

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

THE NEWSLETTER OF LANCASHIRE'S COMMUNITY RAILWAYS

ISSUE 29

AUGUST 2018



Young Proud Trust members on a research trip to Hebden Bridge

Community Rail Lancashire has launched a new project that has been funded by Arriva Rail North's Seed Corn Fund. Stand Clear of the Closet Doors! Has produced a map of significant LGBT+ locations in the North West that can be reached by rail.

**The map is displayed as a 14 metre vinyl banner in Manchester Victoria station
more details about this story on page 12**

CRL
Community Rail Lancashire

NOTES FROM THE BUNKER

Expanding the team:

Let's start with the good news. Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) has just seen three new staff join the team - Erin, Karen and Katie. Two full time Community Rail Education Officers and one part time Special Needs Education Officer. This has been possible thanks to funding through Northern's ComREG which has agreed an initial three year funding package for them. I am sure the new team members will introduce themselves more fully elsewhere in this edition of RBTL (see page 5). Suffice to say they have thrown themselves into their new roles with great gusto. So a big welcome to the new team members. Reluctantly CRL has had to say farewell to Emily Elliott who has moved back into mainstream teaching.

Northern's apprentices learn about community rail:

Also Community Rail Lancashire has just completed a year long engagement with a group of 11 Northern apprentices. Apart from learning about community rail the apprentices have developed and implemented eye-catching projects at Burnley Manchester Rd and Blackburn stations. They secured grants from the DfT's DCRDF; Arriva Rail North's Seed Corn and Station Adoption Funds. The projects were launched at special events at Blackburn and Burnley Manchester Rd stations on the 25th and 26th September respectively. Well done to all of them and I wish them all successful careers in the rail industry. Again you will be able to read more about this elsewhere in RBTL. A new group of apprentices will be starting with CRL in October so we look forward to welcoming them.

The Bunker

The bunker is being given a refresh to accommodate the additional staff and to make good 8 years of intensive use.

Community Rail Awards:

This annual event will be upon us very soon with high expectations all round. The CRL team will be there in force joined by James Syson and Emily Elliott.

Now for the not so good news:

So May 20th came full of promise of improved services across Northern and TransPennine. Well we all know the result, it all went horribly wrong. May 20th was the nemesis of how a new timetable should be introduced and has spawned countless reports, articles, tweets (I do hate the strident and vitriolic way people write tweets), emails and a collapse in services, reliability and dependability.

Community Rail routes in Lancashire have fared badly in all of this and as I write this on Saturday 22 September it still hasn't been possible to restore all our Monday to Friday services on the Blackpool South, Colne and Ormskirk routes - a low priority for Northern?

Yet the portents of what was to happen were evident to many industry watchers even before May 20th. The NW electrification project between Blackpool and Manchester was not going to be ready and still isn't, although Network Rail keep saying it will be shortly; key elements of the Great North Rail Project had been cut by the government including the essential new platforms 15 and 16 at Piccadilly and capacity between Piccadilly and Oxford Rd; rolling stock cascades to Northern from Great Western Railway and ScotRail were not happening fast enough so there was going to be a shortage of DMUs and given that electrification was not complete this would stretch the fleet to breaking point not to mention Northern's customers and so it goes on. With hindsight and as Glaister says in his interim report to the ORR no one took responsibility or control. It was a system failure and showed up the cracks in the fragmented rail industry.

NOTES FROM THE BUNKER

The consequence for Lancashire was the introduction of temporary timetables which saw many services replaced by buses that took twice as long! Hardly surprising not too many people used them. It is now September and still we have bus replacements when nearly everywhere else has a full train service.

None of this has been good news for our Community Rail Partnerships. With lots of schools booked into the bunker at Accrington over the summer the team had to make snap decisions about what to do on the day. Why? Well even the trains that were supposed to run could be cancelled at a moment's notice - lack of train crew being the usual reason. Now this brings me to the bit that has nothing to do with the fragmented rail industry why has our area suddenly not got enough crews? Up to May 20th things went along pretty well but afterwards it seemed like the west haemorrhaged train crew. The excuse about training on the Preston to Blackpool line has reached its sell by date. What has gone wrong here and why hasn't this been dealt with more effectively by the DfT/TfN partnership who oversee and manage the franchise?

To really rub salt into the wound Northern has not been able to roster train crew to run the Sunday DalesRail service. Each weekend there would be a flurry of emails between myself, Craig Ward and Craig Harrop to find out what was happening so that the walk leaders wouldn't waste time turning up for a train that wasn't running. In the end and with great reluctance DalesRail was abandoned. How has this state of affairs come to pass? Community Rail Lancashire spends good money to promote this unique recreational service and in all the years it has operated it has NEVER been cancelled - although there have been some exceedingly rare near misses! Doesn't anyone care what damage they are doing to a service that helps warm the market for rail travel? Is it all spreadsheets, compensation, delay-repay, refunds with scarce a care for what is happening on the real railway? For me what has happened to DalesRail is the canary in the room, the test of how much the railway cares and at the moment the canary is in intensive care! It is now the turn of what we used to call the 'Ribble Valley Rambler' to be routinely cancelled on Sunday.



DalesRail in happier times. A walking group just about to set off from Kirkby Stephen station

NOTES FROM THE BUNKER

Are there any highlights? Well not too many but one service that seems to be operating reasonably well is the Clitheroe/Blackburn to Manchester/Rochdale. The half hourly services seems to be doing well just a pity that south of Blackburn it is a part time railway. The Bolton electrification leads to weekend closures with the inevitable bus replacements. There is going to be so much work to do to just restore realisation that the railway operates 7 days a week. Although, again as I write this the RMT have held strikes on every Saturday this month and are planning to continue this into October in the run up to the Christmas markets. This of course is the other hurdle there seems to be no end to this dispute except to render it impossible to market our local lines. All we can do is sit back and count the long term damage it is doing to our services - who ever runs them. Please note RMT, nationalisation won't make passengers come back after the months of dislocation. It will take years to restore confidence in our local services.

So our local lines are not in a good place at the moment. Community Rail Lancashire and our CRPs do the very best they can but it is an uphill struggle.



A Manchester service at Clitheroe during that lovely summer we had.

And lastly!!

The fate of Clitheroe Interchange (pictured right) still hangs in the balance. At a recent Lancashire County Council Cabinet Meeting the committee members agreed a stay of execution in order to give time to study the expressions of interest submitted by interested parties, for the continued operation of the threatened offices. CRL is currently waiting for LCC to issue details of the operating costs for the Interchange.



CRL NEW STAFF

Community Rail Lancashire has recently taken on three new members of staff to strengthen the education programme. Funded by Arriva Rail North's Seed Corn Fund the staff will enhance the work carried out in Northern's Central & West Regions and also spread the education programme into the East & North East regions of the company.

Erin Dixon has been taken on as a Community Rail Education Development Officer (CREDO) and will be working in the South Fylde area and helping with CRL's apprentice programmes. Erin comes to CRL with a background of secondary education and was PE & Dance co-ordinator at Ullswater Community College,

Karen Bennett has also been taken on as a CREDO and will be working predominantly in the east but will also support the core work in the west. Karen's past includes being a Red Coat and teaching at primary level in the Bradford area and was a subject leader in English, maths & music.

Katie Musgrove has been employed on a part time basis as a Special Needs Education officer (SNEO) and will be supporting the CRL Railway Confidence Programme. Katie's background is in art & education and taught at secondary and college level before becoming an independent artist and educator.

All bring a great deal of enthusiasm and motivation to the community rail world and are looking forward to developing exciting education programmes across the CRL area and further afield.



The new starters out with existing staff on a pacer during their induction programme

Left to right: CRL's Brian Haworth, Erin Dixon, Daisy Chapman-Chamberlain, Katie Musgrove & Karen Bennett

CRL Trivia

Occasional bits of trivia about somewhere on one of our lines that you may, or may not, find interesting.

Clitheroe - the castle keep is the second smallest surviving stone-built in England and is listed as a scheduled monument. Clitheroe is also home to Holmes Mill Beer Hall which has the longest continuous bar in Britain at 105' 8" (32.004m) with 42 hand pumps and up to 30 different artisan cask ales & ciders on tap.

FRIENDS OF PARBOLD STATION



The Friends of Parbold Station group, led by John Sloane, have introduced a number of flower tubs custom built by a member of the group for their platform location. The tubs strategically placed have brought a splendid dash of colour to the platforms and are drawing favourable comments from passengers at the station.

The group have also worked in partnership with Network Rail and the Douglas Valley Lions to renovate and repair the signal cabin name board (See page 16).

The group are always looking for volunteers to help at the station and have further improvements planned over the coming months so watch this space. If you are interested in joining in the work of this group contact info@communityrail Lancashire.co.uk



WOMEN WHO WANDER

Women Who Wander is a unique project engaging women and girls to experience and influence rail use and industry, promoting and publishing their views of rail experiences, use and employment.

Working with a number of education facilities and groups, including Girlguiding North West England, Kirkby High School, the University of Manchester, Broadfield Specialist School and Whalley Range High School, Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) has enabled women and girls to experience rail travel, facilitating discussions and activities around these journeys. The group then wrote a piece in a style of their choice, reflecting their views on any area of rail travel, use or employment.

Over 100 contributions were received and 18 pieces of writing were selected to be published in a booklet. The launch event in Manchester on 8th March 2018 saw a number of the winners read their pieces from the Women Who Wander booklet and a short video of the event can be watched on this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPPaLanmlEI&t=8s>. The booklet of the winning pieces can be downloaded on this link:

<https://downtheline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Women-Who-Wander-Booklet.pdf>

or a printed copy can be requested by emailing CRL on comrailancs@gmail.com



NORTHERN APPRENTICES

Over the last twelve months a group of eleven Arriva Rail North apprentices has been working with Community Rail Lancashire on two large projects at stations in East Lancashire. The apprentices were split into two groups with one working on a project at Blackburn station and one at Burnley Manchester Road station. Late September saw the two projects launched at the stations.

Bringing Blackburn Back

Research through passenger surveys and other channels led this group to thinking about art work, signage and additional planters. The final project includes:

- A giant 2.75m x 1.5m piece of Dibond artwork featuring past, present & future as envisaged by local school children;
- A welcome to Blackburn map developed in partnership with Blackburn with Darwen Council;
- Revamped dementia friendly station and street signage to help with finding the way around the station and to the bus station: and
- Recycled plastic planter and seating units installed on the platform areas.



The project was officially launched on Tuesday 25th September 2018 with invited guests including some of the children involved in the project, CRL directors and staff, Northern managers, Alastair Nicholson (the artist involved) and James Hayhurst from ARK Plastics.

The photographs above show the Past, Present & Future art work in the waiting room, one of the recycled plastic planter & seating units adjacent to platform 3, the improved dementia friendly signage on the platforms and the map of Blackburn displayed at the exit of the concourse.

NORTHERN APPRENTICES

Brightening Up Burnley

The Burnley group of apprentices were originally down to do their project at Bingley station but then moved to Burnley Manchester Road and following research including passenger surveys set about brightening up the platform areas of the station at Burnley Manchester Road. The project includes:

- A canal themed five rise lock planter – the station is very close to the Leeds Liverpool Canal;
- Welcome to Burnley signage – individual letters on Dibond with art work designed by local school children from Reedley Primary School; and
- A silhouette ‘hand tree’ sculpture featuring the hand prints of each child in the class.



The project was officially launched on Wednesday 26th September 2018 with invited guests including some of the children involved in the project, CRL directors and staff, Northern managers, Alastair Nicholson (the artist involved) and the Sobriety Project.

The photographs above show the ‘hand tree’ with hand prints of each child involved, the children from Reedley Primary School speak at the launch, the five lock sculpture designed and built by the Sobriety Project and the Welcome to Burnley Manchester Road signage on the slope down to the Blackburn bound platform.

Funding for various elements of both projects have been found through grants from: The Department for Transport’s Designated Community Rail Development Fund (DCRDF), Arriva Rail North’s Seed Corn & Station Adoption Funds, Community Rail Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen Council.

DEMENTIA & COMMUNITY RAIL

A special party took the train from Bentham on Monday 30th July destined for the seaside at Morecambe, where they enjoyed tea, scones and cakes at the iconic art-deco Midland Hotel whilst taking in the sea views over to the Lakes and spending time together with friends.

The party was made up of a group of people living with dementia, who meet each Monday for a Making Art session at the Looking Studios in Bentham. They were accompanied by their carers and supporters from the art group, which is run by Pioneer Projects, who provide a range of activities to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals by using creative arts.

The day out was organised by the Bentham Line (Leeds-Lancaster & Morecambe) Community Rail Partnership as part of its Dementia and Community Rail project who invited the Pioneer Projects group to visit Morecambe with the support of the local train operator, Northern.

It proved to be a reminder of yesteryear for many; being able to sit, relax, and rekindle pleasant memories. One of the guests said, "It was really nice to go out on a trip". Another participant from the Making Art session added, "I really enjoyed it. I wish these trips happened more often. It was so good being together with everyone. The staff did look after us well".



Departing Bentham bound for Morecambe



Enjoying afternoon tea in the art deco Midland Hotel

Philippa Troutman, Training and Creative Arts Manager at Pioneer Projects said, "Everyone attending the Making Art session held at Bentham each week were delighted to be asked. The trip was an enormous success with everyone taking pleasure in the journey, the afternoon tea at the Midland Hotel and each other's company. The staff and volunteers of the railway could not have been more helpful. Thank you to everyone for making it possible."

Gerald Townson, Chair of the Bentham Line CRP, added, "this was a great example of Community Rail at its best; working with various agencies, including the train operator, to enhance the lives of those living with dementia and others who need extra time and support. It is vital that the railway develops an inclusive and caring approach to all those with 'hidden' illnesses such as dementia".

Richard Isaac, Regional Community and Sustainability Manager at Northern. who accompanied the visit, commented: "Northern are pleased to be supporting this important initiative by the Community Rail Partnership, as the railway looks for ways to become more inclusive for those living with disabilities. It is pleasing to see that this project is attracting interest from rail partnerships and train operating companies across the United Kingdom."

For more details of this project contact the.bentham.line@gmail.com or ring on 01524 298940

STEP FREE ACCESS AT KIRKHAM & WESHAM

Passengers in Kirkham & Wesham are to benefit from lifts and a new footbridge which links a brand new platform to the station, providing easier access to trains, thanks to the recent upgrade of the Preston to Blackpool railway.

On Thursday 13th September 2018 the MP for Fylde, Mark Menzies, unveiled a commemorative plaque at the station as Network Rail, Northern, Lancashire County Council, local town councillors and rail user group members marked the station upgrade during a short ceremony at the station.

Kirkham & Wesham station has benefited from an improved track layout, the installation of a new platform with lifts which will provide access to all platforms, as well as electrification as part of Blackpool's recent rail revolution.

Mark Menzies, MP for Fylde said: "When I became an MP, improving the access at Kirkham Station was a project I made a priority and I am delighted to see not one but two lifts, ensuring the station will be fully accessible to everyone. For too long the station was a no-go area for those with disabilities, anyone with a pram, or even heavy shopping. In this day and age, there should be no barrier to someone in a wheelchair or someone with a pushchair being able to access services."

Andrew Morgan, senior sponsor for Network Rail, said: "As part of our multi-billion pound Great North Rail Project, Kirkham & Wesham station has been transformed with a new platform, footbridge and lifts. The work – which included rebuilding the existing platforms – has been delivered alongside our upgrade of Blackpool's railway which has enabled the introduction of greener, quieter and more modern electric trains on the route. The accessibility improvements we are making will not only benefit disabled people or those with reduced mobility, but also those with children, heavy luggage or shopping."

Craig Harrop, Interim Regional Director for Northern said: "We're delighted that Kirkham & Wesham station will benefit from a new platform, two new lifts and a footbridge. The upgrade work helps to support us on our journey to making the Northern network accessible to all and furthers our commitment to inclusive rail travel. Kirkham station provides a key route into and out of the Fylde area, and the new infrastructure will provide our customers with a modern environment and easy access for years to come."



Tony Ford (left), Chair of the South Fylde Line CRP, at the official unveiling of the plaque

STAND CLEAR OF THE CLOSET DOORS!

Community Rail Lancashire has been involved in a new project that has been funded by Arriva Rail North's Seed Corn Fund. 'Stand Clear of the Closet Doors!' has produced a map of significant LGBT+ locations that can be reached by rail.

Confident and safe use of public transport is a right that must be available to all people within our communities. In Europe and the USA, studies have found that LGBT+ people fear for their safety on public transport. In London, 40% of LGBT+ people who participated in a survey avoided using public transport because of fear of or actual assault, and in a 2012 European Union survey 50% of LGBT+ people said they avoid certain places or locations, and among the places they listed as most unsafe to be open about their sexual orientations was "public transport".

Facilitating the sharing of ideas from all people within society, physical presence of LGBT+ people through projects and visual representation is vital to make it clear that all people have a right to travel safely and confidently using public transport.

In partnership with the Proud Trust, which is a local, Manchester-based lifesaving and life enhancing organisation that helps young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities, Community Rail Lancashire aims to enable some of this necessary representation through an art project named 'Stand Clear of the Closet Doors!' with the tagline 'Enjoy days out by rail!'

The project was delivered over the summer holidays and was launched on the 23rd of August at the 'Rainbow Playground' event. It follows the current Proud Trust yearly theme of geography, and will ultimately produce an LGBT+ 'travel map', connecting and displaying LGBT+ people, places and events through use of the rail network. This will involve physical artwork and a publication guiding rail users through this inclusive and educating network with a usage guide, along with key information about the featured LGBT+ people and events. The key map artwork is displayed in Manchester Victoria on the waiting shelter on platforms 4/5, with smaller pieces focussing on individual locations to be determined; some featuring Proud Trust locations and some focussed on other locations including those lines listed above, along with others.

The young people travelled with CRL staff during the summer holidays, with a week of travel experiences to Proud Trust and other locations. This was followed by art working sessions delivered by Proud Trust staff and the artwork is being used on the main map and within the booklets produced.

Funding from Arriva Rail North's Seed Corn Fund enabled art working, digital artwork creation and printing of art panels and the booklets, as well as the cost for the launch event.



MAKE A BEELINE FROM THE STATION - CROSTON

Saturday 23rd June saw the Watts' at Croston (cross tun - town of the cross) on a delightful summer Saturday afternoon. Croston station is at one end of this attractive village and can be the starting point for some easy strolls along quiet lanes across the former marshes - many in sight or ear shot of the railway! Croston is well served by cafes and pubs - there are at least 5! Close to the station is the Velo Café which is open every day from 10:00 to 15:00 and close to the parish church is the delightfully named deli 'Thyme on the Yarrow'.

The station itself is well looked after by the admirable efforts of the Friends of Croston station. Through their efforts there are beautiful bee-friendly floral displays as the two pictures below demonstrate.



Exploring could not be easier as there are numerous sign boards around labelled the Croston Heritage Trail and describing the many places of interest you pass as you walk from the station towards the parish church.

At the heart of the village is the cross and the parish church of St Michael and All Angels. The church was founded in the 12th century although the current building owes a lot to a series of major refurbishments carried out in the 19th century. If you are lucky the church will be open so you can take a look inside. The church is very close to the Yarrow which flows through this part of Croston. The village itself owes a lot to de Trafford family who once had a pub named after them outside the railway station. Now demolished it is part of the new housing estate. Sadly the family died out in the 1960s.

Getting to Croston by train has never been easier. Trains operate every hour from Preston or Ormskirk (connections to/from Liverpool) on Mondays to Saturdays. Full details of times can be found at National Rail. An off peak day return from Preston costs £5.70 and from Ormskirk £5.40. Duo fares are available for two adults travelling together. So why not let the train take the strain and start your exploration of the West Lancashire Line by taking a closer look at Croston?



Croston in Bloom - by the Yarrow



Next stop Rufford - the 09:39 train departs Croston

ACORP AWARDS 2018 SHORT LIST

Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) has had four entries short listed for ACoRP's 2018 National Community Rail Awards. CRL has also been short listed in a shared entry by the Mid Cheshire CRP.

The short listed entries are:

The Railway Confidence Programme (CRL) - Involving Diverse Groups (Sponsored by Great Western Railway).

Blackpool back on Track (South Fylde Line CRP) - Community Art Schemes – Permanent & Larger projects (Sponsored by Grand Central).

Women Who Wander (CRL) - Best Community Engagement Project (Sponsored by Great Western Railway).

Northern Apprentice Programme (CRL & Arriva Rail North) - Influencing Positive Change (Sponsored by TransPennine Express).

The shared entry is:

Marvellous Days Out Marketing Campaign (Mid Cheshire CRP, Friends of Littleborough Station & CRL) – Best Marketing or Communications Campaign (Sponsored by Govia).



The 2018 Gala Dinner and Awards Presentation is taking place in Glasgow on Thursday 4th October and the full short list can be seen here https://communityrail.org.uk/awards_18_shortlist/ and for details of the event and how to book a table visit <https://communityrail.org.uk/events-training/community-rail-awards/>.

SHOW STOPPER AT CHURCH

Three years ago members of Church and Oswaldtwistle Rotary identified that their local railway station, Church and Oswaldtwistle, was in a very poor state-both inside and outside the station.

As a result a decision was made that members would adopt the station as an on-going project, with the objective of returning the station to its former glory. Therefore volunteer Rotarians and Friends of Rotary agreed to turn up at the station every summer Saturday morning to tackle the many areas which had been neglected.

The two platforms at the station were both covered entirely in weeds. It is pleasing to report that all the weeds have been removed although they need constant action.

Painting both inside and outside the station was a priority especially the subway entrance, which apart from being very grimy was a breeding ground for pigeons. The group were significantly helped by ISS contractors appointed by Arriva Rail North (Northern), whereby they have undertaken much of the painting.

Outside the entrance to the station the undergrowth approximately 30 yards long has been removed and 4 tonnes of chippings laid down, complimented by Rotary members building two large planters which were financed by the Prospects Foundation.

The group were again helped by Northern with additional planters being installed on both platforms which were planted with begonias which over the summer gave the station a definite uplift.

But what is the 'Show Stopper'? This is a large model wooden engine and coaches (photo below) which is sited on the Colne platform, this model train brimming with begonias attracted a great deal of favourable comments and without doubt really gives the station a burst of colour.

The model train was the idea of immediate Past President Jim Hargreaves who proposed the purchase, delivery and installation of the train, which was built by Barrel Creations of Huntly, Aberdeenshire. The train travellers passing through or alighting at the station must be very impressed when seeing the train.

President Lyndon Heap said "This station project has been very successful and has attracted a great deal of interest within the community. I must not only thank club members and Friends of Rotary who turn up every Saturday morning, but also thank Brian Haworth of Community Rail Lancashire, Arriva Rail North, Graham West and Mark Lenton from ISS who all have contributed to the major improvements at the station."



Friend of Rotary Stuart Duhan (left) and Rotarian Michael Jackson (right) with the model train

BETWEEN THE TEES GOLF BAG PROJECT

A project by St. Anne's In Bloom's saw them marking out the route from St. Annes-on-the-Sea station to the Royal Lytham & St. Annes Golf Club for the start of the Ricoh Women's Open Tournament held at the beginning of August.

Volunteers collected unwanted golf bags, took out the insides including clubs, tees, golf balls and score-cards and then added plant pots utilising red and white flowers.

The project, backed financially by St Anne's Town Council, was managed by In Bloom volunteers. 'Silent Golfers' also appeared alongside the bags prior to the start of the tournament.

In addition the group, keeping up with the latest children's craze, hid some painted pebbles in amongst the flowers. The pebbles were donated by St. Anne's Rocks and featured a golf theme.



CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

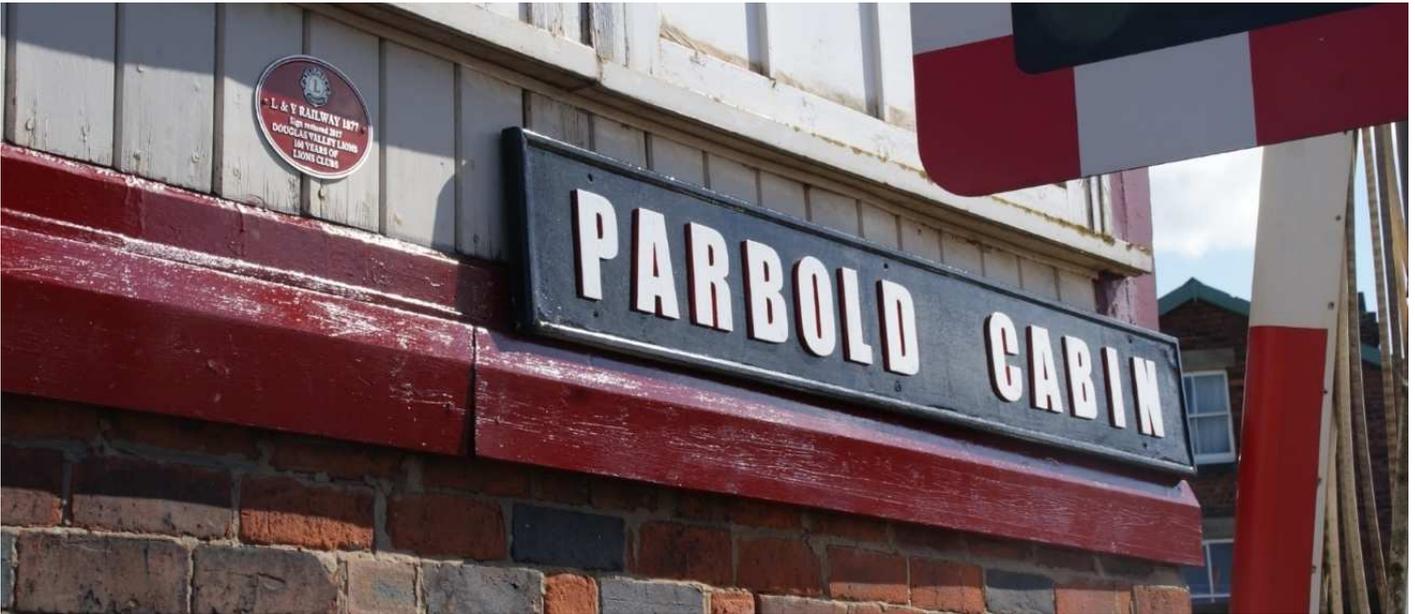
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Other photographs of the work of the Lancashire Community Rail Partnerships can be seen on www.communityrail Lancashire.co.uk, www.downtheline.org, www.dalesrail.com & <http://ribblevalleyrambler.wordpress.com>

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PARBOLD CABIN SIGNAL BOX



Standing guard over the level crossing in the middle of the village, Parbold Cabin Signal Box was built for the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway by Saxby & Farmer and opened in 1877. The cabin has been listed at Grade II by Historic England (list entry 1361805) as a building of architectural or historic interest. The box itself is a Saxby & Farmer type 9 box and was fitted with a 20 lever frame and was fitted with a new locking frame in 1983. It is perhaps the only box in the country which is still called a Cabin.

In 2017 the Friends of Parbold Station working with Network Rail and with funding from Douglas Valley Lions repaired the cabin name board. The repair work was carried out by Graham Mcleod, a member of the friends group.

The newly repaired nameboard was unveiled on 31st August 2017 and the photograph below includes representatives of Douglas Valley Lions, Friends of Parbold Station, Network Rail and Tom Leatherbarrow (now 104 years old) who was a former signalman at the box.

The cabin is unfortunately deteriorating and the friends group are keen for Network Rail to carry out urgent maintenance, including repainting, to restore the cabin to its former glory.



BENTHAM FLUSHED WITH SUCCESS

The North Yorkshire station of Bentham has been involved in a very different kind of twinning scheme. In August, Bentham station gained a second and unusual twin. A toilet used by the passengers and visitors to the station at North Yorkshire's Bentham Station has been twinned with a latrine in Guatemala, Central America. The latrine is located on the outskirts of a small village called Paquip, close to the town of Santa Clara La Laguna, in the Sololá region of Guatemala. It is situated on a mountain side overlooking Lake Atitlán. The precise location is: Latitude 14.709569° (North), Longitude 91.306574° (West). You can locate the site by entering the latitude and longitude into Google Earth or Google Maps and various websites will tell you more about that area.

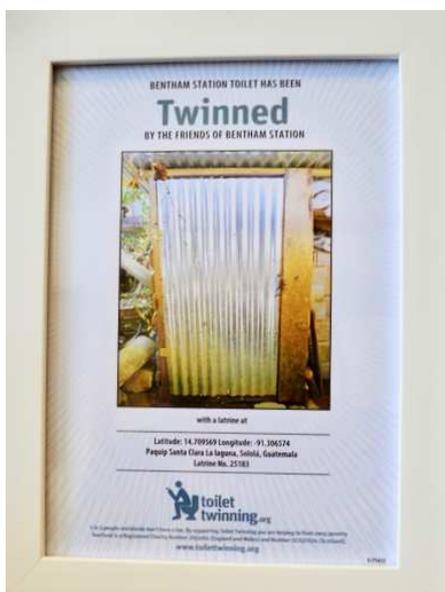
More than half the population of Guatemala live below the poverty line. Poverty is particularly prevalent among Guatemala's indigenous Mayan population, who tend to live in remote rural areas, often beyond the reach of state support. Up to 80% of the country's water sources are contaminated, particularly due to poor sanitation. Water-borne diseases are a significant contributor to high rates of mortality and malnutrition, especially among indigenous children.

Toilet Twinning is a water and sanitation initiative aimed at 'flushing away poverty, one toilet at a time'. By donating £60 to twin your toilet you help those in poverty to have access to a proper latrine, clean water and the information they need to be healthy.

Hopefully, this Friends of Bentham Station (FoBS) decision will encourage businesses, other groups and individuals in Bentham and the surrounding area, as well as other station adopters, to take part in the programme, which does not just cover Guatemala but also Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Tanzania and Uganda.

For more details about the 'Toilet Twinning' scheme visit www.toilettwinning.org

In addition, Bentham and Mytholmroyd stations, and their station adoption groups, have now been twinned for two years and second anniversary celebrations were held at Bentham on 14th September and at Mytholmroyd, in the Calder Valley, on 28th September. At the same time FoBS will be marking their seventh year since formation and Mytholmroyd their twelfth. Both groups continue to be recognised for their leading work in community involvement and in bringing the railway and communities closer to each other.



The toilet twinning certificate



Guests are welcomed by Gerald Townson to a damp Bentham on 14th September to celebrate the second anniversary of the station twinning

OTHER PROJECTS



Changing stations at Liverpool Central



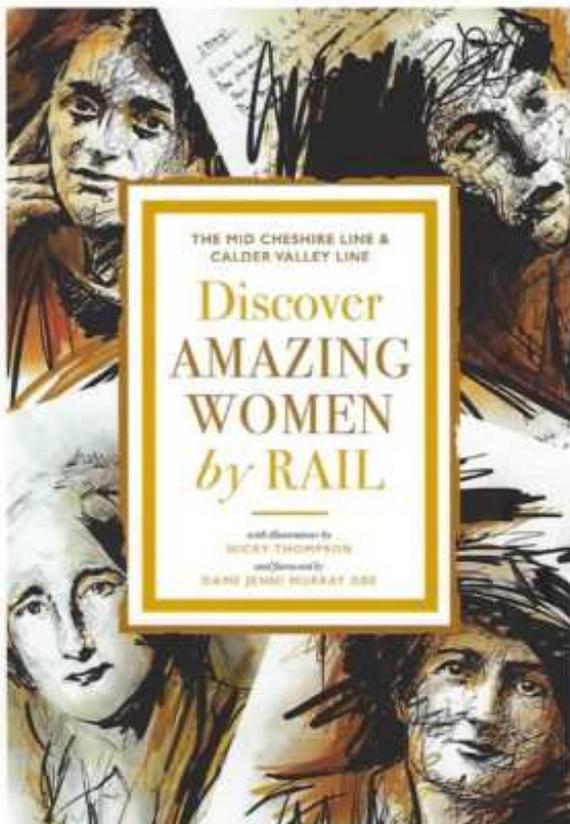
Twin Tracks at Burscough Junction



Bowland Explorer 2018



Princes Trust at Accrington



Amazing Women by Rail

Community Rail Lancashire has been involved in a number of other projects recently including those included shown here in photographs.

Changing stations was a dance performance held at Liverpool Central by Kirkby High School pupils.

Twin Tracks is a twinning project between St. John's RC Primary in Burscough and Sechseckshule Primary school in Erkrath, Germany.

The Bowland Explorer ran in 2018 for the second year linking the Bentham Line to the Forest of Bowland on summer Sundays.

Volunteers from the Princes Trust did a project in the garden at Accrington.

Discover Amazing Women by Rail is a joint project between the Mid-Cheshire CRP, Friends of Littleborough and CRL.

All these and many more stories can be found on the CRL website at www.crl.org.uk/news

TAIL PIECE

From Richard Watts

I know both at the start and the end it is too much! However, I know many of you aware that earlier this year I was diagnosed with an aggressive mantle cell lymphoma, a cancer formed in the bone marrow. It has certainly changed a lot for me and as the treatment has progressed so I have become less able to take part in meetings, events, conferences etc.

There are a number of things that have helped me cope. First and foremost, work. It gives me a focus! My consultants think I'm mad! Second it has been the stream of emails, cards, presents etc. wishing me well from friends and colleagues in the railway, CRPs and my preserved railway retreat. They really do help so don't stop!! The cards make a lovely backdrop in the bedroom.

Lastly, knowing that I have a reliable team at Accrington who keep things going and can handle the meetings etc. that I should have gone to. We do meet up from time to time for catch ups and to plan ahead and I get a regular stream of emails from them which is great.

I am about to have my sixth and final chemotherapy session about the time this RBTL is issued. One sorrow is that I won't be joining you all in Glasgow on Thursday. I hope everyone has a great time with enough jubilation for those who have shortlisted entries. I hope my team will keep me posted on our successes and disappointments.

We are now very close to launch of the new Community Rail Development Strategy. A land mark document when it was originally launched in 2004 when the landscape for railways was nowhere near as positive as it is now. The new CRDS will herald a change to the designation of lines and services but I am not about to do a spoiler for Kul. You will have to wait and see!!

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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