

# FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Hereward Community Rail Partnership achieves new national accreditation**

Fenland's Hereward railway line has seen its Community Rail Partnership receive official accredited status from the government's Department for Transport.

The Hereward Community Rail Partnership (CRP), which aims to connect communities with the Hereward stations at Manea, March and Whittlesea and champion local railway improvements, has become one of the latest CRPs to receive the new quality benchmark.

Managed by Fenland District Council, the CRP is funded by train operators Greater Anglia, Cross Country Trains, East Midlands Railway and London North Eastern Railway with support from the Association of Community Rail Partnerships and local organisations.

Under the government's new Community Rail Strategy, community rail partnerships are encouraged to apply for accredited status to demonstrate that they operate to high standards and that their objectives and activities are supported by government.

The Hereward Line partnership's accreditation also marks it out as a good representative of the local community. It also gives the partnership access to the Community Rail Development Fund as a further source of grant funding to help it carry out its work.

Paul Nelson, chairman of the Hereward CRP, said: "It's great to have our hard work recognised in this way and, with access to a new grant fund, should take us on to do even bigger and better things for the community in the future."

Greater Anglia's Customer and Community Engagement Manager, Alan Neville, added, "I'd like to congratulate the partnership on this achievement, which is testament to their efforts in improving the rail service and station facilities and attracting more people to use their local rail line."

Cllr Chris Seaton, Fenland District Council's Portfolio Holder responsible for transport, said: "The accreditation of the Hereward Community Rail Partnership is a fantastic achievement. It is recognition of the hard work undertaken by all involved in the partnership, including staff, committee members and volunteers in the Friends of Stations and Street Pride groups.

"Accreditation also opens further funding opportunities which will enable the partnership to develop further projects, which improve our stations and better connect our passengers."

Since it was established in 2012, the partnership has been involved in numerous projects to develop the Hereward Line and promote rail travel in the Fens.

The partnership helped to secure the two hourly services from Manea Station, plus additional stops of the Liverpool-Norwich service at March Station, including a lunchtime service, a later evening stop and also at weekends.

It is also helped to progress the Fenland Station Masterplans to deliver improvements at Manea, March and Whittlesea stations. The CRP developed the initial high-level masterplans and consulted widely with the public to ensure the right schemes were included to upgrade the stations for the future.

The CRP also held consultations on options for platform lengthening at Manea and Whittlesea, and new platform shelters for the stations that are due to be installed in April.

The schemes are part of a £9.5million package of funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to Fenland District Council, supported by Greater Anglia as a delivery partner.

The partnership has also developed the Hereward Line Guide, highlighting places to visit and ideas for days out along the 29 mile route from Peterborough to Ely. The free guide can be picked up from the Fenland stations and Fenland District Council's Customer Service Centres and Community Hubs, or downloaded from the Council's website at: [www.fenland.gov.uk](http://www.fenland.gov.uk)

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**For more information contact Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226**