

Stagecoach joins forces with ACoRP to promote stronger communities

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Stagecoach has joined forces with ACoRP to harness the power of the railway to boost regional economies and promote stronger communities.

This joint approach will support local and regional economies, encourage fairness, diversity and inclusion, and look for innovative ways for the railway and community to engage. For example, the partnership will include looking at how communities can make use of underutilised facilities at railway stations, supporting work to help young people and groups with disabilities to access rail travel, and creating better connections between rail, walking and cycling.

ACoRP is the membership body for **60 Community Rail Partnerships** and represents over 1000 **station adoption groups**. As a leading provider of public transport in the bus and rail sectors, Stagecoach has supported ACoRP for a number of years with funding and partnership initiatives through its rail businesses. This has helped to drive greater engagement of communities in their local lines and stations, and significant growth to passenger numbers on community rail lines served by Stagecoach. The new approach will enable Stagecoach to work additionally with ACoRP at a group-wide level.

Tim Shoveller, Managing Director of Stagecoach Rail, said: "We strive to be a trusted and successful public

transport business, supporting local economies, and being a respected community partner.

“We are proud to have worked closely with ACoRP for many years through our rail businesses, and we strongly support the improvements ACoRP delivers for customers and communities.

“This new partnership means we can work directly alongside ACoRP as Stagecoach Group to harness the power of the railway to boost regional economies and promote stronger communities. We will also be looking for opportunities to work with ACoRP to understand how this concept could apply to more remote communities where the bus is the key mode for people”.

Jools Townsend, Chief Executive of ACoRP, said: “We are excited to be embarking on this wide-ranging partnership with Stagecoach. We are here to help communities engage with railways, and get maximum benefit from their local lines and stations. We represent hundreds of community rail groups around Britain, whose work can be life-changing – from helping people with disabilities access new opportunities via rail, to raising awareness about sustainable and active travel among children, to bringing local people together through healthy volunteering activities. These groups are community-based, but the collaboration of the rail industry is vital.

“Stagecoach train operators have long provided support to community rail, but this partnership will enable us to work together on a wider basis. Together, we can help more communities get involved and have a voice in local transport, and ensure that communities are firmly at the forefront of Stagecoach’s services.”