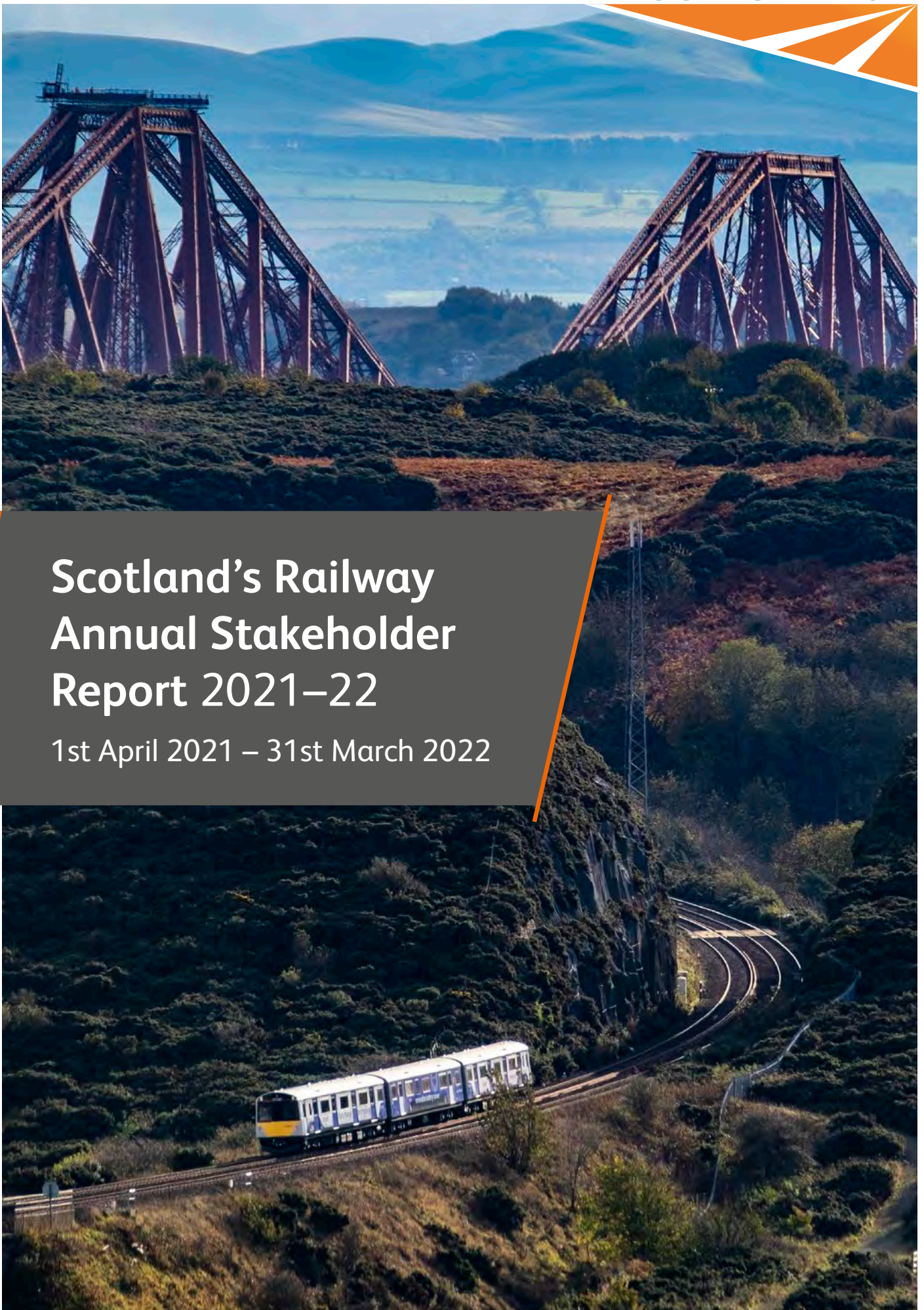


Scotland's Railway Annual Stakeholder Report 2021–22

1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022





Foreword

Welcome to our Annual Stakeholder Report.

Alex Hynes, Managing Director,
Scotland's Railway

It's been another unique year for Scotland's Railway.

We've continued to face challenges and we've taken opportunities to analyse and improve how we operate.

During the brilliant COP26 event in Glasgow, we showcased our commitment to a better, greener railway for Scotland. And under intense scrutiny from international stakeholders and the world's media, our people continued to successfully deliver a safe and reliable railway throughout the event.

Everyone in Scotland's Railway can be proud of how we welcomed and supported the thousands of delegates, dignitaries, journalists and celebrities who travelled on our network during COP26 – not least the world's most famous climate activist Greta Thunberg. This was all happening while we kept the railway running for commuters and leisure travellers during the two weeks of the event.

Over the course of the last 12 months, we've continued to face up to the largest peacetime challenge in our industry's history – the Covid pandemic. And while

that has continued to test us, we've taken the opportunity to adapt and push towards becoming a more efficient and effective railway.

I'd like to acknowledge in particular the major efforts of our maintenance and operations teams, who worked around-the-clock to keep the network fully open for business throughout the pandemic. Their ingenuity in deploying a 'chemical fogging' process – treating our locations routinely with a sanitising mist – was unique and crucial to Scotland's Railway being the only region to keep our key signalling locations open throughout.

We've changed our approach to maintenance and enhancements activities to make sure we deliver the services our passengers and freight customers want and need.

Passenger numbers have remained below pre-pandemic levels but our Scotland's Railway campaign showed what we've been doing to encourage people back to the railway. Our TV advert performed strongly, generating 18 million views in addition to the 1.8 million views online.

Having seen the campaign 48 % of Scots are more likely to travel by rail with 35 % of non-rail users now more likely to travel by rail. Overall, 69 % of Scots feel more positive about the future of Scotland's Railway.

On 12 August 2021, we remembered Brett McCullough, Donald Dinnie and Christopher Stuchbury, who tragically lost their lives a year earlier when the passenger train they were on derailed at Carmont. Our weather action and earthworks management task forces, set-up in the immediate aftermath of that tragic incident have given us actions that are enabling us to enhance our protection of the railway.

It's vitally important that those who lost their lives are remembered. We owe it to them to be better and to do all that we can to prevent anything similar from ever happening in the future.

Our priority will always be to get everyone home safe every day and we're continuing to make improvements that will better equip us to do that while making the railway more accessible.

Following a successful landslip recovery operation in Fairlie, Ayrshire, we carried out an engagement exercise with lineside neighbours aimed at improving the way we communicate during similar events. We gained invaluable insights about vegetation management, our work times and the visual appearance of the recovered area. We are grateful to everyone who took part and our neighbours indicated that they welcomed the opportunity to provide feedback.

In July, when a fire broke out at Troon station, thankfully nobody was hurt. As well as assessing the structural damage and carrying out repairs, we focused on keeping the community and local





stakeholders updated on developments. This involved regular talks with local politicians and the community council as well as timely sharing of key information through local and social media.

In October we celebrated the first year of operation at our new Kintore station on the Aberdeen-Inverness line, and in late 2021 we were joined by the First Minister to mark the official re-opening of the newly transformed Glasgow Queen Street Station. This icon of Scotland's Railway is now a breathtaking landmark in the centre of Glasgow to make the city proud, having already won multiple awards.

Station enhancements at Montrose, Garrowhill, Aberdeen and Motherwell have and will improve the passenger experience in those areas. And with new stations under construction at Dalcross for Inverness Airport, Reston and East Linton in East Lothian, our railway truly is better, and greener, in the making.

We all know that the safest level crossing is a closed level crossing but where that's not possible, we've taken action to mitigate risks. At Cornton's vehicular level crossing –

one of the most incident-prone in Scotland – we installed a new full barrier crossing system to reduce risk. In addition, we installed optical remote sensing technology, which scans for objects on the track before allowing trains permission to proceed.

And at Ben Alder, one of Scotland's most remote Munros near the village of Dalwhinnie, we removed access at one level crossing to improve safety. We have listened and engaged with community groups and stakeholders so that Ben Alder can continue to be accessed from an alternative and safer location, albeit the reaction to the closure has not been without its challenges.

In our renewals portfolio, we completed work to demolish and install a permanent replacement for the Glenarduck bridge at Old Kilpatrick. The route is now re-opened and can now cope with the weight and volume of road traffic that passes over it daily.

And in March we began improvement work on the Argyle line, a key commuter route in Glasgow. While that is causing some disruption to journeys in the

short-term, the aim is for the route to be more reliable for the long-term when work is complete.

Network Rail is now a member of Scottish Land and Estates – an organisation that champions and supports rural land-based businesses. Our membership offers a unique opportunity to further develop and improve our engagement with landowners, farmers and their agents across the country. We'll be able to take part in webinars, roundtable discussions and other learning opportunities that will help us work with, and better understand this stakeholder group.

The East Kilbride and Barrhead electrification project is well under way as our decarbonisation journey gathers pace. This year we also announced plans to make Falkirk High the first carbon-neutral station in Scotland, which is a brilliant step forward in the fight against climate change.

Throughout the year, rail freight has gone from strength to strength. Stobart has started a new service, we've seen increased traffic for Royal Mail, and Tarmac has expanded its operation in Dunbar. In addition, we've seen the start of the UK's first fully chilled and frozen domestic

intermodal train for a major retailer – a really exciting development for freight.

We're making real progress across Scotland's Railway but as ever, there is more to do next year and in the years that follow.

ScotRail Trains Limited – a new public sector body – oversees the work of ScotRail from 1 April 2022. There's a huge amount of hard work going on across ScotRail, Network Rail Scotland and Transport Scotland to ensure a smooth transition to the new structure as we continue to deliver for customers and colleagues. This move will also involve keeping the alliance agreement between ScotRail and Network Rail Scotland as we work together within Scotland's Railway.

There's no doubt that we'll continue to face challenges, but Scotland's Railway will keep playing a vital role as we emerge from the pandemic and provide the lowest carbon form of public transport for passengers and freight.

We're looking forward to working more closely than ever with our stakeholders and partners as we build a better, greener, safer and more reliable railway for Scotland.



Contents

Introduction	8
Executive Summary	10
Our Commitment to Stakeholders	15
Highlights from Year 3	16
Working with passengers	23
Working with partners	24
Working with customers	28
Working with communities	32
Working with elected members	36
You said, we did...	37





Introduction

Jenny Gilruth,
Minister for Transport

The eyes of the world have been on Scotland this year.

Our efforts to tackle climate change, our hospitality and of course our railway were in full focus as COP26, one of the most important global events in decades, took place in Glasgow.

As I reflect on the event, it's clear that Scotland's Railway was one of our major success stories. And it was fitting that our railway, one of our most sustainable modes of transport, was central to getting delegates, dignitaries and others attending the conference, where they needed to be.

Decarbonising Scotland's Railway by 2035 remains central to achieving our climate change goals and we need to continue to recognise and promote our railway as a more environmentally friendly travel option. That's one of the reasons why we're taking measures to accelerate Scotland's transition to a country which leads the way in ending climate change.

Almost £1.4 billion will be spent to maintain, improve and decarbonise Scotland's rail network. This will support efforts to cut car kilometres by 20 % by 2030. And it will maintain the momentum created by COP26, with record investment

in transforming Scotland into a net zero, climate resilient nation.

I welcome the progress that has been made on the East Kilbride and Barrhead Electrification Project. This is particularly important, as the project is at the forefront of plans to decarbonise domestic passenger services by 2035. The prospect of high-quality public transport choices for passengers through greener, more reliable electric trains along the two routes is very exciting.

While sustainable passenger travel on the railway remains key to our environmental efforts, I'm also pleased to see that opportunities and appetite for rail freight has been strong throughout the year. Each tonne of freight transported by rail reduces carbon emissions by 76 % compared to road and each freight train removes up to 76 heavy goods vehicles from the road, so the potential benefits are huge.

During the year, Scotland's railway has continued to face-up to Covid-19. The dedication and hard work of all of those front-line workers, controllers, signallers, track workers, station staff and supply chain operators has once again kept the

country moving through challenging times. For that, and so much more, I have to say a special thank you to everyone in the railway family.

The pandemic has led to fundamental shifts in travel behaviours that have really challenged our railway. But the railway has continued to connect communities. New stations at Dalcross, Reston and East Linton will bring people closer to opportunities and I'm excited to see that construction has started on all of those. And looking ahead, the prospect of Levenmouth being reconnected to the mainline rail network, for the first time in over 50 years, will unlock access to education, culture, entertainment and employment options, as well as new business and investment opportunities.

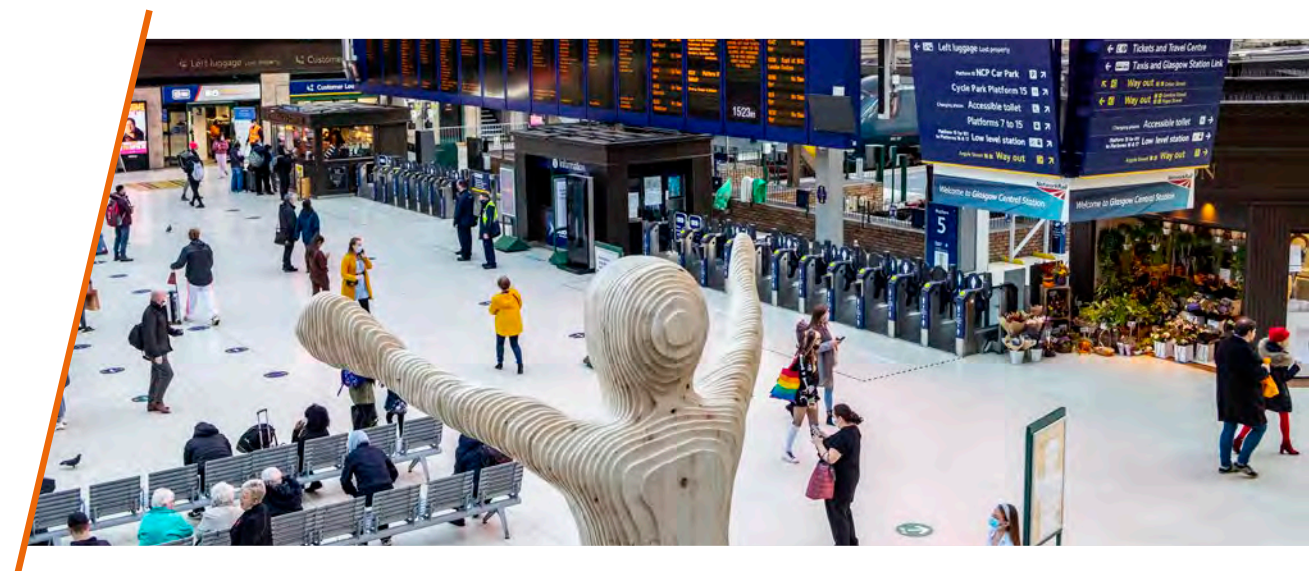
It was fantastic to see Queen Street station transformed and re-opened late last year. Its presence has lifted the outlook in George Square and it sets the tone for improved services for the travelling public.

The Scotland's Railway website has continued to provide a platform for local

communities and stakeholders to interact and receive details about current and upcoming improvements. That has again been enhanced by online community drop-ins, briefing sessions and ongoing engagement by email, phone and on-site where necessary.

Throughout the year there has been a cohesive approach between the teams at Network Rail and ScotRail, particularly on projects like the Argyle line closure in Glasgow. While the work on the ground will improve reliability and punctuality on the line, it's so important that communities and stakeholders are kept up-to-date and are able to have their say on the projects that impact them. This approach, and the continued alliance within the railway has been vital to a successful transition of ScotRail from Abellio into public ownership from 1 April 2022.

As we look ahead to what's next for Scotland's Railway, I welcome the continued collaboration and innovative measures being taken to work with communities, businesses, partners and stakeholders.





Executive Summary

The Annual ORR Stakeholder Self-Assessment 2021/22 reports on Network Rail activities, developments, achievements and challenges for Scotland's Railway during Year Three of Control Period Six.

It's a formal means by which we reflect on our stakeholder engagement activities during the year and provide a candid assessment of our performance and areas for continuous improvement.

Additionally, it fulfils the ORR's regulatory obligations ensuring that Network Rail has complied with our 'Stakeholder Engagement Duty' as set out at condition 1.8 of our network licence. It is within that

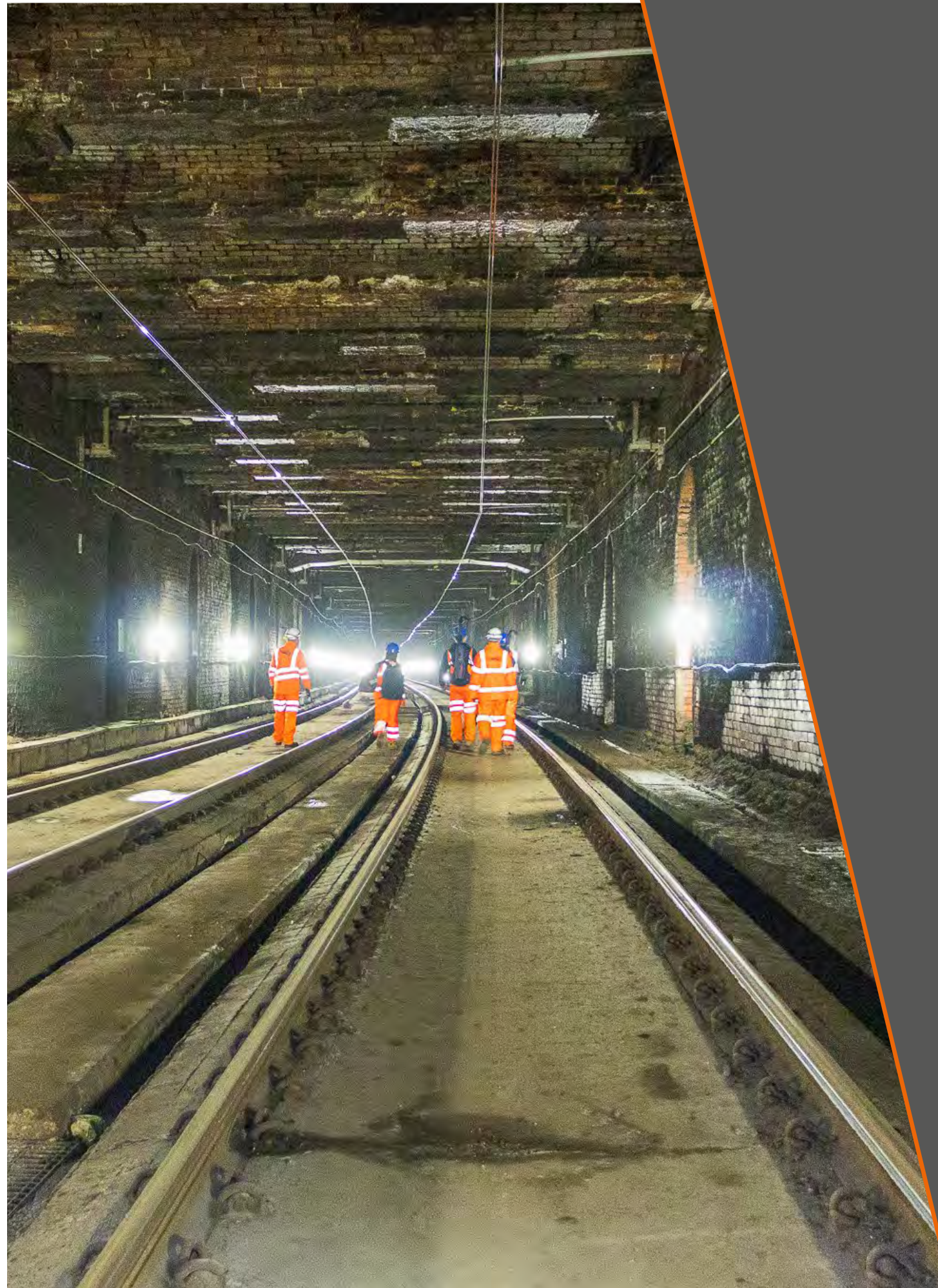
network licence that the ORR has set out four broad principles of good stakeholder engagement – inclusive, effective, well-governed, and transparent.

This executive summary provides a high-level overview of how our activities have met those principles. Later sections provide more detailed information about our activities and outcomes. Some initial examples follow:

PRINCIPLE	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Inclusive	We promoted the installation of a new Changing Places facility and through-route to connect the East concourse (platforms 2-5) to the ticket hall at Edinburgh Waverley station.	Disabled people, their carers, assistants and families now able to use the station more easily. Those who may have avoided rail travel due to a lack of facilities for those with severe or multiple disabilities can now use Edinburgh Waverley confidently.
	While we largely focus on digital and online methods of communication with key stakeholders and communities, we have continued to utilise traditional methods such as sending notification letters directly to homes and businesses near our worksites.	This allows us to reach as many people as possible with important information about our work. By reaching those without access to digital platforms, particularly lineside neighbours, we can prepare them for upcoming disruption. In most cases that reduces the need for members of the public to call the helpline to find out what's going on. But we also provide details of how to contact us via non-digital means should communities and stakeholders impacted by the railway have any general questions.
	Covid restrictions have eased but we have continued to host online drop-in Q&A sessions ahead of, and during, project delivery.	This provides members of the public, who may struggle to attend an in-person information event due to time constraints or physical limitations, the opportunity to speak to our team from the comfort of their homes.
Effective	Our Scotland's Railway campaign, designed to encourage people to travel by train, was promoted on TV, online, on billboards and on street signs.	The TV advert generated 18 million views, with a further 1.8m online. Having seen the advert, almost half of Scotland's viewing public said that they are more likely to travel by rail, and more than a third of non-rail users said they're now more likely to travel by train.

PRINCIPLE	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Effective (continued)	Ahead of the closure and refurbishment works on the Argyle line in Glasgow, we launched and promoted our passenger survey online, in stations, and in the media.	A total of 754 passengers told us about their typical journeys, from origin to destination, station access requirements and what their travel preferences during the Argyle line closure would be. We were able to build a rail replacement bus service plan that was more effective, efficient and catered to the needs of passengers. We've received no helpline complaints about the rail replacement services or line closure, showing that our messaging, and the measures taken, have successfully landed.
	We have created 'Passenger Handling Forums' where, alongside the train operating companies we work with, we formalise and focus on early engagement ahead of major disruptive access.	We are better able to understand the needs and aspirations of train operators while acting on the opinions shared at an early stage. We're also able to identify and maximise passenger journey opportunities more effectively to create a better experience for our customers and their passengers.
Transparent	We are proactively building new relationships with land management organisations, who represent a huge number of our lineside neighbours, from estates to statutory bodies and individuals. We are looking to create a forum with these organisations - and other utilities to regularly share knowledge and our understanding of what's happening on certain parts of the rail network.	This will help to provide a better, more involved and transparent experience for our communities before, during and after projects while actively seeking their feedback and involvement. It will also help improve the safety of Scotland's Railway.
	A specialised leaflet was produced for new and returning MSPs following the Scottish Government's May 2021 election after politicians surveyed indicated they would welcome more information on who is responsible for which elements of Scotland's Railway and who to contact.	Our annual joint ScotRail Stakeholder Survey results for 2021 showed a 17 % increase on favourability among Scotland's Railway's key stakeholders, including elected representatives, and an increase in our performance metrics across all areas from quality and clarity of communications to delivering a reliable and punctual railway.

PRINCIPLE	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Transparent (continued)	Network Rail has committed to doing all we can to involve stakeholders in the design and reconstruction process of Troon Station, following the devastating fire on one of the hottest days in 2021.	Local politicians and community groups have responded well to our commitment to remain transparent about developments to re-build the station. We have committed to taking their views on how the ornate station building will look and by doing so, this has allowed us to build stronger, more favourable and trusting relationships in Troon.
Well-governed	We continually review how we operate and engage with the freight operating companies we work with. Going forward, our freight customers will have an opportunity to share best practice and to openly discuss challenges, opportunities and issues that are affecting performance or safety.	We will be able to address issues and challenges at an early stage and to take action to make the most of any available opportunities for growth.
	We carried out a survey in Strathbungo, Glasgow, to determine a final design for a new footbridge over the railway in the area. This was a unique approach which considered the willingness of the community to engage with Network Rail, as well as the efficiency, effectiveness and fairness that a vote would bring, as well as our ability to deliver on the vote.	We received 514 responses with the community's preferred option – Bridge A – which received 82.3 % of the votes, being progressed. This was an excellent engagement exercise that allowed us to quickly gain valuable insight into the community's preference.
	We planned, co-ordinated and delivered a comprehensive package of communications during COP26 in close partnership with our client and funder Transport Scotland as well as other national and international agencies involved in COP.	Promotion of low carbon trains showcased our commitment to a greener, cleaner railway in Scotland. We were able to successfully promote our environmental credentials through Alex Hynes' appearance at the Low Carbon Logistics Conference, the New York Times Climate Hub, and the Hitachi sponsored rail events. And we ran trains reliably with minimal infrastructure disruption throughout the entire event, so people could get to where they needed to be when they needed to be there.



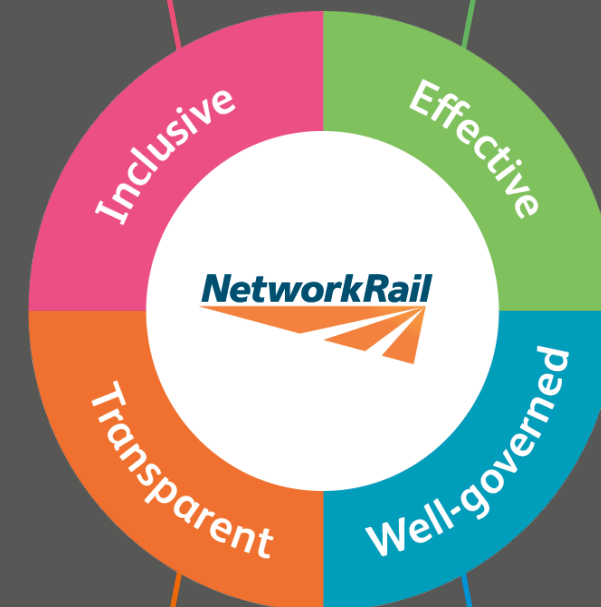
Our Commitment to Stakeholders

We value our stakeholders and aim to develop excellent, long-term working relationships that are built on openness, fairness and trust. Positively engaging with our customers, passengers, funders, suppliers, partners and lineside neighbours is a fundamental part of how we'll build a better railway for Scotland.

We will act fairly, will not discriminate and our engagement will be proportionate.

We will respond to the needs and opinions of our stakeholders.

We will engage effectively on decisions that impact our stakeholders.

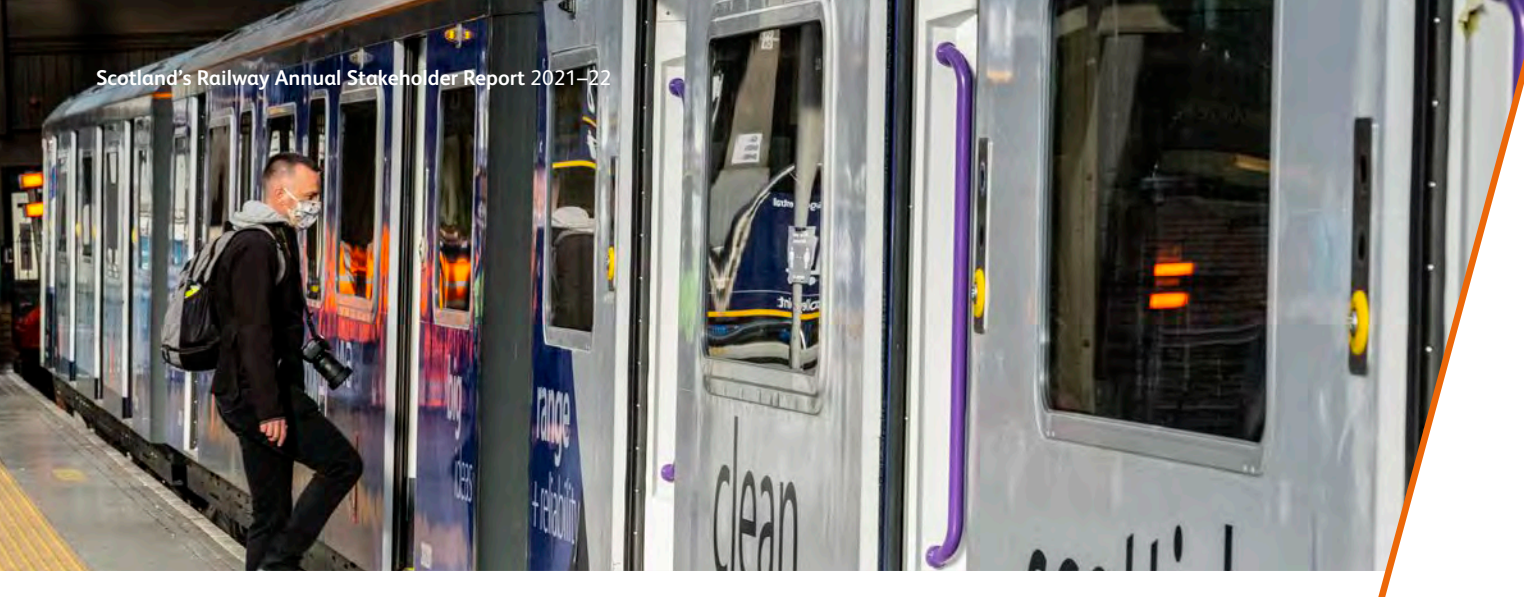


We will be transparent in our dealings with stakeholders.

We will provide good quality information to our stakeholders.

We will employ governance over our engagement with stakeholders.

We are committed to continuously improving our engagement with stakeholders.



Highlights from Year 3

In what is still a challenging environment, Network Rail is taking the opportunity to become more efficient and effective as we welcome passengers back to the railway. We've engaged with communities, passengers and wider stakeholders about the positive social, economic and environmental impacts that our infrastructure improvements and our drive to create a cleaner, greener railway, will have in helping the country to build back better.

- The railway has been crucial to keeping people and freight moving during the pandemic, and as offices and other workplaces begin to re-open, it will have an increasingly important role in the country's recovery.
- As we build back from Covid and look to increase passenger numbers, our Scotland's Railway advert was viewed 18 million times on TV and had 1.8 million views online.
- During COP26 we worked cohesively with colleagues and partners across the railway industry and beyond to showcase Scotland's Railway in its best light when the eyes of the world were on Glasgow.
- We've continued to invest in improving the railway infrastructure to make it more resilient and reliable.
- Facilities and passenger experience have been improved with the completion of our £120m Queen Street station transformation project.
- We demonstrated our environmental credentials through positive ecological schemes across Scotland, working jointly with ecology organisations.
- In the latter half of 2021 we installed 84 electric vehicle charging points at Edinburgh Waverley to allow as part of our wider environmental sustainability strategy. Drivers can charge their vehicles while they use the train and the new units can fully charge a vehicle in as little as two hours.

Welcoming people back to the railway

We're proud to look after the railway that connects passengers with the experiences, communities, businesses and activities that are important to them. During the pandemic, as passenger numbers dropped sharply, our frontline staff worked tirelessly to make sure key workers and freight got to where they needed to be. And as restrictions have eased, we've continued to make progress on improving our railway infrastructure and customer experience measures, with a view to welcoming more people back to the railway.

At Glasgow Central and Edinburgh Waverley, we've rolled out free and unlimited WiFi for passengers and other members of the public to use while in the stations. The new WiFi system is fast enough to support video calls and streaming, with coverage provided in the concourses, platforms, forecourts, taxi ranks and mezzanines. Free WiFi has consistently been identified as one of the key improvements that would enhance the station experience. This point was included in the most recent National Rail Passenger Survey, and we listened and took action in direct response to customer feedback.

At Edinburgh Waverley there's been a complete refurbishment of the toilets, with the installation of a Changing Place facility and a new through-route connecting the East concourse (platforms 2-5) to the ticket hall. It's all designed to improve the customer experience and encourage more people to travel by rail.

In Croy and Johnstone, our Access for All schemes are underway, as we introduce step-free provision to, from and between the platforms. This will allow easier access to rail services for people who would have struggled to use the stations due to mobility issues. This is part of our work to become a more inclusive railway.

And as we look ahead, we'll continue to make progress towards making the railway more punctual and reliable with appropriate capacity to meet demand. We'll continue to focus on making sure rail is offering value for money as our stakeholders have told us they want us to keep doing, while building a better, greener railway for Scotland.



COP26

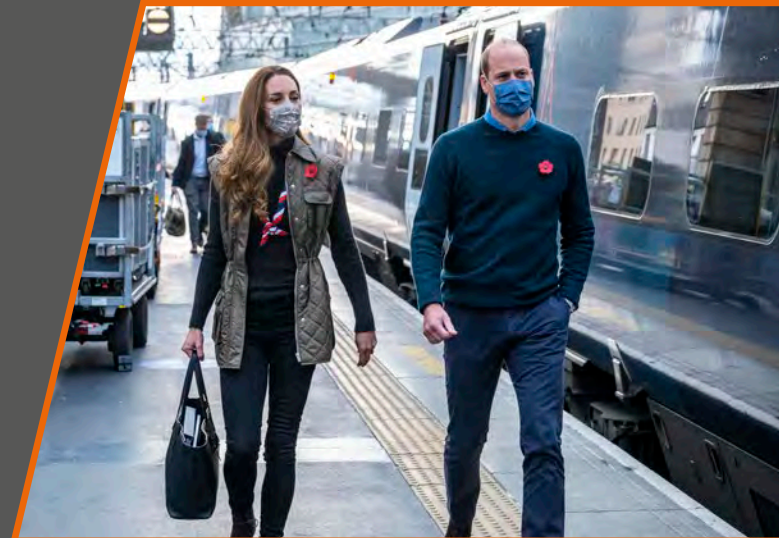
In November, Glasgow played host to COP26, when all eyes were on the city for pivotal talks about the future of our planet. Scotland's Railway played a crucial role in facilitating the summit by running a safe and reliable railway for delegates, dignitaries, the media and celebrities as well as regular passengers. We committed to providing the best possible transport experience, with extra late-night services and more low carbon trains showcasing our commitment to a greener, cleaner railway in Scotland.

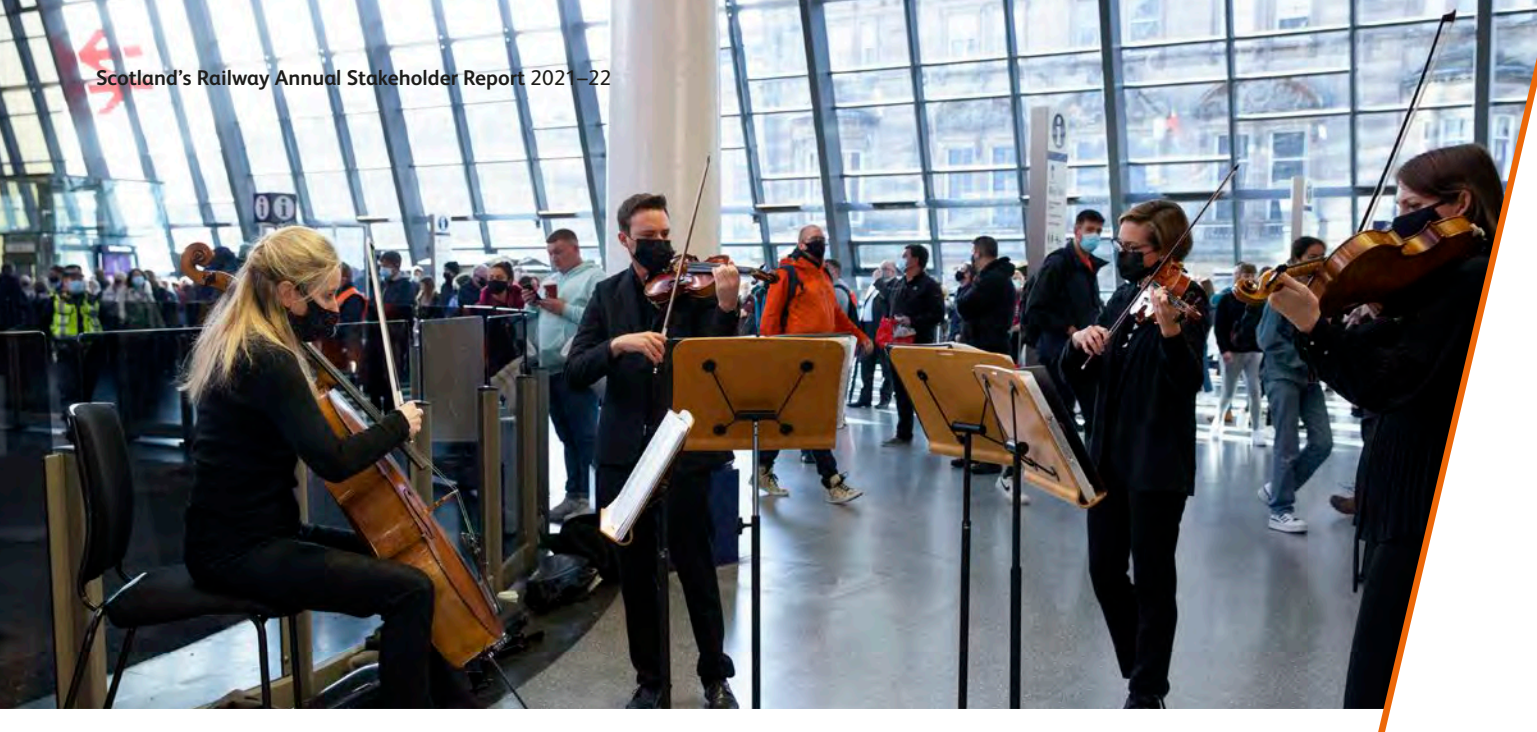
We welcomed climate activist Greta Thunberg and members of the royal family, as well as dignitaries and other VIPs arriving by rail. Those arrivals attracted a higher level of interest in our stations than normal and we used this to promote our green credentials to the world. Central station featured heavily on social media, including as the backdrop to an interview with Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London.

Alex Hynes spoke positively about Scotland's Railway's environmental credentials, among other topics, at the Low Carbon Logistics Conference at Mossend International Railfreight Park, New York Times Climate Hub plenary session, and Hitachi events. We also ran a national schools competition where pupils from four winning schools were invited to Glasgow Central station to receive their prizes as we promoted rail's green future with the younger generation.

The event was a timely reminder that we need to drive even harder towards decarbonisation and our net zero target by 2035.

It also gave us a platform on which to reflect, learn and improve our processes to encourage even better and more meaningful engagement, specifically during large events.





Queen Street station re-opening

In late 2021, the £120m transformation of Queen Street station in Glasgow was completed. Already Scotland's third busiest railway station, the number of people using the station is expected to increase by 40 per cent in the next eight years. To facilitate this the concourse has been expanded and we've extended the platforms to accommodate longer trains that can carry more passengers.

To encourage an even more inclusive environment and a diverse range of railway users, including those with mobility impairments, we installed fully accessible entrances on Dundas Street and George Square. And our new station facilities include accessible toilets, a lost property and ticket office, as well as more retail space.

To celebrate the completion of work, Alex Hynes hosted an event for 70 guests, including railway and wider transport representatives, elected members, contractors, suppliers, key stakeholders from Glasgow City Council and the city's Chamber of Commerce, as well as from accessibility groups and charities.

And Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon unveiled two new plaques to mark the re-opening of the station. This helped achieve widespread national media coverage with images, videos and a timelapse of the station work all being reported positively.



Ecology

We are committed to becoming a better, greener railway for Scotland and as we drive towards realising that ambition, we recognise the importance of the natural world. To this end, we have a team of ecologists who advise on the best way to reduce the impact of our work on wildlife and the environment. And we're making efforts to become more transparent in how we do this, through better and more effective media and social engagement.

In June, working alongside the Forth Rivers Trust, we installed bat boxes along the line of route in Leven. A promotional video was created and released on social media, with our media release gaining regional press coverage.

In collaboration with NatureScot – Scotland's statutory national heritage agency – we created the country's first ever 'beaver pass' on the Highland mainline near Gleneagles in July. Our work involved building a pipe tunnel under the railway to protect beavers while preventing blockages from the dams they build. This generated significant social media traffic and widespread media attention, with national and regional press covering the story in a positive way.

And between January and March 2022, our Works Delivery Off-Track team undertook around 100 miles of work including on the West Highland line, Winchburgh and Dalgety Bay to protect the railway against vegetation encroachment and leaf fall issues. If ignored, leaves on the line can affect train wheel traction to the rail, negatively impacting braking distances and acceleration, and interfering with our signalling systems. And, if unmanaged, overgrown trees and branches can fall on to the line in bad weather, and foliage can block signals from drivers' view.

Mindful of our environmental impact, the project will see Network Rail plant and manage the regrowth of woodland, improve biodiversity and offset the impact of the work on the local environment. Part of our sustainability commitment, the project was part of a trial designed inform how we achieve our targets of no net biodiversity loss by 2024 and net gain by 2035.



This year we...**Refurbished
18,297m²**

of underbridge and overbridge structures

**Completed
21,182m**

of drainage works across Scotland

Renewed 168km

of plain track (track that doesn't have any junctions, crossovers or points)

Renewed 94

switches and crossing units (the sections that guide trains from one track to another and allow them to cross paths)

Renewing Scotland's Railway

Together with our client and funder, Transport Scotland, Network Rail continued to improve our infrastructure to make Scotland's Railway safer, more efficient and more reliable. This year we invested £106.5m in the rail network through 110 renewals projects.

In the west, we began a £32m project to improve the track, tunnels and overbridges on the Argyle line – a key route through Glasgow between Rutherglen and Partick. We strengthened, repaired and repainted the overbridges at Crosshill station – an area represented by high profile politicians, including First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar, among others.

In the east, we progressed with £7.5m of repairs and re-painting work at the iconic Forth Bridge. We kicked off our £1.7m project to improve and protect the railway bridges at Calton Road and New Street, next to Waverley station in Edinburgh. And in February, our refurbishment work on the Forth Viaduct in Stirling began as part of efforts to keep the railway reliable and make access easier for our maintenance staff.

As well as being important to the railway, some of our infrastructure impacts road users. At Old Kilpatrick, in what had been a long-running problem, we were able to demolish and replace the Glenarduck bridge on Dumbarton

Road. The £3.5m project followed the deterioration of the old structure, which had left it unsuitable for the weight and volume of traffic which passed over it daily. A temporary bailie bridge had been in place; however, our work has safeguarded the route for the long-term.

For our passengers, we completed a £2.2m platform upgrade at Drumry station. The new surfaces are more modern, easier to maintain and will improve safety. It's all part of our efforts to improve performance and the passenger experience on the Argyle and North Clyde lines.

Our renewals works protect and enhance Scotland's Railway, keeping it safe and reliable for the long-term. We appreciate the patience and understanding of our lineside neighbours and local communities as we know these works can be noisy and cause some inconvenience.

We've taken a transparent approach to engaging with and keeping our stakeholders updated on these projects. That includes sending letter notifications to lineside neighbours and elected members, to make sure those with no access to digital platforms are included and informed. It also includes highlighting works on our website, in the media and on social media, as well as through radio adverts, to reach as many people as possible.

Working with passengers

Our team is dedicated to running a safe, reliable and efficient railway for customers and communities across Scotland. And as we continuously look to improve the railway, we know the value of feedback from our passengers. That's why we've taken steps to improve how we listen to those who travel by train and introduce changes that enhance the passenger experience.

This year, our presence on social media has continued to grow. Our Network Rail Scotland Twitter account now has 47,500 followers and has generated 16,151 incoming messages since April 1 last year. Our Scotland's Railway LinkedIn account also gained 2,000 highly engaged followers. Proactively, the creation of engaging content telling the story of Scotland's Railway has continued, covering passenger services, freight, sustainability, operations, and engineering. We've worked to encourage passengers to return to the railway with confidence, explain what work we're undertaking to improve the network, keep it safe and keep people informed when things go wrong.

Ahead of the eight-week closure and the major enhancement works on the Argyle line between Rutherglen and Partick stations, we took a collaborative approach with our passengers and rail colleagues. We launched an online passenger survey designed to inform our alternative travel plans during the closure. In total, 754 passengers told us about their typical journeys, from origin to destination, station access requirements and what their travel preferences during the line closure would be. That information allowed us to build a rail replacement bus service plan that was more effective, efficient and catered to the needs of passengers.

To date, we've received no complaints about the rail replacement services or the line closure. This indicates that our efforts to raise awareness of the closure, while implementing alternative travel arrangements based on passenger feedback, was successful.



“

Martin McKay, Executive Director of Regeneration, Clyde Gateway said:

“Clyde Gateway was fully engaged by Network Rail and stakeholders in the lead up to the Anderston Tunnel closure. As an urban regeneration company, many of our local communities, businesses, customers and tenants look to us for information and the engagement was very useful to understand the project and its impact. The process gave us a high degree of confidence in the delivery of the project from a customer travel perspective and has helped us in communicating this. We were also pleased to offer support to the alternative travel plans. We are looking forward to a positive outcome for the project and feel valued as a stakeholder by the Network Rail team.”

”

Working with partners

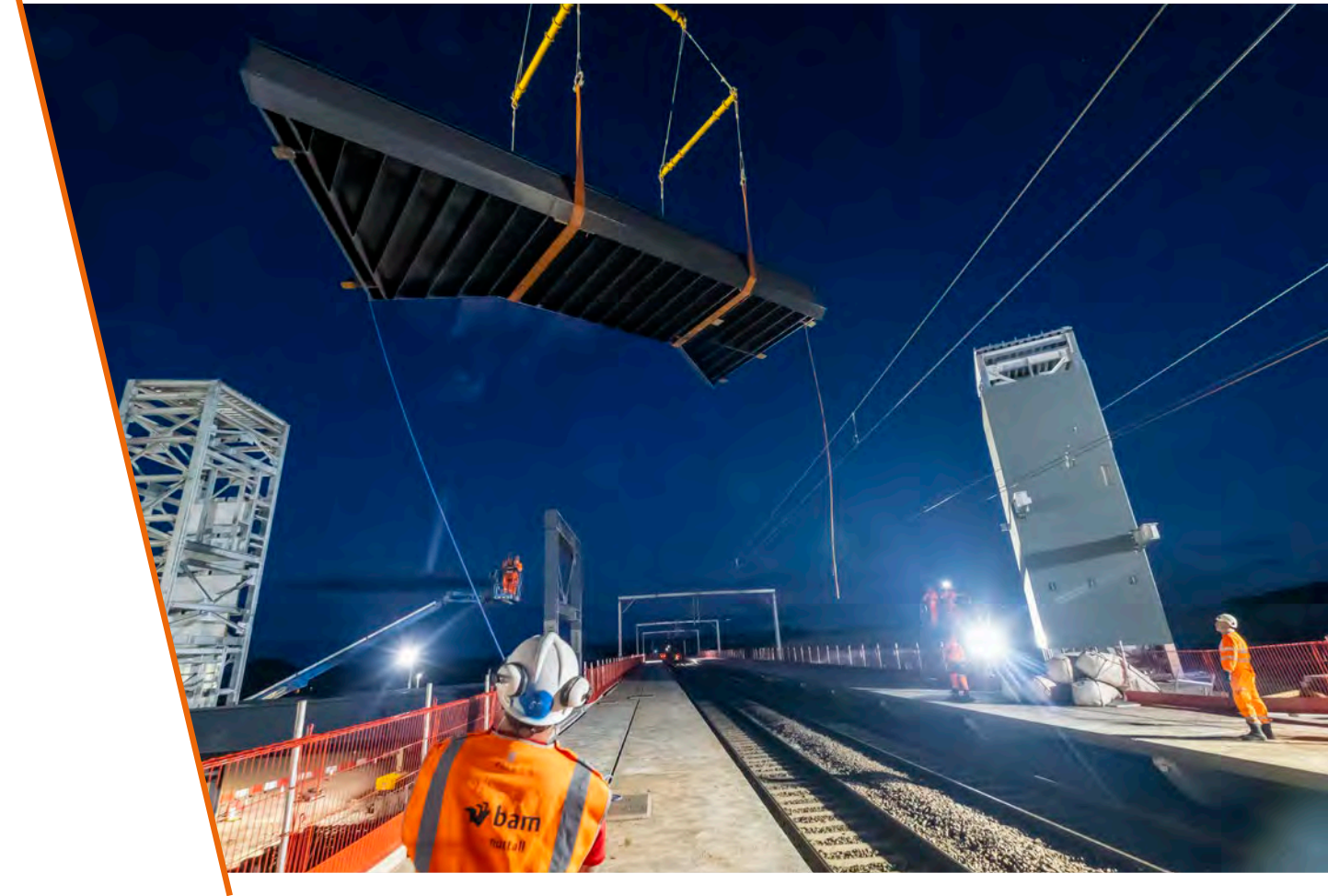
This year we've focused on working closely with our funders, regulatory and infrastructure bodies, and wider partners. We've developed more collaborative relationships with our partners as we strive towards enhancing Scotland's Railway.

Levenmouth – Re-connecting with the railway

The reintroduction of passengers services to Levenmouth for the first time in more than 50 years moved a step closer following approval by Transport Scotland. Our team worked closely with Fife Council and other partners involved in the project to develop active travel routes and plans for the associated bridge works. We also built a positive relationship with Heritage Railways, to whom we donated old track and equipment. And we funded bat boxes for the Forth Rivers Trust as part of our ecological efforts in the area.

Looking ahead, we'll continue to work constructively and transparently with Fife Council's planning department, accessibility groups, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), active travel bodies such as Sustrans, and local interest groups. We'll build closer relationships with educational, employment and training groups. As part of that, we'll deliver Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) initiatives and offer training and apprenticeship opportunities in the area as the project progresses.

We'll also take forward regular briefings with local elected members, community councils, Levenmouth Railway Campaign (LMRC) and other partners to generate positivity around the project. And we'll build on that positivity beyond the delivery of the railway by working with specialist groups to address social and community issues while promoting the wider benefits of our sustainability agenda.



Reston

We made strong progress in our work to deliver a new station at Reston in the year. The project kicked off in March 2021 and by September the new footbridge over the railway had been installed. Community engagement focused on delivering STEM workshops and careers opportunities with the local high school as we look to uncover the next generation of railway talent.

All eyes will be on the opening of the station in the year ahead. Scottish Borders Council and local community groups will be heavily involved in our plans, and we'll work with them to support their aspirations around events to mark the occasion. We'll also be looking at ways we can promote railway safety within the community. And we'll work with Transport Scotland and the train operating companies who will serve the station to ensure we are all adequately prepared and ready to serve the community from day one.





Scottish Football Association – A partnership built on safety

We renewed our safety partnership with the Scottish Football Association (SFA), which has and will continue to see a programme of rail safety engagement for young people roll out across Scotland's Railway. This hugely successful partnership continues to exceed expectations and is a key factor in delivering important safety messages to areas that see anti-social behaviour.

We formally launched the partnership for another year through an event that coincided with the Rail Safety Summer Programme. As part of the new contract, the SFA has and will continue to support key rail safety campaigns such as Rail Safety Week and International Level Crossing Awareness Day.



Crimestoppers – an important safety partnership

We supported Fearless, the youth service wing of Crimestoppers, to raise awareness of their festive safety drive throughout December in the media and on social media. Our backing of the campaign tied in with our wider efforts to engage with communities and young people as we look to improve safety and reduce negative incidents on the railway. Messaging was focused on key safety objectives, including reducing child harm and neglect, socialising safely, the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and the impact of anti-social behaviour on the railway.

“Our view of Network Rail has got better, mainly in response to the pandemic and the operating of stations in response to exiting lockdown and dealing with larger volumes of passengers. Speaking from the charity partnership/public-facing experience, NR Scotland are very engaged and joined up in key partnerships, flexible to work with and very supportive internally in helping us achieve best engagement with helping to keep the public safe.”

Crimestoppers





Working with customers

During the pandemic and as we look to the future, our focus has been and remains very much on collaborating with our customers – Train Operating Companies and Freight Operating Companies – to create a better railway.

It's important that all of our customers feel valued as part of Scotland's Railway family. We know the benefits of working together to overcome the challenges facing the industry. And we've created engagement forums to drive a more coordinated, transparent and effective approach to keeping passengers safe and moving, even in the most challenging times.

The train operating companies we work with join us on 'Passenger Handling Forums'. These forums were created to formalise and focus on early engagement ahead of major disruptive access. The aim is to understand the aspirations of train operators and to help maximise passenger journey opportunities. We've created terms of reference for new meetings and we offered these with our customers to seek feedback so that we can act upon the opinions shared and make sure that our forums are adding value for our customers.

Our 'Insight Forum' provides an opportunity for train operators to share passenger data with us. This in turn allows us to review the way we work and identify opportunities to change our work bank and access strategies to fit better with the train operators' requirements. And our new 'Timetable Change Risk Assessment Groups' have been created to further enhance the discussions, actions and outcomes relating to timetable change with train operators.

As we look ahead, our focus will be on actively responding to pulse survey feedback while maximising outputs from the engagement forums and aligning our own route scorecard with those of train operators.

We meet with our freight customers, and in turn with their customers so that we can support them in developing their business. We have held meetings with Colas and Tarmac to explore the potential of longer train services to and from Dunbar and to facilitate operating services from their new sidings.

All of our freight customers were invited to collaborate with Network Rail to showcase the benefits of rail freight to the decarbonisation agenda during the Scottish Government's Climate Week. DB Cargo elected to showcase their "I Am A Climate Hero" locomotive in Glasgow Central for a day to promote the green credentials of rail freight. We supported this by arranging platform access and supporting the company in its engagement efforts with members of the public throughout the day. We also produced videos with Russell Transport, Malcolm Logistics and Freightliner talking about how rail freight can reduce emissions, and released these on our social media feeds.

Going forward freight stakeholder meetings will give customers an opportunity to share best practice and to openly discuss challenges, opportunities and issues that are affecting performance or safety. The aim will be to address issues and challenges at an early stage and to take action to make the most of any available opportunities for growth.

The Scotland Freight team intends to restart the six monthly Customer Experience Survey in 2022/23. The survey will provide feedback on whether our engagement remains effective, and measures will be put in place should improvement be required.

We are also starting a review of our control period 6 (CP6) freight growth plan and a consultation with the Scotland Freight Joint Board members is ongoing. The outcome of the consultation will determine the focus of our dialogue and collaboration with the Rail Freight Industry and will shape the future document.

“Our engagement with Network Rail is very good and a marked improvement year-on-year at all levels. We are looking to work strategically together on a few things, e.g., bringing our control together into one location”.

Kathryn Darbandi,
Managing Director,
Caledonian Sleeper





Lumo – collaborating with our newest train operating customer

We supported the launch of Lumo - the new 100 % electric, affordable rail service travelling between London King's Cross and Edinburgh Waverley. An event was held to formally mark the launch day on 21 October at Waverley.

As Lumo was launching its' services for the first time, it was especially important to ensure they received the best start to their operations and our relationship with them was cemented from the very beginning. As a new train operating company, Lumo had limited resources and a small staff. Network Rail colleagues used their knowledge and expertise to help support Lumo and ease the pressure on them. Colleagues from across the business, including train planning, passenger experience, communications and station staff all pulled together to provide a positive experience for our newest customer.



Our support helped to ensure a smooth launch event and raise the profile of the new TOC, and our cooperation and proactive nature helped to aid a positive relationship.

Promotional activities were delivered across all channels, including in traditional media, on social media, and via a stakeholder update. The Lumo launch received extensive coverage in the national media across the UK, with much of the coverage focused on the low-cost service being an alternative to air travel.

Having built up a good relationship and provided a warm welcome to Edinburgh Waverley, we look forward to celebrating Lumo's first year of operation in October 2022. We will actively engage with their communications team to support them in celebrating this milestone.



Promoting freight during COP26

Following a proposal from our customer PD Stirling to hold a freight event during COP26, Network Rail collaborated with PD Stirling, Transport Scotland, Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Engineering to organise a three-day Low Carbon Logistics event at Mossend International Railfreight Park.

Low Carbon Logistics was a first-of-its-kind event in Scotland and it brought together customers, potential customers and stakeholders to provide a focus on rail freight and to promote and develop sustainable logistics solutions. The Scotland Freight team established a bi-weekly meeting to engage the industry to shape and deliver the event. All our freight customers and third-party logistics providers, ports and terminal owners and industry bodies (Rail Freight Group and Logistics UK) were invited to the meeting and attendance was excellent. The collaboration between all parties was outstanding and resulted in the industry being engaged and involved in the preparation and having a clear understanding of what was needed to make the event a success.

The Scotland freight team and Scotland's Railway promoted the event within Network Rail, and externally on social media, while we gained media coverage after Alex Hynes spoke to journalists on the day of the event. Our promotional activities on social media were then shared from customers' social media accounts, adding to our reach. Promoting rail freight and the relationships we're building with current and new freight customers will be a focus in the coming year and beyond. We are looking to expand on this going forward as customers are increasingly keen to work with us on the promotion of rail freight.

The event was very successful, both in attendees' footfall during a pandemic and via engagement on social media, and all who attended provided positive feedback. There is now ongoing work with the industry to capture the goodwill and positivity from the event and to make sure that there are future opportunities for the issues explored over the three days to be developed, and also to make sure the event has a legacy.



Working with communities

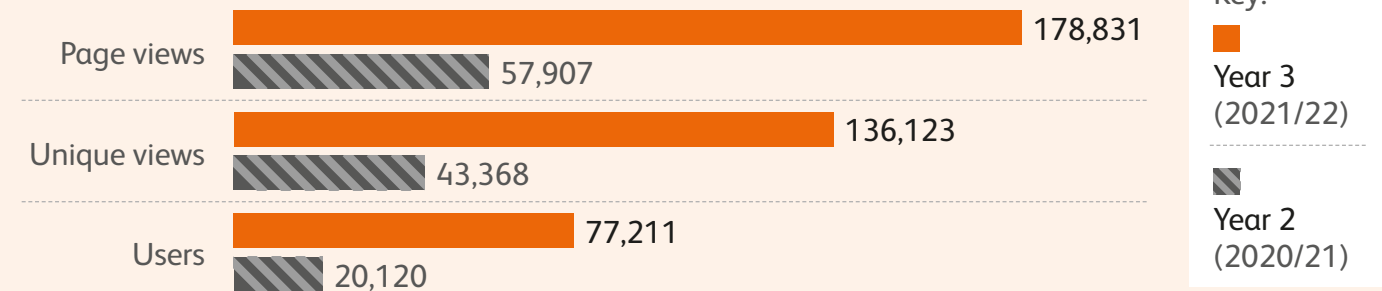
Building positive relationships with our lineside neighbours is a cornerstone of how we operate.

We always aim to improve how we engage with communities across Scotland and to keep them informed and updated about our work and how it affects them. And we've created new and exciting relationships that have helped deliver a wide range of key messages to people across Scotland as we look to build awareness of the railway while giving back to the communities we serve.

Our community relations team responds to questions from members of the public and businesses located close to the railway every day. This year our top three enquiry subjects related to railway work, safety and vegetation management. Our aim is to resolve these within 29 working days and this year we've achieved that on 91.3 % of enquiries. This is slightly lower than last year's performance of 96 % and reflects an increase in the number of complex enquiries that require more time to investigate, respond and resolve appropriately. We are continuing to work hard to improve our response time in the year ahead.

We are proactive in our efforts to prevent complaints to our 24-hour helpline. We recognise that not everyone has access to digital engagement platforms. And as we become a more inclusive organisation, we've continued to use some traditional methods of communication. As well as sending notification letters to homes and businesses near our worksites, we've worked with our staff and contractors to raise awareness of common access and noise complaints and reinforced the importance of always working with consideration for our neighbours. And we carried out a 'toolbox talk' to discuss nuisance caused by engine idling, inconsiderate parking and disposing of litter incorrectly. As we move forward, we expect the result of this to be lower enquiries relating to these topics.

Scotland's Railway website statistics



Scotland's Railway website

The Scotland's Railway website has gone from strength to strength since its launch in March 2020, and we've continued to raise awareness of it as an informational hub for our projects. Twenty projects are currently featured on the website, and these have been working well as a means of enhancing how we engage with communities across Scotland.

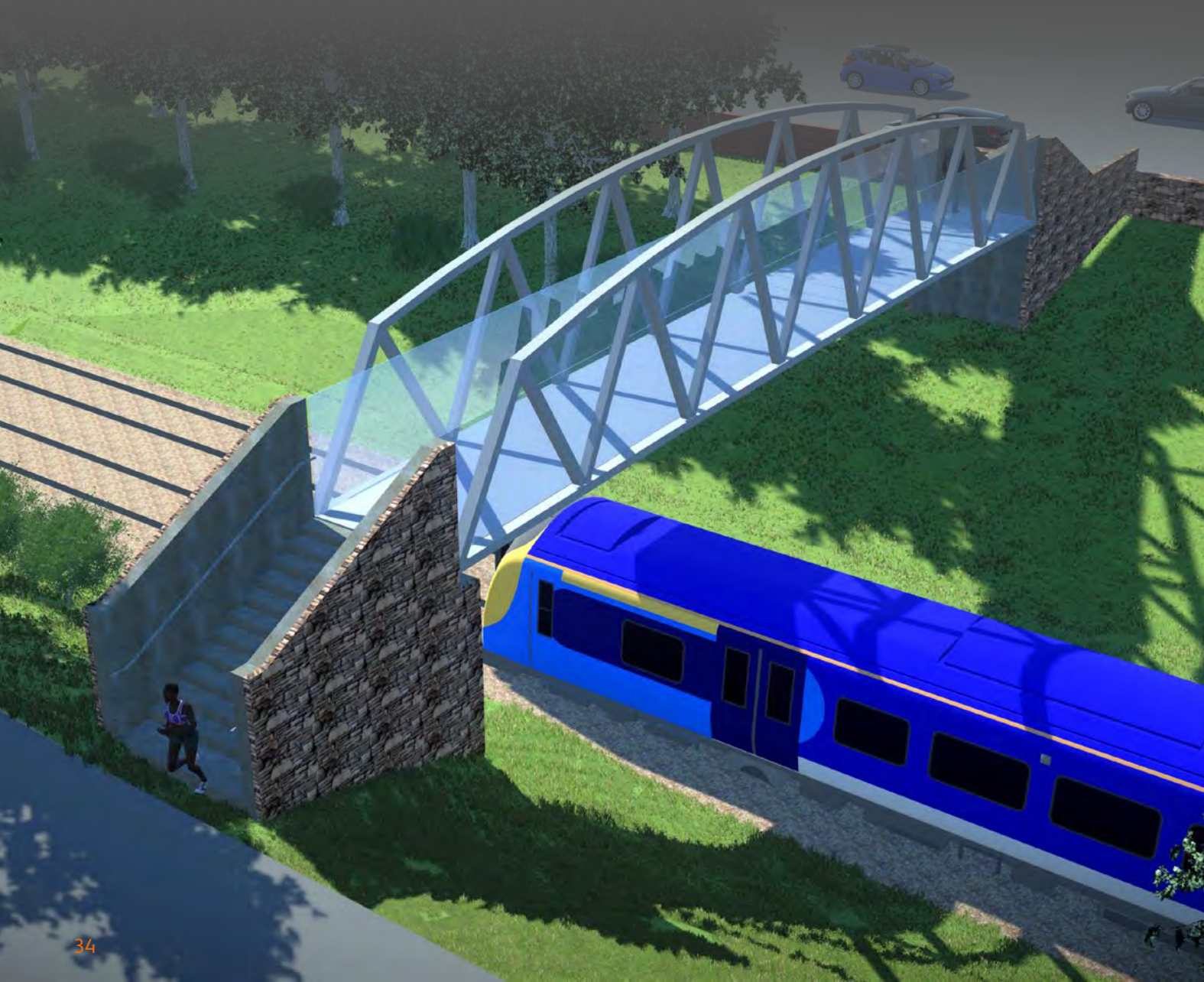
Online drop-in sessions have been facilitated through the website's booking system for projects in Edinburgh, Paisley, Stirling and Glasgow. This function was initially used as a means of allowing members of the public the opportunity to speak to project teams directly when Covid restrictions didn't allow for face-to-face contact. But the success of the online drop-in sessions has continued even as restrictions have been reduced. We've had excellent feedback from lineside neighbours who have taken part, and the 15-minute timeslots that those attending are given have been more than enough for the majority of people to get the information required from the team without the need to leave their homes.

Each project listed on the website offers a different and direct way for non-urgent enquiries to reach the project teams via email. Members of the public have contacted these email addresses regularly throughout the year for information and have received responses directly from project communications managers. This has allowed the community relations team to deal with the most urgent enquiries through the Network Rail helpline.



Strathbungo – Voting for a new bridge design

In a first-of-its-kind community engagement strategy, our team asked the residents of Strathbungo, in the southside of Glasgow, to vote on a final design for a new footbridge in the area. The vote was promoted on social media and in the local press to get as many opinions as possible. We received 514 responses, showing a real appetite from the community to engage with us on this issue. And the team are taking forward the community's preferred option – Bridge A – which received 82.3 % of the votes. The bespoke curved design was inspired by the bridge that it will be replacing and includes a high metal rail on top and a toughened glass parapet.



Scottish Land and Estates

We are proactively building new relationships with land management organisations, who represent a huge number of our lineside neighbours, from estates to statutory bodies and individuals. We are creating a forum with these organisations and other utilities to regularly share knowledge and our understanding of what's happening on certain parts of the rail network. This will help to provide a better experience for our communities before, during and after projects while actively seeking their feedback and involvement.

We are now six months into our one-year membership with Scottish Land and Estates and have taken full advantage of what has been available to us as part of the membership so far. We have access to all the members' receptions giving us great opportunities for networking and a group of Network Rail representatives attended the south west members' regional reception 'Navigating Climate Change'. As part of the membership we also have the opportunity to have an information stall at major summer

shows, including the Royal Highland Show, the Turriff Show and Border Union Show, attended by a variety of relevant stakeholders. Through this, we're able to speak and work directly with landowners to listen and respond to the issues that are important to them. Going forward, we will be taking advantage of the opportunity to provide updates in four weekly e-news opportunities and four articles in the 'Land Business magazine' to inform members of Scottish Land & Estates about our work.

“

Laura Butcher, Head of Communications, Scottish Land and Estates, said:

“My view of Network Rail has really improved. As I have learned more about Network Rail's work in wildlife and habitat management from colleagues and through stories I see on LinkedIn and in the online press, my view has improved.”

”

Our community engagement programmes

Our Routes out of Homelessness charity partners share creative ways to raise awareness of homelessness in and around the railway. Early in the year, we signed our partnership agreement with Glasgow City Football Club. The community engagement programme delivered several activities and initiatives closely aligned

to Network Rail's social value agenda. Plans focused on supporting rail safety activities, including new electrification projects and the wider health and wellbeing agenda. A key aspect of the partnership is employability and career initiatives to support Routes into Rail and promote the rail industry as a career option.

Working with elected members

Throughout the year we engaged with Scotland's elected representatives to build stronger relationships and keep them and their communities up to date on what's been happening on the railway.



MPs, MSPs and local councillors are important conduits for information running between Network Rail and the communities we serve. That's why we regularly

update them on our plans and activities while making sure we are available to respond to any enquiries they have.

The Scottish Parliament election held in May 2021 presented an opportunity to develop new relationships. Many of the MSPs who stood down have had long and productive relationships with Scotland's Railway and we were aware that the fresh intake of elected representatives may not have much knowledge or awareness of us. With that in mind, we used the post-election months to make introductions and set up a regular flow of information to newly elected and re-elected MSPs.

This year we responded to 323 enquiries from politicians and provided regular proactive updates to elected members around Storms Arwen and Malik, bank

holiday engineering works and the Troon station fire recovery work, among many other topics. Our newsletters informed MPs, MSPs and councillors about the progress of our projects across Scotland and our decarbonisation plans. And following the relaxation of Covid rules, we've been able to conduct face-to-face meetings, including site visits to the Forth Bridge, Levenmouth, Aberdeen depot and Troon station with former Minister for Transport, Graeme Dey, as well as one further visit to Levenmouth and Dalcross with current Minister for Transport, Jenny Gilruth. In addition, we welcomed and spoke to elected members at Glasgow Central station during COP26 and we hosted eight briefing sessions with elected members throughout the year. This included an online briefing about the Argyle line works and associated line closure, where presentations were made by colleagues from both Network Rail and ScotRail. This briefing received positive feedback from those attending, with elected members particularly impressed with the level of detail presented during the call.

Looking ahead, we will continue to create new connections following this May's local council elections and will look at ways to improve our existing relationships and ways of communicating.

You said, we did...

Our teams were encouraged that our annual joint ScotRail Stakeholder Survey results for 2021 showed a 17 % increase on favourability among Scotland's Railway's key stakeholders, including elected representatives, and an increase in our performance metrics across all areas from quality and clarity of communications to delivering a reliable and punctual railway.

A specialised leaflet was produced for new and returning MSPs following the Scottish Government's May 2021 election after politicians surveyed indicated they would welcome more information on who is responsible for which elements of Scotland's Railway and who to contact. As well as our usual MP and MSP drop-in sessions – conducted virtually this year due to lockdown – a programme of engagement with newly elected politicians was undertaken.



A sample of activity Network Rail undertook in direct response to political feedback follows:

Arbroath bollards

In spring 2021, a situation arose where newspapers and politicians in Arbroath noticed that the installation of safety bollards in front of the town's railway station was causing access difficulties for some residents, particularly those with mobility difficulties. Following an investigation by the communications team, it became clear a decision by the local council instructing Network Rail to install bollards had been fulfilled, but in retrospect had not been well considered in terms of local access, preference and use. We engaged with local

councillors and residents to agree a way forward that removed some of the bollards, resulting in a much more satisfactory layout to local stakeholders.

A core learning in this instance was that early stakeholder engagement can work well in order to prevent disappointment and greater expenditure of time, money and energy further down the line to rectify a decision that could have been easily avoided if engagement had taken place earlier in the process.



Answering the net zero call

The Scottish Government's call to action on climate change resulted in the 2020 Rail Services Decarbonisation Action Plan, which set out ambitious plans for Net Zero traction decarbonisation by 2035. Network Rail's strategy and investment team works closely with Transport Scotland at all times to work towards this huge goal, but it is worth noting that our elected stakeholders regularly ask us about what we are doing to make decarbonisation a reality. As well as responding to individual letters and emails, and presenting our plans at industry and stakeholder events, we host MP and MSP drop-ins every quarter which are very well attended, and where members regularly ask about our decarbonisation progress.

This year a highlight of achievement in the decarbonisation space has been the reopening of Glasgow Queen Street Station – an event led by our First Minister Nicola Sturgeon who praised Network Rail for its major milestone in the net zero journey by launching the new station and connecting the electrified railway despite the significant challenges of lockdown impeding the original schedule.

Level crossing access concerns

Network Rail has experienced strong community reactions to level crossing closures on safety grounds throughout the year, the most notable of which was Ben Alder level crossing near Dalwhinnie station. The decision to close Ben Alder level crossing to public use was taken in order to comply with clear risk management rules which required prompt action to prevent further public access. The local community council and walkers' groups strongly challenged the decision to close, and remain unhappy with the decision.

Network Rail has met with the community on numerous occasions and answered a range of legal questions around level crossing closure generally. This issue is ongoing but ultimately is an example of where operational, safety-critical decisions, based on legal guidelines and endorsed by the ORR and Transport Scotland, will unfortunately not always be welcomed by stakeholders and communities, but ultimately safety must come first.





Troon station

Following the devastating fire at Troon station, on one of the hottest days of 2021, local politicians and community groups told Network Rail they sought full involvement on how the ornate station building would be re-built in keeping with its original appearance. Network Rail has committed to doing all we can to involve stakeholders in the design and reconstruction process and is currently exploring a range of options for the reconstruction.

With that being the case, we remain mindful that cost is a limiting factor in the current climate post-Covid where taxpayer funds are more limited and customer numbers are lower than before the pandemic.



COP26

COP26 was a resounding success for Network Rail with positive feedback from elected members across Scotland on many aspects of our activity, from support for local schools (including Gaelic medium education) through video recording of children being interviewed in our stations, to sharing our message with politicians of the world at the New York Times' Climate Hub event. Network Rail colleagues worked collaboratively across disciplines and with ScotRail and Transport Scotland throughout, and engagement with politicians before, during and after the event was extensive.

The key ask from the Scottish Government was that we run our trains reliably and safely, which was achieved during the two-week conference with minimal infrastructure disruption and coordinated emergency planning and preparation.

A visit from the Prime Minister to the hydrogen train at Glasgow Central station prompted further questions about what we plan to do in terms of reaching net zero on time; questions our teams were on hand to answer.



Conclusion

At Scotland's Railway we know that good stakeholder engagement is at the heart of running an effective service for passengers and freight. We're proud to listen to and deliver for our customers and stakeholders. And we're committed to being responsive, inclusive, well-governed and transparent in our external engagement now and in the future.

We understand the importance of the ORR's role in holding Network Rail to account for delivering on our promises and to meeting our obligation to providing a safe, high-


performing and efficient railway. And we appreciate the regulator's efforts to promote the adoption of good practice across our organisation and to help in identifying areas for improvement.

We are ready and fully resourced to respond to scrutiny from our stakeholders either directly or through our various channels. And as we continue on our journey to becoming a better railway for Scotland, we remain open to questions, observations and challenges to uphold our integrity to the highest standards.



Contact

If you want to get in touch please contact us by:

 **03457 11 41 41**

 for Typetalk dial **18001** followed by **03457 11 41 41**

 visit communications-crm.custhelp.com for live chat or to report an incident

 www.networkrail.co.uk

 **@NetworkRailSCOT**

