

All change!

**Putting community
rail at the forefront
of transformation**

Jools Townsend
Chief executive



Where we were a year ago...

- Train operator budget cuts > almost all CRP core protected, but ongoing impacts
 - Ongoing rail industry financial squeeze, uncertainty for 2024-25
 - A need to diversify funds + build evidence
 - And negotiate through political change
 - Some CRPs achieving wider funds & demonstrating impact
 - Shift in focus for us, your umbrella body
- ... **But plenty to be positive about!**



South East Lancashire's Rivington Rambler



Photo courtesy of Daniel Graves & Heart of England CRP

Our changed/ing landscape

- **NATIONAL:** new govt, new parliament, mission-led, pace of change
- **REGIONAL/DEVOLVED NATIONS:** ongoing devolution, new Mayors, STBs, rail industry structure
- **LOCAL:** new MPs, reshaped councils, planning review, third sector confidence

Empowering communities =
a cross-cutting theme



Feel Good Field Trips, CRL & Avanti

New UK transport priorities

1. Improving performance on the railways and driving forward rail reform
2. Improving bus services and growing usage across the country
3. Transforming infrastructure to work for the whole country, promoting social mobility and tackling regional inequality
4. Delivering greener transport
5. Better integrating transport networks

Integrated transport strategy coming?

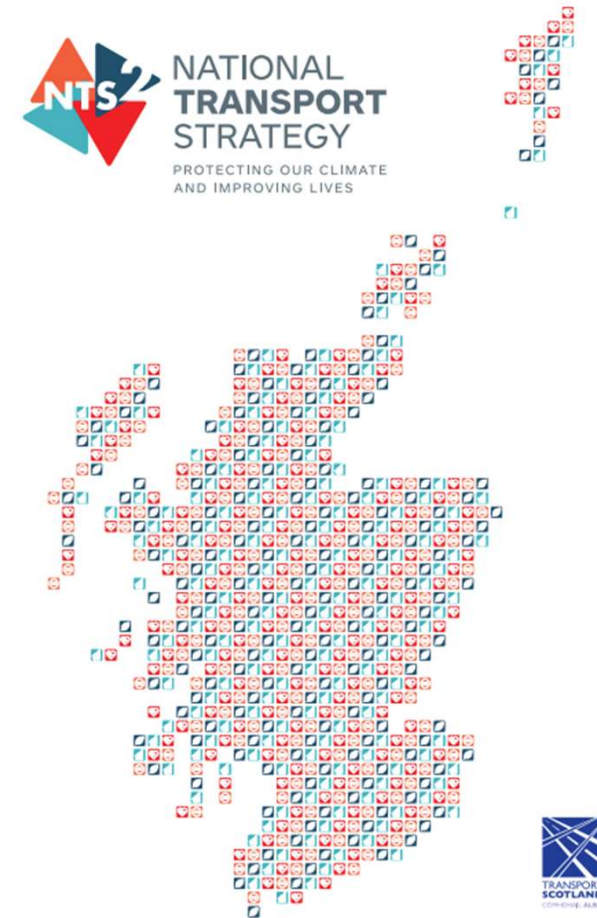


Kent CRP & Five Acre Wood



South East Lancs CRP & RHS Bridgewater

+ Welsh & Scottish strategies



+ And numerous regional strategies and plans



For example, in the West Midlands:



To establish our place in this new landscape, we need to be clear on:



- ❖ who we are
- ❖ what we offer
- ❖ what we need
- ❖ where we're going
- ❖ what more we can do



The Camberwell Society, Denmark Hill Station

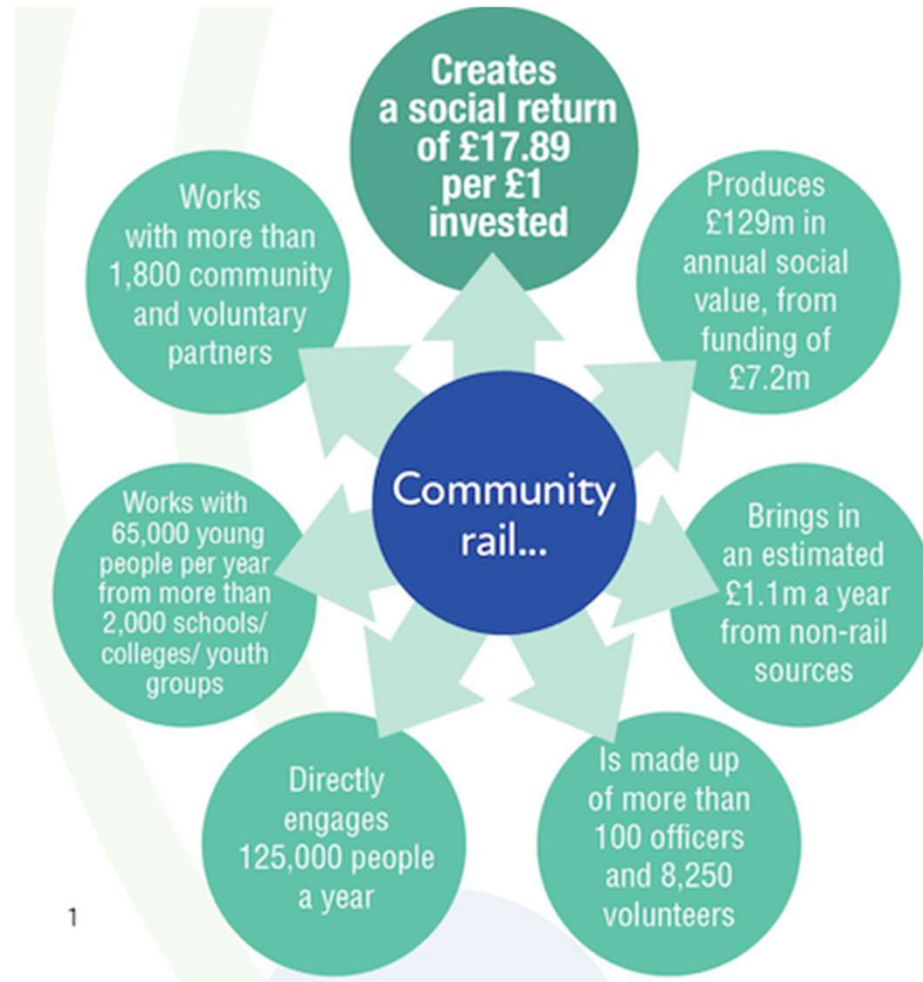
Providing a voice
for communities

Promoting sustainable,
healthy, and accessible
travel

Bringing communities
together and supporting
diversity and inclusion

Supporting
social and economic
development

+ Confident on our worth & impact



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The value of community rail

Written by Rob Lawson
Edited by Jools Townsend

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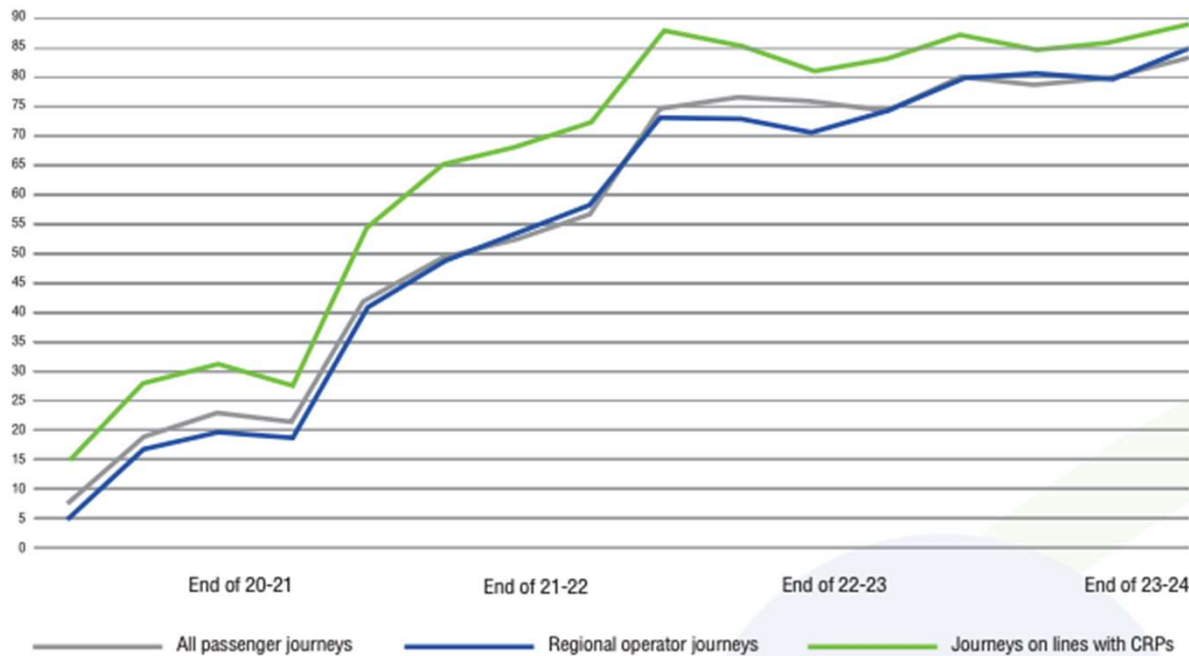
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+ Confident on our worth & impact

Recovery of passenger journeys April 2020 to March 2024



Half of Britain's stations (nearly **1,300**) are adopted by volunteer groups delivering community rail activities



75 community rail partnerships involve communities along more than a third (**35%**) of Britain's railways, spanning both rural and urban lines



+ Confident on our worth & impact

Derwent Valley CRP played a key role influencing the return of hourly services between Matlock and Derby and Nottingham, to better connect communities and visitors along the line.

The CRP helped facilitate public meetings, a 10,000 strong petition, and the support of local councillors, MPs and tourism partners.

They worked with Friends of Spondon Station on a campaign to promote the reinstated service, reaching 100,000 people. Passenger numbers in summer 2023 showed a 12% increase Duffield - Matlock, with a 240% increase from Spondon.



+ Confident on our worth & impact

“The alarming decline in the abundance of wildlife and the plight of species under threat means that just protecting the nature we have left is not enough; we need to put nature into recovery, and to do so at scale and with urgency. This project is a fantastic example of how people can transform nature-poor areas into nature-rich places – and change the way we think about land, seizing opportunities to help nature outside traditional nature reserves.”

James Hogg, development officer at the Norfolk Wildlife Trust

“First time using my local station, I don't know many other places except my neighbourhood. I want to take my son to Severn Beach for the day, it is lovely. We will go on the train.”

**Days Out By Train participant
(Sevenside CRP)**

“It has been a lifeline for me being vocally disabled and physically challenged. It being a few short steps from home has been achievable. Visitors to the centre who now know me are friendly and listen to what I am trying to convey. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet people with varied interests and encourage new interests. The ‘warm hub’ during colder months is a great help for us older pensioners on limited means. Long may it last.”

A regular attendee at the ‘Meet Up Mondays’ session at Bishopstone



How we're feeding in nationally & regionally



- Working closely with DfT
- Advising GBRTT – specific areas of opportunity + general support for community rail
- Building links and understanding with MPs, devolved/Mayoral authorities, STBs
- Engaging industry leaders and thought-leaders
- As part of the Sustainable Transport Alliance



Integrated travel map, Seaford Station – Southeast Communities RP



Buxton Station e-bikes

Drawing on your insights & evidence

- Via research & reports
- Meetings, visits, calls, forums
- Webinars & events
- Member survey (coming soon!)
- Awards entries, case studies, news stories
- TBC dedicated sessions over the year ahead

>> Further work to develop our approach to impact



Wales on Rails campaign



Using today

- Open forum, for sharing your thoughts, ideas, experiences
- Bringing impact and resilience into the discussion
- Reflecting on changes around and ahead of us
- Thinking big, long-term & ambitiously

A chance to be creative and positively challenge ourselves & each other



Using your Community Rail Network

- Draw on our Value report & other resources
- Feed in your examples & impacts (members' survey coming soon!)
- Use our Impact tool
- Use our national campaigns & events (Days Out 14 Oct-3 Nov; Awards 13 Mar)
- Tourism, education & modal integration networks/forums
- Talk to the team (and think big!)



Community Rail Week launch hosted by Severnside CRP & Strawberry Line Café

Please keep talking
to us & sharing your
ideas & experiences

communityrail.org.uk/about-us/our-team-and-board/

