

# RIBBLE VALLEY RAILNews



Class 156, 156472, stands, fresh from the Paint Shops,  
at Langho, August 2017

Number  
118



Sept  
2017



B. Haworth

Class 37, 37422, on 2Z02 Crewe – Crewe with Inspection Saloon '*Caroline*' 975025  
passes Langho on 14 Sept 2017



B. Haworth

Inspection Saloon '*Caroline*' disappears up Langho Bank

## **From the Chair**

Time passes quickly and we'll soon be into the dreaded 'leaf fall' season when adhesion problems occur. The last three months have again been disappointing regarding cancellations and turn-backs at Blackburn. We are assured that things will improve with the new depot at Blackburn and the refurbished rolling stock in 2019, again 'jam tomorrow'.

I reported in the last magazine that we were looking for the extension of the 23:04 Manchester Victoria to Blackburn to continue through to Clitheroe. We have had a response to that request from Network Rail: "The issue is that this is not part of the Train Service Requirement (TSR) and not currently possible on Monday to Thursday and Saturday nights due to possession opportunities. However we would be happy to work with stakeholders to determine whether a Business Case exists to provide a Friday night late service to Clitheroe for a future timetable". At last we've had a response and there is a way forward.

There have been one or two changes in the December timetable with two trains an hour going from Blackburn to Manchester via Bolton, and an earlier departure from Clitheroe at 06:25. Once again the floral displays on our stations, and or station entrances have been excellent. Thanks to our Friends of Station groups along the line, Whalley in Bloom, Langho in Bloom, and Craig Ward for the many hours they spend ensuring that our stations are attractive and safe places for our passengers.

At our last committee meeting members raised the issue of the attendance of Network Rail and Northern staff at our meetings. It was felt that evening meetings were possibly an issue with staff having long journeys to travel after the meeting.

It was agreed that from November we would hold our meetings at 14:30 on the first Tuesday of the month at the New Inn, and I am pleased to report that Vicky Cropper, our Regional Community and Sustainability Manager, has agreed to attend our December meeting. We are hoping that an afternoon meeting may be more convenient for members.

Thank you to all of you that responded to David's article regarding the funding of the magazine. Your replies have given us food for thought.

*Marjorie Birch*

## **Performance from Monday 5 June to Sunday 6 August**

### *Four weeks from Monday 5th June to Sunday 2nd July*

A short (but very sweet) report for the last four weeks! Just one part cancellation:

- Friday 16th June – 06:45 Clitheroe to Manchester Vic started from Blackburn due to the late arrival of empty stock from overnight stabling at Leyland Motors sidings.

### *Five weeks from Monday 3rd July to Sunday 6th August.*

There were 14 cancellations during this period, 12 of which were cancelled and restarted at Blackburn.

Reasons:

- (a) 3 due to signal failure    (b) 2 due to traction problems    (c) 2 due to unit door problems
- (d) 2 due to late starts from Man. Vic.    (e) 1 due to planning error
- (f) 1 due to train crew issues                         (g) 1 due to failed train at Clifton
- (h) 1 due to an unknown reason

### *Five weeks from Monday 7th August to Sunday 3rd September*

There were 11 cancellations during the period. These included 5 Manchester- Clitheroe Trains, which were turned and restarted at Blackburn and the entire DalesRail operation on Bank Holiday Sunday 27th August.

Reasons:

- (a) 1 due to signal failure                                 (b) 1 due to unit brake problems
- (c) 1 due to vandalism                                         (d) 4 due to late starts from Manchester Victoria
- (e) 3 due to issues with train crew (including DalesRail)
- (f) 1 due to problems with the schedule.

### **Other Issues**

The 16-day closure of Bolton Station and the line from Bolton to Salford Crescent, which became a 25-day closure. A pilot man was working between Darwen and Bolton, which disrupted the temporary timetable in the first two weeks resulting in some Clitheroe to Bolton trains being terminated at Blackburn, sitting at Blackburn for 90 minutes before returning to Clitheroe. On the positive side on the Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holiday Monday the service ran from Clitheroe – Manchester Victoria via Todmorden. The service ran well and was mainly 4 car units. The rail replacement service from Clitheroe on RMT strike days also ran well but finished in the early evening, the same time as the last scheduled bus service.

*Ian Tingle*

## Departing Chair

Community Rail Lancashire said a big thank you to James Syson on Friday 16th June, at the joint management group meeting of the Clitheroe Line & East Lancashire CRPs. During that time James has worked with the partnerships to develop projects at Mill Hill, Cherry Tree and Pleasington stations. His biggest achievement was to secure over £12m investment to redouble part of the Bolton to Blackburn line at Darwen to enable an all-day half hourly service to operate between Blackburn and Manchester. Unfortunately James is resigning as Chair of the two partnerships as he is now taking up a post with Transport for the North.

Richard Watts, Director of CRL and Secretary of the two partnerships, thanked James for all his hard work to support community rail development in East Lancashire, and as a token of appreciation, Richard presented James with a 'man bag' with his initials inscribed on the inside.

CRL wishes James every success in his new post.



## **Passengers Pay the Price for Service Improvements**

Between Monday 14th and Friday 25th August the long planned improvement of Bolton station and the further progress of the Manchester-Preston electrification scheme took place. Train services from Preston and Wigan etc. to Manchester were cancelled, leaving just the Clitheroe-Blackburn-Manchester service, which ran only as far as Bolton. For users of this line it was fortunate that the in/out train could be accommodated on Platform 3, north end.

A temporary timetable to cover the two weeks was devised, showing the train service to/ from Bolton, with an onward rail replacement bus service from Bolton to Manchester stations. Other train services which normally use Bolton were likewise replaced by buses, some direct and others stopping at all stations.

The timetable booklet for the two weeks put a worthwhile positive spin on the 'Great North Project', explaining precisely what was planned for the fortnight shutdown. The rest of the booklet showed a timetable of trains between Clitheroe and Bolton which would smoothly connect with onward buses in each direction. Disappointingly the station posters, whilst clearly explaining the weekend arrangements, did not mention the plans for the vital weekdays. As a result only passengers, who were prepared to delve deep into external information (web, phone, ticket office, etc.), could discover that their journey to work would be seriously lengthened. As the shutdown took place in the holiday season, fewer would be affected but that was no excuse for this serious publicity omission.

On Monday 14th August, the train service from Clitheroe got off to a very bad start. The first train of the day (06.45) arrived in Bolton 10 minutes late, but this was nothing compared with the rest of the day when some unfortunate passengers left Clitheroe on time but arrived in Bolton 68 minutes late! Also that day one train was cancelled throughout whilst the next was cancelled beyond Blackburn.

In reality, the well-crafted timetable fell apart because the signalling system between Bolton and Bromley Cross, which is worked by Manchester, had been switched off to enable the reconstruction to take place. Therefore every train to and from Bolton had to be accompanied by a pilotman to just north of Bromley Cross - but having passed that station the pilotman had to travel onwards to Darwen to transfer to the southbound train. Clearly things did not quite go to plan.

During the second week, there were fewer very late trains but more unplanned rail replacement buses from Blackburn to Bolton. More trains arrived no more than 10 minutes late but the improvement was tainted when the last two trains of the fortnight arrived in Bolton 19 and 17 minutes late. By then everyone must have been very tired.

To sum it up - 'A' for effort but only 'C' for achievement (and that was on a better day).

<b>Arrivals at Bolton</b>	<b>Week 1</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Week 2</b>	<b>%</b>
On time or up to 5 minutes late	12	16	28	37
Between 6 and 10 minutes late	20	27	22	29
Over 10 minutes late	36	48	12	16
All or part train cancelled	7	9	0	0
Replacement bus beyond Blackburn	0	0	13	17

## **Change to dates and times of Committee Meetings**

Below are the dates and times of our meetings, please note the change of day and time from November.

<b>Mon 2 Oct</b>	<b>RVR Meeting</b>	<b>New Inn,</b>	<b>Clitheroe</b>	<b>19:30</b>
<b>Tues 7 Nov</b>	<b>RVR Meeting</b>	<b>New Inn,</b>	<b>Clitheroe</b>	<b>14:30</b>
<b>Tues 5 Dec</b>	<b>RVR Meeting</b>	<b>New Inn,</b>	<b>Clitheroe</b>	<b>14:30</b>
<b>Tues 2 Jan 2018</b>	<b>RVR Meeting</b>	<b>New Inn,</b>	<b>Clitheroe</b>	<b>14:30</b>

## **Clitheroe Food Festival**

was held on Saturday 12th August 2017.

All the trains on the Ribble Valley Line were strengthened throughout the day and were well-used by festival goers.

The Red Arrows also did a fly-by over the Castle before heading off to the Southport Airshow.



## **New Blackburn Depot**

*Written by Brian Haworth*

Blackburn's new train depot is now almost complete and due to come into service at the start of the winter timetable. Around 40 jobs will be created at the 6-road depot, which will be used for stabling maintenance and cleaning.

More jobs will be created when Northern move into the Cathedral Square office complex adjacent to Blackburn Station.

Class 150s, 150207/150275, were the first units onto the depot on 24 Sept 2017 to conduct clearance trials, running as 5T76. Unfortunately they ran 21 minutes late onto the depot due to a point's failure.

Photos of the new depot can be viewed on the centre spread.

# NEW BLACKBURN DEPOT



General view



View down Refuelling Line

## Photos: Brian Haworth



View down Stabning Sidings



Brian Haworth and Alastair Nicholson work on the School Artwork

## The Blackburn & Clitheroe Flyer

7th September 2017

I had an interesting journey from Manchester to Clitheroe on the 7th of September when the 1303 departure was delayed and rerouted via Todmorden. Phil Newton, a Northern Manager, informed passengers at 1305 that there was a problem with a crossing in the Bromley Cross area, and hence the train would be unable to travel beyond Bolton. All passengers for Bolton and Bromley Cross were asked to leave the train to catch alternative services to Bolton. The announcement was made personally and not by the public address to ensure all passengers heard the message. The manager then asked if there were any questions or concerns; these were answered clearly. A Darwen passenger was advised to remain on the train and travel to Blackburn; he did not take this advice and left the train, which was probably a poor decision.

As can be seen from the attached log, the journey to Blackburn and Clitheroe was most interesting and an excellent example of emergency planning and action. The manager, who made the announcements, rode "shotgun" all the way to Clitheroe to determine the effectiveness of the new arrangements.

Manchester Victoria	1303 dep.	Departure delayed due to crossing problem at Bromley Cross
Manchester Victoria	1305	Re-route announced
Manchester Victoria	1309 dep.	
Rochdale	1321 pass	
Todmorden	1334 pass	4 minute signal check Walsden area
Burnley Manchester Road	1348 pass	
Accrington	1356 pass	
Blackburn	1405 arr.	
Blackburn	1408 dep.	Stock reversal 3 minutes
Ramsgreave & Wilpshire	1414	
Langho	1418	
Whalley	1422	
Clitheroe	1429 arr.	

**Journey time: -** **80 minutes gross.**  
**73 minutes net of signal check and reversal.**

**Normal journey time: -** **74 minutes**

The above journey times justify the title "**Blackburn & Clitheroe Flyer**"!

Further problems occurred on the following day when a tree on the line at Kearsley caused more disruption. Once again the planned re-route via Todmorden was actioned and this operated perfectly.

8th September 2017

Manchester Victoria	1103 dep.	Departure delayed due to tree on line at Kearsley
Manchester Victoria	1111 dep.	Routed via Todmorden
Blackburn	1207 arr.	
Blackburn	1211 dep.	Stock reversal 4 minutes
Ramsgreave & Wilpshire	1217	
Langho	1221	
Whalley	1225	
Clitheroe	1231 arr.	

**Journey time: -** **80 minutes gross.**  
**76 minutes net of Blackburn reversal.**

**Normal journey time: -** **74 minutes**

Obviously, I hope the above events do not happen too often but it is comforting that an alternative route and plan exists for Ribble Valley services.

Graham Dudley



Photo:  
B. Haworth

**Keep an eye out for this Northern unit  
with the 'We stand together'  
Manchester Bee logos**

As agreed at the last RVR committee meeting, 'Down the Line' will now concentrate on freight and special workings over RVR metals. Service issues such as cancellations and short working will feature in Ian Tingle's report.

On 21/7, 66147 worked 4M00, the Scottish cement into Horrocksford via Hellifield. Later in the day, 66303 was in charge of the engineers 6K05. The following day saw 66093 work the Avonmouth cement 6M90. *Duchess* 46233 worked 1Z32 Crewe/Carlisle later in the day.

On 24/7, 66305 was in charge of 6K05. The following day saw 66093 on 6M90 and 66305 on 6K05. On 26/7, 66031 worked 4M00. The Avonmouth cement 6M90 had 66066 in charge on 27/7, and the following day saw 66068 head 4M00 and 66305 head 6K05. On 29/7, 6M90 saw 66059 paired with 66025. Tamper DR73909 worked 6J72, a Settle Junction to Guide Bridge movement on 31/7, and, later in the afternoon, 66303 headed 6K05.

On 1/8, 66023 worked 6M90 and 66303 6K05. Royal Scot class 46115, *Scots Guardsman*, was in charge of 1Z52, Lancaster/Carlisle, later in the day. On 2/8, 66103 worked 4M00, and an unusual working followed later in the afternoon, running as 6Z73 Tebay/Rugby, class 70 70806 was noted dragging failed Tamper DR73910. Immediately following this working, another class 70 turned up with 70804 working 6J37 the logs. On 3/8, 66023 worked 6M90, and 66427 6K05. The following day saw 66080 head 4M00 and 66004/66023 6M90. On the same day, *Duchess* 46233 worked 1Z54 Crewe /Carlisle.

On 8/8, 66623 headed 6M90 and 66305 6K05. On 9/8, 66090 headed 4M00. On 10/8, 66004 worked 6M90. The following day saw 66080 head 4M00. On 12/8, 66150 was paired with 66176 on 6M90, and, later in the day, 68016/88004 headed 1Z40, an Appleby/Newport excursion.

On 14/8, 66188 headed 4M00, and the following day, 66167 was in charge of 6M90. On 15/8, 66167 worked 6M90, and, later in the day, the unusual combination of 47580 and 37669 was noted heading 1Z46, a Carlisle/Chester excursion. On 16/8, 66425 worked 6K05 and 66080 4M00. The following day saw 66425 working the same diagram as the day before and 66167 again on 4M00. The engineers 6K05 had a different loco in charge on the 18/8 with 66305 at the helm. Later 66158 worked 4M00. On 19/8, 66167 again found itself hauling 6M90.

On 21/8 66103 worked 4M00, and 66425 once again headed 6K05 With 60026 following behind with the logs 6J37. On 22/8 66111 headed 6M90 and 66425 worked 6K05. Jubilee 45690 Leander cut a fine sight storming up Langho bank later in the evening in charge of 1Z53 The Fellsman. On 23/8 66425 had 68030 for company on 6K05, 66047 worked 4M00 and 60026 headed 6J37 the logs. On 24/8 66111 worked 6M90 and 66425 headed 6K05. On 25/8 66103 headed 4M00 and 66302 6K05. Class 66 66111 was back on 6M90 on 26/8.



Photo: S. Clarke

On 29/8, 66167 headed 6M90, 66431 6K05 and 66026 6J37. Later that evening 48151 plodded up Langho bank in charge of 1Z53, *The Fellsman*. On 30/8, 66160 worked the Scottish cement into Horrocksford, 66421 headed the engineers and 60026 the logs. The following day saw 66167 head 6M90, 66434 6K05 and 66026, again on 6J36. On 1/9, a Northern strike day 66030 worked the Scottish cement and 66434 was noted in charge of 6K05. Tamper DR73914 worked 6T43 Guide Bridge/Hellifield on 3/9.

Mon 4/9, saw 66090 head 6M90 and 66430 on 6K05. Class 66 66430 again worked the engineers on 6/9, with 60026 again on the logs and 66030 on the Scottish cement. On the 7/9, 6M90 and 6K05 had the same two locos in charge as the previous day, 66061 was noted heading 6M90. On 8/9, 66103 worked the Scottish cement, Later in the day, 37421/37219 roared up Langho Bank with the Network Rail Test Train, and the engineers ran light engine with 66430 in charge.

On 9/9, 66061 headed 6M90, and later in the evening, Jubilee 45690, *Leander*, made a fine sight storming up Langho Bank. On 11/9, 60026 was again in charge of the logs, a diagram it has made its own in recent weeks. On 12/9, 66176 headed 6M90 and 66303 6K05. In the early hours of the 13/9 due to storm damage on the West Coast Main Line, 68007/66427/66428 were diverted via the RVR Line in charge of 6C18 ,with one waggon in tow! Following this, 66303 was also routed over the RVR Line heading 6C02 Basford Hall / Carlisle. Class 66 66183 was noted later on the Scottish cement.

Brian Haworth

The Ribble Valley Line has seen a couple of weekend closures during September to allow Network Rail to install a new bridge over the RVR Line at Billington.

The now usual engineering village was set up and a temporary road put in across fields to the construction site.

The major work took place at night with the site well-illuminated.

A massive crane was used first to lift out the old bridge in sections and again to lift in the new structure. The accompanying picture shows the crane on site.



*Photo: B. Haworth*

### **RVRNews Archive Online**

You can find back copies of RVRNews on line by visiting the resources section on the website or directly by using the following address:

[www.communityraillancashire.co.uk/rvr](http://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk/rvr)

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS & DIARY DATES 2017/18

<b>Mon 2 Oct</b>	<b>RVR Meeting</b>	<b>New Inn,</b>	<b>Clitheroe</b>	<b>19:30</b>
<b>Tues 7 Nov</b>	<b>RVR Meeting</b>	<b>New Inn,</b>	<b>Clitheroe</b>	<b>14:30</b>
<b>Tues 5 Dec</b>	<b>RVR Meeting</b>	<b>New Inn,</b>	<b>Clitheroe</b>	<b>14:30</b>
<b>Tues 2 Jan 18</b>	<b>RVR Meeting</b>	<b>New Inn,</b>	<b>Clitheroe</b>	<b>14:30</b>

## RVR WHO'S WHO & OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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Northern Rail Customer Helpline 0845 00 00 125 (option 2)

**RVR website:** [www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk](http://www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk)

**Community Rail Partnership Website:** [www.communityraillancashire.co.uk](http://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk)

## THEN



J. Mathews

Above:

An atmospheric picture of the Old Coal Depot at the Wrangling, Blackburn, taken in the mid-1970s

Below:

The same view today with the new depot taking the place of the coal yard picture

## NOW



B. Haworth