

Registration number: 05132845

Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership

Abbreviated accounts for the year ended
31 March 2005



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COMPANIES HOUSE

AWYUTAGH

401

17/11/2005

A14
COMPANIES HOUSE

101

25/10/2005

Introduction

This is the company's first annual report and includes details of the company from the initial idea to set it up through to the end of July 2005. The financial report covers the 2004/2005 financial year.

The Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership was formed in 2004 with the aim of:

"Promoting, strengthening and protecting the role of the Tyne Valley Railway Line for residents, visitors, employers, and service providers".

The role of a community rail partnership is to link the railway with the community that it serves, promoting the services on offer and encouraging people to try them out. CRPs are not campaigning organisations, but are there to undertake practical actions that will maximise the use of the line.

The first stage in developing the Tyne Valley CRP was to convene a meeting of all the interested parties to establish their interest and willingness to commit to the venture. This was held in Hexham in February 2003. Organisations represented included local authorities and parish councils, Tynedale and Tyne & Wear Rural Transport Partnerships, the Northumberland National Park, train operators, Network Rail, market town and tourism partnerships, pressure groups, (such as the Rail Users' Group and Sustrans) and volunteering agencies. Even the Highways Agency (which is responsible for the A69, the trunk road that runs parallel with the Tyne Valley line) attended.

A steering group was drawn from the attendees at this inaugural meeting. This group oversaw the compilation of an action plan and applications for funding. The timing was awkward as the Countryside Agency (which had funded other community rail partnerships) had disbursed nearly all of the available funding and had insufficient to permit the partnership to recruit a paid officer. Consequently, much of the work of the partnership has so far been carried out by members of the board and steering group, or by consultants.

Nevertheless, the Countryside Agency was able to provide some funding, and more has come from North Pennines Leader + (money which comes from the European Rural Development Fund). The then train operator, Arriva Trains Northern provided in-kind help in the shape of travel permits for the partnership and the use of a vacant office on Hexham station.

Nearly all other community rail partnerships exist under the aegis of a local authority, which provides accommodation, line management for staff and book keeping support. None of the local authorities through whose area the Tyne Valley line runs was able to host the partnership. Consequently, the decision was taken at an early steering group meeting to incorporate the partnership as a company limited by guarantee in order that it should be able to employ its own

staff when funding might permit and, in the mean time, sign the lease for the office on offer from Arriva Trains Northern.

The company has "members" that are represented by a steering group and a board (representing a number of key players including the Tyne Valley Rail Users' Group, the Tynedale Rural Transport Partnership, Northumberland County Council in the form of an elected councillor, and the Gateway Stations Project). A list of these individuals and organisations can be found in the appendices.

Report on Activities

To date, the activity of the company has been undertaken by a mixture of self-employed co-ordinators and consultants. As a whole, the work has been supervised by the board. Each of the company's principle areas of activity so far is detailed below.

Event trains

The most visible activities of the partnership are the event trains. This concept was pioneered on the Penistone and Whitby lines, and involves musical entertainment and a bar. From the train operator's point of view, the event should fill lots of seats on a train that might otherwise not be carrying many passengers. Finding local musicians and a small brewery in the area pushes all the right buttons for a community venture, and for a small outlay introduces the idea of rail travel to many who might not otherwise use the train. Two trains were run very successfully last year during the summer and five are running over during the summer of 2005.

Information Boards

A key step for a community rail partnership is to build links with the communities served by the line and with the local businesses in the vicinity of the stations. Simple things like advertising the presence of the stations, where the trains go to and the fares are obvious steps to take. While people generally know where the stations are, they are often surprised at how frequently trains run and how the services available can get them to their destinations at times they want to travel. It also benefits the local community if passengers alighting at stations can find out what amenities are available in the neighbourhood. The partnership is surveying stations and is proposing to erect notice boards at the stations and in the settlements they serve to provide this information. The boards are now on order and will be erected during the winter of 2005.

A Business Case for the Tyne Valley Line

Probably the most far reaching of the partnership's activities is the study of the line, jointly commissioned with Nexus with a contribution from Northumberland County Council. The study is intended to determine the potential for improvements to services and facilities, the potential for patronage growth and improved integration between transport modes along the Tyne Valley line. The

partnership recognises the realities of the commercial world, and the study is intended to develop a business case for the enhancements that communities served by the line would like to see. The study is taking place against the backdrop of a government sponsored enquiry of services provided across the whole of the Northern franchise area, with the alarming possibility that the subsidy the franchise receives might be subsequently pared back.

Retail Study

The original intention for the office on Hexham station was for the partnership officer to be located there. It is conceivable that the adjacent accommodation might be used as a retail outlet – a facility that used to exist until the early 1990s. A retail study has been commissioned to establish the feasibility of such an enterprise. Such a venture would provide a useful service to users of Hexham station and would also give the partnership a source of income in the longer term.

A New Action Plan

Most of the work carried out so far has been done by the directors of the partnership or by consultants. Securing adequate funding to be able to recruit a partnership officer is an urgent priority, although it is not at all clear where this funding is to come from. A new action plan for the next period will be required that can build on the progress to date and address the recommendations that will come from the two key studies currently under way.

Appendix 1 – Directors

Jim Beale

Malcolm Chainey (Treasurer, Tyne Valley Rail Users' Group)

Drew Haley (Northern Rail)

Gordon Harrison (Nexus)

Paul Kelly (Northumberland County Council)

Peter Mogridge (Chairman, Tynedale Rural Transport Partnership)

Company Secretary: Janice Peggs (Gateway Stations)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Chainey', is written in a cursive style.

Statement of income & expenditure 2004/05

Details	Income	Expenditure
Grants and other income		
Tynedale Rural Transport Partnership	£3,000.00	
Tyne & Wear Rural Transport Partnership	£3,000.00	
Tynedale Community Opportunities Fund	£2,305.00	
Countryside Agency	£14,168.75	
Bank interest	£129.59	
Set up costs		
Office refurbishment and set up		£5181.73
Company registration		£300.00
Running costs		
ACoRP membership		£176.25
Board meeting		£37.50
Phone		£7.50
Consultancy		
Consultants fees		£2274.00
Travel & subsistence		£525.24
Publicity		
Newsletter design and editorial		£172.50
Newsletter printing		£1057.58
Newsletter postage		£106.20
Copy for public transport guides and related publicity		£750.00
Website design		£250.00
Website domain registration		£50.00
Office opening event		£30.00
Event trains		
Performers		£310.00
Performing Rights Society licences		£47.38
Totals	£22603.34	£11275.88
Excess of income over expenditure		£11327.46

Balance sheet

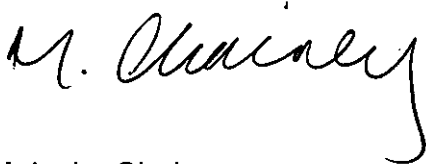
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Fixed assets	100.00
Cash at bank	11327.46
Liabilities	NIL
TOTAL	11427.46

These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small companies.

The directors state that:

- a. For the year ended 31 March 2005 the company was entitled to exemption under section 249A(1) of the Companies Act 1985;
- b. Members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 249B(2) of the Companies Act 1985;
- c. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for:
 - (i) ensuring the company keeps accounting records which comply with section 221; and
 - (ii) preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year, and of its profit or loss for the financial year, in accordance with the requirements of section 226, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the company;
- d. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions in Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small companies.

These accounts were approved by the board and signed by:



Malcolm Chainey
Director