



Community Strategy 2007

Working with communities,
promoting sustainable
development

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14 MAR 2007

Dear Heidi

Railways serve communities. They are run by people from communities; they share neighbourhoods with communities and receive funding from the wider community via central and local government. I believe this is the first time a strategy has brought all of these interactions with the community together into one document.

The Government recognises the importance of rail in the North of England. The Northern franchise will receive £2.4bn (2004 prices) in support payments for the 8 ³/₄ years of the contract - a substantial sum to match a substantial contribution made by the railway. I am pleased that Northern is systematically reviewing how it relates to the people it serves in this innovative Community Strategy Document.

I am particularly pleased with the interaction with communities via Community Rail Partnerships - a key part of the Government's strategy to improve the usefulness and sustainability of local rail services. Partnerships bring together local stakeholders (including councils of all political persuasions) and the rail industry to promote and develop local services. Effective working partnerships can help boost patronage and help to bring about improvements.

Best wishes


TOM HARRIS

Preface

Dear stakeholder,

I'm delighted to introduce our Community Strategy for 2007. It represents a major part of Northern's commitment to corporate social responsibility. It sets out our approach to working with, and supporting, communities across the North of England.

We have a big task on our hands 'doing the day job' of running 2,500 trains each weekday, serving over 500 stations across the North of England. But we firmly believe that we need to do more, and working in partnership with communities is not only good for our business but helps the people we serve to create a more sustainable region.

Since our franchise began in December 2004 we have already made a difference to communities in the North of England. We have supported a range of local charities, we have sponsored a growing number of community rail partnerships and we are backing a wide range of local community projects. Our 'station adoption' programme is a model for others to follow.

We have led the way in our work with schools, with an expanding programme of schools liaison, which helps create a stronger awareness of the risk of trespassing on the line. Our schools work also highlights the positive benefits of using the train – and of seeing Northern as a potential employer.

In partnership with local authorities and passenger transport executives we have funded improvements at dozens of stations across our network. These have helped make our stations into more attractive gateways, offering improved access and better facilities for thousands of people.

One of the less noticed aspects of our operation is the vitally important engineering function, keeping our trains safe and reliable. We have three major depots across our network and several smaller bases. We are developing a pioneering approach to ways in which our depots can engage with their neighbouring communities.

This is our first 'Community Strategy'. We will publish an update each year, reporting on progress towards meeting our targets. I very much welcome any comments on this document.

Yours sincerely,



Heidi Mottram, Managing Director



Executive Summary

This Strategy brings together Northern's community activities including its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies and its Community Rail Development Strategy. The latter includes 'how we do things' in relation to community rail partnerships, individual station partnerships, and our work with rail user and other community groups. The 'CSR' element includes our support for charities.

Sustainability is at the heart of our business. Our vision is of being a train operator 'providing the most sustainable means of connecting people to opportunities'. Sustainability has three pillars – social, economic and environmental. This Strategy focuses primarily on the 'social' aspects of sustainable development and will be followed by a strategy for environmental sustainability during 2007.

We are strongly committed to working in partnership with the communities we serve and this Strategy outlines the practical ways we will do this, with an emphasis towards working more effectively with socially excluded groups within the North of England. Community partnership makes good business sense for us and is 'the right thing to do'.

Northern's Community Strategy links with the Department for Transport's national strategy and highlights our commitment to working with DfT, Network Rail, ACoRP and other partners to deliver the Strategy and our two pilot 'community rail' projects in particular. We outline our specific support for community rail partnerships and targets for development in 2007, which includes setting up six new community rail partnerships.

We want to develop our work on community partnership at stations. We will expand the number of stations with 'station partnerships' comprising community groups and businesses who work with us on small-scale improvements (alongside our well-established 'station adoption' scheme for fault-reporting). A 'station partnership agreement' will set out our respective duties and commitments. We want to undertake more initiatives to bring redundant station property back into use by community organisations, such as those at Edge Hill and Littleborough.

The most innovative part of the Strategy is our community engagement work at major depots. There are strong practical business reasons for doing this, not least in discouraging trespass, vandalism and theft but also in showing we are a good neighbour and potential employer.



Northern staff at the Darlington Community Rail Festival 2006.

We will work with local authorities and community groups to ensure that we have a visible presence at galas and festivals around our network, including events at our own stations such as the highly successful Todmorden Station Gala in 2006.

We will maintain and develop our work with rail user groups and other lobby groups, with regular information through newsletters and seminars. Our very popular 'stakeholder special' to Bridlington last July will be repeated in 2007, to Morecambe.

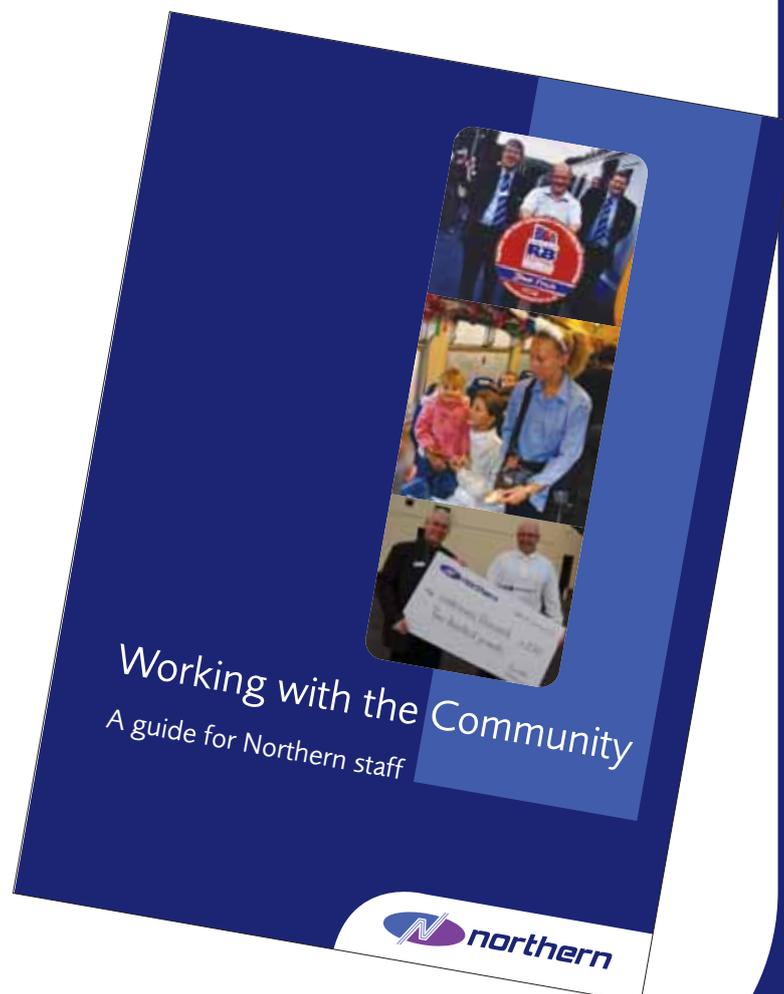
How we address social inclusion issues is fundamental to our vision of promoting sustainable development. We outline our work with schools, scope for developing greater awareness of what Northern offers to socially excluded sections of the community and proposals for specific projects with organisations directly involved in work with socially excluded groups and individuals.

The Strategy addresses sustainable development in general and stresses the need to develop our work on environmental issues but also to progress specific projects such as the 'Eco Stations' pilot study which we launched in February.

We will continue our support for charities in the North of England, through support in kind (e.g. travel facilities) and through our small grants fund. The emphasis will be on supporting charities which have Northern staff involvement and make a contribution to reducing social exclusion in their communities.

Staff involvement in every aspect of the Community Strategy is crucial and we outline ways in which we can achieve this in such a way that staff feel it enhances their work and makes them feel more part of Northern. A guide to working with the community has been produced for staff to supplement this Strategy.

Progress in implementing the Strategy will be monitored on a regular basis through a small working group drawn from Northern staff in different functional areas.



Northern's Vision and Values

We are a joint venture company combining Serco and NedRailways (owned by Netherlands Railways). Our franchise began in December 2004 and runs until September 2013, subject to a performance review in 2011. We employ 4,500 staff and operate 2,500 trains each weekday across the North of England and the East Midlands. We manage a total of 472 stations.

We are primarily a local train operator, with a vision of 'providing the most sustainable means of connecting people to opportunities'. Our services are vital to the economic, social and environmental health and well being of the communities we serve.

We aim to provide top quality services to the communities we serve. We are committed to our communities and want to make a major contribution to the social and economic development of the North of England.

Our 'day job' is running reliable, accessible local rail services. We aim to continuously improve our services and this will involve engaging with all our stakeholders in a constructive way.

We will be:

Accountable: taking full responsibility for getting the basics right

Progressive: continuously improving the way we deliver our services

Ambitious: constantly seeking new ways to realise our vision

Genuine: in the way we conduct ourselves in business

We treat our employees with respect and have a programme of staff development, which is vital to the success of our business and the way we are seen by our customers.

Central to our values is the principle of partnership. Our franchise is with the Department for Transport, with whom we work closely and positively. The passenger transport executives for Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South and West Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear are signatories to our franchise agreement and they are valued partners. We have partnerships with a much wider range of bodies including local authorities, community organisations, business groups and regional agencies.

Our core principles of partnership are:

- Coming together on the basis of mutual respect and shared goals
- Recognising that partners bring different resources to the table – not always money!
- Being open, honest and genuine
- Understanding our partners' needs and aspirations
- Being open and assertive about our own agenda, but not aggressive
- Being innovative – encouraging new thinking and ways of doing things
- Finding common ground but not opting for 'lowest common denominator'
- Agreeing common objectives with all partners at the table
- Building up long-lasting, positive and friendly professional relationships
- Knowing when to compromise
- Always keeping partners informed – being accountable
- Avoiding defensive or confrontational attitudes
- Recognising that there is a collective 'common good' which may be greater than our own immediate interests



'The Blues Train' -
Colne R&B Festival, 2006.

NORTHERN'S COMMUNITY STRATEGY

1. Introduction

This Strategy pulls together all the community-based activities we are involved in, and outlines what we hope to achieve over the next three years. Our approach to partnership involves working creatively with local authorities, community groups, schools and colleges and the business community.

Northern recognises the major contribution our community partners bring to our business. We estimate that we have in the region of 1,000 individuals giving their own time – in some cases many hours each week - towards supporting 'their' local railway. These include station adopters, members of community rail partnerships and rail user groups, and other friends.

We have active partnerships with a wide range of local authorities, passenger transport executives and businesses. Some of these are major funders of services and facilities on the Northern network.

We have a responsibility towards our partners to treat them with respect and trust. Central to our values is the importance of trustworthiness and behaving professionally and responsibly. We will aim to deliver consistently on what we promise.

We recognise that the communities we serve are diverse and that we need to do more to engage with socially excluded sections of the community. We will prioritise work with socially excluded groups during the period of this Plan and ensure that our charitable policy helps support excluded sections of the community.

As a major employer in the North we will encourage our staff to become involved in community partnerships where appropriate in their professional duties, as well as offering support to staff who wish to become involved in voluntary activities outside working hours.



Music train in the Hope Valley - Celebrating 10 years of partnership.

2. Benefits of community engagement

Community engagement in a railway context means many things. It includes our ground-breaking work with route-based community rail partnerships, as well as involving the community at individual stations, through our 'station partnership' programme. Our station adoption programme covers the vast majority of our 472 stations. Northern's community engagement includes our prize-winning work with schools and young people, through 'Northern Trax' and 'Northern Art'. We are developing some innovative projects involving our engineering depots and looking at new ways to engage with socially-excluded communities.

Involvement with communities brings numerous benefits to our business:

- It encourages and promotes goodwill for our business activities and generates invaluable political support.
- It leads directly to increases in ridership and revenue: in general, ridership has increased more rapidly on routes with community rail partnerships (CRPs) than on other similar lines. CRPs are particularly effective at generating ridership in the off peak. Government figures show that lines with a community rail partnership generated on average a 14% growth in passengers last year, compared with 7% growth on non-partnership routes with similar characteristics.
- CRPs have been highly effective in pulling in external funding for a wide range of projects, e.g. Burscough Bridge Interchange, station development projects at Northwich, Parbold and elsewhere.
- Community involvement at stations helps reduce vandalism and graffiti and creates a positive image of 'our local station' which in turn helps promote greater use.

Parbold station wins another award.



Staff and students of St Bees School, Cumbria: station partnership in action.

For communities, partnership with the railway industry brings the following benefits:

- Greater sense of pride in the community – the railway is seen as part of the fabric of the local community.
- Improved facilities often flow from small scale initiatives – the railway industry is often more prepared to invest in projects if there is clear local support and involvement.

This can lead to:

- Improved station facilities
 - Less vandalism and graffiti creating a more positive environment for passengers
 - Enhanced train services
 - Better information
 - Special fares offers
 - Improved integration with other forms of transport
-
- Further benefits to local communities flow from these, including greater social cohesion, improved economic prosperity as a result of enhanced rail services and lower carbon emissions by reduced car dependence.
 - Community rail partnerships assist social cohesion by bringing a wide range of local stakeholders and individuals together, with a common purpose of supporting and improving local rail services.



Peter Moore, Chairman of Ribble Valley Rail - community artwork welcomes you to Clitheroe



Community Rail Festival 2006

3. Supporting Community Rail Partnerships

Northern has a strong commitment to developing community involvement with our business. Much of this will be delivered by community rail partnerships which are outward-facing partnerships with a broad and inclusive membership.

Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) are partnerships with local community organisations, usually based on a line of route (e.g. Penistone Line, Esk Valley, etc.). Typically they will include local authorities, user groups, local businesses and parish or community councils. Their main focus is on getting people to use 'their' local railway and improving facilities for passengers.

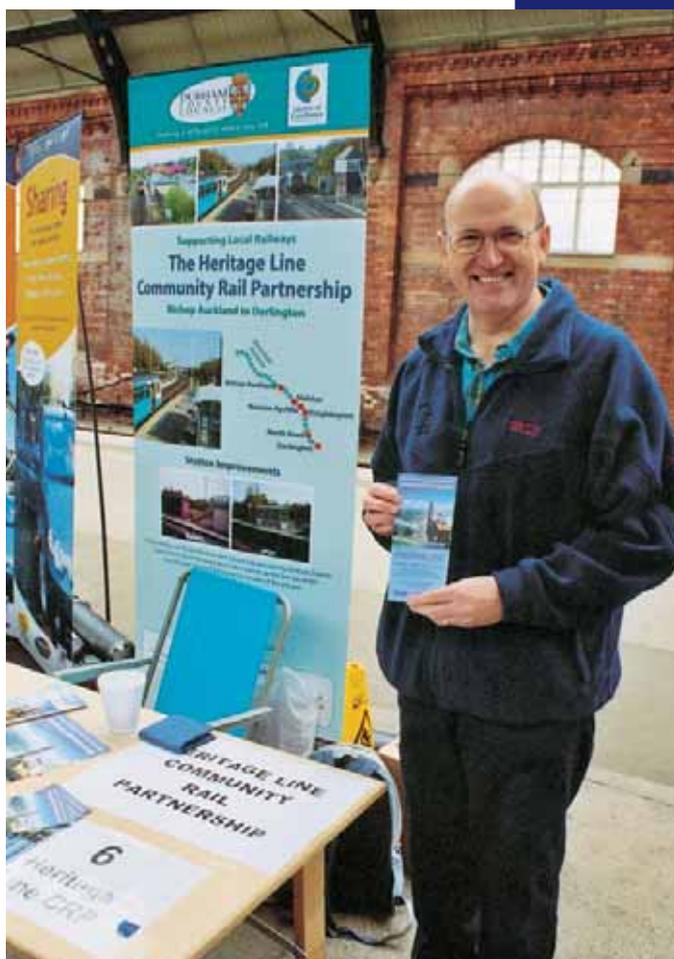
Northern has a total of 12 route-based community rail partnerships covering 17 lines (see Annex 1). This represents more than any other train operating company in the UK. They include both rural and urban routes. We are proud of the work of our CRPs and intend to continue supporting their activities, through funding in cash and in kind, and through our active involvement.

We do not have a single model of community rail partnership. Several CRPs are line of route based, whilst others (e.g. Community Rail Humber, Lancashire) act as umbrella bodies for route-based partnerships, with staff servicing the local partnerships from a central resource. This may become an increasingly common model across Northern and Britain as a whole. Bodies such as Esk Valley Railway Development Co. and Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Co. are forms of community rail partnerships and we will continue to support and fund them accordingly.

We are actively involved with partners in establishing new community rail partnerships. The priority will be to establish partnerships on routes which are proposed for designation by DfT as community rail routes or services.

Community rail partnerships are independent of Northern but will normally have representation from the company on their management boards. CRP employed staff will not normally be employees of Northern but we shall make free travel facilities available to them for our services.

During 2007 we will produce a series of 'community line guides' aimed at marketing our lines to a wide cross section of the public. This will be led by our Marketing and Communications team with input from Client and Stakeholder Managers and CRP officers. The guides will have a strong 'Northern' branding.



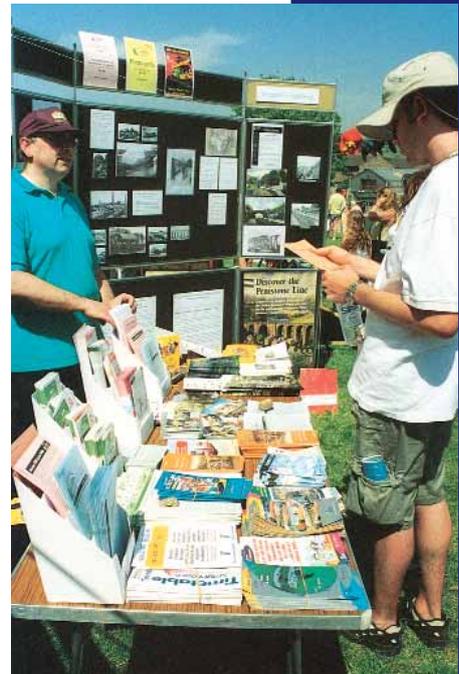
Heritage Line Community Rail Partnership at Community Rail Festival 2006. Charlie Walton of Sedgefield Council mans the stall.

Criteria for supporting community rail partnerships

Northern is committed to funding community rail partnerships, in cash and in kind.

Criteria for funding CRPs have been discussed and agreed with Northern-based CRPs. They respect each CRP's autonomy but expect certain outputs which will be detailed in the action plan which individual CRPs produce each year. They will include many of the following:

- Strategies for developing wider community engagement with the railway, e.g. station adoption, work with schools and local community groups
- Marketing strategy for the line including promoting route identity in agreement with our Marketing and Communications team
- Involvement in national promotions e.g. Community Rail Day
- Involvement in special events, e.g. music trains, gala events, Santa trains
- Suggestions for involving Northern staff in activities
- Modest enhancement proposals e.g. station facilities, information
- Identifying new community uses for redundant station buildings
- Scope for modest enhancements or changes to service levels at the margins (e.g. additional Sunday services, special promotions, etc.)
- Scope for the CRP to generate some external funding – possibly through commercial activities, and/or from external funders (this will vary according to circumstances of each CRP)



Penistone Line Partnership at Penistone Show.



Hope Valley Music Train gets into its stride!

We expect that most CRP lines will show revenue growth which is at or above the target average for Northern – 6% per annum. We realise that not every route will be able to reach this level but where a route does not, we will attempt to identify reasons why it appears to be under-performing and assess scope for remedial action.

We aim for each CRP to have at the very least a half-time development officer who would be partly funded by Northern, with matching support from local authorities and other players. We would not want to be 'majority funders' and our own support is conditional on contributions from other sources.

The main point of contact for CRPs will continue to be the relevant Client and Stakeholder Manager, assisted by Station Managers and other Northern managers as appropriate. The Head of Government and Community Strategies will maintain close contact with CRPs and arrange appropriate briefings and training sessions with them.

Supporting new community rail partnerships

We will prioritise the following routes in establishing new community rail partnerships, though if other opportunities arise we will consider them on their merits with priority given to routes proposed for DfT "Community Rail" designation - see Annex 1.

Barrow – Carlisle

This is to be designated as a community rail route by the DfT. Cumbria County Council has recently appointed a Rail Officer, part of whose brief shall be to establish and manage CRPs for this and the Lancaster – Barrow route (see below).

Lancaster – Barrow

Although not proposed for designation by the DfT, the investment by Cumbria (and support from Lancashire for their part of the route) suggests we should give our full support to this initiative and work with our colleagues in TransPennine Express to develop a partnership approach to the route.



Bringing the community and railway together: the award-winning Penistone Line Partnership.

Preston – Blackpool South

This is to be designated as a 'Community Rail Route' and initial meetings have already taken place involving Lancashire County Council and local stakeholders. It will link into the East and West Lancashire CRPs at Preston.

Manchester – Crewe

This is not proposed for designation by the DfT as a 'Community Rail Route'. However, this line has suffered from prolonged periods of closure due to vital infrastructure works and a CRP approach would make a major contribution to winning back local people to rail. Initial meetings have taken place which involved a wide range of local stakeholders, with strong support for a CRP. A Community Rail Officer for the line will be based at Wilmslow Station.

Bolton – Blackburn – Clitheroe

This line has been designated as a 'Community Rail Service' and forms part of a major diversionary route. There are already well established plans to set up a CRP under the aegis of Lancashire County Council.

South Pennines

This is an innovative project, at an early stage of development. It will function as an umbrella body (not dissimilar to Community Rail Humber which supports CRPs for Hull-Scarborough and Barton Line). It will provide support to partnerships covering:

- Penistone Line (designated as a Community Rail route)
- Manchester Victoria – Huddersfield
- Calder Valley (Leeds/Bradford – Manchester)

Wigan – Kirkby

This initiative will be taken forward under the auspices of the existing West of Lancashire Community Rail Partnership.

Supporting the Association of Community Rail Partnerships

We will continue to support the work of ACoRP (the national federation of community rail partnerships) through direct sponsorship, project funding and through informal 'in kind' support where appropriate. We shall continue to support The Rail and River Centre office base and use facilities in the adjacent Slaithwaite Civic Hall for meetings as appropriate. Northern will sponsor, on a case by case basis, national ACoRP events particularly when they are held in the North.

Community Rail Partnership Targets for 2007

- 1) We will continue to fund existing community rail partnerships on the basis of agreed outputs.
- 2) We will continue to fund ACoRP on the basis of an agreed partnership plan
- 3) We will hold a minimum of two seminars for CRP officers during 2007, attended by appropriate Northern managers
- 4) We will work with partners to establish new community rail partnerships on the routes listed above
- 5) We will aim to produce a 'family' of community rail line guides during 2007 covering a minimum of six community rail lines.

4. Developing partnerships at stations

As more of Northern's routes develop community partnerships, there will be less scope for new line-of-route based partnerships but considerable opportunities for developments at individual stations across our network. This section outlines our approach to community partnership at our stations, based on Department for Transport policy.

DfT Community Rail Policy on Stations

The DfT supports both individual station adoption (fault reporting) and 'community' adoption of stations where community groups bring some 'tender loving care' to their local station, providing this is done in a safe, properly managed way.

The DfT's Community Rail Development Strategy sets out some useful approaches to property development at and around stations, including making use of redundant accommodation on stations for community groups and small businesses. This approach has been actively progressed by the ACoRP 'Central Stations' project, with Central Trains. ACoRP has worked with Central Trains and Network Rail to identify suitable property and find suitable tenants who can bring an appropriate use to the building, benefiting the community and the railway. So, for example, locating a children's nursery, integrated learning centre or a wholefood co-operative on a station could benefit rail users and the wider community.

Northern is interested in developing this approach at some of its own stations and already has pilot projects underway at Edge Hill and Todmorden .

Group adoption and individual adoption

Within Northern, our station adoption scheme has been developed successfully on the basis of individual adopters undertaking simple fault finding and reporting. This has proved extremely valuable in identifying problems at an early stage and getting the fault reported and remedied. Most of Northern's stations are now adopted in this manner and the process is managed by the Northern Rail Service Quality Management team.

Each accredited adopter receives a Northern Rail travel pass and is invited to two conferences each year to discuss how the scheme is progressing. These conferences will continue in 2007.

'Group adoption', where a community organisation takes on, or 'adopts', a station can be far more complex - involving anything from looking after flower beds through to taking on leases for station buildings, maintaining community information facilities, providing art work or restoring heritage features. This sort of 'adoption' is different from individual adoption but we encourage individual adopters to be involved at this higher level. 'Group adoption' of a station is referred to as a 'station partnership' (see below).

'Station Adoption' for Northern refers to where an individual (or small group) takes on the job of fault-finding/problem spotting, using tried and tested procedures. Northern will continue to support this process, reporting directly to the Service Quality Management team at York.



Todmorden station partnership's Gala Fun Day.

Station Partnerships

The objective of having a station partnership will be to involve the community in bringing real, visible improvements to the station – environmental enhancements, better information about local facilities, and new uses for boarded-up, or semi-derelict buildings.

The outcome should be an improved passenger environment, a sense of pride in the station as part of the local community and a reduction in vandalism and graffiti. Evidence from stations where this approach has been tried suggests that passenger numbers will increase because of the improved perception of the station's facilities.

A partnership station will have some or all of the following features

- An active group which is committed to supporting that station through an agreed programme of activities
- Information at the station relating to the local community
- Use, where appropriate, of station accommodation
- Information within the community about the station and train service
- Close liaison with Northern staff, particularly where the station is staffed, and with station maintenance contractors
- Link to the community rail partnership for the route concerned

The 'Station Partnership Agreement' will be a simple contract between Northern and the local group, agreed with Network Rail, which sets out what the group will do over a period of time (e.g. one year) which shows clearly the 'boundaries' in terms of what the group can, and cannot do. **It is not the purpose of station partnerships to replace any work currently done by paid staff, either employed by Northern, Network Rail or by contractors. It is about adding value to current obligations and providing enhancements which would not otherwise happen.**

In some cases Northern may be able to assist with some modest funding to help get the group established and functioning. The 'partnership' group may be an existing body, e.g. local W.I., parish council or community organisation, or a purpose-built groups such as a 'station friends' body. They do not have to call themselves 'xxxxx Station Partnership'.

Managing the 'Station Partnership' initiative

Within Northern, prime responsibility for responding to new 'grassroots' initiatives to establish station partnerships shall be with the Client and Stakeholder Managers in each Area. They will be assisted by the Service Quality Management team and Head of Government and Community Strategies as appropriate. The relevant station managers will be fully involved in the process and have specific responsibility for safety briefings and ongoing monitoring/support. Normally, the Station Manager, will be the main point of contact with the partnership (see below) but care will be exercised to ensure that unreasonable demands are not placed on the manager. Where appropriate, the station manager may delegate some aspects of this work to colleagues with an aptitude for this work, with full training and support provided.



Todmorden Station Fun Day!

There shall be one single point of contact representing 'community' members of the station partnership with Northern. Normally he/she will liaise with the nominated Northern representative, usually the station manager.

Where a community rail partnership exists the CRP officer will play a key role in establishing and supporting station partnerships along the CRP route. It may be appropriate for a representative of the station partnership to be on the management committee (or sub group dealing with stations) of the CRP.

Individual station adopters will be encouraged to be part of the station partnership but this will be up to the individual. There should be a positive reciprocal relationship between the individual adopter and station partnership body.

Northern will set achievable targets for the establishment of station partnerships, in its Community Strategy for each year. These may also form part of each CRP's action plan ('community route strategy').

We will organise a series of training sessions for members of station partnerships and for our own staff who have an interface with station partnerships.

Station property development

In some cases, there may be opportunities for community groups to make use of vacant accommodation at some of our stations. The benefits can be considerable. For us, it brings a station back to life, with a human presence which helps deter vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Depending on the activity, it can provide extra facilities for our passengers. For community groups it can offer them a home, at low cost.

It is not an essential part of the 'station partnership' to take on a lease for station accommodation. However, this could form a major part of a station partnership's work depending on locations.

Northern is talking to groups in Littleborough and Edge Hill about taking on the lease of substantial parts of railway buildings within the lease. We will work with ACoRP to apply the lessons and approach of the 'Central Stations Project' to those buildings which do not have an obvious commercial use but would be suitable for not for profit groups.

Where there is scope for taking on property responsibilities, Northern and Network Rail will work closely to achieving a positive outcome with the prospective tenant.

Benefits to station partnership members

To recognise the goodwill and support of the station partnership members, a complimentary group pass will be provided for one occasion each year to a destination on Northern's network. In addition, partnership members will be invited to join the Northern Stakeholder Special Train.

If members of the station partnership are involved in a specific activity (e.g. attending a meeting convened by Northern to discuss partnership issues) free travel will be provided. Similarly, if a local school involved with the station partnership wants to organise a trip for its pupils, Northern will take a positive view on complimentary group passes, and escorted station visits at larger locations. Current arrangements for individual station adopters are not affected by this.



Station master, Chester-le-Street.

Targets for 2007

- 1) Establish a minimum of six new station partnerships during 2007
- 2) Organise a training/networking seminar for station partnership members
- 3) Re-publish 'Station Adoption Toolkit' as 'Station Partnership Toolkit'
- 4) Each station partnership to be visited at least twice a year by a Northern management representative
- 5) Establish a minimum of 3 projects in 2007 where property is taken over by a station partnership through leasing

5. Northern depots – being a good neighbour

Northern has three major engineering depots – Newton Heath (Manchester), Heaton (Newcastle) and Neville Hill (Leeds), as well as smaller depots around the network. Our three main depots are long-established and important parts of the economies of these areas.

We want to explore ways of being more involved in neighbouring communities, from several aspects;

- Employment: our depots can offer good quality employment opportunities for local people, as well as training and work experience
- Community activities: depot staff can play a bigger part in local community activities, either on an individual basis, or as part of a Northern team
- Open days: there is scope for occasional visits, properly supervised, by local schools and community groups. We are also progressing the idea of running at least one major open day, involving the local community, at a depot (see below).
- Safety and security: making sure that people know that our depots are dangerous places and trespass is not acceptable



Newton Heath depot.

Each depot management team will be encouraged to discuss opportunities with their staff, and it is likely that different ideas will emerge. Northern's Central Support will offer assistance on ways of engaging with the local community but the depot itself will have the lead responsibility for making things happen.

Newton Heath Pilot Project

During 2007 we will evaluate progress on a pilot project involving our Newton Heath Depot. Links have already been established with local community workers and initial activity will focus on:

- Depot involvement in Newton Heath in Bloom
- Depot involvement in Newton Heath Festival
- Depot Open Day involving a wide range of community groups
- In kind support to community groups (e.g. travel facilities)
- Cash support for selected local charities and schools
- Possible development of depot 'celebrity train' in appropriate livery, to be used for special events

Targets for 2007

1. Each major depot to have discussed ways of involving the local community, with production of a brief action plan
2. Newton Heath initiatives to be completed including
 - a) Involvement in the local festival and 'Newton Heath In Bloom'
 - b) Major 'open day' event during 2007
 - c) Sponsorship of at least three local projects

6. Involvement in community events and projects

Northern will, wherever resources permit, play an active part in relevant external community events (e.g. Newton Heath Festival, as above). This can take several forms:

- Northern presence at events
- Sponsorship of external events
- Northern-led events (e.g. Community Rail Day)

Northern presence at external events

There are literally thousands of events, carnivals and festivals taking place across the Northern network each year. Clearly it would be impossible to have a presence at many of these. However, where there is a direct link to our activities (e.g. proximity to a major depot, or closely linked to one of our routes with an active CRP) we will look positively at providing an appropriate presence with a supply of literature and 'give-aways'. In addition, our Northern Trax Roadshow can be made available at events.

Sponsorship of external community events

We currently sponsor a number of external events, in cash or in kind, and we would hope to increase this support in 2007. Again, we must be selective but will be open to providing in-kind assistance, e.g. provision of free rail tickets as raffle prizes.

In the case of particular community festivals we will examine the scope for providing enhanced services or holding special events on the train, e.g. music trains as part of musical festivals (Marsden Jazz Festival, Colne Blues Festival, Shepley and Beverley Folk Festivals etc.). There is scope for decorating stations with banners promoting local events and welcoming visitors. This will be agreed with the Marketing and Communications team.



Cycling promotion at Community Rail Festival.

In a small number of cases we will provide financial sponsorship (via Marketing and Communications) to festival events which have a clear benefit to Northern in terms of additional business through people getting to/from the event by our services.

Again in a small number of cases we will explore the possibility of special liveries for our trains which promote a particular event or activity, though in most cases this will involve some external funding.

Northern-led community events

We will continue and expand the range of special events with which we are directly involved, either as lead partner or one of a group of main partners. Northern was one of the main partners in Community Rail Festival 2006, in the North East.

In 2007 our involvement will be in the following areas:

- Community Rail Week (May 19-26)
- Newton Heath Community Depot Open Day (September 16)
- Station Galas
- Stakeholder Special Trains (July)

Community Rail Week

We had a range of very successful events, mostly small scale, at the May 2006 Community Rail Day. Most of these were co-ordinated by local Northern staff working in close co-operation with community rail partnerships. This model will be followed in 2007 and CRPs/station partnerships will be invited to submit ideas early in 2007.

Newton Heath Community-Depot Gala

This is a first for the railway industry. Northern will open the gates of one of its biggest depots to the local community and other visitors. No ordinary open day - it's also about the local community showcasing its activities.

Station Galas

We will encourage and assist CRPs and station partnerships to hold gala-type events during the summer period. These could include craft fairs, farmers' markets and other activities depending on the size and environment of the station.



Stakeholder Special Train

The special trains we ran to Bridlington on July 23 2006 for our local stakeholders were immensely successful. We will run a similar special train/s on July 22, from the east side of the country to a location in the west. The destination will be Morecambe and Lancaster, with trains running from Hull and Leeds and from Chester in the North West.

We are hoping to organise a similar excursion for stakeholders in the North East.

Community Rail Awards 2007

We will support this event (to be held in Bexhill) and will encourage both Northern staff and CRPs in Northern to enter suitable achievements for an award. We will be the official sponsor for the award 'Involving Young People'.



Our 2006 Stakeholder Special train was a great success.
The crowds arrive in Bridlington.

Targets for 2007

- 1) Organise a Northern presence at a minimum of 6 external events
- 2) Sponsor at least 12 external events in cash or in kind
- 3) Support at least 12 events across Northern for Community Rail Week
- 4) Support a minimum of 4 station galas
- 5) Run stakeholder special trains (July 07)
- 6) Enter at least 12 achievements for the 2007 Community Rail Awards
- 7) Sponsor the 'Involving Young People' award at the above event

7. Working with user groups and campaigning organisations

We have a good, positive relationship with a wide range of rail user groups and campaigning organisations such as RailFuture and Transport 2000. Within Northern we have scores of local user groups who make a very useful contribution to our activities. This is in addition to our very positive work with statutory bodies, particularly Passenger Focus. As a publicly-funded body there are limits to which we can support direct campaigning activities. There will be many cases where we can offer support, particularly in-kind assistance or sponsorship of research projects which help demonstrate benefits of rail to communities.



Our priorities

Whilst we are supportive of efforts to expand the rail network we will not be able to devote significant resources towards particular rail re-opening projects. Our focus must be very clearly on supporting and developing the existing network, its facilities and services. Any assistance we can get to this end from user groups and similar bodies will be greatly appreciated.

Maintaining contact

We will maintain and develop a regular dialogue with rail user groups and similar bodies. The main contacts for user group and similar bodies will be the relevant Client and Stakeholder Managers. In some cases, if issues arise relating to stations, the relevant station manager will be involved. All user groups will be sent copies of 'Connections' our Stakeholder magazine.

Whilst we support much of the aims and aspirations of user groups it is important to stress that we have limited resources to attend meetings on a regular basis, but welcome receipt of newsletters, minutes and general updates. We will be happy to provide copy and illustrations for user group newsletters.

Whilst it will not be appropriate to provide core funding for user groups there may be opportunities to provide assistance for particular initiatives and publications.

We will be happy to provide speakers from Northern for rail user meetings, providing the subject is relevant to our business activities.

Targets for 2007

- 1) We will aim to have a Northern representative visit every rail user group across Northern during 2007
- 2) We will ensure that all rail user groups receive a regular supply of 'Connections' and other Northern publicity
- 3) We will organise a minimum of two conferences for local stakeholders, including rail user groups, in 2007, in each of the three regions.
- 4) Rail user group members will be invited to travel on our Stakeholder Special Train

8. Support for charities and local community projects

Northern has taken a positive approach towards supporting charitable activities, both in cash and in kind, since its formation. Our charitable donations in 2006 are shown in Annex 4. The following guidelines will help structure our charitable activities in 2007 and beyond.

Our charity work will be guided by a small team – Northern CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)/Charity Working Group – which will provide regular reports to the Northern 'Imagine' Board comprising Northern staff. This team has already been established and includes representatives from Commercial, Human Resources and Safety/Assurance directorates.

National Charities

We will adopt a flexible and responsive approach towards work with national charities. Support will be aimed at those charities which are appropriate to our values and most will have an emphasis towards children/young people and the environment, with an emphasis on overcoming social exclusion. We will not (other than for specific projects if appropriate) offer direct financial support but look at a wide range of opportunities for involving staff in fund raising during the year, and making our stations available for fund-raising. Any support for national charities will be approved by the Imagine Board following recommendations from the Northern CSR/Charity Working group.

Local charities

There will be a three-pronged approach to supporting local charities. In each case we will try to get a reasonable geographical balance in terms of our support over a twelve month period, supporting a diverse range of activities which have an emphasis towards supporting socially-excluded groups, children/young people and environmental activities.

We get many requests for financial support from a range of charities, often writing in 'cold'. Through the Imagine Board, advised by the CSR/Charity Working Group, we should consider each application only if it meets the following criteria:

1. Outside requests for financial support:

- The body is a registered charity or has clear charitable objectives
- It operates in our area
- The request is for a specific activity rather than general support
- It broadly sits within our values

2. Outside requests for help in kind (e.g. travel facilities)

- The body operates in our area and has broadly charitable objectives
- The request is for a specific activity (e.g. day trip for a school)
- The activity broadly sits with our values

3. Requests via our own staff including financial support

- The body operates in our area and has broadly charitable objectives
- Northern staff are involved
- The request is for a specific activity or project
- The activity broadly sits with our values

In the case of financial applications for category 3, we will consider grants of up to £1000 per application though the average grant will be nearer £200-£300. The CSR/Charity Working Group will normally be the body responsible for agreeing grants of up to £500 and shall report on its decisions to The Imagine Board. Sums above £500 will go to the Imagine Board, with a recommendation from the Working Group.

It is important that all requests, even for support in kind, are recorded and monitored. A financial value should be placed on support in kind. We request that all recipients of support should publicise Northern's assistance.



Just one of the charities Northern is supporting.

Targets

- 1) Provide support in kind to 4 national charities
- 2) Provide support in kind to a minimum of 10 local charities
- 3) Provide cash support to a minimum of 10 local charities with staff involvement
- 4) Organise and/or support at least 3 special events which raise funds for charitable activities

9. Supporting social inclusion

Within the regions in which we operate there is an enormous diversity of communities ranging from the very affluent to the severely disadvantaged. We serve many communities with a high proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds. On an individual level, many of our customers have disabilities and other potential customers are not able to use our services because of physical barriers, including inadequate access at stations or on the trains themselves.

Some of these challenges can be resolved quickly. A great many of them need substantial resources to be fully addressed. Our focus, given the life of our franchise, must be on measures which can be implemented relatively quickly.

During 2006 we made progress towards addressing problems of social exclusion as far as it impacts on our activities.

- Our work with schools has focused on schools in areas of social deprivation, which tend to have children who are mostly likely to be involved in trespass and vandalism. See Section 10 'Working with children and Young People'.
- Our Northern Trax and Northern Arts initiatives have targeted children from socially excluded backgrounds and given them exciting opportunities to excel in creative activities.
- Our travel awareness project (with ACoRP and Passenger Focus), based on one to one interviews with socially excluded individuals in a Colne Valley community, produced important findings which need to be built on further. In particular, it is clear that there are substantial numbers of potential passengers who are put off using rail because of false perceptions of cost and difficulties of getting and understanding information about how to use trains.
- We have progressed several small-scale schemes to improve disabled access at our stations, in partnership with PTEs and local authorities
- We have developed positive relationships with York NHS Trust staff on a project involving people with mental health problems, making use of the former railway nursery at Poppleton.

In 2007 we want to maintain the momentum with those schemes above which are still running and look at ways of extending the travel awareness scheme to other parts of our network, backed up with suitable information and promotions.

We will explore the scope for projects involving young people from black and ethnic minority organisations, working with representative bodies in those areas.

We will give priority, within our charity policy, to supporting in cash and in kind those projects which support socially excluded communities and individuals.

We will work with Network Rail and other funding partners to identify deliverable schemes which improve access to our stations and trains.

Targets

- 1) Ensure 'Northern Heritage' booklet on the social history of Northern and its predecessors is included on Northern website and schools' materials
- 2) Establish at least one new 'travel awareness' project, to help overcome exclusion and develop existing initiatives with National Railway Museum and British Transport Police
- 3) Look to develop educational material in community languages
- 4) Continue to support the Poppleton Community Rail Nursery Project

10. Working with children and young people

Our work with children and young people is part and parcel of our overall community engagement process and is a key means of supporting social inclusion. Encouraging children to use the train is not only good for our business in revenue terms but reduces the 'victimless crime' mentality. Research shows that many children who commit 'rail crime' (trespass, vandalism, stone-throwing and the like) never travel by train. By encouraging children to use our services and inter-act with our staff we reduce the victimless crime mentality.

We want children and young people to use the opportunities of rail travel to develop a sense of awareness and understanding of their communities. Using the train is a great way of getting to know more about other parts of the country – exploring the countryside, going to concerts in the cities and traveling to sporting events.

So our approach combines encouragement to use the train with diversionary tactics to encourage young people's creativity and talent.

We have a growing number of schemes where children and young people are getting involved in 'station partnership' projects, ranging from St Bees School in Cumbria to Rudheath High School in Cheshire.

Our 'diversionary' strategy, led by Youth and Community Manager Chris Leech, includes the 'Trackwise' campaign, in partnership with the National Railway Museum, where we provide free travel to the NRM to schools in 'hotspot' areas. Our website – www.teachingzone.org/northern is the most well used rail safety website in the world – a position we plan to maintain.

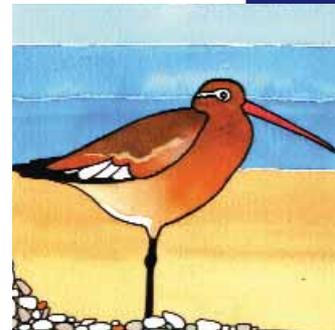
Initiatives in 2007 include:

- Northern Art: encouraging young people's artistic talents
- NorthernTrax: a mobile recording studio which has worked wonders in encouraging local musical talent

A stunning example of 'Northern Art' is 'The Big Picture' made up of 345 individual pieces of artwork, which when viewed from afar, form one large image depicting scenes from across Northern Rail's network. It is on display at the National Railway Museum in York. The artists are all students at primary and secondary schools in the North of England.

Northern Art encourages young people to send their 2D artwork to www.northernartzone.net where it will be showcased in an online gallery for all to see. Northern Rail is pioneering the use of the artwork on posters, corporate literature and eventually the exterior of trains. This year we will also work with local authorities and retail outlets to display the artwork.

During 2007 there will be a major event at the National Railway Museum to launch the NorthernTrax competition will be announced – and performed!



Northern Art painting by Brad Hewgill

Targets

- Northern Trax: continue to improve and develop the website focusing on brand recognition and encouragement of leisure-based youth travel
- Northern Art: we will ensure widespread take-up of arts initiatives across Northern and aim to display work at stations and on trains
- Major event at NRM to launch NorthernTrax competition, May 2007
- We will establish at least one community-based project involving children and young people from black and ethnic minority communities
- We will develop further educational material which is accessible to all communities we serve

11. Promoting sustainable development

Rail is the most sustainable form of mass transport, but that does not mean that we should rest on our laurels and do nothing. As part of our marketing strategy we actively promote rail as a safe, energy-efficient form of transport. The more people who use our trains, the fewer cars there will be on the roads.

However, we recognise that sustainable development in a railway context has a much wider meaning, taking in social and economic aspects as well as environmental. Rail, and Northern in particular, can play a big part in helping to deliver broader objectives for sustainable development in the North of England and the East Midlands. This is fundamental to our vision for Northern Rail – realizing the true potential of local rail as the most sustainable means of connecting people to opportunities.

On a policy level we have already made inputs to the regional spatial strategies for Yorkshire and the Humber, and the North West. These will set a framework for the development of these regions for decades to come.

Our support for community-based action will help deliver local sustainable development. This Community Plan for 2007 is central to our work in promoting sustainable development.

Environmental Challenges

Within our organisation we are conscious that we can do more to meet environmental challenges, from simple resource management in our workplaces, to travel plans, energy efficient rolling stock and eco-friendly stations.

Our 'Eco Stations' project with Lancashire County Council has examined the scope for funding a new approach to local stations, using improved energy and resource efficiency, sustainable materials, and identifying innovative uses for stations as community 'eco centres'. In 2007 we want to implement the recommendations of the study at some of our stations, as a pilot.

We have recently (July 2006) appointed a Utilities Manager who will be addressing energy conservation and waste minimisation issues across Northern, and have commissioned a green travel plan for our new offices in York.

A comprehensive Environment Plan will be developed during 2007 to complement this Community Strategy and Northern's Human Resources Strategy. This will be led by our Safety and Assurance Director. It will encompass a broad range of our activities including:

- Energy and Water Efficiency
- Noise Reduction
- Procurement Policy
- Waste Minimisation
- Travel to Work Plans
- Habitat Management

Targets for 2007

- 1) Implement recommendations of Eco Stations Study with at least one station as a pilot demonstration project
- 2) Complete Northern's Environment Plan by December 2007
- 3) Identify opportunities for supporting social enterprise

This should be taken forward by a working group from relevant sections of Northern, assisted by external specialists as appropriate.

Supporting Social Enterprise

There is a growing network of social enterprises in the UK offering goods and services which meet high ethical and environmental standards and help promote social inclusion. We will examine the opportunities for supporting social enterprise through our procurement policies and other activities, during 2007.

12. Involving Northern staff

The success or failure of the Community Strategy will largely depend on the extent to which Northern staff see it as a relevant to their work, and participate in its activities.

The indications so far are that staff welcome the opportunity to participate in community activities providing that:

- a) it is not forced on them
- b) they have the opportunity to feed in their ideas and suggestions
- c) they are properly briefed on 'what is happening'

To this end we will work to ensure that Northern Rail staff fully understand and are aware of community initiatives. We will do this in the following ways:

Training

We will work with our Training Academy to ensure that new employees are briefed on the Community Strategy, and that a community development element is included in other aspects of professional development. A staff guide to working with community groups has been produced. It outlines what community development means to Northern and ways in which staff can be involved.

As part of the training process we will organise a series of visits to relevant locations – possibly other community activities in the North of England, or CRP activities in other parts of the UK.

Communications

There will be regular articles in our internal communications magazine, 'Journey' about community initiatives. In addition, team briefings will outline news of particular events.

Members of staff who are particularly interested in keeping abreast of community developments may join a Northern 'Community Rail' Email Group.

Local activities

Where there is a station partnership or a community rail partnership (CRP) we will ensure that station staff, train crew and other staff are made aware of its existence and activities, and invite their input. We will encourage our CRPs to highlight particular staff's achievements in their own publicity.



Staff enjoy getting involved!



Northern staff on Ribble Valley Santa Train.



Involving Northern staff in projects

We will explore the potential for identifying a small number of staff-led schemes which set out new ways of doing things – possibly developing a station as a centre of excellence, with artwork and gardens developed and maintained by our own staff. This could also link into our initiatives at depots around our network.

We will identify and encourage staff who have a particular interest in community engagement and nurture this interest through training and direct involvement in projects – always subject to the demands of 'the day job'.

We will recognize outstanding staff contributions by entering staff in relevant national and regional awards events and also through our own events and publications which celebrate staff achievement.

Targets

- 1) A minimum of 4 features on community rail issues in 'Journey'
- 2) A minimum of 4 briefings to staff on community issues
- 3) Production of Northern staff guide to working with the community by March 2007
- 4) Formation of Community Rail Email group by February 2007
- 5) Organisation of Northern seminar on the Community Strategy by May 2007
- 6) Organise at least 2 visits to relevant projects for Northern staff

13. Communicating the message

Northern is proud of its role as the leading 'community' train operating company and we will continue to promote our positive work to an external audience. During 2006 we launched the first issue of our external stakeholders' magazine, 'Connections'. We will maintain the cycle of three issues per year in 2007 and feature outstanding examples of community activity in Northern.

We will establish an email newsletter updating external stakeholders on Northern's community rail activities.

We will, through our Marketing and Communications team, issue press releases on examples of our work in the community on a regular basis and seek out good news stories about what our staff are doing in the community and charity.

We will continue the format of stakeholder conference, with a 'community' focused event taking place at three regional centres, twice a year.

We will run our popular 'stakeholder special train' in July 2007. We will enter outstanding examples of community activity in industry (and other) awards events including the Community Rail Awards 2007, to be held in Hastings.



Client and Stakeholder Managers with local government partners.



Targets

- 1) Community features in each issue of 'Connections' during 2007
- 2) Production of at least four editions of email newsletter to community stakeholders
- 3) Run Stakeholder Specials in July 2007
- 4) Issue a minimum of 10 press releases featuring community developments in Northern
- 5) Submit a minimum of 25 'community rail' entries to at least three awards events
- 6) Organise six conferences aimed at local and community stakeholders (based on a cycle of three events taking place in different regional centres, in Spring and Autumn)

14. Monitoring and reporting

Northern will form a 'Community Steering Group' chaired by the Head of Government and Community Strategies and including a broad range of Northern staff.

In addition, up to three community rail partnership representatives, nominated by ACoRP, shall be encouraged to attend.

The group will meet a minimum of 3 times a year and review progress with the Community Strategy and identify opportunities for new developments.

It will feed in, via the chair, regular updates to Northern's Executive.

It will produce a review of the 2007 Strategy by early in 2008 which will include an updated Community Strategy 2008. This will be widely disseminated to our staff and stakeholders.

15. Links with other initiatives

Wherever possible we will try to ensure maximum benefit by linking the Community Strategy with other Northern activities.

There are synergies between the Community Strategy and several other Northern initiatives and strategies including

- Marketing Strategy
- Environmental Strategy
- Cycling Strategy
- Sponsorship of Rugby League Football
- Rail/community safety initiatives

16. Sharing best practice

We are strongly committed to working with partners in the railway industry, Government and the wider business and voluntary sectors to share best practice in community engagement and corporate social responsibility.

We particularly want to develop stronger links with CSR activities within Serco Group and Netherlands Railways, our two owning companies. We already attend the Serco North West CSR champions' group and other Serco events. We recognise that there is scope to do much more and during 2007 we will strengthen our links with colleagues in our two owning companies and their subsidiaries.



Annex 1: Community Rail Partnerships in Northern

Hope Valley and High Peak Transport Partnership (Hope Valley, Buxton and Glossop Lines).

Mid-Cheshire CRP (Chester – Northwich – Manchester)

Penistone Line Partnership (Huddersfield – Sheffield)

Community Rail Humber (Hull – Scarborough, Barton Line)

Leeds-Morecambe Community Rail Partnership

Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Co.

Tyne Valley (Newcastle – Carlisle)

West of Lancashire (Preston – Ormskirk, Wigan – Southport and Wigan – Kirkby)

Heritage Line (Bishop Auckland – Darlington)

East Lancashire (Preston – Colne)

Esk Valley Railway Development Co. (Middlesbrough – Whitby)

Crewe Line Partnership (Stockport to Crewe)

Annex 2: Station Partnerships

Gathurst

Blackrod

Burscough Bridge

New Lane

Handforth

Sandbach

Goostrey

Garswood

Irlam

Davenport

Littleborough

Glossop

Whaley Bridge

Furness Vale

Whalley

Buxton

Eccles

Mills Hill

Altrincham

Levenshulme

Todmorden

Mytholmroyd

Woodsford

Settle

Poppleton

Dronfield

Bridlington

Kiveton Bridge

Silkstone Common

Langho

Hexham

Stocksmoor

Poulton-le-Fylde

Dalston

Chester-le-Street

Church and Oswaldtwistle

Rishton

Croston

Colne

Nelson

Brierfield

Green Road

Broadbottom

Clitheroe

Ramsgreave and Wilpshire

Bentham

Romiley

Hindley

Walkden



Annex 3. Northern and the national Community Rail Development Strategy

The Department for Transport inherited the Community Rail Development Strategy (CRDS) from the former Strategic Rail Authority. The national CRDS has four key objectives:

- Increasing ridership and net revenue
- Managing costs down
- Greater involvement of the local community
- Enabling local rail to play a larger role in economic and social regeneration

The Strategy goes on to say that 'associated objectives include contributing to the needs of the local economy, particularly the tourist economy, social inclusion and environmental improvement...' (p.3).

A key feature of the CRDS is designation of particular lines as 'community rail routes' (see below) providing an opportunity to implement new approaches to the infrastructure and operation of these lines which deliver the objectives (as shown above) of the CRDS. In addition, some lines which may not be appropriate for full designation may be designated as 'community rail services' which - whilst not impinging on infrastructure management offer opportunities for innovative approaches on fares and ticketing and other service deliver aspects.

Our commitment to the national Community Rail Development Strategy's objectives will be delivered by:

- Fully engaging with the national CRDS, assist in the implementation of its objectives, and feed in innovative approaches, actions and proposals as well as learning from experience of pilot projects elsewhere in the country
- Assisting the achievement of national CRDS objectives to manage costs down, increase revenue and ridership and involve local communities
- Playing a leading and pro-active role in the two national CRDS pilot projects within Northern (Esk Valley, Penistone Line) and support community route strategies of all Northern CRPs
- promoting social inclusion and sustainable development through the work of community rail partnerships and other activities in The Community Plan
- Developing a culture within Northern which embraces a wide range of community involvement
- Learning from best practice in community rail development within the UK and abroad, including activities of our parent companies Serco/NS



Routes designated or proposed for designation as community railways/services:

Middlesbrough - Whitby*
Huddersfield - Barnsley*
Preston - Ormskirk
Preston - Colne*

Barrow - Carlisle
Darlington - Bishop Auckland
Barton-upon-Humber - Grimsby*
Clitheroe - Manchester (service only)*

*denotes already designated

Engaging with the national CRDS and the pilot projects

Northern has a representative on the national CRDS steering group and the CRDS communications group, ensuring there is a strong North of England input into CRDS' discussions. It is important to learn from the experience of other pilot projects and where appropriate apply them to Northern activities. The partners involved in the CRDS groups, including Network Rail the DfT, ACoRP and ATOC are key partners for Northern and most of them are actively involved in the two national pilot projects within Northern (Esk Valley, Penistone).

We will co-operate with DfT and Network Rail in the process of designating community rail routes and services within Northern, and identify scope for innovative approaches which help drive costs down and improve ridership. Where lines are proposed for designation (as routes or services) we will work to ensure there is an active community rail partnership established.

We have a good record in generating additional ridership and revenue on community rail routes, and in promoting community engagement. We are identifying where we have been able to bring costs down and where there may be future scope for cost reductions which do not impact on safety and quality. One particular area of cost reduction has been in reducing vandalism and graffiti at adopted stations.

Whilst 'microfranchising' has been proposed for some routes in the South-West by the DfT, we do not consider this approach is relevant to any routes within Northern, and we consider that most if not all of the benefits of microfranchising can be gained from active engagement by Northern working creatively and positively with our stakeholders and staff.

Developing a Northern culture; learning from, and sharing, best practice

Within Northern we will work to ensure the principles of Community Rail Development are understood and supported by our staff at every level. This is part of creating a progressive Northern culture which pro-actively engages with communities and their organisations. For that culture to develop it must be open to influences from outside – this includes partner NGOs (including ACoRP, Community Transport Association and a wider range of bodies involved in sustainable development and social inclusion), other parts of our own parent companies, and other rail businesses including train operators and Network Rail. We will be happy to share our own best practice with colleagues in other companies within and beyond the railway industry.



Northern train crew and station manager Simon Clarke at Colne.

Annex 4. List of donations

Donations to charitable causes 2006

£300 as contribution towards equipment for member of staff's disabled child

£400 to Cragg Vale Junior and Infants School, Hebden Bridge - contribution to Nature Trail)

£400 to Patient Comfort Fund Ward 8 at Newcastle Royal Victoria Infirmary

£300 to Chadderton Park Football Club - sponsorship of under 7s team coming season

£300 to The Christie Hospital for sponsored bike ride by staff

£500 to Oulton Owls Junior Football Club for sponsorship of strips

£500 to Clifton Rangers Junior Football Club, Blackpool, for sponsorship of strips and equipment.

£575.78 for children's netball team, Leeds.

£300 to 'Scope' following sponsored bike ride by Northern Rail driver at York

£350 to Springfield AFC as sponsorship of youth football team

£600 to Kaskenmoor School, Oldham as part sponsorship of school team visit to Barcelona

£100 to The Railway Mission for 'Mission Possible' fundraising event

£100 to 'Cancer Research UK' following sponsored run by York conductor

£250 to 'Alder Hey Imagine Appeal'

Total cash contributions in 2006: £4975.78
(budget for 2006 was £5000)



www.northernrail.org