



Group leader for 1st Astwood Bank Scouts, Sally Payne and area conductor manager for West Midlands Railway, Paul Cassidy, with some of the Scouts receiving their Cross City Heroes award at Redditch railway station

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Astwood Bank Scouts celebrate Cross City Heroes win at Redditch station

Members of 1st Astwood Bank Scout Group have been celebrating their Cross City Heroes win at Redditch railway station.

The group has been chosen as one of 24 community organisations to receive a plaque of recognition at local railway stations on the popular Cross City Line between Redditch / Bromsgrove, Birmingham and Lichfield.

Children from the group met at the station today (Fri 31 May) to take a look at their plaque, ahead of it's permanent display this summer.

Nominations for Cross City Heroes winners were put forward by passengers, residents and railway staff as part of a competition to celebrate 40 years of services on the Cross City Line. Examples of various influential local clubs, charities and other community groups were received as part of this process. These nominations were then judged by representatives from West Midlands Railway and West Midlands Rail Executive to form the final list of 24 winners.

Sally Payne, group leader for 1st Astwood Bank Scouts, said: "Scouting is all about developing skills for life, and being able to use public transport and get out into the community is one way in which Scouting helps young people prepare for their future. As a Scout group we've used the train for days out from Scout camp and even travelled to an international camp in Holland using the train, underground and overnight ferry. Getting to and from camp using public transport is as much of an adventure as the camp itself! We are delighted that our group has been recognised as one of the Cross City Heroes and to have had the opportunity to meet the people who run our trains and railway at Redditch station today."

Fay Easton, head of stakeholder and community for West Midlands Railway, said: "The Cross City Line connects communities across North Worcestershire to Birmingham, and is a big part of many people's lives. Getting young people to use the train with confidence can open up so many opportunities for them, so it is always great to be able to welcome groups like this onto our stations and trains. 1st Astwood Bank Scouts clearly make a positive impact on those around them, so it is a pleasure to be able to recognise the group with a plaque at Redditch station as part of our Cross City Heroes competition."

For the list of winning Cross City Heroes groups visit <https://bit.ly/2WuPPcb>

Paul Cassidy, area conductor manager for West Midlands Railway, showing some of the Scouts the inside of a train cab at Redditch station.

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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 londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

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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