



Artist Emma Johns and her artwork 'To the Lighthouse', which has been produced for the National Rail 'No Boundaries' exhibition

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## Northamptonshire artist celebrates the freedom of train travel in 'No Boundaries' exhibition

An aspiring artist from Norton, near Long Buckby, is featuring in a unique exhibition celebrating the freedom of train travel for those facing a range of accessibility challenges.

Emma Johns is part of a group of artists who have produced pieces for the National Rail 'No Boundaries' display. The project highlights the benefits of using the railway and challenges the concerns people may have about using

the network.

Emma recently travelled by train from her home station at Long Buckby to St Ives in Cornwall and produced a piece of art about her journey. This included travelling on London Northwestern Railway services between Long Buckby and Birmingham New Street for her outward journey, and between London Euston and Long Buckby for her return journey.

Emma was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in January 2018, following decades of medication and counselling for depression. She uses painting to help embrace various mindfulness techniques and celebrate the creativity of her condition. The piece featuring in the exhibition uses mixed media and items from her journey.

Speaking at the exhibition launch event at Kings Cross station, Emma said: “There’s nothing quite like sitting on the train, people watching and looking out the window. It’s just inspirational and I’ve probably got around another four or five paintings from the journey still to paint.

“It’s great to know that the rail companies are making such an effort for people with physical disabilities and also for those with disabilities that perhaps aren’t so obvious. I know there’s a long way to go, especially with provision for people who use wheelchairs, but I think the train journey can be all about a sense of freedom when it works.”

Andrew Conroy, customer experience director for London Northwestern Railway said, “We are committed to making our services fully accessible for all passengers, and are delighted to feature in this celebration of the freedom that train travel can offer.

“Emma’s experience highlights how people from all walks of life can use the railway and enjoy travel not only on our network but to connect with services across the country. We really welcome initiatives like this and will be continuing to improve the experience we offer to all our passengers.”

London Northwestern Railway is involved in a range of initiatives to improve accessibility for all passengers. These include:

- The formation of a ‘Stakeholder Equality Group’ to gather

- feedback from passengers facing a range of accessibility issues.
- A live trial of the **Transreport Passenger Assist** app for customers to book assisted travel.
- Commissioning the development of a free journey planning service for people aged over 65 called '**Ask Annie**'.
- Implementing station travel plans and personalised travel planning across the network to aid better connectivity.

Emma's work, along with all those who took part from across the rail network will be on display at Birmingham New Street station from 24 August until 15 September 2018. The exhibition will then travel to Cardiff, Gatwick and Edinburgh over the coming months.

Jyoti Bird, Marketing Director for National Rail, explains: "We're thrilled to be visiting Birmingham New as the National Rail 'No Boundaries' exhibition travels around the country to inspire others to talk, travel and support each other without boundaries. One of the railway's key commitments is to help more people take advantage of all of the opportunities that travelling by train opens up, which is why the National Rail website offers customers a range of tools and information to help customers plan and book their journeys with ease.

"We also offer a range of Railcards to help our customers save money on their rail travel. The money saved can then be used to make the most of the areas they are travelling to. This summer we launched our Digital Disabled Persons Railcard, which helps customers save 1/3 on rail fares for them and their companion for just £20 a year. With the introduction of digital Railcards customers no longer have to worry about losing, or forgetting, their Railcard and if the phone runs out of battery it can be transferred on to another smartphone."



[Watch video on YouTube here](#)

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### **About National Rail 'No Boundaries'**

Rail Delivery Group and National Rail have been working with Royal Association for Deaf people, Scope, Stroke Association and The National Autistic Society to launch an exhibition called No Boundaries, which will tour some of Britain's most iconic train stations.

The exhibition is designed to encourage travel without boundaries, thanks to the improvements in accessibility on Britain's railway and the support available to disabled people and their families and friends.

For more information and profiles of all the artists involved go to [www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/news-offers/no-boundaries](http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/news-offers/no-boundaries)

## **About Ask Annie**

Ask-Annie is a free journey planning service aimed specifically at those over 65 living in the West Midlands.

The service provides tailored door to door journey plans across all modes of public transport via a dedicated help line. Customers can call Ask Annie to discuss specific details for any journey, including accessibility requirements, personal preferences and the use of concessionary passes. Ask Annie is a joint partnership between Viaqqio and West Midlands Trains. For more information and to join the trial go to [www.westmidlandsrailway.co.uk/travel-information/accessible-travel/ask-annie](http://www.westmidlandsrailway.co.uk/travel-information/accessible-travel/ask-annie)

## **About Transreport Passenger Assist**

Transreport Passenger Assist is a tool for those who require specific assistance at train stations. The app can send information to railway staff, so that they can locate those requiring assistance more efficiently. For more information go to [www.transreport.co.uk/](http://www.transreport.co.uk/)

## **About West Midlands Trains**

West Midlands Trains operate 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 go to [westmidlandsrailway.co.uk](https://westmidlandsrailway.co.uk) or [londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk](https://londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk)

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

West Midlands Trains operate 1,300 services a day, manage 150 stations and provide 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 operate 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](https://www.abellio.com)

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