

friends on track

Adventures and experiences on the Settle–Carlisle line

West Coast Mainline diversions on the
S&C showcase the Evero 805

Great British Railways – fares, funding
& the future

Horton quarry reconnection – green
credentials for Heidelberg Materials

Langwathby has an A&E Dept in the Sky

November 2025



Scenic. Historic. Sustainable.

friends on track

CONTENTS

6	Avanti Evero is on-line in January but it's off-limits to S&C travellers
10	Keith Watts takes a look under the bonnet of the Hitachi Evero
12	Ingleborough National Nature Reserve expansion
14	Behind the scenes at Langwathby's Great North Air Ambulance base
18	Outline plans for the 2026 150th anniversary year
21	Clare Abbam's insights into volunteering
22	Campaigning call from the Skipton & East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership
24	Thoughts on the future of Great British Rail by Ian Brown
28	It's never too early for Christmas – check-out the Gift Guide
33	Letters & membership renewals
36	A smart new plaque at Ribbleshead for the Yorkshire Dales National Park
38	Handover of an historic station sign
40	The passenger's polymath – impressions from an on-train guide.
44	Historic Horton rail link restored as Settle–Carlisle freight turns 150
48	No water supply, no problem – Armathwaite's garden thrives on teamwork
50	Horton, Settle and Ribbleshead shine in Yorkshire in Bloom
52	Settle–Carlisle Railway ranks among the world's top 10% of attractions
53	Heritage gala at Stainmore brings steam, history and community together
54	Trains on Track – we look ahead to visiting special trains



Avanti 805 exiting Blea Moor tunnel on a test run. Cover photo courtesy of Avanti

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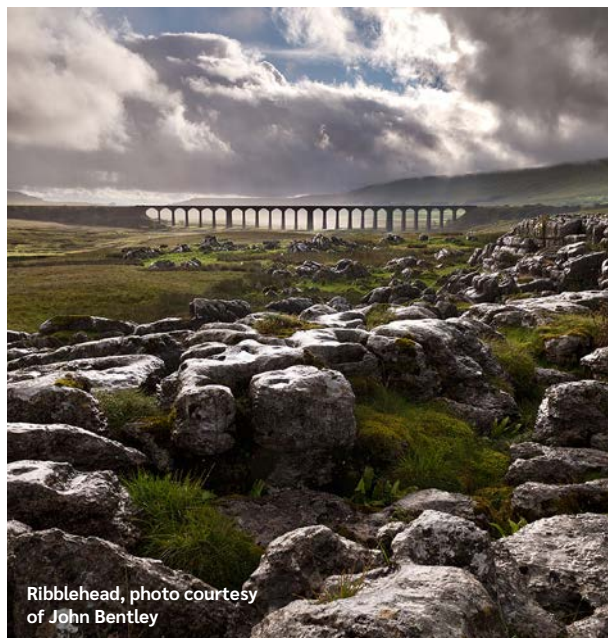
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Ribbleshead, photo courtesy of John Bentley

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Welcome

Recognition, innovation and a glimpse of what's to come...

I think a quiet celebration is on the cards in this issue. We bring news of the recent Trip Advisor award for the S&C as a top-rated attraction, accolades for the volunteers who maintain the station gardens and a significant new chapter for the line itself as new train technology makes its debut.

For two weeks in January, the latest Avanti Evero liveried Hitachi 805 locomotives will be running at 2 hourly intervals along the line. We might be a long way from enjoying them on a regular

Northern operated service, but the WCML diversions are at least a glimpse into what might be to come.

As the 150th anniversary of the line's first passenger traffic draws near in 2026, here's to the future. There will be many events announced throughout the year to mark the occasion, so keep an eye on social media as well as our next issue.

Last but not least, Christmas is around the corner. Check out the Friends' gift guide for a nicely curated selection of rail related goodies.



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Avanti Evero's to run on the line – a glimpse into the future?

By David Owen

Before we get too excited, the planned running of the Hitachi built Avanti Evero trains in January are not intended for the benefit of travellers between Leeds & Carlisle. The bi-mode diesel/electrics will not be making stops on the line – the diversions along the S&C are to avoid a bus replacement service on the West Coast Mainline (WCML) whilst the Clifton Bridge over the M6 is replaced during two weeks in January.

The 10-carriage Evero train is a bi-mode, or diesel/electric power unit that accommodates the transition from overhead electric power on the WCML and the lack of it on the S&C. The 805's were introduced in June last year on the North Wales and West Midlands routes, so Avanti is maximising the flexibility and diesel capability of its new fleet to ensure customers can travel by rail in the North West during the engineering works.

Network Rail is investing £60m to replace Clifton Bridge over the M6 near Penrith so it can continue to safely carry passenger and freight trains over one of Britain's busiest motorways. At 60-years old, weight restrictions on the current structure mean it can only carry one train at a time, causing delays to train services. Once in situ, the new bridge will allow services to pass over the motorway reliably, without restrictions, to the benefit of passengers, freight and road users travelling through Cumbria.

Those travelling from Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester and London to Scotland will be advised to go via the East Coast Main Line using other operators. For those wishing to travel to and from Lancaster, Oxenholme and Penrith, a rail replacement bus service will be in operation.

The full train timetable was available from last month alongside the industry's comprehensive customer communications campaign which aims to raise awareness of the works and provide journey advice for those planning to travel.

During the two weeks, there will be some minor changes on the routes currently served by the Class 805 Evero trains due to the S&C diversion. Customers travelling throughout this period are advised to check before they travel.

Right:
Avanti train
makes its
debut over
Ribblehead
viaduct.



I spoke with Rory Kingdon, our local Network Rail Project Sponsor. Rory commented that ‘the diversion will add 1.5 hours to journey times between Preston and Carlisle with 2 hourly service intervals. Southbound services will join the Settle – Carlisle at Carlisle and leave at Hellifield and then re-connecting with the WCML in Preston.’ Rory went on to say ‘that Preston station itself will be closed between 1st – 5th January so a rail replacement bus service for local travellers will operate for those travelling to and from there, Lancaster, Oxenholme, Penrith and Carlisle. Passengers travelling on longer south to north journeys during that time will divert by train in Wigan.’

Andy Mellors, Managing Director at Avanti West Coast, said: ‘Our plan to run Evero trains on the Settle to Carlisle line is all about giving our passengers the best experience during next January’s extensive engineering work. We know through industry research that during planned disruption customers prefer to stay on trains and avoid lengthy replacement bus journeys where possible.

‘With this work only a few months away, there has been a huge collaborative effort between ourselves, Network Rail and the wider rail industry to find the best solution for customers which utilises our flexible bi-mode Evero fleet, ensuring that we keep Scotland and the North West open for travel when the West Coast Main Line is blocked.’

Further improvements planned

Over the next few years, the rail industry is delivering a multi-million-pound renewal programme across the north of the WCML. The once-in-a-generation West Coast Modernisation programme will drive up train performance and boost economic growth between Cheshire and Scotland.

Phil James, Network Rail’s North West Route Director, said: ‘We work together as a rail industry to keep passengers on trains and limit disruption as much as possible during our planned engineering upgrades. This diversionary route is a testament to our collaboration. ‘It is fantastic to be able to offer passengers a viable route around the work, with as little delay to their journey as possible, while we carry out the main part of this essential upgrade.’

“It is fantastic to be able to offer passengers a viable route around the work, with as little delay to their journey as possible...”

As champions of the line, can we view this entirely positively?

The fear is that there is a potential danger of viewing this from an Avanti press office perspective - as a rail user group we will need to take an overall view. Also bear in mind that the WCML improvements are on a 10 year timeline.

On the whole it must be positive, if for nothing else it will raise awareness of the attractions of the route to many thousands of

passengers. It will safeguard the strategic importance of the S&C – a major plus. It indicates a way forward for long distance services at some point in the future and it may improve maintenance response.

If we step back a little, it’s worrying that it could potentially impact existing services.

- Consequence of infrastructure failure – quite likely given the recent record. Even on the day of the test train there was points failure which led to a near 2-hour delay
- No resilience or improvements carried out which might have had legacy benefit. The speed limit could have been increased but wasn’t
- No timetable improvements on Northern services for the foreseeable future
- Allport is dead in the water. Absolutely no chance of regular long-distance services for 10 years (if diversion strategy carried forward)
- Diversions are likely for only 10% of the time meaning that any paths created on the S&C will be unused for 90% of the time.



Evero captured by drone as dusk closes in



By Keith Watts

Hitachi 805 and the S&C – the future or false dawn?

After several months of speculation, the Settle-Carlisle line will again be used as a diversionary route for West Coast Main Line (WCML) trains, whilst engineering works are undertaken between Preston and Carlisle starting in January 2026.

The Settle-Carlisle route will be accessed from the WCML using the Preston to Hellifield route via Blackburn and via Kingmoor from the north.

This practice was commonplace until the early 2000s and was last undertaken by Virgin when they were the WCML operator using Class 57 diesels towing the Class 390 Pendolinos. Since then, replacement buses have been used for passengers during engineering works. Amongst others the RMT union has exerted pressure to minimise bus use by again using the Settle-Carlisle route.

On August 20th, 2025, an Avanti West Coast Class 805 Evero Bi-mode train, (consisting of two 5 car units coupled together), successfully undertook a trial run under its own power across the Settle-Carlisle route. The Class 805s offer a superior alternative to diesel locomotives dragging electric trains over the Settle-Carlisle line.

Avanti-West Coast introduced thirteen Hitachi Class 805s during 2024 to replace Class 221 diesel-electric Super Voyagers on the Euston to North Wales route. The Hitachi 805 bi-mode units can use electric power when available and change seamlessly to diesel power

for non-electrified lines. The Class 805 lack the tilting mechanism (up to 6%) of the Super-Voyagers, but this is no longer felt to be a disadvantage due to track improvements on the WCML. When running under the wires they offer much improved acceleration than the 23/24-year-old Class 221 diesel electric Voyagers and, in general, offer much greater efficiency and reduced carbon emissions. The 805's are part of Avanti's sustainable travel ambitions, with a goal to hit net zero by 2031 - their Evero trains are a big part of that.

The 805s can run at 125mph, (although currently restricted to 110 mph). The 5 car units can accommodate 291 passengers (including 25 First Class) utilising 84 seats in each coach. They are regarded as having superior comfort to the earlier Class 800s as well as the Class 221 Voyagers as they have the same seating as the refurbished Pendolinos and have nearly all the seating aligned with windows. They also have the benefit of updated displays for passengers including showing which carriages have space, larger luggage racks, a shop, water top-up for passengers and assistance toilets with carer buttons.



Evero's will be a regular visitor during the WCML upgrades

The future?

It is hoped that Northern will use bi-mode units over the Leeds – Settle - Carlisle route when the 35-year-old Class 158s are replaced. Such units would be able to use electric power between Leeds and Skipton and diesel or maybe battery power between Skipton and Carlisle.

It is also hoped that consideration could be given to using Class 805s bi-mode or similar units to provide through services over the Settle-Carlisle line from the East Midlands and West Yorkshire to

Carlisle and Glasgow. The Allport Report (*Friends on Track*, Feb. 25), revealed how this is entirely feasible. Beyond Carlisle either the electrified WCML route could be used or the non-electrified Glasgow South Western Route via Dumfries and Kilmarnock using diesel power.

Maybe cost will rule such things out. But hopefully with the new Great British Railways coming into existence, greater vision can be given to using the full potential of the Settle-Carlisle line.

Wild Ingleborough



INGLEBOROUGH NATURE RESERVE EXPANSION AND A FOCUS ON FUNGI

By Ellie Parker, Wild Ingleborough Community Engagement Officer

In September 2025, an additional 179 hectares of land were officially added to the Ingleborough National Nature Reserve as part of the launch of the King’s Series of National Nature Reserves, established to celebrate His Majesty the King’s Coronation in 2023.

The expansion brings the total safeguarded area to 1186 hectares, equivalent to 2.2 billion Yorkshire Tea bags, making it one of the largest protected landscapes in northern England. It brings together decades of work by Natural England and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, to tackle the climate crisis, restore degraded habitats, and create a resilient landscape for people and nature. The extension recognises the national importance of these sites for their unique habitats, and the species they support, and will allow for improved public access to nature with visitors benefiting from closer access from Ribbleshead railway station on the famous Settle–Carlisle line.

Ingleborough National Nature Reserve is one of the best places to see a mosaic of nature in action, from moorland fell top, blanket bog and heath to rush pasture, fen and woodland and then to species rich meadows and rivers, which can all be found in a single section of

valley. In autumn, a walk alongside the scrubby limestone pavements of Southercales and Scar Close is likely to reward with sightings of large flocks of birds such as starlings and fieldfares, who come to feast on the hawthorn and blackthorn berries. Or you may see

a ‘charm’ of goldfinches, making the most of the seedheads of spear thistles.

Ingleborough is also home to an amazing array of grassland fungi

– perhaps less well known than their woodland cousins, but well worth taking the time to seek out on an autumn walk. In particular, waxcaps (pictured) shine like jewels in the shorter grasses, and come in a startling variety of colours – from crimson and golden species, to pink ‘ballerinas’ and blue-green ‘parrots’. Alongside various club, spindle and coral fungi (named for their distinctive shapes), Ingleborough contains nationally important sites for this group of unusual fungi.

A mosaic of nature in action, from moorland fell top to meadow.

Langwathby Lifesavers

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE GREAT NORTH AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

By David Owen

The Great North Air Ambulance Service, based beside the Settle & Carlisle line in Langwathby, is one of the many points of interest to be highlighted by our volunteer train guides. Mieke Tennant is the Community Fundraiser – she and the medical team gave Friends on Track an insight into an accident & emergency service like no other.

You might be surprised to learn that the Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS) is entirely funded by charitable donations. Mieke, along with Natasha Banks covering Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) & Philanthropy Specialist on business fund raising, are at the forefront of raising £9.3 million per annum through public donations and are one of a number of regional services operating across the UK. The team rely on a Dauphin N3 and Dauphin N3+ helicopter to give life-saving medical interventions across the north of England. Pride of Cumbria 2 is based at Langwathby whilst Guardian of the North 2 flies from Teesside.

Pre-hospital emergency medicine

The term ambulance doesn't do the helicopter emergency service team (HEMS) justice, as the skills and equipment carried are on a par with a sophisticated field hospital. More than any other emergency service, they understand the benefits of the all-important 'golden hour' - the critical 60 minutes during which prompt medical intervention improves a patient's outcome & likelihood of survival.

On average, the charity responds to six

call-outs per day (including their night-time vehicle response) to people in the community in their darkest hour. GNAAS is a progressive organisation which has pioneered pre-hospital care in the region.

30% less rehabilitation time for casualties responded to by the HEMS service. 5% of casualties are 'unexpected survivors' – the result of early intervention.

The latest techniques, equipment and drugs are constantly being evaluated to ensure the charity can provide the best care possible for their patients. Road traffic collisions and cardiac arrests are the most frequent types of incidents responded to by the team. Other incidents they attend include medical emergencies such as strokes, assaults - including stabbings and shootings - leisure activities gone wrong, especially in rural areas, and self-harm.

The operations team is made up of pilots, contracted from aviation services provider Multiflight, paramedics who are full-time staff members at GNAAS,



Returning from an incident in Wigton

and doctors who predominantly work in hospitals throughout the region, and work part-time at GNAAS.

On duty during my visit to Langwathby was doctor Mike, paramedics Iain and Joshua and ex-army pilot Phil.

999 calls are received via the normal route prior to a decision to escalate it to a HEMS response, that is relayed to the GNAAS dispatcher – that might also include a response to a mountain rescue incident. A colour coding system is used to set the triage parameters for each shout – then it's only four minutes from an incoming call to wheels up. Their geographical reach is extensive, ranging

from the Scottish borders to north Lancs, from the Isle of Man to the east coast. To illustrate the speed of response in flying time, the Isle of Man is reached in only 35 minutes.

The team can only fly during daylight hours so each morning the HEMS team run through vital safety checks and assess the weather forecasts. Both good visibility and daylight are needed as they fly by sight – typical flying hours in Summer are 08:00 to 20:00. What isn't widely known is that the operation is further enhanced with a rapid response vehicle which provides the same level of care as its aircraft, carrying the



Iain explains the role of specialist trauma care kits, each one has an average value of £30k

same medical team and life-saving equipment, including blood products, when conditions prevent take-off. That amounts to far more than a standard emergency ambulance and supplements the air service.

Measurable success

Since GNAAS was established as a charity in 2002, they have achieved several milestones which have transformed the level of care offered to patients. In 2015 blood was first carried on board their helicopters and rapid response vehicles, followed by the introduction of plasma the following year. The project was instigated by their doctor Rachel Hawes who received an OBE for her work. Since the launch of the project, GNAAS' critical care team have provided blood

REAL TIME INCIDENT RESPONSE

Pride of Cumbria 2 was responding to an incident in Wigton on my arrival. The critical care team were activated at 10.12am to reports of a medical incident. The paramedic and doctor on board arrived on scene at 10.26am. That's a 14-minute response time as opposed to a 45 minute drive – a massive time saving. The team worked alongside the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) to assess and treat a patient. The patient was taken to hospital by a NWAS road crew. The crew were back on base at 11.35am.

to more than 750 patients. In 2017 their team performed successful open chest surgery when a man was stabbed and left for dead in Horden, County Durham. The footage of the surgery has since become a vital training aid for pre-hospital teams. In 2022 GNAAS was given the highest possible rating of 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) following an inspection.

All of these achievements were only made possible thanks to the generosity of the general public & corporate supporters who help fund the charity. If you'd like to donate to this invaluable service, please go to: www.greatnorthairambulance.co.uk

Thank you to Mieke and the medical team for the time they gave to bring the HEMS story to Friends on Track.

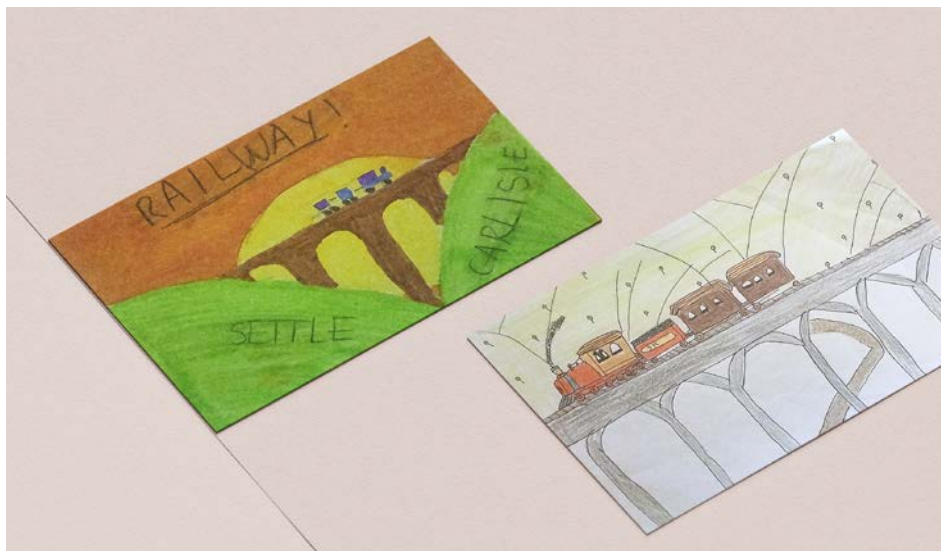


Left to right:
Josh, Paramedic
Phil, Pilot
Iain, Paramedic



By Jill Tiernan

Event updates and plans for the 150th anniversary



- **During November & December 2025** we will be displaying postcards at Settle and Appleby waiting rooms which promote the line from a young person’s perspective. These cards have been created by local Beavers, Cubs, Rainbows and Brownies as part of their Railway Challenge and Platform for Change badge.
- **On Saturday 29th November we will be welcoming visitors to the Settle Christmas Open Station event.** Our station shop will be open selling 150th branded merchandise as well as its usual gifts and books. In addition, there will be a sprinkling of carol singers to get you in the seasonal mood. From 11am we will also be hosting a stall in Settle Market Place. Come and say hello and join in the fun as Settle switches on its lights followed by a firework display around 5pm.
- **World Cup of Stations:** At the time of writing Ribbleshead is one of twenty stations who have been nominated for this annual award. The public voting phase took place from 13th – 17th October so here’s hoping for their success.

We are firming up our plans and will share more in the next edition of the magazine. Here’s a taster of what’s to come:

Friends of Settle-Carlisle will be selling quality second-hand books at the Keighley and Worth Valley event on 21st/22nd February and other events throughout the year.

Plans are a foot to hold a Civic Leaders Event where the FoSCL family can reveal the next nine months of events which will include:

Family Easter ‘eggivities’ along the line (April)
Travel through time at stations (May)
Visit Ingleborough Groundnest Festival in partnership with Yorkshire Dales Millenium Trust will be exploring the local area and wildlife (May)
Celebrate the 40th year of reopening of our iconic stations (May)
Themed walks through Walk the line and Footsteps in time (April to October)
We are partnering with Settle and Appleby Flowerpot Festival. So, look out for some amazing railway themed characters. (During July, August and September)

Events need volunteers to bring them alive. If you would like to know more about an event, or are interested in volunteering, please contact:

jill.tiernan@settle-carlisle.com or anna@settlecarlisletrust.org

FRIENDS OF THE
WALK THE LINE
 SETTLE-CARLISLE LINE

Free Guided Walks: October 2025 to March 2026

When	Station	Time	Walk	Distance	Category
Sat 04 Oct	Horton	10:30	Horton to Settle via Crummackdale	11	Hiker
Sat 18 Oct	Kirkby Stephen	09:34	Kirkby Stephen Circular	12	Hiker
Sat 01 Nov	Saltaire	09:10	Saltaire and Baildon Hill Circular	12	Explorer!
Sat 15 Nov	Settle	10:21	The Great Stainforth Run and Leap	8	Walker
Sat 29 Nov	Hellifield	08:40	Hellifield to Settle via Malham	14	Explorer!
Sat 13 Dec	Horton	10:30	Horton to Settle via Dry Rigg	8	Hiker
Sat 27 Dec	Skipton	09:56	Skipton Circular via Flasby	13	Explorer!
Sat 10 Jan	Ribblehead	10:38	Ribblehead to Horton	7	Walker
Sat 24 Jan	Settle	10:21	Cleatop Wood Settle Circular	10	Hiker
Sat 07 Feb	Gargrave	10:03	Gargrave Circular via Coniston Cold	9	Hiker
Sat 21 Feb	Kirkby Stephen	11:05	Kirkby Stephen Track and Trail	7	Walker
Sat 07 Mar	Skipton	09:56	Skipton Moor	11	Hiker
Sat 21 Mar	Dent	09:16	Dent to Ribblehead via Craven Way	9.5	Hiker
Sat 28 Mar	Clitheroe	11:53	Ribble Valley Line: Clitheroe Circular	8.5	Explorer!

What walk is right for you?



Walker: A good walk in beautiful countryside. May be challenging but not too hard. You'll look forward to that cup of tea at the end...

Try this grade if you are comfortable with shorter walks.



Hiker: A full day's walking at a brisk pace across varied terrain. There will be hills...

Suitable for those who like a faster walk and lots of up!



Explorer! Fast Pace. Distance. Moorland. Mountains. All that the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle Line has to offer. Are you up for it?

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Scenic. Historic. Sustainable.

Clare Abbam – Volunteer at Ribblehead



My name is Clare Abbam and I volunteer at the Ribblehead cafe. I live in Ribblesdale, having moved here two years ago.

Why did you decide to volunteer? Was it the lure of the trains?

I am definitely not a train aficionado, but we live near the Settle Carlisle line, so I have definitely come to appreciate the variety of trains, the engineering involved and the beauty of a diesel engine.

I decided to volunteer as I love meeting new people, which the cafe enables me to do. I also love the idea of sharing the beauty of the Dales and the line with visitors. Though we do get a few local people popping in, I get to learn about the area and connect with them. I am also very interested in the history of the area so being able to learn and support this historic line seemed like an opportunity not to be missed. I am very fortunate that I get the opportunity to work with some wonderful and inspirational people. Every volunteer that I have met has a really interesting story, so coming into the cafe is a real joy.

What does a day volunteering at the cafe look like?

It's not an early start, which is good as I am not an early riser. But I tend to get in around 9.30am. Most volunteers take the train to get here, so they arrive around 9am. As a local I can walk in and ensure we're set up and open. That takes about 30 minutes but we tend to open the doors (and toilet) if customers need us to.

Who visits the station?

The cafe has a small museum which provides details about the history of the line and the Ribblehead viaduct. Visitors come from all over the world to see the viaduct so we try to answer any questions they may have. We have many knowledgeable volunteers who chat to visitors about the railway, the flora, fauna, the historical sites (neolithic sites) and provide any tips about where to visit in the Dales. It's definitely a place for everyone.

This area is known for the Yorkshire Three Peaks walk, how does that impact the cafe?

If I work weekends, then Saturdays tend to be busy. We get a lot of visitors coming to walk the three peaks, though usually by the time they have reached us they have already completed Pen-y-Ghent and the long walk to Ribblehead, and are now considering abandoning their adventure. Sometimes a cup of something hot and a slice of Janet's (Benzi) delicious pineapple fruit cake revives them and we see them back on their way. I'd love to see more people exploring the area away from the walk as there is so much to see; ashes wildflower meadow, Salt Lake, Ribblehead quarry and the river Ribble.

What would you like to say to anyone reading this article?

It's a bit like stepping back in time when you visit us; and if it is cold the fire will be lit.

Please do come and visit us at the station and share our love of the line and area with you. We are always happy to see you, and you will always be welcomed with a smile and a cup of something warm, if needed.

Joined-up Thinking



A TALE OF TWO RAILWAYS

Nick Tennant, Executive Committee member of the Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership, updates us on their campaign.

Whilst the Settle–Carlisle line has happily survived and prospered, the neighbouring Skipton–Colne route was axed in 1970. SELRAP (Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership) is campaigning for the 12-mile stretch of track to be reinstated, bringing wide social, economic and environmental benefits.

Fortunately, in the 1980s Michael Portillo's intervention as a junior transport minister proved to be a life-saver for the Settle–Carlisle line, which had been deemed at risk for decades. Despite the support of Barbara Castle, Transport Secretary in the 1960s, the Skipton–Colne line was not so lucky.

The greatest irony is that Lord Beeching, whilst recommending the Settle–Carlisle line's closure in his review of 1963, advocated developing the Skipton–Colne line, because of its 'strategic importance.' It is now thought likely that the line's unchallenged closure was accidental, the result of a Whitehall civil servant's slip of the pen.

The Campaign for Reinstatement

SELRAP, established in 2004, is working harder to promote the line to today's decision makers, with a simple, five-word mantra: 'Growth. Jobs. Housing. Education. Leisure.' Achievable within ten years, the reopened line would have a transformational effect on rail travel in the North, providing a fast, frequent and affordable service through the Pennines.

Benefits for Tourism and Local Communities

The tourism sector would be a key beneficiary of the line's reopening. For example, it would boost the 4% of visitors who currently reach the Yorkshire Dales by rail. A train journey from Burnley to Skipton would take only about 20 minutes. With the route largely intact, it's a value-for-money, low-risk opportunity.

Our message to ministers is clear: More isolated communities deserve their fair share of planned rail investment in the North.

SELRAP has the strong support of local MPs and councillors from across the political spectrum, past and present, as well as business leaders. We are also buoyed by the recent success of similar community-backed projects in South Wales, Dartmoor, Northumberland and the Scottish Borders.

Addressing Regional Imbalances

Our message to ministers is clear: More isolated communities deserve their fair share of planned rail investment in the North. The project's impact would be greatest in 'forgotten' towns on the route, between Blackburn and West Craven, a corridor which is home to over 250,000 people, including some of the country's most deprived communities. Working and studying in West and North Yorkshire is today an unrealistic prospect for many young people and others without access to a car living on the Red Rose side of the border, due to the lack of fast and frequent, cross-Pennine public transport options. Countryside around Skipton is also rapidly being eaten up by the

growing demand for new homes locally, whilst thousands of properties a matter of miles away in East Lancashire stand empty. The electrified Airedale Line from Leeds to Skipton is thriving, whilst infrequent services from Colne westwards into Lancashire, a line neglected for many years, are underused.

Reopening the Skipton–Colne line would quickly help redress these imbalances. The strategic business case for the project remains as strong as ever. Building on the success of the revitalised Settle–Carlisle line, it would be a genuine game changer.

www.selrap.org.uk

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SETTLE TO
CARLISLE
RAILWAY



7 DAY STAYS





Great British Railways – A Railfuture update

By Ian Brown, member for Greater Manchester's Rail Integration & Reform Board.

Is the view ahead any clearer?

In February 2025 the government consulted on the Railways Bill outlining plans to set up GBR as a new arm's length body to be responsible for rail services and track, stations and signalling.

Railfuture responded to the consultation with emphasis on the following key proposals.

- A new passenger watchdog
- Fares reform and a clear government wish to move to online retail of tickets
- A new statutory role for devolved leaders in governing, managing, planning and developing the rail network
- Simplification of the industry structure and reducing regulation
- Ensuring the private sector continues to play a role i.e. freight, having nationalised the passenger operation

Publicly owned Great British Railways will be created around 12 months after legislation is passed. It is billed as a single directing mind bringing track and train together, putting passengers and customers first, rebuilding trust in the railway and operating the majority (i.e. non open access services) under public ownership and control.

Instead of 14 separate train operators, passengers will once again be able to use 'the railway' travelling on GBR trains running on GBR tracks to a GBR timetable. It's clear that to achieve this monopoly,

the DfT (Dept. for Transport) wants to stop the expansion of open access services which are actually focussed on passengers. How all this puts passengers first is yet to become clear.

The stated vision has six components, the railway should be;

- Reliable
- Affordable (this refers to a balance between passenger fares and taxpayer subsidy)
- Efficient, again better value for the passenger and the taxpayer
- Quality
- Accessible
- Safe (personal and operational)

The difficult task for us is to work out how the changes being developed actually deliver against these objectives.

Fares reform was a separate initiative, albeit bogged down in complexity. GBR may well continue to simplify fares as LNER have recently done with selling single only tickets. The challenge is reducing fares which hasn't happened with experiments so far.

Is Devolution the answer? Scotland, Wales and London perhaps exemplify the greatest single initiative in providing integrated travel and a sensible fares structure. The aim is to extend devolved control of our railways to bodies such as Transport for Greater Manchester and Transport for the West Midlands and



Photo courtesy of Terry Callahan

hopefully other area. The single directing mind emphasis is therefore just blather.

Simplifying the railway structure is of course welcome with earlier estimates circulating the privatised railway costs about 30% more than it should owing to the complex contractual 'money go round'. The Treasury has eyes on this wanting to see savings. It is unlikely that the passenger will be the priority for passing on any savings.

So, we will eventually see a more joined up railway. At the moment we only have an outline structure. GBR reform could certainly provide a framework for a bigger & better railway, with devolution providing an opportunity it to respond to passenger needs.

The key test however is how it is implemented. Plenty to go for in 2026.



This is the equivalent of train travel Narnia. We're stepping through a portal which is exclusive and costly: the observation car of the Belmond Britannic Explorer which will run down the line 1st, 2nd, 22nd & 23rd November. Photo courtesy of Belmond.

Gift Guide 2025

This year's gift guide includes several items celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Settle-Carlisle Line as well as a range of other gifts and items to treat yourself.

This is your only opportunity to buy the anniversary items via mail order – by next Christmas we will have completely sold out of many, if not all, of the anniversary items. But they will continue to be available from our web shop and our shops in Settle and Appleby throughout 2025/26, whilst stocks last.



This year's Christmas card photo is courtesy of John Bentley and is the Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express, Black Five 44932, crossing Arten Gill.

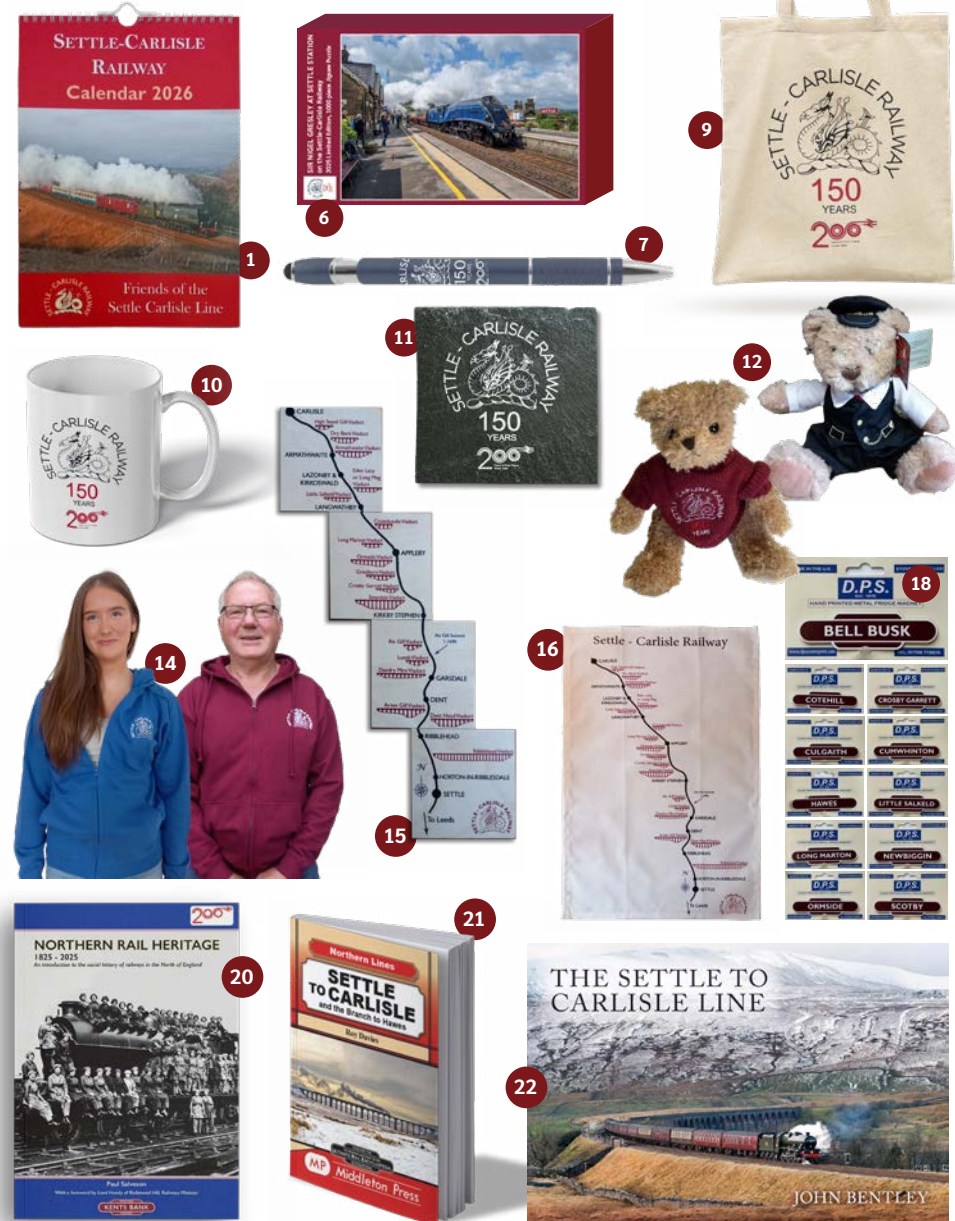
New products perfect for gifts or yourself this year:

The Friends' 2025 bespoke jigsaw, 'Sir Nigel Gresley at Settle Station'. You can read more about our annual jigsaws in the magazine. New totem fridge magnet sets of 'Closed' stations on the line and one of stations between Long Preston and Leeds.

Settle-Carlisle Railway 150 years anniversary items:

Blue ball point pen with texting tip, teddy bear, Linen tote bag, bone china mug, Honister slate coaster. And... don't forget that you can purchase membership of The Friends as a gift too. See membership.foscl.org.uk/giftmemberships

Please note that the last date for orders to be received by us, by post or via the web shop is Monday 15th December 2025 for delivery to UK addresses by Christmas. Whilst we endeavour to carry adequate stock for orders some items may run out as Christmas approaches. Please order early to ensure your item is still available and to secure early delivery. If ordering by post, please ensure to include your phone number.



Some advertised items show the '200 year' train travel anniversary, stock of these are limited, and this will not feature on any new stock. However they will still show our 150th anniversary logo. Item 18 'totem fridge magnets' are also available individually in both Appleby and Settle shops and the online shop.



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Letters

From timetables to rolling stock, readers reflect on the present realities and future potential of the line...

A Paradox

Has it occurred to your readers, that the greater the success of FoSCL in attracting extra traffic to the line through the excellence of the Journal, the greater the chance of horror stories?

In late August 2025 on my way to my morning coffee, I was stopped by a friend and told of a horrendous experience the day after Bank Holiday when a 4-car train suddenly became 2 cars.

The June edition of the Settle & District Community News carried an article by John Carey, warning of infrastructure problems and carriage shortage, with rolling stock not being replaced until after 2035.

It strikes me that unless FoSCL can get undertakings from Northern Trains Limited and the Department for Transport, about some interim measures, that the 150th anniversary in 2026 may become a great disappointment.

Martin Pearson

Further thoughts on services

Firstly congratulations on re-invigorating the FoSCL magazine. The most recent editions have been a big improvement and have included some really thoughtful and informative articles. Thank you.

I thought that the 'compare and contrast' with the Swiss railways of Graubünden was 'fun' but almost everything about Swiss railways, from rolling stock and timetables to marketing and fare structure, is light years ahead

of most in the UK. Just picking up on two points; if nothing else I do find that the windows on Northern trains are generally very clean. Secondly the rolling stock on the Rätische Bahn in Graubünden, is almost entirely new. Most has been replaced by a fleet of four-car Stadler units (Capricorns) that operate in 4,8,12 or even 16 car formations. So capacity is flexible and more than adequate. Service frequency is hourly or half hourly on all routes. This is despite many of the settlements served being considerably smaller in population than Settle or Appleby.

John Carey's article about the potential for an integrated future for the S&C was excellent and would surely merit space in a respected journal such as Modern Railways or Rail magazine.

The SWOT analysis by Stewart Palmer was equally thought provoking. I do take issue, however, with the points raised about locally generated passenger traffic and similarly the analysis by Stephen G Abbott in the August issue. The current timetable is barely fit for purpose – and evening services are non-existent. I would think that the local potential for growth is significant. Look what happened to rail usage when Greater Anglia increased service levels from two-hourly to hourly on the Cromer and East Suffolk lines.

John Carey's article points out that only 2% of visitors to the National Park arrive by rail. It's hardly surprising with service intervals of two hours or more and one glaring four-hour gap at Horton-in-Ribblesdale; a key starting point for Three

Peaks walkers. There can be well over five hundred cars parked in Horton on busy weekends. That is a disgrace.

Northern also operated on a 'no growth' model for many years and sadly the operator lacks the rolling stock and staffing flexibility (and management vision?). Phil Hinde's thoughtful observations in the August issue (pages 20 to 23) sum up many of the views that I have about Northern's operating practises. Northern Rail staff may be very diligent, professional and customer friendly; but if so why are new trains still operated with conductors controlling the doors, trains left locked out of use on cold and wet days, why are there often three staff on the ticket gate line at Skipton and three staff on the Aire valley electric services (driver, door operator/

platform checker and ticket inspector?). I suspect weak management and union protectionism are the cause. It's a pity that Jamie Burles, who turned around train services in East Anglia as Greater Anglia's managing director, could not be persuaded to take on Northern Trains.

The elected York and North Yorkshire mayor seems to be keen to improve public transport in the region. Time to get North Yorkshire Council, the Yorkshire Dales National Park authority, Northern and Network Rail working together and planning for growth. Without a considerably improved timetable there is unlikely to be much growth.

Kind Regards
Stephen Barnes
 (Member 4803)

BACS may also be used by crediting the following account: Friends of the Settle–Carlisle Line, Sort Code: 20-78-42, Account No: 93121526. Please quote your membership number as reference.

Cheques should be payable to 'Friends of the Settle–Carlisle Line' and sent to the Membership Office (details below). Due to the ever increasing costs of postage and bank processing, we encourage payment online as this is quick, easy and cheaper for our members

Membership Benefits

Please remember we have recently been able to expand our range of benefits to reward our members for their valued support.

Members may now enjoy discount on a range of purchases whether you are visiting the line or shopping at the FoSCL webshop. Our new benefits include:

- **10% Discount*** in our shops at **Settle and Appleby Stations including our webshop <https://shop.foscl.org.uk>**
- **10% Discount*** on purchases from the **Refreshment Trolley Service whilst travelling on the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle Line**
- **10% Discount*** on food and drink purchases at **Ribblehead Station Cafe and Horton in Ribblesdale Station Cafe Bar**
- **10% Discount when you stay at any of the iconic station cottages at Dent, Horton, Kirkby Stephen and Ribblesdale**

*Discounts are available along the line on production of your valid membership card or online by using the discount code VOLFOS23

Membership Cards will continue to be sent to all members with their renewal packs. For all Life Members and those who require a replacement card, you can simply download your card from <https://membermojo.co.uk/foscl> or by contacting the membership office below.

The Next Generation – Help us to Grow our Membership!

We are asking for your support to help grow our membership for the next generation. Therefore, please encourage your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews to join the Friends to help us secure a strong future for the line and build on our proud achievements of the last 44 years! Joining is easy at <https://membermojo.co.uk/foscl> and makes an ideal Christmas present. Thank you!

Contact Details

If you have a query about your membership, please contact:

Membership Office:

Email: membership@settle-carlisle.com
 Phone: 07436 159110
 Address: Friends Membership Office, Railway Station, Clifford Street, Appleby, CA16 6TT

Membership Website:

<https://membermojo.co.uk/foscl>
 If you have a query about your payment or as an alternative contact for membership queries, please contact:

Treasurer: Damian Smith

Email: treasurer@settle-carlisle.com
 Phone: 07850 329097

Membership applications and renewals are now open for 2026–27

Subscriptions for the new year are due on or before 1st March to coincide with our financial year, 1st March to end of February.

Prompt renewal is always appreciated and the great news is that you can renew your membership now to continue to enjoy the enhanced range of benefits until 28th February 2027. A renewal reminder will also be sent at the end of January to help you.

How to Make Payment

We value your support and continue to offer a range of payment methods to meet the needs of our members. With the continued increases in postage costs and the shrinking personal services offered by

the banks, the majority of our members are choosing to renew and pay online. Subscription rates are the same as last year and are detailed at the foot of the inside front cover.

Online is the most popular option as it is quick, easy and cheaper for our members. Simply pay your membership at <https://membermojo.co.uk/foscl>

Standing Order continues to be used by approximately 15% of our members and no action is required if you have a valid standing order in place

Ribblehead Commemorative Plaque Renewal

By Caroline Coates

If the spirit of a landscape defines a man, then the Ribblehead viaduct defined my father, Clifford Coates of Oxenhope, West Yorkshire, who died in 2005. To him it was a place of human endeavour and sacrifice – existing against the odds, despite the harsh conditions of the day, and was magnificent - a place of pilgrimage and harsh beauty. He loved Ribblehead, and what it represented.

When he died in 2005, the Coates family decided to walk the length of the Settle to Carlisle line to commemorate his life, and to honour those who died building the viaduct. We approached Peter Davies and Ruth Evans and others from FoSCL, who generously helped to organise a guided walk, in summer 2006. This followed the entire line - and Peter and others gallantly led and walked with the family for its entirety, raising money to pay for an information plaque in Clifford's name, which was installed in 2007, near the viaduct. This lasted well but recently its words and pictures had deteriorated and needed an update.

The Coates family once again contacted Yorkshire Dales National Park and FoSCL, in early 2025, to ask for help with walk leaders and ask if they might help them, by walking once more, to raise funds to replace the original plaque.

Susan and Lyndi, ably supported by Stephen and Bob, offered to guide them on a four-day adventure, beginning at Settle and ending at Kirkby Stephen, some forty miles, to create a new plaque and refreshing and updating the information and images. Funds were raised from family and friends,

and the plaque was put in place by Yorkshire Dales National Park in August 2025. The walk, in June 2025, was glorious, convivial, meticulously timed and informative and if anything, less strenuous than in 2006, and despite deluges on day 3 and 4 spirits were high - a great team effort with a good useful, legacy.

Lyndi & Susan from the Guided Walks Team said "they were delighted to be able to help the Coates family and friends achieve their aim and everyone had good fun doing the walks. Clifford must have been very inspirational for his family and friends to have wanted to do the walk again almost 20 years on." The new plaque is now in place at Ribblehead and it looks splendid - it pays a fitting tribute to the railway workers who built the line.

The Coates family wishes to thank Susan and Lyndi and the FoSCL team, Kate Hilditch Area Manager (Southern Dales Ranger Team) who made the plaque possible and whose team installed it, Bryan Gray for images and Mark Chung for his work to gather information, and to all those who walked and supported their efforts.



Left: The newly installed information board

Appleby or Appleby west?

By David Owen

When Helen Jennings began the difficult task of sorting through her late husband Alan's railway memorabilia, she was presented with a tangible reminder of his love for the Settle–Carlisle line. She discovered an original Appleby West station sign which she has now kindly donated to FoSCL. It's both an historical artefact of a station that no longer exists, and a reminder of the many trips he made along the line.

Appleby West was the former name of present-day Appleby station. It ensured there wasn't any confusion with the nearby and former Appleby East, now the Eden Valley heritage railway, with its 2.2 miles of available track between Warcop & Sandford.

The sign was officially handed over to Larry Jones & Phil Speed at Settle station by lifelong friend Alan Hirst & his wife Andrea Lucy-Hirst in early September. Alan lived in Ashington where Helen still resides, and she told me 'That Alan would often travel to meet Adrian Hirst at stations such as Dent for walking expeditions. He was a committed train enthusiast and he and Adrian both started their careers as Chemists at the Boots production site in Nottingham. His career developed with a move to the new Boots plant in Cramlington, followed later by a move into education as a high school science teacher.'

Alan was also a committed campaigner for the new Washington rail line. Opened in December 2024, it runs from Ashington to Newcastle upon Tyne Central station. Rather poignantly, Alan died before he was able to enjoy the fruits of his, and other campaigner's efforts to secure it.

The family aren't aware of how Alan came upon the sign but there's an interesting link to a similar, or conceivably the same sign, in a Westmorland Gazette news item from February 2010. Thanks to Adrian for bringing the story to our attention:

Bidding in one of the largest auctions of Settle to Carlisle railway line memorabilia the country has ever seen, Daphne Park, 57, of Morecambe, was successful in getting the Appleby West 'station master' sign for £440, despite stiff competition. Note: This also included an Appleby West sign which



Adrian Hirst, centre, presents the sign on behalf of Helen Jennings with FoSCL On-Train Guide Leader Larry Jones, left & FoSCL Maintenance Team Leader Phil Speed, right.

was clearly shown in the Westmorland Gazette article.

'I remember that sign from when I was young waiting in his office for him to finish work.

I worked as a nurse in Keighley and would travel up and down that line stopping off to see my Dad at Appleby. It's such a lovely thing to remember him by and I think he would have been one of the last station masters to have that

sign on the door. I am so pleased that it is now back in our family,' she said.

I'll guess we'll never know the whole story for either sign following removal from Appleby, but we are very pleased that Helen has gone to the trouble of finding an appropriate home for it with FoSCL. At the time of writing, its final home hasn't been confirmed, but The Folly in Settle is potentially an ideal place for it.



By Phil Hinde

Impressions of a first season as an on-train guide



Other viaducts are available...! (Dandry Mire)

At the beginning of the summer, team leader Nick invited /press-ganged me into becoming one of the FoSCL on-train guides. As he explained there's more than one way of filling the role. Some volunteers just like to mingle with the passengers, answering questions and pointing out highlights of the journey. Others such as myself prefer to work with the pre-booked coach tour parties, addressing as many folk as we can squeeze into the front carriage (short formations and other disruptions permitting), with the aid of a microphone and speaker.

But whichever approach you take, I soon learned that the number one priority is making sure that everyone in earshot is absolutely clear when the train is trundling across our iconic Ribbleshead viaduct. In vain you plead that you don't really see the structure because you're on it, and in any case we've got twenty-one other viaducts to enjoy – some taller and more dramatic than Ribbleshead (Arten Gill is my favourite). To the visitors it's the being there on top of that one particular viaduct that seems to count, even without the striking view of Ingleborough, the sight of the Roman road climbing over

Dodd Fell to Virosidum, the amazing field of shake holes immediately below the line, and the history of the Batty Green work camp all to be experienced.

I said 'yes' to joining the team because, although I'm a bit of a wallflower when it comes to small talk at social gatherings, I've never had a problem standing up in front of a crowd of people if I have a clear mandate to talk to them and a story to share. Having joined the Friends, on-train guiding therefore seemed the best opportunity for me to be actually doing something useful. Useful, because the vast majority of the people we conduct

over the line seem really appreciative and interested in what we have to tell. And there is so much to tell. Not only the story of the railway itself in these two anniversary years, but the history of the area, of the Brigantes, the Romans, the Vikings who gave us so many of the place names, the Normans with their brutal harrying of the north, the medieval monks who developed the sheep farming, through to Lady Anne Clifford. I tell the listeners she was a sort of combination of Margaret Thatcher, Emmeline Pankhurst and Queen Boadicea. Surely if we didn't have Ruswarp the dog as our mascot and hero, we would have adopted Lady Anne as our patron saint. Perseverance was her strength; just remember the motto 'Desormais' – meaning 'Henceforth' – over the gateway to Skipton Castle where she was born.

As well the immediate satisfaction from entertaining the guests and thereby promoting the line to the tour companies who send their groups to us, I find myself encouraged to dig deeper into the geology, landscape and history of the areas we travel through. So the stories of Lady Anne, St. Oswald, Queen Cartimandua and others have come to life, and I better understand the chemistry of Dent Marble and Gypsum! Even local government re-organisation becomes a topic; how the good people of Appleby were miffed when their Westmorland got swallowed up into Cumbria, and that Mickle Fell on the North Pennines used to be the highest point in Yorkshire until it was re-allocated to County Durham.

Of course there are downsides – the layovers in Appleby and Carlisle can lead to unplanned expenditure in fish and chip shops or second-hand bookstores! One purchase in the Oxfam shop in Carlisle

was a copy of Malcolm Greenhalgh's definitive survey of the Ribble valley – full of fresh information with which to regale the clients. And there are surprises, such as the day a cheeky hiker 'mooned' at waving passengers as we crossed that infamous viaduct!

While we are strictly not responsible for the safety or welfare of our visitors there are times when a bit of initiative is required. There was the lady who had left her purse in Wetherspoons in Carlisle – nifty work with a pocket timetable showed she could alight at Lazonby, jump on a northbound service and still get back to her hotel in Skipton in time for supper. She did get both her purse and evening meal. Keeping a party entertained when their bus was late turning up at Kirkby Stephen was a challenge, as was a toilet emergency when we were delayed getting back to Settle – the station facilities were

closed so I ran down to the Whitefriars conveniences to make sure they did not get locked at 6pm before our travellers' coach came round from the station.

I do hope that more Friends will sign up to join Nick's on-train team so we can continue to champion the line, whether one to one with individual passengers, or by covering more of the organised groups. It's enjoyable, you meet some interesting people, and giving the coach parties a good experience ensures the tour planners will come back and keep the footfall up on our favourite railway. And I never tire of riding the line – in all weathers, seasons and times of day there is always something fresh to look at. I just have to make sure, as the train rolls round the curve into Carlisle station, that no-one asks, 'Have we been over the viaduct yet?'

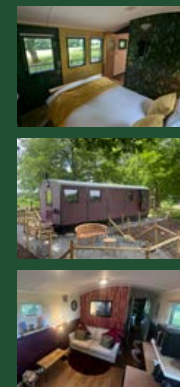


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Reopened Horton quarry rail link marks 150 years of freight on Settle–Carlisle line

The rail link at the quarry has been reinstated after 60 years, allowing high-quality aggregate to be delivered to construction projects across the North West by rail. Restoring the rail connection reduces vehicle movements on the wider road network and cuts associated CO₂ emissions.

Heidelberg Materials UK has hosted an event at its Horton quarry in the Yorkshire Dales National Park to celebrate the reopening of the site's rail link and the 150th anniversary of rail freight on the Settle–Carlisle line. The quarry has been producing limestone and high-quality gritstone since 1889. Its original rail siding was removed in 1965 but the newly-constructed rail terminal is, once again, allowing aggregate to be delivered to construction projects across the North West by rail.

The event was organised in conjunction with GB Railfreight (GBRf), which runs the freight services, and the Settle and Carlisle Railway Trust. It brought together customers, industry representatives and other interested parties to see the quarry's

new rail link as well as the unveiling of a commemorative GBRf-Heidelberg Materials liveried locomotive aptly named Settle and Carlisle 150.

'The first freight train ran on the Settle–Carlisle line in August 1875, and the reopening of our rail link at Horton quarry is a perfect way to mark this anniversary,' said Becky Murphy, Aggregates Regional Director at Heidelberg Materials UK.

The investment is part of our strategy to improve our network of rail connected quarries and depots and to help deliver our sustainability commitments. Each rail movement allows us to supply around 1,650 tonnes of high-quality aggregate across the North West of England, reducing vehicle journeys on the wider road network and cutting associated CO₂ emissions.



The newly named Settle & Carlisle 150

John Smith OBE, Chief Executive Officer of GBRf and Trustee of the Settle and Carlisle Railway Trust, said: "In a year of milestones, we are proud to name our locomotive after this special railway line. Like rail freight, the Settle and Carlisle line has played a key role in driving the economy. He went on to say that, "since 2019, we've had a fantastic partnership with Heidelberg Materials UK, moving six million tonnes of aggregates and cement nationally. Now with this new rail link, we can continue to move more aggregates via rail out of Horton quarry to projects across the North West, reducing emissions in the local area."

The work to reinstate the rail link at Heidelberg Materials' Horton quarry has been carried out by Duo Group, VolkerRail

and AECOM, in partnership with Network Rail.

About Heidelberg Materials

Heidelberg Materials is one of the world's largest integrated manufacturers of building materials and solutions with leading market positions in cement, aggregates, and ready-mixed concrete. They are represented in more than 50 countries with around 51,000 employees at almost 3,000 locations. At the centre of our actions lies the responsibility for the environment. As the front runner on the path to carbon neutrality and circular economy in the building materials industry, we are working on sustainable building materials and solutions for the future. [heidelbergmaterials.com](https://www.heidelbergmaterials.com)

Members' Christmas Lunch 2025

Join fellow members for the annual Christmas lunch, Saturday 22nd November at Herriot's Hotel, Skipton. Opposite Skipton Station, the three-course lunch will cost **£25 per person including tea or coffee to follow**. Our after dinner speaker is Anna Jackson, Commercial Manager, who will outline her new role. Arrival 12:30 onwards for dining at 1:15pm, finishing at 3pm. Please choose one starter, one main and one dessert from the menu choices...

Starter:

- Roasted Vine Tomato and Red Pepper Soup (GF/Vegan/Vegetarian)
- Pressed Ham Hock and Pea Terrine, dressed leaves, tomato chutney, rosemary and sea salt croutes (GF)
- Chicken Liver Parfait, roast plum chutney, dressed leaves and toasted brioche (GF)

Main

- Roast Turkey, Stuffing* Pigs in Blankets* served with Roasted Potatoes and Roasted Root Vegetables *GF
- Baked Salmon Honey Garlic Butter Glaze and creamy dill sauce with Roast Herby Potatoes (GF)
- Butternut Squash Wellington with Roast Herby New Pots: (Vegan/Vegetarian)

All served with seasonal vegetables

Dessert

- Sticky Toffee Pudding, Butterscotch Sauce and Ice Cream
- Chocolate Truffle Torte with a fresh berry compote (GF)
- Vanilla and Strawberry Cheesecake with fresh berry compote
- Vegan Carrot Cake (Plant based GF/Vegan)

Followed by Tea/Coffee

Please select your menu choices and include dietary needs and food intolerances and send to Janet Benzie ASAP to benziej@pobroadband.co.uk and copy Jill Tiernan into the email: jill.tiernan@settle-carlisle.com

BACS Transfer:

Account Name: Friends of Settle–Carlisle Line
Sort Code: 20-78-42
Account: 93121526

Quoting: Lunch and your surname: e.g. Lunch Tiernan

Cheques should be made payable to 'Friends of Settle–Carlisle Line' and forwarded to Janet Benzie, 4 Knowles Cottage, Long Preston, North Yorkshire BD23 4NP no later than 1st October 2025. Please note: If your circumstances change no refunds will be honoured after 1st November 2025 unless we can resell the lunch.

We look forward to welcoming you to Herriot's Hotel on the 22nd November 2025.

Special Reader Offer to Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line

From Kingfisher Productions - We celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first passenger trains along the line.

Completed in 1875 with some goods traffic, it was on 1st May 1876 that the line was opened to public passenger trains. To celebrate that day, we offer several books and DVDs devoted to the S&C.



'Celebrating 150 Years of the Settle-Carlisle'

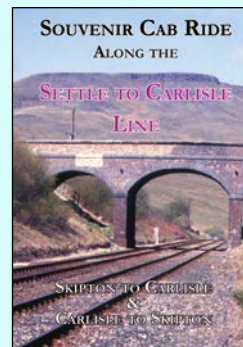
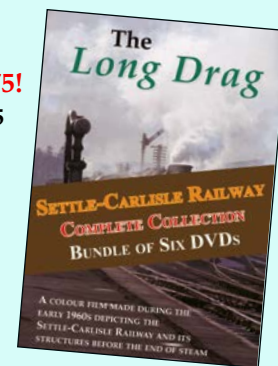
This special tribute book covers the 150-year history from its 6-year construction showing very rare new photographs from that period, through to operations and gradual decline. The line made headlines in the early 1980s when efforts were made to close it completely but fortunately local opposition would come to oppose that. With a starring role by the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line and other local organisations and individuals, the line was reprieved for good and is now a vibrant route with huge numbers of people travelling and a large freight train business. The books delves into all those fascinating aspects and is full of colour and black & white images.

Due out late November **Large format paperback, 48 pages £9.95**

An ideal Christmas present for the followers of the Settle-Carlisle Line

Six DVDs in a gift bundle pack for just £49.95. Save £36.75!

*Titles include - 'The Story of the Settle Carlisle Railway' £13.95
'The Long Drag' £14.95 - 'The Secrets of Blea Moor & Ribbleshead' £14.95 - 'S&C The Line that Refused To Die' £14.95
'Tales of the S&C' £12.95 'The Royal Settle-Carlisle' £14.95
If you would like to opt for another one of these titles in the pack as an alternative, let us know before ordering.
'Settle-Carlisle Revival' £12.95 - 'Ribbleshead Viaduct' £12.95*



'Cab Ride from Skipton to Carlisle'

A new edition of our cab ride along the line.

This digitally improved DVD (2 hours 16 minutes) with Class 47 444 on 31st January 1990 also includes a cab view in the southerly direction from Carlisle to Skipton on a snow-covered line. Hauled by No. 47474 it departs Carlisle on the 10.40 passenger train. It was filmed in January 1986 with highlights and narration with driver commentary added of 21 minutes.

DVD 2 hours 37 minutes £19.95

Kingfisher Productions

PO Box 110, Cullompton Devon EX15 9AZ

Some book titles are available from the Friends' shops and at - shop.foscl.org.uk

Cultivating Connections

PLATFORM PLANTERS DON'T WATER THEMSELVES

By Richard Morris

We had a very dry spring, no measurable rain for weeks, yet at Armathwaite we were able to keep the station garden going regardless. We have 50 metres of garden on the upside of the tracks and five tubs on the platform.

The secret is, naturally enough, to keep them all watered. But how on earth do you do this when there is no supply?

In 2006 when my wife and I took over the garden, it was little more than a wasteland, mostly hard clay soil. Where were we going to get the water from to create a flower garden? At the end of the up-waiting shelter is the former gents' urinal, surely a good place to start.

It's locked and nobody in the village has a key. But one of the former signal box volunteers manages somehow to get the window open and I climb in and change the lock.

The monumental Victorian stalls are still in place, but there's no sign of a water supply of any sort.

Neighbour Susan, who commutes daily on the train to Carlisle, takes empty containers with her, fills them up at Carlisle station and brings them back every day. Judy and she make a start on planting up the garden. The lengths we have to go to!

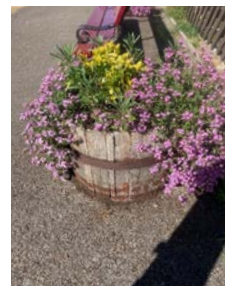
Was there really never any water in a gents' urinal? About this time I give a talk on the building of the line to Lazonby History Society. At the end of my presentation a fairly elderly gentleman comes up to me and says he was the last junior porter at Armathwaite. 'Was there no running water in the gents' urinal?', I ask him. 'That was my job.', he says. 'Every morning, I had to carry a

bucket of disinfectant across the tracks and pour it down the drains!' So much for Victorian hygiene. Mystery solved, but not the problem.

Hard to believe, but we'll have to accept it and try to find a solution. It has to be a water butt, filled with rainwater from the roof of the waiting shelter. We have a spare, take it up to the station and install it on the platform, put an attachment into the downpipe from the gutter with a length of pipe to the water butt. The thinking is that once it's full it will be too heavy for any vandals to push onto the tracks. Until one day I find a little old lady removing the lid and peering inside it. 'I wanted to see what was inside', she says.

So, there's always the possibility that the lid will end up on the tracks, we'd better move the butt inside where it's out of sight. The obvious place is the gents' urinal, now renamed The Gardener's Retreat, with a length of hose from the downpipe and through the window. Retrospective approval is given by the Train Operating Company in the person of their Stations Manager whom I bump into on Preston Station one day. They and we are both happy at the prospect of a nice, attractive station garden.

It proves to be a remarkably resilient piece of furniture, surviving the severe winters of 2010 and 2011, when it froze solid and bulged alarmingly, but never



Clockwise from top left: Garden flowers, Waiting shelter, Tubs on platform, Former urinals and Water butt.

cracked and recovered perfectly when the thaw came.

We survive, supplementing the capacity of the water butt with other containers and almost always have enough water for tubs and garden. They are admired by train passengers.

Fast forward the best part of 20 years to the great dearth of rain in spring 2025. My wife had had a stroke four years earlier and was no longer able to do the garden. Susan had taken over seamlessly and had done a great job ever since. In May they were making the most of the fantastic weather in the Scottish Highlands in their camper van. As a full time carer for my wife, I had no time for much else but as a Friends' board member and former helper I was concerned and one afternoon went up to the station to have a look. The tubs were moist, probably because Jane, who lives next door to the station, had watered them before she too went on holiday. The water butt however and all the other containers were quite empty.

How were we to stop all the flowers wilting before it rained again?

While I'm there, the 16:18 from Carlisle pulls in. Dawn, who lives at the bottom of the hill, gets off and we have a chat. I explain my problem and she immediately suggests that she and Mike fill the water butt using Jane's garden hose – we have permission. It's not long enough to reach to the Gardener's Retreat but they can fill watering cans on the platform and carry them along. I give her the key.

The following day Mike calls at our house and returns the key – job done. I thank him profusely and a couple of days later go up to the station and water the tubs and parts of the garden that are suffering. Obviously, it has an effect as a few days later the long-awaited rain arrives!

This has been a wonderful example of cooperation between Friends' volunteers and supporters in the village, with an excellent outcome. It's called community spirit!

Station gardeners are blooming marvellous!

At a ceremony in Tadcaster on September 25th, our station gardeners had their hard work & dedication recognised with several Yorkshire in Bloom Awards. Anne Brennand, Station Adopter at Horton and Phil Cottam, Horton's Lead Station Adopter and café/bar Manager, accepted the award on behalf of the team.

The judges mentioned that the volunteers clearly justify further recognition, given the location of these stations and the diverse weather conditions they so often face whilst carrying out their work.

All three stations received very positive comments from the Assessor, Peter Oddy...

Settle (Thriving Award): 'It was very encouraging to hear of the many different

groups that help from time to time with the floral features on the line.'

Horton in Ribblesdale (Outstanding Award): Anne Brennand, Horton's Station Adopter, Phil Cottam, Lead Station Adopter and café bar Manager, were pleased to hear that the judges noted 'A good mix of seasonal & perennial colour creating reasonably low maintenance. The banking down the line has been intentionally left to nature & offers a really good natural backdrop that is full of native flora & fauna.'

Ribblehead (Advancing Award): As in previous years, the altitude of the station was noted and judges appreciated the approach to planting that 'mainly consists of herbs & perennials that thrive in the late Spring & early Winter conditions.'

Larry is stepping down, kind of...

Larry would personally like to thank all FoSCL Station Adopters for all their commitment and hard work in the achievement of these awards. He is now handing over the role of Station Adopters Team Leader to Peter Brown. Peter will take on the role from October 1st. Larry has held the position for over 4 years and recognises the total commitment, professionalism and skill-set that Adopters bring to their volunteering. He says, 'it's been an absolute pleasure' and would like to give a heartfelt thanks for all their support. We will continue to enjoy his positive outlook as he will still be volunteering with FoSCL as an On Train Guide and in Settle Shop.



Larry Jones, right, receives the award on behalf of our station gardeners from Phil Gomersal, Volunteer at Rawdon in Bloom.

HORTON STATION

Cafe Bar

Recruiting new volunteers for the 2026 Spring and Summer season!

200 years after the birth of the modern railway and 150 years since the first train ran on the famous Settle – Carlisle line, 2025 promises to be a busy year at Horton station. With walkers, passengers, workers and holiday makers all passing through, our little café provides the much-needed refreshment to see them on their way!

What will you be doing?

- Volunteer on one or two days a month. Usually Friday, Saturdays and Sundays, although we hope to open on other days in the summer holidays.
- Serving customers and clearing tables.
- Preparing food (although not all our volunteers do this – which is fine!).
- Some small amounts of cleaning at the end of the day.
- Chatting to customers and visitors.

What's in it for you?

- Meet new people, give something back and develop new skills.
- A beautiful working environment in the Yorkshire Dales – complete with iconic passing steam and diesel locomotives!
- Free drinks when volunteering.
- Lunch when volunteering for a full day.
- Staff discount at all other times including on Settle and Carlisle memorabilia.
- Free rail travel to and from Horton in Ribblesdale for volunteering purposes (subject to terms & conditions).

What do you need?

A smile and enthusiasm – that's all! Training will be given in all areas, with the opportunity to feedback in informal get togethers a few times a year.

If you are interested and would like to know more – just drop Phil a line at hcb@settle-carlisle.com, or speak to one of the team in the café!

Settle Carlisle Railway recognised as a Top-Rated attraction in the World

The Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company has been recognised in Tripadvisor's® Travelers' Choice® Awards for 2025. Tripadvisor's Travelers' Choice Award winners are among the top 10% of listings around the world on Tripadvisor.

As the world's largest travel guidance platform, Tripadvisor has unparalleled authority with travellers and diners. This award is based on genuine feedback from anyone in the community who has visited and left an authentic, first-hand review on Tripadvisor over 12 months, making it a valuable and trustworthy designation of travellers' favourites.

Chair of Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company, Pete Myers, said: 'We are delighted to have received this award from TripAdvisor and thank all our passengers for their kind reviews. An award like this from passenger feedback makes it extra special for us. We have

brilliant volunteer support from The Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line, who also provide a free guide service and tend the award-winning station gardens. We would like to thank all our staff and volunteers on the Settle Carlisle line who have helped make visiting our line so special for passengers and resulted in this award.'

Kristen Dalton, President, Tripadvisor, said: 'Congratulations to the Settle Carlisle line on its recognition in Tripadvisor's Travelers' Choice Awards for 2025.'

'Ranking among the top percentage of businesses globally means you have made such a memorable impact on your visitors that many of them took time to go online and leave a glowing review about their experience. We hope this recognition continues to drive business to you in 2025 and beyond.'

With over a million passengers travelling on the Settle Carlisle line each year, we are proud to continue to deliver social benefits that support and recognise those most in need.



Settle Carlisle Railway Development team and volunteers pictured at Carlisle Station for the last Charter Steam Train to Carlisle.

Stainmore Heritage Line Gala: 23rd – 25th August 2025

By Jill Tiernan & Allison Cosgrove

September 27th marked the bicentenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR). In conjunction with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and partner Locomotive Conservation Learning Trust, the Stainmore Railway Company set out to celebrate the importance and significance of the Stainmore and Eden Valley Railway situated on the west of the Pennines.

Stainmore held a gala showcasing several steam locomotives along with the opening of their reconstructed Signal Box housing a rare North Eastern Railway Central area lever frame. Located adjacent to a pedestrian overbridge with ramp access, the Signal Box is now accessible to all visitors, including those in wheelchairs and prams.

FoSCL volunteers played a small part in the Signal Box reconstruction by enabling several community groups who support people living with Dementia, Neurodivergence and Autism to participate in restoring some of the signalling components such as winding wheels, braces, clamps, levers and lamps. Restoration workshops were held over 5 weeks in June and July at Settle Station in the Up Platform Waiting Room. The restored items have now been installed in the new Signal Box.

There was an opportunity to ride in several heritage carriages pulled by a range of locomotives. These included:

- The Old Gentleman Saloon as used in the 1972 film *The Railway Children*. Originally built in 1871. It's now owned by Chris Lawson and used on the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. The Saloon made a welcome return to the line and route for which it was originally constructed.
- British Rail Standard Class 2 No 78018
- Gresley TTO No 60505/ Gresley BTK No 3669
- NER Clerestory No 818 Carriage

The gala also attracted a range of stall holders including FoSCL selling second hand books and a range of 150th Settle & Carlisle merchandise. It was lovely to see many familiar faces who visited our stall. Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company website: www.settle-carlisle.co.uk.



Trains on Track

WHEN AND WHERE TO VIEW SPECIAL TRAINS

By Chris Gee



The 'New' Measurement Train, photo courtesy of John Bentley.

Many members like to photograph visiting trains so rather than report on what's been and gone, we'll try to alert you to upcoming visits.

Opposite you can see the special trains expected to run over the Settle and Carlisle line over and above the regular Northern passenger service and regular freight traffic. It does not include trains that will use the route between Settle Junction and Carnforth. Please bear in mind that although some of the excursions are advertised by the promoter, they can sometimes be cancelled, so please check in advance before making travel plans.

Lots of special train workings are planned within very short timescales and the best way to look for these is using the **Realtime Trains** website. These

include engineering trains, rail tours, the inspection saloon or movements of rail vehicles for repair.

realtimetrains.co.uk/search/detailed/

- > In the location field type 'Settle Jn'
- > In the When? field choose 'All Day'
- > Set the date to a date in the future that you want to view
- > Click on the WTT and VAR filters to remove these, leaving only the STP filter highlighted
- > Click the [Search](#) button

This will give you a list of all special workings for that particular day. You can amend the location to choose somewhere else, such as Appleby or Kirkby Stephen.

Date	Train	Direction	Promoter	Locomotives
Sun 26 Oct	New Measurement Train	Northbound	Network Rail	Network Rail High Speed Train
Sat 1 Nov	Britannic Explorer	Southbound (to Appleby)	Belmond	GB Railfreight class 66s
Sun 2 Nov	Britannic Explorer	Southbound (from Appleby)	Belmond	GB Railfreight class 66s
Mon 17 Nov	New Measurement Train	Southbound	Network Rail	Network Rail High Speed Train
Sat 22 Nov	Britannic Explorer	Southbound (to Appleby)	Belmond	GB Railfreight class 66s
Sun 23 Nov	Britannic Explorer	Southbound (from Appleby)	Belmond	GB Railfreight class 66s
Sun 23 Nov	New Measurement Train	Northbound	Network Rail	Network Rail High Speed Train
Tue 9 Dec	Ultrasonic Test Train	Northbound (early hours)	Network Rail	Colas class 37s
Wed 10 Dec	Ultrasonic Test Train	Southbound (early hours)	Network Rail	Colas class 37s
Mon 15 Dec	New Measurement Train	Southbound	Network Rail	Network Rail High Speed Train
Sun 21 Dec	New Measurement Train	Northbound	Network Rail	Network Rail High Speed Train
Mon 12 Jan	New Measurement Train	Southbound	Network Rail	Network Rail High Speed Train
Sun 18 Jan	New Measurement Train	Northbound	Network Rail	Network Rail High Speed Train
Mon 9 Feb	New Measurement Train	Southbound	Network Rail	Network Rail High Speed Train
Sun 15 Feb	New Measurement Train	Northbound	Network Rail	Network Rail High Speed Train

St Albans Row by Matt Turner



The short days are here, and Christmas is around the corner. It's a good time to visit Carlisle city centre as it undergoes a regeneration project to upgrade its pedestrianised areas. The train takes you close to the heart of the retail area so why not check on progress around the Citadel station corner, and browse those independent shops for presents before a hot chocolate in a cosy café?