

New community group to Devon railway station

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Network Rail has worked with Sampford Courtenay Parish Council in Devon to brighten up the platform of the local station, which is currently not used for passenger services, and provide space for community garden planters while creating a more pleasant view for people passing through on trips to and from Okehampton.

The station, situated on the newly reopened Dartmoor line, previously hosted occasional heritage rail traffic and had become overgrown in recent years owing to the lack of passenger use. As part of the reopening of the Dartmoor line, Network Rail enhanced the platform, laying new tarmac and installing fencing.

Following discussions with the parish council's environment and sustainability group, Network Rail was able to secure site access for local volunteers, who received a key to allow them to come and go and set about tending to the planters and keeping the area clean and tidy.

Máedóc Ellis, Network Rail's community support manager for community rail, said: "I'm so pleased that we've been able to work with the parish council and local volunteers to find a solution that suits their

needs.

“The community group have already brightened up the platform by decorating it for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee earlier in the summer and by tending to the planters.

“Passengers travelling through the station will now have an appealing view from their carriage when they pass by, which helps to make the railway more welcoming for all.

“I look forward to seeing how the volunteers progress within the Sampford Courtenay community rail group and hope that looking after the station for local residents and passengers brings further social benefits to the railway.”

Marion Pratt, clerk to Sampford Courtenay Parish Council said: “Sampford Courtenay Parish Council environment and sustainability group are very pleased to be part of the fantastic reopening of the Dartmoor Line.

“Keeping Sampford Courtenay Station looking clean, tidy and colourful is just doing our small bit in the hope that the station will be re-opened for a Sunday service or request stop in the not too distant future, with our main goal for a regular service for our parishioners and those of the neighbouring parishes.”

Photo credit: Network Rail