



## **Kent Community Rail Partnership Press Release**

**For immediate release**

# **Kent Community Rail Partnership shortlisted for three Community Rail Awards**

Kent Community Rail Partnership (Kent CRP) is delighted to announce that it has been shortlisted in three categories for the forthcoming Community Rail Awards 2021.

The awards are now in their 17<sup>th</sup> year, recognising the work of community rail partnerships, station adopters and community groups who help to ensure the communities get the most from their railways.

Kent Community Rail Partnership, hosted by Sustrans, operates on three rail lines; Medway Valley Line, Kent Downs Line and Swale Rail Line. Its core aims are to promote local rail lines in rural Kent and Medway for the social, economic and environmental benefit of residents and visitors, and to support the social well-being of the communities served by those rail lines.

The partnership has been nominated in three categories:

### Involving Diverse Groups

The partnership brought together Grow 19, a small college for learners with special educational needs and disabilities, with a group of retired garden enthusiasts from Cuxton Village. Working together they built and planted up four planters at Cuxton Station. This led to the villagers adopting the station and are now known as the Friends of Cuxton Station.

### Best Community Engagement Project

Kent CRP was awarded a new Community Rail line by Southeastern in July 2020 that runs between Ashford International and Otford called the Kent Downs Line. Kent CRP were shortlisted in this category for the hard work that has taken place to engage with the local communities near to each of its stations and develop an exciting action plan for future projects and activities.

### Best Communication Project

During the coronavirus lockdown, Kent CRP found a host of new ways to engage with local communities. The partnership ran online quizzes, book clubs and logo competition. It introduced a new social media strategy to post a wider range of content and created web pages around the history of its 31 stations.

Andy Place Kent Community Rail Project Officer at Sustrans said

“It is an honour to be shortlisted in three categories this year. It has been an extremely challenging year for everyone and we hope that we have succeeded in working with some of our communities and giving them a range of activities that they could still engage in, albeit mainly online.

We are extremely grateful to Southeastern and Network Rail for their ongoing support of our work and to all our funders and members for the hard work they put in throughout the year.

Good luck to all those who have been shortlisted and who have made a huge difference to their local communities.”

Chris Fribbins Kent Community Rail Partnership Chair added

“The Kent Community Rail Project is pleased to be shortlisted for a number of awards at the national community rail awards again this year. This is recognition and reward for the work of community volunteers and the part-time KCRP team bringing linking our rail lines with the communities they serve.”

One of the main funders for the Kent Community Rail Partnership is Southeastern, part of the Govia Consortium.

Matthew Fraser Community Relations Manager for Southeastern commented;

“Kent CRP adapted quickly and efficiently to the restrictions placed upon us by Covid and adapted their action plan accordingly. The result is 3 very different projects receiving national recognition, I’m delighted that they have been shortlisted.

The Community Rail Award winners will be announced at a gala presentation in Southampton in December 2021

Full details of all the shortlisted groups for the 2021 Community Rail Awards can be found on the Community Rail Network website here

<https://communityrail.org.uk/events-training/community-rail-awards/community-rail-awards-2021-shortlist>