

# Community Rail Partnership Officers Report

## NSCRP Management Group meeting – 15 October 2020

Covering July - October 2020 period

By Claire Sandys and Emma McIntosh

### General

- New volunteers recruited by EMR: John Franks at Longport; Paul Munford at Peartree; Jake Cole at Kidsgrove; Luke Tinning at Tutbury & Hatton; Mick Robson at Blythe Bridge
- Rails to Trails station walks booklet. We have decided to seek an external company to complete the design stage due to ongoing and long-term delays with the City Council designer.
- Rails to Trails Engagement phase has finished. Jayne Clamp has produced 4 preview films – Kidsgrove, Tutbury, Penkridge and Longton. She has produced Walk Leader guides and risk assessments for led walks from Kidsgrove, Penkridge, Stone, Alsager, Blythe Bridge and Tutbury, to be delivered next year assuming social distancing guidelines relaxed by then. Project jointly funded by CRP and LNR.
- Anti-trespass article written in collaboration with the Churnet Valley Railway, Network Rail and BTP. Published in Sentinel on 11 August as *Big Issue*.
- Meir Station Reopening Project: Several meetings attended, including one with EMR. Meir has passed initial sifting of submissions and has received some funding for a consultant to put together a strategic outline business case by end December.
- Installation of EMR station information boards – no further news.
- EMR Community Development Fund: The EMR Charities Committee has approved donations of £150 to: Sanctus refugee centre, Uttoxeter Heath Community Centre and Stoke-on-Trent Food Bank.
- *On Track* NSCRP Annual Progress Report completed and distributed.
- An on-line children's art competition on the theme of 'The Railway in Autumn' has been launched, with a closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

- Community Rail Network awards:
  - It's Your Station – GOLD for Longport, Alsager and Uttoxeter and SILVER for Kidsgrove
  - Shortlisted for Most Enhanced Station – Uttoxeter Pergola and Arbour / Tool shed project
  - Shortlisted for Outstanding Volunteer Contribution - Mike Willmot

### **Alsager**

- DfT has approved the Dementia Friendly signage project. Claire has met with Ross Heaton and Dan Robson, EMR Project Manager. Projected installation February 2021.
- Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College "connectivity" poster for Alsager Station. Waiting for EMR to sign this off.

### **Kidsgrove**

- Platform 2/3 store room roof has been repaired so that the ceiling no longer leaks and the room is usable.
- Access for All – Paul Atherton from NR met with the Kidsgrove Station adopters in September to give them an update:
  - Undertrack pipe crossings to be installed soon.
  - underground mining remediation works starting in late Oct/Nov of this year.
  - NR has offered to help the volunteers with the moving of any plants from garden areas during the works
  - Paul to issue further updates when the main works are due to start with sufficient time to make necessary arrangements
- Separately ... I hear that work on the canal bridge under the Kidsgrove approach road has started. The *Story* construction company are engaged in repairing and strengthening the bridge by removing the road surface down to the bridge arch and replacing it with new concrete and steel.
- CRN has awarded a small grant of £469 to NSCRP for the installation of kitchen cabinets to replace current tables for Spotter Tea by the ticket office.

### **Longport**

- The Waiting Room Gallery's programme of community activities are mostly on hold until social distancing restrictions lifted. In the meantime, with permission from EMR and XC, they intend to spend some of the money on alternative local community activities. It is intended that the majority of activities will be delivered

during 2020-21 when core running costs will be covered by a (Covid-related) small business grant from the government.

- Incidents of petty vandalism at the station building continue. And a bonfire on Highways England land on the Newcastle side in July produced noxious fumes and left a pile of unburnt debris. This has been reported to Newcastle Borough Council, BTP and the Police. Staff member from the car dealership was photographed starting the fire. Claire has sourced a CCTV system that could be installed on the footbridge with NR permission.

### **Longton**

- Installation of 3 new hayrack baskets to be completed by end October.

### **Blythe Bridge**

- Good progress made on clearing weeds and brambles from the NR land by the car park now covered by a community licence. Community Action Day planned for 25 March (to include EMR Comms Team).

### **Tutbury and Hatton**

- The leaning platforms and fences are both in need of repair. The fencing on the Derby platform has been propped up as an interim measure. Alexa and Rob in discussion
- Claire has requested that the areas behind the platforms are fenced off at trackside ends in order to allow volunteers to safely litter pick.
- The adopters are keen to start work on the “new” area of land by the signal box. Alexa has requested from Rob that the electrical box be fenced off and that a padlocked gate be installed to allow access by volunteers. A living wall and Bee Friendly Trust planters are both being considered for this area.

### **Uttoxeter**

- Uttoxeter U3A Urban Sketchers’ art work depicting historic scenes of the town centre has been installed in the platform shelters. Article appeared in the Uttoxeter Times and Echo.
- A CRN small grant has been awarded to the Uttoxeter Adopters for the installation of a tiered house leek planter on the platform by the race course.
- The adopters have built an innovative rainwater harvesting system on top of the compost bins in the Heritage Garden which diverts water into a water butt alongside.
- The mural on the car park platform is badly in need of repair due to water damage. Claire talking to Richard Bagguley re. installation of coping stones to prevent further damage.

### **Peartree**

- Dave Savage from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust has moved role and our new contact is Lisa Witham.
- Benches need replacing – Claire to measure up sleepers needed, then purchase. Kevin to install?
- Tree maintenance by NR has been requested due to concerns about branches falling onto public areas and ivy growing up trees. Not done yet.

### **Penkridge**

- Chase Aqua Rural Enterprise (CARE) mural ready for printing. Still awaiting permissions from WMT.
- Four volunteers from Penkridge Gardening Club have received Safety Briefings from LNR to enable them to carry out planting works at the station.
- Large new planter has been installed in the car park by Penkridge Gardening Club members. They will maintain this, plus some new shrubs planted into the ground on the other side of the car park.
- Phoenix Art Group art work now in poster cases in platform waiting shelters.

### **Stone**

- We continue to progress the planting ideas submitted by two of our volunteers at Stone Station. A bid for planters underneath the information boards on Platform 2 has been submitted to LNR and we are awaiting permission from Stone Town Council before submitting a bid for the fixed baskets on the railings on Platform 2.
- Partners have supported the planting arrangements and work of the volunteers at Stone Station with Councillor Hood securing an additional planter for the front of the Station Building and Streetscene helpfully sweeping Station Approach each month.
- A meeting has been arranged with Network Rail to look at the possibility of wild flowering a section of land on Station Approach with water harvesting from one of their buildings.
- We are in discussions with The Bee Friendly Trust about a planting scheme on Platform 1. We will be submitting a bid to Community Rail Network to match fund the work with The Bee Friendly Trust.
- Step free access to Platform 1: In preparation for possible Access for All funding application for CP7 (2024 – 29) we met with Vicky and Simon Clifford from NR to discuss options. To gain access from the adjacent industrial estate might be a quick win (but this would not qualify for an A4A scheme). Lifts would be the desirable option @ approx. £3.5m.

### **Stoke-on-Trent**

- Following a meeting with Laura Harper and Ruth Shaw we discussed a range of station enhancement projects. Initially we will be submitting a funding application for four new planters on Platform 2.
- Gravel garden on Platform 1: Awaiting timescale for the installation of a permanent new fence. Proposal for the gravel garden is being drafted to be submitted for consideration by Avanti and Network Rail to look at the feasibility of digging in the area.
- Contact has been made with a local park gardening volunteer group to see if they are interested in volunteering at the station.
- There is a new Community Champion at the station, Anthony Stanley.

### Income and Expenditure summary

<b>NSCRCP 2020 - 2021 Income and Expenditure Summary</b>			
<b>as at 30 September 2020</b>			
<b>INCOME</b>		<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Brought forward from 2019-20	39,000	CRPO and Active Travel Officer salaries (April 2020 - 31 March 2021)	48,800
Income from tocs (April 2020 to March 2021)	49,122	Plants, compost and gardening supplies	167
Income from local authorities (April 2020 - March 2021)	1,000	Design, printing, distribution costs	610
Grant from West Midlands Trains for Rails to Trails Engagement project	1,000	Travel, parking, subsistence	93
		Donation to The Lyme Trust Foodbank	500
		Other	317
<b>Total income</b>	<b>90,122</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>50,487</b>
		<b>Total Income minus Total Expenditure</b>	<b>- 39,635</b>
		<b>Reserve requirement</b>	<b>46,200</b>

