

# CLITHEROE LINE & EAST LANCASHIRE COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIPS



**ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12**

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2012

Thank you once again for this opportunity to highlight some of the work of our two partnerships. 2011/12 has once again been extremely busy and has presented us with some real highlights such as a new canopy at Blackburn, further development of the exciting plans for Burnley Manchester Rd station, enhancements at Darwen and the 'My Mill Hill' project.

Sadly though, we have also experienced heartache with the sad loss of Peter Moore, Chairman of Ribble Valley Rail and a most helpful and an enthusiastic member of the Clitheroe and East Lancs Partnerships.

To many Peter was more than a colleague – as a newcomer to Lancashire and Clitheroe he was certainly instrumental in helping me and my family settle into the area and my job and he will always be remembered not just for his endless rail campaigning but for his jovial entertaining and easy going nature.

## What did Community Rail ever do for us?

If you were to approach the ordinary man or woman waiting on a local platform and ask them what does community rail mean to you should we be surprised if we receive a puzzled stare? *(Followed by a few awkward moments as they step away from you and seek shelter back in their own space!)*

Paraphrasing a famous line from 'The Life of Brian' (*not Haworth*) what has community rail ever done for us? Community rail lines after all remain connected to the rest of the national rail network, Northern trains still call at the same train stations, pass the same signals, under the same bridges and tunnels maintained by Network Rail, but people's concerns over punctuality remain the same.



However, what sets a community rail line apart from other lines is the valuable effort of the Community Rail Partnership - busily working in the background acting as a conduit between the travelling public and the rail industry trying to ensure local rail travellers are provided with the best possible service.

So are we simply a silent force for good? No - our groundbreaking work with local schools and community groups, our involvement in major capital schemes and lobbying for

future investment is testament to the high profile nature of our work and although the average person waiting at our stations is blissfully unaware of our toil - local councillors, local authority and community leaders, school children, teachers and parents, British Transport Police, businesses and community groups are gradually becoming aware of our important presence.

Even the most unobservant travellers will not have failed to notice their train is getting busier and seats are now at a premium on morning and evening services. Many may well ponder whether this is simply natural growth and the result of the rising cost of fuel but some will have wondered whether there is potentially more to this increased demand than meets the eye.

Despite the economic downturn passenger numbers continue to grow with the railways now carrying more people per year (1.3 billion) than at any time since 1946 when the network was almost twice the size.

To ease the demand for rail travel over one million more trains per year are now being operated on the national network compared to just five years ago. In line with national trends patronage growth at local stations reflects the increase in rail travel's market share, patronage at stations on the East Lancashire line has increased by 26% over the last five years and there has been a 16% increase witnessed at stations on the Clitheroe line.

But how much of this growth can be attributed to the work of the Partnership? The 2008 Transport Re-generation Ltd report 'The Value of Community Rail Partnerships' gives us some indication. This report notes that active and effective CRPs (like ours) should expect to increase footfall by an additional 7% over 3 years.

Although it is difficult to quantify the direct link between patronage growth and the work of the partnership our work with the rail industry and local authorities to help market the line and to improve train services, bus links and access, is all helping to increase passenger numbers.

Travellers new and old should also have noticed the improvements to our local stations supported by the partnership using a variety of local, national and European funding pots. From grand infrastructure projects such as the award winning Accrington Eco Station and the impressive new canopy covering platform 4 at Blackburn to smaller scale investment in new shelters, CCTV, information, lighting and landscaping, our stations are probably in better shape now than they have been for a long while.



Moreover, thanks to the coordination of a workforce of volunteers representing local 'rail user' and 'friends of' groups many of these stations are also benefitting from the TLC required to ensure the waiting environment remains an important gateway into the heart of their local community.

As the government grapples with the complexities of sending high speed trains through countryside to better connect our major cities, the local rail network that enables towns and villages like those in East Lancashire to prosper by providing real travel choice to employment, training and leisure opportunities must not be left behind and the good work of the partnership undone.

Having successfully completed most of our actions over the last four years we find ourselves entering a new community rail era and the role and importance of our local community rail partnerships will need to evolve to become bigger and better. Over the next few months and years as changes to the management and franchising of local rail services are agreed, the fate of high speed rail in the north of England is decided and local schemes such electrification, the 'Northern Hub' and the implementation of the Todmorden Curve and Blackburn to Manchester service frequency enhancements take a step closer, we need to ensure we are ready to represent our local rail community.

So in answer to the question what has Community Rail done for us - a lot and there is more to come.

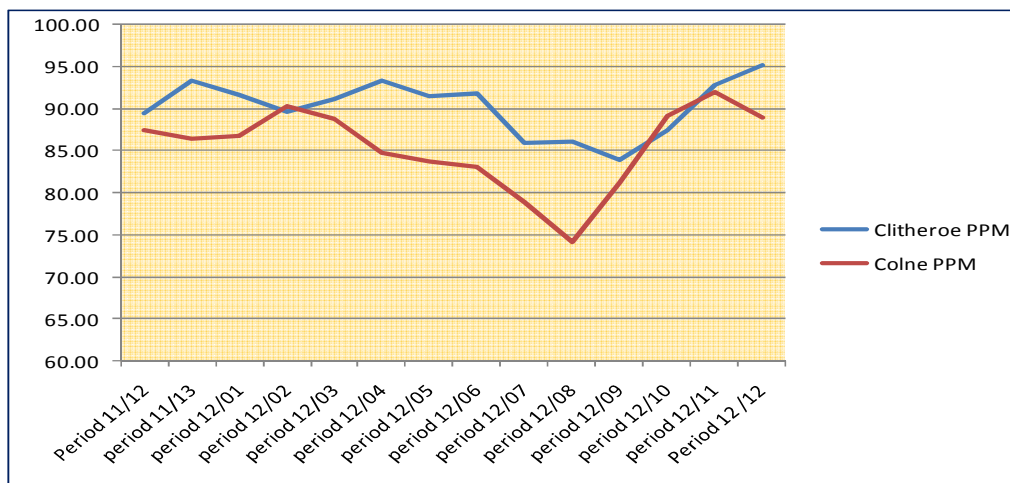
James Syson, Chairman

# NORTHERN RAIL

It is fair to say that throughout January and February we experienced some of the worst weather the country had seen in the last decade which gave us an extremely challenging start to the year. Whilst the majority of other TOCs decided to run a limited timetable and with some roads impassable Northern made the decision to maintain our regular timetable ensuring that our local communities were kept connected as much as possible.

The Public Performance Measure Moving Annual Average (PPM MAA) at the start of the year for the Blackpool South to Colne line was 82% and for the Clitheroe line was 89%. It was pleasing to note that the Colne route saw a performance improvement over the year of 3% with the Clitheroe line maintaining its score of 89% despite the poor start to the year.

Autumn traditionally has a severe effect on the railway performance in East Lancashire but 2011 saw the best autumn operations since the franchise began. Whilst it is fair to say that the weather was particularly benign we had unprecedented levels of cooperation with Network Rail, particularly on de-vegetation work and the provision of greater resources on the ground meant we were able to deal with adhesion related issues more effectively in real time. This work delivered a huge benefit in terms of autumn performance that saw an 8% PPM improvement across Lancashire when compared to 2010.



50% of all delay minutes over both routes during the year were attributable to infrastructure failures and 20% to unit issues. This year saw Network Rail and Northern working closer than ever before on driving down these issues although it is clear we have much more to do. During July we, together with our colleagues at Network Rail, arranged for a week of initiatives to monitor the performance of our trains operating on the Clitheroe to Manchester Victoria and Colne to Blackpool South lines. There was a range of activities including the monitoring of right-time train departures, cab rides, signal box visits and the monitoring passenger flows at stations. We will continue to develop our joint improvement plans with Network Rail to drive continuous improvement.

As you know we provided 2 extra carriages from the July 2010 timetable change that provided a 20% increase in seats on the Clitheroe service. However, it is sometimes difficult to provide this capacity each day as we do suffer from unit faults which reduce our fleet availability. Looking back over 2011 the reliability of some of our fleet has not been as we would have expected and unfortunately when these units failed or were required for maintenance we had only a small degree of flexibility. This meant that some strengthened services on other routes were utilised elsewhere to provide cover. However, since the introduction of our Winter Timetable on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011 and as part of the High Level Output Specification (HLOS) cascade, Northern received a much needed boost of 17 x class 150s and 7 x class 142s entering the business. This increase to our fleet has improved our flexibility to carry out maintenance as well as improving the overall reliability ensuring that we provide adequate capacity on all peak time services on a more regular basis.

Craig Harrop, Client & Stakeholder Manager, Lancs & Cumbria

# PROJECTS

It has been another busy year with the two partnerships being involved in a variety of projects, both new and ongoing. There have been a number of infrastructure projects on the two lines including:

- Platform lengthening on the Clitheroe Line;
- CCTV installed at Lostock Hall and Mill Hill stations;
- Refurbishment of Platform 4 at Blackburn;
- Funding confirmed for the reinstatement of the Todmorden South Curve and refurbishment of Burnley Manchester Road station;
- Work has commenced on Darwen station to improve waiting facilities, provide improved CCTV and also to install ticket vending machines.

Brian the Bull, star of two DVDs, is still pulling in the crowds with Brian Haworth and Marjorie Birch visiting around six primary schools a term and then taking the children either on a trip to Clitheroe or, an increasingly popular trip, to Accrington Eco Station. The work carried out in the Education Resource Centre at Accrington meets many of the subjects of the Key Stage 2 Curriculum and the children are loving learning about all things recycling at this innovative venue.

A new project got under way in January 2012 when the East Lancashire CRP got involved in the 'My Mill Hill' project that intends to bring Mill Hill station back into the community with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour and vandalism. This art based project is pulling together three primary schools, a youth group and a senior citizens group. Local artist Alastair Nicholson is once again involved and is leading the art side of the project and developing vinyl banners to be mounted on the fence at the station along with work created by youths more used to graffiti than art.



Close to Blackburn station, in a recently renovated pub, is 'Nightsafe' a charity working with homeless 18 to 24 year olds. The residents have renamed the building 'Platform 5' due to its close proximity to the station and they have been working with Alastair the Artist to create a piece of work that will be displayed on the telecommunications building at the east end of the station.

Along the Clitheroe Line the major project of the year has been the Platform Artwork and associated QR Trail leaflet created by Junior 4 pupils at Whalley Primary School working with local artist Angela Baptye. The children walked through the village and then worked in class to produce six panels depicting the village in linear form in the style of Austrian artist Hundertwasser. Once completed the six panels were mounted on the Clitheroe bound platform at Whalley station.

The station is the starting point of an innovative trail that uses QR (quick response) codes generated by computer to link smart phone users at various places around the village directly to information on the world wide web. A leaflet designed by the children has been produced and is available from local shops and the library.

The children at the school are also helping to design a garden at the station which will depict the famous Whalley Arches in flowers at the entrance off Mitton Road.

# AWARDS & OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

The Partnerships have had a good year as far as awards are concerned especially Accrington Eco Station. The main awards successes are;

- Eco Station - **Winner**, 2011 RICS North West Awards - Sustainability
- Eco Station - **Commended**, 2011 RICS National Awards - Sustainability
- Eco Station - **Highly Commended**, 2011 MJ Awards - Sustainable Infrastructure
- Eco Station - **Winner**, 2011 Network Rail Awards - Environmental Sustainability
- Eco Station - **Winner**, 2011 Modern Railways, Industry Innovation Awards - Environment
- Greening the East Lancashire Line DVD - **Winner**, National Community Rail Awards - Involving Young people
- Eco Station - **Second**, National Community Rail Awards - Station Development

The Eco Station also had success in the RTPI Awards with a win and a joint win in two categories. Also in the limelight was the Padiham Greenway, which took second place in the 5th European Green Awards and finally Accrington Eco Station made the Top 20 in the Guardian Green Travel List as a place worth visiting!!



One of the annual events that the partnership is involved with is Fresher's Week at Burnley College. Brian Haworth & Simon Clarke have attended the main Fresher's Fair on the campus since the college opened and have spoken to hundreds of students about the possibility of using rail to get to and from college. The most frequent comment has always been that the train from Colne did not arrive at Burnley in time for normal start time of college lectures. The East Lancs CRP working with Northern Rail and using the fact that the line is officially designated under the Government's Community Rail Strategy, obtained derogation from the

Department for Transport to run the 08:50 train from Colne 10 minutes earlier and this now arrives in Burnley at 08:50 allowing students time to get to their lectures.

Each year the joint partnerships hold an exhibition of art work in the Platform Gallery in Clitheroe. This year the exhibition had a working theme of '*Railways in the Community*' and the display featured work by children from local primary schools including work by Padiham Green School, featuring the Greenway, and by Whalley School with the artwork now displayed on Whalley station. Also prominent was work carried out at the Eco Station by children involved with the latest Brian the Bull DVD project.

## SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship is something that the Lancashire CRPs have been involved with for a number of years. In 2011/12 the Clitheroe Line CRP sponsored the Clitheroe Beer Festival which takes place in the town in May of each year. The CRP paid for the glasses for the event and its logo was emblazoned on the side of every glass. As well as this, and with Northern Rail's help, a late train was available on the Friday and Saturday evenings to get festival goers home at closing time.

The East Lancs CRP continued its support of the Great British Rhythm & Blues Festival which takes place in Colne over the August bank holiday weekend. The CRP runs a music & ale train on the Friday evening from Preston to Colne to get the festival underway in style and in 2011 the train rocked to the virtuoso sounds of Tom Attah on guitar supported by Franny Eubank on harmonica. The real ale, supplied by Moorhouses of Burnley, certainly helped the regular festival goers get in the mood. The CRP also works with Northern Rail and Network Rail to run late evening trains over the festival weekend to help get people back through East Lancashire after the day's events finish.

The partnerships also 'sponsor' a number of branded community notice boards along both routes and these distinctive red boards are used by the Friends of Stations and other station adoption groups to promote their community activities and to drum up extra volunteers to help with the work.

# STRENGTHENING

Back in October 2010 the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority (now Transport for Greater Manchester) secured the use of the 'Oldham Five' - the five trains (units) that had operated the Oldham Loop service until it closed for conversion to part of the Metro tramway. A number of these units were predicated to strengthen services between Manchester Victoria and Blackburn/Clitheroe in the peak hours. It was agreed that this would need to be closely monitored in order to make sure that this strengthening, that had been advertised to passengers, was actually taking place. Six services were affected and the chart below, for Period 13, shows how Northern Rail are doing in managing to achieve the strengthening.

Train Strengthening Clitheroe Line – Period 1213

Date	2J54 07.07	2J56 07.40	2J58 08.32	2N55 15.40	2N59 18.00	2N50 18.02
05.03.12	150148 + 153363	150218 + 153304	156426	156455	150218 + 153304	142012 + 142067
06.03.12	150273	150138 + 153304	NUJ	150268	153304 + 150138	142027
07.03.12	150117 + 153332	150137 + 153304	142050	150149	150137 + 153304	142086
08.03.12	150201 + 153363	153304 + 156471	150147	142071	153304 + 156471	142011 + 150201
09.03.12	150205 + 153328	153304 + 150273	150207	150273 + 153304	150136	142043
12.03.12	150142 + 153304	150147 + 153301	150220	150112	150147 + 153301	150201 + 142009
13.03.12	153316 + 150135	150272 + 153360	153301	150119	150272 + 153360	142050 + 142052
14.03.12	150150 + 153360	150115	153330	153330	150116	142028 + 142005
15.03.12	150118 + 153351	150135 + 153330	142028	150118	150135 + 153330	150103
16.03.12	150141 + 153330	150114 + 153351	142014	150118	150114 + 153351	142039 + 142063
19.03.12	150269 + 153358	150103 + 150111	150113	150218	150103 + 150111	142012 + 142033
20.03.12	150150	150204	150207	150207	150204	142046 + 142056
21.03.12	150114	150139	153301	150112	150139	142014 + 150146
22.03.12	150147 + 153317	150111 + 153351	142047	150149	150111 + 153351	142055+ 142057
23.03.12	150270 + 153328	150149 + 153351	142028	150222	150149 + 153351	156429
26.03.12	150214 + 153359	153351 + 156424	142045	150115	153351 + 156424	142030 + 142050
27.03.12	150148	150141 + 153351	142047	150218	150141 + 153351	142040 + 142003
28.03.12	150220	150141 + 153351	153332	150150	150141 + 153351	142040 + 142049
29.03.12	150210	150141 + 153351	142031	150110	150141 + 153351	142005 + 150220
30.03.12	153301 + 156468	150141 + 153351	150103	153351	150132	156472

Total instances	120	%
Strengthened	93	77.5
Not strengthened	27	22.5
Booked units	76	63.3
Better than booked units	17	14.2

Key	
	As booked
	As booked – compatible units
	Better than booked
	Worse than booked

# VOLUNTEERS

No community rail partnership would be able to carry out the work it does on local stations without the invaluable help of a small army of volunteers. These volunteers come from all walks of life, some in work and many retired, but all have the same desire to see their local station and rail line brought back into the community. The type of work carried out, and frequency of visits to the station, varies hugely from station to station and line to line. Some volunteers visit everyday to tidy, weed and litter pick whilst others may only visit weekly and this often depends on the footfall of the station - and whether visiting football fans have used the station!

On the Clitheroe and East Lancashire lines we estimate that the amount of time put in by volunteers is around 2250 hours a year. Using the national average as a guide, this equates to around £23,625 of added value and of course volunteer hours can be used to provide matched funding in bids for grant money.

The following stations currently have volunteers undertaking various roles; Accrington, Brierfield, Burnley Central, Church & Oswaldtwistle, Clitheroe, Colne, Darwen, Entwistle, Hapton, Huncoat, Langho, Lostock Hall, Nelson, Ramsgreave & Wilpshire, Rishton and Whalley.

We are just approaching the best time of year to see what volunteers can achieve with the main planting and flowering season nearly upon us, but don't forget many of the volunteers spend many hours at the station in all weathers to keep on top of the work and their efforts are greatly appreciated and to be applauded.

# DALESRAIL & OTHER GUIDED WALKS

The Partnerships actively support walking and cycling for health and continue to be directly involved with the Lancashire DalesRail service and the local guided walks from stations on the Clitheroe and East Lancashire lines.



In 2011 the DalesRail service operated on 27 Sundays and there were around 150 guided walks of all grades led by the Lancashire Rail Ramblers organisation. The weather in the summer of 2011 was not the kindest and numbers travelling were slightly down with 3790 passengers on the first train and 1048 on the second train. The split of walkers to non-walkers was 70/30.

For the first time a number of 'stepping out' beginners walks were tried from the second train and these were reasonably well supported giving the novice an introduction to the dales and a chance to see what DalesRail was all about. It is hoped that

some of these walkers may now move on to the more serious walks off the first train.

The local guided walks in East Lancashire start at a station either on the East Lancs or Clitheroe Line and can be circular or take the walkers to a station on the other line. There are about 30 walks a year, all led by the Lancashire Rail Ramblers, and around 10 - 15 walkers regularly join these walks. Thanks must go to the Lancashire Rail Ramblers who put in huge amounts of time both reconnoitring and leading the walks with 1000 hours of volunteer time equalling well over £10,500 in value.

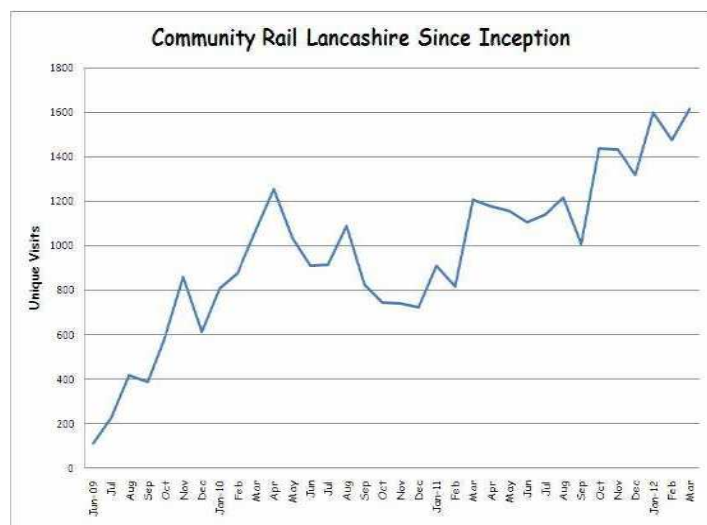
## WEBSITES

The Community Rail Lancashire websites are used both to market the partnerships and the local rail services and stations but also to report the work of the partnerships such as the school work carried out by Brian Haworth and Marjorie Birch. The sites are also used to report news items about our local rail network and the various successes we have had in awards throughout the year.

The website is also used to support our partners and stakeholders with links and items of interest and has a large section of downloadable information about walks and cycle rides, destinations and rover and ranger tickets available for use throughout the East Lancashire area.

The graph alongside shows how visits to the site have grown steadily since day one and statistics show that unique visits to the main site have totalled 15,685 during 2011/12. The two individual sites for the Clitheroe Line and East Lancashire Line have had 3983 and 4462 visits respectively.

Website managers also look at how many pages have been visited to gauge how successful a site is and in total, visitors to all six of the Community Rail websites have viewed in excess of 665,000 pages!



Simon Clarke, who manages the web sites on a day to day basis would like to pass on his thanks to Nigel Kirby of Ribble Valley Rail for all his help and advice on all matters regarding websites.



# WHO'S WHO

<b>CHAIR</b>	James Syson	Transport Strategy Team Ldr. Blackburn with Darwen	james.syson@blackburn.gov.uk 01254 585776
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There are a number of other people who attend meetings regularly including Northern Rail's Station Managers, Revenue Manager and Performance Manager. Also invited to attend are representatives from the Network Rail Community Rail Team and from the Department for Transport's Community Rail Team along with a representative from the Association of Community Rail Partnerships.

There is also a Marketing Sub-group that meets regularly and this includes marketing managers from Northern Rail and Transdev Lancashire along with members of the main management group and a representative from the Lancashire Rail Ramblers.

The Clitheroe Line and East Lancashire Community Rail Partnerships also have a wider Stakeholder Group which includes other members of the railway industry, local councils, local businesses, rail user groups and friends of stations groups. The stakeholder group is kept up to date with partnership activities via the Community Rail Lancashire, Clitheroe Line CRP and East Lancashire CRP websites and through *Reading Between The Lines*, an electronic newsletter issued quarterly and distributed to around 300 email addresses.



