



Department  
for Transport

## **Community Rail Consultation Response Form**

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<b>Organisation</b>	Rail Delivery Group
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<b>Question 1a</b>	
What role can community rail play in improving end-to-end journeys?	
Community Rail Partnerships and schemes by their nature have good local links and can work with partner organisations such as local authorities to improve walking and cycling routes to and from stations to encourage more pedestrians and cyclists in to the station. Setting up links with bus operators to improve bus services that are linked to the train timetable also improves end-to-end journeys.	
<b>Question 1b</b>	
How can community rail help to:	
make journeys more sustainable?	For those people who mainly use their car for transport, by encouraging some of them to use the train for at least part of their journey, community rail can make those people's journeys more sustainable.
encourage more healthy travel?	If walking and cycling routes are included in the whole end-to-end journey, it will encourage more healthy travel by passengers
reduce the environmental impact of travel?	Community Rail groups can help to ensure local bus services are well connected at stations, reducing the need for people to drive to the station and thus reduce the environmental impact of travel.
<b>Question 2</b>	
How can community rail help:	
communities have a voice in influencing the provision of rail?	Community Rail Partnerships can discuss responses to consultations by DfT and Train Operating Companies so that a coordinated response from the community can be submitted, rather than a number of conflicting opinions responding to the consultation. Build up a comprehensive picture of local needs and requirements before approaching transport providers with constructive suggestions.

complementary transport services and development of the rail network?

Community Rail Partnerships are able to work with community transport groups (through the Community Transport Association) to develop links to stations which allow passengers easily to travel to and from rail services. For rail network improvements, concentrate on achievable goals working in partnership with local authorities, Network Rail, Local Enterprise Partnerships and train operators to identify possible sources of funding for projects that have the backing of local people.

**Question 3**

Where should the government encourage community rail to develop on parts of the network currently without active CRPs or other community participation?

The Government should work with the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP) to identify the parts of the network where community rail is not well represented. It is usually smaller, less busy, stations that benefit the most from community involvement as the Train Operating Companies are less able to invest as many resources in these stations and railway lines.

Discover if there are any community groups already formed, such as history societies and transport user groups who can be approached to gauge interest in forming community groups on the railway.

**Question 4a**

What is the role of community rail in supporting:

community cohesion?	RDG has commissioned ACoRP to write a best practice guide to Community Rail and Social Inclusion, to be published in early 2018. It will highlight successful schemes already operating and show how Community Rail can encourage a more diverse range of customers.
promoting diversity?	Develop and promote railway confidence/outreach projects and schemes which make rail travel accessible for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Important to consider passengers with a disability or mental health issue. Encourage new audiences to use rail services, such as older people, children and families.
enabling social inclusion?	<p>Community Rail can be a powerful enabler for social inclusion by playing a vital role in ensuring everyone feels able and confident to use trains. The focus should be on disadvantaged and vulnerable groups who may feel excluded. In doing so, Community Rail helps to open up access to services and opportunities for the most marginalised, promoting fairness and equality. Travelling by rail also reduces social isolation and loneliness.</p> <p>Station friends groups/adopters should be reflective of the communities that they represent.</p>

**Question 4b**

How is this best achieved?

RDG would invite and encourage relevant parties to use guidance documents sponsored by RDG and written by ACoRP that highlight best practice and show schemes that have worked elsewhere.

**Question 5**

How can community rail help to make sure that the railway is accessible to as many people as possible?

There are a number of ways we have identified where the railway can become more accessible by:

- Approaching local community groups that represent all different parts of the community to ensure that the groups know the work of community rail. Discuss with these groups any issues that they feel are holding people back from using the railway locally, and show them the benefits of rail travel.
- Explaining to communities the national railcards which help people to travel more cheaply off peak: Two Together; 16-25; Family & Friends; Network Railcard; Senior Railcard; Disabled Persons; HM Forces; Regional Railcards. Further information available at:  
[http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/times\\_fares/46540.aspx](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/times_fares/46540.aspx)
- Ensuring elderly and disabled members of the community are aware of the assistance that is available for them when they use the railway.
- Obtaining advice from the National Rail website: Disabled passengers can book to get help at any station for any train journey. The train company can then organise for someone to: meet people at the entrance or meeting point and accompany them to their train; provide a ramp on and off the train if people need one; meet people from the train and take them to the next train or the exit; carry people's luggage.

Rail services are now far more accessible than they were in the past and many disabled people are able to use the rail network without assistance.

Further information available at

[http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations\\_destinations/disabled\\_passengers.aspx](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/disabled_passengers.aspx)

**Question 6**

How can community rail support local economies and railways grow through

Increasing employment?

In our publication *Regenerating Britain's railway stations* we consider the importance of understanding the role that a station plays in a local community when designing it. Here there is potential for community rail partnerships to step in and communicate what their unique needs are and work to achieve these in cooperation with the local authority.

By developing innovative community uses for railway stations and land (see question 7 below), the regeneration of the stations and land can contribute to each of these four strands.

Education and training opportunities?

Opening a new business within a previously redundant building will lead to increased employment there, and the business can then offer suitable education and training.

Supporting small businesses?

The 'station as a market' initiative at some stations, where a building has several uses, supports small businesses as it provides scope to network between similar minded people.

Social enterprise development?

Community rail can have a high impact on bringing local entrepreneurial spirit to railway projects. We discuss entrepreneurial spirit in our Vision for Stations where we highlight the importance of viewing stations as catalysts for innovation that can enhance the railway and local economy.

**Question 7**

What role can community rail play in making best use of:

Station buildings?

The Rail Delivery Group commissioned ACoRP to write a guidance document '*Community Stations – Innovative community uses for railway stations and land*' which was published in 2016.

	<p>The document provides an overview of inspirational work by station groups, community rail partnerships, and their commercial, public and third sector partners, to return station buildings to community use. It shows the opportunities available in such work, and provides examples, advice and recommendations relevant to community groups and the rail industry.</p> <p>It is available online at:</p> <p><a href="https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/about-us/publications.html?task=file.download&amp;id=469772252">https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/about-us/publications.html?task=file.download&amp;id=469772252</a></p> <p>The renovation work at the office in Petersfield station in West Sussex, which was coordinated by the community rail partnership officer there, is shown in the RDG / Britain Runs on Rail document 'In Partnership for Britain's Prosperity'.</p> <p>As highlighted in our Regenerating Britain's railway stations publication, Community Rail Partnerships can also provide a useful viewpoint when it comes to determining a clear idea of the role of the station in a local community.</p>
Railway land?	<p>As discussed in our Vision for Stations, it is crucial to share industry know-how when making use of Station Buildings and Railway land. Community Rail Partnerships can serve a purpose here by sharing knowledge of their situation where they live and what customer needs they have. Moreover, having these partnerships enables stations to be more flexible and adapt quicker in changing their station if required. Community Rail allows stations to reflect local needs and opportunities while still being part of a recognisable national network.</p>
<p><b>Question 8</b></p> <p>How can community rail be best supported to act:</p>	
Innovatively?	<p>Community Rail aligns well with our Vision for Stations as they embody local entrepreneurial spirit. Community rail is an innovative solution to a local need for station enhancement that can and has in the past contributed to local economies by for example making their local station a tourist attraction.</p>

	<p>The National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP) is another way of supporting community rail by bringing together resources and expertise that can greatly impact the ability for community rail to deliver projects with the guidance of Network Rail and Train Operating Companies.</p>
Effectively?	<p>Engage positively with the rail industry and understand some of the operational challenges that they work under. There are several key elements that make for a successful Community Rail scheme. They can be summed up as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Getting off to a positive start</li> <li>- A powerful, achievable vision</li> <li>- Strong community support</li> <li>- A sound business plan</li> <li>- Positive relationships, especially between community, rail industry and local government</li> <li>- Developing networks, formal and informal</li> <li>- Getting the right deal</li> <li>- Achieving adequate funding</li> <li>- Thinking creatively</li> <li>- Persistence and passion</li> </ul>
<p><b>Question 9</b></p> <p>What opportunities are there to secure a:</p>	
Diverse income base for community rail?	<p>Where possible at stations, have businesses or enterprises owned by community rail schemes that make a surplus, and use any surplus to fund community rail schemes at that station and nearby.</p>
Sustainable income base for community rail?	<p>NSIP has a track-record of successfully attracting third-party funding which can enable community rail to achieve more with fewer resources and therefore improve efficiency.</p>



**Question 10**

How can community rail designation be developed to more fully realise its potential?

Others are better able to comment on Community Rail designation.

**Question 11**

How can community rail:

Support the development of rail line and stations improvement?

Community Rail can:

Engage constructively with rail consultation exercises conducted by train operating companies and Network Rail by seeking to find a community response that represents a large number of local people.

Contribute to the development of rail line and station improvement?

By focusing on three of our principles from our *Vision for Stations* publication, community rail can ensure that it supports and contributes to the development of rail lines and stations.

Principle 4: Reflect local needs and opportunities

- Tailor stations to reflect local needs and characteristics while still being part of a recognisable national network.

Principle 5: Safe and secure environment

- Ensure all stations and their localities are places where users can feel safe and secure.

Principle 8: Shared industry know-how

- Share knowledge and experience of what works best at stations in meeting passengers' diverse needs most efficiently and effectively.

Make greater use of heritage railways?

Community rail can promote transport links between heritage railway lines and the national rail network, including joint ticketing schemes and bus services that allow customers easy access between the heritage railways and the national rail network.

## Question 12

Do you have any other comments on how Government can best support the future of community rail?

Ensure Community Rail schemes have an assured future by including funding for them as part of the DfT franchise process, with TOCs required to appoint a Community Rail officer where appropriate.

We highly recommend the NSIP as a way of continuing to support community rail. It attracts third-party funding, useful expertise, and introduces industry-wide cooperation to achieve the greatest outcome possible for community rail.

Britain Runs on Rail and the Rail Delivery Group have published 'In Partnership for Britain's Prosperity', the rail industry's plan to secure growth across our country. In the document, one of the four commitments for change is: 'Boost local communities through localised decision making and investment.

*Further detail is as follows:*

- Setting up local supervisory boards or equivalents made up of Network Rail, train operators and passenger groups, giving customers and communities a stronger voice
- Creating vibrant, attractive railway stations that are community hubs – building on the decade-long, £5.2bn investment in railway stations across the country
- Giving our backing to public and private infrastructure projects across the country, like

Transport for the North's plan to extend the number of customers one hour away from the North of England's four major cities to 1.3m

- Enabling more people to benefit from the opportunities that travelling by train opens up

*What we will deliver:*

- Rolling out supervisory boards or equivalents across all routes in England and Wales by spring 2018
- Investing £54m to enhance almost 180 stations during the next two years
- Building on the millions of railcard discounts for the over 60s, students, and people with disabilities

The full report can be found here:

<http://www.britainrunsonrail.co.uk/files/docs/one-plan.pdf>

RDG would welcome the opportunity to continue to work with DfT as they further develop their approach to Community Rail.

For all enquiries about this response, please contact Nick Mitchell, Senior Integrated Transport Officer, at the Rail Delivery Group:

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The Rail Delivery Group (RDG) brings together the companies that run Britain's railway into a single team with one goal - to deliver a better railway for you and your community.

All the passenger and freight rail companies are members of the RDG, as well as Network Rail and HS2.

This response has been drawn together from different departments at RDG.