

Bat and Ball Station redevelopment Evaluation report

April 2019



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About Envoy Partnership

Envoy Partnership is an advisor in evidence-based communications and strategic research. We specialise in measuring and demonstrating the value of social, economic and environmental impacts. Envoy Partnership is dedicated to providing organisations, stakeholders, investors and policy makers with the most holistic and robust evaluation tools with which to enhance their decision-making, performance management and operational practices.

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About the Bat and Ball station redevelopment

Bat and Ball Station is a Grade II listed building built in 1862. It is one of the few listed Victorian buildings in Northern Sevenoaks. The building served as the main station building for around 130 years until its closure in 1991. The station remained vacant for 25 years and had fallen into a state of disrepair prior to the redevelopment. There were concerns that the building could continue to deteriorate and become beyond repair if no action was taken, and the heritage asset would be lost.

It was believed that there was significant potential for the building to generate social value, but very limited market value due to its location, constraints and heritage status. Subsequently, there was very little incentive for private sector investment and redevelopment: an exercise to market the building returned little interest. A local consultation exercise showed that the area around Bat and Ball station was not regarded as a good place to be in the evenings, with locals feeling unsafe around the station due to the disused building with a lack of human presence and poor lighting.

The project aimed to bring this heritage building back into productive use, providing an important community hub to serve the local resident population and commuters. It presented an opportunity to provide an essential community hub for a broad range of social activities and interpretation of heritage. It is intended to provide a safe space for community activities, including younger populations who say they need more facilities. This is believed to be essential to reduce anti-social behaviour seen in the area. The project will also provide opportunities for cross-generational activity, enabling younger people to engage with elder members of the community, particularly those in need.

Prior to the redevelopment, there was a lack of awareness of the station's heritage status due to its inaccessibility and lack of interpretation material. The project therefore aimed to enable existing and new communities to learn about the local heritage of Bat and Ball. For example, the station has seen royal visits in the past with Queen Victoria travelling through the station in 1867, presenting a key narrative to help bring the building back into use for the community. This asset will be re-introduced to the community through a recreation of this royal visit to raise awareness of the building's strong heritage.

In addition, the station is on the Thameslink Sevenoaks line between West Hampstead and Sevenoaks. An estimated 75,000 commuters used the station per annum. The redevelopment therefore represented an opportunity to engage an existing audience who already used the station and provide essential services such as a café and toilet. Revenue generated from these facilities will be used to support the ongoing maintenance of the station, or reinvested in other community activities.

Since 2011, Sevenoaks Town Council has made a public commitment to the regeneration of the Bat and Ball area. Public investments in complementary projects that demonstrate this commitment including the £3m Bat and Ball Centre: a community and conference centre on the other side of the railway line, which is currently under development.

A survey was conducted amongst 63 local people in August 2017 by the Sevenoaks Town Council prior to the development. Anti-social behaviour, the lack of facilities, and limited accessibility were the most pressing issues according to the community. When asked to list their top reasons for not using, or not enjoying, using the station, the high level of anti-social behaviour in and around the station (25 percent) was the most

important reason. The lack of public toilets was the second most important reason (23 percent). Poor access to the station (11 percent) and the non-existence of a café (10 percent) were also mentioned, along with the fact that Sevenoaks station has better services (19 percent).

In the open responses, respondents mentioned the lack of lighting around the station and the excess of litter. Moreover, the area felt unsafe as there were often groups of young people hanging around and the area was sometimes used to deal drugs.

“[There are] intimidating young adults hanging around the station and there is vandalism. My young child has to go past groups of frightening youths. There should be more security, camera at the front and back of the station, and more police.” [Respondent, Baseline survey]

“This station seems to have been forgotten...and people using it are often referred to as troublemakers. That may be due to the perception that is given by some of the unsociable elements who hang around the station. It is also a point for drug dealing which puts users off from using the station.” [Respondent, Baseline survey]

The redevelopment plans had strong public backing. The Bat and Ball Station Friends Group was established in 2014 to support regeneration in the Bat and Ball community. The Friends Group has created and maintained a community garden adjacent to the station building, installed a community noticeboard and supported the introduction of a new bus service connected to the station.

Sevenoaks Town Council received £755,600 of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to contribute to the redevelopment of the station buildings in 2018. Sevenoaks Town Council also secured funding of £130,000 from Sevenoaks District Council Community Infrastructure Levy fund and additional funding towards ancillary works, e.g. cycle racks and the new access to platform 1. The Railway Heritage Trust also provided grant funding towards additional works including heritage railings and gates, heritage clocks and seating, signage, cleaning of external brickwork, and external lighting.



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About this evaluation

This evaluation is intended to give an indication of perceptions of the redevelopment, and the economic and social outcomes that have been created as part of the redevelopment. This report sets out what has been achieved to date, and gives some insight into what the longer-term impact of the HLF investment is likely to be.

The evaluation draws on a number of sources:

Primary data	A baseline survey of 63 members of the local community. A paper and online survey was distributed in August 2017 by Sevenoaks Town Council
	A survey of 97 commuters. A flyer was handed to commuters on the morning of Thursday 14 March 2019. The flyer contained details of a survey that commuters could take on their phone or on a computer
	A survey of 98 attendees at the two Sevenoaks Open Days (held on 19 January and 16 February 2019) and an additional 6 respondents at a Community Art Workshop
	A survey of five volunteers, accompanied by a more in-depth case study provided by the Sevenoaks Camera Club
	A survey of 15 young people (of school age) who use the station
	Evaluations of heritage events that were held during the redevelopment
Secondary data	Crime statistics provided by Kent Police
	Data on youth visits by Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust needed for addressing anti-social behaviour at Bat and Ball Station
	Data on passenger numbers provided by Govia Thameslink Railway and Southeastern
	An economic impact assessment of the redevelopment, conducted by AECOM in 2016
	The Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan, prepared in 2017 ¹
Data from the contractors who undertook the redevelopment	

The open days were held inside the station building, and included details of future plans for the station. Those who completed the open day surveys had therefore seen the inside of the building and are likely to have had more of an idea of future plans for the station (such as the plan for a new entrance to the station, joining the community centre to platform 1).

Most of those who took the commuter survey are frequently travellers; over half use the station on five days per week or more. However, many would not yet have seen the inside of the main part of the building.

Significantly more people completed the open day and commuter surveys than the young people and volunteer surveys; this should be considered when interpreting the data.

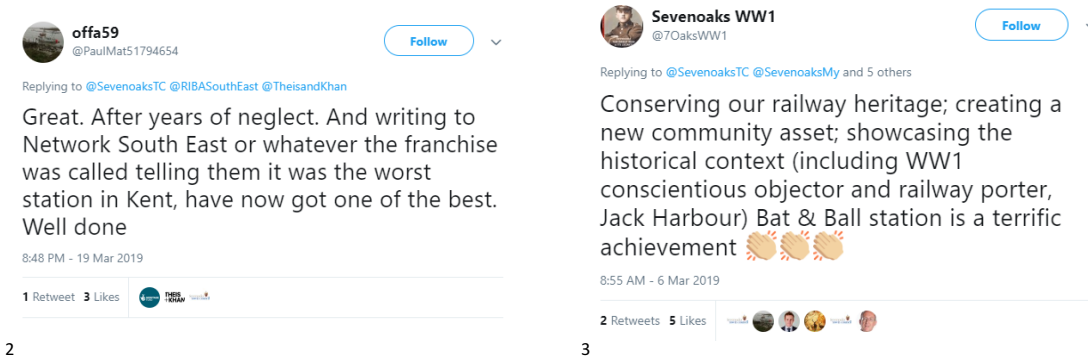
Demographics of the survey participants can be found in the appendices, page 37.

¹ https://sevenoaksndp.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/4140_20171120_northern-sevenoaks-masterplan_final.pdf

Headline perceptions of the redevelopment

Overall, the feedback on the station redevelopment has been very positive. The feedback in the surveys, ad-hoc feedback from people who spoke to the research team, and social media coverage has been largely very positive. In addition, the building has been shortlisted for the RIBA South East Regional Awards 2019.

Figure 1: Example social media feedback



Most stakeholders believe that the station redevelopment was an appropriate use of HLF funds. When asked how appropriate the use of HLF money was, open day attendees rated the project at 9.2 out of 10 on average, commuters rated it at 8.7, and young people rated the project at 7.3 (see Figure 2). During the baseline survey that took place before the redevelopment, respondents rated it an 8.2 out of 10. The perceptions of the appropriate use of HLF funds thus improved overall.

Figure 2: Stakeholders' perceptions of use of HLF funds⁴



"Q. Giving a score between 0 and 10, with 0 being not appropriate at all, and 10 being extremely appropriate, how appropriate a use of the Heritage Lottery Fund's money is improving the station building and therefore the local area?" n=63, 102, 95, 10

"The quality of the work is first class. It's been really well done. The quality of the environment inside the building, and the fact that the building is open and staffed, is great. It is going to make the place feel a lot safer, and will make a significant difference in the way the building is treated"

² PaulMat51794654. (2019, 19 March). Great. After years of neglect. And writing to Network South East or whatever the franchise was called telling them it was the worst station in Kent, have now got one of the best. Well done [Twitter post]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/PaulMat51794654/status/1108108056083206144>

³ 7OaksWW1. (2019, 6 March). Conserving our railway heritage; creating a new community asset; showcasing the historical context (including WW1 conscientious objector and railway porter, Jack Harbour) Bat & Ball station is a terrific achievement [Twitter post]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/7oaksww1/status/1103217546323521536?s=11>

⁴ Volunteers were not asked this question, as they had committed their time to volunteering for the project; they were not therefore felt to be impartial on this question.

by people around it. When the access to platform 1 is complete, I'm pretty sure that will increase footfall too." [Cllr Tony Clayton, Chairman, Sevenoaks Rail Travellers' Association]

"I visited Bat and Ball for the first time last week since being away, and it's the first time I've seen it completed with all the hoardings down and the cafe open. I must say it does look terrific, and is great to see after all the hard work that you all put in. I had a quick visit to the cafe (coffee and a cake) and again, the quality is very high at very good value. I don't remember much of the old Bat and Ball other than what I've seen over the past year, but the transformation is simply outstanding. I can only thank you for giving the Station a new lease of life and look forward to seeing it succeed." [Elliott Waters, Station Manager, Southeastern - Orpington Group]

Many survey participants had suggestions for further improvements for the station, and these are outlined below. However, negative feedback about the work carried out so far was rare, with only isolated examples – including graffiti on one of the restored window frames (which has since been removed).

Impact on station aesthetics

Feedback on the look and feel of the station is very positive. All groups spoken to thought that the station is now much more attractive than before the redevelopment.

Those who have seen the inside of the building – in particular those who attended the open day – are particularly positive about the way in which the redevelopment has restored the building while maintaining and enhancing the heritage. Many spoke about how the station is 'authentic', has maintained 'period features', and has is sympathetic to the original.

"It looks beautiful - it's been so sympathetically done." [Respondent, Open Day survey]

"Refurbishment has been done very well. Now an asset for northern Sevenoaks." [Respondent, Open Day survey]

"Very tasteful interior decoration throughout with interesting detail. Managed to make it feel modern whilst retaining a feeling of nostalgia with the period feature." [Respondent, Open Day survey]

"Extremely pleased that, for once, a redevelopment has been undertaken with a stylish but sensitive nod to a traditional appearance. Fantastic project. Extremely well done. Will certainly be using the station more as a result." [Respondent, Commuter survey]



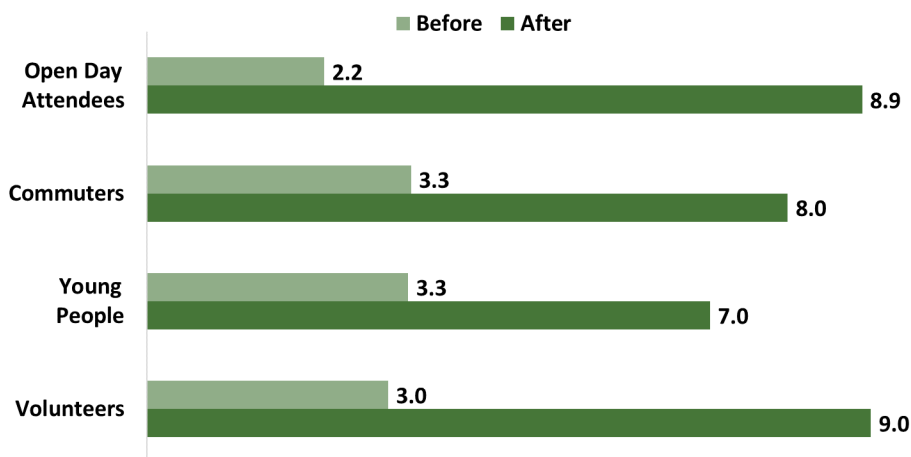
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“The cafe and waiting rooms (from what I’ve seen through the window!) have been improved massively. I love the traditional style of them.” [Respondent, Commuter survey]

“Both the inside and outside of the building now looks fantastic. I think it will improve this area of Sevenoaks and look forward to the pop-up restaurants and other activities that will be held there.” [Respondent, Commuter survey]

Figure 3 shows stakeholders views on the attractiveness of the station both before and after the station redevelopment. Scores for all groups improved by significant amounts. The increase among young people is slightly smaller than for the other groups (although only 12 young people answered this question on the young person survey).

Figure 3: Station aesthetics



"Q. Giving a score between 0 and 10, with 0 being of very unattractive, and 10 being extremely attractive, how attractive do you think Bat and Ball station is... Now / Before the station was redeveloped." n=96, 95, 12, 4

Impact on station usage

A survey of all households in Sevenoaks Town – administered prior to the station redevelopment – showed that 26% of the local population use the Bat and Ball station, compared with 98% using the main Sevenoaks station. A qualitative survey of existing users (also administered prior to the station redevelopment) showed that they would use it more often if the facilities were improved.

While it is too early to fully understand the impact of the station redevelopment on passenger numbers, the early data suggests that the redevelopment of the station has increased, and will increase further, passenger numbers for the station.

Passenger data from Southeastern and Govia Thameslink Railways (GTR) already shows an increase in passenger usage of Bat and Ball station. Passenger numbers increased almost 30 percent from 8,561 in December 2018 to 11,105 in January 2019, an increase of 2,544 (see Figure 4). This is greater than the corresponding increase of 2,070 the previous year (between December 2017 and January 2018).

The increase in number of journeys between December 2018 and January 2019 of +2,544 (or +30%) is not only greater than the increase between December 2017 and January 2018 (+2,070 or +24%), it is also greater than the increase at Sevenoaks station in both time periods (+1,543 or 8% in 2017/18, and +2,177 or 10% in

2018/19). This suggests that the increase at Bat and Ball is greater than might have been expected based on passenger data from Sevenoaks station and from previous years, and may be partly the result of the redevelopment.

Figure 4: Passenger data⁵

Station	Time period	Number of journeys	Change in journeys	
Bat and Ball station	December 2017	8,593	+ 2,070	+24%
	January 2018	10,664		
	December 2018	8,561	+2,544	+30%
	January 2019	11,105		
Sevenoaks station	December 2017	18,406	+1,543	+8%
	January 2018	19,949		
	December 2018	20,372	+2,177	+10%
	January 2019	22,489		

Survey work undertaken by the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association (SRTA) suggests that the number of passengers is higher than records held by GTR. SRTA ran a survey on March 14th 2019, between 5.55am and 9.25am, and extrapolated the number of passengers for the whole day.

Their analysis suggests that:

- Peak footfall for the day is at least 642
- Total footfall will be at least 714. Reports from the afternoon suggest that the number of students going home was higher than the number coming in to Bat and Ball in the morning, so this extrapolation to 714 is a lower estimate.
- Annual footfall should be at least 142,800, compared to *Office of Rail and Road* estimates of 128,900 in 2017/18⁶.

It may be therefore that the total number of passengers, and the increase in passengers, is higher than shown in Figure 4.

Furthermore, the commuter survey shows that 23% commuters say they will travel more frequently to and/or from Bat and Ball station because of the redevelopment. On average, they expect to make approximately a little over one additional journey per week (the average estimated increase was 5.6 per month).

‘The station is more attractive’ was the main reason given for using the station more frequently (see Figure 5). However, the café, increased safety, and station toilets were all given as reasons by over half of those who say they will use the station more.

“It is more accessible and more convenient and safer as well. I am very pleased with this new redevelopment.” [Respondent, Commuter survey]

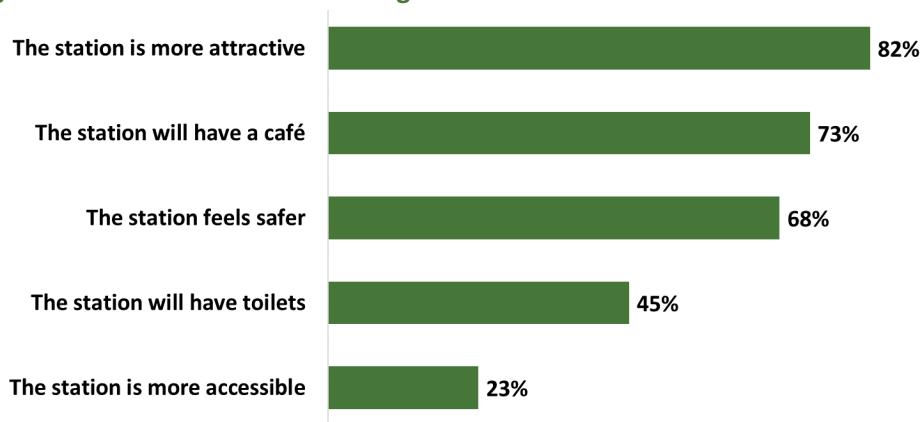
“Bathrooms are an essential upgrade and hope they become available.” [Respondent, Commuter survey]

⁵ Source: Govia Thameslink Railway

⁶ See page 35 for more details

“A really brilliant job has been done! You have done a great job at breathing life into an old, unused building. It feels so much better and safer to use. I’m also hoping to use the community rooms for my son’s birthday too!” [Respondent, Commuter survey]

Figure 5: Reasons for increased usage of Bat and Ball station



"Q. Why will the redevelopment of Bat and Ball station meant that you travel to and/or from the station more frequently? Please tick all that apply." [Those saying they will use the station more frequently]. n=22

Young people’s use of Bat and Ball station

Feedback from families and schools *before* the redevelopment suggested that some young people would avoid after-school activities, as attending would mean they would have to travel home by train after dark, and they did not feel safe at Bat and Ball station after dark.

Young people were asked in the survey if and how their use of Bat and Ball station would change. Only 15 young people completed the survey, but six of them said that they are more likely to attend after-school activities as a result of the station redevelopment (see Figure 6). This suggests that the redevelopment will have a positive impact on some young people’s ability to attend educational activities.

Figure 6: Change in travel behaviour for young people

Change in travel behaviour	Number responses
I am more likely to attend after-school activities	6
I am more likely to use the station during the day time	6
If I attend after-school activities or other events in the evening, I am more likely to travel home by train	3
I am more likely to use the station during the evening	3
None of these	5

“Glad it’s finally been changed and made better!” [Young people commuter survey]

Further developments at the station

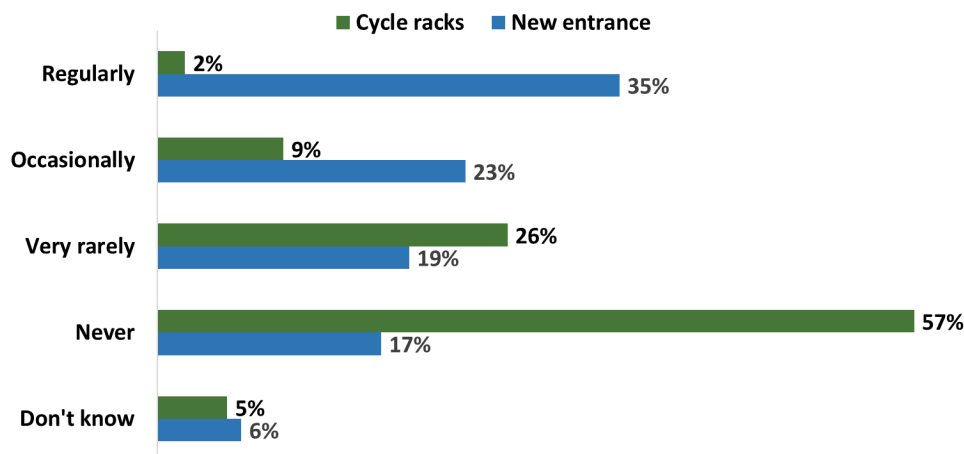
Two areas of the station redevelopment were not completed when the research began – the bicycle racks and new entrance that will link platform 1 with the community centre.

Commuters were asked about whether they will use the new entrance and new cycle racks (see Figure 7). Over one-third of commuters will use the new entrance regularly, and over half will use it regularly or

occasionally. There was also feedback suggesting that improvements to platform 1 and the new entrance to platform 1 would be welcomed (see Figure 16). The impact that this would have on the accessibility of the station, especially for disabled and older people, was mentioned several times.

The cycle racks will not be used as frequently, but 11% said they would use them regularly or occasionally.

Figure 7: Potential usage of cycle racks and new entrance



"Q. How frequently, if at all, do you think you will use the new entrance connecting platform 1 to the community centre? How frequently, if at all, do you think you will use the new cycle racks?" n=95

"Platform 1 needs redoing too just like the other side as it looks really good! I use platform 1 every day and it gets very busy early in the morning with not many places to sit for everyone as the seating is not very nice on platform 1. Can't wait to use the new entryway when it comes. Love the work so far." [Respondent, Commuter survey]

"The next improvement would be to get some accessible access to platform 1! We use it to get to Kings College Hospital but always have to get on at Sevenoaks if I'm taking my mum in her wheelchair. Really well done [on the work so far]." [Respondent, Commuter survey]

There were some concerns expressed about lack of parking, particularly by those attending the Open Days. It was felt that this would be a potential problem if events are held at the station.

"[I least like that there is] No parking for hall users. Lack of buses or taxi connection." [Respondent, Open Day survey]

"Lack of provision for parking - access for drop off pick up of disabled/elderly folk who would appreciate the new facilities." [Respondent, Open Day survey]

"We are pleased about the access through the community centre that is planned but concerned about the knock-on impact in parking down our road. Already it can be difficult for residents to park. I can only foresee this becoming worse when access from Crampton's Road is opened up." [Respondent, Open Day survey]

Impact on passenger safety

The Bat and Ball station, and the immediate area around it, was seen by many as a place to avoid at night. There was poor lighting, and drug dealing took place near the station. This led to fewer people using the station and a level of anti-social behaviour taking place.

Crime statistics from the local police show that from March 2017 to February 2018 – the year before the refurbishment started – there were on average 2.5 crimes committed per month. These crimes ranged in nature from (as classified by the police) Violence & Sexual, Damage & Arson, Public Order, Theft, and Drugs. Most were Damage & Arson cases, and the second largest category of crime was Violence & Sexual. One of the aims of the station refurbishment was therefore to make the station a safer and more attractive place to be.

The local police statistics indicate that the refurbishment has already had a positive impact by reducing the number of crimes in and around the station. Since the start of the refurbishments in March 2018 to December 2018, there were on average only 0.5 crimes per month. This corresponds to two fewer crimes per month, or a drop of 80%.

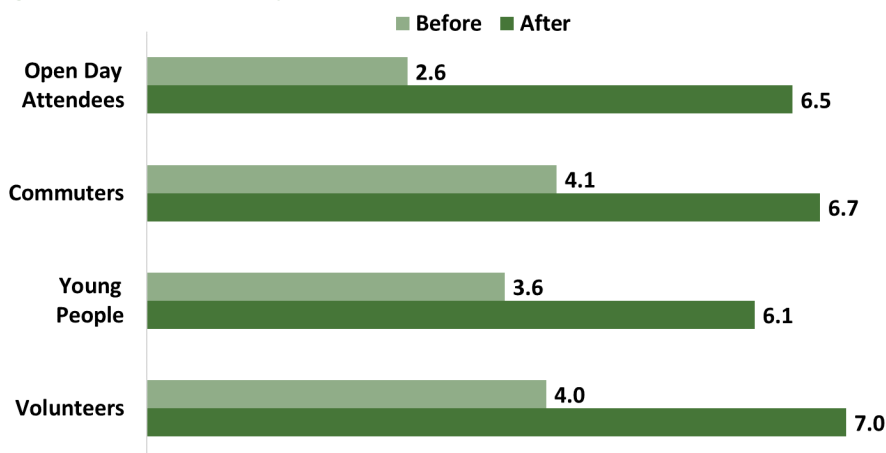
Crimes fell across all categories, but the biggest drop was in Damage & Arson which fell from 16 to only 3 crimes, followed by Violence and Sexual, for which there were six crimes before the redevelopment and have been none since.

This correlates with data relating to youth visits by Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust, needed for addressing anti-social behaviour at Bat and Ball Station. Between 15th March and 20th September 2018 they made one visit for anti-social behaviour per week. Since 21st September they have not had to make any visits.

Perception of safety

This drop in recorded crime correlates with an increase in sense of safety at the station (see Figure 8). All groups who were surveyed felt that the station was much safer now than before it was redeveloped. In particular, open day attendees scored safety at 2.6 out of 10 before the redevelopment, and 6.5 after.

Figure 8: Sense of safety at Bat and Ball station



Q. "Giving a score between 0 and 10, with 0 being of very unsafe, and 10 being extremely safe, how safe does Bat and Ball station feel after dark? Please leave this question blank if you do not know... Now / Before the station was redeveloped." n=67, 84, 12, 4

Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement in people’s sense of safety at the station, particularly among young people. Even after the redevelopment, young people scored the sense of safety at only 6.1 out of 10. This may improve over time, particularly if there is no return of anti-social behaviour. Suggestions for increasing safety include having the station staffed in the evenings (which is beyond the remit of Sevenoaks Town Council), and increasing the lighting at the station.

“It has made it more inviting, feels safer and smartened up a very dismal area.” [Respondent, Open Day survey]

“The redevelopment of the station is great, thank you. I’ve noticed more & more people using the station over the past year whereas before it was pretty deserted, so I feel safer now. I hope the local teenagers respect all the hard work & expense that’s gone into it & don’t destroy it. I would be very wary of leaving a bike here for that reason.” [Respondent, Commuter survey]

“I think there needs to be more lights it gets very dark at night.” [Young person]

“Bat and Ball station is looking great. Hoping the new revival of the station buildings will improve the issues with antisocial behaviour.” [Respondent, Commuter survey]

Impact on heritage preservation and education

The appointment of the Heritage Engagement Officer, Linda Redden, enabled a range of heritage events and community engagement to take place at Bat and Ball station. The talks informed people about the history and restoration of the station, as well as the importance of heritage restoration more widely. Among others, there were arts and crafts workshops for children, history lectures, and contractors taught visitors about the technical restoration aspects of restoring bricks and wood.

There have been a number of benefits to the community of the heritage activities, including:

- Increased heritage knowledge and skills, particularly for school children
- Opportunities to meet other people in the community
- A greater sense of guardianship of heritage among the local community
- The creation of a photo record and information leaflets and brochures

Feedback from the heritage events was very positive as people enjoyed learning more about heritage restoration of the Bat and Ball station. Figure 9 shows that almost everyone strongly agreed or agreed that they got an opportunity to engage with the heritage of Bat and Ball station during the events. Feedback from participants at the heritage events highlights that people not only enjoyed learning about the station and heritage more generally, but also how the events provided an opportunity to meet people in the community.

Figure 9: Feedback from heritage events

Q. The event was an opportunity to engage with the heritage of Bat and Ball station

	Brick Restoration talk Aug 18	Wood restoration event Sept 18	Hard hat tour Sept 18
Strongly agree	7	3	6
Agree	3	2	3
Neutral	0	0	0
Disagree	1	0	0

"Excellent idea to invite local people. Fascinating! We are so busy and rarely look up but such tours mean in the future we will recognise historical aspects of the building, its structure, make up and social history aspects. Also provides a chance to meet those who knew the station as it was in its day". [Respondent, Heritage event]

A flyer was created and handed out to inform visitors about the heritage of Bat and Ball station. The readers were asked if they were more likely to use the Bat and Ball station after reading the flyer, to which a large majority – 80 percent of respondents – said yes. Many of the 20 percent that did not think they would use the station more often explained they already used the station frequently, or that it was simply too far out of the way. When asked if the flyer changed their opinion about local heritage, 49 percent said it did. A small majority (51 percent) said it did not change their opinion on local heritage. However, about half of these people stated they already considered local heritage to be important before they read the flyer. The quotes below are from the survey about the flyer and represent the feelings of many people that filled in the survey.

"Shows how important it is to the historical buildings in and around the town and, convert into useful space." [Response to flyer]

"It is lovely to see this building restored and ready to be used again. Trashing it and building something modern would have been a shame". [Response to flyer]

The information in the flyer was also produced in a series of interpretation boards which were sited outside Bat and Ball Station, at Sevenoaks mainline Station, Sevenoaks Library and the Sevenoaks Community Centre to provide further information about the refurbishment project and heritage of the building for the public to view. Some key stories from the heritage information about the station will eventually be developed into permanent interpretation boards.

Heritage event posters

BAT AND BALL

STATION

IT'S NOW FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR THE RESTORATION OF BAT & BALL STATION BUILDING!



Sevenoaks Town Council is delighted to announce that it has secured a £755,600 Heritage Lottery Fund grant towards the refurbishment of the Bat & Ball Station building, thanks to money raised by National Lottery players.

The Bat & Ball Station was the first railway station in Sevenoaks and used by Queen Victoria when visiting Knole. It has been boarded up since 1992 and gradually deteriorated.

The restored building will provide heritage information, community rooms, public toilets and a café selling Kent produce.

In addition to the refurbished station building Sevenoaks Town Council have reached an agreement with the rail authorities to enable a new access to be created on platform 1 through to the community centre. This will enable parents and carers and those with mobility needs to use the station without struggling with the bridge

Plans are also in place to install cycle racks adjacent to both platforms and will include provision for charging electric cycles.

This is the first project in the Town Council's ambitious plan to regenerate Northern Sevenoaks. A new modern Community Centre is scheduled to be the second project linked through the new access and will be complementary to the station.

Subject to the Neighbourhood Development Plan being agreed at referendum in 2019 there will be many more exciting facilities coming to this area of Sevenoaks in the future.



BEFORE



AFTER



A Sevenoaks Town Council Community Project
Sevenoaks Town Council also thanks the following for their assistance with this project: Southeastern Railways Ltd, Friends of Bat & Ball Station, Railway Heritage Trust



Bat and Ball website

A website for Bat and Ball station was created and launched at the end of August 2018. The website was an opportunity for the public to observe the progress of the refurbishment, on a weekly basis, in the form of a photographic timeline record of works being undertaken. The website also had/has information about the heritage of the station and significance of the building. It is also a platform for the public to learn about events, news, submit memories and comment on historical information. As shown in Figure 10, visitor statistics increased considerably in the first months of 2019.

Figure 10: Visitor statistics Bat and Ball station refurbishment website⁷

	Number of visits
September 2018	172
October 2018	159
November 2018	72
December 2018	0
January 2019	758
February 2019	342
March 2019	541

Contribution of volunteers

The station refurbishment also provided a variety of volunteering opportunities, thereby enabling members of the community to get involved with the redevelopment project. Some conducted research or contributed historical data on the coming of the railway to Sevenoaks. Others assisted by photographing the redevelopment works and key events, or by helping out at meetings or events.

Judging by the feedback on the volunteer survey, volunteers gave an average of 55 hours per person to the redevelopment. The numbers of hours committed ranged considerably, from about 10 hours to up to 100 hours. This mainly reflected the nature of their roles. The volunteer contributions were highly valuable as they enabled the Town Council to host a range of events, to share knowledge, and document the change from the start of the project up to and including the opening and use of the station. It was also a good way to get the community involved and enthusiastic about the redevelopment project.

Besides the Town Council, the volunteers also benefitted from getting involved. The quotes below highlight the satisfaction that volunteers got by getting involved. They had the opportunity to gain or improve their knowledge and skills, and put their skills in practice. Furthermore, they could meet and network with a range of people from within and outside the Sevenoaks community.

“The excellence of the work, the wonderful commitment of all the crafts-persons involved and their always welcoming approach throughout the months of work to a pesky photographer constantly getting in their way. Naz, who was in charge of the work was always very helpful, enthusiastic about what we were doing and constantly suggesting interesting things to photograph. His whole approach was a lesson in excellence to managers everywhere. In short, the whole was a delight. And it reflects extremely well on Sevenoaks Town Council who had the

⁷ Source: Sevenoaks Town Council

imagination to go ahead with the project and had the determination to do so with such high quality works which shows so clearly in the outcome. The Town Council's Heritage Officer Linda Redden's imaginative and extremely well-organised events were a major factor in the success of, and engagement of the community in, the project." [Respondent, Volunteer survey].

"Good for personal networking; helped me think further on the impact of the coming of the railway on the town in the 1860s." [Respondent, Volunteer survey].

"Greatly heartened to see such skill and commitment at a time when the loss of 'doing' skills and alienation are so apparent in the increasingly ravaged British economy." [Respondent, Volunteer survey].

Case study: The Sevenoaks Camera Club's involvement in the Bat and Ball station redevelopment

Case study provided by Derek Medhurst from the Sevenoaks Camera Club

Nine members from the Sevenoaks Camera Club put themselves forward as volunteers to support Bat and Ball station to create a pictorial record of the refurbishment for publication during (for the website) and at the end of the project (at events such as talks and an exhibition). This was the largest number of volunteers for a single community activity the Club had seen. One further member came forward towards the end of the year to take a video from the steam excursion train that passed through the station at the end of November.

In total, the volunteers have spent about 268 hours on this project. This includes photography, travel to the location, photo editing, attending Friends' and other meetings, and co-ordination/communication. At least two of the club are continuing volunteering into 2019.

By the end of December 2018, photos had been taken on 41 separate occasions during the year. This includes internal and external shots, some of the latter not involving access to the formal construction site at all. It also includes half a day photographing station memorabilia at the council offices. There are now nearly 1200 photos in total.

Benefits to the Town Council

Likely benefits to the Town Council include:

- Photos of the progress of the refurbishment for batandballstation.com
- Photos of the refurb for a looping show at the Preview (nearly end of work) event on 27 November.
- Volunteer photography recording some of the public events
- Possibility of printing photos for use as a 'hard copy' archive of the renovation work for historical reference by future generations.
- A route via the Club members for communication to local residents about the project.
- One photo was used as the underlying picture of the 2018 Town Mayoral Christmas card
- The possibility for the council to display photos at the station.

Benefits for Sevenoaks Camera Club members

Benefits to the club members include photograph skills, such as:

- Taking photographs in low light, and improving understanding of either using flash or a camera's capability for such pictures without flash.
- Coping with a variety of lighting conditions, from the low light to very bright conditions when the sun decided to shine that gave issues of controlling the potential high contrast in scenes.
- Considering the visual significance of large-scale versus small-scale construction feature in our photos, e.g. when to go close and small, and when wider overall shots were appropriate.
- Looking for more 'creative' and interesting photographs to supplement what sometimes might appear quite standard 'process' pictures of the progress of the construction.
- Photographing details and close-ups on site, plus the memorabilia at the Council offices. Both had been done before, but now needed more structure because of the formal use of the photos.
- Skills for the photography of old hinges and locks or other artefacts found on site
- Night-time photography of a floodlit building site.
- Photographing public events with significant numbers of attendees.
- The benefit of planning and rehearsal(s) using proxy items when facing important one-off photo opportunities. This relates specifically to the passage of the steam excursion train through the station in the late afternoon of the 27 November preview event.
- Learning more about one's camera's video capability, especially how to shoot low light level videos, and gaining experience of making short movies using iMovie and Premiere Rush software.
- Experience of selecting the optimum photos from many similar ones taken around the same time.
- Broadened knowledge of the station's and area's history, and some of the building techniques used in the second half of the 19th Century to put it up.
- Learning from discussions about the refurbishment work with a range of people, from building company executives through to the expert craftsmen involved on the work, as well as passengers. The benefits of talking with knowledgeable craftsmen with such passion for their type of traditional work was highly valuable.
- Awareness of the importance of health and safety matters on even a small construction site, whilst also being provided with opportunities to put these skills in practice to photograph in roof voids or over floor joists when all boarding had been removed.
- One member attended an oral history workshop put on by the Council, thereby gaining knowledge of that technique which can be transferred to different historical research interests.



Photographs by the Sevenoaks Camera Club

The members who have been most closely involved in this project agree that it has been a valuable and enriching project for them. For the club, the commitment to take part in this medium-term project encouraged members to improve photographic skills to deal with real issues we faced at various times, whether technical or aesthetic. As well as giving the Town Council a good free service, it has also been a great learning and doing experience for the club.

The wider impact of the development

The redevelopment has had benefits that go beyond the users of the station. This includes benefits to the local economy and to people who live in the area. In addition, the redevelopment is likely to act as a catalyst to further developments in the future. These are outlined below.

Impact on the local economy

The redevelopment of the station building is expected to have already boosted the local economy, and to continue to boost the local economy in the future.

A 2016 report by AECOM analysed the development plan and estimated that the redevelopment would:

- Create 19 FTE construction jobs during the 12-month renovation period
- Create 25 net additional jobs, contributing approximately £1.2 million of Gross Value Added (GVA) per annum, following the development. These 25 jobs are as follows:
 - The café, venue for hire and retail of local produce will provide revenue streams to support the financial viability of the building into the future, directly creating two jobs.
 - A Heritage Engagement Office has been employed – creating one job.
 - Procurement of local produce to sell, as well as other local goods and services such as caretaking, supplies and professional services, will support one further FTE job.
 - 90,563 visits to the station were projected in the business plan, of which 15% were anticipated to be day visitors, attracted to the area to attend events and activities at the station. These visitors are likely to spend £360k per annum, supporting or creating a further 13 jobs.
 - A further eight jobs are expected to be created once the multiplier effects of employment through staff spend and supply chain events are accounted for.

Some young people gained apprentices with the contractor during the construction work, gaining useful skills and experience.

“Thoroughly enjoyed the experience and how helpful the other colleagues were.” [Apprentice]

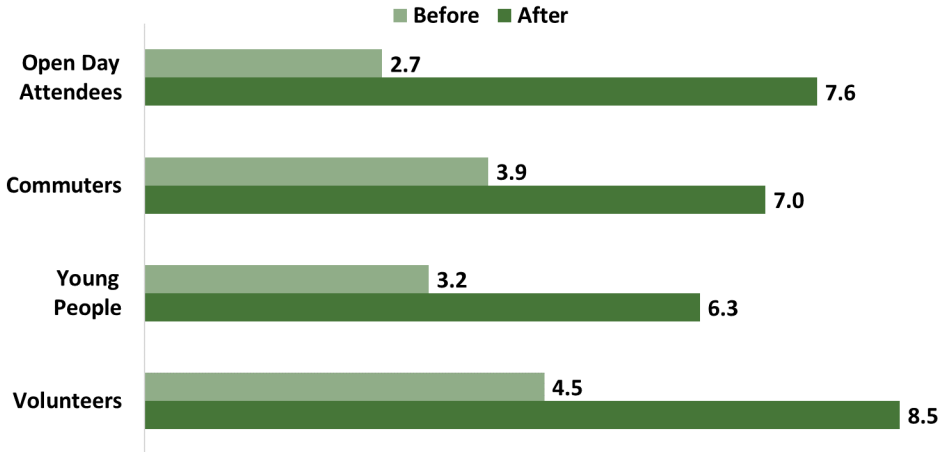
“Thank you for the time I spent with you. I learned many things. The people was very nice, friendly and helpful. Also the site was very clean which made my time there productive. Look forward to working with you again.” [Apprentice]

Impact on the local community

Alongside the heritage benefits and benefits from using the station, there are additional benefits to the wider community. All groups said that they felt more proud of the Bat and Ball area now than before the station redevelopment. This was particularly true of open day attendees and volunteers (see Figure 11).

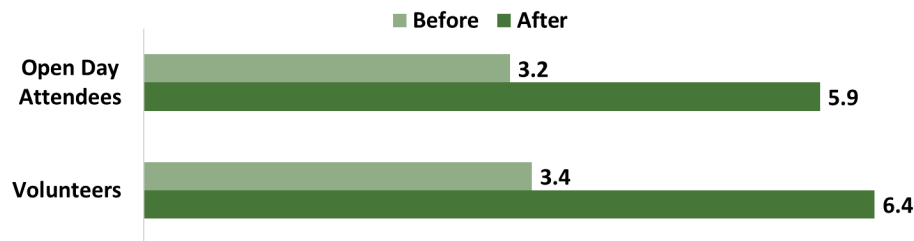
In addition, both open day attendees and volunteers felt that the Bat and Ball area felt better connected to the rest of the Sevenoaks area and beyond (see Figure 12).⁸

Figure 11: Sense of pride in Bat and Ball area



"Q. Giving a score between 0 and 10, with 0 being of not at all proud, and 10 being extremely proud, how proud of the Bat and Ball area do you feel... Now / Before the station was redeveloped." n=91, 95, 10, 4

Figure 12: Sense of connection to rest of Sevenoaks area and beyond



"Q. Giving a score between 0 and 10, with 0 being of very poorly connected, and 10 being extremely well connected, how much does the Bat and Ball area feel connected to the rest of the Sevenoaks area and beyond... Now / Before the station was redeveloped." n=85, 5

Future developments

There are several areas where future developments are expected to create further benefits for the local community. These are described below:

⁸ This metric was not asked to commuters and young people, partly to keep the surveys short, and partly because commuters were – by definition – already using the station.

Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan

The Bat and Ball station redevelopment is an important part of the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan.⁹ According to the Town Council, the masterplan would not have been created without the redevelopment of the station, which allows for the delivery of new sustainable homes.

The proposals contained within the masterplan would create several benefits for the area:

- The provision of new housing: proposals for over 900 new homes, 40% of which would be affordable units based on current policy.
- Good, safe, public transport links for the new homes through the station.
- The intensification and regeneration of existing business areas, creating a further boost to the local economy.
- Environmental benefits: improved green infrastructure, and protected and enhanced biodiversity.
- Employment opportunities created by leisure activities in the area.
- Improved well-being created by the improved public realm and the opportunities to take part in leisure activities in the area.



Community Rail Partnership

The redevelopment of the station has been the catalyst for the development of a Community Rail Partnership (CRP). This will link Bat and Ball station with other stations on the line, and lead to opportunities for communities near all of these stations.

This is expected to lead to:

- Increase in visitor numbers to Bat and Ball station and other stations on the line, leading to economic benefits above and beyond those mentioned on page 19.
- Recreation opportunities for local residents through increased awareness of, and access to, opportunities at other stations.
- Specific CRP activities. For example, the CRP will be able to add additional carriages to trains for specific events, such as the promotion of cycling days for children and young people.

Redevelopment of other stations

The redevelopment of Bat and Ball station is a good example of how stations can be redeveloped while maintaining and enhancing the local heritage. A toolkit is being created that outlines how the redevelopment process can be improved, drawing on the lessons from Bat and Ball. This will help other areas to redevelop heritage stations; this is already happening at Herne Hill station in South London.

⁹ <https://sevenoaksndp.wordpress.com/northernmasterplan/>

Social value

This evaluation has sought to estimate the social value created by the station redevelopment. Social value has been estimated where there is a sufficient quantity of data to make a reasonable estimate. In the future the social value estimates may change, either because new outcomes can be measured and valued (for example, if the new entrance to Platform 1 creates further time savings for commuters) or because existing outcomes increase (for example, if 'sense of safety' at the station continues to improve).

The social value calculations are shown in Figure 13. These suggest the following:

- The economic benefits amount to around £1.2 million per year, as calculated by Aecom
- Increase in sense of safety at the station leads to social value of a little over £500,000 per year
- There are smaller amounts of social value created by reduction in crime (around £30,000 per year) and time savings for commuters (around £6,000 per year)
- The increase in pride in the Bat and Ball area has the potential to create around £2.4 million per year. However, this assumes that everyone in Northern Sevenoaks feels the same increase in pride in the area as the commuters – this is unlikely at this stage. This figure of £2.4 million should be seen as the potential social value that could be created by increased pride in the area over time.

Figure 13: Social value estimates

Type of value	Calculation details	Total
Economic impact	Economic value – Gross Value Added (GVA) – calculated by Aecom ¹⁰	£1.2 million GVA per year
Time savings for commuters	<p>There were 441 more journeys in January 2019 than in January 2018. This is despite a lower number of journeys in December 2018 than December 2017. We have assumed that Bat and Ball is a more convenient station for these travellers, but that these journeys would have started / ended at Sevenoaks Station were it not for the redevelopment of Bat and Ball.</p> <p>It takes approximately seven minutes to drive between the two stations at rush hour.¹¹ Not everyone will save seven minutes as some people will live between the two stations. We have therefore conservatively assumed that those 441 journeys will save 3.5 minutes each (or 0.058 hours).</p> <p>The mean salary in Sevenoaks is £20.18¹², meaning that the value created is 441 journeys per month x 12 months x 0.058 hours x £20.18 per hour = £6,200 per year.</p>	£6,200 per year

¹⁰ Aecom (2016), Economic impact assessment of Bat & Ball station redevelopment

¹¹ Approximated from Googlemaps, journey starting at 7.30am

¹² Office for National Statistics (2018), *Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings*, 2018 provisional data, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/annualsurveyofhoursandearnings/2018/relateddata>

Type of value	Calculation details	Total
Reduced crime	There are now two fewer crimes per month than before the redevelopment, equating to 24 crimes per year. The main type of crime is criminal damage. The impact of criminal damage has been calculated at £1,350 per incident – this includes defensive expenditure, insurance administration, value of property stolen / damaged, physical and emotional harm, lost output, and costs for health, victim, police and other criminal justice services. The value created is therefore £1,350 per crime x 2 crimes per month x 12 months = £32,400 per year. ¹³	£32,400 per year
Sense of safety	HACT – the Housing Associations’ Charitable Trust – has developed several values to represent outcomes for the community. The most relevant of these for ‘sense of safety’ at the station is judged to be ‘no problems with teenagers hanging around’, which is valued at £5,760 per person per day. ¹⁴ Sense of safety at the station rose by 2.6 points out of 10 (or 0.26 points on a 0 to 1 scale) for commuters. Data from GTR shows that 358 people use the station per day (in January 2019). Therefore, the potential social value creation is 358 people x 0.26 x £5,760 per person per year = £540,000	£540,000
Pride in area	The sense of belonging in a ‘good neighbourhood’ has been valued at £1,747 per person per year by HACT. ¹⁵ Sense of pride in the Bat and Ball area rose by 3.1 points out of 10 (or 0.31 points on a 0 to 1 scale) for commuters. Of all the groups surveyed, commuters were judged to be the most representative of the general population. There are 4,500 people in northern Sevenoaks. ¹⁶ Therefore, the potential social value creation is 4,500 people x 0.31 x £1,747 per person per year = £2.4 million. However, this assumes that everyone in Northern Sevenoaks feels the same increase in pride in the area as the commuters. This is unlikely to be the case at the moment, but may occur once the developments outlined in the Northern Sevenoaks masterplan are completed.	Potential for up to £2.4 million per year

¹³ Home Office (2018), *The economic and social costs of crime, Second edition*
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/732110/the-economic-and-social-costs-of-crime-horr99.pdf

¹⁴ HACT (2014), *Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment: A guide to using the Wellbeing Valuation Approach*

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Northern Sevenoaks masterplan

Appendix 1: Survey comments

Figure 14: Baseline survey respondents' comments on the station

- It's unbelievable in this day and age that anyone with disabilities, or anyone with a pushchair, should be unable to catch a train to London from this station because of the access issues. And the state of the building and its surroundings makes Bat and Ball station a destination that I actively avoid at present. [Baseline survey respondent]
- Our customers that travel to the store use this station. They are pregnant women & young children families. Toilets, café & (a) better environment will be very beneficial. [Baseline survey respondent]
- It's important to try and retain listed buildings in Sevenoaks. [Baseline survey respondent]
- I can understand people not using (the station) because of the antisocial behaviour. [Baseline survey respondent]
- It's very dirty (and there is) no security. [Baseline survey respondent]
- It would bring more people to (the) area! [Baseline survey respondent]
- (There is) a lack of staff at the station, especially at night. [Baseline survey respondent]
- I believe this area attracts anti-social behaviour as it is unmanned and unlit. [Baseline survey respondent]
- If the station were rejuvenated, made cleaner and safer for unaccompanied female teenagers to use, I am sure it would be used more. With Trinity School and Weald Kent Grammar School newly constructed, it would greatly facilitate travel by school children... [Baseline survey respondent]
- Bat and Ball Station needs to be renovated as it is a mess and there is a lot of antisocial behaviour and by opening a café it might stop the antisocial behaviour as it might bring people together. [Baseline survey respondent]
- The potential for Bat and Ball is huge: Improvement to the station will augment the area's profile to its existing population and to potential investors and purchasers to the area. [Baseline survey respondent]
- (There are) intimidating young adults hanging around the station and there is vandalism. My young child has to go past groups of frightening youths. There should be more security, camera at the front and back of the station, and more police. [Baseline survey respondent]
- It's very important to restore and maintain the station whether I use it or not personally. [Baseline survey respondent]
- Litter on the line is very off-putting. [Baseline survey respondent]
- A manned station would be good. [Baseline survey respondent]
- (The) renovation of Bat and Ball Station would benefit not only local people and businesses, but would also benefits any travellers passing through. This station would be used more if toilets and a café were installed. [Baseline survey respondent]
- Public halls in Sevenoaks are scarce and expensive. A hall would be useful. [Baseline survey respondent]
- The building is extremely valuable in historical terms. Support by the Heritage Lottery Fund would be greatly appreciated and lead to a much-improved environment. [Baseline survey respondent]
- This station seems to have been forgotten...and people using it are often referred to as troublemakers. That may be due to the perception that is given by some of the unsociable elements who hang around the station. It is also a point for drug dealing which puts users off from using the station. [Baseline survey respondent]

Figure 15: Commuter comments on the station aesthetics

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely pleased that, for once, a redevelopment has been undertaken with a stylish but sensitive nod to a traditional appearance. Fantastic project. Extremely well done. Will certainly be using the station more as a result. [Commuter] • The cafe and waiting rooms (from what I've seen through the window!) have been improved massively. I love the traditional style of them. [Commuter] • A very attractive refurbishment of the old station and within keeping of its historic background. Will also use the space for meetings. [Commuter] • A very good job has been done, particularly the aesthetic of the station and playing to the building's heritage. Looking forward to seeing how everything else looks once the project is completed. [Commuter] • It would be nice to see all the station areas painted green, rather than a mixture of Grey and Green. I think this would make a real difference. [Commuter] • Both the inside and outside of the building now looks fantastic. I think it will improve this area of Sevenoaks and look forward to the pop-up restaurants and other activities that will be held there. [Commuter] • A fantastic job has been done. Aesthetically it cannot be faulted. [Commuter]
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Figure 16: Commuter comments on potential further improvements

Platform 1, and the new entrance to platform 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking forward to the new entrance too :-) [Commuter] • Platform 1 needs redoing too just like the other side as it looks really good! I use platform 1 everyday and it gets very busy early in the morning with not many places to sit for everyone as the seating is not very nice on platform 1. Can't wait to use the new entryway when it comes. Love the work so far. [Commuter] • Once waiting area and entrance on plat 1 is modernised and there is evidence that the station is kept clean and safe on going then 'now' scores will improve. Feels like half way there currently. [Commuter] • As the husband of a disabled lady it is imperative that the access to Platform 1 is actually constructed and with wheelchair access. At the moment my wife cannot use the station. (There will remain the question of how one then accesses the disabled ramps on the platform to board trains !!!) [Commuter] • A HUGE improvement :) I still feel that work could be done on platform 1 as this lets it down, it's very dirty and unkempt. Not sure if there are plans to update it to be in keeping with platform. [Commuter] • It looks great, however the waiting area on the other side of the railway needs refurbishing too. [Commuter] • The next improvement would be to get some accessible access to platform 1! We use it to get to Kings College Hospital but always have to get on at Sevenoaks if I'm taking my mum in her wheelchair. Really well done [on the work so far]. [Commuter]
Seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs more seats on cafe side. [Commuter] • Your new green bench by the cafe is lovely but unfortunately there's a hole in the wall under it and a very friendly mouse who likes to go in and out...perhaps you could fill it in so I can use the bench again!! [Commuter]
Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bathrooms are an essential upgrade and hope they become available even at last trains service. [Commuter] • Is there any intention to put the new WCs into use? They are currently locked! [Commuter]

Trains / ticket machines / staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to see fast trains to London divided between B&B and Sevenoaks. The trains to London from Sevenoaks are fast but a nightmare - never any seats and there are delays so often. [Commuter] • The new entrance to platform one must have a ticket issuing machine provided otherwise there is no point in constructing this entrance. [Commuter] • Can we have an additional ticket machine. At peak times can be v time pressured to get a ticket. The ticket machine is also regularly broken. Can this be better maintained? [Commuter] • If the station was manned it would be perfect. [Commuter]
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Figure 17: Commuter comments on lighting, safety and anti-social behaviour

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like the redevelopment, but think there should be more lighting on the platform and outside the station. [Commuter] • The redevelopment of the station is great, thank you. I've noticed more & more people using the station over the past year whereas before it was pretty deserted, so I feel safer now. I hope the local teenagers respect all the hard work & expense that's gone into it & don't destroy it. I would be very wary of leaving a bike here for that reason. [Commuter] • I still think there's potential to reduce the level of anti social behaviour and drug taking. Often this is committed by youth from neighbouring towns who are able to get onto a train and off at Bat and Ball without paying fares. If you go to the station after dark (after the cafe has closed and the station is unmanned) you often see them congregated outside the station. There needs to be ticket barriers and ideally rail staff after cafe opening hours. [Commuter] • I do feel there should be more lighting around the station after dark, and maybe more security cameras outside, in order to make people feel even more safe. • Bat and Ball station is looking great. Hoping the new revival of the station buildings will improve the issues with antisocial behaviour. [Commuter] • Thankfully the station has not YET been vandalised by the scum that used to congregate and smoke drugs on the station in the evenings. How is this to be maintained? Hopefully there is enough CCTV and any actions of vandalism will be prosecuted! [Commuter] • Better lighting after dark would improve security and appearance. [Commuter]
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Figure 18: Commuter comments on the café

Positive comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cafe is fantastic! The renovation has been carried out to a high standard, the coffee is great, the menu looks varied and it is now quite a unique venue in Sevenoaks. I will definitely plan to use the cafe with friends. Well done to all involved! [Commuter] • Great café [Commuter] • The cafe is lovely [Commuter] • Overall the station looks a lot smarter and the cafe is great. [Commuter] • The new development looks very nice. I'm looking forward to visit the new cute little cafe. [Commuter] • The service I received in the cafe was very welcoming and it's great to be able to get a coffee on my way to work. [Commuter] • Love the coffee! [Commuter] • It has made it a friendly place to arrive at in the mornings for a coffee. [Commuter]
Opening at weekends (this is due to happen soon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to see the cafe open on a weekend so my husband and I can enjoy a brunch but we will use the station cafe as much as possible. [Commuter] • It would be great if the cafe opened at weekends as it would be great for brunches similar to Raffertys on St John's Hill. It is so much of an improvement and thank you for sorting it out. [Commuter]

<p>Other suggestions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cafe nice, would be good to have a small basket of kids books and toys. [Commuter] • Lovely cafe, warm and friendly service. Reusable cups dirty and wasn't cleaned before being used. Seems on the pricey side for food and drinks. [Commuter] • The pastries are a bit expensive in the cafe - about 30-40p more than Otford so if you are travelling to Otford which I do I would be inclined to keep using Otford. There needs to be a take away price. [Commuter]
<p>Concerns about footfall / profitability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I really hope the cafe takes off, however I just not sure how much foot fall it will get. [Commuter] • I think the restoration is fab. I worry for the viability of the cafe if it's not funded as so few people use the Bat and Ball (as it only offers a slow train to London.) [Commuter] • It needed a lick of paint, but struggling to see how the cafe will be profitable. There just simply isn't the foot traffic in order to make it viable as morning coffee and the prices are just a tad too high for food. Better idea to turn it into a greasy spoon for the truckers that go further down the road. [Commuter]

Figure 19: Commuter's general positive comments

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The redevelopment is excellent and appropriate - the station was an embarrassment to Sevenoaks before which is a shame especially because of its history. [Commuter] • It is more accessible and more convenient and more safer as well. I am very pleased with this new redevelopment. [Commuter] • A really brilliant job has been done! You have done a great job at breathing life into an old, unused building. It feels so much better and safer to use. I'm also hoping to use the community rooms for my son's birthday too! [Commuter] • Good job. [Commuter] • Excellent job by all involved. [Commuter] • Very attractive. Glad it's finally happening! [Commuter] • We live nearby, will enjoy being able to come to the cafe from time to time. I commute from Sevenoaks now, but used to use Bat & Ball. I remember Norman, the last stationmaster, I hope there will be some recognition of him here in due course. [Commuter] • Really good improvements, glad it happened! [Commuter] • Station looks lovely now and was overdue development. Good luck to the café. [Commuter] • I love the fact that we get a chance to see and experience the station, like it was opened many years ago. It has been transformed from an abandoned and dilapidated station, into something that can be treasured and enjoyed by all. • Love the new station. [Commuter] • Great Idea and love the new station. I am a commuter Mon-Fri to Bat and Ball. [Commuter]
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Figure 20: Commuter's miscellaneous comments

- I look forward to seeing planting back at the station. [Commuter]
- The station itself runs 4 trains per hour. It's a branch line serving a small population that live nearby. It's never going to be busy. For commuters, the cafe is likely to be of occasional use as local people will mainly have drinks/eats at home. Toilets are good to have but I've not noticed them to be open at the times I travel. If your aim was to make the cafe somewhere for local people to visit and socialise then it seems a good idea as there is little else in the vicinity. For regular travellers, particularly commuters, the facilities will be of limited use or benefit and £750k always seemed a lot to spend to brighten the place up, assuming the work has finished. If you want locals and travellers to be proud of the place, you need to look further than adding a coffee shop and toilet. [Commuter]
- Is there any intention for any internal parts of the building to be used as shelter to customers ? May be very useful in the winter! [Commuter]
- The trees that obscure the streetlight/s on Bat & Ball Road need to be cut back. Similarly, the trees and shrubs growing between the north side of Bat & Ball Road and the station boundary should be removed to open up the area and improve visibility across the site making it safer. [Commuter]
- I would like to point out to the council that there is still a lot of rubbish around the area, and there always has been, in the 10 years I have been living in the area and using the station. The pathway before the community centre is particularly dirty and it is unacceptable to see this. [Commuter]
- Still needs more work [Commuter]
- More protection from rain [Commuter]
- Great work so far though and I am looking forward to further developments in Bat & Ball as I've recently moved to the area. [Commuter]
- If it offered fast trains to London I suspect the parking would become a problem. [Commuter]
- Poor communication about the opening dates of facilities like cafe and toilets.
- Would also be good to use the ticket hall for community events. This would also give business to the coffee shop. [Commuter]

Figure 21: Open Day Participants: Q. “What, if anything, do you like most about the Bat and Ball station redevelopment?”. Answers related to the maintenance and enhancement of the station heritage

- The high quality restoration of a lovely building.
- The superb and sympathetic refurbishment by a brilliant group of craft people.
- I love the way you have recreated the Victorian arrival.
- The care and attention to detail and conservation of some beautifully crafted artefacts.
- The way the history has been refaced with such careful thought.
- The restoration of the period features. Particularly the windows and doors.
- Spacious, clean, tidy and lovely 'vintage; look of some of the history notes.
- The fresh new feel but in keeping with how it used to be.
- The accessories - love the traditional feel
- The vintage feel.
- I like all the information about it when it was a long time ago.
- The restoration of original features (fireplaces etc.). Also the café and toilets.
- Authenticity, light open spaces.
- Kept its original features with a modern twist improved the look of this station and by having people around will deter gangs etc.
- I love the signs and paintwork.
- Keeping the station as a living part of the heritage of Sevenoaks.
- Authentic and made to emulate the past
- The restoration work which will ensure the future of an attractive and historic building, Sevenoaks' first station!
- Everything. Love that it is faithful to the old station. Atmospheric and a real community asset.
- The restoration returning the original features.
- Keeping station heritage.
- Vintage feel - great.
- Sympathetic restoration
- Retro. Done to a high standard
- Restoring the B&B to its original features
- It looks great. You've kept the 'old' bits. Beautifully done.
- It looks beautiful - it's been so sympathetically done.
- It's a lovely snapshot of history and
- The refurbishment has been done very well, keeping many Victorian features and to a high standard.
- Maintained features + made it useable
- A very sensitive restoration - giving a heritage feeling to a building with modern / current usage.
- It looks great, great to regenerate an old building
- Attention to detail and retaining the look and feel of the original station
- Good to see new decoration and renovation of such a heritage site
- Very tasteful interior decoration throughout with interesting detail. Managed to make it feel modern whilst retaining a feeling of nostalgia with the period feature
- Quality of the restoration such as the stained windows
- The fact that it has been taken back to its authentic look
- It has retained its original character and whilst also being fresh and modern
- It's maintained its heritage, with all the modern upgrades you could wish for
- The very fact it's happened and the beautiful station has been restored in a sympathetic manner
- That it's been kept in its original style.
- Atmospheric of the era of the original station
- Paint colour and artefacts - lovely!
- Nostalgia
- Very impressed with all aspects period details, colour scheme, everything

Figure 22: Open Day Participants: Q. “What, if anything, do you like most about the Bat and Ball station redevelopment?”. Other answers

<p>Quality overall</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The look of the building and the interior - absolutely lovely! • I think it has been restored very well and with thoughtful detail. • Refurbishment already done is excellent • Being painted up - nice colours. • Interior woodwork and colour • The exceptionally fine attention to detail in the renovation work. • A beautiful honest building in a sea of the banal and mediocre. • Quality of the finish. • The quality of the building restoration • Fresh look • Warm space, décor
<p>Atmosphere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nice atmosphere - quaint. • It has a very welcoming feel now • Lovely atmosphere! Everything clean and bright and welcoming
<p>Bringing a building back into use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That it seeks to include good use of buildings which otherwise would be left to decay and blight the neighbourhood. • Bringing back a dilapidated but very attractive building into use. • Good use of a redundant building. • It's good to see it being used again. • It's good to see it being used and refurbished. • It's being used and open • Wonderful. Rescued from neglect. • That after so many years of being closed and moribund it is open and in use • Reopening of a previously unused space and the upfit of a bit of a town black spot. • Having used the station as a commuter in the 70s. It's great to see it in use again • That it is old building and will be saved for the future and is still a station • Reuse of heritage building. Somewhere to wait in warmth in winter, during the day with facilities
<p>Impact on the local area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It looks great and I think this area needs regeneration. • A new building which will bring more life and activity to this particular area. • A great improvement for the area • The sympathetic treatment of the building - every aspect is excellent. • Revitalisation of the Bat and Ball area. • Refurbishment has been done very well. Now an asset for northern Sevenoaks • It has made it more inviting, feels safer and smartened up a very dismal area • Upgrading the area is very beneficial, empty station lead to vandalism
<p>The cafe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A real improvement, great to see, very interesting and welcoming especially like the cakes, yummy. • Having a café • The Café • The café and the overall feel of the station building. • Café facility. • The coffee shop. • Whole refurbishment - tea shop! • The café is great • The new café is fantastic (the old ticket office) Amazing. Good job done • Café • Very nice - like café

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The café • Café • Everything, very smart. Especially café. Great improvement • Café • Looking forward to a coffee in the café. • New café
The function room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The function room is a great idea. • The community space • Interested in using the rooms for hire • It is really bright and cheerful and provides much needed [space] for hiring • Great for small group use but not parties etc
Access to station via platform 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian link from Community Centre. • The pathway to the community centre.
Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public toilets • Toilets
Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community feel • The fact that the building has been developed as a community while still maintaining the railway connection. • A great opportunity for community engagement
Anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much more friendly and clean. No graffiti or broken bits and pieces which makes the area look much better.
General positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wonderful!! • Everything • A vast improvement
Misc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean and tidy / Bike Shed • Paintwork (free coffee and cakes) • The fact of developing wage [sic] • Décor, space café

Figure 23: Open Day Participants: Q. “What, if anything, do you like least about the Bat and Ball station redevelopment?” [Excludes ‘don’t know’ / ‘nothing to improve’ comments]

Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking! • Car Park is too small • Limited parking • Worried about parking particularly during the day • Lack of free parking with entry pedestrian access may deter use of the new facilities • Restricted parking available • Traffic at the Bat and Ball roundabout and not sure where to park • Is there parking on this side or only at the community centre? • No parking for hall users. Lack of buses or taxi connection • Lack of provision for parking - access for drop off pick up of disabled/elderly folk who would appreciate the new facilities • The lack of car parking • Will car parking be a problem?
Tickets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a regular commuter. There is always a queue at the ticket machine in the morning. Can we have more ticket machines please • That there isn't a ticket office and station staff. • It would be helpful to have a ticket machine. • It would be good to have a staffed ticket office. The machine often breaks and is also slow if there is a queue.
Potential underuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fear that it will not be as well used as it deserves to be. • I hope it is linked into the local community • It would be lovely to make more of the large room.
Lack of steam trains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No steam trains • Nothing really - though a few steam trains through the station would be good - though this is obviously not something within Sevenoaks council control!
Access to platform 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sign of access from community centre - up side of station • Hope the development can open up the area on the community centre side of the station.
Other potential improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the luggage room you have to go outside to reach the toilets if the main room is in use. • No kitchen facility for groups using the rooms when the café is closed (Sundays? Evenings?) • The unremoved modern outside seating and lights • Hopefully landscaping outside will follow. Flower beds would look good • Turning off from the main road to Station Road - B and Ball station is not visible enough. • Flower troughs set at 90 degrees to entrance would make it more visible/welcoming. • Needs completion / outside needs more decoration. • Could be made to look like its opened again such as a sign on the door to say open or closed. • Not very private • Would like to see push chair/wheelchair access to platforms
Misc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the town Council/Community Centre redevelopment which would have completed a cross-railway line transformation appears to have been abandoned • I wish it smelt the same as in the old days. • That is stayed derelict for so long
Positive comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All been really well throughout, planned and finished. Excellent. • Will make the area more attractive • No looks so much better and locals being able to book rooms for events is good to improve area.

Figure 24: Open Day Participants: Q. “If you have any comments on the questions above, or about the Bat and Ball station redevelopment, please give them here.”

<p>Positive comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The workers and the council are to be congratulated on a job thoroughly well done. Just excellent. • It is an impressive project and money well spent on this part of our community. • Really brilliant job. I hope it will be the first of a number of improvements in the area. • First Class renovation. Well done SDC!¹⁷ • Thank you. An improvement in the area is welcome. Good to know there are volunteering opportunities for seniors to show people around the project. • Excellent! Thanks for the funding! • Have watched the improvements. Really well done, shall look forward to using this station. Hooray well done! • Well done. A substantial improvement. The last regular member of staff here, the late Norman would have been very proud of what you have achieved. • Thank you for your hard work to improve the area of Bat and Ball. • I think you have done a great job and I look forward to using the station and café much more! • A great thing to happen, would be wonderful to have it staffed. Café is amazing. • It is a great improvement. • Will be a good thing to keep Bat and Ball as a heritage site. • Very impressed. Thought it wouldn't happen. Well done all involved. • Looks good - vintage feel - appreciated. • Well worth refurbishing the station. Even better when linked to community centre • The station has been beautifully restored! • Your hard work is greatly appreciated • A fantastic development and something that will enhance our area • Pleased that this station is being restored • Very impressive - well done! • Congratulations to a job well done, may the area continue to prosper! • I think this will be a fantastic resource. What about running a model railway club for youngsters to encourage the next generation to become interested? The whole building feels light and welcoming with some interesting period features. I'm looking forward to using the cafe. A lot of thought has gone into this • All upgrades to this area of Sevenoaks is beneficial as we have sometimes been left behind or left out • So pleased that the station is loved looking forward to the access being open on the Northern - up side. Interior stunning • Looks great • An excellent community facility - I hope it is used extensively in the future. • Love the refurb and can't wait to try the coffee.
<p>Interest in hiring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be very interested in hiring for an event like extended family get together. • Looking forward to hiring out for future events
<p>Access via platform 1 / community centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community centre development is a necessary task to complete the exercise. • Access to platform 1 needs consideration for wheelchair and pram access. Infant sanitary facilities in ladies' toilet. Complete landscaping of outside area. • Access to platform 1 from the community centre side would work well too - and an extension of refurb to rest of station.

¹⁷ Work was actually undertaken by Sevenoaks Town Council (STC), not Sevenoaks District Council (SDC)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The station will be better when connected to the new community centre. Traffic at Bat & Ball always a problem • Looking forward to connection with community centre
Youth club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would love there to be a youth club here for the children. • I heard there might be a youth club here. That would be really good if it happens.
Work on outside of station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sort out the outside lighting and seating. Make it period. • Needs a bit more work to the outside the station.
Access and connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access over from the other platform ASAP for buggies and wheelchairs. • Access - Cross roads at B&Ball very dangerous for pedestrians. Those on foot have to wait a long time for 'green man', tempting people to take a chance! Do you intend people to drive here? St Johns Hill remain v. unattractive • Whilst not concerning the redevelopment directly, I feel the connectivity could be improved with other bus services as well as route 8 which is only hourly. Obviously more trains would help! An inside ticket machine as a [...] against vandalism?
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No parking for hall hirers - station car park not big enough for station users and hall users. Elderly will not be able to walk from community hall car park or over the bridge • The car parking / drop-off pick up issue needs urgent attention. • We are pleased about the access through the community centre that is planned but concerned about the knock-on impact in parking down our road. Already it can be difficult for residents to park. I can only foresee this becoming worse when access from Crampton's Road is opened up.
Other improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More trees cut back on station road to make it feel safer especially in winter. • Vending Machine • It would be lovely to use this as a community area - think about events, book swaps, piano. • Could have done with a leaflet on how to book the facility and when the café might be open. • Why are the weighing scales in kilograms not pounds and ounces? Full marks on an excellent job • Bad rail connections • Youths have in the past hung about the station in school breaks and made people feel uneasy. • It would be lovely to have more events like today - press for Queen Victoria. We don't have any in Sevenoaks and they are really great for imagination. Mindfulness meet people in a safe environment
Comments on the survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the questions are being asked prematurely - the facility is being opened for the first time today and many people here are seeing it for the first time and have never commuted from here. • Too early to answer some questions. • Q6 - N/A today since daytime. Q9 - unfair without anything to compare to. • Re question 6 - have not visited after dark for some time but did not feel safe before
Other comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not a resident of the area, but walk past here (to Sainsbury's about two time per week). • This used to be our playground, we were railway children. We lived in the railway houses. • Not sure what its function is going to be - open for public use/events • When does it open officially and will the building be manned in the early evenings? • I think this is a great opportunity for B&B which needs to be handled well to make it a valuable community hub. • I haven't been here in the dark - what is the lighting like in the immediate area?

Figure 25: Volunteer feedback

<p>What volunteering activities did you participate in during the Bat and Ball station redevelopment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing historical data on the coming of the railway to Sevenoaks; attending relevant meetings, lectures. • Photographing works as they progressed • Attended meetings of Friends of Bat & Ball Station, offered help at an open day, researched history of the area. • Weekly photographing of progress throughout the work along with certain key events during the refurbishment
<p>What, if anything, was most positive about your experience of volunteering during the Bat and Ball station redevelopment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Par for the course; many professional historians give their time freely for local initiatives, advice, etc. • I was most impressed by the quality of the refurbishment work by the contractor and the attention to detail. • Learning about the history of the railway system, and the construction of the station building • The excellence of the work, the wonderful commitment of all the crafts- persons involved and their always welcoming approach throughout the months of work to a pesky photographer constantly getting in their way. Naz, who was in charge of the work was always very helpful, enthusiastic about what we were doing and constantly suggesting interesting things to photograph. His whole approach was a lesson in excellence to managers everywhere. In short, the whole was a delight. And it reflects extremely well on Sevenoaks Town Council who had the imagination to go ahead with the project and had the determination to do so with such high quality works which shows so clearly in the outcome. The Town Council’s Heritage Officer Linda Redden’s imaginative and extremely well-organised events were a major factor in the success of, and engagement of the community in, the project.
<p>What, if anything, was less positive about your experience of volunteering during the Bat and Ball station redevelopment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing I'm not comfortable with explaining the history of the station to visitors, which seems to be the main volunteer activity • The occasional cold and damp of photographing the progress of the works
<p>What impact, if any, did your volunteering during the Bat and Ball station redevelopment have on you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for personal networking; helped me think further on the impact of the coming of the railway on the town in the 1860s • I was pleased to be associated with this project, although only in a minor way. • Good to see the station building revived, even if it will still be closed (when used as a private function room) to passengers using the station. • Greatly heartened to see such skill and commitment at a time when the loss of ‘doing’ skills and alienation are so apparent in the increasingly ravaged British economy.
<p>What impact, if any, do you think your volunteering during the Bat and Ball station redevelopment had on the station and the local community?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional input, providing material that non-trained people might have had difficulty locating and interpreting. • I would like to think that my participation helped the community in providing a photographic record of the works, which will be retained and form part of the history of the Station • Probably not much • The project has had a major effect on local morale - but that has little to do directly with my marginal involvement.

Other comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What a magnificent achievement to restore this historical building for the use of the public and community• It continues to be a delight and a privilege to be involved even in the relatively marginal way in which I have participated in the project.
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Appendix 2: Survey participant demographics

Figure 26: Age

	Open Day Attendees		Commuters		Volunteers	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Under 16	1	1%	2	3%	-	0%
16-24	-	-	6	8%	-	0%
25-34	2	2%	20	25%	-	0%
35-44	17	17%	23	29%	-	0%
45-54	12	12%	16	20%	-	0%
55-64	21	20%	13	16%	-	0%
65+	50	49%	-	0%	2	100%

Figure 27: Gender

	Open Day Attendees		Commuters		Young People		Volunteers	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Male	37	38%	40	50%	4	50%	2	100%
Female	61	62%	40	50%	4	50%	0	0%

Figure 28: Postcode

	Open Day Attendees		Commuters		Young People		Volunteers	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
TN13	39	38%	26	33%	2	25%	2	100%
TN14	48	47%	43	55%	0	0%	0	0%
Other TN postcode	12	12%	6	8%	1	13%	0	0%
Other non-TN postcode	3	3%	5	6%	6	75%	0	0%

Figure 29: Current usage of Bat and Ball station

Commuters	Number	Percentage
On five days per week or more	45	55%
On three or four days per week	19	23%
On one or two days per week	9	11%
More than once per month, but less than once per week	2	2%
Once per month or less	7	9%

Appendix 3: Bat and Ball Passenger Count

Count and analysis undertaken by Sevenoak Rail Travelers Association
Thursday 14th March 2019

Trains Heading North	People Getting On	People Getting Off		Trains Heading South	People Getting On	People Getting Off
5.55	3	0				
				6.21	12	2
6.25	6	0				
				6.51	26	6
6.55	6	1				
				7.23	33	3
7.21	15	6				
				7.52	46	11
7.55	21	7				
				8.23	26	18
8.25	19	8				
				8.51	8	4
8.55	6	4				
				9.21	7	2
9.25	9	6				
Total	85	32			158	46

Total getting on	=	243	If all these peak users return later in the day, peak footfall for the day is at least 642
Total getting off	=	78	
Total footfall	=	321	

- If 24 offpeak trains (between 9.30 and 3.30) have conservatively estimated average footfall of 3 each, then the total footfall will be $642+72 = 714$
- Annual footfall should then be at least $200 \times 714 = 142,800$, compared to ORR estimates of 102,800 in 2016/7, and 128,900 in 2017/8.