

# Kent Community Rail Partnership News

## August 2019



### Message from the Chair

My thanks go to the previous Chair Sue Murray (and her husband) for all their efforts in keeping the partnership active and relevant. Since taking over the role in May I have been reviewing both our officer's roles and that of the Steering and both Line Groups. The amount of work that is undertaken by our officers is very high and delivery is of a high standard, although this leads to demands for even more. Although the team are responsive and will help where needed, their priority tasks are guided by the agreed annual action plan.

The Medway Valley Line Group is now chaired by James Willis (who has chaired his first line meeting) and the SwaleRail Line Group is in the process of choosing a new chair to succeed Cllr Mike Baldock. I am keen to see both line groups and the steering group leading on initiatives, within the context of the agreed action plan. I have also suggested that some of the administrative activities could be taken on by voluntary secretaries to help free up our officers to concentrate on their busy workload.

The announcement of a further extension to the Southeastern franchise is a double-edged sword. On the positive side, we know the train operator and they are keen to continue their work with us and the wider community and our income continues on a pro-rata basis. However, some of our future plans (and those of the new operator) are held up until a decision is made - additional community rail funding being included in all the franchise bids. The management contract with Sustrans was previously extended by a year to allow for the new train operator to settle in, but that has not happened, so currently it is still up for review by March 2020.

**Chris Fribbins** Chairman – KCRP

### Community Rail In the City—15th May 2019

Kent CRP and an army of volunteers took part in the Community Rail in the City event. We successfully surveyed over 140 passengers, some of which took part in our Smoothie Bike Challenge.

A big thank you to all our volunteers, representing Kent CRP, Sustrans and Network Rail for helping us to collate some useful feedback on how people travel to their stations and also to raise awareness of taking bikes on the train (including outside of peak times into London).

Thank you also to all the passengers and friends from ACoRP who dropped in on us throughout the Day.



Volunteers are essential to the success of the work we do at Kent Community Rail. If you would like to get involved please contact us or visit our Get Involved page on our website.



### Five Acre Wood (Snodland) Project

Fantastic progress has been made at Snodland Station over the last couple of months. The students from Five Acre Wood have been working hard to complete the station improvements.

They spent a week clearing the site before constructing planters and filling them with soil and bark chipping the area. In early July, the students chose the plants and planted up the area to bring a splash of colour to the front of the station. Well done to all the students and staff who have made this project possible.

Thank you to The Snodland Partnership, ACoRP and BJA Civil Consulting who all helped to fund the project. Thank you to Southeastern for granting permission and for moving the security cameras to ensure that this area and the bus shelter is now covered by CCTV.

Here are the before and after photos. I am sure you will join us in congratulating the students on all their hard work.



### National Rail Safety Week Pop-Up

To support National Rail Safety Week, Kent CRP and Jackie (a volunteer) visited Sittingbourne Station on Wednesday 24th June. We spoke to around 400 passengers during the morning to help raise awareness of the British Transport Police number 61016. You can text this number if you are worried about anything or you want to report a crime or incident while you are travelling by train or at a station.

### Medway Valley Line Station Improvement Audit.

On Thursday 30th May, Kent CRP and a team of willing volunteers helped to carry out surveys at all 14 train stations along the Medway Valley Line.

The surveys were to identify future project and ideas for station improvements. Thank you to all those who made this possible and Norman from Nu Venture Coaches for driving the bus to enable us to visit all the stations within the day.



A similar survey was also carried out along the SwaleRail Line earlier in April.

### Family Bike Ride to Penshurst Place

On Sunday 7th July, Kent CRP organised a 12 mile Family Bike Ride from Tonbridge Station to Penshurst Place. The overcast conditions were ideal for cycling and we were delighted that people of all ages were able to join us on this enjoyable event.

The event successfully encouraged participants to take their bikes on the train and combine travelling by bike to and from stations and then to enjoy visiting local attractions.



### Tonbridge Pop-Up - 20th June 2019

Kent CRP and Sussex CRP hosted a joint pop-up at Tonbridge Station, where the two CRPs meet, to promote travel and tourism along their respective lines.

### Sheppey College Project

On Wednesday June 24th, Kent CRP and Joanne Donegan from Southeastern were delighted to attend the Sheppey College SwaleRail Project Presentation Day. The students gave two excellent presentations to showcase the work they have been doing since September.

The IT Department created a website and promotional video. They also produced some artwork using their editing skills. A set of posters for each station were also created which will provide passengers with information about each station and what there is to do there.

<https://swalerail.wixsite.com/swalerailtourism>

Meanwhile the Business Department wrote and carried out surveys of 147 passengers along the SwaleRail Line. They then analysed the data and presented their feedback.

The Construction Department made nesting boxes and these can now be seen at Queenborough Station and frames in preparation for the posters. The Multi-skills Team helped to plant up wellies with flowers and create some new flower beds.



### Work Experience

During June, Southeastern kindly offered to give two students from Sheppey College the opportunity to gain valuable work experience at Sittingbourne Station. Kent CRP had the pleasure of welcoming a student from Invicta Grammar School to carry out a weeks work experience and gain an insight into the work of a Community Rail Officer. Well done to all three students for their terrific work.

### Upcoming Events:

23rd Sept 2019 - Annual Stakeholders Meeting 13:00- 15:00

28th Sept 2019 - Maidstone Cycle Fest 10-00 -16:00

Music Train - Date to be confirmed Medway Valley Line

14th December 2019 - Santa Train Event on the SwaleRail Line.

Keep up to date! visit our website [www.kentcrp.org.uk](http://www.kentcrp.org.uk)

Follow us on Twitter [@kentcrp1](https://twitter.com/kentcrp1) Facebook Kent Community Rail Partnership



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