

Community Investment Fund 2023-24 - Project Case Studies



Our Community Investment Fund:

Welcome to our case study document showcasing the inspiring community projects that were delivered throughout 2023/24. From transforming spaces to engaging with residents and charities, this document highlights the diverse projects undertaken by all those passionate about their local communities.

As a reminder, please remember that successful projects need to demonstrate how they meet the scoring criteria.

- **Deliverability** – The project can be delivered by March 2025. The project has a clear plan and can be managed and delivered by a third party. Chiltern Railways will support with stakeholder management and the process of applying for permissions if the project involves railway property.
- **Social benefit / value** – The project can detail how they will deliver social benefits to the local community. Examples include providing economic benefits, volunteering or social opportunities and environmental benefits.
- **Education and awareness** – The project will improve awareness of the railway, such as promoting public transport, railway safety campaigns, promotion of accessible travel and/or wayfinding between the railway and local community.
- **Community support and engagement** – The project has support from a wide range of stakeholders, including local people, Chiltern Railways customers, community groups, charitable organisations or local political or business organisations.
- **Match Funding** – The project has additional third party or match funding from either the bidding organisation or other partner e.g. local authority, commercial sponsors.



Upgrading Buildings / Station Areas – Banbury Business Improvement District

Project Aim - Putting the community at the heart of their projects, the Business Improvement District has been busy transforming public spaces in an aim to make the station and its surroundings feel safe and to promote tourist attractions in the town.

How was the project delivered? Over 100 locals engaged with art workshops led and delivered by the BID and artists Elyse Blackshaw. Locals designed a vinyl mural which has been displayed across the town on hoardings and disused buildings. Local amateur photographers also took photos of attractions that have been displayed in a community gallery at Banbury Station.

Community Benefit – The community have worked together to brighten up and improve disused spaces. The gallery promotes the town centre and key attractions to visitors.



Wayfinding & Tourism -

Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership (OxCRP)

Project Aim - Keen to encourage outdoor and tourist exploration by rail, OxCRP have developed rail trails for customers to access local tourist attractions and beauty spots. They are also running rail exploration visits for children from socially deprived backgrounds in the County.

How was the project delivered? Working with local authorities and organisations, the CRP was able to produce walking trail maps for Banbury and Bicester North Stations. These maps are being rolled out at our stations via pocket maps and digital formats.

Community benefit – The walks help to attract tourists to new destinations, contributing to economic growth in local towns. OxCRP are also planning to run future guided tours to get local people to use the rail network to visit tourist attractions.



Sustainability

Achieving Results in Communities (ARC CIC) - Foundry Woods, Leamington Spa.

Project Aim - to transform the woodland and make it more accessible for the community to use and as a sustainable site, to engage in nature related activities that are environmentally friendly.

How was the project delivered? ARC CIC engaged with many locals and corporate partners and delivered a series of volunteering sessions and workshops around sustainability and how to maintain the environment.

Community benefit – The woodland attracts locals and those around the area to visit the site and explore nature as well as promoting the positive impact nature walks have and the importance of mental well-being.



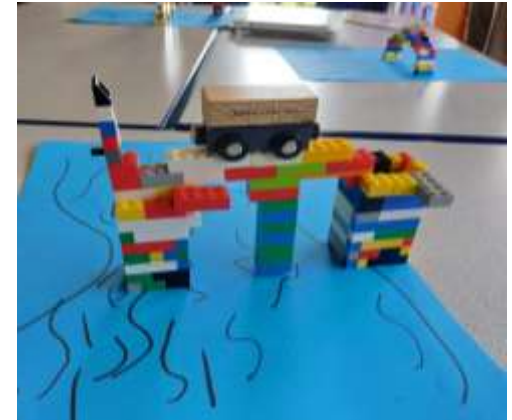
Education

National Literacy Trust

Project Aim – This programme was designed to engage year 2 pupils in Science Technology Engineering and Maths related careers. Targeting schools in areas where literacy rates are below average, NLT aimed to increase literacy and communication skills through interactive activities related to careers in the rail industry.

How was the project delivered – An example trip included colleagues from across the business creating a memorable experience for Year 2 Pupils from Foxes Piece School, High Wycombe. From a station tour, to a reading and Q&A session held at the station as trains passed through. Pupils were treated to a broad educational experience about how the railway operates and what career opportunities are available to them in the future.

Community Impact – The project helped to educate young students on the operation of the railway and promote careers in the industry. The project will help to break down stereotypes and diversify recruitment into the rail industry.



History and Heritage

Friends of Leamington Spa Coronation Garden

Project Aim – The project aimed to create a new Coronation Garden at Leamington Spa Station. This included installing a new customised made planter and historic GWR benches to fill an empty space between the existing station gardens and station buildings.

How was the project delivered – Friends of Leamington have worked with Chiltern Railways and Network Rail to apply for permission to install new assets to the station. A large new planting bed was designed and planted by the Friends Group. This has been complemented by new GWR heritage benches to provide an improved environment for customers to wait for their trains.

Community Impact – The project provides a new space for customers to wait for their services, whilst also enjoying the biodiversity of the station gardens. The station is used for a number of community activities including trips from local school and scout groups.

