



# Station adopters newsletter

Summer 2024



**E M R**



## Hello and welcome to the Summer Edition of the EMR station adopters newsletter

As always, I wanted to start with a thank you for your continued support and commitment to the stations you adopt. This week is National Volunteers Week, and it's great to be able to send you this newsletter to celebrate all the hard work and dedication that you bring to our stations.

The past six months has been incredibly busy, and I was delighted to join some of you at the Community Rail Awards in Swansea in March. It is always such an inspiring evening, and a special mention must go to adopters at Longton who won Lead Bronze for the country, and adopters at Boston, Great Coates, Kidsgrove, Tutbury & Hatton and Blythe Bridge for gaining Silver in the "It's Your Station" category. It was also great to see our Routes of Remembrance project come runner up in the Best Community Engagement category.

In May, to launch Community Rail Week, I joined children from Ambergate Primary School for a trip up the Derwent Valley Line CRP to make

bee bug hotels. Some of you will remember these from the conference. We had great fun helping the year 6 pupils, who added them to Ambergate Station and their school grounds to help the bees.

In this Newsletter you will also find interesting updates from our Fleet (page 13-14) and Infrastructure & Property teams (page 15) as well as news from our Community Rail Partnerships and a station adopter wall of fame – can you spot yourself?

Finally, I would like to thank you for all the efforts you continue to put into your stations. I look forward to seeing some of you again at the Station Adopters Conference later this year.

Best wishes,

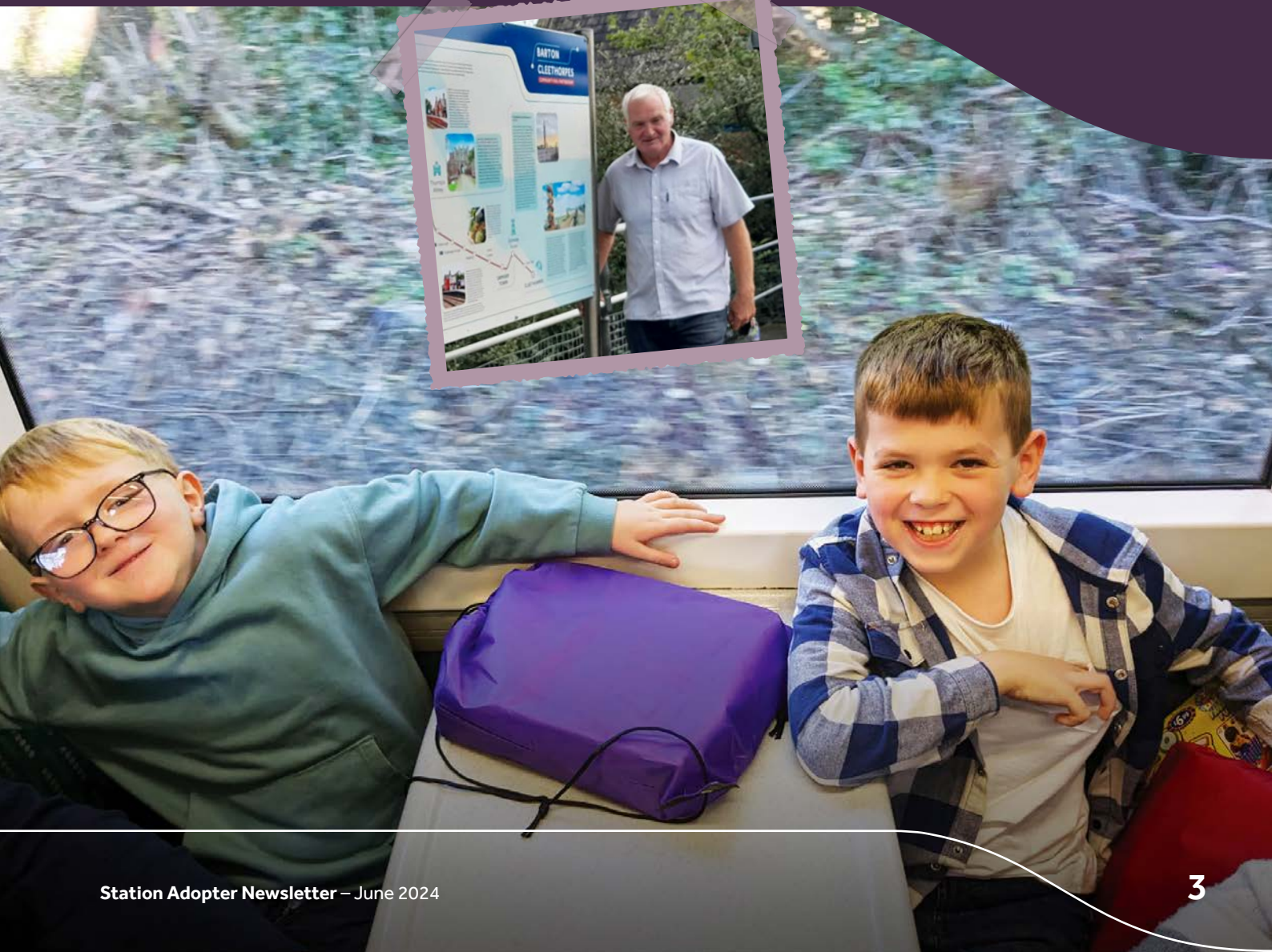
**Will Rogers**  
**Managing Director**

## Barton Cleethorpes CRP Update

We have had a very up and down year here at the Barton Cleethorpes CRP. I'm relatively new in post, having started in July 2023 after the previous Community Rail Officer retired. I quickly realised I had a lot to learn and began by getting to know our wonderful volunteers. They were in the process of putting up new tourist information boards at all stations and replacing some of the old worn planters with new sturdy ones. The new planters are sustainable and made from recycled plastic with large water reservoirs to ensure a consistent and appropriate level of water and less water wastage. EMR has supported me enormously with these two projects, ensuring the boards were erected correctly and providing funding for colourful planting. We couldn't have done this without their help or the hard work and dedication of volunteers.

On a sad note, at the start of 2024 we received the very sad and unexpected news of the passing of our chairman of 16 years, Mike Gathercole. We have all been devastated by this news and it took a while to get things back on track. The CRP is planning a memorial for Mike with a plaque at Goxhill Station where he was the station adopter.

As well as work to improve the look of the stations, we have undertaken rail safety events on the train, giving out "Arlo's Adventures" books to families with young children, and at schools in partnership with EMR and Network Rail. This work has reached over 2,000 children, young people, school staff and parents. This, along with the launch of our new website, is ensuring rail safety messages are being spread far and wide.



*Celebrating the life of Chad Varah who was from Barton and began the charity, Samaritans*

Website - [www.bccrp.co.uk](http://www.bccrp.co.uk)

**BARTON CLEETHORPES**

### Samaritans 70th Anniversary

Chad Varah was born in Barton-upon-Humber in 1911. He was an Anglican Priest and social activist. After attending the funeral of a 14 year old girl who took her own life he said "little girl, I never knew you, but I promise you that you have changed my life" and the idea of the Samaritans was born. On 2nd November 1953 he took the first call from a member of the public on the Samaritans Helpline.

On Thursday 2nd November 2023 at 10:30, Chad Varah and the 70th anniversary of the start of the Samaritans, will be remembered with a short ceremony at Barton Railway Station. All welcome to commemorate this amazing local man and outstanding service.

**SAMARITANS**

Call free day or night on 116 123

**EMR**

**THORNTON ABBEY.**

Other recent projects have included: celebrating the life of Chad Varah who was from Barton and began the charity, Samaritans, 70 years ago; celebrating 175 years of the line from Barton to New Holland in partnership with Barton Heritage, the Ropewalk and Friends of the Barton Line (FBL); and working with FBL to produce hard copies of our timetable requested by many of our older residents who find using the internet difficult. And of course, we can't forget the Santa and Easter specials with Goxhill and New Holland Parish Councils on board the train giving local children gifts at Christmas and Easter Eggs at Easter.

At the moment I am working on our Annual Report as our AGM will take place in July.

This report will be reflected in two new projects in the coming months: replacing all the BCCRP notice boards at EMR stations and redeveloping our walking and cycling routes. These will all be branded identically so that BCCRP is consistently identifiable along the line.

**Dawn Branton**  
**Community Rail Partnership Officer**

## Poacher Line CRP Update

The summer is upon us and everyone on the Poacher Line has been busy bees. We have been re-accredited by the DfT for 2024-2025, a great achievement for all involved. We attended the Community Rail Awards in March, accompanied by some of our Boston Station adopters as they had been shortlisted for a Silver award in the 'It's Your Station' category for their fantastic project at Boston station.

We have collated and printed hundreds of walk booklets which focus on eight of our stations along the line. They provide historical snippets of information and an opportunity to follow a route for loop walks from the station. We want to encourage everyone to get involved, to go for a walk and take an hour out of their day to discover the great outdoors. We have teamed up with Visit Lincolnshire to promote our walks as it is great for mental health and wellbeing as well as a great form of exercise.

We have some creative projects and events coming up this summer including a Come and

Meet Us event where you can also Meet the Manager as part of Community Rail Week at Sleaford Station on 24 May, an action day at Ancaster Station and working with Learn Live to deliver our Rail Safe Friendly programme. The CRP is passionate about working with schools and making an impression on young lives about the importance of rail safety and using rail in the correct way. We are going to be working with 20 schools along the Poacher Line at all ages from primary through to secondary, guiding their journey through the programme. The students will have a chance through their learning to earn achievements and certificates for their school. The CRP will also visit the schools to deliver rail safety talks and engage with students to discuss projects at stations and how they can contribute to the world of rail. We are also taking part in the North Kesteven Walking Festival on 22 June, a six-mile walk from Ancaster to Sleaford Station to join in with the Riverlight Festival held in Sleaford.



*Our station adopters have been working hard to keep all our stations in tip-top condition over the hard cold winter months.*

The CRP is working closely with local groups to bring together and foster relationships. We recently visited Heckington Station Museum and Heckington Windmill to begin our journey for the ultimate Heckington historical experience. We are also joining forces with Sleaford Climate Action Network to promote sustainable travel in and around Lincolnshire and will be joining them for an event at Navigation House in June. We are working hard on the restoration of the running in board at Rauceby which has deteriorated over the years. We are hoping to bring it back to its former 1920s glory as a historical focal point at a beautiful station.

Our station adopters have been working hard to keep all our stations in tip top condition over the hard cold winter months. Adopters at Wainfleet are paying homage to the local

brewery with a creative take on a bug hotel. The Bottesford adopters are getting their trowels out to create a wonderful garden area for the local wildlife and putting their heads together to design history boards for the station. Aslockton Primary School is enthusiastically incorporating station planting and artwork designs into its upcoming curriculum.

We would also like to acknowledge our Poacher Line Chair, Peter Roberts, who celebrated a big birthday this year. We would like to thank him for his continued support, enthusiasm and love for the Partnership. Without him we wouldn't be where we are today.

**Gin Fidlin**

**Community Rail Partnership Officer**

*Boston Station adopters had been shortlisted for a Silver award in the 'It's Your Station' category!*

# Derwent Valley Line CRP Update



It has been a busy few months on the Derwent Valley CRP. All the stations along the route are now busy preparing their planters and gardens for the summer planting, once again creating floral displays that EMR passengers as well as members of community can enjoy.

There have also been three launch events of note since the last DVL CRP Update.

In January, an impressive 3.4 square metre artwork depicting the Midland Railway Compound Class 1000 steam locomotive was unveiled on Matlock Station footbridge. This colourful piece of art has transformed the pedestrian approach to Matlock Station.

The Midland Compound would have been a common sight in Matlock until the 1960s. A complementary plaque installed beneath the artwork tells the story of the steam engine



alongside the story of the creation of present-day Matlock. The plaque features two maps – an 1899 map showing the layout of Matlock Station in its Victorian prime with and a 2024 map showing how much has changed in the last 125 years.

The project was delivered by Matlock Civic Association with grant funding from Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Matlock Town Council, as well as grants obtained by the Derwent Valley Line CRP from EMR and Community Rail Network

In March we joined school children from the two primary schools in Wirksworth at the launch of a new walking booklet celebrating their local history, environment, and the railway.

Pupils from Wirksworth Infants School and Wirksworth Junior School along with invited guests followed a new two-mile Tracks, Trails and Trains walking route around the town and surrounding countryside.

Guests who joined the walking launch included Cllr David Taylor, Civic Chair of Derbyshire County Council along with representatives from Community Rail Network, Derwent Valley Line CRP, EMR, Ecclesbourne Valley Railway and Wirksworth Heritage Centre.



The new walking guide features lots of interesting activities for children to take part in both on the walk itself and at home with their families. There are places to spot along the walk, unusual words to discover linked to the walks, nature challenges and creative activities to enjoy including a Milk and Honey Cookie recipe. Throughout the walking booklet children learn about railway safety including how to be a Rail Safety Champion and they can take part in the Tracks, Trails and Trains Rail Safety 'board' game.

The Tracks, Trails and Trains booklet is also displayed on four information panels located around the town: outside the two schools, at Wirksworth Station and Wirksworth Heritage Centre, enabling the walk to be enjoyed by local residents and visitors who can access the guide online.

The project has been jointly led by Wirksworth Infants School and Wirksworth Junior School with the walking booklet created by Jo Poyser, Head of Wirksworth Infants School.

The booklet, information panels and branded drink bottles have been funded through community rail grants obtained by the Derwent Valley Line CRP from grants from EMR and Community Rail Network. Ecclesbourne Valley Railway and Wirksworth Heritage Centre have also provided funding for the panels at their venues.

In April we celebrated the unveiling of the new mosaic at Belper Station. The mosaic was created by more than 50 local people across

15 workshops, led by local artist Richard Bett and supported by Belper Station gardening volunteers and EMR. Each participant worked on an A4 section of the overall design to make an impressive 4m wide mosaic which proudly welcomes passengers into Belper.

The artwork is made with offcuts of DecoMark, normally used to make road markings and is an innovative way of using pieces of this durable product that would otherwise have ended up in landfill. It replaces a previous artwork by Belper artist Christine Thomas and is closely based on her design to honour her original idea.

The first phase of the installation of the mosaic was completed last autumn and the finishing touches completed earlier this year. At the unveiling event, many of the volunteers who made a piece of the artwork joined artist Richard Bett and representatives from Belper Town Council, Community Rail Network, Derbyshire County Council, Derwent Valley Line CRP and EMR, who provided funding for the project.

The impressive mosaic forms part of a variety of projects that Belper Station gardening volunteers have initiated since they adopted the station over 12 years ago. The group maintain six garden areas around the station, implementing a sustainable and eco-friendly approach which includes managing a wildflower meadow.

**Al Morley**

**Community Rail Partnership Officer**



# North Staffs CRP Update

The Blythe Bridge station adopters have produced a striking artwork panel for the Caverswall Community Art Trail. They worked with the Caverswall Creative Hub based at The Auctioneers Arms in Caverswall. The collage features parts of the station and its gardens, both now and in the past, such as the signal box. A central railway line shows all the stations along the North Staffs Line between Crewe and Derby.

We had a very successful evening at the Community Rail Network Awards in Swansea. In the Its' Your Station category, Kidsgrove, Tutbury & Hatton and Blythe Bridge were awarded Silver. Longton, who were in the Bronze category, came away with Lead Bronze, the best station in this category in the whole country. And that wasn't the only award for the stations on the route. A few weeks later, Alsager won the Community Category in the Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards for the Memory Café on a Train event. The photo shows Councillor Rod Fletcher, station adopter Trevor Cotton, and dementia friendly lead, Kath Reader at the town's Memory Café.

On 23 April we held our first Meet the Manager Morning at Kidsgrove Station. This was an opportunity for rail users and community members to ask their questions of train and bus operators. EMR was represented by Dan Robson and Heidi Robinson, Project Managers for the Kidsgrove Station Redevelopment project, Mel Boler, Station Manager, and Alexa Stott, Community Ambassador. Dan and Heidi were able to share the latest designs for the station with some very interested passengers. We were also joined by some of the station adopters who took great pleasure in showing people around their beautiful garden areas. Two local bus company operators also joined us for the morning, sharing information on the transport links the station has to other parts of Stoke.



*Blythe Bridge station adopters produced a striking artwork panel for the Caverswall Community Art Trail.*

At the other end of the route, at Peartree, we are continuing to work with a group of young people from St Martin's Academy in Derby. Having cleared an area of invasive ivy and brambles, the group has now planted up a planter. Further work at the station has been put on hold until the two new waiting shelters are installed by EMR.

This is my last update before I retire from the North Staffs CRP. I am delighted to report that a new Officer has just been appointed and I hope you will soon get to meet them.

**Claire Sandys**  
Community Rail Partnership Officer



*We are continuing to work with a group of young people from St Martin's Academy in Derby*



*Bus company reps at Meet the Manager Day*

# North Notts & Lincs CRP Update

It's been a busy few months at the North Notts & Lincolnshire CRP. We are delighted to announce that we have been re-accredited for 2024/2025 and would like to thank EMR for their continued support.

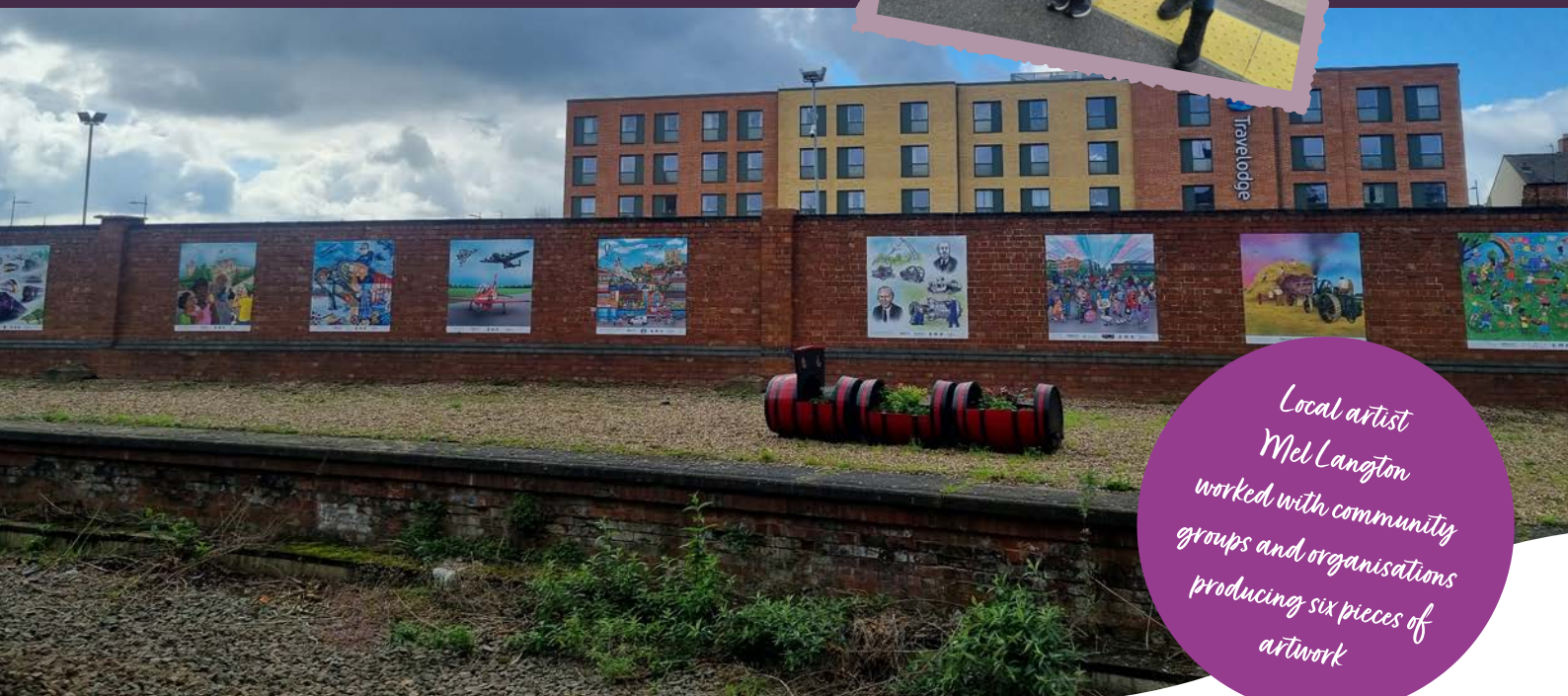
The CRP celebrated World Book Day in early March, by undertaking a day of travel along the network giving out Thomas the Tank Engine rail safety story books. The day began at local school, Benjamin Adlard's in Gainsborough, where the CRP Officers read train themed stories, "There's a Tiger on on the Train", and "My Mummy is a Train Driver" to the Early Years' children. Each child was very excited to receive a copy of "Stay Safe With Thomas" to keep. The Officers then travelled along the network, popping into stations to give out further copies to promote rail safety while celebrating World Book Day.

Our Romans to Railways project at Lincoln Station is now complete. Local artist Mel Langton worked with local community groups and organisations to produce six more pieces of artwork, which have been installed alongside

the disused platform wall at Lincoln Station, joining the original six pieces of art. An unveiling ceremony was held with representatives from EMR, Community Rail Network and local organisations, with The Right Worshipful Mayor of Lincoln, Councillor Biff Bean cutting the ribbon. Each piece of art is unique and vibrant, offering a fantastic welcome to Lincoln.

Finally, after many months of hard work, we are delighted to announce that our new website is live at [nnlcrp.org.uk](http://nnlcrp.org.uk)

**Rick Craig**  
**Community Rail Partnership Officer**



*Local artist  
Mel Langton  
worked with community  
groups and organisations  
producing six pieces of  
artwork*

# Robin Hood Line CRP Update



At last spring has arrived and it is time for gardening!

Last year we started a project with Buzzing Roots and the station adopters at Bulwell Station. The project has moved along nicely, engaging various groups including the Cubs from 4th Hucknall Scouts. They joined us on the platform at Bulwell to gain skills and work towards the 'Platform for Change' Scouting badge. Young helpers seeded sunflowers, weeded, planted flowers, and made wooden signs for the plants that are already growing at the station. The Robin Hood Line is immensely proud of these young volunteers.

Station adopters from Shirebrook also made a huge contribution, enhancing the look and general surroundings of the station and making it a more pleasant experience for passengers and local residents. While waiting for the train, passengers can now enjoy the view of the new garden full of wildflowers

on platform 1. We are also currently working on an information board which will provide information on local attractions for passengers.

On the topic of gardening, we will soon be making a start on the Whitwell Station Garden project, as all funding has now been secured. Further details and dates will be confirmed closer to the time.

The CRP is continuing to deliver the History & Heritage interpretation project by purchasing a further 2000 booklets, distributing them to various venues including libraries along the line. The books are used for education for the local communities. If you cannot find the book in the library, you can download it from our website [here](#).

**Justyna Mayer**  
Community Rail Partnership Officer

## Fleet Update

*The first Aurora was recently seen at our Etches Park depot*



### Aurora

The Class 810 Aurora fleet continues to be manufactured and type tested by Hitachi. Unit 1 is currently on test, with Units 3 and 4 due to join it at RIDC Melton (Network Rail's Rail Innovation and Development Centre, known as 'Old Dalby') in June. Do keep an eye out to see them testing on ECML and MML, including visits to our stations to verify alignment for doors, wheelchair ramps, stop boards etc.

Production continues at the Newton Aycliffe factory, with bodyshells for Unit 21 out of 33 now being welded. Type testing will continue into early 2025, with the first vehicles due to be accepted by EMR around that time ahead of our traincrew training programme.

Unit 1 was recently seen at our Etches Park depot where it was used to verify new infrastructure installed for the maintenance of the new fleet.

## Regional & Connect Fleet Refurbishment

The Class 170, 158 and 360 refurbishments continue to move forward, with all three business cases approved, suppliers chosen and designs in motion.

The Class 170 is in an exciting phase, leading the way as the detailed design has commenced, meaning the systems and refurbishment components are being procured.

The total budget required to deliver this refurbishment is £23 million. Enhancements will include at seat power provision, flooring replacement, additional luggage stacks, new style seats including new fabric and foam, modern CCTV with remote download capability, forward facing CCTV, and an upgrade to the Passenger Information System (PIS) to provide real time information. There will also be a refresh of the vestibules, toilets, wheelchair, and bicycle spaces.

The Class 158 is only a few weeks behind in the Concept Design phase, where we will begin to bring the refurbishment to life with the renders of the new interiors being ready by the end of June.

The total project cost will be £5.2 million. The refurbishment will provide new seat covers and foams, new tabletops, painting of body panels and grab handles, modern CCTV with remote download capability, forward facing CCTV and an upgrade to the PIS to provide real time information and compatibility with Class 170s.

The Class 360, which is having the most extensive work, is in the design mobilisation phase, so there is a lot more news to come on this particular fleet upgrade.

The total capital budget required to deliver this refurbishment is £27.6 million. The refurbishment will include a new 2+2 seating layout with new seats, seat covers and foam, extending seatback tables, at seat power sockets, coat hooks, floor coverings, luggage stacks and litter bins. The existing First Class areas will be removed and there will be a full interior refresh, including the accessible toilets. As with the other fleet refurbishment programmes modern CCTV with remote download capability, forward facing CCTV and an upgrade to the PIS will be provided, as well as fitment of an Automatic Passenger Count System (APCS).



## Infrastructure & Property Update



The last few months has seen the culmination of the Stations, Social & Commercial Development Programme (SSCDP) for 2023/24. This funding has delivered several projects for EMR stations, including landscaping and new garden areas at Shirebrook, Saxilby, Newark Castle and South Wigston, and the installation of defibrillators and water butts at several other stations.

The Assets & Facilities team has recently moved across into the Infrastructure & Property team. They have had a busy year so far.

Deep Clean Strike Days have taken place at Derby, Skegness, Leicester and Lincoln with more planned at Sheffield, Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, Market Harborough, Burton upon Trent, Netherfield, Burton Joyce, Ruskington, Aslockton, Sutton Parkway, Corby, South

Wigston, Leicester, Bingham, Fiskerton, Elton & Orston, Chesterfield, Spalding and Shirebrook.

The team has installed 17 new SQR Help Points, 223 new Maicemain Prima timber benches and 19 new waiting shelters. In addition, new LED lighting has been installed at 39 stations, whilst new signage has been put up at several stations including Bottesford.

There has been vegetation clearance work at 50 stations. New poster cases have been completed at Chesterfield, Derby, Sileby, Melton Mowbray, Syston and Stamford.

The team have also been working closely with Network Rail and Railway Heritage Trust to refurbish the waiting room at Market Rasen

Finally new vinyls have been installed at Lincoln Station and Sheffield Station.

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF



**ESTHER STEELE**  
**Station Duty Manager**

In 2018 I joined what was then East Midlands Trains as a Customer Experience Manager. As the business went through a period of change to become East Midlands Railway, I was appointed as a Station Duty Manager (SDM). I came from a non-railway background, as the majority of my previous career was spent working in the fitness industry, so it was a steep learning curve.

The role of SDM is varied and extremely busy. On paper it may look like any other management role, involving HR, performance analysis, adhering to safety measures and supporting my team. The reality is that it is all those things and more! No two days look the same working at Sheffield Station. There are days where we can potentially have six different sets of football fans passing through the station. Disruption can occur at any time, whether it be engineering works, the weather or the discovery of a World War Two bomb near the station. Thousands of people pass through the station every day and with this comes all manner of differing needs, assistance requests and levels of expectation.

Due to the busy nature of the station, it is paramount that I work with several key stakeholders to ensure everything operates smoothly. Internal EMR stakeholders include my colleagues in the Assets & Facilities team, who are always on hand to sort out the station faults that we report on a regular basis. We also work closely with EMR's recruitment and talent teams and human resources on all things relating to development, onboarding and other staff matters. The On Train management team based in Sheffield is another key stakeholder with whom we work closely to ensure issues

affecting our customers are shared between us. Externally we have several other Train Operating Companies that work from Sheffield, so a lot of time is spent ensuring that we are aligned. Vinci looks after our cleaning and maintenance and BTP helps to keep us safe. I also deal with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority on integrated transport matters within Sheffield.

The list is endless but one of the areas of my role that is most enjoyable is the opportunity to work with the local community and be part of projects that embrace local people and the local area. I work closely with the station adopters and the EMR Community Rail team. Our adopters, Artworks-SY, are a not-for-profit creative arts organisation who help adults with learning difficulties develop life skills. They have supported us with many of our station events and exhibitions. Those that stand out for me have been the creative workshops held in the concourse and their support with our poppy display which formed part of a huge event for Remembrance Day in 2023, attended by several dignitaries and families of the Pridmore Brothers for whom we unveiled a plaque in the station. Tales From the Rails is a collective piece of work curated by pupils from Newfields School in Sheffield. They have been involved in telling stories linked with the history of the station and how it featured in several scandalous news headlines.

I also work closely with the Railway Children charity, to support vulnerable people using our station and trains and raise awareness of the tools available to our tenants and stakeholders to recognise vulnerability and how best to help those in need. In 2023 I worked with Yorkshire Ambulance Service to assist a community project providing first responders. At Sheffield Station we now have volunteer members of our team who can be relied upon for in depth knowledge of initial first aid and incident response. This not only empowers our people and supports the local community; it also reduces the number of ambulances that have been required on 999 call outs to the station.

Looking ahead we have lots of exciting projects coming to Sheffield both linked with the local community and some other commercially related events. Christmas 2024 is already on my radar so make sure to come and see us and join in with the festivities nearer the time!

When I occasionally have some free time outside of work I enjoy being outdoors. This ranges from walking my pet dog Sam (and watching him chase pheasants) to standing in waterfalls in Scotland whilst travelling the NC500 in a camper van with my husband. I enjoy socialising with my friends and attending live music events and festivals. I have recently started to read some books associated with mindset coaching and being happy. Here are a few recommendations for you: The Art of Resilience by Ross Edgley and The Little Book of Being Brilliant by Dr Andy Cope (aka Dr Happiness).

Thanks for reading and here are some self-care tips to take away...

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- ♥ *Be kind (to everyone, including yourself)*
  - ♥ *Enjoy some rest and relaxation*
  - ♥ *Develop a growth mindset*
  - ♥ *Embrace your quirks*
  - ♥ *Dream big, and plan accordingly*
  - ♥ *Craft a great attitude and carry it everywhere*
  - ♥ *Protect your peace*
  - ♥ *Make friends with nature*
  - ♥ *Sleep!*



*To all our wonderful  
adopters.  
Thank you for  
everything you do!*

FROM KAYE, ALEXA & NANCY





# EMR

