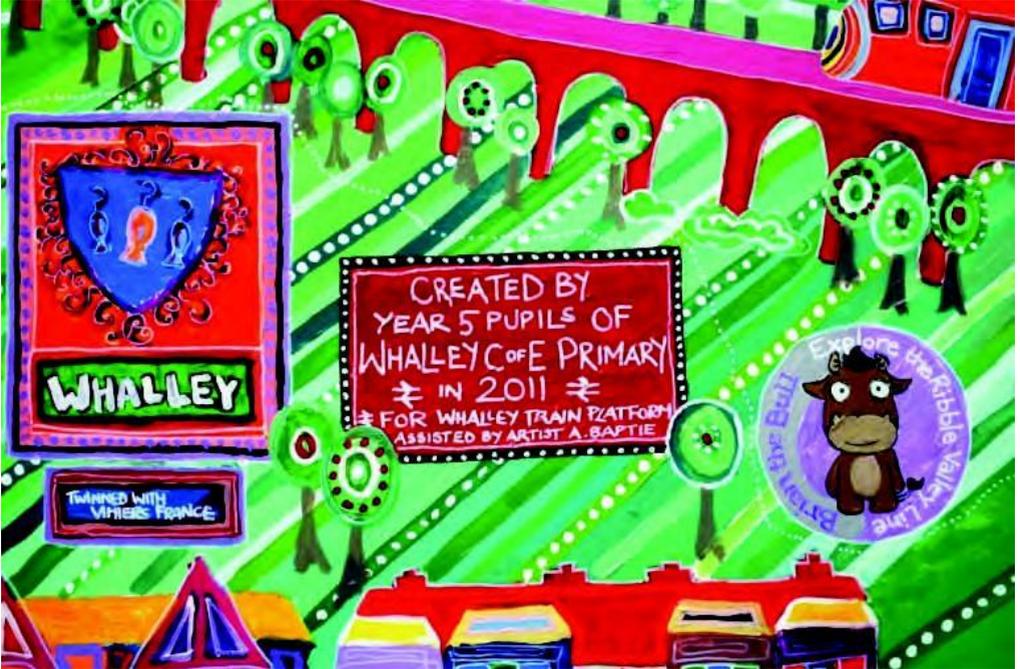


# READING BETWEEN THE LINES

THE NEWSLETTER OF LANCASHIRE'S COMMUNITY RAILWAYS



## WHALLEY PLATFORM ARTWORK



Above is a close up showing some of the detail of the art work, created by Junior 4 pupils at Whalley C of E Primary School and recently installed on the Clitheroe bound platform at Whalley station.

The art work was unveiled on Wednesday 5th October by James Syson, chair of the Clitheroe Line Community Rail Partnership and the children of Junior 4. The full story can be found on page 3 inside this issue.

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Richard's Ramblings, Station Partnerships, Whalley Artwork, ACoRP Awards, Blackburn Platform 4, Padiham Greenway, Additional Trains and much, much more!!

## RICHARD'S RAMBLINGS

Welcome to the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of Reading Between The Lines which as usual gives you a real flavour of what is happening across the Lancashire CRPs – and there is much to report and celebrate. It is worth remembering how limited our resources are and how much is being achieved. This is down to the dedication of our two CRP officers as well as the positive relationship we have with both Northern Rail and Network Rail as well as with our local authority and community partners. We all sadly miss Kathryn O'Brien who was a major driving force behind many Lancashire CRP initiatives and wish her well in her new job.



At the time of writing the last Richard's Ramblings I had just enjoyed travelling on French main and secondary lines. Well the same has happened again!! This time I travelled on a service that will be withdrawn with the timetable change in December. The threatened service runs between Avallon and

Autun in Bourgogne Region and has just one passenger train per day each way. It is a lovely but deeply rural line with some very derelict unstaffed stations that already look closed as well as some which seem to have had a lot of money spent on them. The line was saved in the past by community action but I fear that the very low usage coupled with high operating costs means this time it really will close and be replaced by buses. The irony is that the poor track quality and low speeds means that the bus can do the same journey calling at more villages in the same time!!!

Why mention this? Well I am involved in a bid for Interreg IVB funding to help develop the Community Rail (renamed Citizens Rail) across parts of Europe including France. Interestingly one of the partners to this project is the Region Pays de la Loire who also have a line with a limited service operating between La Roche sur Yon and Thouars via Chantonay.

*(Richard's Ramblings does not necessarily reflect either the official policy of Lancashire County Council or of any Community Rail Partnership.)*

## RICHARD'S RAMBLINGS

Again the line passes through some very rural areas but the difference here is that Region Pays de la Loire want to give it a second chance to see if through the application of Community Rail principles the line can be developed to increase ridership and revenue – sounds familiar? If it fails then the passenger service may well be withdrawn. The key difference here is that the line does connect with main lines at either end and has some largish towns on route. For more information about French regional railways go to [www.ter-sncf.com](http://www.ter-sncf.com) there are comprehensive timetables for all regional services in the Fiches horaires section. We will know the outcome of the European bid in January so fingers crossed – the project will also part fund the improvement of Burnley Manchester Road station and extend the contracts for the Northern Community Ambassadors.

French railways have become a passion of mine perhaps because of their quirky timetables and impressive rolling stock.

Looking to things UK we have had good news on the Preston to Ormskirk line with the announcement at the Community Rail Awards on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September of the formal designation of the line. Things are moving fast and Northern Rail will be introducing an improved timetable for the line from December and for the first time in many years there will be some bespoke marketing aimed at the local communities. A line guide part funded through the Community Rail Development Fund (CRDF) will be delivered door to door throughout Croston, Rufford and Burscough as well as other nearby villages. December also sees a change in rolling stock with the replacement of the single car 153 with a class 142 on Mondays to Fridays. The additional capacity gives the CRP a lot more seats to sell!! At the same time Network Rail continues to look at the feasibility of introducing a standard pattern timetable. At last there is a real focus on this line which I am sure has a bigger role to play in the future.

The designation of lines seems to be gaining momentum as the Leeds to Lancaster and Morecambe line as well as the Furness line (between Lancaster and Barrow) both want to be formally designated. Perhaps the Settle Carlisle line will also want to join the fold!!

Apart from the welcome announcement about the Preston to Ormskirk line the Lancashire CRPs have been doing well in securing CRDF grants. Apart from the one mentioned above we have had three other successes covering station improvements at Lytham, lecterns at Preston station and a QR trail at Whalley.

## WHALLEY'S PLATFORM ARTWORK



This colourful piece of artwork can be seen on the Clitheroe bound platform at Whalley railway station. The work was part of the 'Whalley Station Project' being undertaken by Junior 4 at Whalley C of E Primary School during last summer term.

The artwork, in the style of Austrian artist Hundertwasser, was designed following a walk through the village by the children to look at what buildings and features of interest should be incorporated into the design. They then worked in class, assisted by local artist Angela Baptie, to paint the panels using acrylic paint and the finished panels, which depict the whole village, have been mounted on the fence at the station.

The art work was unveiled on Wednesday 5th October by James Syson, Chairman of the Clitheroe Line Community Rail Partnership, assisted by a few of the children.

*James said; 'The Clitheroe Line Community Rail Partnership is delighted to be working in partnership with Whalley Primary School to help improve the waiting environment at Whalley station for the travelling public and the wider community. The artwork created by Junior 4 pupils is a vivid and colourful depiction of the village, and we are also working with the school to redesign the station garden and introduce an innovative village trail starting and finishing at the station which uses mobile phone technology.'*

## BLACKBURN PLATFORM 4

Blackburn's newly refurbished Platform 4 was handed over on time by Network Rail at a ceremony on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2011.

The £1.7 million renovation of Platform 4 was opened by Jack Straw, MP for Blackburn. The improvements have taken just over five months to complete and include a new lift, new lighting, information screens, and a heated waiting room.

Amongst the invited guests were Romana Jabeen, Muaz Patel, Zahra Bachu, Jameel Waghat, the four



Rail Ambassadors from Daisyfield Primary school, and the Headmaster Peter Fenton. The children were introduced to Jack Straw who spent time talking with them and thanked them for their part in the project.

## WHALLEY QR TRAIL



The second part of the Whalley Primary School project will see a leaflet, designed by the children, which will be a trail, starting at the station and taking in the highlights of the village.

The leaflet is special in that it will incorporate the new technology of QR (quick response) codes which allow smart phone users to discover more information about some of the places of interest by scanning the code, which then links them via their mobile phone to the appropriate page on the World Wide Web.

The project is part of an ongoing partnership between Whalley Primary School and the Clitheroe Line Community Rail Partnership. The leaflet is being funded through a grant from the Community Rail Development Fund and will be available shortly from the school and other tourist outlets.

# STATION PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Community involvement is alive and well in Lancashire with 26 active Station Partnerships, Friends of Stations, adoption groups and schools. These are well spread out over the five partnerships and all are doing great work in keeping their local station looking spick and span.

There are a number of new ventures taking place or planned for the near future and others are worthy of a special mention as they are achieving phenomenal results with only a few volunteers and very little funding.



## Accrington

Accrington station has recently seen a good harvest from its Eco Garden, a project jointly run by the East Lancs CRP and Ian Hodgkinson, Hyndburn Borough Council's Local Food Co-ordinator and working with disadvantaged adults. The group are looking to expand the garden and hope to create a composting area.

## Bentham

The Friends of Bentham Station have been planting flower tubs and weeding and generally tidying the station for a while and are looking to put their group on a more formal footing. The group have a number of aspirations including the renovation of the Midland railway waiting shelter on the Carnforth bound platform.

## Blackburn

The Star & Garter public house, immediately outside Blackburn station has recently been completely renovated for use by Nightsafe, a local charity that provides accommodation for homeless young people. The young people have already christened the building platform 5 and are looking to do some work with Alistair (the Artist) Nicholson to be displayed on the signalling and telecommunications building on the station.

## Burnley Central

Community Rail Development Officer Brian Haworth, working with Northern Rail's Community Ambassador Project have approached the horticultural department of Burnley College and they have adopted Burnley Central station and are looking to create a garden area at the station.

## Hapton

A small group approached the East Lancs CRP with a view to starting a Friends Group and they have now had their safety brief and will be starting work to look after the station shortly.

## Huncoat

The small group of dedicated volunteers that look after Huncoat station have worked wonders in the small amount of time they have been going. They have cleared large area of the platforms of weeds and other debris, created flower beds and have cleaned and painted the attractive stone signs at the

## Lytham

Lytham in Bloom continue to work on the station preparing it for the visits of the 'In Bloom' judges. They, along with the Civic Society have also been given the green light to work on the disused platform at the station once Network



some work to make the platform edges safe.

## Other stations

The groups at **Croston** and **Burscough Junction** are continuing their work on the disused platforms. **Appley Bridge**, **Gathurst**, **Langho**, **Ramsgreave & Wilpshire** and **Whalley** have all had superb flower displays with plants provided by Parish Councils. Others such as **Meols Cop** and **Bescar Lane** have excellent floral displays thanks to donations by the volunteers.

The stations in the Pendle area continue to be well looked after by the Friends of **Brierfield & Nelson** and **Colne** station's planters again were full thanks to the Colne in Bloom organisers. At **Rishton** station the group there are looking to create a wild flower garden in bit of 'no mans land' behind the Colne bound platform.

**St. Annes & Squires Gate** stations continue to look sparkling thanks to the volunteers of the Blackpool & Fylde Rail Users Association.

## PADIHAM GREENWAY

Padiham Greenway's creative engagement programme submitted by Mid Pennine Arts has achieved success in the 5<sup>th</sup> European Green Awards held in Épinal France.

The project received a second place award in the EXEMPLARY INITIATIVES category.

The Community Rail Partnership along with other partners played a part in this initiative by visiting local schools to talk about the history of the local railway and to encourage use of rail travel. History walks were carried out with schools along the Greenway which once carried the North Lancashire Loop Line from Great Harwood Junction to Rose Grove. The Community Rail Partnership working with Lancashire County Council's cycling officer Caroline Holden have also created a Cycling into Railway history circular cycling route complete with an illustrated leaflet which contains a map of the route and route description.

Whilst the Padiham Greenway is now complete a steering group meets on a regular basis to continue to involve and engage with local community and plan for future initiatives on the Greenway. This group chaired by Mark Dixon is always looking for local people to get involved with activities on the greenway and to share ideas.

The steering group actively supports the extension of the Greenway over Martholme Viaduct and for anyone who would like to support this aim a letter of support can be sent to Jo Turton, Executive Director, Lancashire County Council, County Hall Fishergate Hill, Preston PR1 8XJ email; [enquiries@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@lancashire.gov.uk)



Recent initiatives have seen a portrait bench installed at about the half way point of the Greenway and a sculpture installed adjacent to the memorial park.

## BURNLEY CENTRAL ADOPTED

The East Lancashire CRP is always looking for innovative ways to involve the community with their local railway and to this end the partnership is developing links with Burnley (UCLAN) College.

After visiting on Registration Day and attending the Fresher's Fair, with Northern Rail's Community Ambassadors, links were forged with the college horticulture department, which has resulted in some very positive outcomes.

The college has adopted Burnley Central station and have some exiting ideas to develop an out of use section of the platform. Network Rail has been approached and we await their comments. In the meantime the students who will be involved at the station have visited Huncoat station to see what can be achieved with a station partnership.



Northern Rail has provided some half barrel planters, which the group have filled. Hopefully this small start will develop into a worthwhile scheme at the rather run down station, lifting the ambience for the travelling public.

## ADDITIONAL TRAINS

The Clitheroe Line and East Lancs CRPs working with Northern Rail's train planners have managed to secure some additional late night trains from Clitheroe and Colne.

The changes will be effective from the May 2012 timetable and will see the 23.16 arrival at Clitheroe from Manchester Victoria running back as a passenger service leaving at around 23.25 (Mon - Sat) calling all stations to Blackburn.

In a similar move the 23.49 arrival at Colne will run as a passenger service departing at around 23.55 (Fri only) calling at limited stops to Preston.

## ACORP AWARDS 2011



ACoRP's National Community Rail Awards were held in the Sheffield City Ballroom at the end of September.

The Lancashire CRPs entered six categories and had three short listed nominations; **Greening the East Lancashire Line DVD** (Involving Young People), **Accrington Eco Station** (Station Development) and **Marjorie Birch** (Outstanding Volunteer Contribution).

On the evening the Greening the East Lancashire DVD was awarded **First Place** in its category and Accrington Eco Station was

placed **second** in its category.

Other notable achievements were a **second place** for Wayne Smith, Station Manager Lancashire, in the Outstanding Railway Staff Contribution category and a **third place** for the Northern Rail Community Ambassadors in the Passengers Matter category.

## EAST LANCASHIRE SERVICE DEROGATION

Burnley College students are to benefit from a service derogation granted by the Department for Transport. Currently the 08.50 departure from Colne arrives at Burnley Central at 09.03, just after the normal start time for students.

The East Lancs CRP working with Northern Rail have used the fact that the line is designated under the Government's Community Rail Strategy, to push for the 08.50 service to leave 10 minutes earlier thus giving students the opportunity to travel by rail and arrive at the college in time for the start of lectures.

The Department for Transport has sanctioned the change and Northern Rail are looking to introduce the change with the December 2011 timetable. The train will depart Colne at 08.40, calling at Nelson (08.45) and Brierfield (08.48) and arrive Burnley Central at 08.53 and then will stand until its normal departure time of 09.03.

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Annual Ribble Valley Rail Santa Services will be on Saturdays 10th & 17th December 2011. Santa will be on the 11.52 & 14.52 trains from Blackburn to Clitheroe with goody bags for the children under 12. Parents & other passengers will be offered a glass of sherry and a mince pie.

Watch out for a new competition - Lancashire Community Rail Designated Lines Station of the Year 2012. This will be launched shortly and is aimed at those stations that have Station Partnerships, adoption groups or a Friends of Stations group. Full details will be published on the Community Rail Lancashire website shortly.

The Clitheroe Line CRP is continuing its support of the Clitheroe Beer Festival that normally takes place on the second weekend in May and the festival goers will benefit from the changes to the timetable that will see the late empty stock movement from Clitheroe running as a passenger service, calling all stops to Blackburn (see page 9).

Although it is a long way off, plans for the 2012 Colne Rhythm & Blues Festival are already underway and the East Lancs CRP will once again be supporting and running a music train on the opening evening of 24.08.12.

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## WEBSITES

For information on Lancashire's Community Rail partnerships and for a host of other useful information please visit the following websites:

[www.communityraillancashire.co.uk](http://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk)  
[www.dalesrail.com](http://www.dalesrail.com)  
[www.northernrail.org](http://www.northernrail.org)  
[www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk](http://www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk)

[www.railramblers.com](http://www.railramblers.com)  
[www.lancashirebus.co.uk](http://www.lancashirebus.co.uk)  
[www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)  
[www.merseytravel.gov.uk](http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk)

# Santa Services

## Blackburn to Clitheroe

Saturdays 10th & 17th December 2011



Santa will board the following trains at Blackburn and travel to Clitheroe:

Manchester Victoria	11.00	14.00
Bolton	11.20	14.20
Bromley Cross	11.28	14.28
Darwen	11.41	14.41
<b>Blackburn</b>	<b>11.52</b>	<b>14.52</b>
Ramsgreave & Wilpshire	11.58	14.58
Langho	12.02	15.02
Whalley	12.06	15.06
Clitheroe	12.19	15.19

Christmas just wouldn't be the same without Santa. This year, he is giving the reindeer a rest and taking a Christmas train journey and you can come along too!

So why not enjoy a train journey with a difference and meet a truly magical passenger. Ribble Valley Rail is providing sherry and mince pies for the adults and all children under 12 will receive a FREE Santa goody bag.

So come along and take a magical train journey along the scenic Blackburn to Clitheroe line, and make it a happy Christmas for everyone!

Return on any train. Services connect with trains from Preston, East Lancashire and Yorkshire at Blackburn. Please refer to the full timetable for intermediate stations between Manchester Victoria and Blackburn and for other services. Normal fares and railroad discounts apply. Children 5-15 travel half-fare and children under 5 travel free.

RVR, Northern Rail and the Partnership wish you a Happy Christmas



For train times and further information please call **National Rail Enquiries** on 08457 484950 or visit [www.northernrail.org](http://www.northernrail.org) or [www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk](http://www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk) or [www.clitheroelinecrp.co.uk](http://www.clitheroelinecrp.co.uk)