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Cross City Heroes to receive railway station recognition

Heroic groups from across the West Midlands will be receiving special recognition at local Cross City line stations this summer.

24 local community groups and charities have been given the title of Cross City Heroes, following a competition run by West Midlands Railway and West Midlands Rail Executive.

The awards celebrate 40 years of passenger services on the Cross City line between Lichfield, Birmingham and Redditch/Bromsgrove. The two

organisations have been on the lookout for deserving community groups and charities near to every local station along the route - with a final list of 24 being drawn up.

Passengers, residents and railway staff have been submitting nominations for local clubs, charities and other groups that have made a real impact on their local area.

Fay Easton, head of stakeholder and community for West Midlands Railway, said: “We have received a fantastic range of nominations for our Cross City Heroes competition, and the final 24 are a really deserving list of winners. The route is key to connecting people across the city, and there is so much going on around stations on the line. We want to thank everyone who submitted nominations, but more importantly to our winning groups for everything they contribute to their local communities.”

Cllr Roger Lawrence, chair of West Midlands Rail Executive and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) portfolio holder for transport, said: “The Cross City line is by far our busiest commuter rail route and now carries more than 55,000 passengers every day. We are pleased to have invested heavily into this important route, including the extension down to Bromsgrove in July last year. Local rail lines are an important part of any local community and to mark the Cross City line’s 40th anniversary we are delighted to acknowledge the inspiring work people in those communities are doing to help others.”

Winning groups will be receiving a plaque of recognition at a local station on the line (to arrive at stations from late May) and a VIP visit to see the new trains for the route being built in Derby. These are due to be introduced on the route from 2021. The train operator has also donated 10 complimentary tickets for journeys across the West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway networks, to aid in the winning group's fundraising efforts and activities.

The list of winning groups and links to websites for more information on their activities is below:

Lichfield Trent Valley	Friends 2 Friends Lichfield
Lichfield City	Lichfield Cricket Club

Shenstone	Lichfield Live
Blake Street	Midlands Langar Seva Society
Butlers Lane	The Pinks N Blues
Four Oaks	The Donkey Sanctuary
Sutton Coldfield	FOLIO Sutton Coldfield
Wylde Green	John Taylor Hospice
Chester Road	Run Birmingham
Erdington	177th Birmingham Scouts
Gravelly Hill	The Trussell Trust Foodbanks
Aston	Nechells POD
Duddeston	SIFA Fireside
Five Ways	Evolve at Pebble Mill
University	Libby Mae's Little Angels
Selly Oak	Di Cardwell Friendship Group
Bournville	1st Bournville Scout Group
Kings Norton	Kings Norton St Marys Hospice Fundraising Group
Northfield	St Laurence Scout Group
Longbridge	Pride of Longbridge
Barnt Green	Scouts Bromsgrove
Alvechurch	Someone at the Door Samba Band
Redditch	Astwood Bank Scouts
Bromsgrove	The Basement Project

About West Midlands Trains

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

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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Press Contact

press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

0330 095 5626