



# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

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Annual Report:  
April 2022 - March 2023



# Message from the Chair

Welcome to the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership's Annual Report for 2022/23.

This report highlights the Partnership's achievements, how we have encouraged people to return to the railway and projects that we have supported at stations and in local communities.



This year has seen tremendous success, notable highlights include the return of commuter services to Nottingham, with the promise of a full service to follow and a successful evening at the Community Rail Awards.

It is very satisfying to see reward for all those who championed the return of trains to Nottingham. This is a significant achievement, and I am grateful to EMR for delivering the re-instatement of these services, in what continue to be challenging times for the industry.

I was proud to represent the Partnership at the Community Rail Awards in Manchester and receive the Winners' trophy, jointly with Engineered Learning and EMR in the 'Involving Children and Young People' category. We have also seen many other projects and activities come to fruition, with a number of station projects completed and expansion of our marketing, information and communication work.

In January 2023, we welcomed Megan Carroll, our Marketing Co-ordinator into the team, who has made great progress developing our social media and planning marketing for the year ahead. I am also grateful to the support of Rob Fryer who stepped in to cover as Partnership Officer role for several months to help deliver projects, support our station groups and to assist Alastair upon his return to work, following illness.

Our volunteers have continued to show great dedication at their stations, and the support from the rail industry teams on specific projects was once again very welcomed.

I would like to thank our funding partners for their continued support of the Partnership and all the stakeholders who have contributed to making the Partnership a success. I hope you enjoy reading about all the great work and we look forward to another great year in 2023/24.

**Councillor Trevor Ainsworth**





# News from the Line

## Trains Return to Nottingham

Weekday commuter trains returned to Nottingham from Derwent Valley Line stations in December 2022, with three morning and three evening services in each direction, which provided significantly improved journey times for commuters, students and other passengers.

EMR also confirmed the re-instatement of a full Nottingham to Matlock train service from 22 May 2023 - hourly on weekdays and Saturdays.

The re-instatement of these services followed a wide-ranging campaign to highlight the importance of direct services to Nottingham, after their withdrawal in June 2021. This included an interview with Councillor Barry Lewis, Leader of Derbyshire County Council on the BBC's Politics East Midlands programme, a petition signed by over 10,000 people and two public meetings hosted by Belper Town Council.

Local Members of Parliament including Mid Derbyshire MP Pauline Latham, Derbyshire Dales MP Sarah Dines and Browtove MP Darren Henry, all showed their support for the re-instatement, having received correspondence from local passengers as well as from the Rail Partnership.

Regular meetings also took place with EMR and Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership, Friends of the Derwent Valley Line and Derbyshire County Council.

Thank you to everyone who helped to raise the importance of the Derwent Valley Line service between Nottingham and Matlock by writing to their MP, attending public meetings and signing the petition to show support.

Councillor Trevor Ainsworth, Chair of the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership said: "The withdrawal last year of the through trains to Nottingham had a major impact on many local people's lives, especially those travelling to work and young people to education. So I am very pleased that East Midlands Railway have been able to re-instate these key weekday train services between Matlock and Nottingham. This is a significant step in our aim to see the full re-instatement of an hourly Matlock to Nottingham service all day throughout the week, to fully benefit our communities and support tourism in the Derwent Valley".

The Derwent Valley Line  
Community Rail Partnership

### GOOD NEWS!

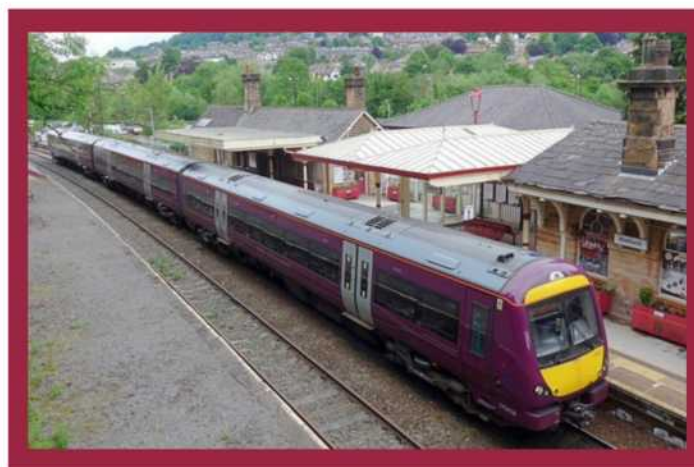
WEEKDAY COMMUTER TRAINS TO NOTTINGHAM FROM 12 DECEMBER

3 WEEKDAY MORNING & 3 WEEKDAY EVENING TRAINS BETWEEN MATLOCK & NOTTINGHAM

Matlock to Nottingham				Nottingham to Matlock			
Matlock dep.	0617	0712	0813	Nottingham dep.	1554	1654	1754
Nottingham arr.	0722	0815	0922	Matlock arr.	1706	1806	1856

MATLOCK - DERBY - NOTTINGHAM

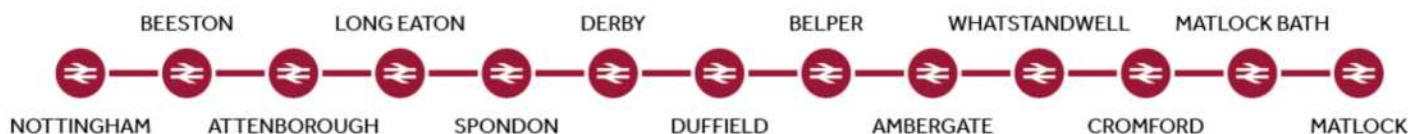
Promotional information posted on social media



Matlock station



Nottingham station





# News from the Line

## Passenger Journeys on the Derwent Valley Line

In 2022/23, passenger journeys continued to increase reaching approximately 75% of 2019/20 pre-COVID levels. Matlock Bath continues to have a strong recovery in leisure travel, but reduced commuter travel continues to impact overall passengers journeys, which is particularly reflected in the figures for Duffield and Belper.

Station	Passenger Journeys per Year			% Change in Journeys	
	2022/23	2019/20 (Pre-COVID)	2021/22	2019/20 to 2022/23	2021/22 to 2022/23
Ambergate	33,137	43,188	27,862	-23.3%	18.9%
Belper	169,508	244,717	145,478	-30.7%	14.1%
Cromford	35,333	46,443	29,496	-23.9%	19.8%
Duffield*	47,551	79,589	39,969	-40.3%	19.0%
Matlock	172,788	232,046	147,860	-25.5%	16.9%
Matlock Bath	67,540	70,801	60,434	-4.6%	11.8%
Whatstandwell	24,929	28,505	21,274	-12.5%	17.2%
<b>Total at all stations</b>	<b>550,786</b>	<b>745,289</b>	<b>472,374</b>	<b>-26.1%</b>	<b>16.6%</b>

Passenger figures are likely to have been suppressed in 2022/23 compared to 2019/20 as the Derwent Valley Line service has for most of the year only being operating between Derby and Matlock rather than Nottingham and Matlock. During 2022/23 there were 37 days of industrial action with no train service or a reduced service only operating between 0800 and 1700 approximately.

N.B. Pre-COVID baseline of 2019/20 includes figures from March 2019 (from 2018/19), not March 2020 when COVID lockdown started. The passenger journeys for 2020/21 totalled 147,955.

\*Total includes through tickets to Wirksworth from Duffield.

## Derby named home of Great British Railways

Following a successful campaign and the clear winner in the public vote, Derby was confirmed the new home of Great British Railways. This will mean that Derby will play an even more pivotal role in the future development of the railways, with the city already being the centre of one of Europe's largest clusters of manufacturers to the rail industry.

Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership was proud to support Derby's bid along with numerous businesses, education providers and local councils from across the East Midlands.



Derwent Valley Line Backing Derby's Bid



# Success at Community Rail Awards

The 2022 Community Rail Awards, hosted by Community Rail Network were held on 6 October at Manchester Central Convention Complex. Cllr Ainsworth represented the Partnership at the presentation event, at which the CRP, station groups and partner organisations enjoyed a successful evening.



The Duffield Arch

## Winners - Involving Children & Young People

'Turning around vulnerable young lives through engineering', won the top prize in the Involving Children and Young People category.

The project run by Engineered Learning, helped a group of vulnerable young people learn engineering skills and created the Duffield Arch, which was installed at the entrance to Duffield station.

Through the project, which was developed in conjunction with Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership and East Midlands Railway, the young people also took part in team building exercises, a rail safety talk, a tour of Derby station and a personal development and careers advice session – giving the students an insight into potential future industry opportunities. At least three of the young people who took part in the project progressed onto an engineering apprenticeship.

Jools Townsend, Chief Executive at the Community Rail Network, said: "Our congratulations go to the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership for its fantastic initiative bringing together a group of young people not in education, employment or training and giving them valuable work experience. Judges noted the benefits experienced by the young people involved, not only creating a well-engineered piece of artwork but gaining useful qualifications and which led to some of the group going back into education and pursuing engineering as a career choice."



Derwent Valley Line Marketing

## Third Place - Tourism & Leisure Award

Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership were awarded Third Place in the Tourism and Leisure award for 'Promoting Post COVID Return to Rail Travel, Walks and Attractions'.

The range of Derwent Valley Line branded marketing initiatives provided high quality and consistent messaging about the line - through our new website, branded platform signs, digital displays and complementary marketing literature, to encourage a return to rail travel.



Ambergate Station Adopters

## Shortlisted - Station Friends and Adopters at the Heart of Communities

Ambergate Station Adopters were shortlisted from over 250 entries in the Station Friends and Adopters at the Heart of Communities award. During the COVID pandemic, the station group helped bring the local community together and the group threw themselves in with gusto to make Ambergate station a special place - building a real feeling of community.



# Community Projects



Ambergate Primary School Artwork on display on the platform at Ambergate station



Wreaths at Steeple Grange Light Railway



Whistlestop Education Centre at Matlock Bath



Internal Refurbishment of the Whistlestop Education Centre at Matlock Bath

## Routes of Remembrance

A community art project involving a local school and a train wreath relay, formed part of this year's Route of Remembrance events at Derby and Nottingham stations, on Armistice Day.

Children from Ambergate Primary School produced a beautiful piece of artwork to commemorate Armistice Day as part of a project involving eight community groups, across the EMR Network.

Working with artist Mel Langton, the children produced a piece of commemorative art that is displayed on the platform at Ambergate and which also formed part of a larger eight-piece artwork, displayed by the war memorials at Derby and Nottingham stations.

The project was jointly funded by EMR, Community Rail Network and six Community Rail Partnerships across the East Midlands, including the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership.

This year's Routes of Remembrance wreath relay commenced at the memorial to the London and North Western Railway Company located at Steeple Grange Light Railway.

The wreaths were then transported by military Jeep to Wirksworth station to board an Ecclesbourne Valley Railway steam train to Duffield and then transferred to the Derwent Valley Line service to Derby. At Derby station, a memorial service was led by The Railway Chaplain.

## Whistlestop Education Centre Refurbished

Funding obtained by Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership from EMR's Community Development Fund, has helped transform the Whistlestop Education Centre at Matlock Bath station.

The space has been transformed from a dated children's classroom into a modern and well-equipped learning and event space for all ages to learn about nature.

The interiors have been redecorated with newly built integrated storage to keep children's crafts and equipment tidied away, and a 65 inch television that can be used for presentations and teaching. A new kitchen area has been added to enable users to prepare refreshments.

The space is finished with a full wall photography mural of nearby Lea Woods, taken when the bluebells were in bloom. The outdoor space has also been enhanced with additional seating and a new mud kitchen for children.

The refurbished classroom is now more spacious and provides greater flexibility for groups of all ages to use the facility, which can easily be accessed by train - direct from the station platform.





## Community Stations

Blooming station gardens and platform tubs welcomed passengers thanks to the efforts of our station adopters, some of whom were assisted on station action days by teams from Department for Transport, East Midlands Railway and Network Rail. For the autumn planting, Martin Waste Management kindly donated peat free compost, made from green waste left at Derbyshire County Council recycling centres. This was deemed a success with winter plants and spring bulbs flourishing.

Cromford Parish Council received funding from EMR for new self-watering style planters for the station platform. These were installed and planted up in the spring by the station volunteers. Some of the Cromford adopters are pictured above on a well deserved tea break.

Cromford and Whatstandwell adopters planted over 40 new shrubs in their large bee friendly planters, whilst the Belper station gardeners planted nearly 100 shrubs throughout their extensive garden areas.

At Duffield a community action day was held in June, with volunteers from WyvernRail assisted by staff from Department of Transport and EMR. Well over a hundred shrubs were planted to re-stock the Mediterranean garden and the volunteers also stained the large decking and planting area (see photo above). The shrubs and plants for these projects were funded by EMR and the Rail Partnership.

Matlock Bath station also benefitted from the efforts of EMR and Network Rail staff who carried out fence painting and assisted local volunteers sprucing up the platform planters and garden area.

Ambergate adopters continued their impressive floral displays and sunflowers along the platform. They also utilised their terraced garden for displays to celebrate events throughout the year including the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Remembrance Day and Halloween.

The Matlock group continued to show their dedication by maintaining an attractive platform area of colourful planters, despite parts of the station being covered in scaffolding and safety fencing.

During the year, the adopters were supported by Alastair and Rob from the Community Rail Partnership and EMR staff Alexa Stott, Community Ambassador and Kev Knight, Station Service Technician.



New planters at Cromford station



Whatstandwell station adopters



Matlock Bath station action day





## Station Improvements

Stations along the Derwent Valley Line stations have benefitted from a number of improvements delivered by EMR. Many of these improvements follow our proposals submitted to EMR's Stations, Social and Commercial Development Plan (SSCDP). The Partnership provided a financial contribution towards a number of these projects.

### Finding Your Way from Ambergate

A new, more prominent station totem stands at the entrance to Ambergate. Local wayfinding has been added to assist passenger's onward journeys - highlighting local villages and places of interest.



New Ambergate totem with local signage

### CCTV Improves Station Safety

Our SSCDP requests for CCTV at stations led to installations at Matlock Bath and Belper. CCTV was installed at Matlock Bath inside the waiting room and to view along the platform. At Belper, new CCTV views both platforms and the Field Lane path and steps.



New CCTV at Matlock Bath

### A Brighter Belper Station

Following our requests, a new strip lighting unit has been placed along the overbridge to illuminate the footway linking the platforms at Belper. Additionally, lights have been installed on the information board on platform 2 (see photo above). These have vastly improved the brightness of this central area of the Derby bound platform and also make the station information boards easier to read.

### Life Saving Defibrillators Installed

As part of EMR's SSCDP projects, life saving defibrillators were installed at Duffield, Belper, Whatstandwell and Matlock Bath.

### New Platform Seating

New easier to maintain wooden seats were installed by EMR at Duffield, Belper, Ambergate, Whatstandwell and Cromford (see photo above).



Defibrillator at Whatstandwell



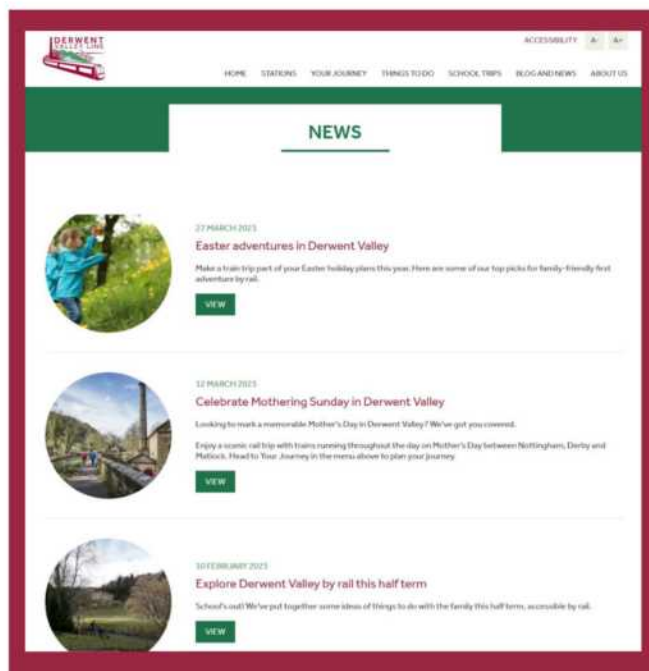
# Marketing and Communications

## Derwent Valley Line website

The Derwent Valley Line website was launched in summer 2021 and has gone from strength to strength. The website features local events, themed attractions and over 50 walks, as well as passenger information and an "About Us" section.

Since February 2023 we have updated the "News" feature to include regular blogs with themed pieces on the best Derwent Valley has to offer, from family activities, to walks and places to visit.

We have enhanced the public transport information with new bus timetable pages for each community along the line. These pages form part of the "Explore More By Bus" within the "Your Journey" section of the website. The Matlock and Belper pages are used as part of the public transport information on the Digital Information Totems in the towns.



Derwent Valley Line Website [www.derwentvalleyline.org.uk](http://www.derwentvalleyline.org.uk)

## Social media

In January 2023 we expanded our social media presence; we can now be found on Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter).

The channels have been popular from the start, especially Instagram which had just over 100 followers at the end of March 2023.

Social media is a great way to reach new audiences and networking with local businesses, residents and organisations such as the Community Rail Network and the East Midlands Railway community rail account.

Our social media and website can be easily accessed using our Linktree profile <https://linktr.ee/derwentvalleycrp>



Screen shot from Instagram account

## Marketing and Communications Coordinator

In January we welcomed Megan Carroll to the team as Marketing and Communications Coordinator. Megan is working with the Partnership one day per week on a freelance basis. This position has been part funded by East Midlands Railway. Megan is always keen to share photos and stories from Station Adopters and supporters of the Derwent Valley Line so please share your content by emailing [info@derwentvalleyline.org.uk](mailto:info@derwentvalleyline.org.uk)





# Marketing and Communications

## Derwent Valley Line Leaflet

A new leaflet for the Derwent Valley Line was produced and distributed by DerbyArts in Derby and venues throughout the Derwent Valley area.

It was designed using the Derwent Valley Line branding, to give a consistent identity to the line. The leaflet was well received, with over 15,000 copies distributed from May 2022.

Thank you to East Midlands Railway for funding this work.



Derwent Valley Line leaflet (left)

## Heights of Abraham Promotion

Throughout summer 2022 we worked with the Heights of Abraham at Matlock Bath to promote sustainable travel to this popular attraction. EMR and Community Rail Network funded the production of a video, a competition to win an iPhone, and flyers, which were circulated in the Derby area.

The video of Mrs Brassington's Day Out is on our YouTube channel and the "Your Journey" section of our website.

The project was delivered by Heights of Abraham. 1577 visitors travelled by train and used the promotional code to gain 25% discount on entry - an increase of 57% from the previous year. A number of visitors travelled from outside the Derby area e.g. from Leicester, showing that the campaign had a wider impact than expected. We estimate that 250 cars were not driven to Matlock Bath as a result of the offer - a fantastic result!



Heights of Abraham promotional flyer

## Website and social media performance





# Transport and Tourism Information Points

Digital public transport and tourism displays, providing real time bus and rail times have been installed on King Street in Belper and Station Approach in Matlock.

Since going live on 10 May 2022, over 18,000 people used one of the interactive screens - up to 31 March 2023. Tourism Maps and the 'Things to Do' section have been the most viewed.

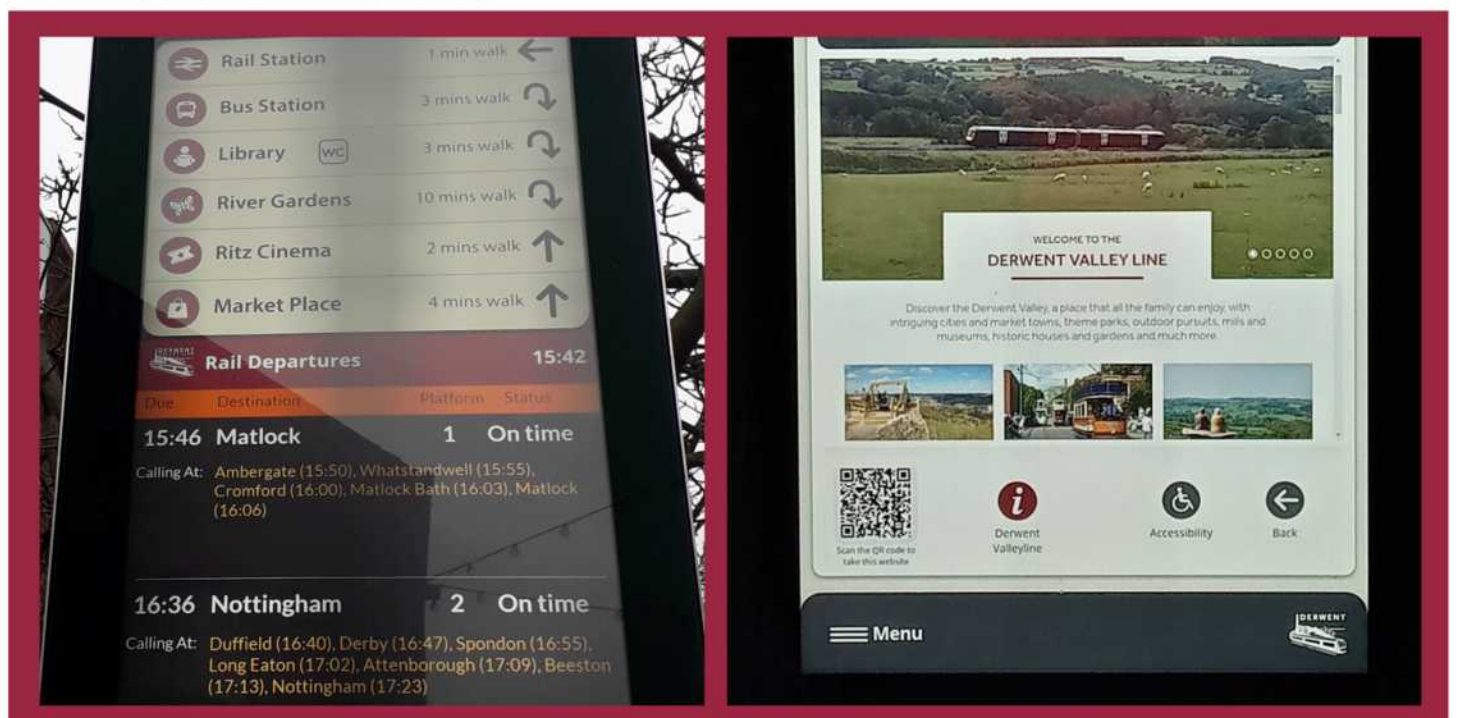


Funding representatives with the new digital display on King Street, Belper

The top screen provides real time bus and train information including destination and stop information as well as providing wayfinding information to local places of interest, making it easier for people to continue their onward journey on foot, by bus or by train. The top screen has also been utilised to promote local events, including Belper Food Fair as well as promoting public transport changes for example, commuter trains returning to Nottingham.

The lower display has interactive functionality through a touch screen providing local information, events and tourism with a drop down menu to access journey planning, things to do, maps and useful websites options, including links to the Derwent Valley Line website.

The real time public transport and interactive digital displays have been funded by Belper Town Council, Community Rail Network, CrossCountry Trains, Derbyshire County Council, Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership and East Midlands Railway.



Real time rail departures and local wayfinding

Interactive screen displaying the Derwent Valley Line website



# Finance Report

Partnership Core funding was provided by Amber Valley Borough Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Peak District National Park Authority, EMR and CrossCountry Trains.

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Salary Costs	31,789.37	Amber Valley Borough Council	2,000.00
Staff Travel	467.33	Derbyshire Dales District Council	2,000.00
Partnership Management Costs*	4,000.00	Peak District National Park Authority	2,000.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	515.68	Derbyshire County Council*	4,000.00
Projects and Marketing Activities	9,678.04	East Midlands Railway	27,290.00
Grants to Partner Organisations	10,300.00	CrossCountry Trains	10,932.54
Sub Total for 2022/23	56,750.42	Grants and prize money	26,550.00
To be carried forward to 2023/24	58,315.67	DVLCRP Reserves from 2021/22	40,293.55
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>115,066.09</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>115,066.09</b>

Funding Notes: \* In kind support from Derbyshire County Council, as the Partnership's host organisation. This includes Management, Finance, Audit, Procurement, Information Technology, HR, Payroll and Administrative Support.

## Grant Expenditure:

Two grants were provided to partner organisations to deliver projects totalling £10,300:

- £8,300 to Heights of Abraham for Derwent Valley Line promotion
- £2,000 to Matlock Civic Association for Matlock footbridge artwork.

## Grant Income and Prize Money:

The Partnership gained grant contributions totalling £26,550. This included:

- £15,500 from Community Rail Network for Turning Around Vulnerable Young Lives Through Engineering;
- £5,000 from Community Rail Network for Heights of Abraham for Derwent Valley Line promotion;
- £3,300 from EMR for Heights of Abraham for Derwent Valley Line promotion.
- £2,500 from EMR for Developing Derwent Valley Line Marketing and Communications
- £250 for First Place in the 'Involving Children and Young People' category at the Community Rail Awards 2022.

## Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership

Our core funders are Amber Valley Borough Council, CrossCountry Trains, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, East Midlands Railway and Peak District National Park Authority. The Partnership is managed by Derbyshire County Council.

The Partnership is accredited by the Department for Transport in recognition of our work to develop, promote and work with local communities along the Derwent Valley Line.

The Partnership would like to thank all our station volunteers, members of the Partnership and Chris Darrall for meticulously recording the minutes of the meetings.



## Contact Information

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