

# ***Rail North West***

## **Forthcoming Railfuture joint branch webinars:**

- **Saturday 30th January 2021 @ 14:00 Tony Baxter, Regional Director, North East, Northern Trains – “Challenging Times”**  
Tony will be speaking about many of the important issues affecting the railway as a whole, and Northern Trains in particular. Tony will also take questions from the audience.
- **Saturday 27th February 2021 @ 14:00 Phil Smart, Railfuture Freight Group - "Freeing Up Castlefield Paths - New Freight Routes Around Manchester"**

Places are limited, please email Andrew Dyson in the Yorkshire branch to reserve your place [andrew.dyson@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:andrew.dyson@railfuture.org.uk), reservations for the first webinar will close on 25<sup>th</sup> January.

## **Message from the Chair: *More Branch Meetings Online?***

Railfuture members will not be surprised to hear your branch committee have found it all but impossible to meet face to face during the last year, and it looks as if any kind of normality won't be returning any time soon.

Our branch standing orders normally provide for us to hold our AGM in February, however due to the present ongoing Covid situation, that won't happen, and at the moment, we may be looking to hold this later in the year or postpone until next year. Members will however see the accounts for 2020 later in this Newsletter.

Some of the committee members have been able to join in with online meetings with

Train Operating Companies and other organisations and this has largely been quite productive and we think that it would be an idea for our branch to hold more meetings online, such that both individual members and Rail User Groups can take part.

To further this, two upcoming online meetings are planned, the first of which is a joint webinar meeting with the Yorkshire, North East and Lincolnshire Branches, we would encourage you to register to attend as soon as possible (there is a technical limit on attendance, so we'll need to know names in advance).

The first is on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and is a Webinar with Tony Baxter, Regional Director, North East, Northern Trains with the subject, "Challenging Times"

Please email Andrew Dyson in the Yorkshire branch, [andrew.dyson@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:andrew.dyson@railfuture.org.uk) if you would like to take part, a link will be emailed back you nearer the time, note that reservations will close on 25<sup>th</sup> January.

The second is another joint webinar, this time Phil Smart from the Railfuture Freight Group is going to talk about Railfuture's proposal for "Freeing Up Castlefield Paths –

New Freight Routes Around Manchester". This is on 27<sup>th</sup> February, again at 1400

Members may be aware that this is outlined on the Railfuture national website, <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/article1855-Relieving-Castlefield> and the full pdf paper is here:

<https://www.railfuture.org.uk/dl2302>

Members should contact Andrew Dyson in the Yorkshire branch as above to register, a link will be emailed back nearer the time.

## WANTED

As every member will know, Railfuture is a totally voluntary organisation in which people are giving up their spare time to campaign for better services on an expanded rail network.

We on the North West Branch committee all have other commitments, but are doing what we can in our spare time by attending a variety of events relating to North West rail matters. We have had talks with representatives of TOCs and have met with various user groups to discuss their local concerns. Meetings with neighbouring Railfuture branches have also taken place to liaise over matters of mutual concern.

However, none of us on the committee are "getting any younger" and over the last few years, the number of members has sadly shrunk. Therefore, we would like to ask whether you could give some consideration to joining us on the committee and help spread the load. Computer skills and/or interest in a particular subject would be of assistance.

So, with apologies to Lord Kitchener...

**YOUR RAILWAY NEEDS YOU**

## Restoring Your Railway North West Successes

Earlier this year, the Department for Transport announced a new scheme (with £500m of funding across the UK) which invited MP's, Local Councils and Community Groups to make proposals to re-open stations or re-instate lost services.

A second round of bids were submitted in June and of the 10 bids from the North West which were entered, there were three which

were successful, these were announced in November, they were;

- A passing Loop on South Fylde Line
- Reinstatement of Bolton-Radcliffe / Bolton-Bury
- Reinstating Beeston Castle and Tarporley railway station on the Crewe to Chester line

The two local MP's in the South Fylde area, Mark Menzies and Scott Benton are the local sponsors of the scheme, which would put a passing loop in the South Fylde line to enable more than the present hourly service and Fylde MP Mark Menzies commented: "This is great news. I have always campaigned for improvements to this line and have long called for a passing loop or similar to enable us to increase services.

Doubling services means better connections into the wider rail network and will help drive more visitors into our tourism economy."

Blackpool South MP Mr Benton added: "This is a huge win. It would double the number of trains which could come into the stations in Blackpool South making it easier for people to come here and helping our local economy by creating further investment and jobs."

"It will help drive more visitors into our tourism economy including to the station at Blackpool Pleasure Beach, one of the country's best and biggest tourism attractions.

"The reliability of this line has been appalling. Installing a passing loop will improve reliability as well as double services.

The MPs' bid is backed by Lancashire County, Blackpool and Fylde Councils, Northern Rail and Network Rail, as well as

business groups and employers including Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Royal Lytham and St Annes Golf Club, and Lytham Festival.

Leader of Fylde Council, Councillor Karen Buckley said: "A more frequent service to Preston on this line will boost visitors and help commuters choose the train rather than the car. This is a great result from our MPs and I look forward to Fylde Council developing the business case to make this a reality."

The Department for Transport will contact lead authority Fylde Council to instigate the feasibility study in the next few weeks.

The Beeston and Tarporley station scheme now has a re-opening group on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/748742379233545/about> created by the local construction professional Michael Flynn, and it already has 600 members.

Michael commented on the page, "With the progress that our campaign has made over the past few months, the next stage in the process is for us to create what is known as an Outline Business Case (OBC)."

"The OBC is a document that sets out in greater detail our plans, outline designs, and costings, so that we can apply to the Stations Fund for resources to complete the project and get our station opened."

## Future branch meetings.

Members will no doubt be aware that we have been unable to hold regular branch committee meetings since the outbreak of corona virus, and in 2020, all but two of our regular branch committee meetings did not go ahead and we think they will be unlikely in the first half of this year.

We are planning to resume face to face meetings in the autumn of this year, the first is on September 11<sup>th</sup> the second on 20<sup>th</sup> November.

We may be able to resume before then and will advise on our website but in the meantime, do please get in touch with your branch committee, (details on the back page) if there are any issues you wish to raise.



*Community Rail Lancashire won the award for Best Community Engagement Project – Women in STEM. Students from a number of Manchester schools, in partnership with the Manchester United Foundation, being met by the Lord Mayor of Liverpool in Liverpool Lime St station. Photo: Eddy Goshtasb Pour - At Tangerine Event photography..*

## **North West Groups get over a quarter of National Community Rail Awards.**

Community Rail Groups across the North West were winners in the recent Community Rail Awards, winning in five of the fifteen categories overall.

Community Rail Lancashire won two categories, second in two more, and third in one other.

In the “Its Your Station” award, Friends of Buxton Station won the top Platinum award, while Gold was won by Friends of Rose Hill Station.

The Outstanding Volunteer Contribution was won by Kath Warbrick from Friends of Aspatria Station.

Community Rail Cumbria, Millom

Discovery Centre and Flimby Primary School were first in the category “Influencing Positive Change and Sustainable Development” with their “Better Side of the Tracks” project (P19)

Community Rail Lancashire came first in the category “Community Art Schemes – Permanent or Larger” with their Horizons Art (pictured above) and were also second in the categories “Community Art Schemes – Renewable & Smaller” and “Involving Diverse Groups.”

They were also winners in the “Best Community Engagement Project” with “Women in STEM.” (pictured) and were

second with "The Autism-Friendly Line."

Furness Line Community Rail Partnership and Morecambe Bay Partnership came second in the Tourism and Heritage Award with their "To Stations and Beyond – Wayfinder Maps on Furness Line Stations and Window Gazer Guide"

Two more North West groups were second and third in the award for "Involving Children and Young People," 2<sup>nd</sup> was Friends of Buxton Station – Mini-Saga Challenges and 3<sup>rd</sup>: Community Rail Lancashire – Ticket to Pride.

## **Southport Loses Direct South Manchester Services in Castlefield Shakeup**

Direct Southport to Alderley Edge services are set to be diverted to Victoria or Stalybridge in plans put forward by the Manchester Recovery Task Force as part of a number of ideas to improve reliability in the Castlefield corridor. The Manchester Recovery Task Force is made up of industry and stakeholder representatives from the Department of Transport, Network Rail, Northern, Trans - Pennine Express, Transport for the North and Transport for Greater Manchester.

The group was set up to analyse the existing traffic all around central Manchester and look for options to reduce the problem of congestion here as a result of trying to fit too many trains

through the Castlefield corridor between Deansgate and Manchester Piccadilly station.

Transport for Wales direct services from Chester/North Wales to Manchester Airport are also set to be diverted to Manchester Victoria in one of the options being considered, although another option has those diverted over the Mid-Cheshire line instead.

The government has started a consultation on this and Railfuture will be making our voice heard, you can view the proposals [here](https://bit.ly/3bBZwN4); <https://bit.ly/3bBZwN4> and the consultation is [here](https://bit.ly/39z4NT1); <https://bit.ly/39z4NT1>

## **Accessibility Work by Northern and TPE.**

Northern have started a project to improve all their managed stations as a long-term project with accessibility a key issue and will be surveying their top 160 of their stations as a starting point. Initially, the assessment will look at six stations with a view to adjusting the criteria with feedback from stakeholders so that the rest of the assessments bring a consistent effective picture of what needs to be

done. Railfuture representatives took part in the first meeting online in early January, with more meetings to come.

Meanwhile Trans - Pennine Express have been looking at the policy with regard to station taxi permits such that it can be a condition that accessible taxis are available.

Trans - Pennine Express agreed their new Accessible Travel Policy (ATP)

with the Office of Rail and Road replacing the former Disabled Peoples Protection Policy – DPPP. This policy clearly sets out what a customer should expect from TPE to support them to travel confidently with a disability.

One of the key changes mandated in the policy was that accessible taxis would be available from all of our managed stations. Taxi permit holders would be required to upgrade their vehicles to an accessible model to

continue to hold a permit but as this is a costly investment, Trans - Pennine Express, in collaboration First Travel Solutions undertook extensive research and identified that accessible vehicles can be provided to all but one of their stations within 20 minutes.

The Office of Rail and Road have confirmed that this review meets their requirements enabling drivers to continue using their current vehicles until they are set to be renewed.

## Cheshire's best Kept Stations Awards Online

There was more than the expected move to an online ceremony in Cheshire's Best Kept Stations (CBKS) Annual Awards ceremony, no overall winner was declared as it was felt that all were winners given the current circumstances and all were given a special award.

Station groups were asked instead to nominate a particular event or project they have been particularly proud of, and the judges themselves looked back at the history of the awards 'to spot consistent excellence over the years and particularly noteworthy achievements.

The awards were presented by Chair Mark Barker in a pre-recorded video from Hadlow Road Station. The

awards were made differently this year as no judging could take place, and of course not a lot of work has been done at the stations due to the pandemic.

There were 18 Special Awards and 3 Highly Commended Awards, as well as 5 Personal Commendation Awards;

The full Awards film can be viewed via You Tube Channel 'Best Kept Stations'.

Some "facemask – to facemask" presentations have been made already (before the present lockdown) and its expected there will be more presentations in 2021 when it is safe to do so.

## A Step Closer For Tram Line to Blackpool North

The demolition of the old Wilkinsons store on the route of the new tramway extension from the North Pier to Blackpool North Station now allows work to go ahead to complete the new line. Its not expected to be in operation before 2022 however.

## Railfuture North West Branch Accounts for the Year 2020

Please would members note the accounts for our branch in 2020 below, members may note these are somewhat different from what would have been normal in previous years primarily because we have not been spending much on room hire.

Added to that are notes by way of explanation of any issues that may not be clear from the simple numbers

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Income.</b>		
Subvention <sup>1</sup>	890-00	450-00
Meals <sup>2</sup>	62-55	63-60
Donations	3-00	0-00
Campaigning 2020	0-00	0-00
Campaigning 2019 <sup>3</sup>	<u>0-00</u>	<u>110-65</u>
	955-55	624-25
<b>Expenditure.</b>		
General Administration <sup>4</sup>	165-00	65-00
Branch News Letter <sup>5</sup>	488-69	296-27
Campaigning and lobby	110-65	18-35 <sup>7</sup>
Meals	85-60	71-55
AGM meeting <sup>6</sup>	107-50	158-00
Travelling	58-80	0-00
Affiliated to TWNW	50-00	50-00
	1066-24	659-17
Surplus of income over Expenditure	<u>(110-69)</u>	<u>(34-92)</u>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash in Hand	0-00	0-00
Cash in Bank	<u>675-73</u>	<u>640-81</u>
	675-73	640-81
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>		
Balance at 1 <sup>st</sup> January	786-42	675-73
Surplus income over Expenditure	<u>(110-69)</u>	<u>(34-92)</u>
Balance at 31 <sup>st</sup> December	675-73	640-81

/Cont...

Notes.

Loss for 2020 was £34-92

### Income

- 1) Subvention of £450 is what the branch got from National. This was reduced from the previous year because we had less costs due to the Corona Virus.
- 2) Meals: food had at the AGM; the branch paid for tea and coffee
- 3) Campaigning; claims for some items that happened in 2019 arrived in after the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2019

### Expenditure

- 4) General administration is room hire
- 5) Branch Newsletter is lower due to getting stamps in 2019
- 6) AGM meeting £150 room hire and £8-00 accounts sheets
- 7) Members should note that the budget we receive from the national organisation is split into two parts; general and campaign and claims for the latter is submitted separately. We made no claim for campaign expenditure in 2020, though we did incur small costs.

## Memorial to Chris Dale

Following the sad passing of Chris Dale last summer, TravelWatch North West are arranging for a commemorative bench and plaque to be placed at his home town station of Macclesfield, with the permission and co-operation of Avanti West Coast and Network Rail. Chris was of course, Chaiman of TravelWatch North West and long standing committee member of this branch of Railfuture.

Due to ongoing coronavirus situation and completion of the necessary paperwork, there has been no unveiling ceremony as yet, but TravelWatch NW hopes to be able to do that in the Spring/early Summer when restrictions on gatherings may be relaxed.

John Moorhouse from travelWatch North West said, "The cost of the exercise will be in excess of £1000 and I do hope that Chris' many friends and colleagues will be able to contribute to this amount. It will be a fitting memorial to Chris and his extensive work on behalf of passengers at a station that he used very frequently and was well known at."

"Should you wish to contribute to Chris' memorial, I am quite happy on behalf of TWNW to receive cheques posted to TravelWatch NorthWest, 11 Harvelin Park, Todmorden OL14 6HX) or a direct BACS payment. Cheques should be made payable to "North West Public Transport Users Forum CIC". For BACS our bank details are – Lloyds Bank sort code 30 95 42, account no. 00346909. Any donations will be gratefully received."

## **Rail User Groups within the North West area Affiliated to Railfuture**

(for those viewing in pdf format, there are  
embedded links to most group's websites)

- [Blackpool and Fylde Rail Users' Association](#)
- [Bolton Rail Users Group](#)
- [Chinley & Buxworth Transport Group](#)
- [Cumbrian coast Rail Users' Group \(CRUG\)](#)
- [Friends of Denton Station](#)
- [Friends of Littleborough Stations \(Lancashire\)](#)
- [Friends of Reddish South Station](#)
- [Friends of Rose Hill Station](#)
- [Friends of St Annes Stations](#) email [tonyford19@gmail.com](mailto:tonyford19@gmail.com)
- [Friends of Settle Carlisle Line](#)
- [Furness Line Action Group \(FLAG\)](#)
- [Goyt Valley Rail Users' Association \(Stockport\)](#)
- [Lakes Line Rail User Group \(LLRUG\)](#)
- [Lancaster and Skipton Rail Users' Group \(LASRUG\)](#)
- [Mid Cheshire Rail Users' Association \(MCRUA\)](#)
- [North Cheshire Rail Users' Group \(NCRUG\)](#)
- [Ormskirk, Preston and Southport Travellers Association \(OPSTA\)](#)
- [Ribble Valley Rail](#) (no website currently)
- [Skipton-East Lancashire Railway Action Partnership \(SELRAP\)](#) (reopening campaign)
- [Support the Oldham Rochdale Manchester line \(STORM\)](#)
- [Stalybridge to Huddersfield Rail User Group](#)
- [Wirral Transport Users' Association \(WTUA\)](#)
- [Wrexham-Bidston Rail Users Association \(WBRUA\)](#)

# Blackpool and Fylde Rail Users Association (Incorporating South Fylde Line Users Association)

Chairman; Paul Nettleton  
8, Balham Avenue,  
Blackpool,  
FY4 3QP

Vice – Malcolm Richardson  
Chairman 135, Branstree Road,  
Blackpool,  
FY4 4SR,



Join us, it's only £3/year, £5 for family membership.  
Contact; Membership Secretary, "Hamlet" 2B, Meadow Park,  
Wesham Preston PR4 3DN. Contact through our Facebook page at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/Blackpool-Fylde-Rail-Users-Association-1266722540018377/> and click on "Sign Up"

# LASRUG

Lancaster and Skipton Rail User Group  
[www.llmr.co.uk](http://www.llmr.co.uk) [www.lasrug.btck.co.uk](http://www.lasrug.btck.co.uk)

The group was formed in 1989 to support and improve the Lancaster to Skipton railway. This links the towns and cities of West Yorkshire with the city of Lancaster and the seaside resort of Morecambe. It also gives access to the Yorkshire Dales, Forest of Bowland and Furness.

If you would like to help us promote the 'Little North Western' line, please contact our Membership Secretary, Lakeber House, Robin Lane, High Bentham, Lancaster. LA2 7AF.

Membership costs £7-00 annually. You will receive a Newsletter quarterly and we invite a speaker from the Rail Industry to the AGM each September.

## Cumbrian coast Rail Users' Group



If you'd like to join a group representing rail users in West Cumbria, and particularly on the Cumbrian Coast line from Carlisle to Barrow, the **Cumbrian coast Rail Users' Group** would welcome your membership.

See [www.crug.org.uk](http://www.crug.org.uk) where you will find all the details about us and how to join. It costs £5 for individuals or £10 for organisations.

We can make a difference, and with your help, our voice will be stronger.



### **WIRRAL TRANSPORT USERS ASSOCIATION**

We believe in modern, public transport systems for the Wirral and Merseyside and keep our members up to date with public transport developments

We support the campaign for electrification of the Wrexham Central–Birkenhead–Bidston Line

We support new railway stations at Ledsham, Town Meadow and Deeside industrial Estate

We wish to see more bus/rail and car/rail interchange for the benefit of passengers

We are affiliated to Railfuture, Passenger Focus, Travelwatch North West, Bus users UK & represent Campaign for Better Transport in the area.

We publish a newsletter twice a year and run coach excursions

#### **Why not join us? Join today**

**Annual individual subscription £6.00; Family £8;**

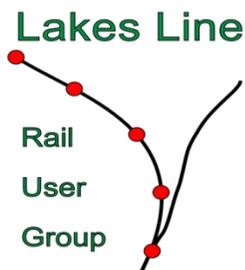
**Corporate Bodies £25.00, representative bodies £12.50**

*Send your subscription to our Membership Secretary today  
and receive a copy of our latest newsletter*

Brian Grey, 56, Coombe Road, Irby, Wirral, CH61 4US.

# THE LAKES LINE RAIL USER GROUP

Formed in 1984 to promote and support Cumbria's only branch line for locals and tourists alike. Travel the lakes line into scenic Lakeland.



## Join Today!

Contact: Mr. P Bell 9, Vicars Hill,  
Kendal, Cumbria  
LA9 5DA

Membership: £5.00 Individuals,  
£7.00 Family, £13.00 Corporate

PLEASE NOTE the email addresses below wont correctly copy from the pdf edition, this is to prevent spam.

### Railfuture North West Branch Officers

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Rail North West is the newsletter of the North West branch of Railfuture. Contributions in the form of articles and letters are welcomed. Please send them to Arthur Thomson at arthur.thomson@railfuture.org.uk or by post via the chairman as above. Text files e-mailed are particularly welcome. The opinions expressed in Rail North West are those of any individual contributors and not necessarily those of Railfuture.

### www.railfuture.org.uk

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