

# COMMUNITY RAIL LANCASHIRE ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17



**The Community Rail Lancashire Team pose at the door of the Education Facility under the main building at Accrington station.**

From left to right; Richard Watts, Simon Clarke, Dax Byrne-Turner, Daisy Chapman-Chamberlain, Marjorie Birch, Brian Haworth and Emily Elliott.

**The office also doubles up as the base and registered office of the newly formed Community Rail Lancashire Ltd. and is the centre of its activities.**

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2016 Annual Report for Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) and the four Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) that it supports. The report mainly covers the activities carried out in the financial report year 2016/17.

The main thrust of the work in 2016/17 has been the expansion of the CRL's Education Programme that has been funded primarily through a grant from Northern's Seed Corn Fund and has seen two new members of staff joining the team in Accrington.

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## PARTNERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

What a buzz there is at Accrington when there is a class of 30ish young people in the 'bunker' learning all about the railway - the dos and don'ts but the message is always put across in a positive way. Yet the real excitement for many of the children is the ride in a train. For most of them it is a first time experience and a tremendous thrill. Teachers report on the buzz of excited chatter when they are back at school having been on the train for the first time.

Not for them a huff and puff because it was a Pacer but the excitement of seeing and observing their environment in a totally new way and from a TRAIN! To capitalise on this excitement each pupil gets the award winning 'Passport to Safe Rail Travel' to encourage them to take the train again with their family. Thanks to all the team involved you do a fantastic job in educating the passengers of the future and once again this was recognised at the 2016 Community Rail Awards with a first in the Involving Young People category - need I say more?



2016 has been an exciting year for Community Rail in Lancashire (CRL). At the start of the year we set about creating a brand new, not for profit, company – Community Rail Lancashire Ltd. and recruiting two new people to join the company. The trigger for this was twofold – changes in Simon's employment and the additional funding from Northern to support and expand CRL's award winning, educational engagement programme. However, setting up a company, writing a business plan, putting in place the policies & procedures required and recruiting staff has been equally exciting and time consuming! I have been very lucky in the support I have received from Simon Clarke, Brian Haworth and Marjorie Birch. In equal measure they have all helped get the company on the right track! It surprises me just how much there is to do to ensure CRL doesn't fall foul of HMRC or Companies House.

As I mentioned above CRL has been fortunate in securing additional funding from Northern to enable it to expand its educational engagement work. During 2016 we advertised and were very lucky to recruit Emily Elliott and Daisy Chapman-Chamberlain who joined the CRL team in September, 2016. Since then new ideas and approaches have been coming hot off their computers. From ideas we are now moving into action with new initiatives on the South Fylde and West Lancashire lines; working with Virgin Trains to give their apprentices a taste of community rail; developing a summer programme for Further Education students; setting up an Education Network involving Northern CRPs, Northern's RCSMs (Regional Community and Sustainability Managers) and ACoRP and forging new links with Trans Pennine Express. Daisy and Emily have also been working with other non-Northern CRPs including the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership. It would be very remiss of me not to acknowledge the tremendous support given by Marjorie and Brian as well.

## PARTNERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

CRL was also lucky to secure the services of Janet Ennis, former Deputy Head at Padiham Green CofE Primary School. Janet joined the CRL team for a short period to develop the KS2 toolkit that will be an important feature of the new 'Down the Line' website. So a big thank you to Janet for all her efforts and I hope she is enjoying her well earned retirement.

Finally a word of thanks has to go to the BTP for allowing Dax the time to come and talk to the children - he is an essential part of the team. Dax was also instrumental in securing another prestigious award for CRL and this time at the 2016 National Rail Awards. Dax entered the BTP/CRL Education Programme in the Outstanding Teamwork category for which we were highly commended and Dax and company received the certificate - well done and thank you!



2016 has also seen the start of the new Northern franchise. A 9 year contract, with the possibility of a 1 year extension that was developed by the DfT in partnership with Rail North. For the first time we have a franchise for our local train services that will see real investment in improving rail services. New trains, faster trains, more trains, refurbished trains, better stations and much else. The franchise also has strong commitments to supporting CRPs and station adoption groups – the mandated £1/2m to support the 19 CRPs was bettered by Northern who have committed to providing an extra £600k per year on top of this to support a range of initiatives. This includes the funding to CRL for its expanded education work, to ACoRP to enable it to recruit additional staff to support and expand the work of CRPs, to support station adoption groups and to provide a seed corn fund.

Northern's engagement with CRPs is co-ordinated through ComREG (the Community Rail Executive Group) which has already met 5 times and is ably chaired by Carolyn Watson. I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to all three chairs of ComREG namely Prof Paul Salveson, Dr Karen Booth and Carolyn Watson for their help and support over the last 12 months. The CRP funding is helping make a real difference.

## PARTNERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

I started writing this report on the 9<sup>th</sup> February on the 11:28 service from Accrington to Manchester Victoria. I was on my way to meet Network Rail. I was travelling on a train that was being funded by Lancashire County Council, from a station that the County Council and partners had heavily invested in and travelling over a curve that was the result of hard work by Burnley Borough Council in securing Regional Growth Fund investment. We called at two stations in Lancashire both of which had received considerable investment from, you guessed it, the County Council and partners. In the case of Accrington and Burnley one of those partners was the European Union – BREXIT may well have an impact on future investment projects in the north. Why do I mention this? I think it is plain to see that without the vision and driving force of the local authorities and CRL many of the investments and service improvements would not have happened. Does the new franchise change this?

The simple answer is yes although the train I was travelling on showed no signs of this - yet. It was a class 150 in very mediocre condition – the seats were those old Northern had provided and had not stood the test of time, cleanliness well I won't go there and litter well yes it was festooned with abandoned Metro papers (a curse in two ways – for real journalism and that people don't value them and discard as soon as they have skimmed read them). On the plus side it was on time, the conductor was brilliant but as it was a 4 car train without corridor connections so he was only able to collect fares, offer advice and do revenue protection for half of the train – which was very busy by the time it departed Mills Hill. So after 11 months of new Northern the areas they are responsible for looked just as weary as they did under old Northern – only a year older. No visible transformation had taken place and passengers in East Lancashire could be forgiven for thinking that it was all hype with lots of jam promised for tomorrow.

I recall how Network South East was launched under the inspired leadership of Chris Green. Immediately all stations received welcome signs, lamp columns were painted red, a few trains were painted in the new NSE colours and the Network South East railcard was launched. A few quick and visible wins that showed that things were changing – yes there was also jam tomorrow as well in the shape of total route modernisation and networker trains BUT it was signalled in as clear a way as it was possible to. I think we missed a trick in not suggesting some quick wins to Northern and making them committed obligations in the brave new contractual world the railway works in. Instead we have to wait for the new and refurbished trains to arrive, for stations to be improved having gone through a plethora of approval processes, new marketing initiatives to start and improved services many of which look likely to be delayed.



## PARTNERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

Looking at the last point we can look forward to some improvement to services covered by CRL. The timescales for these are set out in the train service requirements for December 2017 and December 2019 which forms part of the Franchise Agreement. However, delays to electrification in both the north and south of the country means that these improvements are, in many cases, being delayed. The good news for CRL is that from December 2017 the Sunday Preston to Colne service is improved to hourly and the much more important improvement to the Manchester to Blackburn weekday inter peak service. The latter will make full use of the extended Darwen Loop that was part funded by our partner Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and the Lancashire Economic Partnership (LEP). This is another example of the value local authorities have made to our rail services. Neither the Todmorden Curve nor the Darwen Loop extension would have happened if it had been left to the rail industry – a point well worth keeping in mind.



During 2016 CRL has worked with the County Council and Northern to promote the new Todmorden Curve service – producing bespoke posters, leaflets and pushing the service on its website, Facebook page and Twitter feed. It is pleasing to see that passenger numbers using the service are rising especially at peak times. The contract between the County Council and Northern is for three years after which the service will become part of the franchised network. On the minus side DalesRail, the bespoke Sunday service from Blackpool to Carlisle, has not been doing so well in recent years. Passenger numbers in 2016 were affected by the landslide at Eden Brows which meant trains only went as far as Appleby with an onward bus connection to Carlisle. However, overall the service has been doing less well in recent years and it is now time to think of new ways of linking Lancashire with the Settle Carlisle line. In the meantime CRL continues to maintain the DalesRail website [www.dalesrail.com](http://www.dalesrail.com) and produced an attractive poster and brochure for the 2016 season. Plans for the 2017 season are being developed in partnership with Northern.

It is not new news that local government is facing severe austerity and has seen significant budget reductions in recent years. One of the first signs of that so far as our community rail lines are concerned was the closure during 2016 of the purpose built Burscough Bridge Interchange booking & information office. It was sad to see the end of the hard work and dedication of the three members of staff employed at the Interchange. They gave 200% and had built up a well-deserved reputation for their knowledge and customer care. The building is now moth balled pending a new owner coming forward and it is pleasing to see that this might be the local Parish Council. CRL secured a seed corn grant from ComREG to look at ways in which the interior could be redesigned. This is on-going work and Daisy is exploring ways in which CRL could use the building for its school engagement work.

## PARTNERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

West of Lancashire has not been out of the news in recent months with the plans to direct all Southport to Manchester trains to Victoria in place of the current split between Piccadilly/Airport and Victoria. The local user group has amassed some impressive evidence of the need for trains to continue to south Manchester which was vindicated by an independent survey carried out for Northern by AECOM. We await the views of the Rail North/DfT Partnership on what might be the way forward for this service.

A final word has to go to the many volunteers who give up freely of their time to look after the many staffed and unstaffed stations across the CRL patch. Your efforts really do make a difference which customers notice. The new franchise offers lots of opportunities to do even more given there is a very generous station adoption fund available for station partnerships to bid into and Lancashire groups have already dipped into this such as the Friends of Croston station and the Friends of Pendle stations for Nelson and Brierfield.

Finally finally I have managed to get this far without once mentioning the South Fylde Line which is very remiss of me. In many ways this has been a steady state year with lots of planning taking place with local schools. However, the stations on the line have been successful in attracting a series of awards with St Anne's, Lytham and Ansdell & Fairhaven scooping the NW in Bloom Award. At the same time the Friends of St. Anne's Stations took two awards at the Railfuture Rail User Group Awards 2016 for Best Use of Social Media and the Oliver Lovell Award for Best New Group.

I am very grateful for all the help and support I receive from the three CRP chairs - James Syson, Marion Atkinson and Tony Ford - without you none of what we achieve would be possible. I am also immensely grateful for the help CRL has received from Craig Harrop his 'can do' approach is appreciated and I know I can grumble quite a bit but you always disarm me by taking it so well! I don't think I know anyone who can turn my negative thoughts round into positive action - quite an achievement. Don't lose that skill.

Richard Watts 09 March, 2017  
Partnership Secretary &  
Chair Community Rail Lancashire Ltd

## DfT COMMUNITY RAIL SEMINAR LINCOLN

In March 2017 Lincoln played host to the ACoRP and the Department for Transport's annual Community Rail Seminar. Gathering at the city's DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel were CRPs from across the country including Community Rail Lancashire, along with Train Operating Companies and other key stakeholders who contributed to an engaging two days of discussion on how we together, shape the future of community rail.

Over 100 delegates were in attendance, sharing their knowledge, experience and examples of good practise in the sector. The Community Rail Strategy is also undergoing a review and delegates were asked two questions:

- How do the distinct roles of the DfT, ACoRP and the rail industry help deliver the Community Rail Strategy?
- How do we measure the Community Rail Strategy?

## USELESS CRL FACT

Of the 84 stations on Community Rail Lancashire's routes (including DalesRail) 71.4% start with letters in the first half of the alphabet.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Community Rail Lancashire – Financial Report

This has been a year of transition for Community Rail Lancashire following the formation of the company and the employment of three staff – 2 new and 1 old hand! CRL has also been able to draw down a number of grants from the ACoRP/DfT Designated Line Community Rail Development Fund and the Small Grants pots. It has also been successful in bidding to ComREG for 2 Seed Corn grants.

Summary of grants received:

### **ComREG Seed Corn**

Blackburn Station Masterplan	£20,000 (10k-16/17 & 10k-17/18)
Burscough Bridge outline plans	£ 3,772

### **Designated Line Community Rail Development Fund**

I Spy Booklet	£ 432
Destination Education	£ 1,000
Passengers of the Future	£ 897
Selfie Station	£ 552
Wrangling Project	£ 3,000

### **Small Grants**

Queens 90 <sup>th</sup> Celebration	£ 1,000
Welcome to Langho	£ 490
Friends of St Anne's Planters	£ 1,000
Motorfest posters	£ 270

**Total** **£32,413**

CRL is also pleased to report that it has received contributions towards its core funding from Transport for Greater Manchester, Merseytravel, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Blackpool Borough Council, St Anne's Town Council and the Bentham Line CRP.

In addition, CRL has received £100k from Northern towards the core of the 4 Lancashire CRPs and a further £75k from ComREG towards the expansion of its educational engagement work.

## **Community Rail Lancashire**

### **Summary income and expenditure for 2016/17**

Income	£149,429* (includes grants)
Expenditure	£110,392*

**Balance** **£ 39,038\* (carried forward)**

\* Community Rail Lancashire Ltd. has not yet submitted any accounts to Companies House and these figures must be regarded as being draft.

# COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRS

## Clitheroe Line & East Lancashire Community Rail Partnerships

In the last 12 months we have entered a brave new world with the letting of new franchises for the Northern and TPE networks, the creation of Community Rail Lancashire as a not for profit company and the securing of funding to support the development of our award winning school engagement programme.

The key word to be taken from the last 12 months is 'investment'. The new Northern franchise, which has been split into 4 business units, has set in motion exciting plans for accommodating passenger growth and delivering the transformational railway many of us have been campaigning for over a number of years. New services and timetable improvements will be supported by the introduction of new and refurbished trains which will operate from more staffed and better stations and mobile apps will be developed to make checking and booking more flexible tickets easier for the general public

But the franchise must also ensure it is able to deliver the basics and ensure it is fully customer focussed. Ensuring our trains are reliable and operate from clean attractive stations is unfortunately still proving to be something of a challenge in the early months of the new franchise and with figures realised by the ORR for 2015/16 highlighting some notable reductions in passenger numbers at many of our local stations, owing to a mix of forced possessions and poor performance, I just hope that we are able to quickly recover lost ground.

Improvements to the quality and performance of both the Clitheroe and East Lancashire rail lines is therefore vital if we are to regain passenger confidence and support East Lancashire's ambitious sustainable economic growth proposals.

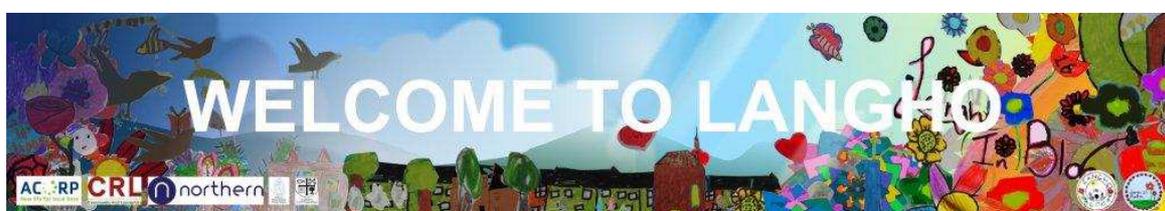
Lancashire is a dynamic economic region within the North West and the wider North of England and has a unique offer to make and role to play in the Northern Powerhouse. Connectivity is however fundamental to maximising our growth potential and the CRP will continue to have an important role to play in ensuring the right outcomes for passengers, communities and businesses locally.

Additional resources within the Northern franchise for CRP activity is also greatly welcomed and I think we can be rightfully proud of our contribution to this shift in the franchise focus given the time and money invested in our local rail network over the last decade and our development of Community Rail Lancashire which has been supported by many hours of volunteer activity.

Once again we owe a great deal to the hardworking volunteers tending to our stations, campaigning for better services and facilities and championing the role of our railways in the future development and growth of Lancashire.

As public services continue to be affected by the ravages of central government funding cuts the volunteers in our community and at our stations are now as important as ever. Whether it's our friends of stations groups, rail user groups, local in bloom groups or even individuals with a simple passion for improving their local area they are all making a huge contribution to the quality of the local environment but more importantly the quality of life of residents and visitors.

On behalf of the Clitheroe Line and East Lancashire Line CRPs I would like to thank all those undertaking a number of selfless tasks within the community that benefit the railway and surrounding neighbourhoods.



## COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRS

I would also like to thank the Community Rail Lancashire team for their hard work in helping to deliver the Action Plan for our two lines. A number of successful projects have again been delivered in partnership with local community groups, schools and colleges and thanks to the assistance of our resident artist Alastair Nicholson passengers can see for themselves the impact that this has made.

2017 looks set to be another fascinating year and I am particularly keen to start marketing the new improved service frequency between Blackburn and Manchester on the Clitheroe line (*scheduled for implementation by December 2017*) and to continue the marketing of the Todmorden curve service as an attractive option for commuting and leisure travel between East Lancashire and Greater Manchester.

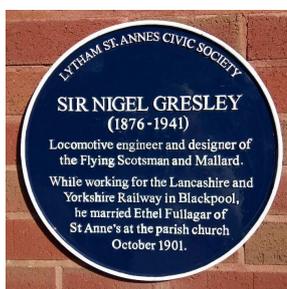
I am also extremely keen to ensure that a masterplan for Blackburn Station is fully endorsed by the rail industry and can be used to unlock further investment to create more commercial and community opportunities at the station to compliment recent investment in the Cathedral Quarter by Blackburn with Darwen and partners.

James Syson  
Chair, CLCRP & ELCRP

### South Fylde Line Community Rail Partnership

It's been a very busy year on the South Fylde Line. We've had a Blue Plaque unveiling, received mentions in the specialist railway magazines and the media, three stations collected In Bloom awards and one station won two 'rail media' awards.

The major highlight of the year was the unveiling of a blue plaque dedicated to Sir Nigel Gresley at St Anne's Station with over 75 guests in attendance.



To coincide with his birthday, a Blue Plaque was unveiled at St. Anne's station in October to mark Sir Nigel Gresley's connection with the town. (He married a St Anne's girl at the Parish Church when he was a locomotive engineer based at Blackpool.

David McIntosh an official of the Gresley society Trust and David Brewer (the man who has visited and photographed every station in the country) were guests at the event and played key roles in the unveiling ceremony.

Another key highlight of the year has been the school's project organised by CRL's Emily Elliott and using Julie Norman's ParkView4U expertise with pupils from Heyhouses School. The project has involved pupils creating bird boxes and bug-houses with a seaside colour-scheme. More art work with themed running in boards is set to be unveiled in the summer. The Year 4 pupils also visited Preston station in groups and undertook various educational activities based on Preston station led by several CRL education staff. A second school activity involved a journey on the line with pupils from Ansdell school meeting up with members of the British Transport Police at Preston station.



## COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRS

The newly formed Friends of St Anne's Stations have been very busy with working party members tackling unwanted bushes, overgrown shrubbery, litter and taking on the repainting of all the fencing on the station. Bulbs which were planted in November burst through to bring some much-needed colour during the winter months.

The inaugural meeting of representatives from the 'friends groups' along the line took place and promoted considerable discussion about common issues affecting the work of volunteer groups. Improvements continue at Blackpool South and with an agreed schedule of meetings further progress should be made on tackling the issues particular to that station and its environs. Squire's Gate Station has benefited from some long overdue maintenance but much more needs to be done to make this station more attractive and welcoming to rail users.

Nik Schofield and Alice Mannion from ACoRP visited the line, met with tourism and event organisers in order to boost rail usage and to help promote links with the various festivals planned for the year. Lytham Festival placed a beach hut 'booking office' by the station entrance selling tickets for the event and this attracted a lot of interest.

The existing Railway Walks have been revised and work completed on the Lytham Walk based on the Town Trail. This is being official launched on June 6<sup>th</sup> with the Mayor of Fylde and the Town Crier leading the way.

We are being well supported by 'Northern' both 'in kind' and financially. and I hope we can make use of the funding opportunities offered to make a real difference to the South Fylde Line for all rail users.

Cllr. Tony Ford  
Chairman, South Fylde Line CRP

### **West of Lancashire Community Rail Partnership**

Where has the year gone? It really only feels like five minutes ago since I wrote the Chairs report for the West Lancashire line 2016. So much has happened in the last year.

Community Rail Lancashire has started work on its exciting education programme and we are encouraging all of our schools along the West Lancashire lines to get involved. The aim is generate interest and improve ridership on our lines by bringing future passengers to the line, today.

We were involved in the special Sunday service that ran to support travel to the popular MotorFest held in Ormskirk and are planning to do the same this year. The partnership approach we have means everyone gets involved and takes responsibility whether that is helping to work on the marketing, working on timetables or spreading the word.

We have many initiatives on the go such as Burscough Bridge Interchange ticket office whereby we are hoping to secure a sustainable future for the building. We are working closely with Northern to secure any additional facilities we can at our stations and we continue to share best practice with our colleagues across the piece in Community Rail.

Our friends of stations volunteers did well in October's North West in Bloom Awards held in Southport, with Croston taking a Level 4 - Thriving Award and Meols Cop picking up a Level 5 - Outstanding Award. The work carried out by our volunteers is a true credit to their commitment and determination to make our stations stand out. I am always humbled by their commitment to their communities and the railway and am grateful to serve as Chair of such a proactive partnership.

Marion Atkinson  
Chair, WoLCRP

## CRL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The start of the new Northern Franchise on April 1st 2016 saw a step change in the amount of funding available for Northern CRPs. Community Rail Lancashire now receives £100k annually for its four CRPs and through a grant from Arriva Rail North's Community Rail Executive Group (ComREG) it also gets £75k (for at least three years) to expand its education programme.

The ComREG funding has allowed CRL to develop a brand new educational website called 'Down the Line' (see page 21). The website has been designed to create an innovative and unique living record of local stations with schools able to upload project information to the website.

The website has also been designed to allow other community rail partnerships and train operators to start their own educational programmes using ideas and best practice set out in a Tool Kit that has been created for CRL by Janet Ennis who recently retired from teaching at Padiham Green School.



Janet celebrates the completion of the Tool Kit with the CRL Team in Holmes Mill, Clitheroe

The funding from ComREG has also allowed CRL to take on two new members of staff, Emily and Daisy and they have developed a four year Strategic Plan that lays out the expansion of the educational work and includes moving forward to include other CRP routes within Lancashire and to involve other groups along with the traditional Key Stage 2 work already in place. This will include working with younger children, further education students, universities and apprentices.

Community Rail Lancashire has already had visits from other CRPs across the country who are looking to get involved in educational work and wanted to look at how CRL does it at Accrington and Preston. In September 2016 Fiona and John from Tyne Valley CRP came to visit the educational bunker in Accrington this was prior to CRL visiting Haltwhistle in November 2016. CRL was able to share the programme on offer to schools with Tyne Valley to give them an in-depth view into how the educational programme was set up, the format of the day and the facilities on offer, this was a useful visit for Tyne Valley who launched their educational facilities in early April 2017.

The CRL team also work closely with partner CRP, The Bentham Line and visits to both Bentham and Accrington have taken place throughout the year.

## CRL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Another group to visit Accrington were the team from Millom on the Cumbrian Coast route and they came in November 2016. The CRL team then made a return visit to Millom early in December 2016 to view their education centre development project. Millom has outstanding facilities with a museum forming part of the discovery centre. The team from CRL spent the day looking at the space available and working with Lawrence and Kathryn to share ideas for how the space can best be used with schools along with the format of what a school trip might look like. From this educational visit there was a suggestion around the idea of linking the educational facilities between CRL and Millom, from this came the concept of the Education Network to help share best practice further.



Along with the Cumbrian Coast CRP and the Tyne Valley CRP the bunker at Accrington has also had visits from the Penistone Line CRP, Essex & South Suffolk CRPs, Mersey Rail and even some Chinese children that were being hosted by Padiham Green Primary School.

Daisy and Emily have also been on their travels visiting the Devon & Cornwall Partnership with Daisy down in the depths of Cornwall to Falmouth in February and Emily to Plymouth in March. Both were to visit Partnership Officer Rebecca to see the work the D&CCRCP do with older students including volunteering.

### Education Network Development

As part of the expansion of CRL's education programme across Lancashire assisting other CRPs in their educational development CRL is aiming to develop a network beginning in 2017. This network will facilitate a programme of meetings for those CRPs we are working in partnership with which will allow partnerships to communicate with each other, to share ideas, thoughts, and feedback in relation to educational engagement. The programme aims to deliver workshops that will have a focus on specific elements relating to education.

The key objectives are:

- To share best practice in educational engagement amongst community rail partnerships;
- To provide a tool for communication and support amongst partnerships;
- Delivering meaningful workshops to develop innovative thinking on how different levels of education can help serve community rail further; and
- To trial new methods of engagement and sharing successes within the network

The first initial session to introduce the network will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Based on the Educational Network participants a programme tailored towards the different elements of educational engagement to be addressed will be designed.

## EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Community Rail Lancashire continues to educate the 'passengers of the future' with its programme of working with Key Stage 2 pupils across East Lancashire, and following the start of the new Northern franchise in April 2016 it is now expanding the work to include the South Fylde and West of Lancashire areas. A three year grant from new operator Arriva Rail North has meant that Community Rail Lancashire Ltd. has been able to employ two new staff, Daisy and Emily and they are busy engaging with schools along the Preston to Ormskirk line and the Preston to Blackpool South route.

West End School from Ormskirk were one of the first schools to visit the new Community Hub at Preston station. CRL working with Virgin Trains West Coast have developed the hub to be used as an educational facility.

The first of three classes from Heyhouses School in St. Anne's visited Preston at the beginning of February 2017. Activities were tailored towards the children's current learning to link with the curriculum.



Part of the package for schools is that each pupil receives a 'Passport to Safe Rail Travel' at the end of the visit which allows them to travel free (with a fare paying adult) for three months on the appropriate line.

Alongside the passports, marketing is also holistically achieved through development of promotional materials, including leaflets and a newly designed I-Spy and word search, we have been able to update both our education and project presentations along all CRL lines.

Following Heyhouses visit to Preston the school are now working with CRL and Parkview 4 U, a charity based in Lytham, to develop an artwork and wildlife project for St. Anne's-on-the-Sea station, which will see environmentally friendly bird boxes and kite themed artwork installed at the station.

To directly promote our work and the facility at Preston, a group of students from Lancaster University will be hosting a promotional event at Preston Station during May 2017, where they will inform and educate the public with the aim of engaging more schools and community groups, and generating further community interest.

# EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Additionally, we are delighted to announce our newly arranged partnership with Merseyrail and Merseytravel, who will be providing free travel along their lines for school groups. This enables CRL to expand its education offer into the Mersey area, as well as take schools from Lancashire into Liverpool, and vice versa, ensuring cross-promotion, co-operation, and increased line usage through family promotion.

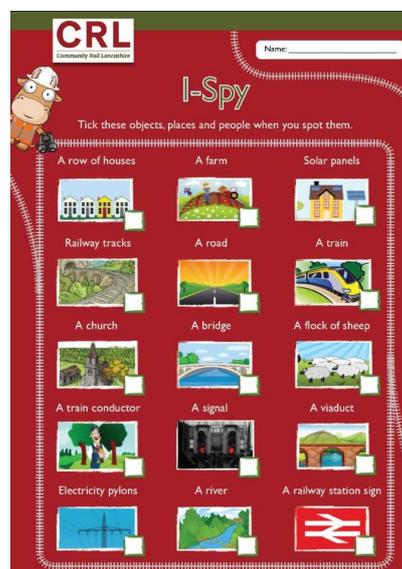


Community Rail Lancashire is also developing a programme that aims to work with students in further and higher education. 2017 will see the first trial of a student programme tailored towards providing students with the opportunity to be involved in Community Rail, through volunteering to carry out community work, spending time with Northern shadowing in roles and designing a project that would help develop a local station.

Furthermore, engagement with higher education students has seen CRL working with Lancaster University to offer volunteer roles for students to take part in the various activities carried out amongst the Development Officers, volunteers, and friends of stations. Volunteer roles will be trialled commencing summer 2017.

Schools from all over East Lancashire and beyond have continued to attend our 'Destination Education Centre' at Accrington throughout 2016. We continue to raise the bar with a very varied set of options for schools to take up on the day of their visit.

Since this initiative was started 6,377 children and 794 teachers and assistants have passed through the doors and current satisfaction feedback scores confirm that what we offer fits neatly into the school curriculum and is as popular now with schools as it was when we first started out.



# CRL WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

## Website

The Community Rail Lancashire website [www.communityraillancashire.co.uk](http://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk) continues to perform well with regular updates and news items posted almost daily. The website covers all five of the CRPs under the umbrella of CRL and each has its own pages. The Events page, accessible from the home page, is used to promote activities, meetings and 'things to do' that are easily accessible by rail and there is a large repository of downloadable resources including guided and self guide walks leaflets, town trails, timetables, history posters and much, much more.

In the period 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017 statistics for the website are as follows:

Sessions	23,661
Users	16,854
Page Views	58,872
Bounce rate*	59.65%

\* Means that just over 40% of visitors view more than one page

The top five most visited pages are:

1. [communityraillancashire.co.uk/home](http://communityraillancashire.co.uk/home)
2. [communityraillancashire.co.uk/dalesrail](http://communityraillancashire.co.uk/dalesrail)
3. [communityraillancashire.co.uk/bentham-line](http://communityraillancashire.co.uk/bentham-line)
4. [communityraillancashire.co.uk/news](http://communityraillancashire.co.uk/news)
5. [communityraillancashire.co.uk/walks](http://communityraillancashire.co.uk/walks)

If there is any information, events, leaflets or other items that you would like to see on the website then please do not hesitate to contact Simon Clarke on [simon.clarke@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.clarke@lancashire.gov.uk) or 01254 386579.

## Social Media

Community Rail Lancashire also maintains two Twitter accounts (@crl\_live & @crl\_getinvolved) and a Facebook page ([facebook.com/communityraillancashire](https://facebook.com/communityraillancashire)). Simon Clarke also continues to run his @communityrailman Twitter account alongside the above and all are used to report and promote the activities of all the CRPs in Lancashire and to support the work of other CRPs and industry partners across the country.

### TWITTER 2016/17

@crl_live		@communityrailman
225	Tweets	304
1277	Profile Visits	2274
132	New Followers	58
161	Total Followers	252
59014	Impressions	55156

The @crl\_getinvolved Twitter feed and the Facebook page have only been running for a short time and have limited statistics but the last 10 posts on the Facebook page have reached an amazing 1889 people. A new venture coming soon will be the use of Instagram alongside Twitter to capture events in photographs as they happen.

## SPONSORSHIP

### Travel to **ORMSKIRK MOTORFEST** SUNDAY 28 AUGUST 2016



#### MOTORFEST SPECIAL SERVICE SUNDAY 28 AUGUST 2016

STURRIS MANCHESTER ROAD	11:40				
ALCKINGTON	11:41				
BLACKBURN	11:48				
PRESTON	11:49				
PRESTON	11:51	11:56	12:05	14:52	16:15
CHESHAM	11:58	12:03	12:18	15:05	16:28
BURFORD	12:03	12:08	12:23	15:10	16:33
BLISCOUGH JUNCTION	12:08	12:13	12:28	15:15	16:38
CHORLEWY	12:16	12:21	12:36	15:23	16:46
CHORLEWY	12:22	12:27	12:42	15:29	16:52
BLISCOUGH JUNCTION	12:29	12:34	12:49	15:36	16:59
BURFORD	12:35	12:40	12:55	15:43	17:06
CHESHAM	12:42	12:47	13:02	15:50	17:13
PRESTON	12:50	12:55	13:10	15:58	17:21
PRESTON				16:38	17:57
BLACKBURN				16:53	18:25
ALCKINGTON				17:02	18:31
STURRIS MANCHESTER ROAD				17:07	18:33

Connections from / to other Lancashire stations involve a change of train at Preston.  
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:  
NATIONAL RAIL ENQUIRIES: 08457 46 49 318  
CUSTOMER HELPLINE: 0800 300 6000  
[www.crl.co.uk](http://www.crl.co.uk) [www.northernrail.co.uk](http://www.northernrail.co.uk)



Looking for a great way to spend the August Bank Holiday? Come along to Ormskirk MotorFest. With everything from motorcycles, super cars, classics and bubble cars, there is something of interest for everyone.

The festival is held in the historic market town of Ormskirk in West Lancashire. Ideally located to welcome visitors from all over the North West, as well as those who are travelling from further afield.

Ormskirk MotorFest takes place on: August Bank Holiday Sunday – 28th August 2016. Classic cars and bikes are on display in the town centre and Coronation Park from 11am. The afternoon parade begins from 2:30pm onwards. [www.ormskirkmotorfest.com](http://www.ormskirkmotorfest.com)

Community Rail Lancashire continues to support local events taking place along its lines and in 2016 four events were sponsored.

In May the Clitheroe Line CRP sponsored the festival glasses at the Clitheroe Beer Festival and distributed timetables at the venue.

July saw two events on the South Fylde Line with the St. Anne's Town Carnival and the annual St. Anne's Kite Festival. The South Fylde Line CRP was able to contribute to the publicity for both events and produced posters for display in the town and at stations along the Colne to Blackpool South route.

August bank holiday sees what was our biggest event with the sponsorship of the Great British Rhythm & Blues Festival that takes place in Colne. The East Lancashire CRP working with Northern Rail, Moorhouse's Brewery in Burnley and Pendle Leisure Trust were once again able to run its traditional music and ale train on the Friday afternoon to open the festival. Northern Rail were also able to provide later and additional trains over the weekend to get festival goers to and from the event.

August bank holiday Sunday also saw Ormskirk MotorFest and the West of Lancashire CRP sponsored publicity for the event and Northern Rail ran a special service between Preston &

## DALESRAIL AND RIBBLE VALLEY RAMBLER

Once again the iconic Lancashire DalesRail service ran on summer Sundays' in 2016. The Lancashire Rail Ramblers arranged and led well over 70 guided walks and numbers were similar to last year even though the weather proved to be challenging. Details of DalesRail can be found on its website at [www.dalesrail.com](http://www.dalesrail.com).

To support the DalesRail service during the winter months there is the Ribble Valley Rambler that runs between Blackpool North and Hellifield connecting into the first north bound train on the Settle Carlisle route. The Ramblers run a short programme of walks off the service one a month and details of these can be found on the Ribble Valley Rambler website at <http://ribblevalleyrambler.wordpress.com>

## CRL GUIDED WALKS

Community Rail Lancashire has a six monthly programme of guided walks led by the Lancashire Rail Ramblers that start and finish at stations on the various community rail routes. There are roughly two walks a month on alternate Wednesdays and Saturdays. There are walks for all levels starting with very easy walks for beginners right up to longer and more strenuous walks for the more experienced walker.

The walks have proved to be very popular with between ten and fifteen on most walks, weather permitting. CRL's thanks must go out to Craig & John from the Lancashire Rail Ramblers who plan and test these guided walks.

# PROJECTS

As well as its core funding from Arriva Rail North, Community Rail Lancashire receives annual contributions from other partners including Blackburn with Darwen Council, Blackpool Council, the Leeds, Lancaster & Morecambe CRP, Merseytravel, Ribble Valley Borough Council, St. Anne's Town Council and Transport for Greater Manchester.

To supplement this core funding CRL also bids for grants from ACoRP's Small Grants Fund, the Designated Community Rail Development Fund (DCRDF) and ComREG's Seed Corn Fund and full details of these can be found in the Financial Report on page 8.

The grants are used to fund projects, publicity and materials across the four community rail partnerships in Lancashire and details of these are listed below:

## DCRDF (DfT & ACoRP)

<b>Destination Education</b>	Design and print of posters to promote the CRL Education Programme and the new Down the Line website for display across the five community rail lines in Lancashire
<b>Educating Passengers of the Future</b>	Printing of a leaflet and 2 vinyl banners explaining the work of the Education Team to be used at events, conferences and seminars
<b>I Spy Book</b>	Design and print of an I Spy book for Preston station in partnership with Virgin Trains and to be used with school groups visiting the community hub on the station
<b>Selfie Station</b>	Design and print of a vinyl banner to be used in colleges to encourage Students to join CRL's summer volunteering programme
<b>The Wranglings</b>	Funding for a large project based on the new Northern diesel depot being built in Blackburn (to be completed late 2017)

## ACORP SMALL GRANTS

<b>Queen's 90th</b>	Purchase of themed rock, promotional materials and bunting for the Station to Station Queen's 90th birthday celebrations - across all community rail lines
<b>Ormskirk MotorFest</b>	Design and print of special Sunday service posters on Preston to Ormskirk Line in partnership with OPSTA and WoLCRP
<b>Welcome to Langho</b>	Design, print and production of 2 Dibond running in boards - with children from two local primary schools and CLCRP
<b>Friends of St. Anne's Stations</b>	Funding for raised beds on platform for newly formed friends group - and in partnership with Heyhouses School and SFLCRP

More details of these and other projects that Community Rail Lancashire has undertaken throughout the year can be found on the CRL website at [www.communityraillancashire.co.uk](http://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk).

You can follow Community Rail Lancashire's activities on social media using the following:

**Twitter** @crl\_live and @crl\_getinvolved  
**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/communityraillancashire/>

## COMMUNITY RAIL AWARDS 2016

This year's Annual National Community Rail Awards were held in Southport on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September. The glittering gala dinner and awards ceremony in the Floral Hall was the biggest event in its 12 year history with well over 300 guests attending.

Community Rail Lancashire had a good evening taking home three awards:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place – Category 1A, Involving Young People – Rose Grove Revived;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Category 6, Photograph Competition – Brian Haworth (142 Dining Car); and
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Category 1B, Involving Diverse Groups – All Together Now (Pleasington).



## DfT COMMUNITY RAIL MARKET PLACE

On 27<sup>th</sup> September 2016 Community Rail Lancashire and the Bentham Line CRP joined other CRPs from across the country at the Department for Transport's offices in London to participate in the Community Rail Market Place.

The Department for Transport (DfT) was supporting National Inclusion Week 2016. This is an annual campaign to raise awareness of the importance of inclusion in the workplace and the business benefits to having an inclusive workforce.

Inclusion is about making sure that people feel valued, respected, listened to and able to challenge. It's about recognising and valuing the differences we each bring to the workplace and creating an environment where everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources and can contribute to the organisation's success.

The DfT's week is themed around communities and the Passenger Services Directorate in partnership with the DfT's Race Network, the Positive Support Group and the rail industry hosted the Community Rail Market Place at Great Minster House, London.



## YOUNG ARTS UPDATE

2017 has been designated as the Year of Culture linked to India to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Indian independence. With our strong rail history linked to India it would be an ideal springboard to begin a project specifically to engage the British Asian community to revitalise Burnley Central Station as well as further destinations along the line. A festival of national events is planned in partnership with Indian counterparts.

*“What does the railway mean to you?”*

It will celebrate local railway history and heritage, links to the Asian community as well as the railway in India. It will focus on the railway as being used by different groups of varied heritages and culture, producing art and music through links with different groups and with different cultural influences, including British Asian influences, and traditional Lancashire influences for the railway in the area.



The project will be carried out at Burnley Central. The project will revitalise the station with bright artwork, as well as linking to music produced by local groups and school children from St Peter’s Primary School, Burnley. The station catchment area has a high percentage of BAME communities (11%), and a focus will be placed on bringing in British Asian influences alongside traditional area influences, and promoting the reasons that passengers choose the railway (low cost, ease of use and accessibility).

The artwork and music produced, as well as signage, will therefore have a strong focus on combining British railway history with British Asian influences, particularly through our shared heritage with railways in India.

The project will: Engage hard to reach communities; Increase revenue via increased travel; and Increase passenger satisfaction with regards to the station environment.

The school children of St Peter’s will be involved in producing artwork and music that has British Asian influences as well as traditional railway meaning. The artwork will focus on translating the traditional rail folk music into British Asian and other local dialects (including English). Local musicians will assist by accompanying children in traditional railway songs; this music will then become part of the physical artwork, accessible via QR code and website links.

The University of Manchester will be involved with local focus groups and establishing the specifics of languages and dialects locally. BAME groups will be offered the chance to access the railway for a free journey; this will take the form of ‘Mother and Child’ or ‘Family’ trips to relevant locations through schools and playgroups. These sessions will instill confidence and understanding surrounding rail use.

The project aims to increase local pride in the station, and ensure that all user groups feel more comfortable in a brighter, more engaging station environment.

# DOWN THE LINE WEBSITE

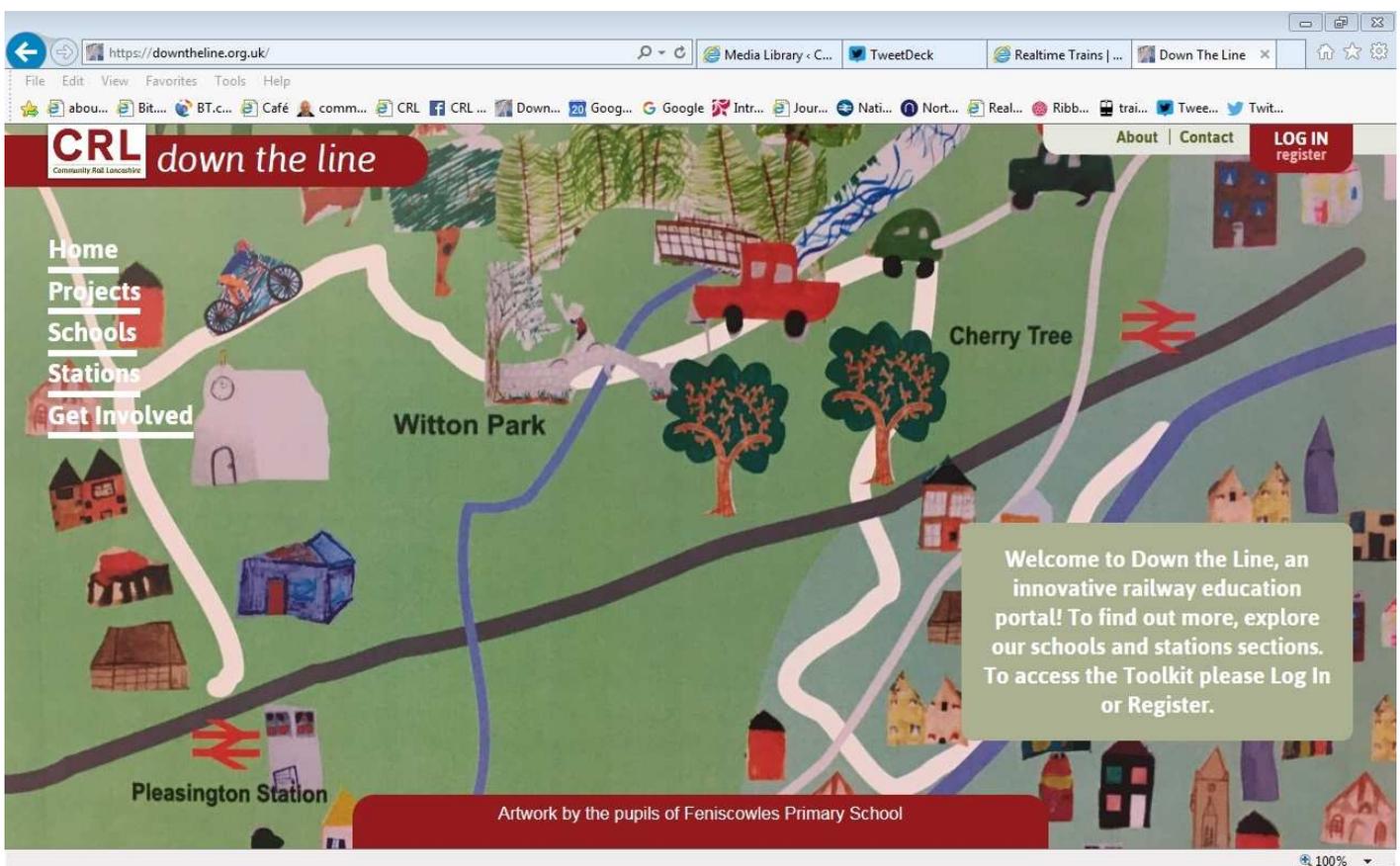
Down the Line is CRL's new education website, which will focus on creating an innovative and unique living record of local stations. The records will be created through working with thousands of local school children, ensuring a record of each relevant station exists that represents, and has been created by, the community.

Each station will be represented by a map icon, where teachers can input station project information following their work with CRL. In chronological order, different schools' projects will appear within each station section, highlighting the excellent work that each child undertook when learning about the national and local railway.

In addition to this community record, projects undertaken by CRL will be displayed on the site. Each school will also have their own page, to serve as a record for schools that have taken part and to enable them to link the site to their own school website.

Students from colleges and universities will also be encouraged to apply for volunteering roles through the site, where recent updates and photos will be posted via a Twitter feed to encourage a high uptake of volunteers.

CRL's 'Education Network' will also be featured on this site, within the map page. Different CRPs will be able to highlight and feature their own station projects and education work; allowing them to showcase their work alongside other outstanding examples from other CRPs.



Visit the new website on [www.downtheline.org.uk](http://www.downtheline.org.uk) to see the schools work that has already been uploaded to the various stations and school pages.

## STATION PARTNERSHIPS

Station partnerships continue to flourish on our local community rail lines and the growing involvement of local 'In Bloom' groups working alongside the partnerships has enhanced the work of these vital volunteer groups.

Station partnership groups come in all shapes and sizes and it is interesting to look at the different organisations involved. Take the line from Colne to Preston as an example.

Colne station and its environs are looked after by Colne in Bloom who work hard to introduce some brilliant colour in the form of flower displays to the platforms. Brierfield and Nelson are covered by Friends of Pendle station with some input from the local In Bloom group. The local college at Burnley are involved at Burnley Central station helping to maintain planters.



The disused platform at Nelson Station

At Huncoat the award winning and hard- working station partnership group produce fantastic floral displays at the station as well as keeping the platforms clean and tidy working as part of the Huncoat forum group. At Accrington station Incredible Edible Accrington grow fruit and vegetables in containers on the platform and a local disabled group grow plants in the station garden area.

Church and Oswaldtwistle is covered by the local Rotary Club who have done some fantastic work to uplift the station. At Rishton the local Prospect Panel have the station under their wing keeping on top of the station planters as well as having a food growing area in raised beds.

A real mix of community based organisations!!

A project at Langho station to provide 'Welcome to Langho' running in boards has involved the two local primary schools, CRL, Langho in Bloom and Ribble Valley Rail, true partnership community based working.

All the stations on the Clitheroe Line between Entwistle and Clitheroe have station partnership groups overseen by Ribble Valley Rail whose proactive approach ensure that stations are kept in good order.

## STATION PARTNERSHIPS

Between Preston and Blackpool South, the Friends of St Anne's Stations a newly formed group have made a great impact at the station and its environs revamping the station car park gardens. The Friends of Lytham working with Lytham in Bloom have installed planters on the platform and developed the disused platform under the Network Rail scheme to transform what was an overgrown area into a garden area complete with insect hotels. The Friends of Ansdell and Fairhaven have worked very hard creating garden areas on the station platform and tidying up the station environs. Friends of Blackpool south have risen above anti-social issues at the station and continue to maintain the station planters.

On the Preston to Ormskirk Line, Croston station continues to shine. The well organised Friends of Croston group maintain the station gardens to a high standard but the jewel in their crown is the disused platform where they have done a splendid job to recover the platform from nature creating a unique garden area, well worth a visit! At Meols Cop on the Southport Line the Friends of Station group have raised money for new planters and continue to maintain the large platform gardens. Friends of Burscough stations continue to maintain their station planters.



Examples of flower displays at stations on the South Fylde Line

Community Rail Lancashire and the four CRPs are very appreciative of the work that the volunteers carry out on the stations. Without their help throughout the year, whatever the weather, the stations on our routes would not be the attractive and inviting places to wait for trains.

On top of this the stations are now regarded as gateways to the town or village and are often treated as such by the In Bloom judges and this is reflected in the amount of awards our groups have taken over the year in the various In Bloom competitions.



A Ribble Valley Rail volunteer hard at work at Clitheroe station

## WHO'S WHO

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Marjorie Birch	Education Volunteer & Vice Chair Joint CL & ELCRPs	margebirch@icloud.com 01200 441549

**Along with the core members of the management groups there are a number of other industry members who regularly attend the meetings along with representatives from local councils, Station Managers and from local Rail User Groups and Friends of Stations.**

Craig Harrop	Client & Stakeholder Manager West Region	craig.harrop@northernrailway.co.uk 07738140353
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Martin Keating	Regional Community & Sustainability Manager (West)	martin.keating@northernrailway.co.uk 07500 447392
Vicky Cropper	Regional Community & Sustainability Manager (Central)	vicky.cropper@northernrailway.co.uk 07585 995523

### **And finally, coming in 2017:**

- Down the Line - a brand new interactive educational website
- Full half hourly service Blackburn to Manchester Victoria - Dec 2017
- Opening of the Wranglings Depot in Blackburn
- The Bee Line project
- 10th Anniversary of the Clitheroe Line Designation



**Photographs and other images in this report courtesy of: Simon Clarke, Brian Haworth, Arriva Rail North, Alastair Nicholson, Tony Ford, Daisy Chapman-Chamberlain & Source Creative**