



Kent Community Rail Partnership



Kent Community Rail Partnership Awarded New Line

The Kent Community Rail Partnership (KCRP) have been awarded a new community rail line which will run from Ashford to Kemsing, after a successful bid for funding from Southeastern. Local groups across the Southeastern network were asked to apply for funding as part of the £400,000 Community Rail Fund for the next two years.

Community rail is a grassroots movement spanning Britain made up of 72 community rail partnerships, which work along railway lines or across counties, and over 1,000 station friends and other local groups, all aiming to connect communities with their railways.

The KCRP is hosted by Sustrans and currently has two community rail lines. The Swale Rail Line which runs between Sheerness and Sittingbourne and the Medway Valley Line which runs from Strood to Tonbridge. The third line which will support 12 stations between Ashford and Kemsing will link up with the start of the Marsh Line at Ashford International which is run by the Sussex Community Rail Partnership.

Community Rail Partnerships work with the Department for Transport, their train operator (Southeastern) and with Community Rail Network to bring together local groups and deliver a range of community engagement and promotional activities around local train stations. The community rail partnership aims to ensure communities get the most out of their railways. It plays an important part in working with a range of partnerships and groups to provide a voice for the community and social inclusion. It also promotes sustainable travel and promotes local tourism and economic development.

Chris Vinson, Senior External Communications Manager at Southeastern, commented:

“Community Rail Partnerships enrich the communities along the railway lines they adopt, helping to support tourism in the areas they serve, sprucing up stations with gardens and helping vulnerable groups volunteer and make a contribution to the local community. We’re delighted that this funding will now ensure that the benefits of community rail go even further across our network.”

KCRP work closely with schools and colleges, local community groups and station adopters to organise events along the line and at stations. KCRP Engagement Officer Andy Place commented

'We are delighted that Kent CRP have been awarded additional funding in the Southeastern bid to establish an additional line between Ashford and Kemsing. This is an exciting opportunity to work with new communities on projects and events and help provide a forum to hear their ideas along this line. We would like to hear from any community groups along the line who would like to get involved with working with us at their local stations'.



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Chris Fribbins chairman of the KCRP said

"The Kent Community Rail Partnership is pleased that Southeastern Railway have agreed to increase the funding for our existing work in Kent over the last 15 years as part of their increased support for community rail in their area and have awarded extra funds to extend the community rail benefits to the Kemsing to Ashford (via Maidstone East) line, working with the local communities."

If you would like to become involved with community rail and supporting your local station or find out more about what KCRP does, then please contact KCRP through our website www.kentcrp.org or email kentcrp@sustrans.org.uk

Follow us:

Website: www.kentcrp.org

Twitter: [@KentCRP1](https://twitter.com/KentCRP1)

Facebook: [Kentcrp@sustrans.co.uk](https://www.facebook.com/Kentcrp@sustrans.co.uk)

For more information and images please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

- The Kent Community Rail Partnership includes Kent County Council, Medway Unitary Authority, District and Parish Councils (along the Medway Valley and Swale Rail lines), Southeastern and many valuable volunteers. www.kentcrp.org.
- The Kent Community Rail Partnership is hosted by Sustrans, Charity No 326550. Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle. We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

For further information on Sustrans' work please contact **Sustrans' press office:** 020 7780 7231 e-mail: press@sustrans.org.uk or visit www.sustrans.org.uk

- Rail Services in Kent are operated by London & South Eastern Railway Ltd. www.southeasternrailway.co.uk