

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

THE NEWSLETTER OF LANCASHIRE'S COMMUNITY RAILWAYS

ISSUE 28

MARCH 2018



A sample of the artwork that is displayed along the fence line on the Preston bound platform at Bamber Bridge station that was created by pupils of Cuerden Church School as part of a project at the station - see page 16

CRL

Community Rail Lancashire

NOTES FROM THE BUNKER

Community Rail – moving forward

2017 saw the DfT consult on a new community rail strategy and it is pleasing to say that many CRPs have responded to this. The consultation itself was launched at Burnley Manchester Road with the former Rail Minister, Paul Maynard, MP, the key speaker. The consultation closed on the 28th January, 2018 and the DfT is in the process of reviewing all the comments it has received to the consultation. I had the pleasure to write the response for Rail North, the body that represents 19 local authorities and manages in partnership with the DfT the Northern and Trans Pennine franchises. It was quite a detailed response and can be viewed by going to: <https://www.communityrail Lancashire.co.uk/news/community-rail-strategy-consultation-response-published/> on the CRL website. Other bodies such as ACoRP also responded and I understand there were around 170 responses in total. Not bad and a big thank you to everyone who took the time to respond. The new strategy will be launched later this year but I expect the 4 themes will become the new community rail mantra. Perhaps not as snappy as the previous ones but possibly more in keeping with where community rail has moved to.

- **Connecting people to places and opportunities**
- **Integrating communities to create a fairer society and encourage diversity and inclusion**
- **Supporting local and regional economies and having opportunities**
- **Suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works, including productive use of underused or unused railway land and stations, and working more closely with heritage**

Introducing the new class 230 dmu

Every year the DfT holds a conference for CRPs and this year's is in Milton Keynes which is close to the Marston Vale CRP. The Bedford to Bletchley line will become part of the exciting east – west rail route and in the short term a test bed for the new Vivarail class 230 DMU based on the former London Underground D stock. Along with many others I am intrigued to see how well these totally refurbished units hold up in daily service and more to the point to actually travelling on one. Are they an option for Northern? Are they better than a Pacer? Well perhaps that is not the right question as almost anything on wheels is better than a 142 and I am totally unbiased as my team well know! Seriously though as 150s get ever longer in the tooth could these be a replacement even in the short term? It will be interesting to compare lease costs, operating & maintenance costs as well as access charges for the 2 units.

For more information about this development go to the Vivarail website using this link: <http://vivarail.co.uk/about-vivarail/> . There are even battery options being investigated.



The class 230 - looking good and soon to operate on the Marston Vale line.
(Source Railway News)

NOTES FROM THE BUNKER

Winter and winterisation

As I write this from the Bunker (Friday 2nd March) we have had one of the coldest weeks I can recall in many years. Climate Scientists say that it has been colder across Europe than it has been in the Arctic which has had unseasonably warm temperatures. A real pause for thought as we can by and large cope with a few days cold but a warmer Arctic should be a concern to us all.

As I open the bunker door I see lots of compacted snow in the car park and ice on the steps leading to the booking office. What has happened to duty of care? At least one person had to be taken to A&E. Hopefully by the time you read this the snow and ice will have melted and the station will be safer for our many users and visitors.

What price an eco – shelter?

Accrington has had a few issues recently apart from snow and ice. The eco shelter on the Preston platform has attracted unwanted anti-social attention since it was put up and on many occasions the large glass windows have been shattered. On the most recent occasion three windows were damaged. We have had excellent support from the BTP but they can't be at the station all the time. I wish I could say the same for others. At no time since its installation has the solar lighting worked, an issue that has been repeatedly raised, and the promised CCTV on the platform has been deferred or cancelled. In theory the eco shelter was a good idea and old Northern were its main funders using money recouped from the feed in tariff from the stations many PVs. A very generous reuse of money gained at no expense to Northern. However, for the reasons outlined above the shelter is not working. Without lighting and CCTV it is a magnet for those wanting a quiet corner to drink and may be worse. I have suggested that the shelter needs to be removed to somewhere where it may be less prone to unwanted attention and replaced with a standard Macemain anti vandal shelter with lighting. I shall keep you posted on progress – it has all the hall marks of being quite a saga.



Accrington Eco Shelter on platform 2

NOTES FROM THE BUNKER

Line plans

Friday March 16th sees the 4 Lancashire CRPs undergo their annual line plan meeting with the great and good from ACoRP, DfT and Northern. ACoRP has been looking carefully at the structure of these meetings and is introducing a new and more systematic approach to them. Yet I can't help thinking that there is a danger of throwing the baby out with the bath water. On the one hand CRPs should be nimble organisations able to adapt to changing circumstances rather more quickly than say the DfT or Lancashire County Council – no disrespect to either organisation but change can be slower to bring about. Yet Line Plans can become a constraint if held to too rigidly. Is it possible to foresee all opportunities at the start of the year? Yes they provide a framework and keep funders happy but the best CRPs are the nimble ones who see a new opportunity and go for it irrespective of the Line Plan. Naturally, my Line Plans are organic and evolve to take account of these changes so what you see on January 1st is very unlikely to be what you see on December 31st!

Station data for 2016/17

The annual ORR (Office of Rail & Road) data is out and elsewhere in this RBTL you will see the good and the good results for Lancashire's CRPs. For me the stars are Burnley Manchester Road, Accrington and Rose Grove. All three stations are showing the impact of the nearly new Todmorden Curve service which is supported by Lancashire County Council. Also worth a mention is Clitheroe which is coming out of its recession due to the Great North Rail Project (GNRP) which has shut part of the route into Manchester on quite a few occasions.

Todmorden Curve

This service supported by Lancashire County Council; and jointly promoted by LCC, CRL and Northern is nearing the end of its three year trial period. The service started on the 17th May 2015 and has gone from strength to strength over the three years with growing numbers using it. The three year trial period ends on the 16th May 2018 at which point it becomes a fully-fledged franchise service – a job well done. It was at that stage that everyone hoped that the journey time from the three Lancashire stations to Manchester would be reduced thus encouraging even more people to try the train. However, delays to the GNRP is resulting in many of the May 2018 timetable changes being delayed until possibly December. At the time of writing the outcome for the Todmorden service is awaited and it is to be hoped that this will be one of the service enhancements that isn't delayed.

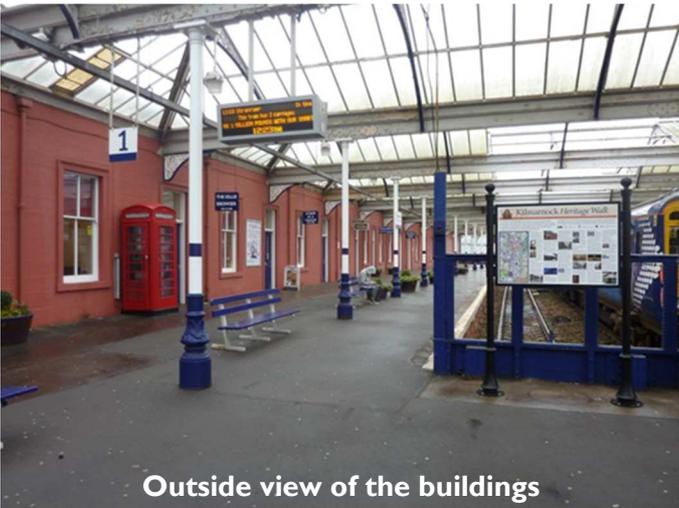
Blackburn Station masterplan

When I first came to Lancashire way back as a student in the 1970's staying in a block of flats (now demolished) close to Mill Hill station the station was a great deteriorating and unfriendly hulk. Thankfully the dangerous structure was demolished and a much more pleasing replacement erected. At that time the only services using the station were hourly DMU services one to Manchester and the other to Colne & Preston with occasional seasonal services from Yorkshire using the Copy Pit route. Today the station is alive with 10 trains an hour and shortly the Blackpool to York service will join the Northern Connect group of services possibly using the new class 195 DMUs.

Notes from the Bunker is prepared by Richard Watts, Partnership Secretary, and is his personal view and not necessarily those of Community Rail Lancashire Ltd.

NOTES FROM THE BUNKER

Despite all this activity and the improvement of the public areas of the station there is much that remains bleak and unloved. The Blackburn station masterplan looked at what needed to be done to make the whole station function properly again. Shortly a meeting will take place to see if there is a willingness to make this happen. Recently Paul Salvesson took a group of Northern and CRP officials to visit Kilmarnock station in Scotland to see how a rundown station had been rejuvenated. The co-operation between bodies including East Ayrshire Council, ScotRail, the Scottish Government, the Railway Heritage Trust and the Kilmarnock Station Railway Heritage Trust (view at - <http://ksrht.org/>) has been impressive. Over £0.5m is planned to rejuvenate the station with the first phase completed in 2014. Funding came from the Railway Heritage Trust and the Scottish Stations Community Regeneration Fund with the rooms fitted out by the East Ayrshire's Council Renewable Energy Fund and Wabtec Rail Scotland. It will be interesting to see if any of these ideas can be replicated to help implement the Blackburn Masterplan – I will keep you updated in the next RBTL.



Outside view of the buildings



Inside view

West Coast Partnership

This is the name being given to the new west coast franchise due to start in April 2019. There are three shortlisted bidders for the new franchise:

- First Trenitalia West Coast Ltd – Trenitalia is the Italian state railway company
- MTR West Coast Partnership Ltd – MTR is the Mass Transit Railway in partnership with the Guangshen Railway Company (I will leave you to Google both for both companies!)
- West Coast Partnership Ltd (made up of Stagecoach, Virgin and SNCF)

What makes the franchise different is not just the name for the new franchise but that it will oversee the introduction of services using the new HS2 line from 2026. As of yet the Invitation to Tender has yet to be made publicly available but community will feature strongly in that as will community rail partnership's. One of the bidders has already arranged through CRL and ACoRP a session taking place in County Hall, Preston and I hope that the others will want to follow the example.

LCC TRANSPORT INFORMATION CENTRES

On 7th December 2017 Lancashire County Council's Cabinet agreed to consult on the proposals to close the council's transport information centres at Preston Bus Station, Nelson Interchange, Clitheroe Interchange and Carnforth Railway Station. The online consultation can be accessed via this link: <http://www3.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/consultation/responses/response.asp?ID=342>. We would encourage as many people as possible to complete the survey before the closing date of 29.04.18

PLATFORM 16

The train now arriving at platform 16 is for Blackburn calling at.....

I suspect you haven't heard that announcement at Manchester Piccadilly and it may well be some time before you do, if ever. Why raise this now and in RBTL? Simple answer Marjorie Birch handed me a copy of the Lancashire Telegraph which reported on a campaign to extend the Todmorden Curve service to Manchester Airport. Easy? Well no as capacity in the Piccadilly to Oxford Road corridor is limited as it is only a two track railway. Capacity is already at a stretch and the new Ordsall Curve won't help.

The original Great North Rail Project had included the quadrupling of part of the Piccadilly – Oxford Rd corridor and a new platform 15 & 16 at Piccadilly. This would have made it possible to seriously look at operating the Todmorden Curve service to Manchester Airport providing connections to HS2 at Piccadilly and to a major international gateway at the airport. It is certainly worth campaigning to see if the parts of the GNRP that have been dropped can be resurrected as we move into the Network Rail CP6 (Control Period). I would love to see trains from East Lancashire gain access to south Manchester as it will do a lot to boost the profile of the area and that is badly needed.



The newly installed bridge - part of the Ordsall Chord

LONG TERM RAIL STRATEGY

Rail North and Transport for the North are currently consulting on the Strategic Transport Plan and the new and updated Rail North Long Term Rail Strategy. The original LTRS played a very influential part in gaining the transformational franchises for Northern and Trans Pennine including the end of Pacers and the brand new fleet of diesel and electric trains. One of the requirements of a sub national transport body is that it has a strategic transport plan (STP) so the scene was set for the updating of the LTRS as part of the new STP. The draft can be viewed at:

https://transportforthenorth.com/wp-content/uploads/Long-Term-Rail-Strategy_TfN.pdf

It is a long read but there is a summary document called key messages which summarises the key aspects of the LTRS. What is interesting from a community rail point of view is the absence of a reference to community rail although there is a new section on communities – which states its objective is to 'involve and integrate local communities' through:

- All stations meeting our minimum standards;
- An increase in passenger station satisfaction; and
- Through the improvement in air quality and reduction of CO₂ and other harmful emissions on and around railway owned land and in wider society, by encouraging use of the rail network.

Take a look and spend take time to respond to the consultation. It ends on the **17th April, 2018.**

THE WRANGLING

When **Community Rail** Development officer Brian Haworth heard about proposals to build a new diesel depot on the site of the old coal yard at the Wrangling in Blackburn he approached Network Rail and asked if the old Lancashire and Yorkshire boundary stone could be saved and re located within the new depot. After discussions with Lauren Jones from Network Rail it was decided to work the stone into an art project which would sit at the entrance to the depot. Local artist Alastair Nicholson and Brian got together and came up with a project which would involve the nearby St Luke and St Philips Primary school and which would highlight the sites long association with the railway. The railway connected coal yard was opened on the 16th December 1848 by the East Lancashire Railway to supply the local mills with coal. The site was in constant use until the mid-1980s when the depot closed.

The opening of Northern Railways new six road depot on 26th October 2017 continues the railways long association with the site known locally as the 'Wrangling'

The two sided laser cut stainless steel sculpture is mounted on a brick plinth which incorporates the original Lancashire and Yorkshire boundary stone. The children from St Luke's and St Philips worked with Brian and Alastair to produce images for the sculpture in the form of paintings and drawing. The work was then digitally photographed and developed into a computer based design which would enable a laser cutter to transfer the information from computer to stainless steel plate. Lasers were used to cut the plastic inserts which gives a stained glass effect to the sculpture.

Network Rail provided the lighting for the sculpture amongst other things and were very supportive throughout the project allowing the children to visit the site during the works to view progress.

The front face of the sculpture shows a modern diesel and below the children's interpretation of how things could have looked in earlier times. The sculpture lists all the railway Companies who have been involved with the site over the years. The back face of the sculpture shows how coal is formed, mined, and distributed. All work carried out with the school was aligned to the National curriculum.



The art installation at the entrance to Blackburn King Street Depot

This project was funded by Network Rail, the Designated Community Rail Development Fund (ACoRP & DfT) and Community Rail Lancashire.

NORTHERN APPRENTICES

In **October 2017** CRL began a 12-month programme with Arriva Rail North (Northern) apprentices. The aims of the programme are to engage with young people and to introduce them to not only the rail industry but the community rail industry.

The programme entails a rigid year-long timetable to educate young people on how to plan, manage and deliver a project in the community rail world. Brian Haworth and Emily Elliott have been working with ten apprentices in partnership with other CRP's such as Community Rail Cumbria and the Leeds, Lancaster & Morecambe CRP (The Bentham Line) to introduce them to a variety of existing projects to help inspire them and to generate ideas for them to use in their own projects.

The apprentices spent a week's induction with CRL in October to understand the CR lines, meet other CRPs and begin project planning workshops to present a business case with their ideas. On a monthly basis the apprentices have been visiting CRL to continue with the development of their project. The apprentices are split into two groups, one based at Blackburn station, and one at Burnley Manchester Road station and are planning and delivering a project.

Ideas have involved artwork, sculptures and dementia friendly stations. The projects feed into the students' academic studies with Blackpool College and cover 20% off the apprenticeship programme being delivered by Northern, this is expected to be completed in November 2018.



Gerald Townson in full flow at the Accrington training session

WRANGLING CHARITY BOOST

During construction of the new £23m train maintenance depot on the old King Street coal sidings in Blackburn (The Wrangling), Network Rail nominated a local Blackburn charity Nightsafe as their preferred charity during the 12 month construction period.

Nightsafe is a local charity in Blackburn that helps support homeless young people aged 16-24. There are several projects in and around the Blackburn area including a day centre, called Platform 5, an emergency shelter and two supported housing projects.

Network Rail's 'Just Giving' page recently closed and a total of £1,180 was raised for the charity - a magnificent effort!

WOMEN WHO WANDER

'Women Who Wander' is a unique writing project that engaged women and girls in experiencing rail use; producing writing pieces that promote their views of rail experience and employment.

Transport across the country and in the North is heavily male-dominated; we aim to change that by engaging, inspiring and influencing, paving the way for the next generation of strong young women.

This project raises awareness of the gender imbalance in rail, and gave the women who participated an important experience in influencing groups to create change, as well as demonstrating to other women and girls that their views are valid, and that they have a place both comfortably using and employed within transport.

Women from a diverse range of backgrounds participated, including women with additional needs, to accurately reflect female views of rail and, vitally, to inform future development.

Special thanks must go to the funders of this project, to all the women and girls who participated, and to Marion Atkinson and Hazel Bonner, who were invaluable in selecting the final winning pieces to be published.



Students from Whalley Range High School on their exploratory journey

NEW CO-OP PROVIDES RAIL PARKING

A new Co-op Food store has recently opened adjacent to Ramsgrave & Wilpshire station and will provide car park spaces for rail users.

The new store, is an £820,000 refurbishment of the building that once housed the Bulls Head pub is open between 07:00 & 23:00 and has a cash machine and hot drinks available.

The car park next to the store has provision for 28 customer vehicles and has 8 spaces set aside for the wider community and will continue to be a popular site for rail commuters using this busy commuting station.



The newly opened Wilpshire Co-op store

Lancashire County Council who had previously negotiated with the pub's owning group to provide car parking spaces are pleased that Co-op Food are continuing this tradition to allow parking for local rail users.

THOUGHTS FROM THE FOOTPATH

TAKING PART IN A CRL GUIDED WALK - September 2017

Having made the decision to go on one of the Community Rail Lancashire guided walks I was disappointed to wake up on the walk day to find the rain pouring down and the grey skies loaded with the promise of more rain to come. Having made and packed my sandwiches and added a small tot of Irish whiskey to my flask of coffee (to combat the cold rain) I squelched up the road to Langho station to catch the train to Ramsgreave and Wilpshire station, the advertised start point of the walk. Emily and 'Alfie', her energetic dog, accompanied me and we were met off the train at Ramsgreave and Wilpshire by our guide for the day.

Due to emergency timetables being in place the walk set off later than advertised as we had to wait for the service from Blackburn to arrive in case it was carrying any one for the walk. As the rain grew heavier six of us plus 'Alfie' set off and headed out of Wilpshire via Eddy Holes climbing steadily until we reached Parsonage Reservoir. As we climbed away from the reservoir passing the fast flowing overflow culvert the rain became torrential and within a few hundred yards we were all soaked to the skin. Looking back at the reservoir beneath the leaden sky I half expected an ark to appear! We had a snack stop in a roofless ruin of a barn adjacent to Middle Mickle Hey Farm which afforded us some shelter from the monsoon conditions. All the many streams we crossed were running fast and furious and conditions underfoot were damp to say the least.



Walk leader John Barnes watches the intrepid walkers climb a stile

Travelling across Cunliffe Ridge the remains of several stone quarries were seen and looking down the valley from the triangulation point the route of the old North Lancashire loop line could be easily picked out winding through the valley below towards Great Harwood. Tan House farm was passed through with the farmer up to his knees in a flooded stream trying to clear a blocked culvert which was threatening to flood over into the farm yard. Also of interest amongst the array of old wagons lying around was a Matthew Brown* trailer.

* Matthew Brown was a local Blackburn brewery

THOUGHTS FROM THE FOOTPATH

Our walk continued as did the rain and we passed alongside Top o' th' Heights quarry. From here a short climb brought us up to Dean Clough plantation and then down through the plantation to Dean Clough reservoir. The overflow here was running very fast aided by the continuing heavy rain. The steep climb from the reservoir to Whittle Hall was made and it was good to hit some firm tarmac on Moor Lane after some of the sodden field paths we had traversed. A short distance along the lane saw us turn off across a field path which brought us to the viewing point on Billington Moor known as Cronshaw Chair. An amazing thing happened as we sat on 'Brian's Seat' the rain stopped and blue sky could be seen appearing from the west coast as the last of the black clouds disappeared. We then dropped down to Langho via Doctors Rake and back to the railway station at Langho to catch a train to take us back to our walk starting point at Ramsgreave and Wilpshire station.



The walkers take a well earned rest - albeit in the pouring rain!

Obviously the weather could have been kinder and John Barnes (Lancashire Rail Ramblers) who arranges and takes part in all the walks confirmed that we had experienced the worst weather of any of the programme of walks in 2017!

Numbers were down due to the weather there is normally around 25 on the walks. Speaking to two of the ladies on the walk, one from Oswaldtwistle and one from Clitheroe both agreed that they found the walks very enjoyable with knowledgeable guides and friendly participants so give them a try and get involved, the weather can't be that bad again!!

Brian Haworth

More information about the current programmes of CRL and Rail Rambler guided walks and details of self-guided walks across the five CRP areas can be found on the Community Rail Lancashire website at: <https://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk/walks/>

DEMENTIA & COMMUNITY RAIL

Following a request from Northern's Apprentices (see page 8) to understand more about dementia and how those living with dementia can be supported whilst travelling on the railway, representatives of the Leeds, Lancaster & Morecambe CRP, who are working to make the Bentham Line 'dementia friendly', visited Community Rail Lancashire's (CRL) HQ at Accrington to offer awareness sessions. The apprentices were joined by the CRL team, guests from the Forest of Bowland AONB and the Association of Community Rail Partnerships, along with local artist Alastair Nicholson, who works with CRL.

Rod Tickner, Vice Chairman of the Bentham Line CRP and a Dementia Friends Champion, gave a thought-provoking introduction to understanding dementia and the challenges it brings to individuals and families, whilst Gerald Townson, Chairman, focused on helping those living with dementia, their carers and supporters, and the challenges they face when travelling. Rod's awareness session also provided the opportunity for those present to sign up to be a Dementia Friends.

Both presenters were keen to emphasise that it is possible for those with dementia to live well. With positive support, they can continue to travel by rail and benefit from their recollections of earlier journeys by train to destinations which hold fond memories. It is vital to provide positive experiences which generate a confidence to continue to travel, whilst it remains possible. It is also essential to support and offer reassurance to individuals travelling who can become confused and anxious during journeys.

All present were provided with a pack of materials to encourage further thinking on the topics covered, a certificate acknowledging their attendance and details of the Bentham Line's 'Dementia and Community Rail' project.



The apprentices listen to Rod Tickner's presentation

COMMUNITY RAIL AWARDS

ACoRP's former General Manager Neil Buxton has been awarded an OBE in recognition of his service to local and rural railways in the 2018 New Year's Honours list.

Neil, who headed up ACoRP for sixteen years until his retirement at the end of 2016, has devoted many years to community rail and so this is a well deserved accolade. In his time at ACoRP, the community rail movement grew and flourished across the country. He also oversaw the large expansion and restructure of the staff team following extra funding guaranteed by the Department for Transport through the current Northern rail franchise.

Prior to working at ACoRP, Neil was a key figure in the development of his own local community rail partnership along the Esk Valley line. This saw him oversee the development and rejuvenation of the line connecting Middlesbrough to Whitby.



Neil Buxton, former General Manager of ACoRP
photo copyright www.upmain.com



Kulvinder Bassi on stage with Sir Jeremy Heywood,
Head of the Civil Service

Kulvinder Bassi, Community Rail Team Leader in the Department for Transport has won the Diversity and Inclusion Award at the 2017 Civil Service Awards.

Lancaster House, London was the venue for the annual Civil Service Awards and Kulvinder was selected from the seven nominees to receive this prestigious award.

The Civil Service website says:

Kulvinder Bassi's energy is awe-inspiring, his networking skills are the stuff of legend and he makes a tangible difference to the way people feel about working in DfT. These skills have been honed over 20 years of leading DfT's Positive Support Group. Kul is an inspiring leader, growing the membership of his network to nearly 80% of BAME people in DfT and working with his executive to build a programme of initiatives supporting members' career aspirations and raising cultural awareness. The tone and direction of his network has influenced the way we do business with all our networks and is the model for new and emerging ones.

Kul, champion of all things community rail, actively supports Community Rail Lancashire's Railway Confidence Programme, the Bentham Line's Dementia Friendly Stations Project and Community Rail Cumbria's Turning Point Project.

RAILWAY CONFIDENCE PROGRAMME

Community Rail Lancashire's (CRL) Railway Confidence programme is largely aimed at Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) schools and groups of children with additional needs, though it can be requested by any group who feels they may benefit from it. The programme aims to encourage confidence of use in the railway, and builds children, young people and adults up to the goal of independent travel.

Aims & Objectives

- To expand Community Rail Lancashire's education programme into non-mainstream schools;
- To offer young people in Special Educational Needs and Disability schools the chance to experience the railway, as well as increase their travel confidence;
- To increase confidence of parents in family train use; and
- To increase diversity and inclusion on local and national railway lines.

Target audience

This programme is largely aimed at SEND schools; however, mainstream schools could opt into the programme for all or some of their young people if they required it. SEND schools can also opt for the standard academic CRL programme if they prefer.

The programme will be most beneficial for young people who need to increase their confidence surrounding independent and group travel, or who require a clear step-by-step guide to railway use.



Students from Broadfield School, Oswaldtwistle enjoy their journey to Preston

A copy of the Railway Confidence Programme brochure can be downloaded using this link:
<https://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CRL-RCP-final.pdf>

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM



Community Rail Lancashire has been awarded the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality badge. The LOtC Quality Badge is the only nationally recognised indicator of good quality educational provision and effective risk management. The purpose of the LOtC Quality Badge is to help schools identify good quality and safe provision, and to reduce red tape when planning educational visits.

CRL has demonstrated a commitment to sustaining high quality learning outside the classroom, meeting a set of quality indicators including:

- The provider has a process in place to assist users to plan the learning experience effectively;
- The provider provides accurate information about its offer;
- The provider provides activities or experiences which meet learner needs;
- The provider reviews the experience and acts upon feedback;
- The provider meets the needs of users; and
- The provider has safety management processes in place to manage risk effectively.

COMMUNITY RAIL STATIONS FOOTFALL

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) published their estimates of station usage for the period 2016/17 in early December 2017. Overall it was good news for stations on the eight routes in the CRL area with 82% showing a rise since 2015/16. Some of the best stations across the patch showing increases were:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| • Entwistle | 57.2% |
| • Darwen | 37.4% |
| • Hall I' Th' Wood | 35.1% |
| • Rose Grove | 25.6% |
| • Bromley Cross | 23.6% |
| • Langho | 23.1% |
| • Burscough Junction | 22.0% |
| • Clitheroe | 18.4% |
| • Burnley Manchester Road | 10.2% |
| • Accrington | 6.2% |

A number of things have affected passenger numbers over the last year including the Great North Rail Project - a massive engineering project to electrify the route between Manchester, Preston and Blackpool North. Other factors have included industrial action by members of the RMT (National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers) and short notice engineering works.

Full details of footfall figures for all CRL stations can be found on:

<https://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk/news/community-rail-station-footfall-201617/>

LOWRY AT BAMBER BRIDGE

Thursday 19th October 2017 saw the Friends of Bamber Bridge Station unveil some colourful artwork on the platforms.

The artwork is the culmination of the 2017 element of the project that has seen recycled plastic planters installed on the station and a general clean-up of the station areas. The project will continue in 2018 with additional planters, a welcome sign and a wooden engine project.

The event started with an opening welcome speech by South Ribble Councillor Paul Foster, who is member for Bamber Bridge West that covers the station. Next to speak was South Ribble Mayor Cllr Mick Titherington who spoke warmly of the involvement of the children from Cuerden Church School and of the time the volunteers have put in on the station.



The children from Cuerden Church School, who designed the artwork on the Preston bound platform then sang a song about inclusion before official photographs were taken of the artwork unveiling. The children will also be invited to have a trip along the line to Accrington to experience the education programme offered by Community Rail Lancashire.

The unveiling was followed by light refreshments hosted by the South Ribble Pensioners Association in their community room in the old station building.

The Friends of Bamber Bridge Railway Station is an organisation that was formed to look after the station and its environs and is a partnership between South Ribble Borough Council, Community Rail Lancashire, Arriva Rail North (Northern), Network Rail, Baxi Manufacturing, The Brothers of Charity, Cuerden Church School and not forgetting the South Ribble Pensioners Association.

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

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Other photographs of the work of the Lancashire Community Rail Partnerships can be seen on www.communityraillancashire.co.uk, www.downtheline.org, www.dalesrail.com & <http://ribblevalleyrambler.wordpress.com>

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BLACKPOOL BACK ON TRACK

'Blackpool Back on Track' is a community project working with Thames Academy in Blackpool. Children of Thames Primary Academy, the Mayor and Mayoress of Blackpool, CRL, Park View 4 U, and Northern Railway were amongst many stakeholders, parents and friends on Tuesday 30th January to celebrate phase one of the project. The Year 4 children (now Year 5) have taken part in CRL's education programme in summer 2017 visiting Preston station to understand how the railway works. 85 children have been involved in this project.

Working with local artist Julie Norman the children have designed a variety of bright and vibrant posters to be displayed along the South Fylde line and at the Blackpool South Station with local attractions along with a map of the local area to direct passenger and tourists to local attractions. The children used a variety of materials and equipment to design these posters as a part of their learning and development including the use of a printing press.



Thames School pupils at the launch ceremony at Blackpool South station

The launch of this part of the project is timely with the re-opening of the South Fylde line which has been closed since November 2017 for the 'Great North Rail Project' electrification between Preston and Blackpool and is not only a celebration of the line reopening but recognition of the children's efforts to promote sustainable travel and contribute towards the local community and its tourism.



Community Rail Lancashire's Emily Elliott, Simon Clarke and Brian Haworth at Blackpool South on the day the artwork was installed

GREAT NORTH RAIL PROJECT

Monday 2nd February 2018 saw the first trains using the brand new platform at Kirkham & Wesham Station. The station reopened in line with the reintroduction of services on the South Fylde Line after eleven weeks of the nineteen week blockade which will see the line between Preston and Blackpool North electrified.

The works at Kirkham & Wesham have included the replacement and realignment of track through the station, a brand new platform and footbridge, refurbishment of the existing platforms and a significant amount of infrastructure for the ongoing electrification works. Phase 2 will see lifts installed to all three platforms.

Other works have been carried out at Salwick station, between Preston and Kirkham that has seen new platform surfaces and new waiting shelters.



Sunday 4th February 2018 saw a rare unit working on the South Fylde Line
158754 is seen calling at the new platform 3 at Kirkham & Wesham

MORE JOURNEY OPPORTUNITIES

MORE JOURNEY OPPORTUNITIES



**MORE TRAINS FOR EAST LANCASHIRE PASSENGERS!
FROM 10TH DECEMBER 2017**

The start of the winter timetable on Sunday 10th December 2017 saw Arriva Rail North introduce more trains on lines in East Lancashire.

On the Colne to Preston (Blackpool South) route the Sunday service has been improved to run hourly throughout the day with the first service departing Colne at 09:23 and the last at 21:31.

On the Blackburn to Manchester Victoria, via Bolton route the service has been stepped up to every 30 minutes from 06:27 to 17:09 Mondays to Saturdays. This means that there are now three trains an hour to Manchester Victoria, two direct and one using the new Todmorden Curve service via Accrington and Burnley.

TRAILBLAZERS PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

'Together We Are tRAILblazers' is a unique photography project undertaken and to be displayed at every station from Wigan Wallgate, through Kirkby, to Moorfields.

The project engaged students from Kirkby High School and Hope School and College, Wigan to travel the line, taking photos that represent their views and perceptions of rail travel, visiting locations that they could encourage their peers to use rail to access.

The students' work promotes safe and responsible use of the line for other young people, as well as giving them locations to visit that provide free or discounted youth activities.

The launch event of the 'Together We Are tRAILblazers' Project, took place at the Museum of Liverpool on Thursday 1st February 2018. The following Tuesday, 6th February, saw the first batch of Dibond panels installed in snowy conditions at Rainford, Upholland, Orrell, Pemberton and Wigan Wallgate stations. If you are travelling along the Wigan to Kirkby line keep an eye out for these colourful pieces of art.



USEFUL LINKS

For information on Lancashire's Community Rail partnerships and for other information on community rail, walking and cycling by rail, integrated public transport, the communityrailman blog and Community Rail Lancashire twitter pages; please visit the following websites:

www.communityraillancashire.co.uk

www.northernrailway.co.uk

www.nationalrail.co.uk

<http://communityrailman.wordpress.com>

<https://communityrail.org.uk/>

www.lancashirebus.co.uk

https://twitter.com/crl_live

www.merseytravel.gov.uk

www.tfgm.com

<http://railramblers.wordpress.com>

www.btp.police.uk

www.dalesrail.com

<https://transportforthenorth.com/>

www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk

www.bwdconnect.org.uk

<https://downtheline.org.uk/>

<https://www.merseyrail.org/>

www.midcheshirerail.org.uk/

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TAILPIECE

As reported in RBTL 27 Simon Clarke, a Community Rail Development Officer with Community Rail Lancashire, was planning an attempt to travel on all seven of CRL's lines in one day. The challenge was to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society in support of the Dementia Friendly Stations Project on the Benham Line.

On Thursday 21st September 2017 Simon departed Accrington at 05:04 to start the challenge and arrived back at Burnley Manchester Road at 22:54 - 17hrs 50mins later. He had covered the following lines: Colne to Preston, Preston to Blackpool South, Leeds to Heysham Port, Wigan to Kirkby, Wigan to Southport, Ormskirk to Preston, Manchester to Clitheroe and finally Blackburn to Burnley Manchester Road, a total of 433 rail miles.

The day went very well with just one near miss at Leeds when a TransPennine Express train ran late leaving only 2 minutes to get from platform 15 to platform 10 which was achieved just as the doors were closing on the 10:17 Northern service to Heysham Port operated by a class 150 (150211).

Arriva Rail North (Northern) excelled themselves on the day with all their trains running on time and all clean, tidy and with all toilets working! All the conductors Simon encountered were friendly and interested in the challenge and wished him well on the journey.



Simon was well supported throughout the day by members of the various CRPs and Community Rail Lancashire staff who supplied refreshments and encouragement throughout the day.

An online donations page was set up using mydonate.bt.com and by the end of the year a total of just over £909 had been raised for the Alzheimer's Society.

Simon would like to thank everyone who donated via the online site and by cash or cheque and also to thank all those who supported throughout the day and also to everyone who publicised the challenge via social media and in newsletters.