



**North Staffordshire  
Community Rail  
Partnership**

[www.northstaffsrail.org.uk](http://www.northstaffsrail.org.uk)

**MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT  
GROUP MEETING ON THURSDAY 10TH  
APRIL 2025, 10:00-12:00 DERBY AND  
ONLINE**

**Present:** David Dowbenko (Chair) [DD], Emma McIntosh (CRPO) [EM], Sam Smith [SS], Ian Clark (IC) (Vice Chair) Yvonne Byatt (East Staffordshire Bough Council) [YB], Paul Webster (Community Rail Network) [PW], Mark Osborne (Avanti West Coast) [MO], Jody Ball (XC) [JB], Sarah Grattage (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) [SG], Hannah Lilburne (Network Rail) [HL], Rachel Selby (RS) (Volunteer Member), Luke Tinning (LT) (Volunteer Member).

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence:</b> Rowley Osbourn (Staffordshire County Council), Cara Higgs (West Midlands Trains), Ian Tamburello (Stoke-on-Trent City Council)	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes of last Management Group Meeting (14th January 2025)</b> The minutes were agreed. EM advised that she had contacted Rebecca Styles at Northern regarding joining the Management Group but had not yet received a response. EM to contact Becky again.	EM
<b>3.</b>	<b>Update on Recruitment</b> DD advised that an offer had been made and accepted for the Community Rail Partnership Officer post and further information would be shared in due course.	DD
<b>4.</b>	<b>CRPO's Report</b> EM reported on projects completed since the last management group including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New- posters at Penkridge Station featuring photography from pupils at Wolgarston High School and information about Penkridge Heritage Centre</li> <li>• New volunteer to start shortly at Crewe Station to maintain the planters on platform 12</li> <li>• Completion of 12 month Rail Safe Friendly programme. 2848 children were involved, eight schools achieved bronze level and two schools achieved silver certificates. Infographic to be circulated with the minutes.</li> <li>• Tommies on Guard installation, funded by EMR and XC, installed at Derby Station in January</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SS updated on the Skillsbuilder project, thanking EMR, CRN, XC for funding. Project now completely delivered, although the upskilling of teachers should have legacy benefits. There were some issues over the scheduling of parts of project, the cause of these difficulties was a lack of insisting partner organisations had effectively communicated. The key learning point of ensuring CRPO has spoken directly with all parties involved to be cascaded.</li> </ul> <p>EM reported that the CRN Awards event went well with Stone, Peartree, Kidsgrove and Uttoxeter stations achieving Silver certificates in the It's Your Station category. The CRP also came second in the photography competition for the Avanti funded school poetry project at Crewe Station.</p> <p>EM reported that the CRP were not successful with CCIF funding application to LNR for the Stone Station mural project as none of the projects put forward by LNR/WMT were awarded funding this year. Options for the project and future funding will be considered for 26/27 financial year.</p> <p>Some projects are awaiting EMR Station Servicing Technician (SST) time before they can be completed. These projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longport window/door covers</li> <li>• Kidsgrove troughs</li> <li>• Longton pot bank art</li> <li>• Derby Station Planters</li> </ul> <p>SS advised an appointment to the vacant SST post has been made.</p> <p>EM shared the finance report. Spend will now be reported against each grant funded project. The report shows income and expenditure for the first three quarters up to 31<sup>st</sup> December. The report will be sent out with the minutes.</p>	SS
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<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>2025 – 26 Action Plan</b></p> <p>EM advised that minor changes to the layout of the action plan have been made. Previously projects were numbered so when additional projects were added all the project numbering changed making it more difficult to keep track. Each project now has an identifying number that will not change as projects are added or completed. In addition, the progress key has been changed to red amber green.</p> <p>A number of projects are shown in amber as they are on hold pending the new CRPO starting in post. This is either because they will be the lead on the project or due to capacity while there's currently only one CRPO in post.</p> <p>EM talked through the new projects in the Action Plan and the plan was approved. As a living document this will be regularly updated.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Community Rail Network Items (PW)</b></p> <p>PW reported that the Community Rail Awards went well and CRN are now planning next year's awards with the EMR team.</p> <p>Community Rail Week will take place week commencing 19<sup>th</sup> May. PW requested EM to send CRN details of the volunteering day at Stafford to be publicised and CRN may also be able to support. EM to liaise with HL and send to PW.</p> <p>EM advised that the CRP are only holding one event for Community Rail Week this year due to capacity. DD offered to support EMRs event at Nottingham and SS offered to take NSCRP leaflets to the Nottingham event. EM to supply.</p> <p>CRN are putting together new webinars for CRPOs and station adopters. These will be available on the events page shortly.</p> <p>CRN are awaiting funding sign off from the DfT for the CRDF and Station Fund for station adoption groups. PW encouraged the CRP to apply for funding once open.</p> <p>DD asked about charitable status. PW advised that the CRN membership voted to proceed with the application and the process is ongoing.</p> <p>CRN update to be sent out with the minutes.</p>	<p>EM/HL</p> <p>DD/SS /EM</p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>East Midlands Railway (SS)</b></p> <p>SS thanked EM for her support during the interim period between SS leaving and the new CRPO starting.</p> <p>SS thanked IC for highlighting the issues of ASB at Peartree and access to the station via the exit button when the station is closed. EMR are looking at options to address this. The new bug hotels and bird boxes have not been vandalised. PW</p>	

	<p>suggested a recent CRN guidance document to tackling ASB might be useful. Linked below.  <a href="https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/CRN-ASB-guidance-FINAL-FOR-WEB.pdf">https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/CRN-ASB-guidance-FINAL-FOR-WEB.pdf</a></p> <p>Working with Derwent Valley line on a mural for Derby underpass to link with Railway 200.</p> <p>SS will be looking to apply to Merlin for funding for a mural at Uttoxeter Station at the bus stand for Alton Towers buses.</p> <p>A replacement for Neil, one of the EMR SSTs, has now been appointed. George will start soon and may already be familiar to some as he currently works at Derby station.</p> <p>SS thanks Network Rail for their support at the Longport litter picking day where they filled a large skip with rubbish.</p> <p>EMRs funding pot is now open with a £100,000 budget for Community Rail.</p> <p>A new officer has been appointed for the Derwent Valley line.</p> <p>The EMR timetable change in December will bring an extra 2000 seats per day.</p> <p>The new waiting shelter at Longton should be completed in the next few weeks.</p> <p>EMR have a number of activities planned for Community Rail week in May and further information will be shared in due course.</p>	
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>London Northwestern Railway</b></p> <p>CH sent apologies and an update which was shared by EM. The update will be sent out with minutes.</p> <p>IC raised the new Crewe to Lincoln timetable and suggested there could be scope for liaison between EMR and LNR for between Stoke and Crewe. The turnaround will increase to 20 minutes which is positive as EMR services will be less likely to terminate at Stoke when running late.</p> <p>IC also raised that in the new timetable there will not be an afternoon service between Peartree and Crewe. This was discussed at EMRs Stakeholder meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February. IC stated that there is a requirement for a service in the afternoon,</p>	

	<p>possibly via rail replacement. IC has been communicating with EMR regarding this and has put forward two proposals. SS thanked IC for his valuable contributions to EMRs discussions regarding the timetable and the discussions will continue outside of this meeting.</p>	
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>CrossCountry (JB)</b></p> <p>A letter has been sent out regarding the May 25 timetable.</p> <p>One class 170 has been refurbished to date with the programme ongoing. Voyagers will be refurbished later in the year.</p> <p>Positive feedback was received from last month's community rail conference and will be used to inform future conferences.</p> <p>Core funding has been approved and project funding will be available from next week.</p> <p>The Peartree rewilding project is on the XC Community Hub, linked below  <a href="https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/community-news-feed">https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/community-news-feed</a></p> <p>Information on Greek Street engineering works are linked below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• XC (will be updated after each works have gone ahead) -  <a href="https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/travel-updates-information/major-engineering-work/changes-to-train-times-stockport-2025">https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/travel-updates-information/major-engineering-work/changes-to-train-times-stockport-2025</a></li> <li>• NR - <a href="https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/our-routes/north-west/greek-street-bridge-replacement/">https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/our-routes/north-west/greek-street-bridge-replacement/</a></li> </ul>	
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Avanti West Coast (MO)</b></p> <p>Recruited almost 700 new drivers.</p> <p>Transport for Wales event at Crewe Station on 16<sup>th</sup> October. Over 1000 children will be invited. There will be space for stands and workshops.</p>	

	<p>Celebrating Stoke's Centenary by transporting MPs and Lords on a City of Stoke-on-Trent train. There will also be an on board offer of Centenary Titanic Beer.</p> <p>Greek Street. Easter works are coming up which will be used to test the waters. Considering options to maintain hourly service during August's closure.</p> <p>JB shared XC plans for the closure. They will also be using Easter (19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>) to learn lessons. Trains will not call at Stockport, Macclesfield and Stoke. There will be a rail replacement service between Stockport and Macclesfield and between Macclesfield – Stoke – Stafford via the Crewe Styal line. If it goes well it will be used for August and October.</p> <p>EM asked JB and MO to send comms information when it becomes available to be shared via social media.</p> <p>Avanti update to be sent out with the minutes.</p>	JB/MO
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>Volunteer Policy and Spending Policy</b></p> <p>EM shared amendments to the Volunteer policy and the group approved the amendments.</p> <p>EM thanks LT for his comments on the draft Volunteer Spending Policy which had been incorporated into the final version. The group approved the Spending Policy that will be circulated to station adopters and implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> June.</p>	
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p>	ALL
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Dates and times of forthcoming Management Group Meetings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17th July 2025 10am (online),</li> <li>• 23rd October 2025 11am (in person – followed by AGM/community event at 1400 – subject to change)</li> </ul>	ALL