

Further Information

If you require any further details about the box and its curriculum, the LMCRP or the Bentham Line, please visit thebenthamline.co.uk or use the QR codes below.

Preliminary visit requests and bookings for the Box can be made using the contact details below.



Box on the Bay



The Bentham Line



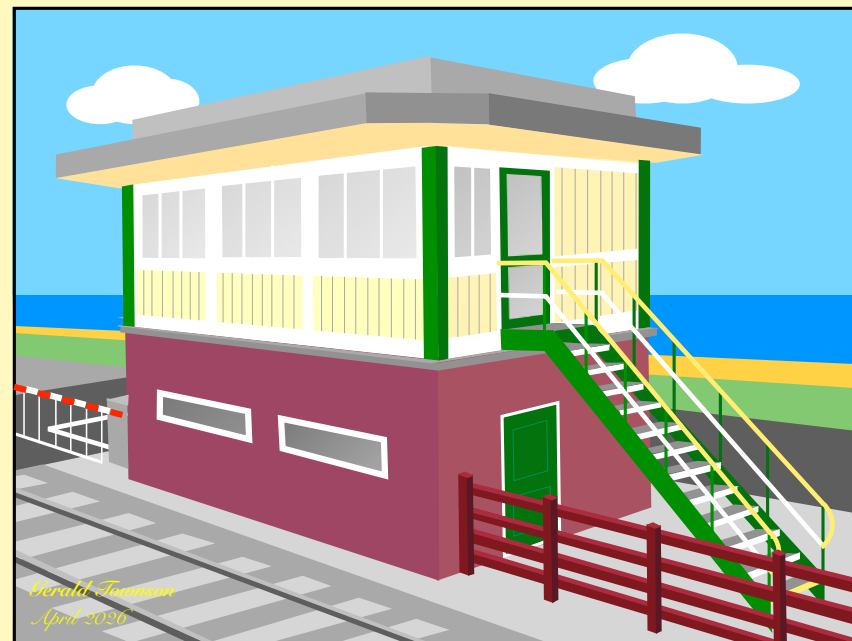
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BOX on the BAY

Hest Bank Railway STEM Centre



A joint venture by



and



With support from



Introduction

During the second half of 2023, Network Rail approached the Leeds-Morecambe Community Rail Partnership (LMCRP) with a view to repurposing the upper floor of the former signal box at Hest Bank, for educational purposes relating to the Railway and to Morecambe Bay.

Following earlier successful education initiatives, the LMCRP was keen to work together with Network Rail to bring the box, unused since 2013, back to life as an exciting hands-on STEM centre for the benefit of the local communities.

The Box on the Bay can accommodate 16 pupils and their accompanying staff at any one time, though it is possible to bring along larger classes, and support pupils unable to climb the staircase, when outdoor activities are included as part of a visit.



Curriculum and Activities

The curriculum at the Box is based around both the Railway and Morecambe Bay and is delivered through a variety of presentations, projects and practical activities, by members of the Community Rail Partnership and from associated groups.

With safety on and around the Railway becoming part of the National Curriculum, we are in an ideal position, with the level crossing, footbridge and main line adjacent, to get the important safety messages across to the children.

Rail history and operation also feature amongst the many activities, as do bridge building, signalling, using timetables and jobs on the railway.

With Morecambe Bay close to hand there will be opportunities to study its wildlife, ecology and weather, through bird spotting and identification, looking at the rich food sources within the sands or studying the cloud formations, to mention just a few possibilities.



A Typical Day at the Box

An example of a possible visit to the box.

09:30 Arrival at Hest Bank Box and safety instructions given.

09:45 Introduction to the box and the day's activities

10:00 Activity A

11:00 Morning break

11:15 Activity B

12:15 Lunch break at the box or on The Shore (weather permitting).

13:00 Activity C

14:00 Round up of the day's activities.

14:15 Departure

All timings and activities can be adapted to suit the visiting school, their journey time to the box and the school's start and and finish times.

Groups are asked to bring their own packed lunches and refreshments, but it is possible to make drinks whilst at the box. Picnic benches are also available for use adjacent to the entrance to the box during good weather.

Support

In addition to the support from Network Rail throughout the development of the project, the LMC RP successfully approached the three main passenger service operators in the area, Avanti West Coast, TransPennine Trains and Northern Trains, for grants from their community funding pots.

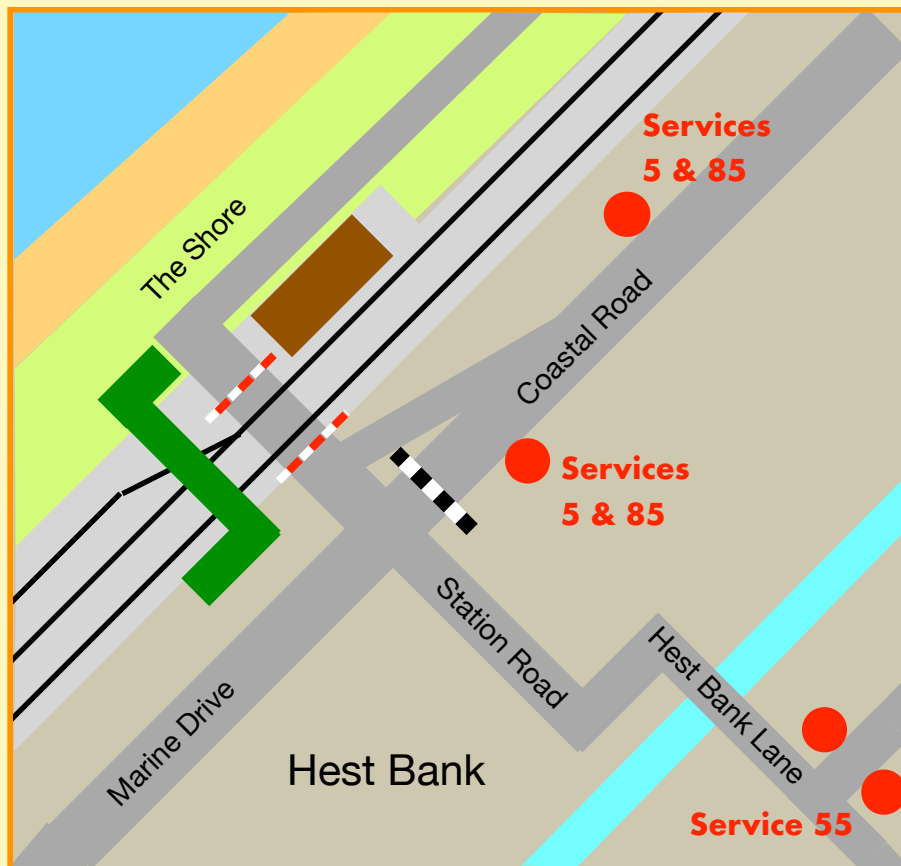
This enabled the internal refurbishment of the box to a high standard and the provision of good teaching facilities and equipment. The LMC RP were also grateful for several donations of furniture and equipment for the Box.

We now look forward to welcoming schools and groups from the Bay Area, and further afield, to Hest Bank.

Please note that there is no charge for anyone visiting the box or for the support and services provided.



Local Plan



Key

	Box on the Bay		Pedestrian Crossing
	Road		Footbridge
	Morecambe Bay		West Coast Main Line
	Lancaster Canal		Level Crossing
			Bus Stop

Location

The box is situated on The Shore in Hest Bank at the south-east corner of Morecambe Bay, adjacent to the West Coast Main Line from London to Glasgow.

The box is within five miles of Lancaster, Morecambe, Heysham, Carnforth and many surrounding villages.

There is free parking adjacent to the box for school minibuses. Local scheduled buses from Carnforth (services 5 & 85), Morecambe (services 5 & 85) and Heysham (service 5) stop close to the box on Coastal Road. Buses between Carnforth and Lancaster (service 55) stop at Peacock Lane in Hest Bank, from where it is a short walk on pavements over the Lancaster Canal, down Hest Bank Lane and Station Road to the Box.

Box Facilities

The main room can accommodate 20 persons comfortably. There is an adjacent toilet and hand washing facility.

A first aid kit is available and a defibrillator is located close to the box.

The walls are bedecked with local photographs, prints and posters of the railway and Morecambe Bay, along with models and railway artefacts. A wide-screen monitor displays, in real time, the movements of the trains on the main line and a large monitor and computer is available for group teaching and video and slide presentations.

Resources including electronic tablets, binoculars and maps. The usual items of classroom equipment are all available for use by the pupils.