



Rail Safety & Standards Board

Research Programme

# Operations

Good practice in station adoption schemes  
Literature review





**T639**

**Good Practice in Station Adoption Schemes**  
**Literature Review**



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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>The Literature Review</b>	<b>1</b>
	Introduction	1
	Presentation of the review	1
	Passenger experiences at stations	2
	Maintaining and improving Britain's railway stations	2
	Crime and personal security	7
	Personal Security on Public Transport	7
	Peoples' perceptions of personal security and their concerns about crime on public transport	9
	Fears and experiences of assault and abuse on the railways	10
	Perceptions of Personal Security at Stations - Practical Steps to Real Improvements	12
	An investigation of public perceptions of personal security on railway station environments, car parks and immediate access routes	12
	Managing Crime on Britain's Railways	13
	Vandalism, graffiti and environmental nuisance	13
	A study of lighting and rail users' perceptions of personal security at Cadoxton Railway Station, car park and immediate access routes	14
	Public transport needs of minority, ethnic and faith communities Guidance Pack	15
	Community Rail	16
	Community Rail Development Strategy	16
	Community rail development: What it means	18
	Rural railways	19
	Rural railways at a turning point	19
	The rural railway: going local to revive	19
	Rural Railways: a new beginning?	20
	Good practice in the provision of rail services in rural areas and small towns	20
	Maximising commercial opportunities at smaller stations: What the train operator can do	21
	Improving Rail Services in Rural Areas	21
	Case Study: assessing the commercial & operational viability of train services in rural areas	22
	Improving rail facilities	23
	Strategy to Reality: using Local Transport Plans to deliver on rail	23
	Passenger Information: what, when, where and how?	24
<b>2</b>	<b>Station adoption guides</b>	<b>25</b>
	Relevance to and lessons for station adoptions	25
	Station Adoption Scheme – Individual and Group Adoption	26
	Adopt a Station	26
	'Adopt your Station' – Station Adoption in the South West	27
	Adopt a Station Program Guidelines	27
	Station adoption: A guide for the local community	28
	Preparing to adopt a station	28
	The basics	29
	Case studies	30
	Station Adoption Agreement – Northern Rail	31
	A partnership story: getting things moving	32
	Manual for Local Authority Involvement in railway stations	33
	Surrey Stations Pathfinder Project – report on non standard station ownership models	34
	Best practice examples	36
	Train Times (Association of Community Rail Partnerships)	36
	Where can we go from here? An action plan for the future development of Crediton Station	41
	Public art	43
	The art of travelling	43
	Arts, business and the local railway	44

Art on Transport: What makes a memorable journey? .....	44
Bibliography .....	46



# 1 The Literature Review

## Introduction

The material detailed in this literature review consists of documents obtained during consultation with rail industry and other stakeholders, conference reports and presentations, and items of relevance located during an internet search.

## Presentation of the review

The material is presented within a number of topic based chapters, though some of the documents reviewed do cover a wide range of issues. These chapters include:

- Passenger experiences at stations
- Crime and personal security
- Community rail
- Rural railways
- Improving rail facilities
- Station adoption guides
- Best practice examples
- Public art

Each chapter contains reviews of one or more pertinent publications or presentations, and commences with an overarching narrative outlining the relevance of the topic to station adoptions, and any lessons for future stations adoptions.

## Passenger experiences at stations

### 1..1 Relevance to and lessons for station adoptions

The experiences of passengers on stations, and their perceptions of stations are the defining issues behind the need and desire to adopt stations, and through adoption to enhance the quality of the facilities and ambience at stations.

The principal wishes of passengers are to feel safe and secure on stations, and for there to be staff and good information available. Passengers also want to feel welcome and cared for, reassured about the arrival of their trains and proud of their station. Research clearly indicates that feelings of insecurity at stations, especially those without staff, results in people not using the rail network. Improving personal safety, the key determinant of passenger perceptions on stations, may result in 15 per cent more journeys by train being undertaken.

Passenger satisfaction with station environment is poor, with only about 60% of passengers being satisfied. This drops significantly when applied to satisfaction with smaller, un-staffed stations. And yet Network Rail maintenance regimes at some categories of station mean that an assessment of the station's structural condition and facilities may occur only once every five years.

Station adoption can help tackle some of these issues. Station adoption at its various levels seeks to bring a better inspection and reporting regime to smaller stations, through to routine maintenance and environmental improvements, right up to bringing new activity and life to stations through re-use of buildings and the generation of people focussed activities to provide a greater human presence on stations. All of these aspects help to tackle the key concerns of users of small stations, and will help to improve passenger experiences and perceptions of stations across Great Britain.

The publications reviewed in detail are:

### Maintaining and improving Britain's railway stations

National Audit Office, HC 132 Session 2005-06, July 2005

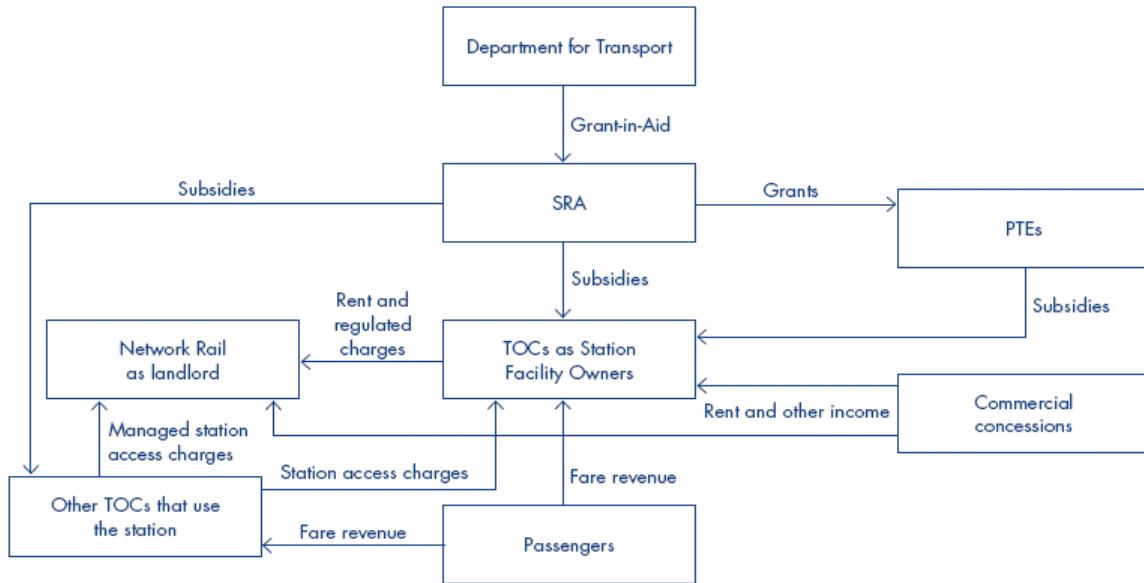
This report examines what has been done to improve passengers' experience at stations, including whether station requirements are being met, where passengers are satisfied with facilities and services and where there are barriers to improvement.

Britain has 2507 railway stations. All of these are owned by Network Rail together with the track, bridges and signalling on the railway network. The age and size of stations vary greatly. Most stations are over 100 years old and 15% are listed buildings that are subject to restrictions on how they may be maintained and improved. 400 of the smallest stations handle fewer than 25 passengers per day compared with the seven busiest stations which handle between 120,000 and 382,000 passengers per day. This equates to the top 28 stations handling over 40% of the average daily passengers using the network (2003/4 figures) while the 1200 smallest and un-staffed stations handle 2% of passengers.

Network Rail is responsible for repairs of the stations. It operates and manages 17 of the largest stations and leases all of the remaining stations to train operating companies which act as station facility owners (SFO). SFOs are responsible for day to day maintenance, keeping the station and its facilities clean and tidy and operation such as providing travel information.

There are various sources of funding for the maintenance, repair and renewal of stations. These are illustrated in the diagram below:

Station maintenance, repair and renewals are funded from a variety of sources.



Source: National Audit Office

Research carried out for Railtrack in 1999 and more recently by Network Rail suggested that passengers' core needs at a station were for the station to be secure and for staff and good quality information to be available. Passengers also want to feel welcome and cared for, reassured about the arrival of their trains and proud of their station.

Network Rail employs inspectors to collect the relevant condition data to enable them to carry out repairs and renewals. The assessment takes account of the condition of up to 34 types of asset at a station. The system has weaknesses in that only one in five stations are inspected each year as part of a rolling programme which means each station is visited every 5 years. Also the inspection focuses on structural elements rather than environment or appearance. Under new franchise agreements, each TOC is expected to inspect 16% of their stations every month, equating to each station every 6 months.

Around £150 million is spent each year on improving Britain's stations. The table below illustrates how this compares unfavourably with investment in other European countries.

Each year, Switzerland and Germany spend significantly more per station on improvements than does Britain.

Country	Approximate amount spent each year on station improvements	Approximate number of stations	Amount spent per station
Switzerland	£75 million	800	£93,750
Germany	£480 million	5,800	£82,759
Britain	£150 million	2,500	£60,000

Source: National Audit Office

*Action to Improve Passenger Rail Services (1999-2000)* reported a fall in passenger satisfaction with the station environment since privatisation. There has been some improvement in passenger satisfaction over recent years. National Passenger Survey data show that satisfaction increased from 58% to 63% between 1999 and 2005.

Passengers are reasonably satisfied with the 95 largest stations, which carry more than half of all rail passengers each year, are staffed and have a range of facilities. Passengers are least satisfied with the more than 2,000 medium sized and small stations that are un-staffed, or are staffed only part of the day, and that have few facilities. Levels of satisfaction are lowest for station facilities and services, the overall station environment, cleanliness, upkeep and repair, personal security and station car parking.

Low passenger use at smaller stations makes it difficult to make a successful business case for investing in improved or additional facilities. Research carried out for the Department in 1996 and 2002 suggests that improving personal safety would result in 15 per cent more journeys by train.

At privatisation, franchised stations had quite basic requirements. All new franchise agreements from 2004 have a higher level of requirements. Previous franchises required stations to be kept reasonably clean. Newer franchise agreements may require stations to be free from litter; bins to be emptied when full; windows and glass to be kept clean and replaced when damaged; offensive graffiti to be removed within 24 hours and other graffiti to be removed within seven days.

The SRA/DfT Community Rail Development Strategy introduced designation of community rail lines with the intention of using standards more appropriate to the level of usage. The strategy aims to promote a local community approach for running and improving rural stations including involving volunteers in developing community uses for stations and making it easier for third parties to invest in station improvements and encourage integration with the local community.

What passengers want from stations, Rail Passengers Council, 2005

Consultant Steer Davies Gleave conducted a study on behalf of the Rail Passenger Council (RPC – now Passenger Focus) with the aims of:

- identifying passengers' current perceptions of station facilities
- assigning priorities to facilities/features at stations within specified categories
- identifying additional needs of disabled passengers

National rail stations are currently allocated to one of the six following categories:

- A: National hub (e.g. Leeds).
- B: Regional hub (e.g. Cambridge).
- C: Important feeder (e.g. Luton).
- D: Medium sized staffed (e.g. Aylesbury).
- E: Small staffed (e.g. Handforth).
- F: Small un-staffed (e.g. Matlock).

Different levels of facilities are provided depending upon the size of the station. There is high level of satisfaction with category A but, for categories D, E and F, there is a low level of satisfaction with facilities and services.

The report considered station users requirements in terms of a hierarchy of need. At the bottom of the hierarchy basic requirements and facilities needed to enable people to use the station are identified. The next level of the hierarchy includes what are known as comfort factors which make the station more pleasant. The top level of the hierarchy includes cosmetic or luxury elements which make the station attractive to use. The report outlines what facilities and attributes fall into each category.

The research found that some stations are not meeting even the most basic needs of passengers. However it acknowledges that passenger requirements are conditioned by a number of factors such as time of travel, and how busy station is. There were also clear differences in expectations for small and larger stations. It was acknowledged that some smaller stations have a similar status to bus stops. These stations just require a simple shelter, seats, adequate lighting and real time information.

The research also highlighted that rail users were concerned at the relatively high proportion of smaller stations which have limited access for mobility impaired passengers because of lack of ramps or lifts. For most people, this was a major priority which should be addressed before any aspirational facilities are considered.

Security both inside and outside the station was identified as a priority for passengers with particular concern being felt about their personal security at night. Commuters and business people felt that the smaller stations were "lonely places" and that leaving them at night is dangerous. Other participants may not use the train at night as they felt it was "too risky".

To summarise the key concerns after dark were:

- no staff or supervision at the station
- ticket office is closed
- gangs of youths hanging around the station or in the waiting room
- lack of people
- lack of adequate lighting at stations and in car parks
- bushes and foliage along walkways/exits

The research found that participants spent an average of 7–8 minutes at the station prior to departure. Analysis of activities undertaken while they wait at the station

found that most of these involved station facilities including information provision, waiting and retail facilities.

The primary retail facility expected at a station was a newsagent which was seen as vital for all but the smallest stations and even here it was felt some peak time provision was necessary.

## Crime and personal security

### 1.2 Relevance to and lessons for station adoptions

The most significant factors in determining experiences at stations are crime, fear of crime, and perceptions of personal security.

There is a significant body of research and study into personal security at stations, perceptions of personal security, crime, and fear of crime. Key factors in influencing people's perceptions are the travelling environment or condition of the station and the presence, or more pertinently absence, of human activity. Feelings of insecurity become worse at night time. Though evidence is mixed, women and older people are more likely to be fearful of using rail stations, whereas young men are more likely to be victims of a crime on the railway. It is unclear in which part of the journey passengers feel most vulnerable as some evidence suggests that this is the period waiting at the station whilst other research suggests that passengers feel less secure once they have boarded a train.

A well maintained environment provides re-assurance to passengers. The absence of graffiti and vandalised furniture adds to a feeling of safety. Poor maintenance, lack of clearance of rubbish and the presence of vandalism and graffiti increases people's sense of vulnerability and concerns for personal security. Initiatives such as public art can help reduce graffiti and vandalism levels.

Encouraging human activity can similarly help improve perceptions, especially off-peak when passenger numbers are lower. Creating opportunities for other activities on the station, such as retail outlets can be effective in bringing people into the station throughout the day.

Responses to improving passenger perceptions can include a range of measures, and it is likely to be a combination of measures that will help. The presence of staff, good lighting throughout the station and CCTV cameras for formal surveillance feature strongly in a number of pieces of research.

All of these aspects can be addressed by station adoption at one level or another. Common activities within adoptions involve the checking and reporting of graffiti and vandalism, undertaking minor repairs, maintenance and cleaning. Adoptions can also encourage the development of community based development projects that might attract or encourage additional uses of station buildings and the development of funding packages to provide additional infrastructure such as CCTV.

The publications reviewed in detail are:

### Personal Security on Public Transport

DfT, September 1996

*“Passenger surveys around the country consistently reveal that, despite low levels of recorded crime, passengers have real fears for their personal security while travelling on public transport.”*

These fears can stem from a variety of factors ranging from seeing someone else being victimised on public transport and stories in the media, to the travelling environment where elements such as graffiti or damaged furnishings can contribute to people's fears. Reducing fear of crime is a commercial issue as surveys have revealed that passengers avoid using public transport in certain areas or at certain times of day due to fear of crime.

The part of the journey where people are on board a vehicle is commonly perceived to be more secure than the time spent waiting for a train or walking to or from a station. The presence of staff or other activity at a station is viewed by passengers to play an important role in providing reassurance.

Key elements for an operator when developing a personal security policy are:

- a procedure for recording and monitoring incidents
- the importance of well maintained environment in providing reassurance to passengers
- the importance of the whole journey, working with other organisations to address social and environmental issues which affect passengers' personal security

In recent years the trend has been for operators to de-staff the transport network and substitute increased use of technology.

### 1..3 **Designing for personal safety**

Landscaping can improve the appearance of infrastructure, but may also inhibit informal surveillance by passers-by and local residents. It could also become a target for vandalism or provide a cover for criminal activity.

Public art features may be used to enhance the individual identity of the infrastructure and its quality image, and can have the effect of deterring vandalism and misuse. Community art, involving local people and often using a local theme, may be used to generate a sense of local ownership and encourage greater informal surveillance and more responsible use.

### 1..4 **Fear of crime - what can operators do?**

There is no single solution to poor perceptions of safety as different people feel unsafe for different reasons. Instead a package of measures is more appropriate. Creating a busy environment is important, particularly at off peak periods when passenger numbers will be lower and fear of crime and feeling of isolation will be greater. One suggested way of doing this is allowing retail outlets to open for longer hours to provide a reassuring presence for travellers.

## Peoples' perceptions of personal security and their concerns about crime on public transport

DfT – crime concern 2002

Findings and conclusions from the national perceptions research in 1996 were used to assist the Department in developing the programme of further research into personal security concerns and the funding of pilot initiatives to tackle these concerns. This study builds on the 1996 national research into personal security concerns and assists in identifying future programmes of research and initiatives that offer more promise in tackling the concerns of transport users and potential users.

The national research undertaken for DoT in 1997 identified that, when waiting for public transport, only 10% of women and 3% of men felt insecure waiting alone on a train station during the day whereas this increased to 53% of women and 23% of men waiting after dark.

Poor maintenance, lack of clearance of rubbish and the presence of vandalism and graffiti all suggest a lack of management, care and control of the environment. In turn, this increases people's sense of vulnerability and concerns for personal security.

One of the key findings was that people rely on a combination of measures to enhance their sense of personal security and not just any particular measure. When waiting for a train, the most effective measures chosen to enhance personal security were the presence of staff; good lighting throughout the station; and CCTV cameras for formal surveillance of vulnerable areas.

Facilities located at bus and train stations can create opportunities for activity and informal surveillance. Shops and cafes were welcomed by the 1997 group participants because they generated activity and provide staffed facilities where people can congregate. However, it was considered that facilities where alcohol was consumed could also contribute to inappropriate activity and contribute to passengers' sense of insecurity. The quality and management of such facilities was identified as an important factor in avoiding the encouragement of drunken and rowdy behaviour.

Research undertaken by consultants Transport and Travel Research for Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive (Merseytravel) in 2001 identified that all ages, both genders, and users and non-users of public transport felt that the wait at the stop or station was where they felt most unsafe. There was little variation between the sub-groups, with between 58% and 68% of respondents finding these locations where they felt most unsafe. The journey on the vehicle was where respondents felt most secure.

National accreditation through the Secure Stations Scheme launched in 1998 and updated recently was designed to promote and establish good practice in security at rail stations. It assesses actual crime rate and passengers perceptions of crime. The scheme is an incentive for operators to improve security and provide

reassurance to passengers and staff. Assessment for accreditation is based on four criteria:

- Design of station
- Management of station
- Managing crime
- Passengers feel secure

Improvements at Ledbury Station in Herefordshire have been promoted by an independent ticket office operator at the station, who has been actively involved with other agencies in securing the introduction of CCTV and real-time passenger information.

### 1..5 **Creating a busy environment**

Feeling isolated can increase feelings of insecurity. Creating a busy environment is therefore vital at stations, especially during off peak hours. Retail outlets are an increasingly popular way of creating activity and informal surveillance. A study for the Scottish Executive (Future Patterns of Retailing in Scotland, Scottish Executive, 2001) suggested that train and bus stations would be important locations for the future location of retail developments. Larger stations in major cities are already exploiting this potential. This is not always practical at smaller and more isolated stations although Dutch Railways has provided premises for small local shops at small un-staffed stations in order to provide opportunities for ticket sales and provision of information.

In Suffolk, many of the train stations are un-staffed and have been for thirty years. Whilst no station staff are present, imaginative leasing of former station buildings at some stations has resulted in the availability of people with transport knowledge. Examples are the Tourist Information Office at Woodbridge station and travel agents at Elmswell and Saxmundham stations.

### **Fears and experiences of assault and abuse on the railways**

Research Report T047, Rail Safety and Standards Board, January 2004

The Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) commissioned a research project into the fears and experiences of railway passengers from assault. The objectives were to establish the extent to which the risk of an assault is increasing, how people perceived risk and what can be done to reduce the number of assaults and fear of assaults.

The number of assaults recorded by British Transport Police has been gradually increasing over the last three years. It is not evident if these increases are due to an increase in the number of assaults or increased reporting.

The British Crime Survey and the RSSB survey show that there is significant under reporting of violent crime, and suggests assaults reported could be as low as 20% of the number that actually occur.

Males are much more likely to be the victims of assault, although females are more concerned about personal security. Young people are more likely to be assaulted but the elderly are more fearful. People from ethnic minorities are more likely to be assaulted, although there was no evidence of racial motivation and this may therefore be due to increased risk of assault in urban areas.

There are significant regional variations in the number of assaults, with London and the North West accounting for the highest absolute number of assaults. However, if assault figures are normalised by number of passenger journeys the West Midlands, North West and South East regions have the highest risk.

In terms of passengers fears and perceptions, there is a fairly even split between reported assaults at stations and those on trains, but passengers feel far less secure when travelling on a train. Only 5% of non users claim not to travel due to concerns about personal security. For the majority price, inconvenience and poor reliability are the main deterrents.

Research identifies 11 areas that are generally recognised as improving perceptions of personal security on trains and stations. They are listed below:

#### **1..5.1**

##### **Proactive measures:**

- Clean, well lit, accessible stations.
- CCTV and other visible deterrents.
- Greater staff visibility.
- Better staff training – on diversity issues and conflict management.
- More police presence.
- Better passenger information.
- Working more closely with communities.
- More stringent alcohol laws/rules.

#### **1..5.2**

##### **Reactive measures:**

- Better treatment of victims.
- Taking more control.
- Greater use of deterrents.

A large number of train operating companies are asking for a change in legislation to prevent large unruly groups congregating and remove intoxicated passengers. This will give more power to deal with anti social behaviour, but there are concerns that this could lead to increased staff assaults. There is a need to assess the impact of counter measures to improve passenger security to avoid simply exporting the risk from one group to another.

Best practice for major stations is available through the Secure Station Accreditation Scheme. The report recommends this is expanded to include recommendations on how people's perceptions of risk can be changed. It also recommends a scaled down version of the Secured Station Scheme for smaller mainline stations and branch lines.

The cost savings to the industry from reducing assaults are likely to be considerably less than the cost of introducing counter measures. Consideration needs to be given to how the funding gap can be bridged. This could include a combination of:

- direct grants (Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Local Strategic Partnerships)
- reduced franchise payments to the SRA/DfT
- increased revenue from higher fares, increased patronage or income from station retail outlets

## Perceptions of Personal Security at Stations - Practical Steps to Real Improvements

Dr Paul Cozens, Professor Jeremy Whitaker and Professor Richard Neale, University of Glamorgan (Wales), Third Annual Rail Stations Conference, November 2003

In 1999 research was conducted at Radyr railway station with infrequent users and potential users of Valley Lines' services. This research highlighted a range of personal safety issues in relation to the usage of Valley Lines as a means of transportation. This study developed from these findings with the objective of investigating personal safety on Valley Lines railway stations and their immediate access.

Perception of crime (as shown in customer surveys) is much higher than that recorded by the British Transport Police.

Transparent shelters have been installed at several stations in order to evaluate the effectiveness of design modification. In passenger surveys 71% of those who had noticed the shelters had been installed felt they enhanced their sense of personal security due to improved visibility.

Valley Lines' programme for improvements included CCTV, foliage clearance, maintenance, lighting, staffing levels, adopt a station schemes, transparent shelters, signage and electronic train information.

## An investigation of public perceptions of personal security on railway station environments, car parks and immediate access routes

Valley Lines, Dr Paul Cozens, University of Glamorgan, 2002

The project developed from a focus group which identified customer perceptions of crime as a potential deterrent to the use of the railways for work and leisure. The physical environment of a recently refurbished station and its immediate access routes were, in spite of the refurbishments, still identified as potentially sponsoring fears, negative perceptions and contributing to constraining patronage growth.

At focus groups carried out as part of this project, certain design characteristics were repeatedly associated with fear of crime. Male respondents were most worried about their personal safety in station car parks and were specifically concerned

about the safety of their cars when parked in the stations at night. Female respondents were more worried about their personal security when approaching the stations and waiting on the station platforms at night. Concerns for personal security were significantly higher after dark and improved lighting levels were the most commonly requested improvement.

## Managing Crime on Britain's Railways

Aidan Nelson - National Railway Crime Group

Crime at railway stations can take a number of different forms including vandalism, trespass and assaults. An important part of combating crime at railway stations is concentrating on the local community including local campaigns and education at local schools. Art work at stations has also been used effectively at stations to discourage graffiti and vandalism. Both of these initiatives are elements associated with station adoption.

## Vandalism, graffiti and environmental nuisance

DfT, December 2003

Crime Concern was commissioned by the then Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions to explore the reasons for and solutions to the problems of graffiti, vandalism and environmental nuisance on public transport.

The presence of incivilities creates a negative impression of an unmanaged and uncared for environment. Ineffective measures to tackle such features of anti-social behaviour and nuisance impact negatively on people's quality of life and their perceptions of public places.

There is little evidence to quantify the impact of vandalism, graffiti, litter and other environmental nuisance on the perceptions of passengers and public transport staff. Surveys often show that cleanliness and the presence of vandalism and graffiti are of comparatively less importance than reliability, frequency of service and fares, although they are still known to have an impact on the propensity to travel, especially at off-peak times and when there is a choice of alternative modes.

### 1.6 Vandalism: who is responsible?

The British Transport Police estimate that young people are responsible for 90% of vandalism offences on the railways. This includes damage to station infrastructure and rolling stock and obstructions on the line.

A national study of young people and crime on public transport found a low awareness amongst children and young people about the impact of graffiti on other passengers. Some young people were found to feel aggrieved by the perceived negative attitudes of older people and transport staff towards them. The thought that their actions might be upsetting or make people fearful may not act as a deterrent. Awareness is also low among young people about the cost of cleaning graffiti or repairing criminal damage.

There also appeared to be an annual cycle with the Easter Holidays and the summer school holidays being particular peaks for vandalism on the national railways. Vandalism was also found to be more likely to occur after 16.30, particularly during autumn and winter.

There are different types of vandalism including acquisitive (to acquire money or property), play (damage property in the context of a game) or malicious (as an expression of rage or frustration against a symbolic item of property, for example, vandalising a shelter if a passenger has missed the last train). This illustrates the point that not all vandalism is the same, different social categories are associated with different types of vandalism and vandalism can have a number of different motivations.

Public transport is a particularly popular target for graffiti. The key attraction could be attributed to the fact that graffiti on a train or on the trackside will be seen by a large audience. The rapid removal or repair of vandalism and graffiti appears to be one of the most effective elements of situational crime prevention.

### A study of lighting and rail users' perceptions of personal security at Cadoxton Railway Station, car park and immediate access routes

Valley Lines, Dr Paul Cozens, University of Glamorgan for the Suzy Lamplugh Trust

This project developed from a focus group which identified customer perceptions of crime as a potential deterrent to the use of the railways for work and leisure. The study was undertaken to evaluate the perceived effectiveness of lighting improvements. At Cadoxton, the existing lighting levels utilised 70 watt low pressure sodium lamps throughout the station and the car park. This was upgraded to 100 watt low pressure sodium lamps. Focus groups were conducted to evaluate how passengers perceived the improved lighting scheme in terms of their personal security and fear of crime.

The lighting improvement was not generally noticed. Many respondents did acknowledge the benefits of the improved lighting levels when probed at interview. Although lighting was important, it must be seen in context with other features and concerns associated with the station. Lighting improvements are best implemented as part of a package of improvements that attempt to tackle local nuisance from youths and drunks and visibility issues related to the underpass, the garages in the car park, transparent shelters, CCTV and more clearly delineating the boundaries of the station.

Fear of crime is as important an issue as crime itself. Official crime rates should not be utilised to measure the impact of lighting on crime since improved lighting could lead to increased reporting. Surveys provide a more accurate barometer of crime and disorder than official statistics. Effective lighting is defined as lighting that puts light where we need it (and no where else) and where light will help visibility. That means no glare, no light trespass, no direct up light, no harsh shadows, and no steep transitions for light to dark.

There is a serious lack of empirical research concerning the existing lighting levels to be found on Britain's railway stations. This raises two important issues - how many railway stations currently meet these recommended lighting standards and are such lighting standards adequate given the importance of improved lighting in several studies?

The coordination of CCTV with lighting of vulnerable points such as the entrance to and in an underpass was recommended. The creation of some relationship with the nearby public house was suggested making the pub a de facto "waiting room" for the station. It was also suggested that local school children could be involved in painting the underpass.

Research demonstrated that crime prevention measures perform better when they are accompanied by an extensive and informative marketing campaign.

## Public transport needs of minority, ethnic and faith communities Guidance Pack

DfT, November 2003

In spring 1999 consultants Social Research Associates were commissioned by DfT to carry out research into the transport requirements and the provision of public transport for minority ethnic and faith communities. The guidance pack is intended to be used by transport planners and operators to improve accessibility of transport for all.

Minority ethnic and faith communities are frequently dependent on public transport but are very concerned about racist attacks and all aspects of personal safety on the transport network, including when walking or waiting at bus stops or in stations.

## Community Rail

### 1..7 Relevance to and lessons for station adoptions

Station adoption often involves the local community or a specific local community group, sometimes formed for the express purpose of adopting a station. Such groups often develop out of wider rail user groups or community rail partnerships that cover a whole line or groups of lines.

There are a number of publications that guide the development of community rail initiatives in a general sense, but have clear implications for station adoptions as adoptions can develop out of wider line based community initiatives. Such community based initiatives act as a catalyst for the revival of some lines, with significant increases in patronage on community rail lines being generated, contributing to the continued commercial viability of such services.

Stations can act as a focal point within communities, and help with local regeneration. The engagement of local communities in station adoption can help to bring buildings back into re-use for a variety of purposes. Such activity brings life to the station, and may have a mutual benefit for the local economy.

The publications reviewed in detail are:

### Community Rail Development Strategy

SRA – November 2004

This strategy is designed to improve the financial performance, value for money and social value of local and rural railways. Community rail lines are typically local or rural routes with a single passenger operator and sometimes a little freight traffic.

Community rail partnerships are not for profit organisations with membership including local authorities, community groups, rail user groups, train operating companies and sometimes Network Rail. These partnerships are established by mutual agreement and are typically staffed by a paid officer supported by a committee of stakeholders.

Achieving the objectives of the strategy depends on partnership and active support from a wide range of stakeholders including local authorities and community groups. The strategy outlines improving value for money and social value of local stations in three ways:

- Increasing ridership
- Managing costs down
- Greater community involvement

The establishment of community rail partnerships around Britain has helped release the latent demand for rail by raising awareness and active promotion of local lines. The approach is flexible and could work at four levels:

- Community rail partnership.
- Rail development companies.
- Community rail lines.
- Microfranchises.

The strategy is based on the concept of a different category of local railway with standards appropriate to the level of usage. It essentially seeks to move these more rural lines on to a more sustainable basis bringing costs and income closer together.

Local railway lines are at the core of a good public transport network, providing residents of rural areas with access to local towns and encouraging vibrant economic and social hubs. Local rail lines also provide access to the regional and national network and are therefore important to the rural economy. This is illustrated in research by Somerset County Council on the West Somerset Railway which suggests that for every £1 in fare income, £1.90 flows into the local economy from associated spending.

Raising income is part of the Community Rail Strategy and there is evidence of significant latent demand for local rail services. An objective is to double originating fare income from community rail services over a five year period through local initiatives and through a combination of:

- better marketing
- changes to fare structure
- changes to fare levels
- integration
- special events and charters
- revenue protection

Property income on community rail routes can also be increased. Property forms part of the package of measures to improve the performance of community railways. There is scope for greater community use of empty or derelict buildings. This would benefit the community and also the railway by improving the station environment, providing a presence at the station as a deterrent to trespass and vandalism, and possibly attracting additional passengers to visit the facility provided.

Government regeneration funding can also be helpful for community rail and partnership station schemes, particularly in growth or deprived areas. Local community groups can be vital in making the case for the role of their local stations in tackling regeneration and social inclusion.

## Community rail development: What it means

### 1..8 ACoRP Policy

Community rail partnerships act as a bridge between local communities and the railway industry. They are a means of providing better transport for local communities and involving local people in their railway. Partners typically involve:

- train operators
- other transport operators
- local authorities
- Network Rail
- development agencies
- parish and town councils
- community groups and local businesses
- schools, colleges

The activities undertaken by the community rail partnerships vary between partnerships but can include:

- promotion and development of the line
- station adoption/development schemes
- activities which promote rail use
- link railway with local regeneration projects/initiatives
- link with cultural and heritage projects

Community rail partnerships are a way of generating increased revenue and patronage. An example of this is the Shrewsbury-Chester Line which has experienced year on year growth of 25% in the last three years. Knock on impacts of this include:

- sense of community pride in the line and stations
- improved services and facilities
- reduced vandalism
- integrated transport links

Rail development companies (RDC) are part of community rail development. They differ from community rail partnerships in that they constitute a company. The typical trustees of a RDC would be key stakeholders similar to those of a community rail partnership. RDCs are able to engage in additional activities to that of community rail partnerships including:

- retail and catering activities (on trains and at stations)
- leasing railway property
- undertaking consultancy services
- organising revenue generating events

## Rural railways

### 1..9 Relevance to and lessons for station adoptions

Many of the smaller, un-manned stations that are either already adopted, or could be regarded as likely targets for adoption, are to be found in rural communities.

Low levels of patronage and remoteness from other facilities are common features of rural stations. Both are aspects that lead to the very issues that station adoption seeks to tackle in terms perceptions of safety and security. Adoption can help to promote activity on the station, and helps to develop links into the community.

The publications reviewed in detail are:

### Rural railways at a turning point

ACoRP Policy

Rural railways in Germany and Scandinavia have modern trains, high quality integration and local management. Often these local railways are owned by the local community. Some British railways have already achieved success including increased frequencies, bus links and better station facilities much of this has been down to community rail partnerships.

ACoRP are looking at ways of bringing stations back to life through the “Central Stations” project. This links to the development of community railways where it is important that stations are attractive, welcoming and safe and buildings should have an appropriate use which adds value to the station itself. There is a need to avoid the basic station by building in facilities for a small shop, meeting room or office space. The station should be a living space.

Local railways need to be integrated with the local community. One option to address this could be the community rail operator also taking on responsibility for local bus services and community transport. Another key element for community railways is staffing. Rural routes can suffer from members of staff that, for much of the time, work on different routes. A higher quality of service could be provided if staff could be dedicated to one line as is the case in the Esk Valley.

### The rural railway: going local to revive

ACoRP Policy

Around 50 of Britain’s rural railways have “community rail partnerships” which bring together the train companies, local authorities and community groups to support and develop their local railway. The results have been a boom in passenger use, improved stations and better train services.

ACoRP wants to look at ways of getting more out of the rural network and has examined experience from other European countries such as Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. The solutions here were local management and local authority owned companies taking over running local train services. In several

cases, local publicly owned transport companies now run both bus and train services with multi skilled staff and a single management structure.

This approach could work in Britain by sub contracting operation of some rural train services to a local company which has strong community backing. In some cases lines could be run as semi independent operations, with a local body responsible for both running trains and maintaining track. Wensleydale Railway is an example of where this system is already in operation where a lightly used freight line is now also used by a community owned company running regular passenger trains.

This is just one of a number of pilot projects in Britain to test out different approaches to developing rural lines. The Esk Valley is another and the Esk Valley Development Company has been formed. The aim is to eventually run the train service as a core of an integrated transport network in Whitby and the North Yorkshire Moors using locally based staff.

ACoRP want to develop strategies which are flexible and creative, with rail at the heart of rural transport, linking up with community bus services, park and ride, cycling and walking.

## Rural Railways: a new beginning?

Jeremy Whitaker, Commercial Director, Wales and West, TR&IN Conference, September 2000

Perceptions of rural railways include the high cost of operation coupled with relatively low customer numbers. Rural lines are not only physically remote from centres of power but also psychologically near the bottom of the corporate priority list. The competing needs of commuters and tourists can often conflict. And the complexity of the market being served often leads to some uncertain and fudged decision making.

An examination of seaside lines highlights the seasonality that can result in some challenging train utilisation and hence cost implications. On the St. Ives branch in Cornwall 70% of all journeys are undertaken between June and September. By way of comparison, the Newquay line has a seasonal peak from April to September containing 73.5% of annual journeys.

There is no such thing as a typical rural line, and the marketing opportunities that exist to grow existing business and generate new growth are hence variable by route.

In Wales and West most local communications work has concentrated on tourism as analysis of individual lines has indicated that this is extremely significant. A more strategic approach to tourism funding provides further opportunities for sustainable development.

Improvements to the rural network will require funding.

## Good practice in the provision of rail services in rural areas and small towns

Jeremy Whitaker, Commercial Director, Wessex Trains, Waterfront Conference, October 2003

This presents a case study of Truro–Falmouth Line. This line consists of 12 miles of scenic railway through Cornish hills. Recent changes to the line include a re-branding in partnership with the local paper to “The Maritime Line”, Falmouth station refurbishment including new shelters and information boards, and an all year round Sunday service. Promotional events on the line have included a Rail Ale Trail, the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and the Falmouth flyer including sponsorship and new liveried trains. In conclusion working in partnership on the line has been crucial to the lines success (7.5% increase in patronage). The line has also exploited several funding opportunities open to it, as well as a number of innovative marketing ideas.

### Maximising commercial opportunities at smaller stations: What the train operator can do

Jeremy Whitaker, Commercial Director, Wessex Trains and Wales & Borders Trains, TR&IN Conference, September 2003

The motivation for maximising these commercial opportunities are numerous including to improve personal security, revenue protection, added customer value, value to the community and building maintenance.

Local marketing is vital to these initiatives along with the use of existing networks. The station buildings at smaller stations are often in a poor state of repair. In this case the use of temporary buildings is a possibility. Alternatively buildings could be rented out rent free for a period in return for renovation.

### Improving Rail Services in Rural Areas

Jeremy Whitaker, Commercial Director Wales & West and Valley Lines, Rural Transport: The Way Forward, Conference – 27 June 2001

Operator commitment and “buy in” is clearly vital to the objective to improve rail service provision in rural areas. The level of service provided by a franchise operator on a rural route is entirely down to specification set out in the Franchise Agreement, the contract with the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA). Rural services make a loss and do not cover even their marginal variable costs of operation, thus the level of grant aid received is critical and directly related to the level of service provision.

Adequate funding is essential and must embrace not only capital funding, which to date has come from a number of national, regional and local sources as well as the EU, but is also about revenue funding. The current round of re-franchising and the existence of Rail Passenger Partnership (RPP) Grants were however beginning to have an effect in this area.

There is potential conflict between the centrally funded rail network and locally supported bus services in the drive towards greater transport integration. What is required in rural areas is a wider transport strategy and not just a solution for rural railways.

It is of critical importance that a transport strategy is not developed in a vacuum. Consumer behaviours are developing fast and diverging. Consumption patterns are becoming global in terms of both the development of global brands and the opening up of new distribution channels through e-commerce. In the opposite direction governance is becoming more localised with the development of regional assemblies and the desire for more localised control.

The ultimate consumer offer must be customer focused. The old “use or lose it” philosophy is alien to any concept of a customer focused service provider.

Most of Wales and West’s rural marketing activity has only been possible because of its membership of three rail partnerships - the Devon & Cornwall, Heart of Wales Line and Heart of Wessex Line partnerships. All the partnerships provide resources in terms of people who are individuals with good local knowledge. More than that they have local credibility and a vital network of contacts. For them, the route or routes they promote will always be their first priority. Additionally, they are often able to draw on funding sources that are difficult or too time consuming for an operator to access.

In being consumer focused, it is implied that the product offer will deliver a contemporary image and not be the provider of last resort otherwise no amount of funding will deliver the objectives required. Unless rural services become acceptable and mainstream no amount of historic background will deliver the improvements in patronage that operators and all agencies desire.

### Case Study: assessing the commercial & operational viability of train services in rural areas

Jeremy Whitaker, Commercial Director, Wessex Trains, Conference presentation, January 2004

There is no single solution to improving cost effectiveness of train services in rural areas. A number of factors need to be considered including the role of partnerships, the role of local authorities, renewal versus operation and an appropriate culture of risk. There are a number of commercial constraints in rural areas including PSR (reality versus customer perception), performance regime, a failure to understand the market, negative media and third parties. Finally there are a number of operational constraints including journey times and stopping patterns.

## Improving rail facilities

### 1..10 Relevance to and lessons for station adoptions

A key issue identified as a deterrent to passengers is their poor experiences on stations leading to a poor perceptions of stations. This is the defining issues behind the need and desire to adopt stations. Many of these poor experiences relate to poor quality or poorly maintained facilities.

Developing partnerships to help improve facilities is identified as a key action. This could be within or outside a station adoption programme, but station adoption certainly lends itself to developing community focussed partnerships to deliver improved facilities.

The reporting regimes undertaken as part of station adoptions helps to provide improved facilities at stations, by providing regular checks and identifying maintenance and repair requirements.

Good quality information provision is vital to passenger requirements. The most important sources of information for passengers are direct from staff and from station announcements. Identifying the appropriate means of information provision within adopted stations to provide the service required and to help provide the assurance and confidence in the service necessary to encourage use is therefore one to be addressed.

The publications reviewed in detail are:

### Strategy to Reality: using Local Transport Plans to deliver on rail

Rail Passengers Council (RPC) and Committees, 2005

This report was aimed at Local Authorities preparing their Local Transport Plans (LTPs). The purpose was to highlight the importance of rail in the context of LTPs, to offer practical advice to local authorities on deliverable rail strategies, and to encourage wider partnership between local authorities and the rail industry.

The report suggests that the first round of LTPs leaned towards aspirational rather than deliverable proposals. The RPC advised that, rather than advocating brand new lines or routes, LTPs should focus on improving:

- access to rail network from communities
- enhancing integration
- improving the provision of information
- encouraging multi modal ticketing
- developing partnership to improve station facilities

The RPC acknowledges the importance of the station. A poor station environment is unlikely to encourage occasional travellers to use train rather than the car. The report outlines the importance of community schemes and outlines the various ways of involving the community with local stations and educating them about the railway system. Arriva Trains Wales are highlighted through the “adopt a station” initiative.

The project is aimed at improving the station and encouraging regular feedback about the station buildings and facilities to help to ensure they meet the high standards expected by their customers.

The report also outlines a number of issues including lighting at stations to reduce the perception that the station is unsafe; and vandalism which is not only unsightly and consumes resources which could be better employed elsewhere, but also deters passengers from using the transport system. The presence of litter on track beds and embankments not only looks unsightly, but is also a health hazard and could deter people from using the railway.

## Passenger Information: what, when, where and how?

Rail Passenger Council, 2004

Consultants Steer Davies Gleave undertook a study to identify practical measures which could be used to improve passenger information provision. The research was designed to identify passenger priorities, measure satisfaction and explore ways of improving information provision.

This found that the top priorities for improving sources of information were closely related to the sources used most often. The top three are electronic information displays, station announcements and staff at stations, all of which are at station sources. Planning sources (e.g. internet and telephone) were less of a priority.

The report concludes that better and timelier information when services are disrupted and when there are engineering works is a clear priority. It is also clear that examples of information good practice need to be spread network wide. The report suggests the following for improving passenger information at stations:

- Use visual and audio displays as complementary sources.
- Precede time sensitive audio messages with a distinctive beep.
- Conduct visibility audit for displays and define minimum standards.
- More electronic A to Z information at major stations.
- Earlier advertising of departure platform.
- More TV style displays in waiting areas.
- More TV style displays outside the station.
- Raise awareness of help points as information sources.
- Develop standards for equipment in relation to station types.

## 2 Station adoption guides

### Relevance to and lessons for station adoptions

A number of specific and more generic guides for station adopters have been produced. Some guides are specifically for use within certain schemes, such as those operated by UK train operators Northern and Arriva Trains Wales, and the TransAdelaide scheme. Others are more generic, such as the ACoRP guide to station adoption produced for use in Greater Manchester, but which references good practice from around the UK.

The guides outline the range of possible adoption models, these principally being at two levels. Firstly, adoptions could take the form of a monitoring and fault reporting regime undertaken by individuals or groups by arrangement with the train operator. At a more involved level, “friends” of stations or other voluntary groups undertake a variety of activities including feeding comments back to operators, and station enhancements such as gardens, planters and local art.

The specific guides identify key requirements for adopters, principally those in relation to safety and the limits of responsibility of adopters. The limitation of responsibility, and the range and scope of work allowed by adopters is clearly specified in the guides and is clearly linked to the need to maintain a safe operating environment on the railway concerned. The guides are prescriptive in the range of duties allowable, and the procedures by which they should be undertaken.

The ACoRP guide for Greater Manchester contains guidance that broadens the role of adopters, examining the more detailed “friends” of station approach. There remains a consistent and firm line that safety on the station is paramount.

This guide encompasses broader community development issues, and covers the processes and guidance on developing and managing a community based adoption group.

Building on the theme of community engagement, the Countryside Agency’s Gateway Stations project examined the building of linkages between twelve stations and their communities and hinterlands. This recognises the role a station can play within a community in rural market towns, and the importance of a station to delivering wider regeneration and policy objectives.

Two reports in this section move away from direct station adoption and examine alternative station ownership models. In both cases, they specifically focus on local authority involvement in station ownership and management. Both reports were undertaken by independent consultants on behalf of Surrey County Council.

The drivers behind the desire to examine alternative models of ownership and management are the range and quality of facilities on stations, which are variable, and not entirely satisfactory to customers in all cases. This led to an examination of how influence could be brought to bear on the quality of stations, and specifically alternative management regimes. This motivation is the same basic one as that behind station adoption, and therefore the lessons from this work are relevant. Alternative ownership models from around the UK are examined, and some case

studies of local government involvement in the operation of stations elsewhere in the UK are provided.

The publications reviewed in detail are:

## Station Adoption Scheme – Individual and Group Adoption

Northern Rail, 2005

Northern Rail operates a formal station adoption scheme. The aim of the scheme is to ensure that each of the stations leased by the company under the terms of the franchise is adopted by an individual or group. Station adopters visit stations once each week to check for problems or damage and provide the company with a monthly report using a standard form – the Northern Rail Service Quality Log. All reports are passed to Northern Rail Station Managers who have the responsibility for initiating repair work. In return for their help, adopters receive a free travel pass valid on Northern Rail services.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to individual and group station adopters on a variety of topics:

- A safety briefing containing a series of safety rules.
- What to do when visiting an adopted station.
- How to complete the Service Quality Log.
- What to do where there are problems that require immediate action.
- An explanation of the rail industry zero tolerance policy towards alcohol and drugs.
- Terms and conditions for station adopters and an agreement for signature by the adopter(s).
- Contact telephone numbers.

## Adopt a Station

Arriva Trains Wales, 2005

Arriva Trains Wales operates a similar station adoption scheme to Northern Rail based on the recruitment of individual or group adopters to visit and inspect stations at regular intervals and provide reports identifying problems that can be passed to Station Managers to arrange for rectification.

The Arriva Trains Wales guidance to station adopters is provided in the form of a folder that includes the following:

- A safety brief for station adopters and an explanation of the company's alcohol and drugs policy.
- A memorandum of understanding introducing the concept of station adoption.
- Terms and conditions and an adoption agreement for signature.
- A Station Adoption Survey Form for fault reporting.
- Contact telephone numbers.

## 'Adopt your Station' – Station Adoption in the South West

Jeremy Whitaker, Commercial Director Wessex Trains, ACoRP Conference, 2005

The majority of the 125 stations on the former Wessex Trains network are un-staffed and a large number are rural or semi rural. They have the very real potential to enhance the tourist experience in the south west that is so important to the economy in the region if they are adopted, through improving that station environment for visitors as well as providing a welcoming and secure environment all year round for local residents.

The desire to expand the number of stations with adopter status led to the realisation that there was a need to significantly improve the process to ensure a safe and efficient management of the programme. Potential recruits who wished to join the 'Adopt Your Station' programme could record an interest via cards handed out at community events or they could find out more and register on line on the Wessex Trains website.

Adopters and potential adopters had access to a specific Community Rail section on the Wessex Trains website where they could learn more about Community Rail and Station adoption in general.

Details of each scheme were to be available to staff on the Wessex Trains Intranet to ensure contact details are readily accessible and up to date. This approach allowed Wessex to expand its 'Adopt Your Station' programme in a way that did not detract from the flair and enthusiasm of the individuals concerned but which allowed the cost effective administration of the scheme as well as significantly improving the information available to adopters.

## Adopt a Station Program Guidelines

TransAdelaide, 2001

The TransAdelaide Adopt-a-Station Program is an initiative to enable the company to involve community groups and individuals in the maintenance and upkeep of its stations and tram stops. The objectives are to encourage community involvement and to maintain attractive station environments that encourage people to use public transport.

Prospective Adopt-a-Station groups need to make a written application to TransAdelaide containing contact details, function of group and scope of work to be undertaken and names of all working volunteers. Groups are chosen to adopt stations on the basis of a number of criteria:

- Preference is given to "local" interest groups that provide evidence of their links with the local community.
- Creativity, enthusiasm and ownership.
- Integration with local community projects.
- Benefits to the surrounding environment and travelling public.
- Concepts that encourage the use of public transport.

The performance of adopters is monitored annually and poorly performing groups can be removed from the Program after two years.

Guidelines are provided on the scope of work that can be undertaken. Permitted work includes painting, graffiti removal, gardening, litter removal, cosmetic improvements and reporting of damage. Artwork is encouraged, subject to TransAdelaide approval, but no advertising is permitted. The Guidelines also identify the types of work that must not be undertaken by adopters including any structural alterations to buildings and anything that affects platforms, track, signalling and level crossings. Guidance is also provided on personal safety, safe working procedures and the reporting of accidents or incidents.

## Station adoption: A guide for the local community

ACoRP for GMPTE, 2005

The problem: many of Britain's stations are un-staffed, cold and prone to vandalism. The number of stations across the country means that train operators are unable to monitor them as regularly or thoroughly as they would like.

One of the aims of station adoption is bringing station back into the heart of the local communities, adding value to what is already there and make the station more welcoming.

The Guide outlines two models for station adoption:

- Adopt a station schemes where individuals or local groups monitor stations and report any problems to train operating companies.
- Friends of stations includes a variety of activities including feeding comments back to operators, and station enhancements such as gardens, planters and local art.

This *Guide* focuses on providing advice to groups intending to take a more proactive approach to adoption. There is a wide variation in what groups across the country actually do. Some stations are adopted by existing groups, some by groups formed specifically to look after a particular station and some by individuals.

## Preparing to adopt a station

The need is to get a small group of people to act as the station adoption group. The group could include local organisations that are already involved in community or environmental work in the areas (e.g. "anytown in bloom").

Once the station adoption group has been formed and a name has been agreed, there is a need to consider aims and objectives, funding and a constitution. The group can hold meetings for discussion of the problems are at the station, opportunities for change and activities for the group to undertake.

## The basics

The *Guide* stresses the importance of working in partnership with train operating companies to set out rules, duties and responsibilities. Emphasis is placed on the need for members of the adoption group to be given a safety briefing by the train operating company including specification of the areas where they can and cannot go. In most cases, members of the group can only go where passengers are normally allowed access. In no circumstances is access allowed to the lineside.

Groups should set up a rota of inspections to establish who is doing what and when. Frequency of checking of stations should be at least weekly. Examples of items that should be included on checklists include:

- lights not working
- time tables and information should be up to date
- vandalism and gangs hanging around the station
- equipment out of order (e.g. telephones, PA system)
- litter bins not being emptied and litter on station and trackside
- check car park for lighting and inappropriate use (e.g. abandoned vehicles, parking by non rail users)
- obstacles to accessibility

Station adoption groups should establish an action plan setting modest targets. This should be reviewed regularly (e.g. every 6 months). Getting the plan in writing shows the group is serious, organised and has a clear sense of purpose.

Some adoption groups get involved in providing station furniture such as benches and planters. It is important that these are firmly fixed down. It is important that any additional furniture can be repaired, maintained and removed at the end of its useful life.

The *Guide* includes advice on how to maintain interest after the initial period of enthusiasm. This could include involving a local school or other local organisations. Activities like arranging visits to other adopted stations or inviting external speakers to meetings can encourage the social side of the group.

It is important to use the local media to create a positive image for the group and maintain community interest through regular press releases, articles in the local press, distribution of a newsletter or use of a web site.

Some station adoption groups have taken over redundant buildings for the following uses:

- Tourist information offices
- Bookshops cafes
- Waiting rooms
- Art galleries
- Office space
- Parish or town council offices

This has the added advantage of bringing stations back to life and reducing people's concerns about personal safety. Empty buildings can be the responsibility of the train operating company, Network Rail or Spacia. All are usually pleased for empty buildings to be brought back into use.

Station adoption groups can also use community art work to liven up stations providing another opportunity to engage the local community. For example, the Penistone Line Partnership "art along the line" initiative won funding from art organisations and allowed the commissioning of artists to work with local young people to create displays, information boards and mosaics at stations. Another way of engaging the local community is through special events (e.g. garden parties, carol singing).

## Case studies

Handforth, Cheshire has won numerous prestigious national awards including a "small scale innovation award". Achievements include the station gardens, art work and a brand new booking office.

Friends of Levenshulme Station encouraged Network Rail to rebuild sub-standard platforms. The group has also worked with a local school for the hearing impaired to install a series of images of the station to illustrate sign language.

At Mountain Ash, Glamorgan, a local comprehensive school has been involved in improving their local station by clearing overgrown vegetation and litter, encouraging students to become active citizens.

At Prestatyn, North Wales, station gardening and litter picking have formed part of the local scout and cub group environment badge making the station a safe and more inviting place for passengers.

Dolau, Powys, has floral displays and is a winner of best kept station awards.

West Runton, Norfolk, has seen station adoption result in the development of a garden and heritage style signage. Adopter group activities include an annual station tea party.

Friends of Saunderton Station raised funds to restore the historic station waiting room leading to re-opening in 2005.

Stocksmoor, West Yorkshire, started by creating a station garden. Railway staff helped to clear some space and the W.I. look after the gardens. Heritage style signs have been put up and traditional railway benches installed on the platform. The Penistone Line Partnership is working with the train operator on ideas for a small shop.

At Church and Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire, a local mill shop adopted the station and provided new seats and planting to add colour and life to the station. Security has been improved through the installation of CCTV.

At Helsby, Cheshire, a rail user group adopted the station, developed a garden and are trying to find tenants for the vacant station buildings. The group publishes a regular newsletter distributed to local households.

Friends of Altrincham Interchange mobilised 80 people to help clean up the station and provided floral displays in the booking hall. The Friends' newsletter has a distribution list of 350 people.

## Station Adoption Agreement – Northern Rail

The agreement and associated papers used by Northern Rail for station adoption are included in an Appendix 7 of the GMPTE/ACoRP Guide to illustrate how a train operating company can utilise the station adoption process to its benefit. Volunteers are recruited to monitor stations in accordance with advice provided by the train operating company.

Northern Rail asks station adopters to abide by the following rules:

- Not act in a manner that could lead others to believe you are an employee of Northern Rail or its contractors.
- Not act in a manner that could be considered to be defamatory towards Northern Rail, its agents or contractors.
- Follow instructions given by Northern Rail employees while on Northern Rail property.
- When visiting the station, individuals must not act in a way that may jeopardise their safety or that of customers, employees or anyone else using the station or railway.
- Access to the railway track is strictly prohibited. Adopters must stay within public areas and must not enter any areas marked private or no unauthorised access.
- Adopters must not carry out any maintenance or repair work without prior written permission from the station adoption manager.
- Adopters must not alter, move or remove any station facility without prior written permission from the station adoption manager.
- Adopters must not carry out inspections in a manner that may damage property belonging to Northern Rail, its contractors or its customers.
- When visiting the station with the purpose of making an inspection, adopters must comply with Northern Rail's alcohol and drugs policy.

Northern Rail introduced the station adoption scheme to strengthen links with the community. The great majority of stations have an adopter who visits the station once a week and reports back any faults. This information is passed on to the relevant manager to ensure that rectification takes place. Members of the scheme receive a complementary travel pass for use on Northern Rail services.

Station inspections are recorded by completing service quality log forms at weekly intervals giving details of any problems identified. A station inspection should take 10–15 minutes. Early rectification can avoid a need for more substantial remedial works later or can allow safety matters (e.g. broken glass) to be dealt with quickly.

The guidance explains that cosmetic work and minor faults may not be addressed immediately for budgetary reasons.

The area covered under the Northern Rail scheme includes platforms that are in use and public areas including the booking office. Track, signalling and car parks are not included in the adoption scheme. When assessing station decoration, adopters are advised that much decoration is purely cosmetic and matters that may affect safety such as crumbling plasterwork are much more important. Passenger safety signs at the ends of the platforms are covered in the inspection, but the standard adopter's log form does not cover any other safety signage.

## A partnership story: getting things moving

Countryside Agency, 2004

This report describes the experiences of 12 designated Gateway Stations since their launch in 2003. This report draws out good practice and identifies elements of success and barriers to progress.

All stations should be gateways, encouraging people into the wider community. This is not always the case and sometimes stations can be a particularly uninviting environment.

Main objectives of Gateway Stations programme are to:

- help deliver national, regional and local transport policies
- provide advice and support to individual stations and community groups
- provide comprehensive link between community plans, rural transport plans, local transport plans, existing community partnerships and local strategic partnerships
- provide link to rail industry
- develop links between individual stations and towns they serve.

The twelve Gateway Stations examined by the Countryside Agency are quite different but they have a number of common elements:

- Sound partnerships – each gateway partnership has been able to draw partners together. Some towns have existing strong partnerships which include members of the rail industry. These partnerships vary from market town partnerships and rural transport partnerships to local authorities and their strategic partnerships. Communities need to buy into the regeneration of their station. This helps to ensure the long term sustainability of the station.
- Stations as part of integrated transport service provision – effective transport service must be integrated, including good signage, clear information and coordinated timetables.
- Embedding gateway stations into policies and strategies – plans for stations should be embedded into LTPs and other local plans to ensure the station becomes a central part of the community and part of the funding process. The LTP process does not dovetail with train operating franchise agreements which makes negotiations more complicated.
- Links with other organisations.

- Commercial awareness – the rail industry is a multiplicity of private companies. Public sector action plans, consultation and strategies are meaningless exercises without an understanding of the business imperative that drives the rail industry.

## 2..1 Barriers to success

The franchise process hinders implementation of station improvements, particularly in the run up to the end of the franchise. The franchise document to some extent ties the hands of the operating company which means they are not always able to be responsive to local changes and needs.

Partnership capacity – volunteers contribute significant skill and time to the programme, however this is not limitless.

Land and property issues – when land and property is owned by several organisations, both publicly and privately owned, this can make leasing arrangements complicated. Station buildings are often neglected and prone to vandalism.

Security - Gateway Stations present an opportunity to engage perpetrators of vandalism and mischief and to channel their energy into productive rather than destructive activity.

Additional information on Gateway Stations is contained within the *Train Times* publication from ACoRP (Issue 32, Summer 2003) and from the Countryside Agency website.

The following stations were in the scheme: Hexham, Craven Arms, Sheerness, Uttoxeter, Wem, Frodsham, Market Harborough, Crediton, Brandon, Sandown, Berwick-upon-Tweed and Whitby.

## Manual for Local Authority Involvement in railway stations

Laing Rail, April 2006

This report examines potential ownership and delivery models enabling local authorities to exert greater control over quality and facilities of railway stations. The study recommends development of a number of pilot schemes applying different ownership and delivery models.

The privatised rail industry is complex and subject to constant change, with both challenges and opportunities for the improvement of station environments and facilities.

Surrey's stations have widely differing characteristics in terms of size, footprint, access, service patterns and location in relation to settlements and developments. There is therefore no one alternative ownership and operation model applicable to all stations.

There are some limited opportunities for enhanced revenues based on commercial sub-leasing or advertising. There are some opportunities for re-use of buildings by

local authorities or voluntary bodies, as facilities supporting tourism or for commercial use.

The new Stations Code, shared and “carve out” leases, and community rail principles offer the greatest chance of successful pilot scheme implementation. Third party involvement and potential investment, particularly in re-development pilots, warrants further assessment. Close engagement with Network Rail is recommended given its enhanced industry leadership role, ownership of stations, and more open attitude to enhancements.

## Surrey Stations Pathfinder Project – report on non standard station ownership models

Jacobs Babbie, November 2005

The aim of this study was to capture information that would be useful in assisting in the identification of potential models for Surrey County Council’s new approach to station management under the Pathfinder project.

Following privatisation there has been widespread concern about the condition of railway stations particularly through lack of investment and upkeep of the small to medium size stations. The aim was to maintain the stations in the state they were found at privatisation, and this has led to little improvement in the station environment.

The modern facilities at stations initiative introduced in 2003 sought to provide basic improvements to small and medium sized railway stations. Recent research including “Maintaining and improving Britain’s railway stations” has identified a gap between rising passenger expectations and the level of investment in the industry. Stations are an important element of a journey and are a significant component of the urban fabric. Members of the industry feel that there is significant potential to improve the quality of small to medium sized railway stations.

Surrey County Council has investigated options to take more responsibility for the running of some stations which are in poor condition. The aim is to make better use of under utilised assets. There is potential to use empty buildings for community facilities and improve the appearance of stations to make them more welcoming to passengers.

The report provides case studies of two stations in Lancashire where the local authority is engaged in operating aspects of the station. As part of the Carnforth Connect project Lancashire County Council provided a ticket and information office at the station. The rest of the station buildings are leased out to Carnforth Station and Railway Trust Co. Ltd who have brought the buildings back to use by creating opportunities for new businesses. This work has been funded from a variety of sources including the North West Development Agency, National Lottery and European funding.

Lancashire County Council owns and operates a customer service office at Clitheroe Interchange. This provides information and sells tickets. Responsibility for the station lies with Network Rail and Northern Rail, while the Council has

responsibility for the Customer Services Office and bus station. This is an example of Local Authority involvement at a station, making use of adjacent council facilities.

Finally, the report references the concept of a tripartite lease to secure the long term use of station assets by a third party within the train operating company lease. Tenancies must run beyond franchise terms in order to secure long term investment. This is the mechanism used in the *Central Stations* project.

## Best practice examples

### 2..2 Relevance to and lessons for station adoptions

In addition to guides to the processes and mechanisms behind station adoption, the review includes a number of sources of best practice examples that supplement and add value to the guidance available through the experiences of adopters.

The principal source of best practice in this regard is the regular ACoRP newsletter, *Train Times*. This is supplemented by examples from the *Central Stations* project, the *Gateway Stations* project, and from a specific study of Crediton station in Devon.

The case studies cover a variety of topics, but are particularly focussed on projects that have helped to bring life and activity back into stations through re-use of formerly redundant buildings for a variety of uses. Garden development is also featured.

Another aspect that is showcased here is that of community development, and the importance of community groups, “friends” groups and other links into local communities that have helped adoptions place the station at the heart of its local community.

The publications reviewed in detail are:

#### Train Times (Association of Community Rail Partnerships)

The Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP - before 2004 known as Transport Research & Information Network (TR&IN)), publishes a quarterly journal *Train Times*. This review summarises key coverage of station adoption schemes in *Train Times* from January 2000 (Issue 18) to Summer 2006 (Issue 43). The review is extended and updated by reference to information taken from web sites (e.g. for individual tenants and Community Rail Partnerships), from published studies and obtained through direct contact with tenants for some of the schemes.

The lack of a precise distinction between station tenant and adopter is often to be seen. Whilst some tenants simply rent redundant accommodation at stations, *Train Times* frequently cites examples of tenants who, although not formally adopters, clearly fulfil a significant role at the stations.

### 2..3 Buffets, restaurants, pubs and guest houses

Very typical of station tenants who play a wider role are independent operators of station buffets, pubs and restaurants. *Train Times* runs an occasional series on these, covering for example:

- Crediton (Issue 18, 2000): tenants turned derelict 150-year old premises into a refreshment room open 7 days a week and serving hot and cold meals. The scheme began in 1998 and continues in operation in 2006 (source: telephone information from tenant).
- Malton (Issue 19, 2000), the licensed Whistlestop Café offers home-cooked meals at the former Station Hotel premises (source: web site).

- Manningtree (Issue 23, 2001), a CAMRA-recognised licensed bar and restaurant, winner of Best Station Buffet award, and featured in the Essex Community Rail Partnership's The Ale Trail leaflet.
- Yeovil Junction (Issue 34, Spring 2004), where the tenant "helps out on the station, keeping the platform neat and tidy and helping with the excellent floral displays", as well as delivering refreshments to train crews and passengers on board the trains.
- St. Bees (Issue 35, Summer 2004 and web site): high class restaurant and bed & breakfast in the former station house. Recently transferred to new ownership after the retirement of the owners for the past 25 years.
- Codsall: station buildings restored to house The Railway, an award-winning pub that hosts meetings of local groups such as the Cotleigh Barn Owl Group and Severn Valley Railway enthusiasts (Issue 41, Winter 2006).
- The award of a civic Certificate of Commendation to Llandudno Junction's Going Loco buffet operator for special service to the travelling public (Issue 42, Spring 2006).

Starting with Issue 39 (Summer 2005), *Train Times* featured a *Buffets, Bars and Dining Cars* column. The first of these cited the buffet at Hellifield, ceremonially opened at a station gala and managed by Kingfisher Videos whose products are also sold at the station.

The Valley Indian restaurant at Corbridge station on the Tyne Valley line, Northumberland, is unusual in offering an inclusive train fare plus meal deal. Branded as the Passage to India, the offer includes travel on specified trains from and back to Newcastle (source: Tyne Valley Rail Study, Martin Higginson Transport Research & Consultancy, 2005).

A common theme is the generation of interest and pride in the station, by the refurbishment of premises, through displaying and selling railway memorabilia and by encouraging interest in the station's heritage. In every case, the refreshment facility relies on a wider clientele than just rail passengers, thus ensuring both greater activity in and around the station and an increased awareness of the railway's presence.

## 2..4 Communities and facilities at stations

In Issue 19 (April 2000), *Train Times* reports on the re-birth of West Highland Line stations, including "projects breathing new life into stations which can in turn help the economic well being of fragile rural communities. The initiatives, which involve establishing private sector partners, include the conversion of Bridge of Orchy station to a bunkhouse and tearoom....the award winning Tulloch Station Bunkhouse.....and plans to convert Taynuilt station into a Heritage Centre with a small cinema". Other initiatives proposed on the line include a railway museum at Glenfinnan station, a gardeners' club occupying premises at Arisaig and Friends of the West Highland Line restoring premises at Upper Tyndrum as a base for their meetings. In 2006, the Road-to-the-Isles web-based newsletter confirms Glenfinnan station as railway museum with a restaurant and accommodation in converted railway carriages.

At Halesworth, Suffolk, a partnership involving the rail industry, local authority and EU funding has enabled the station buildings to be brought back to life as a base for the town museum, community bus service and Mencap. The lease of the premises is held by the town council. (Issues 20, July 2000 and 29, Autumn 2002).

The Settle & Carlisle railway benefits from a Development Company that manages and sells tickets at the line's two staffed stations, Settle and Appleby. Rural development along a rail corridor (Issue 26, January 2002) traces the development of line's re-incarnation as a major tourist attraction to provide "both a transport link and a focal point" for the area served. Independent retailers also sell tickets at other stations, including Chester-le-Street and Gobowen (Issue 27, Spring 2002). The local authority, Lancashire County Council, staffs the booking offices at Carnforth and Clitheroe stations (Issue 32, Summer 2003).

At Southminster, Essex, the train operator leases the station building at a peppercorn rent to the Essex Community Rail Partnership and the local volunteer group Right Tracks. The station house has been renovated as a Healthy Living Centre, incorporating a café, meeting room and citizen's advice bureau (Issue 23, Spring 2001).

At Brandon, Norfolk, the redundant station buildings used to be occupied by a building contractor, which played no particular role in developing interest in the railway. Since that company vacated the premises, discussions have been taking place on the possibility of housing a YHA Youth Hostel at the station, a scheme that would afford regular human presence at the station, as well as bringing customers to the railway (Issue 34, Spring 2004; Norwich-Ely Train Service Optimisation for RPC Eastern England, 2005; Brandon Communities Partnership website).

Penrhiwceiber station in South Wales is adopted by the Community Partnership for Penrhiwceiber in collaboration with local primary schools, the health trust, borough council, police and voluntary groups (Issue 36, Autumn 2004).

The Heart of Wales Line Travellers' Association has won funding through Carmarthenshire Council's Rural Services and Thematics Programme to create a post of Station Host, based at Llandovery, and to develop a programme of station improvements (Issue 37, Winter 2005).

The role of individuals in creating and developing community involvement with stations and railways is of great importance. For example, in the series of articles on *Local Heroes*, *Train Times* profiles Eric Stanley who, among other contributions to the Settle & Carlisle Line tends Settle station garden, mans the station shop, conducts parties round the signal box and distributes leaflets around the town (Issue 40, Autumn 2005). At Aberdour, Scotland, the station is effectively 'adopted' by its own stationmaster who keeps his booking office open for longer than the required hours, has turned the station gardens into a nationally recognised showpiece and supplies hanging baskets to other stations (Issue 39, Summer 2005).

Events on stations also help foster local interest. The 2005 visit of Santa Claus to the Hull-Scarborough Line, sponsored by Northern Rail and the Co-operative Group, included a charity gala and carol concert at Bridlington Station (Issue 41, Winter 2006).

## 2.5 Arts

Redundant station premises can make suitable venues for arts projects. Todmorden Art Group has moved into rooms at Todmorden station, creating the Platform One Gallery, which is managed by a not-for-profit company (Todmorden Art Group) made up of local artists. Exhibitions are mounted by artists from the local area and further afield. At Bridlington, the Old Parcels Office has been given a new lease of life as an arts and crafts centre, hosting performances and demonstrations of work including singing, creative writing, dance, puppetry and traditional crafts (Issue 24, Summer 2001).

ACoRP's 2004 conference took as its theme 'The Creative Branch Line'. Jeremy Whitaker's article 'The Art of Travelling' (Issue 35, Summer 2004) sets out the part community art can play in regenerating stations as a showcase for regional artists, to unite stations with the community and to make stations "fun and stimulating installations in their own right". Jonathan Denby, *One Railway*, writes in the same issue on Arts, Business and the Local Railway. Whilst raising principles relating to the topic that could be applied at stations, the article concentrates on the sponsorship of events on trains and at other venues, for example as part of local arts festivals.

Capitalising on a local literary association, the renovation of Dorchester West station was launched by the arrival of The Mayor of Casterbridge, with members of the Thomas Hardy Society reading poetry by and presenting anecdotes about the author (Issue 37, Winter 2005).

## 2.6 Gardens

Perhaps the most popular public perception of station adoption is that of volunteers to do the gardens. This is indeed an important aspect of station adoption and has been given its own column, *In Your Station Garden*, in recent issues of *Train Times* (Issues 36, Autumn 2004 onwards). The articles offer guidance on what to plant and seasonal tips on tasks: when to plant bulbs, etc. Issue 40 (Autumn 2005) presents case studies of good practice in station gardens, including:

- participation in *Towns in Bloom* events, e.g. at Rugby
- on the Ribble Valley Line, at stations to Clitheroe
- at Frinton-on-Sea in the Tendring area of Essex, where garden renovation has taken place in the station and car park and is complemented by a mural created by local students in the station waiting shelter
- at Wymondham, where the station won the prize for the whole of East Anglia in 2005

On the Bittern Line in Norfolk, the local Women's Institute has adopted the station gardens – and won prizes for them - whilst at nearby Worsted, the gardens have been taken over by the Parish Council (Issue 21, October 2000). In another example of station staff undertaking voluntary work over and above their normal duties, the station gardens at Dunbar are looked after by GNER staff in their spare time. At Helsby, Cheshire, the gardening is carried out by members of the North Cheshire Rail Users' Group (*Station Gardens of Delight*, Issue 24, Summer 2001).

Further case examples are given in Issue 41 (Winter 2006, including Dolau, winner of the Wales in Bloom (Railway Stations Category) award and bulb planting by Brownies at Whaley Bridge.

## 2..7 Station Friends

A growing number of stations have supporters' associations, generally known as 'Friends of...Station', a form of adoption which enables an unlimited number of people to be involved, spreads the workload and allows for different members to make use of their individual interests and special skills.

*Train Times* has given coverage to numerous Friends schemes, for example:

- Penmere, Cornwall: garden renovation, complemented by traditional style station signs sponsored by the local Marks & Spencer store (Issue 21, October 2000).
- Handforth, Manchester-Crewe line: art work by local people (Issue 23, Spring 2001), an international schools art competition, garden design by the Rotary Club and conservation work by Venture Scouts (Issues 24, Summer 2001 and 27, Spring 2002).
- Whaley Bridge, where, as described above, the platform garden was cleared of weeds and planted with bulbs, by a mixture of adult and child volunteers (Issue 41, Winter 2006).
- Hall i' th' Wood, Bolton: Friends scheme under development (Issue 26, January 2002).

The Settle & Carlisle Line has a Friends group covering the whole line and also benefits from the services provided by The Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Company, formed in 1992 as a limited by guarantee, not for profit partnership to encourage sustainable commercial development ([www.settle-carlisle.co.uk](http://www.settle-carlisle.co.uk)).

## 2..8 Central Stations and Gateway Stations projects

Central Stations is a scheme supported by Central Trains, Passenger Focus, The Countryside Agency and both East Midlands and West Midlands regional development organisations. ACoRP has engaged a Project Officer to assist tenants in taking over, renovating and improving station buildings. There are no pre-conceived ideas as to who should occupy station buildings. Use is based on what benefits can be brought to the community, the help that would be brought to the groups taking on the premises and any benefit that would be brought to passengers (Issue 37, Winter 2005). A subsequent progress report (Issue 40, Autumn 2005) shows the rail industry's long term commitment to Central Stations, in the form of proposed tripartite leases involving Network Rail as well as Central Trains, to ensure continuity under successor franchise holders.

The first leases to be signed are:

- Oakham in Rutland (Tenant: StudentForce for Sustainability): Oakham will provide StudentForce with space to facilitate young people to learn, develop, work and volunteer with people in the workplace and wider community. They can learn together and boost their own future as well as the local economy, community and environment. With a 25 year lease, StudentForce is making a

considerable investment in the premises and will promote sustainable development, by recruiting, training and supporting young people as graduates on placement, students, volunteers and entrepreneurs

- Worcester Foregate Street (Tenants: Yoke and Zoom): A seven year lease has been granted enabling the conversion of space next to the station manager's office into a gallery (an 'artist-led space') for contemporary art.
- Stamford, Lincolnshire (Tenant: Welland Enterprise Agency): Welland provides free, quality business support to pre-start and growing small businesses (including social enterprise). Their aim is to foster an enterprise culture and encourage enterprising communities, particularly in isolated rural areas. ([www.wellent.net](http://www.wellent.net))
- Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire: Tenants have been secured for three units in the station buildings - Welland Enterprise aiming to help producers to market and distribute their products; Riffs Big Band who will use the space as practice and rehearsal rooms; and a community/social café.
- Great Malvern, Worcestershire (Tenant: Malvern Social Education Centre - Opens August 2006): The Centre's users have learning disabilities and they currently use their day centre to run a shop selling craft materials and stationary. The shop is open to the public and they have many regular customers including local playgroups. Having premises at the station will benefit a wider range of people and will promote independence and opportunity for the service users and make good community involvement possible.

Source: (Minister hears how local groups are reviving old railway buildings to serve the community, Central Trains News Release, 14 June 2006)

## Where can we go from here? An action plan for the future development of Crediton Station

The Friends of Crediton Station in conjunction with the Crediton Station Development Forum

Recent years have seen privately funded improvements take place at the station, with the refurbishment of the main booking office, previously in a decayed and much neglected condition, transforming it into a thriving tea rooms and craft shop. The presence of the Tea Rooms proved to be the necessary catalyst and starting point for the setting up of the Friends of Crediton Station (FOCS).

Experience shows that decay feeds on decay and that, conversely, the best way to turn matters around is first to make a start and then to build on that. In recognition of this, ways are being sought to improve facilities at the station and its connections with the town. These alterations will be over and above the periodic maintenance and limited renovations which are carried out by the train operating company (Wessex Trains) and Network Rail, work which has been characterised by its 'as and when necessary' nature.

Applications for funding these improvements are made largely, but not solely, through the offices of the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership, most monies having come from the Countryside Agency.

Match funding, typically a way in which secondary sources of finance are obtained, often results in a snowball effect. Starting is often difficult, but subsequent progress can be less so.

Two central themes were identified - finding ways of bringing the station and the town closer together and making the most of the unique historic nature of the station, thereby raising its profile and standing in the local community.

The action plan is divided into a number of sections, with work in progress and a series of short, medium and long term objectives, coupled with a publicity plan.

## Public art

### 2..9 Relevance to and lessons for station adoptions

One of the initiatives that can be introduced on rail stations is public art. This can be done either as part of an adoption scheme or through another route.

Public art has a direct relevance to station adoptions in the same way as planting and other initiatives to improve the appearance and ambience of stations. This improved appearance has a number of beneficial effects, not only directly on the stations concerned, but across whole lines or networks.

The improved image and raised profile, both of the railway as a whole and of the operators concerned, through the ability of public art to promote a positive message about the railway brings a number of benefits.

This positive image can have a positive commercial impact, helping to raise patronage levels, and therefore public art can be a commercial asset to the railway.

The introduction of public art on stations also builds links into the community through the use of local artists reinforcing the role of station adoption within the community. Public art helps to build a sense of local identity and to mark stations as part of the local community. This community ownership of public art projects can, as well as helping to build a sense of pride in the local station, help to reduce vandalism and crime on stations through the sense of shared ownership.

Finally, public art projects can help open up funding opportunities for improving station facilities that would otherwise not be available to operators or station adopters through established routes.

The publications reviewed in detail are:

### The art of travelling

Jeremy Whitaker, ACoRP Publications

Wessex Trains built a relationship with artists within the community to improve the quality of the environment in which its services are operated. This had considerable impact on the perception of the Wessex brand.

Public art at stations provides an opportunity to showcase local artists whilst uniting the community and providing something which can be entertaining. Penzance was highlighted as a good example of this where signals and a map of Cornwall based on the flag of St. Pirran have proved successful and represent both railway history and the spirit of Cornwall.

Art can also be used as a way of reducing vandalism and graffiti by involving the community and creating a sense of ownership. An example of this is in inner city Bristol, where community murals at several stations have significantly improved the environment and led to lower levels of vandalism than is normal for stations in the area.

Wessex Trains has developed individual line identities for eight lines in Devon and Cornwall. Prior to the work on line identities, Wessex Trains implemented what it claimed to be the largest programme of tourism and community sponsorship in the country on trains. It introduced 25 individual liveries as part of its fleet refurbishment. Wessex Trains also commissioned a local artist to produce images for its communications activity which has had appeal across all ages promoting a positive image of rail travel.

## Arts, business and the local railway

Jonathan Denby, ACoRP publications

This paper demonstrated how creative partnerships with arts organisations can help to raise the profile and patronage and profit of local rail routes.

There are practical and positive outcomes for art organisations and train operators. In East Anglia, the positive effects have been as follows:

- Wider awareness of the convenience of train travel on local routes.
- Increased favourability towards the train operator seen to be playing its part in the community.
- Greater support – verbal and monetary from local authorities and other agencies.
- Political lobbying.
- Greater involvement in decisions which affect commercial environment.
- Establish and strengthen of relationships with key stakeholders.
- National Arts and Business award.
- More customers.
- Opening up of other PR opportunities.
- Reinforcement of the “feel good” factor around the local routes.
- A contribution to the significant growth in passenger number.

The financial impact of these benefits are difficult to measure however the growth in passenger journeys in East Anglia in recent years is well above that achieved previously.

## Art on Transport: What makes a memorable journey?

Nexus and contributors, 2005

The primary purpose of this booklet was to provide an illustrated guide to examples of works of public art on the transport network of Tyne & Wear commissioned through the Art of Transport programme originally established by the former Tyne & Wear County Council in 1977 when the Tyne & Wear Metro system was under construction. The programme is now managed by Nexus, the Passenger Transport Executive for Tyne & Wear.

The introduction to the document states that “art, architecture and design have always contributed to making places special, creating and reinforcing a sense of

identity". The Art of Transport project is seen to provide "the opportunity to enlarge the experience of public transport with a journey of the imagination". The role of public art is considered to be a way of improving the quality of public transport facilities that also helps to create and sustain lively communities.

There are works commissioned from more than 40 artists on display at over 30 locations including bus stations, Metro stations, car parks and pedestrian routes to and from stations. Some examples are described below:

- Bede Metro Station: The shelters on both platforms contain murals on vitreous enamel panels designed by artists following a number of workshops with children. The themes are the history of Jarrow and the life of the early Christian scholar Bede.
- Four Lane Ends Metro Station: A modern steel and neon sculpture is located in a courtyard adjacent to the ticket office. The red neon pulses at increasing fast intervals when a train is arriving at or leaving the station.
- Gateshead Metro Station: The ticket concourse contains a mosaic based on images selected from prints by two Japanese artists.
- Manors Metro Station: An abstract mural is positioned at the station entrance.

The Art on Transport programme also includes temporary commissions in the form of posters, lighting displays and use of public address systems to play music and other sounds.

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