



Community Rail Lancashire Newsletter

July 2026



As we continue celebrating 25 years of Community Rail in Lancashire, we were delighted to welcome CRL staff, directors, partners and guests to a special anniversary event on 1 June.

Following a buffet lunch, the celebrations were officially opened by the Great Harwood Town Crier, setting the tone for an enjoyable afternoon of reflection and celebration. We then heard inspiring presentations from Richard Watts, Martin Keating (Northern), and Ian Davis and Paul Webster (Community Rail Network), who shared their thoughts on the remarkable journey of Community Rail in Lancashire.

The event highlighted many of the achievements, partnerships and community projects that have made such a positive impact across the county over the past 25 years. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate how far we've come, thank everyone who has contributed along the way, and look ahead with excitement to the future.

Here's to the next 25 years of Community Rail in Lancashire!

Read more about our anniversary year here -

<https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/news/community-rail-celebrates-25-years/>

Stay up to date with all the latest CRL news and stories by visiting:

 [CRL News Updates](#)

CRL Celebrates the Success of the Railway 200 Inspiration Train

CRL was proud to be represented at the special celebration held in Scarborough on Monday 22 June to mark the conclusion of the Railway 200 Inspiration Train tour. Over the past year, the Inspiration Train has travelled to 60 locations across the UK, welcoming more than 100,000 visitors, including around 6,000 schoolchildren from 190 schools. The tour has provided thousands of young people with the opportunity to explore the history of Britain's railways, discover the latest innovations, and learn about the wide range of careers available across the industry.

Dave attended the final celebration event in recognition of CRL's contribution to the project. During the train's visit to the North West, he worked with 70 primary and secondary schools to organise visits for around 1,800 pupils, many of whom travelled to the train by rail. His efforts helped ensure that young people from across the region could experience this unique educational attraction and gain a greater understanding of the railway industry.

Throughout the tour, the TrainED team supported the train at numerous locations, delivering engaging railway careers and safety talks. They also handed out Arlo books and encouraged schoolchildren to dress up in railway uniforms, creating an interactive and memorable experience that inspired interest in the rail industry from an early age.

CRL is proud to have played a part in the success of the Railway 200 Inspiration Train, supporting an initiative that has inspired the next generation and showcased the

exciting future of rail.

Read more here -

<https://trained.website/crl-celebrates-the-success-of-the-railway-200-inspiration-train/>



Hyndburn Business Awards

In June, Dave and Caroline attended the Hyndburn Business Awards, where Community Rail Lancashire was proud to be shortlisted in the Green Business category. Although we didn't take home the award, we were delighted to reach the finals alongside so many inspiring organisations that are making a positive impact in our communities.

Congratulations to all the winners and finalists. It was fantastic to celebrate the achievements of businesses across Hyndburn and hear about the innovative and successful work taking place throughout the borough. We look forward to continuing to work with many of these organisations in the future.



Community Rail Week 2026

Community Rail Lancashire marked Community Rail Week with a busy programme of events celebrating rail, heritage, education and community involvement across the county.

The week began with a celebration of 25 years of Community Rail Lancashire, recognising the achievements of volunteers, partners and supporters. School engagement featured strongly, with author Susan Brownrigg visiting local primary schools to share her book *Wrong Tracks*, bringing the story of the Rainhill Trials to life through interactive sessions.

On the South Fylde Line, the new Ansdell Heritage Trail board was officially unveiled, while the Kirkham Heritage Trail was launched, encouraging visitors to explore the town's rich history on foot from the railway station.

Community Rail Lancashire also joined Network Rail at Manchester Piccadilly for Community Day and a railway careers event, promoting community rail and opportunities within the rail industry. Pupils from Bispham Endowed CE Primary School enjoyed an educational rail journey, including an Eco Station tour at Accrington. The week concluded with BBC Radio Lancashire featuring the Stations of Welcome Group, the first all-Muslim women's group to adopt a station.

Activities continued beyond the week with a guided Lancashire Rail Ramblers walk from Clitheroe, demonstrating the lasting impact of community rail in bringing people and communities together.

👉 **Read more:**

<https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/news/community-rail-week-2026/>



Travelling with Confidence

Community Rail Lancashire is proud to deliver the Travelling with Confidence programme, led by Community Rail Network, which helps people gain the skills and confidence to travel independently by rail. Through practical sessions covering journey planning, ticket buying, station navigation, rail safety, and accessing support, the programme removes barriers to public transport and builds confidence. Working with partners, Community Rail Lancashire supports people with disabilities who are lacking confidence in using the rail network. By developing essential travel skills, participants can access education, employment, training, and social opportunities more independently, reducing isolation and helping create more inclusive, connected communities.

Click here to view a Travelling with Confidence film - [Travelling with Confidence 2026](#)



Voices of Lancashire: What does rail mean to you?

As part of our celebrations marking 25 years of Community Rail in Lancashire, we are gathering words, memories and reflections from people across Lancashire.

Your contribution could be a few words, a sentence, or a short paragraph. You might want to tell us about a journey you remember, a station that matters to you, people you have met or what rail means to you.

The words and reflections gathered will help inspire a new poem by Ajaz Qureshi, which will become part of a permanent artwork at Accrington Station.

If you'd like to contribute please click this link. Thank you!

LINK: <https://forms.gle/187on6cAz1vCcJDG9>

Blackpool Pleasure Beach Artwork

Armfield Academy Year 10 art students have unveiled a vibrant new artwork display at Blackpool Pleasure Beach station, showcasing creative pieces inspired by local landmarks and influential artists. The project, created with support from art teacher Mr J. Evans and Lancashire artist Diane Muldowney, forms part of the students' GCSE portfolios and celebrates a range of artistic techniques. The official unveiling brought together railway partners, the Station Friends group, and Northern's mascot, Whistle the Dog, to recognise the students' achievements. The installation enhances the station's welcoming atmosphere while highlighting the value of community collaboration and young people's creativity.

Visit the link below to view the artwork and learn more about the artists that inspired the students: <https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/welcome-to-blackpool-pleasure-beach/>.



Yorkshire Dales Explorer

The Yorkshire Dales Explorer (YDE) started in June 2024 and has since carried more than 10,000 passengers for days out in the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Eden Valley. A welcome surprise has been the number of passengers travelling from stations along the Settle–Carlisle line to enjoy the Ribbles Valley, with Clitheroe proving a particularly popular destination. The Saturday service operates throughout the year, linking Greater Manchester and Lancashire with the Dales. Full details are available at:

<https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/lines/yorkshire-dales-explorer/>

To make the most of your visit, why not join one of the guided walks organised by the Lancashire Rail Ramblers? Led by experienced volunteer guides, there are at least two walks each week from the YDE, with some including a connecting coach to reach places beyond the railway. Details of all walks are available at:

<https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/yorkshire-dales-explorer-walks/>

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Settle Carlisle Railway, with special events taking place throughout the year. Find out more at:

<https://settlecarlislerailway.org.uk/news-events/150-anniversary/>

On Saturday 18 July, Ribbleshead Station Tea Room will celebrate the completion of its refurbishment with a day of activities. The tea room now serves home-cooked food seven days a week from 9.00am to 4.00pm.

Northern has also introduced Advance fares for the YDE. Availability is limited, so book early via the Northern website or app to take advantage of these lower fares. We look forward to welcoming you aboard the Yorkshire Dales Explorer.



The Clitheroe Line: Line Guide and Timetable

The latest version of the Clitheroe Line: Line Guide and Timetable can be viewed here:

<https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/explore-the-clitheroe-line/>

The leaflet also details connecting bus services and links to the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

South Asian Heritage Month

This month, the Stations of Welcome ladies have continued to be busy around the station, with several activities celebrating our diverse community during South Asian Heritage Month.

BBC Radio Lancashire visited to broadcast its breakfast show from the ticket office.

Shahista Iqbal was interviewed at the crack of dawn to talk about the Stations of Welcome group, the first all-Muslim women's group to adopt a railway station.

On the same day, the new Mayor of Hyndburn, Cllr Noorul Azaad Aziz, visited the station to learn more about the work we do and to meet the volunteers.

The Stations of Welcome group also organised a traditional dholki celebration on a train for the group's treasurer, Neelam, ahead of her upcoming wedding.

Find out more here: <https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/news/dholki-on-the-train/>



Education Update

The education team have been busy attending career fairs, delivering safety talks, running Try the Train trips, and taking groups out on rail confidence experiences.

In addition to these activities, we continue to offer free educational sessions at Accrington Eco Station, providing students with hands-on learning opportunities and an insight into the world of rail.

 Learn more and book a session here:

[Discover Accrington Eco Station Workshops](#)

Bee Workshops

CRL has teamed up with the East Lancashire Beekeepers Association to deliver a series of three workshops highlighting the importance of bees at Accrington Eco Station.

The first workshop took place on World Bee Day (20 May), with the second held in June.

On each occasion, a primary school class met Dave at Burnley Manchester Road station for a rail safety talk before travelling by train to Accrington.

At the Eco Station, the groups were welcomed by volunteers from the East Lancashire Beekeepers Association, who led a range of engaging activities. These included learning about the vital role bees play in the environment, candle making, creating seed bombs, viewing bees in an observation hive, and honey tasting.

A third and final workshop is planned for later this month.

 Find out more:

<https://communityrail Lancashire.co.uk/news/buzzing-with-excitement-on-world-bee-day/>



Focus on Sustainability

Rail travel is one of the most sustainable forms of transport, helping to reduce carbon emissions while connecting communities. Promoting sustainable travel and our work at Accrington Eco Station continues to be a key focus for Community Rail Lancashire.

NW School Sustainability Conference

In June, we attended the NW School Sustainability Conference at Blackburn Rovers Football Club, where more than 500 young people explored ways to live more sustainably. We promoted the benefits of rail travel and showcased Accrington Eco Station, while also networking with organisations committed to climate action. Find out more:

<https://trained.website/nw-school-sustainability-conference/>

Eco Club Visit

We welcomed 10 Eco Club students from a Preston high school to Accrington Eco Station. After travelling by train, the group learned what makes the station unique before designing their own sustainable railway stations.

Find out more: <https://communityraillancashire.co.uk/accrington-eco-station/>

Sharing Best Practice

At a Northern TrainEd education meeting in Sheffield, Community Rail Officers shared sustainability projects including Accrington Eco Station, Travel with the Green Team resources and TransPennine Express biodiversity initiatives. We also welcomed Steve Glider and the TPE environmental team to Accrington Eco Station to exchange ideas and good practice.

Lancashire Climate Action Network

Community Rail Lancashire is proud to be a member of the Lancashire Climate Action Network (LancsCAN). Richard recently joined the management group meeting to help shape the future of the network.

Find out more: <https://sites.edgehill.ac.uk/lancscan/>

Stay Connected with the Latest News and Events from the Education Team!

Our education team is always on the move—bringing you fresh updates, inspiring stories, and event highlights. Don't miss a thing!

👉 Follow us on Facebook: facebook.com/trainedbycrl

👉 Check out our blog for more news: trained.website/insights-events



Contact us

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