

BOLTON AND SOUTH LANCS COMMUNITY RAIL UPDATE

October 2019

This is an updated version of the old 'update' from Bolton Station Community Development Partnership, which it incorporates and gives a wider coverage of what's happening in community rail both at Bolton station and within the wider Bolton and South Lincs Community Rail Partnership. Read on!

The UK's newest community rail partnership

Bolton and South Lincs Community Rail Partnership is the UK's newest CRP, founded earlier this year, in June. It brings together the rail industry with a range of local stakeholders (public sector, private and community) to build strong and positive links between the railway and the communities it serves. The CRP covers four lines:

- Bolton to: Preston
- Bolton to Wigan
- Bolton to Bromley Cross (linking with Community Rail Lancashire, to Blackburn and Clitheroe)
- Bolton to Manchester (Victoria/Piccadilly)

A key part of our work as we develop will be to engage with the diverse communities served by the rail network. The CRP has been working hard to engage with the multi-ethnic communities in the Bolton area, with a degree of success. Bolton Hindu Forum and Bolton Asian Migration are involved in our work, together with Bolton City of Sanctuary and Bolton Inter-Faith Forum. We want to extend this further, along the routes that form part of the new CRP.

The CRP is a member of ACoRP and Bolton CVS and works closely with Community Rail Lancashire. We are currently at an advanced stage of discussion with ACoRP on gaining accreditation for the CRP and have produced the necessary policies to accompany our Activity Plan. Membership of the CRP is open to organisations in the area we cover - and is free. Please get in touch if you want to know more.

National Community Rail Awards

Bolton figured prominently in the national Community Rail Awards, held in Telford on October 3rd. Bolton Station Community Development Partnership (CDP) had three short-listed entries:

- Best Community Engagement Project
- Involving Diverse Groups
- It's Your Station

We didn't win any prizes, but it's a good start for what is still an embryonic project. We were represented at the event by Julie Levy, Frankie Hahlo and Richard Walker (with Paul Salveson and Linda Nuttall as guests of ACoRP). It was great to see Friends of Hindley Station winning the prestigious 'platinum' award in the 'It's Your Station' category. Our good friends in the Penistone Line Partnership, who visited Bolton earlier this year, won a first prize for their arts project, *Dwell Time*. Mytholmroyd Station Partnership, with whom we have close links with, won the ACoRP award for 'outstanding contribution to community rail'. Community Rail Lancashire, with whom we have shared membership, did particularly well. They won first prize in the 'involving children and young people' category for their *Stand Clear of the Closet Doors* project. They also picked up second prize

in 'involving diverse groups' for their *On Track to Train* project. They scored another first in the small projects award for *Bringing Sunshine to Morecambe*. Well done all of you.

CRP Funding agreed

The really good news for the community rail partnership is the award of three-year funding to enable us to employ a community rail officer. The job description has been agreed by the CRP management committee and we will be advertising what we hope will be a full-time job soon. The emphasis of the job will be very much on community development and social inclusion (you don't have to be a rail expert!) If you are interested in applying, please send an expression of interest to CRP Chair Paul Salveson in the meantime: paul.salveson@myphone.coop

Platform Gallery progress

The Platform Gallery on Bolton station, managed by the station partnership under the lead of Julie Levy, has now held three exhibitions. The current activity is a residency by local artist Phil Porter, starting on Monday – feel free to pop in and say hello if he's there. His exhibition ('The Journey') will begin on October 21. Phil will be giving a talk about his works, date to be confirmed. During November, Westhoughton artist Andy Smith has a residency and exhibition. Details next month. Other exhibitions are planned taking us through to next Summer. The gallery was recently awarded a generous grant by TransPennine Express to complete fitting out of the space.

City of Sanctuary walks: next one Saturday October 26th

Our next guided walk with Bolton City of Sanctuary is on Saturday October 26th. Meet at Bolton station at 12.15 for the 12.26 train to Farnworth for what we think will be a fascinating (and easy) walk around some real hidden gems of our area. Bring a packed lunch, strong footwear and waterproofs. If you want to be on the mailing list email us at boltonstationcdp@gmail.com

Christmas is coming: Market on the Station planned

The station partnership is hoping to have a Christmas Market on Platform 4/5, complementing Bolton's well-established Christmas Market in the town centre. Final date to be agreed but it's looking very much like December 14th. We want to have a mix of community groups and small businesses bringing a seasonal flavour to the station. The event will build on our successful 'Food and Drink Fringe Festival' on August 24th, which attracted 25 stalls and hundreds of visitors. Let us know if you'd like a stall – as before, it is free of charge. boltonstationcdp@gmail.com

Platform Planters

The station partnership now has a small group formed to develop the station gardening activity. 'Platform Planters' have had their first meeting and are hoping to develop some ideas for making the space at the south end of platforms 4/5 into an attractive and welcoming space.

Station Developments

Discussions between the University of Bolton, Network Rail and Northern re the lease for the 'community space' are on-going but there are hopes of completion soon. The university has exciting plans to use space upstairs on Platforms 4/5 for community arts projects and student incubation units. One issue that we are trying to address is accessibility to the upstairs area. An 'Access for All' application is being submitted to the Department for Transport for a lift, and we hope to hear if it's successful fairly soon. Separate discussions on the commercial unit on Platform 4 are coming to a conclusion soon and we hope to welcome a very positive addition to the station!

Next open meeting: Bolton's Community Sector

The next meeting of the station partnership will be on Tuesday October 22nd at 6.30 for 7.00pm/19.00. Darren Knight chief executive of Bolton CVS, will be talking about Bolton's thriving community sector and where he sees the sector going in the future. All welcome, tea and coffee from 6.30.

Clock Tower Trails

One of the winners at the ACoRP Community Rail Awards was the Heart of Wales Line Development Company for its 'Heart of Wales Line Trail'. This is a linear 150 mile trail that shadows the scenic Heart of Wales Line from Craven Arms to Llanelli. We have something a bit similar in mind – four self-guided walks from Bolton Station's iconic clock tower, shadowing all of the CRP's routes – to Preston, Wigan, Manchester and Blackburn. Each of the four routes will link in to stations along the way, using existing public rights of way and featuring places of historic and community interest, as well as pubs, cafes and attractions. People will be encouraged to take the train to a local station and walk back, or vice-versa, with all walks possible in stages (unless you're super fit and can do each one in a day, a bit of a stretch). We need volunteers to help, particularly people willing to walk potential routes. Contact Paul if you're interested paul.salveson@myphone.coop

Lancashire Day: November 27th

The CRP is working with Northern to celebrate Lancashire Day on Wednesday November 27th. Current plans are being finalised but it is likely to feature reserved space on a Manchester – Preston service, returning to Bolton for a buffet lunch in the Community Room. There will be entertainment on the train. In the evening we are working with local brewery tap, Wayoh (near Blackrod station) for a Lancashire Night, from 7.00pm. Music, poetry and food.

Website: The CRP is getting a website created and we hope it will go live very soon. Watch this space for www.communityrailbolton.org.uk. In the meantime, all enquiries can be emailed to boltonstationcdp@gmail.com

Bolton's Railway and Industrial Heritage

The station partnership and CRP are both strongly committed to promoting Bolton's important industrial and social heritage. We want to feature photographs and artefacts at and around the station and are open to accept donations of suitable items. Ideally, we need a 'Bolton Heritage' group based at the station which can develop ideas, produce leaflets and booklets and curate what we hope would be a growing collection. **Email us at boltonstationcdp@gmail.com if you'd like to be involved**

Bolton Model Railway Club

The club is meeting each Monday and Tuesday in the Community Room on Platform 5, at 7.00pm. They had the launch of their layout at the August 24th 'Food and Drink' event and they are continuing to develop the layout and do other projects. If you're interested in being involved, pop down and see them or they're on facebook [@boltonmodelrailwayclub](https://www.facebook.com/boltonmodelrailwayclub) or boltonmodelrailwayclub@gmail.com

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