



**Hampshire**  
Community Rail Partnership

# Annual Review 2022/23

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[hampshirecommunityrail.co.uk](https://hampshirecommunityrail.co.uk)

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## Annual Review 2022/23

### Dear Stakeholders

Welcome to the Hampshire Community Rail Partnership 2022/23 Annual Review, which, following on from the disruption caused by the Coronavirus epidemic, contains reports about our continuing development, activities at stations along our routes and information about some forthcoming interesting projects.

Of particular note is that we have formed the Hampshire Community Rail Partnership Community Interest Company, which acts as a legal umbrella for our various partnerships across and beyond the county into Wiltshire, Berkshire and Surrey. This partnership was created to allow us to enter into the leasing of redundant station buildings from train operators and to employ staff.

Hampshire CRP has grown over the past few years to incorporate and administer Three Rivers CRP, Hills To Harbour CRP (which has merged the East Hampshire and Surrey Hills CRPs), Reading Basingstoke CRP and Wey Valley CRP as shown on the map below.



# Hampshire

Community Rail Partnership

incorporating:

-  Hills to Harbour CRP
-  Reading Basingstoke CRP
-  Three Rivers CRP
-  Wey Valley CRP
-  Adopted stations



This map is not to scale.



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In addition to our CRPs, we are happy to administer finances and staff for other partnerships in the SWR network area, saving them costs and time.

We have three directors and two rail officers supporting Hampshire Community Rail Partnership:

### Directors

**Nick Farthing**

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**Mark Miller**

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**Veronika Moore**

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[veronika@hampshirecommunityrail.co.uk](mailto:veronika@hampshirecommunityrail.co.uk)

### Rail Officers

**Josephine Dunningham-Foley**

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**Lucy Lomax**

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[lucy@hampshirecommunityrail.co.uk](mailto:lucy@hampshirecommunityrail.co.uk)



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We have come a long way since establishing the Three Rivers CRP in 2007 and it is clear that Community Rail has grown considerably in its remit, work and reputation. We look forward to further developments which will include seeking Accreditation from the Department for Transport and Community Rail Network.

Of course, nothing could have been achieved without the funding received from our major stakeholders:





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# Achievements during the last year!

### Social Media and website improvements

With the employment of Josephine, she has refreshed our social media presence, merging previous separate pages into one set of outputs as follows:

- [facebook.com/HampshireCRP](https://facebook.com/HampshireCRP)
- [twitter.com/@hampshirecrp](https://twitter.com/@hampshirecrp)
- [tiktok.com/@hampshirecrp](https://tiktok.com/@hampshirecrp)
- [instagram.com/@hampshirecrp](https://instagram.com/@hampshirecrp)



Of particular importance has been her development of short videos, many featuring her dog Ned, highlighting the tourism attractions available from various stations around our patch.

We have managed to build websites for all of our partnerships, which has increased our marketing presence.

- <https://readingbasingstokecrp.co.uk/>
- <https://weyvalleycrp.co.uk/>
- <https://threeriversrail.com/>
- <https://hillstoharbour.co.uk/>





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### Station Refurbishments

Over the past few years we have been taking on leases of redundant spaces at stations across the SWR network, in order to refurbish facilities and make them available for community use.

Special thanks must go to SWR who have developed this idea with us and provided peppercorn rents to help community activities establish and flourish.

We now have 10 leases including:

Bitterne, Crewkerne Pump Room, Netley History Room and Volunteers Toilet, Netley Platform 2 Waiting Room, Petersfield Hub, Romsey Café, Shawford Café, Swaythling and Woolston Signal Box Garden.

These are being used for heritage purposes, community gardening and arts and crafts bases, Free Shops (See Page 8) and community cafés.

Shortly work will start on developing three more major projects at Romsey Station Master's House, Woolston Signal Box and refurbishing a small room at Bentley station.

- Shawford before and after



- Bitterne - Work In Progress - before and after





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### Free Shops

During the Covid pandemic volunteers were keen to establish and develop Free Shops at two locations in Hampshire: Petersfield and Swaythling. The idea was to introduce food waste avoidance schemes at both in association with FareShare and Neighbourly charities. How it works is that volunteers are put in contact with local supermarkets, collect surplus food which is still fit for human consumption and then give it away for free to local residents from railway station buildings. These supplies are often supplemented by private donations.

Although the concept is food waste avoidance these Free Shops have been significantly helping those affected by recent cost of living pressures.



These schemes have now been running for over 3 years, and are staffed by rotas of community rail volunteers.

- Petersfield, which operates from the old Red Star Parcels Office next to Petersfield station on Wednesday afternoons and Friday and Saturday mornings, has extended its remit to include school uniform swaps, which is extremely popular.

Regularly, each Free Shop session welcomes 60+ visitors, and at the end there is nothing left!

During Covid, Lucy ensured that a local public house maintained the provision of meal boxes for people, earning her a Mayor's Recognition Award for Volunteering.



- Swaythling, which operates out of two leased rooms and the booking office of the station every Saturday morning, has been supplemented by a Baby Bank full of toys, clothes, equipment and baby food. Visitor numbers have climbed steadily and now top 90 per Saturday. Any surplus food is then donated to the local St Denys Sunday Lunch Club which makes dinners for vulnerable people the next day.

We are extremely thankful to all our volunteers, donors and supporters who make these projects such a success.







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### Travel with Confidence

In association with SWR and GWR our rail officers have been working with community groups to encourage them to travel by train more. One of the by-products of this was that they identified that many people with physical or learning difficulties or phobias were wary of travelling on the railways together or individually owing to accessibility issues, lack of information, fear of things going wrong or generally not being confident.

With the help of project funding from Hampshire County Council Adult Services and SWR, we were able to create a steering group of disability groups and interested parties, including Michael Adlington, SWR's Accessibility Manager to discuss the barriers to travel for these groups and individuals.

As a result, we created a Journey Planning document and Simplified Guide to Travel called "HELP IS AT HAND", which not only covers rail travel, but also bus journeys with input from Stagecoach. With support from SWR Community Ambassadors we then took groups out on specific trips using the document to help them throughout the planning of journeys and what to expect during a rail journey, which has proved highly successful in helping to improve confidence to use trains independently in the future.

Last year, we were fortunate to partner with Winchester Go LD charity, who were provided with funding through the SWR Project Funding streams to provide peer to peer travel training to similar groups of people with learning difficulties.

To date they have helped 100 peers travel with confidence and we are now working on ways to extend and develop the programme.





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### Winter Warmers

Following on from the success of our Free Shops, Lucy had the idea of providing one-off events for the donation and distribution of spare coats, gloves, hats and scarves to those who needed them over Winter.

Her first event was held at Petersfield Hub and attracted many visitors taking away over 144 coats. A further event was held in Reading, with the help of Network Rail who allowed Lucy to utilise a spare retail unit in the Brunel Arcade. It was so busy that we were unable to track the footfall but gave away in the region of 800 winter warmer items over a period of 4 days.

General feedback was that these events were much appreciated and helped many people who could not afford to buy their own coats and accessories.



### Waterside Wanderer Ticket

Last year saw an innovative ticketing scheme designed and implemented by the Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership. With funding from the Department for Transport's Integrated Sustainable Transport Fund, administered by the Community Rail Network, we came up with the idea of a joint rail, bus and ferry ticket for the Waterside area of Hampshire. Known as the "Waterside Wanderer", this was the first integrated ticket to cover ferry services as far as we know and for a discounted rate passengers could purchase a day ticket to sample the delights of Southampton, the New Forest and the Waterside area. The scheme also showed that all public transport modes could work together, which is something we are spearheading as part of efforts to reopen the Fawley line to regular passenger rail services!





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### South Downs Rambler bus

In a further attempt to promote tourism by rail and bus in Hampshire the Three Rivers and Hills to Harbour CRPs reintroduced the popular South Downs Rambler bus between Winchester and Petersfield stations on Summer Sundays. Funded by CrossCountry and operated by Bluestar buses, this service provides a superb ride alongside the South Downs Way, where passengers can hop on and off to walk part of this famous route or just enjoy the many tourist attractions stretching along the way. Being the first time we operated the service post-COVID, we were delighted that over 400 people used the bus in the summer of 2022.



Having received additional funding from CrossCountry, we hope to reintroduce this service in Summer 2023, alongside a revamped Test Valley Bus linking Andover and Romsey via many tourist attractions, recreating the Sprat and Winkle train service which ran many years ago.

The popular Marwell Zoo bus should also be mentioned here, as we helped to develop this service to call at Southampton Airport and Eastleigh stations to encourage visitors from London, Portsmouth and Bournemouth and elsewhere to visit this world-famous conservation park. Marwell Zoo now plan, fund and market the new "Zoo" bus run by our Steering Group colleagues Bluestar and the route will be extremely popular once again, running each year to a special timetable between Easter and September.



### Train to Travel programme



This year we have been aiming to increase our Education Training package to schools. With a background in teaching, Josephine, with support from a national Backtrack education programme and Network Rail's ongoing safety promotion sessions, has been designing presentations aimed at Year 6 pupils. The idea is to ensure these 11 year olds are confident to travel safely and more independently on trains, especially as they move into the Secondary School stage of their lives.

Josephine is happy to present 1 hour training sessions to any Year 6 class across our network, and then with support from SWR and GWR follow the theory learning with actual trips on trains, putting all they have learned into practice.



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### Try the Train – Dementia Friendly Groups

With help from SWR we have been promoting a “Try the Train” programme for people with dementia.

Initially three groups from Dementia Friendly Hampshire met with Lucy to carry out a station audit at Havant station, along with their carers. One helpful participant was surprised to see that there were no longer steam trains! His initial feedback was how difficult it was to understand how to move from one side of the station to the other using the lifts and then finding out where to go next. As a result of this, better signage has now been provided for adults with dementia.



The group then enjoyed a trip to Petersfield with a visit to the Petersfield Museum, which was the old police station. One of the group remembered his son working there and was delighted to get to visit the cells.

The second group from Petersfield took a trip to Godalming where they had afternoon tea at an independent local café. The group also enjoyed singing on their journey with the leader of the dementia friendly choir reminding them not to 'dilly dally on the way'.

Lastly a group from Romsey took a train trip to Mottisfont and Dunbridge station to enjoy lunch and skittles at a local pub.

The main lesson learnt from all these trips is that participants and carers feel better prepared to take a journey and now know how to book assistance and get help, including booking a ramp, which is for everyone not just wheelchair users.



### Try the Train – Young People

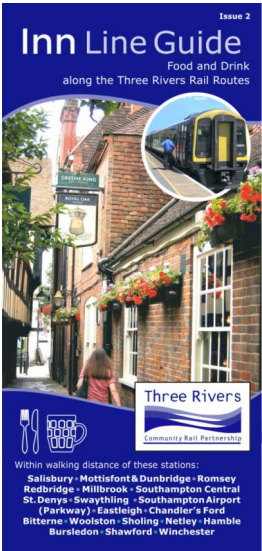
The “Try the Train” programme is also designed for youngsters. Those who have never travelled by train before have gained valuable experience on trips organised by Lucy.

# Annual Review 2022/23

## General publicity

To accompany our online presence we have been busy producing hard copy publicity to distribute to our stations and stakeholders.

Please find a list of publications available below and if you wish to have any copies for stock or use, just let us know. All publications are available on our webpages.

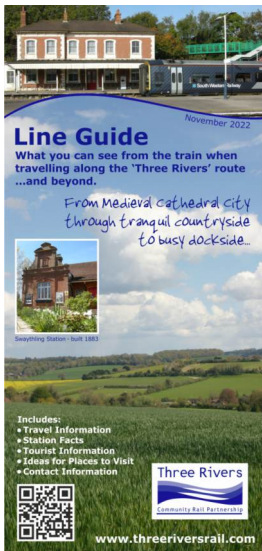


**Inn Line Guide**  
Food and Drink along the Three Rivers Rail Routes  
November 2022

**Line Guide**  
What you can see from the train when traveling along the 'Three Rivers' route ...and beyond.  
From Medieval cathedral city through tranquil countryside to busy dockside.

Includes:  
• Travel Information  
• Station Facts  
• Tourist Information  
• Ideas for Places to Visit  
• Contact Information

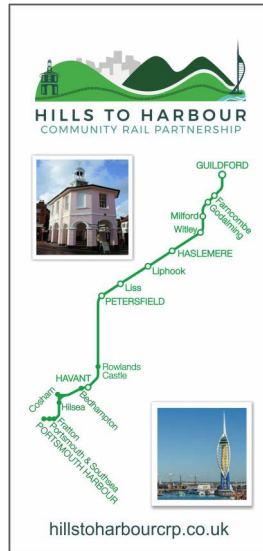
www.threeriversrail.com



**HILLS TO HARBOUR**  
COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP

Includes:  
• Travel Information  
• Station Facts  
• Tourist Information  
• Ideas for Places to Visit  
• Contact Information

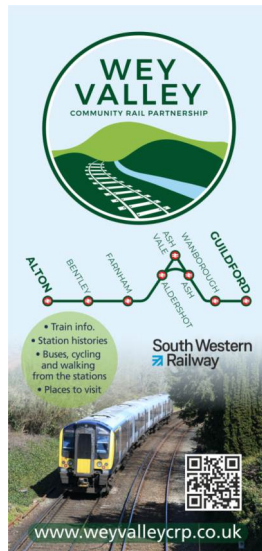
hillstoharbourcrp.co.uk



**WEY VALLEY**  
COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP

Includes:  
• Train info.  
• Station histories  
• Buses, cycling and walking from the stations  
• Places to visit

www.weyvalleycrp.co.uk



**READING TO BASINGSTOKE**  
COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP

Includes:  
• Train info.  
• Station histories  
• Buses, cycling and walking from the stations  
• Places to visit

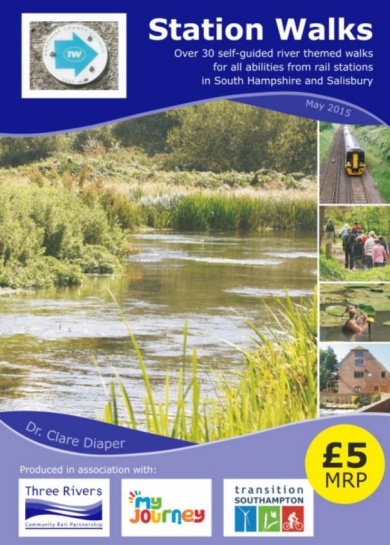
www.readingbasingstokecrp.co.uk



**Station Walks**  
Over 30 self-guided river themed walks for all abilities from rail stations in South Hampshire and Salisbury  
May 2015

£5 MRP

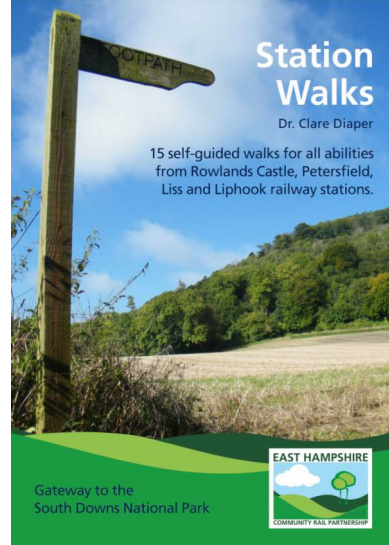
Produced in association with:  
Three Rivers, my Journey, transition SOUTHAMPTON



**Station Walks**  
Over 30 self-guided river themed walks for all abilities from rail stations in South Hampshire and Salisbury  
May 2015

£5 MRP

Produced in association with:  
Three Rivers, my Journey, transition SOUTHAMPTON



**Station Walks**  
Dr. Clare Diaper  
15 self-guided walks for all abilities from Rowlands Castle, Petersfield, Liss and Liphook railway stations.


Gateway to the South Downs National Park

EAST HAMPSHIRE COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP



**The Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail**  
...by train or bus

Produced in association with:  
Three Rivers, crosscountry by rail, SWR



**MAKE TRACKS**  
bike rides by train in East Hampshire

Twelve fantastic countryside routes for families and enthusiasts

Produced in association with:  
East Hampshire, Community Rail Network



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### Volunteers

The funding provided by stakeholders is amazing, but on the ground we could not be as successful in our activities without the ongoing support of our amazing volunteers, who give up their time with such enthusiasm and good nature. Thank you all for your help and the difference you make.





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• A volunteer of particular note is Val Hart who has been involved with Free Shop Petersfield and many other local charities in the town. She has recently been awarded the British Empire Medal for all her work over the years – This is much deserved. Well done Val!

If you would like to volunteer with any of our partnerships, please contact the relevant Rail Officer detailed on Page 2.



### Reading Green Park opens

We were delighted to be part of the opening ceremony for Reading Green Park Station which opened in May 2023 after many years of planning. This is the most modern station on our network and will help provide many additional journeys between Reading and Basingstoke and further afield and will provide an efficient alternative to the nearby often congested A33. The station will be served by half hourly trains in both directions Mondays to Saturdays and hourly on Sundays operated by Great Western Railway. Already we are making connections with the local residents, community groups, schools and businesses to promote the new station and services.



Many congratulations to Reading Borough Council, Network Rail, Great Western Railway and other stakeholders for pursuing and delivering this excellent project and we hope this acts as an incentive for further stations to open in our area.



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31 Station Adoptions

100+ volunteers

10 Station Leases

200+ stakeholders  
and interested parties



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