

PURBECK COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP MEETING 33

HELD BOTH IN PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA TEAMS
ON 3 MARCH 2026



In person:

Cllr Beryl Ezzard (BE) of Dorset Council, Steven Booth (SB) PCRPP Community Rail Officer, Mick Stone (MS) Secretary, and Frank Roberts (FR) representing Swanage Railway.

Online: Mike Whitwam (MWm), Kelly Flynn of Dorset Council (KF), Ali Rodari (AR) of Perenco UK, and Jenni Jones (JJ) of CRN.

The meeting was quorate.

Agenda Item 1 - Election of Chair and Vice Chair

In accordance with the Constitution and PCRPP's normal practice, MS led this part of the meeting. He advised that he had received one nomination for the position of Chair, from BE. FR explained that he had intended to stand but now felt unable to do so at the present time. There being no other nominations BE was elected as Chair. There was one nomination as Vice Chair - BE nominated FR. This was agreed by the meeting.

At this point, MS handed back to BE for the rest of the meeting.

Agenda Item 2 - Chair's Opening Remarks, Welcome and Introductions

BE welcomed all to the meeting. There was a lot 'going on' and the agenda reflected this.

Agenda Item 3 - Apologies for Absence

Received from Paula Aldridge (PA) and Andrew Ardley (AA) of SWR, Jack Wharton (JW) of Network Rail, Tom Clarke (TC) of National Trust, and Rob Smith (RS) of Perenco.

Agenda Item 4 - Draft Minutes of the Steering Group meeting of 18th November 2025

These were approved in terms of accuracy.

Review of Action points:

- Item 4 - SB and MS were due to meet with Emily Sedgewick of SR who had taken over marketing, in the next two weeks. **ACTION: SB and MS.**
- Item 4 - there had been no follow up in regard to the PlusBus item - **ACTION: MS/SB to chase AA.**
- Item 7 - Decals at Dorchester South - **ACTION: SB to contact Dorchester Museum.**
- Totems at Wareham, Wool, and Dorchester South - MS had become aware that a similar Totem elsewhere on the SWR network had the capability to display real time Bus information. **ACTION: SB and MS to follow up with AA.**
- Item 9 - the replacement for Debbie Fiddik at DC was Izaaz Munshi, whom SB had met and was in touch with.
- Item 9 - FR commented that the SR's proposed number of working days for the Corfe to Blue Pool shuttle had been reduced to 90 days in 2026, and not 120.
- Item 9 - Holton Heath 110 Anniversary Celebration was now scheduled to take place on 21st April 2026.

Agenda Item 5 - Matters Arising Therefrom and Not Appearing on the Agenda

Nothing to add to the above.

Agenda Item 6 - Financial Update

SB had circulated a Financial update. News was still awaited from SWR about the Core Funding and the potential for CCIF for 2026/27. Overall the financial position was 'healthy'. Grants from CRN in respect of projects were awaited (in respect of Travelling with Confidence and the new Line Guide). KF confirmed that the £2,000 of Dorset Council core funding contribution would be available in 2026/27 subject to completion of the usual application. SB confirmed that, generally, the search for new funding sources continued.

Agenda Item 7 - CRPO's Report & Updates

SB had circulated his report. The main points arising were:

- Dorchester South Down platform - SB continued to work through options with local groups and with SWR, whose new area Station Manager was considered a 'breath of fresh air'.
- Work on the proposed Vinyls for shelters at Dorchester South continued.
- Water butts at Dorchester South - there was continuing frustration that these were still not a reality.
- Wool - Tank Museum posters and frames - these had been erected and a small event had been held, under the R200 badge. Thanks to Tony Smale were expressed for his assistance.
- Purbeck Shuttle 200 - see report below.
- Travel with Confidence (TwC) - SB was working on this proposal and an offer of funding from Motability, via CRN, was in place.
- Holton Heath 110 celebration - was planned for 21st April. Sandford School would take part. SWR would provide some funding, with thanks to PA.
- SWR Timetable Refresh - an initial consultation for PCRCP had been offered and a meeting was due to take place later in March. It had been confirmed that both Dorset Council and Swanage Railway would get their own consultation separately. **ACTION: BE asked that PTAG be advised of the consultation. SB/MS.**
- Purbeck Shuttle - BE confirmed that a bid for 2026/27 BSIP funding had been lodged by Dorset Community Transport in respect of the Shuttle. It was hoped that a one day per week service throughout the year, supplemented by additional days per week in the summer months, would be confirmed later in March. Wareham Station would be the starting point for all journeys.
- Rural Mobility Pilot Study - SB had attended a workshop with other interested parties. A follow-up meeting was planned for later in March and the consultant's report (WSP) was due for April.
- Travel with Confidence - SB was liaising with Munseys of Portland. It was pointed out that this was more than just the Try the Train offer.

Agenda Item 8 - Jurassic Coast Promotion

Discussions continued, working with SWR and other CRPs. A suggestion from SWR that some funding would be made available before the end of 2025/26 now looked very unlikely. However, the process with partners would continue with the aim of recognizable consistent branding under the banner of Rail Link.

Agenda Item 9 - Wareham Station Building Usage

The meeting considered the future use of the vacant space at Wareham Station. Plans and letting details were awaited from SWR's agents (Amey), and a request for an inspection had been made. BE reviewed forthcoming changes in the area around the station and the importance of some sort of community facility at the station going forward, particularly a cafe and possibly bike hire. KF asked if DC Adult Services might be interested. However, it was early days, and further information was required **ACTION: MS and SB to pursue.**

It was noted that other station buildings with community cafes existed at Yatton and Bridgewater.

Agenda Item 10 - Reports from Group Members

Dorset Council

KF advised that the next BSIP meeting was due to take place on 26th March and decisions would be communicated. BE added regarding flooding prevention, gully emptying etc programmes.

Network Rail

No report as such. SB, FR, and MS were due to meet with JW online the next day for an update.

SWR

No report was available. It was noted that both PA and AA would have liked to attend but circumstances prevented this.

Swanage Railway

FR gave an update on the financial position and the Governance Review. He mentioned the visit of the R200 train and the Community Weekend and re-iterated about the proposed Blue Pool shuttle train service for 2026. In regard to the temporary halt at Blue Pool a favourable pre-planning response from DC had been received, and a full planning application was due to be submitted. SB asked about Accessibility and AR advised of the need to deal with Biodiversity Net Gain, if it applies.

Perenco

- AR advised that she had no further information re the Sidings lease.
- Discussions on the cycle route to Rempstone were progressing. FR asked if he could see the proposed route. **ACTION: AR to respond and share with Partners.** SB asked whether a contribution to the Shuttle Bus might be forthcoming in 2026/27, to which AR replied that it was a possibility, subject to an application. **ACTION: SB.**
- In answer to a further question AR advised that the Moors Project (flood prevention) near Arne was due for completion in October. BE asked about the Community Benefit Fund (landscaping). **ACTION: AR to send details.**

Swanage Town Council

No report. It was noted that MWm would no longer be the STC representative after the May 2026 elections, when the Council expected to appoint a new rep. BE thanked MWm for his service and contributions over the many years.

National Trust

No report was available.

CRN

- JJ advised of the forthcoming Community Rail Week in early June and of the DfT conference in Derby on 19/20 October.
- 2025/26 funding via CRDF was now closed, but for 2026/27 this would be opened soon and probably before DfT funding had been announced.
- JJ had no insight on what would happen with SWR CCIF but felt that it was likely to be less than in previous years. She also advised that it would be better to speak to her before making decisions about match-funding.

Agenda Item 10 - Any Other Business

None

Date of Next Meetings:

Steering Group - Tuesday 14th July 2025 Online Only

Stakeholder Group - to be advised.

MS – V1 - 08/03/26

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