

**British Land Reclamation Society & National Land Regeneration Panel
Spring Visit and Annual General Meeting**

**Regeneration of the Irwell Valley and
The East Lancashire Railway - Bury**

Date: Wednesday 30th April 2008

PROGRAMME

09.30	Meet at the Bury Metropolitan Borough Council Offices, 4 th Floor Conference Room. Coffee, tea and biscuits.	
10.00	AGM	
11.15	Coffee and tea.	
11.30	Regeneration of the Irwell Valley & the Regional Park	Mike Dunne and John Leatherbarrow Bury MBC
12.15	The East Lancashire Light Railway	Malcolm Vickers ELLR Commercial & Planning Director
13.00	<p>Buffet lunch on board a Class 101 type diesel train, leaving from East Lancs, Bolton Street Station, Bury.</p> <p>A return trip on the East Lancashire Light Railway from Bury up the Irwell Valley to Rawtenstall, looking at various regenerated sites en route, followed by</p> <p>A visit to Buckley Wells engine sheds (full of steam trains being worked on), a Grade 2 listed building and the oldest operational locomotive works in the country still working.</p>	
16.30	Return to Bury MBC Offices for departure	

Note: High visibility orange over-jackets will be provided for the afternoon visit, but you need to bring stout footwear.

The Croal Irwell Valley Regional Park

Creating a green artery from the centre of Manchester to the West Pennine Moors.

There is a long history of cross authority working for environmental and social gains in the Croal Irwell Valley dating back to 1965. A lot has been achieved via the Croal Irwell Valley Plan, the rolling programme of Reclamation for the South Irwell Valley and the Irwell Adventure. The idea of Regional Parks in the North West is new. Smaller than a National Park and larger than a Country Park, they are envisaged to be extensive outdoor areas offering a range of recreational facilities and attractions.

The first session and visit will provide you with an understanding of how the major stakeholders have worked together to:

- Improve the visual infrastructure of the area, creating a better image and attracting inward investment;
- Tackle the extensive derelict, underused and neglected land legacy;
- Create an attractive visitor destination focused on recreation and existing and proposed cultural and heritage assets, including the longest sculpture trail in Europe and the East Lancashire Railway;
- Support and develop opportunities to improve the natural heritage and biodiversity;
- Create an accessible landscape that re-establishes the linkages between the conurbation and its hinterland, enabling space for 1.5 million people to play and enjoy themselves 20 minutes from their front door;
- Involve local communities in the development of the Regional Park and use investment to build capacity within them;
- Develop a framework for other existing and future regeneration programmes to slot into.

The East Lancashire Railway

The second session will be presented by Malcolm Vickers, Commercial & Planning Director of the ELLR. He will outline the restoration of the steam railway since its closure in 1972. With assistance from Bury and Rossendale Councils, the line was reopened in 1991 and the traditional station buildings and developments along the tracks have contributed to the East Lancashire Preservation Society being presented with a number of environmental awards. The line is a major tourist attraction with an average of 120,000 passengers per year enjoying educational “evacuation” days, 1940’s nostalgia weekends and Days with Thomas the Tank Engine.

Following the presentation we will walk to the Bolton Street Station and board a Class 101 diesel train to travel up the scenic Irwell Valley. A buffet lunch will be served on board. The single carriage train has panoramic front windows so we will have a good view of tunnels, track and reclamation and regeneration sites on route. The train will stop for us to look at Burrs Country Park and other reclaimed sites and regeneration projects. On return to the station we will walk passed rolling stock (recently used in the final episode of the series of Life on Mars) on our way to the Buckley Wells engine sheds. This is a Grade 2 Listed building and the oldest operational locomotive works in the country still working. Here we will be in amongst huge steam engines and there will probably be an opportunity for photographs on the footplate – every boys dream! – before returning to the Bury MBC offices for departure.