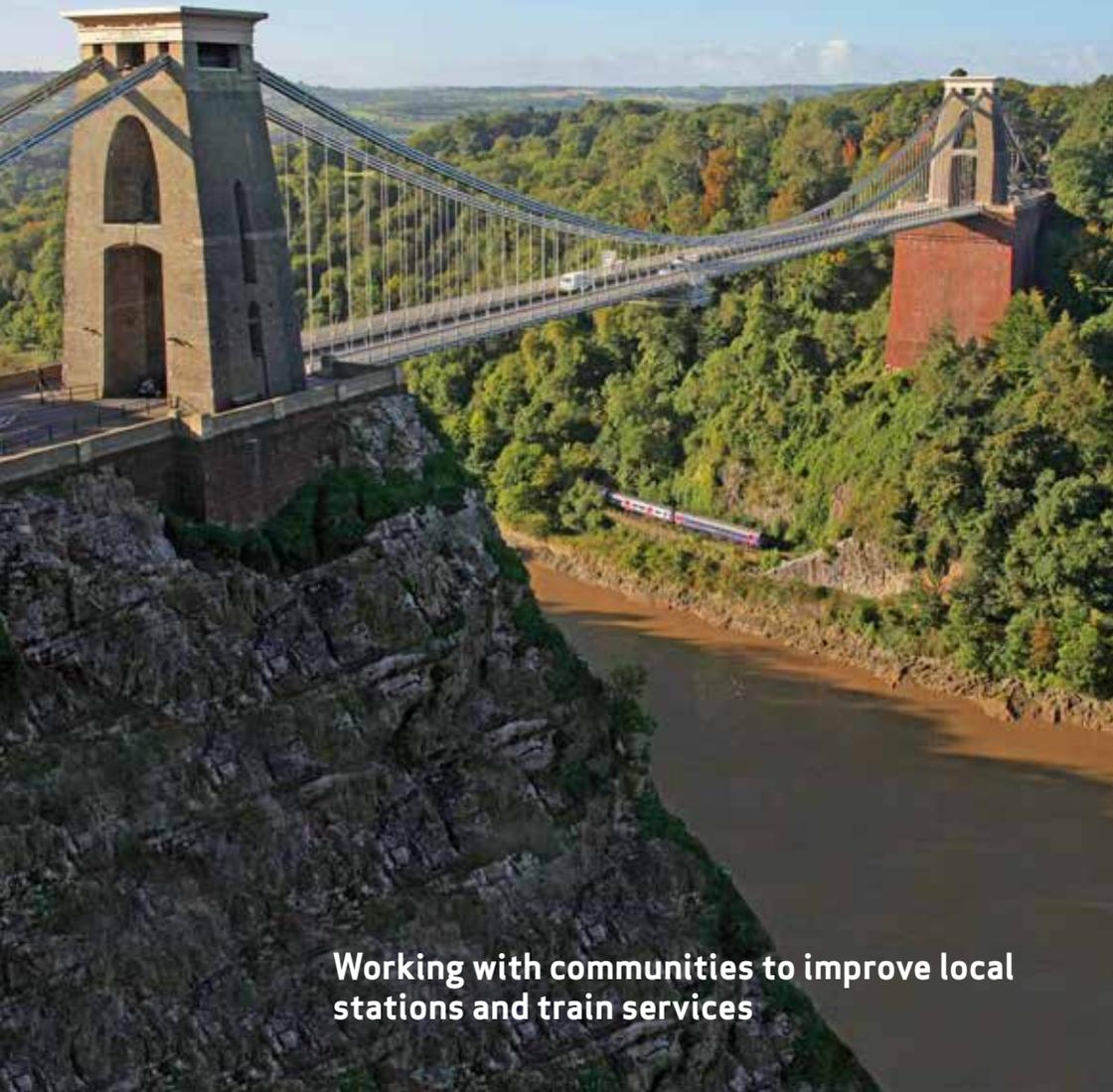


Sevenside Community Rail
Partnership  c.i.c

Progress Report

Published January 2013



**Working with communities to improve local
stations and train services**



Severnside Community Rail Partnership c.i.c

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The national award winning

Severnside Community Rail Partnership

Works with local communities, schools, the rail industry and local authorities to deliver

- cost-effective community based improvements at local stations
- more friendly, welcoming and safer stations
- reduced station crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour
- better passenger information at local stations and about local train services.

Has helped achieve the remarkable 100% increase in passenger numbers on the Severn Beach line over the last five years.

Better stations, locally supported, help encourage more passengers to use local rail services, which means less cars on the road and less pollution.

cover photograph

A special train, operated by First Great Western as part of the Community Rail Festival held in Bristol in September 2012 travels under Brunel's Suspension Bridge en route to Portbury.

Introduction to the Partnership

Community Rail Partnerships are a means by which stakeholders play an active role in the development of their local rail service. They bring together train operators, local authorities, employers, local organisations and community groups.

The Severnside Community Rail Partnership - a Community Interest Company - was formed in 2004. Its main aim is to identify and implement measures to encourage the use of local trains on routes radiating from Bristol; to ensure that access to local stations is easy and that stations provide a safe and welcoming environment. The emphasis is on working with partners and local communities to deliver quick wins and small-scale initiatives that make local rail services more attractive and bring passenger benefits.

The Partnership covers the network of routes radiating from Bristol, bounded by Gloucester, Bath/Freshford, Weston-super-Mare, Taunton, and the Severn Estuary; this includes the branch line to Severn Beach.

The Partnership's principal sponsors are Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset, Somerset, and South Gloucestershire Councils, Business West, First Great Western, and the West of England Partnership, who together form the Management Board for the Partnership. We have also welcomed support from CrossCountry Trains, Network Rail and the British Transport Police. The Principal Sponsors also have the option of being nominated as Directors of the Partnership, who are legally responsible for the conduct of the Partnership, in accordance with the Companies Acts. The Principal Sponsors fund the running costs, including the post of part-time Partnership Officer, our one employee. Projects are funded largely through the Partnership's funds, supplemented by specific grants, and assisted by local and community voluntary work.

Our achievements in 2012

As in previous years, much effort has gone into working with communities to improve local unstaffed stations to provide a safer and friendlier waiting environment. Most of the local stations in our area have now benefited from improvement schemes. We have been greatly supported in this work

by the Probation Service – much of the heavier work has been done by offenders as part of the Community Payback scheme. This is then followed up by encouraging local schools to look after station gardens and to brighten up the stations with artwork displays – under the banner of the Severnside Schools Community Stations Programme. Some local stations are now being formally “adopted” by local schools. Experience has shown that involving the local community, and particularly local schools, encourages more pride and less vandalism at stations: and better stations attract new passengers to the trains. We are grateful to Bristol Clean and Green, North Somerset's Community Safety and Drug Action Team, all the local authorities, First Great Western and Network Rail - for their support, funding and encouragement for the station improvement programme. Thanks also go to the British Transport Police who have provided additional support through their Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Contributing our expertise

In addition to station improvements, the Partnership has over the last year been heavily involved with Great Western re-franchising, which we hope will facilitate the West of England's proposals for a Greater Bristol Metro and other rail improvements. The Partnership looks forward to participating further in this work in 2013. Other work has included the proposal to open a new rail platform at the Portway bus Park and Ride, where we have a lead role in steering the project, and the development and implementation of improved access for Nailsea and Backwell station. We have contributed to safety forums arranged by both Network Rail and the British Transport Police. The Partnership has considered, and responded to, consultations from the Department for Transport on rail decentralisation, on fares and on the Great Western Franchise replacement; and from Network Rail on their proposed Alternative Solutions Route Utilisation Strategy.

Around the Stations – a snapshot of our work

Stapleton Road – Community Garden Centre

Eastside Roots is a Community Garden Centre occupying Network Rail land between two former platforms at Stapleton Road station. It is a not-for-profit, volunteer led co-operative focused on promoting gardening, skills sharing and providing space for community activities.

At the beginning of the year, the future of the Centre was uncertain as Network Rail needed temporary possession of part of the site to allow work to commence on a new footbridge for the station. In the longer term the entire site will have to be handed back to Network Rail to enable four-tracking of Filton Bank as part of electrification of the line between Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway.

Following consultation, all parties agreed that everything possible must be done to allow the Centre, which has been fundamental in the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour at the station, to continue in some form. Severnside Community Rail Partnership helped in a number of ways. To assist with a temporary scaling down of the project, a grant was secured from the Association of Community Rail Partnerships to fund the purchase of equipment required to move

stock. We then arranged for offenders working under Community Payback to assist with moving larger items into the newly designated area.

The Partnership continues to support the project by sponsoring small teams of offenders working under Community Payback to help with tasks at the site on a regular basis. The centre hosts a variety of community activities including parent and toddler groups, a Forest Schools project and small scale seasonal festivals. The centre opens to the public each Friday for garden advice and the collection of stock. New volunteers are welcomed.



Bridgwater – engaging with schools

Bridgwater station is a restored listed building. Pupils from Bridgwater Community College regularly provide artwork for display in the booking office, thus furthering the link between school and station established when the pupils helped produce the brilliant new artwork on the platform.



Parson Street – engaging with schools

Engaging schools in enhancing their local station environment remains an important part of the Partnership's work. Parson Street Primary School has adopted their local station, and with some help from Paddington Bear, the School's Eco Club busily sowed flower seeds for the planters on the station.

Sevenside Community Rail Partnership rewarded the pupils with a trip by train to Bristol Zoo. During the visit pupils received a talk from the Zoo's Sustainability Officer which highlighted how their transport choices will make a real difference to the future of the world they live in.



Oldfield Park and Keynsham – station gardens

Green fingered volunteers throughout the region continue to brighten up local stations by landscaping and planting the station gardens. There is none more imaginative than Oldfield Park station, where the garden is tended by the On Board group.

In 2012 the garden regained its outstanding status in the Royal Horticultural Society's Its Your Neighbourhood Awards, and was also Highly Commended by the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP). The work of Cllr June Player, the dynamic leader of On Board, was recognised at the ACoRP awards where she received the national award for Outstanding Volunteer Contribution.

Nearby Keynsham station will benefit from a new ramp to be installed in 2013 under the Department for Transport's Access for All programme. Completion of the works will present opportunities for volunteers to become involved with horticultural activity at the station.



Weston Milton – Community Payback landscaping; school artwork and gardening

Many successful station enhancement projects have started off with the teams from Avon and Somerset Probation landscaping and renovating overgrown and derelict areas of the station in preparation for local schools to do gardening activity.

Pupils from two North Somerset schools were given an opportunity to learn about this when representatives from Avon and Somerset Probation Trust and Severnside Community Rail Partnership visited Milton Park Primary School and Worle Community College. They gave a talk on the success of the three-way Partnership working and the improvements which have been made to local stations. An art competition was launched with pupils being asked to produce a picture depicting offenders working under Community Payback at their local station.



The winning artists were rewarded with First Class tickets from First Great Western, and their entries are displayed at Weston Milton station.

Filton Abbey Wood – liaison with employers

The Partnership has visited a number of local employers to highlight their accessibility to rail travel, and we respond to feedback we receive from employers and their employees. For example, a large number of employees commute on a part-time basis, yet are discouraged from travelling by train as they do not benefit from the purchase of a season ticket.

The Partnership has proposed a trial with part-time season tickets for commuters travelling to the MOD site at Filton Abbey Wood; we hope to have further discussions with MOD and FGW, once data on commuter travel patterns is available.



Better local train services

During the year, additional carriages were provided on the busiest peak trains, and this has considerably reduced overcrowding. A particularly noteworthy addition was the use of a 3-coach train on some morning peak services on the Severn Beach line – but this additional capacity has now already largely been filled. With the continuing growth in passengers in 2012 on local trains, overcrowding is not going to be kept at bay for long, and further efforts must be made to find more rolling stock. The region cannot wait several years for diesel trains cascaded by the electrification of Thames Valley services to be made available for use in the West of England.

However crowded trains are not just a feature of weekday commuter periods. A sudden increase in passenger numbers, for instance families travelling to Weston-super-Mare on a sunny day, to Bath on a Saturday for sport or shopping, or even extra mid-week shoppers because of school closures on in-service teacher training days, can put a real strain on the local services. Passengers are left behind and those on overcrowded trains are likely to be put off travelling by train in future. So we think it is important that the recently provided extra carriages are also used now to supplement capacity on appropriate weekday off-peak and weekend services.



Attracting more passengers to use local trains

One of the aims of the Partnership is to attract more passengers to use those trains where there is space. During 2012 we have

- continued to develop the dedicated Severn Beach line web-site – severnbeachline.org. As well as details of times, fares and general information, this gives direct access to First Great Western's live train running system. There are over 13,000 visits to the site each month
- continued to work with employers on the north Bristol fringe to encourage rail commuting via Bristol Parkway and Filton Abbey Wood
- encouraged scholars to use the train, where there is capacity, by promoting, and issuing on behalf of First Great Western, scholar season tickets for the Severn Beach line, and to schools and colleges throughout our area
- worked with the Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways on a summer weekday count of passengers using the Severn Beach line; and on other promotional activities.

We are working with the Heart of Wessex Rail Partnership (which covers the Bristol - Weymouth line) to jointly promote the Heart of Wessex Day Ranger ticket, which now includes the Severn Beach line.

A Healthy Walking group waits for their train at Shirehampton

Severn Beach line

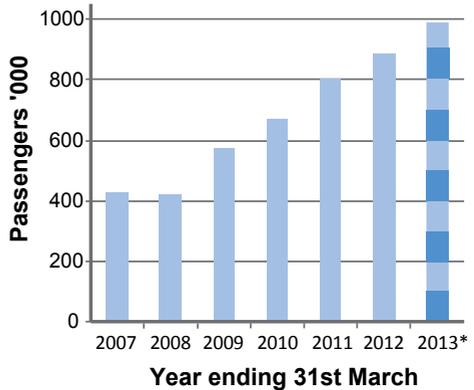
The Severn Beach Line has been formally designated by the Department for Transport as a Community Rail Route. This gives the Partnership an enhanced role and real involvement in the development of the line, and helps encourage innovation. The number of passengers using the line has increased by over 100% during the last 5 years. The Partnership continues to facilitate small scale improvements. The route is unique in having a zonal fare structure, but revenue collection on busy trains, with passengers travelling short distances continues to be a problem. So we sponsored the trial of basic ticket machines - developed from car park machines - at three stations; the most successful location being Clifton Down, but there were some reliability problems, and we hope that more robust machines will be installed in 2013.

CCTV coverage of most Severn Beach line stations (plus Parson Street), funded by Bristol City Council and linked to their control centre, was introduced in summer 2012 and this has been welcomed by passengers.

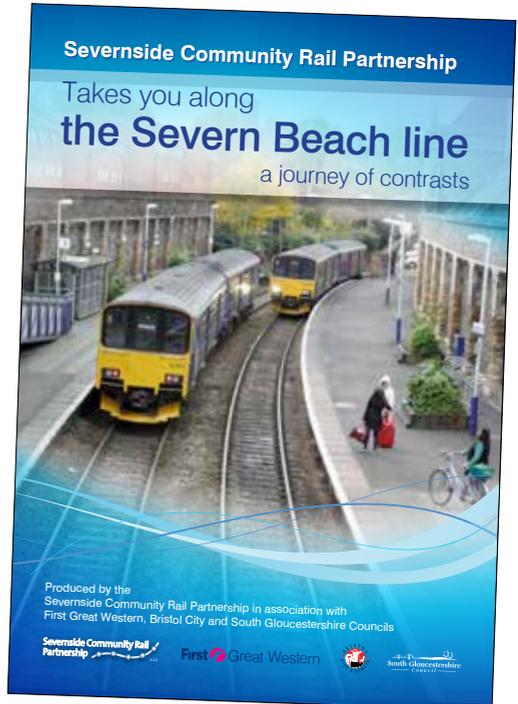
During 2012 we have undertaken research into the views of passengers using the line and their priorities for further improvements; more research will be undertaken in 2013.

The Partnership is increasingly being asked to show visitors around the Severn Beach line, so we have produced a leaflet about the line and illustrating the work we have done on improving the stations.

Severn Beach Line Passengers



Source: FGW ticket sales * Projected figure for 2013



Passenger Statistics

Passengers using local stations on weekdays

Station	2007	2011	2012
Yate	694	974	1231
Patchway	139	295	361
Filton Abbey Wood	1958	3461	n.a.
Bedminster	156	359	352
Parson Street	108	283	353
Nailsea and Backwell	1315	1565	1682
Yatton	1192	1447	1425
Worle	841	1375	1368
Weston Milton	261	318	316
Weston-s-Mare	2279	2303	2415
Keynsham	839	1204	1198
Oldfield Park	841	1247	1208
Freshford	89	118	164
Highbridge	408	505	511
Bridgwater	474	717	720
Severn Beach	135	201	165
St Andrews Road	30	29	51
Avonmouth	218	348	481
Shirehampton	86	230	313
Sea Mills	121	277	314
Clifton Down	500	1152	1321
Redland	264	561	751
Montpelier	253	813	958
Stapleton Road sb	326	753	776
Lawrence Hill sb	263	393	530
Temple Meads sb	649	1593	1853
Severn Beach line trains total	2845	6350	7513
Stapleton Road nsb	91	463	373
Lawrence Hill nsb	49	326	470
Stations - Temple Meads - Severn Beach - all trains	2985	7139	8356

Passengers using local and regional trains in the West of England 2012

Route	2012
Cardiff - Bristol - Westbury - Portsmouth/Weymouth	8,025,000
Bristol - Severn Beach	959,000
Bristol - Weston-super-Mare - Taunton - Exeter	2,154,000
Bristol - Gloucester - Great Malvern	1,241,000
Total West of England local/regional journeys	12,379,000

Notes: The above figures are from First Great Western ticket sales allocated Lennon data and include only FGW journeys. Some journeys made for example on rover tickets or employee passes, or on substitute buses, may not have been recorded. So the figures may underscore the total journeys, but this is unlikely to be significant.

Notes: The station figures are from the November weekday count which is undertaken annually by the local authorities. The figures are a one-day snapshot of the total number of passengers both boarding and alighting at the station on the day of the count. The 2012 figures are provisional. (Somerset stations at Highbridge and Bridgwater are November daytime only.)

nsb = Passengers on trains other than the Severn Beach line
sb = Severn Beach line passengers

n.a. = Filton Abbey Wood count abandoned because of poor weather, and the weather may have affected numbers elsewhere

Accounts and financial statement

Severnside Community Rail Partnership

Year ended 31 March 2012 Balance Sheet		
	£ 2011-12	£ 2010-11
Fixed Assets	-	-
Current Assets		
Debtors	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand	32,772	21,234
	<u>32,772</u>	<u>21,234</u>
Creditors : Amounts falling due within one year		
	(797)	(664)
Net Assets	31,975	20,570
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	<u>31,975</u>	<u>20,570</u>
Represented by:		
Restricted funds	9,202	11,029
Unrestricted funds	22,773	9,541
	<u>31,975</u>	<u>20,570</u>

The Directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the accounts for the year by virtue of section 477, and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 477 of the Act. The Directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the company keeps proper accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 396, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

Year ended 31 March 2012 Profit and Loss Account		
	£ 2011-12	£ 2010-11
Income	114,588	136,692
Administrative Expenses	(103,183)	(130,253)
Operating Profit/Loss	11,405	6,439
Interest Receivable	-	1
Profit/(Loss) on Ordinary Activities before taxation	11,405	6,440
Corporation Tax	-	-
Retained profit brought forward	<u>20,570</u>	<u>14,130</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>31,975</u>	<u>20,570</u>

The Company has no recognised gains or losses other than the profit/loss for the above financial period.

None of the Company's activities were acquired or discontinued during the above financial period.

Severnside Community Rail Partnership

Year ended 31 March 2012 Income and expenditure information

	£ 2011 -12 Restricted	£ 2011 -12 Unrestricted	£ 2011 -12 Total	£ 2010 -11 Total
Income				
Contributions from partners	-	47,500	47,500	47,500
Bank Interest	-	-	-	1
Miscellaneous	-	200	200	1,360
Station Improvement Projects	4,913	-	-	37,848
Leaflets	-	-	-	-
Scholar tickets project	61,975	-	-	49,984
	66,888	47,700	114,588	136,693
Expenditure				
Travel & Subsistence	-	1,086	-	2,499
Salary costs	-	27,831	-	29,330
Miscellaneous	1,132	795	-	2,740
Depreciation	-	-	-	-
Telephone/IT	-	2,774	-	2,844
Postage/stationery	-	239	-	268
Meetings/Conferences/Seminars	-	313	-	337
Accommodation	-	-	-	5,000
Printing/Publicity	-	-	-	-
Accountancy/Audit/Insurance	-	1,430	-	1,119
Station improvement projects	13,982	-	-	34,893
Leaflets	-	-	-	-
Scholar tickets project	53,601	-	-	51,223
	68,715	34,468	103,183	130,253
Surplus/deficit for the year	(1,827)	13,232	11,405	6,440
Transfer between funds	-	-	-	-
Balance brought forward	11,029	9,541	20,570	14,130
Balance at 31/3/11	<u>9,202</u>	<u>22,773</u>	<u>31,975</u>	<u>20,570</u>

Contributions in kind: we are grateful for travel passes provided by First Great Western and CrossCountry Trains, which are not included above

Local authorities gain considerable benefits from their funding towards the running costs of the Partnership.

Active help in delivering Local Transport Plans and other Targets, including the Localism Agenda

Local authority targets to attract increased use of local rail services will not be achieved without considerable work; the Partnership's active role in this is

- working with train operators to achieve more frequent off-peak local train services – already largely delivered
- working with train operators to resolve problems of lack of peak capacity - some additional carriages now in service
- delivering small scale improvements to make local stations more welcoming, safer and environmentally friendly - on-going programme
- making rail travel easier for local passengers
 - simplified timetable posters - displayed at unstaffed stations
 - better, and better targeted, local publicity through leaflets and special promotions
 - reducing barriers to travel through
 - improving station safety and security - CCTV already installed at most stations, with others being covered during 2013
 - better station access - the Partnership is able to sponsor and attract match funding for small schemes
 - promoting integration - eg combined bus-rail tickets.

The Partnership's work also helps local authorities deliver a sustainable transport system, as well as achieving the wider objectives set out in Local Area Agreements, assisting with local regeneration schemes and promoting economic growth. Much of our work is in socially deprived areas which helps meet local authority social inclusivity targets. We have developed a range of measures to encourage localism, including local volunteering.

Increasingly the Partnership is providing a facilitation role with the industry and stakeholders in the delivery of small rail improvement schemes.

Augmenting Councils' influence on the rail industry

The Partnership provides an opportunity for local authorities to have regular and easy access to senior rail management; and for local authorities to come together with other Partnership members and the train operators to make representations, for instance to the Department for Transport. The Partnership "club membership" provides a mechanism for consultation, input and influence on rail issues varying from significant policy development to more practical issues such as local timetables, which would not otherwise be so readily available.

Information for local authority members and transport officers

The Partnership provides a source of independent expertise and briefing for local authorities on rail issues, such as timetable changes, rolling stock, performance and infrastructure development issues. The briefings help local authority members and officers, and reduce the need for each local authority separately to devote time and effort to researching rail issues.

Support for the local economy by encouraging rail tourism

The Partnership works closely with tourism agencies, and produces leaflets promoting days out by train in the West of England.

Access to funding, which is not available to local authorities

As a Community Interest Company, the Partnership is able to attract grants and match funding not available to public sector bodies. This has already been used to help deliver local station improvements.

A mechanism for involving local communities constructively in supporting public transport

The Partnership provides a mechanism for involving local communities constructively in supporting public transport – for example not only do art displays and gardens help to make the stations more friendly places, but local "ownership" helps reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour.