

The Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership Station Volunteers' Garden

The RHS Flower Show at Tatton July 17th-21st 2024 Long Border Plot 185

We are a group of enthusiastic volunteer gardeners who care for the stations along the Mid Cheshire Line. We have grown much of this garden ourselves. The project is sponsored by the Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership. The garden contrasts the monochrome world outside the railways with the colourful 3-D world within. We have used plants to represent travel, music and cooking and have incorporated original rail track and trolley as part of the design.

Who has worked on the border?

We are a group of volunteers from stations along the line who have drawn on their gardening and engineering skills along with their connections to organisations such as Mid Cheshire Community Sheds, Grozone, and the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways. We are first time exhibitors at The RHS Flower Show at Tatton. We designed the border as a group and, with the help and advice from a great many people, together we have managed to grow this border. We have not done this in the conventional way by engaging with a plant nursery to provide the plants. Instead, the volunteers have

- grown plants from seed
- borrowed from volunteers' private gardens
- purchased cuttings, plug and young plants from local suppliers
- grown and endlessly repotted these plants in our own gardens along the line

... and then brought everything together for this show.

The group has developed as a great support network giving support, advice and guidance to each other to get to this point, meeting, messaging and talking on a very regular basis.

What does the planning represent?

From waiting room to trackside and beyond, using a railway-inspired theme, our planting depicts

- travel to places far and wide
- the art of music on the move
- expanding culinary skills with the availability of herbs.

The border promotes the wider role of our railway line including not only an access to work and leisure but also

- a place where people can volunteer to care for their local station through the care of plants, flowers and shrubs
- bringing a community together at each station as well as along the whole line.

This is all under the overarching support of the Mid-Cheshire Community Rail Partnership (MCCRP) who play a pivotal role in bringing communities along the line together.

The MCCRP (our sponsor)

This community interest company (CIC) was founded just over 2 decades ago with the aim of connecting local communities with their railway and is part of a nationwide movement known as Community Rail.

The rail partnership strives to promote sustainable travel; walking, cycling and rail travel. They do this by working with rail operators to hold special events such as the ever-popular Mid Cheshire music trains and through organising "Try the Train" [Home - Try the Train](#) trips for schools and supporting days out by train for groups who may face barriers to travelling. The partnership also works with the rail operators, chiefly Northern Trains on the mid Cheshire line, to support and encourage volunteering at stations. These friends' groups help to make stations look their best through platform gardening, touching up the paint work and creating themed notice board displays and art projects. Their efforts

help to create a welcoming impression and a safe space for passengers to wait for a train. Finally, the MCCRP publishes leaflets with guides for walks that start and finish at stations.

Further information about the MCCRP is available from Sarah Muir, Community Rail Officer. sarah.muir@midcheshirerail.org.uk and the website [Homepage - Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership \(midcheshirerail.org.uk\)](http://Homepage - Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership (midcheshirerail.org.uk))

What story does the border tell?

The Long border aims to draw on the themes of travel and music to take visitors on a magical rail themed journey. Starting with 2-D monochrome planting depicting the world outside the railways, the traveller goes through the picket fencing to the colourful domain within.... plants have been chosen to signify what the line has to offer

- first, travel, with plants such as Salvia “Lake Baikal”, Aster frikartii “Monch” and Mexican fleabane.
- Then celebrating the music trains using plants such as drum-stick allium, saxifrage, bugle and bell flower.
- The central railway trolley is loaded with brightly coloured cannas representing distant lands and far-flung places, and that tricky souvenir which seemed like a good idea at the time until you tried to bring it home!
- A ‘path’ of black millet and Verbena leads the eye towards the track and references the train line meandering through the countryside.
- Adjacent to this central path is an aromatic herb area, which grow in-abundance in many stations
- Leading out of the border is a piece of track surrounded by species which commonly self-seed along the railways such as buddleia, borage and dead nettle, natures’ volunteers. The track leads on suggesting the continuing journey.

Who do you need to talk to?

Harry Allen (Mid Chesire CRP CIC Director)

Harry.allen@midcheshirerail.org.uk

07787658876

Sarah Muir Community Rail Officer

sarah.muir@midcheshirerail.org.uk

07825815442

This is a photograph of the Long Border as constructed in our garden! Just for practice.



RHS Flower Show Tatton Park 2024. Site 185

Bugle - Ajuga
Alyssum 'Snowdrift' and 'Carpet of snow' - Lobelaria maritima
Ammi visnaga - Ammi visnaga
Bell Flower - Campanula portenschlagiana
Bell Flower - Campanula persicifolia Blue
Mondo grass - Ophiopogon
Black millet - Pennisetum glaucum Purple Majesty, and Purple Baron
Borage - Borago officinalis
Butterfly bush - Buddleia
Canna - Canna "Durban"
Chives - Allium schoenoprasun
Common Morning Glory - Ipon
Cosmos - Xanthos Yellow
Curry plant - Helichrysum italicum
Dead nettle - Lamium purpureum
Drumstick allium - Allium sphaerocephalon
Euonymus - Euonymus japonica 'Aureus'
Fleabane / Santa Barbara Daisy - Erigeron karvinskianus
Flowering sage - Salvia 'Lake Baikal'
Lady's mantle - Alchemilla mollis
Lavender - Lavandula augustifolia
Lobelia - White Lady
Mexican feather grass - Nassella tenuissima
Michaelmas daisy - Aster x frikartii 'Mönch'
Oregano -
Paris Daisy (Marguerite Daisy) - Argyranthemum frutescens
Purpletop vervain - Verbena bonariensis
Rosemary -
Sage - Salvia Officinalis
Saxifrage - London Pride
Stonecrop - Sedum spathulfolium 'Cape Blanco'
Thyme -
Tufted hair grass - Deschampsia cespitosa 'Goldtau'
Vervain - Verbena rigida
Yarrow - Achillea millefolium Cloth of Gold
Yarrow - Achillea millefolium 'Lilac Beauty'
Yellow Ox-eye Daisy - Rudbeckia fulgida
[var Sullivantii Goldstrum]

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Facebook: midcheshirecrp

