



Working in partnership

to reconnect the community with its railway



Annual Report

2016

Chairman's Introduction



Our long serving and popular Community Rail Development Manager, Sam Lear left us towards the end of 2016 to take up a new challenge with Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) as Environment Manager and we extend our thanks for her years of service and wish her well in her new role within the industry. Sam is succeeded by Kirsten Firth - a warm welcome to Kirsten. Arun Valley Line Officer, Veronica Payne also moved on to Gatwick Express. Tim Sparrow stepped back from the position of Stakeholder

Advisory Board Chairman although Tim remains very active as a Director. I will be attempting to build on Tim Sparrow's good work, as Chairman and I am joined by GTR's Andy Harrowell as Vice Chairman.

I don't think I can remember a time when it has been so challenging for those using public transport or working within and supporting it and I am sure that many of you will identify with this. However, a full normal timetable will hopefully be restored early in 2017 across the network after many months of disruption, I would like to pay tribute and say a big thank you to some important people:

- Firstly our small team of employees and volunteers within the Sussex Community Rail Partnership –these individuals have carried on working hard behind the scenes with little recognition on a multitude of projects from keeping our stations looking wonderful and ready to burst into bloom as we approach Spring, working within our communities to arrange a variety of events, community projects and display artwork and the important work we are doing in partnership with GTR to educate future generations of rail users. Their continued commitment will surely receive the recognition and appreciation it deserves as confidence returns.
- I would also like to thank our stakeholders for their assistance in providing event and work spaces, materials for projects, time in helping things become a reality, and importantly, funding are much appreciated by us. I would also like to thank the many railway employees and support staff. Their patience and professionalism, sometimes under very real pressure has enabled us to continue the work of the Partnership. Thank you all!

Patrick Warner, Brighton and Hove Buses
Chairman, Sussex Community Rail Partnership

Marshlink Line



Friary Gardeners have been a station partner for Rye, Appledore, Ham Street, Winchelsea and Bexhill, on the Marshlink line for two years. It is a charitable organisation which caters for adults with disabilities and they grow their own shrubs and plants to sell to the public.

They have supplied and looked after the plants at stations along the Marshlink line.

Bexhill Art On the Line Projects

In the last year Bexhill has seen two Art On the Line projects, which have involved the local artist and photographer, Louise Kenward. The first was photos of Bexhill in Australia and Canada, the second was photos of characters and landmarks in Bexhill. They are displayed on both platforms.

In October the local college has used the space for photos of a seagull's life in Bexhill. Early in 2017 there will be a display of work by adults with mental disabilities. This is another good example of engaging with the local community by making use of the station to showcase the talent in Bexhill.

Art project on Track

Development Officer Kevin Barry and Southeastern, got together to bring Art On the Line to Ashford station but with a twist.

Southeastern Area manager, Paul Harris, wanted to bring some community activity to the station. With Louise Kenward, who has produced large photos of characters in Bexhill station, Kevin contacted Ashford Museum to see if the staff could supply photos or art, which could be used at the station. The display of memorabilia is now turning the heads of the many passengers travelling through. Canterbury Oast Trust, a charitable organisation based near Ashford for young adults with learning

difficulties, was also keen to be involved and have provided planters to go on platforms filled with herbs and flowers. In the main ticket area there is a craft display and all the Christmas decorations were supplied to fill the main ticket area.



Education Projects

Visit by Rail

This project, to promote sustainable travel by young people into the South Downs National Park, was started in April 2015 in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority and completed in March 2016. The funding came from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and free rail travel was provided by Southern, thanks to the partnership between SCRP and GTR.

5 Case Studies were created for stations and learning providers within the South Downs National Park. This involved the schools taking the train to a destination within the SDNP for an educational visit.

- St Philip Howard Catholic High School went to Pulborough Brooks for a Year 9 Geography fieldwork visit.
- Chichester High Schools for Boys and Girls came together to do a Year 8 Geography fieldwork visit to Arundel.
- Fittleworth CE Village School Years 1 and 2 went to Amberley Museum to find out about living in the past.
- Downlands Community School, Hassocks Eco-group, comprising of Year 8 and 10 pupils, went to YHA South Downs at Southease to participate in an eco-walk and nettle tea making.
- Eastbourne Academy Year 7 had a history trip to Lewes Castle.

This fulfilled the aim that schools would access SDNP and its facilities for educational purposes by using the train, where 4 of the schools would have previously used a bus.

From these five case studies, Educational Visit Plans were created as well as three additional ones from other stations and learning providers within the SDNP. These plans have sustainable travel plans integral to them to promote sustainable travel for schools when they go on educational visits.

Details of the Case Studies and Educational Visit Plans can be found using the following link: www.sussexcrp.org/what-we-do/education/visit-by-rail/

In addition to these documents a Top Ten Tips for Train Travel document was created to help teachers when they are planning to use the train with pupils.



Go Learn

In August 2015 Sussex Community Rail Partnership and GTR Southern got together to deliver a project called Go Learn. April 2016 saw the expansion of the Go Learn project, with all of Development Officer Angie Lowen's time now being dedicated to delivering workshops to Primary schools, to help Year 6 children develop confidence and skills for independent travel on public transport. This is in conjunction with the Southern Neighbourhood Officers who deliver Rail Safety sessions, particularly track safety, to Year 6 children at Safety in Action and Junior Citizen events across the Southern Railway area.

Go Learn has three modules related to travelling by train:

1. Safety on the Railways
2. Classroom workshop
3. Station visit and train ride

In addition to this Angie runs a Leaflet Competition that the schools can choose to participate in, to extend the learning from the workshop and see how much the pupils have retained.

Since August 2015 the numbers participating in Go Learn are as follows:

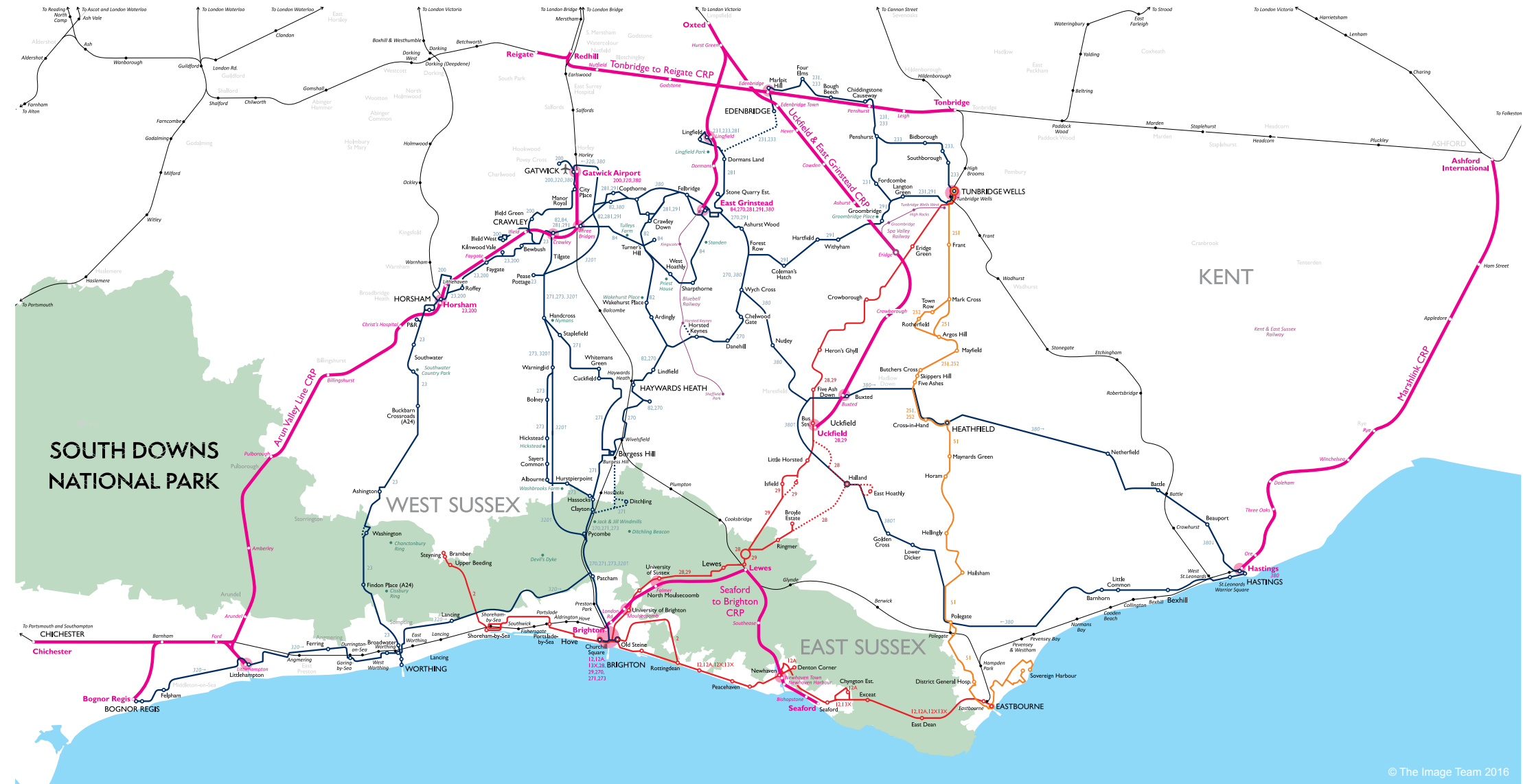
Events		August 2015 – March 2016	April 2016 – December 2016
SiA / Junior Citizen		3,195	4,821
Workshops	Number	14	31
	Children	412	802
Station visits	Number	0	6
	Children	0	133
Total number of children		3,607	5,756
Number of Leaflet competitions		5	4

In June, Go Learn won the Rail Industry Innovation Award for Safety, which was great recognition of the work that is being done by Angie and the Southern Neighbourhood Officers.



Community Rail Partnership connections in the South East area

- Community Rail Partnership station
- Railway station
- Preserved railway station
- Metrobus bus routes. Please note that routes 320 and 380 are very early morning journeys only.
- Brighton & Hove bus routes
- Stagecoach bus routes
- Interchange: Bus calls at or near to Community Rail Partnership Station
- Tourist attraction/Place of interest



Arun Valley Line

The line group has maintained an active educational programme through the Go Learn initiative in partnership with Southern. There have been numerous visits to schools with workshops to raise the awareness, confidence and readiness of young people to use public transport both collectively and independently. A number of educational visits were arranged to support this project and advertising was produced for use at the Amberley Teachers' Conference.

We supported the Sustrans campaign, with many schools involved, to raise awareness of the 20mph speed limit in the centre of Chichester.

Work with the SDNPA (South Downs National Park Authority) LSTF (Local Sustainable Transport Fund) concluded with the unveiling of the mural at Amberley station, highlighting this location as a gateway to the South Downs.

A line guide was produced showcasing some of the many attractions to be found on the Arun Valley route.

Three walks were organised. The first was on Valentine's Day from Arundel to Amberley. We celebrated Amberley Day in April, walking in the area of Amberley Castle to Amberley Museum. In May, we had a Canal Day walk, with the train element being from Barnham to Chichester.

We supported the 170 Years On Track event in June in partnership with Southern and East Preston Parish Council, celebrating anniversaries at Goring, Angmering and Ford stations, coinciding with the first day of the East Preston Festival.

A Queen's 90th Birthday event was held at Horsham station in partnership with the Solo Café providing tea, coffee and cake, which was offered free to passengers. Mini 'Community Rail in the City' events were staged at Chichester and Horsham stations.

The Line Group held four steering group meetings at various locations along the route including Three Bridges Train Operating Centre and the Compass Bus Depot at Durrington-on-Sea. We held our Stakeholder meeting in Pulborough.

Uckfield & East Grinstead Lines and Tonbridge to Redhill & Reigate Line

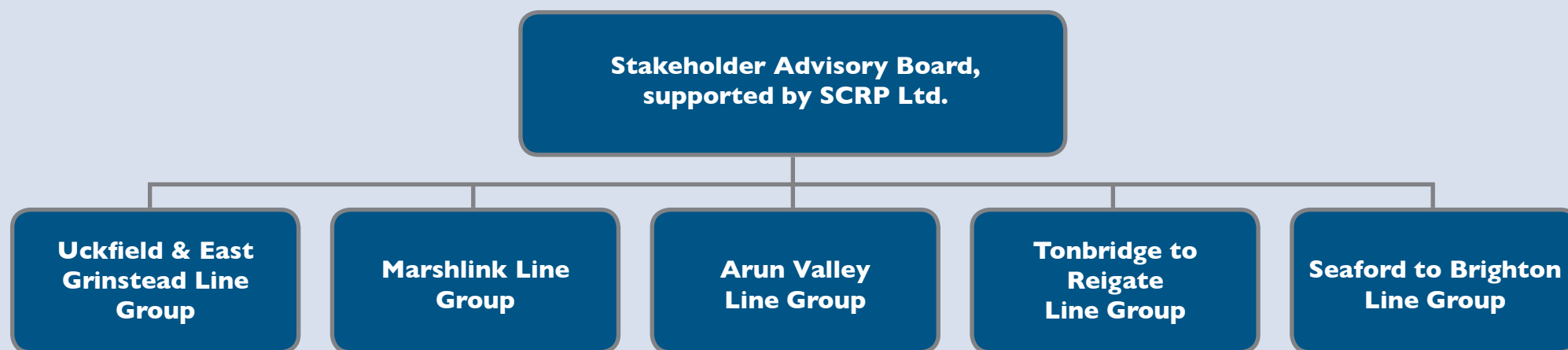
2016 has been an exciting year with new platforms being installed along the Uckfield line, which has in turn led to longer refurbished trains and provided some welcome relief from overcrowding.

Projects this year have been widely varied: a golden crown for the Queen's 90th birthday celebration; a commuters' breakfast; child safety event; a passenger survey to identify the need for a commuter bus; a tourist guide to destinations accessible from Gatwick station; art projects; new station partners; and the issuing of an updated joint line guide. All of these lead to deeper relations with community group. An example of this is the involvement with County Care groups who work with young people with autism, who volunteered to help with platform planting at Redhill station, which led to them being invited on a 'try the train' trip with Southern. They then expressed an interest in forming a partnership with Horley station and can now be seen at the station every week watering, planting and litter picking, in fact anything that needs doing to keep the station looking spick and span. The best result of this relationship was in September when they attended the joint lines annual meeting and gave a presentation to the audience.

Work along these three lines also involves issues concerning the local communities, which vary from a parking problem, an overgrown tree and complaints that need to be directed to Network Rail. This demonstrates the result of continuous and hard work with the communities by the partners and especially by the development officer, Sharon Gray, who is seen as someone who will listen to partners and do her best to find a solution.

Finally, a creative and involved project last summer at Edenbridge Town station involving the town's youth groups. It received national recognition with a first prize at the ACoRP National Community Rail Awards. The town's youth group returned again this year to design and install another brilliant and exciting mural at Edenbridge station and the idea is now also being transferred to Tonbridge Station so can we expect more first prizes next year!





Structure of the Partnership

Sussex Community Rail Partnership is directed by the Partners on its Stakeholder Advisory Board (see pages 13-16) and is managed by volunteer Directors on the Board of SCRП Ltd. This not for profit company employs a small team of dedicated Officers who co-ordinate project work within their community areas. They have the support of local community partners in the line groups and an active group of volunteers, particularly in over 50 station partnerships (see page 17) who roll their sleeves up and literally get stuck in to some transformative projects that have made a real difference to rail users and the surrounding community.

www.sussexcrp.org

Financing the Work of the SCRП

The SCRП management and finances are looked after by the not for profit company, SCRП Ltd. In 2015/16 income was just over £167,000, costs were almost £146,000 and the remaining money was carried over to cover ongoing projects in the coming year. Both income and expenditure increased from the previous year because of success with Local Sustainable Transport Fund projects undertaken during the year. That fund closed in March 2016, so income levels will reduce in 2016/17, with expenditure reducing to match it.

The main cost is staffing and managing the work of the line groups. Salaries, and the associated office, travel and line group meeting costs make up 70 % of our costs. Producing and distributing line guides and other communication activities cost 13 % and event costs make up the remaining 17 %.

The SCRП income is derived from across the Partnership with 48% from the train operating company, 48% from local authorities, and 4% from business and other organisations.



Seaford Line Partnership Working Continues

The new Station Partnership at Newhaven Town has gone from strength to strength, winning Newhaven in Bloom's Gold award for Business in Bloom on its first outing in the competition. Newhaven Town Council and local businesses Paradise Park and Burley's Group, support the partnership in providing colourful planters, and plan an art competition for 2017. In April, the Seaford-Brighton line volunteers were recognised as 'Unsung Heroes' by Lewes District Council in a celebration of the contribution of volunteers, charities and voluntary organisations who work tirelessly for the benefit of others.

Try the Train

Nationally recognised in the ACoRP Community Rail Awards 2016, such events help groups of people who have additional barriers to travel, to learn the skills and gain confidence to travel by train for leisure and tourism purposes.

National Citizenship Scheme

Working with the National Citizenship Scheme and Southern, SCRP has co-ordinated 2 projects to install hand painted murals and mosaics at Falmer and Moulsecoomb stations which celebrate the local attractions and uniqueness of the communities.

Queen's Birthday Celebrations

The Queen's 90th birthday was celebrated in style at Lewes station with a royal-themed walk, garden party sandwiches and birthday cake in the station partnership gardens, and a children's colouring competition.

Walks by train

SCRP continued to promote travelling by train to local attractions and events, such as wildlife walks run by Sussex Wildlife Trust, and the Charleston Festival. A 2016 Line Guide was published and distributed to stations, local attractions and tourist offices.



Partners

Kent County Council

Kent County Council has continued this year, jointly with Ashford Borough Council, to lead the 'Ashford Spurs' project. This essential project will deliver the required upgrade of the signals on the spurs which link Ashford International with High Speed 1, thus enabling the new generation of Eurostar trains, and indeed any other European rail operator, to access Ashford International station.

The project is jointly managed with Network Rail, High Speed 1 and Eurostar, and supported by the Office of Rail and Road, and is currently scheduled for completion in Spring 2018. Once delivered, this will enable Marshlink users to continue to access the full range of Eurostar services by a single change of train at Ashford, thus retaining good connections between Hastings, Rye and continental Europe. Kent County Council appreciates the strong support of SCRP for this project.

Network Rail

It was suggested that Elpseth Broady from the London Road station adoption team was looking for some potential volunteers. As a business Network Rail has a process where each employee can take 5 days' volunteer leave yearly. Five members of the Network Rail Project team were to take part. The work itself was predominantly assisting in general appearance improvement. Weeding, clearing leaves and litter, and moving planters situated in the small community garden area at the station was carried out.

2 volunteers from the station adoption team helped along with Southern's area manager and maintenance staff, and Sam Lear from SCRP.

The results were a triumph, as was the relationship building especially in Elpseth's conservatory where she provided lunch. Everyone was mixing and it was a really welcome sight. Hopefully a few more such events can be arranged in 2017.

South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA)

The SDNPA and SCRP continue to work in partnership to promote rail travel. As part of the Two National Parks LSTF Programme, the SDNPA ran a campaign to promote visitor rail travel. The campaign "Have an Adventure in the South Downs National Park by Train" included a wide reaching multi-media campaign of newspaper ads, posters and social media posts supported by an online video, which is still being promoted by Southern. The campaign concluded with a series of rail events at key gateway stations in March 2016. The events at Chichester, Horsham, Lewes, Brighton, and Eastbourne were co-ordinated by SCRP and manned by staff and volunteers from both SDNPA and SCRP.

Stands with both National Park and Community Rail Partnership branding and information were set-up on the station concourse at each location, which enabled event staff to interact with passengers and hand out 'Have an Adventure' Maps.

The South Downs National Park Authority looks forward to continuing to work in partnership in the future.

West Sussex County Council

WSCC values its close working relationship with the Sussex Community Rail Partnership, especially appreciating the opportunities it offers to bring stakeholders together to discuss ideas for improving rail services and facilities at stations. Most recently this was demonstrated at the Arun Valley Annual Stakeholder Meeting where the County Council were able to present and get feedback from stakeholders about the proposed County Council consultation response to the GTR 2018 post-Thameslink timetable changes.

The County Council also appreciate the innovative work undertaken by the Partnership to promote rail travel amongst local communities and visitors to the area. This includes the production of line guides, events to mark the history of the lines, as well as the regular hosting of walks to help visitors explore the beauty and character of West Sussex.



SDNPA & SCRP Promoting Rail Travel at Eastbourne



East Sussex County Council

ESCC in partnership with Sustrans has worked with SCRP on a number of exciting projects to engage local communities and schools with their local rail stations. This has included a Sustainable Artwork Project, which involved schools designing artwork that depicted the journey along the Newhaven to Seaford section of the Seaford – Brighton line. The artwork at Newhaven Town railway station had been specifically designed by the pupils of Harbour Primary School. This was also undertaken at Seaford Rail Station, where pupils and parents undertook a bike ride to the station to launch the new art work designed by the pupils of Cradle Hill and Chyngton Primary Schools.

This was an effective project between ESCC, Sustrans and SCRP, focussing on the benefits of integrated travel.

Southern (GTR)

The efforts of the Partnership results in valuable involvement by local groups in our stations: artwork, 170th anniversary celebrations, marking the Queen's 90 birthday, gardens, walking tours and much more. The jewel in the crown was the addition of more excellent artwork at Edenbridge station and Southern were so pleased that the work of the youngsters won first place in the annual Association of Community Rail Partnership (ACoRP) awards.

Working together, more station partners have signed up including Newhaven Town which won Gold in Newhaven In Bloom. New partnerships are being created on non-SCRP lines, as well as at Great Northern and Thameslink stations too. Joint work for the Try The Train initiative events won second place in ACoRP's Involving Diverse Groups Award.

Essential work together on education, the Go-Learn project, has over the year been excellent, exceeding our ambitious target by over 200%. It won the national Railway Industry Innovation award for Engineering and Safety.

Gatwick Airport

Gatwick Airport station has more direct links to British rail stations than any other airport in the country. There are good 24 hour links to London.

Gatwick Airport embraces the work with SCRP both engaging the local community and assisting in matters such as improving modal access for both staff and passengers. Currently airport staff, working shifts need to arrive at the airport in the early hours, but accessing the airport by train from East and West Sussex at these times is not possible, with no adequate train service at that time of day. The Airport, through its surface access strategy aims to encourage modal shift and develop more accessible public transport opportunities for staff and passengers. Gatwick Airport welcomes the opportunity to be an active member of the Sussex Community Rail Partnership to assist that policy.

Also, working with SCRP development officers, publicity material has been produced to encourage passengers to explore the surrounding area rather than depart straight for London and beyond.

Station Partnerships



During the year more station partners have been formed. Station partnership involves agreeing to adopt a station to form an on-going relationship with the train company. The two groups work together to help tailor the location to the community it serves.

There are a few key steps to follow, the first being a discussion with the local station manager. There will always be safety considerations so a risk assessment needs to be completed and approved by the manager. Southern also offers some finances to help the group start up.

In July members of the Brighton Uckfield group became station partners for Uckfield. The aim is for the volunteers and Southern to work together to improve the station's environment. Together with the local Rotary Club, they have introduced herbs, which anyone can help themselves to.

On the Seaford to Brighton line, Newhaven Town Councillor Simon Barnes, brought together a group of local business people to brighten up the station. Partners including Paradise Park, a family run garden centre and Burleys, part of the TCL group, They worked with the station manager to create a collection of six large wooden planters. One Partnership includes a children's nursery adopting its nearby station. Clare Masters, from Glaisdale Day Nursery, explained: "Our children loved visiting Cheam station and becoming a partner sounded like a perfect way to involve them more. Our groups of children put art work up and tend to the plants, which has already brightened the station."

Thameslink's Cricklewood station was the first north London location on the network to be partnered. Inspired by examples from Sussex, the group have transformed the previously run-down entrance with a beautiful flower bed, purpose built sign, station clock and photo collage. The group's efforts, were rewarded with it winning first place in the Silver level of the "It's Your Station" category of the ACoRP awards.





Keeping in Touch

We would like to hear from you and we are also very happy to provide more information so do please get in touch.

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YOUR LONDON AIRPORT
Gatwick



SCRP working in partnership with East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council, Kent County Council, Brighton and Hove City Council, Surrey County Council, Hastings Borough Council, Southern Railway, Network Rail, Gatwick Airport, South Downs National Park Authority and local councils, community groups, tourist bodies and rail passenger support groups across South East England.

SCRP is very grateful to all those who have supplied photographs especially Southern Railway and SCRП staff.

