



# FRECCLLES Newsletter No 10 - 29 March 2024

Hello to all our members and supporters. Hope everyone is well and looking forward to Easter and the onset of Spring

## 1) Gardens

The station gardens and planters are now displaying their spring blooms. The planters on the forecourt look particularly impressive and are worth a glance if you are passing. Thanks go to Pat and the rest of the gardening team for their efforts for helping to make the station so attractive to station users.

Over the winter, Network Rail removed vegetation from the huge station wall and this seems to be linked to monitoring of the condition of the wall.

Our next Station Clear-up and Garden Session will take place on **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 11am**. Everyone is welcome to join us.

## 2) Train Service

Many, though by no means all, our services now have 4 coaches instead of 3 as a result of an exchange of units with those based in Yorkshire to concentrate the 4 coach units in the North-West where services are deemed to be busier.

The 319 trains dating from 1987, which were used on our services when the line was first electrified, are now being retired from duty.

Unfortunately, strike action by the rail union ASLEF continues and a new round of strikes have been announced for early April (see separate notices). Disputes over rest day working also continue in our region affecting Sunday services in particular.

## 3) Bee Network

Plans by Transport for Greater Manchester to integrate rail services into the Bee Network are being brought forward. This would mean train travellers would be able to use tap-in/tap-out facilities as with the tram network, there would be a cap on fares and eventually fully integrated ticketing across all modes. We are not in the first tranche of lines to be trialled in 2028 but hopefully things will move quite quickly after that.

## 4) Rocket 200

A first meeting has taken place to look at how to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Liverpool to Manchester Railway in 2030, which was attended by representatives from ourselves and Friends of Patricroft Station. Various ideas were put forward with the

emphasis placed on community involvement in whatever is planned. There was also the suggestion of linking planning for Rocket 200 to the development of the Community Rail Partnership which is envisaged for our line.

**There is more about FRECCLES on our web page ([www.freccles.org.uk](http://www.freccles.org.uk)) and on our Facebook page or you can contact us at [info@freccles.org.uk](mailto:info@freccles.org.uk) - tel 0161 789 5016)**