

# Reconnecting the railways: communities awarded funding to restore Beeching rail links and forgotten stations

- 15 rail schemes awarded up to £50,000 to accelerate plans that could restore lines and stations to communities, including those closed during the Beeching cuts
- government investing £32 million to develop and construct new stations in England and Wales
- part of wider £500 million [Restoring Your Railway Fund](#) to develop proposals that level up transport links across the country

Towns and villages across England, which were left isolated when their railways were closed, are one step closer to having their connections restored and transformed, as 15 projects are awarded up to £50,000 each to progress plans to reinstate historic stations and restore passenger services, as announced in the [Spending Review](#).

More than 50 years since the railways were radically reshaped, including thousands of lines and stations closed during the infamous Beeching cuts of the 1960s, this latest investment will kick-start work on schemes that reconnect previously cut-off communities, with the potential to reinvigorate local economies and level up opportunity across the country.

## [Restoring our railway](#)

Schemes awarded funding include:

- restoring Ferryhill station in Sedgefield, demolished alongside Mainsforth Colliery in 1969
- returning services to Consett in the North East
- bringing back a station close to the medieval Beeston Castle in Cheshire
- reinstating services for communities around Ashfield on the Maid Marian Line

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

For towns and villages left isolated and forgotten by Beeching cuts, restoring a rail line or a station has the potential to revitalise a community. It breathes new life into our high streets, drives investment in businesses and housing, and opens new opportunities for work and education.

By building back with a real focus on better connections and supporting left-behind communities, we're delivering our promise to level up this country.

These latest projects to receive a share of the second round of the Restoring Your Railway 'Ideas Fund' will progress plans to deliver new routes and improved connectivity, as well as developing plans for new stations to areas poorly served by public transport.

Entries have been specifically judged on their ability to deliver real economic benefits and support left-behind communities, with investment targeted at regenerating local economies by:

- supporting new house developments
- opening up access to jobs and education
- boosting tourism

Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said:

From restoring historic stations at Ferryhill and Langport, to reinstating passenger services on the Maid Marian Line and transforming rail connections around Bolton, Bury and Consett, our investment will provide the vital links that people depend on.

Among the winning bids is a scheme to reinstate passenger services from Bolton to Manchester through Radcliffe with a radial Metrolink – running through some of the most economically deprived parts of the UK.

A proposal for a Mid-Cornwall Metro has also been awarded development funding which would create a coast to coast through-service connecting the biggest towns in Cornwall – Newquay, Par, St Austell, Truro, Penryn and Falmouth – reducing journey times and easing road congestion.

Today's news comes as the government provides £32 million of funding to deliver 3 new stations in England and Wales, including Edginswell in Torquay, Thanet Parkway in Kent and St Clears in Carmarthenshire, with additional funding being invested to develop a further 2 in Haxby and Deeside.

The Beeching cuts saw tracks ripped up or grassed over, iconic viaducts and bridges left without a purpose and communities set adrift. Initially proposed by British Rail chief Dr Richard Beeching in 1963, passenger services were ended on around a third of the rail network, with more than 2,300 stations closed and up to 5,000 miles of track axed across the UK.

Over the summer, proposals from MPs and local authorities for the second round of the 'Ideas Fund' were considered by an expert panel, including Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris and Network Rail Chair Sir Peter Hendy, after 51 bids were received earlier this year.

A further 28 bids will receive further guidance to help develop and refine their ideas for assessment in future funding rounds.