

South Fylde Line AGM – June 2026

Chairman's Report

It has been the busiest year of activity I can remember on the South Fylde Line with activities and projects being undertaken at most of the stations.

Once again, the Partnership has received Accreditation from the Dept for Transport via the Community Rail Network.

INSTALLATIONS

New litter bins have been installed at Squires Station, and these should prevent seagulls from getting into and spreading the refuse across the platform.

New planters have been installed at Ansdell & Fairhaven station courtesy of a grant from Northern (thank you Martin).

St Anne's station received a bequest which funded 4 new planters supplied by Arc plastics. New signage in a totem design has since been added to them.

Lytham station now boasts its own wooden train with wagons filled with plants. and several stations now proudly host Bug Hotels courtesy of Lytham Community Workshop.

ARTWORK

The South Fylde Line Partnership (SFL) funded a large dibond poster of the town's Heritage Trail which now adorns the railway bridge.

Artist **Diane Muldowney** worked with pupils from **Armfield Academy** in Blackpool to create an eye catching display of railway related images at Pleasure Beach station. A selection of the designs has also been turned into posters and displayed at other SFL stations.



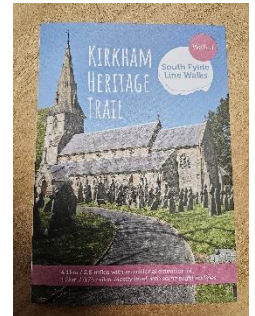
We were fortunate that, at the official unveiling, Northern's mascot Whistle was in attendance as by a stroke of good fortune the costume was in the back of Euan's van.

Poster cases and posters have been installed on the fencing by the station entrance at Squires Gate and efforts have gone into tidying up and sand clearance to provide a more welcoming environment for rail users.

RAILWAY WALKS

History students attending the University of Lancashire have created a draft version of a potential self-guided heritage trail between Pleasure Beach station and Blackpool South which will hopefully form the basis of a new walk under our Railway Walks series. Thanks go to Martin Keating for providing Authority to Travel letters for the students to visit the town to undertake their research.

During Community Rail week the Kirkham Heritage Trail was officially launched and the partnership welcomed Alex Peel from Community Rail Network HQ to take part in the event.



VISITORS

We welcomed several 'Try the Train' groups during the year, the latest one led by Shahiستا who brought a group from Berkley College and one of them felt confident to do some mowing. Lancashire Ramblers descended on Blackpool South for a walk and I was pleased to welcome them personally and hand out our Line Guides.

We greeted other station adopters from Northern's stations. Volunteers from SFL stations supported the Inspiration Train when it made its two visits to Blackpool. Blackpool North provided an ideal location and some of the highest attendance and engagement figures were recorded.

PRIDE OF PLACE & GREEN WAVE

We were approached by Blackpool Council (thank you Mel for the introductions) and Blackpool's stations could well be receiving funding and support for projects under these two projects.

LICENSED AREAS

Peter Woods from Grow Kirkham & Wesham has secured a License agreement from Network Rail to develop a previously neglected patch of land to the rear of Platform 3.

Lytham In Bloom is redoubling their efforts on the licenced area opposite the running platform with plans to renew the timbers on the raised beds.

Blackpool Pleasure Beach volunteers have their eyes on a plot of land which they hope they may be able to secure from Network Rail. This would link in with Blackpool's Green Wave ambitions and enhance the look of this busy station. Squires Gate's licensed area goes from strength to strength with flora and fauna to delight the eye and they have evidence of considerable wildlife activity.

FUTURE PLANS

- Create a Nature Trail self-guided walk in conjunction with the Rangers from Fylde Borough Council - this would be no. 8 in the series
- Develop a Heritage trail between Pleasure Beach & Blackpool South
- Discuss ideas for following up on previous University student work in and around Preston Station.
- Investigate extending the Partnership to encompass the Blackpool North to Kirkham & Wesham route.
- Opening of the level access route at Squires Gate
- Facilitate a 'Try the Train experience for Just Good Friends.
- Encourage Station adopters to garner support from the new Parish councils in Lytham and Ansdell & Fairhaven
- Encourage station groups to participate in In Bloom & other community activities organisations to raise the line's profile as a way of recruiting additional volunteers.



Figure 1 Creating an eye catching entrance to Squires Gate Station



Figure 2 'All Aboard'

