

friends on track

- The Allport Report breaks cover – is this the future for the Settle-Carlisle?
- Opening the doors of the Citadel – major changes for Carlisle Station.



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Adventures and experiences on the Settle-Carlisle line

February 2025



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John Bentley:
Freight train in blizzard.

Friends on Track
is the members' magazine
of the Friends of the
Settle-Carlisle Line

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welcome

David Owen introduces a look at exciting rail developments, a bold vision for InterCity services, and members' contributions.

Welcome to your new look magazine – I hope you like it! With *Friends on Track* I'm hopeful that we've created a title that helps to signal what the Friends of Settle-Carlisle magazine are about. It may also add a little shelf appeal, enough to pull in new members should they happen to see a copy in the wild.

I would like to thank those who contributed their ideas for titles, but *Friends on Track* seemed to gain traction amongst those who participated in the review.

But a name is nothing without good content, so we lead with an exclusive: a vision for the future of the S & C. I first came across the concept of the S & C as a fundamental part of the InterCity network in *The Line That Refused To Die* by Stan Abbott and Alan Whitehouse. Now, a group of former Network Rail professionals have taken it from concept to a well-researched and fully formed plan for an InterCity service - in the shape of the Allport Report. It makes

compelling reading and signposts how a relatively low-cost project (in rail terms at least) could improve connections and slash travel times between cities such as Nottingham and Leeds and the central belt of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

We also have the inside track on Horton station footbridge – a significant project in the life of the S & C – and the developments planned for Carlisle station. Both the Network Rail Scheme Sponsor for Horton and the Carlisle station Project Sponsor provide an insight into the challenges and opportunities that creative investment delivers.

I'm also pleased to say that the appeal to members for new contributions is bearing fruit, as is the call that went out to several community newsletters. We can't have too many new voices, so please think about how you as members, your friends and your wider contacts could also add flavour to future editions.



Notice of the 2025 FoSCL Annual General Meeting

- Tuesday 17th June 2025 at the Crown & Mitre Hotel, English Street, Carlisle CA3 8HZ
- Formal business will commence at 1pm
- The agenda, minutes of the 2024 AGM and other information will be distributed nearer the time.
- Nominations are requested for the posts of Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and up to three committee members.

- All FoSCL members in good standing are free to stand for election or to propose or second a person who they wish to nominate.

Nomination forms are available from the Secretary, James O'Ryan, on request to: secretary@settle-carlisle.com. The closing date for nominations is Friday 28th March 2025.



chair's notes

"A warm welcome to 2025 from all of us, and I hope this new year is good to you." – Allison Cosgrove, Chair.

We are looking forward to so many exciting events this year: the 150th anniversary of freight on our Line: the 200th anniversary of passenger rail travel in the world: Bradford gaining City of Culture status – all happening near us. More details are on other pages in the magazine, and I hope that many of you will be able to take attend some of the events.

I have heard today that our colleagues in the S & C Development Company will be running a steam special from Bradford to Carlisle on Saturday 31 May as part of the celebrations. You can sign up to their mailing list for access to tickets at <http://settle-carlisle.myflodesk.com/odaykq6ftu>. It will travel outwards on the S & C and return via Carnforth and the Bentham Line, and should be a great day out.

For those of you who travel up and down the Line regularly, I hope you have been able to see the new Station signs which have now been erected all along



the Line. This was a Station Improvement Group initiative and has been made possible by the hard work of Adrian Quine. Pictured are the new signs, in Midland Red colour, at Langwathby and Kirkby Stephen stations.

You may also have seen in the news that sadly the interior of the station waiting room at Armathwaite has recently been vandalised. Our volunteers at the Signal Box, John, Katherine, Felix and Kevin Warmesley, were appalled at the damage including smashing the window and destroying books and toys which they supply for families waiting at the station. On a positive note, volunteers from the local community have waded in to help restore the historic waiting room to its former pristine condition.

Finally, on another page you will see details of our AGM for 2025, which is being held on Tuesday 17 June in the Crown and Mitre Hotel, Carlisle. We have not held an AGM at the north of the Line for some years: we had booked it for 2020 but had to cancel due to Covid. It will be good to see our members from the North as well as welcoming our friends from the South end to the fine city of Carlisle.



Ribblehead Footsteps in Time

FREE EVENTS 2025

*By Alyson Cadman
ribblehead@settle-carlisle.com*

The Footsteps in time team have two new features during the 2025 seasons events and have added to our exhibits and walk routes.

To accompany the tale of the Ribblehead viaduct build, we now have a series of prints from the engineering drawings used by the viaduct Project resident engineer, Tony Freschini, during the 1989-1991 restoration. These are on display in addition to our growing collection of exhibits. Tony will be in the visitor centre to explain these to our many railway enthusiasts.

We have a welcome return of the outdoor theatre with a new production at St Leonards , Chapel le dale, during our Navy Hike and at Batty Green as part of the Shanty life and Railway builders event. The viaduct fossil hunt, firm favourite, will accompany Rocks and Rails on its new walk route.

Our first event of the season on April 23rd, St Georges Day, is The Lost Village of Thorns. This was a small community close to Ribblehead which largely relied on the drovers for the exchange and trading of goods and livestock which was on their journey along from north to south. Drovers had a 250 year industry which collapsed

with the coming of the railways which, following the earlier enclosure acts, forced many agricultural workers in to the towns. Many interesting features remain.

In June we have our first Limestone Botany which takes us through the nature reserve and Gauber pasture , passing the Viking settlement beneath Ingleborough and with views of the iconic viaduct. This is a relaxed discovery walk identifying the more familiar of our limestone wildflowers. The landscape itself is rugged limestone. We are joined by Leeds based botanical artist, Selina Thorp, who is a frequent visitor to Ribblesdale. Selina will talk about her work and join us in identifying the colourful flora.

Look out for more on The Lost Village of Thorns and Limestone botany in our next journal. The events leaflet will be available in March from stations along the line. Take the spectacular journey to Ribblehead and join us for a great day out.

- April 23rd **The Lost Village of Thorns**
- May 7th **Rocks, Rails & Viaduct Fossil Hunt**
- May 21st **Shanty life, Viaduct builders & Theatre**
- June 4th **Limestone Botany**
- June 18th **Navy Hike & Graveyard theatre**
- July 2th **The Lost Village of Thorns**
- July 18th **Rocks, Rails & Viaduct Fossil Hunt**
- July 30th **Limestone Botany**
- August 13th **Navy Hike & Graveyard theatre**
- August 27th **Shanty life, Viaduct builders & Theatre**
- September 10th **The Lost Village of Thorns**

Group bookings welcome



A New InterCity Route?

THE ALLPORT REPORT BREAKS COVER

David Owen gained exclusive access to ex-industry insiders. Their forensic assessment makes compelling reading.

Named after the visionary General Manager of the Midland Railway in the 1860s, the Allport Report, updated in 2024, sets-out a well-researched plan to exploit past upgrades to the Settle-Carlisle line as part of a time-saving InterCity route that would connect Leeds and other Yorkshire cities with Glasgow and, with an easy change at Carlisle, Edinburgh.

“Allport starts from the premise that the S & C is a genuine mainline and is in first class condition”

Allport expertise

Consisting of a time-served railway operator who had been heavily involved in the line’s upgrade in the 2000s, a signalling engineer and two train planners, the report’s authors certainly had the competence to assess the feasibility.

Input was received from former civil engineers on the route and the output of the group's work was peer reviewed by nearly twenty current or former railway people, each judged by the Allport team to be experts in their field. The result was a pretty packed forty-seven page report when completed. This can only be but a summary of it.

It follows that by exploiting the extensive upgrades carried out for coal traffic twenty years ago one can save considerable travel times over the current routes north. The disconnect between the line's low usage and its good condition/strategic place in the geography of the UK's railway has become increasingly topical in recent years. The route's 60mph permitted speed, fixed for over fifty years now, compares unfavourably with improvements over similar routes such as that between Crewe and Cardiff via Ludlow which has seen judicious increases in permitted speeds, also without resignalling.

In summary, the results of the study appeared to be positive. The group's conclusion was that the S&C route could, with very minimal additional capital work/infrastructure adjustment, become an 80mph route for passenger trains of all types (freight remaining at 60mph). This enhanced speed and the consequential reduction in journey times were found to be able to support a set of attractive 'InterCity' timings as well as allowing for enhancing the current stopping train service and supporting all current and predicted freight paths. The team found a few minutes of flexibility in the timings possible on the S&C itself. The desired non-stop run from between Skipton and Carlisle could be achieved in 78 minutes (an average of 67mph) but there was scope to add one, possibly two, intermediate calls (for example in evening

trains or those being used by the tourist trade) without adverse effects beyond the S&C.

Importantly the group did not have the background in nor access to current financial information to carry out a business case assessment. In line with the group's policy of handing the proposal over to service specifiers (Department for Transport and Transport for the North), such financial assessment was deemed to be for experts in these matters to undertake, the results to then be judged against any political stances on train service enhancement in the north.

Whilst some initial work was undertaken to assess likely demand during January 2020, with some encouraging results, Covid and then the succession of well-publicised challenges the railway industry has faced, has meant that Allport's initial early traction was lost and was not regained.

Easy wins - pathway to improvement

Compared to large infrastructure-led schemes elsewhere (such as East West Rail, Transpennine Route Upgrade, and HS2), realisation of this work would be swift indeed. Of a different order. The group's view is that the small list of relatively minor enabling works could be carried out simply and extremely cheaply compared with other rail and road projects. These are very low, and thus manageable, inputs indeed.

"There are now no through trains between Leeds and Glasgow via any route"

A fundamental objective of the Allport Group - against which it constantly tested the veracity of its argument - was in fact that any infrastructure enhancements

that would be suggested must be of low capital cost and take few engineering resources. Allport contends that minimal interventions are required and could be an extension to the day job for those responsible for the S&C. A chance to do things differently - and well. Once such feasibility was proven, the formal service specification and train planning tasks - undertaken elsewhere - could be confidently carried out too.

Specifically, quality paths exist for an 80mph two-hourly each-way 'express' service amongst the S&C local trains, through freight trains and amongst the stone trains that work south of Blea Moor, even taking into account planned growth of these services (including the then-hoped-for Horton Quarry traffic). These paths were proven south of Skipton too, though consequential but mitigatable alterations were seen as needed in platforming at Leeds and minor tweaks of freight south of Skipton.

The potential for improved services is striking.

The provision of a linespeed of 80mph (with a dip over Ribbleshead) rather than the current 60mph would enable:

- A Leeds-Glasgow through 'InterCity' timing of 3h32m both northbound and southbound against the current via-Carlisle (with changes) timing averaging 4h25m and the current with changes via-Berwick timing of 4h07m. There are now no through trains between Leeds and Glasgow via any route. The Allport team selected the West Coast Mainline (WCML) north of Carlisle, there being no paths off the G&SW between Kilmarnock and Glasgow.
- For a city with traditionally poor rail connections, a Bradford-Glasgow timing averaging 3h40m with one same-platform change (at Keighley or

Bingley), compares very favourably with today's via-Preston times in the 4h01m to 4h28m range and via-East Coast Mainline (ECML) at 4h42m. Southbound a Glasgow-Bradford one-change timing averaging 3h36m becomes possible compared with today's 4h53m via-Preston and 4h37m to 5h00m via ECML with three changes.

- Importantly it was found that the journey time improvements at 80mph provided for excellent paths on the rest of the route south of Skipton and north of Carlisle.
- Ability to commence such a service as four-hourly, building to two hourly (to the proven timetable paths) or to just commence at two-hourly. Hourly paths would not be possible. Soon after Allport was published two-hourly emerged as the more attractive proposal in resource utilisation terms.
- Ability to extend the 'intercity' service south of Leeds to and from Derby or Nottingham as a projection of current services. This is a good example of the potential role of Allport in wider changes on these parts of the network, issues that have perhaps gained prominence since the report was produced.
- Provision of an additional, credible, high-quality option for passengers should the West Coast or East Coast mainlines be blocked either in the plan or by mishap.
- Flexibility and resilience in allowing S&C or ECML routing decisions for
- Yorkshire/Scotland passenger traffic *flows* (not necessarily *trains*) in future. The forthcoming wholesale modernisation of the Preston-Carlisle section of the WCML may be a case in point.
- A standard two-hourly clockface local *stopping* train service along the S&C



without the current 3½ to 3¾ hour mid-day southbound gap and with potential for between five- and twelve-minute Carlisle-Leeds or Leeds-Carlisle journey time reductions and better commuting scope, dependent on rolling stock type/characteristics/any changes to local train stopping patterns (Allport didn't give a view on this).

- Protection of all current and predictable future through and part-route freight paths and shunting capability and to/from S&C locations along with steam or diesel charter train paths.
- No identifiable strategic clash

with any other railway scheme in northern Britain.

- Potential for continued use of inter-city rolling stock with maybe a decade of life left in it if policy elsewhere is for re-equipping other Train Operating Company (TOC) routes with bi-mode rolling stock.

This robustness of pathing is a direct result of the provision of extra signalling sections for the 2000s coal traffic, allowing for a roughly fifteen-minute headway between successive trains if needed.



Service provision

The group was purposely ‘TOC agnostic’ about which part of the industry would run any ‘InterCity’ services that might be introduced. It may be that, six years on, a specific TOC, arguably now requiring some significant re-specification of its service patterns and/or rolling stock, could emerge as the logical one to be remitted to provide services on this axis. With the Department for Transport, since Allport was produced, now having control of all English TOCs, the concept of a directing mind to overcome or amend franchise passenger service propositions or obligations is now very relevant.

Timetable study was detailed between Leeds and Glasgow with services then timed in outline south to Derby. Timings were based on a Class 185 DMU but Allport stressed that this was but a proxy (and a better proxy choice than the Class 45s plus coaches last used on the services)! The trainplan worked on the

110mph railway north of Carlisle with this 100mph rolling stock. 110mph-capable stock would help further.

Infrastructure considerations

The route defined for detailed infrastructure study was the double track conventionally signalled railway from 230m00c (just south of Hellifield) to 307m05c just south of Petteril Bridge Junction, Carlisle, a distance of 77 miles. This section of the route is entirely within the North-West and Central Region of Network Rail.

To support the customer-focussed benefits already listed, initial work, during mid to late 2018 and early 2019 was focussed on how feasible it would be to reduce journey times so as to support attractive journey times, good connections at Carlisle and efficient rolling stock and traincrew diagrams (workings). The ‘sweet spot’ was found to begin to exist if the linespeed between

Hellifield and the approaches to Carlisle could be raised from 60mph to 80mph. In one of those rare ‘alignments of holes in the Swiss cheese’, 80mph emerged as precisely the most easily obtainable maximum permissible speed for the route.

The approach taken was that structural engineering and track condition issues were merely ‘judged’ - with professional input - from developments over the previous fifteen years but signalling issues were looked at more closely. The background to this approach was that the condition of structures and track is dynamic in nature – only the line’s current Network Rail engineers can *really* know the current capabilities of the line. Conversely the team’s look at signalling was not about condition of such assets – it was to understand the installed capability of the equipment, a matter that doesn’t change with wear and tear or through maintenance input.

The fact that the S&C’s track has been re-laid, almost throughout, with stronger track for the heavy flows of coal during the 2000s was absolutely key. Current tonnages over the route are a mere fraction of those in the era of long distance coal traffic and the view from those consulted was that the 75mph capability designed in at the time (but ‘signed’ for just 60mph) could very readily support passenger trains at 80mph. Only one or two curves, we learnt from the peer review, might need a ‘design tamp’ to ease transition curve geometry. Doubtless the regular runs of the HST Measurement Train could prove this hypothesis one way or the other.

The team had found that along with the much lower annual tonnages over all sections of the route, but particularly those north of Blea Moor, the route’s structures and track were in excellent condition – the report cites seven freight

heavy-axleload speed restrictions on the Newcastle-Berwick mainline. There are none at all on the S&C.

The team’s signalling expert, then only just retired from his signalling design role, carried out a detailed assessment of every signal on the S&C. Braking curves, siting, sighting, gradients and distances were charted and with few exceptions every signal was compliant with an 80mph approach speed. (But not 85 or 90mph, this re-enforcing the ‘sweet spot/minimal intervention’ view of the team that 80mph was the achievable figure). There were only two northbound signalboxes where the track was deemed fit for 80mph but where the Distant (caution) signal was currently placed with inadequate braking distance towards that signalbox’s first stop signal. Southbound there were also just two. In all four cases the calculated compliant approach speed was 70mph. In each case the proposed intervention was to retain a short 70mph permitted speed on the approach or to move the Distant signal outwards the short distance required. For timetabling purposes the team assumed the former, cheaper, approach.

Level Crossings were the third major item to be assessed. Those which were unstaffed (not at staffed stations, not at level crossings with an adjacent signalbox)



were of course the focus here. For those at stations with ‘barrow crossings’ a mitigation for each was developed. Removal, being the best, has now applied at Horton-in-Ribblesdale for other reasons. At Ribbleshead the current crossing must, practically, stay. It is for Network Rail determination as to whether excellent sighting from it allows any change from the current 30mph. 50 or even 40mph over the viaduct would assist with the InterCity vision, allowing a further few minutes time savings and reduce the occupation of the single line. Allport by the way saw no timetabling need at all to re-double this section. The crossing at Dent station would be removed with a replacement non-disabled-compliant but walkable path through a new stepped gap in the coal road wall east of the station, the path running through the trees down the slope and emerging at new steps south of the Up platform shelter. The logic here is that a wheelchair user, having to use a car to get to the station, would far more likely keep on the main road and head for the compliant access Up platform at Garsdale. A derogation from parallel provision at Dent would be sought from the authorities on safety grounds. Finally, on level crossings, a programme of visiting every



“This transformational Northern Powerhouse Rail project will connect our towns and cities like never before, giving confidence to investors, as well as being at the heart of our decarbonisation strategy.”

Martin Tugwell, Chief Executive, Transport for the North

field-to-field/footpath crossing to assess its tenability in minimum train sighting terms at 80mph would be needed – a task one of the report’s authors had done many a time. Any mitigations needed (tree/undergrowth cut back etc) would then need completion before speeds were raised.

Allport concluded with a set of annexes, tabulating detailed timings between Glasgow and Derby via Settle, developing rolling stock diagrams to support these, giving views on crewing, detailing how the signalling assessments had been carried out and, as an add-on, looking at what Allport would enable apart from the main prize. Once such was the realisation that the timings of the new exactly two-hourly *stopping* service would allow ten-minute interchanges at Hellifield with any extended Manchester-Clitheroe trains, a subject at that time under consideration but now been dropped. Allport also gave a solution for reversing the Clitheroe’s without any infrastructure changes. Such a development would have given Clitheroe, thanks to the Midland Railway’s island platform design, step-free one-change access to trains two-hourly to and from the West Riding. A final annex suggested a signalling alteration at Blea Moor which would facilitate the stone trains reversing with reduced effect on the running of southbound through trains.



So, that's Allport. Were it to progress it would certainly need a proper financial and commercial assessment and a formal input from Network Rail. One wonders if, to coin a phrase from another railway long ago, 'perchance it is not dead but sleepeth'. The answer to that question really does lie with those who specify our train services. They are pretty preoccupied at the moment, to put it mildly, but at a time when value for money is a real concern and where there is a palpable view from the public that there is never any good news from the railway industry, one wonders whether there is a modern-day James Allport out there with the vision needed to at least take a proper look at it.

Editor's note: Northern Powerhouse Rail – will Abbott be the sequel?

The Transport for the North website is clear that Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) "is a major strategic rail programme, specifically designed to support the

transformation of the North's economy and efficient rail connectivity between the North's major economic centres, offering a faster and more reliable service across the entire region."

But that vision still relies on the WCML and the ECML as the only arteries connecting the north with Scotland from cities such as Leeds and Sheffield.

The Allport Report clearly demonstrates that the S & C could play a major role in improving connectivity south to north/north to south, as will NPR do in improving connectivity west to east/east to west.

Could Allport form the basis of a campaign by the Friends to convince the Government and the train operating companies that investment should extend to improving overall rail infrastructure? After all, the Government manifesto included a laser focus on enlarging the dividend from economic growth to all parts of the UK, acknowledging that the south-east corner has benefited disproportionately.

150 Years of Freight

ON THE SETTLE AND CARLISLE

By Mark Rand

2025 sees the 150th anniversary of through freight on the S & C – from its infancy in 1875 to the present day.

At the southern end of the line freight trains had been using it before 1875, especially quarry traffic in the Ribble valley where quarry owners had been quick to exploit its enormous potential. Construction of that southern end had depended on getting a line through as soon as possible to enable heavy construction materials, people and supplies to be brought to the huge construction sites. Evidence for this is emerging as the list of fatalities continues to grow. Firemen and engine drivers begin to appear quite early in the records, sadly often because of mishaps.

Ribblesdale's quarrying heritage

Nowhere was this quarry traffic more apparent than at Horton in Ribblesdale

where what is now the enormous Horton Quarry operated. The then Delaney's quarry producing limestone and lime dominated the railway itself and the activities at the nearby Horton station. Some say that four miles of railway lines extended into the quarry itself and its adjoining lands. The layout of sidings and access tracks varied over time.

One thing is clear though; it was decided in the 1960s that the quarry's rail connection would cease. Full stop and forever, it seemed. After all, the future of Britain's railways was becoming increasingly uncertain. Road transport in general and motorways in particular were the future. Mixed news for the quarry. Their output was needed for road building materials but every last tonne of it would have to go by local roads. The result was increasingly large quarry lorries, in Settle especially, causing serious local concern. There was an inevitability about this though. The infamous Beeching report foretold closure of the very railway on which the quarries



Horton quarry dwarfs the village of Horton.

had depended. After almost a decade of campaigning by FoSCL and others, reprieve came in 1989, by which time freight was all but dead on the line.

Nearby to Horton some 25 years later the quarries at Dry Rigg and Arcow reconnected to the railway. The business case was thin and the owners of Horton quarry, then Heidelberg Hansons, though well aware of that reconnection, decided not to reconnect. Nonetheless, FoSCL's Freight Friend and experienced railwayman, Ken Shingleton, saw Horton's reconnecting as one day virtually inevitable. He scrutinised Network Rail's plans and pleaded successfully for Horton's down line intermediate block signal to be positioned sufficiently far north of the obvious rail access to allow for that quarry's reconnection whenever the time was right. How very fortunate that was.

Freight on the S&C was started back in 1875 in quite a big way. Not only was there heavy bulk freight but also food, livestock, parcels and packages. Back in the day that

was referred to as 'goods' and the term used was 'pick-up goods' trains. Those trains could stop at all stations where there would be sidings and often very large goods warehouses. On the S&C these buildings were both large and ornate. Some have survived, such as Armathwaite, Lazonby, Appleby and Kirkby Stephen. Others, notably at Settle, were demolished in less enlightened days. At many stations there were cattle docks and milk platforms. In the Eden Valley especially it was said that milk could be on doorsteps in London next-day with the coming of the railway.

One aspect now almost forgotten is that goods trains had brakes on the locomotive and, via the guard, in a rear brake van but no automatic wagon brakes at all. Individually applied wagon brakes had to be set or 'pinned down' by the guard depending on the steepness of the gradients involved. Chain link loose couplings meant that trains could both lengthen and shorten slightly during journeys, creating an ever-present risk of

56049 rolls through Kirkby Stephen - one of the last bitumen transports between Haverton Hill & TotalEnergies plant in Preston. Photo courtesy of Chris Gee



violent snatching and runaways. Skill and awareness of speeds and gradients were required of engine men and guards who had access to the only braking efforts at each end of the train. Local stopping goods trains were limited to 25mph and through freight could comparatively fly by at 35mph. These slow trains, often running to no particular timetable, needed to have loop lines to enable faster traffic to overtake them. Yet the Midland Railway avoided the use of facing points so these were few and far between. The loops at Blea Moor were not installed until WW2.

The wonderful book *Rails In The Fells* by David Jenkinson has a great deal of detail about the S&C's freight fortunes which have proved difficult to compare as categories of goods have changed over time. For instance mineral traffic included 'coal, coke, limestone and lime' which accounted for half of freight traffic between 1876 and 1885. Overall S&C freight tonnage had peaked in the mid-1950s.

Opportunities & threats

The 1960s saw the arrival on the S&C of a named freight train, the Condor, which ran from Hendon to Glasgow and broke

“During the 1980s freight disappeared entirely from the S&C, so bad had its condition become during what was described at the time as its 'maintenance holiday'.”

very new ground. 27 double bogied flat wagons long, each carrying two containers of the day, so 54 in all, it was able to do 60mph on the S&C. Reliability of the Metropolitan Vickers Co-Bo locomotives shortened its S&C promise, until mining subsidence in Yorkshire caused diversion onto the WCML (West Coast Mainline) via Nuneaton. Another serious step backwards for the line was the closure of all stations apart from Settle and Appleby. An obvious blow for passenger traffic but the loss of goods facilities meant the absolute end of pick-up goods too. The decade saw the introduction of the Red Star Parcels scheme for packages to be carried on passenger trains. The scheme ran until the '90s and was a valuable component of the case to save the line from closure. The line was prominently in freight use with its 9F heavy steam locomotives for the anhydrite trains from Long Meg to Widnes.

The S&C achieved an important freight boost in the 1970s with the introduction of freight services from many parts of the UK including RWS (Registered Wagon Service) trains. Some of these were continuous brake fitted, and others were formed with braked wagons ahead of un-braked wagons with the guard at the rear. Hilly lines especially could only be used safely for un-braked trains if catch points existed along them. Catch points had been removed from the West Coast Main Line (WCML) as part of a then major upgrade and the S&C, with its catch points still fitted, became the only freight route available for such freight trains between England and Scotland. Up to the end of wagon load freight in the '80s, a couple of ABS (express Air-Braked Services) ran over the S&C, including Harwich Parkstone Quay to Glasgow.

During the 1980s freight disappeared entirely from the S&C, so bad had its condition become during what was described at the time as its 'maintenance holiday'. Freight, including power station coal, began to return to the line in the 90s but in 1997 the poor state of the track itself caused a serious derailment of a coal train at Dent Head.

Powering the nation

Power station coal went day and night over the S&C on the route from Hunterston on the Clyde and from the Ayrshire coalfield in Scotland, to the Northern and Midlands power stations, punishing the track. Those massive loads combined with the dire state of the up line especially meant that almost the entire line was renewed and signalling much upgraded. That traffic has since ceased leaving a main north-south route of hugely unused capacity. Some bulk freight remains: logs, cement, gypsum (now via Carlisle) and increasingly of course, limestone aggregate. So too railway lines,

sleepers, track aggregate and heavy track machinery. Even the occasional trainload of aviation spirit has been known.



Coal fired power station – now becoming a distant memory.

A positive future - the Horton quarry connection

If things go to plan, and so far this looks very likely, Horton quarry will be putting out daily trains, each of 20+ large wagons from April - an immense environmental relief for the Yorkshire Dales especially. Three Horton trains a day will be possible from 2026 when replacement stone crushers come on stream. Most will have to be hauled expensively uphill to Blea Moor before coming right back down again. That seems to be wildly at odds with net zero energy targets. Spectacular and noisy too as they labour up hill on full power from standing starts at the Ribblesdale quarries, only to return for much of the way under heavy braking. The cumulative costs in terms of money, energy, time and the environment must be colossal and ever increasing. Bi-directional entry and exit arrangements in the vicinity of Horton must be well worth considering.

2025, with its increasing extra loads, somehow represents a fitting tribute to the staggering amount of freight carried by the S&C for the past 150 years, including two world wars.



Opening the doors of the Citadel

MAJOR CHANGES FOR CARLISLE STATION

By David Owen

Carlisle Citadel station is a pretty grand affair and thanks to the £20m project known as the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, it's about to get even grander. Network Rail Sponsor, Hannah Clarke, kindly took time out of her busy schedule to update *Friends on Track* with the headline changes.

The scheme is jointly funded and developed by Carlisle City Council and Cumbria County Council working in partnership with Network Rail, Cumbria LEP and Avanti West Coast. Firstly, it's going to be a front to back turnaround. What you see today as the main entrance will become a pedestrianised area that will link the station seamlessly



**Right: Hannah Clarke,
Network Rail Sponsor**



Left: A moody looking Carlisle station - photo courtesy of M J Turner photography. The Citadel station was built in 1847 and was designed by William Tite, who was also responsible for the London Stock Exchange. In its heyday seven railway companies operated from the station.

from Court Square into the heart of the city via Botcher Gate. As before, you will exit facing the real citadel turrets (commissioned by no less than Henry VIII) providing a first visual spectacle onto the sandstone city.

George Square, bounded by James & Water Streets on the southwestern elevation, will become the new main entrance once the first phase is complete. This area has a large footprint including a wrinkly tin shed housing a Matalan that will be demolished to free-up space for public car parking and to reduce vehicular traffic around the current entrance. Hannah highlighted the opportunities for retail development in an area of the station which many would not be aware of, and which is currently devoid of any charm. As you look out from this entrance the development potential becomes clear.

Exiting from an attractive undercroft with vaulted sandstone arches, it doesn't take much imagination to see how this can transition into a rejuvenated and inviting space.

But you might want to linger in the station before experiencing the delights of the city's many fine sandstone buildings, castle and nationally renowned Tullie House Museum. That's because the first phase will convert a currently redundant grade 2 listed interior gem into a classy pub. The feature high ceiling and stately fireplaces will be enhanced by a smart bar and snug areas for that Brief Encounter assignation. Look forward to completion around September 2025.

The current glorious statement footbridge spanning the platforms is decidedly unfriendly for the less mobile – the gradient means that wheelchair users would need a tame Gladiator to push them up and over to catch the northbound trains. The style will be retained (think of the new Horton in Ribblesdale footbridge and you'll get the picture) but with lifts installed and the gradient modified to meet the specified maximum of 1:20.

The George Square redevelopment is still some way off but I'm grateful to Hannah for allowing *Friends on Track* to share her vision.

Championing National Parks



FOR EVERYONE

By Jamila Gaskin

A new project is aiming to give everyone the confidence to visit and enjoy our National Parks by addressing inequalities in accessing them, including for people from ethnically diverse communities.

The project vision is that everyone should be confident to visit our National Parks, and receive the health and well-being benefits of spending time in them, as well as gaining the knowledge to help share in protecting them.

‘Championing National Parks for Everyone’ is a joint project led by Peak District Mosaic, partnering with Derbyshire Dales CVS and the Peak District, North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authorities.

Jamila Gaskin, Project Officer within the Yorkshire Dales National Park, said: “Over the next 18 months, we will be organising monthly events for community groups from East Leeds, East Bradford and Keighley.

“We hope that these events will enable new and revisiting visitors to experience a range of activities in the Yorkshire Dales, promote a connection to nature, and build confidence in visiting independently.”

A central part of the project is recruiting and training 24 Community Champions from target communities. There will be three training programmes which will provide participants with the knowledge, expertise and confidence to independently lead safe and enjoyable visits for their communities in the Yorkshire Dales.

“As part of the project, we also hope to increase the diversity of our volunteer pool, and encourage individuals from our target areas to volunteer to support the delivery of the project and other activities within the National Park.”

Jamila

For more information on becoming a Community Champion, joining events or volunteering with the Championing National Parks for Everyone project, contact **jamila.gaskin@yorkshiredales.org.uk**



Left: High Seat from Ais Gill, photo courtesy of MJ Turner Photography

Mallerstang

RODNEY TOWERS JOURNEYS SOUTH ALONG THIS LESSER-KNOWN SECTION OF THE LINE

Never named as a dale, but geographically and frequently referred to being one, Mallerstang is something of an anomaly.

Topographically it's a deep trench carved out between high fells to east and west of closely similar altitudes - this is Mallerstang; a name that just has a Nordic ring about it. Wild, scenically spectacular, rather bereft of trees, scantily populated and largely unchanged in pattern since becoming a place of settlement for the invading Vikings.

It was previously part of Westmoreland, now a Civil Parish in Cumbria, and more recently drawn within the boundaries of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The uplands area of High Seat is the source of three major English rivers, the Eden, the Swale and the Ure. A place where a myriad of Gills and Becks are found on any OS maps of the area.

The origins of the name remain uncertain. The most plausible suggestions seem to evolve around it being derived 'from a combination of two languages;

Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line

Initially the Cumbric, Celtic or Welsh words *mel* or *moel-fre*, meaning bare hill, and then later during the Viking occupation, the addition of the Old Norse word *stong*, meaning a landmark.’ Bare hill and landmark would surely both add up to an appropriate description of Wild Boar Fell. There have been some fourteen different spellings of Mallerstang recorded over a period of some 800 years but of its origin, we will never really know for sure.

Mallerstang is strongly marked on early maps together with Mallerstange Forest, termed Forest not because of its tree abundance but because it was known as a Chase or open hunting area for the Barons of Westmorland. Mallerstang has long held established boundaries, the ridings of which were made annually such as in 1836 when these were recorded as enclosing some 8000 acres. When, in 1869, the Midland Railway Company began to build a mainline railway running through the length of Mallerstang, it must have felt

like a momentous invasion of privacy to the inhabitants of this erstwhile remote valley. The noise, turbulence and activities of an army of toiling navvies will have brought their own problems, but by 1876 the railway was complete.

My favourite section of the 72 mile S&C railway are the final five to six miles of steep ascent from Wharton, past Birkett Common, and on up to Ais Gill Summit, which, at 1169 ft, will ever have the distinction of being the highest point of any mainline railway in England.

Whilst standing at Ais Gill awaiting the first sight and sounds of a steam train rounding the fellside on its long upward climb through the Mallerstang valley, there is a sense of anticipation and pending excitement. Then suddenly it’s there – steam, white, blown by the wind and as the locomotive first comes into sight, there is this amazing spectacle of a steam train high up in these remote hills, working hard and continuing to climb.

Right: Sir Nigel Gresley passes Ais gill viaduct, photo courtesy of MJ Turner Photography





Above: Hell Gill Force taking water from Hell Gill Beck, photo courtesy of MJ Turner Photography

I don't know of any other location in Britain where the majestic background contributes so much to emphasise the height to which the train has so obviously reached. There is something poetic about the glorious revelation of such moment. From the footplate it might be the iconic structure of Ribbleshead with Ingleborough beyond or the superb distant vistas whilst traversing Dentdale, are each part of the S & C spectacular, but it is that first glimpse of a steam train climbing high out of Mallerstang which, for me, transcends all to become nothing less than an inimitable visual drama from another age.

After breasting the fell, the gradient eases a bit as the train continues the climb beneath Wild Boar Fell before

crossing the four arches of Ais Gill Viaduct, where the line curves left and the locomotive blasts under the road bridge to the usual delight of a phalanx of photographers. From first sight of the train breasting the fellside to the summit only takes about 3 minutes but the preparations of patient photographers can be well rewarded.

In final reflection, we must remain greatly indebted and ever grateful to all those persons who, in the 1980's, gave so much of their time towards successfully persuading Government to overrule the intentions of British Railways management to close the Settle & Carlisle Line.

“the line curves left and the locomotive blasts under the road bridge to the usual delight of a phalanx of photographers”

FoSCL today has the distinction of having been the focal point in helping preserve a railway line which epitomises the initiatives, enterprise and magnificent engineering achievements of the Victorian age. At the same time FoSCL must take credit for what has been achieved in the persistent marketing of this national asset which has contributed to the growth in passenger traffic.

Acknowledgements and information sources:

- The Old North
- Cumbria County History Trust
- *The History & Traditions of Mallerstang Forest.*
The Rev. W Nicholls
- *Old Cumbria Gazetteer*
- The English Place-Name Society

£6 million investment

HORTON STATION BRIDGES THE ACCESS & SAFETY GAP

by David Owen

Rory Kingdon is Network Rail's Scheme Sponsor for the new Horton in Ribblesdale station footbridge. He kindly agreed to tell *Friends on Track* the story behind one of the most significant recent projects on the Settle & Carlisle line.

When passenger safety and the need for ease of access combine, but may also conflict, the designer's maxim of form and function comes to the fore. Add the additional need to respect the existing "design language" of the S & C and Rory's team, including Mark Rothwell (Project Manager) and Richard Jakeman (Project Engineer), had the bar set high to deliver an outstanding solution.

Initial work started in 2017 with the consultation process – local residents, the planning authority and the Dales National Park were all involved. Horton in Ribblesdale station is a little unique in that the public right of way across the track means that walkers crossing the line far exceed the number of rail passengers.

Many thousands annually make their final descent off Ingleborough on the Three Peaks challenge walk – across the track. Rory pointed out that group walks are a particular consideration for rail safety. Imagine 2 or 3 walkers at the head of the party saying "clear" as they cross, but a train is potentially approaching at 60mph – will the walkers at the tail-end be oblivious to the impending danger? As Rory said, "it's a really high risk crossing for a really low patronage station."

But surprisingly perhaps, the current bridge with lift solution wasn't a foregone conclusion. Options included relocating a redundant footbridge from Pitlochry station, that was quickly dismissed as it would still not meet modern access standards for passengers of reduced

mobility. A barrier crossing was another option, to allow taxi access to the northbound side. Likewise, the option of an underpass was quickly dismissed due to topographical challenges of the dig and the need for lift access anyway. The alternative of a ramped bridge would negate the need for lifts, but the devil is always in the detail. It turns out that ramps cannot have more than 1:20 in height gain, which would have made the bridge far too wide in a sensitive location to provide the required incline. Nor was a standard Network Rail bridge going to cut the mustard – Rory was very much in favour of a design that was faithful to the

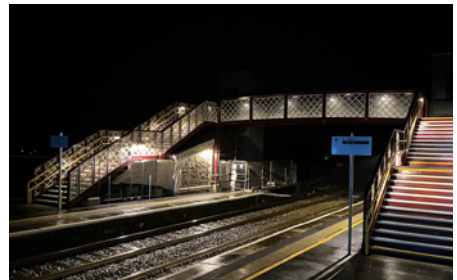
line’s heritage vernacular architecture.

Around 2018/19 the team consulted the Built Environment Accessibility Panel to check that the Equalities Act was adhered to – it confirmed the need to make the bridge accessible for people of reduced mobility. Result: a bridge and lift system befitting of a station not only for rail passengers, but also for the thousands of walkers who cross the line at the finish of the Three Peaks challenge. An additional safety measure was incorporated into the bridge design by adding a small deck from the Ingleborough side, enabling walkers to step onto the bridge platform first, rather than onto the platform.



Left: nearing completion – November 2024

Below: the footbridge is well-lit for night visitors



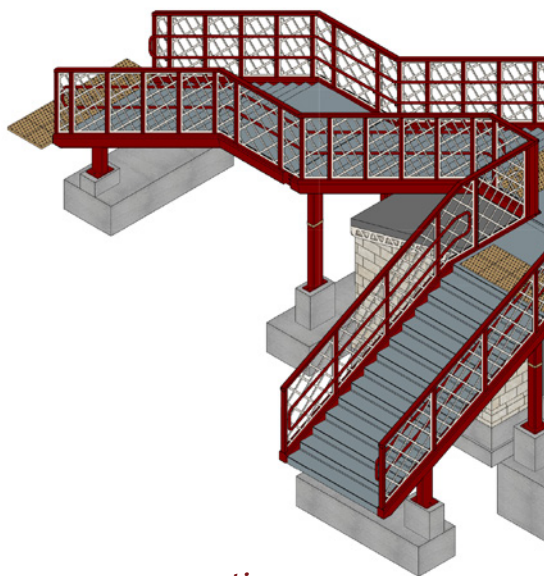
“We recognise that the Settle-Carlisle railway is unique in the UK from a conservation and heritage perspective.”

Rory Kingdon, Network Rail Scheme Sponsor.

Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line

The rather protracted consultation and design phase conspired with Covid (and the resulting inflation in construction materials) to add c30-40% to the costs. But Rory was able to tap into a cocktail of funding streams. Network Rail utilised their core renewals budget, as part of their level crossing risk reduction programme; the Dept for Transport contributed from their access fund and the local quarry contributed as well. This relates to the line being used twice a day by the quarry trains and travelling at only 3mph, thereby occupying the line for c5 mins. This highlighted one particular hazard scenario where a 3 peaks walker could be trying to hit a particular finishing time, then might try to walk around or even through the trains themselves. Not to be recommended.

Rory went on to say that although the design was bespoke, it will provide a template for “conservation areas and listed stations” across the network. For example, Ulverston has a similar access problem where the Horton design could be used, and may well be next in-line.



“The community accepted the project, were very supportive of the team on site and the work that they were doing.”

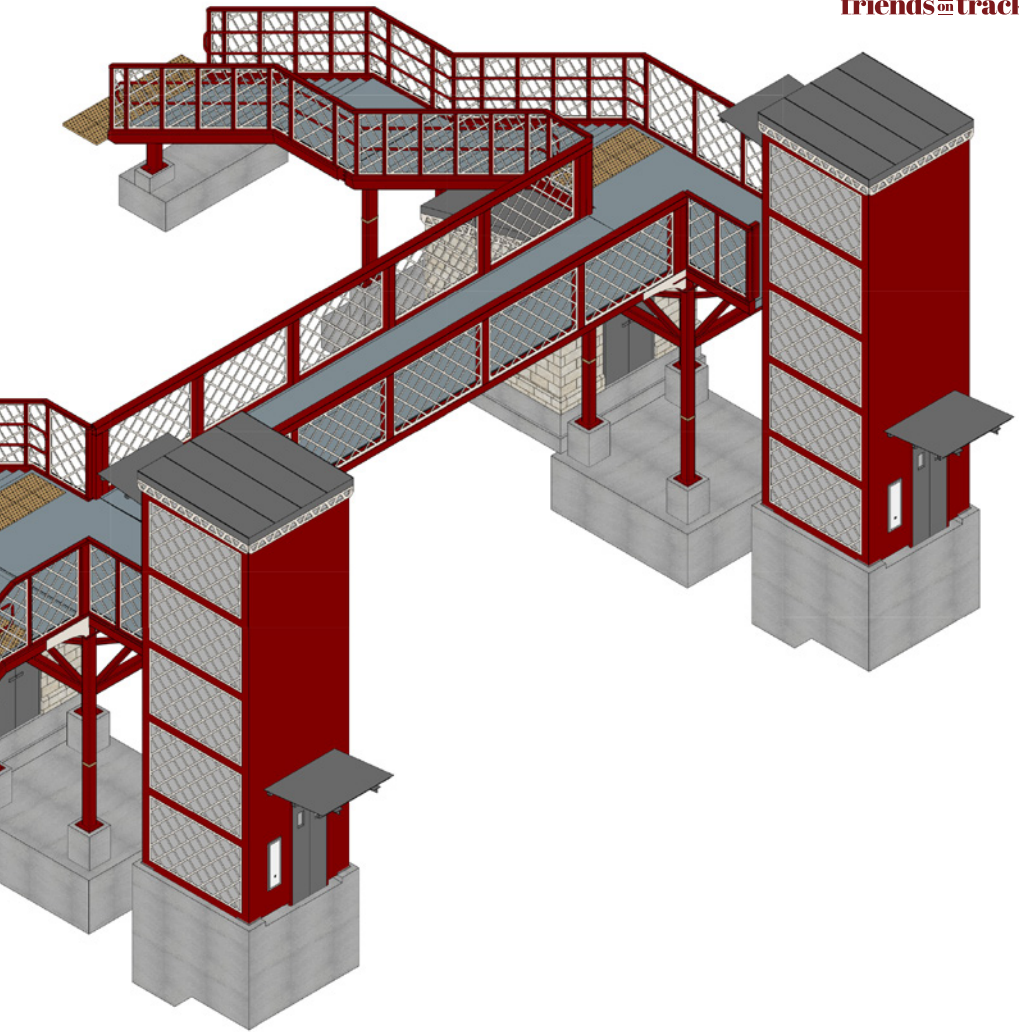
Mark Rothwell, Project Manager

Richard Jakeman commented on the fabrication carried out by Harrison Engineering. They were presented with the design but had the opportunity to suggest revisions which could identify both cost savings and any opportunities for a more streamlined build process.

In terms of project status for the S & C, Rory said “it is one of the most significant changes for the S & C for quite some time.” The last significant one “being the Arcow quarry rail connection, around a decade

ago.” There are also long-term commercial implications in that quarry traffic has increased on the line which is only a good thing to help ensure its continued viability.

Overall, it was very much an “internal delivery team” within Network Rail but focussed on Carlisle staff to deliver. Mark is pretty sure this is the first time that they have delivered a project of this size. Mark was full of praise as “the standard of tradecraft that they’ve been able to source and undertake has been excellent



and he's really happy with how they've performed. It's evident when you look at the stonework, the walls that they've built... all the details were finished on site by hand." That helped to reduce cost.

Mark also added that "the community accepted the project, were very supportive of the team on site and the work that they were doing. It's a credit to them that they've accepted it, as well as making them feel welcome in the community. The Carlisle team would like to convey

how gratifying that is as the company delivering something for them." Well done Horton in Ribblesdale.

Rory concluded by saying, "the designs look good but the actual quality of the fabrication, and the way it fits in with the station, makes it look like it's been there for years."

By the time you read this, the footbridge will be fully functional with stairs; whilst the lifts are due be commissioned by April 2025 at the earliest.

Journey

TO A WILDER FUTURE



Ellie Parker, Wild Ingleborough Community Engagement Officer (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust), gives an insight into what to look out for as Winter moves on.

Launched in summer 2021, Wild Ingleborough is a multi-partner, landscape-scale conservation project creating a wilder future for this part of the Yorkshire Dales.

Step off the train at Ribbleshead and look west towards one of the most iconic views in the Dales – the three summits of Park Fell, Simon Fell and the unmistakable flat-top of Ingleborough itself. On this corner of Ingleborough sits Natural England's Ingleborough National Nature Reserve, and several smaller nature reserves owned and managed by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, which in 2021 joined forces with four other conservation organisations to form the Wild Ingleborough Partnership. Fragmented woodland, limestone grassland, traditional hay meadows and peat bogs are being restored by dedicated volunteers, with a vision for Ingleborough where nature and people are thriving. Connecting and extending this mosaic of habitats means wildlife can move and

expand freely through the landscape, and the unique biodiversity of this mountain stands a better chance of flourishing in an uncertain climatic future.

Conditions on Ingleborough's exposed slopes can be punishing in winter, but hardy souls who do venture up here won't regret it. Spectacular limestone vistas, dramatic fast-changing skies and low winter sun make this one of the best times of year for photography. Limestone pavement provides the perfect habitat

Below: Redwing courtesy of Willerby Richard Willison.



Right: Barn Owl, photo courtesy of Russell Savory.



for thorny scrub – along its edge you will likely see flocks of fieldfares and redwings feasting on the abundant hawthorn and blackthorn berries.

Take a walk on the lower slopes of Park Fell in the morning or late afternoon and you might encounter a barn owl or two, ghost-like, hunting for small rodents across the cattle-grazed pastures. Though normally nocturnal hunters, the

“You might also meet the herds of red poll and belted Galloway cattle”

pressures of winter force them to become crepuscular (dawn- and dusk-flying) or even diurnal (day-flying) as they seek out the increasingly elusive food sources.

You might also meet the herds of red poll and belted Galloway cattle who range across this part of the reserve: hardy native breeds which are perfectly happy outdoors all winter, their only supplementary feed being local hay when there’s snow on the ground. Their grazing habits encourage the

specialist wildflowers that thrive here in spring and summer.

Those who make it right to the summit, especially on colder days, may be lucky enough to meet snow buntings. Elusive fluffballs, these winter visitors from Scandinavia and the Arctic move in flocks, and can be found feeding on the ground in the highest parts of the Dales. With around 10,000 wintering birds in the whole of the UK, they are not a common sight and it’s a rare treat to come across them.

But perhaps the best thing of all about a winter walk on Ingleborough is the solitude! Most walkers use the well-trodden Three Peaks paths or the popular route up from Ingletton, but the path up from Ribbleshead is far quieter – in winter, you might even be lucky enough to have it to yourself.

To find out more about Wild Ingleborough visit www.ywt.org.uk/wild-ingleborough-vision-future or follow Wild Ingleborough on facebook/Instagram.

Passenger Assist

UPDATE FROM NORTHERN ACCESSIBILITY USER GROUP (NAUG)



By Jill Tiernan, Access & Inclusion Director

Travelling by train can be daunting and frustrating; and I am not talking about train delays and cancellations. I am referring to people who are anxious, unsteady when walking in crowds, have hidden and visible needs, poor or limited vision, use a walking aid, wheelchair or scooter or have children in pushchairs and so on. All these factors can make a journey extremely stressful.

To achieve commonality of Passenger Assist, Northern and other train operating companies, (known as TOCs) are working collectively to ensure rail travel is accessible to all, with the aim to improve passenger confidence levels. As part of the Passenger

Assistance offer, train companies not only offer support negotiating getting on and off a train, but also offered in assisting customers in finding a seat, taking customer luggage from station entrances to departure platform and transferring between trains. For information: the current luggage limit being two large suitcases and a small item per person.

Over the past months Northern staff have received training on how to support customers with their journey requirements and establishing new meet and greet sites at stations. These are distinctive in their black and yellow (see image). For those passengers with mobility restrictions, rail companies offer Step Free Access Maps and free priority seating cards for customers with hidden and visible needs and 360-degree



visual images of stations, which assist with planning your journey. This has been undertaken by the Bentham Line so take a look on their web site: thebenthamline.co.uk We are still working on this 360-degree visual application for Leeds-Settle-Carlisle line.

So, what does Passenger Assistance include?

- Assistance at our stations to access platforms and trains. Support in transferring from train to train.
- Alternative accessible transport when our stations or trains are inaccessible.
- Clear, consistent and up to date customer information.
- A range of discounts to reduce the cost of travel for disabled people and their companions through rail cards reducing your ticket price by 33%.

You can book assistance

- When you book your tickets online
- Phone: 0800 138 5560

- Text Relay: 18001 0800 138 5560
- Mobile/App
- Email: assistance@northernrailway.co.uk

More recently Northern Rail have been consulting with users through the Northern Accessibility User Group (NAUG) to develop and deliver more assist points and requests for the benefit of all passengers. Northern's Passenger Assistance Team is on hand to help people discuss and plan their journey seven days a week (excluding Christmas).

Whether you have a top tip when travelling by train or have experienced good or poor service with Passenger Assistance, please share with jill.tiernan@settle-carlisle.com

Northern is the second largest train operator in the UK with 2,500 services a day to more than 500 stations across the North of England

Railway 200: celebrating 200 years of Railway

PLUS 150 YEARS OF FREIGHT AND PASSENGER SERVICES ALONG THE SETTLE-CARLISLE LINE (S&C)

2025 sees a 12-month celebration of the 200th anniversary of the modern railway across the nation. Railway 200 was launched on the first day of 2025 at midday with many heritage lines: more than 50 railways and up to 200 locomotives participating in a 'whistle up'.



By Jill Tiernan, Access & Inclusion Director

Over the next eighteen months there will many events and activities across the UK - it's a great opportunity to inspire a new generation of rail travellers as well as promoting opportunities to work in the industry. Described as a national and international milestone, Railway 200, will reference the past but more importantly encourage investment in a sustainable rail future. For further information and to keep a track of events go to railway200.co.uk.

And over the other side of the Dales, the Stockton & Darlington Railway will mark its rightful place in history as the first public railway to use steam, beginning 27th September 1825. For more information, or to sign up to a newsletter, go to sdr200.co.uk. As part of *Bradford 2025: Year of Culture*, Keighley and Worth Valley are hosting the London production of the Railway Children on the very line where it was filmed.

The S&C celebration will cut across 2025/26 as we acknowledge transportation

of freight along the line from August 1875 with passenger services some nine months later on the 1st May 1876.

We are planning a range of events and activities in association with communities along the line, including heritage exhibitions and promoting volunteering opportunities. We're keen to identify 150 rail ambassadors of all ages to promote the line for future generations to enjoy with photographic competitions and family activities. That will include working in conjunction with local groups, schools and communities.

For further information visit www.foscl.org.uk to find out more, register your interest, share ideas. We will be posting information on Facebook and providing updates within the Members magazine.

For further information contact jill.tiernan@settle-carlisle.com

Buses

THE VITAL INGREDIENT IN TRANSPORT INTEGRATION

By John Carey
john.carey@settle-carlisle.com

Connectivity is of increased importance as the railway enters a new era of Great British Railways and the pending Bus Services Act makes its way through parliament.

Once implemented it will increase the powers of local authorities to take control over bus routes, timetables, connections and fares as well as affording some protection to lifeline services particularly in rural areas. Hopefully the necessity for transport integration will come to the fore. Hitherto, it has not been the priority of either the railway or the commercial bus operators. We are taking the opportunity to revitalise our detailed study on the subject and, hopefully, there will be more to report on this shortly.

£1.1 billion government support package

Late in 2024 the government introduced a further package of measures to support bus services totalling £1.1billion. The package included ongoing support for the single fare cap, increased to £3 for the duration of 2025, and support for the local authority bus services improvements often referred to as BSIP. Obviously, this is welcome news but a fraction of the roughly £10 billion annual support for rail in England. Meanwhile both of the main

local authorities are working through their transport plans. Naturally, we urge that any rural transport strategy should include the railway; it is already there and largely paid for. Several operators have ceased to exist in recent years plus many drivers have moved to the HGV industry particularly during Covid. Additionally, there are onerous requirements now placed on the operators of public service vehicles in that full sized buses have to be fully accessible.



Snapshot of current service provision

Below is a list of bus companies servicing the Dales and surrounding areas. Given the regular changes to service provision and timetables, please check the following websites for details:

- **Dales Bus** www.dalesbus.org
Skipton station/Ilkley/Malham routes.
- **Lonsdale Buses** www.klch.co.uk
Skipton station/Settle station/
Ingleton/Kirkby Lonsdale/
Lancaster routes.
- **Western Dales Bus**
www.westerndalesbus.co.uk
Dent station/Sedbergh/
Kendal routes.
- **Cumbria Classic Coaches**
www.cumbriaclassiccoaches.co.uk
Barnard Castle route.
- **The Little White Bus**
www.littlewhitebus.co.uk
Garsdale station/Hawes routes.
- **Stagecoach**
www.stagecoachbus.com
Kirkby Stephen station/Sedbergh/
Appleby/Penrith routes.

Full steam ahead

FROM CITY OF CULTURE TO THE SETTLE CARLISLE LINE

A special steam train will be pulling out of Bradford, the City of Culture 2025 on Saturday, May 31st for a special journey along the Settle Carlisle line to Carlisle.

Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company have launched their exclusive charter steam train, The West Yorkshireman and has requested the iconic LMS 7P Scots Guardsman for this journey.

The charter is a triple celebration of Bradford's City of Culture status, 200 years of passenger rail transport and the 150th anniversary of the Settle Carlisle line opening.

There will be a steam-hauled departure from Bradford Forster Square, with pick-

ups at Shipley, Bingley, Keighley, Skipton, and Settle.

Following the journey along "the most scenic line in Europe" according to *Lonely Planet*, there will be free time to explore Carlisle's historic landmarks, including Carlisle Castle, the Cathedral, and Tullie House Museum before returning to the train for a scenic return via the West Coast Main Line and the Bentham Line.

Tickets are available for Premier Dining, which includes a full English breakfast and a four-course dinner served at your seat - due to time constraints, this option is not available from Settle. There is also First Class, which includes morning tea or coffee with breakfast roll and sweet treat, plus an afternoon tea service, and Standard Class with reserved seating.

Tickets go on general sale via the Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company website (<https://settle-carlisle.co.uk/the-west-yorkshireman/>) on Wednesday, 29th January, at 10 am.



MAKE A STAY OF IT at KIRKBY STEPHEN STATION

Enjoy the unique experience of staying on a station beside this iconic railway.

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The Settle and Carlisle Railway Trust is a Registered Charity, no 702724.

Service Performance Review



By John Carey
john.carey@settle-carlisle.com

Services over the last few months were showing some signs of improvement following the seasonal disruption of the autumn leaf fall from late October to early November, with cancellation rates ranging between 1.67% and 3.26% of scheduled services. This is slightly lower than the remainder of the Northern network.

Weather eh? Sometimes you just can't beat it

Unfortunately, the dreaded weather events seem to be ever more prevalent these days with flooding a major problem. We were also impacted by snow fall which affected services for different reasons on a couple of weekends, including early January. In this case many crews simply could not get to work.

Train crews and carriage allocation – same old, same old?

Train crew resource issues would appear to be the cause of a number of cancellations. Whilst we are advised that recruitment has taken place, the evidence would suggest that there still isn't sufficient spare capacity in the system to cope with staff sickness, absenteeism and other factors. Whilst we do suffer the odd cancellation, as irritating as it might be, our problems are considerably less than elsewhere.

We were advised that the winter carriage allocation would be applied as from 15th December until just before Easter 2025. Therefore, services would be largely a mixture of 2 and 3 car formations. However, the reality was that the reduction had been applied significantly before this date and probably from around mid-October. On the face of it, we would accept that this is a sensible economy for the lesser used winter period, provided always that additional stock can be quickly allocated for periods of anticipated higher ridership. Unfortunately, as we know, the railway is often inflexible and unable to respond to sudden increases in demand.

Next generation trains - 2028.

We are now told that the next generation of trains are not going to start to materialise until after 2028. These are likely to be multi-mode and invitations to tender are about to be issued shortly whilst consultations are ongoing as to the internal specifications. We would hope to be involved but would argue that there is a strong case for stock dedicated to our line. Basic requirements should be facility for reservations, seats aligned with windows, adequate cycle and luggage space, two toilets and adequate space for the trolley. We could go on. The line has specific needs which are different from the commuter lines which Northern normally operate.

Membership

APPLICATIONS AND RENEWALS FOR 2025-26

We are delighted to share that we have even more membership benefits and that rates of subscription remain unchanged. Membership 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 2026. A renewal reminder will also have been 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 ever reducing personal services offered by the Banks, most 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 18% of our members and no action is required if you have a valid standing order in place
- **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 'FoSCL' 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

Enhanced Membership Benefits

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

Friends' membership benefits now include:

- 10% Discount* in our shops at Settle and Appleby Stations and via our web shop <https://shop.foscl.org.uk> by using the discount code VOLFOS23
- 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 Ribblesdale 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 by quoting FOSCL10
- Optional Dales Railcard currently offering 1/3 discount off fares on the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle, Leeds-Morecambe lines and Manchester-Clitheroe-Ribblesdale (The Yorkshire Dales Explorer)
- Quarterly magazine featuring news of the line, available as traditional printed paper copy, or in digital format direct to your email

*Discounts are available along the line on production of your valid membership card

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, simply download your card from <https://membermojo.co.uk/foscl> or by contacting the membership office below.

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
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

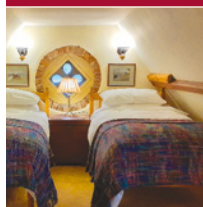
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