



Poacher Line

Annual Report 2019

Foreword



I am delighted to present this annual report for the Poacher Line Community Rail Partnership (CRP). This report highlights once again what an extremely productive 2019 we've had with projects enhancing stations along the line and volunteers once again helping us hit the four pillars of the new Community Rail Development Strategy released by the Department for Transport earlier this year.

Particular highlights include our work with secondary schools in Sleaford and Skegness to enhance 'The Wall' at Skegness Station (see page 4), our partnership effort with the Bee Friendly Trust and local community to bring 'The Bottesford Friendly Garden' to fruition (see pages 6 & 7) and take a home a coveted Community Rail Award for most enhanced station.

We worked hard on our youth engagement this year engaging with several different groups and schools along the line to introduce the younger generation to the railways (see pages 4 & 5).

August saw the beginning of a new franchise with Abellio East Midlands Railway (EMR) taking over and this saw a welcome boost in funding towards the end of the year. We look forward to the exciting things EMR will bring to the Poacher Line over the course of the franchise.

I am truly grateful for all the support we get from our station adopters along the line. The work they do week after week to enhance their local stations is nothing short of phenomenal with Ancaster, Heckington and Radcliffe being recognised with awards this year. Quite simply I want to say Thank You as we couldn't achieve what we do without you all.

This year has been another year of personal development learning, courtesy of Cross Country Trains, the art of video making and project management and outcomes thanks to Association of Community Rail Partnerships, who we are a member organisation of.

I hope you enjoy reading about our year as much as we've enjoyed everything we've done.



Kaye Robinson
Community Rail Officer

The Poacher Line

The Poacher Line is a Community Rail Partnership which runs from the bustling city of Nottingham to the traditional seaside resort of Skegness. It is an accredited line supported by the Department for Transport working with East Midlands Railway (EMR) as the main train operating company and other partners. The CRP follows the Community Rail Development Strategy working on the four pillars as follows:

1. Provide a voice the community
2. Promote sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
3. Bring communities together to support diversity & inclusion
4. Promote social & economic development

The partnership is supported by Lincolnshire County Council as the host partner, DfT, EMR, Cross Country Trains & London North East Railway.

East Midlands Railway

As of August 18th 2019 East Midlands Railway owned by Abellio became the main train operating company in our region. EMR is committed to working closely with Community Rail lines across their network; with 4 CRPs currently they are looking to expand this over the course of the 8 year franchise. As part of their committed obligation to the Department for Transport there are several funding options for CRPs and station adoption groups to bid in to, to support projects along their lines.

eastmidlandsrailway.co.uk

Financial Statement 2018/19

Expenditure		Income	
Salary cost	19621.50	East Midlands Trains	30309.00
Staff travel	2776.63	VTEC	10000.00
Projects and marketing activities	39656.44	Cross County Trains	5236.60
Misc. expenses	2030.56	Grants	33907.83
Grants to partners	2727.25	Income - Music train	2263.27
Subtotal	66812.38	Income - RAF Events	1227.45
To be C/F 19/20	23526.89	Misc.	15.00
		C/F 17/18	7379.56
Total	90339.27	Total	90339.27

Engaging with young people

The partnership had another busy year engaging with schools and groups along the line. Read on to find out about our key achievements.

The Wall

Platform 7 at Skegness Station benefitted from a major uplift thanks to a multi school project with James Mayle, graffiti artist owner of Imageskool.



Year 12 Art pupils from St George's Academy in Sleaford and Skegness Grammar School took on the challenge of creating a mural on the 110 metre empty wall. The pupils researched the line and Skegness as a destination and put their proposals for the artwork to the Train Company and James the artist.

They also had a graffiti master class with Imageskool to prep them for the final task and then in May and September the students worked hard to create the masterpiece quite simply known as 'The Wall'.



We also had help from the station adopters and volunteers from EMR to clear the platform of all the weeds and to paint the background black.

The pupils of St George's made a time-lapse video which can be viewed by visiting vimeo.com/341767260 the video was entered into the Community Rail Awards and opened up to public voting and we're delighted to say the school came 2nd, a great acknowledgement for a fabulous project.



Rail safety talks

We continued our commitment to deliver Rail Safety to schools near the line delivering sessions to 3 primary schools and over 200 pupils. This essential work continues to remain an important focus for us in 2020 using Network Rail resources to keep the future generations of rail passengers safe.



Mosaic making

Radcliffe on Trent Junior School and Sir Thomas Cranmer CofE Primary School, Aslockton both completed a six week scheme of work that culminated in a mosaic to put up at each of their local stations. During the 6 weeks the children learnt about the Poacher Line, took a trip on the train, designed their mosaic and took part in the making of it.



South Nottinghamshire Academy – Fine Art

During the autumn term we started working with 3 Year 12 Art students at the secondary school in Radcliffe-on-Trent. As part of their course they were tasked with creating 3 pieces of fine art relating to the station and village. The students came up with a concept and then spent 2 months completing the final pieces ready to go up at the station for passengers to enjoy.

As part of the process we took the students to the local residential home to showcase some of the work they had done and give the residents a lesson if they wanted to. We wanted to encourage intergenerational working within the locality but also give the residents access to some of the artwork that they may not have the opportunity to see at the station. The school is now introducing this mini project into their yearly curriculum so fresh artwork will be present at the station each year.



Bottesford Beavers

We joined Bottesford Beavers at their weekly meetings in March and got them to design and make bug hotels for our new garden at the Station. The group then joined us once the garden was completed to place their bug hotels for creepy crawlies to find and we all built a really big bug hotel together.



Bottesford Friendly Garden

Our flagship project of the year was the transformation of a derelict piece of land next to Bottesford Station with the Bee Friendly Trust. The project took 18 months from inception to completion and involved many partners and lots of commitment from the local community. The transformation was truly remarkable and now the village has a wonderful facility to use for years to come.



Bottesford before



Bottesford clearing



Building the planters



The Poacher Line Officer as part of their long term planning for the line, identified a run down, uncared for piece of land next to Bottesford Station that actually fell under the East Midlands Trains lease area. The land, overgrown from years of neglect, also hid an old building so plans were laid to completely transform the site. Identifying a gap in knowledge regarding gardening and after seeing successful projects from other Community Rail Partnerships, the Poacher Line approached the Bee Friendly Trust to see if they would partner on the project – which they gladly accepted.

The project was managed jointly along the way with critical and key input from East Midlands Trains and Network Rail.

Planning was done in stages with consultations and forums being held

locally and communication via local social media. The local primary school and Beaver Cub Scout group designed different aspects of the garden which the Bee Friendly Trust then turned into a more robust design. Eco-friendly options were considered during the entire process using natural resources where ever possible, installing water butts and preserving the building to the best of the partnerships ability.

Clearing of the land was done by a contractor due to the level of the overgrowth and also to check for site contamination; once this was complete the long process of transforming the site began. A total of 7 community days with over 90 volunteers happened over the period of around 6 months. The garden was developed in stages with raised beds and paths being laid first alongside a

rockery, they then added a greenhouse, pond and work on the building commenced over the winter period whilst the soil was settling. Planting took place over the spring with specific fruit trees being placed first then the final action days incorporated building a composter, painting inside the building and mulching and wild flowering the land.

The building renovation was the slowest part of the project due to getting the necessary permissions and the right workers to complete it. With the initial pot of funding the building was re-roofed, re-pointed and cleared of excess debris before being painted. Collectively it was decided that it was essential to reinstate the electricity and water supplies in order to use the building to its full potential. The community agreed that an education and dry space for the adopters and users

of the garden was necessary as well as a permanent water supply – an issue many stations have therefore being immediately alleviated. When the building was surveyed they found two rooms so a toilet and storage area was put in the plans rather than any major structural work taking place.

The grand opening officially took place on Monday 17th June with Her Grace, the Duchess of Rutland cutting the



Funding streams

£2,500	Bottesford Parish Council
£4,000	Lincolnshire County Council
£4,000	Grow Wild UK
£5,000	Bee Friendly Trust
£16,000	ACoRP

ribbon in front of all the people that have volunteered and worked hard over the previous 18 months.

A competition was launched in the local community to pick the name of the garden entries were submitted and the top five were put to a public vote on social media to pick - the winning name being 'Bottesford Friendly Garden' or 'The BFG' for short picked by Phil Salathiel.

Going forward the building is ready for the water and electric to be reinstated and we are hoping in early 2020 the building will be in full working order. The education space will have boards up once this work is complete which will have the story of the garden and wildlife facts on.

Most importantly the station is now looking fantastic, is home to many varieties of wildlife and is a place for the community to enjoy.



ACoRP Awards

The partnership had another successful year at the Community Rail Awards, held in Telford in October. This year hosted by West Midlands Trains and London Northwestern Railway, we were treated to 3 days of activity in their region.

The highlight of the awards was fighting off tough competition to win Most Enhanced Station Building and Surround for the Bottesford Friendly Garden project.

In addition to this we were recognised in several other categories including:

Runner up for Best Video for 'The Wall' made by the Photography & Art Department students from St George's Academy Sleaford.

Third Place in the Small Projects Award for our artwork at Skegness Station in conjunction with the local Rotary group.

Third place in the Outstanding Volunteer category for Phil Thomas our station adopter at Radcliffe on Trent.

Heckington and Ancaster station adopter groups both received Silver in the It's Your Station category and Radcliffe on Trent adopters jumped from Bronze to gold.

Some of the adopters joined us on the evening and it was delightful to celebrate all the successes the Poacher Line has had over the year.



Events

We had some wonderful events in 2019 from our Music Trains to a Bucket and Spade Train there was plenty to encourage communities along the line to take a trip for a fun day or evening out.



Community Rail in the City

This year we took over Kings Cross Station, with our neighbouring CRP North Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, to launch our Mayflower 400 campaign. From November 2019 to November 2020 the country and for us in particular Boston will be celebrating the 400th anniversary of when the pilgrims attempted to set sail for America.

We had special leaflets designed, had a selfie board, gave out chocolate and dressed up at Pilgrim travellers to engage the passengers of Kings Cross Station about the Pilgrim Story.

Vintage Festival - Skegness

We supported Skegness Vintage Festival this year by linking in to our work on the mural on platform 7, to some vintage artwork to be displayed at the front of the station. Our friends at Imageskool created us 6 black and white posters, modern takes on the old vintage style seaside posters from years gone by. These were then placed in Skegness Station for the public and passengers to colour in over the course of the festival. As you can see from the below the finished results are brilliant and add a splash of colour to the entrance of the station.



Music trains

We ran 6 music trains with over 300 people joining us throughout the year to Batemans Brewery and the 8 Sail Brewery. Bands Itchy Fingers, Identity Crisis, the Ukulele Orchestra, Samphire Music, Lynn McFarland and the Lincolnshire Vocal Choir entertained the passengers along the way. We are grateful for the support we get for these events and look forward to many more music trains in 2020.

Bucket and Spade train

In July we worked with the Radcliffe on Trent adopters and EMT to put on a summer special train to Skegness. The adopters sold over 75 tickets for the bucket and spade train with entertainment on route for all the passengers including; quizzes, goodie bags, colouring, competitions and of course a bucket and spade for the beach. Bringing back a bygone era of days out to the beach from the Midlands our first train was a huge success and could have sold out twice over and will definitely be continued in 2020.



Music at the Mill

Our inaugural Music at the Mill event took place in May with bands coming in on the train from Grantham and Boston to join a lively evening of entertainment. The headline act was The Blighty Belles, joined by Nightshift, Between the Lines and Identity Crisis over 200 people attended giving a massive boost to Heckington Mill, Brewery and Tea Rooms with extra refreshments from Banzai Thai Street food.

The event supported Sleaford LIVE! Week and was so successful this is now part of our yearly calendar of events.

Christmas Market train

In November we put on a Christmas Market special, adding a bit of Christmas to the Poacher Line whilst it transported passengers to the ever popular Batemans Christmas Market. Mulled wine, mince pies, music and a Christmas quiz were given out for free to entice local communities to take the train to the market and sample some of the delights the brewery has to offer.



Keep up to date with all our events by following us on Facebook @Poacherline

Station Adoption

We welcomed a boost in station adopters this year thanks to the completed project at Bottesford. All our adopters have worked tirelessly again this year to improve their stations with some great recognition for what they've done along the way.



Awards

The annual Community Rail Awards saw a band of adopters travel to Telford to join in the evening. Our adopters at Ancaster and Heckington we're awarded Silver in the It's your station category and the band of volunteers at Radcliffe took home Gold, Phil Thomas our original Radcliffe adopter was a runner up in the Outstanding Volunteer of the year category – well done to all.

In addition to this the Radcliffe on Trent adopters received a Civic Award for their efforts as well as being runners up for Community Group of the year in the Rushcliffe Borough Council awards – congratulations on this very well deserved recognition.



Goodbye East Midlands Trains

Due to the franchise changeover this year saw a different sort of Community Rail Conference – as a thank you from EMT to all our adopters they treated them to a day out on the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway line, knowing that the majority of adopters love anything to do with trains this was a real treat for everyone and a great chance to see all the other adopters from across the region to share ideas and catch up.



There are lots more of our stations which need your love and attention. If you would like to become a station adopter please see eastmidlandsrailway.co.uk/routes-destinations/adopt-a-station for further details.

Education and Training

We took advantage of the many opportunities provided by the Association of Community Rail Partnerships and Train Operating Companies this year to enhance our knowledge and professional development.



Community Rail Conference

Summer seminar

Winter Seminar

Project Management and Outcomes training

CoComms video training

Funding training

Coming up in 2020

We're excited for the year ahead with major anniversaries and collaborative projects here's just a sneak peek of what we have planned...



Mayflower 400

New allotment at Sleaford Station

Boston station regeneration

ELR50

Social inclusion in Netherfield

Improved stations with our adopters

And a story telling train!

Get in Touch

Want to get involved with the Poacher Line or learn more?
We'd love to hear from you...

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Thank you to all of our partners for your continued support



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