

# Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership Annual Report 2013-14



Working to improve local stations and train services

## Read about:

- Award Winning Stations
- Flower Power Brightens Stations
- School Artwork Adorns Matlock Bath Station
- More  
Passengers on  
the Derwent  
Valley Line



# Welcome from the Chair



Councillor Irene Ratcliffe helping to promote the work of the Rail Partnership.

I am delighted to introduce this report, having thoroughly enjoyed my first year as Chair of the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership. The report illustrates the **varied and successful work of the Partnership.**

I have been very impressed by the passion and dedication of many of the partnership members, particularly so the station volunteers. The volunteers continue to take great pride in making their local station a welcoming entrance to their community. The new floral displays, **created as part of the 'Brightening up Derwent Valley Line Stations'**, have made a great impact along the line.

Particularly impressive are Ambergate and Cromford, where new volunteers have come on board and made a real difference. At other stations, existing volunteer groups continue to flourish, most notably the continued planting improvements carried out by Transition Belper. Thanks must also go to a couple of our longest serving volunteers who retired after seven years dedicated work at Matlock. Luckily we have some new volunteers to help the remaining volunteers continue their legacy. It is pleasing to see the efforts of many of our volunteers recognised with awards from both East Midlands Trains and, at a national level, at the Community Rail Awards.

I am very pleased that the **school artwork has now been installed at Matlock Bath** to greet thousands of visitors to this popular destination, complementing the efforts of our volunteers lovely planting barrels. The continued use of the train by local school groups is also very welcome. I am sure that the popularity of the train service will continue, especially following the journey time reduction to Nottingham, which has been very popular.

The **continued funding commitment** of all our partners is greatly appreciated during these difficult times for local government. This funding is vital to sustain the Partnership, bring in match funding and to develop the line further. The input from, and joint working with, Parish and Town Councils, Friends of the Derwent Valley Line, heritage rail groups and many other organisations continues to be essential to delivering the benefits of the line to the communities it serves.

I would also like to thank Alastair Morley, our part time Partnership Officer, and the support from East Midlands Trains which is key to successful partnership working. I look forward to continuing to support the work of the Partnership.

**Councillor Irene Ratcliffe**

# More Passengers on the Derwent Valley Line

Passenger journeys on the Derwent Valley Line, **increased by an impressive 6%** to 596,265 during 2013/14. The most notable passenger increases were at Cromford, Belper and Matlock Bath. An increase in journeys also occurred at other local stations, with the exception of Whatstandwell, which decreased by 10%. It is believed that a local road closure which lasted approximately 5 months between Lea, Holloway and Whatstandwell contributed to this decline, as potential passengers from these communities either used Cromford, or did not travel by train. The changes in passenger journeys for each station are shown below:

Station	Passenger Journeys 2013/14	Passenger Journeys 2012/13	% Change in Passenger Journeys 2012/13 to 2013/14
Ambergate	39,909	38,490	4%
Belper	193,516	177,528	9%
Cromford	35,847	32,550	10%
Duffield	56,784*	55,470	2%
Matlock	187,492	176,163	6%
Matlock Bath	58,817	54,689	8%
Whatstandwell	23,900	26,618	-10%
<b>Total at all local stations</b>	<b>596,265</b>	<b>561,649</b>	<b>6%</b>

\*Total includes 229 through tickets to Wirksworth via Duffield.

## School Groups Get on Board

Our school group travel leaflet 'Get on Track for Great School Trips Along the Derwent Valley Line' was again produced **to encourage more school groups to use the train**. The leaflet featured details of the fantastic discounted fares available to school groups. A total of 32 school groups travelled on the Derwent Valley Line between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014, totalling over 1,250 passengers comprising 280 adults, 870 children and 29 students.

## Trains Keep to Time

Over nine out of ten Derwent Valley Line trains ran on time during the year. Punctuality and reliability did dip slightly from the previous year high of 93% to 90%. Punctuality on the Derwent Valley Line was particularly affected in February, due to mainline train alterations, caused by the impact of the landslip at Unstone, near Chesterfield.



Commuters board the 0803 at Duffield for Derby and Nottingham.

# Award Winning Local Stations

**Projects and representatives from four of the seven Derwent Valley Line stations have received the following awards, in recognition of their work:**

## **Belper**

- Kathy Fairweather winner of East Midlands Trains Outstanding Volunteer Contribution.
- Runner Up in Community Partnership Award - East Midlands Trains Best Station Awards.
- Third place to Transition Belper for Best Station Volunteers' Project - Community Rail Awards.



Trio of awards recognising improvement to the environment at Belper Station.

## **Cromford**

- A photograph of the Cromford Staff Challenge event won the Photographic Competition for Community Rail People in Action at the Community Rail Awards. (See the front cover for this award winning photograph.)

## **Matlock Bath**

- Runner-Up Most Improved Station - East Midlands Trains Best Station Awards.

## **Matlock**

- Winner Most Improved Station - East Midlands Trains Best Station Awards.
- Runner-Up Best Small Station - East Midlands Trains Best Station Awards.
- Highly Commended in Community Partnership Award - East Midlands Trains Best Station Awards.
- Award for Excellence to Friends of Matlock Station from Matlock in Bloom Summer 2013.
- Third prize to Friends of Matlock Station for Communal Gardens - Blooming Dales Competition 2013.



Matlock's numerous awards on display at the station.

## **Derwent Valley Line**

- Matty Materaghan, East Midlands Trains awarded Highly Commended for his Outstanding Personal Contribution to the Derwent Valley Line.



Matty painting at Belper Station.

# Improving Local Stations

Derwent Valley Line Stations continue to be enhanced, becoming even more attractive and welcoming locations to catch a train. Most of the credit for these continued improvements must go to our **teams of dedicated volunteers** at every local station. East Midlands Trains, in recognition of the all the great effort and achievements of the volunteers along the line, presented each of them with a small "Thank You" box of chocolates.

Our 'Brightening Up Derwent Valley Line Stations' project had a significant impact along the whole line, receiving notable praise from passengers. This project was funded by both the Designated Community Rail Development Fund and ACoRP's Small Grant Fund. The stations look stunning as a result of this project, especially Ambergate and Cromford, which had no existing planters or managed station gardens area, prior to this project. There are now over **80 mini gardens** in the form of platform planters, barrels and flower baskets adorning the seven stations.



Flower power at Ambergate.

## Duffield

Members of the Partnership, Ecclesbourne Valley Railway and East Midlands Trains met with Network Rail to discuss proposals for replacing the footbridge. Initial design work was completed, but the implementation date was put back from summer 2014, to a later date in the electrification programme. The Partnership will continue to request that accessible ramps are included as part of the new footbridge design.

The small team of station adopters helped to install, and are now looking after, five new flower baskets along the entrance path to the footbridge. An impressive floral display welcomes passengers walking to the station, complementing the existing platform planters around the footbridge. The new flower baskets formed part of the 'Brightening Up Derwent Valley Line Stations' project.

Flower baskets along the entrance path to Duffield Station.



# Improving Local Stations

## Belper

The Partnership welcomed the start made in February **to improve passenger facilities** at Belper, especially those to enhance use of the ticket machine. East Midlands Trains installed new waiting shelters on both platforms. This included repositioning the existing Ticket Vending Machine inside the new, larger shelter on Platform 2, where passengers await trains for Derby and Nottingham. This has greatly improved passengers' experience of buying tickets. Previously, passengers had to either queue in the rain to buy tickets or struggle to read the screen due to the sun, which not only dazzled the screen, but caused it to fade. New seats have been installed on Platform 1. As part of the station improvements Network Rail have agreed to replace the partially collapsed wall, adjacent to the new shelter on Platform 2, an improvement the Partnership and station volunteers have been requesting for some time. The Rail Partnership obtained a grant from the Designated Community Rail Development Fund towards these improvements, part of which can be used by Transition Belper to plant behind the new wall.



Ticket machine inside the new shelter.



Volunteers tending the gardens.

The transformation of Belper Station Gardens has continued apace with **ever increasing numbers of volunteers** progressing Transition Belper's station gardening project. The group's fantastic work was recognised with three awards in as many months. Community Partnership working was recognised with a Runner-Up award by East Midlands Trains and a third place in the Best Station Volunteers' Project at the Community Rail Awards.

Kathy Fairweather's dedication and enthusiasm for the project was also recognised by East Midlands Trains who awarded her with their

Outstanding Volunteer Contribution for 2013. All three awards are proudly displayed at the station. These awards generated several news articles in the Belper News and Derby Evening Telegraph. Station volunteers and members of the Rail Partnership also took part in a BBC TV East Midlands Today feature and BBC Radio Derby interview about **the value of volunteering**, as part of National Volunteer Week.



Station gardens in bloom.

Summer 2013 was a real challenge for the volunteers due to the dry, hot weather which required an extensive and well co-ordinated watering regime for a four week period to ensure that new shrubs and plants would not wither and die. Their efforts thankfully proved successful with plants surviving and flourishing in late summer and early autumn. Unfortunately, prior to the start of spring planting, Kathy Fairweather decided she would step aside from her involvement at the station. Whilst this was disappointing, her work leading the project left a considerable legacy for the rest of the group to continue. Thankfully, the rest of the group have continued the excellent work with early maintenance of the four large garden areas and planting of the many donated herbaceous perennials and wild flowers. **Scores of plants have been donated** through appeals on Twitter and Facebook, through local gardening and environmental networks and from local Councillors. Most significantly, numerous mature, late flowering perennials were donated by the Derby Breast Cancer Support Group.

A core group of 8 Transition Belper adopters are regularly assisted by another 6 volunteers, plus family, friends and staff from Belper Town Council and the Co-op Bank. The volunteers efforts saw a total of 98 hours gardening work carried out at the station in March 2014. Additional to this, there are numerous tasks as noted by Kate Pudney. "This does not include the hours per week co-ordinating (emailing etc), collecting plants from donors (Barbara, Adrian and Rebecca), drawing up garden plan (Barbara), writing blurb for website (several of us), maintaining website (Lynne and David), doing the photos (Jennie), making cakes for the gardeners (Terry, Jennie, Barbara and me) so I think you can add another 5 or 6 hours per week with this stuff!"

*Kate Pudney, Transition Belper.*

# Improving Local Stations

## Ambergate

**Three new Station Adopters** have been making a great difference at Ambergate taking on the planting and care of 6 planting barrels and 11 flower baskets along the platform and around the station car park. The platform is now a colourful and welcoming display of flowers and has received many positive comments, including a thank you card regarding the floral display, received from a lady from Derby.



Barrels and flower baskets adorning Ambergate Station.



Linda planting daffodil bulbs at Ambergate.

The volunteers also planted donated Polyanthus along the platform. In addition, the Rail Partnership obtained funding from ACoRP's Small Grants to enable the volunteers to buy a hand-pulled water bowser which enables them to water the flowers and plants more effectively.

## Whatstandwell

Five flower baskets were added in June 2013 to the six platform planters that the Station Adopters care for along the platform. In the autumn, the volunteers also planted some donated Polyanthus and Daffodil bulbs in the border by the car park, which led to the idea of a larger scale planting scheme around the station. Work was started in February 2014, by Derbyshire Probation Service Community Payback Team clearing spoil from a strip of land at the rear of the platform and digging over compacted ground around the station car park. A terraced sleeper bed was then created at the end of March 2014 by volunteers, assisted by Matty from East Midlands Trains and Alastair from the Rail Partnership. This sleeper bed and areas around the station car park would then be planted up by the local community and children from Crich Carr School in the spring. Funding was received from the Designated Community Rail Development Fund towards this project.



Above: A colourful display brightening up a misty morning.

Left: The new planting bed created by station volunteers and Matty from East Midlands Trains.

# Improving Local Stations

## Cromford

### The first East Midlands Trains Staff Challenge

event, between the team of Directors and Derby Station Management, took place on 3 May 2013. This new event saw the Directors team carrying out clearance of the approach road banking, whilst the Derby Station team created a new planting area in the car park. The project was supported by Network Rail and plants for the project were donated by Neil Thompson Nurseries of Tansley. Donated Polyanthus plants were also planted following the event. Photographs from this enjoyable and successful day were entered into the photographic competition for Community Rail People in Action at the Community Rail Awards. The judges were suitably impressed choosing the 'Cromford Teams Unite' photograph as the winner of the award. See the front cover for this award winning photograph.



Some of the new barrels and flower baskets at Cromford.

As part of the 'Brightening Up the Derwent Valley Line' project four planting barrels and five flower baskets now adorn the station platform, planted and cared for by the Station Adopters. The Station Adopters have also applied to Network Rail for a Community Licence for gardening activities along the approach road and around the platform. This will build upon the initial work carried out on the Staff Challenge Event.

During the year, concerns grew about the safety of some of the trees along the Station Approach Road. Following discussions with Network Rail and Derbyshire Dales District Council one large tree was felled and branches deemed to be dangerous, removed from a number of other trees. Initial discussion has taken place regarding future proposals for tree management.



Children's artwork adorning the station waiting room.

Matlock Bath was awarded Runner-Up Most Improved Station at East Midlands Trains' Best Station Awards, in recognition of these improvements and the new access ramp and water barrels installed at the end of the previous year.

## Matlock Bath

Following on from the planting of the first two planting tubs, the Station Adopters acquired and planted eight planting barrels. These new barrels were complemented by three flower baskets on the entrance fence making an attractive welcome for the many visitors to Matlock Bath.

**Artwork produced by children from Matlock Bath Holy Trinity Primary School** was unveiled around the interior of the waiting shelter. The series of scenes depict local tourism attractions and places of interest in Matlock Bath.



Station volunteers with their new planting tubs at Matlock Bath.



# Improving Local Stations

## Matlock

**Improvements to Matlock Station** were again recognised this year with a number of awards. At the East Midlands Trains' Best Station Awards, Matlock won Most Improved Station, was Runner-Up for Best Small Station and Highly Commended in the Community Partnership category. Friends of Matlock Station also received local recognition with the presentation of an Award for Excellence from Matlock in Bloom and Third prize for Communal Gardens in Derbyshire Dales' Blooming Dales Competition.

These awards reflect the **success of the Visitor Information Point**, integration of Peak Rail's services and the continuing enhancements to the station by East Midlands Trains and Friends of Matlock Station. The, already excellent, floral displays were enhanced in summer 2013, by the addition of four flower baskets on the station entrance fence and hanging baskets from the canopy roof.



Flower baskets at the station entrance.



Flower planters along the platform at Matlock.

Funding raised by the Friends of Matlock Station enabled the purchase of a new hose reel trolley to make watering at the station much easier, to complement the upgraded water supply within the Peak Rail building, which they had also worked to fund. Peak Rail kindly continue to allow the volunteers free use of their water supply.

After seven years of improving the station environment and raising several thousand pounds towards their projects, **Jeanette and Robin Lumb** decided to **retire** from their station duties. Working with Janet and David, they have made the station a more attractive and welcoming entrance to the town. The Partnership is very grateful for their efforts. Fortunately, four new volunteers joined Janet and David and they will continue the great work at the station.

# Marketing the Derwent Valley Line

Marketing activities continued throughout the year to promote the Derwent Valley Line to both local residents and visitors. The Partnership welcomed the reduced journey time to Nottingham from December 2013 and assisted East Midlands Trains in marketing this latest train service improvement.

The following marketing initiatives were delivered during the year:

## Nottingham Now Even Nearer

The Rail Partnership obtained £2,500 funding from the Designated Community Rail Development Fund towards East Midlands Trains promotion of the 13 minute journey time reduction to Nottingham. A leaflet was distributed to households in the valley and adverts placed in the Belper News and Matlock Mercury.



Promoting the Derwent Valley Line at London Victoria.

## Community Rail In the City 2013

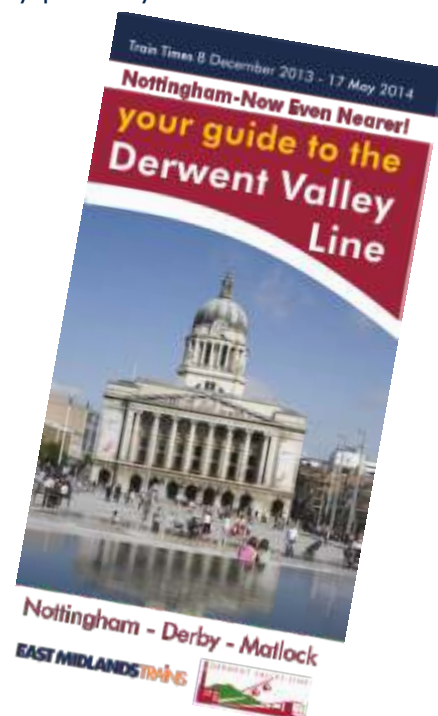
In May, volunteers from the Derwent Valley Line joined ACoRP and other Partnerships promoting Community Rail at stations across London. This year we had displays at London Victoria and gave out Derwent Valley publicity at Waterloo.

## £3 return Late Night Christmas Shopping Promotion

For the second time, a bargain £3 Christmas train fare was offered for any evening journeys into Derby to coincide with late night shopping at Westfield Derby.

## Your Guide to the Derwent Valley Line

Two editions of 'Your Guide to the Derwent Valley Line' were produced in May and December 2013. Distribution continued to numerous local outlets and to regional train stations and Tourist Information Centres.



# Marketing the Derwent Valley Line

## Matlock Bath Illuminations

Visitors arriving by train to the Matlock Bath Illuminations once again benefited from a 20% discount on entry to the Illuminations, on production of their train ticket. More seats, with four carriages on some services, were provided to serve the popular fireworks nights as part of the Matlock Bath Illuminations. The continued popularity of this event is very welcome and there is hope that this will continue in future. Station posters helped promote train services to the event.

## Derwent Valley Mills Discovery Days

Station posters helped promote the World Heritage Discovery Days and a full page feature was included in the Discovery Days Event Guide to encourage visitors to travel by train. Events included an Ecclesbourne Valley Railway guided train tour and Derwent Valley walk and ride.

## Local Transport Information

Local train timetable displays and transport maps in towns and villages were updated throughout the year. Similarly, the information in the Partnership's station display cases was updated throughout the year informing passengers of timetable changes, ticket information and local events.

## Other Partnership Activities

Other activities undertaken by the Partnership during the year has included:

- The Partnership updated the prospectus for the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail designation. Many of the objectives from the original document produced in 2006 had been achieved, notably improvements to the train service. The updated version for the next five to ten years focuses on rolling stock, timetable and infrastructure improvements.
- Co-ordinating Partnership responses to proposed timetable changes. The Partnership is pleased that Friends of the Derwent Valley Line's campaign for an evening Belper train from Sheffield and Chesterfield has been successful. This will commence in May 2014.
- Representing the Partnership at a range of stakeholder meetings.
- Working with partners to promote the train service, for example through the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage site and tourism leaflets.
- Regular attendance at Friends of the Derwent Valley Line meetings to discuss rail service issues with local passengers.
- Commenting on relevant rail industry consultations.

**Travel by train to these fantastic events with East Midlands Trains**

**Matlock Bath Illuminations:**  
31 August to 26 October 2013  
Spectacular cliff-top fireworks displays on Saturdays: 5, 12, 19 and 26 October. Train passengers! Save 20% on the entrance fee with your train ticket.  
derbystripodates.gov.uk/illuminations

**Derwent Valley Mills Discovery Days**  
26 October to 3 November 2013  
A nine day festival of events celebrating the World Heritage Site between Derby and Masson Mills. derwentvalleymills.org

**Nottingham-Derby-Matlock**  
**EAST MIDLANDS TRAINS**  
For more information pick up a leaflet from staffed stations or visit eastmidlandsrail.co.uk/derwentvalleyline

# Finance Report 2013/14

The Partnership continues to operate on a small budget with a part time officer. East Midlands Trains continue to provide significant funding to support the Partnership Officer's role and towards marketing and many station projects along the line. Local Authority funding continues to be received from Amber Valley Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council and the Peak District National Park Authority. A total of £6,895 grant funding was received towards the cost of seven projects - see details below.

## Financial Statement 2013/14

Expenditure	(£)	Income	(£)
Salary Costs	17,978.29	Amber Valley Borough Council	2,000.00
Staff Travel	843.02	Derbyshire Dales District Council	2,000.00
Projects and Marketing Activities	7,220.38	Peak District National Park Authority	2,000.00
Miscellaneous Expenses (meetings, administration, IT & mobile phone)	340.71	Derbyshire County Council	2,000.00
Sub total for 2013/14	26,382.40	East Midlands Trains*	10,803.91
To be carried forward to 2014/15	40,690.45	Community Rail Awards Prize Money	250.00
		Grants from National Community Rail Fund	6,895.00
		DVLCRP Reserves from 2012/13	41,123.94
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>67,072.85</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>67,072.85</b>

The Partnership received the following eight grants from the Designated Community Rail Development Fund (DCRDF) and ACoRP Small Grants Fund (SG) in 2013/14:

1. £2,500 to promote reduced journey time to Nottingham (DCRDF).
2. £1,000 Whatstandwell Station Garden (DCRDF).
3. £1,000 towards 'Brightening Up Derwent Valley Line Stations' (DCRDF).
4. £985 towards 'Brightening Up Derwent Valley Line Stations' (SG).
5. £715 for improvements to the water supply at Matlock Station (DCRDF)\*.
6. £400 for Matlock Bath Art project (SG).
7. £250 for water bowser for Ambergate volunteers (SG).
8. £45 match funding for Matlock hose trolley (SG).

\*This grant was awarded and work completed in 2012/13 but funding was received in 2013/14.

Grants towards improvements at Belper Station (£5,000) and to establish a Derwent Valley Line website (£2,275) were also agreed and will be completed in 2014/15.

Looking ahead, the Partnership has funding secured until March 2015. It is hoped the continued success of the Derwent Valley Line, which has benefited greatly from the work of the Community Rail Partnership, will result in continued funding from all the local authorities. East Midlands Trains funding commitment as part of their franchise agreement remains a key component in the continuation of the Partnership, providing vital match funding alongside the local authority partners.

## Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership

The Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership works to develop and promote the Derwent Valley Line for the benefit of residents and visitors. The Derwent Valley Line is one of approximately 20 designated community rail routes. The Partnership's role in developing the line is officially recognised by the Department for Transport.

## The Partnership's vision for the Derwent Valley Line is:

'The operation of a frequent and reliable 7 day a week railway service that will attract a growing market, meet the needs of residents and visitors and support the economy of the Derwent Valley'. The Partnership is funded by Amber Valley Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, East Midlands Trains and Peak District National Park Authority. The Partnership is managed by Derbyshire County Council.

The Partnership would also like to thank David Rayner for his role over a number of years as Minutes Secretary at Partnership meetings. David was very reliable and did an excellent job, a role he also carried out for Friends of the Derwent Valley Line. Chris Darrall, has agreed to take over David's role for the Friends group and the Partnership.



## Contact Information

Alastair Morley, Partnership Officer, Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership,  
Derbyshire County Council, Economy, Transport and Environment, County Hall, Matlock, DE4 3AG  
Telephone: 01629 538062. Email: [alastair.morley@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:alastair.morley@derbyshire.gov.uk)  
Website: [eastmidlandstrains.co.uk/derwentvalleyline](http://eastmidlandstrains.co.uk/derwentvalleyline)