



Kent Community  
Rail Partnership

# Autumn 2025

## NEWSLETTER



**Inspiration, the Railway 200  
exhibition train at Margate**



**Railway 200, Queenborough**



**Southeastern Ashford Depot Open Day  
Courtesy of Dominic Noades**

### Wishing a Happy 165th Birthday to Queenborough Station.

(So good, we celebrated it twice)



On the morning of Thursday 17th July, over 200 pupils from Queenborough School and Nursery brought along special Rail 200 artwork and took part in a big procession from the Station onto the Green, creating a "200" to mark "Rail 200" and Queenborough Station's 165th Birthday.

Hannah O'Connor, art lead at the school, who was in charge of more than 240 youngsters said: "We love being creative at Queenborough. When I explained this, everyone wanted to get on board. It was so nice to be able to celebrate Queenborough station's birthday and 200 years of passenger rail travel. It was a collaborative project involving the whole school. Thursday was absolutely brilliant."



On Saturday 19th July, we came together again for another day of birthday activities and celebrations. Swale Borough Council organised a Cycle Re-Cycle sale, Queenborough Town Council held a free raffle with a Hornby train set as the prize. Southeastern had a carboard Queenborough Express train in the booking hall, where we hosted children's art activities, with more fabulous rail-related prizes. Matt Fraser donned top hat and tails to lead the community procession accompanied by the Big Fish Band,



before birthday cake in the booking hall. The afternoon saw Luck Moyo host drumming workshops at Castle Connections, Dr Bike fixing cycles and The Big Fish leading a history and story telling tour of the town.

Our thanks go to Queenborough Town Council, Swale Borough Council and Sheerness Town Council for financial support and support-in-kind.

Thank you to everyone who came along to help make this such a special community event.

## Inspiration at Margate



The Railway 200 exhibition train, Inspiration, visited Margate station 20-21 July, a unique exhibition train, part of a national celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the modern railway. In addition to the train's exhibition carriages, a special event at Margate station saw Kent CRP join local people from the tourism sector in Thanet including Dreamland, the Turner Contemporary and the Crab Museum, with market stalls also present from several organisations. A local conservator presented archaeological finds discovered when the original South Eastern Railway was built in the 1840s.

Shortly after opening on Sunday, Southeastern's Matt Fraser extended an invite to Kent Community Rail Partnership to come onboard Inspiration and exhibit in the partnership carriage. While informative, the static displays from Visit Thanet and Creative Isle Community Rail Partnership were not engaging. We were both honoured and delighted to accept and with support from volunteers Dominic Noades and Jonathan Fryer, we were

soon set up to rotate our team to have a presence both in the exhibition marquee and on the train.

Across the two days over 1,000 people came to visit Inspiration, both from the Thanet area and further afield, offering us the chance to engage new audiences with our project work and places to visit on Days Out By Rail adventures along our lines. Inspiration continues its tour of the UK. coming to London Victoria in December.



## Railway 200 – Happy Birthday Paddock Wood



We held a pop-up promotional stall at Paddock Wood, joining Southeastern to celebrate the station's 183rd birthday.

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



## Ashford Depot Open Day

Southeastern's Exclusive Railway 200 Depot Open Day celebrated 200 years of the passenger railway in the UK; Southeastern opened the doors to their train maintenance depot in Ashford for one very special day. The unique event was hosted by the Southeastern engineering team.

The day was warm and sunny bringing over 2,700 paying visitors. Attractions included walkways around the huge maintenance shed to view trains in various states of repair, the very special Railway 200 Javelin train – 395015, Clan Line steam engine, Unit 1001 Hastings Diesel 'Thumper', Balfour Beatty 'Tiny Tamper', Class 73 GBRf locomotive, Class 66 GBRf locomotive and Stepney, the Bluebell engine. There were many stalls, food vendors and free fairground rides for the little ones.

It is estimated the team engaged with around 1000 people, giving away Kent CRP bags, pencils and pens with our website on and leaflets promoting walking and cycling routes around our stations.

This was a great opportunity to promote community rail and on hearing of our station adoption projects and activities several people said, "I wish you were at our station."



## Black Girls Hike



On Saturday 26 July, 7 members of the London branch of 'Black Girls Hike', Julia supporting NDW Ambassador and Therese, Project Officer Kent CRP left Charing station for a guided walk along the beautiful Pilgrims Way to Hollingbourne.

Five of the attendees traveled by train, everyone wanted to come back and explore the area further.



## Heritage Open Days, Medway Archive Centre



With over 90 visitors through the doors there were plenty of opportunities for Gary and our volunteers to welcome people to the Kent CRP stall; introducing them to Community Rail and hearing their own rail stories.

It was great to be invited along to a place away from the railway where we meet new audiences. Our thanks go to volunteers Dominic Noades and Clive English for supporting us on our stand.

Visit our website for upcoming events



[kentcrp.org/railway-200](http://kentcrp.org/railway-200)



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

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