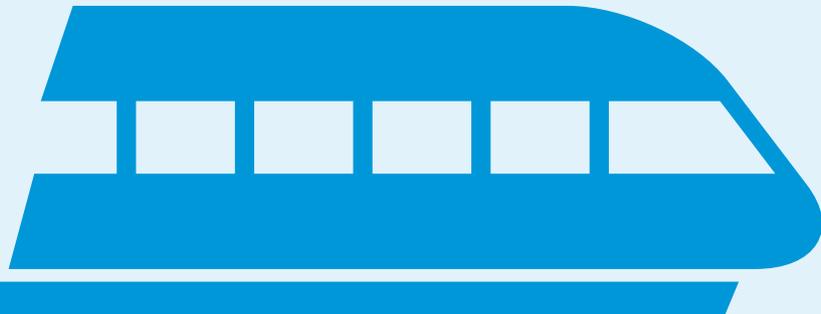




# WHITE CLIFFS COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
April 2023 - April 2024

**SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

## What is Community Rail?

**Community Rail is an initiative brought in through the Department of Transport.**

It is described as a grassroots movement working to engage communities in their local railway. Initiatives range from people helping to maintain station gardens to major refurbishment schemes.

Although some community railways provide a tourism service, they are largely separate from heritage and private railways which function solely as tourist attractions. Community rail takes the form of Community Rail Partnerships and station adoption groups<sup>1</sup>.

We work with the Department of Transport's vision in mind and follow the four pillars of Community Rail, part of the development strategy:

-  providing a voice for the community
-  promoting sustainable, healthy, and accessible travel
-  bringing communities together
-  support diversity, inclusion plus social and economic development<sup>2</sup>

Alongside the government, we work with Community Rail Network, who empower communities, provide support, advice, and expertise to Community Rail Partnerships across the UK, including our own.

There are over 70 Community Rail Partnerships across the UK and we proud to be one down on the South-East coast of England.

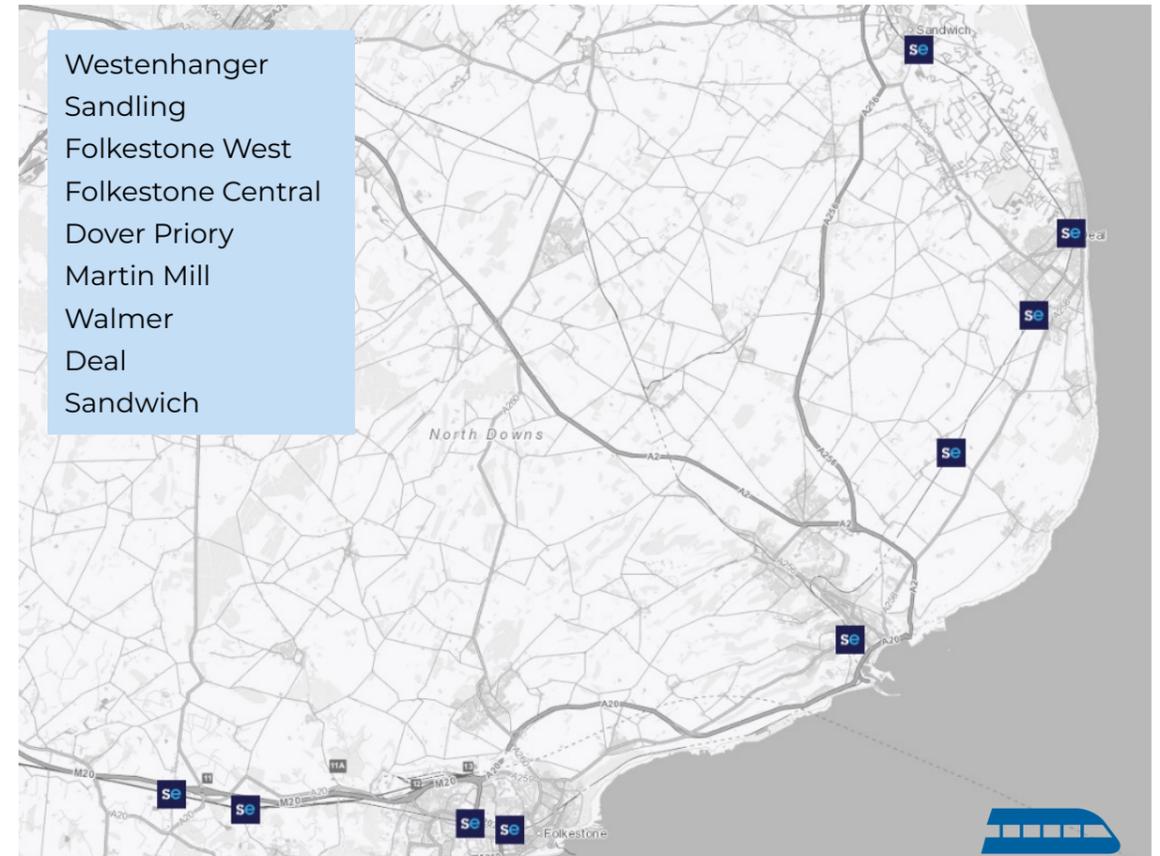
Alongside other partnerships, there are many station friends and volunteers, spending their time to improve station appearance and support projects and initiatives to encourage more individuals to use the train.



## Who are we?

**The White Cliffs Community Rail Partnership is a partnership made of 11 partners located in the South-East coast of England.**

Covering 9 stations, across 2 districts we are a growing partnership moving into our fourth year as an active CRP.



**Our partnership is made up from 11 partners, including district and town councils, railway operators, community assets and partnerships:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Folkestone Town Council             |  Sandwich Town Council                |
|  Folkestone & Hythe District Council |  White Cliffs Countryside Partnership |
|  Dover Town Council                  |  Southeastern                         |
|  Dover District Council              |  Network Rail                         |
|  Deal Town Council                   |  Community Rail Network               |



## Financial Report & Funding

White Cliffs CRP is thankful to our local train operator Southeastern for funding the partnership allowing it to start and continue each year.

We have received £30,000 annually to launch and run the partnership.

There are set costs to run the partnership which include staffing for our line officer, administration fees and membership fees to Community Rail Network. These are illustrated below:

White Cliffs Community Rail Partnership		
Costs		Amount
Staff Costs		£22,500.00
CRN Membership		£180.00
Administration, Meetings, etc.		£500.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£23,180.00</b>

We are thankful that these costs have not varied despite other rising costs which gives a consistent and considerable amount for projects this year.

The White Cliffs Community Rail Partnership is in a fortunate position to still have funds available that are rolled over from previous years meaning we are not in a deficit and have monies to utilise. This is outlined in alongside the financial breakdown below:

## Financial Breakdown from 2023/24

White Cliffs Community Rail Partnership 2023/24	
Costs	Amount
Staff Costs	£22,500.00
CRN Membership	£180.00
Administration, Meetings, etc.	£500.00
Folkestone West Planters	£597.38
Stakeholder Event	£18.28
Guided Walks	£1,500.00
CRP Conference	£121.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>£25,417.56</b>
CRP Conference	£63.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>£26,062.34</b>

Funding Rolled Over	£12,818.66
Funding Received	£30,000.00
<b>New total for 23/24</b>	<b>£42,818.66</b>
Total remaining for 24/25	£17,401.10 *

\* Not to go below £6,000 as reserves for the partnership should funding discontinue to source other funding.

## Project and Events from 2023/24

These last twelve months have seen some new projects emerge as well as continuation of some well-loved events we have done for the White Cliffs CRP.

We have been able to achieve some of the goals set at the start of last year and are excited to set new goals and plans for our next year of Community Rail!

### Guided Walks

We were very happy to continue with our Guided Walk programme delivered by our partner White Cliffs Countryside Partnership. With great feedback and each walk embarking on a new adventure our walks programme proved popular with a chance to learn about the local area, stations, nature, and biodiversity there was something for everyone!



### Folkestone West Planters

We are pleased to have worked with Incredible Edible over the last year and Age UK South Kent Coast – Folkestone Men's Shed on building and installing some planters at Folkestone West station with some edible plants in for the local community. We hope this is the first of many projects at Folkestone West that the Partnership is involved with.

### Sandwich Safety

We were pleased to work off the back of some local community requests and put on an open morning/afternoon drop in the Sandwich Library to provide information about how to stay safe on the railway and even when a pedestrian, cyclist or driver around level crossings.

Joined by Partners from Dover District Council, Sandwich Town Council, Southeastern and Network Rail we welcomed members of the community and a chance for them to be heard, answers their questions and offering support and advice.





## Accreditation

Last but not least we are very proud to have achieved our goal set for this year by achieving accreditation status from Department of Transport.

A meeting was held with Southeastern, Network Rail and Community Rail Network who have supported the partnership since inception to achieve this milestone. A portfolio of work, finances and governance was presented and sent off for review from Department of Transport and signed off as a recognised Community Rail Partnership.



This is not just an achievement but also allows other doors to open as an Accredited Community Rail Partnership such as further funding opportunities which we are aiming to utilise for future projects!

## Thanks & Farewell's

Since our last report we have gained new interest, new relationships formed, and projects completed and ideas for new ones made.

We would not have been able to complete many of our projects without our determined partners from Folkestone & Hythe District Council and White Cliffs Countryside Partnership, Alex Samson, and Mel Wrigley.

Their time with these partners has sadly come to an end as they embark on new journeys, we will miss their valuable contributions but would like to thank them for their hard work and support of our partnership and we will continue to grow as we welcome new members onto our partnership.



## Other Projects

There are many projects that are happening across our line, and we are thankful for our stakeholders and supporters that continue to work with us.

We would like to bring forward two of our stakeholders and the projects they have been working

on in the last twelve months to bring to your attention and spark your interest and involvement should you wish to do so!

The Resident Platform Project at Folkestone West led by Strange Cargo, public artwork installations where the local community plays a part in the process and their ideas are beautifully made and displayed at the station.

To see further information visit their webpage: [www.strangecargo.org.uk](http://www.strangecargo.org.uk)



Along The Railway Line is a video series found on YouTube created by John Jones the Rainham Railway Enthusiast. John travels across the UK blogging and vlogging the stations to understand the station features, historical attributes, and local information.

John came down the White Cliffs line last summer and vlogged his way across our line!

Check out his videos on YouTube by searching his username @RainhamRailEnthusiast



## Passenger Numbers Across Our Line

**Passenger numbers have dramatically increased over the last 12 months, still not quite pre-pandemic statistics but a healthy uplift in numbers with top 3 stations being Dover Priory, Folkestone Central and Folkestone West.**

We hope that with the projects brightening up the stations and attracting more persons to the area this will also increase numbers, train usage, sustainable travel options and awareness of our CRP.

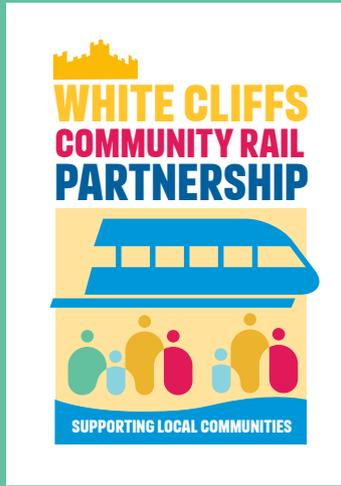
Station	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Westenhanger	80,168	18,902	45,092	54,372
Sandling	96,612	20,000	53,828	70,978
Folkestone West	775,466	201,292	513,322	610,330
Folkestone Central	1,031,302	267,698	682,674	811,686
Dover Priory	975,402	345,324	732,322	895,588
Martin Mill	70,648	19,956	37,658	45,894
Walmer	228,638	64,392	147,402	179,250
Deal	586,950	163,884	393,602	427,624
Sandwich	351,470	105,692	282,258	268,232

This data was collected from the Office of Rail and Road.

## References

1. Community rail - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-rail-lines>
2. Community rail development strategy - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-rail-development-strategy>





# Thank you for your support to White Cliffs Community Rail Partnership!

Should you wish to support us further by getting involved,  
please contact us.

Line Officer: Rebecca Dunroe  
Email: [community@dover.gov.uk](mailto:community@dover.gov.uk)  
Webpage: <https://arcg.is/Kryb4>

