



Community rail: encouraging and enabling modal shift

Written by Rob Lawson
Edited by Jools Townsend



Sponsored by

Rail Delivery Group



Introduction

Empowering communities to travel through sustainable and healthy means, including a shift away from car use and more equitable access to transport, brings a range of benefits for local people, places, and our wider environment, and will be a necessity in combatting the climate emergency.

This report explores how community rail can support modal shift from private car use to rail, combined with other public transport, and active and shared travel. It highlights the importance of community-led activity in partnership with rail industry, government, and other partners.

It examines the importance of modal shift to transport decarbonisation and considers how rail is prioritising and contributing to sustainability. It also assesses the barriers and opportunities affecting modal shift, especially as we look to ‘build back better’ and greener from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the role community rail and community engagement plays. It also discusses how the movement can make an enhanced impact locally to support positive behaviour change, against a backdrop of rail reform.

The current context

Why is modal shift important?

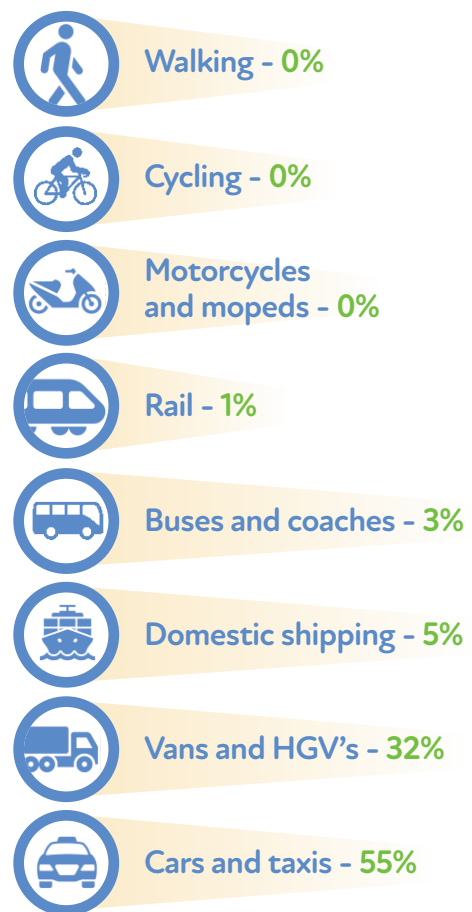
“Public transport and active travel will be the natural first choice for our daily activities.”¹
 Department for Transport

Via the Climate Change Act,² the UK has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 100% of 1990 levels, or net zero, by 2050, and recently announced the “world’s most ambitious climate change target” of a 78% cut in emissions by 2035.³

Transport has a huge role to play if these figures are to be achieved, as it is now the largest emitting sector in the UK, making up 27% of domestic emissions in 2019. While overall emissions have fallen by 44% since 1990, those from transport have plateaued and fallen by just 5%, compared to 66% from the energy supply sector, the second highest contributor.⁴ This is largely due to road transport emissions, which actually rose by 6% from 1990 to 2017.⁵

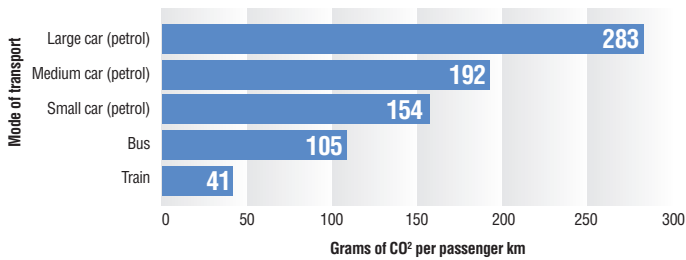
Provisional figures for 2020 carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions again show transport as the largest emitting sector in the UK, accounting for 29.8% of all emissions.⁶

Mode of travel and % of UK domestic transport emissions - 2019

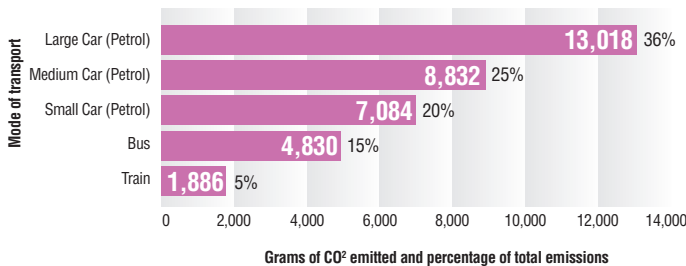


As part of its commitment to reducing emissions and decarbonising transport, the government has stated the need to enable modal shift and make greater use of public transport, shared and active travel. The railway has a critical role to play in this, with rail shown to produce some of the lowest greenhouse gas emissions by transport type.⁷

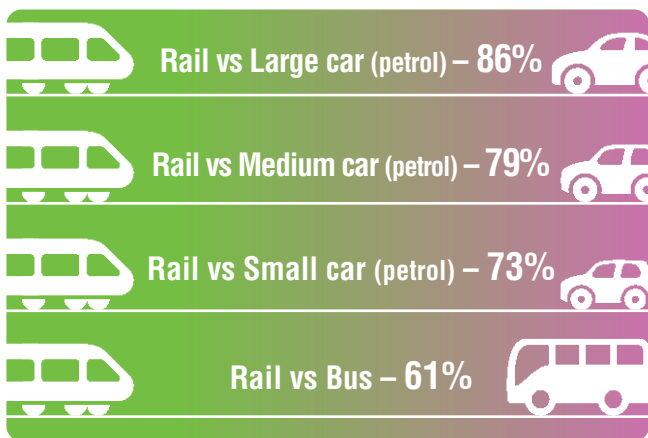
Carbon footprint of travel per passenger km



Carbon footprint of travel per passenger for an 'average' community rail journey - 46km (total of 35,650g of CO₂)



% savings of CO₂ emissions when using rail for distance of 'average' community rail journey (46km) compared to other travel modes



N.B. Comparative figures devised using <https://ourworldindata.org/travel-carbon-footprint#licence>. 'Average' community rail journey distance calculated by taking the total km of community rail lines in Britain and dividing it by the number of lines. An average journey is deemed to be a full one-way trip on the average line length – 46km.

The Department for Transport's Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), expected to be published in Summer 2021, is due to set out what government and society will need to do to deliver the significant emissions reduction needed across all transport, putting the UK on a pathway to net zero transport by 2050. Modal shift away from private car use will be key, as reflected in the strategic priorities of the TDP's pre-cursor, **Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge**.⁸ This report emphasises the need to accelerate modal shift and highlights the importance of place-based solutions to achieving local impact.

Two of the six strategic priorities for the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, to deliver a vision of a net zero transport system:⁹



Accelerating modal shift to public and active transport

- Help make public transport and active travel the natural first choice for daily activities
- Support fewer car trips through a coherent, convenient and cost-effective public network; and explore how we might use cars differently in future
- Encourage cycling and walking for short journeys
- Explore how to best support the behaviour change required



Place-based solutions

- Consider where, how and why emissions occur in specific locations
- Acknowledge a single solution will not be appropriate
- Address emissions at a local level through local management of transport solutions
- Target support for local areas, considering regional diversity and different solutions

“Decarbonisation of transport will not happen without users changing their behaviours. It is essential we continue to explore how best to encourage a shift to more sustainable and active travel and the adoption of zero carbon technologies and services to achieve a smooth transition to net zero transport.”¹⁰

Department for Transport

In Scotland, Transport Scotland has outlined its route to reaching net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 via the **Rail Services Decarbonisation Action Plan**,¹¹ which highlights the importance of modal shift to rail from private vehicles to not only reduce emissions, but also to unlock wider operational, societal, environmental, and economic benefits. Scotland's new **National Transport Strategy**, published in 2020, also has climate action as one of its four key pillars.¹²

In Wales, one of the key priorities in the Welsh government's new transport strategy, **Llwybr Newydd**,¹³ is to encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport. Modal shift is stated as being "at the heart" of the strategy, and the main component for achieving a target of 45% of journeys to be made by public transport, walking, and cycling by 2040.

The UK government has also committed to facilitating integrated sustainable travel and a modal shift away from private car use via:

- The National Bus Strategy for England, **Bus Back Better**,¹⁴ which states that more bus routes should serve railway stations, and that "stations should be hubs for connecting services with high quality stops close to station entrances." It also highlights the need for multi-modal, multi-operator planning and ticketing to allow a smoother transition between rail and bus, and greater integration between rail and bus service timings, offering greater flexibility and value for money for passengers.
- The vision for cycling and walking, **Gear Change**,¹⁵ which complements £2 billion in funding for cycling and walking, with promised investment for safer cycle routes to railway stations and more safe cycle storage. It aims to shift half of all future journeys in towns and cities, such as short trips of five miles or less, from cars to walking and cycling.

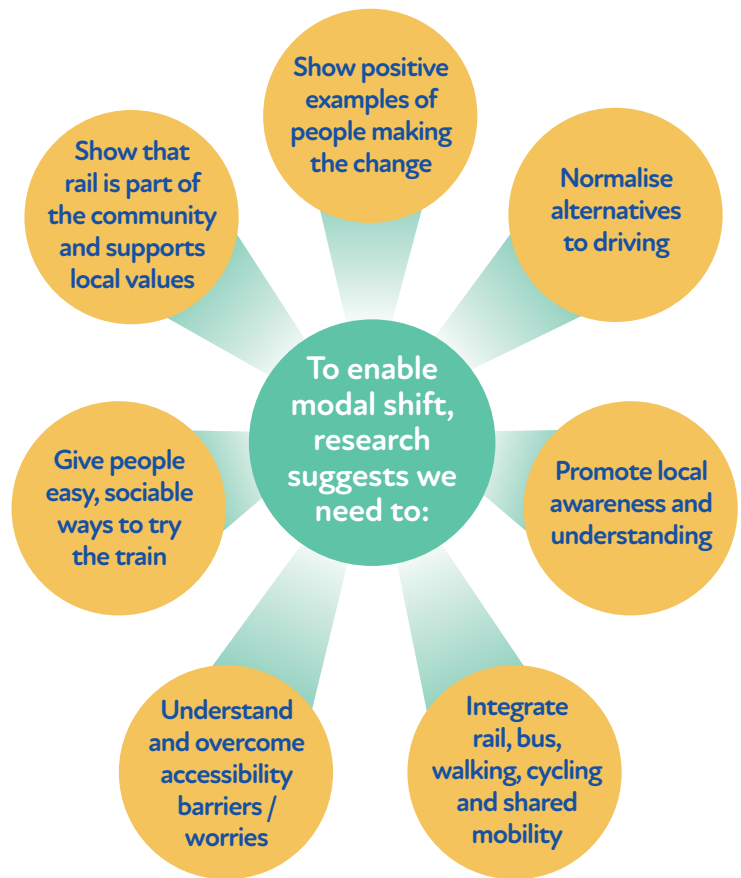
How is the rail industry encouraging and enabling modal shift?

As the provider of a green and sustainable option, rail has the potential to make a significant contribution to reducing the overall carbon footprint for transport. Across the rail industry, there is an increasing focus on environmental sustainability and creating a lower carbon transport system. These commitments, and specifically a modal shift to rail, are reflected through:

- Department for Transport – The White Paper '**Great British Railways: The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail**'¹⁶ states the government's ambition to use rail to spearhead the nation's ambition to become a world leader in sustainable transport. It highlights decarbonisation as a key element in ensuring rail is the "backbone of a cleaner, greener public transport network", and how modal shift from road to rail, supported by integration and connectivity between travel modes, is vital to support a green recovery. Modal shift is also expected to be a key priority in the Department for Transport's forthcoming Transport Decarbonisation Plan.
- Rail Decarbonisation Taskforce – This cross-rail industry group has identified the shift of passenger and freight from more carbon intense transport modes to rail as a major target.¹⁷
- RSSB – RSSB's Rail Sustainable Development Principles recognise that rail needs to enable and provide end-to-end journeys and be in reach of people to be sustainable. It is now developing a Sustainable Rail Strategy to embed sustainable development principles into the rail industry.
- Rail Delivery Group (RDG) – Via its new '**Sustainable Stations**'¹⁸ guide for industry, RDG emphasises how modal shift can be encouraged via community engagement, inclusive station design, cross-modal collaboration, and the development of stations as integrated transport hubs. RDG is also pushing for reforms in fares and ticketing to help give people affordable and convenient alternatives to car use.

- Network Rail – In its **Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2020 – 2050**,¹⁹ Network Rail outlines its vision to put passengers first and allow them to make “green choices.” It also states a commitment to engaging with communities to foster innovation and collaboration to deliver sustainability improvements for the railway.
- Train operators – Train operators are working in various ways to encourage modal shift, especially by highlighting the green credentials of rail and decarbonisation. Transport for Wales has created a sustainable development plan to complement Welsh Government decarbonisation targets and put rail at the centre of a high quality, safe, integrated, affordable and accessible transport network.²⁰ Others have started to promote sustainability achievements to the public, such as Greater Anglia, which published its first annual Environment and Energy Report in 2020,²¹ showcasing an 11% decrease in carbon emissions from the previous year. To highlight the importance of community engagement in sustainable development, Avanti West Coast has ‘improving life in our communities’ as one of the four pillars of its sustainability plan,²² while East Midlands Railway has working with communities as a key commitment in its policy to improve environmental performance.²³

Research insights into modal shift:



I. Combining ‘normalising’ communications with practical improvements

A wide-ranging review of existing evidence by NatCen on behalf of the Department for Transport considered the effectiveness of interventions encouraging people to switch from cars to more sustainable modes.²⁴ This found that encouraging people to monitor their transport behaviours against social norms was most effective in sustaining active and public transport use. This resonates with wide-ranging studies indicating that social norms are important in guiding choices and habits.²⁵ It suggests that normalising sustainable travel and the use of public transport as a natural way to get around is key. The evidence also found that providing stories of successful instances of modal shift resonated with people and helped to encourage and embed long-term change.



However, alongside communications that normalise public transport and show examples of others making the change, practicalities are crucial too. To enable a switch from car to public transport, findings suggested that, unsurprisingly, this needed to be more cost effective and convenient, issues that have been highlighted as the main reasons people choose car use over rail.²⁶ Public transport options were also most effective when well-integrated with other modes, highly visible and accessible to potential users, and understood by local people. The most successful interventions were those that focused on short and simple journeys and allowed users to try out the sustainable options first, e.g. supported cycling projects.

II. Recruiting people socially

Social practice theory argues that people cannot be ‘persuaded’ to adopt different behaviours, but need to be ‘recruited’ within their social contexts. This suggests that communications and practical improvements should be combined with interactive engagement that assimilates sustainable transport with local needs, lifestyles, and identities.²⁷ For example, local events, try the train activities and creative projects that bring people together, and celebrate local histories, culture, and landscapes, showing the railways’ place in that, may be powerful ways for community rail to encourage wider rail use. These sorts of activities can enable people to learn and experience together – as family groups, or classes, or groups of volunteers – the advantages, convenience, and pleasures of train travel.

Resonating with this idea, COVID-19 has illustrated how behaviours can change quickly, but for these to become embedded, it requires a ‘social mandate’, so changes become accepted and habitual in the longer-term.²⁸



III. ‘Place-based’ approaches

One of the key themes in research around modal shift is considering local contexts, putting local needs at the heart of any project or development, and involving communities in the process of change.²⁹ This involvement must be meaningful and sustained if interventions are to have long-term impact.³⁰

The Department for Transport’s transport decarbonisation call for evidence had as one of its priorities ‘place-based solutions’, recognising that, whilst decarbonisation of transport has to happen everywhere, it will be enacted in places. Place-based approaches are seen to have the potential to engage communities and businesses in building the vision of the neighbourhoods, towns, cities, and villages they want to live in,³¹ including transport networks. This will be crucial in attempting to achieve the transitions needed to move away from strongly embedded behaviour, such as car use.

IV. Listening, empowering, and enabling

Research across disciplines points to localised, community-driven activity as being important, if not vital, to achieving action on the climate emergency and sustainable behaviours. Localised approaches and interactive engagement can support people to make change together, and many studies have proposed that community empowerment naturally produces more sustainable forms of development.³² Engagement can build a sense of identity and belonging³³ around transport modes other than cars, promoting them in ways that are engaging, relatable and empowering, connected to local realities and identities.³⁴

Experience within community rail shows that by empowering and enabling communities to engage with, influence and lead change on transport, we can identify and break down barriers, and mobilise local people behind the changes needed.³⁵ Engagement enables us to talk to and hear from local people, to better understand practical barriers and misgivings they may

have about rail specifically or non-car-based travel generally, and to work with the community and our railway, transport, and local authority partners to break these down. Community rail shows how grassroots approaches can help to stimulate a sense of local ownership and momentum around the process of change that cannot be created from the top-down, so there is no need to try to ‘persuade’ people to change their behaviours. It becomes instead a case of community members making things better for themselves and their future collectively, with sustainable transport behaviours and people’s sense of local pride, identity and aspiration becoming inextricably linked.

Current opportunities to ‘build back better’ and greener:

The COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on the use of rail and public transport in the UK. Following the first lockdown in March 2020, rail usage fell to just 4% of pre-COVID levels at its lowest point that year, rising to a high of only 43%. At one point in April 2020, car use fell to 22% of pre-COVID levels, but by mid-May 2021 had risen to 88% compared to rail’s 36%.³⁶ These figures suggest that the pandemic has impacted negatively on alternatives to private car use, at least temporarily, risking a longer-term reversion towards a car-based system and undermining efforts towards modal shift and decarbonisation.³⁷

Despite this, surveys suggest that the proportion of people who intend to use public transport once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted is similar to the proportion who used it before the pandemic, although the overall number of trips they expect to make may be reduced.³⁸ There was also a marked rise in active travel through the pandemic, with significant increases in walking (39%) and cycling (38%), with 94% stating it was likely that would continue to cycle and walk more once travel restrictions eased.³⁹

There appears little doubt that the impacts of COVID-19 will change travel patterns for the foreseeable future, with an expectation of more flexible working patterns and therefore reduced commuting.⁴⁰ At the same time, reduced foreign travel opportunities mean increased appetite for domestic tourism and leisure. For rail, this is likely to mean a greater focus on the leisure market.⁴¹ Clearly, the railways must evolve to suit new ways of working and living, and offer a genuine, attractive alternative to private car use, especially for leisure journeys, as recognised in the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail.⁴²

This can be seen as an opportunity, necessity, and challenge. There is a need to seize on the positive elements of travel behaviour change caused by COVID-19, and the glimpses we have all been given of quieter, less polluted communities with less traffic.



Further reading: Communicating and highlighting the value of sustainable transport

Our report on ‘**Communicating Community Rail**’ explores what academic research tells us about how community rail can encourage sustainable transport behaviours through effective communications.

Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel is also one of the themes of our ‘**Value of Community Rail**’ report, highlighting the positive impacts of work in this area.



We also need to rebuild public confidence around public transport, with reassurances that it is not only safe, but a responsible choice in terms of social and environmental sustainability, and one that complements many people’s newfound appreciation for their localities and communities. It is acknowledged by many that while the pandemic has offered the opportunity for a true ‘moment of change’, ‘building back better’ also needs to be ‘building back differently’,⁴³ with sustainability and social equity at the forefront.

We know community rail can support this approach, given its place within communities, its ability to bring together local people and partners, to align with local values, and create pride and positivity. Community rail has a solid track record in promoting and widening use of rail as a sustainable, healthy, inclusive, and sociable form of travel, with a raft of qualitative evidence showing its success, and passenger data showing greater use of lines with community rail partnerships.⁴⁴ Currently, community rail is strongly focused on how this type of work can contribute to COVID recovery,⁴⁵ aligning with wider third sector initiatives such as the Campaign for Better Transport’s ‘**The Way Forward**’ campaign,⁴⁶ a drive to get people back on board with public transport.



How important is community-level activity to enabling and encouraging modal shift?

“There is an opportunity for community groups to support local decision makers by putting forward solutions and building a shared understanding of the role sustainable transport can play in delivering on the climate agenda, and the challenges and opportunities involved.”

Greener Transport Solutions

“Community-led engagement will be absolutely critical if change is to be sustained over time. Local groups can identify and co-produce projects at a neighbourhood level, based on their intimate knowledge of the environment.”

Living Streets

“Public transport needs to be regular, reliable, and accessible if we are to ‘build back better’ and encourage modal shift. Only the people who live, work, and visit a community can provide insight into local public transport, and only through community engagement will we be able to deliver the transport systems people need and want.”

Bus Users

“Most local authorities still see community engagement as just the usual consultation processes once a plan is in place, not involvement in co-design and planning. There is definitely a role there for community groups, to have a voice in protecting and improving local services.”

Campaign for Better Transport

“Governments often see community-led solutions as peripheral and eccentric exceptions to the rule. This can mean it is less open-minded about what innovation is and where it may be found and tested. Given the nature of the outcomes sought, there needs to be a relentless focus on creating social value through our transport network, which tends to come more from community-led services.”

Community Transport Association

If communities are successfully engaged in the process of change, it can help to build a sense of identity and belonging⁴⁷ around certain transport modes, promoting them in ways that are engaging and relatable, connected to local realities and identities.⁴⁸

Community groups and partnerships, local councils and volunteers are well-placed to know, or to find out, what makes their communities ‘tick’ in terms of transport, e.g. What people want/need, opportunities for further or extended use of public transport and/or active travel, and specific local factors and barriers.

Developing this local understanding, through two-way communications, dialogue, listening, testing and ongoing engagement events and projects, means that:

- Effective and efficient place-based solutions can be developed that are well-suited to local transport challenges, and which gain high profile, buy-in and understanding in the community;
- A sense of efficacy, pride and togetherness is created through the engagement activities (and feedback that the community is being heard and succeeding in making change), aligning sustainable transport with local values and identities.

Delivering maximum benefit for communities is a priority for all community rail partnerships and groups, who are naturally driven by needs, aspirations, and opportunities within their localities.⁴⁹ The movement is an asset that communities appear proud to have and are keen to support, as shown by the strength of volunteering.

When devising place-based solutions, it seems vital, and hugely valuable, to harness this community goodwill, knowledge, and experience within community rail and the wider community sector to ensure that sustainable transport solutions are workable for, and attractive and known to, local communities. Embracing local knowledge should enable transport strategies, services, and infrastructure improvements to be inclusive, appropriate to local needs, and most likely to spark behavioural change.

In addition, bringing people and partners together at local level is vital for creating better connectivity across transport modes and alignment between transport, planning and local development. The government’s **Williams-Shapps White Paper**⁵⁰ and active travel vision both acknowledge the importance of improved integration between modes, and being attentive to local needs and contexts. This requires joined-up working between partners including bus and train operators, local authorities, community transport providers, local businesses, developers, and community groups, and community rail can play a crucial role in getting these parties round a table.

Opportunities and challenges in community rail

Community Rail Network is actively supporting its members, and working with wider partners, to help achieve effective local progress on sustainable and healthy travel, a key pillar of the **Community Rail Development Strategy**.⁵¹

We know that our members are active and proactive in this area, and express ambitions to do more. There is a widespread, keen awareness that rail does not work in isolation, and work is needed to better connect rail with buses, active travel, community transport, and shared mobility schemes, to ensure rail is accessible and appealing for all, as a cornerstone of a coherent sustainable transport network.



Challenges: what issues does community rail come up against in progressing integrated sustainable travel?

Research with our members has identified potential issues that can hinder locally-led progress on integrated sustainable travel, including:

- Priorities and perceptions – e.g. the failure to prioritise public transport and active travel over private car use; siloed thinking within transport modes that restricts opportunities for rail/bus/community transport/shared travel/active travel to work together; problems achieving space and priority for active travel; difficulties in challenging the ‘driving is a necessity’ mentality;
- Bureaucratic barriers – e.g. barriers to bus/train operators working together and developing timetable coordination; problems achieving permissions for small and simple improvements such as wayfinding signage; depleted resourcing within local authority transport or active travel teams leading to a lack of responsiveness, progress, or decision-making;
- Lack of coordination and operational integration – e.g. the lack of a coordinating force and difficulties bringing multiple partners with different interests together to collaborate effectively; limited data/understanding related to multi-modal journeys and journey planning; a lack of availability of smart/combined ticketing and pricing.

Despite challenges and complexities, community rail groups are determined to make real impact in modal shift and integration, and the current climate offers opportunities for this. In our consultation response to **Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge**,⁵² we made four broad recommendations:

- Ensure a sharp focus and positive messaging on ‘making active travel and public transport the natural first choice’, as the key to decarbonisation and extensive co-benefits;
- Recognise and prioritise the role of communities and community-led change in achieving a more sustainable and inclusive transport future;
- Set out how public transport and active travel will be integrated and developed as a coherent, aspirational, affordable transport system;
- Commit to going ‘further, faster’, to support a green and fair recovery from COVID-19 and show global leadership on climate transition.

Fitting with those recommendations and the momentum building around the forthcoming Transport Decarbonisation Plan, we have identified potential opportunities for community rail to nurture community-led change to achieve sustainable transport behaviours at a local level, in a post-COVID-19 context.

Prioritising and positioning public transport and active travel:

- Community rail has the ability to demonstrate local leadership on how public transport and active travel should always be prioritised strategically to make a major difference on sustainability and modal shift, including overtly acknowledging the need to significantly reduce private car use. With support from governments and authorities, those within community rail can help to ensure that public, community, shared and active transport and travel are positioned positively as the aspirational modes of the future, by providing consistent messaging that emphasises the huge range of benefits to this, to health, wellbeing, society, inclusion, COVID-19 recovery, and ‘building back better’.



Tapping into heightened interest in community, localities, and tangible sustainability benefits, e.g. less traffic, more active travel:

- Community rail can tap into the heightened enthusiasm for and uptake of walking and cycling, and recognition of the benefits of less traffic where we live. It can nurture the sense of community, heightened attention to local vicinities, and the idea of communities and volunteers pulling together. This may encourage more volunteers, community groups and partners to engage with sustainable transport and the community rail movement.

Harmonising public transport and active travel development and delivery:

- Community rail can bring together parties and interests across modes to assess what is needed to harmonise buses, rail, community transport, shared travel, and active travel, to ensure that operators and authorities always collaborate. It has a role to play in promoting and maximising modal integration and reform, and can also influence the range of government-supported improvements being made by local authorities to public transport and active travel, ensuring they are considered holistically and joined up with rail.

Encouraging responsiveness among transport operators and authorities, ensuring communities are listened to and have a voice:

- As the transport sector adjusts to new travel patterns, and with new government strategies on sustainable transport, it's essential that community members, local groups and partners can feed in ideas, views, and opportunities, which may otherwise be overlooked, and that these contributions are valued and utilised to ensure development is suited to local needs. Many emerging national and regional transport strategies, such as the **Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail** and the **Welsh Transport Strategy**, place an emphasis on local engagement and responsiveness: something that community rail can leverage off and take advantage of.



How is community rail encouraging and enabling modal shift?

Community rail has a critical part to play in supporting modal shift, and much activity is already taking place across Britain to promote rail as part of everyday sustainable and healthy travel. ‘**Connected Stations**’,⁵³ our guide to community-led station travel planning linking rail with sustainable transport, contained several examples of community rail linking with walking, cycling, public/community transport, and shared travel. It also featured expert insights from a range of national charities and organisations involved in sustainable transport.⁵⁴

Examples of the types of community-led activity to promote sustainable travel that have proved successful within community rail are outlined in the next section, alongside recent case studies.

How is community rail encouraging modal shift?



Partnership working

- Bringing partners together to maximise resources and expertise
- Using local knowledge/insights to inform sustainable transport improvements
- Working with or learning from other community rail partnerships and groups



Modal integration

- Delivering projects with partners to achieve integrated journeys and ticketing
- Building the case for changes and acting as a 'broker' between different stakeholders
- Spearheading improvements at/around stations to create multi-modal travel hubs



Active travel

- Creating materials to promote activities/provide information, e.g. walking/cycling routes
- Promoting the benefits in terms of physical and mental wellbeing
- Offering support, e.g. cycle training, for those looking to incorporate active travel into multi-modal journeys



Community engagement

- Reaching out to a broad spectrum of local people and community groups
- Using a range of engagement and data collection techniques, e.g. to understand local views, barriers and travel patterns
- Ensuring proactive, ongoing collaboration/engagement at all stages of planning and delivery



Youth engagement

- Delivering confidence-building programmes with young people facing barriers to travel
- Creating projects that develop young people's life skills and creativity
- Harnessing young people's passion for the environment and sustainable behaviours



Communications, promotions, and events

- Giving adults/children the chance to try the train and sustainable travel
- Running projects/community events that bring people into stations or onto trains for fun, sociable, or creative activities
- Promoting the benefits of rail travel via positive messaging and communications campaigns

I. Partnership working:

Projects to support modal shift should be shaped, defined, and delivered locally, according to local needs and circumstances. Community rail groups are ideally placed to lead on, or be a significant partner in, such projects as they are rooted in the communities they serve and are likely to have a grasp of local contacts and networks.

We have seen evidence of community rail bringing partners together to support healthy and sustainable travel via projects such as the creation of station travel plans. For example, community rail partnerships like Marston Vale have been integral in bringing partners together to create plans for each station on its line to complement the ‘Stations as Places’ concept adopted by the West Midlands Rail Executive, designed to improve station environments and encourage rail use.

We have also seen community rail groups work in partnership to support wider sustainability improvements, e.g. Community Rail Cumbria’s valued **input** into Local Cycle & Walking Infrastructure Plans,⁵⁵ and Gloucestershire CRP’s guide on how rail and other sustainable transport options can, and should, be included in the developmental planning process.⁵⁶

As those across the rail industry sharpen their focus on leisure travel, we have also seen community rail groups working in partnership with each other, and the relevant train operator(s) to deliver joint promotional campaigns, such as Greater Anglia’s **‘Room with a View’** project,⁵⁷ and **‘Countryside, Capital, and Coast’** by community rail partnerships in South East England.⁵⁸

CASE STUDY: Wales on Rails

This project promotes tourism by using rail and other forms of public transport throughout Wales, encouraging safe, sustainable, and scenic adventures. It involves all the Welsh community rail partnerships, and Great Little Trains Limited, whose members include many of Wales’ heritage and narrow-gauge railways. A website offers images and storytelling to attract travellers to each line/route, with information provided on topics including awesome adventure, fantastic food, gorgeous gardens, heroic heritage, and obtainable outdoors. The project will be launched in Summer 2021, helping to promote leisure travel and ‘staycations’ by train and bring people back to rail.



“ Working closely with the CRPs has avoided any duplication of websites and collectively we have a better product and offering for ‘all Wales’. It is vital to showcase scenic routes and attractions together to make Wales irresistible to tourists and provide practical support on routes and public travel options.”

Jo Quinney, Great Little Trains of Wales, and Wales on Rails project manager.

CASE STUDY: The Waterside Wanderer

Waterside Wanderer

Getting to Hythe and the Waterside area by public transport just got easier...

Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership, South Western Railway, Bluestar buses, Unilink buses and Hythe Ferry have joined together to bring you a new, multi-modal ticket for a great day out!

With the Waterside Wanderer you can travel around and explore all day.

Your 'Waterside Wanderer' Day Rover ticket includes:

- Unlimited** rail travel within the ticket zone after 0900 Mon-Fri, anytime weekends and Public Holidays
 - South Western Railway trains
 - Romsey-Southampton-Chandler's Ford service (Calling at all stations). Daily every 60 mins.
 - Bursledon-Netley-Southampton service (Calling at all stations). Daily every 60 mins.
 - Winchester-Southampton service: Daily, frequent GWR trains.
 - Romsey-Southampton service. Daily every 60 mins.
- Unlimited** travel on any Bluestar 8 or 9 bus
 - Bluestar 8 buses: Southampton Central station-Hythe-Calshot Mon-Sat every 60 mins daytime. Sunday 4 journeys to Hythe (See Bluestar 9 for Calshot on Sunday). Bluestar 9 buses.
 - Southampton Central station-Hythe-Langley/Fawley Mon-Sat every 20 mins daytime, and every 60 mins evenings. Sunday every 30 mins daytime to Hythe, and every 60 mins evenings. Extends every 60 mins to Lepe/Calshot Surs 9 Public Hubs.
- One return journey on the Quayconnect shuttle bus
 - Southampton Central station-Town Quay (for Hythe Ferry) Daily up to every 30 mins daytime.
- One journey on the Unilink U1C (NOCS) bus
 - Southampton Central station-Town Quay (for Hythe Ferry) Daily up to every 15 mins daytime.
- One journey on the Unilink U1A (Airport) bus
 - Town Quay-Southampton Central station Daily up to every 15 mins daytime.
- One return journey on the Hythe Ferry
 - Southampton Town Quay-Hythe Pier head Daily up to every 30 mins. Crossing time approx. 10 mins.
- One return journey on the Hythe Pier Railway
 - Hythe Ferry Terminal - Hythe Pier head Daily up to every 30 mins.

To encourage people back to rail and support local leisure travel via public transport, the Three Rivers CRP joined forces with bus and ferry partners to create the 'Waterside Wanderer', a multi-modal day ticket allowing passengers to explore the coastal areas around Southampton and Hythe. Due to its excellent relationship with all the stakeholders involved, the partnership was able to effectively coordinate the project and ensure a positive, collaborative approach.

While other multi-modal tickets have been available previously, this is the first to incorporate rail, bus, and ferry services, with operators receiving an agreed allocation of ticket revenue. As well as all modes benefitting from new business and passengers, the project – which launches in Summer 2021 – encourages sustainable travel and modal shift alongside supporting local businesses and economies.

“Community rail has been the glue that has brought it all together. The fact we are a well-established community rail partnership gave us the provenance and governance to do it, coupled with the fact we have very good relationships with all the stakeholders involved.

"The different operators, bus, train, ferry, are all in competition in a way, but by us bringing them all together, no-one has seen anyone as a threat. It's all new and additional business, and everyone benefits. Without the community rail partnership, none of this would have happened, so it is a real boost for us and something we want to shout loudly about.”

Nick Farthing, chair of Three Rivers CRP

II. Modal integration:

By better joining up rail with public/community/shared transport and active travel, community rail can make a positive difference towards encouraging modal shift and unlocking greater social, environmental, and economic value from our transport networks by enabling more people to travel who would otherwise have limited mobility, via entirely sustainable, healthy, and socially responsible means.



Further reading: Integrating rail with other forms of sustainable transport

Our ‘**Connected Stations**’ guide gives advice on, and examples of, community rail partnerships and groups working with public transport, community transport, and shared travel partners.

There are recent examples of community rail working with partners towards modal integration, such as through services being extended or revised to improve connectivity, improvements at stations, joint ticketing schemes, and multi-modal information provision online or at and around stations. For example, North Notts and Lincs CRP worked with local bus operators to improve bus/rail connections at stations, and various partnerships have successfully run ‘shuttle’ services to popular locations or to complement local events. There have been successful instances of integrated rail/bus ticketing, such as the **Saxmundham to Aldeburgh through ticket** coordinated by the East Suffolk Lines CRP,⁵⁹ and Southeast Communities CRP has held ‘bus surgeries’ at stations, strengthening relationships between bus and rail partners to work together on integrated timetabling and ticketing.

Alongside commercial bus operators, there are also examples of community rail partnerships and groups aligning with community transport providers to offer convenient door-to-door travel options. Gloucestershire CRP is currently exploring how it can potentially work with Lydney Dial-a-Ride, a community transport operator that serves Lydney Station and has modified its timetable to enhance bus-rail connections.

Stations are increasingly evolving to support end-to-end journeys, with greater emphasis placed on infrastructure and timetabling integrated with other travel modes with low emissions.⁶⁰ Such travel or mobility hubs,⁶¹ are designed to accommodate and promote multi-modal trips, offering seamless switches between different forms of transport, and accessible first and last mile connections. While such projects are a developmental area for community rail, travel hubs are starting to appear across the network, including new ones planned for Melksham and Haltwhistle stations.



Further reading: Stations as integrated transport hubs

- Rail Delivery Group’s **Sustainable Stations Guide**
- CoMo UK’s **Mobility Hubs Guidance**



CASE STUDY: Katch on-demand electric taxi-bus



To improve transport integration for people living in rural Suffolk, the East Suffolk Lines CRP is supporting ‘Katch’, a new electric taxi-bus service which links communities from Framlingham and Wickham Market with rail services at Wickham Market Station in Campsea Ashe. The partnership has helped to fund the installation of electric vehicle charging points to allow Katch buses to serve the station, enabling multi-modal journeys. The vehicles are electric and use renewable energy sources, helping to cut carbon emissions and align with Suffolk County Council’s target of being carbon neutral by 2030. Led by the county council, the project also involves East Suffolk Council, the community rail partnership, Community Rail Network, Greater Anglia, CarsSmart, and local town and parish councils, who are all committed to growing the region’s passenger transport in a sustainable way. The new service, which passengers book in advance via app or phone, launched in May 2021 and will run as a trial for 12 months.

“ We were very keen to support the introduction of this service to make it easier for people to access train travel in a rural area. A combined journey using the train and Katch will help to cut emissions and pollution from car use in our countryside, and encourage people back to rail once restrictions are lifted. ”

Aaron Taffera, chair,
East Suffolk Lines CRP

CASE STUDY: Bolton to Rivington Bus Link



Despite being one of the most popular parks in the North, Rivington Country Park had no public transport access. The nearest bus stop is about two miles away, and the nearest railway stations around four miles. To combat this, South-East Lancashire CRP worked with partners to provide a Sunday and Bank Holiday service for Summer 2021. The route is an extension of an existing commercial service, the 575 Bolton – Horwich, operated by Diamond Bus North West, which starts at Bolton Interchange.

The partnership identified a real need for public transport access to the park through its local knowledge and engagement with local communities about inconsiderate parking in the area. Using their insights in terms of potential passenger demand, the partnership also engaged with local businesses, to get their views and support. Although in its infancy, there are signs that passenger numbers are growing, and the partnership has built strong foundations to potentially continue the project and embed modal shift from car to rail and bus.

“ The Rivington Bus is at an early stage of development but we are pleased with results so far. We have engaged with the local town council and businesses along the route who realise that the current levels of traffic are not sustainable and put people off coming to the park. We would very much like to keep the service running into the autumn and winter months if funding can be found, or – even better – if it becomes commercially viable. ”

Prof. Paul Salveson, chair of South-East Lancashire CRP

III. Active travel:

There are many reasons for encouraging people to make more journeys by walking or cycling. It improves health, physical and mental wellbeing, they are the cheapest, most environmentally friendly, and inclusive of all modes, and they are top of the ‘sustainable travel hierarchy’.⁶² Ensuring that people can get to and from stations on foot and by bike is key to them being encouraged to make longer, and more regular, multi-modal journeys involving rail.



Further reading: Promoting rail and active travel

Part four of our ‘**Connected Stations**’ guide gives advice on improving walking and cycling environments in and around stations, and working with partners to promote and deliver active travel schemes.



Many community rail groups are already involved in projects to enhance the ‘first and last mile’ of journeys, to ensure that walking and cycling routes to and from stations are safe, direct, and convenient. Some, such as South West Glasgow CRP and Tyne Valley CRP, have conducted walking and cycling audits to and from stations, looking to create environments conducive to supporting active travel. Community rail groups are also commonly involved in schemes to improve signage for walkers and cyclists, including the **Friends of Wool Station**, who erected new signs to let passengers know of the four cycle paths directly accessible from the site. Some stations now host active travel hubs, offering information, guidance, and training, including those at Kilmarnock and Pollokshaws West, and the redevelopment of Stow Station on the Borders Railway is set to include a cycle hub and bike share and storage scheme, in which local residents can use a small fleet of e-bikes for travel to and from the station, or for leisure activities.

Improved physical and mental health have been cited as the main reasons why people plan to keep up levels of active travel post-COVID-19,⁶³ and community rail

groups are increasingly promoting and delivering projects that are overtly health-orientated.

For example, Severnside CRP runs a successful ‘Healthy Walks from the Railway’ programme, Community Rail Lancashire is a key partner in the popular ‘**DalesRail**’ guided walks, and many other partnerships run guided walks or rides. In Scotland, South West Glasgow CRP works with local GPs to facilitate physical activity referrals, i.e. ‘social prescribing’, using rail to promote health and wellbeing.

Many community rail groups are also involved in promoting active travel as part of leisure travel and local days out, providing online information and leaflets on walking and cycling routes and onward travel to local attractions. For example, the Conwy Valley and North West Wales Coast CRP has a page on its website to assist travellers in creating their ‘**perfect walk**’ from the train, the ‘**Heart of Wales Trail**’ connects all stations along the Heart of Wales Line, and Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership runs the ‘**Great Scenic Railways**’ website, which promotes walks from different branch lines and themed trails to encourage people to explore the area by rail and on foot.

CASE STUDY: Cycle Back to Health from our Stations



The Surrey Hills to South Downs CRP devised the 'Cycle Back to Health from our Stations' project to improve cycle-rail integration, promote health and wellbeing, and encourage a shift to active travel. A key element of the plan is making positive use of station car parks, where space has opened up due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Working with South Western Railway, the partnership's plan is to use the spaces to run cycle confidence training and bike doctor maintenance sessions, supporting adults who might be nervous about cycling but want to lead more active lifestyles. As well as creating hubs for community activity, the plan is to develop a series of short cycling routes to and from local stations, and to run guided rides for small groups. The partnership is working with Surrey County Council, which delivers the Bikeability scheme locally, and also plans to train up a member of the local cycle forum to become the 'community rail bike leader' within the area.

“ It is a good use of redundant spaces, and it's bringing people back to the stations. It is encouraging health and wellbeing, both physical and mental, and supporting people who have been socially isolated during the pandemic, giving them a reason to go out. Under normal circumstances, these spaces wouldn't have been available, so we're trying to turn a negative into a positive. ”

Lucy Lomax, Surrey Hills to South Downs CRP

IV. Community engagement:

As discussed earlier, taking an engaging and empowering approach to working with local communities on sustainable transport aligns with a range of academic research. It also helps the transport sector to adapt and ready itself for the future, ensure innovations work on the ground, and show that it's caring and listening.

Community rail partnerships and groups are well-placed to lead on and/or influence community-led change designed to achieve beneficial behavioural shifts. They can bring together a broad, diverse spectrum of views to ensure that a wide cross-section of people are represented, enabling those communities to co-create place-based solutions and drive and own local progress. When communities are empowered to influence and drive the infrastructure and service changes that they need, these changes are not only more likely to work for local people, but there will be awareness and ownership from the outset that will help to ensure these improvements are utilised.

Community engagement techniques can include interactive workshops, participatory mapping, creative projects, youth-led campaigns, surveys and questionnaires, audits, and community meetings and events, as well as social media campaigns and discussions. All seek to gather and understand people's views as well as providing information, which enables people to interact, discuss, and develop ideas, plans and projects together.

To maintain meaningful levels of community engagement throughout station improvement schemes, Hereward CRP created simple and effective consultations and surveys online and by phone, encouraging community members who were less confident with or had limited access to technology to respond. This allowed greater numbers of people to contribute and ensured the station re-designs were community-led. Gloucestershire CRP also recently facilitated a public consultation as to how challenges related to COVID-19 had impacted travel behaviour locally, promoted via local authorities, community organisations, parish and town councils, and other local groups. The aim was to better understand people's future wants and needs regarding local travel, and the role the partnership could play.

Tyne Valley CRP demonstrated a creative approach to engagement via its 'Lyric & Line' project, which used music and song writing to bring out the views of three groups – a special school and two charities supporting adults with learning difficulties and isolation issues – on both the challenges they faced in using the train and the joys of rail travel. The findings allowed the partnership to set specific working objectives to reduce barriers to travel and continue to support the groups involved.

Further reading: Community engagement

Parts two and three of our 'Connected Stations' guide offer useful insights on planning, engagement, and data collection.



CASE STUDY: ‘Visioning’ meetings

LLANELLI TRAIN STATION SHARED VISION MEETING



JOIN THE ONLINE CONVERSATION ON EVENTBRITE

We’re inviting interested parties to join us to co-create a shared vision for the station and the surrounding communities, businesses and organisations.

What would you like to see there, what’s possible and how can we make it happen?

**THURSDAY 3RD DECEMBER 2020
12:00PM - 2:00PM VIA ZOOM**



To overcome COVID-19 restrictions, South West Wales Connected CRP, which was established during the pandemic in mid-2020, held a series of online ‘shared vision’ meetings, bringing interested parties together to co-create shared visions and action plans for stations and their surrounding communities, businesses, and organisations.

The community engagement meetings were hugely successful in generating themes and ideas that could be translated into key priorities and community action plans, seeking to maximise the role the railway can play in fulfilling the aims of the Welsh Government’s Well-Being of Future Generations Act. Having developed many potential project ideas, the partnership’s goal is to support the community in turning those ideas into workable initiatives, led by local people.

“ By connecting and encouraging collaboration among businesses and organisations in local communities, we can empower those communities to work better together on a whole range of social, economic, cultural and environmental issues. ”

Jennifer Barfoot, community rail partnership officer, South West Wales Connected

V. Youth engagement:

Youth engagement seems especially important for supporting the change we need to decarbonise transport and protect our climate: engaging people at a time in their lives where travel habits are forming and locking-in long-term benefits, by building early confidence and positivity about rail and other sustainable forms of travel.⁶⁴

The environment is an issue that many young people are passionate about, and increasingly, they are campaigning for change to safeguard their futures and the future of the planet.⁶⁵ If rail is to be part of the solution to averting the climate emergency, young people need to be enthused by and included in its development, and effectively engaged in how change such as modal shift is brought about.



Activities like these can help young people develop familiarity and positivity about sustainable transport, and a sense that this form of travel is the ‘norm’ and part of their identity, which, as stated earlier, research suggests may be key to encouraging sustainable transport behaviours.⁶⁶ Alongside providing an avenue for them to showcase their creativity and develop life skills, being involved in community rail appears to actively encourage people to use the railway. For example, the young people involved in 6VT, Britain’s only youth-led community rail partnership, design projects to help promote the railway to their peers, highlighting issues such as health and wellbeing, inclusiveness, and rail safety.

Community rail can offer young people the chance to showcase their passion for the environment and provide an opportunity to make a positive difference to sustainability in their local area, with groups such as the youth-led Friends of Bescot Station developing projects around environmental issues. As more stations are adopted by schools and colleges, giving pupils and students the chance to take part in gardening and arts and crafts activities, more young people are experiencing rail and being encouraged to use it, and to travel sustainably, as they grow older.



Further reading: Youth engagement and sustainable behaviour

‘**Looking to the future**’, our report exploring youth engagement in rail highlights the benefits of engagement to young people, community rail, and society.

Some community rail partnerships, and an increasing number of station groups and other rail partners, now work with young people to increase confidence in using the railways. For example, Community Rail Lancashire has engaged with thousands of children from more than 100 local schools via the ‘**Railway Confidence**’ and ‘**Passport to Safe Travel**’ schemes. Southeast Communities Rail Partnership has delivered workshops to more than 5,000 young people since 2015 via its ‘**Go Learn**’ project, which includes sustainable travel and healthy travel as topics for groups of year 6 primary school pupils. The partnership has also been a key partner in the ‘**Active Access for Growth**’ programme, a multi-agency project designed to encourage modal shift and rail and sustainable transport use. It delivered independent travel training to more than 200 young people to help break down travel barriers, with high (87%) satisfaction rates.

CASE STUDY: A Chance to Shine



Kent CRP and Sheppey College provide opportunities for students to get involved and lead on a range of community projects linked to the railway, from IT to landscaping, designed to showcase their talents in practical settings. To introduce them to the programme, hundreds of students - some of whom have often never travelled by rail before or even left the Isle of Sheppey - are taken on the train to stations on the SwaleRail Line. Alongside information on how to travel safely and independently, they are tasked with looking at issues at the stations and identifying improvements they feel could encourage further use, by young people and all sections of local communities. As well as contributing positively to their local communities, breaking down initial barriers to rail travel is vital for the students, as it helps to broaden horizons and ambitions for their own futures, widening professional and personal life choices and reducing feelings of isolation.

“
Some of our students are quite shy and timid, but this partnership promotes wider ambition, allowing them to venture a bit further. They can say, ‘I haven’t got to be restricted to this area, there’s a big world out there’. Having that confidence to be able to travel and look wider, it’s very important.”

Nicole Fitzpatrick, Sheppey College

VI. Communications, promotions, and events:

As stated earlier, research suggests that providing stories of successful instances of modal shift can resonate with people and help to encourage and embed long-term change. Community rail has the potential to create and support communications, promotions, and events that normalise rail travel, along with other sustainable travel modes, promote its healthy and green credentials, and highlight a wide range of positive effects.

Many community rail partnerships and groups run ‘Try the train’ trips and other projects that give people who may be marginalised from, or unfamiliar with, rail travel the chance to experience and embrace it. This often involves young people who have perhaps never been on a train before, who benefit from the natural excitement of a positive first experience. There is evidence to suggest that this interest and enthusiasm can be passed on to whole families, with attendance at events or involvement in projects prompting future leisure journeys by train rather than car.⁶⁷ Such events can also enable modal shift by demonstrating to groups of people who may not use rail that it is an accessible and inclusive option for them. For example, partnerships including Community Rail Lancashire and East Hampshire CRP have run trips for new parents and babies/toddlers, and Meldreth, Shepreth, and Foxton CRP have organised outings for groups with learning disabilities and autism, a youth befriending scheme, and young carers.

Community rail can also help to stimulate sustainable travel behaviour by delivering activities that attract people to stations and onto trains in fun, sociable, and creative ways. Arts and heritage projects, for example, can help to engage new audiences and excluded groups, increase pride and ownership in local railways and stations, and tap into powerful community identities.



Events and projects that emphasise the sociable nature of rail travel can help open up a range of opportunities for increased social mobility, alongside promoting the benefits of rail and other sustainable transport over car use. For example, Severnside CRP runs special events on trains, such as ‘Chatty Trains’ or ‘Games on a Train’, to introduce communities less familiar with using rail travel to their local services and stations, and Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership helped to host ‘CreativiTea Trains’, inter-generational tea parties held on the train to evoke memories of the railway, bring people together, and encourage rail use.

Many community rail partnerships and groups also promote the benefits of rail travel to sustainable tourism, hosting events and campaigns to encourage people to use local lines. A recent example was the Highland Mainline CRP’s ‘Highland Fling’, which saw the partnership visit Kings Cross Station in London for the ‘Community Rail in the City’ event, where volunteers spoke to more than 6,000 people about the heritage and history of the line and promoted leisure journeys to Scotland by rail.

 **Further reading: Community rail and social inclusion**

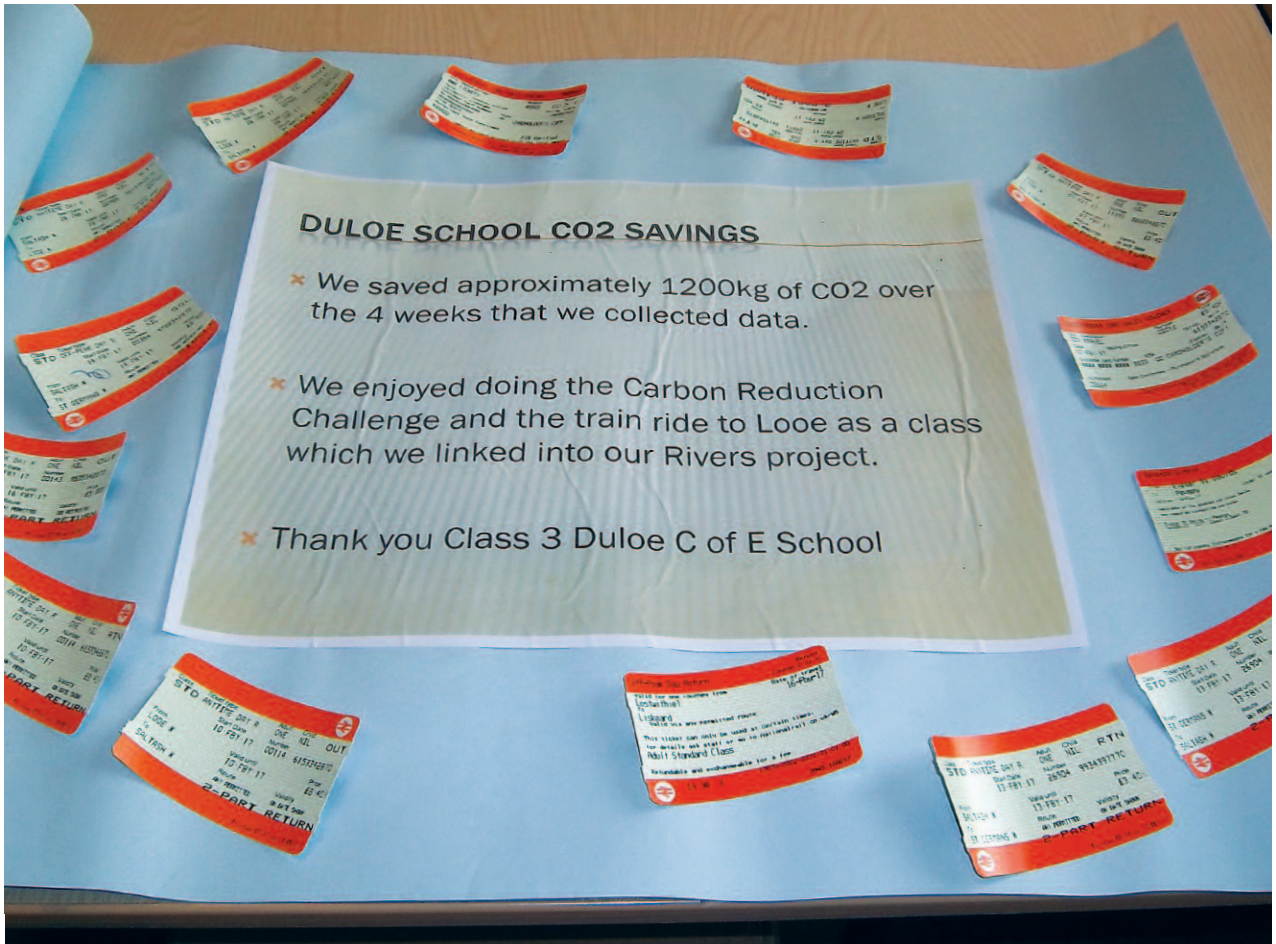
Our report on ‘Community rail and social inclusion’ highlights the importance of addressing and enhancing social inclusion through and in connection with our railways.

 **Further reading: Promoting community rail**

We have a range of guidance resources on marketing and communications and tourism, leisure, and heritage.

Our national/regional ‘Community Rail across Britain’ reports also contain examples of how community rail partnerships and groups are contributing to each area of the Community Rail Development Strategy, and how the movement is supporting a green recovery from the pandemic.

CASE STUDY: The Carbon Reduction Challenge



Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership devised ‘The Carbon Reduction Challenge’ as an inter-schools competition to encourage local families to swap car journeys for train journeys to reduce their carbon footprint. The idea behind the project was to promote rail travel in ways which would cut across numerous curriculum themes and encourage sustainable behaviour. The project mascot, Coco the Cat, urged pupils to get out and explore their local area by train and persuade their friends, family and teachers to do the same, with schools given free taster trips to engage them with their local lines.

Entries to the competition included posters warning of the dangers of climate change, video debates and question time sessions on the environment, a book, and a rap. The winning school, Duloe School, measured their carbon savings made over a month of swapping train journeys for car journeys and the final total was 1200kg or 1.2 tonnes of CO², which is the equivalent of driving to Scotland and back three times from Cornwall.

“

The children developed their skills of persuasion and negotiation, key curriculum targets for language and literacy, and through exploring the global concepts of climate and carbon reduction, they were given the opportunity to examine their own values and attitudes and understand the global context of their local lives.”

Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership

Recommendations:

In this report, we have considered the importance of modal shift to transport decarbonisation and how community rail can help to achieve the behavioural changes needed to combat the climate emergency. We have looked at opportunities emerging from the pandemic, and wider shifts in policy and public awareness, for community rail to significantly contribute to modal shift as part of building back greener and fairer.

If modal shift is to succeed, research suggests that 'place-based' approaches and community-led activity, engaging and empowering local people, as exemplified through community rail, will be key. We have identified a range of work taking place in community rail to bring partners together, engage local people, create modal alignment, and promote active travel specifically, but there is no doubt scope to extend this and increase impact.

The recommendations below suggest how this can be achieved and supported, by those within community rail, and across the rail industry and wider transport sector.

For community rail:

Think modal shift – Many community rail activities already align with research on modal shift, but we don't always recognise this as an outcome. Considering how modal shift can be enabled as part of existing initiatives, and monitoring this as a potential outcome, could increase our impact.

Share inspiring examples – When we succeed in helping people to make the change, it's powerful to share these examples (with permission) through communications to show what we're achieving together.

Normalise non-car use – Show local leadership on the need to reduce private car use, and help to build a sense that public transport, active travel and shared mobility is the 'natural' way to get around.

Hold up the benefits – Raise awareness of and reinforce the benefits to individuals, families and communities of sustainable travel: to do with health and wellbeing, reducing pollution, noise, congestion and danger, creating more inclusive communities, and doing our bit for the climate.

Get armed with the facts – Rail is already the greenest way to travel longer distances, and it's getting greener all the time. Use the stats in this report and from partners to show that rail is part of a sustainable future.

Go beyond the railway – To reach out to non/rare rail users, we need to get out there, and go to people where they are. Working with local charities, community groups, educational establishments and authorities is key.

Listen, enable, and empower – We need to break down barriers and address worries and unfamiliarity to enable more people to travel sustainably. This starts with listening, and showing how we're responding. Empowering people in this way can create a sense of momentum and ownership around developing local sustainable travel solutions.

Engage young people – Working with young people, drawing on their ideas, and empowering them to travel sustainably can be life-changing, and helps us all look to the future. (See '[Looking to the Future](#)').

Be clever with communications – We can use communications to promote our work, amplify key messages, and show the railway as part of the community and our shared future. (See '[Communicating Community Rail](#)').

Collaborate across modes and sectors – Bringing partners together is a key strength of community rail. To decarbonise transport, we need to work together across modes and sectors, and integrate rail, bus, walking, cycling, shared and community transport.

Keep up-to-date – Be aware of emerging developments and policies, locally and nationally, that you can align with and tap into, as work on transport decarbonisation ramps up. (See [our bulletin](#) as a starting point.)

For the rail industry and wider transport sector:

Seize the opportunity – Develop policies and communications to seize the opportunities for behaviour change provided by COVID-19.

Maximise community goodwill – Make use of and nurture the sense of community, new-found attention to our immediate local vicinities, the heightened interest in active travel and less traffic, and the idea of communities pulling together to make a positive difference on issues such as the environment and the climate emergency.

Recognise community rail – Ensure community rail partnerships and groups are included as meaningful partners in the design and implementation of modal shift projects, and respect and value their contributions.

Use community rail's knowledge and networks – Utilise the good will, knowledge, and experience of those involved in the movement. Working in partnership, and sharing ideas and information, is key to the success of sustainable travel schemes, and community rail is all about networks, bringing a range of partners together.

Develop integrated travel – Always be on the lookout for opportunities to collaborate across transport modes, linking rail with buses, walking, cycling, community and shared transport, to make stations into multi-modal mobility hubs that can act as beacons for sustainability locally.

Embrace new ideas – Maximise the role of rail, including community rail, in innovative projects that offer mobility as a service, or new technologies and approaches such as the use of e-bikes and e-scooters, or shared vehicle or multi-modal ticket schemes.

Prioritise community engagement – Recognise the importance and role of community engagement and community-level activity in stimulating and maintaining behaviour change onto sustainable travel modes.

Listen to communities – Ensure mechanisms are in place for listening and responding to communities and supporting them to spearhead positive change, going beyond existing passengers, working with community rail and other local partners.

Focus on leisure travel – Develop communications and initiatives to promote rail for both long-distance domestic tourism and for local leisure journeys, thereby supporting local businesses and economies. Work with community rail to help promote the 'love of the local'.

Reinvigorate public transport – Develop positive messaging around the use of rail and other forms of public transport, to rebuild confidence and positivity post-pandemic. Work to normalise public transport and active travel as safe, convenient, sociable, accessible, and inclusive, and the 'natural choice' and sustainable way forward.

Promote a sustainable transport future – Look for opportunities to help people access the railway through non-car-based means, in line with the sustainable travel hierarchy, and consistently emphasise the benefits of this, e.g. to health, wellbeing, inclusion, local economies, and to the environment and wider society.



End notes:

1. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf
2. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents>
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-enshrines-new-target-in-law-to-slash-emissions-by-78-by-2035>
4. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957687/2019_Final_emissions_statistics_one_page_summary.pdf
5. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/roadtransportandairmissions/2019-09-16>
6. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/972583/2020_Provisional_emissions_statistics_report.pdf
7. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/energy-and-environment-data-tables-env>
8. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf
9. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf
10. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf
11. <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47906/rail-services-decarbonisation-action-plan.pdf>
12. <https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/national-transport-strategy/national-transport-strategy-takes-climate-action/>
13. https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/llwybr-newydd-wales-transport-strategy-2021-full-strategy_0.pdf
14. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/980227/DfT-Bus-Back-Better-national-bus-strategy-for-England.pdf
15. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf
16. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/989810/gbr-williams-shapps-plan-for-rail.pdf
17. <https://www.rssb.co.uk/en/sustainability/decarbonisation/decarbonisation-our-final-report-to-the-rail-minister>
18. <https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/about-us/publications/12802-2021-04-sustainable-stations-best-practice-guide/file.html>
19. <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/NR-Environmental-Strategy-FINAL-web.pdf>
20. <https://tfwrail.wales/about-us/sustainable-development-plan>
21. https://www.greateranglia.co.uk/sites/default/files/assets/download_ct/20201202/6qGT683e_sAhyKd-qaOKr25zhVsoMfX6WqSg5-Wfs9o/greater_anglia_environment_energy_annual_report_2020.pdf
22. <https://www.avantwestcoast.co.uk/about-us/sustainability>
23. https://www.eastmidlandsrailway.co.uk/sites/default/files/assets/download_ct/20210129/HmabrCT8nNHL_cD9wr1HABQ6oJkDnSLsJz1KfBW5l/1136-emr_environmental_energy_policy_a4_1_v2.pdf
24. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/switching-to-sustainable-transport-a-rapid-evidence-assessment?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=3f96f245-b190-45d3-8365-8cddc780597a&utm_content=daily
25. Ibid; Reynolds, K.J. (2019) 'Social norms and how they impact behaviour', *Nature Human Behaviour* 3, 14–15, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-018-0498-x>
26. https://d3cez36w5wymxj.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/16120106/TF-Rail-passenger-priorities-July20_link.pdf
27. See Strengers, Y. and Maller, C. (eds.) *Social practices, intervention and sustainability: beyond behaviour change*; Shove, E. (2010) 'Beyond the ABC: climate change policy and theories of social change'. *Environment and Planning*, 42, pp.1,273-1,285.
28. <https://researchportal.bath.ac.uk/en/publications/building-a-social-mandate-for-climate-action-lessons-from-covid-1>
29. For example, see <https://decarbon8.org.uk/decarbon8-a-new-approach-to-place-based-decarbonisation/>
30. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/switching-to-sustainable-transport-a-rapid-evidence-assessment?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=3f96f245-b190-45d3-8365-8cddc780597a&utm_content=daily
31. https://decarbon8.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/59/2020/09/Submission_to_TDP_Consultation_DecarboN8.pdf
32. This is explored in our report, with reference to a range of academic sources: ACoRP, *Communicating Community Rail*, 2017, <https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Communicating-CommunityRail-researchreport-2017.pdf>
33. As social psychology research suggests is crucial in influencing behaviours: see Fiske, S.T. and Taylor, S.E. (2013) *Social Cognition*. Second edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.
34. Gammelgaard Ballantyne, A. (2016) 'Climate change communication: what can we learn from communication theory?'. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, no pagination; Jaspal R., Nerlich B., Cinnirella, M. (2014) 'Human Responses to Climate Change: Social Representation, Identity and Socio-psychological Action'. *Environmental Communication*, 8(1), pp.110–130; Wiest, S.L., Raymond, L., Clawson, R.A. (2015) 'Framing, partisan predispositions, and public opinion on climate change'. *Global Environmental Change*, 31(3).
35. ACoRP (2019) *Value of Community Rail*, <https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ACoRP-Value-of-Community-Rail-2019-final-for-web-141019.pdf>
36. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-use-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic>
37. Campaign for Better Transport (2021), 'The way forward: Revitalising public transport use post-pandemic.
38. <https://bettertransport.org.uk/media/12-apr-2021-survey-reveals-publics-travel-plans-post-covid>
39. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/924959/national-travel-attitudes-study-wave-4-provisional.pdf
40. <https://www.cbi.org.uk/media/6558/cbi-kpimg-greener-miles-2021.pdf>
41. https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/research-files/Covid_19_Recovery_Renewing_the_Transport_System.pdf
42. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/989810/gbr-williams-shapps-plan-for-rail.pdf
43. <https://www.creds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/covid-transport-report.pdf>
44. <https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ACoRP-Value-of-Community-Rail-2019-final-for-web-141019.pdf>
45. <https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CR-Network-Recovery-and-Renewal-Sept20.pdf>
46. <https://the-way-forward.org/>
47. As social psychology research suggests is crucial in influencing behaviours: see Fiske, S.T. and Taylor, S.E. (2013) *Social Cognition*. Second edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.
48. Gammelgaard Ballantyne, A. (2016) 'Climate change communication: what can we learn from communication theory?'. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, no pagination; Jaspal R., Nerlich B., Cinnirella, M. (2014) 'Human Responses to Climate Change: Social Representation, Identity and Socio-psychological Action'. *Environmental Communication*, 8(1), pp.110–130; Wiest, S.L., Raymond, L., Clawson, R.A. (2015) 'Framing, partisan predispositions, and public opinion on climate change'. *Global Environmental Change*, 31(3).
49. <https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ACoRP-Value-of-Community-Rail-2019-final-for-web-141019.pdf>
50. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/989810/gbr-williams-shapps-plan-for-rail.pdf
51. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-rail-development-strategy/connecting-communities-with-the-railways-the-community-rail-development-strategy>
52. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf
53. <https://communityrail.org.uk/resources-ideas/reports-resources-tools/station-resources/connected-stations-a-station-travel-planning-toolkit/>
54. <https://bususers.org.uk/supporting-communities-on-sustainable-and-inclusive-transport-and-travel/>
55. <https://communityrail.org.uk/community-rail-cumbria-walking/>
56. <https://www.gloucestershirecommunityrail.org/research-and-development>
57. <https://communityrail.org.uk/resources-ideas/case-studies/room-with-a-view/>
58. <https://www.scenicrailbritain.com/countrysidecapitalcoast>
59. <https://communityrail.org.uk/eslcrp-aldeburgh/>
60. <https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/about-us/publications/consultations/12606-2020-07-30-decarbonising-transport/file.html>
61. <https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Mobility-Hub-Guide-241019-final.pdf>
62. <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/active-travel/>
63. <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/news-and-blog/press-media/poll-reveals-why-brits-love-walking>
64. <https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Youth-engagement-report-final.pdf>
65. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-02696-0>
66. Jaspal R., Nerlich B., Cinnirella, M. (2014) 'Human Responses to Climate Change: Social Representation, Identity and Socio-psychological Action'. *Environmental Communication*, 8(1), pp.110–130 and Walker, G. (2015) 'Beyond individual responsibility: social practice, capabilities and the right to sustainable ways of living'.
67. <https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ACoRP-Value-of-Community-Rail-2019-final-for-web-141019.pdf>

Acknowledgments:

Particular thanks go to long-standing Community Rail Network partners the Rail Delivery Group for their sponsorship of this report and ongoing support of community rail. Thanks also go to the members of the **Sustainable Travel Alliance** for their contributions as expert consultees. Credit must also be given to the Community Rail Network members and partners who contributed to the report through case studies and examples.

About Community Rail Network:

Community Rail Network is dedicated to supporting community-based groups and partnerships that connect their community with their railway and deliver social benefit. Members can access operational support, training and development, written resources, networking opportunities, and advice on good practice within all aspects of community rail.



For further information, visit communityrail.org.uk.

About Rail Delivery Group:

The Rail Delivery Group (RDG) brings together the companies that run Britain's railway into a single team with one goal - to deliver a better railway for you and your community. RDG continues to work with Community Rail Network to further the case for community rail activity and support for it, as well as improving train operators' knowledge of how the community role can help them and the communities they serve through practical examples.

Rail Delivery Group



For information, see railandeliverygroup.com.



The Old Water Tower,
Huddersfield Railway Station,
St George's Square,
Huddersfield HD1 1JF

T 01484 481052

E info@communityrail.org.uk

W communityrail.org.uk