



NORTHERN

Community Rail Report 2020/21

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# Foreword

Despite the impact of the pandemic I am very pleased at the progress that Northern has made and continues to make with its' operations, its' stakeholders, its' customers and their communities.

Since the transfer to DOHL on 1 March 2020, great efforts have been made by the new management of Northern and all of its employees to stabilise performance and to improve the reputation of Northern.

I'm delighted to see the positive impacts of the many community rail partnerships in place and the valuable projects that are happening across the North to enrich communities and support economies. Many of the case studies featured within this report are truly inspiring.

I am particularly proud to see that Northern has now moved to a more customer centric position, with for example, the deployment of a new Customer Panel and customer feedback platform and introduced various station improvements as well as new Accessible Hubs at stations. Northern continues to work with the Northern Accessibility User Group (NAUG) to further shape accessible travel.

Northern also has a key part to play in contributing to the Government's 'levelling up' agenda, supporting immediate economic recovery and helping the region build back better and drive sustainable economic growth.

Restarting and reinvigorating promotion of rail, for leisure and tourism will be crucial as communities rebuild from the pandemic. With your support and engagement, I believe that Northern is now well-placed to become one of the best operators on the UK over the next few years as well as one of the largest.

**Robin Gisby**  
**Chair**  
**Northern Trains Limited**



# Welcome

Northern Trains Limited has just celebrated its first anniversary, which also marks my first year as Managing Director. It is a business and region I know well though, having lived in the North West for many years and as interim engineering director at Northern from 2016-17.

So when I joined I knew that Northern had a proud history of working with community partners and volunteers who devote endless hours and energy into making the railway more welcoming and accessible for communities across the network.

This year has challenged all of us, and our communities, in ways none of us could have imagined, but I have been struck by the determination of colleagues and our community partners to supporting others through these difficult times.

This report brings together shining examples of the activities that have been undertaken. Volunteers have supported the most vulnerable in our society and at the same time delivered projects to foster social inclusion and build a more sustainable future.

On behalf of the Northern team, thank you to everyone for your continued commitment. As we embark on supporting the government's roadmap to recovery, we look forward to working with you to help the region build back better and towards a greener future.



**Nick Donovan**  
managing director



# Executive Summary

Welcome to our annual community rail report, a celebration of engagement and outreach undertaken by community groups, Northern colleagues and other partners.

It's been a challenging year for us all, and when the last report was published in spring 2020 we were yet to realise the full toll the pandemic would take.

But as can be seen in this report and via the various links and videos, it has shown the resilience, agility, care, selflessness and brilliance of the community partners we work with.

When in-person activity couldn't take place, volunteers made scrubs, face masks, befriended, delivered food parcels and gave other support to their community and the NHS in any way they could.

Meetings were moved online, welcoming new people and providing valuable interaction for those who would otherwise be isolated.

Rather than be defeated by circumstances, groups across Northern's community rose magnificently to the challenge and took the opportunity to review their plans and adapt them accordingly.

And they never stopped delivering. Their inspirational projects support inclusivity, break down barriers, help to build a more sustainable future and create a sense of pride and ownership, perfectly aligning with the four pillars of the national community rail development strategy.

We showcase some of their projects in this report but have only been able to include a small selection of what they do. Please take a look at our [community rail film](#) and visit our partner websites and social media channels to see the range of activity taking place.

In this year's report, for the first time, you'll find links to pages and sites where you can learn more about the amazing projects being undertaken by our volunteers and CRPs. These links are live, in blue in the online version.

Each year, many groups work to promote rail travel. With restrictions in place since March 2020, they shifted their focus instead onto providing reassurance and

confidence for those travelling. They have also been working to identify potential barriers for groups ahead of restrictions easing, as well as for those who haven't travelled by train before.

Nearly all CRPs supported by Northern have now been accredited or re-accredited under the Department for Transport's formal quality standard scheme. We are working with Community Rail Network to support the remaining partnerships through the process.

We're proud to have a growing early career programme of apprenticeships, year in industry students and graduate placements. As you'll see in this report, community engagement remains an essential part of their activity, which not only gives these young people valuable lifelong skills and insights, but also has a positive impact on the community and their colleagues.

As Northern Trains marks its first anniversary, we have an eye firmly on the future. We will embed social value into our business planning, building on the strong foundations already laid. As part of this, our new community engagement strategy will have a clearer-than-ever focus on inclusion and sustainability. We look forward to sharing our objectives and getting your views.

In everything we do, Northern is committed to having a positive impact on people and communities throughout the north of England. As we emerge from the pandemic, such commitment is more important than ever, and I am proud to know that our community rail partners are also ready to support the region to build back better.



**Carolyn**  
**director of stakeholder**  
**and community engagement**



## 2. Community Updates







TRAVEL THE MID CHESHIRE LINE AND DISCOVER  
**CHESHIRE'S**  
Wonderful Wildlife



## 2.1 Northern Delivery Partners



## Bradford's Partnership in Action

Bradford District's unemployment rates are higher than the regional and national average, and employment rates have lagged behind the UK's for over a decade.

The average gap over the period equates to 20,000 people, with ethnic minority women making up three quarters of the employment gap. Within the 21 districts in the Yorkshire and Humber region, Bradford District has the second lowest employment rate, the third highest economic inactivity rate and third highest level of unemployment.

The economic strategy for Bradford District 2018-2030 sets a goal to be the UK's fastest-growing economy over the coming decade, up by £4bn, with 20,000 more people in work, and 48,000 residents having improved skills.

### Career & Technical Education (CTE)

Bradford's CTE core team is instrumental in ensuring that young people are aligned to opportunities within the Bradford District and regionally.

### Outstanding

Northern won Outstanding Contribution business of the year award, the highest accolade a business can achieve from the CTE Partnership. The award was in recognition of Northern's positive approach to the partnership, providing opportunities for young people from primary school through to post-16, supporting their learning and their understanding of the transport and rail sector, dispelling myths around gender stereotypes and other perceived barriers.

**A film was produced with Northern** to demonstrate how the partnership benefits local schools, especially in raising awareness of opportunities in the rail industry and the skills and knowledge needed to help them succeed.

### Inspiring

Asma Patel, a Northern staff volunteer, was inspirational when she told South Asian girls of her experiences of being the first South Asian female conductor in Leeds, soon to become a train driver. This sparked several questions about how she felt on her first day, and questions about her reasons for becoming a train driver. The girls' enthusiastic questioning demonstrated interest, and they gained an insight into a career they would have stereotypically banded as a job for boys.

Other Northern rail volunteers also took part in career-related activities in schools such as the fun activity, What's My Line?

### Safety

In collaboration with Leeds City FC, Northern offered a much-needed activity to raise issues about safety on the railway lines and why children and young people shouldn't play on them. It also took this opportunity to raise awareness about the different roles and jobs in the rail industry that keep it all running safe and smoothly.



## Frizinghall

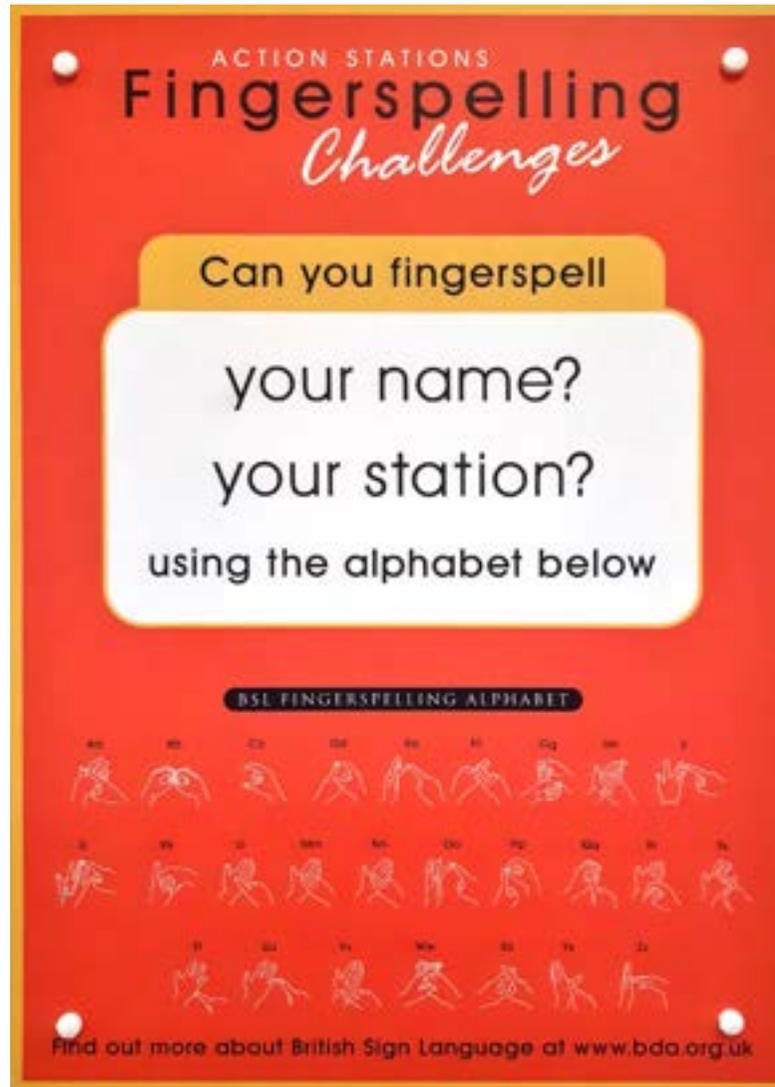
Frizinghall station was recently adopted by Frizinghall Primary School. This adoption means that the school can develop projects to support the community and the families whose children attend the school.

The four priorities for Frizinghall are to:

- Improve awareness of rail safety.
- Better engagement with the local community to explore the region beyond the Bradford Broadway shopping centre.
- Work with '50 things to do before you are five' to access the countryside and the canal towpaths in Bradford District.
- Increase travel confidence of students and the community to improve their access to attractions supporting the local economy.

## Shipley

Schools have been getting more involved recently with creating displays that are both interactive and informative, and some have given a priority to raising awareness for more vulnerable travellers. The BSL Fingerspelling posters at Shipley station were designed by schoolchildren to give travellers the opportunity to learn some basic sign language so they could spell their name and the station's name.



## Inclusive

The CTE supports Northern's inclusion and diversity agenda, targeting and promoting roles to under-represented groups. This benefits Bradford District immensely and supports its economic development and recovery.

A post Covid-19 plan has been created so that the partnership can continue to highlight roles within the rail industry specifically aimed at ethnic minority women. Apprenticeship opportunities are being promoted and videos are already in schools and colleges showcasing Northern as an inclusive employer.

A series of short films are being produced on the theme of "A day in the life", looking at various positions within Northern including senior roles, front line workers, skilled engineers, technical and safety roles, as well as behind-the-scenes jobs.

As part of CTE Transport, Distribution & Logistic (TDL), a trip was arranged to the Hitachi train plant to inspire young women and celebrate women in transport.

## Skills

The CTE is currently in the early stages of developing a rail qualification with Northern and Shipley College. This will help ensure that industry experts will feed in their requirements so that college leavers joining their workforce can have the necessary technical skills and knowledge to future-proof the workforce.

## Community Rail Network

Community Rail Network (CRN) is one of Northern's key partners in delivering support to community rail partnerships and station groups across the region. It provides much-valued core funding to allow its team to give expert support and advice to community rail groups in the North.

CRN's support and development team normally spends much of their time visiting CRPs and groups to provide advice and guidance. During 2020, as Covid-19 stopped projects and meetings, they were more determined than ever to stay in touch with members.

They maintained frequent contact, via online meetings, phone calls and emails, discussing ways to adapt and support local communities' resilience, and to help members plan ahead to support recovery.

This support helped create a sense of togetherness across the country, with groups encouraged to look to the future and consider the vital role community rail can play in building back better, fairer, and greener, as outlined in CRN's [briefing on recovery and renewal from Covid-19](#).

### Marketing and communications

It was a challenging year for CRPs to tell their stories and successes, so CRN tailored its support for them on the Northern network to help them continue with marketing and communications activity during the pandemic.

Following on from the previous year's work on identifying the support needed for digital marketing, CRN provided targeted webinars, including [a session on using and harnessing social media](#).

CRN also continued to regularly share stories and good practice via its social media channels, website, and fortnightly e-bulletin, *Community Rail News*. This helped spotlight projects such as Community Rail Lancashire's (CRL) Bonded Together with a Prayer Bead, Penistone Line's Dwell Time, and station projects from groups including the Friends of Dronfield Station and the Friends of Handforth Station.

To add colour to this year's online Community Rail Awards, snippets from the Friends of Buxton Station's ['Mini-Sagas'](#) competition were set to video to provide a poignant reminder of what community rail means to everyone – showcasing how they continued to engage their community using digital means.



## Tourism and heritage

Restarting and reinvigorating promotion of rail, for leisure, tourism, and sustainable mobility, will be crucial as communities rebuild from the pandemic. CRN reflected this by adapting its tourism support to CRPs to focus on how to build back better, develop effective partnerships, and support local economies.

These topics were emphasised in a **sustainable tourism** webinar delivered with High Peak & Hope Valley CRP.

CRN also introduced a new tourism network, featuring CRPs from across the country, including Tyne Valley, Penistone Line, Settle to Carlisle, High Peak & Hope Valley, and Community Rail Cumbria. Meeting every few months online, this network provides an opportunity for CRPs to discuss challenges, learn from others, and share best practice around tourism promotions. This will be valuable in the recovery of sustainable tourism by rail in 2021-22.

Promotion of Northern community rail lines on **scenicrailbritain.com** continued throughout the pandemic, focusing on future travel ideas and impressive scenic rail photography. The 2021-22 promotional plan for the site will feature improved search engine optimisation, enhanced marketing activities and increased partnership development to encourage visitors back onto the railway, promote sustainable travel and highlight local businesses to help recovery.

## Reports & resources

CRN released a **major report on youth engagement** in community rail in summer 2020. It featured valued contributions from members of Northern's community and sustainability team, Northern apprentices, and staff and volunteers involved in CRL's education projects.

Tyne Valley CRP was also featured in **Connected Stations**, a new guide to community-led station travel planning and sustainable transport.

Northern supported CRN to produce practical guidance documents for members, including advice on **engaging local media** and a guide on how CRPs can **work with national landscapes**, including national parks, AONBs and RSPB reserves, highlighting case studies from Esk Valley Rail Partnership and Leeds-Morecambe CRP.

## Support & development

Despite the extraordinary challenges of Covid-19, CRN remained on hand to respond to CRPs, help groups cope with change and adapt their priorities and delivery plans. There was notable support for Tyne Valley's Lyric & Line project, Penistone Line's Dwell Time, and for Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Company with their inclusion and community engagement plans.

CRN's officers also worked closely with CRPs going through accreditation or re-accreditation, helping to develop plans to fit in with a post-pandemic environment and promote recovery and renewal.

Many new officers joined Northern's CRPs during the year, and CRN provided them with an introduction to

community rail and ongoing dedicated support as they were starting their roles in such difficult times.

In 2021-22, CRN will look to build upon existing relationships with the English Football League Trust, National Citizen Service **see page 17**, and The Prince's Trust, to develop further youth engagement, inclusion, and wellbeing projects with CRPs and station groups.

## Future developments

After an unprecedented year, CRN will continue to work closely with Northern to provide passion and leadership to ensure that community rail in the North is engaged and empowered in rail recovery and modal shift.

Staff will provide direct advice, guidance and resources to help Northern CRPs and station groups position and promote rail as sustainable, aspirational and community-minded, central to 'building back better' from Covid-19 towards a greener transport future.



## CRL Education Programme

### Developing engagement through education

During the past year, the Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) education team, in partnership with Northern, has had to adapt its practice to navigate through Covid-19.

Before the pandemic, CRL focused on educating young people on safety and careers, supporting other CRPs with education in rail and engaged local communities with the railway including making station enhancements. When people had to work from home, plans were devised to ensure those objectives could still be met.

During the adaptation to home-based education, the team created rail-related activities that supported the National Curriculum. **These were uploaded to the downtheline website** and shared on social media, with some rail-inspired tasks to keep children active and creative during lockdown.

When restrictions eased, videos were made to show people how to use the train safely and in particular on the UK's first Autism Friendly Line (Blackburn to Manchester via the Todmorden Curve). Videos were also made about the history of some of Lancashire's stations and a collection of stories from the DalesRail programme was put together virtually.

When schools returned in the latter part of 2020, online safety sessions took place over Zoom and schools were glad to have virtual visitors to their classrooms. Some uniformed groups such as the cubs also enjoyed this online interaction. While some face-to-face safety sessions were held at the Al Hayat language centre in Blackburn, the week of live sessions planned for late January 2021 was cancelled because of lockdown so a video was sent instead.

Before the pandemic, CRL hosted tri-annual education network meetings for stakeholders across the Northern franchise. Usually based in Accrington or Preston, these gave participants the opportunity to exchange ideas and undertake training such as suicide awareness or learning about autism.

These meetings moved to Zoom in March 2020, giving regular attendees the chance to talk about their new working arrangements. CRN suggested that an invitation to join the meetings could be opened-up nationally.

Since moving online, the network has provided peer-to-peer support and external training. To continue this throughout 2021, CRL has allocated a training budget.

The switch to an online format during such a challenging time for the community rail family helped the education network receive the Outstanding Contribution to Community Rail award in December 2020.

The education network also nurtured a major project that CRL co-led in 2020, after Network Rail asked for support in reducing trespassing. A small working group from CRL, Bishop Line, Tyne Valley and South Eastern CRPs met weekly and created a national competition for teenagers, Backtrack.





During 2020, CRL continued to encourage young people to look at careers in the railway industry. In October they hosted an event for *Rail Week*. The Right Track to Diversity was an online seminar which saw three rail employees from underrepresented groups discuss their experiences of the industry. The seminar was broadcast live and was also uploaded to the downtheline website for schools and colleges. In December and January 2021, several more careers sessions took place online.

Artwork was created and displayed during the year. The Memorable Journeys displays went up at Accrington. At Castleford, a banner was created via Zoom with a local primary school and unveiled in December. Along the Line saw a total revamp at Ramsgreave and Wilpshire with an online launch in January.

The Hidden Gems photo collage boards were finally revealed on the West of Lancashire lines in August. Be a Gem was another remote project, where a gem-shaped template was sent to vulnerable groups across Lancashire. Recipients were invited to fill the gem with things they loved: the entries were made into posters and are now displayed along the Lancashire lines.

Since 2018, CRL has hosted an annual's women's project to improve gender balance in the industry. Knowing that groups wouldn't be going on rail trips in 2020, a new project was born: 100 women-100 journeys. Women across the globe were invited to pen their memoirs of rail journeys, with stories that could make readers laugh, cry or be inspired. Female rail employees wrote great accounts of their jobs, while others told how they met friends or had travelled to breathtaking locations.

The aim of 100 women-100 journeys is to encourage people back to the railway when it is safe to do so. A booklet of the stories will appear on the [downtheline website](#) during 2021.

The team is tentatively planning projects for 2021 to continue to deliver safety and careers education and connect local communities to the railway. It recognises its important role in welcoming passengers back onto trains after the pandemic. However, it will plan for all eventualities to ensure that its work can continue in case restrictions are still in place.

More details are in the four-year strategic education plan which is regularly reviewed at ComREG.



## National Citizen Service

### NCS Summer 2020

Thanks to its partnership with Northern, Bradford City FC's Community Foundation continues to use the rail network in Calderdale and Bradford as part of the National Citizen Service (NCS).

NCS is a voluntary, government-funded programme for 16 and 17-year-olds, to help with personal and social development. It uses programmes, called Challenges, in the summer holidays and during October half term to get the young people involved, and this is followed by social action to help them make a difference in their local communities.

In the Yorkshire & Humber region, NCS delivered 42,675 hours in 2020, despite the pandemic - the highest average hours across any NCS region in the UK, accounting for 20% of all social action hours nationally.

The Foundation's partnership with Northern designed a Challenge to introduce young people to the ease of train travel across the district and gave them the opportunity to identify and tackle local issues in an engaging way.

In 2020 NCS programmes including skill-based sessions and volunteering had been planned for around 500 students. Although these were halted due to the pandemic, the Foundation kept in safe contact with as many students as possible, aware of the difficulties they were facing with isolation and the disruption to their education.

Because of lockdown, it was decided to adapt the initial face-to-face programme into a digital one. Northern agreed to partner them on this and, reflecting the rail industry's faith in young people, Northern's Richard Isaac set the Foundation the task of creating a mural for Bradford as part of its City of Culture bid.

Over two days, teams worked hard, designed two murals and pitched their ideas to key colleagues at Northern, Bradford Council and Network Rail via an online



Dragon's Den. The 'dragons' were so impressed that they selected both murals, which were merged to create the final design. [A video of the pitch](#) was uploaded to YouTube.

The launch was scheduled at Bradford City FC to officially unveil the design, but due to renewed restrictions it was switched to an [online event](#) at short notice.

NCS manager Lizzie Saunderson said: "I am so proud of the work the young people completed over two weeks. Covid-19 has brought so much uncertainty and disruption to the community, but they truly demonstrated that they are an asset that should be celebrated in the district."

2021 brings its own challenges again and the NCS programme has a slightly new look but once again aims to engage, develop and support young people and the communities in which they live.

Through the partnership with Northern and Bradford City, the English Football League Trust charity is looking at opportunities for involving young people on the NCS programme to enhance and support the excellent work being done by Community Rail Partnerships.

## Democracy

### Engaging with Parliament

The UK Parliament and Northern have teamed up to engage young people across Yorkshire and Humberside.

They have helped facilitate seven workshops, engaging with over 450 young people from community groups, colleges, National Citizens Service/English Football League and the Rugby Football League.

Parliament's outreach team is based in every UK region. It aims to inspire people to use their democratic rights and get involved with Parliament wherever they live in the UK by helping them understand the working process of Parliament, the House of Lords and government.

Young people have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. In recent months, Parliament's senior outreach and engagement officer for Yorkshire & Humberside Rachael Dodgson has worked closely with Northern's regional community & sustainability manager Richard Isaac to identify local community groups and colleges that would benefit from these workshops.

During the pandemic, Parliament's outreach sessions moved online with many interactive ways for young people to share their ideas and opinions about local issues, and to learn how to get their voices heard at Parliament.

Where possible, the local MP attends the session so that groups can ask questions and find out more about how their representative is speaking up for their constituency in the House of Commons.



## 2.2 CRP Case Studies



## Along the Line

**“We are designing and creating things...  
to make it more interesting and more vibrant”**

*Keira, pupil, Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe*

### Ramsgreave & Wilpshire station

Along the Line is an art project that was developed to help change attitudes to Ramsgreave & Wilpshire station on the Clitheroe Line.

Despite being the railway gateway to the scenic Ribble Valley, close to a large residential area and well-used by commuters and students, the station is in a cutting concealed by trees. This made it an easy target for anti-social activity and it was getting a reputation as a place to avoid especially after dark!

Keen to overcome these issues, CRL and Connecting East Lancashire (CEL) proposed the Along the Lines project. Its aim was to turn round the station's negative image by engaging young people and the community through artwork and local involvement.

CRL and CEL got plenty of support for the project from the Clitheroe Line CRP, the Platform Gallery in Clitheroe, Blackburn Museum, students from Ribblesdale High School and Blackburn College, the local Alzheimer's Society and Child Action North West (CANW). The Friends of Ramsgreave & Wilpshire Station group gave support throughout the project.

### Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe

Many pupils travel by train to Ribblesdale High School each day. A group of 18 visited the station and then went 'along the line' to Manchester's Walker Art Gallery. On the way they surveyed passengers about their journeys and asked for ideas to improve the line. This trip helped the group decide that it would focus on creating bright artwork inspired by the silver birch trees and wildlife around the station.

### Blackburn College

Six photographic students developed a series of montages showing features that can be seen 'along the line'. These are now displayed by the platform entrances and provide visual impact, helping to direct people to the right platform.

### Alzheimer's Society and CANW

The work with the local Alzheimer's Society and CANW added a different dimension to the project, using historical references and images. Inside the platform shelters passengers can now read stories from local people who used the station in the past.

Local artist Karen Allerton brought everything together, displaying the artwork at the station. Huckleberry Films produced **three short films** showing the project's progress. **More information about the artwork is available here.**

**A project report can be viewed here.**

**“If someone's having a bad day at work, they're gonna go to the railway station and they're gonna see all the bright colours... and it might make them happy”**

*Keira*



## Better Side of the Tracks

Cumbria is renowned for its beauty, breathtaking scenery and Wainwright walks. However, the stark reality is that the county has 29 communities ranking within the top 10% of England's most deprived areas.

Cumbrian Coast Line CRP was aware of the deep and lasting impact deprivation can have on young people, and wanted to explore how it could play a role in helping to bring about real and positive change for children and families.

### What happened

The CRP engaged with Flimby Primary School, which serves a community high on many deprivation indices. The first step saw the school adopt its local railway station, with the children creating a festive banner to say it was their station and that they were proud of it.

The project Stop Smashing Our Windows quickly followed. It was supported by Northern and CRN and was designed to start addressing the difficult behavioural patterns arising from local social deprivation and to bring the community closer together.

Safety in and around the station was reinforced via Northern's safety briefings and Network Rail workshops.

The village reached out for partners to support them with their vision. The Colourful North, Workington Academy, Flimby Primary School and Community Rail Cumbria came together to design and paint a vibrant coloured fence and wall on both station platforms.

Children from both schools attended a series of workshops and came up with ideas that would eventually become the template for the design. The increase in the children's confidence and self-esteem was wonderful to witness, as was the feedback from the community.



Allerdale Community Learning and Development provided a range of workshops: some helping to educate parents who need additional support for future employment, and others designed to bring parents and their children closer together.

Supported by Northern, pupils were given the opportunity to experience train travel, some for the first time. Those journeys introduced new dimensions to the school curriculum with the use of timetables, landscapes, buildings, safety, tickets and speaking to staff. This highlighted the importance of the outdoor classroom concept that the CRP continues to promote.

Community Rail Cumbria created a Strategic Alliance with Millom Discovery Centre to reinforce its commitment to education and ongoing social and economic wellbeing.

Every child from the school together with staff and community volunteers visited Millom Discovery Centre and its museum. They learnt how rail had impacted on the area's industrial and social past, as well as enjoyed the centre's model railway and other attractions.

Pupils said: "I never knew there was so much outside of our village," "I love the way the train travels between the mountains and sea," and "These timetables are great, I love tracking the stations and looking at what times the trains will be arriving."

## Results

The project has been appreciated by the community of Flimby, with the revitalised station at the centre of the community and young people leading the way. Antisocial behaviour has been eradicated. One resident said: "The pupils are inspiring their brothers and sisters to respect each other and take pride in their village."

Community engagement has also increased with allotment owners providing advice to the school, as well as offering plants and flowers to brighten up the station. The school is now the heart of the village and that has inspired the community to create its own parish council.

Parents have started to attend workshops and go on trips and school events. Footfall

has increased with parents and pupils travelling outside of the village and spending time together as a family, visiting places they attended on school trips.

The CRP aims to develop a more substantive strategy for supporting other deprived communities within Cumbria, providing opportunities for all children within the county, no matter what their backgrounds. This offer has already been extended to the Furness Line, engaging with primary schools at Roose and Barrow, and Sandgate School which supports pupils with learning disabilities.

This project surpassed expectations and created a blueprint for CRPs to use in other deprived areas of the UK.



## Lyric and Line

Music has the power to engage people; that's the simple concept behind Lyric and Line.

Singer-songwriter Gareth Davies-Jones approached Tyne Valley CRP (TVCRP) with a proposal to use songs to facilitate various community views of rail travel.

The partnership had been exploring different ways of identifying and understanding barriers to rail use, particularly in groups with additional needs, and asked Gareth to work initially with three specific groups:

- Gibside SEND School, Gateshead, who frequently take part in TVCRP's education programme.
- Journey Enterprises, a charity for adults with learning difficulties who run the coffee kiosk at Hexham.
- Zig Zag, a group for adults experiencing isolation.

The CRP wanted to see the railway through the eyes of the people in these groups, to understand how they view rail travel, and what barriers prevented them travelling by train.

The partnership officer and a colleague from Northern had talked with these groups and facilitated some trips but, particularly with Zig Zag, there was still hesitancy to use the train.

Seeing the railway through the groups' eyes would give the partnership clarity in its work to break down barriers, and the project would also give the groups the opportunity to explore a new skill: 'I found it interesting that you could construct a song with just a fine sense of the obvious,' said one of the participants.

The partnership's aim was to find a way to engage in a more in-depth yet neutral way rather than through a session run 'by the railway'.



Gareth was clear that he wanted to build relationships with the groups, spending time getting to know them. Over three months, he ran music workshops and facilitated views about the railway.

He accompanied Gibside on a class day out to Haltwhistle and even sang for the class, building confidence with the children and teachers. He went with Zig Zag on a sausage making day and became immersed in the group's sense of humour. And he visited Journey at Hexham, where coffee was drunk! Gareth also spent time travelling on the line, collecting sounds, video clips and pictures to use in the workshops.

Each group wrote and recorded a song that identified the challenges or joy of train travel for them, and each one saw rail travel differently.

Gibside's song spoke about the railway being 'a journey, an adventure'. It was this idea the partnership wants to explore with their parents although lockdown means this has to be put on hold.

Journey Enterprises, despite their involvement in running Hexham's coffee kiosk, had the least experience of trains as individuals and their song focused on the practicalities of rail travel.

Zig Zag, the group with the most experience of rail travel, wrote the toughest messages. They were clear that ticket machines, fear of buying the wrong ticket, worry over toilets and the height of the step on and off were all areas that prevented rail use. However, they were also clear that if you get it right rail travel is 'the best way to understand the world'.

Gareth, along with the TVCRP chair and officer, hosted an online feedback session in which he explained his work, and **played the video and recordings from each group**. This was very well received by the 25 attendees.

Gaining insight into the views of these groups means that TVCRP can set specific objectives to help reduce these barriers and build on group excitement.

In March 2020, Lyric and Line had an immediate impact with Journey who, despite holding station adoption bearer passes for a year, took a group on the line for the first time ever.

At the Community Rail Awards 2020, TVCRP's innovative approach saw them come first in the category Involving Diverse Groups.

As Covid continued through the late Spring of 2020, TVCRP asked Gareth to explore how passengers felt about returning to the railway. Funded by CRN, he held a series of workshops exploring four questions with participants:

- What do we miss about rail travel?
- What's changed, good or bad?
- What would you leave behind?
- If you could change one thing about rail travel, what would it be?

An additional workshop explored taking bikes on trains.



Gareth circulated a document to Northern and other TOCs with all the comments and suggestions from the participants, and wrote four new pieces. One participant said: 'The songs really reflect our discussion and the atmosphere of the sessions. Well done.'

A sequel to Lyric and Line is predicted!

## 2.3 Station Adoption Case Studies



# Alderley Edge

The end of 2020 saw the completion of an interesting artwork project spearheaded by Alderley Edge Station Volunteer Group.

Thanks to fundraising by the volunteers and support

from the Crewe to Manchester Community Rail Partnership, two digitally-created montages by local artist Eamonn Murphy were commissioned.

The artworks depict interesting buildings close to all the stations along the Crewe-Manchester line. Each one features an iconic Alderley Edge building: Queens Court, which was originally built as a railway hotel in 1844 for the London & North-Western Railway Company, and the Alderley Edge Community Primary School, built in 1854.

Since they were installed in December, the images have been highly praised for enhancing the station and making a big improvement to the appearance of the Manchester-bound platform.

Not wanting to rest on its laurels, the volunteer group is raising more funds for further improvements to the station in 2021. As well as extra artworks, it is planning new flower planters on the platforms with support from Northern Trains/DFT grant funding.



# Buxton

With the announcement at the end of April 2020 that there would be at least another three weeks of lockdown, the Friends of Buxton Station (FoBS) decided they'd try to stimulate home-schoolers into entering a mini-saga competition. A complete story in 50 words, the mini-saga would need to be a happy tale with the title: "It Happened at Buxton Station".

The local education authority initially agreed to promote it, but then changed its mind. Not wanting to give up, the FoBS worked hard with its own promotional efforts in local newspapers and with former partner Buxton Junior School. Although the numbers were low, they succeeded in getting 15 entries telling fanciful stories about rainbows, pop stars and mythical creatures. Pictured are three of the entrants, The Grant Boys, all brothers hence socially un-distanced.

In June 2020, the mini-saga idea was extended to all Friends groups and others through the national publication *Community Rail News*. The idea had been to share positive thoughts about volunteer work at the heart of communities but again, the uptake was low, with just another 15 entries received.

Although it wasn't widely supported locally - possibly due to the education authority's lack of support - this innovative idea won second place at the national Community Rail Awards event in December 2020 in the category Involving Children & Young People.

FoBS arranged for the most appropriate mini-sagas to be voiced by actors from Buxton Drama League. FoBS volunteer Will Blake produced a perfect soundscape backdrop for each audio input, available to [hear as a mini-podcast](#).



# New Mills

There were hearts aplenty around the Derbyshire town of New Mills over Valentine's weekend 2021.

Local artist Deborah Pitman and organisers of the town's annual festival worked together to share the love and ensure that, despite the pandemic, a community event could still take place.

Inspired by the national group The Climate Coalition, who send green hearts to MPs every Valentine's Day, this Covid-friendly festival #showthelovenewmills aimed to raise awareness of climate change. The team wanted the town to show that it cared, and people were encouraged to make green hearts from various materials.

Because of the pandemic, the hearts had to be displayed outside with plenty of space for people to view safely. Remembering that a previous art project called JunkStop had used the fence at New Mill Central station, the team approached Northern's Becky Styles and Catherine Croney from High Peak and Hope Valley CRP to see if it could be used again. Once all the safety criteria were met, New Mills Central got the green light for green hearts! Deborah worked with Rachel Monteath from BeingOutdoors CIC to harvest willow from a community wood in Marple, ensuring the hearts would be made from the ultimate sustainable free material.

Children who were being home educated or flexischooled wove wicker hearts during their local forest school sessions. These were displayed on the station fence over Valentine's weekend and stayed a few extra weeks for more travellers to enjoy.

Other festival events included green hearts made by locals and displayed in the MP's office window or set in various places for residents to enjoy on their daily exercise.

Said Deborah Pitman: "It was a great but very chilly weekend of 'feel good' Covid-safe events. We're grateful to the train station for playing a part."



# Romiley

Transforming an unsightly slope at Romiley station has become a bit of a mission for the volunteers determined to get on top of the problem.

Following tree felling in 2018, the area by the station car park had become overrun with weeds and looked so unsightly that the Friends of Romiley Station (FoRS) nicknamed it The Hill of Doom.

However, knowing that problems can become opportunities, the FoRS successfully applied for funding from Northern, TfGM and the Co-op Community Fund to help them tackle the problem.

By early 2020, with funding in place, they were ready to proceed with their task. They aimed to remove as much vegetation as possible and cover the area with heavy-duty weed-control matting, crushed stone and planters. However, before they could put their plans into action the pandemic arrived and most of the work had to be put on hold.

Fortunately, between lockdowns the team was able to have a mini-volunteer day in October and that allowed them to cut back the base area and lay the matting. They had hoped to organise the crushed stone to be put down immediately afterwards but tighter Covid-19 restrictions have delayed it again.

The team has no doubt though: "It WILL happen!" they insist. As soon as it's possible, the stone will be laid and edged with sleepers and the planters will be organised. These will be managed by Phoenix Alternative Provision, who provide support for local young people struggling to engage in education.



# Alnmouth

Despite everything, 2020 still managed to be a busy year for Friends of Alnmouth Station (FoAS).

They had two major initiatives which, whilst choreographed in 2019, were planned to be completed in 2020. And they were - by dint of fortunate timing and the generosity of Northern and Community Rail Network.

The 18 FoAS herb containers, sited on the northbound platform, had come to the end of their lives and were to be replaced. The first ten were in position and replanted by mid-March and the remaining eight were installed in late October during an engineering works closure weekend.

As part of their Curlews and Castles project, Hipsburn Primary School pupils visited a local art gallery before the first lockdown in late March. International wildlife artist and gallery owner Paul Henery gave them a masterclass in sketching for the collage and banners they were making for the station.

Paul was commissioned by FoAS to produce two wildlife artworks showing some of Northumberland's iconic landmarks and its symbolic bird, the curlew.

These were installed in December with a socially-distanced ceremony presided over by local photographer Jane Coltman.



# Blaydon

Like volunteers everywhere, the Friends of Blaydon Station (FoBS) had a difficult year with very restricted access to platforms.

However, this small group still managed to achieve a great deal - including winning a special award.

Fully supported by Northern, a project to paint two

large platform murals was finally completed. Designed and created by local artist Sarah Jarman, the Blaydon Station Murals were installed between lockdowns, one for each platform. They celebrate the history of the station and the town's famous Blaydon Races song.

The murals were painted onto drab brickwork and have succeeded in transforming the station into a colourful and welcoming place, complementing the planters and displays produced by FoBS.

In recognition of the group's efforts, it received the Angel Award from local MP Liz Twist. At a simple

ceremony at the station, following all Covid-19 rules, Ms Twist said: "This award is to recognise outstanding contributions made to our community during Covid-19. Thank you for all you have done, you have made a real difference."

Later in the year, on Remembrance Day, the station was decorated with hand-knitted poppies that had been previously made by local knitters and were reused. The Christmas season kept the knitters busy again, bringing festive cheer to many people thanks to their decorations in the waiting shelters and outside the station.



# Nunthorpe

Knitting displays at Nunthorpe station during 2020 reflected how lives have coped and adapted to recent and historic difficulties.

A Rainbow of Hope during the first lockdown was followed by a tribute to NHS staff and keyworkers. In May and August respectively displays helped to commemorate VE & VJ Day.

Then in November there was a nod to the WW2 Dig4Victory campaign in the station's Remembrance display and finally a traditional nativity in December.

Displays were always installed following the current government restrictions.

The tribute to keyworkers included knitted wreaths with each rose representing a life lost locally to Covid-19 at that time. The Dig4Victory display provided a little light relief in difficult times and reflected the station adopters' mantra: Keep Calm & Knit!

A traditional nativity scene was chosen because it was felt that people may not have been able to see one in the usual places at Christmas. Alongside this, the station's Christmas Tree became a Tree of Love. For a donation to the Mayor of Redcar's Charities, people were given two knitted hearts, one to hang on the station tree (with a name/message to remember loved ones) and the other to take home.

In such a difficult year, Nunthorpe's displays helped people to maintain contact with each other and keep up their good spirits.



# Shildon

Shildon in Motion was a collaborative project that used stories and memories of local people to help transform the station with vibrant artwork.

Fascinating stories from residents and community groups combined with the town's rich railway heritage plus its inspiring present and future were key factors behind the new station artwork.

Katy Milne, creative director at Greenfield Arts, worked alongside designers and artists to create the look and feel of the project and share the process through a zine and blog.

To launch and celebrate the final stages, a filmmaker and songwriter were commissioned to work with the community and share the outcomes widely.

It is hoped that the impact of Shildon in Motion will be far-reaching and that it will help the town to be recognised and celebrated as a good place to be - by those who live in, visit and pass through the area.

The [film about Shildon in Motion](#) is available to watch online.



# Leyland

Members of the Friends of Leyland Station group put their creative skills to good use in November to help the station commemorate Remembrance Day.

Using the cut off bottoms of plastic drink bottles, painted red and attached to stems, Jane Bennett and Margaret Oliver made lots of red poppies to be displayed in planters at the Golden Hill entrance by the booking office.

The scene was made even more poignant by the addition of a printed extract from Robert Laurence Binyon's famous poem: For the Fallen.

**At the going down of the sun  
and in the morning  
We will remember them**

As well as this display, many poppy seeds - imported from the Somme itself - were planted in and around the station including the Moss Lane car park embankment. They will hopefully flower each year as a timely reminder of the sacrifices made by members of the armed forces.



# Parbold

Parbold was one of the first of the new station history posters that were unveiled in October 2020, showcasing the history of stations and their importance to the community.

Caroline Holden, who joined CRL in April, took on the history posters as one of her early projects and involved a number of friends of station groups across Lancashire.

The Friends of Parbold worked with Mark Dowding of the Lancashire Society and with the Friends of Parbold Library to produce the poster. It gives a brief history of the station and features many photographs including several from different eras, with some from the extensive collection of Friends of Parbold member John Sloane.

Draft text was amended, proofread (by friend and rail historian Tony Graham) and approved, and images were agreed. It was then sent to CRL for final approval and production.

Following the success of the history poster at Parbold station, Mark Dowding and the Lancashire Society secured funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for permission to use a series of audio recordings about the station. [These audio files can be accessed here](#). CRL added the audio files plus a [virtual version of the poster](#) to its website.

One interesting fact about Parbold station is that it has had several names. It was originally called Newburgh after the nearby village, then it became Newburgh for Parbold, then it changed to Parbold for Newburgh and, since 1973, it's simply called Parbold.

A further spin-off from the project is that John Sloane produced an expanded history of the line from Wigan through Parbold. It has many illustrations including photos of the Parbold quarry wagonway, the waste siding at Appley Bridge and the narrow-gauge line to the Roburite factory at Gathurst. [This fascinating history can be seen here](#) on the Parbold Online website and at Parbold library.



# Seascale

Seascale station adopters are a youth charity called Shackles Off and they're working hard to run activities and workshops to encourage young residents to become more involved with their community and take pride in their local area.

One such group is part of a young women's local action project called 'I can'. The girls, aged 10-14, are passionate about improving the local area and engaging their community. They have taken the initiative to plan their sessions and activities focusing on world issues and topics that interest them.

As official station adopters, they have taken responsibility for keeping the station clean and tidy, reporting faults to Northern. During the past year they installed planters on the platform and displayed recycled plastic bag art along the fence.

More recently, they commissioned a Save Our Planet project at the station. The group researched the impact that plastic has on the world's oceans and agreed that they wanted to make the wider community aware of this.

An artist from Millom helped them to design a mural for Seascale station. It's now finished and will soon be installed on the station fence.

The 'I can' group is also planning events such as litter picks and beach clean ups which again will involve the wider community. An international element to this group is their contact with a charity that supports a school in Gambia. They are working on helping to fundraise for a classroom that will be called Seascale Class.



# St Anne's

When the crisis concerning a lack of personal protective clothing for NHS staff and carers hit the headlines, two volunteers from Friends of St Anne's Station knew exactly how they could help.

Shellene Divall and Christine Holland joined forces to raise funds, source materials and start making some much-needed hats, washbags and scrubs. They sent out emails and appealed on social media for donations and were very soon able to deliver sets of scrubs to Blackpool's Victoria Hospital.

They were joined by Ansdell & Fairhaven station adopter Karen Cornforth and it wasn't long before volunteers from other station groups along the South Fylde Line CRP joined in, donating material and involving their communities.

Spare sheets and redundant pillowcases were collected and delivered by bike to various locations along the South Fylde line. Local businesses helped out too, not just with material but also offering to use their industrial machines to cut out patterns for the scrubs.

Demand for their items kept growing so Shellene and Christine appealed for more funds to source ever-larger quantities of material and thread. Thanks to donations from CRL, St Anne's Town Council and the local area, the team increased its output. Shellene's 11-year-old daughter also got involved, raising funds from her hand-sewn face masks and wrist bands.

As Shellene and Christine have shown, the pandemic brought out the best in the community rail family, and their hard work was acknowledged when they won the Railway Family Supporting Communities Award in December 2020. This special award was introduced to recognise those in the rail industry and community rail who went above and beyond to help others during the Covid-19 pandemic.



# Castleford

Half Acres Primary Academy is one of nine schools in the Inspire Partnership Multi Academy Trust. It is a large two form entry school that puts the local area, community and the history of Castleford at the heart of everything.

The school was delighted to be invited to get involved in the Castleford History project. Being in the middle of a global pandemic didn't stop them at all, it just needed to be thought about more creatively.

As the school couldn't visit the station or the local area for their research, they used ipads and art resources instead, which all needed to be cleaned and quarantined between use across school. Working in class bubbles meant that everything needed to be thought about carefully.

Half Acres Primary Academy was built in 1898 and first extended in 1970 then again in 2016. The school building has its own sense of history through time and wanted to replicate this in the Welcome to CASTLEFORD sign.

After an initial discussion and a few ideas, the design was handed over to the children. Each class was allocated a letter of the word Castleford, to represent the journey through time and key events, people and places in the history of the town.

- C** = Stone Age, Bronze Age
- A** = Romans
- S** = Castleford Tigers
- T** = The River Aire, Queens Mill, Thomas Boat
- L** = Industry: brickworks, potteries, Hicksons, Haribo, Burberry
- E** = Coal
- F** = Henry Moore
- O** = Local Heroes: LCpl Thomas Bryan, Sgt Bruce Smeaton, Bombardier Craig Hopson, Rifleman James Backhouse
- R** = Millennium, Xscape, Junction 32
- D** = The future: robots and computers running the world!

The welcome sign was framed with a colourful border of named handprints from all the nursery children, who were very excited to know that these would be on a sign at the station... forever.

The children thoroughly enjoyed researching their letter and shared stories from family members about their experiences of Castleford.

Every child contributed to their class letter. A variety of media and materials were used and links were made to develop art skills.

Children were in awe when it was completed and spelled out the word Castleford. Many children and their families have now been to see the welcome sign, sharing feelings of joy, pride and wonder.

As part of the project, CRL's education development officer Karen Bennett conducted some rail safety sessions for pupils over Microsoft Teams, so that they will be well prepped to return to the station and take a journey when restrictions allow.

The school said that working with Karen Bennett and the team at Northern was inspirational and pivotal to the success of the project. It praised their co-operation and support and is looking forward to continuing the links with further projects and experiences.



# Mytholmroyd

Like many places, Mytholmroyd was caught napping when lockdown was imposed in March 2020.

But the weather was beautiful so it was easy to relax, take exercise and be socially distanced. It took a little while to fully comprehend what lockdown really meant!

Although the partnership couldn't physically achieve much during 2020, some volunteers were able to observe the government's strict rules and do some weed control because the station embankments are separate from the platforms.

In April 2020, NHS surgeries in Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd joined with Todmorden to enable a more efficient community GP service. Thanks to the Friends' input, local practice staff were issued with rail passes to ensure their smooth travel and this assistance was gratefully received by nursing staff.

Also during the year, Northern's Richard Isaac and some adopters held a socially-distanced meeting with students from the local college to discuss how their artwork could be displayed in the new 180-space car park (originally the marshalling yard).

This is an exciting development for the partnership. It's important to continue engaging with future leaders in the area, to inspire them and show the value of volunteering and how it benefits communities along the valley.

Another positive that came out of 2020 is that the Mytholmroyd team learned how to Zoom – setting up, operating and relaxing in front of the camera.

The digital world has come into its own and helped maintain personal communication. This was vital during winter and helped alleviate feelings of isolation and loneliness suffered by many.

It also meant that members didn't have to leave the warmth and comfort of their

homes during winter, although they missed the usual social interaction of laughter and chatter.

## Station Building

While the partnership side of Mytholmroyd has been paused, there's plenty happening with the Station Building, Mytholmroyd Charity (CIO 117 4609) and the plans to make it into a community space; run by the community for the community.

Zoom has been invaluable for the meetings between the architect/Railway Heritage Trust/Network Rail/ Northern/CRN/Hebden Bridge Town Council and Community Foundation for Calderdale to name but a few.

The volunteers have had a year of learning new skills and having fascinating experiences: diverse, life-changing, exhilarating, frustrating, joyful, tiring, and inspiring.

But they know that all the effort will have been worth it, and pride and joy will prevail once the building restoration is complete and in the hands of community.



## 2.4 Partnership funding

### Funding

The distribution of funds to the Community Rail Partnerships takes account of the secretary of state's community rail development strategy. To inform this funding cycle, Northern held discussions with and took into account the views of Community Rail Network (CRN)\* and Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs). This enabled Northern to understand their aims and needs and the funding required to achieve these.

2021/22 will be the third year of this three-year funding cycle. The cycle was agreed to help mitigate instability of funding from other sources and help CRPs develop long-term plans. Discussions for the next funding cycle will begin later this year.

CRP	Northern Region	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Settle - Carlisle	East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Leeds - Morecambe (Bentham line)	East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Barton - Cleethorpes**	East	£11,530	N/A	N/A
Yorkshire Coast	East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Penistone Line Partnership	East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
North Nottinghamshire & Lincolnshire	East	£8,200	£8,421	£8,539
Bishop Line	North East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Tyne Valley	North East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Esk Valley	North East	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
South Fylde Line	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
West of Lancashire	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Cumbrian Coast line	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Furness Line	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Lakes Line	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
North Cheshire	West	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Mid Cheshire	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
East Lancashire	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Clitheroe Line	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
South East Manchester	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
Crewe - Manchester	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
High Peak/Hope Valley	Central	£27,617	£28,362	£28,759
South East Lancashire***	Central	N/A	£28,362	£28,759
New CRP Fund share		£16,087	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>£560,540</b>	<b>£575,661</b>	<b>£583,719</b>
We also provide funding to Community Rail Network and Community Rail Lancashire's Education Programme				
Community Rail Network	-	£189,625	£194,745	£197,471
Community Rail Lancashire Education Programme	-	£107,625	£110,531	£112,078
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>£297,250</b>	<b>£305,276</b>	<b>£309,549</b>

\*Formerly ACoRP

\*\*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 subsequent core funding. The line is due to transfer in May 2021

\*\*\*Formerly Bolton and South Lancashire

## Projects funding

Northern is pleased that applications for its station adoption and seed corn funds have been opened for this year. While various lockdowns restricted on-site activity at certain times, many of the groups Northern supports used that time to develop their plans. As a result, a healthy number of applications have been received to both funds.

At the time of writing this report around £35,000 has been allocated to station adoption projects.

The seed corn fund has also supported a wide range of projects.

### SEED CORN FUND

Organisation	Project
Women in Community Rail	Website and DVDs
Community Rail Lancashire	100 women-100 journeys
	Back on Track - Blackburn and Darwen stations
The Station Building, Mytholmroyd CIO	From Wreck to the Pride of Mytholmroyd - video project
Community Rail Cumbria	Ulverston Access for All
	Asking Shadows to Dance
Settle-Carlisle Development Company and Friends of Settle-Carlisle Line	Dalesbus summer connections
Incredible Edible Garforth	West Yorkshire stations
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£48,490</b>



## 2.5 Community Rail Conference

Like many events and organisations, Northern's 2020 community rail conference looked a little bit different.

Instead of meeting in person, the event was moved online but that didn't stop a line-up of great speakers sharing inspiring projects, Northern updates and some expert gardening tips.

The virtual conference was attended by over 100 guests. Although many value (and missed) the interaction and networking that these events usually provide, it was good to see that some people were able to attend online when they previously would not have been able to travel.

Guests heard from the Northern team, including managing director Nick Donovan who gave a business update and his reflections of the year. Speakers covered a range of topics and case studies including Rebuilding Rail Confidence and youth engagement, with case studies from the English Football League Trust and Community Rail Lancashire.

Tyne Valley CRP got everyone singing along and taking inspiration from their Lyric and Line project [see page 22](#).

David Domoney hosted a fascinating masterclass in how to get the best out of station gardens and the day closed with a [celebratory film showcasing community groups](#) from across the Northern network.



## 2.6 Meet the Team

Northern's regional community and sustainability managers Richard Isaac, Becky Styles, Martin Keating, Marie Addison and newest recruit Simon Abbott share some of their thoughts.



Richard

Becky

Martin

Marie

Simon

### What was your highlight of 2020?

**Richard:** The way community groups came together to support their local areas and how volunteers set up virtual networks to ensure everyone stayed connected and supported during lockdowns. Also, the amazing work done by NCS and young people in Bradford [see page 17](#).

**Becky:** I enjoyed the innovative ways groups kept in contact, learning new skills such as Zoom and the newsletters and quizzes. I was also inspired by the groups that changed focus to support their local communities, such as foodbanks and good neighbour schemes.

**Martin:** So many! Stations winning the RHS/Britain in Bloom/Community Rail awards and adopters persevering through lockdowns and rules. Favourite moment was Kath Warbrick of the Friends of Aspatria winning Outstanding Volunteer at the Community Rail Awards.

**Marie:** The way community groups adapted and continued to support each other and their communities throughout the pandemic is truly inspirational. Also the award winning TVCRP project Lyric and Line [see page 22](#).

**Simon:** Being appointed to this role, having joined the railway in 2007. I'm really looking forward to getting involved with our customers, especially after last year's challenges, and helping get people back into travel.

### Favourite film?

**Richard:** Not a film but the annual Christmas Panto at the Alhambra in Bradford. It's been a big part of my life since 1976 when I first saw Aladdin. Things seemed a lot simpler then...

**Becky:** Don't really watch films but liked the Matrix trilogy and The Running Man.

**Martin:** For a Few Dollars More – the middle of Sergio Leone's trilogy with Fistful of Dollars and The Good, the Bad and the Ugly.

**Marie:** Love Actually. I absolutely love Christmas and it shows how people adapt to life and relationships.

**Simon:** Star Wars. Its characters are an imaginary masterpiece and it examples the hero's journey better than most other films around.

### What are you looking forward to this year?

**Richard:** Meeting people again. Zoom/Teams meetings are great, but nothing matches a pot of tea and a bacon sandwich with our volunteers, sorting out the issues of the day.

**Becky:** Getting out to meet with the brilliant groups, delivering and presenting the best kept stations award boards and seeing all our on-hold projects get started!

**Martin:** Colour at our stations!

**Marie:** Meeting people face to face, getting out and doing wonderful stuff (and cake of course!).

**Simon:** Seeing how social behaviours may have changed, and helping provide the support communities will need to adapt to these changes.

### Three words a partner would use to describe you?

**Richard:** Approachable, adaptable, dependable.

**Becky:** Loyal, motivated, social

**Martin:** Thoughtful, generous and loyal

**Marie:** Passionate, focused and friendly

**Simon:** Witty, kind-hearted, practical

### 3. Community Rail Partnership Profiles



## 3.1 Settle-Carlisle Railway CRP

**Region:** East

**CRP Chair:** John Moorhouse

**CRP:** Joanne Oakey

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

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Awarded accreditation as a CRP.
- Staycation Express was introduced to the line by Rail Charter and exclusively aimed at tourists. Running daily between Skipton and Appleby, it ran a first class socially-distanced service during the pandemic and was well-received by passengers and local businesses. The catering team adapted to the changes and enjoyed the challenge, providing refreshments on every journey. It is well promoted on social media, and one Facebook competition reached over 89,000 people. The Staycation Express also featured in ITV's Home Sweet Home, showcasing Joanna Lumley's personal favourite journeys.
- Pop Up Shops were introduced during 2020 to coincide with the Staycation Express and offered refreshments to people on platforms. In poor weather, these moved into the waiting shelters.
- Prior to the Staycation Express launch, volunteers rallied round and went to Appleby to clean the white heritage Appleby Stones, giving visitors and locals a better, brighter welcome.
- Branded face coverings were made by one of the team. This kept her busy whilst she was furloughed and were proudly worn by the team during the pandemic.
- The Station Improvement Group is a collaborative group made up of Northern, Network Rail, Settle and Carlisle Railway Trust, Friends of Settle-Carlisle Line (FoSCL) and is chaired by the CRP. Despite the pandemic, last year saw the completion of much-improved car park at Dent station and the refurbishment of the historic glazed entrance screen at Settle station.
- The CRP funded a project to renew and enhance the bus shelter at Kirkby Stephen, highlighting areas and activities within the surrounding area.
- Northern's Rainbow Train initiative was supported by the CRP, who circulated details to local schools and via Facebook. Colouring-in the templates was a welcome distraction to local children and families. The completed pictures were displayed at stations.
- Ribblehead Coffee Shop & Visitor Centre opened as a Covid-safe takeaway refreshment service, welcomed by walkers enjoying the local Fells.



- The Yorkshire Festival of Story was converted into a virtual event.
- The virtual Ribbleshead Google Expedition allows teachers across the world to access 360° views and information relating to one of the most iconic structures in engineering history. More information is on [the Settle Stories website](#).
- To engage with communities virtually, local families and schools were invited to submit photos, artwork and collages that celebrate the magic of winter in the area. Every image was used in the Virtual December Calendar – with a different one being displayed online each day.

## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Welcome Back To Rail community engagement events including Open Days.
- Promote leisure travel and activities across the Yorkshire Dales and Eden Valley.
- Open a dedicated STEM Studio at local primary school.
- Refurbish Appleby station.
- Continue to deliver improvements through the Station Improvement Group.
- Promote Carlisle station with two other CRPs and possible catering facility.
- Integrated bus connections by Dalesbus/others for summer season.
- Reopen and promote Ribbleshead Coffee Shop & Visitor Centre.
- Promote Group Travel and Dales Railcard.
- Project Triangle linking walking and cycling destinations between Morecambe and Settle-Carlisle lines.
- Promote and provide catering service for Staycation Express.
- Grain on the Train – providing a sustainable transport solution to a local business.
- Christmas Advent Calendar.
- Settle station – revive café proposal and examine relocation of CRP office to station.
- Strengthen links with local councils and other stakeholders including FoSCL.

### Next five years:

- Increase winter tourism and awareness of activities with organised events.
- Introduce a cycling solution to support increased and sustainable travel.
- Volunteer recruitment drive.
- Continue with Station Improvement Group promoting investments to stations.
- Autism Society, Age Concern and other disadvantaged Groups Days Out.
- Further work with schools and community groups.
- Promote Explore Vouchers throughout the year.
- Support Yorkshire Dales National Park with Dark Sky events.
- Produce videos to support and promote the line.
- Produce an app for storytelling along the line.
- Support project for electric charging points.
- Environmental sustainability along the line's corridor introducing wildlife.
- Participate in integrated transport discussions.
- Participate in Craven Climate Action Partnership – Climate Change.
- Timetable service strategy inc Anglo Scottish and Blackburn-Hellifield aspirations.
- Examine more local control of station cleaning/light maintenance.



## 3.2 Leeds-Morecambe CRP (LMCRP – The Bentham Line)

**LMCRP Chair:** Gerald Townson

**Secretary:** Simon Clarke

**Treasurer:** David Alder

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

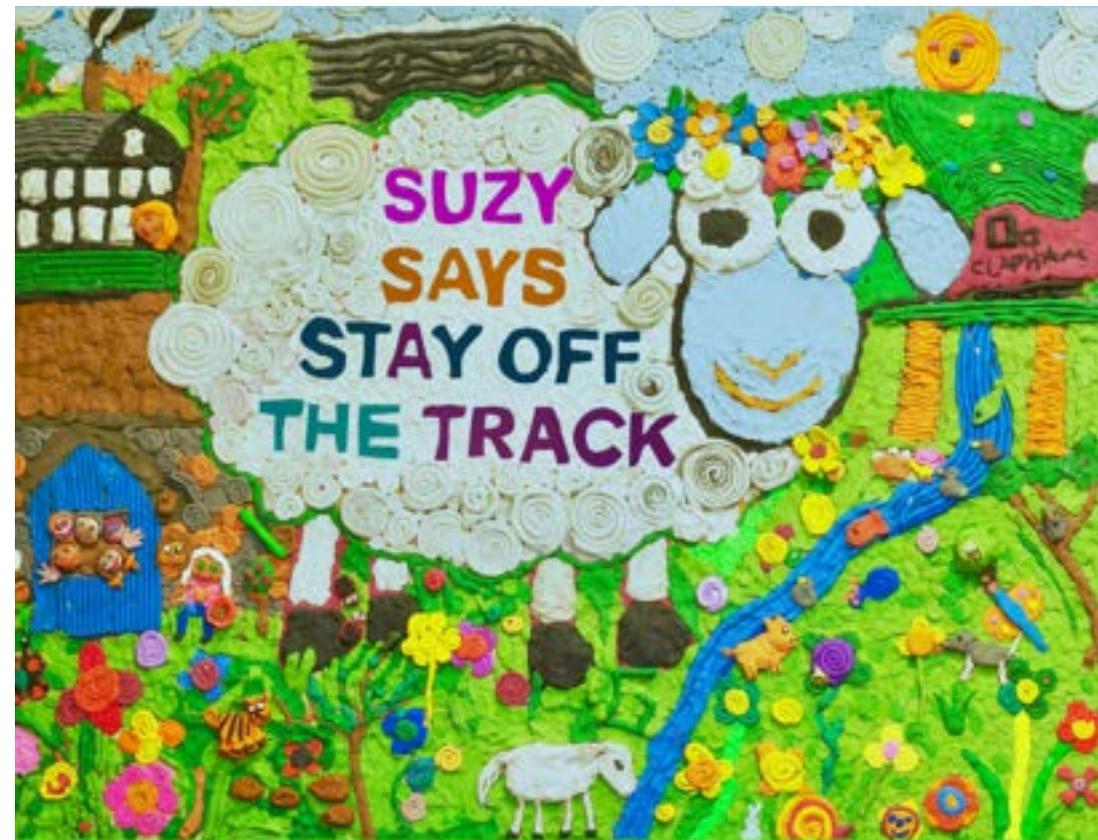
**Websites:** [thebenthamline.co.uk](http://thebenthamline.co.uk)

and [leedslancastermorecambecrp.co.uk](http://leedslancastermorecambecrp.co.uk)

and [communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/bentham-line](http://communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/bentham-line)

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- DfT re-accreditation.
- Continued development of the Dementia and Community Rail project. Online dementia awareness sessions offered to rail staff and volunteers. Produced a booklet about the project to help other CRPs wanting to work with groups and individuals with hidden disabilities.
- Organised travel and activities for several groups living with dementia, their carers and supporters. Covid-19 restrictions made those visits impossible but they will hopefully take place in 2021.
- Worked with Northern's year in industry students to develop their understanding of the rail industry through community rail ideas and activities. They helped deliver a children's story for the Sheep on the Line project based on a Leeds-Morecambe journey covering rail safety, community and heritage themes.
- Launched an e-newsletter about the CRP's work, encouraging local volunteer groups, schools and nearby businesses to get involved.
- New website, thebenthamline, covers the partnership, its activities and achievements as well as tourism and leisure activities such as the popular Rail to Trail walking and cycling initiative. Social media links are included.
- Completed an extension of the Sheep on the Line rail safety project with Clapham C of E Primary School before it closed last summer. The school and village were presented with pupils' large original artwork. At a socially-distance event, youngsters unveiled panels of their work at Clapham station.



- Extended the CRP's Historical Stations project with new panels and posters. All 13 stations between Skipton and Heysham Port are now included. An additional panel was installed at Hellifield station.
- During 2020, the partnership began preparations for its 15th anniversary in 2021 to reflect on its achievements and look to the future.
- Initial preparations were made for a full study of the Bentham Line to help develop it for the future. This has the backing of Northern and CRN.
- Responded constructively to consultations relating to future timetables, local development, assisted travel and sustainable integrated transport.

## Priorities

### Plans for the next five years:

- Continue to promote the line as a scenic and historic route and for tourism and leisure.
- Undertake joint marketing initiatives with Northern, LNER, CrossCountry and Avanti West Coast.
- Promote the enhanced timetable, introduced prior to the pandemic, and the wider range of journey possibilities through a Grand Day Out and Grand Weekend Away campaign on social media and the websites.
- Promote the Dales Railcard along with associated offers and advance and off-peak tickets.
- Continue to bring the Dementia and Community Rail project to the widest possible audience.
- Work with Northern's year in industry students to help them develop an understanding of CRPs and to undertake community-orientated projects to support their professional and personal development.
- Further develop the new website to reflect the line's range of activities and the many tourism possibilities the Bentham Line has to offer.
- Obtain funding and commission the study of the Bentham Line.
- Finalise plans for the CRP's 15th anniversary.
- Continue to establish links with disadvantaged groups to create bespoke travel packages and develop a greater awareness of hidden disabilities in communities.
- Develop further links to the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Forest of Bowland AONB, Lancaster City Tourism and the (Morecambe) Bay Area. The latter being the potential site for the Eden Project North.
- Further develop education plans and facilities at Bentham station for work with primary schools along the line.
- Develop, with TOCs using Lancaster, a main line multi-purpose venue at Lancaster station with possible use for education, staff development, exhibition purposes and as a community meeting space.
- Introduce a welcome/quiet space at Lancaster, in association with TOCs using Lancaster, to assist those travelling with hidden disabilities.
- Enhance the Historical Stations project with illustrated information panels to highlight the role of this pioneer (electric) line.
- Alongside Northern, support and assist the development of station adoption groups.
- Add new walking and cycling routes to the Rail to Trail initiative.
- Participate in the future plans for the Craven Area as set out by North Yorkshire County Council, Craven District Council and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Tourism is growing and there are large housing developments across the area, including Skipton and Bentham. This also applies to the North Lancashire towns of Carnforth, Lancaster, Morecambe and Heysham.
- Ensure the heritage Midland Railway shelters c.1870 at Gargrave, Clapham and Bentham are sympathetically restored.
- Facilitate, with Northern, the installation of defibrillators at Wennington, Bentham and Clapham, and encourage similar projects at all stations along the route.
- Progress the proposal from FoBS and the LMCRP (funded by Northern and the partnership) to create the first 100% green energy station using photovoltaic cells on the roof.

### 3.3 Yorkshire Coast CRP (YCCRP)

**Region:** Hull, East Yorkshire, North Yorkshire

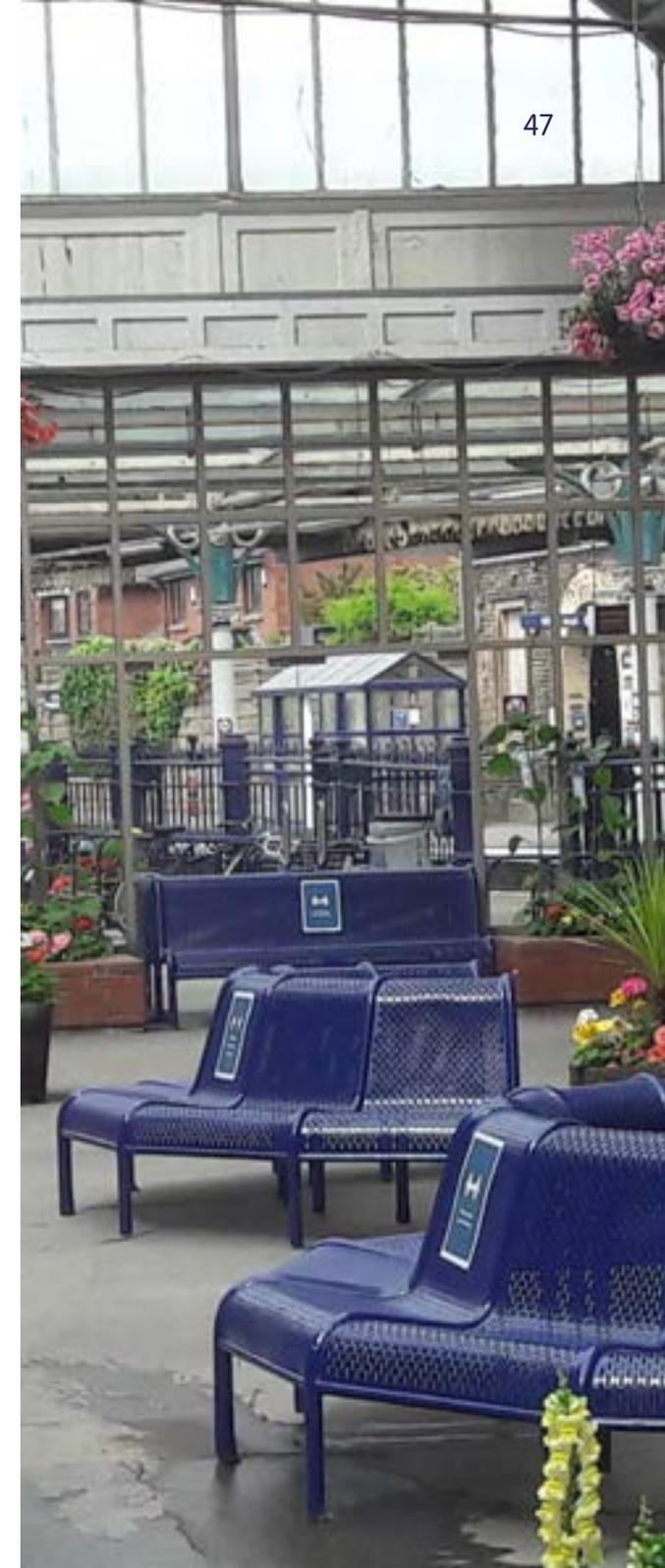
**CRP Chair:** Tony Cooper

**CRP:** Gill Simpson

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

#### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- In these strange times the CRP has continued to communicate with members and the wider community via its website and social media. Information is regularly posted about timetable changes, bus replacements, engineering updates and good news stories.
- Useful links are provided to sites that support home learning and rail safety.
- A small team works hard to raise the CRP's social media profile and helps to increase membership year on year.
- The CRP's Facebook page was liked by 1,282 people and is followed by 1,374 people. The page is updated at least once a day, with a steady supply of useful information and photos. These posts reach on average 5,000 people per week, with about 700 weekly engagements (likes, comments or shares).
- On Twitter, the 529 followers can read daily updates.
- Where possible, the community gardens have been maintained thanks to the volunteers and booking office staff who created and cared for the floral display at Bridlington station. The station adopters also decorated the Christmas tree, worked on Beverley in Bloom and, with two local schools Keldmarsh and St. John's, made lots of homemade Christmas decorations that added festive spirit to the ticket office area, platforms, the bridge and the station frontage.
- Station adopters ensured that the Driffield In Bloom team maintained their garden all year round, and made some special Christmas pomanders.
- Timetable consultations between the YCCRP and Northern made sure that the management committee was consulted and kept informed about all changes. One volunteer provided front line support via her two sons, letting Northern know what was and was not working with school and college commuter times.
- The CRP also supported the station adopters, who are independent from the partnership, by providing funding for some small projects and generally keeping an eye on the stations that are local to them.
- Aware of the impact isolation can have on people, members of the management committee supported each other with regular phone calls especially since online meetings weren't easy because not all members had internet or suitable phone/IT equipment.
- Most adopters and others have now had their Covid-19 vaccination and feel more confident about the future.



## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Continue to improve social media presence with frequent updates of information and good news stories.
- Work with train operating companies (TOCs) and CRN to encourage members of the public back on to the trains.
- Work with all local authorities, TOCs and businesses to promote tourism.
- 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 to enhance their experience of rail travel.
- Hold several marketing events to promote the service and the area it serves via the distribution of good news stories, rail updates 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 TOCs.
- Continue to develop the partnership's website, promoting the partnership and rail travel through the use of social media.
- 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.
- Raise awareness of rail services and connectivity.
- Continue to deliver themed on-train and station activities.
- Continue to build cohesive working relationships between the partnership and station adopters.
- Work with train operators and local authorities to improve the signage within towns/villages to their local railway station.
- Work with local transport providers to develop and maintain new and existing bus links from the stations to outlying areas.



### 3.4 Penistone Line Partnership (PLP)

**Region:** East

**CRP Chair:** Neil Bentley

**CRP Officer:** Rowena Chantler

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

**CR Support Officer:** Sarah Wells

#### Key highlights of 2020/21:

The past year was a strange one for everyone. It began with a variety of projects planned, but the pandemic changed everything. Yet, despite the difficulties, PLP completed various projects although some inevitably had to be adapted to fit in with the change of circumstances.

- The award-winning Dwell Time project was completed. The publication was available for distribution early in the year although Covid delayed distribution. Panels were designed and are displayed at Huddersfield station. They will be more widely available later. A number of submissions from the project have been transformed into station art. After a year in considerable isolation, people will undoubtedly find increased relevance in Dwell Time.
- Platform extension work on the line gave the PLP access to additional funding to work with local schools, although national restrictions meant the project was carried out virtually. This work also linked in with the CRP officer's involvement with the Virtual Education Network, in which workpacks for schools were created.
- PLP launched a competition to design an eco-friendly station for the future. The winners and runners up received vouchers, and their images are on the new information boards at Honley station. Funding also meant that existing artwork at Honley could be refreshed.
- PLP has been planning ways to work with people with hidden disabilities to promote rail travel and build confidence in using trains. Officers undertook training on autism awareness, disability and equality, as well as mental health first aid training. The team worked with TPE to distribute sunflower lanyards to people who need them. Craft packs were produced to make Twiddle Muffs to help ease anxiety. These will be given to people living with dementia once group trips can start running again.
- Last year, PLP worked with Support 2 Recovery (S2R), a local organisation that promotes mental wellbeing. People joined the train trips for mindful walks, and these walks have been made into displays at Brockholes, Berry Brow, Mirfield and Dewsbury stations. Over summer, a group worked with S2R to repair planters at Denby Dale (with thanks to Denby Dale and District Rotary) and create new ones at Shepley station (planted by Friends of Shepley).



- Before lockdown 1, PLP took some parents and children from Crosland Moor and Newsome on a Time for You trip to the Experience Barnsley Museum, the Cooper Gallery and a wander around the shops. Families that were isolated before the pandemic enjoyed company and a rare day out.
- Two large murals were installed at Penistone station. They were designed by Rosie Pearsall who worked with local young people to try and deter them from antisocial behaviour. The colourful murals along with new CCTV have seen reduced antisocial behaviour. New planters have also been made for Penistone station and will be installed when possible.
- Despite the restrictions, volunteers gained a new Station Friends group on the line, at Silkstone Common, and have already done some planting between lockdowns.
- The pandemic has seen PLP move to digital communications, with a number of e-newsletters already produced.
- When schools returned in September, the support officer helped Northern to count and supervise Honley High pupils on a trip.
- The PLP restructured, moving from a membership-base to a Foundation-based model of governance.

## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- The focus will be on getting people back onto trains: boosting the confidence of those with general anxieties about rail travel, and helping reassure those who have been deterred from using trains for over a year. The PLP has been around 28 years, so has lots of experience in giving people reasons to use the train. Promoting the great outdoors will be one of the key messages with, hopefully, the return of the guided walks programme plus additional self-guided walks.
- The website will be updated to look more modern and appealing, with new marketing materials.
- The PLP will continue to share the rail safety message with schools and community groups. During the pandemic, trespass and anti-social behaviour increased on the railway. This is not only incredibly dangerous for those involved, but there is also a knock-on effect on services. To be able to build passenger confidence in using trains, the service must be reliable. By tackling trespass, reliability will improve.
- The Woven Festival 2021 is scheduled for June and one of the headline events is a giant yarnbombing at Huddersfield station. Community groups will be encouraged to join in at their local stations (subject to government guidelines) and will hopefully attend some festival events by train.
- To support sustainability, local people will be encouraged to use the train rather than the car where possible.

### Next five years:

- Whilst building on passenger numbers, work will continue to engage with people with hidden disabilities. Wider issues such as station approaches and access also need addressing.
- Steps to aesthetically improve stations along the line will continue, hopefully through the PLP's work with local communities and station adoption.



## 3.5 North Notts & Lincs CRP (NNLCRP)

**Region:** Eastern

**CRP Chair:** Barry Coward

**CRP Officer:** vacant

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

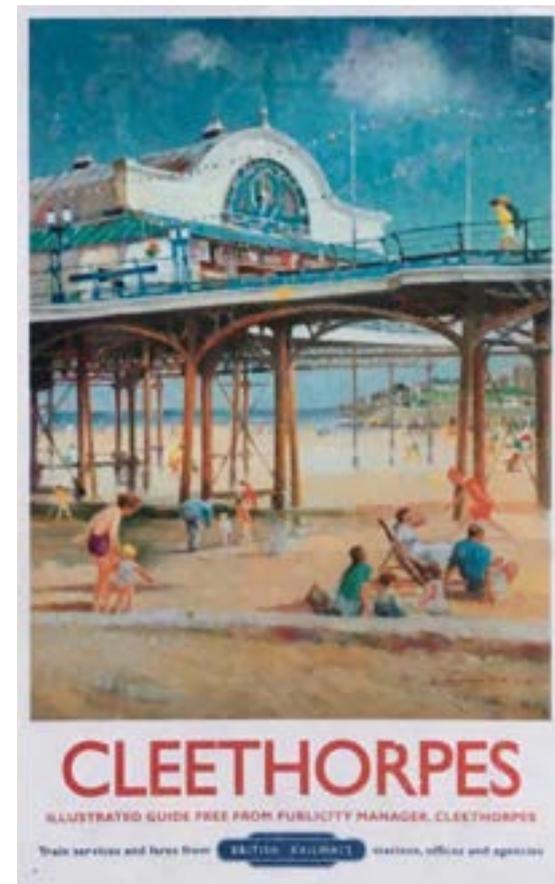
### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Became a Community Interest Company and opened a bank account.
- Station planters were maintained through the hard work of volunteers.
- After the spring 2020 lockdown, Friends of Shireoaks Station put up two banners to welcome passengers.
- Worked with Friends of Worksop Station to sympathetically paint the front of the station.
- Worksop was highly commended at the 2020 National Rail awards.
- For more information [see the CRP's 2020 annual report](#).

## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Focus on helping people return to rail travel and encourage those who have never used a train to realise that it is an enjoyable and safe way to travel.
- Lease a room at Worksop station for use by NNLCRP and the Friends of Worksop Station. The room will include a model railway of the station and a display showing Worksop's railway history. This will form an educational resource.
- A Welcome to Worksop panel, running in boards at Shireoaks and more information displays are planned for 2021.
- Work with North Lincolnshire Council on a feasibility study for a South Humber Rail Link as part of the DfT's Restoring Your Railway project.
- Work with SYPTE and Northern on a passenger train service for the South Yorkshire Joint Line.
- A [Romans to Railways art project](#) for Lincoln station (opposite platform 5 used by Northern Trains) is planned for the autumn, subject to funding. Several large panels depicting both the history and the life of Lincoln are proposed.



### Next five years:

- Work to attract passengers back to the railway after Covid-19 restrictions.
- Encourage the development of a working partnership with nearby CRPs of Yorkshire Coalfield, Hope Valley, Penistone, Poacher and Barton on Humber.
- Foster greater community involvement especially with groups who make little or no use of railways.
- Produce travel guides for Lincoln, Gainsborough, Market Rasen and Kirton in Lindsey/Brigg/Barnetby.
- More information on [the CRP's five-year strategy is here](#).

## 3.6 Bishop Line CRP (BLCRP)

**Region:** North East

**CRP Chair:** Robert Whitehouse

**CRP Officer:** Felicity Machnicki

**Website:** [bishonline.org](https://bishonline.org)

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Pass on a Smile. When the government announced that face coverings were to be mandatory on public transport, the CRP thought about the impact on passengers, especially those who would find it daunting to wear a mask and for those who have difficulty connecting with others. Passengers must feel safe but social interaction is also vital. To meet both these needs and bring a little happiness into passengers' days, 'smiley' face coverings were given out. Smiling has many benefits to both physical and mental health. The initial order for 300 went almost instantly and a second order arrived in October to coincide with World Mental Health Day.
- Our Line. In 2018, working with local production company Luxi, an app-based play called Our Line was produced which could be listened to on the train from Darlington to Bishop Auckland. In March 2020 Luxi suggested repeating the exercise but because of Covid-19 restrictions, they refined the app so that Our Line could be listened to from home. The virtual experience of Our Line went live in November and was **launched online in December** featuring a discussion between the project team and audience members from other CRPs.
- Shildon in Motion started in July 2019 with the aim of creating a vibrant welcome to Shildon station. The project, led by Katy Milne of Greenfield Arts and brought to life by artists Nicola Golightly and Sally Pilkington, demonstrates true community collaboration. They visited public venues around Shildon and met with people to gather perspectives about the town's past, present and future. These conversations informed the project's design and were transformed into bright and uplifting artwork displayed across the station, celebrating extraordinary aspects of Shildon and its people. More information about the project is on [page 32](#) and the **launch film about Shildon in Motion is here.**
- Backtrack was the result of close cooperation between groups aimed at tackling trespassing on the railways. In the first month of lockdown, trespassing increased by 25%, with an extra 1,000 incidents. It needed to be dealt with urgently before the long school summer holidays. The BLCRP, along with other members of the Community Rail education network, agreed that CRPs could help. In a matter of weeks the national Backtrack competition had been devised, prizes sponsored and backing received from across the rail industry. The competition ran through summer and autumn 2020 and the project team is now working on Backtrack 2021, to engage more of the rail industry and spread the anti-trespassing message even further.



## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Our Line. After the online launch, it was felt that Our Line could have the biggest impact by facilitating conversations linked to the play. The next steps and potential funding possibilities are being discussed, to share the play with diverse groups.
- Lyric and Line. This collaboration with Tyne Valley CRP will expand upon their successful Lyric and Line project. The objective is to remove misconceptions in selected target groups that the railway isn't for them, and to inform the railway of particular needs that prospective passengers have that should be considered. A number of organisations/groups will be selected to satisfy a broad criteria such as socially isolated residents, educational groups and dementia groups. Funding dependent, the joint project will run from September 2021 to March 2023.
- The website will be updated to be welcoming, accessible and uplifting to help attract new and existing passengers. It should also reflect the line's beautiful location and the range of work the CRP does.
- Attract and engage with new partnership members from charities, local businesses and schools.
- Deliver Build Back Better marketing campaigns serving tourism and travel to work/education/training.
- Continue to work with Weardale Railway and Network Rail to progress the platform connection project and maximise connectivity.
- Continue to be an engaged partner in the preparations for the 200th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 2025.

### Next five years:

- 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.
- 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 a range of other visitor attractions.
- Improve access to the Bishop Line services by bus, cycle, on foot and to/from the national rail network at Darlington.
- Promote community action at stations.
- Put the railway at the centre of local regeneration partnerships.
- Encourage local businesses to sponsor environmental enhancements at stations or other locations along the line through the Northern managed Station Adoption programme.



#Pass  
On  
A  
Smile



#WorldMentalHealthDay

### 3.7 Tyne Valley CRP (TVCRP)

**Region:** North East

**CRP Chair:** Dr Malcolm Chainey

**CRP Officer:** Fiona Forsythe

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

#### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- New directors. Two new members, Allan White and Joseph Codling, joined the board bringing much experience and enthusiasm with them.
- Haltwhistle Waiting Room Buildings Project. This £1½m project will bring back into use redundant railway buildings at Haltwhistle. Work on site began late September 2020 and is due for completion in Spring 2021. The boarded-up parts of the buildings will become four small studios/offices for rent to start-up businesses or artists. The waiting rooms will be reformed and dressed to welcome passengers and visitors with platform 2 focusing on the World Heritage Site. Platform 1 will show that 'Haltwhistle is Something Special' with a changeable poster display on aspects of local history, each involving a community element. The project has involved securing the funding and working with rail industry partners, professional advisers, contractors, local businesses and the local community.
- Lyric and Line, the pilot. The CRP was awarded first place at the Community Rail Awards (Involving Diverse Groups category). Professional singer/songwriter Gareth Davies-Jones worked with different marginalised groups, hosting workshops that used songwriting to explore views on rail travel. Whilst Covid-19 curtailed some follow-up activity, the team is looking at ways to re-engage post-lockdown.
- Lyric and Line, the recovery. During the summer, Gareth Davies-Jones facilitated workshops with passengers, past and future, to explore views around travelling in a Covid world. The workshops raised various concerns and suggestions, and produced four songs that fully capture the discussions. [See page 22.](#)
- Blaydon Murals. Friends of Blaydon Station transformed large brick walls with painted murals by local artist Sarah Jarman. The group was presented with an Angel Award by local MP, Liz Twist, for improving the environment. [See page 30.](#)



- Seeing the bigger picture. Through the world of Zoom and Teams, conversations and learning widened. The CRP officer worked with others to deliver the Backtrack competition and learned new skills through the virtual education network. The directors and officer improved their skills and knowledge through sessions on digital marketing with York St John University. The team also participated in various rural transport initiatives. The CRP contributed to TOC and DfT conferences, maintaining strong relationships across the rail industry. It also spoke with groups such as Northumberland Cancer Care and Railway Correspondence and Travel Society about rail travel.
- New website. The updated website is more visitor focused to inspire a greater number of visitors to the area. Further content will highlight the work of station adoption and community groups as well as the many projects undertaken.
- Taking time to plan. Using the four pillars in the DfT Community Rail Strategy, the CRP restructured the way it builds action plans. This helped engage with volunteers and communities to develop plans, giving direction to the CRP's community engagement work.
- Christmas decorations. In a year of disruption, the Co-op gave welcome help to some stations, by buying and distributing wooden decorations to schools to be coloured in. This enabled adopters, along with the knitters of Blaydon, to add some colour.
- Wartime Escape by Train. Working with Wallsend Local History Society, the CRP had planned to mark the 80th anniversary of the 1940 evacuation from Tyneside to Haltwhistle. With face-to-face events difficult, the crowdfunding platform Spacehive was used to raise money to make a film that recorded the memories of surviving evacuees. Interpretation boards will also be installed in Newcastle.



## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Welcoming passengers and new tenants to the refurbished buildings at Haltwhistle.
- Many station adoption groups are planning 'the next big thing' with some wonderful projects at stations along the line.
- It is hoped that a new Lyric and Line event can be produced.
- TVCRP will engage with Carlisle Young Ambassadors around careers in the rail industry, working with the National Citizen Service and the new UNESCO-driven initiative, Hadrian's Wall Young Ambassadors.

### Next five years:

- Sustainability is crucial, both in terms of diversifying income stream and having a board of directors with skills necessary to pilot the partnership through challenging times ahead. TVCRP will then be well positioned to achieve its key goal of connecting its communities with the rail industry and being a truly independent critical friend. To this end, it has created a fifth pillar - sustainability strategy - to achieve income generation and succession planning.

## 3.8 Esk Valley RDC (EVRDC)

**Region:** North East

**CRP Officer:** Piers Elias

**CRP Chair:** Alan Williams

**CRP PR & Marketing:** Lisa Williams

**CRP Schools and Education:** Sally Michulitis

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

**Twitter:** @EVRDC

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Sent a project to all schools to help with home schooling.
- The Forget Me Not train continued until March 2020, to help people living with dementia and their carers. Funded by EVRDC, North Yorkshire County Council, CRN 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 extra treats on each train. Funding is being lined up so that this valuable project can restart as soon as it is safe to do so.
- BBC Songs of Praise has been in touch and is planning to build a programme around the Forget Me Not train in 2022.
- Completed work on the Land of Iron station boards project with support from North York Moors National Park.
- Apple Pressing Day with Moor Sustainable CIC was held in October. Community groups hired the apple pressing equipment and, in spite of the restrictions, over 2,000 litres of apple juice were pressed at nine different locations, including a record day at Off the Rails next to Glaisdale station where ½ tonne of apples were pressed.

### Priorities

#### Next 12 months:

- Focus on tourism, encouraging day trips and holidays by train.
- Gain Railway Heritage Fund support for improvements to Whitby station.
- Restart running and promoting the Forget Me Not train.
- Continue involvement with Apple Pressing Days.
- 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 to encourage cycling.
- Develop proposals for Dark Skies trains.
- 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 with a schools programme.

- Update and modernise the website.
- Promote 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.
- Aim to repurpose disused signal boxes at Sleights and Glaisdale stations.
- Increase newsletter readership and Twitter profile.
- With NYCC support, re-examine 2008 proposal for new Battersby Curve.



## 3.9 South Fylde Line CRP (SFLCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Chair:** Tony Ford

**CRP Officer:** Simon Clarke supported by Caroline Holden

**Website:** [communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/southfylde/](https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/southfylde/)

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Along with CRL and the other three Lancashire CRPs, the SFLCRP received its re-accreditation, recognising the hard work of volunteers and staff along the route.
- The SCRUBS project was a huge success, with volunteers making sets of scrubs, bags and hats for local medical facilities at the height of the pandemic. [See page 36](#) for the full story.
- Where the published guidance allowed, work took place at virtually every station along the South Fylde line with volunteers continuing to make their stations look as colourful and as cared for as they could.
- Volunteers working from home created Christmas trees from discarded pallets to add some seasonal cheer for passengers and station users. These proved so popular that orders were placed and donations made to the St Anne's Station Adopters funds. The idea was then taken up at Ansdell & Fairhaven and at Squires Gate stations.
- Friends of Squires Gate Station continued to work on clearing the overgrown platform 2. Apples from the tree were harvested, pulped, pressed and turned into apple juice which was shared out amongst the volunteers. Recently, volunteers

have built new wooden planters to replace the life-expired half-barrels.

- Work continues to secure step-free access on platform 1 at Squires Gate station.
- Once again volunteers helped colleagues at other stations supporting projects and activities. This has improved communication and volunteer involvement.
- Stations along the line carried posters supporting NHS and key works in the branded poster cases.
- Efforts to develop a Friends Group at Kirkham & Wesham station as well as more wide-ranging work have been thwarted by Covid-19 restrictions. However, a Railway trail walk is under development, branded poster panels have been installed, plans are being drawn up for Hidden Gems artwork and proposals have been put forward to brighten up and enhance the booking hall with historical photographs of the station.
- The CRP supports the efforts by Fylde Borough Council to improve service frequency through its recent successful bid to the DfT's Restoring Your Railways Ideas Fund for the provision of a passing loop on the line. The project is now developing a strategic outline business case.

- History Posters have been created for several stations and more are in the pipeline.
- The popular mini timetables for the line had to be suspended but the CRP was grateful for the willing volunteers who helped to distribute them. Hopefully this can be picked up once the pandemic is over.



## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Hidden Gems. It is hoped this will be completed at St Anne's and extended to other stations when conditions allow.
- Pursue and complete step-free access at Squires Gate station.
- Develop a station adoption group at Kirkham & Wesham and revive the group at Blackpool Pleasure Beach.
- Develop links with Just Good Friends and the Memories Café to encourage those seeking to develop friendships/overcome loneliness to get involved in community rail activities.
- Create clips to promote the Railway Walk around St Anne's.
- Remove graffiti at Ansdell & Fairhaven station and work with volunteers and agencies to repaint the footbridge.
- Proposals for the St Anne's Foundation Stone still exist and hopefully the easing of restrictions will enable this to progress.
- Continue the production and distribution of mini timetables for the line.
- Review and update the Discover the South Fylde Line brochure.
- Support the St Anne's International Kite Festival and the Lytham Festival – both cancelled in 2020.
- Bid for grants from the Community Rail Development Fund and other sources to support projects along the line.
- Planning to commission themed artwork with HiveArts.
- Look at the potential to take part in the English Football League's and National Citizen Service's volunteering programme working with Blackpool Football Club.

### Next five years:

- Maintain the CRP's accreditation and secure ongoing core funding.
- Ensure the CRP management group reflects the diversity of the local community.
- Maintain strong links with the railway industry, local authorities and community groups and develop new links with local businesses.
- Continue to support Restore Your Railway project for a passing loop to increase service frequency.
- Create video clips to promote Railway Walks from stations along the line.



## 3.10 West of Lancashire CRP (WofLCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Officer:** Caroline Holden supported by Simon Clarke, Development Officer and Katie Musgrove, Special Needs Education Officer

**CRP Chair:** Marion Atkinson

**Make a Beeline:** [youtube.com/watch?v=wwqCraWQYfU&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwqCraWQYfU&feature=youtu.be)

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

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Not the year that had been planned for! Thanks to the resourcefulness and innovation of the people involved, many activities still went ahead. A lot of things moved online, especially meetings, which meant that those involved in educational work delivered their lessons online.
- Along with CRL the WofLCRP was formally re-accredited by the DfT following a review meeting in October 2020. Once again this recognises the hard work of the staff, the CRP's management group and the many volunteers along the lines.
- Caroline Holden was welcomed to the CRL team, and has taken on some project work for the CRP. The recently-formed South East Lancashire CRP (previously the Bolton & South Lancashire CRP) has joined the management group and plans are being developed for joint projects.
- The pandemic understandably caused many changes to train services on both lines with the Preston-Ormskirk line suspended during the first national lockdown and services to Southport reduced. Over time, trains were reinstated to the Ormskirk branch and there have been frequency improvements to Southport. CRP responded to the Manchester Recovery Task Force consultation which proposes changes to Manchester services that could impact the connectivity of Southport.
- Station adoption work was also affected when groups were advised to suspend their activities during the three national lockdowns.
- Marketing of the lines had to be suspended. The December 2019 mini timetable for the Preston-Ormskirk line was the last promotion and that had to be withdrawn in February 2020.
- There has been a complete change in the way things are done, and much now takes place virtually. With the first lockdown and the suspension of station adoption work the CRP, working with CRL's Caroline Holden and Katie Musgrove, took the opportunity to invite adoption groups to develop history posters for their stations. To provide inspiration for this and help them follow the format used on other Lancashire lines **a short video was uploaded onto YouTube.**
- An **ambitious history poster** was developed by the Friends of Parbold Station with help from

the Friends of Parbold Library, John Sloane, Tony Graham and Mark Dowding. More information is on [page 34](#).

- Other history posters are being developed for Meols Cop and Burscough Bridge stations.
- A further highlight in 2020 was Hidden Gems. This photography project engaged schools and community groups across Merseyside and West Lancashire. It has provided a platform for people to explore, discover and share the places that were of interest to them. **A full report about Hidden Gems** is available.



## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Work with CRL to secure re-accreditation in October.
- Work with Northern, the Community Rail Network and other partners to help restore confidence in using the railway following the pandemic.
- Continue with the development of the Make a Bee Line promotional campaign, a core part of the CRP's rail recovery promotional plan.
- Complete the Hidden Gems project which has been on hold during the pandemic.
- Reintroduce the mini timetables.
- Develop stations as gateways.
- Work with CRL's education team to restart face-to-face sessions in local schools and to engage with St. John's RC Primary School who are the adopters of the redundant platform at Burscough Junction.
- Develop a series of self-guided linear canal towpath walks that can be accessed by rail from stations between Wigan and New Lane.
- Continue to engage with the station groups along both lines. They are important community ambassadors.

### Next five years:

- Maintain the CRP's accreditation and secure ongoing core funding.
- Ensure the CRP management group reflects the diversity of the local community.
- Maintain strong links with the railway industry, local authorities and community groups and develop new links with local businesses.
- Develop community champions along the lines to help promote the lines in their community.
- 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 and to use this information to develop complementary marketing and promotional projects.
- Continue to develop the case for a Sunday service on the line.



## 3.11 Cumbrian Coast Line CRP

**Region:** West

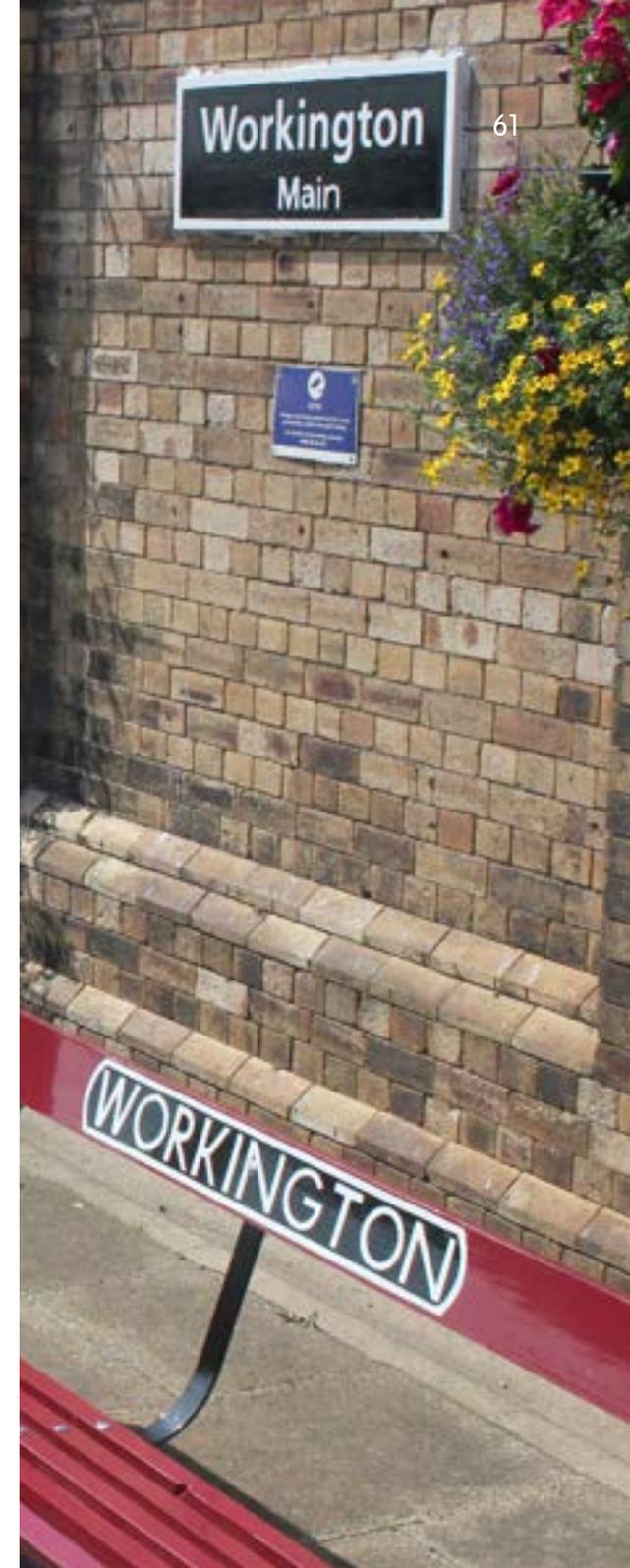
**CRP Chair:** Eddie Pollock

**CRP Officer:** Warren Birch

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

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Won the Community Rail Network awards for Better Side of the Tracks and for Station Volunteer of the Year (Aspatria station).
- At Millom Discovery Centre, rooms and displays were improved and funding was secured for Workshop to Waiting Room and for Asking Shadows to Dance.
- Contributed extensively to the Millom Town Deal and asked for £1.2m of investment for a programme of station access improvements.
- Contributed to the Future High Street plans for Maryport, including key developments for the station and surrounding area.
- Assembled a focus group (CRP, Northern, DRS, CRA, CCC, Workington Transport Heritage Trust and the Helena Thompson Museum) to research Workington's industrial history in preparation for the Rails Which Circled the World project.
- Collaborated with Workington town council to create new flower displays and a festive display at the front of Workington station.
- Adoption of Sellafield station. All stations along the line now have a registered volunteer group.
- Worked in partnership with Turning Point to deliver inspirational display panels at Green Road station.
- Supported Northern with the delivery of Transport for the North's investment programmes at Workington, Whitehaven and Sellafield stations.
- Continued participation with local authorities regarding:
  - Energy Coast rail upgrade
  - Nuclear Transport Group
  - Whitehaven parking strategy
  - Local transport infrastructure plans to link walking and cycling routes to the local stations.
- Member of the focus group for Copeland borough council's Connecting Cumbria's Hidden Coast initiative.
- Contributed to the ongoing timetable reviews.



## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Complete and launch the Rails Which Circled the World heritage exhibition at Workington station.
- Millom Discovery Centre:
  - Continue to work with Network Rail and the Arch Company to resolve issues around the transfer of Millom station building lease
  - Complete the Workshop to Waiting Room scheme
  - Complete the Asking Shadows to Dance project
  - Support the educational aspect of the centre with the trustees
  - Actively support and promote Millom Discovery Centre with Covid recovery plans.
- Contribute to the delivery of the programme of events and displays for the 175th anniversary celebrations.
- Support Tyne Valley CRP with plans for Hadrian's Wall celebrations.
- Continue working with Sellafield Ltd to further develop modal shift opportunities, with passenger surveys, parking, improved catering, station building improvements.
- Support and develop station adoption groups:
  - Plan and host a virtual station adopters engagement event with the CRP officer for Furness Line and Lakes Line

- Support Flimby Primary School with an artwork project commemorating the refugees who were relocated to Flimby during the world wars
- Support the groups from Shackles Off to start developing projects for both Seascale and Sellafield stations.
- Presentation at the CRN conference.
- Maintain and develop engagement of the Cumbria Rail Recovery forum to consider and plan for building back better, restoring confidence in rail travel and the potential staycation influx.
- Collaborate with Network Rail, TOCs and stakeholders to develop plans for the Levelling Up fund.
- Engage with TOCs regarding May and December 2021 timetable reviews seeking to improve connectivity and reduce skip-stopping patterns.
- 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 local cycling and walking investment plans and initiatives, town deals, place deals, local plans, station hub developments, travel plans, tourism based ventures.

### Next five years:

- Maintain accreditation and ensure ongoing financial and staffing sustainability of the CRP.
- Develop a sustainable 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 evolving along the line.

- Develop the platform 2 area at Carlisle station.
- Work with borough councils as town regeneration plans emerge, ensuring development of rail-related enhancements.
- Develop a programme of promotional and marketing activities focusing on key destination stations and exploiting the benefits of the new services and rolling stock.
- Maintain close links with Turning Point and consider potential for future initiatives including the development of plans for the refurbishment of the station building at Green Road.
- Further develop the Millom marketing centre initiative and enhance the travel information provision.
- Consider a second Scenic Rail Journeys brochure.
- Collaborate with TOCs and bus companies to explore opportunities for improving train-bus connectivity.



## 3.12 Furness Line CRP (FLCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Chair:** Tim Owen

**CRP Officer:** Kerstin Esbjornsson

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

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Won the Community Rail Network award for the striking way-finder display panels and gazer guide at each station along the line.
- 175th Anniversary committee set up to plan for celebratory events (virtual) and displays during 2021.
- Awarded funding to develop a GRIP 3 study for access improvements at Ulverston station.
- Ongoing engagement with station adopters.
- Recruitment of new station adopters at Ulverston.
- Worked in partnership with local authorities and the police to reduce issues with anti-social behaviour on Dalton station.
- 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.
- Contributed to the development of local authority plans and strategies e.g. local cycling and walking investment plans and initiatives, town deals, place deals.
- Engaged with Northern timetable planning team regarding the temporary timetables due to lockdowns and December 2020 timetable.

## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Deliver the programme of events and displays to celebrate the 175th Anniversary of the Furness Railway.
- Progress delivery of the GRIP 3 study for Ulverston access improvements.
- Re-engage with the Cumbria Better Connected forum due to recommence March 2021.



- Continue to work with the station manager to display an exhibition set of the wayfinding panels in Barrow station waiting room.
- Continue to work with the CRP officer to develop and deliver initiatives utilising Millom Discovery Centre for rail-related activities and events.
- Maintain and develop engagement of the Cumbria Rail Recovery forum to consider and plan for building back better, restoring confidence in rail travel and the potential staycation influx.
- Continue to embed rail safety and travel initiatives with schools and community groups along the line.
- Maintain collaboration with the Barrow BID manager to develop plans for wayfinding signage between the station and town centre.
- Support and develop station adoption groups:
  - Plan and host a virtual station adopters engagement event with the CRP officer for CCL
  - Prepare with new station adopters for a community volunteer day at Ulverston station.
- Progress volunteering initiatives for improved mental health and recovery e.g. The Well Barrow, Ulverston MIND, and The Well Kendal.
- Continue to work with local authorities and the police to develop strategies/ plans to address antisocial behaviour at Dalton station.
- Collaborate with Network Rail, TOCs and stakeholders to develop plans for the Levelling Up fund.
- Engage with TOCs regarding May and December 2021 timetable reviews seeking to improve connectivity and reduce skip-stopping patterns.
- 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 local cycling and walking investment plans and initiatives, town teals, place deals, local plans, station hub developments, travel plans, tourism-based ventures.

### Next five years:

- Maintain accreditation and ensure ongoing financial and staffing sustainability of the CRP.
- Develop a sustainable 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.
- Build the business case for developing wasteland at Dalton station for car parking.
- 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.
- Secure funding, appoint resources and develop final plans for a new community project: Tree-mendous Cark! at Cark station. This is inspired by the planting of 75 trees beside the station, aiming to raise awareness of the wonders of the natural environment and draw attention to climate change – closely linked to the Boom Project supporting the preservation and reintroduction of rare insect/plant species at Barrow station and along the coast.
- Collaborate with TOCs and bus companies to explore opportunities for improving train-bus connectivity.



### 3.13 Lakes Line CRP (LLCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Chair:** Tim Owen

**CRP Officer:** Kerstin Esbjornsson

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

#### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Won the Community Rail Network award for the station adopters' skill swap workshop held in November 2019.
- 175th anniversary committee set up to plan for celebratory events (virtual) and displays during 2021-22.
- Continued participation with Cumbria County Council and Network Rail to develop a bid to the Restoring Your Railways fund for much-needed line capacity improvements.
- Ongoing engagement with station adopters.
- Ongoing liaison with the Lakes Line rail user group and TOCs.
- 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 the work scheduling and the planning of replacement transport provision.
- Contributed to the development of local authority plans and strategies e.g. local cycling & walking investment plans, town deals, place deals etc.
- Engaged with the Northern timetable planning team regarding the temporary timetables due to lockdowns and December 2020 timetable.

#### Priorities

##### Next 12 months:

- Continue to collaborate with Network Rail, Cumbria County Council and Northern to develop the Restoring Your Railways fund bid for line capacity investment.



- Deliver the programme of events and displays to celebrate the 175th Anniversary of the line.
- Work with Avanti West Coast to deliver improved passenger information and welcome ambience at Oxenholme station, encouraging travellers to use the Lakes Line and travel further afield.
- Support and develop station adoption groups. Plan and host a virtual station adopters' engagement event with the CRP officer for CCL.

- Progress volunteering initiatives for improved mental health and recovery e.g. The Well Kendal, The Well Barrow and Ulverston MIND.
- Work with station adopters, Northern and Network Rail to develop a programme of rail safety initiatives with schools and community groups along the line.
- Re-engage with Sandgate School, a strategic special needs school to collaborate on rail-based travel initiatives.
- Continue to work with the Cumbrian Coast Line CRP officer to develop and deliver initiatives utilising Millom Discovery Centre for rail-related activities and events.
- Maintain and develop engagement of the Cumbria Rail Recovery forum to consider and plan for building back better, restoring confidence in rail travel and the potential staycation influx.
- 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 e.g. Liverpool and Edinburgh.
- Support the next steps for the review of the Access for All bid for Staveley station.
- Continue to liaise with the Lakes Line rail user group and TOCs.
- Support Lakes Line rail user group with 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.
- Support Cumbria Tourism on the development of a 'window gazer' guide for the line.
- Collaborate with Network Rail, TOCs and stakeholders to develop plans for the Levelling Up fund.
- Engage with TOCs regarding May and December 2021 timetable reviews seeking to improve connectivity and reduce skip-stopping patterns.
- 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 local cycling and walking investment plans and initiatives, town deals, place deals, local plans, station hub developments, travel plans, tourism-based ventures.

### Next five years:

- Maintain accreditation and 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 – better signage, pedestrian and cycle access to/from the town centre, links with the bus station etc.
- 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.
- Develop opportunities to engage local businesses and trade organisations with railway initiatives.
- Collaborate with Avanti West Coast and other TOCs to consider art/design scheme for Oxenholme underpass.
- Seek timetable improvements which open up Sunday morning employment opportunities.
- Collaborate with TOCs and bus companies to explore opportunities for improving train-bus connectivity.



## 3.14 North Cheshire CRP (NCCRP)

**Region:** West

**CRP Chair:** Garfield Southall

**CRP Officer:** Marina Farey

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

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Launched the website.
- Delivered a marketing campaign promoting Ellesmere Port/Chester-Leeds service.
- Participated in the organisation and delivery of Cheshire Best Kept Stations online awards event.
- Received accreditation by the DfT.

## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Continue working in partnership with the railway industry organisations, local authorities and businesses.
- Identify projects supporting post-Covid recovery.
- Participate in the Go Green festival at the University of Chester.
- Participate in a pilot study organised and led by Cheshire West and Chester Council's sustainable transport task force to consider opportunities and barriers to delivery of inclusive walking, cycling, public transport and integrated transport projects.
- Develop cycling and/or walking maps.
- Continue developing and enhancing the website.

- Continue with community rail activities such as gardening, artwork and volunteer days and any other projects that may enhance the stations and benefit local communities.
- Promote Halton Curve services.
- Promote Chester-Leeds services.
- Volunteer recruitment.
- Promote the partnership and community rail.
- Continue developing links with local CRPs especially the Mid Cheshire Line, the Borderlands Line, Chester-Shrewsbury Line, Conwy Valley Line, and work on joint projects.
- Participate in CRN's projects and events.
- Collaborate with the University of Chester in promoting community rail and careers in the railway industry.

### 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.
- Engagement with diverse communities.



### 3.15 Mid Cheshire CRP (MCCRP)

**Region:** Central

**CRP Chair:** John Oates

**CRP Officer:** Sarah Morgan

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

#### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- A wildlife art exhibition was launched at Tatton Park in October 2020 by the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, in partnership with Cheshire East Council, National Trust and the Cheshire Wildlife Trust. The exhibition promoted the line and was on display in the garden at Tatton Park until February 2021, supported by a widely distributed 24-page full colour booklet. The artwork has also been displayed at stations along the line, with postcards and posters sold at outlets across Cheshire. The exhibition received five pages of coverage in *Cheshire Life*.
- Supported by the MCCRP, the Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards went ahead despite the pandemic, demonstrating the support of volunteers, Northern, Network Rail and stakeholders across the region. Five stations on the Mid Cheshire Line won awards and a member of the Hale station adoption group also won an individual award for the restoration of an historic bench at Mobberley following previous work on benches at Mouldsworth and Hale.
- Sales of mugs, posters and postcards of railway art have continued, with new outlets being established along the line.
- A primary school art competition run in partnership with Marketing Cheshire and acclaimed local artist Nicky Thompson went ahead during the spring 2020 lockdown. Over 90 entries were received from schoolchildren across Cheshire. Winning entries were displayed at stations and winners each received a personal letter from the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire.
- The line has three Mid Cheshire Rail Walks booklets which were revised in 2019. The updated versions were completed and reprinted in 2020 to promote sustainable travel and tourism along the line.
- The partnership was incorporated into a Community Interest Company on 1 July 2020.
- The CRP officer was recruited in November 2020 after the position had been vacant since February 2019 due to recruitment restrictions from the previous accountable body.
- A disused noticeboard was repurposed as a poetry board by the Friends of Altrincham Interchange.
- Relationships with town and parish councils were strengthened and the partnership had ongoing support from a strong volunteer base.



## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Achieve accreditation of the partnership.
- Develop a conservation plan for Hale station in partnership with Northern, Network Rail and Trafford Council to ensure that listed historic buildings are sympathetically preserved.
- Continue to strengthen connections with town and village groups along the line, e.g. town councils, parish councils, voluntary groups and stakeholders.
- Work with partners to fund the installation of a new shelter at Greenbank station on the Manchester bound platform.
- Work with partners to refurbish and extend parking facilities at Greenbank station.
- Identify initiatives with Northern and adjacent TOCs (Avanti West Coast, CrossCountry, Merseyrail, Transpennine Express and Transport for Wales Rail Services) for joint promotions both to and from the line to rebuild passenger confidence post Covid-19.
- Sponsor events along the Mid Cheshire Line to promote the use of sustainable transport.
- Restart the Music Train when events are given the go-ahead.
- Refresh the website and develop social media channels.
- Install defibrillators at Northwich station in partnership with Northwich Town Council.
- Commence designing outbound and inbound travel plans for each station along the line starting with Northwich.

### Next five years:

- Continue to rebuild passenger numbers post Covid-19 by working with partners and funders to establish successful marketing campaigns.
- Work with partners to achieve a submission for Access for All funding to make Northwich station accessible.
- Establish feasibility of a new station at Parkgate in Knutsford and other new connections to the line, enhancing connectivity to major employers and transport hubs including HS2.



## 3.16 East Lancashire CRP (ELCRP)

**Region:** Central

**CRP Officers:** Simon Clarke and  
Caroline Holden

**CR Education Development Officer:** Shahiesta Raja

**Website:** [communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/east-lancashire](https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/east-lancashire)  
and [communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/dalesrail.com](https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/dalesrail.com)

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Re-accreditation by the DfT, recognising the hard work of the paid staff, management group and station volunteers.
- Welcomed Caroline Holden to the CRL team of Community Rail development officers. Caroline joined in April during the first national lockdown.
- Continued to work with Connecting East Lancashire (CEL). Two projects - Connecting Brierfield and Memorable Journeys - were concluded, with a number of smaller projects in the pipeline or underway. Connecting Brierfield was launched in March 2020, while Memorable Journeys was September with artwork created by pupils from Peel Park and Hyndburn Park primary schools displayed at Accrington station. [Read more information about Memorable Journeys.](#)
- Produced some [short films showing both projects in various stages.](#)
- DalesRail, the popular Sunday service from Lancashire to the Yorkshire Dales and Carlisle was suspended in 2020 due to the pandemic. Not to be downhearted ELCRP along with CRL and the Lancashire Rail Ramblers launched the Virtual DalesRail and asked DalesRailers to submit stories, pictures, and articles about what they liked about DalesRail. View the final [Tales from DalesRail here.](#)
- Plans for the return of DalesRail in 2021 are in hand.
- Despite the pandemic ELCRP, working with the CRL education team, has maintained contact with schools along the line including Broadfield Specialist School, Peel Park and Hyndburn Park primary schools, Accrington; Blackburn College; Al Hayat Language Centre and Crosshill Special School, Blackburn. It has also been possible to do some face-to-face lessons but in most cases education engagement was virtual.
- Working with Nightsafe and Northern Apprentices, an attractive banner was installed at Blackburn under the title Recycle - Reuse - Regenerate.
- Seed Architects was commissioned to look at how to improve access to platform 1 at Accrington. The study enabled Northern to make a successful bid to the DfT's Access for All mid-tier fund. Work is due to start shortly.

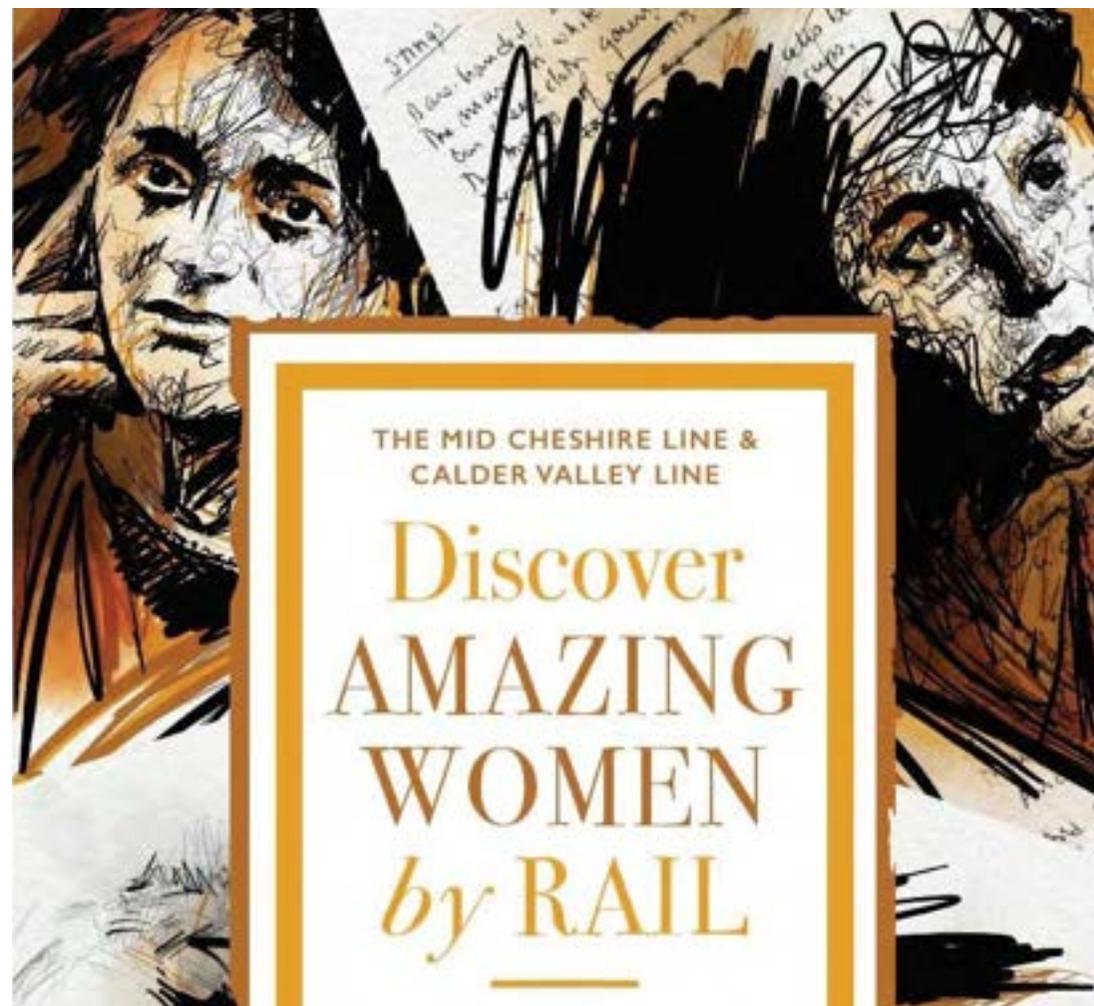


- CRL and the ELCRP has continued to develop its award-winning Autism Friendly Line project. Two trial station films of Accrington and Rose Grove have been produced, taking people on the autism spectrum on **a virtual tour of a station** prior to using the train.
- In support of the **Amazing Women by Rail** promotion the partnership commissioned two films to showcase the work of Rachel Kay-Shuttleworth (Burnley) and Kathleen Ferrier (Blackburn). Ethel Carnie Holdsworth (Church & Oswaldtwistle & Hebden Bridge) is also featured.
- ELCRP continued the successful mini timetable guides for the Todmorden Curve service but this was put on hold when the pandemic struck.
- Assist Pendle Borough Council with its bid to the Restoring Your Railway fund for a passing loop between Rose Grove and Colne to enable a more frequent service to operate.
- Complete the installation of the Mills to Tower artwork at Rishton.
- Promote active travel through a series of videos with the first based on the Padiham Greenway from Rose Grove including a deviation to Gawthorpe Hall.
- Develop and expand the range of activities that take place in the education room at Accrington.

## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Work with CRL to secure re-accreditation in October.
- Continue working with CRL's education team along the line.
- Work with Northern, CRN and other partners to help restore confidence in using the railway following the pandemic.
- Look to expand the management group so that it represents the many diverse communities in East Lancashire.
- Promote the 2021 DalesRail season and begin to plan for 2022.
- Restart the guided walk programme.
- Work with the station partnerships.
- Continue to work with CEL and complete the ongoing projects.
- Continue producing a series of station videos to help people on the autistic spectrum understand what facilities are available. These will cover all stations that the Todmorden Curve service calls at from Blackburn to Manchester Victoria inclusive.
- Restart the successful mini timetables and other promotions to help with the rail recovery.



### 3.17 Clitheroe Line CRP (CLCRP)

**Region:** Central

**CRP Officers:** Simon Clarke and Caroline Holden

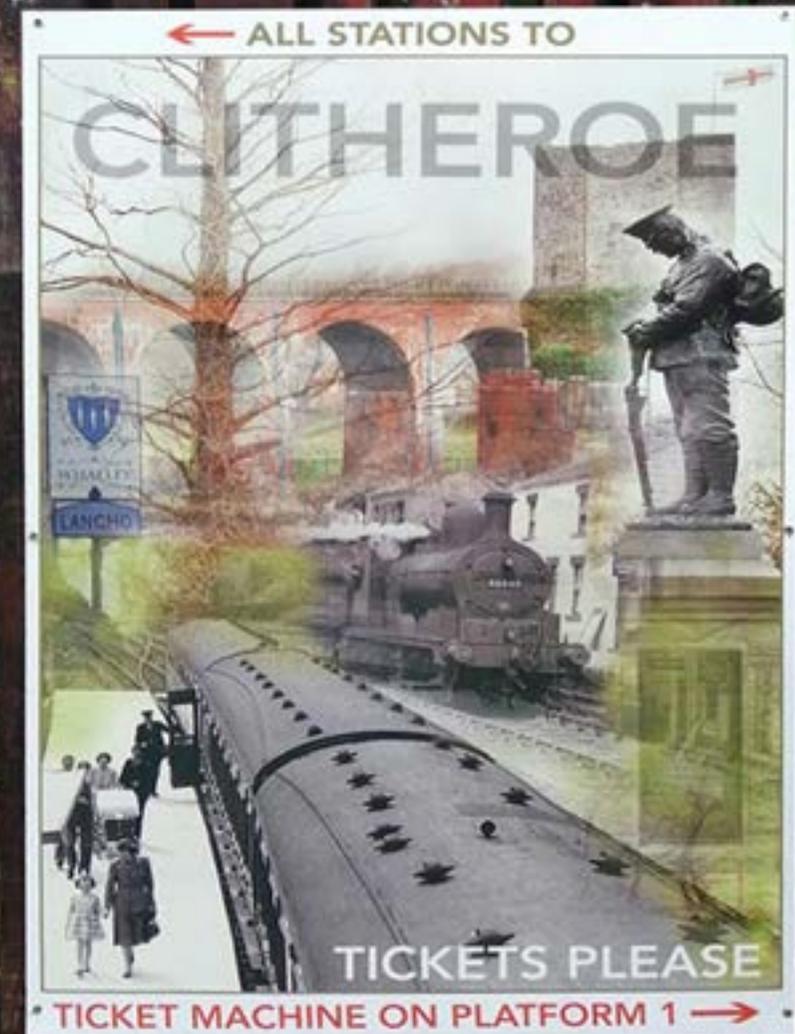
**CR Education Development Officer:** Shahiesta Raja

**CRP Chair:** Marjorie Birch

**Website:** [communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/clitheroe-line](https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/clitheroe-line)  
and [communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/dalesrail](https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/dalesrail)

#### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Re-accredited by the DfT, recognising the hard work of the paid staff, management group and station volunteers.
- Welcomed Caroline Holden to the CRL team of Community Rail development officers. Caroline joined in April during the first national lockdown.
- Due to lockdown, from the beginning of March 2020 many activities were virtual.
- Continued to engage with local primary schools through the key stage 2 educational project in conjunction with East Lancashire Community Rail Partnership (ELCRP) linked to the Passport to Safe Rail Travel. Achieved via Zoom and curriculum packages on the website.
- Maintained and updated the CRP's website and the new website [Down the Line](#).
- Completed the Langho station access study.
- Worked with Ribbles Valley Borough Council following its successful bid to the DfT's Restoring Your Railway fund, looking for the provision of regular passenger services between Clitheroe and Hellifield and possibly beyond.
- Northern apprentices were involved in a project involving Nightsafe and CRL's Artist in Residence at Blackburn station. A bright banner was installed on platforms 1 & 2 called Recycle - Reuse - Regenerate.
- Connecting East Lancashire developed a project called [Along the Line](#) to produce artwork and signage for Ramsgrave & Wilpshire station. This involved pupils from Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe, students from Blackburn College along with the Child Action NW (CANW), the local Alzheimer's Society and the Friends of the station group. The project was launched in January 2021. [See page 19](#).



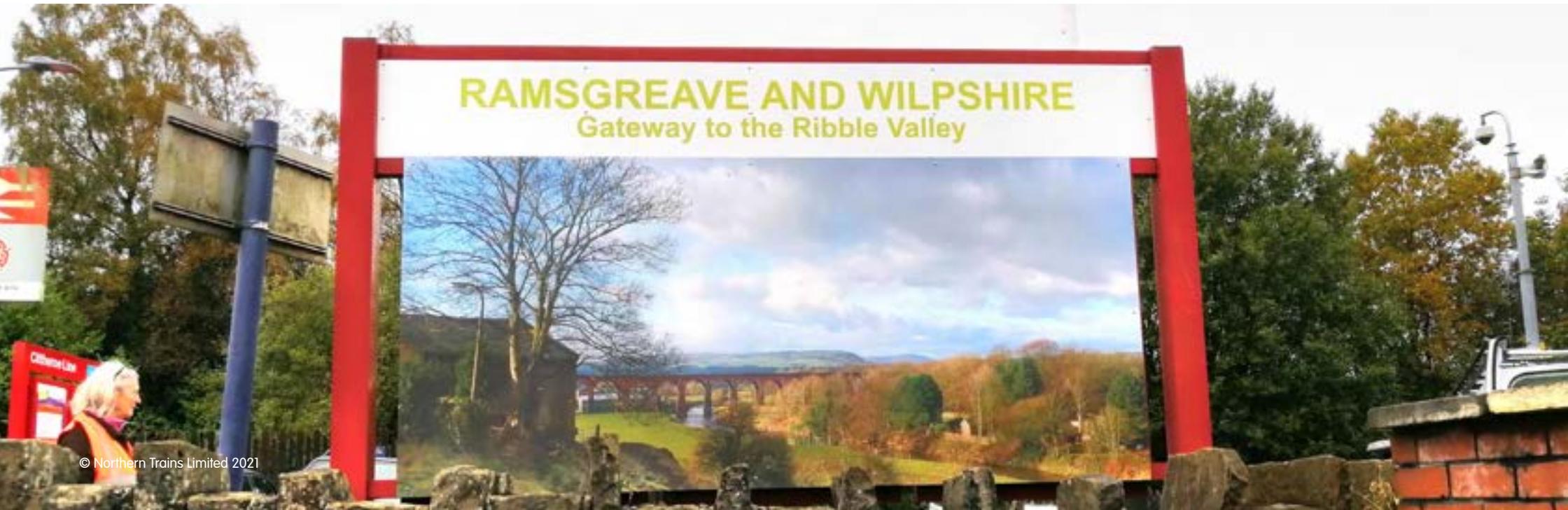
- A further project with CANW was developed for Darwen station called Back on Track. It is hoped to install the completed artwork once the pandemic restrictions are lifted.
- The partnership works with the South East Lancashire CRP, attends their meetings and is working on mutual projects.
- DalesRail was suspended in 2020 due to the pandemic. More details of the Virtual DalesRail can be found in the East Lancashire CRP report [on page 67](#).

## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Work with CRL to secure re-accreditation in October.
- Look to expand the management group so that it represents the many diverse communities along the Clitheroe Line.

- Develop a Rail Recovery plan in partnership with the DfT, CRN and the Lancashire CRPs for implementation post-pandemic.
- Support Ribble Valley Borough Council's Restoring Your Railway project to improve services along the Blackburn-Hellifield line.
- Look at opportunities to improve journey times between Clitheroe and Manchester.
- Continue to work with Blackburn with Darwen on developing the redundant space at Blackburn station (joint with ELCRP).
- Continue to work with the South East Lancashire CRP and develop projects at the south end of the Clitheroe Line with them.
- Promote the 2021 DalesRail season and begin to plan for 2022.
- Complete the Back on Track project at Darwen.
- Develop a Clitheroe town map in partnership with Ribble Valley Borough Council.
- Produce mini timetable for the line.



## 3.18 South East Manchester CRP (SEMCRP)

**Region:** Central

**CRP Chair:** Peter Robinson

**CRP Officer:** Vacant

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

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### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- The core of the partnership are the 14 active Friends groups which it hosts: Ashburys, Fairfield, Guide Bridge, Denton, Reddish South, Hattersley, Broadbottom, Romiley, Marple, Rose Hill, Strines, Middlewood, Davenport and Woodsmoor.
- 2020 has of course been a challenging year for everybody. Many voluntary groups have members who are amongst some of the most at-risk sections of society. Despite the challenges though, it was possible to progress many projects that were begun before the lockdowns kicked in. A number of others were initiated throughout the year.
- One exciting project that the CRP has been involved with is procuring a Brompton Dock for Stockport station. Brompton make the classic folding bike, and these will be available to hire and return at the Dock. The CRP has worked with station operator Avanti and obtained funding from TPE, Stockport Council and Sustrans. The aim is to facilitate 'last mile' journeys to and from the station.
- It was a happy start to spring when children from Woodley primary school visited their local station to see their CARE artwork in place.
- The team continued gathering information from local history groups to produce more industrial heritage history boards for five additional stations along the Glossop-Manchester line.
- Woodsmoor, Davenport and Hazel Grove procured some bespoke artwork to illustrate well-known local landmarks.
- The CRP is keen to develop active travel and walking from stations along the line. One of the latest projects on this theme was the production of a self-guided walks booklet by the Friends of Romiley Station. Some of the CRP's Line Art images were used to create the cover of the book.
- Earlier in the year one of the objectives of the partnership was to support Friends groups recovering from the first lockdown and the damage that had caused to station planting. The CRP was able to fund groups to purchase new seeds, plants and compost.
- One of the last projects delivered during the past 12 months was the installation of a carved owl on the approach road at Woodsmoor station. This work was funded by the CRP.



## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

The future of rail services in the post-Covid period is very uncertain and the public transport sector is in truly uncharted territory. It is impossible to know what the world will look like over the next few years and no-one can forecast the level of passenger demand for train journeys.

Community Rail needs to go back to first principles of encouraging rail travel.

- While some return to commuting is inevitable, in the short term it is unlikely to be a strong return. Community Rail's ability to influence people's decision about whether or not to commute is limited. It can, however, guide travel choices more effectively by influencing leisure and discretionary travel decisions.
- SEMCRP will work with local school networks to develop trips by train. Children have a great ability to influence the behaviour of their families. Even where some adults may have become nervous about public transport because of Covid-19, their children can encourage them go on days out to places they have been to with school. This is a good way to positively influence views and behaviour and could, in the medium term, feed into travel to work decisions too.
- Other campaigns will include promoting trips for retail, using retail trails to highlight local opportunities to travel and explore neighbouring towns and villages.
- The CRP is working with its neighbouring High Peak and Hope Valley CRP to build a series of events to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the Peak District National Park in 2021 and the celebration of the Mass Trespass on Kinder Scout. Both of these historically significant events are worthy of recognition and celebration.



### 3.19 Crewe to Manchester CRP (C2MCRP)

**Region:** Central

**CRP Chair:** Vacant

**CRP Officer:** Vacant

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

#### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- There are ten active Friends groups: Levenshulme, Heaton Chapel, Handforth, Alderley Edge, Styal, Chelford, Goostrey, Holmes Chapel, Sandbach and Mauldeth Road.
- The CRP was hit by the unexpected death of its chairperson, Chris Dale. Chris was a powerful advocate of passengers' rights and needs and was often called upon to talk on national and local media due to his encyclopaedic knowledge and his ability to speak in plain English. Chris will be greatly missed by many people and transport groups.
- Like most CRPs and Friends groups, 2020 was a difficult year. Nevertheless, much work was carried out, with some of the traditional on-station work condensed and undertaken between lockdowns.
- After the first lockdown, most of the stations' planting had died off. The CRP issued funds so that groups could replant. Unfortunately, their work may have to be repeated again.
- Mauldeth Road station's new planters were installed as part of the post-lockdown recovery. This is the CRP's newest group
- The CRP's Line Art project continues to develop and the artwork is being used extensively along the line. In March 2020 at Heaton Chapel, one piece showing the Buxton Opera House was installed into a blind window. Another new piece was commissioned for Alderley Edge station, reflecting the objective to build the line's identity through art. See the Alderley Edge station adoption case study on [page 25](#).
- One of the CRP's more complex projects is the adoption of Heaton Chapel's old station house. The lower floor is still used as a ticket hall but the first floor could be developed into a community space.
- Crewe Dementia Friendly. Prior to lockdown the CRP worked with Avanti, Cheshire East Council and the Dementia Engagement Empowerment Project (DEEP) in Crewe to look at options to improve wayfinding and the general passenger experience at Crewe station. Due to the shielding of DEEP members, the project was put on hold. It will hopefully be revived shortly and, once completed, the learning will be shared with Stockport.
- The CRP supported Friends of Sandbach to deliver work by local artists to brighten up the station. One piece, on the end wall of the ticket hall, has a garden and potting shed theme. A second piece is on the waiting room of the Manchester platform, again with a garden theme.



- Friends of Goostrey have worked hard to develop successful links with local businesses. Two major local firms are supporting developments at the station.
  - Waste management company ANSA has agreed to support a covered cycle rack and CCTV. Northern has agreed the installation. CCTV is proving harder to progress despite external funding.
  - Materials and recycling company Sibelco has agreed to support the installation of two large cabinets to display work produced by Goostrey primary school. Unfortunately, the school work recently suffered from vandalism so a more secure cabinet is required.
- The CRP has helped Friends of Goostrey convert the station's old ticket office into a community space. The building has been fully renovated with assistance from the Railway Heritage Trust. The CRP is negotiating a suitable lease with Northern and Network Rail to enable local artists Debbie Goldsmith and Sian Tudor Jones to occupy the space and host community workshops.
- Friends of Handforth are developing various projects including an outreach initiative with local charity Time Out Group, to help young adults with learning disabilities develop living skills. Another initiative saw FoHS working with their local allotment society to promote a greener Handforth.

## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

The future of rail services in the post-Covid period is very uncertain and the public transport sector is in truly uncharted territory. It is impossible to know what the world will look like over the next few years and no-one can forecast the level of passenger demand for train journeys.

Community Rail needs to go back to first principles of encouraging rail travel.

- While some return to commuting is inevitable, in the short term it is unlikely to be a strong return. Community Rail's ability to influence people's decision about whether or not to commute is limited. It can, however, guide travel choices more effectively by influencing leisure and discretionary travel decisions.

- C2M will work with local school networks to develop trips by train. Children have a great ability to influence the behaviour of their families. Even where some adults may have become nervous about public transport because of Covid-19, their children can encourage them go on days out to places they have been to with school. This is a good way to positively influence views and behaviour and could, in the medium term, feed into travel to work decisions too.
- Other campaigns will include promoting trips for retail, using retail trails to highlight local opportunities to travel and explore neighbouring towns and villages.
- The CRP is working with local groups and rail enthusiasts to celebrate the 180th anniversary of the Manchester to Birmingham Railway, connecting to Crewe. Around May 2022, there will be events along the line.



### 3.20 High Peak and Hope Valley CRP (HPHVCRP)

**Region:** Cental

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

**CRP Officer:** Catherine Croney

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

**Key highlights of 2020/21:**

- Developed a new brand style for the CRP to ensure consistent identity across all three lines.
- In response to Covid-19, a regular newsletter Keeping You On Board was issued to all CRP partners and stakeholders to keep people up to date with CRP news. Stakeholders were actively involved to share their news.
- Produced a new-look annual report in the CRP brand style.
- Worked with High Peak Borough Council to develop and produce a series of welcome and orientation panels at Whaley, Chapel-en-le-Frith and New Mills Central stations as well as a series of self-guided walks trails.
- Disley welcome panels were installed.
- Continued to work on a new CRP website, launched in February 2021.
- Set up a new CRP Facebook page and linked with station groups and TOCs to raise awareness of all three lines.



- Collaborated with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and station groups along the three lines to develop the Buzzing Stations project. Held online bee ID training sessions for station group volunteers. Friends of Buxton Station developed a self-guided Bee Safari from the station.
- The CRP was actively involved with Community Rail Lancashire’s virtual rail education network initiative Backtrack, aimed at tackling rail trespass among young people locally.
- Worked with arts groups to promote community arts projects such as Bamford’s Heritage Timeline and #ShowTheLoveNewMillsCentralStation.
- Shortlisted for five Community Rail Awards. Friends of Buxton Station was awarded Lead Platinum in the It’s Your Station category and second place in the Involving Young People category. Friends of Glossop Station was acknowledged for its superb work in the Platinum category of It’s Your Station.

## Priorities

### Next 12 months:

- Work with partners such as the Peak District National Park Authority and High Peak Borough Council to continue to promote rail-based tourism.
- Work on more social inclusion projects such as Hope Valley Xplore aimed at young people excluded from school to engage them with rail travel and practical conservation skills.
- Develop further the Sling Express concept to encourage new parents to confidently use the train to access the National Park.
- Promote the Dementia Signage project developed by Friends of Buxton Station.
- Organise The Great British Bumblebee Hunt for early summer in collaboration with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and CRP station group volunteers.
- Work with Friends of Edale Station to replace wire fencing with traditional wooden fencing.
- Refresh the three line guides aimed at promoting rail travel once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

### 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.



## 3.21 South East Lancashire CRP (SELCRP)

**Region:** Central

**CRP Chair:** Prof Paul Salvesson

**CRP Officer:** Dr Stephanie Dermott

**Website:** [boltoncommunityrail.org.uk](https://boltoncommunityrail.org.uk)

### Key highlights of 2020/21:

- Worked on a variety of projects in Bolton, Wigan and other communities covered by the CRP.
- Despite delays due to Covid-19, the refurbishment of rooms on platforms 4/5 led by Bolton Station Community Partnership continued to progress and is now near completion and the signing of a contract lease with the University of Bolton.
- In June 2020 the CRP appointed a full-time community rail development officer on a fixed-term contract for two years.
- During lockdown, a number of projects were worked on. Some took place within local and national restrictions, others were virtual and some are planned for 2021.
- Continued to develop the CRP's social media, strengthening its Facebook and Twitter profiles, and created an Instagram page for Bolton Community Rail.
- Developed other profiles to reflect more localised work. For example, to tie in with a number of projects planned for 2021 in and around Wigan North Western station (including a self-guided walking trail, wildflower meadow and beehives, and a large-scale community art mural), social media profiles have been created for Wigan Community Rail to post updates specifically related to this locality.
- Small grants were received at Christmas and these enabled festive family gift packs to be produced. These were distributed to service users of a local foodbank, and asylum seeker/refugee families in the area, with the help of City of Sanctuary Bolton. A series of short craft workshop films were produced for Bolton Council's online Winter Festival and uploaded to the CRP's YouTube channel.
- Continued to work alongside other local organisations to develop events and projects for 2021.
- Worked on a project for Greater Manchester Hate Crime Awareness Week (1-7 Feb 2021) in collaboration with City of Sanctuary Bolton, consisting of an online survey, social media campaign, online craft workshops and an online art exhibition.
- Succeeded in getting funding for projects that will hopefully take place in 2021.
- Planning to submit applications for the first phase of a large-scale gardening project at Bolton station.



## Priorities

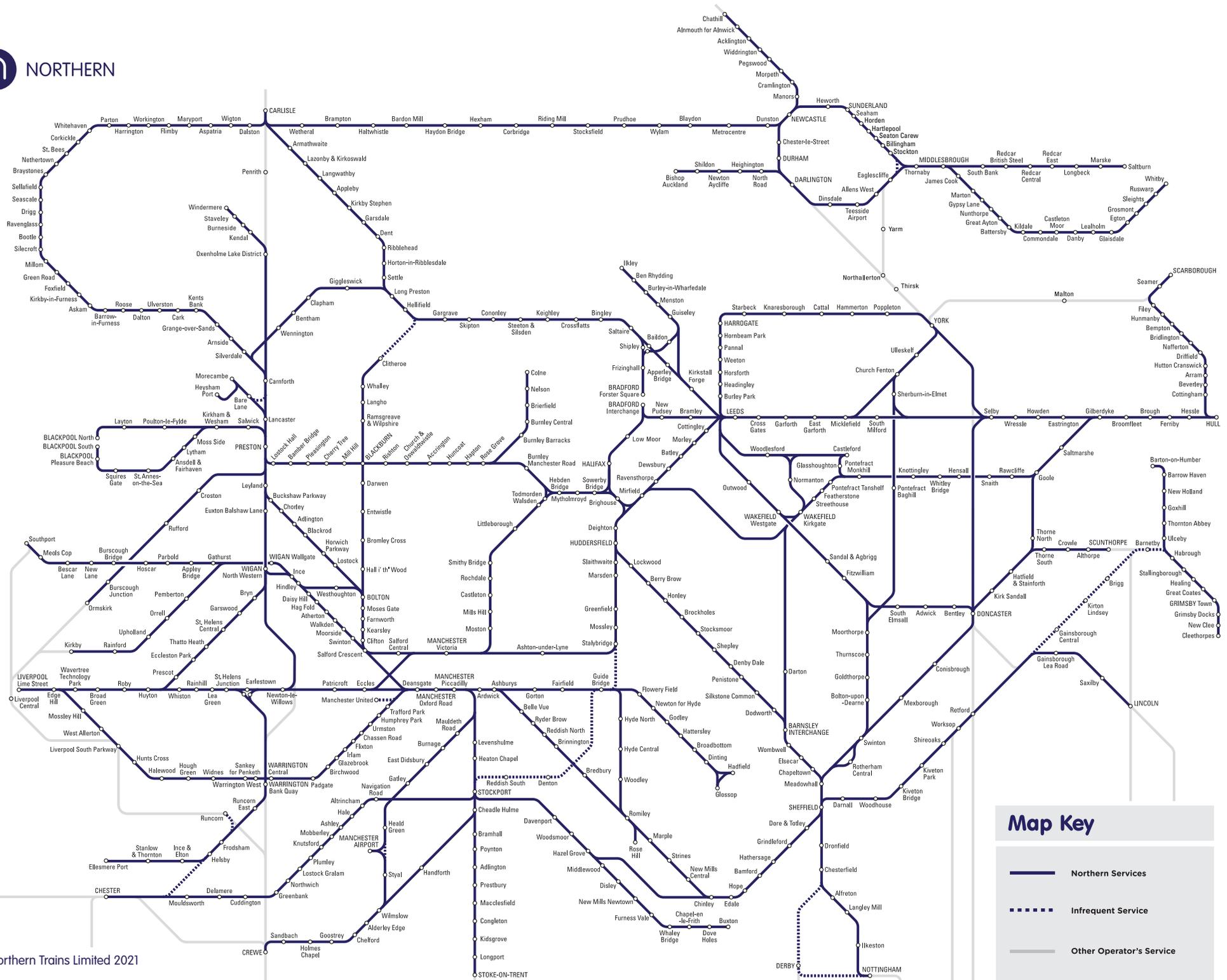
### Next 12 months:

- Complete GM Hate Crime Awareness project and distribute findings.
- Commence Rivington bus project, creating integrated transport links between Bolton Interchange and Rivington Country Park.
- Complete first phase of the Clocktower Trails self-guided walks (Wigan to Bolton route).
- Install Wigan North Western underpass art mural.
- Establish beehives and wildflower meadow at Swan & Railway pub opposite Wigan North Western – develop honey-themed social enterprise.
- Plan and run Bolton station’s Mela event (may take place online due to Covid-19 restrictions).
- Bolton station gardening project – phase 1 to take place on platforms 4 and 5.
- Reopen Platform Gallery P5 and community room (in line with Covid-19 restrictions).
- Involvement in research project with University of Bolton, related to the use of refurbished space on platforms 4 and 5.

### Next five years:

- Extend Rivington bus project timetable.
- Work on making Bolton station a cycling hub.
- Develop more successful adoption groups at local stations.
- Continue to engage diverse communities served by the rail network.
- Work with City of Sanctuary Bolton to relaunch the project to make Bolton a Station of Sanctuary.





### Map Key

-  Northern Services
-  Infrequent Service
-  Other Operator's Service

