

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

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Fenland rail group joins national campaign to celebrate Britain's railways

The Hereward Community Rail Partnership will join community groups and volunteers across Britain for this year's Community Rail Week, celebrating how our historic railways connect communities and help us move towards greener and healthier travel.

Community Rail Week, organised by Community Rail Network and sponsored by Rail Delivery Group, runs from 22-28 May, and looks to drive change at a community level through the efforts of 76 community rail partnerships and 1,200 station friends groups across Britain.

The Hereward CRP will be taking to social media during the week to highlight the different projects they have been involved in to bring people in the community together and to promote train travel along the Hereward Line, which runs between cathedral cities of Peterborough and Ely, and its railway stations at March, Manea and Whittlesea.

CRP officers will also be joining community rail colleagues at Nottingham Railway Station on 24 May showcase the Fens and the opportunities and attractions available along the Hereward Line.

Over 50 community events and activities are taking place throughout Community Rail Week nationwide, aiming to improve travel confidence, increase access to opportunity, give communities a voice, and put railways and stations at the heart of community life. They will also encourage people who rarely use public transport to consider the benefits of making at least the occasional switch to greener, healthier, more social forms of travel, including rail.

This year also marks the 10th anniversary of the Hereward CRP, which is managed by Fenland District Council in partnership with train operators, railway user groups, station adoption groups and local residents who look after the Hereward Line, together with support from the Community Rail Network.

In the past year the CRP has developed and organised a number of projects and events, including:

- Developed a bespoke village map for Manea, promoting things to do in the area and helping visitors from the railway station to find their way around the village.
- Commissioned a wayfinding monolith for Whittlesea station to help passengers navigate their way around the station and to get to the town centre.
- Promoted the redeveloped March Railway Station - including commissioning a drone video to capture the full extent of the improvements.
- Held a special 'Herewards Are Go' 10-year anniversary celebration which saw Hereward Line stations decked with bunting and the CRP team meeting passengers at Peterborough and Ely stations and on-board trains.
- Launched a new Transport Planning Guide for Local Communities to explain the transport planning processes and shows people how to have their say on transport planning issues.
- Held its first coffee morning at March Railway Station, alongside a 'Meet the Manager' event with representatives from Greater Anglia, East Midlands Railway and CrossCountry Trains.

- Developed an online Think Travel Tool, which compares the impacts and benefits of different types of transport - encouraging people to think about how they can make their journeys more sustainable, more cost and time effective and more beneficial to their health.
- Commissioned a drone video to promote the Hereward Line.

The CRP was also shortlisted for a Community Rail Award last year in the “Most Effective Communication” category.

Cllr Chris Seaton, Chairman of the Hereward Community Rail Partnership, said: “This Community Rail Week, we're looking forward to celebrating how the Hereward Line helps to connect people to the people and places they love, and provides us with a greener, healthier, and more social form of travel. Travelling by train is not only much better for the environment than driving a car, but also a totally different way to experience a journey.”

Jools Townsend, Chief Executive of Community Rail Network, said: “Community rail partnerships and thousands of ‘station friends’ volunteers the length and breadth of Britain are this week mobilising en masse, engaging local people and partners to raise awareness about rail travel, and get people enthused about its benefits.

“It’s all about connecting communities and bringing people together, while supporting and enabling more people to travel sustainably by train and access the opportunities they want. Community rail has an inspiring track record of doing just that: promoting travel confidence and broadening mobility horizons, sometimes with life-changing effects, while giving communities a voice on transport, and putting railways and stations at the heart of community life.”

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Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk