



# Station adopters newsletter

Summer 2023





## Hello and welcome to the Summer Edition of the EMR station adopters newsletter

I wanted to start with a big Thank You on behalf of EMR for all the work you do at our stations. This week is National Volunteers Week and recognising the contribution and commitment you bring to the rail industry is extremely important to us.

The past few months has been particularly busy for EMR, with some significant events happening on our routes. The main one was the King's Coronation, which so many of you contributed to, making our stations look regal for the event and being part of 'The Big Help Out', a volunteering initiative encouraged by King Charles III. It was great to see some adopters holding recruitment events to support this.

In May our timetable change came into effect, delivering more services for our passengers across our routes, and supporting the changing travel patterns of our customers.

In this newsletter you will also find an interesting update from our Fleet Team (page 14).

Our Day in the Life of article (page 15) features two of our Infrastructure & Property Team members who look after the Stations Social & Commercial Development Plan (SSCDP) to deliver improvements to stations for our communities, now in the final stages of development.

Our Service Quality Regime (SQR) is an industry standard commitment to ensure that our stations are clean, tidy and welcoming for passengers. I wanted to acknowledge and thank you for the work you do as station adopters to support this. The regular litter picking, looking after the gardens and reporting faults makes a huge difference to our scores across the network.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your continued support and hard work and I look forward to getting out and about on the network to meet more of you soon.

**Will Rogers**  
**Managing Director**

## Barton Cleethorpes CRP Update

Following a reorganisation, we are now working in partnership with Humber & Wolds Rural Action (HWRA) who are delivering the employment service for our CRP Officer and administering our financial arrangements, leaving members free to develop new projects and deliver existing ones. On the back of this we have revisited our governance, project delivery mechanisms and how we can communicate more effectively with the communities around the rail corridor, enabling us to produce a new activity plan and events diary with lots of fresh ideas. Our greatest achievement for the first quarter of the year was achieving our long awaited Department for Transport (DfT) accreditation.

At our OGM in March we launched our new logo which has been developed with the

support of the EMR marketing team and Kaye/ Nancy, EMR Community Ambassadors, so a big thank you to them and all members who took part in the consultation. We can't wait to use it on the new station line boards, line guides and cycle & walking trails. Our intrepid Vice Chair Nicola and her friend Gillian will be out and about snapping some great photos to be included on all three.

To start our activities for 2023 we held our annual on train Easter Special which was very well received by the public. The Easter Bunny was present on the train with lots of helpers giving out over 80 Easter eggs to children of all ages; there were lots of photos on social media





*The Easter Bunny was present on the train with lots of helpers giving out over 80 Easter eggs to children of all ages*

As we move forward, we are looking to delivering our try before you buy green cycle scheme. The idea is that anybody who wants to improve their physical or mental health by cycling will be able to borrow a folding electric bike that they can take on the train to their desired station and cycle on from there. They can have the bike for two weeks free of charge. If they like it, they can then purchase a bike at a discounted rate and continue their journey to better health and contributing to reducing their carbon footprint.

We will also be developing three community parks in partnership with station adopters and Parish councils in New Holland, Goxhill and

Habrough. They will have a green area where wildflowers and sensory plants can thrive, encouraging pollinating insects to come and fill up on nature's goodness. They will also encourage children to interact and exercise whilst having fun. A rail safety message will also be part of the landscape with local children encouraged to create artwork that will become a feature of the parks.

**Gill Simpson**  
**Community Rail Partnership Officer**

## Poacher Line CRP Update

I would firstly like to introduce myself, I am Gin Fidin, your new Officer for the Poacher Line. I have now settled in after an exciting first three months in the role, taking over the baton from Jo Andrews to continue the promotion and showcasing our wonderful Poacher Line. I have met lots of enthusiastic individuals including fellow Officers, EMR and Network Rail management, and most importantly lots of the wonderful station adopters along the Poacher Line!

The Poacher Line has been picking up speed since I have stepped into my role, and we have a number of exciting projects along the line to inject some colour and feel good areas to escape to on the coming sunny days! We have started a project at Boston where the station adopters have built the most fantastic bug hotel and have developed an area on the platform that is going to be an eco-garden,

which is being generously funded by EMR and the Poacher Line. Alongside this will be a redevelopment of the waiting rooms, ticket office, well in reality the whole station!

'The Old Waiting Room' community room project at Sleaford station has seen some local community groups utilise the space for AGM meetings, community gatherings and small events. Hopefully there will be many more opportunities for the room to be offered to the community in the coming months.

Ongoing projects include clearing the surrounding areas on the road leading to Radcliffe station for landscaping. This will be made into a natural wildlife habitat with wild flowers and tree planting. We are also working on the creation of promotional material highlighting eight circular walks from Poacher Line stations. This will include booklets detailing each walk and information



*Station adopters have built the most fantastic bug hotel and have developed an area on the platform that is going to be an eco-garden.*

being installed at the participating stations. A Railways Ramble is planned for late June/early July from Ancaster to Sleaford via Rauceby. Further details and dates will be confirmed closer to the time.

I am always looking for new ideas, events and projects. All will be considered on their merits and feasibility; anything to improve the communities and customers' experience of the Poacher Line. Please contact me via the usual channels.

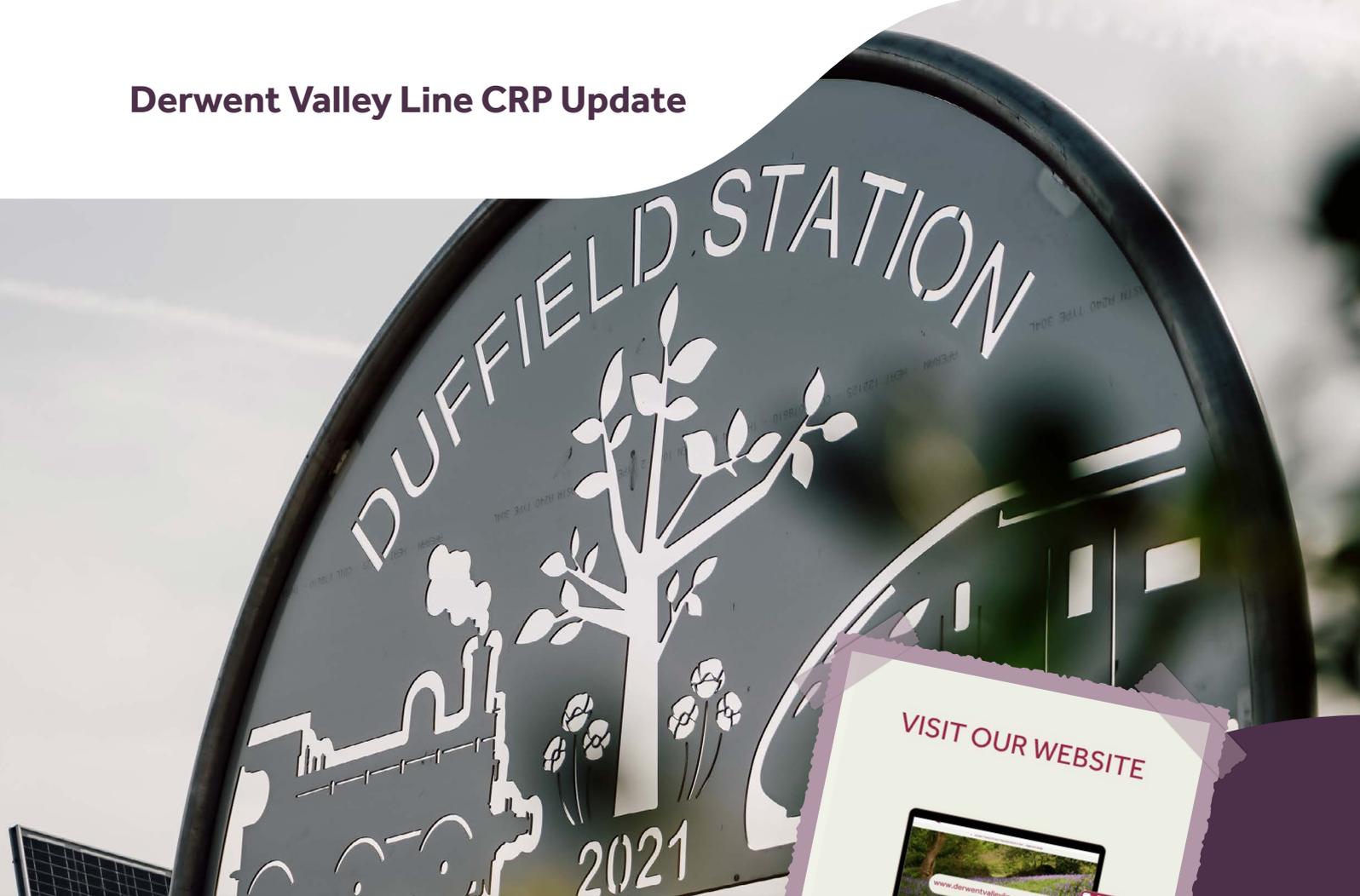
As we go into the summer after three bank holidays in May, the stations are looking in fine fettle ready to welcome our increased passenger loads now the sunny summer days are here. The stations along the line have been adorned with numerous flags and bunting to celebrate the King's Coronation, I hope you all enjoy them!

**Gin Fidlin**  
**Community Rail Partnership Officer**



*Stations along the line have been adorned with numerous flags and bunting to celebrate the King's Coronation*

# Derwent Valley Line CRP Update



This winter the planters at stations along the line have been looking great, bringing much-needed colour and cheer throughout the winter months. Ambergate, Duffield and Whatstandwell stations have benefited from new planters thanks to an EMR Community Fund grant and a generous donation of peat-free compost from local waste management contractor H W Martin for us to try. We're really pleased with the results and will continue to use it from now on. You can read more about our link up with HW Martin on our website: [News | Derwent Valley CRP \(derwentvalleyline.org.uk\)](https://www.derwentvalleyline.org.uk/news/derwent-valley-crp).

Our website and social media has gone from strength to strength, with the addition of Facebook and Instagram to our existing Twitter account and regular updates on our blog. We've seen a 130% increase in website use in the last quarter, compared to January-March 2022! Click here to follow us and find out more: [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) | [Linktree](#)

We're delighted to see upcoming timetable changes featuring the return of an hourly service to Nottingham from 22 May. Though the timetable change initially coincides with some engineering work in the first few weeks, we're looking forward to this greatly improved service from 19 June, which will especially benefit Spondon and Attenborough.

**Al Morley**  
Community Rail Partnership Officer



# North Staffs CRP Update

The wooded slopes of Peartree station, Derbyshire's Least Used Station, are perfect for wildlife. We brought together St Martins Academy sixth form students, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and the Peartree station adopters to create a range of new habitats for insects, birds and bats. The students used equipment and expertise from the Museum of Making in Derby to build the bird boxes. They then visited the station to install them on the trees, along with a donated bat box. Some of the students also made a huge bug hotel from pallets. Thank you EMR for funding this project. The station now has a grit box full of tools ready to be used on further working visits from St Martins. There's always a lot of brambles and ivy to be cut back!

This spring saw the completion of two important marketing projects for the CRP: a new website ([www.northstaffsrail.org.uk](http://www.northstaffsrail.org.uk)) and a short film promoting the delights of our

communities and nearby visitor attractions. You can check out the film on our YouTube channel. 'Explore More by Train' was kindly funded by CrossCountry and Community Rail Network.

The woodland adjacent to Longport station is regularly fly tipped so the CRP organised a Community Action Day on a snowy day in January. We are very grateful to our station volunteers, Dave and Dave, for helping out and to two further volunteers from the community, Matthew and Amarvir. We thank Middleport Matters for lending a hand in partnership with a huge and very well-equipped mega team from GrowthPoint, Stoke. GrowthPoint is a community based recreational, vocational and multi-craft based project for adults with mental health needs, organised by the City Council. I have since been to visit their extensive grounds and am planning another project with them. Over lunch time we even had a working visit from local MP, Jonathan Gullis and colleagues.



*Longport Station Community Action Day on a snowy day in January*

On Saturday 22 April we repeated our Rails to Trails guided walk from Blythe Bridge station attended by ten people. It covered local heroes, such as Sgt Ernest Egerton VC, and the village's connections with the nearby Potteries. Both Blythe Bridge and Alsager were seen as very attractive, pollution-free settlements for the wealthy pottery owners once the railway was built. We are grateful to Foxfield Railway for opening especially for us on the day, to the Olcote Sanctuary for bringing along their miniature ponies and to Blythe Bridge Library for showing us their wonderful community history display on the site of the once magnificent Blythe House.

Claire Sandys  
Community Rail Partnership Officer



*Visiting the Foxfield Railway*

*The students used equipment and expertise from the Museum of Making to build the bird boxes.*



## North Notts & Lincs CRP Update

In March, we took a group from the UK's first City of Sanctuary for asylum-seekers and refugees on a Try the Train trip from Sheffield to Lincoln to deliver rail confidence and explore the city. There were 50 people altogether and the feedback was excellent – they loved it! Our next Try the Train trip will be travelling from Market Rasen to Lincoln.

We are very close to having a new NNLCRP website which aims to provide a modern, user-friendly experience where content can be updated regularly.

A huge thank you to EMR, Network Rail and station adopters for helping us transform the garden area at Lincoln station. We are so pleased with the results from the action day!

Two artwork displays at Worksop station have recently been installed. Thank you to everyone who joined us for the reveal. The two pieces showcase 'Beautiful Bassetlaw' and aim to promote Worksop and surrounding stations as destinations by promoting local attractions in the area.

Thank you to the Market Rasen station adopters for organising the fantastic event in support of the Big Help Out.

Following the withdrawal of the Saturday train to Cleethorpes we have arranged with Stagecoach to run a double decker bus between Gainsborough Lea Road station and Cleethorpes on Summer Saturdays starting on 24 June for Cleethorpes Armed Forces Day.

We are also working with Stagecoach and local authorities to design bus and train timetables to be distributed to all homes in our area.

We are thrilled to be working with a local college that aims to help young people with Special Educational Needs to produce art for Shireoaks station. This project will showcase the area's beauty whilst brightening up the station for passengers and visitors. Alongside this we are looking forward to installing a herb garden at the entrance to the station, working alongside local allotment holders.

*Thank you to Market Rasen station adopters for organising a fantastic event in support of the Big Help Out.*



We are looking forward to starting phase 2 of our Romans to Railways project, working alongside artist Mel Langton and local businesses to produce a further six pieces to sit alongside those already at Lincoln station.

Finally, a huge thank you to the wonderful station adoption groups. We are excited to do more work with you and improve the NNLCRP line further. Thank you for all your hard work.

**Kate Myers**  
**Community Rail Partnership Officer**



*The two pieces showcase 'Beautiful Bassetlaw' and aim to promote Worksop and surrounding stations as destinations by promoting local attractions in the area.*

# Robin Hood Line CRP Update



We are delighted to announce that the RHL CRP is now fully accredited, a great achievement in just 18 months.

The CRP has seen several milestones achieved including the launch of the dedicated website [www.robinhoodline.com](http://www.robinhoodline.com). The website is being updated continuously with dedicated walking and cycling routes to be uploaded once finalised.

Several school trips have taken place with 4 classes of 30 children from Mansfield travelling by train to visit Creswell Crags and complete the Discovery Trail.

The land at Whitwell Station is now taking shape; it has been cleared and the development works are due to start imminently. This has been an excellent example of partnership working, pulling together multiple partners to help fund the project. The development will be an asset for the Robin Hood Line, providing an educational space for the schools along the route. It will also provide a welcoming space for the local community and patrons at the station.

A very exciting project is set to be delivered offering Alternative Provision for 12 secondary school students working in

partnership with Engineered Learning and Direct Education Business Partnership.

The students will have 20 days off site over 20 weeks at Engineered Learning. Here the students will co-design a sculpture with the volunteers at Just Good Friends for the Whitwell Land Development. The students will then physically make the sculpture, gaining valuable experience working in an engineering factory setting along with a qualification in fabrication.

The students will get exposure to colleges along the Robin Hood Line for further education opportunities in engineering and fabrication, along with apprenticeship opportunities with large employers, such as Harry Needle Railroad Company, who overhaul fleet for the rail industry.

Mansfield station is the focal point of another collaborative project, which has come about after the state of the underpass and platforms were identified as a barrier to people accessing the station and the nearby areas of the town. This venture hopes to change this, and as creatively as possible.

Teaming up under their practice 'Lick of Paint', artists Megan Russell (Peachzz) and Alastair Flindall (Kunstity) will be working with Year 5 pupils from Sutton Road Primary School to come up with a design, inspired by the local area.

The project is being funded by Community Rail Network, EMR, Cross Country Trains, Nottinghamshire County Council, Mansfield District Council and the RHL CRP. They are working in partnership with First Art, Network Rail, Sutton Park Road Junior School and Mansfield Town Football Club to deliver the project.

The partnership was keen that young people were involved to ensure the community shapes, takes ownership and safeguards the endurance of the artwork.

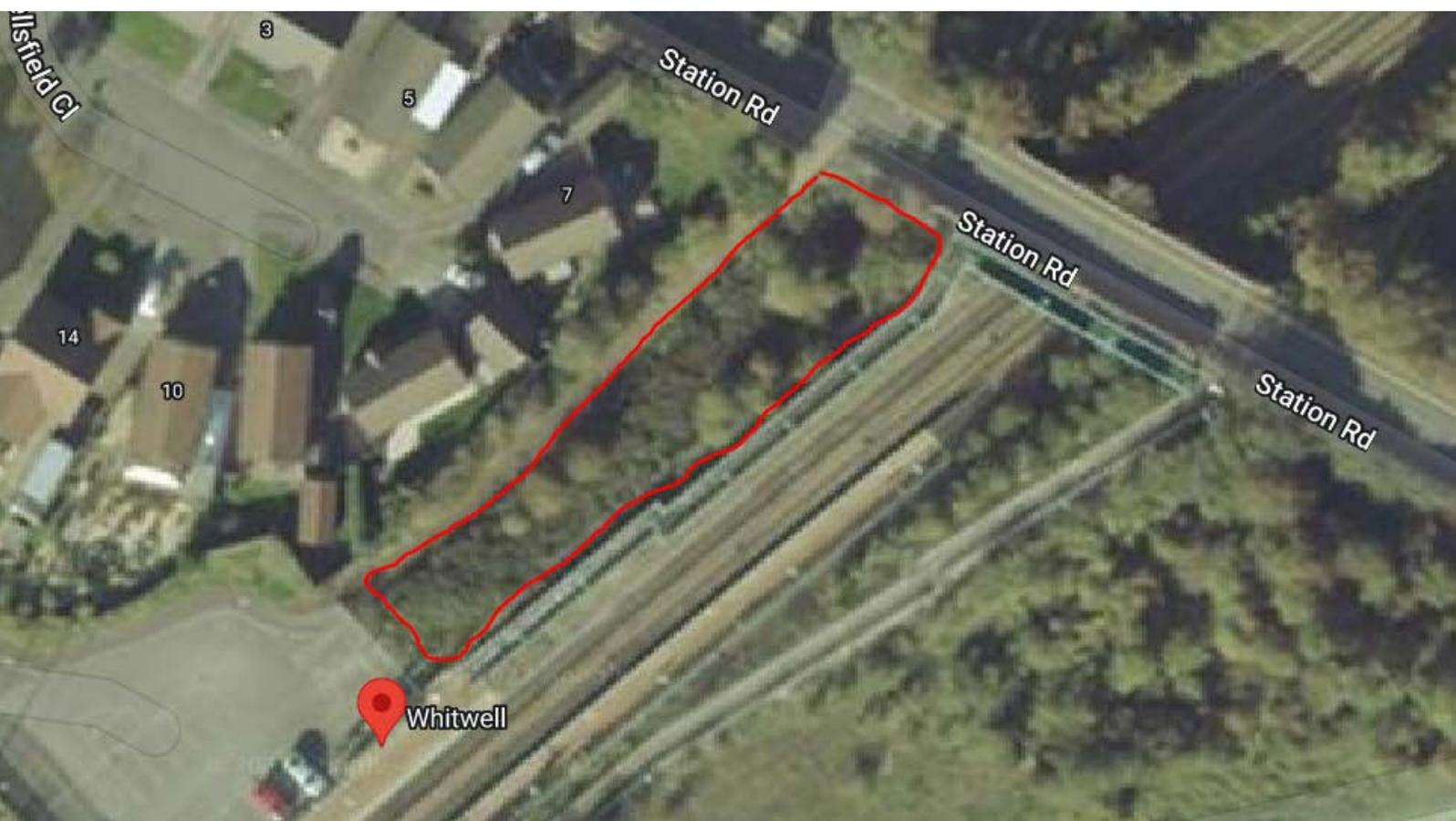
The Sutton Road pupils have been involved from the start, helping to select the artists from the shortlisted candidates.

At Bulwell station, together with Buzzing Roots ([www.buzzingroots.co.uk](http://www.buzzingroots.co.uk)) we are proposing a project called Blossoming Trains. Key to the Buzzing Roots and RHL approach is in how we involve the local community creatively in a process of change. Art creates a safe place for people to engage on their terms whilst socially acting for a cleaner, greener and nature friendlier place.

Last but not least is our successful Heritage Project led by Denis Hill. The project includes:

1. Heritage interpretation boards on the stations which are due to be installed soon.
2. Mobile exhibition with talks.
3. Several schools have been contacted to provide educational talks along with 2000 copies of a booklet telling the story of the history of the line.

**Arron Johnson and Justyna Mayer**  
Community Rail Partnership Officers



*The land at Whitwell has been cleared and the development works are due to start imminently.*

## Fleet Update

*We saw the completion of the Class 156 hand back, with the final three units leaving EMR on 21st May*



We are continuing to deliver the Class 170 cascade, having received three units from Transport for Wales, three from Govia Thameslink and further units from West Midlands Trains. We are expecting these cascades to continue as we move into the summer.

May saw the completion of the Class 156 hand back, with the final three units leaving EMR on 21 May. However, we have agreed with the Department for Transport (DfT) that we will retain our Class 158 units for up to an additional eight years, to support our regional services and supplement the Class 170 fleet. This is in part because EMR has retained the

Nottingham-Liverpool services that were originally planned to be transferred to another operator.

We are continuing to work with the DfT in relation to the scope and funding of the Class 158, Class 170 and Class 360 fleet refurbishments.

Work at our depots continues to drive performance and availability improvements – with schemes at Bedford and across Eastcroft taking place. Eastcroft is also trialling a new depot modelling software, where we have teamed up with the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre in Sheffield to try and digitally model our depot to improve performance.

## AURORA UPDATE

The Class 810 Aurora fleet manufacturing is still progressing steadily. Hitachi's Newton Aycliffe facility has now started manufacturing the twelfth unit, with routine testing continuing on the first and third units. The second unit is being used for specialist 'climatic chamber' testing to prove the new HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning) systems meet the computer modelled predictions and meet the required standards in a range of climate conditions.

'Type Testing' (proving that the units meet all technical standards requirements such as braking, acceleration and working with signalling) has been delayed by a few months and is now due to start in Summer 2023.

Some of this will take place at Network Rail's Rail Innovation & Development Centre at Melton Mowbray and you may also see some of the units out on the Midland Main Line.

The EMR Aurora team continues to monitor that the trains are built and tested to our expected standards – it is exciting to see the interiors being fitted. We are also preparing for the arrival of the fleet with activities such as reviewing station stop board positions and checking that wheelchair and catering trolley turning circles are not obstructed where the new ramp locations will be located.

The North Shed extension at Etches Park depot is now being fitted out with heating, lighting, rails, lifting jacks, cranes etc. ready for the arrival of the new fleet. Our fuelling and inspection roads are also receiving a full equipment upgrade which will enable the depot to increase the throughput of trains during the busy night shifts. Work has also commenced on fitting a section of OLE (overhead line equipment) to allow us to test the electrical systems on the new trains in a normally diesel-only depot.

*The EMR  
Aurora team continues to  
monitor that the trains are built  
and tested to our expected  
standards*



# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF



**KATE PARNELL**

**Infrastructure & Property  
Development Lead**

I lead the Infrastructure & Property (I&P) Development team which consists of myself, Ricky Shanker (Development Manager), Surita Mengri (Development Strategy Manager) and Adam Howard (Engineering Design Manager). Together we look to shape the vision for EMR stations and influence the programme of works to be delivered by the wider I&P team.

My team takes aspirations and ideas from various sources – the Annual Business Plan, Local Authorities, Community Rail, Railway Heritage Trust, Advance Ventures, Network Rail and across all areas of EMR. Sometimes the ideas are worked up, other times we start with just a funding pot or a farfetched idea. The size of the schemes can vary from a relatively small project like a local statue installation up to multi-million pound redevelopment schemes, which can take months of work and planning. When something new comes in it is our job to collate enough information to determine if the idea is feasible, whether it aligns with the wider business objectives and if there is appetite to progress the scheme. We will also consider any constraints or challenges that the project may face such as impacts on other works/future plans and what approvals may be required to progress. Once this initial development piece is complete the I&P Delivery team will take the project forward and see it through to completion of the works.

Attracting and securing Third Party investment is a high priority and the recent success of our Town Deal and Levelling Up funding bids

securing over £30million of investment for the redevelopment of Boston, Skegness, Kidsgrove and Leicester stations shows just how much can be achieved in this area. We are continually engaging with third parties to identify new opportunities and funding pots to ensure that together we can maximise investment and improve station environments.

As team leader it is my role to coordinate and manage the team, plan the workload and ensure we are aligning with the business needs. We are a small team so we all chip in and assist with project work including information gathering, survey work, design work, feasibility studies, options assessments and funding bids. These elements take us all over the network, completing site visits and viewings to scope out new ideas and to meet with internal and external stakeholders to work up plans and to discuss joint aspirations.

My team is instrumental in shaping the future strategy and vision for EMR stations, owning the Stations Social & Commercial Development Plan (SSCDP) and through the rollout of Station Masterplans. We use the short, medium and long term aspirations captured in these plans to map out our future investment and shape our Annual Business Plan content.

No two days are the same in Project Development world and every day is a learning day! The main challenges I face are not knowing when new ideas will land and having to juggle and re-prioritise the workload effectively. Also because we work with so many different partners it can be challenging to navigate our way through the processes that can vary between organisations.

The variety of my role keeps it fresh and exciting and it is very rewarding to see a project come full circle and know that you've contributed towards improvements that create a better station environment for station users, staff and local communities.



*Attracting and securing Third Party investment is a high priority. Above is a banner detailing the investment of the Skegness Town Deal.*

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

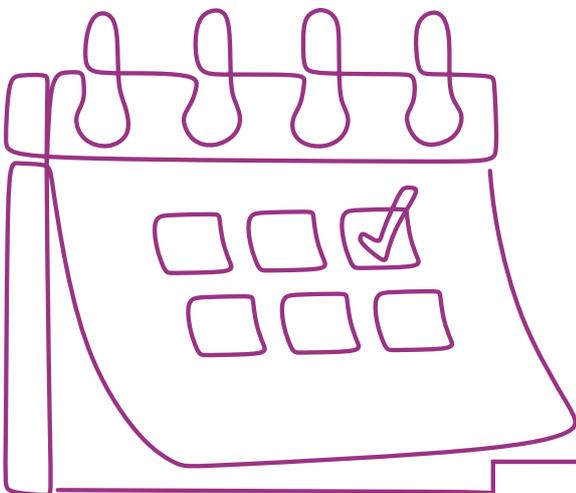
I'm the Development Strategy Manager working in the Infrastructure & Property Development Team. My role in the team supports the development of future strategies for station improvements, considering key stakeholder requirements and known local area infrastructure developments.

My role directs me to think about the future strategy, the 'here and now', and to reflect on past projects. Moving between creative thinking and detailed analysis, from engaging with a range of stakeholders to solitary focused work. My role is both challenging and rewarding. What I enjoy most of all is being empowered to help shape the future and doing so through engaging with internal and external stakeholders, understanding their visions, aspirations, constraints and collaborating to make things happen.



**SURITA MENGRI**

**Development Strategy Manager**



My day consists of:

1

Site visits to investigate first-hand the opportunities for improvements. Using the analysis to feed in to the development of schemes and the physical creation of Station Masterplans.

2

Engaging with teams from around the business and requesting information on different workstreams, station development aspirations, key milestones, customer surveys and journey data to ensure these are captured in the Masterplans. These plans share the collective stakeholder vision and the aspirations for station enhancements from the short term through to the medium and long term.

3

Writing business cases, number crunching and submitting applications for funding to secure investments in support of improving the overall customer experience, considering the future needs of the station and the local community. Creating and maintaining the SSCDP to meet our business obligation to capture and share future projects.

4

Collaborating with external partners on initiatives to improve our stations and to explore investment opportunities to support the Masterplan development and vision. These teams include Councils, Sustrans, Advanced Ventures, Community Teams, other Train Operating Companies, Railway Heritage Trust, Network Rail, consultants and suppliers.

It's true to say no two days are the same. However, in order to adhere to our processes and procedures, I attend regular governance meetings and complete routine administrative tasks to ensure projects are managed effectively and delivered to meet the needs of the end user and improve customer experience.



# Thank you!

The Coronation marked the start of The Big Help Out, a special celebration of volunteering for the coronation year which is intended to inspire people across the country to lend a hand and make a difference in their communities. On behalf of EMR, Kaye Robinson, Alexa Stott and Nancy Roberts Gordon would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your efforts both in the past and during the coming year. We really appreciate the way you work together to create gardening displays, artwork, help with larger projects and keep a watchful eye on our stations. You are an important part of our railway family, giving many hours of your time to our stations and we really do appreciate your contributions.

## EMR AND THE CORONATION WEEKEND

For the first time since 1953, the railway network had the opportunity to celebrate the coronation of a monarch. People across the country and throughout the Commonwealth were invited to celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen

over a weekend of special events on 6–8 May. From Coronation Big Lunches and street parties to taking part in the Big Help Out, there were lots of ways that were suggested to mark and celebrate the Coronation weekend. Several larger events took place in our region, including a Steampunk Seafront Event in Skegness on the Saturday; a big screen showing and entertainment in the grounds of Lincoln Castle and a procession in Boston's Central Park.

A significant number of EMR stations were involved. More than a dozen stations received bunting and flags as adopters decorated their station for the big event. At Market Rasen, there was a 'Big Help Out' and the station also hosted a heritage display and railway-themed games with tea, coffee and cakes being served.

At Lowdham, one of the station adopters knitted some amazing coronets which were placed along the fencing of the station, while the adopter's sister station of Burton Joyce hosted various events organised by their parish council.



## BEESTON TEA PARTY

Beeston put up EMR bunting and flags on the Friday ready for the day of the Coronation. On the Bank Holiday Monday, they hosted a tea party for their members and booking office staff at the station, with cakes and non-alcoholic drink.

Coronation bunting and flag waving could be seen at some of the following stations:

- Stamford
- Spondon
- Spalding
- Blythe Bridge
- South Wigston
- Attenborough
- Stallingborough
- Wainfleet
- Boston
- Lincoln
- Kirkby in Ashfield
- Wellingborough
- Heckington
- Sleaford
- Willington



*To all our wonderful  
adopters.  
Thank you for  
everything you do!*

FROM THE COMMUNITY RAIL TEAM





# EMR

