

Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership Annual Report 2019-2020



Belper Station volunteers and wild flower garden



Improved waiting facilities at Matlock Station



Launch of the Derwent Valley Line Activity Book at Derby Station with Perri the Peregrine, Bertie the Badger and friends

Message from the Chair

The partnership has had another successful year with significant enhancements to stations, more community involvement, new marketing and a rise in passenger numbers, despite sadly, activities being curtailed in March with the COVID-19 lockdown, the longer term implications of which remain uncertain.

In April 2019, the new East Midlands rail franchise was awarded to East Midlands Railway (EMR), part of the Abellio group, who operate much of the Dutch rail network. EMR began the new franchise in August 2019 and we look forward to building on the great initiatives and excellent working relationships we enjoyed with East Midlands Trains.

It is pleasing that we will continue to work with familiar faces who have supported our work over a number of years. Donna Adams, Community Engagement Manager, has been joined by Alexa Stott in a new Community Ambassador role, who will support community and station adoption activity. Locally, we continue to have the assistance of the Derby Station team including Paul Mobbs, Station Duty Manager, and Kev Knight who looks after the local stations and is always willing to assist the work of the station adopters.



Cllr Ainsworth at the EMR launch event at Derby Station

The new franchise brings a notable increase in community rail funding. This additional funding from EMR, along with continued financial support from CrossCountry Trains, Amber Valley, Derbyshire Dales and Peak District National Park, has enabled an increase in hours for our officer Alastair, and brings with it greater opportunities for the future development of the partnership.

In January 2020, the Department for Transport (DfT) confirmed the Derwent Valley Line CRP had achieved accreditation status. This is a new DfT initiative which is administered by Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP) and I would like to thank Paul Webster from ACoRP for guiding us through the process. The accredited status recognises that we have the support of Government for our work and that the partnership adopts a collaborative approach and operates to a high standard of governance.

As a user of the line, especially for leisure trips, I am keen that we encourage people to explore the Derwent Valley Line. Our new family Activity Book is a fun way to encourage more young people and their families to enjoy the railway and discover new places in the Derwent Valley. The 'adoption' of Perri the Peregrine as a fun character, guiding young explorers on their visits, has been a creative and eye-catching way to promote the line to a new audience.

Our station adopters have continued their great work at their local stations, with several groups involving local children in project work, including planting as well as bird and bat box making. The Belper group have received further recognition for their extensive station gardening activities, achieving a Gold Level award in the 'It's Your Station' category and Kate, their lead volunteer being deservedly shortlisted for the Outstanding Volunteer Contribution award. At Matlock, I have seen the idea from one of the adopters turned into reality with the installation of the glass screen, providing wind and rain protection for passengers waiting at the station. It is wonderful to see the local community at the heart of what goes on at each station.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the partnership over the last year, especially the efforts of the many volunteers who contribute enormously to the success of the Derwent Valley Line.

Councillor Trevor Ainsworth

News on the Line

New East Midlands Railway Franchise Begins

In April, Abellio, operating as EMR, were confirmed as the winning bidder for the East Midlands Rail Franchise. To celebrate EMR held a launch event on 18 August 2019 at Derby, to mark the start of their eight year franchise, which may be extended for a further two years beyond that.

The Derwent Valley Line will see a number of enhancements from the new franchise including:

- More frequent Sunday service;
- Replacement of existing regional 153, 156 and 158 train fleet with more modern and spacious, refurbished class 170 trains;
- Belper and Matlock will become staffed stations, offering improved customer service;
- Whatstandwell will be one of six zero carbon stations across the East Midlands;
- Increased core funding for the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership;
- New funding for community rail projects and community rail marketing initiatives; and
- More support from EMR with new Community Ambassadors to assist community rail activities and Station Adopters.



One of the first local trains re-painted in EMR colours at Cromford Station February 2020

Derwent Valley Line Awarded Accreditation Status

The Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership has gained Accreditation from the Department for Transport. Accreditation is formal recognition that the Community Rail Partnership operates to a high standard and that its objectives and activities are supported by Government. The new accreditation status also means that the partnership can apply for extra project funding from the Community Rail Development Fund.



Passenger Journeys on the Derwent Valley Line

There was a welcome increase in passenger journeys along the line, despite the impact in March of the travel restrictions due to COVID-19. The increase in passenger journeys for each station are:

Station	Passenger Journeys	Passenger Journeys	% Change in Passenger Journeys
	2019/20	2018/19	2018/19 to 2019/20
Ambergate	41,720	41,241	1%
Belper	236,579	210,886	12%
Cromford	44,629	41,740	7%
Duffield	76,991*	68,954*	12%
Matlock	223,257	201,649	11%
Matlock Bath	68,104	62,151	10%
Whatstandwell	27,210	23,181	17%
Total at all local stations	718,490	649,802	11%

*Total includes through tickets to Wirksworth from Duffield

Community Inspired Stations

Over 50 station adopters on the Derwent Valley Line continue to contribute to the upkeep of their local station by maintaining station gardens and looking after planting displays along the line. Many of the groups are involving other organisations in their work, bringing more diverse representation and engagement from within their community.

The Community Rail Partnership continues to support the station groups to develop ideas, access funding and implement projects. Station adoption activities are also well supported through both the Derby Station team, in particular by Kev Knight, Station Service Technician, and Paul Mobbs, Station Duty Manager, along with assistance from Donna Adams, Community Engagement Manager, and Alexa Stott as the newly appointed Community Ambassador.

Recognition for Belper Station Gardening Volunteers

Transition Belper's station gardening prowess was recognised at the Community Rail Awards with the presentation of Gold level award in the 'It's Your Station' category. This award acknowledges the hard work of the Belper volunteers maintaining their extensive garden areas and the community involvement they have brought to the station through the art project and other initiatives.

Additionally, Kate Pudney was shortlisted for the Outstanding Volunteer Contribution for her commitment over many years to the station gardening and co-ordinating the work of the Transition Belper Station Gardening Volunteers.



Gold award for Belper station adopters

Bird and Bat Boxes Installed at Cromford Station

In the spring, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust installed bird and bat boxes in trees around Cromford station. The Cromford Station group had worked with Greenaway Workshop for adults with long term health conditions and children from Cromford School to make the boxes. Some of the children visited the station to watch the boxes being installed and take part in some planting at the station.

Compost Bins Created by Cromford Volunteers

Station volunteers assisted by EMR's station team installed a set of compost bins to help manage the large amount of vegetation that is regularly collected at the station.



New compost bins built at Cromford

School Children Planting at Whatstandwell

At Whatstandwell children from Alderwasley School helped the station adopters with summer planting at the station. A number of classes have also been using the Derwent Valley Line Activity Book to explore their local area and the partnership is working with the school to provide pupils with a programme of rail travel training.

Thank You Event for Station Adopters

In July, East Midlands Trains treated station adopters to a special day out on the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway (EVR). Station volunteers from across the East Midlands network were invited to Duffield to take a journey on the EVR. At Wirksworth, volunteers were able to change trains on to the steeply inclined Ravenstor branch, ride the miniature railway, visit the museum and enjoy the historic town of Wirksworth.



Station adopters visit to EVR

EMR's First Station Adopters Conference

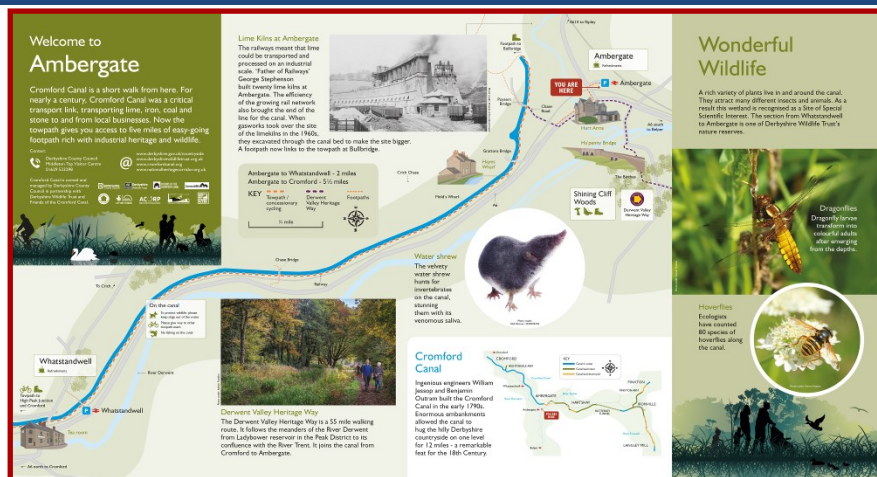
The first EMR Station Adopters Conference was held in February at a new venue, the Derby Conference Centre. The Grade II listed building, retains many distinctive features from when it was home to the British Rail Training College and was an ideal setting for station adopters to share their experiences, meet the new members of the EMR Community Rail team and learn about EMR's plans for the future.

Station Enhancement Projects

Exploring the Cromford Canal

New information panels have been installed at Ambergate and Whatstandwell stations to welcome visitors wishing to access the Cromford Canal. The panels include a map from each station and explore the history and wildlife of the canal. The DerwentWISE project produced the panels with input from local partner organisations including the Community Rail Partnership.

Cromford Canal interpretation board at Ambergate Station



Bertie the Badger Opens the Whistlestop Café

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's Whistlestop Café was officially opened by Bertie the Badger on 11 April 2019 to celebrate the restoration and transformation of the Grade II listed railway station at Matlock Bath. The building is now an eco-friendly café, vibrant visitor centre and welcoming gateway to the town. Built in 1849, the Whistlestop had been closed for over a decade until over £150,000 funding was secured from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Crowdfunding along with grants secured by the Community Rail Partnership from ACoRP and CrossCountry Trains. The project was Runner Up in the 'Most Enhanced Station Building and Surroundings' category at the 2019 Community Rail Awards.

Official opening of Whistlestop Café



New Walkway to the Heights Nears Completion

The new walkway linking Matlock Bath station car park to the Heights of Abraham was nearing completion for the start of the visitor season. The attractive new path replaces the former path across the railway line, which was closed due to safety concerns. Once completed the Community Rail Partnership, working with EMR and the Heights of Abraham, is planning to install a set of panels illustrating places to visit at each station along the Derwent Valley Line.

Glass Screen Shelters Matlock Passengers

A new community inspired glass screen to create a dry and sheltered passenger waiting area has been installed at Matlock Station. The Matlock station adopters' request for a more enclosed passenger waiting area was developed by the Community Rail Partnership and delivered in partnership with East Midlands Trains. Numerous challenges were overcome and extensive consultation took place with Network Rail and local stakeholders to design, approve and install the modern, high quality glass screen. The project was funded by ACoRP, CrossCountry Trains and Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership and follows on from Network Rail's recent high quality renovation of the two historic station canopies.

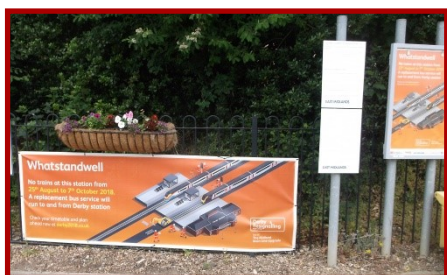
New glass screen provides improved waiting facilities at Matlock Station



Community Rail Awards 2019 and Projects in the Pipeline

Community Rail Awards 2019

- Waking up the Whistlestop – Runner Up, Most Enhanced Station Buildings and Surroundings
- Communicating Derby Resignalling to Derwent Valley line passengers – Runner Up, Best Marketing or Communications Campaign
- Transition Belper Station Gardening Volunteers – Gold, It's Your Station award.
- Kate Pudney from Belper Station – Shortlisted, Outstanding Volunteer Contribution
- Perri the Peregrine at Community Rail in the City – Shortlisted, Photo and video competition.



Communicating Derby Resignalling



Waking up the Whistlestop



Belper Station Wild Flower Meadow

Projects in the Pipeline

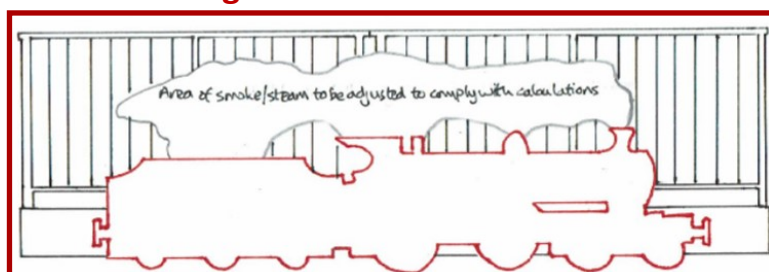
Funding was gained for a number of future projects, whilst some activities have been put on hold due to COVID-19.

EMR Funds New Planting Barrels at Matlock Bath

EMR have provided funding from their Station Improvement Fund for four more 'self-watering' style planting barrels at Matlock Bath station. These will replace the remaining wooden barrels, which are in a poor condition, and enable the volunteers to produce a better planting display throughout the station.

Funding Confirmed for Artwork for Matlock Station Footbridge

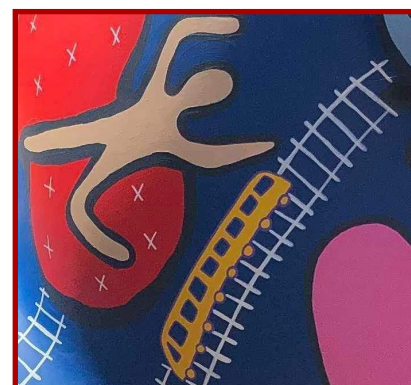
The Community Rail Partnership secured funding from EMR and ACoRP to enable Matlock Civic Society to develop their steam train artwork project for the station footbridge. The aluminium plaque, depicting a Midland Railway 4-4-0 compound locomotive, will be attached to the railings to enhance the appearance of the footbridge. A planter and interpretation board will be installed at ground level beneath the artwork. Funding for this project has also been secured from Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council and Matlock Town Council.



Depiction of steam train for Matlock Station footbridge

Community Rail Ram at Derby Station

A Community Rail Ram promoting both the Derwent Valley and North Staffordshire community rail lines will be located at the front of Derby Station as part of the Derby Ram Trail. EMR's Community Development Fund and the Derwent Valley Line and North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnerships are jointly funding the project. A local artist, Holly Aspinall, has been chosen to depict the rail lines and places to visit based on her 'connecting communities' theme. Unfortunately the Derby Ram Trail was postponed for summer 2020.



Part of the draft design for the Community Rail Ram

New Marketing Initiatives

Funding totalling over £75,000 had been secured to develop a series of marketing campaigns with EMR and tourism partners for summer 2020. The main project was a joint tourism marketing campaign with Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire and Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. There was also funding for a project to encourage more school groups to use the railway for school trips, which was being led by the Heights of Abraham, and a new heritage railway passport with Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. It is hoped these marketing initiatives will be delivered in 2021.

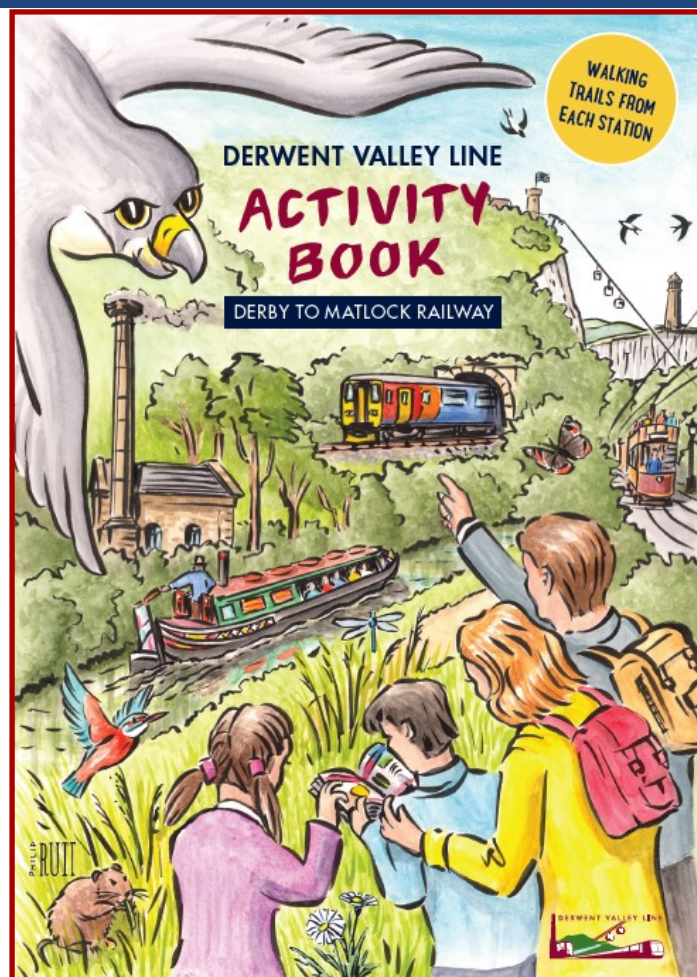
Derwent Valley Line Marketing

Marketing activities to promote the line were delivered by the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership. During the year the following marketing initiatives were delivered:

Perri the Peregrine and Friends Launch New Derwent Valley Line Activity Book

A new Derwent Valley Line Activity Book was produced, providing fun walking trails from each station with numerous family orientated quizzes and activities to take part in. Families with young children are encouraged by 'Perri the Peregrine' to "Spot things and do stuff" by discovering history, spotting wildlife or just exploring the wonderful countryside along the Derwent Valley Line. The character of Perri has been based upon the Peregrine Falcons that nest in the Derwent Valley at Derby Cathedral and Belper Mill. The booklet was produced in partnership with DerwentWISE and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and also received funding from ACoRP.

Derwent Valley Line Activity Book



Perri the Peregrine and a pair of Peregrine Falcons promote the new Activity Book at Nottingham Station

To launch the Activity Book at Derby Station 'Perri the Peregrine' was joined by 'Bertie the Badger' from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and a pair of Peregrine Falcons from BB Falconry, along with representatives from the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership, East Midlands Trains and ACoRP. The Activity Book was also promoted as part of our Community Rail in the City event at Nottingham Station, at a promotional event at the Heights of Abraham and on a series of train trips around the East Midlands.

Derwent Valley Line Visitor Leaflet

The Derwent Valley Line promotional leaflet was produced in May and December 2019, featuring places to visit along the line, discounts to attractions and walking information. The leaflet was extensively distributed using leaflet display racks in Derby and Nottingham.

Summer Evening Saver

Leaflets and posters to promote the Summer Evening Saver Fare were produced by the Community Rail Partnership. The evening fare was available from 13 May to 1 September 2019 at a cost of just £3 return from Derby and £6 return from Nottingham and any Derwent Valley Line station.

Local Transport Information

The partnership's station information cases continued to provide visitor and local event information, as well as useful travel information. Town and village timetable cases were also kept updated.

Finance Report 2019/20

The new rail franchise with East Midlands Railway brought a welcome increase in partnership core funding from August 2019. This additional funding, along with continuing contributions from CrossCountry Trains, Amber Valley Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council and Peak District National Park Authority, enabled an increase in hours for our partnership officer to contribute to work on the Derwent Valley Line.

Financial Statement 2019/20

Expenditure	(£)
Salary Costs	22,143.39
Staff Travel	712.52
Partnership Management Costs*	4,000.00
Miscellaneous Expenses (admin, IT and mobile)	355.47
Projects and Marketing Activities	16,122.86
Grants to partner organisations	35,925.00
Sub Total for 2019/20	79,259.24
To be carried forward to 2020/21	57,034.39
Total Expenditure	136,293.63
Income	(£)
Amber Valley Borough Council	2,000.00
Derbyshire Dales District Council	2,000.00
Peak District National Park Authority	2,000.00
Derbyshire County Council*	4,000.00
East Midlands Trains	4,509.00
CrossCountry Trains	10,000.00
East Midlands Railway	16,657.00
Grants and project contributions	33,250.00
DVLCRP Reserves from 2018/19	61,877.63
Total Income	136,293.63

Grant Expenditure

Five grants were provided to partner organisations to deliver projects totalling £35,925:

- £30,000 to East Midlands Trains for Matlock Station waiting facilities
- £4,000 to Matlock Civic Society for Matlock footbridge artwork and planter
- £1,325 to North Staffordshire CRP for Community Rail Ram at Derby Station
- £350 to Transition Belper for Rail Awards and project work
- £250 to Groundwork for Autumn Footprints Walking Festival

Grant Income

The partnership gained grant and project contributions totalling £33,250:

- £15,000 from ACoRP for Matlock Station waiting facilities
- £10,000 from CrossCountry Trains for Matlock Station waiting facilities
- £3,250 from EMR for design work and promotional leaflets.
- £3,000 from EMR for Matlock footbridge artwork and planter.
- £1,000 from ACoRP for Matlock footbridge artwork and planter.

Funding Notes: * In kind support from Derbyshire County Council as the Partnership's host organisation. This includes Management, Finance, Audit, Procurement, Information Technology, Human Relations, Payroll and Administrative Support.

Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership

The partnership is accredited by the Department for Transport in recognition of our work to develop, promote and work with local communities along the Derwent Valley Line.

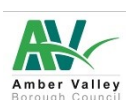


The Partnership's Vision for the Derwent Valley Line is:

'The operation of a frequent and reliable 7 day a week railway service that will attract a growing market, meet the needs of residents and visitors and support the economy of the Derwent Valley'.

The partnership is funded by Amber Valley Borough Council, CrossCountry Trains, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, East Midlands Railway (from 18 August 2019), East Midlands Trains (until 17 August 2019) and Peak District National Park Authority. The partnership is managed by Derbyshire County Council.

The partnership would also like to thank all our station volunteers, members of the partnership and Chris Darrall for meticulously recording the minutes of the meetings.



Contact Information

Alastair Morley, Partnership Officer, Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership, Derbyshire County Council, Economy, Transport and Environment, County Hall, Matlock DE4 3AG **01629 538062** alastair.morley@derbyshire.gov.uk