



# Station Adoption

A guide for the local community

2005

Association of Community Rail Partnerships  
and GMPTE





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# Preface

**Welcome to your 'Station Adoption Toolkit'. It has been produced by the Association of Community Rail Partnerships, in conjunction with Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive.**

We hope it will be of interest to a wide range of community groups and individuals across Greater Manchester, and beyond, who want to make a difference to their local station.

Here in Greater Manchester we're fully committed to community involvement in local rail services. We want to see the ideas turned into practice, with more and more stations being adopted by their local community.

**This toolkit is designed to help you do that.**

**Chris Mulligan**  
Director General, GMPTE

**Manchester, June 2005**



# 1

## Introduction

**More and more local stations are being adopted by their local communities. Usually, these are small unstaffed stations which have lacked tender loving care, following the cuts and economies of the 1960s.**

'Adopt a station' schemes have traditionally been one of two models (but there is often overlap!):

- ✱ 'Adopt a Station' schemes run by train companies such as Arriva, where station 'monitors' report problems to the train operating company on a regular basis
- ✱ 'Friends of Stations' – where groups undertake a wide variety of activities, ranging from feeding in comments, the provision of station enhancements such as gardens and planters, cycle racks through to art work and signage.

Station adoption is a way of turning round uncared-for and unloved stations, bringing them back into the heart of the community and encouraging greater use of environmentally friendly public transport.

This is a guide to adopting your local station. There isn't one single method and there's a huge difference between what various groups around the country actually do. The Government's Community Rail Development Strategy gives strong support to communities wanting to adopt their station – and it isn't difficult to do.

But there are some simple things which groups need to be aware of. Safety must be paramount! You also need to make sure that whatever you do has the agreement of the train operating companies and Network Rail, though they are very supportive of communities adopting their station.

This guide has been produced for Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, but we hope it will be relevant to other communities around the country who are interested in adopting their local station.

Within Greater Manchester there is already a number of stations – both inner city and suburban – adopted by their communities and we hope this guide will encourage many more. It has been prepared by the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP). We are a national federation of partnerships and station adoption groups, based in Huddersfield. We're here to help.

**Happy adopting!**

**Paul Salvesson**

**Association of Community Rail Partnerships  
Rail and River Centre, Civic Hall,  
15 a New Street, Slaithwaite  
Huddersfield HD7 5AB**



# 2

## Why adopt your local station?

**More and more community groups and individuals have adopted their local station. It's all about local pride and seeing the station as an important part of the community.**

Adopting the station by the community adds value to what is already there, and helps make the station more welcoming and attractive: a vital part of the local community! Often it is the station that lets down a community in 'Tidy Town', 'Britain in Bloom' and similar competitions. Here's an opportunity to change that.

Northern Rail, which manages most stations in Greater Manchester, is very supportive of station adoption. One of its managers with responsibility for station adoption, Carl Longfield, said:

*'It's good for local groups – scouts, a church group or community organisation – to help us do things at stations like gardening or keeping the place clean and tidy... this encourages local interest and helps the community see that there is a railway and someone is concerned for its well being. Having schools involved helps reduce graffiti and vandalism.'*



Everyone gains: local people get a cleaner, safer and more welcoming station. The train company – and the environment – benefits from more people using the train.



# 3

## What can you do as a station adopter?

As much or as little you like is the short answer. Whatever you do, make sure the train operator and Network Rail are happy with it. Some of the case studies at the back of this toolkit give you a good idea of the range of things which station adopters do. And why not be first, with something no-one else has thought of?

### Bringing tender loving care to unstaffed stations

Most of Britain's local stations are unstaffed. That means they can often be cold and unwelcoming and sometimes prone to vandalism. They get checked regularly, but that's no substitute for having somebody there.

Train companies like Northern Rail have a large network. They could not hope to visit every station often enough to make sure that problems do not go un-noticed. This is why the work station adopters do is essential to us. By spotting problems as they occur the necessary repairs can be made much sooner.

Station adoption helps to bring unstaffed stations back to life, as a vitally important part of the community.

You can keep a watchful eye on your station, report any problems and – if you want to – look at doing other things which improve the station's appearance and what it offers.



# 4

## Preparing the ground

It is better to get a small group of people to act as the 'station adoption group' rather than just one or two individuals. It's a good idea to involve local groups such as 'Tidy Town', 'Anytown in Bloom', Rotary, Lions and others who are already involved in community or environmental work in the area.

A group gives continuity, mutual support – and it's more fun! A group can be pretty much anything you want. Including:

- \* An existing community group
- \* A small business
- \* A church group
- \* A school or college
- \* A parish council

Or you can set up your own purpose made group, like Friends of Levenshulme Station, Friends of Altrincham Interchange, and others around the country. Most of these groups focused specifically on a station involve existing local groups.

Several stations have just one person as the 'adopter'. That can work well and this guide should be of help to one person or dozens. However, the following section relates mainly to organised groups.

### Get a new group formed

*If you are already an established body go on to Section 5.*

There are a few things to do if you're starting from scratch with a new group – we recommend calling it 'Friends of XXXX Station'. This will bring you into the broader family of station friends around the country, and entitle you as a member to use the ACoRP logo.

First you need members! This could be by bringing together people you already know, regular users of the station or people in a particular neighbourhood or existing groups who would welcome the opportunity to extend their activities, maybe gardening or artwork, to a new location.

Call an informal meeting to generate interest and involvement. Choose a venue that people are comfortable with – not everyone likes going to pubs. A community centre or village hall is the best bet, if it's comfortable and warm.



# 4



**Publicise the meeting:** send a letter to the local paper and ask the train operator for permission to display a notice at the station and around town. Hand out flyers to passengers. Invite local councillors and the local authority – very often they have small pots of money for voluntary groups. Contact your local MP – they can be an invaluable source of help. Ruth Kelly MP launched The Friends of Blackrod Station, which is in her Bolton West Constituency.

There is no ideal time to hold a meeting, but go for what suits the people who have already expressed interest. An evening meeting, when it isn't dark, may be best, or a weekend. Try to get someone to provide/sponsor tea and biscuits.

At the meeting, keep it friendly and informal. You may want to invite someone from ACoRP or a neighbouring 'Station Friends' to come along and say what's involved. This could include a slide show of what has already been done elsewhere – a picture is worth a thousand words! Another option is to arrange a visit to a nearby station which has already been adopted by the community. ACoRP can help you with this.

Ask for ideas and suggestions – don't force a particular line! Try and reach agreement on the basics:

- \* What the group sees as problems at the station
- \* What the group sees as opportunities
- \* What the group will do, initially,
- \* The name of the group
- \* Elect a chair, secretary and treasurer
- \* Agree a membership fee (keep it modest and have lower fee for pensioners, students and unwaged)

Getting a treasurer is always the hardest job. The group will not be dealing with £millions but you do need someone who will look after the accounts. The secretary could be the treasurer as well, if you don't have volunteers to be treasurer.

- \* At the inaugural meeting make sure you get a list of names and addresses of everyone who wants to be involved. Phone, postal address, email.
- \* Ask the train operator if they can provide a free rail pass as a draw prize for all who express interest in being involved.
- \* Agree who will do what and fix a date for the next meeting, when you will come back with some more detailed proposals.



# 4



## *In the meantime:*

- \* Get papers to set up a bank account
- \* Contact your train operator and tell them about the group. Ask for a date for a safety briefing
- \* Contact ACoRP or GMPTe (see contacts at back). ACoRP can advise on local community rail partnerships or similar groups interested in supporting the railway
- \* Start drafting out a simple constitution. Feel free to adapt the one in Appendix 5 of this toolkit.
- \* Send a short press release to the local media saying that the group has been formed and invite new members. See sample press release in Appendix 4.
- \* Fix date for follow-on meeting (within a month at the most)
- \* Arrange a visit to a local 'Friends' station

## **At the follow-on meeting:**

- \* Get an appropriate guest speaker and publicise it well
- \* Welcome everyone but especially new faces
- \* Invite the train operator to attend
- \* Report progress
- \* Agree the constitution
- \* Discuss practical things: what are you going to do, when, who's doing it
- \* Fix a programme of dates for meetings and other activities
- \* Make sure you have arranged a safety briefing



# 4



## Bank account

These days, setting up a bank account for community groups can be complicated. If you need help, contact ACoRP.

However, several banks offer accounts for community groups where you pay little or no bank charges. The Co-op, Lloyds TSB, NatWest and many others will help. Ask to see an adviser who knows what they're talking about. Stress that you're a voluntary group with charitable objectives (but not a registered charity).

### *They will want:*

- ✳ Proof of identity and addresses of officers
- ✳ Evidence that the group exists and has a constitution
- ✳ An initial deposit

You will need two signatures to authorise cheques. The normal arrangement is to have three or four 'named' signatories which the bank recognises, with just two needed to authorise cheques.

## Annual general meeting

You will need to present your accounts to an annual general meeting. It's a good idea to get a supporter or sympathetic accountant to audit your accounts each year before the AGM.

The AGM is when you re-elect the officers of the group. Keep your AGM friendly and informal but don't forget the basics.

It's often a good idea to get a guest speaker and have tea and cakes at the end of the meeting (this also has the advantage of making sure people stay to the end!). ACoRP can supply a list of speakers, who will not charge for their services.

You can always get help from your local voluntary sector advice group on finance or 'governance' issues – they are usually called 'Council for Voluntary Service' or 'Council for Voluntary Action'. Or you can ask for advice from ACoRP.



# 5

## The basics

**As we keep stressing, it's up to you how much you take on. In the early days especially, be a bit cautious and keep your enthusiasm under control!**

Most station adoption schemes around the country, run by the train operator, ask you to keep an eye on the station and report any faults, vandalism or other problems. There will be a simple form to fill in. You will also need to sign a simple contract with the train operator setting out your responsibilities.

The sort of things you need to look out for will include:

- \* Lights not working
- \* Timetables and information posters out of date
- \* Vandalism and undesirables 'hanging around'
- \* Faulty equipment (e.g. telephone, PA system)
- \* Litter bins and general litter, both on track and at the station (you must never go on or near the track)
- \* Car park: lighting, appropriate use, etc.
- \* Damaged fences
- \* No timetable leaflets available

### How often do you check?

Weekly is probably the right level of frequency. If anything happens in between that's important, report it to the train operator immediately (e.g. lights, PA or phone not working)

### But before you start

By now you will have made contact with the train operator and hopefully they will be delighted that they've got you involved.

The next step will be for the train operator to send a member of staff to meet you and give everyone involved a safety briefing. This is not a time-consuming affair but it is extremely important.

Make sure everyone who has volunteered to be involved takes part in the briefing. If you get a new volunteer, they will need an individual safety briefing by the train company.



# 5

The train company representative will tell you exactly what you can and can't do on the station. A good rule of thumb is only go where passengers are normally allowed to go – but you will get detailed, site specific advice. The representative will show you exactly where you can and cannot go on the station.

**ON NO ACCOUNT EVER GO ON OR NEAR THE TRACK. IF YOU SEE SOMETHING AMISS ON THE TRACK REPORT IT IMMEDIATELY BUT DON'T, REPEAT DON'T, GO ON THE LINE YOURSELF. YOU MAY GET KILLED.**

Is that clear enough? Good.

## **Get advice from ACoRP and GMPTE**

Again, before you start, feel free to use the services of ACoRP – the Association of Community Rail Partnerships. If you are in Greater Manchester, we suggest you get in touch with the Rail Team at Portland Street and tell them about yourselves (see Contacts).

ACoRP is the national federation of rail partnerships and station friends groups. We urge you to join ACoRP because:

- \* You get access to a national network of station friends and community rail groups
- \* You get regular information
- \* You get copies of specialist toolkits
- \* You get invited to conferences and seminars
- \* You get access to a range of funding sources

It costs £25 a year, plus VAT. There is a form at the back of the toolkit in Appendix 3. There is no charge for membership in the GMPTE area.

## **What resources do you need?**

You don't need lots of money. You need:

- \* People
- \* Enthusiasm
- \* Creativity
- \* Good will

But yes, you might need a bit of money, to get things like hanging baskets, planters, signage, and newsletters.

You'll find you can get a lot of help in kind. Sometimes, local garden centres will donate plants and even some equipment. Don't be frightened to ask. It is good to have a 'Sponsors Panel' as part of the Community Information Board.



# 5

For your group, it's a good idea to have a logo and sufficient quantities of letter headed paper. ACoRP can help with a generic 'station friends' logo. Remember that officialdom isn't impressed by scrappy hand-written letters, especially if you're asking for money and support. If you are applying for a grant you'll need an action plan – see below.

## Develop an Action Plan

If that sounds a bit daunting, don't worry. Before you start, set some very modest targets that you know you can achieve. It may be nothing more than regular checks at the station.

It could be a target of planting a few bedding plants in summer, or bulbs in autumn. Again, we've an example of a simple Action Plan in Appendix 2.

The thing is, once you get started you will want to expand your activities. The Action Plan should be a flexible tool, capable of being revised say every six months.

Ask local members, residents and passengers what they would like to see happen and if they can help towards doing it. Have a 'brainstorming session' to get a list of ideas.

Again, make it look neat and professional. Your Action Plan should be well presented, with your logo. List what you want to achieve and when you want to achieve it by. Keep a record of what you have agreed to do and who in particular is doing it. Remember that getting things done in the Rail Industry can be quite complicated and take time so try not to rush things.

## Setting a Budget

It may be that your group is not planning any significant expenditure. However if you are then it is important that you clearly set out a budget which identifies your planned sources of income and expenditure. Always remember to ensure that your planned expenditure doesn't exceed your planned income!

## Business Plan

The term "Business Plan" sounds a bit daunting for many people, particularly volunteers. Essentially it is just common sense. You must firstly ensure that if you want to achieve a set of objectives then you must have the resources to do it. The two most important of these are time and money.

Having a plan in writing also shows that you are serious and organised and have a clear sense of what you want to achieve and how you are going to achieve it. This is particularly important when you are bidding for additional funding from an outside agency or organisation. In such a case it is essential that you can show what you intend to achieve with any grant money.



# 6

## Getting on with it

Agree with the train operator when the adoption formally starts. Sign your contract with them so everyone is clear what is expected of each other. The safety briefing is of crucial importance and you must not do anything until all individuals involved have been briefed.



Then get on with it. You will have agreed your rota of inspections, and who will be doing them. It's a good idea to have one person co-ordinating this, who will submit reports to the train company. The secretary is the obvious person, but it doesn't have to be them.

Don't over-complicate things by contacting lots of different people and organisations. Use the train operator's nominated contact person as your main point of contact. If there are issues which require the involvement of Network Rail, use your train operator contact to get to them, or consult ACoRP.

If you have decided to do a bit more, agree when the group will begin. For example, if it involves a bit of gardening, some groups agree to meet every Friday afternoon, or Thursday evening, or Sunday morning – whatever suits you best.



If you are considering planting shrubs or providing 'physical' works (e.g. sculpture) please bear in mind ongoing maintenance issues. Discuss everything with the train company and make sure the issue of maintenance is covered.



# 7

## What to look out for

Your train operator will provide you with a checklist (see examples at the back). It will include:



- \* **Station signing**  
Should be clear, graffiti free, undamaged, in its right place and not obscured by vegetation
- \* **Poster displays**  
Should be up to date, graffiti free, legible and provide local directions and information
- \* **Litter bins**  
If in place, should be undamaged and not overflowing
- \* **Lighting**  
Should be undamaged and operational during hours of darkness
- \* **Shelters**  
Should be clean, litter free, graffiti free and not leaking
- \* **Fencing and boundaries**  
Should be undamaged, litter free and secure
- \* **Platforms**  
Should be litter free and clear of obstacles or tripping hazards
- \* **Car Parks**  
Should have no abandoned vehicles, unauthorised lorries, buses or coaches parked and be litter free
- \* **Help points/information screens**  
Should be working, audible and giving correct information
- \* **PA system and CCTV** (if installed)  
Are the systems working and clearly audible?
- \* **Graffiti**  
Should not be present on the station
- \* **Telephones, Help points**  
If installed should be operational and undamaged, and clearly signed
- \* **Seating**  
Should be secure, free of damage, scratches and graffiti
- \* **Flower beds**  
Make sure they are neat and tidy and don't contain plants with poisonous berries if next to public areas
- \* **Facilities for customers with special needs**  
Where provided they should be in good condition and accessible



# 7

## Safety is paramount

You've had your briefing, you've made a start. But keep safety uppermost in your mind. Even standing on a station platform where passengers get on and off trains can be dangerous.

A high speed train whizzing through can cause turbulence and creates a vacuum which can suck the unwary passenger under the train. So keep well away from the platform edge, well behind the yellow line.

Remember, if you are doing work on the platform it's easy to get distracted and forget where you are. Stations can be dangerous places.

Look out for your colleagues and ensure they are wearing appropriate safety clothing. Your train operator will advise on this.

If you see anyone trespassing on the track please do the following;

- \* Ring the British Transport Police  
**0800 40 50 40**
- \* Don't get involved in arguments

Even in situations like this YOU MUST NOT give the impression of being a railway employee.

## Platform furniture: a cautionary note

If you get a bit more advanced you may look at providing station furniture – benches, planters and the like. That's great, providing you do it with the consent and assistance of the train operator. It is very important to ensure that any items are firmly fixed down to the platform surface, in case some idiot decides to throw them onto the track. Ensure that there is provision for maintenance, repair and possible future removal

## Basic Safety Briefing

Again, remember that every individual has to have a safety briefing – it can be done as a group, or individually (e.g. if you get a new recruit). The briefing will be specific to the station you are adopting and will be done on site.

### **ALWAYS:**

- \* Be prepared to give your name and the reason why you're there
- \* Ensure that you don't create anything that can cause an obstruction
- \* Comply with instructions on vehicle parking
- \* Stop your work if requested by a railway official
- \* Report any accidents to the train company



# 7



## NEVER

- \* Cross any railway line, except at a public crossing
- \* Go any nearer the platform edge than 1.25 metres, or 4'
- \* Go beyond the platform ends
- \* Take any heavy equipment onto the platform
- \* Get on any train unless you have a valid ticket
- \* Use any chemicals or substances e.g. petrol or solvents (unless supplied by the train operator)
- \* Use any electrical equipment
- \* Use any railway equipment without authorisation
- \* Block any platform, passage roadway or other area
- \* Be under the influence of drink or drugs when doing your work



**Several lines in Greater Manchester (and other parts of the country) have overhead electrified wires, energised at 25,000 volts. You don't have to touch them to get killed – going within a few feet can give you a massive electric shock. So DON'T use poles, cutters, ladders, water hoses or anything high which may come in contact with, or near to, the wires. Don't lift tools above your head. Similarly in some parts of the country there are electrified railways using a third or fourth live rail. This simply underlines the importance of not going on or near the track at any time.**

## Insurance and other legal issues

The policy of train operators towards station adoptee's insurance does vary. If you are in Greater Manchester, and working with Northern Rail, the train company considers that your insurance is within the company's general insurance arrangements for third parties. So you don't have to worry. *But the moment you go out of the area where you are allowed to be, you are uninsured.*

There aren't really any other major legal issues to worry about. Use your common sense and you'll be fine. If you do have any legal queries contact ACoRP for free advice.



# 8

## Keeping going

### Maintain the interest

Keeping a voluntary group going over several years isn't easy, but plenty of station adoption groups have been going for ten or more years – see the examples at the back!

To do that, you need to maintain people's interest, try different things and get a regular flow of new recruits. Schools are a good source of ongoing involvement if you work with their curriculum. Invite existing local organisations, such as horticultural and arts groups, to apply what they already do at the station.

Organise visits to other stations, develop friendly links with similar groups around the country, using the ACoRP network.

### Make sure your group is open and inclusive

So you've had your couple of meetings and have got a group together. Remember that groups always change, with people dropping out, leaving the area or just deciding it's not for them. Take it in your stride.

But you need to get a regular flow of newcomers. Make people feel welcomed and valued! It's particularly difficult to get young people involved, but when they do come in you'll find them an amazing source of ideas and enthusiasm. Encourage them – the worst thing you can do with any volunteer is to put them down or unfairly criticise someone.

### Keeping difficulties under control

That said, there will be times when you do need to take action. This could be when:

- \* A volunteer goes where they shouldn't
- \* They are rude or discourteous to a passenger or other volunteer
- \* They indulge in inappropriate behaviour to other volunteers or passengers
- \* A volunteer is under the influence of drink or drugs
- \* They regularly don't do what they promise to do

In the case of a volunteer who goes on the track, you should expel them from the group. They are a liability to you, to themselves and to the community rail movement.

Inappropriate behaviour can take a lot of forms – for example racist comments, sexist remarks and the like. Don't tolerate that sort of behaviour – ask the person to desist and if not, ask them to leave. Other 'sacking offences' include turning up at the station under the influence of drink or drugs.



# 8



## Use the local media

What you're doing is good for the community. Make sure you spread the word. A good source of local publicity (and new members) is the local paper. They like positive stories about what people in the community are doing.

- ✳ Issue regular press releases
- ✳ Invite a reporter with their photographer along to see what you are doing (make sure the train operator is happy with this)
- ✳ Build up contacts with staff on the local paper

Most places have free newspapers which are distributed door to door. They welcome local news. Make sure your press release is clear, concise and positive!

Make sure your copy is in editable format – word-processed. Editors prefer press releases to be emailed. It's also a good idea to send a photograph, in digital format. Make sure it's a good quality image with plenty of smiling faces. If you are dealing with a press photographer don't be manipulated into being photographed in a compromising position – this means not going on the track or other places you shouldn't go.

If you are taking photographs yourself for publication, agree it with the train operator and think carefully about what the photograph's message says. Make it positive, and avoid any suggestion that the picture was taken from an 'off limits' location.

You should also use anything else that's out there: parish newsletters, other community magazines and local radio even regional TV can be interested sometimes.



# 8



## Keeping the group going

Developing a station adoption group is not much different than keeping any other voluntary group going.

- ✿ Don't expect too much from people
- ✿ Accept that some will put in more than others
- ✿ Encourage the 'social' side – coffee mornings, a Christmas meal, an occasional trip (perhaps to see what other stations are doing!)

The regular meetings should be short and business-like. Try and get through the agenda as quickly as you can and encourage people to stay behind for a chat over a coffee (or maybe a pint) afterwards.

The group will have its ups and downs. Try and think of new things to do – learn from what others have done and see if you can apply it to your station.

## Not just the station – the community as well!

Many station adoption groups, or 'Station Friends' recognise that getting community support for the railway involves going beyond the station, and into the community itself. Several groups publish newsletters which go to surrounding households, library and community centres. Others use community noticeboards in the village or a community focal point where they display information about their work. Use what's out there!



# 9

## Going further

Several 'station friends' have gone way beyond the basics of checking station conditions and doing the gardens. Walk before you run, but bear in mind there are opportunities out there to do some really exciting things!

### Bringing buildings back to life

Some have taken over redundant buildings and brought them back to life (such as Saunderton). This can be time-consuming but rewarding! Not very many stations still have buildings left, but if your station does have vacant accommodation which you think you could use, talk to your friendly train operator.

Buildings have been brought back to use for:

- \* Tourist information offices
- \* Bookshops
- \* Cafes
- \* Waiting rooms
- \* Art galleries
- \* Office space
- \* Parish council offices

Train operators like having people at stations. It brings life back to the station and reduces people's concerns over personal safety.

ACoRP's Central Stations project, in the Midlands, is about working with local communities to find tenants for empty station buildings in the Central Trains network. Northern Rail is also supportive of groups taking over unused buildings providing the use is appropriate.

Remember that some empty railway buildings may not be the responsibility of the train operator – it could be Network Rail. The train operator will be able to tell you who manages the lease of the building you're interested in. If you need help from Network Rail, contact their community rail director Jerry Swift (see Contacts, Appendix 1). They are equally keen to bring unused buildings back into use and – especially when a building may have been empty for many years – are happy to consider community uses on beneficial terms. Feel free to contact ACoRP if you need advice.



# 9



## New buildings

Most unstaffed stations do not have anything more than basic bus shelter type facilities. If you are well established – and ambitious – there may be scope for looking at providing entirely new facilities on your station. Friends of Handforth Station managed to bring various partners together to get a new booking office and new waiting shelters, all protected by CCTV! On a smaller scale, the community group at Dolau got money to provide a modest timber waiting shelter.

Don't go into this lightly, but seek advice. There may be scope for providing a small shop or tourist information office on or adjacent to the station.

## A question of art

Several stations have been enlivened by community artwork. A good example is Handforth, where artists have worked with community groups to create exciting and vivid art work to brighten up the station.

There are many opportunities to create locally-themed art which is about celebrating the local community – for example images of 'local heroes' or notable landscape features.

The Penistone Line Partnership's 'Art Along the Line' won funding from arts organisations and allowed the partnership to commission artists to work with local young people to create some amazing displays, community information boards and mosaics at stations.



The good thing about community art is that you can often get funding for it from non-railway sources – so seek advice from ACoRP or your local authority Arts Officer. Remember that any art work on stations will need the approval of the train operator and Network Rail. Make sure you cover ongoing maintenance issues. Don't do anything to encourage trespass and make sure it's compatible with running a safe railway. A 20' high sculpture within inches of the overhead wires just isn't an option.

## In the community

There are lots of opportunities for promoting your work on the station in the community. You will want more people to use the station, so you have to go out and spread the word. Ways of doing that include leaflets and newsletters, posters in shop windows and use of the local media. Take part in community events such as fairs and festivals. Make links with like-minded groups such as women's institutes, community associations and civic trusts.



# 9



## Special Events

Throw a party! West Runton Women's Institute organises an annual tea party on their station. You can do the same (make sure you get the necessary permission). It could include:

- ✿ Displays of art work
- ✿ Summer station garden party
- ✿ A Christmas carol singing concert
- ✿ Other musical entertainment

It's a particularly good thing to do if you are launching, or completing, a project. Equally, you may get an important visitor – a Government Minister, or celebrity. Use it as an excuse to go a bit wild (but within reason, we have to keep saying).

## Station maintenance

This is a very new concept but worth exploring if you are well established with a good team of volunteers. Some rail partnerships have established contracts with Northern Rail to undertake certain services on a paid basis. So far this has focused on station gritting during winter. The Penistone Line Partnership gets paid a fee each year to use its volunteers to go out and grit station platforms. It has proved successful, with quicker response times when frost or snow is forecast. This could be a useful way to generate some income for the group.



The concept could develop further, with partnerships or station friends taking on contracts to clean and maintain stations. Savings on contractor's fees could be re-invested in improvements to the station.

## Other opportunities include:

- ✿ Station Gala days
- ✿ Running music sessions on the local train
- ✿ Guided walks from stations
- ✿ Poetry events on the train and at the station
- ✿ Rail Ale Trails – promote local pubs near the station!



# 10



## Station Adoption in Practice

### Handforth, Cheshire

Handforth, on the fringes of Greater Manchester (it's just about in Cheshire!) is a stunning example of what community involvement with your local station can achieve. Much of it is down to the vision of one man – Mike Bishop, a former railway engineer who, with a group of local friends, thought it would be a good idea to safeguard their local suburban station's future by improving its condition – and did something about it. Since then, Handforth has won numerous prestigious national awards, culminating with the 'Small Scale Innovation Award' at the Railway Innovation Awards ceremony in 2003.

And that's the interesting thing about Handforth – it isn't deep rural, it's a fairly ordinary two platform station between Stockport and Wilmslow. But today the station is far from ordinary! By involving local volunteers, including school children the station has its own gardens, art work and a brand new booking office thanks to the efforts of 'Friends of Handforth Station'.



### Levenshulme, Greater Manchester

Friends of Levenshulme Station is a fairly new group, in an inner urban part of Manchester. Levenshulme is on the Manchester to Stockport line and is a busy suburban station. They like to think that in their small way they encouraged Network Rail to rebuild the sub-standard platforms.

The group has been involved in a range of projects including work with a local school for the hearing impaired and a number of ethnic minorities. A series of images at the station were erected illustrating sign language and they produced postcards and posters advertising the line.

### Mountain Ash, Glamorgan

One of the most exciting examples of young people's involvement as adopters is at Mountain Ash, in the South Wales Valleys. The students of the local comprehensive school have been actively involved in improving their local station. Their work was recognised by an award of £10,000 from Barclays New Futures scheme.

The students have cleared overgrown vegetation and litter and the project has encouraged the students to become active citizens.



# 10



## Prestatyn, North Wales

The local scouts and cubs formed 'Friends of Prestatyn Station' last year and have already been busy with station gardening and litter picking as part of their environmental badge. Amanda Wiggan is chair of the group and says that the work of the five volunteers has made the station a safer and more inviting place for passengers. The group meets to do its work at the station every Sunday.

## Dolau, Powys

Dolau, on the Heart of Wales Line between Shrewsbury and Swansea, is about as rural as you can get. The tiny station serves an equally tiny village in Mid Wales. Over the years a local group has been involved in making Dolau a showpiece of what community adoption can achieve. It was even visited by the Queen a couple of years ago!

It's the stunning floral display that makes it so special. But there's also railway ephemera, including an old porter's trolley used for carrying planters. The tiny waiting room is full of certificates for best kept station over the years.

The group meets once a week on Thursday evenings, throughout the year. There's always something to do and the best time to see it is in late May or June when the whole place is a mass of colour.



## West Runton, Norfolk

West Runton is a good example of a station adopted by an existing group – the ladies of West Runton Women's Institute. The group decided to adopt the station about ten years ago and the results are a beautifully looked-after garden and some 'heritage' style signage. A wonderful feature of the place is the annual station tea party! The station is decked out with bunting, chairs and tables are laid out on the platform and home made cakes, tea and coffee are available.

Well worth a visit!

## Saunderton, Oxfordshire

Friends of Saunderton Station is a lively group supported by the local parish council with strong backing from Chiltern Railways. They have only been formed since the beginning of 2004 but immediately set about raising funds to restore the historic – but disused – station waiting room. The facility was completely renovated with funding coming from the local authority, train operator and ACoRP. The room re-opened to a grateful community in January 2005.



# 10



## Stockmoor, West Yorkshire

Stockmoor, on the Penistone Line between Huddersfield and Barnsley, is a small rural station which has been adopted by another local W.I. group, with support from other residents of this small Yorkshire village.

The station was fairly unkempt and the booking office had long been unstaffed.

The first step was to create a station garden. Railway staff helped clear some space and now the W.I. look after the gardens, with a pleasing mix of shrubs and annual plants. Heritage style signs have been put up and traditional railway benches erected on the platform.

The next step could be to bring the old booking office back into use. The Penistone Line Partnership is working with the train operator (Northern) on ideas for a small shop.

## Wymondham, Norfolk

Wymondham station is an example of 'business' adoption of a station. The station buildings – splendid Great Eastern railway architecture – are occupied by a local piano shop. Part of the building is the actual shop and an adjoining room is the Brief Encounter Café.



## Church and Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire

Church and Oswaldtwistle is a station serving an urban community in East Lancashire on the Preston – Colne Line. It had a history of vandalism and few people liked using it. However, a local mill shop – Oswaldtwistle Mills – agreed to adopt the station and there has been an amazing transformation.

There are new seats and planting which add colour and life to the station.

CCTV has been installed which is monitored by the security staff in the Mills. If there is the slightest sign of trouble a PA announcement tells the miscreants they are being filmed! If they don't stop, the security staff will go down to the station and ask them to leave.

The Mills is a five minute walk from the station and has highly visible publicity promoting use of the train.



# 10



## Altrincham Interchange, Greater Manchester

Altrincham is pretty unusual: a combined train, tram and bus station! Friends of Altrincham Interchange were formed last year and their official launch was on the Railway Gala Day, May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2004. They had a stall on the station and met an array of mayors, MPs and media.

One of the first jobs was 'clean up week' and over 80 people from the group and the local Baptist Church turned out to help clean the area, paint parts of the station and create a better environment around the interchange.

## Helsby, Cheshire

Helsby is a good example of a station adopted by a rail user group. The North Cheshire Rail users' group decided to develop a garden at the station several years ago. They were supported by the train operator and the local parish council.

Today, the gardens are magnificent and well worth calling in for a visit. The station buildings are of great historical interest and the group is currently trying to find a tenant for one of the vacant rooms.

NCRUG is also involved in improving nearby Frodsham station and campaigning to improve local rail services. It publishes a regular newsletter which goes out to local households.

Helsby station regularly wins prizes for best kept station. No wonder!

Floral displays have appeared in the booking hall, provided through Altrincham in Bloom. The bus station manager has provided cash to install planters.

The Friends' newsletter has a distribution list of over 350 people.



# Appendix 1

## Contacts

### **ACoRP: Association of Community Rail Partnerships**

Rail and River Centre, Civic Hall,  
15a New Street, Slaithwaite,  
Huddersfield HD7 5AB

**Main contact:** Paul Salvesson

**Phone:** 01484 847790

**Email:** [office@acorp.uk.com](mailto:office@acorp.uk.com)

**Website:** [www.acorp.uk.com](http://www.acorp.uk.com)

### **Mike Bishop**

Chairman of Friends of Handforth Station and a member of ACoRP, has a particular brief from GMPTE to work with community groups interested in adopting stations in Greater Manchester.

**Phone:** 01625 524123

**Email:** [mikebishop47@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:mikebishop47@tiscali.co.uk)

### **Hope Valley and High Peak Transport Partnership**

Mike Bishop c/o Town Hall,  
New Mills, High Peak SK22 4AT

**Email:** [mail@hvhptp.org.uk](mailto:mail@hvhptp.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.hvhptp.org.uk](http://www.hvhptp.org.uk)

### **Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive**

9 Portland Street,  
Manchester M60 1HX

**Main contact:** Steve Magner

**Phone:** 0161 242 6228

**Email:** [steve.magner@gmppte.gov.uk](mailto:steve.magner@gmppte.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.gmppte.com](http://www.gmppte.com)

### **Train Operators:**

#### **Northern Rail**

(includes virtually all Greater Manchester stations)

Main HQ, Station Rise

York YO1 1HT

**Main contact for station adoption:**

Carl Longfield

**Phone:** 01904 522799

**Email:** [carl.longfield@northernrail.org](mailto:carl.longfield@northernrail.org)

#### **Arriva Trains Wales**

2 Fitzalan Road,  
Cardiff CF24 OSU

**Contact for North Wales:** Gerald Jones

**Phone:** 01244 356206

**Email:** [gerald.jones@arrivatw.co.uk](mailto:gerald.jones@arrivatw.co.uk)

#### **Network Rail:**

Jerry Swift

(Account Director, Community Rail)  
c/o Network Rail

40 Melton Street, London NW1 1EE

**Phone:** 07956 295489

**Email:** [jerry.swift@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:jerry.swift@networkrail.co.uk)

**For other train operators please contact ACoRP for details.**



# Appendix 2

## Action Plan / Business Plan

### ACTION PLAN: Friends of Plodder Lane Station

Task	Target	Date
Recruit volunteers	Minimum of 6	Within month 1
Make contact with train operator	Station liaison officer	Within month 1
Initial Site Visit	With volunteers and TOC	Within 1 month
Weekly inspection	Once a week	Within 2 months
Open meeting	Attract minimum of 12 members of public	Within 2 months
Media contact	Identify local journalists	Within 2 months
Media Liaison	1 press release each month	Within 2 months
Contact MP	Aim for meeting with MP	Within 3 months
Formal launch of FOPL	25 guests invited – press invites	Within 4 months

### BUSINESS PLAN: Friends of Plodder Lane Station

#### Planned Income 2005/6

Subscription Income  
 Donations  
 Grants  
 Other Income

£ A  
 £ B  
 £ C  
 £ D

#### Total

£ E

#### Planned Expenditure 2005/6

Project 1  
 Project 2  
 Project 3  
 Admin Expenses / Postage

£ F  
 £ G  
 £ H  
 £ I

#### Total

£ J

#### Surplus for the year

£ K



# Appendix 3



## Join ACoRP!



The national network for 'station friends' and station adopters

**ACoRP – the Association of Community Rail Partnerships – is the national federation of voluntary station groups. It makes sense to join and be part of a friendly and supportive family!**

If you are based in Greater Manchester membership is free. If you are outside Greater Manchester the annual cost is £25 plus VAT.

This entitles you to receive all our publications (we do a quarterly magazine, Train Times, and a bi-monthly electronic newsletter).

You will also be able to participate at ACoRP events including seminars and conferences.



# Appendix 3

## ACoRP Membership – 2005

*Please sign us up as a member of ACoRP  
in the 'station friends' category*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please return with a cheque for £29.37 (including VAT) if you are based outside Greater Manchester, made out to Association of Community-Rail Partnerships, to: ACoRP, Rail and River Centre, Civic Hall, 15a New Street, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield HD7 5AB.

**We can also invoice you if that is easier. If so, please indicate  YES  NO**  
(include purchase order number if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_).

Note that we can send additional email information (like *Train on Line*) to other members of the same organisation – please provide their email addresses.

**Additional email addresses:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We would be grateful if you can send us supplementary information about your group including a constitution (if you have one) and examples of the work you are doing or planning to do (Please attach with your membership application).



# Appendix 4

## Example Press Release

### **PRESS RELEASE from FRIENDS OF PLODDER LANE STATION**

**505 Plodder Lane, Farnworth  
Bolton BL9 3TP**

**Phone: 01204 949737**

**Fax: 01204 944234**

To the news editor (immediate)  
May 28th 2006

### **GREEN FINGERED STATION FRIENDS CELEBRATE!**

Friends of Plodder Lane Station are celebrating further improvements at their station. On Wednesday June 12th at 11.30 Councillor Vicky Hampson will open the new station garden at Plodder Lane, which has been created by the Friends of Plodder Lane Station with help from local railway staff and Hollins Garden Centre.

‘We’re delighted with the work our volunteers have put in to create this new community facility,’ said Joe Taylor, chair of the group. ‘Some of our volunteers have spent hours of their own time digging out flower beds and creating an attractive area for passengers. We’ve also been delighted with the sponsorship we have had from Hollins Garden Centre, which provided us with bedding plants.’

Local railway staff at Bolton station have given some of their spare time to help out with some of the heavier work. ‘The staff at Northern Rail have been simply great,’ said Joe. ‘Nothing has been too much trouble and they feel as proud of the work as we do.’

Eileen Murphy, one of the green-fingered volunteers, is delighted with the group’s success. ‘We’ve helped make a fairly dull-looking station into something really special,’ she said. ‘Local people now feel proud to use their station.’

Friends of Plodder Lane Station are inviting station users and any members of the local community to join them for the celebration on Wednesday June 12th. Tea and cakes will be served and musicians from the Plodder Lane Band will perform at the station entrance before the official opening.

‘We hope the sun will shine and everyone will be able to admire the work we’ve done so far,’ said Joe Taylor. ‘We welcome the involvement of new volunteers – it’s fun and a good way to meet new people. Our next plan is to involve Plodder Lane Primary School in a station art project.’

Friends of Plodder Lane Station can be contacted on 07971 884241.

**Ends.**

#### **Further details:**

Joe Taylor on 01484 949737  
or 07971 884241.

#### **Note to editors:**

Friends of Plodder Lane Station was formed a year ago to provide community support to the local railway station. It is a totally voluntary group. The ‘Friends’ work closely with train operator Northern Rail and Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive. Their website is: [www.plodderlanestation.com](http://www.plodderlanestation.com).



# Appendix 5

## Example Constitution

### “Friends of Anytown Station” Constitution

- 1 The group shall be called “Friends of Anytown Station”**
- 2 The aims of the group are:**
  - \* To promote practical environmental enhancement works especially by volunteers for the benefit of the community and train passengers.
  - \* To publicise and raise awareness of the benefits of ‘green transport plans’, the train, and attractions of the station area and its environs to increase station ‘footfall’.
  - \* To encourage community involvement and ownership, particularly by young people and schools, in conservation, environment and associated education artworks, poetry, competition, etc. at the station and its environs.
  - \* To encourage local businesses to improve their own properties and in sponsoring environmental enhancements at the station area.
  - \* To campaign for improved infrastructure facilities and services.
  - \* To work in partnership with ALL stakeholders to achieve these aims.
- 3 To fulfil these aims the group will:-**
  - a) Undertake practical environmental, conservation, recycling works and other activities as they see fit.
  - b) Encourage partnerships with other like-minded groups to undertake such works.
  - c) Raise money/funding when necessary including by means of awards, grants and sponsorship for carrying out the aims of the group.
  - d) Publicise their activities and achievements.
- 4 The area is generally the environs of Anytown Station and the adjacent areas.**
- 5 The organisation shall apply for membership of The Association of Community Rail Partnerships.**
- 6 Membership shall be open to anyone interested in taking part in, or supporting, the works of the organisation.**



# Appendix 5

- 7** The organisation shall hold four meetings including an AGM each year to discuss its policy and administration. All members shall be entitled to attend and the meetings shall be fully advertised, especially at Anytown Station.
- 8** A committee and sub-committees shall be appointed as required to conduct the administration of the organisation. This committee (which will include a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer) will be in charge of the day to day running of the organisation, but will be answerable to meetings of members.
- 9** There shall be an annual subscription to help pay necessary expenses – to be fixed at a members’ meeting at such a rate as is from time to time thought appropriate.
- 10** Accounts shall be kept by the treasurer, submitted to an independent inspection and approved at a members’ meeting.
- 11** The organisation shall obtain any necessary insurance for volunteers on its projects, and for injuries to third persons, and damage to property.
- 12** This Constitution shall only be altered by consent of a majority of the members of the organisation.



# Appendix 6

## Funding sources

Greater Manchester PTE has a number of small grants that may be available for station adoption groups within Greater Manchester. Contact Steve Magner (Contacts, Appendix 1).

ACoRP also has a small grants fund (currently suspended). But feel free to enquire at address shown in 'Contacts'.

Most local authorities have small grants available for voluntary organisations. The easiest way to find out whom to contact will be through your local Council for Voluntary Service – find them in your phone book or ask ACoRP.

If you have a parish or town council, they invariably give small grants to local worthy causes.

A number of large organisations and firms both at national and regional level also provide funds and sponsorship for Community based projects. Ask ACORP for more details.

For bigger projects, there is a wide range of funding opportunities for voluntary groups. The Big Lottery Fund is currently being re-structured but may be able to help. Charitable foundations can also often have funds for your sort of project. Make sure it meets their criteria.

For big projects we strongly suggest that you seek advice from ACoRP.



# Appendix 7

## Station Adoption Agreement NORTHERN RAIL



Appendix 7 is the Station Adoption Agreement, and associated papers, used by Northern Rail. The forms are not for use – they are samples to illustrate how one particular train operating company goes about the detailed process.

Other train operators will have different policies and forms. If you are outside the Northern Rail area, please contact your local train operating company. If in doubt, get in touch with ACoRP for details of the appropriate TOC contact.



# Appendix 7

## Welcome

### Welcome to the Station Adoption Scheme.

We appreciate the time you are willing to give to help. We hope that the work we do together will create stations we are proud of and our customers will enjoy visiting.

We are committed to providing the best possible service for our customers. Our service standards are set to meet our customers' needs wherever possible. Through the Station Adoption Scheme, you will help us monitor your station and through this, we can improve the service we provide. The valuable and objective feedback you give us will let us know if we are meeting our targets and if you let us know something is wrong, we'll try to put it right. Please take a few minutes to read these guidelines. They explain what information we require and give you advice on how to inspect your station.



Finally, thank you for joining the scheme. We hope you enjoy your time as a Station Adopter.

**The Station Adoption Team**



# Appendix 7

## Terms and Conditions

There are a small number of rules that you must follow during your time as a Station Adopter. They are not designed to limit your involvement at your station, but take into account both health and safety and insurance considerations. Hopefully, they will make sure we have a safe and enjoyable partnership.

We ask that all Station Adopters abide by the following rules:

- \* You must not act in a manner that could lead others to believe you are an employee of Northern Rail or its contractors.
- \* You are respectfully asked not to act in a manner that could be considered to be defamatory towards Northern Rail, its agents or contractors.
- \* You must follow any instructions given by our employees or any other authorised railway personnel while on Northern Rail property.
- \* When visiting your station you must not act in a way that may jeopardise your safety or that of customers, employees or anyone else using the station or railway.
- \* You may not act in a manner that may jeopardise the safe running of the railway.
- \* Access to the railway track is strictly prohibited.
- \* You must stay within the public areas. You may not enter any areas that are marked 'private', 'no unauthorised access' or in any other manner that prohibits public access.
- \* Do not carry out any maintenance or repair work without prior written permission from the Station Adoption Manager.
- \* Do not alter, move or remove any station facility without prior written permission from the Station Adoption Manager.
- \* You must not carry out your inspection in a manner that may damage property belonging to Northern Rail, its contractors or its customers.
- \* When visiting your station with the purpose of making an inspection, you must comply with our alcohol and drugs policy.
- \* Northern Rail reserves the right to alter these Terms and Conditions if deemed necessary.

Northern Rail reserves the right to remove anyone from the scheme who, in the opinion of the Station Adoption Manager, has acted in contravention of the above rules or at the request of Station Management. We want you to enjoy your time as a Station Adopter, but we hope that you understand our need to have some rules. The above will make sure your station inspections are done safely and properly.



# Appendix 7

## Membership Details

### Your Membership

#### What is the Station Adoption Scheme?

It is a privilege for us to provide such an important service to so many communities, both large and small across the north of England.

As part of our commitment to strengthening our links with each community we have introduced the Station Adoption Scheme. Each of our stations has an Adopter, who visits the station once a week and reports back to us with details of any faults that may have occurred. This information is then passed to the managers in charge of correcting these faults and the repairs are made.

Each Station Adopter can therefore play a very big part in keeping our stations in top condition.

#### What is an Adopter?

An Adopter is someone who cares about the appearance of his or her local station and wants to do something that will make a difference.

Station Adopters visit their station once a week and look for any problems that may be present. Something may have broken or been vandalised.

You will have been given some Service Quality Log forms. These are completed weekly, giving details of any problems that you may find.

The size of our network is so large, we could not hope to visit every station often enough to make sure problems do not go unnoticed and this is why the work you do is essential to us. By spotting problems soon after they occur, the necessary repairs can be made much sooner, stopping them from getting worse and keeping the station up to standard.

This is why we appreciate the work done by our Station Adopters so much.



# Appendix 7

## What do I need to do as an adopter?

The information you provide is important and can make a real difference for our customers. As an Adopter we need you to visit your station at least once per week and with a minimum of five days between each visit. The following pages will give you guidance on how to conduct a thorough station inspection. Please also bear the following in mind:

If you will be unable to attend due to holiday commitments or ill health, let us know. Please remember that membership of the scheme is on the understanding that we will receive regular reports.

Please remember to advise us as soon as possible, if your contact telephone number changes.

If you require any help at all, please feel free to contact us on 01904 522 799 and we will be happy to clarify anything and answer your questions.

We appreciate the contribution you will make, but please remember that above all else, we value your safety. Please be careful when visiting your station and don't take any unnecessary risks. We have put together a Safety Brief to assist you. Please make sure you are familiar with the advice it gives.

Finally, we know that many of our station adopters use our services. Indeed it is often this that leads people to join the scheme. You are a valued customer, but please remember that if you have any complaints about our services, you should still contact the Customer Relations Department. Their phone number is 0845 600 11 59.

## The faults I report are not being repaired

During your time as an Adopter, please bear in mind that some of the issues you highlight may not be addressed immediately. For example: you may believe that the station is in need of redecoration. By all means, let us know, but due to budgetary considerations, some cosmetic work and minor faults may not receive attention immediately.

It is also worth considering that once you have advised us of a problem or fault, we will be aware of it and looking to correct it. We realise you may find it frustrating if work doesn't appear to be done, so please feel free to contact us for an explanation if you would like one.



# Appendix 7

## How do I use my travel pass?

As a member of this scheme you will have received a complimentary travel pass for use on our services. Please remember to always have your pass with you when you travel and to show your photo card. If you forget your pass, you will need to buy a ticket and we will not be able to give you a refund.

When making a journey, please always make sure you will be travelling on one of our trains. The pass is not accepted on the services of any other operators unless written permission is given through this office. Please do not ask conductors who work for other companies to allow you to travel on their trains free of charge.

The pass remains the property of Northern at all times and can be withdrawn at any time. If we request you to return your pass, for whatever reason, please send it immediately to our freepost address. Any delay may incur charges in line with the equivalent Rail Rover ticket.

When using your pass, you must still abide by the Railway Byelaws and National Rail Conditions of Carriage, which are available from any of our ticket offices on request.

If your train is delayed you will be exempt from compensation payments under the Passengers Charter, but the Customer Relations Department will always look at any claims you make sympathetically. Just attach a copy of your pass to any correspondence you may send.

## How long will I be an adopter?

There are no strict time limits to determine how long you will adopt your station for.

You can leave the scheme at any time by advising us in writing of your intention. We will then advise you how to return your travel pass.

If you do not meet your commitments or if your reports are consistently not to the standard we need, we may look at ending our partnership. If we do have any concerns, we will let you know so we can look at solving any problems.

Also, other people applying to join the scheme will be put on a reserve list. In the interest of fairness, we will look periodically at passing on stations to other interested customers. Again, we will let you know if this happens.



# Appendix 7

## Station Visits

### Visiting Your Station

To carry out a thorough inspection, we recommend that you take your Service Quality Log with you and allow between ten and fifteen minutes.

Please familiarise yourself with the Service Quality Log. The questions it asks can be answered with a tick in the appropriate 'yes' or 'no' boxes. Where this may not be the case, you will also be given the option of 'N/A' for 'not applicable'.

All questions **must** be answered where appropriate.

Please also remember that you should keep any comments you may add, brief and to the point.

If you are reporting a fault for a second time, please do not mark the form "as before" or "as previously stated". Please provide details of the fault and mark the box to highlight that it is a repeat fault.

Please don't report facilities that are not available at your station as a fault, such as stations without a payphone or litter bins. Only report the removal of facilities if they appear to have been removed without permission. If you have any queries about the removal of any facilities please feel free to contact us.

Any faults that require immediate attention, such as; broken glass; every light out across the station; or the presence of syringes, should be reported to Customer Relations **immediately**.

However, still record the fault on the Service Quality Log, along with any reference number you may be given.

If you report anything to the British Transport Police, such as offensive graffiti or antisocial behaviour, please remember to get a crime reference/incident number. This should then be quoted on the Service Quality Log for that visit. This is very important in case we need to follow up your report.

When we receive your forms, the information is entered into a database and then passed to the managers responsible. The appropriate action is then taken. The database is in the same format as your forms, so please bear this in mind. Any additional notes that are not in the 'Station faults' boxes cannot be transferred to the database and as such cannot be used.

In order to make sure any faults are logged and corrected quickly, please make sure you return your completed forms as soon as possible. Please do not send several forms in at once. For the Station Adoption Scheme to work, we need to be told about problems quickly.

Finally, always use the twenty-four hour clock when inputting times. If you don't wear a watch and the station does not have a clock, please estimate the time of your visit.



# Appendix 7

## Completing Your Service Quality Log

This section goes through each section of the Service Quality Log in turn, with guidance on how to make sure each question is answered correctly.

### ‘General Questions’

As you enter the station, note if, on first impressions, it appears to be clean and tidy. For the purposes of the Station Adoption Scheme, ‘the station’ refers to the platforms that are in use and public areas including the booking office. The tracks, car parks, signals and any station shops are not covered as part of this scheme.

Can you see any obvious safety hazards, such as raised paving stones, scattered broken glass or ice? Your Safety Brief gives a more extensive list of faults that should be considered a hazard and must be reported immediately.

When assessing whether the station is in good decorative order, please be objective. Station decoration is purely functional and open to the elements. We have an ongoing station refurbishment scheme, with each station being redecorated in turn. We are mainly interested in anything that will need correcting sooner, rather than later, such as significant crumbling plaster work, noticeable staining or large areas of flaking paintwork. Also, please do not report the colour scheme as a fault.

Most of our stations will be redecorated with Northern branding, but the size of the task means this will not be done quickly or as a short-term priority.

The passenger safety signs, mentioned on the form are positioned at the end of each platform, advising passengers not to cross the lines. These are the only safety related signs on your station we need reporting. Any others are not covered by the scheme. The signs should be clearly visible and easy to read from the platform. Please stay within the public areas when checking the signs and do not leave the platform to move anything obstructing the view of the sign.

The white lines at the platform edge should be clearly visible, though some minor discolouration/fading is acceptable. They are there for the benefit of all passengers, including people with impaired vision, so please use sensible judgement when assessing this. You do not need to report the standard of any yellow lines near the platform edge, which are not covered by this scheme.



# Appendix 7

## 'Station Questions'

When you look at the fencing, shelters and seating, again, please be objective. We are mainly interested in damage that may lessen their usefulness. Please also try to be objective when assessing graffiti. We particularly need to know about anything that is obvious or offensive.

Please note that we do not require you to visit the station late at night to discover if youths loiter at the station and cause a nuisance. We are happy for you to use anecdotal evidence to support this. To reiterate: Please do not do anything that may jeopardise your safety when inspecting the station.

## 'Information Questions'

When noting whether the customer information screens (CIS) are working, please check that they are switched on and displaying accurate and current information. Where there are no CIS fitted, please mark the 'N/A' box.

At stations where there is a public address (PA) system, check the clarity of the announcements and whether the information is correct. Please only note that the PA is not working if you know for a fact that it is not or if a train arrives unannounced during your visit. Otherwise, mark the 'N/A' box, as we know which stations have a PA system and which don't. Where there is no PA, mark both 'N/A' boxes.

If there is a public phone or help phone, check that they are working. When checking the help phone facility, on receiving an answer, please advise the

person speaking that you are checking the help phone and give the station name. The successful test will then be recorded in the Customer Relations Department. Please note that when testing the \*\*1 (dial \* \* 1 on the phone keypad) and \*\*2 (dial \* \* 2 on the phone keypad) facilities, after dialling, a period of silence may follow the initial dialling tone. This will be followed by another dial tone. You will then hear the number being dialled. To clarify: \*\*1 connects to the British Transport Police and \*\*2 to our Customer Relations Department.

If there is a fault with any phones on your station, please report this directly to BT, who will arrange for the repairs to be made. Their number is: 0800 085 1665. When reporting a fault to BT, please get a reference number and advise us of this on the Service Quality Log. This will allow us to follow up any work that is done.

If any platform or subway lights are out, please give a brief description of where the faulty light is on the station. If the lights are numbered on your station, you only need to advise us of the number. If all lights are out, please report this immediately to Customer Relations on 0845 600 11 59.

When looking at the Quickfare (self-service ticket) machine, please check that the machine is switched on and undamaged. If possible, note whether passengers can buy a ticket. There is however, no obligation for you to buy a ticket as part of this check.



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## ‘Publicity Material Questions’

The Service Quality Log form only refers to our posters. These are timetables specific to our services, the Useful Information Posters and notices about our special offers and engineering work. Any other timetables, including Metro, SYPTe and Nexus timetables etc, and posters advertising promotions by other companies, including Railcards are not covered by this scheme. We do however need to know if the poster boxes holding these are damaged.

Please also note that it is acceptable for the Useful Information Poster to be covered by Engineering Work Posters. This should not be logged as a fault unless the poster is out of date.

## ‘Station Faults’

Please list each station fault on a separate line, marking any with a tick that are repeat faults.

List faults in the ‘Obvious Safety Hazards’ box **only** if the fault may affect the safe use of the station. Do not list other faults in this box.

If there is insufficient space in the ‘Station Faults’ boxes, you can continue in the ‘General Comments’ box. Otherwise, this can also be used to advise us of your holiday plans etc., or left blank.

Please remember to keep descriptions of faults brief. We receive a large number of Service Quality Logs each day and only require enough information to allow a maintenance team to identify the fault when they visit the station.

## ‘Travel Experience’

If you are making a journey with us on the same day as your station visit, please fill in the relevant details. We don’t need to be told if your train is late or not. This is automatically reported through other channels.



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## Other Information

### Useful Abbreviations

These are some commonly used abbreviations that may be useful.

**P1, P2 etc:** Platform 1, Platform 2 etc

**BO:** Booking Office

**Ent:** Entrance

**CIS:** Customer Information Screens

**PA:** Public Address

**CCTV:** Closed Circuit Television

**UIP:** Useful Information Poster

**OOO:** Out of Order

**OOD:** Out of Date

**BTPL:** British Transport Police

**NR:** Network Rail

### Useful Contact Details

**Station Adoption Manager**  
01904 522 799

**British Transport Police**  
0800 40 50 40

**Customer Relations**  
0845 600 11 59

**BT Telephone Fault Line**  
0800 085 1665

**National Rail Enquiries**  
08457 48 49 50



# Appendix 7

## Safety Briefing for Station Adopters

### Introduction

Your own safety must be your first concern at all times. You (and anybody with you) must observe the following rules while you are on Railway property:

### Safety Rules

- \* Never put yourself at personal risk.
- \* Never go on the track.
- \* Keep well away from platform edges – at least 4 feet unless you are boarding a train.
- \* Never touch anything in contact with overhead line equipment.
- \* Never touch any exposed electrical wiring or equipment.
- \* Where a foot crossing is provided only use it where necessary and follow any instructions provided.
- \* Follow any instructions given to you by railway staff and show them your authority to be on the premises if requested.
- \* Do not obstruct any paths or access points.
- \* Do not carry out any work other than that for which you have written authority and a written safe system of work. When carrying out any work other than a station inspection, **you must** advise Customer Relations when you arrive at the station and on your departure.

- \* Keep to the public areas of the station. Do not enter any areas marked 'Private' (or similar).
- \* Do not carry out a station visit whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs (see below).
- \* You must report your arrival and departure time on the Service Quality Log.

### Defect Reporting

If you find a defect, which presents an immediate risk to trains, report it straight away. If a member of railway staff is not immediately available telephone Customer Relations.

**Tell them that it is an emergency call and give your name, exact location and details of the fault.** Examples:

- \* Fallen trees.
- \* Collapsed overhead lines or debris on overhead lines.
- \* Large items/debris on the track.
- \* Loose platform edge (coping) stones/slabs.

Defects presenting an immediate danger to persons using the station must also be reported to Customer Relations, as above. Examples:

- \* Significant damage to footbridges and staircases etc, e.g. balustrades, steps or treads missing.
- \* Exposed wiring.



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- \* Collapsing or unstable structures.
- \* Broken glass.
- \* Damage to timber platforms.
- \* All station lights out.

*All other defects should be reported using the Service Quality Logs.*

*Examples:*

- \* Uneven floor surfaces, potholes etc.
- \* Damaged poster boards.
- \* Graffiti/vandalism.
- \* Minor structural damage, loose tiles etc.
- \* Damaged fences.
- \* Minor lighting defects.
- \* Damaged benches, litter bins etc.

## Reporting Accidents

If you or anyone working with you sustains an injury, however minor, you must report it to Customer Relations **immediately**. You must then fill in 'Form 44' and either fax it to the number on the form, or return it with your Service Quality Log. This must be done as soon as possible after the accident. Form 44 can be requested from the Station Adoption Office.

## Stopping Trains in an Emergency

If you need to stop a train in an emergency, e.g. to prevent a fatal or serious accident, stay on the station platform and **face the oncoming train with both arms raised above your head. Do not go on the track.**

## Cleaning and Gritting

You must only carry out cleaning or gritting if you have specific written authority from the Station Adoption Manager to do so. You must be briefed on any relevant safe systems of work and risk assessments. You **must not** approach within 4 feet of the platform edge whilst working.

## Alcohol and Drugs

The Rail Industry operates a **zero tolerance** policy extending to all staff, contractors and adopters.

**You must not carry out station visits if you are under the influence of or have recently consumed alcohol or drugs, nor must you consume them whilst carrying out a visit.**

The alcohol limit for rail staff is less than half the limit for car drivers. This limit also applies to Station Adopters. Further advice on compliance with this policy is available on request.

If you breach or are suspected of breaching this policy you will be permanently excluded from the Station Adoption scheme.

## Telephone Numbers

### Customer Relations:

0845 600 1159

### Station Adoption Manager:

01904 522799



## Alcohol & Drugs Policy

### Introduction

In the interests of safety, all Station Adopters are required to conform to Northern Rail's Alcohol & Drugs Policy. This policy is common to all Train Operating Companies and is in place to keep the railway and those using the railway safe.

When carrying out your station inspections, you must strictly observe the limits explained below. If, in the opinion of the Station Adoption Manager or any other rail employee, you try to make a station inspection while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, you will be immediately removed from the scheme.

We appreciate that you are not an employee, but we hope you can understand that the policy is imposed to make sure you can make your inspections safely.

### The Alcohol & Drugs Policy Requirements

The limits set by the Alcohol & Drugs Policy are:

#### Alcohol

- \* No more than 29 milligrams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood.
- \* No more than 13 micrograms of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath.
- \* No more than 39 milligrams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of urine.

You will notice that the levels set for maximum alcohol levels are less than half that for driving a car.

### Drugs

- \* No presence of drugs (both illegal and prescription) for which there is no legitimate medical need for either the use or the quantity of their use.

### Testing

As part of the Station Adoption Scheme, you are asked to comply with our Alcohol & Drugs Policy, but you will not be tested for the presence of alcohol or drugs. Anyone who is thought to be in contravention of the policy will be removed from the scheme immediately.



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## Station Adoption Agreement

To become a Station Adopter, please complete this form. It states that you agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of the Station Adoption Scheme.

Once signed, please return it to the Station Adoption Manager, who will send you a copy for your records.

I confirm that I wish to adopt

Station.

I have read and understood the Station Adoption Guidebook, Terms and Conditions, Safety Brief and Alcohol and Drugs Policy Statement and I am willing to be bound by them.

Signature:

Name (please print):

Date:

SAMPLE



