

- Our new **Value & impact of Community Rail** report was released in September which shows through rigorous research and example case studies the real social value of community rail activities. Headline figures for the work delivered by over 1,300 station adoption groups and our 75 CRP members include:
  - A social return of **£17.89 for every £1.00 invested**
  - An annual social value of **£129 million from funding of £7.2 million**
  - Directly engages with over **125,000 people** per year
  - Works with 65,000 young people from more than 2,000 schools and youth organisations
  - Each year **8.250 volunteers give 380,000 hours** of time with a social value of **£30.9 million**

Download the report from <https://communityrail.org.uk/community-rail-movement-delivering-social-return-on-investment-of-nearly-18-for-every-1/> and a summary sheet is also available.

- The 2024-25 **Community Rail Development Fund** (for DfT accredited CRPs) & **Small Grants Fund** (for station adoption groups) is open for applications. CRDF can support projects up to **£25,000** (subject to match funding) and SGF is for Station Adoption Group projects up to **£1000**. The CRDF fund is open until **31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**, although projects do not need to be completed until **30<sup>th</sup> June 2025**. See here - <https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/grants-funding-and-bursaries/funding-available-through-crn/>
- We have met with a number of regional mayors and sub-national transport bodies and are soon to meet the Rail Minister - getting the message across that adequate recognition of members' community rail is noticed and funding secured to help deliver outstanding community rail activities.
- The launch of **Railway 200** took place in September which is building up to a year of celebrations in 2025 to mark the 200th anniversary of the start of the modern railway era. This will be a year not just about looking back or talking about trains and infrastructure, but also the role of railways in social and community development over the last 200 years... and will also look to education, innovation and the future too. A touring **Exhibition Train** and many national events are planned, but also you are encouraged to register local collections of railway history in libraries, museums, and railway stations and local events too. The main website is <https://railway200.co.uk/> and the events page is <https://railway200.co.uk/get-involved/share-activity-or-event/>. We will continue to hold regular members Q&A webinars with the Railway 200 team with details publicised here - <https://communityrail.org.uk/events-and-campaigns/training-networking-webinars/>
- We have recently been awarded a **Travelling with Confidence** grant from the **Motability Foundation** for a two-year programme of work with four CRPs (CR Lancashire, GO CRP, Severnside CRP & South East Communities RP) engaging and empowering disabled people, promoting independent mobility and using rail and connecting modes. A dedicated grants pot will also be available for other members to access, and resources will be developed to help raise awareness of this important topic.
- Our partnership with Scouts on the **Platforms for Change** scheme continues to grow with 290 Scout groups registered and matched with 165 station adoption groups – a reach to around 5,000 young people. The scheme includes rail safety, station-based activities, rail confidence and a rail experience. Please encourage station adoption groups to sign-up and to link with their local Scouts groups here - <https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/community-rail-education-network/platforms-for-change/>

- Three **national dates** to add to your calendars are:
  - From **14<sup>th</sup> October 2024 to 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2024**, we are running our ‘Days out by Rail’ campaign encouraging more people to take the train for greener, healthier leisure journeys. Details and downloadable resources are available here - <https://communityrail.org.uk/how-you-can-get-involved-with-our-days-out-by-rail-campaign/>
  - All members are encouraged to attend the **Community Rail Network AGM** which takes place on-line on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (1400-1530). We are actively seeking new board members, so please consider if this is something you would be interested in finding out more about.
  - The National **Community Rail Awards** takes place in Newcastle on **13<sup>th</sup> March 2025** with **Lumo & Hull Trains** as headline sponsors. We had a record breaking **227 entries** for the awards which we are reviewing with a shoer list announced on **11<sup>th</sup> December 2024**.
- The **events and webinars** page of the website contains many opportunities for members and partners (<https://communityrail.org.uk/events-and-campaigns/training-networking-webinars/>). These include:
  - ‘Working with your local bus company to develop bus/rail links’ by Roger French - **24<sup>th</sup> October**
  - We continue to run a range of specialist networks (although some are taking a summer break):
    - Integrated Sustainable Transport – **21<sup>st</sup> November**
    - Education (**Third Thursday each month**)
    - Tourism (**Next date TBC**)
    - CRP Chairs (**Next date TBC**)
    - Community Rail Officers (**Next date TBC**)

If you missed any webinars, many of them can be watched back by following the links on our website.

- **Bespoke training** for members is also available – recent sessions have helped CRPs think about their governance structure, overall aims and visions and their marketing & communications messages.
- Members can also apply for **Training Bursaries** of up to £200 for courses of their own choosing that will help CRP Officers in their role. Contact Alex Peel or Naomi Lilley for more details.
- Several rail industry **Corporate Partners** can support and help your activities as shown on the info page <https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/how-our-corporate-partners-support-our-members/> Complete the **Support Request Form** to register your needs - <https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/how-our-corporate-partners-support-our-members/members-request-for-volunteer-support/> Our newest offer from Team BA can provide media and comms mentoring and support for Community Rail Network members and **discounts (or free) hire** of comms equipment for your events.
- Our **Support and Development team** should be your first contact for day to day queries, regionally led by Paul Webster with local area support from Jenni Jones (SWR & GWR), Ian Davis (North), Rhiannon-Jane Raftery (Wales), with Paul supporting the Midlands, Anglia and South East. Other specialist support is available on Education (Karen Bennet), Training & Development (Alex Peel & Naomi Lilley) and Integrated Sustainable Transport (Gary Shipp).
- Finally, please send Erin ([news@communityrail.org.uk](mailto:news@communityrail.org.uk)) your **good news** stories to share with the wider community rail family through our social media channels or twice monthly e-bulletin ‘**Community Rail News**’ which now reaches over 1000 subscribers. We are always looking for interesting examples of work CRPs and station adoption groups are doing across the country and to amplify the great work you are doing to a national audience. [Sign-up here if you don’t already receive it](#)

**Paul Webster – Community Rail Network – Regions Support Manager – October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**