

Poacher Line Annual Report



2018

Foreword



I am delighted to showcase the Poacher Lines achievements in this annual report. 2018 was an extremely productive year for the partnership showing great growth for the line in terms of volunteers and our presence within the Community Rail industry.

Particular highlights include our collaboration with the Royal Air Force for their centenary celebrations which saw us recognised with a coveted Community Rail Award for Best Marketing and Communications campaign – as well as raising a stunning £1000 for the RAF100 Appeal and a further £327.25 For the RAF Benevolent Fund (see centre pages for more detail). Not to mention taking a replica Red Arrow to Birmingham New Street and Skegness Stations.

We worked with 3 schools in conjunction with Sustrans to deliver 3 further mosaics for Sleaford footbridge and commenced a new project with St George's Academy, Sleaford to be completed in 2019 (see page 5).

Financially we have benefited from several grants to enable us to maximise our outputs and budgets.

I continue to be inspired by the hard work our station adoption groups put in to their local communities with both Ancaster and Radcliffe receiving awards for their approach to their stations. I send a big thank you to every single one of our volunteers that has helped either as an adopter or at an event over 2018; quite simply we could not achieve change without you.

Personally the end of the year saw me elected on the ACoRP board and since as Vice Chair and I hope the knowledge I will gain in this role will further help the partnership down the line.

I hope you enjoy reading this report as much as we've enjoyed improving the Poacher Line.



Kaye Robinson
Community Rail Officer



The Poacher Line

The Poacher Line is a Community Rail Partnership which runs from Nottingham to Skegness and is supported by the Department for Transport (DfT). Working with East Midlands Trains (EMT) and other partners our aim is to improve stations, encourage community involvement, promote train travel as a sustainable option and increase social and economic growth. The Partnership is funded by Lincolnshire County Council as the lead partner, EMT, Cross Country Trains, London North Eastern Railway and the DfT.

East Midlands Trains

East Midlands Trains (EMT) is a British train operating company owned by Stagecoach Group. EMT is committed to working closely with Community Rail lines across their network, the Poacher Line being one of the 4 lines they operate. With the help of station adopters and volunteers from across the business, local councils and other railway companies, EMT has helped make a real difference across the network.

eastmidlandstrains.co.uk

Poacher Line in Numbers:



£41,926.23
Amount of funding secured



8 Number of stations adopted



38 Number of station adopters



2 Awards won



290 Slices of cake eaten



14 Rail safety presentations given



£1,337
Amount of money raised for charity



915 Music train passengers



324 Twitter followers

Sharing Best Practice

In order to continually improve and progress, sharing best practice was an essential aspect of our work in 2018.

We made several liaison visits with fellow Community Rail Partnerships (CRP) in order to both share our knowledge and educate ourselves about each other's CRPs.

22 FEBRUARY



A trip down to the Sunshine Coast at Manningtree to meet up with CRPO Jayne Sumner.

2 JULY



We assisted our colleagues at CallConnect with their national campaign of "Catch the Bus Week" This consisted of a tour of 50 villages in 5 days, promoting the great service they offer while also promoting our line and a possible option to address "last mile" problem.

19 JULY



Our CoComms course took us to Bristol where Heather the Severnside Partnership CRO, took us for a tour of her line.

30 JULY



A fantastic visit to the Settle and Carlisle Community Rail Partnership to meet CRPO Drew Haley to see a trolley service and café in action

2 AUGUST



Accompanied by Donna from EMT and Paul from ACoRP we visited Essex CRP to experience one of their bucket and spade trains. This will be an event on the line in 2019.

4 OCTOBER



ACoRP awards allowed us to visit Kilmarnock and Wemyss Bay stations in Scotland to look at some fantastic community projects.

25 OCTOBER



We welcomed our friends from Essex CRP onto our Halloween music train as this was something they would like to implement on their line.

School Engagement

Rail safety talks

During the month of June we visited numerous schools in the Skegness and surrounding area to deliver rail safety presentations provided by Network Rail, to Key Stage 2 children. Due to the rural nature of the area and the many unmanned crossings on the line, it was felt that this was essential especially with the summer holidays fast approaching. The children received this training positively and with some very creative questions; mainly about the legal age of responsibility! While in the schools the opportunity to enhance relationships further was undertaken with schools designing posters for Skegness station, these were unveiled by the Skegness Mayor during our RAF100 Fun day on 27th August.



Ancaster station

We are very lucky to have an ongoing commitment from the primary school that designed and continue to look after the station garden here. Last year they were winners in the "It's your station" bronze category and this year they achieved silver in the same category.



The partnership has had a busy year engaging with schools on both rail safety and art projects at our stations. We are fortunate to have a proactive Sustrans officer available to us and along with the Skegness Rotary we managed to make good progress in schools this year. Below outlines the key achievements this year.

Artwork projects

Throughout the year we have been working with Sustrans and schools along our line to produce amazing pieces of artwork to display at our stations. February saw the unveiling of a mosaic on Sleaford footbridge by St Marys School, Grantham.

In May the children from Church Lane Primary School visited Sleaford Mosque to gather ideas for a mosaic they were undertaking during June. Sustrans also worked with St Andrew's Primary School, Heckington to create another mosaic for Sleaford, both were unveiled in July.

During November the children of Radcliffe on Trent Primary school started work on a mosaic of their own for the station. There were class lessons and a walk around the village for inspiration. The unveiling took place in January 2019.



Skegness wall mural project

During November, St Georges Academy Sleaford, were excited to get involved with a mural on a wall located on Platform 7 at Skegness station. This involved year 12 art students taking a trip, by train, to Skegness to research all the great things about the area. A trip to the Aquarium and Natureland was included, then a question and answer session where we answered their questions about what we hoped to achieve. Due to the size of the wall this project is long term and we hope local schools will want to join us once they see what is being produced. We are working with a graffiti artist and work is due to start in 2019.



Carol singing along the line

Working with Jon Moody from Sustrans the children from St Andrew's Primary School, Heckington boarded the train on the 10th December to delight the passengers of Sleaford, Grantham and Nottingham stations with Christmas carols.





Our marketing campaign this year was based around celebrating 100 years of the Royal Air Force. Lincolnshire is known as bomber command and many of the Heritage sites and planned events were accessible via our line and East Midlands Trains (EMT). We decided in addition to the official planned events we would run our own events while raising money for the RAF100 Appeal.



Sleaford Vintage Afternoon



Skegness RAF Fun Day



Radcliffe on Trent Summer Carnival

The campaign name was decided as "100 years of aviation along the Poacher Line". To complement the campaign a new leaflet was designed along with a voucher card containing discounts at some venues along our line. A data capture card was produced with a chance to win return train tickets courtesy of EMT, overnight stay at the White Hart in Lincoln and a signed, framed Red Arrow Print. EMT also donated 2,000 branded vintage sweets to hand out. Our campaign was funded by a generous grant from CrossCountry Trains and Lincolnshire County Council.

Our launch event was a Vintage afternoon at Sleaford station in March. The local RAF cadets from 2160(Sqn) Sleaford assisted with refreshments and a raffle; entertainment was a live 40's singer and 40's music along with the Skegness Silver Band – vintage stalls added to

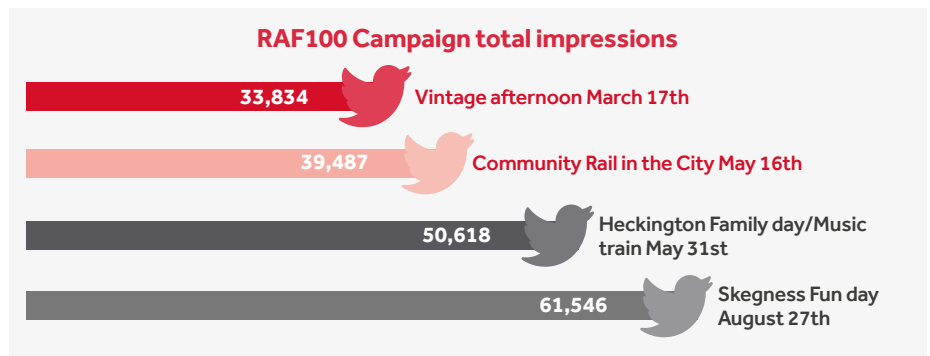
the atmosphere and the station was decorated with props from the era and a rations table. CallConnect provided complementary transport to the RAF Cranwell Aviation Museum throughout the day. This event took place during the Beast from the East and despite the challenging weather we managed to sell out of nearly 200 pieces of cake.

We then moved into our next event which was ACoRP's Community Rail in the City at Birmingham New Street station (see separate article below).

May 31st saw a Family day at Heckington Mill, this was a day of music and fun ideally located right next to the station. We trialed our new gazebo with an interesting information stand about our line and the RAF100. The cadets again attended to help out and we organised trade

stalls selling crafts and vintage goods. A bouncy castle kept our younger guests entertained while Kelly Anne sang songs from the 40's and the Skegness Silver Band played. The weather had vastly improved from March and the café at the Mill (which is a registered charity) reported they made over £800 profit which would go towards desperately needed kitchen equipment. Due to there being a micro-brewery at the mill we decided to bring our famous music train to the mill that evening with band Identity Crisis. Many of our regulars were already at the Mill enjoying the celebrations and a further 110 people came via train. We had booked the Blighty Belles, a 1940's tribute trio, to entertain in the evening, alternating with live sets from Identity Crisis. This event was a huge success with the brewery selling out of beer and asking for us to partner with them in a similar event in 2019.

We were contacted by the RAF Association (RAFA) about some possible fund raising on their behalf. We decided we would have a stall at the Radcliffe on Trent summer carnival in July. RAFA sent some merchandise and we created a "Hook a duck" game and sold pin badges. Donna from EMT came to help out along with the Radcliffe station adopters who were thrilled we had a stall at their carnival.



We rounded up our RAF100 events with a Fun day at Skegness station on August Bank holiday Monday. We used this as joint fund raiser for both the RAF100 Appeal and RAFA. The cadets again gave up their valuable time to assist us and we arranged live music and entertainment along with the Skegness Silver Band. The Red Arrow made a reappearance and it parked up outside the station next to the Jolly Fisherman which people could sit in for a donation.

The whole campaign was a great success and we raised £1,000 for the RAF100 Appeal and £327.25 for the RAFA. A cheque presentation was made to Mark Quinn, regional director of RAFBF on 10th October at Sleaford station. During the campaign we had 3 radio interviews, 1 TV appearance, multiple newspaper articles and 325 new contact details captured. Our Twitter activity is represented in the graph above.



ACoRP Awards

The partnership had a very successful and rewarding year in 2018. This was celebrated at the ACoRP awards which was held in Glasgow and sponsored by ScotRail on 4th October.

As guests of EMT, the Community Rail Officer and assistant travelled on 3rd October to attend the various seminars and events which had been organised by ScotRail and ACoRP. The partnership was nominated 4 times in the following 3 categories:

1. Involving Children and Young People – for our work with St Georges Academy Photography and art students in Sleaford

2. Best Marketing Campaign – for “100 years of aviation along the Poacher Line”

3. It’s Your Station – Ancaster
It’s Your Station – Radcliffe

We were delighted to win “Best Marketing Campaign” for our RAF100 campaign and Radcliffe won “It’s Your Station” in the Bronze category. Phil Thomas was invited to accept the award on behalf of Radcliffe on Trent station adopters group and Jon Moody from Sustrans was also invited to attend due to his involvement with the St. Georges Academy project.

Community Rail in the City

This is ACoRP’s flagship event promoting Community rail at the country’s larger stations. This year we took our RAF100 campaign to Birmingham New Street station on 16th May. Sponsorship by CrossCountry Trains enabled us to commission an eye catching display and we gave out our RAF100 leaflets, vouchers and vintage sweets, courtesy of East Midlands Trains. We had several interactive elements to our stand which included a scaled down replica of a Red Arrow; which members of the public could sit in and a GIF machine, which when you included @poacherline and @CrossCountryUK on social media you could win first class return train travel. A quartet from the RAF Waddington band attended to play tunes during the day and personnel from the RAF Careers Office Birmingham were on hand to give out RAF freebies.

There was also the opportunity to enter our competition to win a signed Red Arrow print, overnight stay in Lincoln and return first class train tickets. We received amazing responses to our stand; one twitter follower specifically travelled our line after seeing us at Birmingham and we were featured on Good Morning Britain.

Music Train

Despite a busy marketing year we managed to run 7 music trains to 3 breweries with 4 bands. The year kicked off in January with a change of venue to The Canal House, a Castle Rock brewery in Nottingham. We had lower patronage, around 50 passengers, but received very positive responses from those who attended. We returned in March to Batemans brewery in Wainfleet, this was a very busy train with 150 passengers and we invited a professional photographer to take some great pictures. For the April train we decided to return to Castle Rock breweries but to the Vat & Fiddle; numbers were similar to January's train but everyone reported a good time had.



Extremely positive feedback on this train with everyone in fine festive spirits having a great time.



To coordinate with our RAF100 event the destination for our May train was the 8 Sail Brewery at Heckington. After a successful day around 110 passengers arrived, both from Boston and Grantham although many of our regulars were already at the Mill enjoying the festivities. Along with our usual band on the train we had booked the Blighty Belles, a 1940's tribute trio, to perform in the evening.

28th September was BBC Music Day and we were asked to add an extra date to our train schedule. We took approximately 50 passengers to Batemans Brewery in Wainfleet.

We were assisted on our Halloween train in October by our Community Rail colleagues from Essex who were interested in running their own music trains, destination was Batemans Brewery

Our busiest train by far was our Christmas train with around 180 passenger's boarding enroute to Batemans Brewery. Another 50 passengers had travelled on the earlier train to take advantage of a 10% discount at the brewery offered to alleviate the rush to the bar! Extremely positive feedback on this train with everyone in fine festive spirits having a great time.

Community Action Days

We scheduled a series of action days inviting people to turn up and join in with activities to improve their local station, including weeding, planting, cleaning and painting. These ran between 10am and 2pm and lunch and refreshments, courtesy of EMT, were provided.



16th March – Radcliffe station. We had a clean-up day at the station where the approach road was cleared and the fence painted. Streetwise arrived and took away all the debris collected on the day



3rd July – Wainfleet station. Along with our station adopter, EMT and Network Rail staff, we undertook some light gardening and gave the station a good clean. The blue paintwork on the building on the Nottingham bound platform was refreshed.



11th September – Bingham station. Our amazing Station Services Technicians had made 2 planters for the station so along with EMT staff and the local parish councillor we secured and planted them up. We also painted the fences and gave the shelters a good clean.



26th June – Skegness station. We were joined by staff from EMT, Network Rail and the station adopters. On a very hot day we tackled the Platform 7 weed problem and painted the fences. EMT arranged for Stagecoaches Hattie to visit and serve refreshments and jumbo games to engage with passing members of the public. A very successful day in challenging heat conditions.



17th July – Heckington station. The station adopters here already do a marvellous job so our task was to get the station ready for the Heckington Show later in the month. We put up bunting, cleaned the shelters and painted the main fence and gate.



18th September – Radcliffe on Trent station. A busy day made easier with the biggest adoption group we have, currently 27 members. A large planter was built on the platform out of sleepers and an embankment was cleared of bushes and weeds ready to become a blaze of colour with spring bulbs. Hedges were cut back, platforms were swept and the shelters given a good clean. Streetwise again arrived to take away the cutting and rubbish and a press officer from Nottinghamshire County Council was present to write a news story.

Station Adoption

Last year saw a huge increase in the number of volunteers along our line. In particular the Radcliffe on Trent group which currently stands at 27 members. Everyone has worked tirelessly to maintain the appearance of our stations and we had some special events planned to thank them for their dedication and commitment.



October saw the Annual station adopters conference held at Derby County Football ground. Along with our neighbouring CRP's, ACoRP and Network Rail. EMT organised an exciting and informative day for all. Activities included workshops from the Bee Friendly Trust, funding sources from ACoRP and display stands from the Community Rail Partnerships. The day also contained a fun quiz and a delicious lunch was provided courtesy of EMT. This was a great day for networking and sharing best practice.



To recognise the hard work of our amazing adopters in December we decided to treat them to a Christmas afternoon tea at Heckington Mill. Train travel was arranged and we were joined by Church Lane Primary School who delighted us with some lovely carol singing, Bingo was a big hit along with a Christmas themed quiz, well done to the winners! Everyone left with a goodie bag which included a delicious treat from EMT.



Last year Heckington station was chosen as the recipient for the Lincolnshire Co-op Community Champions. Two local community groups are chosen from each store and a percentage of the total spend during a 3 month period is given to that group. Heckington station adopters received £796.23 in December.



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

“ Everyone has worked tirelessly to maintain the appearance of our stations and we had some special events planned to thank them... ”

Education and Training



We took advantage of the many training and educational opportunities offered by ACoRP during the year.

Multiple seminars were attended including the 2 day rail conference at Milton Keynes and both the summer and autumn seminars in York and London. Social inclusion was featured heavily this year by both ACoRP and the DfT; we were able to attend workshops in York and London and were invited to have a stand at the DfT inclusion week where we showcased the artwork from St. Georges Academy, and raised further funds for our RAF100 campaign.

New officer training at Huddersfield was completed; webinars and e-courses were undertaken, including one on funding sources.

CoComms

We were delighted when CrossCountry Trains approached us to deliver a pilot communications course to aid Community Rail Partnerships in dealing with press and media requests. The pilot delivered to 6 Community Rail Partnerships in Leeds was a great success and a further two courses were delivered to 12 further Community Rail Partnerships in both York and Bristol. The training has now been developed further and two new courses will be delivered in 2019 relating to other aspects of media that were highlighted as areas of interest by the original officers that attended.

Other News



A new look

2018 also saw the Poacher Line rebranded in new colours with the logo and font updated to a new modern look. Production of our first animation film showcasing the Poacher Line went live on Twitter and Facebook; along with a promotional short film which could be viewed by Augmented Reality posters supplied by CrossCountry Trains.

An information board was designed for Ancaster station, which highlighted its Roman history and is now displayed at the station for all to enjoy.



Whoville Express

After the success of last year's Polar Express EMT approached us to see if we would organise a Santa train for underprivileged children and those in foster care who live along our line. On a Saturday in December we arranged to take 90 children and carers from Nottingham to watch the new Grinch at Boston cinema. The train was decorated; activity bags made and The Grinch boarded the train at Bingham to surprise the children. EMT provided lunch and organised for staff to donate presents which were given out by Santa on the return train trip along with a copy of The Grinch who stole Christmas. Everyone had a wonderful day and it was a great start to the festive season.

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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