

An Autism Friendly Line



the Todmorden Curve

CRL
Community Rail Lancashire



This project was funded by Arriva Rail North's seed corn fund and Community Rail Lancashire.

Ask for pens, crayons, ear defenders and sunglasses at stations with staff, but they might not always be available.

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With thanks to those who helped develop and review this booklet, including Northern staff, Rob Osinski-Gray, Rhianna Aston, Hannah Mallot-Manning and family, the featured businesses, the Community Rail Lancashire team, the National Autistic Society and the fantastic students of Broadfield Specialist School!

Introduction

The Todmorden Curve is the first direct train service for over 40 years which now runs between East Lancashire and Manchester, from Blackburn, through Todmorden and into Manchester Victoria.

The reinstatement of 500 metres of track known as the Todmorden West Curve has improved journey times between Burnley, Accrington and Manchester. This has put Burnley and Accrington within commuting distance of Manchester and opened up job prospects, as well as tourist and leisure opportunities.

The autism-friendly line dates are;

30th July (filming and photography will take place)

1st August

7th August

12th August

24th August

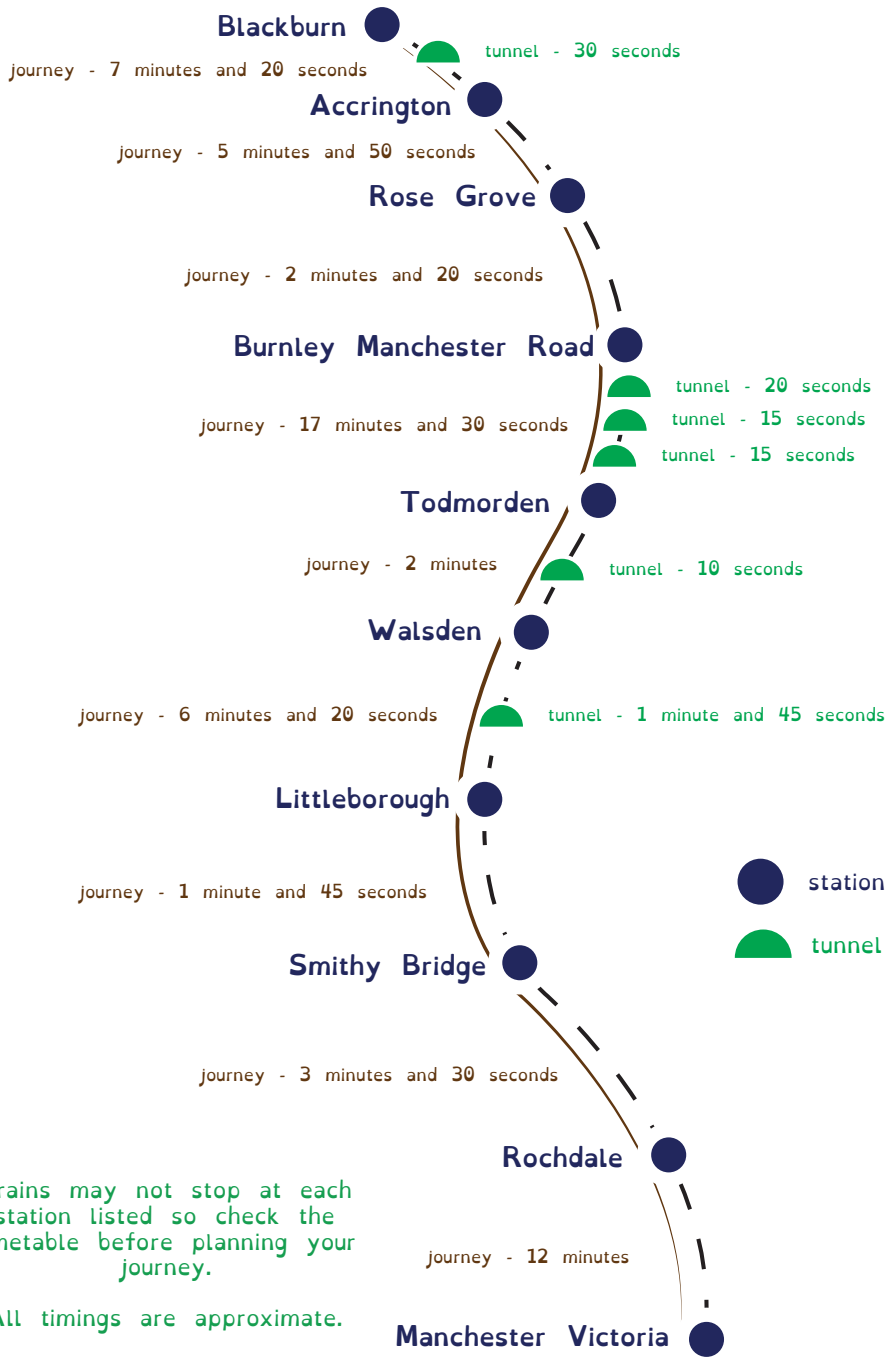
30th August

Autistic people are welcome on the journey every day, just like everyone else, however the train line has organised autistic friendly days, in addition to trying to make train line as accessible as possible all year round.

Services may be quieter off-peak between 09.30 and 15.30, but be prepared - it might get busy! Someone might sit next to you or your group, or you might need to stand. If you need to sit down, you can ask someone nicely if you can sit in their seat, if there are no seats free for you. Someone might also sit down next to you on the train. You can show the person your Autism Alert card or BlueAssist card.

Some trains have seats for people with disabilities.





Trains may not stop at each station listed so check the timetable before planning your journey.

All timings are approximate.

The history of the line

Todmorden station is located by a triangular junction between the lines to Manchester, Burnley and Halifax, with the station itself located on the line towards Manchester. From 1972 until 2015, there was no link between the Manchester and Burnley lines. Railway passengers wishing to travel between Manchester and Burnley had to change at Hebden Bridge or Blackburn.

The station was formerly served by local trains to/from Rose Grove and Preston, which were withdrawn in 1965 (the bay platform they once used can still be seen). The short curve that allowed trains to travel between the Manchester and Burnley was removed in 1972.

A project to reinstate the Manchester-Burnley curve was first proposed in 2009. In addition to the work to lay in new track on the curve itself and a completely new junction at the Todmorden end, significant alterations to the signalling system have been required to allow trains to use the new curve (these were only fully completed in February 2015, which is why the curve could only be used by Burnley-bound trains when the curve was first brought into service). The area is controlled from Preston Power Signal Box. A regular service began using the curve in May 2015.

What to expect

Sunglasses and ear defenders are available (subject to on-the-day availability) at staffed stations along the line. Please request these from ticket office staff and return them at the end of your journey. The route features many bridges and tunnels, as well as other passing trains and passengers, all of which can be noisy.

Toilet facilities are available at stations as detailed in this booklet, but are also available onboard the trains.

The most comprehensive station facilities information can be found at www.nationalrail.co.uk

To view selected videos of the line, and common events that take place, such as a ticket check, visit our dedicated YouTube page by visiting www.youtube.com and searching for the 'Autism Friendly Railway' channel; look for the logo! Or, find us by visiting www.downtheline.org.uk/projects and follow the link to the Autism Friendly Line, and through to our YouTube page.

What to bring with you

The only thing you will be asked to show in order to travel is your tickets for you or your group. You should buy your tickets before boarding the train on the internet at www.northernrailway.co.uk or using a ticket machine at the station.

Don't worry if you are unable to book on the internet or if the ticket machine is broken or closed on the day, you can buy a ticket on the train with cash or a card.

Whatever else you'd like to bring is up to you!

Music players and game devices can be great for covering loud train noises, but make sure it's not too loud so you can still hear safety announcements. Make sure you always use headphones!

Books and mobile phones can also be excellent for longer journeys.

If you need medication, make sure you bring this – such as an inhaler.

If it's a hot day, or raining, you might need refreshments or umbrellas for your group.



What to do if the plan changes

If things change, like a train delay or a cancellation, the first thing to remember is to stay calm. The rail company will make sure you get to your final destination, and they are there to help you.

If your train is delayed or cancelled, check a timetable or use your phone to check when your next train is.

If you aren't sure, you can speak to a member of staff at the station. If there are no staff at your station, you can press the 'help' button on the platform, if there is one.

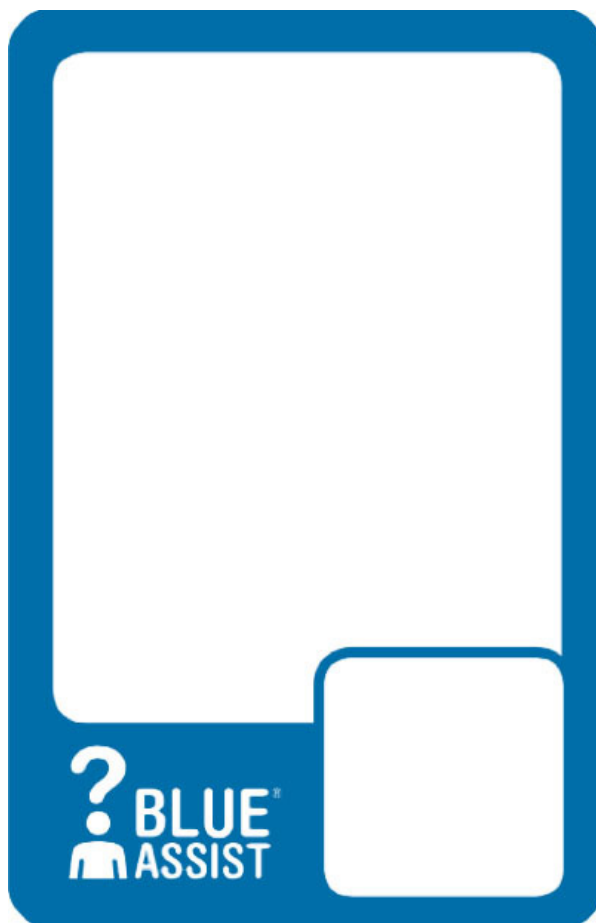
Otherwise, you can call the Northern customer helpline at **0800 200 6060**.

Trains often slow or stop on tracks; this does not mean there is an issue. Staff members will alert you to any delays or concerns as they happen.

If you lose something on a train, contact the Northern customer helpline above. If you see something that doesn't look right, feel unsafe or witness antisocial behaviour, contact the British Transport Police at **0800 40 50 40**, or text **61016**. In an emergency, always call **999**.

BlueAssist

You can use this card any way you like. If you don't want to speak, you can draw or write your question here, or point to one of the sentences on the page.



Please help me

Where are the toilets?

Please help me to find
a seat

Please help me to find
my train

I would like a ticket to

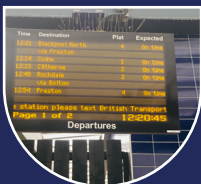
A single ticket

A return ticket

Can I borrow a pen?

For more information visit www.blueassistuk.org.uk

Blackburn



Blackburn railway station is a railway station that serves the town of Blackburn in Lancashire, England. It is 12 miles east of Preston.

There has been a station on the current site since 1846, when the Blackburn and Preston Railway (a constituent company of the East Lancashire Railway) was opened - the contract to build the station having been awarded in November 1845. This route was extended eastwards to Accrington in March 1848 and subsequently through to Burnley and Colne by February 1849.

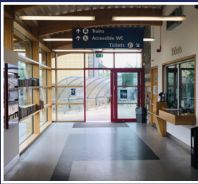
The 1923 Grouping saw the station pass into the hands of the London, Midland and Scottish Railway, but it wasn't until after nationalisation in 1948 that traffic and services began to decline. The biggest losses came though in the 1960s - Wigan trains were withdrawn in January 1960, those to Hellifield in September 1962 and the Southport line & Blackpool Central station both fell victim to the Beeching Axe in 1964. By 1970, the through links to Skipton and Liverpool had also gone, leaving only the Manchester via Bolton & Colne to Preston lines along with a few seasonal trains between Leeds and Blackpool North via Hebden Bridge and the

Copy Pit route to serve the station.

The 1980s & 90s would though see a revival in service provision, with the reopening to regular passenger traffic of the Copy Pit line in 1984 (initially on a twice-daily trial basis with services funded by a local building society) and the Ribble Valley line to Clitheroe a decade later in 1994. The latter would be served as an extension of the existing route from Manchester via Bolton, whilst the former brought regular services to & from Blackpool, Leeds and York to the station for the first time in more than a decade.

Notes:

Accrington



Accrington railway station serves the town of Accrington in Lancashire, England. It is a station on the East Lancashire Line 6 1/4 miles east of Blackburn railway station.

The station was opened in 1848 by the East Lancashire Railway, which amalgamated with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway in 1859. Taken into the London, Midland and Scottish Railway during the Grouping of 1923, the line then passed on to the London Midland Region of British Railways on nationalisation in 1948.

This was, for many years, a busy commuter route carrying regular trains from Skipton and Colne to Manchester Victoria, but the Skipton to Colne and Accrington to Manchester, via Baxenden, routes fell victim to the Beeching Axe in the sixties and closed to passengers on 5 December 1966.

In 2011, the station underwent a major rebuild, as part of a project to create a model of sustainable energy use for a railway station. This redevelopment cost £2 million, of which £500,000 was funded by the European Union's Interreg IVB programme. The previously existing ticket office has been demolished, and was

replaced by a new build and constructed, where possible, with local materials including recycled stone. The building uses a rainwater harvesting system, photovoltaic cells and solar hot water generation panels on the new tower.

Notes:

Rose Grove



Rose Grove railway station is located in the western part of Burnley in Lancashire, England, 11 miles east of Blackburn railway station. The railway reached here in 1848 when the East Lancashire Railway Company opened a station.

Rose Grove was formerly the site of an engine shed, which was one of the last to house steam locomotives on British Railways. During the mid to late 1980s, Rose Grove was the starting point for an Inter City "Holidaymaker" Saturday service - in the 1989 timetable this ran as the 06:50 to Paignton via Preston and Birmingham New Street and the terminus for the 14:10 from Paignton return journey.

The Blackpool North-York service initially called at Rose Grove after its reinstatement in 1984 to allow interchange with trains to and from Colne, Nelson, Brierfield and the two other Burnley stations at Burnley Barracks and Central. However this stop was removed from the service in the early 1990s with East Lancashire Line passengers wishing to travel eastwards towards Yorkshire having to change at Accrington instead.

The station became unstaffed in the 1980s,

following the demolition of the station buildings. The last remnants of the Great Harwood Loop towards Padiham have also disappeared, the line having been closed in 1993 with the end of oil traffic to the power station there.

Notes:

Burnley Manchester Road



Burnley Manchester Road is a railway station serving the town of Burnley, Lancashire, England. It is situated on the Calder Valley Line 24 1/2 miles east of Preston, near to the route's junction with the East Lancashire Line.

On 12 November 1849, the Manchester and Leeds Railway opened a single line branch – doubled in 1860 – from Todmorden to Burnley. The first station in the town, which was at Thorneybank, was replaced by Burnley Manchester Road in 1866. It had two stone platforms, a modest single-storey main building on the eastbound (“up”) side and a smaller waiting room with toilets on the opposite side.

This closed to passenger traffic on 6 November 1961, and to goods in April 1973. The platforms were subsequently demolished, but the main building was retained and used as industrial premises. It was reopened (with new timber platforms) in September 1986, two years after the successful re-introduction of year-round services between Leeds and Preston/Blackpool North. The old station building was eventually demolished in 2013.

On 31 October 2011, funding was granted

which saw the station facilities upgraded at a cost of £2.3 million with the opening of a new ticket office in a new station building and the provision of additional car parking spaces and new waiting shelters. The station building opened in November 2014.



Notes:

Todmorden



Todmorden railway station is in West Yorkshire, England, originally on the Yorkshire/Lancashire border. It was built by the Manchester and Leeds Railway and is on the Calder Valley Line 23 miles west of Leeds and 17 miles north-east of Manchester Victoria.

It was opened in March 1841 when the final portion of M&L main line between Manchester and Normanton through Summit Tunnel was completed. It became a junction in 1849 with the opening of a branch line westwards through the Cliviger Gorge to Burnley. This was later extended to join the East Lancashire Railway near Rose Grove, giving a direct route to Blackburn, Preston and Blackpool.

For many years the station was served by express trains between Liverpool and York and local trains toward Preston, Bradford and Leeds, but since the Beeching cuts in the 1960s the basic service has been a local one between Leeds and Manchester Victoria. In May 2015, a service from Manchester to Blackburn via Burnley began using the station.



Historical photo of Accrington station.

Notes:

Walsden



Walsden railway station serves the village of Walsden, Todmorden in West Yorkshire, England, on the edge of the Pennines.

It is served by the Caldervale Line operated by Northern. The station is 32 miles west of Leeds and 17.25 miles north east of Manchester Victoria. Walsden is the last station before the boundary with Greater Manchester. The station was opened by Metro (West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive) on 10 September 1990 as a replacement for an earlier structure that closed on 6 August 1961. This earlier station, which was opened in 1845 by the Manchester & Leeds Railway, predecessor of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway, was situated between the level crossing and the north portal of Winterbutlee Tunnel, a few yards south of the present station.

It was the only place in Todmorden to be bombed during the Second World War Blitz, probably because the German plane had a leftover bomb after a raid and so dropped it on what appeared to be an important site Littleborough.



Historical photo of Accrington station.

Notes:

Littleborough



Littleborough railway station serves the small town of Littleborough in the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester, England.

It lies on the Caldervale Line 13³/₄ miles north of Manchester Victoria towards Halifax, Bradford Interchange and Leeds.

This is the last station on the Caldervale Line in the Greater Manchester area. It was one of the original Manchester and Leeds Railway station sites and for the first year of operation following its opening in July 1839, it was the temporary terminus of the line from Manchester (the section on through the Summit Tunnel towards Mirfield not being completed until 1841). It did so again for some eight months after the December 1984 Summit Tunnel fire - passengers transferring between the trains to/from Manchester and a rail-replacement bus service onwards to Todmorden until repairs to the tunnel could be completed and the line reopened.



Notes:

Smithy Bridge



Smithy Bridge railway station serves the village of Smithy Bridge and Hollingworth Lake near Rochdale in Greater Manchester, England. The station is on the Caldervale Line 12 3/4 miles north of Manchester Victoria on the way to Leeds.

The station was first opened by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway in October 1868. It was closed on 2 May 1960 by British Rail but reopened on its original site, albeit with a slightly different platform layout, on 19 August 1985.

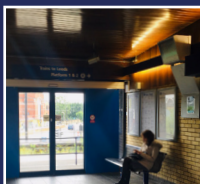
The signal box here, which controlled the level crossing and acted as a 'fringe' box to Preston from 1973 onwards, was downgraded in late 2011 from a block post to a crossing box. The signalling is remotely operated from the new 'Rochdale West' panel at Castleton (which also supervises the layout at Rochdale and will eventually replace another box at Castleton East Junction) and the crossing is now automatic. Smithy Bridge Crossing box was closed early in 2014 and has since been demolished.



Historical photo of Accrington station.

Notes:

Rochdale



Rochdale railway station is a multi-modal transport hub in Rochdale, Greater Manchester, England. It consists of a Northern-operated heavy rail station on the Caldervale Line, and an adjoining light rail stop on Metrolink's Oldham and Rochdale Line. The original heavy-rail element of the station was opened by the Manchester and Leeds Railway in 1839 (for economical reasons) 0.5 miles to the south of Rochdale town centre. The Metrolink element opened in February 2013.

The town's first station, which opened in 1839, was adjacent to Moss Lane and located around 300 yards east of the present one. The structure was replaced by the current depot in April 1889, being too small to handle the increasing traffic levels on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway's main line between Leeds & Manchester.

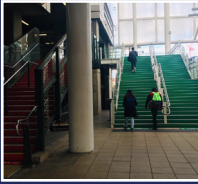
The present station previously served lines to Bolton (via Bury, closed in October 1970) and Bacup (closed June 1947) as well as the lines still in existence. It had eight platforms (four through platforms and four bays) and two entrances, one on Maclure Road and another on Miall Street. In 1979 the station was reduced

to three platforms (with the closure and abandonment of the eastern island platform and its bays), and the Miall Street entrance was closed.

In 2015, construction on a fourth railway platform began. The 135m-long bay platform was completed in 2016 and was intended to relieve congestion at Manchester Victoria.

Notes:

Manchester Victoria



Manchester Victoria station in Manchester, England is a combined mainline railway station and Metrolink tram stop. Situated to the north of the city centre on Hunts Bank, close to Manchester Cathedral, it adjoins Manchester Arena which was constructed on part of the former station site in the 1990s. Opened in 1844 and part of the Manchester station group, Victoria is Manchester's busiest railway station after Piccadilly and Oxford Road and the busiest station managed by Northern after Oxford Road.

The Manchester and Leeds Railway (M&LR) was founded in 1836 and the company began building its line between Manchester and Leeds in 1837. Originally its line terminated at Manchester Oldham Road which opened on 3 July 1839. The company realised it would be advantageous to join its line to the Liverpool and Manchester Railway (L&MR) creating a through route from Liverpool to Yorkshire with a joint station serving the centre of Manchester.

In 1839 Samuel Brooks, vice-chairman of the M&LR, bought land at Hunt's Bank close to the cathedral and presented it to the company for the new station. The site was on the north

bank of the River Irk, between the workhouse to the north which had opened in 1793 and Walker's Croft Cemetery to the south. After several years of negotiations between the companies, work started in 1842. The M&LR built an extension from Miles Platting to the station which opened on 1 January 1844. On this date, the Oldham Road terminus was closed to passenger services and became a goods station. The L&MR extended its line from Ordsall to Victoria and its trains operated from the western end from 4 May 1844, on which date its Liverpool Road station terminus became a goods station.

The station underwent a two-year £44 million modernisation programme which was completed in August 2015. Renovation entailed electrification of lines through the station, renewed Metrolink stop with an additional platform, restoration of listed features, upgraded retail units, and a new roof. The Ordsall Chord directly linking Victoria to Oxford Road and Piccadilly was completed in December 2017.

Notes:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

An Autism Friendly Line



the Todmorden Curve

This booklet is part of the autism-friendly railway line resources pack. It features detailed historical and current information about the stations along the line and aims to provide information for those who find rail and rail history of particular interest.

You can also find a booklet for younger children and a detailed use booklet for the line as part of the autism-friendly resources.

Ask a staff member, or find these at staffed stations (subject to availability).

For more information, contact info@downtheline.org.uk



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