

# COMMUNITY RAIL REPORT

## West Midlands Railway

December 2018

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Community Rail is a key component of the Customer Experience Directorate at West Midlands Railway and we are working to introduce community activity at all of our 114 stations.

To achieve this ambition, we are looking to build new and productive partnerships with communities, district authorities, social enterprises, business improvement districts, innovation & enterprise hubs and local parish councils.

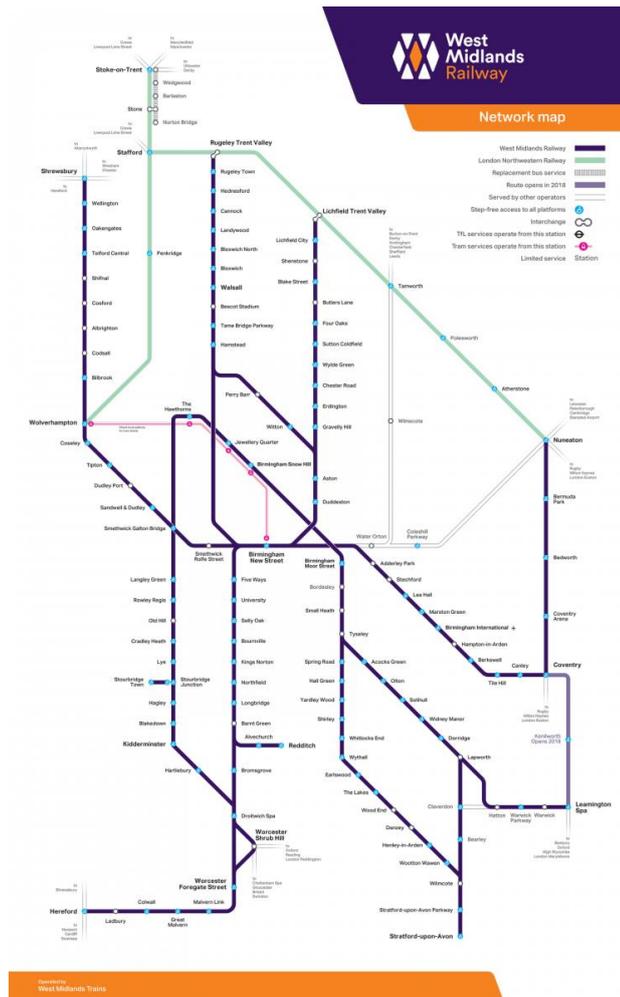
Communities are central to the new golden era of railways and we aim to demonstrate how our stations can once again become a pivotal point for local communities, reconnecting with the people they serve, developing new levels of 'localism', brokering new connections, breaking down barriers, providing tangible customer support and enhancing the experience of all rail travellers.

Our efforts in community rail ventures will increase both rail usage and the quality of the customer experience.

The Secretary of State's new Community Rail Strategy was launched in November and the Rail Minister hailed community rail projects as life changing; we are aware of the power of community connections and the impact on local levels of regeneration and we plan to invest resources to strengthen links between the railways and local people to not only enhance the station network but to help initiate social inclusion, supporting the regeneration of communities and tackling loneliness & isolation as part of wider government plans.

We can also confirm that such is the importance attached to community rail initiatives within the West Midlands Railway business unit that a revised budget has been agreed that allows £150k+ expenditure for the coming year to support adopters, enhance stations and bring prominence to our community rail sector. A core aim for 2019 will be to bring matched funding to this budget.

We look back on a year of change and work that has established the foundations for an intensely productive year ahead as we invest in projects to benefit local communities and develop new urban rail partnerships that will involve a wide range of partners and have a sustainable & productive future.



## INTRODUCTION

This report covers the key community rail activities of the past year, outlines the strategic goals with committed obligations that have been delivered and provides summaries of projects for the year ahead.

At the start of the franchise, whilst there was an admirable level of energy and activity dedicated to local work with community rail initiatives; across the West Midlands Railway network there were no formal ‘Community Rail Partnerships’. Over the past year we have created a senior management post to oversee the expansion of our community rail work and we have set our own targets to create two new rail partnerships in 2019 and a further three in 2020. Our challenge in establishing these new partnerships is to set out a convincing business case to bring partners on board and establish a new format of enterprising rail partnerships for urban areas.

We have finalised the Service Level Agreement with ACoRP and the annual payment of £40,000 per annum from West Midlands Trains will provide dedicated support within the business totalling 3 days per week with one day a week allocation for the West Midlands Railway business unit.

West Midlands Trains have also agreed sponsorship of the 2019 National Community Rail Awards and this investment combined with core strategic ambitions demonstrates our company’s overarching commitment to community rail.

## The Power of Purpose

We are totally committed to the communities we serve. We have created a new post 'Head of Stakeholder & Community' and have a serious ambition for all of our 114 stations to benefit from the joys and warmth of community activity.

**"By 2025 an army of a thousand friends & adopters will help ensure that our stations become symbols of community connection, inspiring local people and initiating wider local economic and social regeneration"**



## COMMUNITY RAIL 2018 & PLANS FOR 2019

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This Community Rail Report addresses:

1. Strategic Goals with Committed Obligations delivered during 2018
2. Statements of Required Information
3. Overview of Activities 2018
4. Key Points from National Community Rail Report 2018
5. West Midlands Railway Separable Business Unit Structure and Governance
6. 2019 Key Project Plan
7. Finances 2018 -19
8. Strategic Objectives

In 2018, the WMT Community Rail Report included the statement below which we have worked towards, with the committed budget allocation paid to existing CRPs within London Northwestern Railway (£90,000) which will be reported separately by LNR.

*"Our strategic aim is to dedicate time and resource to existing Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) as well as planning for new and enhanced community rail activity across the area. Our plans are to deliver to The Secretary of State's Community Rail Report (2018). We have committed £150,000 per year to supporting the community rail sector ... we have exciting plans to take community rail to a new level across the franchise area, working with a range of stakeholders and partners (rail and non-rail) and support emerging CRPs*

## 1. STRATEGIC GOALS WITH COMMITTED OBLIGATIONS DELIVERED DURING 2018

- There is a Committed Obligation to develop Community Rail expansion across the business and host an Adopters Conference - **this is evidenced by this report**
- The Franchisee shall become a member of and continue to participate in the Community Rail Partnerships relevant to the Passenger Services – **close working partnerships with national and regional community rail organisations are established as evidenced in this report**
- The Franchisee shall identify a senior Franchise Employee whose duties shall include supporting Community Rail Partnerships, ensuring managerial focus within the Franchisees' organisation to enable the Franchisee to meet its CRP obligations and lead on the Franchisee's development of community rail projects – **see below re senior post inception: Head of Stakeholder & Community (July 2018)**

## 2. STATEMENTS OF REQUIRED INFORMATION

The Community Rail Report shall contain the following information:

- (a) a statement confirming that the Franchisee's distribution of funds to the Community Rail Partnerships takes account of the Secretary of State's then current published Community Rail Strategy;

**We confirm that we have allocated funds over this year as per the agreement albeit was wholly within the LNR business unit (£90,000 in total)**

**Via our West Midlands Trains Corporate Affairs Budget, the Service Level Agreement with ACoRP has been signed and the first payment made (£40,000) as part of a three-year commitment which was signed by both parties in September 2018**

- (b) a statement confirming that the Franchisee has discussed the funding of the Community Rail Partnerships with ACoRP and has taken sufficient account of ACoRP's views;

**We confirm that we have met and consulted regularly with ACoRP and continue to work in close partnership and harmony towards a joint ambition for the expansion of community rail activities across our network**

- (c) confirmation that the Franchisee has discussed with all Community Rail Partnerships the aims and needs of such partnerships and the funding required to achieve these;  
**Within the West Midlands Railway network, as yet, there are no Community Rail Partnerships, but we confirm that preparatory work is underway for both the Heart of England Line and Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury corridor. Partner organisations, other TOCs, local authorities and BIDs in these areas are supportive of the creation of formal partnerships in 2019 and we aim to formalise the first partnership in January 2019 with the second launching in March 2019.**

- (d) a table setting out the relevant portions of the CRP Amount which are to be paid to each Community Rail Partnership (on a nonindexed basis) over the next three (3) years (it being acknowledged that these amounts are likely to be different for each Community Rail Partnership)

COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP	2019	2020	2021
Heart of England	20,000	20,000	20,000
The Shrewsbury Line	20,000	20,000	20,000
NEW PARTNERSHIP TBA		20,000	20,000
NEW PARTNERSHIP TBA		20,000	20,000
NEW PARTNERSHIP TBA		20,000	20,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>

### 3. OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY RAIL ACTIVITIES DURING 2018

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#### ➤ January – May

Foundations for new franchise deliverables in community rail and creation of **Job Description for Heads of Stakeholder & Community within separable business units**

#### ➤ June

West Midlands Trains organised an **Adopter Away Day** at Severn Valley Railway on the 28<sup>th</sup> June

#### ➤ July

Filled a new post: **Head of Stakeholder and Community** on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018

#### ➤ August

Agreed sponsorship of **National Community Rail Awards 2019**

#### ➤ September

**Station Adopters Summit** 21<sup>st</sup> September 10am to 3.30pm represented the **Committed Obligation to host a Conference for Adopters**. Held at The Bull Ring Conference Centre in Birmingham and supported by West Midlands Rail Executive, 65 attendees all received travel passes to the event with speakers from ACoRP, Permission to Smile Campaign & Director of CX.

##### **AGENDA TOPICS**

*Adopters Groups*

*Funding, Legals, Insurance and Work Schemes*

*Edible Gardening*

*Pop Up Artisans*

*Small Free Library*

*Permission to Smile Campaign*

All delegates received **Station Adopters Handbook** and this was distributed electronically to a further 52 potential adopters/volunteers.

#### ➤ October

**Business Case prepared for two new Community Rail Partnerships:** Heart of England (Birmingham – Stratford – Leamington Spa 37 stations) and A Greener Line (Wolverhampton – Shrewsbury 10 stations) *Line plans in the Appendix*. Established a new stakeholder group **‘Community Railway Stations Action Group’** with membership from West Midlands Railway Executive, Network Rail, ACoRP and the Adopter Community

#### ➤ November

Produced final version of our CX Directorate Business Plan and presented **‘People Power & Better Railways’** at West Midlands Rail Executive Stakeholder Conference. Finalised a funding bid for **£350k to Innovate UK** with WMR Innovation Manager: Title: ‘Tomorrow’s Station, Today’

#### ➤ December

Expansion of the **Adopter Database** (from 52 to 260) and number of stations formally adopted (from 5 to 14)

### WEST MIDLANDS RAILWAY STATIONS WITH ADOPTER ACTIVITY DURING 2018

- |                    |                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Berkswell       | 8. Smethwick Rolfe Street |
| 2. Coseley         | 9. Stechford              |
| 3. Greater Malvern | 10. Stourbridge           |
| 4. Hagley          | 11. Stratford             |
| 5. Hall Green      | 12. The Lakes             |
| 6. Hednesford      | 13. Wellington            |
| 7. Malvern link    | 14. Widney Manor          |



## 5. WEST MIDLANDS RAILWAY SEPARABLE BUSINESS UNIT STRUCTURE & GOVERNANCE

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Senior Management within the West Midlands Railway separable business unit have worked over the course of this year to create a Directorate Business Plan. A central element of our own business plan is the expansion, support and increasing importance of community rail within our business.

There is a powerful connection of railways to local communities and the UK has a deep-rooted historic sense of national pride in its railways. Stations began life as catalysts of social standing and of economic development with the iconic places representing beacons of hope and revival for local communities.

Our work plans focus on bringing local personality to stations, working with stakeholders and communities, we are aware that railways have always brought people together and that to enhance the passenger experience and create feelings of comfort, safety, warmth and welcome at our stations, community partnership working is pivotal.

One of our core business aims is to build on the community connections offered by our stations across 114 localities in this region. We will do this by increasing the numbers and visibility of volunteers at our stations.

Stations with community activity have life, activity, local character and increased feelings of safety and when stations are places of welcome & community connection, happier passengers ensue, rail business increases and safer environs result.

Our work is focussed on ensuring passengers enjoy a quality experience from the beginning to the end of their journey and this vision underpins our work for the coming years.

### **Separable Business Unit Values**

Within our CX Directorate, we follow the values of the wider company which are

\* Simple \* Real \* Open \* Proud

**The principles within our Separable Business Unit Plan that align with the company aims are:**

- To create a 'One Team' culture & positive partnership working
- We aim for ideal end to end journeys & enhanced services for customers
- We work for constant improvements
- We plan to meet & exceed targets
- Always maintaining a commercial focus and generating entrepreneurial & revenue building ideas and projects

**We follow the wider company 'high level goals' for:**

- \* Faster journeys, more capacity, better links to other regions
- \* A railway that meets customers' expectations every time
- \* A company that people are proud to work for
- \* A railway for everyone
- \* Working in partnership with communities, industry partners and stakeholders
- \* Reporting against high level objectives that cover the strategic, tactical and operational

**West Midlands Rail Executive is seeking 5 key outputs from this contract and we share these clear goals.**

1. Stations as economic and social assets
2. Happier passengers
3. Higher patronage
4. Increased value of the Franchise
5. Higher staff satisfaction

### **CORNER SHOP Mentality**

We aim to embed this philosophy in our delivery of the company goals, the principle is well-aligned with community rail ventures and station adoption whereby local ownership and pride is prevalent in successful schemes

### **The Stakeholder & Community Targets within CX Directorate Business Plan for 2019**

1. Increase the numbers of adopters by 20% per annum
2. Issue all Adopters with 'WMR Adopters Handbook', protective and branded high viz workwear, ID cards & Promotional Cards for expanding the Adopters community
3. Establish two new (Community) Rail Partnerships in 2019 and three in 2020
4. Launch a new online portal for WMR 'Friends Army' and measure numbers of connections and £-value of hours invested by volunteers. The system to enable data storage, community interaction & support and stakeholder connections
5. Organise & Attend Events (include Annual Community Conferences & Away Day with Volunteers in partnership *with LNR*) to grow support networks
6. Log the range and value of stakeholder support for WMR, secure match funding for station projects and additional third-party funding for community art schemes
7. Ensure community activity at every WMR Station by 2020



*Hall Green Station Adopters, Howard & Sandra*

## 6. 2019 KEY PROJECT PLAN

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- **ACoRP Partnership** working to develop new rail partnerships and support matched funding ventures
- Develop two new **community rail partnerships** (Heart of England & Wolverhampton-Shrewsbury Line)
- Organise **twenty additional stations with community activity** and expand community and stakeholder database of contacts and partners within WMR
- **Launch Community Rail Strategy for WMT** and arrange Station Adopter Conference and Thank You event in partnership with LNR
- Arrange **Stakeholder Conference and Community Rail Information event** in partnership with LNR
- Develop Innovative Project Proposals and target **matched funding** to the annual budget of £150k
- With LNR and under the WMT brand, **host National Community Rail Awards** in our region (October 2019) with ACoRP and organise seminars and activities to promote our company's commitment to community rail and strengthen community rail initiatives
- **Station Travel Plans:** West Midlands Trains has an ambitious plan for the development of circa 90 station travel plans across the network over the coming two years and while the final list is fluid, the stations below are involved in the early work within the West Midlands Railway network:
  - Droitwich Spa
  - Hartlebury
  - Ledbury
  - Local stations between Sutton Coldfield and Lichfield
  - Potentially the stations along the Wolverhampton – Shrewsbury corridor
  - Kidderminster



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Operated by West Midlands Trains

## 7. FINANCES 2018 - 2019

### West Midlands Railway Community Rail Expenditure in 2018

Activity	Detail Description	Amount
Sundry station adopter expenses	Planting, posters, art and printing	1,630
Community Collateral	Adopter Handbooks	1,510
Events	ACoRP National Community Awards held in Glasgow	5,000
Station Adopters	Annual Conference 'Adopters Summit'	1,910
Station Adopters	'Thankyou' Event at Severn Valley Railway	10,000
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>20,050</b>

### West Midlands Railway Community Rail Funding Forecasts for 2019/20

Activity	Detail Description	Budget
Community Art Projects	Community Art Schemes at Stations	8,438
Community Collateral	ID Cards, Handbooks, Posters	3,000
Community Rail	Annual Stakeholder & Community Rail Report	5,000
Core Funding for Rail Partnerships	New Community Rail Partnerships (£20,000 investment to 4 new partnerships (2 in calendar year 2019 and 2 to April 2020))	80,000
Events	ACoRP National Community Awards	5,000
Events	Other Organisations - National Awards & Events	10,000
Stakeholder	Conferences & Publications	5,000
Station Adoption	Annual Conference + 'Thank you' Event for Volunteers	5,500
Station Adoption	Adopters Small Grant Fund	30,000
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>151,938</b>



## 8. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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Greater involvement with local community to help create a fairer society, encouraging diversity and inclusion

Enabling local rail to play a distinct role in economic and social regeneration

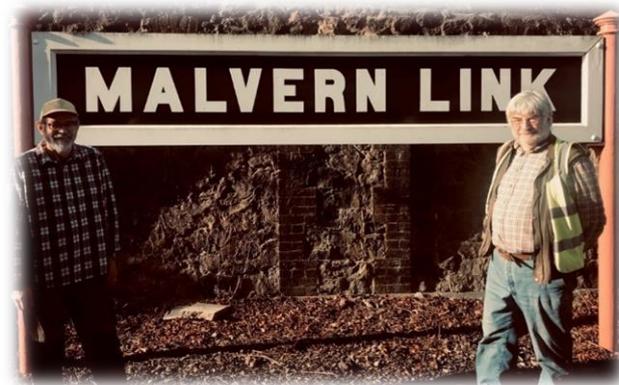
Develop regional marketing campaigns to raise the profile of community rail

Promote off-peak travel across our communities, connecting people to places and opportunities

Submit projects for Community Rail Awards

Recruit more volunteers and issue up to date ID cards and High Viz protection

Develop proposals for Innovation Projects



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MEMBERS OF MALVERN LINK PARTNERSHIP

## APPENDIX

### 1. LINE PLANS FOR PROPOSED RAIL PARTNERSHIPS TO BE DEVELOPED IN 2019

- (i) The Wolverhampton – Shrewsbury Corridor ‘A GREENER LINE’ 10 stations
- (ii) Birmingham – Stratford – Leamington Spa Line ‘HEART OF ENGLAND’ 37 stations





**West  
Midlands  
Railway**

**December 2018**

**Report Prepared by**

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