

Community Rail Cumbria



2016 Annual Summary

The Team



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Turning Point

Turning Point is a national charity engaged in the rehabilitation of people recovering from substance and alcohol abuse. The pilot scheme between Turning Point and the CRP, funded via ComReg, is proving an unqualified success. Turning Point residents have proved overwhelmingly enthusiastic, taking part in all elements of the structured programme of rail-related activities. Turning Point staff have noted increases in resident's confidence, social skills and self-respect. An unexpected development is the proposal to regenerate Green Road station, with an emphasis on bio-diversity. In addition to performing routine tasks such as painting and maintenance, residents are also involved in developing community-based improvement schemes at the new transport hubs at Workington and Whitehaven.



Millom Rail Room

The Rail Room project involves the transformation of a room within the Discovery Centre at Millom Station into an interactive, rail-based environment. A highlight will be a fabulous model railway which reproduces the features and history of the Cumbrian Coast railway. There will opportunities for local schools to take advantage of special rail packages enabling them to visit and enjoy the Rail Room and Discovery Centre. A Project Officer was appointed in October 2016 to progress the development of the Rail Room which is due to open in April 2017.

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Lakes Line Feasibility Study

Thanks to a successful ComREG bid, Seedcorn Funding will pave the way for the long awaited feasibility study of the Lakes Line. The study will assess the case for increasing capacity on the line and consider accessibility issues at Burneside Station and Staveley Station.

A long term Vision for Burneside has been drafted by a local group keen to see significant infrastructure improvements to the village whilst access to Staveley Station is via 41 steep steps and prohibits easy access for many people.



Santa Special

Christmas arrived early this year in Maryport with our first ever Santa Special.

Working with local councillors and the Rotary Club, Northern and DRS pulled out all the stops and provided a fantastical magical Santa Special service for local children who are looked after by the local authority.

Due to the success of this venture plans are now being developed to consider a spring or summer event for the children.

Hub Stations

The CRP initiated the concept of transport hubs at Workington and Maryport railway stations, resulting in Cumbria County Council receiving £5m capital funding from the Regional Growth Fund.

Both schemes are designed to encourage and facilitate rail travel, encouraging regular commuting and visits further afield.

A new 147 space free car park facility has now opened at Workington station and plans for the Maryport Hub are progressing with work due to commence early 2017 on a 78 space car park adjacent to the station.

The CRP is currently accessing additional funding for a wide range of platform improvements at both locations, and is developing community-based schemes encouraging bio-diversity, landscaping, maintenance, etc.



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The nuclear industry is the prime driver of the West Cumbrian economy, and Sellafield Ltd is a primary stakeholder with the Cumbrian Coast Line CRP.

Sellafield station is rundown and neglected, with all waiting and toilet facilities in an exceptionally poor state of repair.

The CCL CRP is currently developing a full refurbishment programme of the station in collaboration with Sellafield's apprentices, a multi-disciplinary team including designers, engineers, manual trades, etc.

This project takes full advantage of Sellafield's socio-economic responsibilities, and will have a much-needed positive impact on the anticipated increases in rail usage when the new commuter services commence in May 2018.



The proposal by Nugen to build three nuclear reactors on land adjacent to the existing Sellafield site represents the largest capital investment Cumbria has ever witnessed. Estimated at £60bn this will transform the moribund economy of West Cumbria. The associated build programme is largely dependent on rail infrastructure enhancements.

The Cumbrian Coast Line CRP is an integral player within the Rail Strategy Group which is currently examining the improvements needed to cater for the huge increases in both freight and passenger movements. A formal submission to the government, paving the way for full approval of the scheme, is anticipated to be made at the latter end of 2017.



DRS provides the rolling stock for loco-haul services at peak times along the Cumbrian Coast and Furness lines and are a Primary Stakeholder within Community Rail Cumbria.

Rail capacity for the movement of freight is an integral part of the planning process for infrastructure enhancement and DRS is heavily involved within the Rail Delivery Group.

DRS is committed to community involvement and are particularly supportive of community rail schemes and projects involving disadvantaged groups across Cumbria.

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Friends of Silverdale Station

This group has worked with the CRP and Northern to have trees removed, roof repairs carried out and additional restoration done at the old shelter.

They also received a well-earned Bronze Award from ACoRP in 2016. There will be a volunteer day in the spring of 2017.



Friends of Wigton Station

This long-established and committed Friends group continued their efforts to enhance Wigton railway station during 2016.

As a result of local support and community engagement the station has been transformed, utilising local stone for features, flower beds and general landscaping. Neglected areas have been restored, seating provided and artwork reflecting local heritage installed.

In recognition of their efforts, the Friends group received a gold award at the ACoRP 2016 Community Rail Awards.

Friends of Kents Bank Station and Foreshore

A very active group making great improvements to the station gardens during 2016.

Interpretive plaques have been fitted explaining the local heritage.

A Volunteer day is planned for the end of March 2017 to undertake fence repairs, painting and tree cutting.

The group received a Bronze award at the 2016 Community Rail Awards.



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Marketing

In readiness for the enhanced rail services to be delivered under the Arriva franchise, in particular the introduction of Sunday services along the Cumbrian Coast, the CRP has developed a marketing strategy specifically designed to increase footfall, draw visitors away from the Lake District honeypots, and encourage visitors to explore Cumbria's hidden corners.

A mainstay of this marketing campaign is a high-impact visual project, utilising the latest drone technology to capture the juxtaposition of the railway between sea and fells, as well as encouraging visits to unrecognised tourist locations such as Maryport, Ravenglass and Grange-over-Sands. Incorporated within the CRP's new website, the project will launch in spring 2017.

Heritage

Historically, the economy of West Cumbria is based on the heavy industries such as coal-mining, iron and steel production. The railway played a crucial role in these industries, and the social impact these developments made.

The important legacy of the railway has been largely forgotten, and the CRP is working with a number of agencies and community groups to celebrate the historic role of the railway.

One concept is to designate Workington as a 'Heritage' station, utilising funding from the National Lottery to commission a series of large-scale murals which celebrate the railway's role both pictorially and graphically.

Oral histories are being collected, and will be included within the overall project in a travelling presentation located at schools, community centres, libraries, etc



Scholars Season Ticket

The Lakes Line CRP was delighted to be advised by Northern in Dec 2016 that a new discounted season ticket will be offered to students aged 16-18 years with effect from January 2017. The offer is extended on a trial period for the Spring and Summer 2017 terms. This initiative follows pressure from the Lakes Line CRP who raised concerns about revenue collection at peak times of travel and the financial burden on families who pay for transport to education. The trial includes options for students travelling on the Furness, Lakes and Cumbrian Coast lines and offers a 25% discount on a season ticket.

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Morecambe Bay Partnership

Discussions are ongoing with the Morecambe Bay Partnership and Northern regarding a station Hub for Grange station.

The hub would include a heated, glass waiting room with information screens explaining the natural and cultural heritage of the area. It would also be a starting point for local walks.



Walks leaflets

The new Walks from the Lakes Line leaflets were launched at Oxenholme station in April.

Thanks to Northern for funding the reprint of the existing Walks and Discover leaflets.



Kents Bank Station

A joint CRP and Network Rail scheme enabled vital repairs to the roof of the Beach Hut Gallery at Kents Bank.

The gallery is a long established centre for local crafts and the refurbishment will ensure the sustainability of the building as a business venture.



The Lakes Line Rail User Group

This group has become the Friends of the Lakes Line encompassing all four individual stations along the line.

Members were proud to receive a nomination for the 2016 Community Rail Awards.

Representatives from the group joined CRP partners and rail industry colleagues for the launch of the new Northern franchise at Windermere.



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What's Next?

Manage and contribute to the Lakes Line Feasibility Study. This will help to build the case for increased frequency of trains on the Oxenholme-Windermere route and examine the best locations for accessible stations at Burneside and Staveley.



Through collaborative work with Turning Point and other agencies a major project aimed at regenerating redundant station buildings is planned. Green Road is situated on the edge of the Duddon Estuary, and the aim of the project is to showcase the outstanding geology, flora and fauna of the area within the station buildings, in addition to regenerating the disused passenger waiting facilities.



Progress station access and development projects at Dalton, Grange, Arnside, Silverdale and Carnforth with Northern and Network Rail with particular emphasis on accessibility and community use.



Encourage and support the establishment of sustainable "Friends of Station" groups across the Cumbrian network including Dalton and Carnforth.

