

Train into Work

Our innovative pilot project to provide young people and long-term unemployed 20 days work experience and focused learning with EMT at Derby Station to give them a step up into employment.

The concept is a first for a community rail line. Thanks to the support of EMT and the endorsement of the Institution of Railway Operators (IRO), we piloted the project during September 2015 with two very inspiring young people who each have a learning difficulty, Amelia (Milly) Humphries (24) and Mitchell Grant (20).

Milly from Alsager and Mitchell from Newcastle-under-Lyme, a station volunteer at Kidsgrove, embraced the opportunity wholeheartedly. From selling tickets and minding the gateline, to making announcements and serving passengers on board, they applied themselves to learn all aspects of customer service, and with great success, winning many compliments from passengers and great feedback from the Derby station team.

During their placement, they also studied through a detailed training pack, developed especially for us by the IRO, to help them review their performance in all the activities: they also received tips on CV writing and undertook mock interviews, giving them comprehensive preparation for the job market. And when suitable vacancies arise with EMT, they will at least be given an interview.

EMT is to roll out the project to benefit many more young people from job clubs and colleges along the route, with Milly and Mitchell as the ideal ambassadors.

“Train Into Work is a fine example of organisations working in partnership creatively to address local employment needs and help people into work.”
Janice Mills, Alsager Job Club



Milly and Mitchell start to “Train Into Work”

10Years of Success



- ▶ Crewe
- ▶ Alsager
- ▶ Kidsgrove
- ▶ Longport
- ▶ Stoke-on-Trent
- ▶ Longton
- ▶ Blythe Bridge
- ▶ Uttoxeter
- ▶ Tutbury & Hatton
- ▶ Peartree
- ▶ Derby

Kidsgrove Station Regeneration Project
see centre pages for latest

For more information about North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership or to get involved by sponsoring a project or joining the volunteer team, log onto www.northstaffsrail.org.uk or get in touch with:

Faye Lambert
Partnership Officer
North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership
Tel: 01782 232272
Email: faye.lambert@stoke.gov.uk



northstaffsrail.org.uk

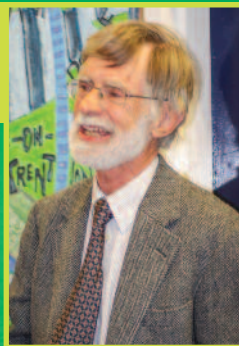
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Progress report of North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership 2014/15



Welcome from the Chairman

Welcome to "10 years of Success" our anniversary report in which we celebrate our 10th birthday; 10 years of

improving station facilities and encouraging communities to take pride in their local stations. 10 years of growing passenger numbers and ensuring the future of the Crewe - Stoke - Derby line is secure. For when we started out in 2005, Etruria station was being closed; we resolved to do all we could to prevent local rail services from being eroded further.



Former REACH student Jordan Boughey designed our 10th Anniversary poster

10 years of working in partnership, which is the centre of our success. Partnership with East Midlands Trains (EMT) and Network Rail and partnership with local authorities along the line, Cheshire East, Stoke City Council and Derbyshire and Staffordshire County Councils. Most importantly, partnership with the local communities at each station. Without our volunteers and their countless hours of work improving station gardens, route stations would look as unwelcoming as they did when we started. But instead now all are not just looking better, they are award winning...!

Award-winning stations

Our first decade has brought us over 30 awards for excellence in and outstanding contribution to community rail, including a host of Best Stations awards. Alsager was awarded the 2014 Cheshire Best Kept Stations ACoRP Award and EMT's 2015 Community Partnership Award, both in recognition of exemplary partnership working and fantastic community involvement at this station.

Kidsgrove was this year voted EMT's Best Small Station and in 2014 EMT's Community Partnership station, acknowledging the unstinting support of station volunteers and the community in improving this station for passengers. We were delighted for Uttoxeter to be

named the first ever winner of EMT's Station Environment Award, recognising the outstanding partnership resolve that made the unique Station Heritage Garden there a reality.



Innovation

We're proud to have delivered some very innovative projects this year all of which have received national recognition for involving young people, improving the passenger experience and successfully promoting the route. You can read all about these on Page 7. I am especially excited about our latest idea, 'Train Into Work', another first for community rail, which we hope will help young people and long-term unemployed into jobs through a 20-day work experience placement with EMT. The pilot has been a huge success and we are confident that this project will change lives.



The "Train Into Work" team

Kidsgrove station

There is especially good news to celebrate for Kidsgrove...the station facilities are to be transformed, thanks to a community-inspired partnership project that secured £multi-million Access for All funding....see the centre pages for full details.

Passenger growth

At the start I said we wanted to do all we could to prevent local services from being eroded further. The good news is that since 2005, the number of passengers using the service from intermediate stations has grown on average 270%. When we started, many people thought Longport and Longton were closed, they were so run down. One of our first projects was to advertise that these two

Stoke-on-Trent city stations were still open for business. Today they are well-used, up 594% and 284% respectively during the decade. Proof that North Staffordshire CRP really does deliver positive outcomes for local rail; this is the best possible measure of the stations' future now being secure.

However, this unprecedented growth shows the limitations of the route's allocated rolling stock during peak times. In March, with the support of our local authority colleagues and station volunteers, we carried out a week-long passenger count on all Crewe-Derby peak-time services. The results showed a high incidence of severe overcrowding. One of our key objectives therefore continues to be to improve service capacity. To this end we are working behind the scenes with partners to realise the strategic nature of the Crewe-Derby service, which we hope will bring future benefits of improved capacity and better connectivity.

The Central Role of the Community Rail Partnership Officer

I hope what you read here will enable you to celebrate with us the achievements of our first 10 years. During that time Faye Lambert has worked unstintingly as our Community Rail Partnership Officer. In only a part-time post, she has initiated and delivered projects, recruited and supported volunteers, won funding and gained the involvement of businesses and schools, generated publicity material, and been the driving force behind our long list of achievements. So a huge thanks to Faye for leading on so many successful projects during the past 10 years. She is truly the source of our success.



Faye (left) and the Crewe route team celebrate our 10th anniversary

Michael

Michael Willmot
Chair, North Staffordshire
Community Rail Partnership

People make it happen

A growing volunteer team

The North Staffordshire Line boasts the largest station volunteer team of EMT's community rail routes. Over 50 volunteers continue to do stations proud by creating winning gardens and helping us to promote the route. Many of the team have been volunteers for 8 years; they've been joined this year by more inspiring local people, including:

Mitchell Grant (Kidsgrove), Sue Owen (Kidsgrove), David Steele (Longport) & Marika Latham (Uttoxeter). Hats off to all our volunteers for the huge contribution they make to the North Staffordshire Line.

"It's always clean and tidy and it's nice to see flowers, impressed they are done by volunteers."

Tutbury & Hatton passenger



Businesses help deliver winning stations

TESCO Kidsgrove, Nestle Tutbury and Redstone Willows Alsager have all supported us this year, sponsoring a variety of projects, like these purpose-built oak planters from Nestle for Tutbury & Hatton station, helping the station achieve a Most Improved Station award.

TESCO also sponsored the ingredients for our 10th anniversary celebration cake, expertly created by Kidsgrove resident Linda Blunt. The verdict? Delicious!

Cracking customer service

Rapidly growing footfall at Kidsgrove station (up 564% in a decade) equals lots of passengers requiring a cuppa and snack for their rail journey. Our solution? 'A Spotter Tea' community cafe, which we developed with Small Grants funding from ACoRP and set up, with the support of EMT, in the station Booking Hall. It's proved a huge success thanks to the epitome of customer service who manages it, Kidsgrove resident Kath Keeling, pictured opposite, far right.

REACH for the sky

We were delighted to work again this year with REACH Pupil Referral Service, Stoke-on-Trent, which supports students 11-16 who are excluded or are at danger of exclusion from their home schools. Our aim was inspire the students' creativity to promote the route for travel to work, leisure and all around the UK. Their commitment achieved eye-catching poster designs for local display.



Promoting rail travel on your doorstep

Alsager station provides a great rail transport resource; direct, regular services to London, Crewe, Derby and Stoke, affording rail connections UK-wide from a fully accessible and welcoming station. Through our 'Make Tracks for Alsager', campaign, sponsored by Cheshire East Council, we developed an information leaflet for all households, poster, web campaign and press release to promote these benefits to the local population. The project delivered increased origin footfall at Alsager of 728 in April over March, up 15%.



Uttoxeter's Marika



Mitchell (front right) meets the Kidsgrove team



REACH students help launch the project

People make it happen

Here's a snapshot of some of the great partners who have worked with us this year to deliver a wide variety of community rail projects across the North Staffordshire Line.

Tots, a twin and celebrating Alsager WI

Alsager station had community buzz all year. In February, we hosted a special visit by a class of 3-5 year olds from Betley Primary School. The children visited as part of their class railway project to learn about being safe at stations. We joined with the Alsager station volunteers to show them good rail safety practice and they were thrilled to receive high visibility jackets, wrist bands and bags, provided by Stoke City Council, to help keep them safe on their travels. The day ended with the tots planting a new bed of nasturtiums; it inspired them to grow sunflowers for the station from seed in their school garden, which bloomed proudly in the station gardens all summer.

"The kindness of everyone at the station, especially the station volunteers, made it a great day of learning."

Gill Mellor, Class Teacher Betley Primary

For the fourth year running, Alsager was a winner at Cheshire Best Kept Stations, taking the ACoRP award for outstanding partnership working and



Station Twinning helps share ideas

We've also involved Alsager Women's Institute in improving the station through the creation of a special flower display to commemorate their 25th anniversary in the centenary year of the WI. The display, comprising red, white and blue annuals, specially grown by station volunteer and Alsager WI member Hilary Robinson, was given the seal of approval by one of Alsager WI's founding members Betty MacKenzie. WI members now continue to support the station with donations of cuttings from their own gardens.

Top teamwork at Blythe Bridge

In July, we held a highly productive Station Community Day when EMT's Marketing Team, Derby station staff and former Forsbrook Parish Council colleagues Gill Burton and Christine Snape joined station volunteers to form a 16-strong working party to keep Blythe Bridge station gardens in first class condition.

Gill and Christine, former Chair and Clerk of Forsbrook Parish Council, were delighted to join in the work to celebrate how greatly Blythe Bridge station has improved since the Parish Council adopted it in 2007. The Parish Council sponsors the many seasonal planters that help to embellish the station.



First Class teamwork at Blythe Bridge

10 years of making a difference for passengers

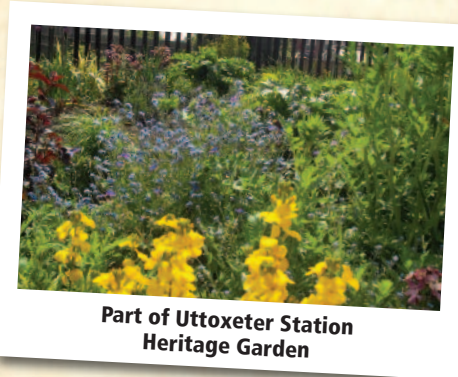
100s of 1000s more passengers now use the Crewe-Stoke-Derby service; a result of improved, safer and more welcoming stations, and increased awareness of local rail.



Customer Information Screens at all Stations



Longport Station



Part of Uttoxeter Station Heritage Garden



Volunteer Support at Longton Station



Longton Station mural sponsored by AMCO Rail



Betley Primary Children at Alsager Station



A Best Station Award for Tutbury & Hatton



Passengers at Uttoxeter Station

"North Staffordshire CRP is an excellent example of what happens when different people work together...great things happen. It is enormously rewarding for everyone at East Midlands Trains and extremely humbling for me that this is part of our railway"

Neil Micklethwaite: Customer Experience and Commercial Director, EMT

- ▶ 100s of £1000s raised for investment in North Staffordshire Line stations, including supporting a £multi million community-inspired project for a fully accessible Kidsgrove station with transport interchange.
- ▶ 10s of station improvement projects funded including new shelters, customer information screens, CCTV, new seating and lighting; all better for passengers.
- ▶ 10s of station volunteers engaged, who have transformed station gardens as well as promoting the route and raising additional funding support.
- ▶ 10s of promotional projects developed for the Crewe-Stoke-Derby service, including a bi-annual route guide with vouchers to local tourist attractions.
- ▶ 10s of local schools involved to create community artwork and support volunteers to further improve station environments; young people helped into employment through our "Train Into Work" project.
- ▶ 10s of national businesses like JCB, AMCO Rail, Nestle and TESCO and local councils engaged to sponsor station community days and projects.
- ▶ 10s of awards won, recognising North Staffordshire CRP's contribution to the route and to community rail best practice nationwide.

Full steam ahead for Kidsgrove Station



Thanks to a determined partnership bid, backed by outstanding community support, Kidsgrove was one of only two community rail stations to be awarded 'Access for All' funding by the Department for Transport (DfT).

Access for All will fund a £multi-million new station footbridge project that will make access to the station easier for everyone, particularly people with reduced mobility.

Since the good news was announced, the Kidsgrove station regeneration team has been busy working to add value to the footbridge project and secure additional funding to completely regenerate Kidsgrove through:

- ▶ *New transport interchange.*
- ▶ *New, larger car park.*
- ▶ *Improved station facilities.*



Here's the good news to date:

March: Community event at station

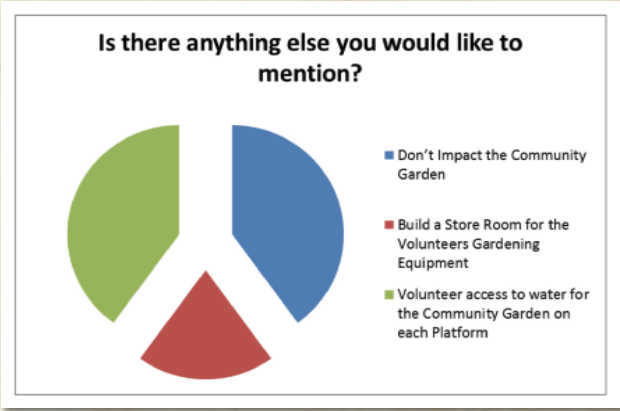
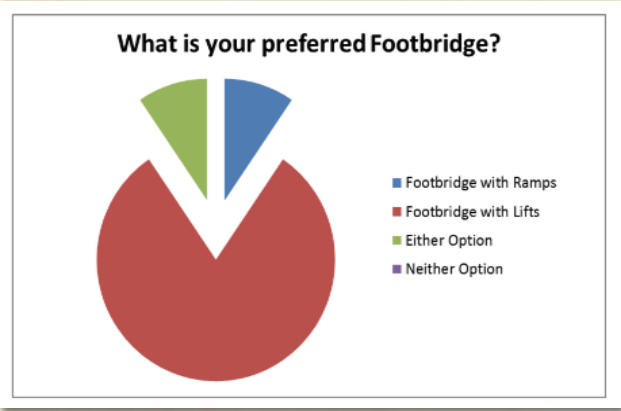
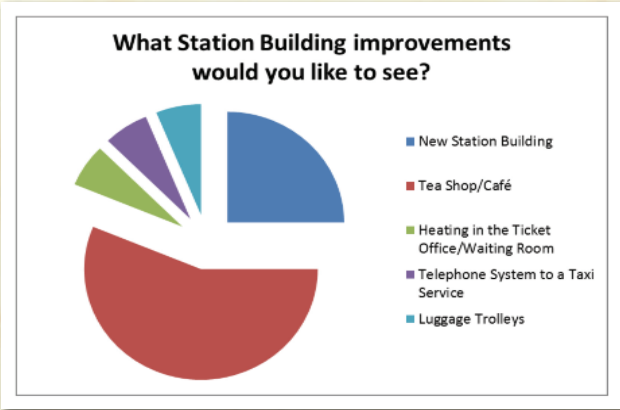
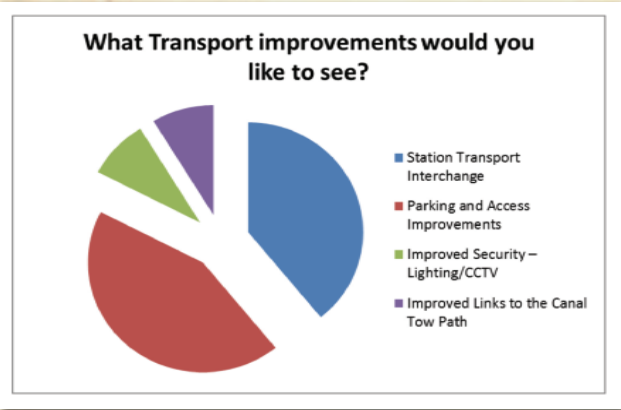
Community feedback is central to the whole project. Over 100 people attended this event, see the charts opposite for a summary of what you told us you wanted to see at the new Kidsgrove station.

April – September: Footbridge design developed

Design for a covered footbridge with lifts, the preferred option from feedback received and one that will be sensitive to the station gardens, is put forward to the DfT for approval.

October: DfT approves the design and the cost of £4.2 million

December: Survey works by Galliford Try will start at the station to get the project underway



Stop press! Land transfer signals go ahead for new car park



Area of land for new, larger station car park

As part of the station regeneration project, partner Staffordshire County Council is to transfer its ownership of land adjacent to Kidsgrove station to Network Rail. The land will be developed to provide a much larger new station car parking facility for passengers, with 1 hour of free parking for local residents, greatly improving the current car parking offer both for the station and locally.

What's next?

We're planning another community event at the station in the New Year. In the meantime, to give your comments about the project, please contact; getintouch@eastmidlandstrains.co.uk

Kidsgrove Station Regeneration team

