



Community rail and rail transformation | FAQs from community rail

Since the [Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail](#) was published we have been liaising with the Department for Transport (DfT) on community rail's position and opportunities to make an enhanced contribution in the future. We already issued a [briefing on the plan](#) and brief summary on [National Rail Contracts](#).

We are now developing this community rail FAQs document on rail reform, putting our members' queries to the DfT. As you will see below, this includes questions around the structure of Great British Railways (GBR), timescales, funding for community rail, and future relationships with CRPs and station groups. The answers to the questions below in bold are what we have received to date from the DfT.

Many details are still to be confirmed at this stage, but we will keep returning to and updating this document as more information emerges. We will continue to liaise with the DfT, as well as with our contacts in the Welsh and Scottish governments in the coming months.

Should you have any queries, please speak to your usual contact in our [team](#).

Timescales

What are the timescales for reform? Are there certain milestones that must be reached for legislation purposes?

Completion of the programme isn't likely to be until 2024. The setting up of GBR and the transferring of functions to it requires legislation and the plan has to be implemented in phases. A small GBR transitions team has been established within Network Rail to see what changes and progress can be made prior to legislation being brought in.

Community rail funding

How will funding for community rail work, and who will provide the funding?

Where there are recently established community rail partnerships (CRPs) that are not currently receiving contractually obligated core funding from their train operators in existing ERMAS/National Rail Contracts, how and when will they get parity of core funding with longer-established CRPs, under the future arrangements?

To what extent will there be a standardisation of core funding amounts to CRPs across the country?



Will core funding for CRPs be dependent on them achieving accreditation under the future arrangements?

Will CCIF (and similar) project funds still be available, and will there be a single GBR-managed fund, or a fund that each passenger service contract operator manages?

All details are still to be confirmed.

Future relationships and contacts

- How will we ensure there is flexibility around new CRPs/initiatives developing? Both after GRB and in the interim?

By Community Rail Network remaining engaged with DfT's Stations & Community Rail team in the interim, and with GBR once it is established.

- Where will the main relationships/partnership working sit? Will this still be with dedicated community rail managers at train operators? Or within GBR divisions?

It is anticipated that the GBR's regional divisions will provide the single point of contact for CRPs. It is envisaged that the regional splits may be based on the current Network Rail regional areas, although this is still to be confirmed.

- Many CRPs work closely with the marketing departments of their TOC; where is it envisaged that external marketing for the national rail network will be carried out under the future arrangements, at the passenger service operators or at GBR?

As revenue risk will sit with GBR rather than the TOCs, GBR will be responsible for marketing and branding across the national network.

- Will CRPs be signing Service Level Agreements under the new arrangements and if so, with whom (GBR or the passenger service operators)?

Details are still to be confirmed.

- Will CRPs still have access to timetable and performance data, and will they still have a voice in future timetable planning decisions?

Details are still to be confirmed, but the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail emphasises the need for the railways to be responsive to local community needs.



Stations and station adoption:

- How will stations be managed?

Station management will be a responsibility of GBR. Dedicated station management teams will be created locally within regional divisions to manage stations, land, and assets.

- Who will station friends/adopters have their station adoption agreements with: GBR or the passenger service operators?

As GBR will take over responsibility for stations, adoption agreements will be with them rather than passenger service operators.

- How will community activities on what is currently Network Rail land (e.g. on disused station platforms or 'spare' railway land), currently managed through NR's community licence scheme, be managed under the future arrangements, and through whom? How will lease arrangements for community use of otherwise disused Network Rail-owned properties (e.g. redundant signal boxes) be managed under the future arrangements, and through whom?

Exact details are still to be determined but this will be through GBR.

- How will lease arrangements for community use of otherwise disused spaces at stations (e.g. station houses, spare rooms), currently managed through peppercorn lease arrangements with TOCs, be managed under the future arrangements, and through whom?

Exact details are still to be determined but this will be through GBR.

- Where there are current train operating franchises which include commitments to TOC-specific funds for station adopters' projects (e.g. South Western Railway) what will happen to such funds with the transition to GBR and passenger service contracts?

Details are still to be confirmed.



Community rail in Wales and Scotland

- What will be the differences in Wales and Scotland – different arrangements/timescales for change etc?

Devolved responsibilities are not changing so responsibilities of devolved governments will remain as they are now. The exact detail of how this will work once GBR is set up is to be determined. The model for reform in Scotland is subject to discussions with Transport Scotland and in Wales we are seeking a joint-working agreement on services and infrastructure. The legislation that will set up GBR will be GB-wide, so we will be working to the same timescales in Scotland and Wales.

The future direction for community rail

- How can we use reform to ensure community rail's independence as a grassroots, community-based movement, is protected and enhanced?

Community rail partnerships can be assured that they are supported, and will continue to be so, as we go through the transformation. We look forward to working with them on the different aspects in the weeks and months ahead.

- Will the four pillars of the Community Rail Development Strategy still be the driving themes for all the work we do, or will GBR have new aims for community rail?

We do not anticipate any changes to the four pillars at this stage. Once set up and after a period of operation, GBR may look to reconsider new aims for community rail.