

Next stop for Community Rail? The Socially Enterprising Railway

Prof. Paul Salveson MBE

(Heart of Wales Line Development
Co. and University of Huddersfield)

Background: ATOC Report

- ATOC commissioned ACoRP to research experience of TOCs working with small businesses/social enterprises.
- Research carried out by Heart of Wales Line Development Co. – a rail-based social enterprise – David Edwards and Rachel Francis
- Final report is now available

Each a glimpse.....

But not gone for ever!

- A few snapshots of community business on the railway across the UK
- Some great examples in Wales (and beyond)
- Great potential to go further
- Can we build this good practice into the new franchise?

Anyone for tea?



And to go with it.....



The mobile station buffet



Return of the traditional station buffet!



The perfect combination



Pop-Ups with Virgin



No ordinary booking office



Llandeilo Community Hub



Kilmarnock: before



And after.....



Local pride...Kilmarnock Station Village



Marriages made in heaven? All happens at Pollokshaws West



The last railway nursery...thriving!



Be inventive!



Are you being served?



The Benefits: Rail Industry

- Breaks down barriers between railway and community: builds trust
- Brings stations back to life; makes them attractive and welcoming
- Adds additional services (e.g. On-train catering)
- Right approach can bring external investment
- 'Feel good' factor drives up usage
- Small but not insignificant extra property income
- New niche markets (freight...and more)

Benefits: Local Communities

- Creates jobs and training opportunities
- Offers affordable space to SMEs
- Local economy grows
- Brings station environment back to life – local pride
- Provides a base for SME networks:
‘Kilmarnock village’
- Builds further potential opportunities

Benefits: Passengers

- Stations become welcoming and fun places
- Additional services e.g.
 - Station cafe/pub
 - Other retail services
 - on-train catering
- Potential new ticket office facilities
- Less anti-social behaviour
- Passengers are part of their communities – local pride in ‘our station’

Next stop for Community Rail?

- Most of these examples have been supported by Community Rail Partnerships
- CRPs need to get new partners in business community (e.g. 'Rural Concierge')
- Must to go beyond a simple 'marketing-led' approach and be more entrepreneurial
- Need for creative thinking and 'can do' approach
- Must be encouraged by new franchise specification and positive engagement by all bidders
- There are risks – as with any business. Needs support of WG, DfT and other public sector bodies including English LEPs
- The 'community business unit' concept has huge potential – Heart of Wales Line and Settle-Carlisle are the pioneers