



Autumn 2021

NEWSLETTER

Kent Community Rail Partnership



East Farleigh Station 1999 -
Courtesy of Colin Price



Kemsley Station 2011-
Courtesy of Ian Paterson



Kemsing Station 1938-
Courtesy of Kemsing Heritage Centre

Chairman's Report by Chris Fribbins

On the 28th September The Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps, announced that the Southeastern Franchise would not be extended into the optional 6-month extension period to March 2022 and would be replaced by a DfT 'operator of last resort' in the meantime.

While the rail service (including fares and timetable) will not change, there may be several changes over the next few months which may impact on Kent Community Rail Partnership. Our current funding is only guaranteed to the end of March 2022. With the emphasis given to the role that Community Rail is expected to play in the future of Rail (Williams/Shapps Review), this should not be a problem.

A challenging 18 months continues. I am sure many of our stakeholders would wish to recognise the positive relationship that the partnership has had with Southeastern over many years and expect that this will continue from our future partners.

Over the last three months it has been wonderful to return to stations and engage with our passengers. We have also been shortlisted for three Community Rail Awards.

Despite the changes ahead, we will continue to bring together our communities to help bring social, economic and environmental benefits to the people using the train.

Shortlisted for 3 Community Rail Awards

We have been shortlisted in three categories this year at the Community Rail Awards 2021. The categories were:

Involving Diverse Groups for our work at Cuxton Station to provide 4 large planters working with Grow19 and the newly formed Friends of Cuxton Station.

Best Communication for our engagement with our communities during the pandemic, involving a range of online activities, new social media content and the history of our lines on our website.

Best Community Engagement for the work involved to establish the Kent Downs Line and projects planned over the next year.

Thank you to all our members, funders, partners and volunteers who have made this possible. The winners and runner-up will be announced in December.

Charing Station adoption



Charing station has been adopted by two station adopters!

Matt Fraser (Southeastern's Community Relations Manager) carried out station safety training before presenting Susan Eason, (Charing Parish Council) and Jo Eglin (Heath Farm School) their station adoption letters.

Kent Downs Line station audit

In August, 19 members and friends of the Kent Downs Line carried out a station audit along the Kent Downs Line, to hear about the planned projects and to look for opportunities for future activities.



Thank you to Norman Kemp (Volunteer of the Year 2021) who kindly provided and drove a bus to travel between the stations and ensure we could visit the majority of stations in one day. He was also presented with his award.

New mural at Strood



In September a new mural was opened at Strood Station. Students from Strood Academy worked with a local Street artist Graham Upton to inspire the design.

We would like to express our thanks to Govia Thameslink Railway for funding the project and Southeastern for their ongoing support of our work.



The vibrant mural captures Strood's past and present, and depicts places in Medway, Kent and beyond that you can visit from Strood station when you take days out by rail

Travel Surveys and pop-up events

In September, Kent CRP were delighted to be able to partner up with Southeast CRP at Ashford Station and Darent Valley CRP at Otford Station to carry out travel surveys with passengers.

It was also a great opportunity to share with passengers the wonderful places they could reach by train and some of the nearby walks and cycle routes they could explore.

On the Swale Rail Line, the University of the Third Age (U3A) invited us to attend their group meeting at the picnic in the park, Sheerness, to talk with their members about using technology to help them travel by train.

A fresh lick of paint

A huge thank you to Network Rail and Southeastern for the work that has been carried out at some of our stations on the Kent Downs Line, while essential maintenance between Maidstone East and Ashford was completed in August.



Queenborough Station

The Queenborough footbridge will be closed between October and February for essential repairs, so passengers will need to use the road way to access the opposite platform. Work has also started on repainting areas around the station.



Keep up to date! Visit our website: kentcrp.org.uk

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