



Partneriaeth Rheilffordd
Cymunedol Dyffryn Conwy ac
Arfordir Gogledd Orllewin Cymru

Conwy Valley and North West
Wales Coast Community Rail
Partnership

Annual Report 2022/23

May 2023

Conwy Valley and North West Wales Coast
Community Rail Partnership

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Community Rail Officer



The Partnership – Who we are and our aims

Welcome to the Conwy Valley and North West Wales Coast Line Community Rail Partnership.

We are an accredited Community Rail Partnership, awarded by the Community Rail Network, Department for Transport and Welsh Government. Mr Philip Evans, Chair and Haf Jones, Vice Chair welcome you to this website which highlights the work we do in connecting communities to their railways.

Our partnership members include Transport for Wales, Avanti, Network Rail, British Transport Police, Snowdonia National Park, Conwy Council, Gwynedd Council, Station Adoption representatives, Creating Enterprise, Community Rail Network and Boots on the Ground.

The business activity plan is delivered by all members, led by the Community Rail Officer. Our plan aims to:

1. providing a voice for the community
2. promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
3. bringing communities together and supporting diversity and inclusion
4. supporting social and economic development

Conwy Valley and North West Wales Coast Community Rail Partnership covers the line from Blaenau Ffestiniog through to Llandudno and Llandudno Junction to Holyhead.



Message from the Chairman



In writing this brief introduction, it is appropriate that I record the departures and arrivals of some key people. Karen Williams, our Rail Officer, left to take up another position locally and Anwen Daniels, Blaenau Ffestiniog, our Vice-Chair, relinquished her role as a result of her retirement from Cyngor Gwynedd. We were sorry to see them go and are very grateful for work and enthusiastic support they gave to the Partnership. We have been very pleased to welcome Claire Williams as our new Rail Officer. Claire has considerable experience in events management locally and has

quickly settled into her new role. Our new Vice-Chair is Haf Jones, who is well-known in the area as Conwy CBC's Rural Development Officer. Having worked with Haf on the Fflecsi Bws project, I know she will be an excellent ambassador for the Partnership and public transport generally.

During the past year we have been active in promoting links with local organisations and community representatives particularly in the area to the west. This work will continue in the year ahead.

Transport for Wales' new Class 197 trains were formally launched by the Minister for North Wales, Lesley Griffiths MS, at Llandudno railway station in January. The name of the new unit, "Happy Valley" was put forward by a pupil of Ysgol Tudno, Llandudno. The ceremony was very well attended and it was good to see it supported by so many school children. We look forward to the use of the 197 units on the Conwy Valley route in the near future.

A key theme during the year has been the issue of safety on the railway. To promote awareness, particularly amongst young people, we have engaged in particular with schools in Holyhead and Conwy to facilitate the pupils' depiction of safety related matters at station sites. In doing this we have worked closely with Network Rail and British Transport Police; we hope to carry the initiative forward in the coming year.

One of the more positive experiences I have is contact with the station adopters who are based throughout our area. They form reliable and hard-working groups who add special touches to many of our stations. We are very grateful for the time and dedication they so readily give on a voluntary basis all the year round.

Philip C Evans JP FloL
Chairman

New Community Rail Officer – Claire Williams



I was appointed new Community Rail Officer for the Conwy Valley and North West Wales Coast Community Rail Partnership in January 2023.

By connecting and encouraging collaboration among businesses and organisations in local communities, we can empower those communities to work better together on a whole range of social, economic, cultural and environmental issues. I am very much looking forward to working with communities across the region.

I have worked in the local community for many years, with the Llandudno Extravaganza. I am looking forward to bringing my experience in events, community engagement and working in collaboration with external organisations to the role. Already I have attended the New Community Rail Officers event with Community Rail Network, took part in a 2 day social value training and also TrainEd.



Projects 2022-23

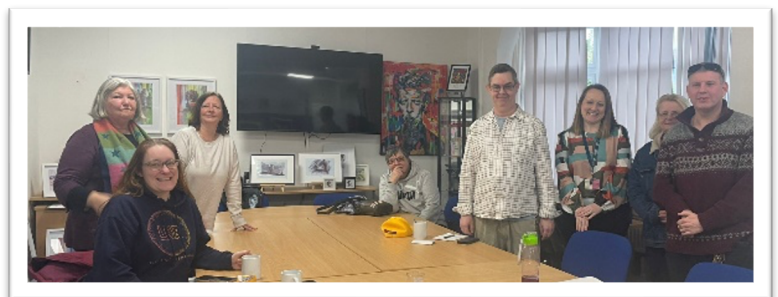
Community Resilience Grant Fund

In September of 2022 the Conwy Valley and North West Wales Coast Community Rail Partnership and Transport for Wales launched their second round of Community Grant Funding designed to support the resilience and sustainability of community organisations. Funding of up to £1,000 was available for community groups within a five-mile radius of stations along the routes from Llandudno to Blaenau Ffestiniog and Llandudno Junction to Holyhead. Applications were considered for a wide range of activities that could demonstrate their impact on the community and how the funding will sustain them in the future and keep services going. The fund was administered by Mantell Gwynedd and in December 2022 a total of £10,878.38 was awarded to the following community organisations:

- Conwy County Deaf Activities
- Deganwy Out of School Club
- Jon Egging Trust (JET)
- Llanfairfechan Town Football Club
- MaesG Showzone
- Blaenau Youth Shedz
- Tenovus Cancer Care
- Cylch Meithrin Parc Y Bont
- Cyngor Ysgol Llanfairpwllgwyngyll
- Seren Ffestiniog Cyf



“My normal default activities would be sport based and having lost some of those for various reasons I thought I needed to find something else to challenge me. And I find singing to be a satisfying combination of both physical (breath control) and mental exercise. I’ve met new people, experienced singing in public, signed up for a trip to Cardiff and every week I have a laugh. I love it.”





Greener Communities Community Grant Fund

Additional funding from Transport for Wales was made available for community groups within a one-mile radius of a station on the Conwy Valley and North West Wales Coast Line whose emphasis was on 'Green Projects'. Groups could apply for up to **£500** to deliver projects with a greener initiative such as habitat creation, bug houses and allotments. There were two successful applications to the following organisations:

- Partneriaeth Maesgeirchen Partnership
- Seren Ffestiniog Cyf

“For some of our members BSL is their primary method of communication with English being secondary. This can present the members with difficulties in everyday life. The coffee mornings and drop-in clinic provide a much needed service to our community, strengthening the bonds between us and providing us with the opportunity to make informed decisions, building our resilience and giving us the tools to prepare for future challenges.”

Wellbeing through Nature Walks

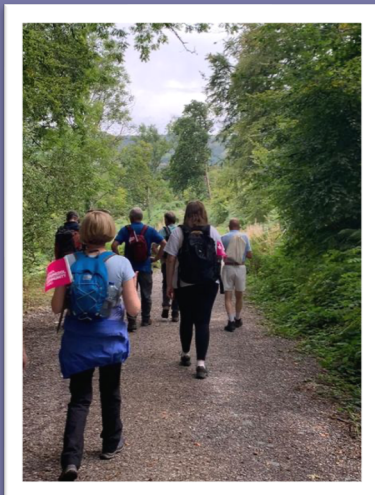
We teamed up with Conwy Mind to host 4 circular wellbeing walks. Walk leader, Nick from Conwy Mind's Wellbeing Team led the walks which started from stations along the Conwy Valley and North West Wales Coast. We were also joined by experts in areas such as archaeology.

The walks focused on the '**5 ways to wellbeing**' and mindfulness in woodland space with nature at your fingertips. During our walks, Nick shared tips on planning your own walk and how you can use the 5 ways to wellbeing to **connect, give, learn, take notice** and **be active** in our daily lives. These easy steps are simple and very effective.

Every walk was circular so that they all finish in the same destination as you arrived. Walks were approximately 5-6 miles long and start times for each varied depending on train or bus times. Locations were: Conwy Railway Station, Llanrwst North Railway Station, Aber Falls Bus Station, Betws y Coed Railway Station.



"I can fully recommend the above walks. I have attended them all over the last two years & have introduced two friends to them. Nick is an excellent leader & must be thanked for the effort he puts in to researching & organising these walks.



Each one is in a very interesting & scenic location & starts adjacent to railway or bus stops. Usually both. We have regular stops for talks on the surrounding's or small role plays. We quite often have experts on the area with us to give information on the history, animals, birds or plant & trees. We have a break to sit & eat our packed lunches & a chat to meet new friends. Each walk is around 4 hours, 5/6 miles. I really hope & look forward to the walks continuing this year."

Queen's Jubilee

Llandudno railway station was transformed into a wonderland for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration. Up to 50 volunteers and friends of the Conwy valley and North West Wales Coast Community Rail Partnership joined Transport for Wales at Llandudno station for afternoon tea, entertainment and magic hosted by the Mad Hatter!

100s of Transport for Wales rail passengers were greeted by the white rabbit, Cheshire Cat, the queen of hearts and of course Alice. Their smiles bigger than the Cheshire Cat, including one from Station Manager Andrew Baker!

Passengers loved the entertainment with local residents coming to the station asking for more events throughout the year.

Great community Rail teamwork with Jessica Wragg from 3 Counties connected and Sian Jones Community Rail Ambassador, Transport for Wales.



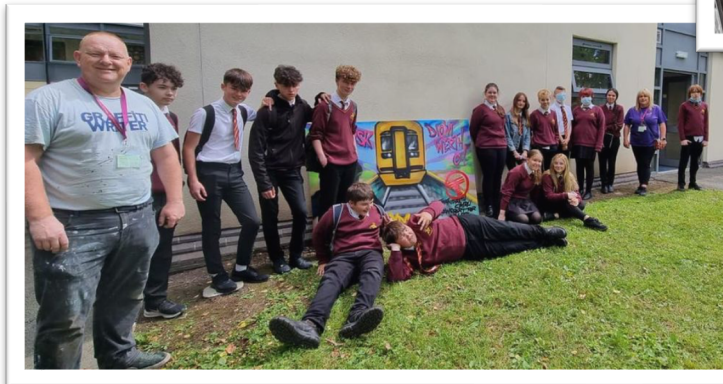
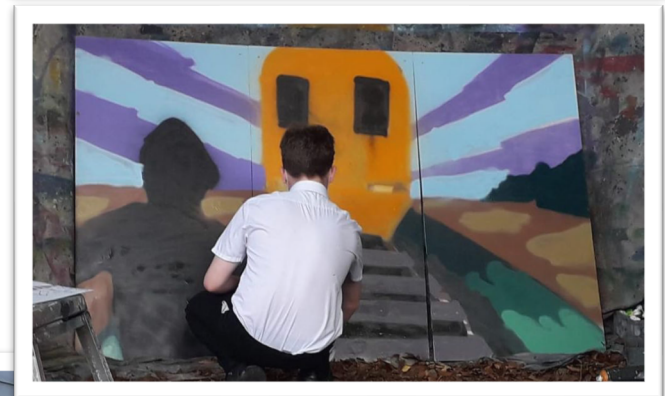
Safety Messages

Llanrwst North

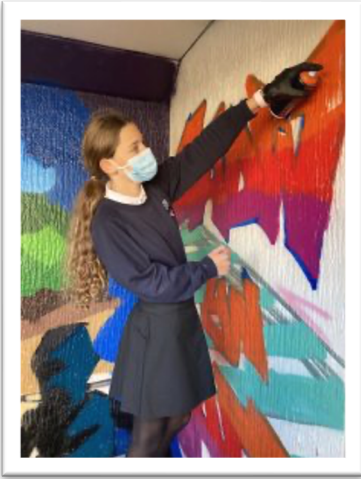
Artwork designed and created by pupils from Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy has been installed at North Llanrwst railway station.

The Conwy Valley and North West Wales Coast Line Community Rail Partnership worked with Graffiti Artist, Andy Birch (Dime One North Wales Graffiti Art Murals) and year 10 and 11 pupils from Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy to design a piece of art based on rail safety.

The artwork replaced an old and damaged piece in the shelter at North Llanrwst railway station. The frame to secure the artwork was kindly donated by College Llandrillo. The young people were given the opportunity to develop new skills whilst having fun and learning about rail safety.



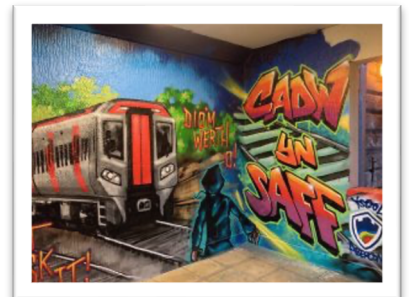
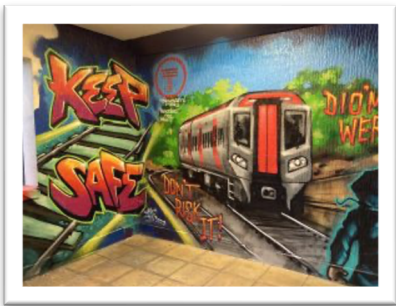
Conwy



There'll be no trespassing on the railways at Conwy as students from Ysgol Aberconwy work with Andy Birch (Dime One North Wales Graffiti Art Murals), to transform the shelter into a piece of art highlighting a very important rail safety message.

The project, in partnership with Transport for Wales, British Transport Police and funded by the Conwy Valley and North West Wales Community Rail Partnership, aimed to try and reduce trespass and anti-social behaviour at railway stations.

Andy Baker, Transport for Wales Station Manager (North West Wales) said, "It's important to engage with young people in a way that they understand, this project was a wonderful way of engaging with the pupils from Ysgol Aberconwy and get over the importance of safety around railways. It is a fabulous piece of Art. I was so impressed with the pupils from Ysgol Aberconwy, their engagement and how they had thought about the safety subject, they were polite and pleasant, a credit to their parents and the school."



Mr Gerrard, Headteacher said, "Congratulations to everyone involved and thank you for all your hard work. As a school we were delighted to be asked to participate in this important initiative that could help to save lives."

World Book Day

We provided various themed entertainment at stations and libraries on the Conwy Valley and Northwest Wales Coastline.

- In Llandudno there was a local children's book Author and the characters from her book providing a reading of her book published in lockdown, Trixibelle.
- Llanrwst had a Welsh storyteller based in the local library.
- At Bangor train station there was a magician providing a children's magic show.
- At Culture Conwy centre there was a pirate themed show.

We will invite local schools close to the stations to come to experience the entertainment. The aim of the project was to bring communities together and support diversity & inclusion whilst also supporting social development. By involving a local author and local entertainers we also supported economic development. The 4 locations allowed us to engage with over 450 children.

We teamed up with Conwy Libraries and Conwy Family information services to deliver the project. Conwy Family Information services provided each child in Conwy County locations with a free activity pack with colouring pencils etc.



"All pupils thoroughly enjoyed visiting the library and listening to the storyteller. The activity was organised well for the age group and staff and pupils reported that they really enjoyed themselves."

"The whole aspect was excellent, the children thoroughly enjoyed it! Thank you also for the books and the free items the children received."



"Thank you so much for organising this morning. It was brilliant!! The children loved it."

Again, thank you so much..."



#RandomActofKindness

In 2023, one of the first things Claire did was to identify a number of dates where the CRP can provide a random act of kindness to the commuters on the railway.



St Dwynwen's Day

Valentine's Day



"Just wanted to say thank you as I received one of your lovely biscuits today from Llandudno train station. I've never had anything for Valentine's Day, so I really do appreciate your kindness."



Each of the days above had a supply of the items at the booking offices in Llandudno, Llandudno Junction and Bangor. The Community Rail Officer also handed them out to passengers on board the trains.



St David's Day

Looking forward 2023/24

We will continue to work closely with TfW, Avanti and other organisations on future projects.

Llandudno Junction will have a new tenant in the café. Porters will be taking over the space and transforming it into a new community café.

We will be celebrating a number of anniversaries across the 2 lines. The North Wales Coastline is 175 years old this year. Bangor station (1st May), Llandudno Junction station (1st August) and Holyhead station (1st August). The Conwy Valley line to Llanrwst is also 160 years old.