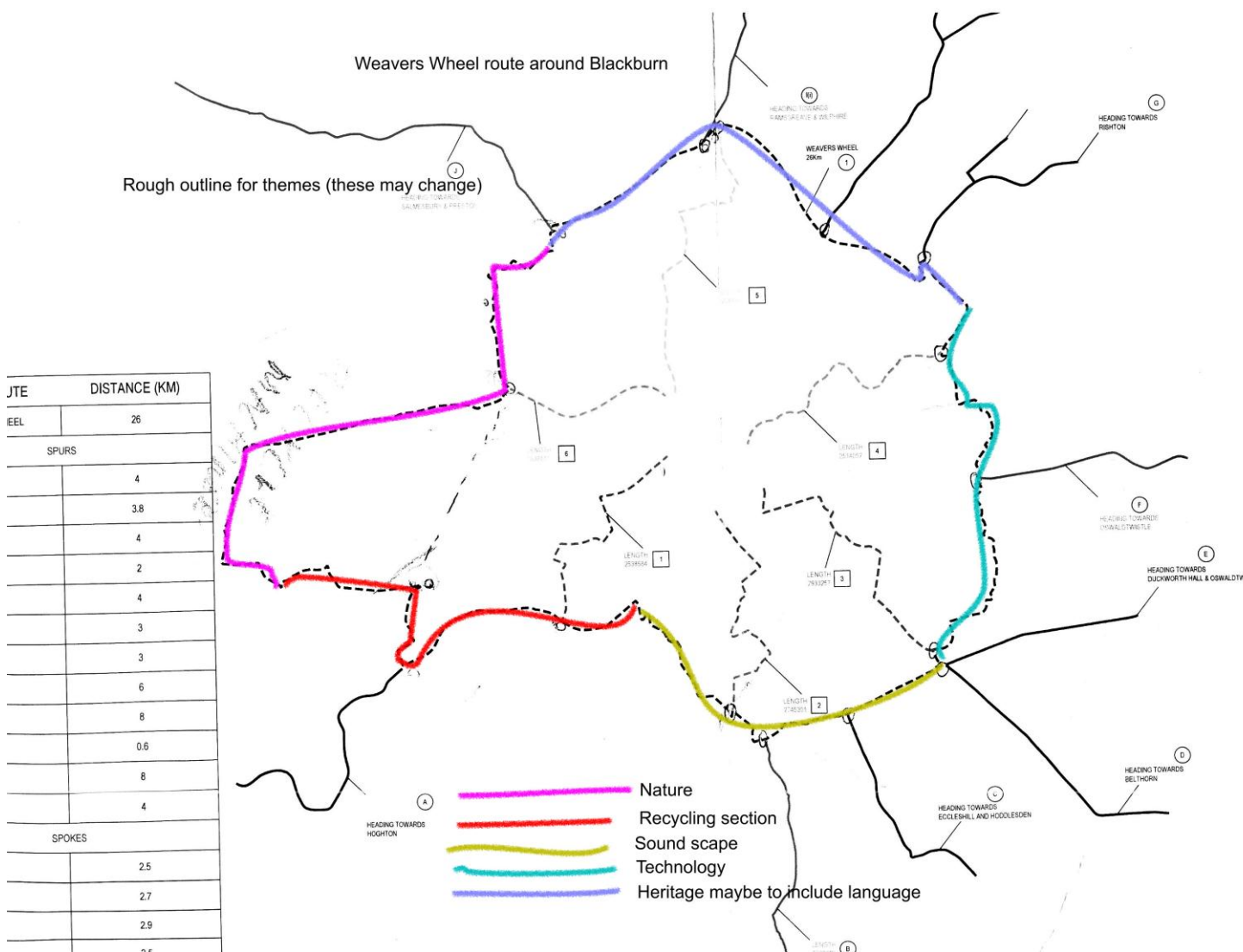


Weavers Wheel

Community & Stakeholder Art / Signage Project

Alastair Nicholson

- My first impression on hearing this proposal was “what about the hills?” but having ridden the proposed route over a few sunny (and a few not so sunny) days in February 2015 I can see the benefit and enjoyment many people will get out of following this route. There are sections that will appeal to all cycling abilities from beginners to more keen and committed leisure and utility cyclists.
- The route I feel could be divided up into about 5 sections and these would have themes that would be reflected in the form and design of the community signage and art work that will be developed.
- The proposed sections being considered include:
 - Recycling section
 - Soundscape section
 - Technology section
 - Rural section
 - And either the History or Language section
- Consideration is now being given as to how these are spaced around the wheel. See map below for my initial ideas for zones:



Recycling section:

- The initial focus of work has concentrated on the Recycling section of the Weavers Wheel route. This section of the Weavers Wheel stretches from Witton Country Park through to Ewood and a spur from Witton out to Pleasington.
- For the recycling section we are not limiting groups to the traditional ideas about recycling objects. Recycling in its broadest sense can be about rethinking the use of an object or area or maybe even oneself.
- Ideas that are currently being developed for recycling includes cycling figures in cut metal, development of Dream catcher hoops from old cycle wheels and the idea of using old cycles as 'poems wheels' that can be turned.
- The possible location for several sites suitable for community art / signage (totem poles or mile markers) has been identified.
- A number of groups including St Francis Primary school have been engaged and have produced some wonderful pieces of art work for signage and have developed drawings that can be used for steel cuttings similar to a piece completed recently for Community Rail Lancashire below.



An example of a steel cutting designed by Alastair Nicholson using children's artwork and manufactured by WEC of Darwen. This piece is now located at Rose Grove station.

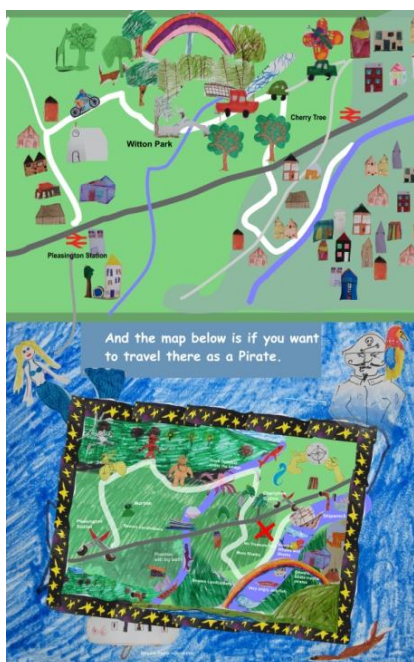
Other groups that have been involved in the project and will help contribute artwork include:

- Project at the Thomas group: a group for people who are supporting each other and are in recovery from substance abuse.
- The Young Weavers: local walking cycling and art group established to encourage family friendly events.
- Nightsafe Project: homeless charity working with young vulnerable adults
- Mill Hill Community Centre: 2 x Youth groups (Mill Hill Girls Group & Mill Hill Boys Group)

- Lower Darwen Youth Group in conjunction with the local Youth Service.
- Blackburn Youth Zone: working with children to develop ideas and artwork.
- St Johns Art Centre Blackburn – currently in discussion about having a small exhibition maybe in the New Year to celebrate what work has been undertaken to date with the local community.
- Stansfeld Adult Day Care Centre: working with people with learning difficulties and age related memory loss.
- Community Rail Lancashire: linking the Weavers Wheel to Pleasington rail station as part of a Blackburn with Darwen Council, Community Rail Lancashire and Abellio funded project at the station to improve passenger waiting facilities. We are also investigating the potential for CRL information boards to be located along the Weavers Wheel route to inform people about local rail options.
- Canal & Rivers Trust: adoption of a section of the Leeds & Liverpool canal towpath (part of the Weavers Wheel route) by local group Young Weavers.
- Feniscowles Primary School: linked to the Pleasington rail project which links into the Weavers Wheel Recycling section.

Complimentary investment and activity:

- As we continue to meet with various groups around the route there is a great potential for participatory projects. Whilst the project at Pleasington rail station is being funded separately it is being linked to the promotion of the Weavers Wheel through route maps, artwork and local activities.
- Working with young children a pirate themed route linking Pleasington station and the Leeds & Liverpool canal is being created. The fictional story tells of a pirate shipwreck in the canal following a storm at sea! A time capsule buried along the towpath will be the buried treasure and all this work is linked to a litter pick and the adoption of a section of the towpath by the Young Weavers.



Colourful and Pirate themed maps have been developed by local children which highlights the good walking and cycling links from Pleasington rail station to the Leeds & Liverpool canal at Cherry Tree.

- To support the enhancement of waiting facilities at Pleasington station and to compliment the colourful walking and cycling maps Feniscowles Primary School has been helping to create some colourful pictures of local bird life that can be seen in the local area. The eventual aim is to create a bird hide out of a waiting shelter at Pleasington station and encourage rail travellers to enjoy the local wildlife.

