



# 'From the bare platform'

## A survey of community engagement in railway buildings



*Photograph kindly provided by Sheila Dee, rail officer at Chester-Shrewsbury Rail Partnership*

# Foreword

This report provides further, important evidence of the array of 'community stations' projects we are seeing around the country, delivering positive benefits for local people, rail passengers and sustainable development. These innovative, empowering and community-driven projects are diverse and wide-ranging, as this report shows, but they have in common a passion and determination to make a difference locally and ensure people can get the most from their railway stations. They are all about bringing stations back into the heart of communities, where they belong. This brings all sorts of social and economic benefits, from giving community groups welcoming spaces they can use in their work to enhance health, wellbeing and cohesion, to enabling people to appreciate local history, art and culture, to providing affordable and nutritious food sourced from local suppliers.

These projects are inspiring and exciting to hear about, but they have all faced challenges, and have aspirations to deliver wider, greater benefits to their communities and localities. It's therefore important that we learn from them, and share lessons across the community rail movement, rail industry, and public and third sector partners, so we can support more projects like these to come to fruition.

*- Jools Townsend, Chief Executive, The Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP)*

# Introduction

In autumn 2017 Rose Regeneration circulated a 'call for information' through the Rural Services Network. This sought the views of people with experience of bringing train station buildings back to life, including from:

- Community groups that had transformed stations for the benefit of local residents, businesses and passengers.
- Local Authorities, charities and/or voluntary & community sector organisations that had helped / were helping a local community to regenerate a station building.
- Community Rail Partnerships, Friends of Station groups or parts of the rail industry running rural stations.

People responding to the Information Call were requested to provide some details about:

- The location of their station building.
- When and why the project started.
- How their station building is used – the activities that take place there.
- Other people/organisations that have been /are involved in the project.
- How the project has been funded (capital and revenue costs).
- The key ingredients of their success – and any barriers faced and if/how these have been overcome.
- Any plans for the future.

86 responses to the Information Call were received. We are very grateful to everyone who took the time to send us a response electronically and/or who telephoned us to tell us about their station building. We are also indebted to The Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP), Railway Heritage Trust (RHT) and Professor Paul Salvesson ('the railway doctor') for their help in circulating the Information Call and/or for putting us in touch with station building groups.

We used the evidence we received to inform a feasibility study that we carried out for Mytholmroyd Station Building Group.

This document summarises all of the responses we received – and has been circulated to everyone who contributed to the Information Call.

This document is organised into three sections:

- A.** Write ups containing information about 43 station buildings.
- B.** Write ups containing information about 7 Heritage and Community Buildings.
- C.** Useful resources – links to websites, publications and other useful materials.

If you would like more information about this work please contact Jessica by email [jessica.sellick@roseregeneration.co.uk](mailto:jessica.sellick@roseregeneration.co.uk), telephone 01522 521211, or post (Exchequergate House, 18A Minster Yard, Lincoln LN2 1PX).

# A: Station Buildings

We received information from community groups, Local Authorities, voluntary & community sector organisations, Community Rail Partnerships, Friends of Station groups and/or representatives from the rail industry about 43 station buildings:

1. Alston (Cumbria) and Slaggyford (Northumberland)
2. Alverstone Station (Isle of Wight)
3. Bat & Ball Station (Kent)
4. Beccles Station – Café and Community Rooms (Suffolk)
5. Castle Hedingham Station (Essex)
6. Caverswall Road Station (Staffordshire)
7. Coalbrookdale Station (Shropshire)
8. Cooksbridge Station (East Sussex)
9. Cottingham Station (East Riding of Yorkshire)
10. Croston Station (Lancashire)
11. Ellesmere Port Station (Cheshire)
12. Fishguard & Goodwick Station (Pembrokeshire)
13. Fremington Quay (Devon)
14. Gillingham Station (Dorset)
15. Great Malvern Station – the Worm (Worcestershire)
16. Hadlow Road Station (Cheshire)
17. Hassocks Station (West Sussex)
18. Hebden Bridge Railway Station (West Yorkshire)
19. Helmsdale Station (Sutherland, Scotland)
20. Irlam Station (Salford)
21. Liss Station (East Hampshire)
22. Longridge Station (Lancashire)
23. Maiden Newton Station (Dorset)
24. The Milkmaid Folk Arts Centre (Suffolk)
25. Narborough Station (Leicestershire)
26. Nuneaton Trent Valley – Art Alert Nuneaton (Warwickshire)
27. Ottery St Mary (Devon)
28. Petersfield Station – Old Parcels Office (Hampshire)
29. Richmond – The Station (North Yorkshire)
30. Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre (Bedfordshire)
31. Rushden Station (Northamptonshire)
32. Saltash Station (Cornwall)
33. Shillingstone Station (Dorset)
34. Sleaford Station (Lincolnshire)
35. Tetbury Goods Shed (Gloucestershire)
36. Trimley Station (Suffolk)
37. Wallingford Station (Oxfordshire)
38. Warmley Signal Box (South Gloucestershire)
39. Whaley Bridge (Derbyshire)
40. Whitegate Station House (Cheshire West)
41. Wolferton Station – The Royal Retiring Rooms (Norfolk)
42. Woody Bay Station (Devon)
43. Yatton Station – Strawberry Line Café (North Somerset)

The following summarise the information we received about each station building. Some of the grids are more comprehensive than others – depending on who submitted information to the Call and what stage their project was at. Wherever possible we have included a link to the station building/group’s website where you can go to find out more information.

We have used the following symbols to clearly identify the use/s of these buildings:

	Cafe, restaurant, food and/or drink		Heritage/literary
	Arts, crafts, gallery and/or exhibition space		Housing for residential and/or tourism
	Community meeting space		Business/commercial space e.g. offices
	Facilities for cyclists and/or walkers		Retail outlets
	Community learning		Visitor centre

Stations will also be described as either **ACTIVE** or **DISUSED**:

**Active:** Station buildings where trains regularly stop

**Disused:** Station buildings where the railway line is disused, closed and/or derelict



# 1. Alston (Cumbria) and Slaggyford (Northumberland)

Project summary from a representative from South Tynedale Railway Preservation Society

Website: <http://www.south-tynedale-railway.org.uk/>

When did the project start?	Alston: 1977 Slaggyford: 2015
Why did the project start?	To rescue and recreate a community railway.
How is the station/building being used?	Railway stations, cafe/buffet, large car/coach parks, ticket offices, shops and access to the South Tyne Trail. The Society recently completed a major 3 year £6.5 million development programme to re-open Slaggyford Station, to renew Alston Station, to extend the South Tynedale Railway/South Tyne Trail, to create a unique Renewable Technologies demonstration site and to prepare the launch pad for the final push back to Haltwhistle.
Who has been involved in the project?	Cumbria County Council, Eden District Council, Northumberland County Council and Office of Rail Regulation.
How has the project been funded?	Capital costs = grants (e.g. Prince's Countryside Foundation) and accumulated surplus. Revenue costs = met through earned income.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Sheer dogged and tenacity at times of great adversity. NEVER take "no" as the final answer!
Have there been any barriers?	Lack of funding, gaining public sector support and technical input (e.g. from highways), costs overrun and change of design team.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Persevere, build and support strong networks, (e.g. a large "friends of..." group).</li> <li>- Develop an eye for opportunities.</li> <li>- Pursue funding opportunities with a vengeance - learn by experience, find an "angle"/tell the story.</li> </ul> <p>Learn to spot distractions (even those with potentially big purses).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Never, never, never give up - keep asking and keep learning.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	Complete the South Tynedale Railway as an all year round community railway and the South Tyne Trail as an accessible footpath/cycleway 13 miles to/from Haltwhistle to Alston by 2022.



## 2. Alverstone House (Isle of Wight)

*Project summary from a representative of Alvestone Station*

*Website: <https://www.facebook.com/alverstonestation/>*

When did the project start?	2 October 2013
Why did the project start?	Station building turned into residential property.
How has the project been funded?	Personal Finance.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Rich source of photographic and other materials to assist with restoration.</li><li>- The enthusiasm and encouragement of local people and visitors has helped to propel the project forward.</li></ul>
Have there been any barriers?	Lack of interest from heritage organisations/funders.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Do your research thoroughly and never compromise on authenticity.
What developments are planned going forward?	Further restoration, perhaps incorporating some small-scale community cafe facility, as well as traffic calming infrastructure. Encourage local walking and cycling.



### 3. Bat & Ball Station (Kent)

*Project summary from a representative from Sevenoaks Town Council / Friends of Bat & Ball Station*

When did the project start?	2014
Why did the project start?	The station building has been boarded up for 30+ years and fallen into disrepair. No facilities were available for commuters or the nearby community and anti-social behaviour was an issue.
How is the station/building being used?	The building is currently boarded up - but planning permission has been granted for a cafe, community room and public toilets.
Who has been involved in the project?	Friends of Bat & Ball Station, the local community, Network Rail, Southeastern trains and Heritage Lottery Fund.
How has the project been funded?	Awaiting Round 2 decision from the Heritage Lottery Fund (capital costs). Income from the project will fund the revenue costs.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desire from local community to see improvements.</li> <li>- Assistance from Southeastern/Network Rail to enable a lease to be provided.</li> </ul>
Have there been any barriers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Availability of Funding.</li> <li>- Network Rail requirement for a break clause in the lease.</li> <li>- The condition of the building was worse than anticipated.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	Subject to agreement from the Heritage Lottery Fund, building work should commence January 2018 and the facility ready for opening in October 2018.



## 4. Beccles Station - Cafe & Community Rooms (Suffolk)

Project summary from a representative of Beccles and District Regeneration Company Limited  
 Website: [www.becclesstation.co.uk](http://www.becclesstation.co.uk)

When did the project start?	2014
Why did the project start?	A need for facilities at the station, especially a toilet and cafe.
How is the station/building being used?	Active Station. A cafe, visitor information point, community rooms for hire (used for wellbeing, business meetings, training and much more for all ages) and 4 offices for SME's.
Who has been involved in the project?	The trustees of the group, local community groups, East Suffolk Rail Partnership, the CIC who run the cafe.
How has the project been funded?	A variety of grants, donations and volunteers time.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	It provides much needed facilities at the station, is a community hub for local people and visitors and provides space for training and all ages of the community.
Have there been any barriers?	Parking is still an issue and we are working with Network Rail.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make sure that the funding you are applying for is fit for you.</li> <li>- Ensure that you have the support of the local community.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	We still have other services we would like to offer (e.g. Cycle Hire), it is still early days so we are not expanding until we are ready to do so.



## 5. Castle Heddingham Station (Essex)

*Project summary from a representative of the Colne Valley Railway Preservation Ltd.*

*Website: <http://www.colnevalleyrailway.co.uk/>*

When did the project start?	2005
Why did the project start?	The previous owner sold the site.
How is the station/building being used?	Heritage Railway - a mile long period country railway with relocated station buildings, signal boxes and bridges all lovingly restored and rebuilt offering many activities (e.g. driver experience courses, educational visits, days out/special events and wedding receptions).
Who has been involved in the project?	Braintree District Council, Heritage Lottery Fund.
How has the project been funded?	Grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and visitor income.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Seeing an increase in visitor numbers and satisfaction.
Have there been any barriers?	Cash flow - supported by Braintree District Council Loan.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Estimating costs - having the funding and cash flow in place.</li><li>- The bureaucracy of modern building work.</li><li>- The workload on volunteers in developing and submitting successful funding bids.</li></ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	Plans for a new Museum, Restoration Centre and Entrance.



## 6. Caverswall Road Station (Staffordshire)

*Project summary from a representative from The Knotty Coach Trust*

*Website: <http://www.knottycoachtrust.org.uk/>*

When did the project start?	1967
Why did the project start?	To provide a passenger station for the Foxfield Railway.
How is the station/building being used?	Board steam trains, cafe, bar, museum, shop, ticket office and toilets.
Who has been involved in the project?	Several hundred volunteers over the past 50 years.
How has the project been funded?	Various grants and donations.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Volunteer enthusiasm and determination.
Have there been any barriers?	Not really - you can overcome any obstacle if you put your mind to it.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Get organised and plan carefully.
What developments are planned going forward?	The bar is presently being refurbished and an extension to the cafe's kitchen is planned.



## 7. Coalbrookdale Station (Shropshire)

*Project summary from a representative of the Small Woods Association*

*Website: <http://smallwoods.org.uk/green-wood-centre/introduction/>*

When did the project start?	1984
Why did the project start?	Desire to develop a Green Wood Centre.
How is the station/building being used?	Green Wood Centre - training, information and events, as well as national HQ for the Small Woods Association.
Who has been involved in the project?	Many partners including Telford and Wrekin Council and the former Countryside Commission.
How has the project been funded?	Various funding streams including Landfill Tax, Membership, European funds (ERDF) and private trusts.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Finding a new role for the station building that had resonance with the local community.
Have there been any barriers?	Long term funding.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Station sites offer a wide range of opportunities. Although railway heritage is important, there is no need to be constrained solely by railway related uses.
What developments are planned going forward?	Establishing sufficient activities on site that there is no need for external financial support.

## 8. Cooksbridge Station (East Sussex)

*Project summary from a representative of Cooksbridge Station Partnership*

When did the project start?	2010
Why did the project start?	To improve the facilities and environment at Cooksbridge Station.
How is the station/building being used?	It is used by customers of the Southern train service.
Who has been involved in the project?	Southern Railway (GTR) and Sussex Community Rail Partnership.
How has the project been funded?	Limited donations by both Southern Railway and local companies.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Significant voluntary effort by the local community.</li> <li>- An effective working relationship with Southern Railway and Sussex Community Rail Partnership.</li> </ul>
Have there been any barriers?	As Cooksbridge is a rural station, and hence not a top priority for Southern Railway, on occasions it has been necessary to highlight the need for improvements (replacement of a malfunctioning Ticket Vending Machine was one example). This was overcome by keeping a log of all reported failures and escalating the issue through the Southern Railway management chain for resolution.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish good working relationships with your partners.</li> <li>- Never give up - persistence pays off and you will be surprised by what it is possible to achieve.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	To continue to improve the station environment and achieve the provision of a full and comprehensive train service.



## 9. Cottingham Station (East Riding of Yorkshire)

*Project summary from a representative of Yorkshire Coast Community Rail Partnership*

*Website: [www.yccrp.co.uk](http://www.yccrp.co.uk)*

When did the project start?	2016
Why did the project start?	The building is a grade 2 listed building that would be ideal as a community business.
How is the station/building being used?	It is not completed, it is hoped that it will be a community cafe, newsagents and meeting place.
Who has been involved in the project?	Northern Rail, Network Rail, Humber & Wolds Rural Community Council, Cottingham Parish Council and East Riding of Yorkshire Council.
How has the project been funded?	The capital costs will be covered by Northern Rail, Network Rail and Railway Heritage Trust.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	- Community consultation. - Partnership working.
Have there been any barriers?	The progress of the project is slow due to the amount of work required. We communicate with all partners regularly.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Keep talking. As soon as you stop, so does the work.
What developments are planned going forward?	This will be a sustainable community project.

## 10. Croston Station (Lancashire)

*Project summary from a representative from The Friends of Croston Station*

When did the project start?	2007
Why did the project start?	To station platform and car park were neglected.
How is the station/building being used?	NB: the single line station was adopted in 2007 - there are no buildings, only a shelter. The station house was sold many years ago.
Who has been involved in the project?	Lancashire County Council.
How has the project been funded?	£200 prize won and Parish Council grant of £100.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Community involvement - and appreciation.
Have there been any barriers?	Getting the rail industry to enable the group to work on the unmanned site - a licence given.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Working with the rail industry and Local Authorities - let them know you won't give up.
What developments are planned going forward?	Several developments planned including a greenhouse and a new section to the car park.



## 11. Ellesmere Port Station (Cheshire)

*Project summary taken from information provided by a representative from the Friends of Ellesmere Port Station*

When did the project start?	2010
Why did the project start?	The station building was unsafe to use, the area leading to the platforms uninviting and spoilt by litter, vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
How is the station/building being used?	The station building has been restored and is an active community space with meeting room, kitchen and toilet on the ground floor, and then upstairs toilets, small kitchenette and 2 small office rooms. Plantings to the front of the station and along the platforms are beautifully looked after by volunteers from the local community. Children's art work along the platforms. The ticket office area is adorned with awards for Best Kept Station and numerous other accolades. The place feels loved and a nice place to be.
Who has been involved in the project?	A transport officer from Cheshire West & Chester Council who wanted to improve the station and established a 'Friends of Ellesmere Port Station'. The Station Friends, Merseyrail and Cheshire West & Chester Council have come together with partners to restore the building.
How has the project been funded?	Merseyrail, along with Merseytravel, Heritage Railway Trust and Cheshire West & Chester put in a National Stations Improvement bid to restore and bring back into use the empty side of the station building. Veolia Environmental Management Services supported planting/created a new garden area.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can do attitude from Station Friends, local community, Council and train operator, and determination to make it work.</li> <li>- Activities of the Station Friends transformed the station and reduced fear of crime, litter and vandalism - all partners were impressed, leading them to invest more in the station.</li> </ul>
Have there been any barriers?	Overcoming bureaucracy by working with the rail industry and council and all wanting to progress the project.

<p>Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Value your volunteers</li> <li>- The Station Friends group was key - and it would be hard to imagine the project coming together without a key facilitator/ enabler person.</li> <li>- Foster positive relationships. The starting point is to ask organisations to do something with you - rather than just ask for money.</li> <li>- Don't accept that the only way forward is with costly legal agreements. If a community group takes on an unused space, they help keep it in good repair going forward - this is then a cost saving for the owner.</li> <li>- Projects shouldn't be stifled by legal costs, tripartite agreements and having to take on liabilities - with a good partnership project the liability and outlay can be borne by the train operator or Network Rail.</li> <li>- Many station buildings that have no commercial use identified. A good community project protects a building and turns it from an eyesore into a community asset.</li> </ul>
<p>What developments are planned going forward?</p>	<p>What is most innovative about the good practice and partnership working at Ellesmere Port Station is that it has been achieved without any formal community rail partnership arrangement and without any allocated budget. The project has succeeded because of the passion and creativity of all those involved, their collaborative spirit, and a willingness to do things differently.</p>



## 12. Fishguard & Goodwick Station (Pembrokeshire)

Project summary from representative sat North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum & Pembrokeshire County Council. Website: <http://www.nptf.co.uk/about.html>

When did the project start?	2000
Why did the project start?	From 2000, a local campaign from improved rail services to Fishguard. From 2011, plans to reopen the station building to provide facilities for the local community and visitors.
How is the station/building being used?	As a cafe.
Who has been involved in the project?	Pembrokeshire County Council, former South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium, Welsh Government, Network Rail, Arriva Trains and local community groups.
How has the project been funded?	The capital cost of re-opening the station in 2011 was met by a Welsh Government transport grant. There were no revenue costs.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Persistence! Having to establish a recognised need for added train services to Fishguard and the need to re-open the derelict old station.</li><li>- Survey work on our part, followed by a successful professional study, led to added services and the re-opening of the station being included in the Regional Transport Plan.</li><li>- Community support - significantly a petition asking for the extra stations organised by two teenagers then being taken up by the National Assembly for Wales Petition Committee, resulted in the Welsh Government funding 5 extra trains per day on a 3 year trial, which led to permanent funding for the services following a successful report at the end of the trial.</li><li>- On the strength of the trial, the capital project to re-open the station was brought forward to coincide with the beginning of the trial train services, and completed 8 months after the launch of the extra trains.</li><li>- Partnership working</li></ul>

<p>Have there been any barriers?</p>	<p>The Wales &amp; Borders Rail Franchise only provided 2 trains per day to meet the ferry at Fishguard Harbour. In order to be able to make the case for re-opening the old station, it was necessary to provide a demand for additional trains. This was accomplished by means of carrying out local surveys, the professional study and the teenage petition. Any financial barrier was removed when the Welsh Government was granted powers to fund additional train services to the franchise in 2005. The old station building is in a conservation area and had to be demolished as it was unsafe. The new station building had to replicate the old one to satisfy conservation requirements.</p>
<p>Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is a need to identify the barriers and the strategies required to get over the hurdles. Each time we thought that we have gone over the final hurdle, others appeared. So you have to be able to go through the process as often as it is required.</li> <li>- Be sure of your facts before you open your mouth or put something in writing. We gained in credibility by seeking information from the right sources and when we weren't sure of anything. The powers that be appreciate it when you want to know what something isn't happening. It gives them the opportunity of explaining why it isn't happening now, but might be happening in the future, or can never happen. Campaigners all too often waste a lot of energy by asking for something that can never happen. As we always sought for information in a serious way, we build up an information base, and eventually gained credibility and support.</li> <li>- Community involvement is important - and working in partnership.</li> </ul>
<p>What developments are planned going forward?</p>	<p>As we are a multi-modal group our main objective is to work for effective integrated transport between all modes - which is a huge challenge. We also promote the benefits of travelling by public transport. We also engage on an ongoing basis with travellers, providing information, passing on complaints, publicising transport developments etc.</p>



## 13. Fremington Quay (Devon)

*Project summary from a local resident*

*Website: <http://www.fremingtonquay.co.uk/>*

When did the project start?	Summer 2013
Why did the project start?	To bring the building back to use on a site with excellent footfall.
How is the station/building being used?	The building had a small extension to incorporate a visitor centre to complement the existing cafe.
Who has been involved in the project?	North Devon Council, Fremington Parish Council and North Devon Museums Director.
How has the project been funded?	Local Authority, European grant (LEADER), Parish Council grant and income from cafe.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Being on a site with great visitor and local footfall (on the Tarke Trail cycle and walk way - former railway line) between Bideford and Barnstaple.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The project had good support locally.</li><li>- Build a really good relationship with councils, funders and museums (for artefacts and information).</li></ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	The project continues to be popular and is running well.

## 14. Gillingham Station (Dorset)

*Project summary from a representative of Friends of Gillingham Station*

When did the project start?	January 2016
Why did the project start?	To enhance the station building and platforms.
How is the station/building being used?	Active station.
Who has been involved in the project?	Friends of Gillingham Station and Blackmore Vale Community Rail Partnership.
How has the project been funded?	Community rail partnership and donations from local businesses.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dynamic volunteer group.</li> <li>- Good working relationship with franchise holder South West Trains, now MTR/first group.</li> </ul>
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Put your ideas and aspirations forward to rail franchise/Network Rail, with as much information as possible. Joined up thinking it is important so projects outside the remit of 'Friends of' group can be highlighted (e.g. need for car parking).</li> <li>- It is good to get your local authority onside, to support and advise.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	To improve downside platform, large pedestrian shelter, improved pedestrian footway and disabled access.



## 15. Great Malvern Station - The Worm (Worcestershire)

*Project summary from a representative from Friends of Malvern's Railway Group / Malvern Civic Society*

When did the project start?	Planning and costing stage - would like to reopen a brick and iron pedestrian tunnel at Great Malvern railway station to showcase important aspects of the town's Victorian history.
Why did the project start?	The structure is in a state of decay.
How is the station/building being used?	The aim is to restore this passageway and open it for public to view and display information about the local area.
Who has been involved in the project?	Friends of Malvern's Railway Group, Network Rail and Railway Heritage Trust.
How has the project been funded?	Planned funding includes grant applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Railway Heritage Trust and local charities/fundraising.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Public enthusiasm and interest.
Have there been any barriers?	Getting buy-in from the rail industry.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Do not give up.



## 16. Hadlow Road Station (Cheshire)

*Project summary from a representative of Friends of Hadlow Road Station*

*Website: <http://willastoninwirralresidents.org/friends-of-hadlow-road-station-2/>*

When did the project start?	January 2015
Why did the project start?	Following outcome of Willaston wide District Plan.
How is the station/building being used?	Passenger services stopped in September 1956 and freight services in May 1962. The station is designated by English Heritage as a Grade II listed building. The Friends of Hadlow Road Station operate a cafe at the station, and the former signal box is used as Santa's Grotto. Other events are held at the station.
How has the project been funded?	Cheshire West & Chester Council funded the small kitchen. The Friends of Hadlow Road Station funded (through obtaining grants) the electrical and other goods.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community volunteers</li> <li>- Successful grant applications</li> </ul>
Have there been any barriers?	Slow response/decision making process among some funders.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Getting the support of your Local Authority and ensuring you know who the decision makers are.</li> <li>- Grant applications need to be focussed on the provider's expectations.</li> <li>- Survey design - this needs to be designed well so as to capture the views of the local community.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	Implementing some of the improvements in our development plan: <a href="http://willastoninwirralresidents.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2015/08/Improvement-list.pdf">http://willastoninwirralresidents.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2015/08/Improvement-list.pdf</a>

## 17. Hassocks Station (West Sussex)

*Project summary from a representative of Hassocks Rail Group*

When did the project start?	2002
Why did the project start?	The project building had deteriorated.
How is the station/building being used?	A working station with waiting room and ticket office.
Who has been involved in the project?	Network Rail and Southern Rail.
How has the project been funded?	From National Station Improvement Projects and Access for all government funding.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Working constructively with the rail authorities and local authorities.
Have there been any barriers?	Putting forward a well thought out case for improvements - a feasibility study, setting up a group to plant up attractive planters as a means of showing the local community's interest and care in its station, attending rail stakeholder meetings and meeting with the appropriate rail improvement staff.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Patience and luck in the timing!
What developments are planned going forward?	Maintain the building and platform shelters/waiting areas and planters.

## 18. Hebden Bridge Railway Station (West Yorkshire)

*Project summary from a representative from Pennine Heritage*

When did the project start?	circa 1980
Why did the project start?	To protect the historic character of the station.
How is the station/building being used?	Working railway station.
Who has been involved in the project?	Local residents.
How has the project been funded?	Very little cost other than our time to get the buildings listed and persuade the railway industry to change its approach.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	British Rail (in charge at the time) were, eventually, persuaded of the merit of our case and brought their special environment budget into play to facelift the entire station buildings in a much more sympathetic manner. Today it is much visited for its historic splendour.
Have there been any barriers?	Budget, but once the station buildings were listed, this opened up access to extra resources.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The power of persistence and maintaining enthusiasm amid the bureaucracy.</li> <li>- The importance of getting 'Stuck In' and getting ones hands dirty, rather than sitting back as a sophisticated 'talking shop' telling other people what they should be doing.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	The station is now appreciated by the whole community.



## 19. Helmsdale Station (Sutherland, Scotland)

*Project summary edited from response received from a representative of Helmsdale Station Community Interest Company (HSCIC). Website: <http://helmsdalestation.co.uk/>*

When did the project start?	2009
Why did the project start?	To rescue and restore the listed building at Helmsdale as a community project.
How is the station/building being used?	As well as restoring the accommodation for holiday use, the station has been improved for passengers. Restoration has included bringing back into use the station waiting room, which includes a small display covering the history of the building and advertising for local amenities to new arrivals. On the platform, the original 1871 glazed panel has been recreated in the end wall of the station canopy - bricked up for many years - which adds to the charm of this feature as well as giving passengers a better view of approaching trains from the shelter.
Who has been involved in the project?	Helmsdale Station Community Interest Company (HSCIC), local community, businesses, Friends of the Far North Line, ScotRail, Network Rail and Railway Heritage Trust.
How has the project been funded?	Highland LEADER, the Railway Heritage Trust, the Stations Community Regeneration Fund and the East Sutherland & Edderton Ward Discretionary Grant Fund, and also a number of local agencies and businesses which have generously donated time, advice and services.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liaising with the local community to ensure we had local support and 'buy-in' for the project.</li> <li>- Raising £186k of grant money to restore the listed building.</li> <li>- Seeking planning and listed building consent for alterations.</li> <li>- Setting up a Community Interest Company</li> </ul>
Have there been any barriers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Negotiating a 50 year tripartite lease with ScotRail and Network Rail (the first in Scotland so it took 3 years to achieve), but a template is now established for others to follow.</li> <li>- Procuring and managing the major elements of the restoration work - work encroaching on an operational railway zone (additional problems!).</li> </ul>

<p>Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exchange good practice, advice and expertise in a targeted way with similar projects.</li> <li>- Employing a part-time caretaker/cleaner.</li> <li>- Insuring aspects of the building not covered by Network Rail, including public and employer liability.</li> </ul>
<p>What developments are planned going forward?</p>	<p>The project was highly commended in the 2014 Railway Heritage Awards, shortlisted for the 2015 Scottish Civic Trust Angel Awards and won the 2015 ACoRP Award for Innovation in Community Rail.</p>



## 20. Irlam Station (Salford)

Project summary from a representative from The Hamilton Davies Trust

Website: <https://hamiltondavies.org.uk/grants/irlam-train-station/>

<p>Why did the project start?</p>	<p>The Victorian station house, which dates from 1893, had been boarded up and derelict for a quarter of a century. The Hamilton Development Trust wanted to help regenerate the district and create a landmark.</p>
<p>How is the station/building being used?</p>	<p>We needed to decide which facilities would make the station sustainable and attract people to it; both rail users and others. We wanted our station to be open from the first morning train until as late in the evening as was financially sustainable. The key elements we included are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Station waiting room and toilets</li> <li>- Large shelter adjoining station house</li> <li>- Secure and well-lit free car park</li> <li>- Cycle hub</li> <li>- Cafe and bar</li> <li>- Meeting venue for business</li> <li>- Local industrial history museum</li> <li>- Railway period theme 1923</li> <li>- Station garden</li> <li>- Children’s play area</li> <li>- Station masters flat</li> </ul> <p>Over 240,000 people use Irlam Station every year, making it the busiest in Greater Manchester without staffing.</p>
<p>Who has been involved in the project?</p>	<p>Irlam is located in a fairly densely populated (20,000 population) area on the boundary between the villages of Irlam &amp; Cadishead. There are several interested stakeholders including the Friends of the Station, the Hamilton Davies Trust, Irlam &amp; Cadishead Regeneration Committee, NC Developments, Salford City Council, Transport for Greater Manchester, Manchester Ship Canal Company, Network Rail and Northern Rail.</p>

<p>How has the project been funded?</p>	<p>The total capital expended at Irlam is around £1,600,000. Providers of the majority of the funds outside the provision of personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TFGM car park, approach road works, fencing, security, cycle hub £500,000</li> <li>- Hamilton Davies Trust - gap funding £300,000</li> <li>- NC Developments: station building, overflow car park £700,000</li> <li>- Hamilton Davies Trust - landscaping and art approx. £100,000</li> </ul> <p>The income from the cafe and functions would determine the value of the lease to the operator, which in turn would support the capital that could be spent on the building. We also wanted to make a statement about Irlam &amp; Cadishead, which is only just recovering from its industrial decline. Going the extra mile to produce a venue of note that we could be proud of was high on the regeneration agenda but would have a cost.</p>
<p>Have there been any barriers?</p>	<p>The site was a challenge for TFGM's car park contractor and the Station House refurbishment a major challenge for NCD. Built in 1894 it had lots of nice architectural features, history and character but needed major works to bring it to modern-use standards. Several local neighbours really took exception to the project and objected at every turn. They were concerned over a licenced bar being part of the project and the potential for local disturbances. In the first six months these concerns have proved unfounded but the time expended by HDT, NCD, their contractors and the local council was unhelpful.</p> <p>The rail industry is not geared up for this (small) scale of regeneration. The lack of financial or asset gain for them and their main project priorities all detracted from us being able to run an efficient project.</p> <p>The advantage of the Station House and surrounding land being in private ownership rather than Network Rail was countered by the difficulty in purchasing it from the owner.</p>
<p>Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A good number of station buildings have a negative lease value after capital investment is taken into account and in some cases the buildings are listed, further complicating the investment case.</li> <li>- Multi use - smaller stations needs multiple uses to sustain their presence. The cafe forms the hub but it's the wider use that brings people in and makes the station a destination in its own right.</li> <li>- Cycling - make the station the hub, and design radial routes out from it.</li> <li>- Stations are public buildings? Like it or not that's what people think, so the condition and facilities of the station reflect on the wider communities thinking about public service.</li> <li>- Station Garden - the addition of a station garden adds to local pride and is a focus point for any friends group. It is also a good use of rough land adjacent to the station.</li> <li>- Children's Play Area - a children's play area is a good draw for non-travelling visitors. Children love trains, so a small themed play area would be well received.</li> </ul>

<p>What developments are planned going forward?</p>	<p>By making the building interesting and multi-use, it is appealing to a much wider community than just rail users - it has become a destination in its own. It has also become the repository of much of the local history. The station project has had a regeneration impact beyond the station area. It has helped restore pride in the two villages and created a hub to build regeneration projects out from, such as the linear park, embankment maintenance, Liverpool Road improvements and cycle route establishment.</p>
<p>Any other information you would like to share.</p>	<p>The key project elements were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCC station adopted policy</li> <li>- Funding</li> <li>- Obtaining the property</li> <li>- Obtaining permissions from Network Rail</li> <li>- Local community consultation</li> <li>- Building refurbishment contract</li> <li>- Car park and approach road contract</li> <li>- Obtaining embankments from Manchester Ship Canal Company (phase 2, linear park)</li> <li>- Assembling displays and local history</li> </ul>



## 21. Liss Station (East Hampshire)

*Project summary from a representative from Liss Parish Council*

When did the project start?	Started thinking about the project 10 years ago, with action beginning in 2014.
Why did the project start?	The Victorian station was demolished in the 1960s and replaced with a modern "shoe box" building not in keeping with the Liss Conservation Area.
How is the station/building being used?	Improvements to both the interior and exterior of the building to "lift" it have included: planting, artwork by local youth group and South Downs National Park Authority and installation of a working model railway depicting the Liss to Longmoor army railway which ceased in early 1970s and featured in films such as St. Trinians and Bwhani Junction railway.
Who has been involved in the project?	East Hampshire Communiy Rail Partnership, South Downs National Park Authority, Liss Model Railway Club, Liss Crossover Youth Group, Liss Historical Society and Parish Plan Group.
How has the project been funded?	Small grants from Community Rail Partnership and volunteer labour.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Perseverance and taking advantage of opportunities as they have arisen.
Have there been any barriers?	Would like to have achieved more improvements to the station, but have been thwarted by changes in personnel in the rail industry.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Keep at it.
What developments are planned going forward?	Complete the art work - Liss has a rich railway history which we are keen to keep alive.



## 22. Longridge Station (Lancashire)

*Project summary from a representative from Longridge Social Enterprise Company*

When did the project start?	1999
Why did the project start?	Desire to save a heritage building and exploit a town with rich heritage assets.
How is the station/building being used?	Cafe - commercial let, heritage centre, meeting room and town council office.
Who has been involved in the project?	Town Council
How has the project been funded?	Heritage Lottery grant (approximately 45% of project cost) and then a cocktail of smaller match pots.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Determination, creativity and strong community support.
Have there been any barriers?	Challenges of European (RDPE) funding nearly stopped the project - the cash flow problem - so we had to drop part of the build and find a partner, hence commercial let of the cafe space.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	It's important to have a can do mind-set and community and political support.
What developments are planned going forward?	Potential to take over another building in the town but it should be only a management project rather than a development project.



## 23. Maiden Newton Station (Dorset)

*Project summary from a representative of Maiden Newton Parish Council*

When did the project start?	1980's
Why did the project start?	As part of the successful fight to keep line open, backed by Parish Council. The station building was opened on 20 January 1857 on a line built by Brunel and is Grade 2 listed.
How is the station/building being used?	Main building leased by West Dorset District Council from Network Rail and let to a commercial operator.
Who has been involved in the project?	Volunteer group of Station Gardeners, started 2007.
How has the project been funded?	By the Heart of Wessex Community Rail Partnership.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Appointment of a Community Rail Officer.
Have there been any barriers?	Need for communities to work together to franchise operator.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Need enthusiasts and local residents to continue to use station.
What developments are planned going forward?	Disabled access to Platform 2 at Dorchester West.



## 24. The Milkmaid Folk Arts Centre (Bury St Edmunds Station Project, Suffolk)

*Project summary from a representative from The Milkmaid Folk Arts Centre CIC*  
*Website: <http://www.milkmaidcentre.com/>*

When did the project start?	January 2012
Why did the project start?	The building is in extremely poor condition and the CIC wants to provide a friendly and supportive centre for vulnerable and disadvantaged people to access the arts.
How is the station/building being used?	The project is ongoing - the building is not yet complete.
Who has been involved in the project?	Architect, local council and local fundraisers.
How has the project been funded?	This project is not completely funded yet.
Have there been any barriers?	The Centre's postcode is not on the Government's list of deprived postcode areas which can bring challenges in attracting funds - but 40% of the refurbishment costs have been pledged.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Check the eligibility criteria carefully before you apply to funders.
What developments are planned going forward?	Plan to start the first phase of refurbishment in Winter 2017 (funding dependent).

## 25. Narborough Station (Leicestershire)

*Project summary from a representative from the Friends of Narborough Station*

When did the project start?	2017
Why did the project start?	Local concern about rail services and the state of station buildings.
How is the station/building being used?	Working rail station - with a booking office and waiting room.
Who has been involved in the project?	Narborough Parish Council.
How has the project been funded?	No cost as yet.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	The project is at an early stage.
Have there been any barriers?	Liaising with the train operating company to see if more trains can stop at Narborough.



## 26. Nuneaton Trent Valley - Art Alert Nuneaton (Warwickshire)

*Project summary from a representative of Art Alert Nuneaton*

*Website: <http://www.artalertnuneaton.co.uk/home.php>*

When did the project start?	November 2016.
Why did the project start?	Art Alert needed a place to exhibit, meet and host workshops.
How is the station/building being used?	For exhibitions, workshops, monthly meetings and group activities.
Who has been involved in the project?	London Midlands Trains and Warwickshire County Council.
How has the project been funded?	TGrants from London Midlands Trains and Warwickshire County Council.
Have there been any barriers?	- Desire to make it work - flexibility, imagination and hard work. - Strong community links.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	- Be convinced that you can make it work. - Memory projects can help to galvanise a new initiative. - Partnership working.
What developments are planned going forward?	Developing a programme of exhibitions, making space available to other local groups/events and linking to railway history society.



## 27. Ottery St Mary (Devon)

*Project summary from a representative from the Friends of Narborough Station*

When did the project start?	Spring 2014
Why did the project start?	When Devon County Council closed its universal youth services including in Ottery.
How is the station/building being used?	It is now a community hub including a youth club and a venue for many local community organisations.
Who has been involved in the project?	A local charity was formed and the local town council have been hugely supportive.
How has the project been funded?	Initial grants from Devon County Council and Ottery Town Council.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	There was a real need to keep the youth club open, plus there was a clear need for an additional local community facility.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Form a competent steering group to see the project through.
What developments are planned going forward?	Maximise usage of the facility.



## 28. Petersfield Station - Old Parcels Office (Hampshire)

*Project summary from an officer at East Hampshire District Council*

When did the project start?	June 2016
Why did the project start?	The local community wanted to turn an unused old parcels office into an Information Hub, advising on sustainable onward travel and South Downs National Park.
How is the station/building being used?	Leaflets and advice on the local area provided.
Who has been involved in the project?	South Downs National Park, South West Trains, East Hampshire District Council.
How has the project been funded?	Community Rail Partnerships Fund, ACORP funding, South West Trains.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Community involvement.</li><li>- Partnership working.</li></ul>
Have there been any barriers?	Leasing the room from South West Trains - the Council took on a short term lease (arranged by the project manager through his company) and this was then gifted to the Community Rail Partnership.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Try and involve community groups and willing volunteers to help with project. We started as an information hub but intend on building on this and would like to open up the room to local groups in the winter months.</li><li>- Have clear direction on what you want to achieve and project planning is very important.</li></ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	Our ambition is to continue to make improvements (e.g. fit in a toilet to enable community groups to use the room in the winter months, offer electric bike hire). The Council's future aspiration is to make use of unused buildings at other stations in the district.



## 29. Richmond - The Station (North Yorkshire)

Project summary provided from trustees and staff at The Station and local residents, businesses and visitors. Website: <http://www.thestation.co.uk/>

When did the project start?	2002
Why did the project start?	The Victorian station building and yard were offered to Richmond Borough Council by British Rail in the 1960s. The Council cleared a lot of the buildings and built Richmond Swimming Pool. The station building was then run as a hardware store by a local family for 25-30 years then the Council announced they wanted to dispose of the building. Public meetings were held and the local community were not supportive of the 4-5 options proposed for the site. Local residents formed a steering group to develop their own proposals and wanted to see the building brought into community use.
How is the station/building being used?	An art gallery, exhibition space, community venue for groups, meetings and classes, restaurant, cinema and home to a variety of independent businesses.
Who has been involved in the project?	The Council gave the community steering group 2 years to develop the project. The building was redeveloped under the Richmondshire Building Preservation Trust in 2007. The Station is managed by the Trust, a registered charity.
How has the project been funded?	Feasibility and business planning work funded by grants from District Council and County Council. Refurbishment undertaken with grants from Yorkshire Forward (former Regional Development Agency), European Regional Development Fund, Architectural Heritage Trust, Heritage Trust Network and Heritage Lottery Fund. Also raised £450,000 from local residents through 'conditional gift', meaning any monies donated had to be spent on the project and money from patrons and private donors. Refurbishment funding was for capital only; the project had to be self-sustaining through revenue from the outset. All tenants pay rent which covers maintenance and staff costs. The project received an interest free loan in its first five years - this was invested, delivered a return, and was paid back.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	- Community members who had the vision, determination and persistence - and gave their time for free - to see the building refurbished and open to the public. - Commitment by all stakeholders in supporting the local community to take the project forward.

<p>Have there been any barriers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physical refurbishment: balancing the need to conserve the building with needing to do things in a commercial way - overcome by the Trust having contingency funds to cover additional work.</li> <li>- Taking the local community and stakeholders on the journey with you: ensuring ongoing community support and being able to let anyone claim the credit for your work.</li> <li>- Finding and tapping into professional/technical skills in the local community.</li> <li>- Some organisations were sceptical that a bunch of community volunteers could develop the project - it became the largest public-private project in North Yorkshire at the time.</li> <li>- Funding: each funder has different areas of interest, eligibility criteria and output requirements - and you need to match your timescale to those of potential funders.</li> </ul>
<p>Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a fully costed business plan - with some alternative options built in. Ensure that you will generate sufficient revenue to run and maintain building without revenue grants.</li> <li>- You need to build a good relationship with your architect - you may disagree a lot along the way!</li> <li>- Form a good working relationship with strategic organisations. The County Council cash flowed the project.</li> <li>- Engage local movers and shakers - and get them to commit to the project so they don't want it to fail as it will reflect on them.</li> <li>- Be prepared for difficulties and bureaucratic obstruction.</li> <li>- Be prepared for a long timetable.</li> <li>- You need paid staff as well as volunteers.</li> </ul>
<p>What developments are planned going forward?</p>	<p>Our station has been open to the public for 10 years and we now hope to develop new project re-furbishing a local Grammar School, no longer used for education and currently empty.</p>



### 30. Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre (Bedfordshire)

*Project summary taken from information provided by a representative from Bedfordshire Rural Community Council. Website: <http://bedsrcc.org.uk/ridgmont-station-heritage-centre>*

When did the project start?	2008 - with facilities in the building open to public from 2013/14
Why did the project start?	The station building had stood derelict for 40 years. It was the last remaining station building on the Marston Vale Line available for community use.
How is the station/building being used?	The project had a number of specific objectives including to increase local access to services and employment; increase the provision of tourist information within the Greensand Ridge area; promote the history and heritage of the railway line and the brick industry that it served; and greatly increase the energy efficiency of the building so that it can serve as an environmental exemplar. The former station house comprises three former bedrooms with the original Ladies Waiting Room and Booking Office. These have been converted to three first-floor offices with a gift shop and Tourist Information Point downstairs. The booking office has been restored and houses displays on the history of the building and temporary exhibitions. There is also a meeting room, tea room and kitchen, with Ladies, Gents and disabled toilets. Outside there is a patio garden and refurbished car park.
Who has been involved in the project?	The project has been led by the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership and its lead partner, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (Bedfordshire RCC). Bedfordshire RCC has a 99 year lease with Network Rail (the building is outside the lease of the train operator).
How has the project been funded?	One of the project's biggest funders was the Railway Heritage Trust.

<p>What factors have underpinned the success of the project?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Volunteers - Ridgmont has an active Station Friends Group (formed in 2014 from the Heritage Centre volunteers). The Station Friends staff the gift shop and provide guided visits of the restored booking office. They also assist with a variety of practical tasks around the building and surrounding land (including the car park). Some members of the Friends have additional responsibilities in researching exhibitions, publicity and assisting with the management of the gift shop.</li> <li>- Having the train operator (Silverlink Trains as was) undertake the initial feasibility study and the involvement of Bedfordshire RCC Project Team in the initial stages.</li> <li>- It also helped that the Community Rail Partnership officer had a tourism and heritage background, with an awareness of funding opportunities beyond the railway.</li> <li>- The support of Bedford to Bletchley Rail Users' Association in setting up the Station Friends Group, and their active support, was hugely helpful.</li> <li>- ACoRP was actively involved in this project; they provided advice, support and information, which were invaluable over the lease/tenancy issues.</li> </ul>
<p>Have there been any barriers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- While the community rail teams within the industry were very supportive there was a lack of understanding over the project within the estates team.</li> <li>- You need a broad spectrum of volunteers - not just railway enthusiasts.</li> <li>- You need continuity in people developing the station building and those opening it - don't parachute someone in but embed them from the beginning.</li> <li>- Car parking - this is important if you want to attract commercial users.</li> </ul>
<p>Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include the full cost of building management after opening in funding bids.</li> <li>- Involve the community rail partnership officer in setting up contracts for utilities.</li> <li>- Stage your approach to restoration - complete the work in phases as funding becomes available.</li> <li>- You need a project team to develop the building.</li> <li>- Choose your architect carefully - you want someone who's invested in the project and local community, not someone who sees it as another commission.</li> <li>- Have a robust business plan - that's flexible and open to harnessing new opportunities after you've opened.</li> </ul>
<p>What developments are planned going forward?</p>	<p>The project has provided greatly improved facilities for rail passengers at Ridgmont and the Heritage Centre has been the catalyst for the inclusion of Ridgmont as a stopping point on the East West Rail semi-fast service from Bedford - Oxford and the selection of Ridgmont as a Transport Interchange by Central Bedfordshire Council. The project is now working to become an accredited museum and is also working with the train operator to see if volunteers can sell tickets under the next franchise.</p>

<p>Any other information you would like to share.</p>	<p>Marston Vale Signalling Centre and proximity of the planned route of the Bedford - Milton Keynes Waterway Park located adjacent to the building enhance the offer for school and adult group visits.</p>
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## 31. Rushden Station (Northamptonshire)

*Project summary from a representative of Rushden Historical Transport Society*

*Website: <http://rhts.co.uk/>*

When did the project start?	1984
Why did the project start?	From the very beginning it was to bring back a railway to the Town.
How is the station/building being used?	4 rooms are used as a museum which has gained accreditation from the Arts Council. We also run heritage trains from the platform.
Who has been involved in the project?	Support has been received from both the Town Council and East Northants Council.
How has the project been funded?	Mainly from money that we have raised ourselves with a few grants from the local councils.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Great volunteers who put in many hours a week.</li> <li>- Working closely with other groups.</li> </ul>
Have there been any barriers?	When we purchased the Station from the County Council in the 1990s they were very supportive - in more recent years their sense of what we are doing and their active involvement in it has not always been possible.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make sure you know what you want (uses, activities).</li> <li>- Support this with a good business plan.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	We are in the process of applying for planning permission to extend the railway track towards Higham Ferrers. We would also like to acquire a piece of land adjacent to the track so that we could have a building so that rolling stock could be stored and restored under cover. We recently purchased the Rushden Goods Shed and Yard, which we intend to use as a heritage centre/community facility.
Any other information you would like to share.	We have found that it has been a lot of very hard work to get to where we are today but also it has been very rewarding.

## 32. Saltash Station (Cornwall)

*Project summary from a representative at Saltash Town Council*

When did the project start?	2016
Why did the project start?	Community pressure to refurbish derelict station building.
How is the station/building being used?	Not yet complete.
Who has been involved in the project?	Great Western Railway, Network Rail and Cornwall Council.
How has the project been funded?	So far - by Town Council reserves, Cornwall Council Local Transport Fund and Section 106 fund.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Not yet complete.
Have there been any barriers?	- Funding - Being close to an operational railway
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	- The need to keep learning. - Sharing practice with other people/organisations undertaking similar projects.
What developments are planned going forward?	The project includes several phases.



### 33. Shillingstone Station (Dorset)

*Project summary from a representative of North Dorset Railway Trust*

*Website: [www.shillingstone-railway-project.org.uk](http://www.shillingstone-railway-project.org.uk)*

When did the project start?	2000
Why did the project start?	Desire to preserve the history/heritage of the Somerset & Dorset railway.
How is the station/building being used?	Railway Cafe, shop, toilets, museum visitor attraction.
Who has been involved in the project?	Stakeholders involved in the North Dorset Trailway.
How has the project been funded?	Donations, membership fees, shop and cafe revenue, and grants.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The determination of volunteers.</li> <li>- Finding a sponsor.</li> </ul>
Have there been any barriers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finding and keeping regular volunteers.</li> <li>- Having a constitution and rules to manage contradictory ideas.</li> </ul>
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Be ambitious but realistic; everything takes longer than expected.
What developments are planned going forward?	To progress from a static to a working heritage railway.



## 34. Sleaford Station (Lincolnshire)

*Project summary from a representative from North Kesteven District Council*

When did the project start?	2009/10
Why did the project start?	<p>This project was not to deliver community facilities, although it did originate through an ACORP call for community based projects at stations.</p> <p>The project was a commercial conversion/refurbishment of the disused parts of Sleaford Station to form 8 small office suites with shared communal facilities. It was a way of restoring a semi derelict eyesore back into full operational use.</p>
How is the station/building being used?	Parts of the station that are not operationally needed have been converted into leasehold office space for local small businesses.
Who has been involved in the project?	North Kesteven District Council, East Midlands Trains and Network Rail.
How has the project been funded?	All costs were funded by North Kesteven District Council with the support of commercial grant funding from the then Regional Development Agency.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	East Midlands Trains was crucial in liaising and progressing the project with Network Rail.
Have there been any barriers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- It can be difficult getting to speak to the right people in the rail industry.</li><li>- As a Council we had to agree to a number of factors in the lease requirements that a private or voluntary sector organisation may be reluctant to.</li></ul>
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	You need a lot of determination and perseverance. Do not give up.



## 35. Tetbury Goods Shed (Gloucestershire)

*Project summary from a representative from Tetbury Town Council*

*Website: <https://shed-arts.co.uk/>*

When did the project start?	10 years ago - building converted in 2016-2017.
Why did the project start?	We were developing an ex rail line into a Country Park, this contained a redundant Goods Shed.
How is the station/building being used?	A volunteer run venue - a centre for the arts and entertainment.
Who has been involved in the project?	A partnership between the Town Council and a Regeneration Trust.
How has the project been funded?	Public Works Loan Board Loan to the Council.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Enthusiasm and a desire to succeed among local people.
Have there been any barriers?	Not many barriers - overcome by a will to create a community asset.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Stick at it.

## 36. Trimley Station (Suffolk)

*Project summary from a representative of The Trimley Station Community Trust Limited*

*Website: <http://www.trimleystation.org/>*

When did the project start?	2012
Why did the project start?	Because there was a threat to demolish the buildings.
How is the station/building being used?	Disused station - it is in a very dilapidated state and is not useable.
How has the project been funded?	Grants from District Council, Parish Councils, Locality and own fundraising.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	The project is ongoing.
Have there been any barriers?	A failed HLF Stage 1 application - applications made to other funders.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The whole project is an enormous task. You need a suitably large group of trustees/volunteers to share the huge amount of work that is involved.</li> <li>- Consider a diversity of funding options and funders.</li> <li>- Building a relationship with Network Rail and Abello.</li> <li>- Do not expect a quick and easy solution and be prepared for knockbacks that can affect morale. Expect the project to take very much longer than you thought it would.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	To raise sufficient money to restore the buildings.



## 37. Wallingford Station (Oxfordshire)

*Project summary from a representative of Cholsey and Wallingford Railway*

When did the project start?	Ongoing
Why did the project start?	The presention station site has no building.
How is the station/building being used?	Active station - has a shop and cafe as well as ticket sales and general office.
How has the project been funded?	Grants, donations and income from train rides.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	The project is ongoing.
Have there been any barriers?	Gaining access to extra land through a Section 106.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Have patience.
What developments are planned going forward?	We hope to be in a position to start building within 12 months.



### 38. Warmley Signal Box (South Gloucestershire)

Project summary from a representative of a Parish Council. Website: <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/historic-environment/archaeology/historic-sites-and-monuments/warmley-signal-box/>

When did the project start?	2008
Why did the project start?	The Signal Box, a Grade II listed building, was in a poor state of repair. A new group of volunteers emerged who were interested in its restoration.
How is the station/building being used?	Now the building is restored it's opened to the public by volunteers most Saturdays and for community events. There is a community garden next to it which is used by the public daily and for community events.
Who has been involved in the project?	South Gloucestershire Council led a group of local volunteers. There we links with the owners of the Station House and Warmley Waiting Room cafe. Corporate volunteers were involved at the start of the project, building the community garden.
How has the project been funded?	South Gloucestershire Council and other grant funding.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Volunteer involvement was key, especially an ex-signalman joining the volunteer group.</li> <li>- Partnership working and close relationships with the Council's Conservation Officer helped the project go smoothly.</li> <li>- The co-operation of the owners or Warmley Waiting Room cafe who were restoring the Station House and waiting room at the same time. This led to the total regeneration of a small part of Warmley, supporting both small business and communities.</li> </ul>
Have there been any barriers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vandalism was a barrier but this was resolved by growing the project slowly from an initial community garden at the side of the signal box. As people saw the garden was looked after, vandalism decreased.</li> <li>- Funding was an issue but involving volunteers to lobby councillors helped to release the funding. As the project took off councillors wanted to be associated with it and share in the success.</li> <li>- Health and safety concerns of opening a historic building to the public while staying true to its historic integrity was an issue but these were resolved by close conversations with the Conservation Officer and briefing volunteers about the use of the building.</li> </ul>

Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Keep going! Don't expect everything to happen at once and be in it for the long haul.</li><li>- Remember this is fun as well as a worthy cause.</li></ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	Warmley Signal Box celebrates its 100th anniversary next year - possible community celebration.



## 39. Whaley Bridge (Derbyshire)

*Project summary from a representative of the Friends of Whaley Bridge Station*

*Website: <https://www.friendsofwhaleybridgestation.org/>*

When did the project start?	2009
Why did the project start?	To restore the station building and bring the waiting room back into use.
How is the station/building being used?	Active station - the Waiting Room is used by passengers during Booking Office opening hours. It is used at other times by local community groups (e.g. Art Group Exhibition, Local History Group) as well as a meeting room for the Friends of the Station.
Who has been involved in the project?	Network Rail and Railway Heritage Trust
How has the project been funded?	By Network Rail, Railway Heritage Trust, Friends of Whaley Bridge Station, Whaley Bridge Town Council, High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	An excellent working relationship between Network Rail and the Friends of Whaley Bridge Station.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	We formed a small regeneration group which enabled us to keep in close contact with Network Rail and the train operating companies.
What developments are planned going forward?	To enhance one of the station platforms with new planters and continue to maintain the large garden on the other platform.



## 40. Whitegate Station House (Cheshire West)

*Project summary from a representative at Whitegate Station Community Group*

*Website: <http://whitegatestation.org.uk/>*

When did the project start?	May 2015
Why did the project start?	The building was empty.
How is the station/building being used?	Community cafe, trike and tandem hire, and start up business enterprise.
Who has been involved in the project?	Parish Council, Cheshire West & Chester Council and NWEngland
How has the project been funded?	Start-up costs funded by Parish Council, Cheshire West & Chester Council. Building will generate its own funds going forward.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Community volunteers.
Have there been any barriers?	Some boundary disputes - but these were resolved.
What developments are planned going forward?	To complete the 19-mile railway re-instatement.



## 41. Wolferton Station - The Royal Retiring Rooms (Norfolk)

*Project summary from a local resident*

*Website: <http://www.wolfertonroyalstation.co.uk/>*

When did the project start?	Approximately 2000
Why did the project start?	Local desire to see this historically significant station refurbished back to former standards. The building's historical significance was underlined by Sir John Benjamin who described it as "unique, like no other in England".
How is the station/building being used?	A private home but open daily for visitors to walk platforms and view displays.
Who has been involved in the project?	The owners of property neighbouring the station.
How has the project been funded?	Privately funded with some grants from Local Authorities.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Attention to historic detail and refurbishment.
Have there been any barriers?	Listed building status means the project received detailed attention from the Conservation Officer - working closely with the Local Authority.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Work closely with your Local Authority.
What developments are planned going forward?	Ambitions for more printed material and displays.



## 42. Woody Bay Station (Devon)

*Project summary from a representative at Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust*

*Website: <http://www.lynton-rail.co.uk/>*

When did the project start?	1995
Why did the project start?	First steps in re-opening the railway.
How is the station/building being used?	As a railway station.
Who has been involved in the project?	Hundreds of volunteers/Trust members.
How has the project been funded?	Trust member donations.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	The heritage aspects of the railway.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Good vision and a business plan.
What developments are planned going forward?	Would like to extend kitchen area and build a toilet block (ensure the facility meets DDA requirements for access).



### 43. Yatton Station - Strawberry Line Cafe (North Somerset)

Project summary from a representative of Strawberry Line Café

Website: <http://www.strawberrylinecafe.co.uk/>

When did the project start?	2007
Why did the project start?	A charity was looking for a location for a cafe.
How is the station/building being used?	Community cafe that rains and employs adults with learning disabilities.
Who has been involved in the project?	Railway Heritage Trust, Regional Development Agency and Great Western Railway.
How has the project been funded?	Grants from Department of Transport, Railway Heritage Trust, Regional Development Agency and Great Western Railway. Local fundraising and cafe revenue.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Commitment of individuals involved.</li><li>- Location and proximity to a cycle path.</li></ul>
Have there been any barriers?	Slow responses and unwieldy processes within the rail industry; overcome by involving local staff.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Secure professional services wherever you can for the initial design and build stages. Initially we tried to use volunteers and pro bono people but ended up using paid professionals.</li><li>- Carefully explore your organisational status and governance (charity, company, cooperative) and check if there is anything in the future that you won't be able to do because of your legal status.</li></ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	To offer more employment opportunities to people with learning disabilities.

# B: Community Buildings

We received information from community groups, Local Authorities, charities and voluntary & community sector organisations about 7 community buildings:

1. Bucks Cross Village Hall (Devon)
2. Gleneagles Centre (Redcar & Cleveland)
3. Hudson House (North Yorkshire)
4. Kirkgate Centre (Cumbria)
5. Oddfellows Hall (Nortfolk)
6. Silver Rooms/Silver Road Community Centre (Norwich)
7. Welbourn Forge & Farriers (Lincolnshire)

The following tables summarise the information we received about each building. Some of the grids are more comprehensive than others – depending on who submitted information to the Call and what stage their project was at. Wherever possible we have included a link to the building/group's website where you can go to find out more information.

# 1. Bucks Cross Village Hall (Devon)

*Project summary from a representative at Bucks Cross Village Hall*

When did the project start?	2005
Why did the project start?	The village hall was in poor condition and little used.
How is the station/building being used?	Community activities including skittles, table tennis, coffee mornings, meetings and events.
Who has been involved in the project?	The village hall trustees, local residents and groups, Torridge District Council, Woolsey Parish Council and Devon Communities Together.
How has the project been funded?	Grants from local and national charities and support from local authorities.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	The commitment of the village hall trustees.
Have there been any barriers?	Liaising with the diocese.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have simple and achievable aims.</li> <li>- Have dedicated people on your management group.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	A new roof, improved pathway and new porch.

## 2. Gleneagles Centre (Redcar & Cleveland)

*Project summary from a representative at New Marske Community Group*

*Website: <http://www.newmarskecommunitygroup.co.uk/>*

When did the project start?	2013
Why did the project start?	Coast and Country who own the building were going to close it.
How is the station/building being used?	For various community activities by local groups (e.g. bowls, tai chi, friendship group, quilting group, U3A etc.).
Who has been involved in the project?	New Marske Community Group with help from the local community.
How has the project been funded?	Grant from Impetus.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	Sheer determination in the face of odds.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Keep with it and believe in yourselves.
What developments are planned going forward?	Recruit some new committee members.

### 3. Hudson House (North Yorkshire)

*Project summary from a representative at Hudson House*

*Website: <http://www.hudsonhouse.org/>*

When did the project start?	January 2003
Why did the project start?	At the time there was a push through the County Council and District Council to look at setting up Community Offices and to write a Community Investment Prospectus, the latter being done through the Two Dales Community Partnership covering Swaledale and Argengarthdale. Funding was applied for to purchase the redundant Barclays Bank building to turn this into a Community Hub.
How is the station/building being used?	It is used as an information and advice centre, community library, to access the internet and Wi-Fi, meeting space, Swaledale Festival, Police Community Support Officer, Yorkshire Dales National Park Tourist Information, YDNP Ranger, Reeth and District Community Transport, Richmondshire District Council Customer Service Point, Unversite of the 3rd Age. The upper floor of the building has been converted to 3 affordable flats - these are owned and operated by Chevin Housing. There is also the Community Orchard run by a separate steering group. The building also has the Orchard Gallery, an affordable space to rent for local artists and creative industries. In addition there is a separate building, The Barn, which has been converted into office space and is currently on a long term rent to a local entrepreneur.
Who has been involved in the project?	Richmond District Council, North Yorkshire County Council, Police, Yorkshire Dales National Park and Chevin Housing.
How has the project been funded?	The initial project was funded through Yorkshire Forward (capital and revenue funds). Since then, various grants have been received for minor refurbishments including European LEADER funding. Each of the partners within the building pay an annual rent which pays for a part time manager and other costs required to keep the building open.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	The success of Hudson House is due to the excellent working relationships of the various partners and their willingness to retain a presence in Hudson House and provide a community service to residents of, and visitors to, the two Dales.

<p>Have there been any barriers?</p>	<p>Not necessarily barriers, but certainly challenges in being able to continue to cover the salary costs of a Manager, especially given austerity cuts facing one of our main partners, Richmondshire District Council, which has not been financial but mainly the presence of a member of their staff who provided additional support to keeping the building operational. It has been possible to overcome this by entering into an agreement with Richmondshire District Council and Homes and Communities Agency for Hudson House to take on the management of 5 business units for which Hudson House will receive the income less obligatory costs such as insurance. This additional income has also meant we can employ the Manager for 3 days per week as opposed to previously 2 days per week; thus replacing 1 of the days previously covered through sharing the Richmondshire member of staff. This has left Hudson House seeking additional support from its bank of volunteers to cover 1 day per week during the winter opening hours of the National Park.</p>
<p>Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?</p>	<p>Keep talking to your partners and operate on a basis of give and take.</p>
<p>What developments are planned going forward?</p>	<p>The Board of Directors are constantly looking for ways to increase the footfall into Hudson House. The Board is also looking at a small grants system for groups with the Two Dales.</p>

## 4. Kirkgate Centre (Cumbria)

*Project summary from a representative at the Kirkgate Centre*

*Website: <https://www.kirkgatearts.org.uk/>*

When did the project start?	1990
Why did the project start?	The building would have been demolished.
How is the station/building being used?	A unique arts and theatre venue based in a former Victorian school. First established by a group of volunteers, the Centre is now a social enterprise and registered charity.
Who has been involved in the project?	120 regular volunteers involved in every possible aspect of running the Centre.
How has the project been funded?	Grants from Lottery, English Heritage; pledges from business/ individuals; fundraising events. Managed by a voluntary Board of Directors who oversees the corporate governance and strategic direction of the Centre.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	The building met a local need for an arts/museum/community facility.
Have there been any barriers?	The Council initially wanted to demolish the building and were then reluctant to sell it - following District Council wanted to demolish, then would not sell, after 2 years agreeing to district valuers' valuation - turned out to be cost of required repairs, so we were 'given' the property for £5.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seek allies and never give up.</li> <li>- Draw upon local skills (e.g. architect, quantity surveyor and solicitor) - their services were paid for via a Lottery grant. Many donated their fees to help liquidity.</li> <li>- Plan your first activities; even before work has been complete (e.g. we held a Victorian school day event involving the community as we're in a former school building).</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	Having completed work on auditorium, cinema projection room, bar/office facilities, Lottery bid planned to fund further extensions; meanwhile working together with other arts facilities in the region.

## 5. Oddfellows Hall (Norfolk)

*Project summary from a representative from a local community group*

*Website: <http://www.oddfellowshall.co.uk/>*

When did the project start?	2008
Why did the project start?	Oddfellows Hall, Sheringham is a 150 year old brick and flint built former lifeboat station. The project sought to rebuild and fully restore this community facility and bring it back into use.
How is the station/building being used?	Various community uses - venue for meetings, conferences and functions.
Who has been involved in the project?	Sheringham Plus Regeneration Group.
How has the project been funded?	European Regeneration Grant (capital costs).
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	You need a range of skills on your board and persistence.
Have there been any barriers?	Maintaining political support and ensuring community buy-in over time.
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have clear objectives - and a business plan.</li> <li>- The importance of consulting the local community.</li> <li>- Getting skilled and professional help in if/when you need it.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	To undertake the next phase external community works.

## 6. Silver Rooms/Silver Road Community Centre (Norwich)

*Project summary from a representative from the Silver Road Community Centre*

*Website: <http://silverroadcc.org/>*

When did the project start?	August 2014
Why did the project start?	Because the rooms were up for auction to maybe be turned into flats.
How is the station/building being used?	We have turned it into a community centre.
Who has been involved in the project?	Local residents and Local Authority/Councillors.
How has the project been funded?	Local charitable trusts, Lottery grant and rental income.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	The community wanted the project and stood by us over the five years it took the Council to give us a lease. The dedication from the community is what made us carry on; seeing people use this old, very friendly hall makes your heart lighten.
Have there been any barriers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Getting the right Trustees who want to help others in the local community.</li> <li>- Finding permanent people/groups for rental space.</li> </ul>
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	Just keep a positive thought, and anything you want to do you can achieve, even if it is in small steps. Be practical and know it will take years to get what you want to achieve.
What developments are planned going forward?	Solar panels, new heating, pulling down outhouses and having an area with new toilets - implementing our five year plan.

## 7. Welbourn Forge & Farriers (Lincolnshire)

*Project summary from a representative of the Friends of Welbourn Forge*

*Website: <http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/welbourn>*

When did the project start?	1995 - The building was opened to the public in 2000
Why did the project start?	Part of a heritage project.
How is the station/building being used?	The building is open to the public on the first Saturday of each month. Group visits are welcome by arrangement.
Who has been involved in the project?	North Kesteven District Council and Welbourn Parish Council - the Forge and buildings are now owned by the Parish Council.
How has the project been funded?	Local Authority and Parish Council grants, and local donations.
What factors have underpinned the success of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A dedicated team of volunteers.</li> <li>- Local Authority support e.g. with advertising.</li> <li>- Local public support.</li> </ul>
Have there been any barriers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change of ownership from District Council to the Parish Council.</li> <li>- Changes in volunteers.</li> </ul>
Are there any lessons to pass on to other groups working on similar projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuity of volunteer support.</li> <li>- A stable Local Authority heritage assets agenda.</li> </ul>
What developments are planned going forward?	To take on more ambitious projects e.g. blacksmithing skills and demonstrations.

# C: Useful Resources

The range of information available on approaches to station/community building projects (the facility itself and the activities that take place there) is vast. Here we provide a selection of information we collated during our work with the Station Building Group in Mytholmroyd that we found most helpful.

## **The Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP)**

ACoRP is a membership body for almost 50 community rail partnerships, representing over 80 community rail lines across the UK, as well as more than 1,000 station adoption groups.

Website: <https://communityrail.org.uk/>

The news section on the ACoRP website regularly covers station projects around the country: <https://communityrail.org.uk/news/>

Reports, resources and tools to help people working in and around community rail are available online here: <https://communityrail.org.uk/resources-ideas/reports-resources-tools/>

Ideas of where to look for funds and some tips on how to apply can be found here: <https://communityrail.org.uk/resources-ideas/funding-advice/>

You can sign up to ACoRP's monthly email newsletter to give you an overview of their activities here: <https://communityrail.org.uk/news/train-online-sign/>

## **Community Stations: Innovative community uses for railway stations and land (2017)**

[https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/files/Publications/2017-05\\_community\\_stations\\_acorp.pdf](https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/files/Publications/2017-05_community_stations_acorp.pdf)

This work, commissioned by the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) and produced by ACoRP, provides an overview of inspirational work by station groups, community rail partnerships, and their commercial, public and third sector partners, to return station buildings to community use. It shows the opportunities available in such work and provides examples, advice and recommendations relevant to community groups and the rail industry.

## **The Socially Enterprising Railway (2016)**

[https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/files/Publications/2016-05\\_socially\\_enterprising\\_railway.pdf](https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/files/Publications/2016-05_socially_enterprising_railway.pdf)

ACoRP published this study, commissioned by the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC), and was researched by the Heart of Wales Line Development Company Ltd. The report includes ten case studies:

1. Cafe des Fleurs at Rye Station
2. Severn Dee Travel and Gobowen Station
3. The Bistro @ Etchingham Station

4. Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Company
5. The Railway Heritage Trust in Scotland
6. Kilmarnock Station Community Village
7. Pollokshaws: South West Community Cycles
8. Veterans Centre at Dumbarton Central
9. Tyne & Wear Metro
10. GWR small business initiatives (lobsters and tea from the West Country)

The introduction, lessons learned and recommendations sections were prepared by Professor Paul Salveson ('the railway doctor'). The lessons learned include:

- A good relationship between the business and the train operating company has been fundamental to the success of projects. That takes time to build – it needs trust and consistency, ideally with little changeover of personnel.
- Having the flexibility and willingness to negotiate a reasonable rent that is realistic in terms of local or commercial potential – the train operating company's willingness to bring the premises up to a good standard and maintain them.
- The contribution of the Railway Heritage Trust, not only funding capital improvements to buildings, but also ensuring they have an appropriate use.
- Independent ticket retailing can work where a conventional train operating company approach won't – but it requires determination and energy.
- Getting the right mix of people and the right structure for the business – enthusiasm and commitment are an essential starting point but on their own they are not enough. Having expertise such as financial management, HR, marketing and teamwork is essential.
- New entrants should be welcomed and encouraged – but it can be bewildering for a small business to find its way around the railway industry.
- While celebration of successes and sharing of best practice is strongly urged, the occasional failure should not be feared.

## **The Railway Heritage Trust (RHT)**

The Trust is an independent company limited by guarantee and is formally owned by its members, who are usually the Directors of the Trust, and is independent of both Network Rail and the Highways Agency, although both bodies provide its sponsorship. Its scope is basically buildings and structures either owned by Network Rail or part of the Highways Agency Historical Railways Estate. It does not support heritage railways directly, nor does it deal with rolling stock, other mobile heritage or artefacts. The Trust gives both advice and grants.

Website: <http://railwayheritagetrust.co.uk/>