

CrossCountry Community Impact Report 2022

Introduction

Tom Joyner, CrossCountry Managing Director



Welcome to the latest edition of our Community Impact Report, setting out some of the highlights and achievements we are most proud of over the last year.

2022 was a year of many challenges, from the disruption caused by record-breaking heatwaves, a period of national mourning following the loss of our Queen, and a prolonged period of industrial action that has disrupted our passengers' journeys.

Throughout these and more, I was pleased to see that our business and our people remained steadfast in their determination to make a difference to the towns, cities and communities we serve. I was pleased to speak at the annual Community Rail Conference in Southampton and meet with many of you and look forward to forging new relationships in 2023.

At the forefront of this has been our continuing collaboration with Community Rail Partnerships and this year we increased this with three new partners. I am pleased to say we now also support Robin Hood, Reading-Basingstoke and 6VT CRPs, the latter being the only youth-led partnership in the UK. You can read about many of these activities in the 'Community Bites' sections towards the end of this report. These partnerships continue to play an important role in supporting their communities. We saw how effective their work could be during the pandemic, supporting food distribution efforts and helping people cope with the challenges of social restrictions. And still their great works continue by helping groups and neighbourhoods recover from the lingering social and economic effects and supporting efforts to get people back to travelling by train.

Reflecting society's recognition of a need to support and educate future generations, another big part of this year's work has been on projects that promote education. These have included schemes to raise awareness of the social and environmental benefits of rail travel, and dedicated STEM projects promoting education and career opportunities in the rail sector. We are also continuing our successful work with Primary Engineers, with courses starting in Oxfordshire and plans for more in Devon. And we have maintained our partnership with The Prince's Trust, welcoming two cohorts of young people and providing an insight into our business and the wider rail industry.

We've also worked on ventures to enhance stations for a better experience and promoted projects to increase inclusion, and supported the transport plans for the Commonwealth Games that helped contribute to its success.

I do hope you enjoy reading this report about the many things achieved in 2022 and would love to hear your feedback. I look forward to working with our partners again next year.



Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| A new community hub coming to Wolverhampton Station | 4 |
| Providing Community Rail Education for schools..... | 4 |
| Prince’s Trust programme | 5 |
| New Assistance Dog Cards..... | 5 |
| Showcase of Community Rail Excellence..... | 6 |
| Partnership promotes safeguarding on the railway | 6 |
| Celebrating the ‘iconic’ High Speed Train | 7 |
| Celebration and charity event | 7 |
| A repainting to be proud of | 7 |
| Commonwealth Games was a success in Birmingham | 8 |
| Funding for drone and emergency shelters | 8 |
| Special waiting room at Edinburgh for mourners | 9 |
| New accommodation opens for West Midlands partners | 9 |
| Improved security at Willington station..... | 10 |
| Scottish Transport Awards win | 10 |
| Success at Community Rail Awards..... | 10 |
| Investing in our communities | 11 |
| Caring for our environment | 11 |
| COMMUNITY BITES | 12 |
| Rivington Rambler proves to be success | 12 |
| Sustainable travel education toolkit launch | 12 |
| Showcase at Rail Academy Industry Week | 12 |
| STEM+ Challenge Days teaches young people about the railway | 12 |
| New community room and repaint for Sleaford station | 12 |
| Support for UKs only Youth CRP | 12 |
| New digital information displays in the community..... | 12 |
| Students celebrate at Academy Awards..... | 12 |
| STEM classroom opens for business..... | 12 |
| Community celebrate connection through music and art..... | 12 |
| Inspiring engineers of the future | 12 |
| Community Rail Funding | 13 |

A new community hub coming to Wolverhampton Station

A community 'hub' is being delivered to Wolverhampton, offering passengers and residents a place to meet, access business advice and enjoy local art.

Due to open during winter 2022, the facility will be located inside the brand-new station building, which fully opened last year following its multi-million-pound redevelopment.

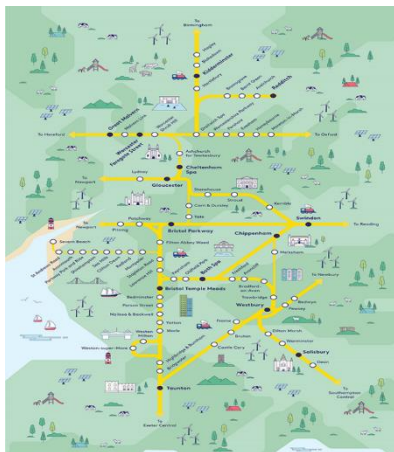
The project has been made possible thanks to a grant from our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund, while West Midlands Railway provided project management and a community licence for the station unit.



Welcoming the development the Director of Wolverhampton Business In District, Cherry Shine, said: "This project made possible by CrossCountry provides a real opportunity to connect our community and city centre businesses, supports sustainable rail travel, provides an even warmer welcome to this key gateway to our city centre and encourages enterprise at our iconic new station. We are delighted to be working in partnership with CrossCountry and West Midlands Railway in an exciting venture for us all."

Providing Community Rail Education for schools

This year, in one of our biggest collaborations ever, we were proud to see the launch of *Platform*, a new scheme offering rail education to schools and young people.



Supported by CrossCountry, GWR and Community Rail Network, the scheme brings together the work of Severnside, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and TransWilts Community Rail Partnerships, covering the area stretching from Somerset and Wiltshire to Worcestershire.

The Platform team are passionate about connecting young people to their local railways and communities, helping empower them to make life choices that are healthy, sustainable, aspirational, and ethical.

They've produced a bespoke website to provide teachers with clear guidance about how to access the in-person offers, as well as the stations covered by the scheme. There are also free rail-related local resources, with lessons that are linked to National Curriculum requirements for a range of subjects, making it easier for teachers to engage with rail-education without sacrificing curriculum time.

The team includes qualified, experienced teachers with up-to-date knowledge of current classroom requirements, putting them in a perfect position to go into schools and provide fun and informative workshops. They also provide free experience days out by rail. You can find out more at

www.platformrail.org

Prince's Trust programme

This September we were again delighted to welcome two new Prince's Trust cohorts to our Manchester and Leeds teams. This was an opportunity for the young adults, aged 18-24, to gain an insight into the rail industry and give them some valuable work experience.

They spent time with our colleagues on board trains to understand the roles in catering, revenue protection and train management. They also visited depots and spent time within industry colleagues at Freightliner and Network Rail. The Prince's Trust candidates successfully gained a Level 2 Food Hygiene qualification as part of their placement.



The programme concluded with a celebration event hosted by the Prince's Trust, with Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham in attendance, where our candidates gave a presentation on their experiences. The celebration was part of a wider event to recognise the Future Workforce Fund and all the great things that have been accomplished with employer support for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Talking after the event our Apprenticeship Manager, Caren Alderwick, said: "I am delighted with how well the programme was received by the candidates. The team really did pull together during a difficult couple of weeks to ensure we delivered an exciting opportunity for all."

New Assistance Dog Cards



In an update on the work we reported on last year for people who may want a little extra help, we are delighted to be part of a new rail industry initiative to support Assistance Dogs UK.

Special cards can be placed on train seats reserved for working assistance dogs to keep the seat free. These will prevent passengers accidentally sitting on seats which are reserved for a dog to sit beneath, as well as helping raise awareness of working assistance dogs.

Passengers can apply for an assistance dog card by emailing customer.relations@nationalrail.co.uk or phoning 0800 022 3720.

Showcase of Community Rail Excellence

In June, we sponsored an event at Southampton, bringing together representatives from all over the country to showcase some great examples of the work of Community Rail Partnerships.



Opening the day Tom Joyner told the audience of his admiration for their efforts to deliver real benefit, not just to stations but also into the surrounding communities. Much had been achieved he said, and often their local and focused efforts had resulted in significant benefits for train operators by highlighting the opportunities for travel and enhancing the passenger experience.

The partnerships' work during the pandemic had been particularly impressive in adapting to the sudden need to support the elderly and disadvantaged. He singled out New Forest CRP, who had taken XC funding for a project to entertain passengers on trains and used this to create 'Food on the Move', providing food parcels to individuals and families in need and supporting food banks. So far, the project has raised £182,000 for Hampshire and Isle of Wight communities and is still going strong.

Other projects showcased included bringing back redundant station buildings for community use, meeting modern standards but also being carbon-neutral, and work to support people needing a little extra help re-entering work or education.

After the event, organisers Bobby Lock and Nick Farthing from two of the local CRPs thanked Tom for CrossCountry's support and his praise for their work during difficult times. They added: "It's great we have such an established relationship between CrossCountry and our respective Community Rail Partnerships."

Partnership promotes safeguarding on the railway

In November, we joined forces with the Railway Children and other industry partners including Samaritans, Railway Mission, Shelter, British Transport Police, TransPennine Express, Avanti West Coast and Northern, for a partnership day raising awareness of safeguarding on the railway.



The day started with a talk about what is being done for young people and their families as well as how partners are helping. It was followed by a collaborative stall at Manchester Piccadilly to increase awareness to colleagues at the station and to the public who may be able to help when travelling.

Talking about the event, West Midlands and North West Stakeholder Liaison Manager, Jody Ball said: "Railway Children has a unique partnership with British Transport Police and takes referrals from them of young people they find at risk on the network. Officers identify around 10,000 such children every year and by working closely with the police and train companies, the charity can offer support to some of the hardest to reach and vulnerable children in the UK."

Celebrating the ‘iconic’ High Speed Train

Celebration and charity event

During September we ran a special train from Leeds to Kidderminster and along the scenic Severn Valley Railway to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the introduction at CrossCountry of the iconic InterCity 125 train, also known as the High Speed Train or HST, on the North East to South West part of our network.

In a partnership with railway magazine Modern Railways and Severn Valley Railway we ensured that all proceeds from the day went to the Railway Benefit Fund charity, to help current and former employees in need. To mark the event a special commemorative nameplate was unveiled on the train, which was one of the original fleet from 40 years ago.



Speaking after the event, Tom Joyner said:

“Not only was it an opportunity to celebrate these iconic and much-loved trains, but also to support our Heritage Railways who have struggled the last few years.”

Donations and an auction on the day raised over £16,000 for the Railway Benefit Fund.

A repainting to be proud of

In further celebrations of our association with the HST we repainted one of the train’s power cars.

Completed in the popular 1980s ‘InterCity 125 Executive’ livery, it also now bears its original train number, 43184.

Introduced at CrossCountry in the early 1980s, these trains significantly cut journey times and allowed rail to compete with the dominant motorway network that runs alongside much of the current CrossCountry network.

Thanking the team at Laira Train depot where the repainting was completed, Fleet Engineer Nathan Rogers, and Contract Manager James Edwards, said: “A massive amount of work went into this with our partners at GWR, going over old drawings and getting paint specifications and type facing correct. 43184 was then hand painted by the GWR team.”



Commonwealth Games was a success in Birmingham

This summer Birmingham hosted the 22nd Commonwealth Games, the largest multi-sport event held in England in 10 years. During July and August, the city became home to more than 180 nationalities and welcomed over 1.5 million spectators.

Working alongside industry partners and the Games Organising Committee we did all we could to make sure visitors got to the 15 venues and nine festival sites. We provided 'Travel Champion' volunteers at several key stations across the West Midlands to offer much needed customer support during the busy 11 days.

The event proved to be a spectacular success, with 877 medals awarded, 96 Games records and four world records broken with fantastic success for all the Home Nations leaving a lasting legacy.



Funding for drone and emergency shelters

This year we were delighted to present a cheque for £29,315 to Network Rail's West Midlands Signalling Centre to sponsor a drone and two inflatable shelters. The equipment will be part of their Emergency Intervention Unit, which was initially brought in to deal with incidents during the Commonwealth Games.

The drone and shelters have already been deployed to a variety of events, from a derailment at Carlisle to trespass incidents. And, as part of the wider unit, it has already saved the railway thousands of pounds and prevented hundreds of minutes of disruption to passengers.

The shelters can be put up in a matter of minutes, creating a warm, dry and safe environment in response to a variety of incidents. They're equipped with Wi-Fi, heating and lighting and include



partitions which provide flexible accommodation in an emergency situation.

The drone has many benefits, including being able to easily get a view of the network that wouldn't otherwise be possible, transmitting images directly back to the operator and control centres anywhere in the country. The heat sensing drone can fly for 45 minutes before needing a recharge and has been able to locate trespassers on the network which is already leading to prosecutions.

Special waiting room at Edinburgh for mourners



Like so many people across the United Kingdom, the rail industry took time during September to remember and reflect on the legacy and achievements of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II following her sad death.

During the mourning period, many travelled to pay their respects at St Giles Cathedral at Edinburgh as part of the State Funeral, before her passage to London. With so many wishing to be part of the event, our Edinburgh team set up a [special waiting room](#) at Waverley Station to help people who were unable to make a return journey until the following day.

A train was kept open at the station throughout the night, with hot drinks and sandwiches provided by local team members, Dale McDonald, Owen Wild and Ali Cauchie. And in a sign reminiscent of many gatherings at the time, the team stayed all night reminiscing about Her Majesty with around one hundred people.

New accommodation opens for West Midlands partners

In October, the West Midlands Grand Railway Collaboration officially opened its new Collaboration Hub at Birmingham New Street station.

The space was the brainchild of Malcolm Holmes, Executive Director of West Midlands Rail Executive and John Robson, our Regional Director for West Midlands and North West.

The idea was to provide a dedicated location that could also be used by all industry groups, the wider community, charities and social groups. The hub creates a neutral environment where frank discussions can be held about strategy, support and future plans.



Launched back in 2019, the Grand Rail Collaboration is a unique partnership representing the West Midlands' six passenger train operators, Network Rail, the West Midlands Rail Executive and Transport Focus. The group are committed to working closely together to tackle train performance, simplify rail fares, improve the passenger experience on trains and at stations and deliver more efficient timetables.

Network Rail provided the unit at New Street station, including fitting it with a toilet, kitchenette, chairs, tables and a screen.

Improved security at Willington station

A collaborative project between CrossCountry, East Midlands Railway, Derwent Valley Community Rail Partnership and Derbyshire County Council has delivered a brand-new CCTV system at Willington station, improving the personal security of people waiting for trains, and acting as a deterrent to potential anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

Scottish Transport Awards win



We're always proud of the work our people do and put them forward for recognition whenever they go the extra mile. So, we were delighted when our Edinburgh-based Customer Service Manager Dale McDonald, was a joint winner for Frontline Employee of the Year at this year's Scottish Transport Awards.

The nomination was for his hard work during COP 26, where he coordinated and supported volunteers throughout the event. Since being appointed as Customer Service Manager at the start of the pandemic, Dale has gone on to support the day-to-day running of our Edinburgh team while also introducing and reviewing Covid controls and audits. His friendly, professional, and highly motivated approach has enabled him to thrive. And, during one of the toughest years professionally, he has continued to demonstrate the best of our people.

In addition to Dale's success, the whole Edinburgh team was shortlisted for Transport Team of the Year, although losing out to Transport Scotland for their delivery of the COP 26 Transport Plan.

Success at Community Rail Awards

In October, the Community Rail Network held their annual awards event to celebrate an inspiring range of community initiatives from across the country.

The event recognised a diverse array of projects including support for social inclusion, sustainable travel, empowered communities, and economic development.

We were delighted that an entry part-funded by ourselves and developed collaboratively by four Community Rail Partnerships won the award for 'Influencing Positive Change and Sustainability'.

'Platform' is the product of a unique partnership by Severnside, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and TransWilts CRPs. The curriculum-based rail education scheme seeks to raise awareness of the value of transport among young people by connecting classrooms to the railway.



Investing in our communities

This year was the first of our new Community Investment Fund, a special scheme where local authorities and organisations can apply for funding to support local projects and initiatives.

Ten schemes shared almost £300,000, with communities benefitting in the South West, Midlands and Scotland. These included support for people in Torbay to get back into employment, schemes in Gloucestershire to encourage travel and tourism and promote local venues, an enterprise hub and community gallery in Wolverhampton and a wayfinding scheme in Stonehaven to help people navigate from the station to the town centre and other places to visit. And in the East Midlands we were pleased to fund schemes from local community groups at Burton-on-Trent, Narborough and Nuneaton stations.

All the schemes will be complete by April 2023 and we've already received applications for funding for next year.

Caring for our environment

Our environmental strategy, Destination Green, continues to engage our people and drive progress towards reducing our environmental impact as we move forward with specific targets for energy, fuel, water and waste.

Our new starters receive training to support their understanding of environmental sustainability and how we aim to reduce their impact. Those with a keen interest in the environment can volunteer to be an Environmental Champion and receive additional environmental training. This is helping promote sustainability at offices and depots, by reducing printer use or ensuring lighting and heating is not overused.

As part of the refurbishment of our main Birmingham offices, the design is focused on achieving net zero carbon emissions through energy-efficiency measures such as LED light fittings. We will also increase our recycling with initiatives such as crisp packet collections. Achieving a higher proportion of waste for recycling will promote the circular economy and preservation of resources and ensure none of our office waste goes to landfill. We also work with our suppliers to ensure the procurement of new products is sustainable.

On our trains, a driver assistance system together with our engine idling policy is helping reduce fuel and emissions and promote cleaner air in and around the railway. We are also working with suppliers to trial modifications to some trains to further reduce the environmental impact from CO2 emissions.

Lots more exciting work is expected over the coming years, which we will share when we have more information. If you have any ideas and would like to share the work you are doing to reduce the impact on the environment, please contact

environment@crosscountrytrains.co.uk



COMMUNITY BITES

Here you can find a selection of some of the many activities we've worked on with our CRP partners during 2022. Each heading contains a link to our [Community Hub](#) where you can read more details.

[Rivington Rambler proves to be success](#)

The 'Rivington Rambler' bus service was again hailed a great success by users and the local community for providing an easy and sustainable way of getting to Rivington Country Park.

[Sustainable travel education toolkit launch](#)

We've launched the UK's first Sustainable Travel Educational Toolkit at the National Railway Museum in York.

[Showcase at Rail Academy Industry Week](#)

In October, CrossCountry staff joined the Newcastle Rail Academy to host a series of events giving students a behind the scenes view of how Britain's railway works.

[STEM+ Challenge Days teaches young people about the railway](#)

Between March-July 2022, we funded Railway Engineering STEM+ Challenge Days across Coventry and Warwickshire schools with Heart of England Community Rail Partnership, developing vital skills to inspire the next generation of engineers.

[New community room and repaint for Sleaford station](#)

Our Community Engagement Fund contributed towards a £204,000 project to repaint Sleaford station and convert an unused space into a community room.

[Support for UKs only Youth CRP](#)

We recently launched our partnership with 6VT Community Rail Partnership, providing funding to the UK's only youth partnership.

[New digital information displays in the community](#)

High-tech 'totem' displays were funded by our Community Engagement Fund meeting Derwent Valley Community Rail Partnership's aspirations to provide improved integrated public transport and tourism information near to the un-staffed rail stations in the two busy market towns.

[Students celebrate at Academy Awards](#)

In June, the Newcastle College Rail & Civil Engineering Academy hosted its annual student awards.

[STEM classroom opens for business](#)

Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Company have worked with Settle Primary School to introduce a STEM room in the primary school grounds to promote science, technology, engineering and math education.

[Community celebrate connection through music and art](#)

Over 100 people from the Bishop Line community celebrated the importance of connections at Locomotion, Shildon, sharing their experiences of participating in the Our Line Connections Project.

[Inspiring engineers of the future](#)

We've been working with Primary Engineers inspiring the next generation of engineers through STEM early years education.

Community Rail Funding

Each year we provide our designated Community Rail Partnerships with a sum of money towards their operational costs. This helps towards their payroll, accommodation and utility bills, other office costs and travel.

| Community Rail Partnership | 2020* | 2021 | 2022 | 2023* |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Bishop Line | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Bolton & South Lancashire | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Borders | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Crewe – Manchester | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Derwent Valley | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Devon & Cornwall | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| East Lothian | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Gloucestershire | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Heart of England | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Hereward Line | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| High Peak & Hope Valley | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Leeds-Lancaster-Morecambe | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Lymington - Brockenhurst | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Mid Cheshire | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| North Staffs | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Nottingham – Skegness | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Penistone Line Partnership | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| South East Glasgow | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| South East Manchester | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Settle & Carlisle Railway Company | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Severnside | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Southeast Communities | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Three Rivers | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Tyne Valley | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Worcestershire | £7,015.38 | £10,138.00 | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Reading-Basingstoke** | | | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| 6VT** | | | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |
| Robin Hood** | | | £10,932.54 | £5,898.27 |

* Part year

** New partnership from 2022