



## Railway 200 briefing sheet

### What is Railway 200?

As you may know, 2025 marks 200 years since the world's first passenger train set off along the Stockton and Darlington Railway, marking the birth of modern passenger train travel. So, it is certainly a time to celebrate!

Railway 200 will kick off in January 2025 and will run throughout the year with a packed programme of events, activities and promotions honouring this momentous landmark.

Railway 200 is more than a celebration of the past. It will leave a legacy beyond 2025 by supporting and enhancing the industry's efforts to close the skills gap by offering more opportunities for young people to learn about the wide variety of careers the industry has to offer.

### What is planned for 2025?

There are a range of flagship activities being considered which aim to inspire the next generation by celebrating rail's remarkable past, recognise its importance today and look forward to its future. Events will focus on 4 strategic themes:

- Innovation, technology and environment
- Education and skills
- Celebrating rail people
- Culture, heritage and tourism

Plans currently being developed include a mobile exhibition train, rail industry open days, commemorative merchandise range and partnerships with brands and cultural organisations.

The theme for [Community Rail Week](#) 2025, coordinated by Community Rail Network, will be centred around the Railway 200 celebrations.

### Who is involved?

Railway 200 is an industry-wide initiative being led by the Great British Railway's Transition Team and chaired by Sir Peter Hendy. Community Rail Network has been supporting the development of Railway 200, with a seat on the steering group since its conception in 2022. Other partners supporting the initiative include Network Rail, Stockton & Darlington Bicentenary Festival, Great British Railways Transition Team, National Skills Academy for Rail, Rail Delivery Group, Rail Forum, Young Rail Professionals, Heritage Railway Association and National Railway Museum.

Railway 200 is also working with partners from outside the industry to highlight the influence the railway has had on culture, art, and society.



## How can I get involved?

Railway 200 is inviting the rail industry, its partners and custodians of railway heritage, art and artefacts to consider how they can play their part. Community rail is ideally placed to get involved and promote local messages by springboarding off the national celebrations. This is a once-in-a-generation celebration that provides community rail an opportunity to be part of the national Railway 200 story and benefit from its legacy.

Now is an ideal time to consider how you can get involved and showcase the hard work and dedication of your partnership/volunteer group.

We've included some initial suggestions on what you can be doing now in advance of planning your events and activities for Railway 200:

- Speak to local partners and tell them about Railway 200 – is there something you could deliver together for a bigger impact?
- Talk to your train operator and discuss what opportunities are there to showcase your line
- Consider how you can promote the work you've already done and weave this into the celebrations of Railway 200
- Consider what you want to get out of the campaign – do you want to use it as a recruitment drive to gain more volunteers? Do you want to engage with more schools/colleges in the area? Are you looking to reach a bigger audience to promote travel along your lines/through your station?
- Discuss your ideas with us, we're happy to lend a hand to help you with your plans, speak to your usual [support and development team contact](#) or get in touch with our [comms team](#)
- Do you have any events or activities planned for 2025 already that could be slotted into the Railway 200 programme?

Railway 200 will be developing a branding toolkit that will include digital assets that community rail members will be able to use for their own local promotions.

## Where can I find out more?

We'll keep you updated as plans develop and will highlight further opportunities as they arise. In the meantime, if you'd like to discuss ideas of how you can get involved, please get in touch with our Comms team on [news@communityrail.org.uk](mailto:news@communityrail.org.uk)

You can visit the official Railway 200 [website here](#) which will be updated as plans progress over the next few months.

