



Kent Community
Rail Partnership

Summer 2025

NEWSLETTER



Class 395 in Railway 200 livery
Courtesy of Dominic Noades



Railway 200 logo



Class 375 crossing Kingsferry Bridge
Courtesy of Dominic Noades

Annual Stakeholder Event



We were delighted to welcome our stakeholders, partners, members and volunteers to our Annual Stakeholder Event, on Wednesday 30th April at Maidstone Town Hall.

The event provides an opportunity to showcase our achievements to our stakeholders, and to celebrate the contributions of our volunteers.

It was great to have a room full of enthusiastic and passionate volunteers and industry representatives to celebrate the successes of the year and recognise those who have made it happen.



Among many certificates issued, special mentions go to Ian and Margaret Paterson as they step back from many years of care for the station gardens at Maidstone West, John Wright for his "Outstanding Contribution to Kent CRP" since our foundation in 2003, and to Chris Fribbins in his pivotal role as our Chair.

Among many speakers we were joined by Xavier Brice, Sustrans CEO, who talked about how Sustrans makes people powered movement possible for everyone; when we change how we travel, we change everything.

Swale Rail Line Chair, Linda Brinklow gave a fabulous presentation on our work with Diversity House; Simon Hulse, Network Rail, introduced the upcoming Maidstone West and Barracks strategic station studies; Sarah Moon, Kent Downs, set out our collaborative working on their "Putting down routes" project. Kevin Warn provided updates on all things Southeastern.

Chair, Chris Fribbins thanked everyone for the role they have played in Kent CRP's success at the 2025 Community Rail Awards, where we were recognised for our "Outstanding Contribution to Community Rail."



Faversham Festival of Transport



Kent CRP had a fantastic time with a pop-up stand at the Faversham Festival of Transport. It was a busy weekend, spanning Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th May, with the Faversham streets filled with inspiring vintage vehicles. We were lucky enough to be located in the Mayor's Parlour in the Guildhall in the centre of the town, with a constant flow of visitors interested in finding out more about our community activities and upcoming celebrations for Rail 200 (the 200 year anniversary of rail passenger travel).



Over the two days, we had a footfall of approximately 1050 visitors, handing out event info to 320 family groups and 270 stickers to children!

We had a tremendous pop-up crew, with volunteers Linda Brinklow, Jonathan Fryer and Dominic Noades, alongside Project Officer Vicky Wright. We were joined by Chris Fribbins, Chair of Kent CRP, in the Mayor's Parlour. Chris also represented RailFuture.

On our pop up we were sharing useful travel information from Southeastern, historical resources linked to The Colonel Stephens Society, updates from the Sheppey Light Railway Greenway Project, and most importantly our exciting upcoming Rail 200 events.

<https://kentcrp.org/events/>



All in all it was a fantastic weekend celebrating transport which we were grateful to be involved in. We'd like to say a big thank you to Faversham Town Council for organising the weekend, our volunteers and all the lovely people we spoke to.



Railway 200 – Happy Birthday Tonbridge & Strood

We held pop-up promotional stalls at Tonbridge and Strood, joining Southeastern to celebrate their respective birthdays during Community Rail Week and just before Rail Safety Week.

There were a range of freebies on offer, supplemented with cakes and bakes from Southeastern as we introduced people to new ideas for days out by rail along our lines, discounted ticketing and accessible services from Southeastern, and our award winning project work.



Travel Training and Led Walk with Ashford College

Working with Kent Downs National Landscape's 'Putting Down Routes' project Kent CRP undertook train travel training and a guided walk on the Kent Downs Way for 9 English for speakers of other languages students and 3 of their tutors.

On Thursday 5 June we began our travel training at Ashford International station and continued during the journey to Charing station. Here the guided walk began along the North Downs Way to Lenham. The dull and drizzly weather didn't dampen our spirits. The walk began with a slow wander through the historic village of Charing before the climb to join the North Downs Way with its impressive sweeping vistas of the Kent Downs. The gentle route took in many places of interest including a hazel nut tree, varying farming techniques and the chalk cross. After a short visit to St Mary's church in Lenham the group made their way to Lenham station for the return journey back to Ashford International.

All said they were now confident to travel by train independently and they would like to join us on another walk.



Maidstone's Big Day Out



An informative and enjoyable rail ramble was held on Maidstone's Big Day Out, celebrating green spaces across the borough.

All seven participants arrived by train, expressing the value they place on our rail rambles to connect them with nature and a desire to advocate for more people from their local communities to enjoy their own Days Out By Rail.



Award for Paws on the Platform



An amazing afternoon spent with the wonderful Guide Dog volunteers at their annual award ceremony in Kent on Friday 30th May.

Our collaborative Paws on the Platform event highlighting the difficulties partially sighted passengers encounter when travelling by rail achieved second place, well done all!

<https://kentcrp.org/paws-on-the-platform-friday->

Visit our website for upcoming events



kentcrp.org/railway-200



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

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Facebook Kent Community Rail Partnership



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Kent Community Rail Partnership encourages greater use of the Medway Valley, Kent Downs and Swale Rail lines by local people and visitors and aims to improve station environments and facilities on offer. Kent Community Rail Partnership is hosted by Sustrans. Sustrans is a registered charity in England and Wales (326550) and Scotland (SC039263) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England (1797726) at 2 Cathedral Square, Bristol, BS1 5DD