



# Community Rail Report 2019/20



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# 1. Introduction

## Welcome

Welcome to our annual Community Rail Report, a celebration of engagement and outreach undertaken by community rail partnerships (CRPs), station adoption groups, Northern colleagues and other partners.

Community groups on the Northern network have always been at the forefront of community engagement and, as this report shows, 2019/20 was no exception. Of course, everything came to a stop in March 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic and we must acknowledge the significant efforts made by so many of the groups we work with. When many of their traditional activities were halted so abruptly, they tackled the difficult challenges with virtual engagement and planning.

Prior to March, it was another strong year for community engagement across the Northern network. An increasing number of communities and individuals benefitted from initiatives and projects that break down barriers, foster a more inclusive society and build foundations for a more sustainable future.

We are firmly committed to showcasing the great work of groups across our network and to share best practice. Our 2019 Community Rail Conference did just that with a selection of presentations, workshops and the ever-popular marketplace. Guests heard from some very powerful speakers about what community rail can mean for those who participate in projects.

We are also improving the community section on our website ([northernrailway.co.uk/community](https://northernrailway.co.uk/community)) to help raise the profile of community engagement across the region and beyond, publishing case studies and sharing ideas to encourage more people to get involved.

At this year's community rail awards hosted by ACoRP (now the Community Rail Network), it was wonderful to see recognition for the efforts of many groups we work with. We were so pleased to see their dedication and commitment honoured on a national stage. Projects supporting some of the most vulnerable in our society took category prizes and we must give special mention to Julie Gibbon from Tyne Valley CRP who won Outstanding Volunteer, and Mytholmroyd Station Partnership which scooped the top prize of the Outstanding Contribution to Community Rail.



In April 2019 Tyne Valley CRP became the first on the Northern network to achieve accreditation under the Department for Transport's new process, replacing designation, which demonstrates that partnerships have met appropriate standards for operation. We've welcomed its introduction and have aligned our service level agreements with CRPs to support this process. Most CRPs on our network are now either accredited or have been recommended for accreditation and we are working with the Community Rail Network to support those remaining partnerships through this process.

Community rail continues to grow and thrive in the North and this year we welcomed the formation of a new CRP – Bolton and South Lancashire. You won't see a profile on them yet because they had just started recruiting for an officer as we were putting this report together, but building on the strong community foundations of the Bolton station community development partnership, I know they'll have plenty to share in the future.

And we've welcomed a number of new station adoption groups this year, with nearly 80% of our stations now adopted. We also added a new station into our estate with the opening of Warrington West and continue to

seek new and diverse groups who want to engage their community in their local station and vice versa.

The case studies section of this report highlights the range of projects supported by our seed corn and station adoption funds. The funds were well used this year and we have been encouraged by both the level of applications and the third-party funding they have attracted.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our review of community engagement last year. As you'll read in the report, we've improved the application processes and strengthened our service level agreements. We'll continue this work throughout 2020/21.

In last year's report we highlighted how community engagement was becoming a key part of Northern's early career programmes, including our apprenticeships and Year In Industry cohorts. Creating and delivering their own community projects, supported by our partners, provides the opportunity for developing valuable skills such as budget planning, project management and collaboration. Cohorts from both programmes have worked with Community Rail Lancashire and the Leeds–Morecambe CRP to deliver educational and transport integration projects. Our current cohorts are developing their plans for 2020 and we look forward to sharing their projects next year.

Northern's dynamic approach to community engagement and sustainability remains guided by the Community Rail Executive Group (ComREG), made up of rail industry, and community and sustainability representatives. Through ComREG we ensure that the core funding to CRPs and a further £600,000 per annum

to advance the wider community rail agenda, delivers great projects and maximum value to our customers, our railways and our communities.

All the projects and initiatives showcased in this report were undertaken as part of the Arriva Rail North franchise, one that delivered groundbreaking levels of investment and support for community rail in the region. Our thanks go to Arriva colleagues for their support and guidance over the last four years. As this report was being prepared, ownership of the Northern franchise transferred to Directly Operated Railway Holdings Limited (DOHL). In terms of community rail and community engagement we are committed to building on the strong foundations that have been laid, enabling this work to go from strength to strength.

With so many exciting community rail and engagement projects and initiatives taking place across Northern's network, this report can only give a glimpse of what is happening. However, I'm sure you will appreciate the positive impact the complete range of activities have on supporting local communities, championing the most vulnerable and isolated in society and helping to deliver a more sustainable future for all.



**Carolyn Watson**

community and sustainability director

## 2. Community Rail Report

### 2.1 Community Rail Partnerships

We can confirm that following detailed discussions with each partnership about their plans and the funding required for those plans, we have agreed Service Level Commitments (SLC) with all of the community rail partnerships (CRPs) across Northern. In 2019 we reviewed and updated the SLCs.

### 2.2 Funding for Community Rail Partnerships

2020/21 will be the second year of this three-year cycle of funding. The three-year cycle was agreed to help mitigate instability of funding from other sources and help CRPs develop long-term plans.

Since the funding levels were agreed ahead of the 2019/20 year there have been a small number of changes. From 2020/21, Bolton and South Lancashire CRP - recently established and accredited - has been included. It had been anticipated that the Barton–Cleethorpes line would transfer to the East Midlands Railway (EMR) franchise in August 2019, however while the line hasn't transferred yet EMR honoured its pro rata funding to the CRP in 2019/20 and will provide core funding for 2020/21.

In distributing funding for CRPs we have remained mindful of the Secretary of State's current published Community Rail Development Strategy.

CRP	Region	2019	2020	2021
Settle-Carlisle	East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Leeds-Morecambe (Bentham line)	East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Barton-Cleethorpes*	East	£11,530	N/A	N/A
Yorkshire Coast	East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Penistone line	East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
North Notts and Lincs	East	£8,200	£8,421	£8,421
Bishop line	North East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Tyne Valley	North East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Esk Valley	North East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
South Fylde	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
West of Lancashire	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Cumbrian Coast	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Furness line	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Lakes line	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
North Cheshire	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Mid Cheshire	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
East Lancashire	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Clitheroe line	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
South East Manchester	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Crewe-Manchester	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
High Peak/Hope Valley	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,362
Bolton and South Lancashire	Central	N/A	£28,362	£28,362
New CRP Fund share		16,087	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£560,540</b>	<b>£575,661</b>	<b>£575,661</b>

\*2019 payment was pro rata, the line was due to transfer to the new EMR franchise in August 2019. While the line did not transfer as planned, EMR honoured its pro rata payment until 31 March 2020 and has confirmed core funding for 2020/21.

### 2.3 Community Rail Conference

'Celebrating community rail' was the theme of the 2019 conference held in Leeds on Monday 9 September.

Over 150 guests attended from CRPs, station adoption groups and other community partners across the network. The event showcased the dedication of community partners in making stations more attractive places to visit, working with local schools or community groups to encourage more people to travel by train, breaking down some of the barriers (real or perceived) that may prevent people using rail and engaging with often isolated groups.

Guests heard some powerful case studies from groups and individuals about the difference community rail can make, including young people taking part in positive social action in challenging circumstances in South

Yorkshire; a personal experience of benefitting from a community rail project 'Stand Clear of the Closet Doors!' which set out to help create a safe space for young LGBTQIA+ people on the network. They also heard how community rail groups engage across wider local networks and get involved in a host of disciplines such as tourism, supporting the local economy and education.

The afternoon included workshops from Northern's environment team, Women in Community Rail and Community Rail Cumbria on their ongoing project at Northern stations working with people rehabilitating from drug and alcohol abuse and the sense of pride and self-worth that this has helped some of those individuals to rebuild. The 'marketplace' hosted a range of Northern and industry colleagues and other organisations such as the National Literacy Trust, Canals and Rivers Trust, Dwell Time and National Citizen Service.





## 2.4 Northern Engagement Programme

### NCS

With its stated aim of making the world a fairer, kinder, more compassionate place, the government's National Citizen Service (NCS) is a voluntary personal and social development programme for 16-17 year-olds.

With a positive 'yes' attitude, the programme works with businesses such as Northern, sports clubs and grassroots organisations, and has helped over half a million young people gain greater self-confidence and communication skills, encouraging them to give back to their local community.

#### Summer 2019

Northern has partnered NCS for the past three years, supporting a range of volunteer social action projects, called Challenges, across East region.

One of the biggest strengths of Northern's collaboration with NCS is how it has increased confidence in rail travel among young people, opening up opportunities for them in terms of social mobility, employment and ease of access to work, life and play. They also learn transferrable skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and timekeeping, all essential skills in further education and employment.

During the summer of 2019, around 1,000 young people learned about Northern's commitment to diversity and inclusion, rail safety and behaviour, Northern's employment opportunities, and its commitment to the

environment and sustainable low carbon rail travel. Some of the young people lived in rural areas with limited or no access to public transport, including rail. Others were from urban areas and relied on parents for transport. The partnership with Northern/NCS let them experience rail travel – some for the first time – with Northern's staff on hand to assist or answer questions.

#### Presenting to the heart of government

The Department for Transport (DfT) invited Northern and NCS to attend a conference for its senior staff in October "to gain a better understanding of how the rail sector can better service communities and young people." Six young people and two NCS staff shared with the DfT about the support Northern had given them and their communities.

In December, Northern representatives also attended the Inclusive Leadership conference in London to support the DfT in sharing its vision for diversity and inclusion in government. The event was chaired by Bernadette Kelly, DfT permanent secretary, and was aimed at directors and senior civil servants across government departments.

At both events Northern showcased its approach to youth engagement and diversity and inclusion, and described its work to create a diverse workforce that reflects its communities.





### English Football League Trust

The English Football League (EFL) Trust works in partnership with Northern/NCS helping young people across Yorkshire and Humber regions in a variety of ways, including introducing them to train travel, timetables, rail safety, increasing their knowledge about careers and employment in the industry and developing greater connection with their communities.

Said Richard Isaac, EFL Trust's community and sustainability manager: "It is truly inspirational to hear the passion young people had for supporting their local communities and what they feel about Northern, rail travel and all of the social action projects they deliver."

Supported by Community Rail Partnerships, the partnership in 2019 resulted in more than 25,000 hours of social action invested in local projects, equating to £206,674 of economic value to the communities.

The EFL Trust plans to evaluate the partnership in 2020 to understand more about how young people and communities have benefited from Northern/NCS, and to highlight areas for development.

During 2020, 22 delivery partners from the football, rugby league and cricket communities along with several non-sporting third sector organisations will offer NCS places to more than 9,000 young people across the region.



## Educational activities

Northern continues to work with and support many educational activities and projects that promote diversity and inclusion, and increase awareness of training and career opportunities in the industry.

### **Ticket to Pride**

It is imperative that all young people from diverse groups and backgrounds feel included in rail both to travel and become future rail employees. For this reason, Northern has supported Community Rail Lancashire's and the Proud Trust's Ticket to Pride project to help LGBTQIA+ young people to feel safe using public transport by challenging behaviour and celebrating pride through artwork.

In 2019, a public art installation went up at major stations throughout the North West to celebrate the region's Pride events. An art trail across the rail network is also being produced and will be used as a tourist initiative for use by families in supporting LGBTQIA+ lives.

### **Women in Rail**

At the Women in Rail conference, six apprentices from different parts of the industry spoke about their roles and responsibilities. Other speakers included Cllr Kim Groves, the first woman in charge of transport policy and planning in West Yorkshire. Her powerful presentation on the region's challenges in terms of transportation and climate change emphasised the need for women to be involved at the highest level of decision making.

### **Women in STEM**

Northern actively supports Women in STEM (previously called Women who Wander), led by CRL. The initiative

aims to help make the rail industry a more equal, diverse and inclusive place and particularly wants to attract more women. During the year, several CRPs arranged visits where they could meet Northern staff and Year in Industry students to gain a valuable insight into the opportunities available.

CRL, supported by Northern and LNER, also organised visits for A-level students to the Hitachi Rail plant in Newton Aycliffe to learn about various roles in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) available to women. The visits included a tour of the factory to see some of the trains currently in production.

Students were asked to write some inspirational poetry or prose after their visit to Hitachi. Masie Eccles from Keighley College was presented with an award at the Women in STEM event for these words:

I'm tangled in my wires, my brain is fused to be,  
your harsh words are hurting.  
It's never stopping me.  
I've got a plan, and I don't need reminding that I'm not  
a man,  
No I don't need your help, no I don't need a hand.  
I don't need a man's assistance to show my plan will  
land.  
I tell them, "be wise!" you'll soon be working for me,  
They laugh in my face,  
I exclaim,  
"You'll see  
You'll see  
You'll see"



### Careers initiatives

Bradford's pioneering Careers and Technical Education (CTE) and Industrial Centres of Excellence (ICE) initiatives to promote careers in engineering are actively supported by East region, Northern, CRL and LNER.

As women - especially those from the BAME community - are particularly under-represented in the rail industry, plenty of work goes on with local education groups to help pupils and students understand the career opportunities available to them. The City of Bradford MDC Careers and Technical Education Partnership has established an excellent relationship with the rail industry to deliver real results to young people in the district. This relationship shows how resources made available by the industry can be successfully targeted at communities that would benefit the most.

### Schools

Reaching out to schools is one of the main strengths for Northern. Many of the CRPs have a close relationship with schools in their area helping them to deliver the national curriculum in a variety of ways.

Supported by Northern and their CRP, many schools have adopted their local station. Children from Lanercost primary school worked with Tyne Valley CRP in 2019 to adopt Brampton Junction station. They have given it a new look with a large mosaic depicting their local countryside, and plenty of flowers.



For the platform at their local station in Seaham, pupils from St Mary Magdalen primary school created a mosaic planter decorated with Seaham glass they had collected from the beach.

Wherever possible, CRPs helped SEND schools. For example, pupils from Gibside SEND school travelled by train from Gateshead's Metrocentre station to Tyne Valley CRP's educational centre at Haltwhistle where they enjoyed learning about the railway and safety using maths, English, geography, role play and PSHE skills.

During the year, dozens of children took their first ever trip on a train thanks to their CRP. Just two of the many examples are the Bradford pupils who were taken to



# WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DONCASTER'S RAILWAY HERITAGE?

## DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE MAGIC OF MOTION?

At August 2019, The East York College (Learning Excellence) The great question was 'Do we understand the magic of motion?'

**The Learning targets were:**

- Understand the history of the railway in the area.
- Understand the impact of the railway on the local community.
- Understand the role of the railway in the industrial revolution.
- Understand the role of the railway in the modern world.
- Understand the role of the railway in the future.

**Our learning:**

- Understand the history of the railway in the area.
- Understand the impact of the railway on the local community.
- Understand the role of the railway in the industrial revolution.
- Understand the role of the railway in the modern world.
- Understand the role of the railway in the future.

**Our products:**

- Informational text.
- Diagrams.
- Posters.
- Presentations.

**Thank you:**

- Green Top Primary School.
- XP.
- greentopschool.co.uk/blog

Leeds City station for a session on safety hosted by Northern, Leeds City FC and the Transport Police, and the Y9 classes from Preston’s Muslim School for Girls who had tours of Manchester Piccadilly station and Newton Heath depot.

Northern’s Asma Patel has made many visits to primary schools in the area, sharing fascinating stories about her work as a train conductor and helping children aspire to interesting jobs. The Asian girls were enthralled to learn that Asma was the first Asian female conductor in Leeds.

In 2019 the Green Top primary school in South Yorkshire

adopted Thorne North and Thorne South stations. It chose The Magic of Motion as a key project to learn about the area’s rich industrial, mining and railway heritage.

Over several months pupils visited both stations, plus Doncaster, to learn more about trains – steam, diesel and electric – and how to stay safe on the railway.

At a special event in December, their project and a large panel for the platform on railway heritage was displayed to over 250 parents, community representatives, stakeholders and educational professionals.

## 2.5 Seed Corn Fund

RECIPIENT ORGANISATION	PROJECT
Settle-Carlisle Development Company	Stone and glass Appleby shelter
SENRUG (station adopters)	Feasibility study for local services north of Morpeth
Hope Valley station adoption groups	Hope Valley 125
Friends of Fitzwilliam	Art project for station footbridge
Community Rail Lancashire	Ticket to Pride
	Clitheroe station project
	Autism-Friendly Line
	Story sacks
	Reasoning Express
	Women in Stem
	Burnley Manchester Road - A4A feasibility
Community Rail Cumbria	Broken Lives Mended
Tyne Valley CRP	Our Place
Mytholmroyd CIO	Architect for station building project
North Notts & Lincs CRP	Mini Imps - school engagement
Penistone Line Partnership	50 Things to Do Before You Are 5
	Dwell Time
Esk Valley RDC	Wild About our Station
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£104,718</b>

The main purpose of the seed corn fund is to help kickstart projects that encourage innovation, inclusion and community engagement across Northern's network.

Seed corn funding means that CRPs can undertake initial research and development work on these projects and produce business cases. This, in turn, can unlock other funding opportunities to allow the projects to proceed. Seed corn funding can be used as match funding but this is not a requirement.

With the help of a group of volunteers, the fund's application process was reviewed in 2019 to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of Northern and the applicants.

### Case Studies

The following examples show some of the range of projects that CRPs are undertaking and have requested seed corn funding for.



### Uniting the Community

Early in 2019 the Friends of Fitzwilliam station and Kinsley & Fitzwilliam learning & community centre approached Northern with a vision to tackle an issue that literally divided them.

The ex-mining community of Fitzwilliam near Wakefield had effectively been cut in half because the station's footbridge that linked their village was covered with graffiti and seen by many as a no-go area because of anti-social behaviour.

Their vision to reclaim the footbridge would also promote diversity and inclusion by breaking down barriers, bringing people together and creating a sense of shared ownership. Train travellers would have a much better experience too.

It was agreed that a 12-panel mural should be created to span the footbridge and link both communities. During 2019, Northern worked with Edgelands Arts, Friends of Fitzwilliam station, Wakefield council, volunteers, youth groups,

local schools and Kinsley & Fitzwilliam learning and community centre to make this happen.

Each panel on the mural represents a house on Railway Terrace facing the station and through each window is a view of Fitzwilliam that has special significance to the community. The images were taken with disposable cameras over a 12-month period by local people of all ages, both new to the area and long-established residents.

In April, many of them came together for a special lunch (complete with 1.5m long cake) provided by local businesses and the community centre, where

they saw the blueprints for their new-look bridge.

In June, a group of volunteers from across Wakefield including staff from Northern and Network Rail, rolled up their sleeves and painted the footbridge in preparation for the artwork installation.

As a thank you for the community's hard work, Northern put on a special charter service to take them to Leeds.

In July 2019, over 90 children and local representatives gathered at Fitzwilliam station to launch the very special art project that had brought their community together in more ways than one.



### From Seats to Sacks

An innovative project aimed at increasing literacy skills is also helping to reduce social isolation.

From Seats to Sacks is a project that turns railway moquette into story sacks for primary school children in Bradford. The idea came from Community Rail Lancashire's education development officer Karen Bennet. She had previously taught in Bradford and knew how poor its literacy levels were.

Realising how popular Network Rail's Stay Safe with Thomas book is with children Karen thought it could be used as part of a story sack, to support literacy while teaching children about rail safety.

A story sack is a large cloth bag containing a children's picture book with supporting materials to bring the book to life, such as soft toys of the main characters, items relating to the story, a non-fiction element and perhaps a game.

Many primary schools have a library of story sacks which they loan to families to help encourage children to enjoy reading at home.

Initially, it was thought that old moquette from refurbished trains could be upcycled into the sacks. Jenny Dempsey, fleet refurbishment manager at Northern, provided a large bag of material but even after it was washed several times, the prototype still looked dirty and worn. Refurbishment company

Diamond Seating then stepped in and donated a new roll of seat cloth.

The next step was to find a group to sew the sacks. Keen to engage vulnerable members of the community, Karen contacted Muslim Women in Prison, a charity that supports former prisoners who are often ostracised and suffer from low self-esteem, anxiety and self-isolation.

A group of women soon came together, working tirelessly on Saturday mornings with expert sewing guidance from learning support assistant Shazia Awan. They made the sacks and filled them with flags, whistles, books, toy trains, a high vis jacket and of course the books, donated by Network Rail.

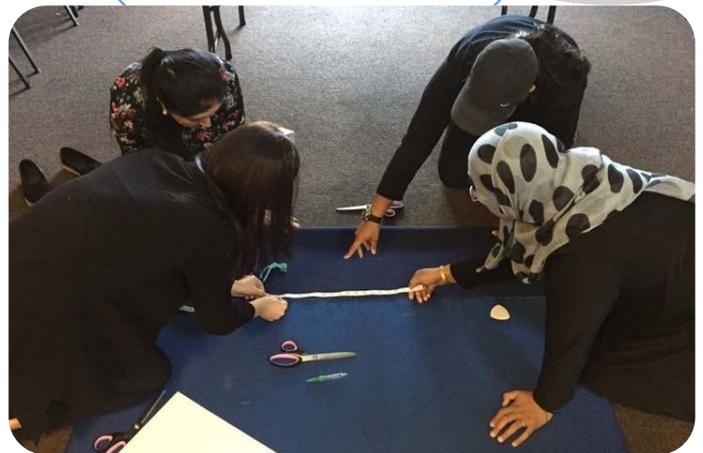
Most of the women had never travelled on a train before so, to improve their personal railway confidence, they were taken on rail journeys with their families to the National Railway Museum in York and the Manchester Christmas markets. After learning how easy it was to go out with the family by train, many said they would do it again.

For the women, making the sacks went beyond learning new sewing skills. Friendships were formed and confidence grew, especially on the trips out on the railway. One mother said it was the first time she had left the house with her family for seven years.

From Seats to Sacks was launched in October at Kala Sangam, the intercultural arts hub in Bradford. The event was attended by the city's mayor, Cllr Doreen Lee, who praised the project and encouraged all involved to continue to share in its success.

Since the launch, members of Community Rail Partnerships in the North have collected 50 story sacks to engage with their local schools. Community Rail Lancashire has some for use with children throughout the county. Story sacks have been given to Community Rail Cumbria, the Penistone Line Partnership, the Leeds-Morecambe CRP (The Bentham Line), Settle-Carlisle Railway, Tyne Valley Line, Bishop Line, the Esk Valley Line and station Friends' groups to support engagement between schools and the railway.

And of course, several story sacks have gone to schools in Bradford attended by the children of the Muslim Women in Prison.





## DWELL TIME

### Dwell Time

The Penistone Line Partnership (PLP) has published a free arts publication, Dwell Time, reflecting on mental wellbeing. It features selected contributions of art, poetry and writing and is available from stations, Huddersfield centre, and various arts and community events. It is also available to download.

The first issue was launched in March 2019 and thanks to funding from PLP, ACoRP, Northern and CrossCountry, Issue 2 will arrive in March 2020 with Issue 3 hopefully being published in 2021.

It's been a busy year for the Dwell Time team with a programme of workshops, films and community interviews. There is also an art trail at stations along the Penistone Line plus South Yorkshire stations and Handforth station.

Films featuring interviews and looking at the work of Dwell Time are on the website [dwelltimepress.wordpress.com](http://dwelltimepress.wordpress.com) and on Facebook.

There has been plenty of praise for the project, with several personal testimonies saying how it has made a positive difference to people's lives.

In recognition of the impact it has had, Dwell Time received the Community Rail Awards 2019: Community Art Schemes – Renewable & Smaller Award.

The publication is curated by Alice Bradshaw, Vanessa Haley and Lenny Szrama.

On railways Dwell Time is the time a train spends at a scheduled stop without moving. Typically, this time is spent boarding or alighting passengers, but it may also be spent waiting for traffic ahead to clear, or idling time in order to get back on schedule.

### Autism-Friendly Railway Line

In July 2019 Community Rail Lancashire, in partnership with Northern and working with the National Autistic Society, delivered the UK's first autism-friendly railway line.

This project specifically aims to address some of the needs faced by autistic people and others with less-visible disabilities when travelling by rail, including better information, improved staff training and more available resources.

It originated from an identified local need through work with special needs schools in the Blackburn and Accrington areas. School staff had identified a reluctance, and in some cases a deeper worry, on the part of parents and guardians regarding taking young people with disabilities on the railway network.

It is important that autistic people and their families can access all opportunities within society; this includes confident use of public transport to access leisure, healthcare, employment and education.

Working closely with multiple groups of young people with less-visible disabilities, their families and the National Autistic Society, CRL developed the project with a number of features designed to inspire confident, independent and comfortable rail travel.

These features include line guides for the route between Blackburn to Manchester Victoria via Todmorden, giving comprehensive travel and accessibility information for each station, as well as links to local businesses with autism-friendly facilities. The guides include activities and were comprehensively reviewed by young people and adults with lived experience to ensure they contained all the information that might be needed to travel confidently by rail.

Another key aspect of the project is the training delivered to Northern staff by the National Autistic Society, ensuring that they are well-equipped to assist every passenger and communicate as effectively as possible. The staffed stations along the route were also stocked with ear defenders and

sunglasses, aiming to give passengers the option of mediating sensory changes in the environment.

The feedback was 100% positive from the 55 attendees (largely families with lived experience) to the inaugural autism-friendly service. They said the trip was well-planned and easy, and felt confident enough to use the line and resources in future. The line map identifying the location and length of tunnels was seen as particularly useful in managing stressful situations relating to sensory change.

Without public understanding, autistic people and their families are at risk of being isolated and developing mental health problems. It is believed that there are around 700,000 people on the autism spectrum in the UK – more than 1 in 100, and this figure is rising. When families are included, autism is a part of daily life for at least 2.8 million people.

More information and a video are at [downtheline.org.uk/projects/autism-friendly-line/](https://downtheline.org.uk/projects/autism-friendly-line/)



**"As a parent,  
this autism-friendly line  
gives me confidence that my son  
can travel safely and have staff on  
the trains that he can approach  
for help and understanding  
if needed!"**

Tina Hindle, parent

**"Time to  
start exploring with ease!"**

Gemma Linley,  
parent

**"Amazing.  
Very friendly staff who  
couldn't do enough for everyone.  
Thank you so much for inviting  
us to be a part of this  
innovative journey."**

Jane Harrison,  
teacher

**"Friendly, welcoming  
and helpful - thank you!"**

Lucy Livesey,  
young attendee

## 2.6 Station Adoption Scheme

The purpose of the station adoption scheme is to encourage and support members of the local community who wish to adopt - or have already adopted - a local station. Station adoption groups typically work in collaboration with the relevant CRP where one exists on the line.

Benefits of station adoption:

- Benefit to local community and customers. A station adoption group can transform unstaffed, rural or 'problem' stations into friendly, safe places.
- Benefit to the rail industry. More people are attracted to use the train.
- Benefit to business. An affordable space for a small café or local craft shop on a small station could be the next step up, engaging local businesses and supporting local economies.

During 2019/20 Northern allocated over £60,000 to help fund station adoption projects.

## Case Studies

### Central Region

#### Levenshulme

Pupils at Alma Park Primary School have reinstated an iconic piece of sign language artwork at Levenshulme station.

Supported by Northern, Friends of Levenshulme station and ACoRP, the project was designed to highlight the work done at the school with hearing-impaired and deaf children.

The inspiring and educational artwork features the hands of 11 hearing-impaired children from the school using sign language to spell Levenshulme. It replaces a previous similar piece that was removed long ago following water damage.

Sign language is highly valued as one of the many languages used in the school community and the pupils benefit hugely from the expertise of the specialist signing staff.

The children were excited and proud to see photos of their hands on display and it is a tribute to the inclusive nature of the Levenshulme community that British Sign Language is promoted in such a public and permanent form.





## Goostrey

On a Sunday in March 2019, between sunshine and showers, Friends of Goostrey Station (FOGS) took time out of their monthly working party at the station to celebrate two events.

First, Bill MacDonald mounted the 2019 Campaigns Award from the Cheshire Best Kept Station Awards on the wall of the bridge beside the Manchester platform – alongside the four previous awards. This latest one recognised the effort over a number of years that finally resulted in the repair of the Victorian wooden building.

Secondly, a plaque in memory of the late Cyril Caulkin was unveiled by his son Andrew, and attended by Cyril's brother Keith, two grandchildren and several friends.

Just before the unveiling, Cyril's friend Peter Godfrey talked about how they both started Friends of Goostrey Station in 2012. He said that Cyril was a larger than life figure, with an infectious smile and a twinkle in his eye, who made every FOGS volunteer feel appreciated and valued. He was, said Peter, the glue that held the group together, adding that his friend would have loved to see the Victorian building so beautifully restored, and that the group was still working to improve the station.



## Glossop

Father Christmas had a special present for Glossop station friends' group chairman and ACoRP volunteer of the year, Neil Williams.

More than 70 children and their families came for the Santa Special day held in Glossop station's waiting room. As well as fun and games, there was music from local folk group Spindrift, and the chance to make Christmas tree decorations. The tree lights were switched on by Northern colleagues who thanked Glossop station friends and staff for their hard work in keeping the station looking so attractive.

Then came Neil's surprise present. Rebecca gave him a large parcel which he unwrapped to discover a class 323 'Glossop' destination blind.

Local trains are currently undergoing refurbishment and their roller destination blinds are being replaced by digital versions. Northern's gift to Neil and the Friends of Glossop station came from a train that regularly ran on the Manchester Piccadilly-Hadfield line.

One of Northern's refurbished class 323 units was specially requested to be in use on that particular day. One of the children proudly gave the driver the tree decoration he'd just made and saw it displayed in the cab.

The event also included a popular seasonal interactive model railway layout provided by Glossop Model Railway Society.

## East Region

### Bingley and Crossflatts

In just 18 months since it was established the station adoption group has achieved much, with big plans for the future.

It has refurbished the Bingley tunnel sign, sandblasting the original and repainting in heritage colours.

It has also removed self-seeded saplings and decades of rubbish from the garden on platform 1, and received grants for giant planters at Bingley and Crossflatts stations. Having established a good relationship with Bingley town council, the group gets donations of spring bulbs plus summer and winter bedding plants each year for the planters.

The group also received funding to produce publicity material, and has been featured in the local media.

Supported by Bingley town council and local MP Philip Davies the group successfully campaigned to Network Rail for refurbishment of the dilapidated buildings around Bingley station. A programme of works began in 2019.

Thanks to the group's efforts, there is now a Five-Rise Locks themed garden on platform 2 at Bingley. This feature, representing an important tourist landmark in the town, was supported by grants from Bingley town council, Shipley area community trust and Northern. The garden consists of an 8m planter shaped liked a narrow boat with illusion posts sunk into the ground representing the five locks on the Leeds Liverpool Canal, between Bingley and Crossflatts stations. The garden is a tranquil spot at the end of the platform, where station users now walk to for a closer look. It is teeming with butterflies,

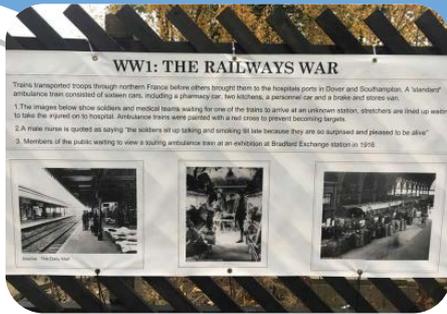


bees and other insects throughout the summer, while laurel chippings provide an ideal environment for mushrooms. The project was filmed by Northern as an example of what station Friends groups can achieve.

Future plans include a finger spelling project at Bingley and possibly Crossflatts to raise awareness of the deaf community and provide a more enjoyable experience for station users. There will also be Incredible Edibles, providing herbs and edible plants for commuters to pick and take home.

The group has plenty of other ideas to bring colour and interest to both stations. It's hoped that bricked-up windows, doors and walkways on the platforms will be transformed with colourful artwork and history boards created with the help of community groups.





## North East Region

### Todmorden and Walsden

Todmorden station is an important gateway to the town, made attractive by the small group of volunteers who organise, plant and maintain the displays.



The award-winning WW1 exhibition can still be seen around the station, depicting the involvement of the townspeople and the railway in the 1914-18 war. The group was proud to attend the rededication of a recently discovered Roll of Honour of the Railway Workers from Newton Heath Depot.

On a very damp and misty day in April, BBC2's Britain in Bloom filmed the preparations for summer displays in the station and around town. The programme highlighted the collaborative work done with other local groups and led to interest from new volunteers. It has formed part of several tourism and promotional videos advertising the town and station adoption groups.



Each year Todmorden in Bloom enters the town and station in the Yorkshire in Bloom competition, and has won gold and silver gift awards for the town.

In 2019 Walsden station was amalgamated with the Friends of Todmorden station, and two large planters were purchased to brighten up the platform with more items to come. The Walsden Scarecrow Festival had the theme of Film, and the group entered with The Railway Children.



### Morpeth and Cramlington

South East Northumberland Rail Users Group coordinated projects with local schools to create the stunning artwork displayed at Morpeth and Cramlington stations.

The artwork on the northbound platform at Morpeth was created by year 8 students from Newminster school. The paintings follow the Morpeth in Bloom theme: Between Woods and Rivers We Dwell, and promote the rich landscape of flora, fauna and architecture found in and around the historic town.

Jill Woolley, Newminster's art teacher and deputy head, said: "We hope that the designs reflect Morpeth's beautiful architecture and wildlife. The pupils have worked collaboratively over five months to complete the artwork and we are thrilled that our students have been given the opportunity to develop their creative skills and resilience within a real life brief."

The artwork at Cramlington station was created by pupils of Cragside C of E Primary School and is





displayed on the southbound platform. It features Cramlington's landmarks of St Nicholas's Church, Alexander Park and Northumberlandia, and is inscribed with quotes from pupils.

Paul Rusby, headteacher at Cragside said: "We were delighted to produce this artwork for Cramlington station. The children wanted their work to highlight some of the major places in Cramlington. Inspired by some of the quotes on London Underground, the children also selected two quotes that they feel might inspire visitors to Cramlington and those on their daily commute.

"It has been lovely that the children's creative gifts and talents will help to brighten up our local station."

### Chester-le-Street

The enthusiastic station adoption group at Chester-le-Street has a jam-packed action plan for the short, medium and long term.

With the help of Durham county council and the Friends of Riverside they will enhance the station surroundings, refurbishing old planters and adding hanging baskets for a splash of colour.

Volunteers arranged a Community Day, where they could get together and make a start on sprucing the platform fence with a coat of paint. On their next painting session



they were joined by local group Pad-B (Push A Different Button).

Pad-B seeks to reach people struggling with mental health issues such as addiction, homelessness and loneliness by offering a safe-space where they can just be: exist, live, laugh and take the necessary steps to recovery at their own pace.

### Corbridge

The station adopters at Corbridge have been extremely busy over the past year creating and installing 'Welcome to Corbridge' interpretation boards. These provide customers with local information and promote the concept of Corbridge being a 'Bridge to the Wall'. They are also convenient access points for visitors to the wider Tynedale area and Hadrian's Wall in particular for day visitors, walkers and cyclists.



Planters have been sited on both platforms to provide an attractive arrival point for visitors to the village. New signage has also been installed to direct customers to car parking facilities and exits. The station certainly has a more welcoming feel and is very informative.

Next steps for the group are to provide educational resources for both Corbridge schools to engage with the significance of the railway, linking into various aspects of the curriculum.

## West Region

### Cark

On a rainy Thursday in June 2019, Friends of Cark station and Community Rail Cumbria held a community day to tackle the large overgrown area by the station.

They were joined by over 40 volunteers from Grange-over-Sands & District Lions Club, the local community, Network Rail, ACoRP, Direct Rail Services, Northern, Northern's Year in Industry students, Northern contractor ISS, and even other station adopters.

Despite the weather, the volunteers cheerfully worked hard, removing lots of soil and weeds that had accumulated over several years on the approach road, and to the side of the station and along the platforms. Thanks to a substantial grant from the station adoption fund, the Friends had been able to buy two good quality planters with plants and soil, one for each platform, and these were planted up during the day.

In achieving the station's transformation, the Friends and Community Rail Cumbria are grateful for all the volunteers' hard work and for the support it gets from the station adoption fund.

Jane Murray, Northern station manager for Cumbria said: "The Friends of Cark station only adopted the station two years ago. They have already made a real difference to the station and this is noticed by our



customers and our staff. It's truly overwhelming the amount of effort and enthusiasm this group puts into making their station look as remarkable as it does. I am so very proud of them."

Tim Owen, chairman of the Furness Line Community Rail Partnership said "There have been so many positive comments received from people using the station in recent times that it makes events such as this and the regular input from local volunteers so worthwhile."





### Squires Gate

The station is on the South Fylde Community Railway Line at the furthest edge of St Anne's town boundary with Blackpool.

Previously managed by the Friends of St Anne's station, it has had its own Friends group since January 2018, although it still runs in parallel with St Anne's for administration purposes.

To help make the platform much more welcoming and attractive, Squires Gate Friends decided to hold work days. The four or five volunteers from the Friends were joined by helpers from St Anne's, and St Anne's In Bloom.

Community Rail Lancashire supported the Friends with a new large red display unit and some new seating planters for travellers to rest on while waiting for trains.

Lighting column bases were repainted and a gold band was added round the middle for extra interest.

In November, a Remembrance Day banner was displayed in honour of those who worked on the railway, in the local community and were involved in



the wars. Two 'silent soldiers' were positioned at the base with the "Lest we Forget" wording.

The redundant platform 2 has been cleared with support from neighbouring Friends of Ansdell & Fairhaven. Subject to approvals, current plans for this platform.

The group will also create wildlife havens, with bird boxes, insect homes and raised beds with wildflowers. Existing wildlife 'runs' under perimeter fences will be protected to join the green nature corridor running from Moss Side to Squires Gate.



## Workington

During 2017 Workington station underwent a major refurbishment. Cumbria County Council delivered a £3m scheme which involved the building of a new 143-space car park, drop-off zone and improvements to the public area in front of the station. The scheme also delivered improvements to pedestrian and cycle access to the station.

The new transport hub, funded by Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, aimed to encourage people to travel by train along the Cumbrian Coast, reduce traffic congestion and improve access to Workington station.

Inside the station, staff from Northern and the Workington Transport Heritage Trust (WTHT) have given up their own time to transform the station back to its old LMS colour scheme of maroon and cream. The group is also changing the existing Workington station signs back to their historical black and white design, as well as putting heritage benches on both platforms.

The small volunteering team has five WTHT workers, three train drivers, and a range of skills between them with station displays ranging from a World War memorial to an impressive flower bed. Cumbria in Bloom have been regular visitors commenting on the variety of tubs and hanging baskets on both



platforms, many grown from seed in the homes of group members.

The heritage look and feel to this unique station and superb flower displays wouldn't have been possible without the support of Northern's station adoption fund.

Community Rail Cumbria is working with a focus group to create an exhibition area that celebrates the industrial history of West Cumbria and its worldwide impact. It will create a place to not only wait for a train, but where children can learn about their heritage and the older generations can reminisce. The focus group consists of the county council, Cumbria Railways Association, Northern, WTHT, Helena Thompson Museum and Direct Rail Services.



## 2.7 Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP)

ACoRP is one of Northern's key partners in delivering support to community rail partnerships (CRPs) and station groups across Northern's region.

Northern provides significant core funding to ACoRP which allows it to employ a team of staff who provide support and advice to community rail organisations across the North both in person and remotely.

ACoRP continues to attend bi-monthly meetings of the Community Rail Executive Group (ComREG) and had input to last year's community rail review looking at how support and processes for community rail could be improved. ACoRP has continued to play a key role in how CRPs develop their annual plans. This has been especially significant in this first year of accreditation of CRPs by the Department for Transport, with many Northern CRPs among the first to be accredited nationally. ACoRP also attended and spoke at Northern's Community Rail Conference in the Autumn of 2019.

ACoRP provides direct support to CRPs and station groups in a number of more specific areas:

### Marketing and communications

Following on from the previous year's work in identifying support needed to improve digital marketing skills, considerable support and training has been offered in this area. This has included workshops to improve the skills of CRP officers and volunteers, direct ongoing support as well as identifying appropriate external courses.

ACoRP has also been able to give hands on support to CRPs and station groups when they were undertaking their own events to help raise their profile through social media, such as the launch of the autism-friendly line and the Seats to Sacks launch. It has also advised CRPs such as Community Rail Cumbria and North Cheshire on how they can develop and improve their websites.

Alongside this, ACoRP has been actively promoting the activities of Northern CRPs via its social media channels, monthly e-bulletin and Community Rail News. This proved especially useful in highlighting case studies of some of the excellent range of projects being undertaken as well as the success of Northern CRPs in the 2019 Community Rail Awards.





## Tourism and heritage

ACoRP has provided ad hoc support to CRPs helping them to promote their local tourism offer to visitors. Considerable work has been carried out to enhance CRPs' online presence by raising awareness of **ScenicRailBritain.com**, delivered through social media promotions and attendance at local events such as Penistone Armed Forces Day.

Other direct support has included providing ongoing advice and support to Tyne Valley CRP's tourism intern and North Notts & Lincolnshire's participation in 2020's Mayflower 400 commemorations.

One of ACoRP's major annual events is Community Rail in the City where community rail groups visit major stations and promote their work, especially the tourism opportunities along their lines. ACoRP was able to organise the attendance of a number of Northern CRPs at this event (a 50% increase on the previous year) such as Tyne Valley CRP going to Glasgow Central, Community Rail Humber in Manchester Piccadilly and High Peak & Hope Valley at Sheffield.

## Community stations development

There is considerable ongoing support for the development of community stations and bringing redundant station buildings back in to use.

A key project this year has been at Mytholmroyd where the building has been restored and work is underway to ensure the interior is ready for tenants to move in. ACoRP

has provided support and advice on managing this project, grant funding and how to develop the project for the future.

Other projects in earlier stages have also received specialist advice. These have included stations such as Guide Bridge, Haltwhistle and Baildon, with a community stations workshop also taking place and bringing together a number of groups across the North interested in their own projects.

## Social inclusion

ACoRP gives considerable ad hoc and ongoing specialist advice and support on social inclusion work directly to CRPs. Following last year's successful launch of the project to support people living with dementia on the Bentham Line, ACoRP has helped to encourage the rollout of this to other lines in the North.

ACoRP continues to use its partnerships with The Prince's Trust and Groundwork to help develop further youth engagement by CRPs and station groups.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### *I/We will at all times*

- Promote positive relationships to deliver positive outcomes and discussions
- Champion diversity and inclusion, aiming to ensure that community rail is welcoming, engaging and respectful for everyone
- Value others by listening and not making assumptions
- Challenge bullying, harassment, intimidation and report all negative behaviour
- Never act in a manner that could bring community rail into disrepute

Endorsed by  
**ACoRP**

## 2.8 Youth Engagement Programme — CRL

Community Rail Lancashire's (CRL) partnership with Northern in 2019 led to multiple awards and saw thousands of young people and community groups involved throughout the year.

Award wins included the National Autistic Society's Best Community Project for the Railway Confidence Programmes, ACoRP's Involving Children and Young People award for Stand Clear of the Closet Doors! and the Small Projects award from ACoRP for Bringing the Sunshine to Morecambe.

CRL's education programmes continue to grow, expanding to encompass new groups and new geographical regions. These programmes include a burgeoning science, technology, engineering, arts and maths programme for secondary students, high levels of engagement with LGBTQIA+ young people, delivery of the UK's first autism-friendly railway line and work with new groups from diverse communities across Lancashire. This runs alongside engagement with primary school groups, focusing on safety and confident rail use, including recipients of the Passport to Safe Rail Travel.

CRL is a recognised pioneer in the fields of education, diversity and inclusion. In addition to inputting to education partnerships locally, it regularly delivers to and collaborates with ACoRP, Northern, other train operator partners and the Department for Transport (DfT). It was also awarded accredited status by the DfT.

Alongside rolling programmes, CRL has focused on a successful, project-based delivery approach, which ensures that all community groups engaged are able to maximally benefit from rail and community rail engagement, as well as leaving their own mark on their local areas.

In 2019, Marjorie Birch's time as a volunteer for CRL's education programmes came to an end, and the year also saw the retirement of Brian Haworth from Lancashire county council and CRL. Their tireless education work over many years made a big difference to very many people and projects.

### Stand Clear of the Closet Doors!

This project creatively engaged young LGBTQIA+ people; giving them the opportunity to feel confident on public transport, and also to create writing and artwork pieces that visually represent the LGBTQIA+ community. Working



with the Proud Trust, CRL collaborated with groups to create a rail-linked guide to LGBTQIA+ people, history, events and places, along with spectacular artwork, to fully represent a traditionally marginalised group and educate the general public on key LGBTQIA+ issues, alongside signposting access for further learning.

### #BeeFreeMCR

In partnership with Astley Park special educational needs and disability (SEND) school, Manchester city council and TfGM, resources have been created to use when visiting the city. They are designed to support SEND groups that CRL brings to Manchester to explore the rich history of the city and advances in rail technology.

### Hidden Gems

Hidden Gems has involved over 200 people of all ages and backgrounds along the Liverpool-Southport, Southport-Wigan and Wigan-Liverpool lines. Through a number of supported photography walks those involved have captured the 'hidden gems' that surround 12 stations. The photography is displayed on the platforms and two groups (Wigan and Liverpool) exhibited their work. This project was also extended to support 6th form students to develop station specific resources for stations from Wigan-Liverpool.

### Railway Confidence

This year the Railway Confidence programmes were delivered to multiple SEND groups enabling them to work towards independent rail travel. CRL's Railway Confidence Employment Experiences also engage with neurodiverse groups to explore the range of

careers open to all within rail and community rail.

### **Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP)**

Knowing how to use public transport can be a barrier for young people to access opportunities, which is why CRL continues to be involved in a number of LCEPs that aim to ensure young people have access to local arts activities.

### **Memorable Journeys**

This history and art project with two primary schools in Accrington will look at how journeys can change lives. Artwork produced by the children will be displayed at Accrington station.

### **Bonded Together with a Prayer Bead**

This community cohesion project brings people of all faiths and backgrounds together. It helps foster understanding between communities by focusing on similarities through discussions, learning together and by creating large 8cm beads. On completion, these will form a 1,000-bead, 100m long prayer bead thread.

This creative project breaks barriers and encourages new friendships, empowering individuals with confidence to start conversations in their communities. The thread will be exhibited at a variety of venues, including churches, mosques and gurdwaras.

### **Options for women**

Continuing CRL's programme of engaging women and girls, there will be a strong focus in 2020 on the STEM options available to women within the rail industry with Women Who Wander, A Female Future and Women in STEM. The views of these women will be expressed through writing, poetry, artwork and photography. This programme has included train trips with Aawaz Women's group and Sisters Mosque Club resulting in a wide range of artwork and writing, as well as trips across Yorkshire, Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside, including a collaborative trip with the Manchester United Foundation.

### **Schools Linking**

This Blackburn-with-Darwen initiative, facilitated by CRL, brings children from two different schools together in a neutral place to discuss the similarities between their lives and celebrate the differences. The children from Pleckgate High School and Islamia High School will meet on a train for their initial discussion.

### **Sling Events**

CRL pioneered three events in partnership with Northern to encourage parents of young children to use a sling rather than a pram when travelling by train. Working alongside sling libraries, the parents were able to borrow a sling for free and leave the pram in a safe place. During the trip, the young families had the chance to make new friends and visit interesting places while having time to enjoy a hot drink and cake.

### **On Track to Train**

In partnership with the Mid Cheshire CRP, CRL developed On Track to Train to engage all under-represented young people – including BAME, those with SEND, and women – in rail employment options. This programme involves collaboration across multiple rail groups and operators to give a comprehensive employment experience.

### **The Reasoning Express**

This programme is a collaboration with maths consultant Mark Hattersley, where primary schools across the Bradford region have the opportunity to take part in four challenges that link maths to the railway. As part of the project, schools also get to take part in an assisted rail journey to put their real life maths skills to the test.

### **Bringing the Sunshine to Morecambe**

This award-winning project saw families from deprived areas of Keighley and Bradford take a trip to the seaside during the Easter holidays. Working alongside the National Literacy Trust, the children all received a free book to enjoy with their families.

More information about these projects can be found at [www.downtheline.org.uk/projects](http://www.downtheline.org.uk/projects) or by emailing [info@downtheline.org.uk](mailto:info@downtheline.org.uk)

## 2.9 Meet the Team

Northern's four regional community and sustainability managers share some of their most memorable moments and advice.

### What's been your main highlight in terms of community engagement?



#### Becky

Being able to present Neil Williams from Friends of Glossop with the old roller blind from a 323 as a Christmas present in front of his community.



#### Martin

Cumbrian Coast CRP winning national awards for its Broken Lives Mended project and station groups winning awards from the Royal Horticulture Society. The diverse groups that have become station adopters: gardening teams, schools, young people's organisations and businesses.



#### Marie

I've had so many highlights over the last three years in my role. If I had to choose one it would be the Forget Me Not Dementia Train on the Esk Valley. It is an absolute pleasure to be involved in such a worthwhile project.



#### Richard

Our partnership with the NCS engages with thousands of young adults, enabling them to build core skills for life. One of the most positive outcomes is how well generations work together for the good of their community.

Another highlight was Sling Express. It was originally intended to help families with babies and young children access Northern's services, but it has delivered much more. It has shone a light on a section of our community that needs more support if we are going to create a truly inclusive network.

### What's the strangest/quirkiest thing you've seen?

#### Becky

For the Victoria 175 celebrations we had an actress as Queen Victoria and she 'stayed in character' throughout. I was escorting her and had to keep referring to her as "your majesty" or she didn't respond!

#### Martin

A small fishing boat on the platform at Parton being used as a planter showcasing the village's connection and history with the sea.

#### Marie

Tyne Valley's Hadrian's Wall. This 4.8m eye-catching replica of the Roman wall goes everywhere with them! It has a fully working model with a Northern 153 service and was a fantastic community effort that attracts attention wherever it goes.

#### Richard

We get lots of strange requests: yoga classes for commuters, canons on stations and free travel for all. Plus you know you are getting old when a request goes out for volunteers to be Father Christmas and everyone looks at you.

### Advice for anyone considering working in this field?

#### Becky

Know your areas and localities. Get out and about on the network as much as you can. Try to respond to any correspondence or call asap. It can be challenging and it's good to inject a bit of humour into situations.

#### Martin

If not already a volunteer, become one in your local community or elsewhere to understand what motivates them. Manage people's expectations: be happy saying "Yes" but be prepared to say "No".

#### Marie

Get stuck in and get your hands dirty - there's no better way to support community. Secondly - be supportive. No project should be dismissed without trying your utmost to make it happen, or find an alternative. Finally - keep saying thank you, the work our volunteers do is priceless.

#### Richard

Don't be afraid to reach out to new groups. Try and involve young adults and the high schools. Young people get a bad press for just being teenagers: give them the opportunity to be involved and value their input and they can be a fantastic asset.

### Three words to describe you

#### Becky

Noisy, Industrious, Athletic.

#### Martin

Dedicated, resourceful, ebullient.

#### Marie

Friendly, approachable, respectful.

#### Richard

Enthusiastic, approachable, hardworking.

# 3. Community Rail Partnership profiles

The following section includes plans from CRPs for 2020, provided for this report before the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

**Customer numbers:** Some lines have experienced significant change year on year. During 2018/19 a number of lines in the North West were negatively impacted by electrification work on the Bolton corridor and continued strike action was affecting routes across the network.

## 3.1 Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Company (SCRDC)

**Region:** East

**CRP Officer:** Drew Haley (Joanne Oakey from end March 2020)

**CRP Chair:** John Moorhouse

**Website:** [settle-carlisle.co.uk](http://settle-carlisle.co.uk)

### Brief summary of route:

Rural area linking main centres of Leeds and Carlisle, through the Dales and Eden Valley. Seven through trains in either direction daily. Heritage stations, viaducts and stunning Dales scenery.

### Key highlights of 2019/20:

Over 100 people attended the Appleby Open Day on August bank holiday where the winner of the schools art competition was unveiled. Attended community rail events at Carlisle and showcased the line to potential new users alongside partners on the Tyne and Cumbrian coast. Also supported a number of events at Appleby for local charities close to the hearts of local people.

Special days out on the line were held for elderly or bereaved people, with befrienders from Age UK.

The CRP's work with Northern, Network Rail and the Friends has seen significant investment in the stations, new promotions, Kirkby Stephen's access path, Langwathby's heated shelter, heritage features restored at Settle and a new shelter at Appleby complete with local mural.

The completion of the unique Group Travel Guide and USB promotion has seen an increase in group bookings on the line for 2020 and ahead.

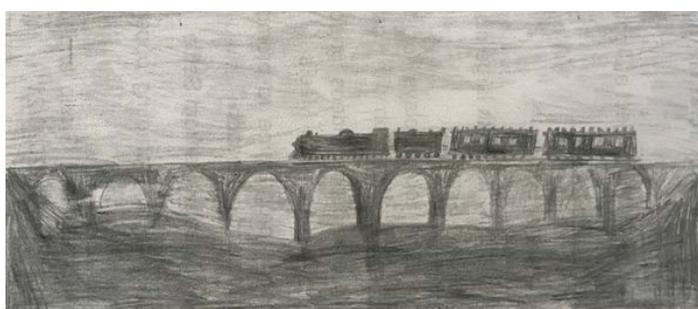
Over £7,000 was invested in work to design, print and distribute material to promote the area. Two versions of the Explore vouchers were printed, giving discounts at local businesses and attractions. Two timetables were

produced and a new great railway journeys leaflet was published. In addition, the excellent Grand Days Out campaign features nine bespoke downloadable guides for days out from stations along the line. These guides complement the new longer Walks section on the website.

The social media strategy of offering specific content to promote travel through easy days out saw considerable growth and engagement in 2019. There was a large increase in the number of users with thousands more viewing and engaging with posts. On average, there are now between 12,000-20,000 visitors a month.

The 30th Anniversary Express in July celebrated three decades since the line was saved from closure. It was a very special day out, especially for the many who had been involved in the campaign all those years ago. The Friends who were involved in that original campaign were remembered with the unveiling of a plaque to the famous Dales author Bill Mitchell. This was featured on ITV's local Calendar news and in the press.

The visual presence at Leeds and Carlisle stations has been improved, with a large new eye-catching board at platforms 5 & 6 at Leeds and displays depicting the railway's heritage in Carlisle station's waiting room, with decals in the glass covered area.



Although it was a difficult year for disruptions, the CRP is proud to have kept passengers updated and informed through various channels, with sales of its Dales Railcard growing to over 7,000 for the year.

Plans to revamp Settle station with a new café and seating area have been passed by planning and Network Rail for landlords' consent. Approvals from Northern will be needed to take this forward when there is a new operator.

In 2019, the CRP worked with local provider DalesBus to promote bus services via the train timetable, social media and website links. It also successfully bid for over £16,000 of funding to support local bus services connecting the Settle-Carlisle line.

**Priorities**

**Next 12 months:**

- UK First Google Expedition project at Ribbleshead and the Dales.
- Age UK special train to promote befriending and combat loneliness.
- Schools short story competition and visits.
- Promotion and support for Yorkshire Festival of Story.
- Support electric charging project at Appleby.
- Window Gazer's Guide leaflet.
- New Explore voucher leaflet.
- Promote the new line map with large displays at Leeds, Shipley and Skipton.
- Design new tabletop displays for 158s to promote the line in conjunction with Northern.

- Smith Davis promotional videos for download on YouTube, web and social media.
- Station adoption programme to promote Bee Friendly planting and pollination.
- Design six self-guided walks from Settle.
- New volunteer leaflet promoting opportunities with Friends.
- Chair the Station Investment Group, promote investments and plan for 2020/21.
- Sponsor and promote the local women's rugby union team.
- Heritage lighting at Settle and revamped foyer with seating and tables.
- Support the running of a café and visitor centre at Ribbleshead.
- Continue to promote Dales Railcard sales and Group Travel.

**Next five years:**

- Much will depend on ongoing evaluation by Rail North.
- To promote the line for direct Anglo-Scottish journeys.
  - Increase the line speed to 80mph.
  - Improve the local timetable and trains.
  - Support any improvements through promotions and links with the community to target appropriate station investments.

**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
**Average % growth 2019/20**  
**7.47%**



### 3.2 Leeds-Morecambe Community Rail Partnership (LMCRP/ The Bentham Line)

**CRP Chair:** Gerald Townson

**CRP Officers:** Catherine Huddleston and Brian Haworth

**Website:** leedslancastermorecambecrp.co.uk

or communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/bentham-line/

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The line runs from Leeds to Morecambe and Heysham Port via Skipton, Bentham, Carnforth and Lancaster. It is almost entirely double track joining the Furness Line then the West Coast Main Line at Carnforth, leaving again at Bare Lane. In May 2019 weekday services increased from five to eight each way and from four to five each way on Sundays.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Accreditation was awarded by the DfT in October 2019.
- The huge success of the ground-breaking Dementia and Community Rail project. Since it was launched in 2018, it has delivered dementia awareness sessions for frontline staff, dementia-friendly walks from stations on the line, and over 30 awareness sessions for 300 staff linked to the line, plus volunteers and community groups. The partnership has also worked with Northern to create a rail-based dementia-awareness video for staff development. At the National Community Rail Awards in October, the partnership came first in the Influencing Positive Change in the Railway category with this project.
- During the year, travel and activities were arranged for several groups of people living with dementia, their carers and supporters, with visits to Morecambe and the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- Northern named a train The Bentham Line - a Dementia-Friendly Railway.
- Worked with Northern's Year in Industry students and engineering apprentices to help them develop a new perspective on the rail industry through community rail ideas and activities including history, art and rail safety projects to primary school children in Carnforth and Cononley.
- Developed and promoted a new line guide in association with Northern.

- Extended the partnership's Historical Stations information project to cover the Craven Area stations of North Yorkshire with new pictorial panels.

- Established many new links with community groups on the route including becoming a founder member of Dementia-Friendly Bentham and working with Pioneer Projects, a local arts and well-being charity.
- Responded constructively to numerous consultations relating to future franchises, timetables, local development and assisted travel on the railway.

#### **Priorities**

##### **Next five years:**

Much will depend on ongoing evaluation by Rail North.

- The continued promotion of the line as a scenic route, a trans-Pennine route and as an opening to tourism and leisure opportunities.
- Prepare for increased use of the line for special events such as Carnival and Vintage Festival in Morecambe, the V Festival in Leeds in August and other events that will attract many young passengers from North Lancashire and South Cumbria.
- In the near future, the proposed Eden North Project at Morecambe will have a major impact on the use of services passing through Lancaster. The chosen site at Morecambe is only 300m from the railway station.
- Continued promotion of the Dales Railcard on the Bentham Line with associated offers and off-peak tickets.
- Launch new website, integrated with social media, to reflect the wide range of activities undertaken by the partnership and the many tourism opportunities along the line.
- Continued addition of new walking and cycling routes to the well-supported Rail to Trail initiative.



- Promote the enhanced timetable and the wider range of associated journey possibilities through the Grand Day Out and Grand Weekend Away campaign.
- Produce a short video and booklet to significantly widen the scope of the Dementia and Community Rail project.
- Develop a greater awareness of hidden disabilities in the communities and along the line and establish links with disadvantaged groups to create bespoke travel packages.
- Promote the full range of improved services on the route and beyond.
- Investigate and develop further links to the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Forest of Bowland, Lancaster City Tourism and the (Morecambe) Bay Area. The latter having been chosen as the potential site for the Eden Project North.
- Develop, in association with TOCs using Lancaster, a multi-purpose venue at Lancaster station, available for education, staff development and exhibition purposes as well as a community space.
- Introduce a welcome/quiet space at Lancaster to assist those travelling with hidden disabilities.
- Extend the Historical Stations project to include Carnforth, Lancaster, Bare Lane, Morecambe and Heysham Port. At Lancaster, Morecambe and Heysham Port stations panels will highlight the role of the Pioneer (Electric) line in preparing for the west coast electrification.
- Undertake a major art panel project for all stations with a Life in the Community theme in association with local sixth formers, college students and pupils with additional educational needs.
- Alongside Northern, support and assist the further development of community-minded station adoption groups and encourage them to join ACoRP for additional support.
- Continue to develop a true sense of community spirit and inclusivity on the line, as illustrated by the Dementia and Community Rail project.
- Participate constructively in the future plans for the Craven Area, particularly major housing developments at Skipton and Bentham, and the developing tourism industry.
- The Bentham Line CRP remains keen to support Northern, other TOCs and Network Rail in improving stations on the line.
- There will be a need to ensure that the heritage Midland Railway shelters at Gargrave, Clapham and Bentham are sympathetically improved.
- The Friends of Bentham Station and the LMCRP received a £16,000 grant towards creating the first 100% green energy station by utilising the reinforced flat station roof for photovoltaic cells. Final discussions ahead of the installation will be held in Spring 2020.

**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
**Average % growth 2019/20**  
**1.62%**



### 3.3 Barton-Cleethorpes Community Rail Partnership (BCCRP)

**Region:** East

**CRP Officer:** Gill Simpson

**CRP Chair:** Mike Gathercole

**Website:** [bccrp.com](http://bccrp.com)

**Brief summary of route:**

The line starts at Barton, an historic town near the Humber Bridge, then goes to Barrow Haven, New Holland, Goxhill and Thornton Abbey with its imposing medieval gatehouse, Ulceby and Habrough where it joins the mainline from Scunthorpe. It then goes through the villages of Stallingborough, Healing and Great Coates before arriving at the fishing port of Grimsby and finally the seaside town of Cleethorpes.

**Key highlights of 2019/20:**

The BCCRP has some great heritage and tourism attractions along the line and has been busy marketing them through the distribution of tourist information across the region. This has encouraged people to visit, explore the area by train and get involved with the partnership. To complement this, the CRP was able to support the siting and opening of the waiting shelter on Cleethorpes station.

- Easter Special on train event. After last year's success, more Easter Eggs were available to be given away this time. The beautiful weather attracted many families on to the train for a day out at the seaside.
- Santa Special. This was another popular event, with Father Christmas handing out sweets and gifts for the children and mince pies for the adults. This was also a good opportunity to give a little something to the staff to say thank you for supporting the CRP all year round.
- Actively worked with members and community partners to put in place the 2019-20 line plan. It is hoped to further develop this with the new franchise holders as they become more involved with the line for 2020-21.
- Being the main station adopters along the line, the CRP tidied up and planted flowers at stations and supported independent adoption groups such as Habrough and New Holland parish councils. A primary aim has been to continue to build on this initiative, engaging with parish councils and local



community representatives and using every opportunity to develop partnerships and projects within the communities along the line.

- With support from ACoRP, social media expert Rachel and her two sons have been building a new website. Rachel has also developed the Facebook page, using it as a vehicle to attract new members. Ron, the treasurer, uses Twitter to actively promote use of the train and integrated transport when visiting the area. He also reports on incidents and welcomes comments from the travelling public.

### Priorities

#### Next 12 months:

- Become an independent incorporated not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. The BCCRP will move away from Community Rail Humber and become a stand-alone organisation responsible for its own management. This is expected to happen by April 2020.
- Achieve full accreditation by the end of April 2020, with the support of ACoRP and other community partners.
- Continue to develop the station adoption scheme, bringing on new community members to help out with station projects following the success of New Holland in partnership with EMR and Northern.
- Take on an adopter for Barrow Haven, although the station will be closed for a period when NWR delivers some structural upgrades.
- Install drinking fountains at Cleethorpes and Grimsby stations. Funding for this was received in 2018 from TPE and ACoRP.
- Continue to produce new marketing materials for distribution at various events and outlets, to spread positive messages about BCCRP and community rail.

#### Next five years:

- It is difficult for the BCCRP to predict five years ahead as it continues to be in a state of limbo - currently managed by Northern, funded by EMR and the train crew is TPE. This is not expected to change before May 2021. However, the CRP remains confident about the value of the partnership and the positive impact it has on the communities along the rail corridor.

- This is a small CRP, and recruitment of new and active members is an ongoing process. Four new members were recruited in 2019.
- Revenue collection is still low on some trains, especially when they are overcrowded, so it will continue to support all attempts by the TOCs to improve this situation.
- Continue to support the TOCs, ACoRP, Network Rail and other groups to influence how community rail is perceived and shape future decision-making by taking part in consultations and attending numerous events.

### Recent trends in customer numbers

Average % growth 2019/20

-2.15%



### 3.4 Yorkshire Coast Community Rail Partnership (YCCRP)

**Region:** East

**CRP Officer:** Gill Simpson

**CRP Chair:** Tony Cooper

**Website:** [yccrp.co.uk](http://yccrp.co.uk)

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The line links the thriving city and port of Kingston upon Hull with the seaside town of Scarborough. In between, the route passes through the large village of Cottingham, the historic town of Beverley, then Driffield and the coastal resort of Bridlington. From there it goes through the RSPB nature reserve at Bempton, the rural station at Hunmanby and the small coastal resort of Filey before joining the York-Scarborough line at a junction near Seamer.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Added Cottingham to the stations it has adopted, making four in total. Local girl and keen cook Kasha Gravill took the unused lamp room on Cottingham station, upgraded it and opened The Old Lamp Room cafe. Kasha joined YCCRP and is now their nominated station adopter, building strong links with local groups.
- Continued to support the independent station adopter groups at Hutton Cranswick, Beverley, Hunmanby and Driffield.
- Driffield in Bloom won the ACoRP Lead Bronze Award in the It's Your Station category.
- Driffield had the bench on platform 1 restored to its former glory.
- Ran two train events: the ever popular Easter and Christmas Specials with the Easter Bunny and Father Christmas.
- Held over 10 on/off station events including the Driffield Show, Community Rail in the City, Yorkshire Day, Driffield Steam Rally and the Driffield Scramble event.
- Barry the treasurer took the lead on the timetable consultations, representing the partnership at various meetings and reporting back to the management committee.
- Hosted a review and planning workshop in Driffield facilitated by the Association of Community Rail



Partnerships (ACoRP) in October 2019. All members were invited to come and help shape the future direction of the partnership ready for its separation from Community Rail Humber (CRH) in 2020.

- Took part in the launch of Northern's new direct Hull to Halifax rail service. At Hull's Paragon station they met with managers from Northern, the local press and representatives from the local authorities to wave the train off in style.
- Reached 500 followers on Twitter, a big milestone. Alan who manages the Twitter account posts or retweets messages on a variety of things from YCCRP and communities along the line, such as deals, service disruption, events and activities.
- The YCCRP facebook page now has over 1,200 followers, including several local newspapers, rail industry staff, tourism boards and railway fans. Rachel maintains it and gets an excellent 90% response rating, based on the time it takes her to reply to messages. In an average month the page reaches around 10,000 people and gets about 3,000 engagements (shares, likes and comments).
- As well as her work on social media, Rachel designed a new website giving the YCCRP an interactive facelift.



- Continue to roll out small scale improvements at each station including information/noticeboards, shelters and gardening projects.
- Build relationships with families and schools to promote rail safety and travel awareness, and raise awareness of the rail services and connectivity.
- Continue to deliver themed activities on trains and stations.
- Continue to build cohesive working relationships between YCCRP and station adopters.
- Work with train operators and local authorities to improve railway signage in towns/villages to their local station.
- Work with local transport providers to develop and maintain new and existing bus links from the stations to outlying areas.

**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
**Average % growth 2019/20**  
**7.25%**



**Priorities**

**Next 12 months:**

- Become a stand-alone organisation from Community Rail Humber.
- Achieve DfT Community Rail Accreditation with the support of ACoRP.
- Establish an office at Cottingham station.
- Work with TPE & ACoRP to install free fresh drinking water facilities at both Hull and Scarborough stations.
- Work with TPE, ACoRP and North Yorkshire County Council to install secure cycle parking at Seamer station.
- Continue to develop the station adoption programme by encouraging new groups and members of the community to get involved.
- Engage with local schools and young people’s clubs through educational initiatives and the development of new projects that will enhance their experience of rail travel.
- Hold several marketing events to promote the service and the area it serves via good news stories and updates in rail and tourist information.

**Next five years:**

- Continue to promote and market the line and the attractions along it, working in partnership with local businesses, local authorities, educational establishments and local tourism offices plus train operating companies.
- Continue to develop the website and promote the partnership and rail travel through social media.

### 3.5 Penistone Line Community Rail Partnership (PLCRP)

**Region:** East

**CRP Officer:** Rowena Chantler

**CR Support Officer:** Sarah Wells

**CRP Chair:** Neil Bentley

**Website:** penline.co.uk

**Brief summary of route:**

The Penistone Line passes from the large West Yorkshire town of Huddersfield, through scenic villages down to Barnsley, then across a more industrial area to Sheffield. Along the line are several tourist attractions and many walks, including the fortnightly Penistone Line Partnership Guided Walks from various stations.

Key markets for the line are school pupils and students travelling between Huddersfield and Barnsley, commuters, day visitors, families, the elderly population and BME groups.

**Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- PLCRP is one of the key groups behind Dwell Time, the arts publication and workshops that reflects on mental wellbeing. It was awarded 1st place in CRL's Community Art Schemes – Renewable and Smaller Projects. A Poetry Train event is scheduled for March 2020.
- The popular music trains returned, with local bands performing on trains and an onboard bar with local ales. The Christmas carol train was well attended with singing from the Gledholt Male Voice Choir.
- For National Rail Safety Week and throughout the year CRP officer Rowena Chantler visited schools and groups such as guiding and scouting. She promoted rail safety, positive behaviour on trains, and showed how to purchase a ticket and read a timetable. Primary school pupils created artwork for Honley station, with help from Children's Art School. For World Book Day pupils from South Crosland School created their own characters and story based on the Penistone Line and this was published in the CRP's newsletter. Their artwork features on the windows of the disused train at Huddersfield Station (platform 2).
- Extended the network of community partners in Kirklees and Barnsley who support vulnerable people.
- Continued success of Guided Walks. In 2019, walk



leaders prepared, promoted and led 29 walks for 473 people. The CRP also worked with other walking groups to promote the Penistone Line to access their walks. Some of the walks are on the app ifootpath.

- The annual Community Rail in the City event visited Sheffield station. Results of the art workshop promoting places along the Penistone Line can be seen at Sheffield station. There was a talk about the Dwell Time project, while travellers were entertained by the Uplift Community Choir.
- The successful Knit and Natter Train as part of the Kirklees Woven Festival had people knitting and crocheting bunting to decorate Huddersfield station.
- For Penistone Armed Forces Day, children were helped to make their own medals. These will be included in artwork to be installed at Penistone station.
- Children were entertained on the Santa Train. The train and the waiting shelter at Huddersfield station was decorated by the CRP and local community groups.
- Work continued at several stations along the line, thanks to local volunteers. Penistone station surroundings were greatly improved with artwork, interpretation boards and a reclaimed sleeper bench, thanks to partnership working with Trans Pennine Trail Conservation volunteers and Penistone Heritage Group. Local business Lavendar International helped provide a metal fence to secure Penistone station nature reserve (Network Rail land).
- Mental health charity S2R looked after a flower bed at Huddersfield station, and created a Bug Train there. The group has also had several trips on the line practicing mindfulness and is creating panels to promote mindfulness at stations.

- Student embroiderers have continued their unique embroidery on the fence at Huddersfield station where platform 2 continues to reflect the eclectic nature of the Penistone Line. Work began in 2018 with Brownies and the textiles department at the University of Huddersfield and was completed and displayed in 2019.
- Dwell Time. This unique project commenced in 2018 and was launched in March 2019 at Penistone Arts Week with an art trail along the line and several live events at stations. Work has continued since then with an open call for Dwell Time 2, due to be launched in March 2020. The Dwell Time project was well received by the rail industry, passengers and local communities, and this is reflected in the award of further funding for Dwell Time 2.
- In preparation for a major project in 2020, the CRP has networked with community groups that support those living with hidden disabilities.



## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Continue to improve the aesthetics of the stations, including artwork.
- Run music trains over the summer, a Christmas carol train and a Santa Train.
- Continue to work with and within local communities to promote use of, ownership and pride in their local station.
- Work with schools to promote rail safety and work with primary schools in preparation for the pupils' transition to secondary schools (many will be using the train).
- Promote mental wellbeing along the line.
- Improve connections with people living with hidden disabilities to build confidence in their use of the train, and tackle issues that may act as a barrier to them using trains and stations along the Penistone Line.

### Next five years:

- Continue to engage with local communities.
- Support plans for level access to both Shepley and Honley stations, a half-hourly service, improved line speeds and better rolling stock.

Recent trends in customer numbers  
Average % growth 2019/20  
**-3.15%**



### 3.6 North Notts & Lincs Community Rail Partnership (NNLCRP)

**Region:** East

**CRP Officer:** Rachel Martel (until 06/03/20)

**CRP Chair:** Barry Coward

**Website:** nnlcrp.org.uk

**Brief summary of route:**

The route covers 11 stations in North Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, with services provided by four train companies. Northern services covered are: Lincoln-Leeds (Mon-Sat), Lincoln-Huddersfield (Sun), Sheffield-Cleethorpes (Sat), Sheffield-Gainsborough Central (Mon-Sat).

**Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- In 2019, Gainsborough Central introduced its first regular weekday rail service in over 25 years. Hourly trains now run to and from Sheffield (Mon-Sat).
- Work to restore and preserve parts of Worksop station was rewarded with the Railway Heritage Trust Conservation Award. Local MP unveiled the Heritage Award plaque.
- Introduction of bus service at Gainsborough Lea Road connecting with trains to and from Leeds (Mon-Sat).

**Priorities**

**Next 12 months:**

- Assist station adopters at Shireoaks and Worksop as part of the plan to increase volunteer involvement at stations.
- Encourage greater community involvement at both stations including working with North Notts College to create station artwork.
- Develop and implement a marketing campaign with West Lindsey District Council to promote the Gainsborough Central service.
- Be involved with Education Mini Imps with schools as part of the Lincoln Imp Trail, sponsored by Northern.
- Develop work experience with rail industry companies in the area.
- Work with Stagecoach to produce travel guides for Retford and Worksop.

**Next five years:**

- Extend the Gainsborough Central service to Barnetby (currently Saturdays only). This will require upgrading the stations at Kirton Lindsey and Brigg.

**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
**Average % growth 2019/20**  
**1.52%**



### 3.7 Bishop Line Community Rail Partnership (BLCRP)

**Region:** North East

**CRP Officer:** Felicity Machnicki

**CRP Chair:** Robert Whitehouse

**Website:** [bishopline.org](http://bishopline.org)

#### **Brief summary of route:**

Starting in Bishop Auckland - home of Auckland Castle - the Bishop line links Shildon, Newton Aycliffe, Heighington, Darlington North Road and Darlington's main station. Beyond Darlington the line continues as the Tees Valley line to Saltburn via Middlesbrough. The Bishop line serves commuters, shoppers and day travellers.

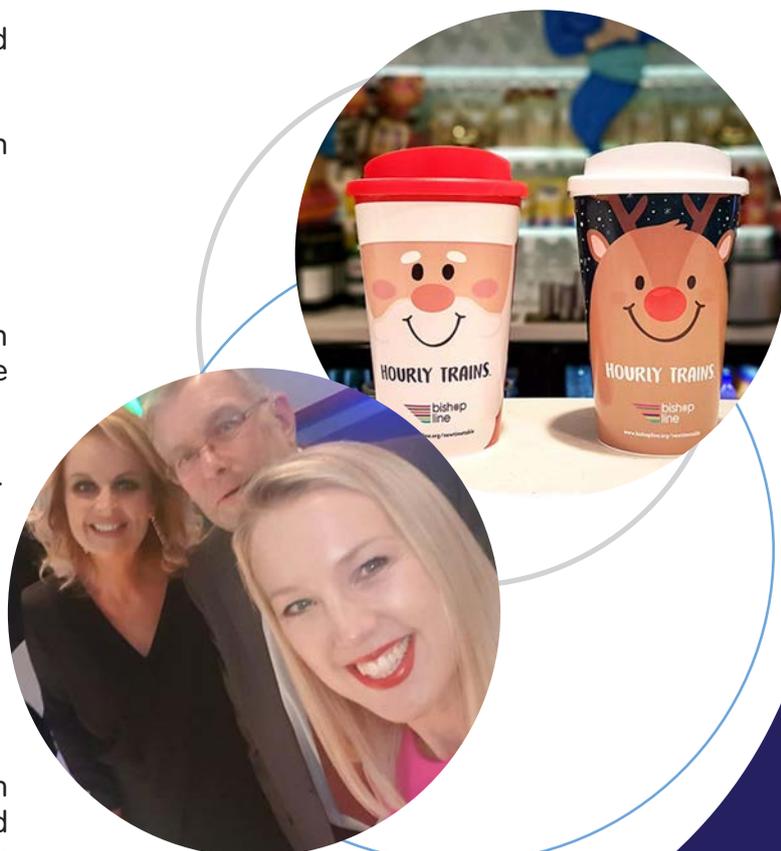
#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

It was a year of transition for BLCRP, with a new officer in post and the previous officer taking up the role of chair. The focus was on community engagement while continuing to increase awareness of the partnership in the community.

- Engaged with key stakeholders along the line and beyond including tourist attractions, local councils, businesses, students and charities. This was achieved through one to one meetings and attendance at organised events. Feedback from the meetings was positive and resulted in a network of contacts who can be called upon to help deliver projects along the line.
- Shortlisted for the Best Marketing and Communications category at the ACoRP Community Rail Awards for the Hourly Service campaign. Although the entry was unsuccessful, the event gave everyone the opportunity to see the breadth of projects being delivered and may help to focus efforts going forwards, concentrating on community engagement.
- Successful promotion along the line of local food festivals, encouraging visitors to travel by train using a strengthened service. Both festivals were well attended with Bishop Auckland Food Festival attracting a record 29,000 and Saltburn Food Festivals around 20,000 visitors.
- Secured funding for the Weardale Railway platform link. The Weardale Railway runs heritage services from Bishop Auckland to Stanhope. It uses Bishop Auckland West platform and this is a 5-10 minute walk from the

main Bishop Auckland station platform, serving Northern services to Darlington. In 2019 the BLCRP helped secure significant funding to enable work to connect the two platforms with a safe walking route. This will make the services fully accessible and save around five minutes' transfer time.

- Involved with the Stockton & Darlington railway heritage programme. The BLCRP is a member of the S&D Rail heritage board and also sits on the communications workstream. This means that it is a conduit between the community and the board, sharing the views of the community in terms of the S&D Rail programme and the 200 year celebration and sharing the project's progress back to the community.
- Accreditation status was awarded in November 2019 by the Department for Transport.
- Partnership benefitted from regular networking meetings with other CRPs across the north covering a range of topics such as best practice when working with schools, and training in dementia awareness, deaf awareness and suicide awareness.



- Involvement with the Women Who Wander project. Working with Community Rail Lancashire, the BLCRP took a group of female students from Bradford and Darlington to Hitachi Rail using the Bishop line. The group met with female members of Hitachi staff who introduced them to the roles available to women in engineering.
- The partnership increased its presence on social media with more posts on Facebook and activity on Twitter and LinkedIn. Engagement on all platforms has increased and continues to grow.

### Priorities

#### Next 12 months:

- Recruit a more diverse and active membership by end March 2021.
- Conduct the annual customer engagement survey.
- Through station and community events and engagement meetings, work to understand the needs of the local community in terms of rail.
- Promote travelling by train to tourist attractions along the line.
- Work with Heritage lines more collaboratively to promote connecting services.

#### Next five years:

- Promote the Bishop line and its service including identifying and developing new markets.
- Support development of the Bishop line service and infrastructure to better meet the needs of local residents, visitors and businesses.
- Ensure the continuance and improvement of services through to destinations beyond Darlington.
- Promote the Bishop line's unique social and industrial heritage.
- Bring more tourist income to the area, developing the Bishop line as an attraction in its own right as well as a means of access to other visitor attractions.
- Improve access to the Bishop line's services by bus, cycle, on foot and to/from the national rail network at Darlington.
- Work with the Weardale Railway to maximise connectivity between services at Bishop Auckland.
- Promote community action at stations, such as school or community station adoption schemes.
- Put the railway at the centre of local regeneration partnerships.
- Generate funds for rail-based projects.
- Encourage local businesses to sponsor environmental enhancements at stations or other locations along the line through the Northern managed station adoption programme.
- Work effectively and without prejudice within the emerging devolved franchise governance fostering appropriate relationships with Rail North and the North East Rail Management Unit.



**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
**Average % growth 2019/20**  
**4.52%**

### 3.8 Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership (TVCRP)

**Region:** North East

**CRP Officer:** Fiona Forsythe

**CRP Chair:** Malcolm Chainey

**Website:** tvcrp.org.uk

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The 60-mile Newcastle–Carlisle route is largely rural with 14 stations between the two cities. Stations are near local communities, except Brampton which is a couple of miles away. The main markets are commuters, domestic and overseas tourists, shoppers, walkers and cyclists. Since May 2019, three trains an hour operate Monday to Saturday Newcastle–Hexham with two an hour to/from Carlisle. The CRP continues to push for late night Saturday services from Newcastle, increased services on Sunday, and improved stopping patterns.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Began the year with the line plan review and unveiled a map of the line on the pedestrian bridge over Metrocentre station, joined by Herbert, Intu's Metrognome.
  - The first Northern CRP to be awarded DfT accreditation status.
  - CrossCountry-funded tourism intern Matthew negotiated and planned the CRP's contribution to Community Rail in the City. This included building a 4.3 metre model of Hadrian's Wall, painted by the Platform Painters who meet each week at the Haltwhistle building. Complete with a model railway and a DMU in Northern livery, the Wall was admired at the CRC in Glasgow and also featured at the Northumberland County Show, two community rail days and a Hadrian's Wall networking event in Carlisle.
  - Worked with other funders including CrossCountry and Northumberland National Park to launch Go Gilsland Community Transport's hybrid electric car in September. This provides a bookable service between Brampton and Haltwhistle stations, rural communities and visitor attractions. TVCRP continues to provide marketing and business support for the scheme. A recent film funded by CrossCountry will help market the area to a wider audience.
  - Held two successful Heritage Open Days at
- Haltwhistle station, helped by Northern and Network Rail. TVCRP opened the Old Booking Hall and Network Rail opened the old signal box. Thirty students and staff from Newcastle College Rail Academy visited, toured the signal box, walked the bridges and tunnels around the station and learned about plans to refurbish the two wooden buildings on the platforms.
  - TVCRP's director of projects Julie Gibbon received the Outstanding Volunteer Contribution award at the ACoRP Community Rail Awards in October. Julie's wide-ranging commitment to the area includes involvement with the campaign to re-open Gilsland station, the Haltwhistle partnership and the Rail Users Group. She also leads the project to redevelop station buildings at Haltwhistle.
  - Throughout winter, the CRP officer continued to be out and about talking to cubs, beavers and scouts about using the railway. A train brake shoe, supplied by a Network Rail colleague, was used to make the point that trains are not to be messed with. Fiona and Marie welcomed school groups to the Old Booking Hall. In summer, members of the Education Network Forum enjoyed a walk and swapped ideas.
  - Analysis of rail passenger and tourist attraction visitor data showed a need for a greater focus on tourism. Since January, the CRP has worked on a TPE-funded project Open in Winter, employing a project officer to undertake the planning, organising and liaison with local businesses, developing relationships and strengthening links with them. The CRP officer, projects director and volunteers





visited some TPE stations to promote the Tyne Valley. Two of the stations visited, Middlesbrough and Thornaby, have direct services to Hexham.

- Promoted travel on the Tyne Valley Railway using social media, new leaflets and at networking events.
- Recently began working with singer-songwriter Gareth Davies-Jones on his project Lyric and Line, to help strengthen the CRP's role in making travel more inclusive. The project uses music to explore the challenges and delights of travelling by train with several groups who have additional or hidden needs.

#### Priorities

##### Next 12 months:

- Develop Lyric and Line and our response to challenges faced by those with additional needs.
- Recruit project workers to engage with local groups and develop content for the Newcastle University app Our Place (funding received from TPE, Northern and Northumberland National Park).



- Complete the project to refurbish the Haltwhistle station buildings and recruit tenants for the new studio/workshop spaces.

##### Next five years:

- Develop income streams to ensure the partnership's financial sustainability.
- Work with industry partners and statutory bodies to ensure that the railway takes its place as the key component of a truly sustainable transport network.
- Ensure the partnership maintains a wide-ranging skill set at board level to be able to create projects and respond to opportunities as they arise.

#### Recent trends in customer numbers

Average % growth 2019/20

8.40%



### 3.9 Esk Valley Railway Development Company (EVRDC)

**Region:** North East

**CRP Officer:** Piers Elias

**CRP Chair:** Alan Williams

**CRP PR & Marketing:** Lisa Williams

**CRP Social Media:** Sally Michulitis

**Website:** eskvalleyrailway.co.uk

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The route starts at Middlesbrough, where there is a busy shopping centre and two major attractions, the Museum of Modern Art and the Dorman Museum. Beyond Nunthorpe the route is very rural, crossing the North York Moors then following the River Esk to the sea and finishing in the popular seaside resort of Whitby.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Launched the Forget Me Not train in September to help people living with dementia and their carers. Funded by EVRDC, North Yorkshire County Council, ACoRP and Northern, this special train runs from Whitby to Middlesbrough on the first Wednesday of every month. Live music is provided by the Dave Clegg Duo and there are always special treats on each train, such as hand massages, biscuits, soaps, Forget-Me-Not seeds, Northern goodies and a Pets As Therapy (PAT) dog for people to make a fuss of. Every few months,



the fire brigade comes on board to give advice to people and arrange home visits if necessary.

- Excellent media coverage of the Forget Me Not train launch included coverage on BBC Look North, and local press and radio. The train's fame will soon be nationwide because the BBC's Songs of Praise, filmed on board, will be transmitted during Dementia Action Week on 17 May 2020.
- Launched new commuter services from Whitby to Middlesbrough.
- Updated and reprinted the large map of the line for display at Whitby and Middlesbrough stations.
- Took part in Apple Pressing Days. Throughout October, Esk Valley Railway in conjunction with Moor Sustainable ran a project to convert people's surplus apples into juice and then distributed in the local communities. Apples were taken by train from Sleights & Battersby to Beyond Boundaries at Comondale for



pressing. Over seven days there were 240 visitors and helpers, who pressed two tonnes of apples and produced 900 litres of juice.

- Mince Pie train helped promote new timetables.
- Further increased take-up of newsletter by running competitions.
- Promoted the line, the new services and timetables with stands at five rural shows.
- Upgraded the information trolley at Whitby station.

### Priorities

#### Next 12 months:

- Continue running and promoting the Forget Me Not train.
- Continued involvement with Apple Pressing Days.
- Promote a service for parents with babies and toddlers.
- Work with James Cook University Hospital to encourage more use of the station by patients, visitors and staff.
- Improve signage and promote the use of James Cook University Hospital station.
- Work with the North York Moors National Park's Land of Iron team to produce information/orientation boards at all EVRDC stations.
- Develop proposals for a Dark Skies train on Fridays.
- Increase social media presence via Twitter.
- Work closely with schools through station adoption and station artwork to teach pupils about the railway and hopefully reduce vandalism.
- Have more regular get-togethers with station adopters to swap ideas and offer greater support.



#### Next five years:

- Progress proposals to use Section 106 funding to improve the line.
- Continue to promote the new services, giving a Whitby-Middlesbrough commuter option.
- Aim to re-open disused signal boxes at two stations.
- Increase newsletter readership and Twitter profile.

### Recent trends in customer numbers

Average % growth 2019/20

3.07%

### 3.10 South Fylde Line Community Rail Partnership (SFLCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Officer:** Simon Clarke

**CRP Chair:** Tony Ford

**Website:** [communityrail Lancashire.co.uk/lines/south-fylde/](http://communityrail Lancashire.co.uk/lines/south-fylde/)

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The branch is a single-track railway from Blackpool South to Kirkham where it joins the main Blackpool North to Preston line. The line serves the prosperous seaside resorts of Lytham St Annes as well as one of the country's best known tourist attractions, Blackpool Pleasure Beach. Preston provides good access to the West Coast Main Line and to the administrative centre of Lancashire.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Along with Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) and the other three Lancashire CRPs, the SFLCRP was formally accredited by the DfT, recognising the hard work of both the paid staff and volunteers along the line.
- The CRP was very active at virtually every station along the South Fylde line.



- The line enjoyed a successful year from the point of view of community activities but suffered from considerable service disruption, impacting on passenger confidence and usage. However, passenger numbers recently increased at some stations and this hopefully bodes well for the future.

- Network Rail offered a licence to the newly formed Friends of Squires Gate station to take on the overgrown platform 2, and work there has continued apace. In addition, the CRP continues to work with a

number of stakeholders including CRL, Persimmon Homes, Fylde BC and Lancashire County Council to develop a project for step-free access at the station.

- Friends of Blackpool's Pleasure Beach station were shortlisted for an ACoRP award at the October Community Rail Awards held in Telford.
- St. Annes station won the North West in Bloom judges discretionary Best Station Award. It was also judged as Outstanding in the Neighbourhood Awards section. The station has benefitted from the resurfacing of its car park after consistent and continued lobbying of Northern and Network Rail. Both Fylde Borough Council and St. Annes Town Council have supported projects and activities at the two stations in the town.
- Volunteers elsewhere continued to make their stations look good all year round. Friends of Lytham station gained a station adoption grant for a tiered planter. At Moss Side, a concrete fence was painted with large flower heads bringing a welcome splash of colour to the station.
- Volunteers conducted a survey of access provision at all the stations, then met with relevant and appropriate stakeholders to seek solutions to some of the issues raised.
- A number of volunteers offered their services at other stations, helping to develop a community spirit along the line. Several went to Kirkham & Wesham station to refurbish and refill neglected planters, adding colour to this important interchange. This is the only station without a Friends group, and efforts are being made to develop one. Wesham Town Council is supportive and Kirkham Town Council's art project will provide artwork to brighten up the station.
- CRL is working with pupils from Pear Tree School on railway-based activities.
- During the year, SFL Friends groups have supported events at Bolton station organised by the new CRP based there.
- Almost all stations on the SFL now have Facebook pages, where they copy appropriate service messages to provide useful information for rail users.
- Several stations and rail-related activities were featured on TV and in vlogs on YouTube by Nodrog (Gordon Head).

- Hundreds of popular pocket-sized timetables were produced for the SFL and distributed to retail outlets, businesses, restaurants and hotels along the line.
- The CRP ran a successful music train in July 2019 and it is hoped to repeat this. Other successful events include the International Kite Festival at St Annes.

### Priorities

#### Next 12 months:

- Achieve step-free access at Squires Gate station.
- Address known access issues/provision.
- Completion of Foundation Stone project at St Annes station.
- Reapply for accreditation.
- Continue to distribute pocket-sized timetables and dispensers to local businesses and retail outlets.
- Continue to engage with relevant parties to promote the construction of a passing loop that would permit a doubling of the service.
- Pursue Hidden Gems and station history projects at various stations. Hidden Gems will involve working with CRL's education team to involve local schools and colleges.

- Produce newsletters for delivery to residents near key stations along the line.
- Look to develop a project based at Kirkham & Wesham station, possibly in partnership with Avanti West Coast.

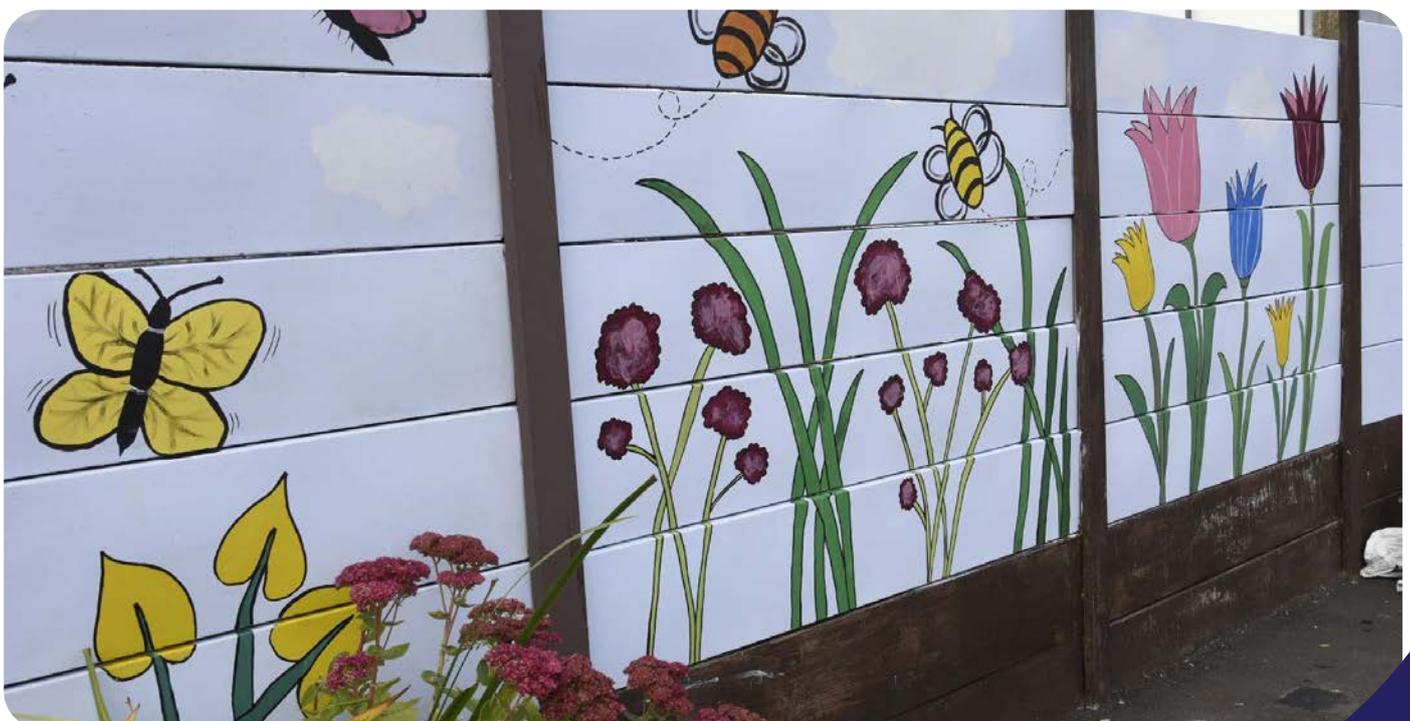
#### Next five years:

- At a strategic level, continue to work with all parties to develop the case for a more frequent service.
- Continue work with CRL to maintain accreditation status.
- Maintain the high standards at all stations along the line.
- Recruit new station volunteers.
- Develop improvements to make it easier for all members of the community to use the railway.
- Work with CRL to develop an educational engagement programme based on its four-year Strategic Education Plan.

### Recent trends in customer numbers

Average % growth 2019/20

19.22%



### 3.11 West of Lancashire Community Rail Partnership (WoLCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Officer:** Simon Clarke supported by Katie Musgrove, CRL special needs education officer

**CRP Chair:** Marion Atkinson

**Website:** [communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/west-of-lancashire/](http://communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/west-of-lancashire/)

**Make a Beeline:**

[youtube.com/watch?v=vwqCraWQYfU&app=desktop](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwqCraWQYfU&app=desktop)

**Brief summary of route:**

The WoLCRP covers two main lines, namely Preston to Ormskirk (Liverpool) and Southport to Wigan (Manchester). The CRP also covers the Merseyrail Northern line between Liverpool and Southport and the line between Wigan and Kirkby. A very mixed portfolio, serving a wide variety of markets and with many different requirements.

**Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Along with Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) and the other three Lancashire CRPs, the WoLCRP was formally accredited by the DfT. This recognises the hard work of both the paid staff and volunteers along the lines.
- Preston to Ormskirk is a single-track branch for most of its route and its service frequency recently increased to hourly. However, the mixed performance of the new interlinked Lancashire triangle of services had a negative impact on passenger confidence and usage. During 2019/20, all members of the CRP worked to regain passenger confidence in the service.
- All three intermediate stations on the Preston to Ormskirk line have station partnerships who do excellent work in different ways.
  - o Croston received the Outstanding award in the 2019 It's Your Neighbourhood awards.
  - o Rufford maintains close links with the local primary school, which is involved in CRL's Passport to Safe Rail Travel education programme.
  - o Burscough Junction has two groups working at the station and they both make a big difference. The main Friends group works on the used platform and Burscough St John's RC Primary School works under a licence from Network Rail on the disused platform.



- Having delayed the launch of the Make a Beeline marketing campaign, CRL and the WoLCRP agreed to a low-profile launch in April 2019. It features a video (see Youtube link above), leaflets, posters and displays at all stations. The promotion was undertaken jointly with Merseyrail because it also covers the line from Ormskirk to Liverpool.
- The CRP trialled its first mini timetable on the line. All the station groups were involved in ensuring that the timetables got to places they wouldn't normally reach. These have been well received with requests for extra print runs. Hopefully the various promotions, along with an improving service, will see passenger numbers start to rise again.
- The Southport to Wigan (Manchester) line has a strong local user group, OPSTA (Ormskirk Preston Southport Travellers' Association). In particular, there was a successful campaign to restore a service to south Manchester. The service now waits for the introduction of the class 769 bi-mode units and will need a considerable marketing effort to win back passengers.
- The Southport to Wigan (Manchester) line has very active Friends groups at Meols Cop, New Lane, Bescar Lane, Burscough Bridge, Parbold, Appley Bridge and Gathurst. CRL helped the Friends of Parbold by installing one of its branded boards

which includes a community notice board. The group also installed an attractive Welcome to Parbold display, brightening up the austere cycle shed.

- CRL's Katie Musgrove is working on the Hidden Gems photography project, taking in the Liverpool-Southport-Wigan lines. Hidden Gems involves special educational needs and disability (SEND) schools and community groups, including some in Meols Cop, Gathurst and Wigan. The groups explored their local area and took photographs of places and things of interest - the Hidden Gems - in easy reach of the station. Katie also attends meetings of the Wigan & Leigh LCEP (Local Cultural Education Partnership) which covers parts of West Lancashire.

### Priorities

#### Next 12 months:

- Develop the Make A Beeline marketing campaign, reissuing the leaflet and the poster, and working with local attractions such as Rufford Old Hall and Martin Mere as well as with the Canal & River Trust.
- Continue to produce the popular mini timetables.
- Continue to engage with local primary schools.
- Look at the potential to develop a community hub in Preston in partnership with the other Lancashire CRPs, Northern and Avanti.
- Further develop the scope of the Hidden Gems project working with SEND schools and groups.
- Extend the Autism-Friendly Line project to the Wigan area.
- Continue to attend relevant LCEP meetings.
- Work with and support the station partnerships.

- Work with Northern to promote links to south Manchester.
- Work with CRL to maintain and renew the CRP's accreditation.
- Assist OPSTA with its passenger surveys.
- Resolve the long-running car park issue at Burscough Junction.

#### Next five years:

- Maintain accreditation.
- Initiate or be part of research to better understand the market for the lines and continue to work with Northern and OPSTA on its passenger surveys.
- Use the above to develop complementary marketing and promotional projects.
- Develop stations as gateways.
- Continue to produce bespoke educational projects in partnership with CRL's educational team.
- Develop initiatives to make stations accessible to everyone.
- Continue to support the station partnerships along both lines.
- Continue to develop the case for a Sunday service on the line.

Recent trends in customer numbers  
Average % growth 2019/20  
**6.41%**





### 3.12 Cumbrian Coast Line Community Rail Partnership (CCLCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Officer:** Warren Birch

**CRP Chair:** Laurence Hilland

**Website:** [communityrailcumbria.co.uk](http://communityrailcumbria.co.uk)

**Brief summary of route:**

With 86 miles of stunning coastal views to one side and an impressive landscape of hills and valleys to the other, the route wends from Barrow to Carlisle touching the fringes of the Lake District. It provides a car-free experience for visitors and essential transport for local communities, businesses and industry.

**Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Attained accreditation status.
- Launched the 'Edge of Empire' Roman exhibition panels at Maryport station and released the case study video depicting the creation of the transport hub and platform transformation.
- Released the Broken Lives Mended video and the Rail Journey to Recovery information brochure.
- Received the first place award for ACoRP's Involving Diverse Groups category for the Broken Lives Mended video.
- Created the new proactive marketing centre at Millom station and launched the Scenic Rail Journeys brochure – a collection of journeys to inspire a thirst for rail travel.
- Developed the Stop Smashing our Windows initiative with Flimby Primary School involving educational visits

to Millom Discovery Centre, Maryport library and the Senhouse Roman Museum, plus rail safety workshops and the creation of a colourful artwork display along the platform fencing.

- Started The Rails Which Circled the World heritage project at Workington station, setting up an expert focus group, agreeing exhibits, identifying lead designers etc.
- Gave a presentation on tourism/heritage at ACoRP's summer seminar.
- Gave a presentation on Involving Communities on the Cumbrian Coast Line at ACoRP's community rail partnership and station adopters seminar.
- Held workshop session on Broken Lives Mended at Northern's annual Community Rail Conference.
- Worked with TOCs, FOCs, CRPs, local authorities, businesses and suppliers to host the Community Rail festivals at Carlisle station in July and December including a promotional stand in the city centre.
- Adoption of Kirkby in Furness, Corkickle, Parton, Braystones, Nethertown and Maryport stations.
- Refurbishment of Wigton and Millom footbridge.
- Supported Northern with the delivery of the Transport for the North investment programmes at Workington, Whitehaven and Sellafield stations.
- Continued participation in building the case for the Energy Coast Rail Upgrade.
- Engagement with the Williams Review, established to support delivery of the government's vision for the railway.
- Article published in Rail Professional capturing the story of the Maryport hub and station developments.
- Participation with Cumbria County Council in developing the Whitehaven parking strategy.
- Supporting Copeland Borough Council's innovative project: Connecting Cumbria's Hidden Coast.

**Priorities**

**Next 12 months:**

- Complete the Rails Which Circled the World exhibition at Workington station.

- Further develop the Millom Marketing Centre initiative and enhance the travel information provision – consider a second Scenic Rail Journeys brochure.
- Secure funding, appoint resources and develop final plans for The Better Side of the Tracks, a new project targeting issues arising from social deprivation.
- Secure funding, appoint resources and develop final plans for The Railway Years, a new project focused on extending the educational experience at Millom Discovery Centre.
- Continue to work with local authorities, the Cumbria LEP and stakeholders to ensure rail is at the heart of travel and transport schemes such as station hub developments, cycling and walking initiatives, travel plans and tourism-based ventures.
- Continue working with Sellafield Ltd to further develop modal shift opportunities, looking at passenger surveys, car park issues, catering, and station building improvements.
- Support and develop station adoption groups.
- Secure adoption of Sellafield station, the final one to be adopted.
- Support Flimby Primary School with creating an artwork project commemorating the refugees who were relocated to Flimby during the World Wars.
- Plan a station adopters' engagement event.
- Work closely with TOCs to maintain positive relationships as franchise variations emerge eg Northern and Avanti West Coast.
- Work with Network Rail and the Arch Company to

resolve the issues around the transfer of Millom station building lease.

- Develop and further enhance the Community Rail Cumbria website.

#### Next five years:

- Ensure ongoing financial and staffing sustainability of the CRP.
- Develop a sustainable business plan for the continuation and expansion of The Better Side of the Tracks beyond 2023.
- Continue to develop the educational thread and the concept of the 'outdoor classroom' now firmly emerging along the Cumbrian Coast line. Initially, develop a vision for Whitehaven station which celebrates its maritime heritage, creates a platform-based learning experience and complements the town's regeneration plans.
- Work closely with Allerdale Borough Council as plans for the regeneration of Maryport emerge.
- Develop a programme of promotional and marketing activities focusing on key destination stations and exploiting the benefits of new services and rolling stock.
- Maintain close links with Turning Point and consider potential for future initiatives including the development of plans to refurbish the station building at Green Road.

#### Recent trends in customer numbers

Average % growth 2019/20

18.64%



### 3.13 Furness Line Community Rail Partnership (FLCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Officer:** Kerstin Esbjornsson

**CRP Chair:** Tim Owen

**Website:** [communityrailcumbria.co.uk](http://communityrailcumbria.co.uk)

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The route embraces the northern shores of Morecambe Bay from Barrow-in-Furness to Carnforth with services extending north to Carlisle and east to Lancaster, Preston and Manchester. This busy lifeline railway offers stunning views of coast and fell while connecting commuters, students, residents and visitors along the South of Cumbria and beyond.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Attained accreditation status.
- Collaborated with Morecambe Bay Partnership to create and install striking wayfinder display panels at each station along the line.
- Produced and distributed 15,000 popular Furness line Window Gazer Guides inspired by the CRP's former secretary and complementing the station wayfinder displays.
- For Cark Community Volunteer Day over 50 people from the community came together with railway colleagues to weed, plant, chop, strim, clean and sweep the station environs.
- Worked on the Silverdale Art Project with the village primary school and stakeholders to produce artwork for display along the platforms. This saw the creation of an iconic vinyl sign to cover graffiti on a Network Rail electric storage unit visible from the railway and road.
- Installed display cases for school artwork exhibitions along the underpass at Barrow station.
- Worked with Northern and Cumbria Tourism to establish a series of promotions in compensation for travel disruption and cancellations. This included a permanent offer for discounted travel for holders of the My Cumbria card and a marketing fund aimed at regenerating tourism business by rail.
- Arranged a well-attended and productive skill swap workshop at Cark for station adopters from the Furness and Lakes lines with input from Northern and ACoRP.
- All stations are now adopted by local volunteers with several successfully participating in the Cumbria in Bloom scheme.
- Engaged with primary schools to encourage rail-based visits to Millom Discovery Centre, supporting the evidence base for The Better Side of the Tracks project emerging from the Cumbrian Coast Line CRP.
- Worked with TOCs, FOCs, CRPs, local authorities, businesses and suppliers to host Community Rail Festivals at Carlisle station in July and December including a promotional stand in the city centre.
- Continued participation with the Cumbria Better Connected forum to seek service and capacity improvements.
- Held the launch event at Barrow station to celebrate the introduction of the new 195 units.
- Contributed to the review of planning engineering works. These often take place over holiday periods adversely affecting Cumbria's visitor market, one of the county's primary economic generators. The group is exploring alternative approaches to work scheduling and the planning of replacement transport provision.
- Refurbishment of Arnside footbridge.
- Resurfaced approach road to Arnside up platform.
- Engaged with Northern's timetable planning team regarding the May and December 2019 timetable reviews.
- Engaged with the Williams Review.





- Built strong working relationship with the Avanti mobilisation team.

**Priorities**

**Next 12 months:**

- Assist station adopters at Shireoaks and Worksop as part of the plan to increase volunteer involvement at stations.
- Encourage greater community involvement at both stations including working with North Notts College to create station artwork.
- Develop and implement a marketing campaign with West Lindsey District Council to promote the Gainsborough Central service.
- Be involved with Education Mini Imps with schools as part of the Lincoln Imp Trail, sponsored by Northern.
- Develop work experience with rail industry companies in the area.
- Work with Stagecoach to produce travel guides for Retford and Worksop.

**Next five years:**

- Ensure ongoing financial and staffing sustainability of the CRP.
- Develop a sustainable business plan for the expansion of rail safety and travel initiatives along the line.
- Work with the Arch Company to consider opportunities for community use of the Ulverston station building.
- Continued collaboration with relevant stakeholders to secure investment for service, capacity and connectivity improvements.
- Develop a programme of promotional and marketing activities focusing on key destination stations and exploiting the benefits of the new services and rolling stock scheduled.

**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
**Average % growth 2019/20**  
**13.22%**

*Silverdale Art*



by pupils of

**Silverdale St John's Primary School**



Artwork celebrating local wildlife, nature and history



### 3.14 Lakes Line Community Rail Partnership (LLCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Officer:** Kerstin Esbjornsson

**CRP Chair:** Tim Owen

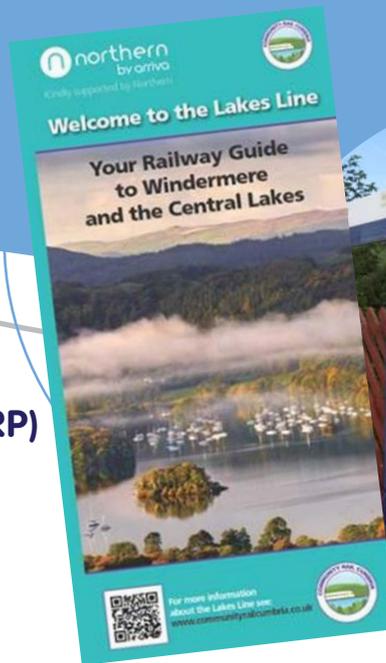
**Website:** [communityrailcumbria.co.uk](http://communityrailcumbria.co.uk)

**Brief summary of route:**

A 10-mile, scenic gateway linking the local communities of Windermere, Staveley, Burneside and Kendal to the West Coast Main Line (WCML) at Oxenholme and regional capital Manchester, with direct services to/from the airport. The Lakes Line provides an important local transport link and sustainable travel to/from the World Heritage Lake District.

**Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Attained accreditation status.
- Trial programme of rail-based activities and events for sixth form students with special needs attending Sandgate School.
- Produced and distributed 10,000 much-praised Welcome to the Lakes Line promotional timetable leaflets.
- Staveley station art project saw three striking exhibits depicting a local artist's impression of life in and around Staveley village.
- Arranged a well-attended and productive skill swap meeting involving station adopters from the Lakes and Furness lines with input from Northern and ACoRP.
- All stations are now adopted by local volunteers.
- Worked with TOCs, FOCs, CRPs, local authorities, businesses and suppliers to host Community Rail Festivals at Carlisle station in July and December including a promotional stand in the city centre.
- In partnership with Northern, prepared and submitted a bid for the Network Rail mid-tier Access for All fund for access improvements to Staveley station.
- Continued participation with the Cumbrian LEP and county council to build the strategic business case for much needed line capacity improvements.
- Held the launch event at Windermere station to celebrate the introduction of the new 195 units.
- Worked with the Lakes Line Rail User Group to undertake on-train passenger surveys identifying travel patterns, reasons for travel and economic benefit to the area.



- Contributed to the review of planning engineering works. These often take place over holiday periods adversely affecting Cumbria's visitor market, one of the county's primary economic generators. The group is exploring alternative approaches to work scheduling and the planning of replacement transport provision.
- Engaged with Northern's timetable planning team regarding the May and December 2019 timetable reviews.
- Engaged with the Williams Review.
- Built strong working relationship with the Avanti mobilisation team.

**Priorities**

**Next 12 months:**

- Continue to embed rail travel initiatives with Sandgate School, a strategic special needs school.
- Secure funding, appoint resources and develop final plans for a new community project at stations along the line to celebrate renowned literature, poetry, art and innovation inspired by the local landscape.
- Progress plans for sponsorship of the Welcome to the Lakes timetable leaflet and consider opportunities for integrating West Coast Main Line timetables to further afield destinations such as Liverpool and Edinburgh.
- Continue to work with the Cumbrian Coast CRPO to develop initiatives associated with The Better Side of the Tracks project focused on improving opportunities for children and families living in socially deprived areas.
- Work closely with station adopters, Northern and Network Rail to develop a programme of rail safety initiatives with schools and community groups along the line.
- Continue to develop station adoption groups and their aspirations, with art projects, planting schemes, station facility maintenance and improvements etc.

- Plan and host a second station adopters engagement event.
- Work in collaboration with local authorities, the Cumbria LEP and stakeholders to ensure rail is at the heart of travel and transport schemes such as station hub developments, cycling and walking initiatives, travel plans and tourism based ventures.
- Support the next steps for the outcome of the Access for All bid for Staveley station, either by contributing to the project development or reviewing and refining the bid for a future opportunity.
- Continue to work in partnership with the Cumbria LEP, county council, Network Rail and Northern on the development of a strategic business case for investment in increasing capacity along the line.
- Collaborate with local bus company Stagecoach to explore opportunities for improving train-bus connectivity.
- Participate in passenger surveys identifying travel patterns, reasons for travel and economic benefit to the area.
- Contribute to the Lake District National Park Partnership's sustainable transport group.
- Engage with South Lakeland District Council regarding its Local Plan review.
- Support Cumbria Tourism on the development of a Window Gazer guide for the line.
- Work closely with Northern colleagues to maintain positive relationships as franchise variations emerge.
- Press Avanti West Coast for infrastructure improvements and better WCML connections at

Oxenholme which enhance the customer experience to and from the Lakes Line.

- Engage with TOCs regarding the May and December 2020 timetable reviews.

#### Next five years:

- Ensure ongoing financial and staffing sustainability of the CRP.
- Develop a sustainable business plan for the continuation and expansion of rail travel initiatives at Sandgate School.
- Work closely with South Lakeland District Council and Kendal Town Council as the Kendal Vision emerges and ensure improved integration of Kendal station in the transport plans, e.g. signage, pedestrian and cycle access to/from the town centre, and links with the bus station.
- Continued collaboration on securing investment for line capacity improvements.
- Develop a programme of promotional and marketing activities stimulating sustainable visitor travel to/from the Lakes and exploiting the benefits of new services and rolling stock.
- Seek timetable improvements that open up Sunday morning employment opportunities.

#### Recent trends in customer numbers

Average % growth 2019/20

7.61%



### 3.15 North Cheshire Community Rail Partnership (NCCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Officer:** Marina Farey

**CRP Chair:** Garfield Southall

**Website:** northcheshirecrp.org

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The main focus of the CRP is the branch to Ellesmere Port from Helsby, passing through the huge Stanlow refinery. The line also serves the Thornton Science Park campus of Chester University and other industrial and residential developments. The route links historic Chester and its range of recreational and cultural attractions with the industrial town of Warrington, which still has a large chemicals sector. The small towns of Frodsham and Helsby are thriving and Runcorn East serves the large and expanding 'new town' of Runcorn.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Held a rail safety session at Elton primary school, with Northern.
- Participated in activities and celebrations following the launch of the new Wrexham/Chester to Liverpool Lime Street via Halton Curve service.
- Launched an art project in Castle Park, Frodsham celebrating the re-opening of the Halton Curve in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council, North Cheshire Rail User Group and Network Rail. Two semaphore signals and three levers were gifted and installed in the park by Network Rail.

- Artwork was produced by local artist Nicky Thompson to promote Wrexham/Chester-Liverpool via the Halton Curve service.

- Carried out a feasibility study for Little Sutton's Grade II listed station building.

- Presented Little Sutton station's restoration plans at the successful Open Day



and public engagement event. Around 70 people attended including local councillors and MP Justin Madders.

- Held Heritage Open Days at Ellesmere Port station.
- Frodsham won the Cheshire Best Kept Stations Award.
- The partnership works closely with North Cheshire Rail Users Group who carry out community rail work at Frodsham, Helsby and Runcorn East along the line, acting as station Friends and adopters. Their useful work includes providing timetables and items of interest on their website.

#### **Priorities**

Community engagement in Ince and Elton, station adoption, raising awareness of the CRP and community rail.

#### **Plans for next 12 months:**

- Launch new website [northcheshirecrp.org](http://northcheshirecrp.org).
- Receive accreditation from the Department for Transport.
- Continue working in partnership with the railway industry organisations, local authorities and businesses.
- Continue with the community rail activities such as gardening, artwork and volunteer days and any other projects that may enhance the stations and benefit the community.
- Promote Halton Curve services.





**Plans for next five years:**

- Have all stations adopted along the line.
- Little Sutton station building restoration and repurposing.
- Explore opportunities for improved service frequencies between Ellesmere Port and Helsby.
- Develop stations as gateways to the local community.
- Improve station facilities.
- Better park and ride facilities.
- Improve disabled access.
- Improve bus links.
- Improve walking and cycling routes between stations and their hinterland.
- Improve transport links along the Cheshire Science Corridor.
- Increased engagement with diverse communities.

**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
**Average % growth 2019/20**  
**36.11%**

- Promote Chester-Leeds services.
- Volunteer recruitment.
- Promote the partnership and community rail.
- Continue to develop links with local community rail partnerships especially the Mid Cheshire CRP, the Borderlands Line, Chester-Shrewsbury Line, Conwy Valley Line and work on joint projects.
- Participate in ACoRP's projects and events.
- Collaborate with Chester University to promote community rail and careers in the railway industry.



### 3.16 Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership (MCCRP)

**Region:** Central

**CRP Officer:** Vacant since February 2019 and unable to recruit due to restrictions placed by the accountable body, Cheshire West & Chester Council (CW&C). With CW&C's agreement, the CRP is setting up a Community Interest Company (CIC) to take over the accountable body role. This should be done in April 2020 and recruitment for this post will begin immediately. Meanwhile, the CRP is supported by many very active volunteers.

**CRP Chair:** John Oates

**Website:** [midcheshirerail.org.uk](http://midcheshirerail.org.uk)

**Brief summary of route:**

Chester to Manchester via Delamere Forest, Northwich, Knutsford, Altrincham and Stockport, connecting many towns and villages to their main centres of Manchester and Chester, and also to train services at Chester, Stockport and Manchester Piccadilly.

**Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Launched the professional-looking full colour quarterly brochure *Along Mid Cheshire Lines*, produced entirely by volunteers. All 5,000 copies of the first issue in summer 2019 were distributed in six weeks, so it was agreed that it would become a quarterly. The fourth issue will be launched in March 2020.
- Promotions are concentrating on the line and its usefulness to potential local users for commuting and leisure. The CRP has specifically not promoted the service as such due to poor performance with a current Moving Annual Average (MAA) of 76%, when not so long ago it was over 91%.
- Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards, demonstrating the support of volunteers, Northern and Network Rail staff and stakeholders along the line.
- Continued the successful volunteer-led music trains, with 18 run in the season for the public and for private parties. These generated around 800 additional return trips along the line.
- Built on the success of the *Marvellous Days Out* initiative.
- The *Marvellous Days Out* poster exhibition was at the Weaver Hall Museum, Northwich, then at



**The Mid Cheshire Line**

Stockport station (courtesy of Virgin Trains). It is now permanently on display at the Crewe Heritage Centre. A further set of posters have been created which means that the exhibition can stay in Crewe and also travel to other locations, including Stockport station who have asked for it back.

- Launched the webshop in association with Crewe Heritage Centre, selling the *Marvellous Days Out* posters and related items. The income from this helps support the reprints of the popular full colour *Marvellous Days Out* booklet.
- The line has three *Mid Cheshire Rail Walks* booklets which were successful but have been out of print for over five years. During the year, all 17 walks in the booklets were re-walked by volunteers to check the details. The first booklet to be reprinted is at final proof stage and the other two will follow mid 2020.

**Priorities**

Community engagement in Ince and Elton, station adoption, raising awareness of the CRP and community rail.

**Plans for next 12 months:**

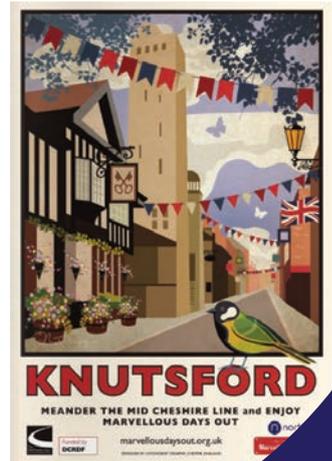
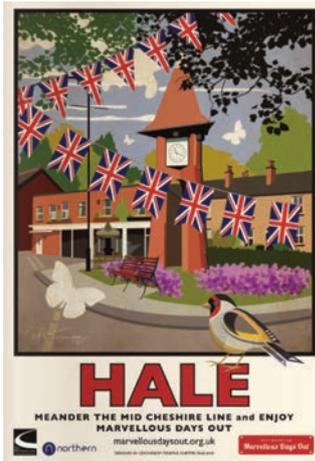
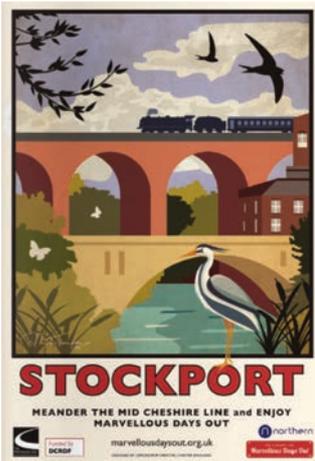
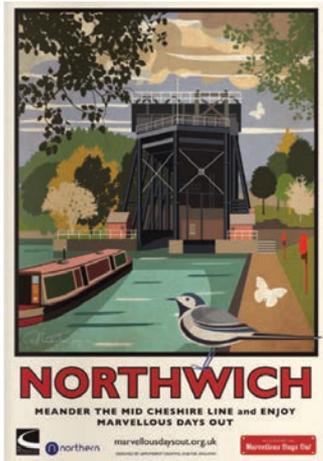
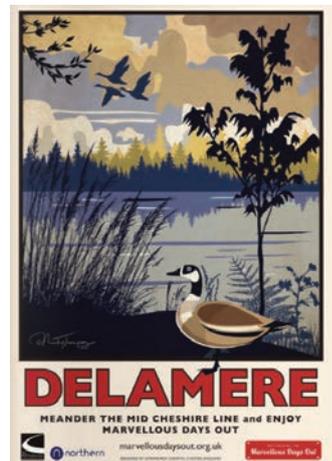
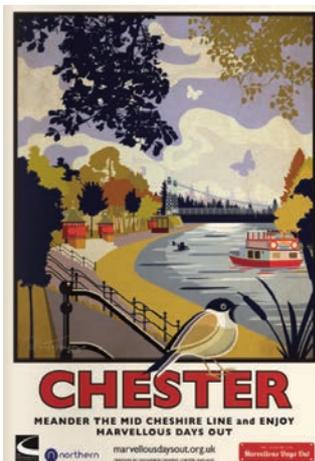
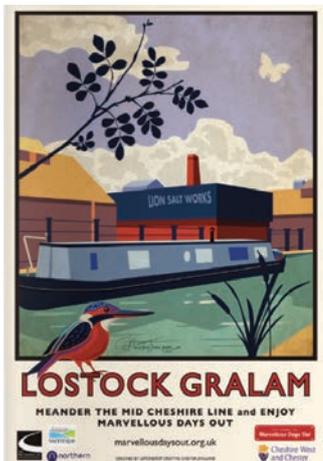
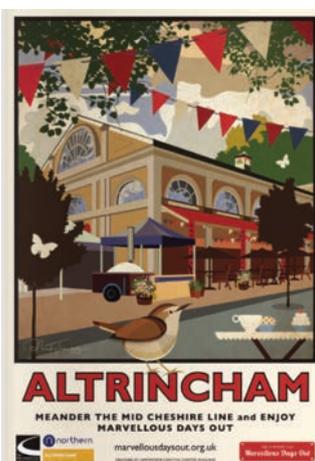
- Recruit and train a CRO, and agree a short term plan for deliverables.
- Strengthen connections with town and village groups along the line, e.g. town councils, parish councils, voluntary groups and stakeholders.

- Relaunch the reprinted series of Rail Walks booklets.
- Run another successful music trains season.
- Identify initiatives with Northern and adjacent TOCs (Avanti West Coast, CrossCountry, Merseyrail and Transport for Wales Rail Services) for joint promotions both to and from the line. The inbound initiatives will probably be based on the Marvellous Days Out.

**Plans for next five years:**

- With a CRO in place and many of the outstanding items caught up with, to identify a plan for the next two-three years leading to projects and other initiatives.
- Once the train service becomes more reliable and punctual, perhaps when the MAA rises above 82%, work with Northern to promote the service along the line of route.

Recent trends in customer numbers  
Average % growth 2019/20  
1.11%



### 3.17 East Lancashire Community Rail Partnership (ELCRP)

**Region:** Central

**CR Development Officer:** Simon Clarke

**CR Education Development Officer:** Shahiesta Raja

**CRP Chair:** Marjorie Birch

**Websites:** [communityrail Lancashire.co.uk/lines/east-lancashire/](http://communityrail Lancashire.co.uk/lines/east-lancashire/)

and [dalesrail.com](http://dalesrail.com)

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The partnership covers four services:

- Preston to Colne.
- (Blackpool North) Preston to Burnley Manchester Rd (York).
- Blackburn to Manchester Victoria via the Todmorden Curve.
- (Blackpool North) Preston to Blackburn (Carlisle), DalesRail shared with the Clitheroe Line CRP.

The lines serve a predominantly urban area including the former industrial towns of Blackburn, Accrington, Burnley, Nelson and Colne. The area has seen much regeneration in recent years which has significantly benefited the stations at Accrington and Burnley Manchester Rd.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Along with Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) and the other three Lancashire CRPs, the ELCRP was formally accredited by the DfT. This recognises the hard work of both the paid staff and volunteers along the lines.
- East Lancashire has seen the first new trains since the Pacers were introduced in the mid-1980s. The class 195s made a welcome debut on the Blackpool-York service and it is hoped to mark this occasion soon.
- DalesRail, the service that links Lancashire to the Settle-Carlisle line, had a successful year. More details are in section 3.18 and on [www.dalesrail.com](http://www.dalesrail.com).
- ELCRP/CRL have worked with Connect East Lancashire on a range of projects at Brierfield and Accrington. At Brierfield the emphasis was on developing links between the station and the local community. A range of organisations including In-Situ have worked with two local artists to raise the profile of the railway.



Artwork was exhibited at Brierfield library under the title Danger Signals and will be displayed on the station. At Accrington, two local primary schools were involved in the Memorable Journeys project where they learned out about the history of the railway and explored with their families the memorable journeys they have made. Artwork from this project will be displayed at Accrington station on the platforms and in the booking hall.

- ELCRP has developed a close relationship with Broadfield Special School whose students have been working in the station's community garden. Some pupils are working towards the DofE volunteer's badge. The school also takes part in CRL's On Track to Train programme. The Sisters' Group from the local mosque have adopted the station and are looking after the planters on the platforms.
- It was a busy year in CRL's classroom at the station. In addition to the regular visits from primary school children learning about rail safety, a series of meetings took place as part of the new Near Neighbours/Big Conversation initiative.
- The Rishton Prospects panels project, From the Mills to the Tower, is supported by ELCRP. It explores local history with 180 children from the town's three primary schools who have learnt about the role of the railway during the Wakes Weeks.

Attractive artwork is being developed for display at the station.

- Partnership working has taken place at Bamber Bridge and Lostock Hall stations with the help of South Ribble Borough Council. Partners helping transform the station included Baxi's, the Brothers of Charity and the South Ribble Pensioners Association. Lostock Hall is in the early stages of development to make it a better experience for local rail travellers.
- ELCRP/CRL developed an Access for All mid-tier project for Accrington and initiated a design study to look at improving access at Burnley Manchester Rd. The latter will form the basis of a public consultation.
- The partnership continues to market the Todmorden Curve service through the production of mini timetables and posters.
- Successful sponsorships included the annual International Rhythm & Blues Festival on August Bank Holiday weekend in Colne, and CAMRA's Pendle Beer Festival at the end of January 2020.

- The partnership also works with the Lancashire Rail Ramblers to offer a set of guided walks from East Lancashire stations.

### Priorities

#### Next 12 months:

- Maintain accreditation.
- Welcome the new Community Rail Development Officer in April 2020.
- Continue supporting marketing initiatives such as the Todmorden Curve service.
- Continue to offer guided walks from East Lancashire stations.
- Sponsor special events such as the Colne R&B Festival.
- Support station partnerships and see if new groups can be formed for Mill Hill and Cherry Tree stations.
- Develop and expand the range of activities that take place at CRL's base and educational room at Accrington station.
- Assist Pendle Borough Council to explore opportunities to improve rail services to Colne.
- Produce a new mini timetable for the Preston to Colne service.
- Maintain and expand the CRL red boards.

#### Next five years:

- Maintain accreditation.
- Continue to develop CRL's base at Accrington station for educational and other community engagement.
- Develop initiatives to make stations more accessible for everyone.
- Support station volunteers and In Bloom groups.
- Continue to support the Todmorden Curve service.
- Further develop and promote DalesRail.



### Recent trends in customer numbers

Average % growth 2019/20

**13.84%**

### 3.18 Clitheroe Line Community Rail Partnership (CLCRP)

**Region:** Central

**CR Development Officer:** Simon Clarke

**CR Education Development Officer:** Shahiesta Raja

**CRP Chair:** Marjorie Birch

**Website:**

[communityrail Lancashire.co.uk/lines/clitheroe-line/](http://communityrail Lancashire.co.uk/lines/clitheroe-line/)  
[dalesrail.com](http://dalesrail.com)

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The CLCRP runs from the market town of Clitheroe, population 15,500, through the Ribble Valley to Blackburn and Darwen, with a combined population of around 150,000 and on to Bolton and the regional centre at Manchester. The line is well used by commuters and students and plays an important part in the social life of all the communities it serves.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Along with Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) and the other three Lancashire CRPs, the CLCRP was formally accredited by the DfT. This recognises the hard work of both the paid staff and volunteers along the lines. The CLCRP acknowledges the work done by the station volunteers and the In Bloom groups who look after the stations along the line and make them more welcoming places.
- The year started with a celebration at Whalley station in April 2019 to honour the role of the nearby Calderstones hospital in the First World War.
- To mark the 25th anniversary of the restoration of a regular train service between Blackburn and Clitheroe, CLCRP/CRL held a reception in the Ribble Valley council chamber in June 2019. This event brought together people and organisations who were involved in the restoration in 1994 and who have overseen its subsequent development.
- It was a good year for DalesRail (Blackpool North to Carlisle via the Ribble Valley line and the Settle-Carlisle line). Nearly 2,000 passengers travelled on the summer Sunday service.
- CLCRP/CRL appreciate the work of the volunteer walk leaders from the Lancashire Rail Ramblers who provided 72 guided walks and six coach links on the 17 Sundays the service operated. New for 2019 was a



short promotional video clip produced by NODROG.

- CLCRP successfully promoted the printed Guided Walks leaflets provided by the Lancashire Rail Ramblers from stations along the line.
- During the year CLCRP/CRL worked with Connect East Lancashire (CEL) to develop a project to improve the visibility of Ramsgreave & Wilsphire station. The project involved pupils from Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe and students from Blackburn College. Co-ordinated by a local artist, artwork will be displayed at the station along with other measures to increase the community's awareness of and pride in their station.
- After working closely with CLCRP/CRL, the newly formed Bolton & South Lancashire CRP will take the lead in developing initiatives at the south end of the line.
- Throughout 2019 CLCRP/CRL continued to work with groups of Northern apprentices. In September the Connecting Clitheroe project was formally launched. The apprentices worked with pupils from Brookside and St Michael & St John's schools in Clitheroe to create the artwork now on display at the station. The project also saw new dementia-friendly signage installed. A new group is developing a Destination Green project at Blackburn station as well as working with Nightsafe, a charity helping homeless young people.

- A recent development was the production of mini timetables for the line. These timetables have been so popular that a reprint was needed.
- The CLCRP regrets that the popular Clitheroe Interchange office was closed by Lancashire CC as an economy measure.

### Priorities

#### Next 12 months:

- CLCRP/CRL will continue to work on possible service developments in the Ribble Valley with partners Lancashire CC, Ribble Valley BC, Northern and TfN.
- Maintain accreditation.
- Welcome a new community rail development officer in April.
- Complete and launch the CEL project at Ramgreave & Wilpshire station.
- Assess the scope for further CEL projects along the line.
- Work with partners to look at ways to extend the reach of DalesRail.
- Maintain the high-profile marketing of DalesRail through the brochure, website and social media, and assist Northern in the development of the DalesRail landing page on its website.
- Determine the best use for the Sunday Blackpool-Hellifield service.
- Continue to produce the mini timetables for the Clitheroe line.

- Develop projects in partnership with the Bolton & South Lancashire CRP.
- Continue to work with local schools as part of the Passport to Safe Rail Travel, On Track to Train, and Railway Confidence programmes.
- Develop business cases for the development of rail services along the Ribble Valley line.
- Continue to work with station volunteers and In Bloom groups to make stations attractive gateways to their communities.

#### Next five years:

- Maintain accreditation.
- Initiate or take part in research to better understand the market for the whole line.
- Use the outcomes from this research to help inform future promotional and marketing activity.
- Continue to develop educational engagement along the line.
- Develop initiatives to make stations more accessible for everyone.
- Support the station volunteers and In Bloom groups.
- Continue to develop and promote DalesRail.

**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
**Average % growth 2019/20**  
**12.89%**





### 3.19 South East Manchester CRP

**Region:** North West

**CRP Officer:** Stephen Forde

**CRP Chair:** Peter Robinson

**Website:** semcorp.org.uk/

**Brief summary of route:**

The four routes covered by the partnership are Manchester to New Mills Central, Manchester to Rose Hill via Hyde, Stockport to Buxton/Stockport to Middlewood and Manchester to Glossop/Hadfield (as far as Broadbottom).

**Key highlights of 2019/20:**

2019 was a busy year for the CRP and the Friends groups. Friends of Rose Hill carried out a major community art project that involved a number of multi-generational workshops. Participants shared stories to explore their life experiences and what living in the Marple area is like now to compared to years past. Part of the output of the workshops was the production of art pieces painted onto wooden discs that were offcuts from a local woodworking studio. The project was recognised at both the ACoRP awards and the Cheshire Best Kept Stations awards.

Friends of Romiley also carried out a major community-based art project. The aim was to fill several 'blind windows' at the station. Workshops were held at local markets and community groups where individuals painted part of the scenes. The result is a much brighter station.

The CRP has been working in partnership with Friends of Glossop station to continue a station history board project that began some years ago at Glossop, Hadfield and Dinting. Friends groups, with the assistance of local historian Paul Abell, have also created boards for Ashbury's, Gorton, Hattersley, Fairfield and Guide Bridge. The boards at the first two stations have been installed and permission is awaited for Hattersley and Fairfield.



Pupils of Woodley Primary School designed the welcome board for Woodley station, which has now been installed. Rose Hill station celebrated its 150th anniversary with the unveiling of a plaque in July and a walk along a section of the original route which now forms part of the Middlewood Way walking/cycling route.

**Priorities**

Community engagement in Ince and Elton, station adoption, raising awareness of the CRP and community rail.

**Next 12 months:**

- The main priority will be for the CRP to receive its DfT/ACoRP accreditation. This will require a substantial change in the CRP's governance arrangements.
- To support Woodley Primary School in continuing its involvement with their local station.
- Continue to work with Friends of Glossop and other Friends groups on the Glossop line to complete installation of the remaining history art boards.
- Display its Line Art Collection at Stockport central Memorial Museum in May for a month.
- The CRP has been working with Friends of Reddish South and Denton in discussions with the Greater Manchester mayor to establish a full rail service to replace the current 'Parliamentary service' of one train per week. It's hoped that agreement can be reached this year about the type of service that will be introduced.

**Next five years:**

- Improve passenger facilities at stations to make journeys more comfortable, encourage modal shift onto railways and promote more sustainable travel to stations, working with local authorities to promote cycling and walking routes to stations.
- Connect several stations to Greater Manchester's evolving 'Bee Network' (see [tfgm.com/made-to-move](http://tfgm.com/made-to-move)).
- With the resolution of Sunday working issues it is hoped to start promoting increased leisure usage via the railway stations along the line. This will aim to encourage those living at the rural end of the line to travel into the regional centre and those living closer to the centre to travel outwards to take advantage of the rural open spaces accessible to them.



**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
**Average % growth 2019/20**  
**0.45%**



### 3.20 Crewe to Manchester Community Rail Partnership (C2MCRP)

**Region:** North West

**CRP Officer:** Stephen Forde

**CRP Chair:** Chris Dale

**Website:** [crewe2manchesterrail.org.uk](http://crewe2manchesterrail.org.uk)

#### **Brief summary of route:**

The partnership is on the West Coast Main Line and provides a fast, frequent and direct rail service to Manchester, Stockport, Manchester airport and Crewe, with leisure services into Cheshire and Manchester city centre.

#### **Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- After a decade of campaigning, the Friends of Handforth station succeeded in winning Access For All funding to make the station and platforms fully accessible.
- Line art has been installed at several stations and the collection has been on display at a variety of locations along the line.
- Friends of Heaton Chapel with the assistance of children from Tithe Barn Primary School installed a bug hotel in the form of a train. The children submitted designs as part of an art contest and the winning design was then constructed by the local Men in Sheds group.
- Friends of Levenshulme station installed a sign language station name on both platforms. The sign, produced in finger spelling, was designed with the assistance of children from Alma Park School.
- The partnership has worked with local artist Eamonn Murphy to create pieces of art that reflect the communities around the stations on the line.
- At the Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards several station groups from the Crewe to Manchester CRP were recognised for their hard work and the contribution that they make to improving the travelling experience for passengers.

#### **Priorities**

##### **Next 12 months:**

- The main priority will be for the CRP to be awarded its DfT/ACoRP accreditation. This will require a substantial



change in the governance arrangements for the CRP.

- Construction of two lifts at Handforth station in 2020/21 will give step free access to both platforms and an accessible parking scheme located adjacent to the station.
- The CRP will continue to support Friends of Levenshulme station in delivering a project to renovate the disused railway station at Levenshulme South. Initial structural work has been completed to make the building weatherproof.
- Friends of Heaton Chapel station are progressing the development of a community space on the first floor of their station building. The CRP will assist the group in the creation of a Community Interest Company that will act as the building manager going forward.
- Restoration of the historic wooden ticket hall at Goostrey station is well under way. Friends of Goostrey expect to take possession of it in the next 12 months and it is then intended to be used for community projects. The CRP will be supporting the group in establishing a management structure to help oversee the day to day running of the hall.

**Next five years:**

- The key priority is to improve passenger facilities at stations to make journeys more comfortable and encourage modal shift onto railways.
- Promote more sustainable travel, working with local authorities for cycling and walking routes to stations. Connect several stations to Greater Manchester's evolving Bee Network ([tfgm.com/made-to-move/bee-network](https://www.tfgm.com/made-to-move/bee-network)).
- With the resolution of Sunday working issues it is hoped to start promoting increased leisure usage via the railway stations along the line. This will aim to encourage those living at the rural end of the line to travel into the regional centre and those living closer to the centre to travel outwards to take advantage of the rural open spaces accessible to them.



**Recent trends in customer numbers**

Average % growth 2019/20

**-0.95%**



### 3.21 High Peak & Hope Valley CRP

**Region:** Central & East

**CRP Officers:** Andrew Walker and Catherine Croney

**CRP Chair:** Cllr. George Wharmby, Derbyshire County Council

**Website:** [peakdistrictbytrain.org](http://peakdistrictbytrain.org) (coming soon)

**Brief summary of route:**

There are three routes: The highly scenic Sheffield-Manchester Hope Valley line runs through the Peak District National Park in Derbyshire and South Yorkshire. The Glossop line is heavily used by Derbyshire residents to access Manchester for work and leisure. The Buxton line connects some of Derbyshire and Cheshire's most attractive towns to Manchester.

**Key highlights of 2019/20:**

- Held a series of community events along the Hope Valley line to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the running of the first passenger train.
- Completed a multi-partner project to install an attractive heritage-style canopy over the platform at Dore & Topley station.
- Produced heritage-style totem name boards for five Hope Valley stations to promote their location inside the Peak District National Park.
- Ran several successful CRP-supported live music trains and station to station guided walks, attracting participants all year round and many favourable comments.



- Delivered a wide range of station group projects including glass art at Whaley Bridge, painted artwork at Buxton, panoramic skyline interpretation panels at Edale, a bench seat with a magnificent view at Chapel-en-le-Frith, schoolchildren's artwork at Bamford, Hathersage and Hope, and successful Teddy Bears' Picnic and Christmas events on Glossop station.
- Shortlisted for five Community Rail Awards.

**Priorities**

**Next 12 months:**

- Work with partners such as the Peak District National Park and High Peak Borough Council to promote rail-based tourism.
- Continue various marketing projects aimed at creating a specific brand and identity for the three lines that the CRP is involved with.
- Work with the rail industry to secure the provision of CCTV at Dinting station on the Glossop line where there are passenger safety and crowd control issues at busy times due to the sharply curving platform.
- Work with partners who can help deliver meaningful support for members of society who feel excluded from rail travel and the personal development opportunities this can bring.

**Next five years:**

- Continue building a strong marketing presence across all media channels for rail-based travel to and from the Peak District.
- Work with the rail industry to resolve the three stations on the Hope Valley line that do not have step-free access to one or both platforms: Chinley, Hope and New Mills Central.

- Work with the rail industry to provide more car parking capacity for rail users at key stations with strong growth potential such as New Mills Central, Dore & Totley and Buxton.
- Look into possibility of replacing the metal and acrylic waiting shelters at Edale station with attractive stone-built waiting rooms in keeping with the station's natural surroundings in the Peak District National Park and reflecting the village's iconic status as the southern starting point of the Pennine Way long-distance walk.

**Recent trends in customer numbers**  
Average % growth 2019/20  
**-0.64%**

