



## **FRECCLES Newsletter No 14 – July 2025**

Hello to all our Members and Supporters.

### 1) Gardens

The station gardens and forecourt continue to look well despite the very dry spell of weather that we have experienced during which we have endeavoured to water the gardens as best we can. The next Station Garden and Activity Day will take place on Sunday August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11am. Do come along if you can – either to help with the work or just to meet the team.

### 2) Station Environment

The toilet facility at the station is now in place (see photo below). Our Chair is liaising with Northern regarding when it will become operational.

The Church Street Place development opposite the station, seems to be nearing completion and we can expect the first tenants soon. When complete it will offer 272 one, two and three bedroom apartments plus ground floor commercial space. Hopefully, the new tenants will add to the footfall at the station!

Meanwhile, work has started on the planned redevelopment of Eccles Town Centre. Demolition has begun on parts of shopping area, car park and market hall. The rest of the town centre will continue to operate and a consultation on the future of Eccles Town Centre will continue.



### 3) Patricroft Station Passenger Count

Nina from FrOPS, has circulated the results of the 2025 passenger count at their station. They reveal an 11% increase in Passenger Numbers from 2024 - giving a predicted annual passenger usage figure of 144,000 – the highest ever! Passenger journeys to and from Manchester seemed particularly healthy and point to the on-going vibrancy of our line. Well done to the FrOPS Team!

### 4) LUMO Service - Rochdale to London

The Office for Road and Rail has confirmed that, disappointingly, it has rejected the bid by private operator LUMO to run a service from Rochdale to London , stopping at Eccles, because of capacity issues at the London end of the West Coast mainline. So for the time being, we are not going to get our direct service to London Euston!

### 5) Train Service

Train performance through Eccles still gives rise to concerns. Throughout the region, Northern has removed 200 Sunday services to improve reliability. It is problems with the employment of conductors on Sundays that has given rise to timetable difficulties on a Sunday but Northern has now reached agreement with its conductors which is waiting to be signed off by the DfT and the Treasury, so hopefully there will soon be a resolution?

In the meantime more trains have become available to Northern which has led to an increase in the number of 4 and 6 coach trains on our line.

### 6) TfGM Developments



I attended the TfGM Stakeholder Event on 17<sup>th</sup> June. Much of the planned development of bus services has now been completed, leading to a 12% rise in patronage on the buses and an improvement in reliability from 69% to 80%. Work continues on ticketing arrangements including the launch of Hopper tickets, allowing the use of a single fare for more than one journey within an hour.

Attention has now turned to rail reform and integration, with the aim of integrating all local rail services into the Bee Network by 2030. For the time being, Northern will continue to operate stations and trains but TfGM will set the standards for

stations including accessibility, customer experience and station environment so that all stations will offer the same standards of service. Tap and Go tickets will be available at all stations. A major problem remains in terms of lack of disabled access at 22 out of the 64 stations in Greater Manchester, including Eccles of course.

## 7) AGM

We originally planned to have our AGM on September 15<sup>th</sup>, the actual 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of FRECCLES in 2005. However, we have found that this clashes with the 'Rocket All Aboard Meeting' that evening to launch the celebrations planned for the 200th Anniversary of the inauguration of the Liverpool to Manchester Railway in 1830. This would affect our ability to attract speakers for our AGM so we are in the process of looking for an alternative date for our AGM in late September/early October. We will let you know as soon as a date is fixed.

## 8) Community Rail Partnership

Progress continues, albeit slowly, to develop a Community Rail Partnership for the Manchester to Liverpool lines. Paul Greenwood from Manchester Histories has been engaged temporarily, to work with groups along the 2 lines to help progress the CRP until a permanent officer can be appointed. Paul came to one of our garden sessions and updated us on progress as well as joining in with some of our gardening activities!

## 9) Eccles Festival

The Eccles Festival will take place on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July and details of the event are set out below.

### Eccles Festival

Saturday 26 July 2025

When: 10am to 4pm

Where: Eccles Recreation Centre, off Oxford Street, Eccles M30 0DD

Join us for a day of unmissable fun and entertainment at the Eccles Festival! Enjoy a variety of activities for all the family, including:

Funfair

Face painting

Balloon modelling

Demonstration rugby

Bowling

Tennis

Wheelchair bacha

Lego sessions

Tattoo Art

Vintage Police Vehicles

DJ and performances on the main stage

Information and Community stalls

## Health advice

FRECCLES and FrOPS will be sharing a stall at the festival so do come down on the day if you can. If you wish to help on the stall, let me know and I will pass on your name to our members who are staffing the stall.

You can find out more about the work of FRECCLES on our website  
[www.freccles.org.uk](http://www.freccles.org.uk)

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