

## Community Rail - New Life for Local Lines

The rail service between Clitheroe and Manchester via Blackburn and Bolton has been designated as a community rail service, Rail Minister Tom Harris announced today.

The designated service allows for a more flexible approach to be adopted by the train operating company (Northern) working alongside the local community rail partnership. This allows them to manage the service with greater emphasis on meeting local needs. Together they will continue to look for ways to increase patronage and improve the service.

Transport Minister Tom Harris said:

"Designation of the Clitheroe Line as a community rail service is good news for passengers. It will encourage involvement from community, businesses, and the local council working with the train operating company to develop the service."

Heidi Mottram, Managing Director, Northern Rail said:

"Northern welcomes the designation of the Clitheroe Line as a 'community rail service'. We will continue our support for the Clitheroe Line Community Rail Partnership and the user group Ribble Valley Rail. We hope that designation will offer significant opportunities to build on the success of this route."

Richard Watts, Partnership Secretary, Clitheroe Line Community Rail Partnership said:

"The Partnership welcomes the Community Rail service designation for the Manchester to Clitheroe line. This is the culmination of a lot of hard work to establish the partnership and to agree with partners an Action Plan for the future development of the line. Designation will provide even more opportunities to breathe new life into the line, improve stations and further engage with the local community. We have an exciting Marketing Plan for the line which has been short listed for entry into the National Community Rail Awards later this year. This is indeed an exciting time for the line."

1. The Community Rail Development Strategy looks at innovative ways of operating local branch lines, through a programme of cost management, a drive to increase passenger numbers and direct community involvement via local authorities, community rail partnerships, and other stakeholder groups.

2. On the 30th March we will be publishing a review of the Community Rail Development Strategy. The publication of the review demonstrates a continued commitment to the community rail strategy and a desire to see it implemented.

3. To date, 13 lines with their services have been designated as Community Rail lines:

St Ives Bay Line - Cornwall

Looe Valley Line - Cornwall

Tamar Valley Line - Devon/Plymouth/Cornwall

Island Line - Isle of Wight

Abbey Line - Hertfordshire

Penistone Line - South and West Yorkshire

Esk Valley Line - Teesside and North Yorkshire

Tarka Line - Devon

Maritime Line - Cornwall  
Derwent Valley Line - Derbyshire  
East Lancashire Line - Lancashire  
Gainsborough Line - Suffolk/Essex  
Barton-on-Humber Line – Lincolnshire

Previously we have designated lines with the services running on them. The Strategy was extended last year to allow for the designation of services without designating the lines on which they run. This change was made to recognise that it is not always possible to designate the line because it also carries heavy freight, is part of the Trans European Network or because of specific local issues, but that the services on the line can nevertheless benefit from the community rail approach. To date five services have been designated:

Atlantic Coast Line - Cornwall  
Poacher Line - Lincolnshire  
Marston Vale Line - Bedfordshire/Buckinghamshire  
Wherry Line: Norwich to Lowestoft - Norfolk/Suffolk  
Wherry Line: Norwich to Great Yarmouth - Norfolk/Suffolk

4 The Minister announced today the designation of additional community rail service running through Lancashire between Clitheroe and Manchester.