



# The New River Line Community Rail Partnership

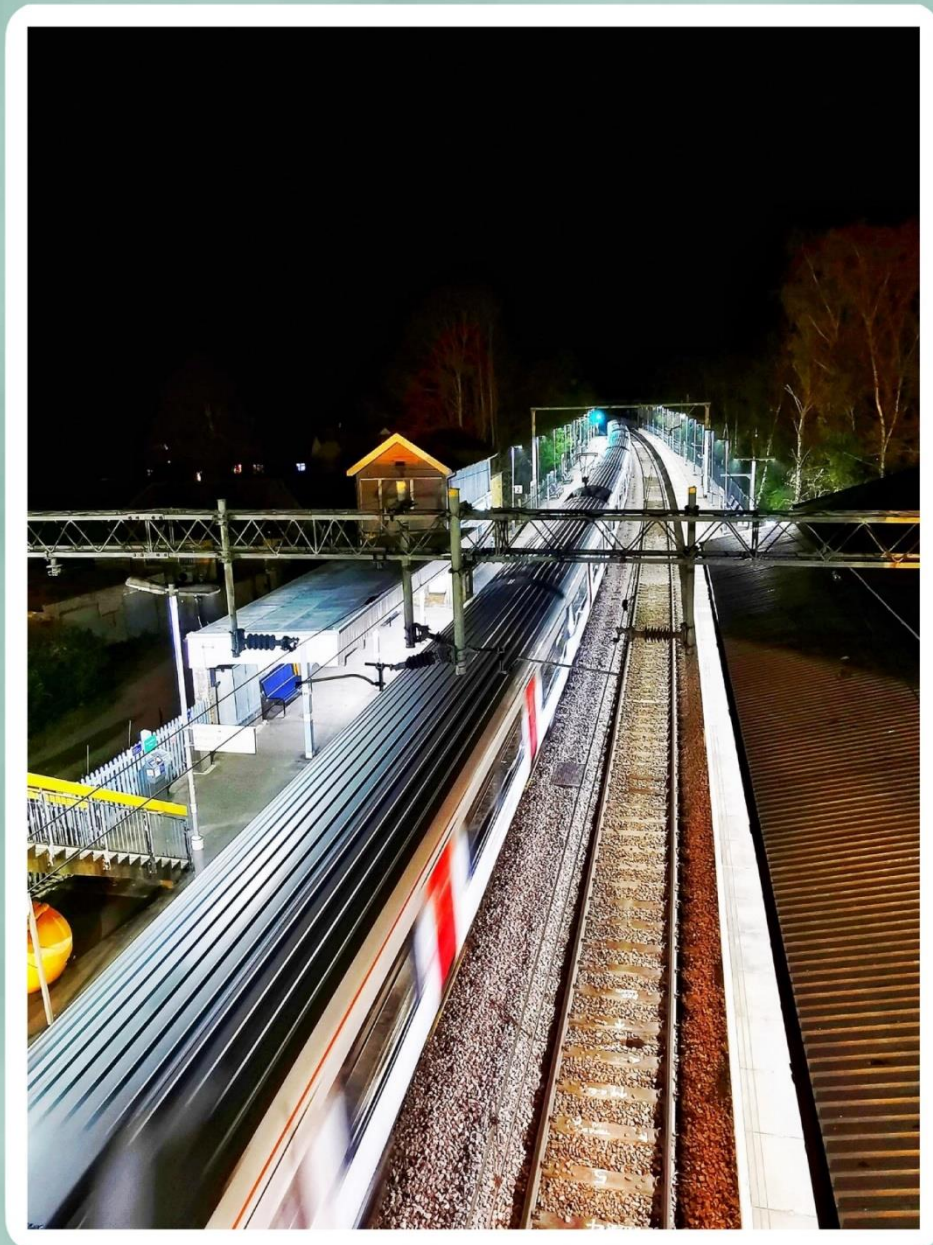


Image by Paul Marriott @Highflyingdrones

## 2020/21 Annual Report

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# Message from the Chair of the New River Line



Kate Belinis DL

CEO, Community Development Action Herts

It has been my pleasure to be Chair of the new and emerging Community Rail Partnership (CRP) in East Herts. What is a Community Rail Partnership? It is a grassroots movement made up of more than 1000 local voluntary groups working within 74 community rail partnerships across England. This community-based partnership is about engaging communities with their railways and now is in a terrific position to play a pivotal role in the new government plans to reinvigorate rail. And now we have our very own CRP, The New River Line, running between Hertford East and Broxbourne Stations.

This brand-new partnership has a Steering Group and the members have brought their experiences, knowledge and skills to launch this exciting initiative not only for the passengers using the trains between Hertford East and Broxbourne but for their families and friends to enjoy the amazing places of interest outside and beyond the rail stations.

I must thank the Steering Group for bringing this to East Herts and for their commitment to making this project a success. The hard work in the setting up of the project has cumulated in this first Annual Report. Sadly Covid-19 had an enormous impact on the plans to launch but with the tenacity and determination of the Steering Group, we have managed to bring this New River CRP into reality.

I hope that you will learn more about this wonderful community-based asset and make connections with the station adopters and groups we would be delighted if you can join us as we move forward.



# Financial report

## FINANCE SUMMARY

### INCOME

The total income received in 2020/21 was £60,553. This total was a combination of £28,500 core funding, and £32,053 from additional funding, as set out in the two tables below.

#### Core Funding Received for 2020/21

Source	Amount (£)
Abellio East Anglia Ltd	20,000
CDA Herts	500
Ware Town Council	1,000
Hertfordshire CC	5,000
East Herts District Council	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,500</b>

#### Additional Funding Received in 2020/21

Source	Amount (£)	Description
Abellio East Anglia Ltd	3,200	2019/20 additional contribution
Abellio East Anglia Ltd	20,000	2019/20 core funding
Abellio East Anglia Ltd	8,208	Additional 2020/21 contribution
Stanstead Abbots Parish Council	645	Contribution to St Margarets project
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,053</b>	

### EXPENDITURE

The total expenditure in 2020/21 was £17,463, which was made up of £11,004 hosting costs (for the period September 2019 to March 2020), £5,690 on projects, and £769 on annual out-goings.

Spending on projects was limited as the CRP Officer was not in post for the first five months of the year, and the scope for delivering works was restricted by the pandemic.

Detailed breakdowns of expenditure are regularly reported to the Steering Group.

### OVERALL SUMMARY FOR 2020/21

A summary of the overall financial position is given the table below.

#### Summary of 2020/21 Financial Position

	£
Balance carried forward from 2019/20 (+)	26,900
2020/21 Income	(+) 60,553
2020/21 Expenditure	(-) 17,463
Balance carried forward to 2021/22	£69,990

### FORECAST 2021/22 POSITION

Whilst all figures are subject to change, the forecast core funding for 2021/22 is expected to be £31,500, with on-going costs at £19,184.

Total project costs for the year have not yet been fully assessed.



# Introducing the Community Rail Partnership

Community Rail Partnerships provide a link between the railway and local communities. They are about positive development, bringing together a wide range of individuals and groups along the route.

The New River Line Community Rail Partnership (CRP) was formally established in January 2020, the officer took up the post in August 2021.

The Partnership aims to enhance station environments, to make them a more pleasant place, the station adoption scheme co-ordinated by Greater Anglia, gives the local community the opportunity to become more involved in their railway.

Though the CRP officer began during lockdown, working despite associated restrictions a number of projects have been completed during these tricky times which will be detailed in this report.

Thank you to all the members of The New River CRP for your ongoing support.



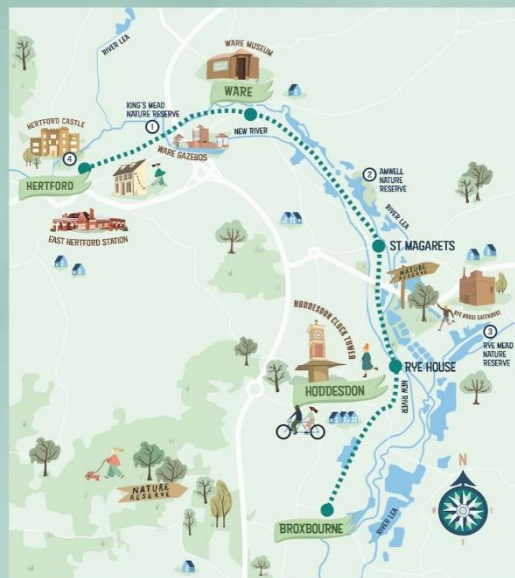
# The New River Line Guide

The first job to complete for the newly appointed officer was to finalise design and production of the Line guide.

Printed by a local company, using local businesses when possible is key to the ethos of the Partnership, these were in storage up until the final lifting of restrictions.

They are now available at all five stations along the Line.

With the inclusion of an illustrated map and details of local attractions the guide offers visitors and locals a useful resource to explore the area surrounding the Line.



# The New River Line and Social Media

With Covid restrictions in place launching and building up a social media presence was an ideal starting point for the new officer.

A bank of photos to promote the local area was developed. These images were used in regular posts to engage and grow followers on Twitter and Facebook.

More targeted campaigns were developed such as the 'Looking Forward' promotion that ran during the third lockdown to offer a sense of positivity whilst also highlighting the many attractions accessible from stations along the Line.

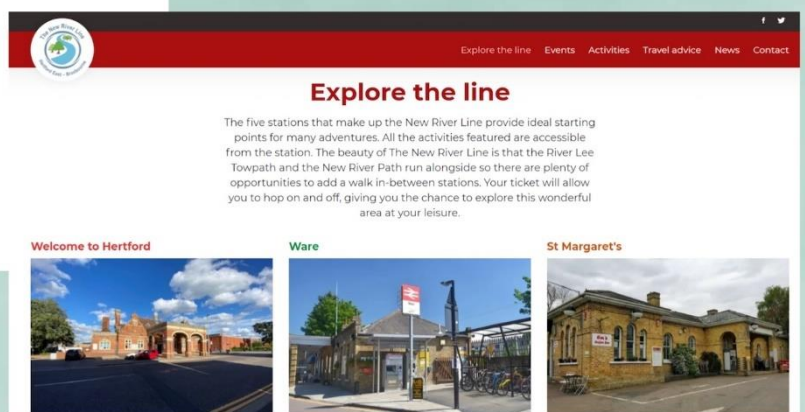
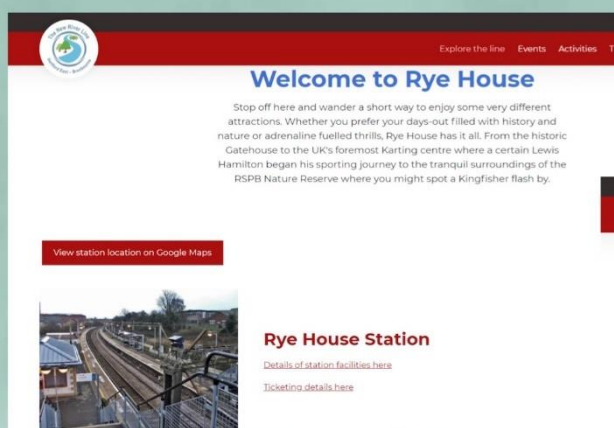
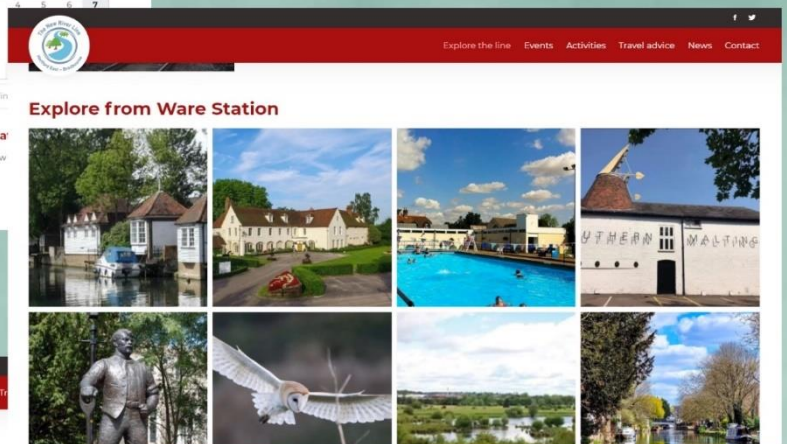
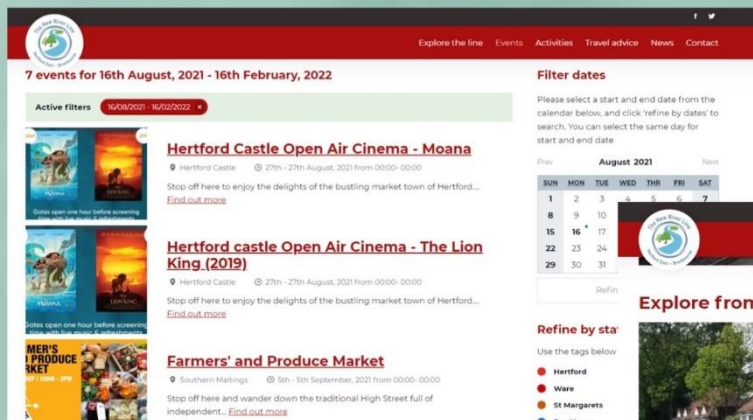
The New River Line has also been involved in the national 'Days Out' campaign run by Scenic Rail Britain. Posts have suggested places to visit around a weekly theme.

Social media followers have been steadily building and a number of collaborations have emerged through these interactions on social media and are going to be developed in future projects. For example, we are working with the Aspire, Strive and Learn group based in Ware to develop a travel on the train with confidence strategy.



# Development of a Website

After a tendering process the Partnership opted to go with Hertford based website developers, AWD. Once again showing their commitment to give business to local companies when possible. The structure of the platform was built and the officer, after a very steep learning curve, populated the site with details about the area, real time rail information such as ticketing and station facilities, events listings and lots of great photos to encourage people to explore the Line. All attractions and events are easily accessible from at least one of the stations and there is the option to get directions on a mobile device. News items will be added regularly and pages updated as required.





# Station Improvements at Rye House Station

At the start of the year, thanks to funding from Hertfordshire County Council, a new waiting room was installed at Rye House Station. The previous open-sided shelter was replaced by an enclosed waiting room, with fully automatic doors, free WiFi, CCTV and air conditioning.

Following this upgrade a safe and secure bike shelter was installed to assist passengers on their journeys, giving them the opportunity to travel sustainably for their whole journey.



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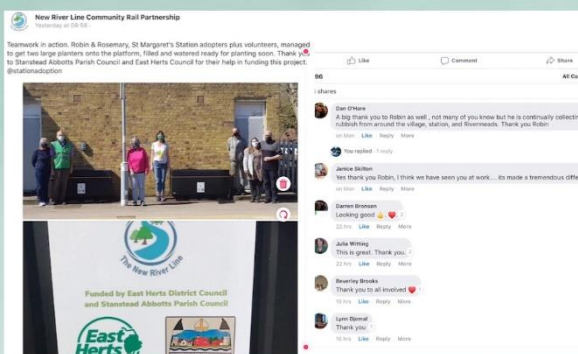
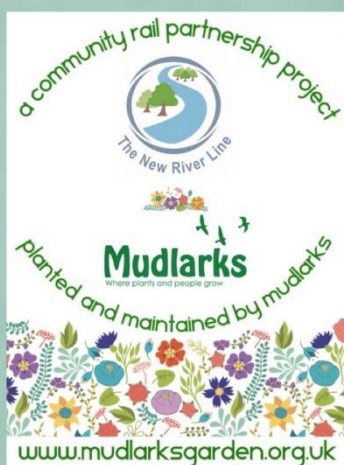


# Station enhancements at Hertford East & St Margaret's

Station enhancements are so important, they make stations welcoming and attractive, they can also give communities a pride in their local places. Passengers can enjoy the beauty of a flowered planter whilst they pass or alight the platform.

The New River Line welcomed one new station adoption team, Mudlarks, at Hertford East and have enjoyed working with established adopters, Robin & Rosemary at St Margaret's. The Partnership funded six new planters for Hertford East which Mudlarks, a Hertford based charity that offers opportunities for adults with learning difficulties, maintain on a regular basis.

With funding successfully applied for from East Herts District Council and Stanstead Abbots Parish Council two new planters were installed, filled and planted by adopters and local volunteers. The feedback from the local community at St Margaret's Station was incredibly positive, with one Facebook post full of gratitude for Robin And Rosemary's hard work.



# Promotional New River Line Video

Filming for a new video of the Line took place on 2nd June. Wholly funded by Greater Anglia the video will showcase the New River Line and all it's surrounding attractions.

There are a myriad of opportunities to collaborate with the organisations featured in the video which we will be exploring once the video is released. The video will be on our website and used at promotional events and on social media.

It really does work to highlight the beauty of the area and will encourage visitors and locals to explore and discover what's on offer by the Line.



# Art @ The Station - St Margaret's

One of the exciting projects we have been able to run during lockdowns is Art @ The Station. It was proposed that a tired looking signal box at St Margaret's station would provide the backdrop for an array of art produced by the local community.

A poster was put on the local community Facebook page and pinned up on the village noticeboards asking for submissions. The response was fantastic, with the two local primary schools as well as residents getting involved.

After a selection process, kindly hosted by one of our sponsors and made up of representatives from the Partnership and Greater Anglia the station adopter and sponsor, twelve pieces were chosen in a variety of mediums.

A local signage company have printed the work on aluminium sheets ready for installation by the Greater Anglia asset team in October.

This project was a wonderful collaboration and was made possible thanks to generous funding from local businesses, French and Jupp's and Universal Signs, both based close to St Margaret's station.

Once the art work is installed the signal box will provide an exciting visual advert for what community rail and it's supporters can achieve.

**Calling all Artists**

Help us turn this

into this

Your Artwork Here

St Margaret's

No age limit, but St Margaret's must be the artist's local station.  
Any chosen medium accepted.

**Deadline for submissions 31st May 2021**  
**Installation Summer 2021**

For details e-mail: [Katie.goldthorpe@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Katie.goldthorpe@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

The New River Line  
A community rail partnership project  
Sponsored by French & Jupp's

FRENCH JUPPS



# Report from Alan Neville

## Community and Customer Engagement Manager, Greater Anglia

### PERFORMANCE

Since the start of the pandemic, service performance on West Anglia and the New River Line has been extremely high, with a moving annual average which is the highest ever recorded in the franchise. Even throughout the traditionally challenging autumn and winter period, figures remained high. Although on West Anglia in general it is true that we have been running less peak services, the figure still reflects great attention to detail every day by our employees and the staff employed by Network Rail to keep the infrastructure in good condition. There have been few serious incidents and those there have been handled swiftly and effectively.

### EMERGENCY RECOVERY MEASURES AGREEMENT

In September we transfer from the Emergency Recovery Measures Agreement to a Direct Award with a very important Business Plan as an integral part of this. The ERMA has given support and surety throughout the pandemic.

### OUR STAFF

Throughout these difficult times our staff have been amazing, remaining strong, resolute and dedicated in the most difficult of periods. Sickness and the amount of time actually lost has been very low and we are very proud of all frontline employees.

### REVISIONS TO TIMETABLE

At the start of the pandemic services were cut back but as the situation has evolved, many have been reinstated and we are now operating at 86% on pre-pandemic levels. The next uplift will occur in mid-September and some more West Anglia services will be reinstated.

### FUTURE WEST ANGLIA TIMETABLE CHANGES

We are not expecting now to make any major changes to the timetable until May 2023, when the ECML and GTR service change is now expected to occur. This date has been amended recently from May 21. Even in May 23 it is unlikely that there will be major changes.

### WEST ANGLIA MAIN LINE CAPACITY STUDY

Information about the study is being made available on the Network Rail website.

### SAFE TRAVEL AND CLEANING ISSUES

Enhanced and very thorough cleaning regimes were put into place at the start of the pandemic and have continued ever since. More staff have been employed and new techniques put into place. No traces of Covid have been found on our trains.

### CARRIAGE OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

Throughout the pandemic the safety of students and children has been at the forefront of management attention, both in terms of train capacity and in terms of social distancing measures. Counting of train numbers continues even now and we have been praised for this thorough work.

### MARKETING INITIATIVES

Marketing preparatory work continued throughout the pandemic, ready for the day that we were able to actively promote rail again. Some fantastic and in-depth work has been done and following the July 19<sup>th</sup> date both enhanced GA wide marketing and UK rail marketing has re-started.

### NEW TRAINS

The first Class 720 service operated in passenger service on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> August, forming the 0531 Cambridge-Stratford. Subsequently the train visited Hertford East. These trains will start to be rolled out across West Anglia. The trains have much great capacity, high standards of comfort, great features which customers want on a modern train and they are much more energy efficient with regenerative braking.

### INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The following infrastructure improvements will be occurring during winter 21/22.

- Hertford East – platform lengthening and movement of S and C signals
- Ware – Platform extension
- St. Margarets – [down] signal move.
- Broxbourne -Platform extensions, S and C changes to platform 4 and forward loop
- Stratford, Brimsdown, Enfield Lock and Cambridge – associated alterations.



# Stay in touch



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[www.newriverline.org](http://www.newriverline.org)



0758 074 3607



@CrpNew



New River Line Community Rail Partnership



# Looking forward

We are pleased to have made many contacts within the communities along the New River Line over the last year and the future for our partnership is brighter because of this. A number of projects are in early stages of exploration and we look forward to celebrating some of these in next year's report.

Produce a booklet for walks from each station

Carols for commuters at Rye House Station

Art on the Meads, large murals on the A10 Viaduct pillars visible from the train

Murals at Rye House Station

Working with Railscape to identify possible areas for biodiverse planting

Rebranding a number of station name signs with our logo

Rail safety/confidence programmes delivered to local primary schools

To get Rye House Station adopted

