

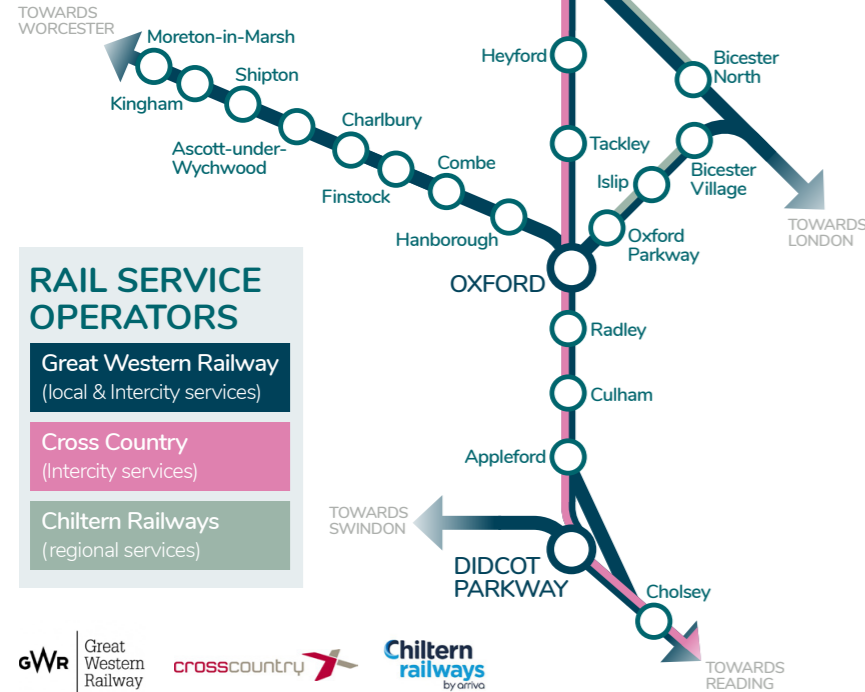
Oxfordshire Community
Rail Partnership

IMPACT REPORT

2023-24



OUR STATIONS & ROUTES



RAIL SERVICE OPERATORS

Great Western Railway
(local & Intercity services)

Cross Country
(Intercity services)

Chiltern Railways
(regional services)



CONTENTS

Welcome	03
Our Vision	05
Our Goals	06
Our Year In Numbers	07
Access & Inclusion	08
Cotswold Calm Corner	
Connecting Communities	
Oxfordshire Travel Survey	
Social Value	14
Getaway	
Let's Talk Travel	
Leisure & Tourism	18
Destination Innovation	
TrainTripper	
Taste for Travel	
Stations as Places	22
Our Team	24
Finance	26
Our Community Partners	27

WELCOME

Our inaugural year of delivery has been a transformative period for sustainable transport and community engagement in Oxfordshire.

Our journey began with a clear vision: to use the railway to improve the lives of people living in Oxfordshire and to give visitors a high-quality welcome. We've approached this mission with enthusiasm, innovation, and a deep commitment to alignment with stakeholders, inclusivity and sustainability.

In our first year, we've made significant strides in establishing ourselves as a vital link between communities, rail operators, and local authorities. Our focused and targeted approach has allowed us to make meaningful impacts across Oxfordshire's diverse communities.

Our delivery programmes:

- 1. ACCESS & INCLUSION**
- 2. SOCIAL VALUE**
- 3. LEISURE & TOURISM**
- 4. STATIONS AS PLACES**

OxCRP Community Development Officer Alayne McDonald at the GWR Community Rail and Stakeholder Conference



Special recognition goes to our Community Rail Development Officer, Alayne McDonald, whose unique blend of health and social care expertise with strategic stakeholder engagement has been pivotal. Alayne's commitment to equity and inclusion, coupled with their ability to balance community needs and high-level strategy, has been instrumental in establishing OxCRP's impactful and holistic approach. From initiating our feasibility study to driving key initiatives, Alayne's vision and dedication have been the cornerstone of our success.

We've made significant progress in building strong relationships with our stakeholders. Cross-sector collaborations with our community, public and private sector partners have been instrumental in our success and have allowed us to leverage resources and expertise, maximising our impact across the county with special thanks to Great Western Railway, Chiltern Railways, CrossCountry Trains, Active Oxfordshire, Oxford University and Oxfordshire County Council.

It is important to express gratitude to our dedicated team, our sister CRP in Gloucestershire and our non-executive directors of GoCRP board members, and all our partners who

“Collaboration with our sister CRP in Gloucestershire and our partners, communities and local stakeholders has driven our success.

– Hannah McDonnell, Executive Director GoCRP

have made this successful first year possible. Together, we're not just improving transport links; we're building stronger, more connected, and more sustainable communities across Oxfordshire. We are particularly excited to welcome an inspirational industry leader, Daisy Chapman-Chamberlain, to chair our steering group. Their wealth of experience and passion for community rail aligns perfectly with our vision.

Looking ahead, we're excited to build on this strong foundation. We aim to expand our reach, deepen our community engagement, and pioneer innovative solutions to sustainable transport challenges. Our goal is to ensure that rail travel in Oxfordshire is not just a mode of transport, but a catalyst for positive change in our communities.

As we move into our second year, we remain committed to our core values of inclusivity, sustainability, and community-led action. We look forward to the positive changes we can bring to Oxfordshire in the coming year and beyond.

Hannah McDonnell
Executive Director
Go CRP CIC

Daisy Chamberlain-Chapman
Chair
OxCRP Steering Group



OUR VISION...

...is to use the railway network to improve the lives of people living in Oxfordshire and to give tourists a high-quality visitor experience.

OUR GOALS

- Inclusion of diverse and less advantaged groups and communities, developing rail-based solutions that address short-term needs and enable long-term opportunities.
- Inclusively empower local communities to connect to Oxfordshire's railway to enrich lives and create new opportunities for them and others.
- Improve the welcome for everyone who travels to and through Oxfordshire's stations and help visitors access neighbouring spaces and places.
- Add a voice, resources and activities to promote sustainable and active travel to, from and around Oxfordshire.
- Work in partnership with others to improve the fabric and quality of places in and around the and the communities it serves.



OXFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP - A YEAR IN NUMBERS



152+

Connections made with stakeholders and local organisations



500+

Audience members engaged with our messaging



115

Young people engaged through our programme delivery



955

Meaningful responses to surveys received and analysed



11

Organisations represented on GoCRP Steering Group



8

New leisure maps and travel confidence resources

“It’s incredible to see the impact of our community connections, which have truly been the driving force behind our success this year.” – Alayne McDonald, OxCRP

DELIVERY PROGRAMME: 1

ACCESS & INCLUSION

Ensuring all community members, regardless of background, can benefit from their local rail network



COTSWOLD CALM CORNER

Developing an inclusive space for all travellers

In 2022 during the OxCRP feasibility study, we started work scoping and developing an evidence base for a Cotswold Calm Corner. Recognising that for many people, including disabled people and those from multi-faith backgrounds, rail travel presents a range of access barriers, we sought to consult, design and develop an inclusive station-based space that enhances station accessibility and passenger wellbeing.

Working closely with inclusive design consultants and our sister CRP, Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership (GCRP), we audited five stations with close links to the Cotswolds AONB to understand where a calm corner would be best placed. The Cotswold Calm Corner shows huge potential to increase ridership, while also unlocking access to the landscape for more communities.

Aligning with public health priorities and consulting closely with a lived experience user group, we developed the Cotswold Calm Corner concept for a station facility that provides an accessible environment for disabled people, decompression space for neurodivergent users and multi-faith area for those wishing to pray or reflect.

Now, focusing closely on Oxford Station, and the potential to incubate the concept across the rail network, we continue to work with our rail industry partners, Oxfordshire County Council and local groups to further develop the Cotswold Calm Corner into a ready-to-go package of technical design guidelines. As part of this, we will be rolling out a further round of lived experience consultations in 24/25, working with CrossCountry Access Panel members, customer feedback auditors and GWR Accessibility Mentors, to understand how the space can benefit the widest range of passengers.

“All information necessary for my journey available in one space would be really useful as I’m constantly checking departure screens!”

– Lived experience user group workshop participant

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

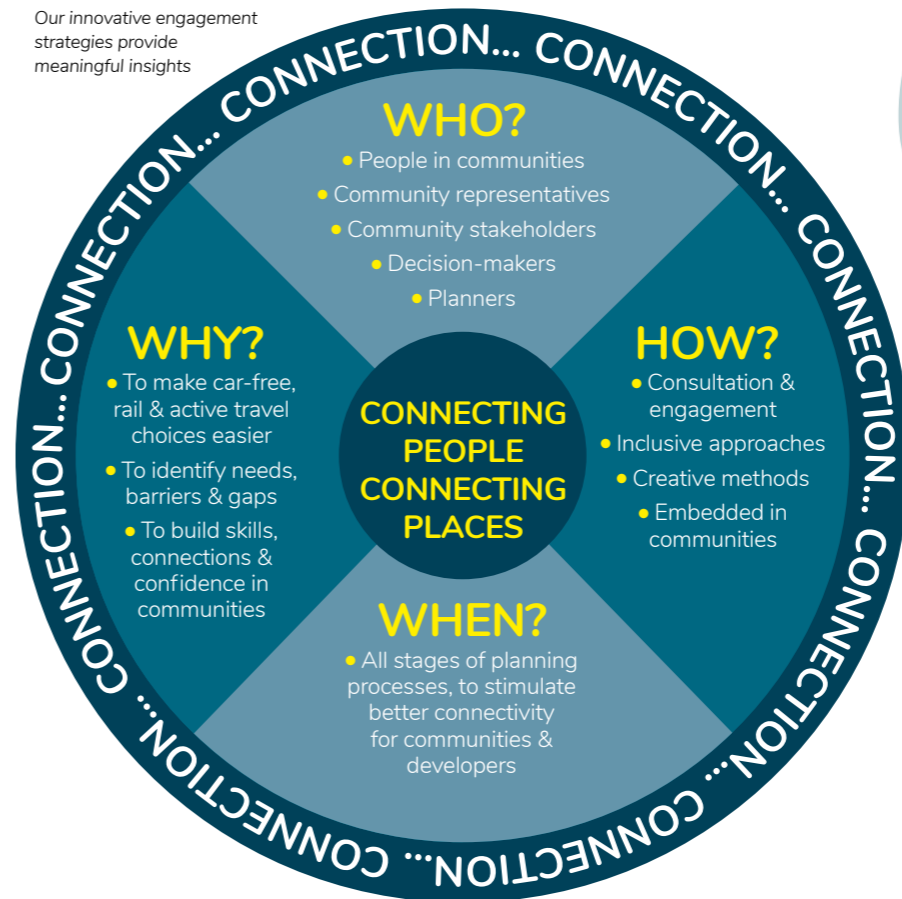
Identifying transport needs and barriers inclusively

Our Connecting Communities programme aims to better understand travel behaviours, needs, barriers and motivations for modal shift in Oxfordshire. The programme rests upon our commitment to understanding local needs through inclusive and engaging consultation processes and the importance of being able to plan journeys to and from the station, navigate the surrounding area, and confidently embrace integrated transport options.

We've developed two brand new Access & Active Travel Maps for Banbury and Didcot Parkway stations that support wayfinding, journey planning, and the overall welcome to the area for local people and visitors alike. Working closely with a cartographer and our local stakeholders who hold valuable insight into their local area, we designed, developed and consulted on the new maps to ensure accuracy. As we look ahead to our 2024/25 activity, we are planning exciting and engaging community events across the county that will allow us to activate our maps using our Connecting Communities Impact and Evaluation toolkit.



Our innovative engagement strategies provide meaningful insights



“OxCRP is working to greatly enhance access to sustainable transport and local connectivity for Oxfordshire’s diverse communities and visitors. Collaborating with OxCRP enables us to listen attentively to community feedback, fostering a more sustainable and inclusive future for all.”

– Pete Brunskill MRTPI, Rail Development Lead, Oxfordshire County Council

TRAVEL SURVEY

Researching and understanding local transport needs

This year, we launched our Oxfordshire Travel Survey, which received nearly 1,000 responses from local residents. We recognise that as a new CRP, it is crucial to develop our baseline of understanding of current travel behaviours and needs in order to better shape our interventions and programmes going forward. The responses to the survey offer us first-hand insights into

travel realities, barriers, and opportunities. This valuable feedback allows us to develop meaningful and responsive programmes that address real issues and priorities for local people. Additionally, by leveraging our close relationships with transport planners and operators, we can contribute to solutions that improve travel experiences for everyone.

955
survey responses
providing valuable
and meaningful
insights

80%
said reliability
was the biggest
factor in travel
choices

67%
claimed a high
awareness of
sustainable
transport

“‘Having their voices heard’ was most important to young people, highlighting the critical need to empower and engage.” – Alayne McDonald, OxCRP



SURVEY INSIGHTS

Listening to community needs and overcoming barriers

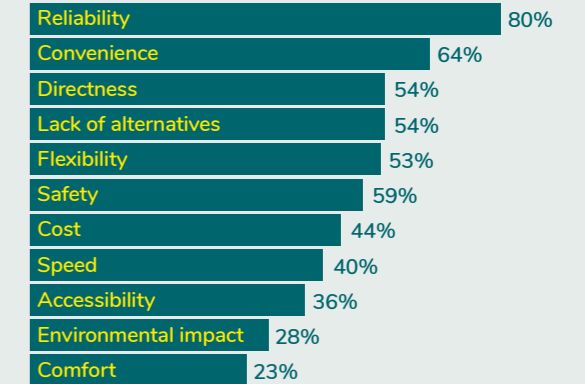
The Oxfordshire Travel Survey highlighted local people’s travel and transport needs. A significant theme was the challenge of accessing train stations, especially for residents in rural areas and those with disabilities. Many respondents said that integrated transport solutions, such as improved bus connections to stations, are essential for making public transport a viable option.

For underrepresented groups, including those from diverse ethnic backgrounds, young people, and disabled people, these challenges are even more pronounced. Accessibility barriers often limit their access to employment, education, and healthcare. Improving transport infrastructure and services for these communities is vital to fostering inclusivity.

Community well-being is closely tied to transport accessibility, as it enables residents to connect with essential services and opportunities. Addressing these barriers will not only enhance mobility, but also improve quality of life, creating greater social equity across Oxfordshire.

Collaborating with the community, especially amplifying the voices of those most affected, is essential to developing sustainable travel solutions. We are committed to ensuring that everyone is heard especially underrepresented communities so we can respond according to the needs of those that most need our support.

IMPORTANT FACTORS WHEN DECIDING HOW TO TRAVEL



KEY POINT: Those with disabilities are more likely to say a lack of alternatives, safety and accessibility drive their travel decisions. Speed, flexibility and directness are less important than for those without impairments.

DELIVERY
PROGRAMME: 2

SOCIAL VALUE

Empowering communities
by fostering sustainable
growth, community
wellbeing, and access
to life opportunities



GETAWAY

Building travel confidence and independence in young people from urban communities

Our Getaway programme focuses on supporting young people from underrepresented and urban communities to access natural environments by rail.

We understand the importance of supporting young people from urban environments to expand their horizons, reach their potential and enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of time spent in nature by visiting destinations and landscapes that may have otherwise been out of reach.

We started this work by researching and understanding local community profiles, focusing on urban areas with high levels of transport poverty, health inequity and socioeconomic deprivation. From there, we began building trusted relationships with grassroots community hubs and organisations working tirelessly in partnership support their communities. We engaged with these partners to understand the challenges young people in their communities face, and developed the Getaway programme as a way to facilitate positive, life enhancing outcomes in response.



“I’d never been on a train before and was nervous at first but it was so exciting. I really want to go again now!” – Young person



115
young people taken on train trips to build confidence

8
new countryside destinations visited for days out by train

Working closely with four community organisations and youth groups in Oxford, 115 young people joined us for eight days out by train, where we zip lined in Malvern Hills, canoed the Oxford Canal, played paintball in the Cotswolds and more! Feedback from young people has demonstrated how invaluable these opportunities are for building social connections, improving mental wellbeing, developing new skills, and growing confidence using public transport.

Celebrating this impact, we are excited to be delivering eight more trips for young people in 2024/25 and we will be incorporating more tailored travel training support to empower young people with independent journey planning, station safety, and ticketing advice.

“I really enjoyed the train ride and I loved the activities – it really pushed me out of my comfort zone!” – Young person

LET’S TALK TRAVEL

Supporting improved access to work and opportunities

Over four years, our sister organisation, GCRP has worked with job seekers and young people to understand and build evidence of the crucial role inclusive and accessible transport options play in improving access to work, education, training and wider life opportunities. They found that travel is often a significant barrier preventing learners and jobseekers from accessing education and employment opportunities beyond their locality, with 40% avoiding opportunities which require travel. Anxiety and a lack of confidence around journey planning, financial barriers and logistical difficulties can often make travelling for work, education or training opportunities more difficult, especially for young people.

Our Let’s Talk Travel programme supports jobseekers in two key ways. Firstly, it raises awareness of local sustainable transport options and helps build confidence in using them. Secondly, it educates employability professionals about the transport barriers jobseekers face, enabling more effective support.

This year, we developed two new travel confidence resources to support people to access public transport confidently and affordably. Our Let’s Talk Travel resources include practical tips to cutting the cost of travel, and address common travel concerns to build confidence. We engaged with 15 community organisations and local stakeholder groups in the development of this programme and resources,

“Job seekers tell us all the time that transport is an issue for them, so it’s great to have you at our job fairs to offer support.”
– Department for Work & Pensions Work Coach

and in the process raised employability professionals’ awareness of common transport related barriers to work.

We will continue to promote and distribute these resources across Oxfordshire in 2024/25 through job fairs and community events. Working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions, we will be attending job fairs equipped with the best advice, tips and solutions to empower job seekers to access opportunities further from home.



DELIVERY PROGRAMME: 3

LEISURE & TOURISM

Unlocking destinations and experiences, enhancing connectivity, and promoting car-free exploration



DESTINATION INNOVATION

Partnerships unlocking car-free access and responsible destination experiences

Our Destination Innovation work has involved engaging and working with tourism stakeholders to promote awareness of the potential for us to work together to increase car-free access to attractions across the county. This year we have been building relationships with key destination stakeholders including Bicester Village, Banbury BID, Experience Oxfordshire, Chilterns National Landscape, and Cotswold National Landscape to promote rail travel and enhance visitor experiences.

We strengthened our partnership with Cotswolds National Landscape, developing innovative projects to reduce carbon emissions from visitors. Our joint initiatives encourage visitors to explore the area sustainably, emphasising the role of rail and integration to bus and active travel in accessing and protecting our cherished landscapes. Initiatives include partnerships with destination attractions to consider how we can improve the integrated transport options from stations, building travel confidence for young people wanting to access the Cotswolds and travel planning through TrainTripper.

Our Moreton-in-Marsh: Connecting the Cotswolds Car-Free campaign has been developed in partnership and we are excited to see this launch in the autumn of 2024. Working closely with Pulhams Bus, GWR, our tourism partners, and the Cotswolds Plus Local Visitor Economy Partnership, we have created an attractive trail map and engaging video content. These showcase the ease and appeal of car-free travel to and

within the Cotswolds. We highlight Moreton-in-Marsh as a gateway to the Cotswolds, encouraging responsible access to this magnet destination that needs protection.

Our popular Rail Trails from Banbury and Bicester stations continue to grow in popularity, offering visitors rail-focused, sustainable leisure experiences. These trails not only promoted environmentally friendly travel but also supported local businesses by increasing footfall and encouraging longer stays.

“Together with OxCRP we’re promoting local tourism, reducing car-based visits, and ensuring the Cotswolds remain a vibrant, accessible, and cherished destination for all, now and for generations to come.”

– Andy Parson, CEO Cotswolds National Landscape

TRAINTRIPPER

Promoting sustainable tourism and independent businesses

Our TrainTripper platform promotes sustainable tourism across Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire, highlighting local independent businesses and hidden gems along the way.

This year, the platform has benefitted from significant improvements such as improved accessibility information to ensure, back-end development to speed up the data upload process, the launch of an integrated carbon calculator tool to support the platform's sustainability credentials. The Hidden Gems Campaign launched in July 2024 promotes TrainTripper to a wider audience.

Over this past year, we have focused on inputting data for all 22 stations. With the support of James Hamilton, our talented student placement, 300 data sets were logged in total. Our next steps include automating the systems to ensure data sets are kept up to date and current. We are also working on building a strategy for use that supports our stakeholders effectively, and considering how to best implement TrainTripper as a travel confidence tool.

300+
destinations
listed on the
TrainTripper
website



Scan here to visit the
TrainTripper website or
go to traintripper.co.uk



TASTE FOR TRAVEL

Encouraging car-free exploration and promoting local tourism

It's important to us that local people and visitors to the county have improved options to explore by rail and integrated modes, get active, and enjoy the vibrant landscapes and independent businesses that make Oxfordshire unique. This year, we have developed four new trails that do just that!

With new leisure trails for Charlbury, Banbury, and Bicester North Stations, as well as an integrated travel map and promotional video for connecting Moreton-in-Marsh station to the Cotswolds, we're providing fun and easy options for people to explore sustainably and enjoy everything the county has to offer. With routes radiating directly from local stations, our leisure trails promote deeper engagement with the surrounding landscape and community while reducing car dependency.

“We’ve needed something like this for a while – I’m really happy to feature on the map!” – Local Business Owner in Bicester



Alayne McDonald (OxCRP) and Zach Bailey (Chiltern Railways) celebrating the launch of new leisure trails for Banbury and Bicester North.

The Banbury to Kings Sutton canal trail follows a beautiful countryside route, while the Bicester North Independent Business trail highlights local shops and restaurants within close reach of the station, encouraging people to support

the local community and embrace active travel. Working closely with Pulhams Bus Company and Great Western Railway, we also developed the Moreton-in-Marsh integrated travel map, highlighting rail, bus, cycling and walking routes from the station encouraging car free access to the Cotswolds.

We're delighted to be sharing these maps in print and digital format, promoting them via station boards, and with the support of our partners we hope to expand our leisure trails to more Oxfordshire stations next year.

DELIVERY PROGRAMME: 4

STATIONS AS PLACES

Transforming stations into vibrant community hubs that are welcoming and inviting spaces for everyone



OUR STATIONS

Community groups dedicated to improving station environments

Across the county, there are dedicated groups of volunteers maintaining and enhancing their local station environment through grassroots gardening initiatives, litter picking, and the creative arts.

Developing stations as pleasant and enjoyable public spaces not only uplifts local communities, but stations with active volunteer groups also see increased local ownership and reduced anti-social behaviour. Rail stations with CRPs experienced a 33% higher growth in ridership than those without.

With active station adoption groups at Ascott-under-Wychwood, Bicester North, Charlbury, Heyford, Kingham and Radley station, Oxfordshire stations are being well looked after to represent the beauty and identity of their local place.

We are committed to supporting existing station adopters dedicated to enhancing their local place, and encouraging new volunteer groups to join this growing grassroots initiative.



“I’d like to see art projects that brighten up the stations, and help to ‘bridge the gap’ between locals residents and the planners/authority.” – local Oxfordshire resident

Driving our mission in a complex landscape requires a dynamic and committed team. We're immensely grateful to our staff, student contributions, non-executive director board members, funders, and partners whose commitment to social mobility has built momentum and driven impactful change. In our first year, we have embraced collaborative working with our sister organisation, GCRP, allowing us to apply and evolve tried and tested community development approaches. We have fully harnessed these economies of scale, while adapting tried and tested models to the unique needs of Oxfordshire's diverse communities. This collaboration and mutual support has empowered both GCRP and OxCRP to flourish and grow together under Go CRP CIC.

As a young organisation, we constantly reflect on our team's needs, how to support them and maximise our impact. This year's success stems from dedication and collective energy. Looking ahead, we're excited to be welcoming fresh talent along with an aspiration to attract more student placements, to support us in expanding our reach.

OxCRP CORE DELIVERY TEAM



Hannah McDonnell

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Destination Management, Equity & Advocacy, Strategic Planning, Climate Action



Helen Buckle

HEAD OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

Marketing, Business Management, Communities



Molly Beebee

ACCESS & INCLUSION LEAD

Accessibility, Inclusion, Community Engagement, Active Travel



Alayne McDonald

COMMUNITY RAIL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Health & Wellbeing, Community Development



Jon Harris

CHAIR

Transport Planning, Accessibility & Inclusion



Rachel Geliamassi

Intergrated Transport, Customer Service, Transport Operations



Odus Palmer

Connecting Communities, Carbon Agenda



Polly Gannaway-Pitts

Arts & Culture, Inclusion, LGBTQIA+



Olubukunmi Olukoya

Strategy, Infrastructure, Governance, Stakeholder Engagement



Neil Bradbury

Safer Rail for All



Olivia Dickinson

Accessibility, Education, Third Sector

NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

OxCRP is delighted to also have the guidance and support of 11 key partner organisations on our steering group, whose range of specialisms help to drive constructive, multi-disciplinary discussions underpinned by shared values.

“We’re always pleased to work with new CRPs that can inspire those more established with their fresh approach!”

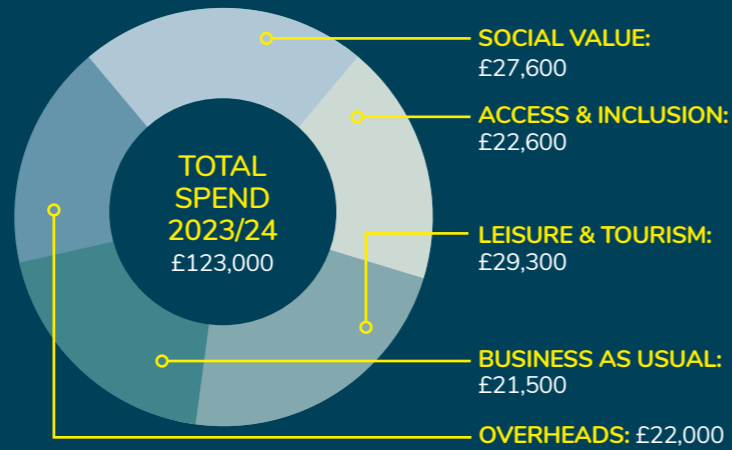
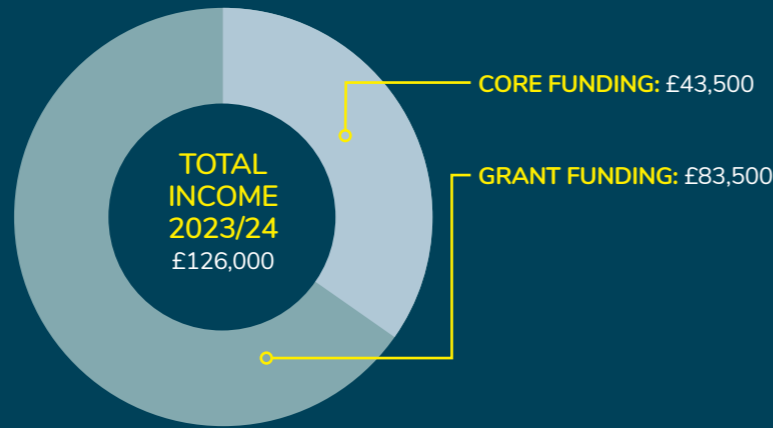
– Steering Group member

FINANCE

We are grateful for the financial contributions received this year, which have enabled our impactful work across Oxfordshire. Recognising the scope and complexity of improving connectivity for communities at our 22 stations, we are committed to enhancing our financial resilience in the coming year by actively seeking new partnerships and opportunities to diversify our income streams, ensuring sustainable support for our mission.

Go Community Rail Partnership CIC, our legal accountable body, provides robust governance and maintains clear financial separation from our sister CRP (GCRP). This structure not only ensures transparency but also enables us to offer consultancy and advisory services. For a comprehensive view of Go CRP CIC's financial performance, refer to our annual financial report, available at Companies House (No 12556197).

“Identifying new and diverse funding streams will allow us to expand our impact and drive positive change.” – Hannah McDonnell, GoCRP



OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

OxCRP links community, public and private sector organisations through partnership working



WHAT OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS SAY ABOUT US:

“OxCRP has given opportunities for us to work with new stakeholders.”

“Working with OxCRP has opened my eyes to other ways to improve accessibility.”

“OxCRP has raised awareness on the social value links to transport.”

GET IN TOUCH

Email us at: info@oxcrp.org or
visit our website at: oxcrp.org.uk

OxCRP would like to thank our core funders, Great Western Railway, Chiltern Railways, and Oxfordshire County Council as well as the many partners that have pledged time, effort and project-based funding.

© OxCRP 2024

Oxfordshire CRP is a
member of Community
Rail Network



oxcrp.org.uk    

Oxfordshire CRP is part of GO Community Rail Partnership
Company number: 12556197