



Winners of the ACoRP Community Rail Awards 2018

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Entries now open for prestigious Community Rail Awards

The search for the excellence in the community rail movement begins today (17 April 2019) as entries open for the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP) Community Rail Awards. The awards, now in its fifteenth year, celebrates and rewards the innovation and hard work from the unsung stars of the community rail movement.

This year's awards will venture into Shropshire, being held in Telford on the 3 October 2019. Headline sponsors, West Midlands Railway and London

Northwestern Railway, are planning a great programme of events alongside to welcome UK wide attendees for this greatly anticipated occasion.

Familiar categories such as “Involving Diverse Groups” and “It’s Your Station”, make a welcome return and will be joined this year by a new award, “Tourism & Heritage”. This category celebrates innovative and effective ways of promoting community rail to a tourism audience, through delivery of specific initiatives or events.

Award entries can be made online at the ACoRP website (communityrail.org.uk), using the easy to complete online entry system. This year’s Entry Booklet, outlining the award categories and criteria is also available to view online and download. As always, the awards are free to enter and open to everybody.

Richard Brooks, customer experience director for West Midlands Railway, said: “Community rail activities make a huge difference to across our networks, and the Community Rail Awards are a fantastic opportunity to recognise the work that goes on. All this work makes such a difference to our customers, staff and most importantly the communities and volunteers themselves. I’m looking forward to seeing some of the engaging projects that will be recognised this year, and also to welcoming attendees to the awards to join us for an exciting range of activities around the main event - more details to come.”

Said Hazel Bonner, ACoRP Events & Fundraising Manager: “The search for winners culminates at our prestigious annual awards ceremony and is a highlight of the community rail calendar. Winners and guests can look forward to a to a great evening that celebrates everything that great about the community rail movement. Making it to the short-list is an achievement in itself, and I look forward to welcoming all our short-listed entries there.”

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For further information on this release, call our press office on 03300 955150 or email press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

About ACoRP

ACoRP's vision is of a flourishing community rail movement, connecting communities and their railways, and enhancing the wellbeing, sustainability and development of communities and railways across Britain.

As the umbrella body for community rail, it works to empower and support community rail partnerships and groups through membership services, resources and events, to: enhance the railways' contribution to local sustainable development and community wellbeing, including by maximising access to and use of the railways; ensure the community has a voice and plays a part in the development and improvement of our railways; and communicate the development and importance of our railways to communities, enhancing understanding and pride, and promoting rail as a key part of sustainable, healthy travel.

All 61 community rail partnerships are members of ACoRP, alongside more than 160 station friends/adoption groups, with members continuing to grow.

See communityrail.org.uk, follow and tweet us @ACORPoffice, find us on Facebook, or sign up to our monthly e-news (<http://bit.ly/tol18>) to keep up to date.

About West Midlands Trains

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast mainline to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street.

For more information on these services visit westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or

The West Midlands Trains franchise started on 10 December 2017 and will run until 2025/26.

West Midlands Trains operates 1,300 services a day, manages 150 stations and provides over 70 million passenger journeys a year. Over the course of the franchise, West Midlands Trains will be investing £1 billion into the rail network to deliver new trains, improved routes and station upgrades. This will include 400 new train carriages across the network and space for an extra 85,000 passengers into Birmingham and London at peak times.

The franchise is a joint venture between Abellio (70.1% share) and East Japan Railway Company / Mitsui & Co., Ltd (29.9% share in a 50:50 split). Abellio is the international passenger transport subsidiary of the Dutch national railway company, Nederlandse Spoorwegen. In the UK, Abellio operates ScotRail and Greater Anglia train services, Merseyrail services in a joint venture with Serco and buses through Abellio London. For more information visit www.abellio.com

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