



Kent Community Rail Partnership

# Autumn 2023

# NEWSLETTER



## Kent CRP 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at Masters House, Sheerness



Our day of celebrations started with a train trip along our Swale Rail Line, where the partnership began. Along the way Jonathan Fryer kindly shared his detailed knowledge of local history, from the industrial heritage of the paper mills, through wartime munitions ships to the closure of the Sheppey steelworks. We learned of Royal Trains, floods and ferries and of course the work carried out by our partnership at each of the stations.

The Mayor of Swale, Councillor Sarah Stephen welcomed us to our celebration with a speech detailing many of the projects we have been involved with across the Borough, including the Faversham Festival of Transport, murals at stations, school travel training trips and a multitude of projects providing learning opportunities to students from Sheppey College.

This was followed by presentations from our current Chair, Chris Fribbins, past Chairs Mike Fitzgerald and John Wright, and Matt Fraser, Southeastern Community Relations Manager. Each explained how they had seen the partnership grow over the years, delivering improvements to station environments and opportunities for our communities through collaborative working.

The dedication of our volunteers was at the heart of all the speeches and the day was a fabulous

opportunity to celebrate two decades of their efforts. Thanks to our volunteers we have delivered a flourishing partnership that delivers for its communities and helps Community Rail to grow. After lunch we took the positive energy in the room and used it to begin making plans for the future. We rounded off the day with a further stroll to take in some sea air before returning to the station for our onward journeys.

A most enjoyable day, here's to the next 20 years!

### Tidy up at Kemsley



The deck on the model of the Kingsferry Bridge at Kemsley had become rotten. With our Sheppey College station adopters on holiday, our thanks go to Dominic Noades for helping us to break it up and take it away.



We have made a successful bid for Community Rail Development Funding to refresh our promotional materials.

Design work is being finalised by local firm, Absolute Creative Print Ltd.

## Grow 19 at West Malling

Ten Grow 19 students and 3 of their tutors arrived at West Malling station excited for their first station adoption day planting bulbs and litter picking. Despite the ground being fairly hard the students worked diligently until the bank was covered in bulbs. The technique used was naturalisation which means as nature would grow therefore the bulbs were randomly planted as opposed to being planted in straight rows. This planting and future planned work will support a City and Guilds unit of work for Level 1 practical horticulture skills which the students are studying. Some students also participated with a litter pick of the whole area leaving the platform looking nice and tidy - we can't wait for spring to see the daffodils!



## St Edward's Catholic Primary School Mural at Sheerness

In 2022, young learners at St Edward's created an exciting mural, celebrating sustainable travel choices and the railway. It's now on display at Sheerness-on-Sea station.



## Station Adopters – Blooming Marvellous

Our station adopters continue to tend and care for gardens, planters and hanging baskets at stations along our lines.

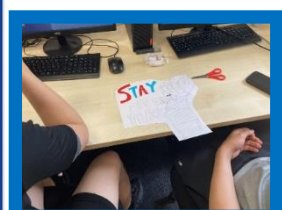
Beautiful blooms and green spaces don't just make a more attractive welcome for passengers, they encourage pollinators and other wildlife too, adding to the railway's green credentials.



## Rail Safety Sessions at Sheppey College

In partnership with Southeastern, we held assemblies with students to introduce them to Kent CRP and discuss rail safety.

The assemblies focused the students on what has been achieved at and around the stations over the last 5 years and they were asked to contribute ideas for what they would like their future activities to be.



The students went on to design rail safety posters, to strengthen their learning.





## Bus stop waymarking for our Medway Stations



Inspired by a waymarking photograph from Transport for Cornwall, the Kent CRP team worked with Medway Council to produce some simple wayfinding signage to help people find the right bus stop for their onward journey from Strood, Cuxton, and Halling stations.

We hope our latest initiative will help people arriving in Medway to make their onward journeys by bus, particularly from Strood Station where buses provide important connections to centres of employment, entertainment, and to the rural communities on the Hoo Peninsula.

## Travel Safe Travel Smart with Five Acre Wood

At the beginning of July we took two trips with students from Five Acre Wood (Snodland) to the fabulous Travel Safe Travel Smart centre in Margate.



The team at the centre adapted the learning to suit each group, ensuring that key messages about how to use the railway safely were understood and reinforced with some fun and games.

In addition there was a tour to discover where to buy tickets, check train times and departure platforms, and how to get help from station staff. Excellent learning delivered in a safe environment.

## Rail User Groups

A variety of Rail User Groups operate in our area, campaigning for improvements to services and the passenger experience.

North Kent Rail User Group (Swale): [nkrug@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:nkrug@blueyonder.co.uk)

Tonbridge Line Commuters: <https://tonbridgecommuters.org.uk/>

Maidstone East/West Commuter Group: Find them on facebook

Bearsted Commuter Group: Find them on facebook

## Ashford College Travel Training



Additional Learning Support Students from Ashford College joined us for train travel training on 4 July. This built upon a station familiarisation session we held with them earlier in the year to build their confidence.

Station adopter Susan Easun met us at Charing station where the students helped to refresh the planting in the windowboxes.



## Dates for your diary

### Armistice Day Steam Rail Tour

A steam service running along all three of our lines.

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November

### Whole Group and Line Meetings

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024



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

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