



Rail Development Officers Report October 2018

Production of annual business and marketing plans with updates quarterly on progress

The business plan was approved by the partnership during Q4, and was approved by WG with the DRAFT award letter being received in March 2018.

The marketing plans have been published via social media, with engagement increasing during each campaign phase. We have seen significant clicks made onto the current train operating company's website; however we are unable to receive the data from them as to how many people proceeded to book tickets as they have advised us this data is unavailable. The FB advertising for June, July and Aug had a total Reach of: 54,377 and total Engagement of: 9,067

For Twitter June, July and Aug there were 130,800 Impressions made and a total of new engagement of 763

During Q1 the partnership agreed to an extra spend for a targeted advert on SKY TV Focussing on English Border Local Authority areas of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin for initial campaign in order to exceed ad viewing frequency of four times per household and to allow campaign to run over four weeks. This included a 20 second English language TV ad to maximise number of times (frequency) ad will be seen in target homes. The campaign to ran from Friday 29 June to Wednesday 29th August 2018 inclusive (to coincide with run up to and including school summer holidays).

The results of this advert will be made available to the RDO in Q3.

During Q2 the RDO has met with Visit Wales and the communications company to look at Campaigns for the Visit Wales 2019 Year of Discovery theme. Meetings with Transport For Wales Rail Services and the other CROWS's have taken place during Q2 to discuss working together to re-brand the Scenic Rail Wales programme. This will also be discussed with TfW,

WG and ACoRP at a meeting in Q3 with more detailed meetings taking place when TfW officially run the Wales and Borders route in Q3

Participation in a minimum of one all-Wales community rail initiative targeted at tourism (i.e. promoting off-peak rail use), to be discussed with the Train Operating Company TOC, Welsh Government Transport Company/Rail Team and Visit Wales.

As a result of this year's Community Rail in the City collaboration between the Community Rail Officers of Wales and the Great Little Trains of Wales, we entered this project into the ACoRP Annual Awards, under the "Best Marketing Project" and we are more than happy to have been shortlisted. The awards ceremony is being held in Glasgow this year, and will take place in Q3. This project has given us food for thought on what we can do for 2019, with idea workshops already taking place.

Liaison/consultation/and involvement on the inclusion of Community Rail Partnership support as part of the next Wales & Borders franchise

This relationship has already started progressing well, with meetings taking place with the mobilisation Stake-Holder Liaison Manager, TfW, WG and the Community Rail Officers of Wales and Borders where the plans for the new franchise were discussed, with ideas being requested from TfW on Community Rail projects within our lines that we can start looking to work on in partnership as well as any unused station buildings that could be used as Community hubs.

We are very much looking forward to the start of the new franchise in Q3.

Community engagement, developing plans to expand the reach of the CRP to a wider range of groups including those socially disadvantaged and /or with protected characteristics

The RDO has applied to the Alzheimer's Society for recognition as a Dementia Friendly Community. This will give us the accolade of being the first dementia friendly railway line in Wales. Whilst Bow Street will potentially be the first unmanned station, we are expecting Newtown to be the first manned station on the line to receive the recognition. The RDO is also running Dementia Friends Information Sessions for a number of the station adopters on the Cambrian Coast, which will play an important part on those stations receiving their status in the coming year.

Consultation Responses. Respond to consultation requests in particular associated with Rail Franchises

Virgin Trains Conference & Workshops

On September 20th Virgin Trains held its first Community Rail Conference and Workshop in Crewe. With Shrewsbury station being served by VT services I represented the partnership to learn more about their CR activities and hopefully have an opportunity to feed back our Community Rail aspirations. In their introduction they asked for all of us to consider 1 idea that VT could implement easily.

It was a morning of presentations and the workshops were based on different departments within VT such as apprenticeships and working with offenders.

Unfortunately we were not able to feed back some suggestions so I have followed up with them by email as follows:

Virgin Trains currently offers half price single fares for sale on the internet only. Many people who can least afford to travel and have no access to the internet are being digitally excluded by this single method of purchase. Booking Offices where they rely on being sold the best fare are not able to access these cut price tickets.

We asked them to consider these sales being made through booking offices or through booking offices that are aligned to Community Rail Partnerships so we can allow those who need them most to benefit too.

4. Linking in with National Media Campaigns e.g.

- **National Rail Safety Week**
- **Community Rail in the City**

We were pleased to be able to announce that the Community Rail Officers of Wales and the Great Little Trains of Wales, working together, were delighted to accept an invitation from Network Rail to stage a week-long event starting Sunday May 13th in the atrium of the freshly revamped Birmingham New Street station to promote travel into Wales and its coasts by train.

With Scenic Wales by Rail banners the Community Rail Officers of Wales & the Borders promoted the through services, operated by Arriva Trains Wales, which run from Birmingham New Street into the heart of Mid Wales and on to Machynlleth where it splits; taking the southern side of the Dovey estuary to Aberystwyth or turning north towards Pwllheli, hugging the coast all the way.

As a result of this, we entered this project into the AcoRP Annual Awards, under the “Best Marketing Project” and we are more than happy to have been shortlisted. The awards ceremony is being held in Glasgow this year, and will take place in Q3.

The RDO has also met with Claire Hickman who is the new contact within Network Rail and has started looking at projects that we can work in partnership on along with the ODP for National Rail Safety Week in 2019.

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