride into town is well worth it, despite having lots of roadworks to negotiate. By the end though it was a matter of keeping everyone on their bikes and being fit enough to finish."

HKR have been long time partners of Manchester at MIPIM and in all likelihood will be back again next year.

So will they be parking the bikes in 2011 and taking the easier transport option of Easyjet? "Let me have a beer and think about it," said Jon. "But it was a great experience and we are chuffed to have done it."



The facts: Manchester's football legacy

- In 1888, the Football League, the oldest football competition in the world, was created in Manchester's Royal Hotel
- Nineteen years later, the Players Union, one of the first trades unions, was born in Manchester
- Manchester United is one of the world's most successful clubs, with the Reds dominating the English Premiership and winning three European Cups
- Manchester City has recently become one of the richest clubs in the world
- In 2011, the National Football Museum opens in Manchester, just a few hundred yards from where the Royal Hotel once stood