



Community Rail Network Upcoming Events, Webinars and Training January + Onwards 2025. Ian Davis-Support and Development Officer -North of England – 8th July 2025

Railway 200 Exhibition Train

We're sure you've all seen by now that [Railway 200](#) has confirmed the route for the first three months of the [Exhibition Train](#). The bicentenary train, named *Inspiration*, will visit 60 locations across Britain over 12 months (including several community rail lines and stations), promoting rail innovation and careers with interactive displays. Read our [FAQ sheet](#) for information on the route and details of the volunteer coordinators at each station.

Active Bystander Training

The [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#) is running a series of 30-minute training sessions on standing up against harassment. The free and participative sessions are designed to empower more people to be active bystanders when they see harassment taking place, without putting their own safety at risk. There are some specific public transport examples included which members may find relevant and useful. [Book onto one of the sessions here.](#)

The provision of bystander training is one way in which community rail could make a positive impact on women's safety. If you are interested in joining a working group to share your ideas and experiences to further develop work in this area, please contact [Gary Shipp](#).

Safeguarding on Transport Course (pre-recorded by The Railway Children Charity)

Online

[The Railway Children Charity](#) has produced a 'safeguarding on transport' course to give those working within rail an understanding of the issues affecting our transport network, as well as the tools and confidence to identify vulnerability and take appropriate action. Our members can access the short course, which takes approx. 45 minutes to complete, for free. To request access, [submit your details](#).

Railway 200

01 January 2025 - 31 December 2025

Online

In 2025 the nation will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the modern railway, and there is plenty of opportunity for community rail to get involved.

Next year is **Railway 200**, the 200th anniversary of the first passenger carrying railway and there are many events planned. The team behind Railway 200 have been very keen to stress that this will be a year which marks not just the developments in trains and infrastructure, but also the role of railways in social and community development over the last 200 years... and looking to innovation and the future too. The celebration is not just for the North East as there is a desire to showcase and open-up collections of railway history in local libraries, museums, and railway stations. If you would like to know more about the plans for Railway 200, see <https://railway200.co.uk/> or join one of our regular on-line Q&A sessions for members - the latest (with a recording) was on 16th May - <https://communityrail.org.uk/training/railway-200-information-session-2/>

[Visit the official Railway 200 website.](#)

[Revisit our online information sessions with project manager Emma Robertson.](#)

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

Wednesday 16th July 2025 10:00- 11:45 hrs

Online

Join this online session taking an in-depth look at how members can work together with their train operators, local communities and other partners to develop engaging projects addressing anti-social behaviour at stations.

- Understand the factors that have contributed to a successful distraction project to combat anti-social behaviour
- Understand the part played by partners in a multi-agency scheme
- Identify the indicators that demonstrate longer-term outcomes are being achieved

View the [agenda here](#).

[Book your place](#).

Project Outcomes and Planning

Tuesday 5th August 9:45 -12:45 hrs

Online

This informal, online workshop, on Tuesday 5 August, 9.45am-12.45pm, will provide an overview of what project outcomes are, how to identify them, and tools and techniques for planning to achieve your outcomes and evidencing their success. This workshop is aimed at community rail officers, but other members (chairs, station adopters) are also most welcome.

[Register here](#).

Tourism Network – August

Tuesday 5th August 2025 10:00 hrs

Online

The Community Rail Tourism Network brings together members that are interested in encouraging more people to take the train for greener, healthier journeys using community rail lines.

The sessions provide members with an opportunity to highlight their current projects, share best practices and learn from others, with a tourism and leisure focus. Additionally, the online sessions offer a supportive space to seek advice and discuss challenges around promoting the railway in the current environment.

If you're interested in attending a future session, please get in touch with Alice (Campaigns and leisure promotions coordinator) on alice@communityrail.org.uk.

Travelling with Confidence Small Grants Information Session

Tuesday 16 September 2025 12:00 -13:00 hrs

Online

As part of our [Travelling with Confidence programme](#), aimed at empowering hundreds of disabled people to travel more confidently by rail and connecting modes, we will soon be in a position to provide a small number of grants (and support) to accredited CRPs to set up similar, smaller-scale initiatives in their local areas, and to be a part of our wider project.

We will be holding an online information session on Tuesday 16 September, 12-1pm.

If you are interested in attending, or would like more information, please contact [Sally](#).

Tourism Network – October

Thursday 2nd October 2025 10:00

Online

The Community Rail Tourism Network brings together members that are interested in encouraging more people to take the train for greener, healthier journeys using community rail lines.

The sessions provide members with an opportunity to highlight their current projects, share best practices and learn from others, with a tourism and leisure focus. Additionally, the online sessions offer a supportive space to seek advice and discuss challenges around promoting the railway in the current environment.

If you're interested in attending a future session, please get in touch with Alice (Campaigns and leisure promotions coordinator) on alice@communityrail.org.uk.

Community Rail Conference, 6th & 7th October 2025

Monday 6th October 2025 - 12:00 hrs

Tuesday 7th October 2025 - 10:59 hrs

Nottingham

The next Community Rail Conference will take place in Nottingham on Monday 6 and Tuesday 7 October 2025.

Hosted in partnership with the Department for Transport, our Community Rail Conference is specifically for community rail partnerships and rail industry partners and is [by invite only](#).

The conference is an opportunity to network with colleagues, exchange ideas and experiences, learn and find inspiration for future activities.

Booking details and outline agendas will be available soon.

[Join our mailing list](#)

Tourism Network – December

Tuesday 16th December 2025 10:00

Online

The Community Rail Tourism Network brings together members that are interested in encouraging more people to take the train for greener, healthier journeys using community rail lines.

The sessions provide members with an opportunity to highlight their current projects, share best practices and learn from others, with a tourism and leisure focus. Additionally, the online sessions offer a supportive space to seek advice and discuss challenges around promoting the railway in the current environment.

If you're interested in attending a future session, please get in touch with Alice (Campaigns and leisure promotions coordinator) on alice@communityrail.org.uk.

Other News

New resources

As part of our work with the [Foundation for Integrated Transport](#), we have produced a [practical guide](#) to support community organisations in leading on modal integration initiatives. It takes a step-by-step approach to the planning, delivery and review of activities to integrate different forms of public, shared and active transport; to help people access the opportunities they want in a more sustainable way.

The resource itself is best viewed as a 'slide show' due to the inclusion of animations and links within and outside of the document.

[Watch the 'talk through' of the resource here.](#)

We are also pleased to be publishing two new guidance resources for members, both sponsored by Northern. The first is a guide on [community rail and tackling anti-social behaviour](#), particularly at stations, and the second is a guide on [community rail and engaging in local planning and development](#), building on the work of Gloucestershire CRP's '[Connecting Communities](#)' guide.

Railway 200

The route for the exhibition train is likely to be formally announced at the end of January: we will update you when we can. Meanwhile, members are invited to the next [Education Network meeting](#) on Thursday 20 February, where a representative from Railway 200 will be talking specifically about the Exhibition Train.

- 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.
- **Community Rail Development Fund (CRDF)**

The 2025-26 Community Rail Development Fund is now open.

Accredited community rail partnerships in England and Wales can apply to this funding scheme, which Community Rail Network administers on behalf of the Department for Transport. It is

intended to support projects and activities set out in CRPs' annual plans. The maximum grant for projects in this funding period is £25,000.

You must speak to your usual [contact](#) within our support and development team to discuss your project before submitting any bid.

[Download the application form and funding criteria.](#)

- **Small Grants Fund (England)**
- **The 2025-26 Small Grants Fund (England) is open for applications.**

Community Rail Network members in England can apply for small grants of up to £2,500 for non-accredited community rail partnerships and community station members, or £1,000 for station friends, adopters and small groups, through this scheme which Community Rail Network administers on behalf of the Department for Transport.

If you have any questions about applying to the Small Grants Fund, please contact grants@communityrail.org.uk.

[Download the application form and funding criteria.](#)

- **Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) Small Grants Fund**

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is providing funding and wider support to community groups who want to improve Greater Manchester's rail stations. They have made a funding pot available for project bids from community rail partnerships and station friends' groups. CRPs and Community Stations can bid for up to £1,500. Friends Groups can bid for up to £500.

Bids will be assessed on their benefit to local communities. We are looking for evidence-based submissions on what the project is hoping to achieve. This could be, for example:

- Greater local engagement
- Reduced crime
- Improved recycling rates

(Note: projects should not be primarily aimed at increasing rail patronage).

There is no limit on the amount of bids each CRP or Friends Groups can make. All bids must be submitted on the form below and emailed to grants@communityrail.org.uk and will be assessed by TfGM and Community Rail Network, and, where appropriate, Network Rail. Where appropriate submissions will be shared with Network Rail and train operators to a) seek relevant approvals and b) seek additional or match funding. Once a request has been approved funds will be distributed via Community Rail Network.

TfGM are also keen to help applicants with their projects and will also be happy to provide communications support, for example writing press releases or profiling your project on social media.

TfGM's rail officers also keen to help you plan your project and also, where necessary, liaise with Network Rail and the train operators. TfGM may also be able to provide volunteer support. This will be measured as a funding contribution of £15 per hour. Community involvement in rail stations is hugely important and is highly valued by TfGM. It is a key part of their plan to transform rail stations into community hubs that provide access to a range of essential services.

[Download the application form and funding criteria.](#)

- Our partnership with Scouts on the Platforms for Change scheme continues to grow with 270 Scout groups registered and matched with 130 station adoption groups – a reach to over 4,500 young people! The scheme includes railway safety, station-based activities, rail confidence and a rail experience. Please continue to spread the word about the project to local Scouts organisations and to your station adoption groups and encourage them to visit our page to register their interest. Full details of the project are also on the page - <https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/community-rail-education-network/platforms-for-change/>
- **The new Value & impact of Community Rail report** is now published (thank you to the members who contributed towards this). This important report about the local difference your CRP makes, its reach and outcomes, will provide incredibly useful information when talking to partners and completing funding bids.
- We continue to develop our work with our Corporate Partners, the latest being with **Team BA** who provide media and comms services to the rail industry. Their offer to community rail is 50 hours of free mentoring and support for Community Rail Network members and discounts (or free) hire of comms equipment for events. See the details of their offer here - <https://communityrail.org.uk/community-rail-network-and-teamba-announce-corporate-partnership/> and our other partners who offer free volunteering of their staff for your work here - <https://communityrail.org.uk/partners-and-supporters/our-partners-supporters/>
- 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** (see above) can provide media and comms mentoring and support for Community Rail Network members and **discounts (or free) hire** of comms equipment for your events.
- **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 first for more details

- We have recently produced a Policy Position Paper on [Sustainable Transport and Travel](#) and have another paper in development on Accessibility for the Railway. We also produced a viewpoint paper on the Shadow Rail Policy which came out in April. These are available to download here - <https://communityrail.org.uk/resources/policy-papers-and-consultation-responses/>

Community Rail Network membership survey for 2024

A big thank you to everyone who participated in Community Rail Network's membership survey for 2024. We received responses from community rail partnerships and station/community groups spanning Britain, and as ever, have carefully analysed the results to help inform our planning for the next year and beyond. (cont.)

The survey provides us with some member satisfaction measures which helps us to assess and reflect on what we are doing well and what we need to improve. In addition, it allows us to create a more detailed picture of your future priorities and challenges, which ensures our work continues to respond to your needs and provides support for the growing community rail movement.

Headline figures for 2024:

- 95% said they received value for money from their membership, compared to 91% last year;
- 89% say we communicate well (very or reasonably) with members, compared to 86% last year;
- 85% received direct support from across the year, compared to 77% last year;
- 80% attended some form of event/training course/webinar, compared to 82% last year
- 78% of CRP respondents got involved in at least one of our campaigns in the past year, compared to 84% last year

Top priorities for members over the coming year

CRPs:

1. Developing stronger links with and engaging your community;
2. Promoting tourism and leisure travel by rail;
3. Promoting rail travel and increased rail usage.

Station/community station/other groups:

1. Recruiting volunteers/developing volunteer activity;
2. Developing stronger links with and engaging your community;
3. Arts/creative/history projects, and promoting rail travel and increased rail usage (joint 3rd)

Most important issues for the new member support strategy to address

CRPs:

1. Working to simplify the processes involved in station buildings projects;
2. Improving the accreditation process;
3. Supporting the development and expansion of integrated sustainable travel programmes.

Station/community station/other groups:

1. Improving grants processes, and working to simplify the processes involved in station buildings projects (joint first);
2. Supporting the development and expansion of integrated sustainable travel programmes;
3. Supporting the development and expansion of education/youth engagement programmes.

Funding and fundraising

- 55% of CRP respondents said they had been affected by cuts to community rail budgets (down from 63% last year), as well as 14% of station/other group respondents (same as last year);
- More than half (56%) of CRPs have made, or are making, plans to explore/access new funding sources, with some having already been successful, currently bidding, or changing governance/structure to help access new funding;
- 53% of CRP respondents said they had been asked by funders to provide information on the social value of their activities (up from 36% last year), alongside 11% of station/other group respondents (same as last year).

The results of the 2024 membership survey will be used to underpin Community Rail Network's planning processes over the coming months and will be crucial in informing our new member support and development strategy. We will also feedback the results to key rail industry and government partners in England, Scotland, and Wales.

The next survey is due to take place in Autumn 2025, however, we really value your input and suggestions, and would encourage you to feed in comments and ideas at any time through your regular Community Rail Network contact(s), on social media, or via e-mail to info@communityrail.org.uk.

A big thank you again from all the Community Rail Network team.

Finally, please send Erin (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](#)

