

August 2024

# Stakeholder Newsletter



**"AND SO WITH THE SUNSHINE AND THE GREAT BURSTS OF LEAVES GROWING ON THE TREES....I HAD THAT FAMILIAR CONVICTION THAT LIFE WAS BEGINNING OVER AGAIN WITH THE SUMMER."**

**-F. SCOTT FITZGERALD, THE GREAT GATSBY**

Welcome to our Summer newsletter which is bursting with updates on all of our projects. We have two opportunities for Midlands based artists to work with us as well as a fantastic creative writing competition that we have launched in partnership with the Stratford Literary Festival. As we go into Autumn our CRP Officers will be launching two new projects with Sarah leading our Wild Rails biodiversity project and Julia heading up the White Ribbon Project, so we've had a busy summer preparing for those! Our minds have also been turning to Railway 200 and how we can celebrate it here at the Heart of England. We are still very keen to hear ideas from local communities, so if you do have a suggestion, then please use this [form](#) to let us know.

Malcolm Holmes, Chair of Heart of England CRP

## NEWS & STORIES FOR THIS ISSUE:

- Artist Opportunities
- Rail Tales
- Education
- Station & Neighbourhood Improvements
- Inclusivity & Community Links
- Sustainability
- Partner Events



Schools receiving a free art workshop at our Rugby Colour Palette Launch

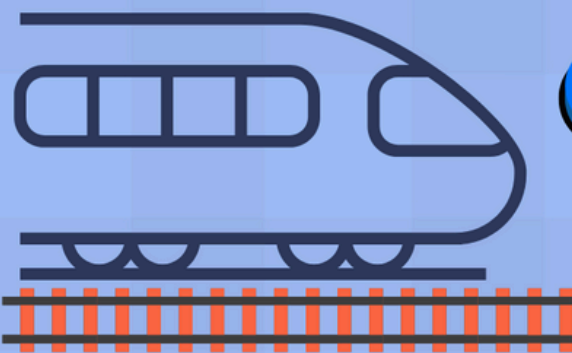
## A CALL OUT FOR MIDLANDS BASED ARTISTS

We are commissioning an artist to work with schools to create a mural style banner celebrating the Heart of England Community Rail Partnership's 5th birthday, alongside the 200 years of the Railway anniversary!

Do you have a creative eye and experience working with students facilitating art workshops?

Scan the QR code for more information and how to apply

The deadline is Monday 2nd September 6pm so don't delay.  
For more information email [sarahdavison@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:sarahdavison@warwickshire.gov.uk)



APPLY NOW



Heart of England Community Rail Partnership



200  
Years of Train Travel  
Since 1825

## CALL OUT FOR MIDLANDS BASED ARTISTS

We are commissioning an artist to work with 2 men's mental health groups over 7 sessions for each group between October 2024 and January 2025 to produce pieces of artwork for 9 stations that reflect the message of White Ribbon UK

Do you have experience working with community groups and creating murals?

Scan the QR code for more information and how to apply.

The deadline is 9am Thursday 5th September so don't delay.  
Email [heartcrp@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:heartcrp@warwickshire.gov.uk) with any enquiries.

APPLY NOW



This White Ribbon Day, it starts with men.



# Creative Writing Competition

## Rail Tales

Next year is the 200th anniversary of the modern railway. It has always inspired stories and this is your chance to create a story inspired by trains or a railway journey.

### Who can enter?

If you are *(on 30th Sept 2024)*:

- 6-11 years
- 12-16 years
- 17-21 years

### How many words?

Maximum of 1000

### What could you win?

- Shopping vouchers
- A bundle of books worth £50
- A travel journal and backpack
- Train merchandise inc. water bottles, and pens
- Your story read by an actor and displayed at railway stations in the region

### What's the deadline?

Entries should be sent to:

[heartcrp@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:heartcrp@warwickshire.gov.uk)

as a Word document by

30th September 2024

For full details, terms and conditions of entry go to [stratlitfest.co.uk/railtales](http://stratlitfest.co.uk/railtales)

Heart of England || Community Rail Partnership



Stratford  
Literary  
Festival

[stratlitfest.co.uk](http://stratlitfest.co.uk)

# Education



## Feel Good Field Trips

Congratulations to Community Rail Lancashire who are close to their milestone of 5000 students benefitting from the Feel Good Field Trips programme, with over 4200 already having taken part.

We have continued to support the delivery in our area of CRL's Feel Good Field Trips programme in partnership with Avanti West Coast. These trips take school groups out on the train to travel to incredible places across Avanti's network. Some of the exciting destinations the Heart of England CRP has recently supported visits to are Birmingham Botanical Gardens for an animal handling experience (pictured above) and a visit to Oxley Railway Depot to see the new Avanti Hitachi Evero fleet (pictured right - more information is also listed on our sustainability page!)



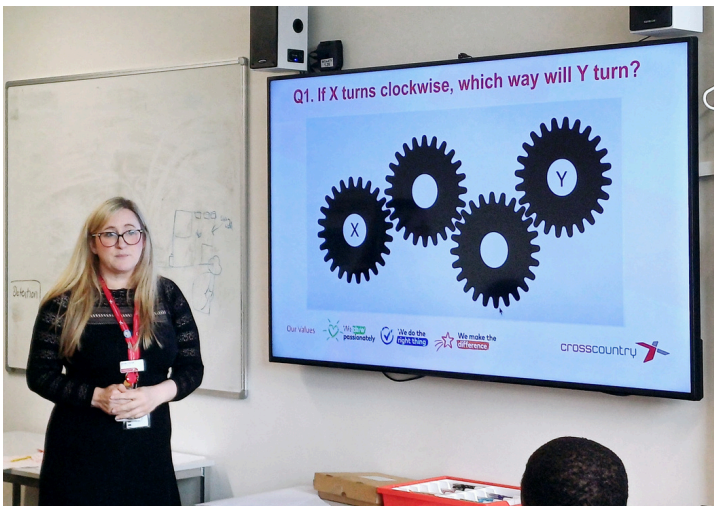
## Wild Rails

Preparation for Wild Rails has been taking place to begin in September 2024. It's aim is to engage with schools along the railway line from Leamington Spa to Birmingham Moor Street and help students to learn about improving biodiversity in stations through a variety of curriculum based activities. We are excited to announce we have partnered with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) to deliver the understanding eco-systems workshops and wildlife surveying. The hope is to strengthen the relationships between HOE CRP, the schools, station adopter groups, TOCs and our partner WWT.



## STEM 5

Continuing with our work with schools we visited West Coventry Academy in July to provide a day's overview of a wide variety of careers in the rail industry for Year 10 students, many of which the students had not contemplated before. We were extremely fortunate to have a visit from Jenny and Tim, Train Driver Managers from CrossCountry who talked through their impressive careers and how students could start thinking about job entry routes. They ran through some driver aptitude tests, which went down a storm!



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## Education



Other activities included designing a sustainable train of the future and presenting their ideas to the class and discussing possible social media campaigns for the rail industry with themes such as rail safety and encouraging rail travel amongst the younger generation. The day was a great success and evaluation forms showed that at the start of the day 89.5% of students wouldn't consider a career in the railways but by the end of the day, this figure had dropped to 26.3%!



## Rail Safety

As part of Heart of England's CRP's commitment to rail safety we are partnered with LearnLive to deliver the Rail Safe Friendly programme in the Midlands, with funding provided for engagement with 45 schools. We want everyone to be able to use and enjoy the railways safely, so it is key that young people are educated about how to stay safe on the railways.



The Rail Safe Friendly programme offers 3 levels on the Rail Safe Friendly Initiative for schools to achieve – Bronze to Gold. 17 schools in Coventry & Warwickshire have engaged with our Rail Safe Friendly project and achieved at least a bronze level to date, with a total website views of over 10,000. We are looking to substantially build on this number this Autumn so if you know any Midlands based schools who might be interested please contact [heartcrp@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:heartcrp@warwickshire.gov.uk)



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# Station & Neighbourhood Enhancements



## Lapworth Station Water Pipe

Friends of Lapworth Station gathered with Fraser Pithie from Network Rail and Sarah Davison from the Heart of England CRP to celebrate the unveiling of a new water pipe stand.

The new installation will make a huge difference to the all important garden and planter maintenance at the station, especially in the summer months. Volunteers are the back-bone of this close knit and expanding adopters group and from the picture below you can see has one very young recruit!



## Solihull Station Adopters Help Re-vamp Historic Stone

Solihull Council gave Friends of Solihull Station permission to clean this monument situated in the centre of Solihull. It celebrates 50 years of Queen Victoria's reign and was installed in 1887. The stone was covered in lichen and green mould. Three girls from Alderbrooke School helped with the clean up as part of their Duke of Edinburgh's Community Service.



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## Station & Neighbourhood Enhancements



### Dorridge Station Waiting Room

We were delighted to be invited to the opening of the refurbished ticket office at Dorridge Station on the 17th May. The project, funded by Chiltern Railways Community Investment Fund and delivered with support from the Friends of Dorridge Station and ourselves, included a full refurbishment of the ticket hall and the preservation of historic features, including parquet flooring from the 1930s.

This is the third major project supported by the Friends of Dorridge Station, who have also delivered upgrades to the waiting rooms at the station, as well as 'pick your own' herb beds and colourful planters.



### Art at Rugby and Coventry Stations

In the past few months we've unveiled two major art installations at stations. The first was our community inspired Rugby Colour Palette funded by Avanti West Coast. Artist Stacey Barnfield from the Colour Palette Company worked with us to create 3 colour palettes that are now on display at Rugby Station. At the official launch in April, we were joined by some of the schools and community groups that took part in our Colour Palette Workshops as well as the Mayor of Rugby, Ruby Road - who delivered our workshops. Rugby Borough Council, Avanti West Coast and Warwickshire County Council, all of whom were huge supporters of the project.

In Coventry we unveiled our community artwork celebrating the theme of 'connections' with Coventry Artspace and the Life Path Trust. Featuring 10 unique pieces of art created by local artist Donna Preece-Jones with participants from the Life Path Trust, a charity that supports people with learning disabilities, the CONNECTIONS exhibition celebrates the things that connect us to each other and the world around us.

Watch [Donna's video log](#) to find out more about the project and make sure you visit that art in situ!

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## Inclusivity and Community Links



### Railway Explorations

We have entered the final stages of our Railway Explorations project funded by Chiltern Railways, which has seen us partner with Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre, the Positive Youth Foundation in Coventry, and Solihull MBC's Refugee and Resettlement Officer.

We have delivered rail confidence sessions and more than 200 people from refugee communities have joined these sessions and days out.

A range of travel confidence resources have been translated into other languages for other refugee communities to use. The recent political unrest and targeting of asylum seekers has made the positive good will this project endeavoured to achieve even more important, but has certainly made its delivery more complicated with some summer trips being postponed.

Recent trips have included Warwick Castle and the Mad Museum in Stratford, with trips to Edgbaston Cricket Ground, Birmingham City Football Grounds and Birmingham Aquarium soon to take place.

### Play Days Community Day

We were proud to be a part of the Play Days community day delivered by Highly Sprung Performance in partnership with Go Parks & Positive Youth Foundation. The Heart of England stall promoted Rail Trails, handed out wild flower seed packets and ran a competition to design a train wrap. We were inundated with entries and were super impressed with the artistic talents at Cash's Park in Coventry, with the top entries winning some arts and crafts prizes.



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# Inclusivity and Community Links



## Work with the Life Path Trust

Our work with the Life Path Trust and the Coventry Station Adopters group has continued in recent months with regular gardening of the planters, freight train spotting and appreciation and arts and crafts sessions. In addition to this there has been a trip to Nuneaton station to view the art work on display and for the group to practise taking photographs of their favourite places at the station.



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# Sustainability



## The New Avanti Evero Fleet

Students from Meadow Park School in Coventry got the opportunity through Feel Good Field Trips to visit Oxley Railway Depot and view the new ground-breaking Hitachi Evero. This £350m fleet are being introduced over the coming months to replace their old Voyager diesel fleet thereby delivering significant environmental benefits/carbon reduction as well as an uplift in the passenger experience. Read all about the school's visit [here](#).



## Stratford Pursuits

We had a great day at the Stratford Pursuits Festival in May. We engaged with over 200 people, talking about and handing out leaflets about our Rail Trails. Links were made with numerous local groups and organisations who all have an interest in how we can live our lives more sustainably. There were also plenty of 4-legged friends who came to see us to find out new walks for them to discover with their owners!



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# Upcoming Partner Events



## **Avanti West Coast Stakeholder Conference**

**Date: Thursday 19th September 2024**

**Time: 09:30 - 16.30**

**Location: Liverpool**

The day will bring together political, regional and industry leaders to discuss how we can grow rail for the benefit of customers, communities, and support economic growth on the west coast. A variety of sessions are planned for the day focussed on how we, through both Avanti West Coast and West Coast Partnership Development, can work with partners to achieve these objectives.

## **West Midlands Trains Annual Conference**

**Date: Wednesday 25th September 2024**

**Time: 09:30 - 16.30**

**Location: Edgbaston Park Hotel, Birmingham**

Bringing together stakeholders from across the railway and partner industries, the conference will provide the opportunity to hear from our executive directors on our vision for innovation and growth, potential new services, progress on the delivery of our £1bn investment programme and our plans to enhance the experience of rail passengers.

We'll also be showcasing how we're engaging with young people to shape the future of the railway as well as how we're improving passenger safety and tackling harmful behaviours towards women and girls by becoming a White Ribbon accredited organisation.

## **Chiltern Railways Community Conference**

**Date: Wednesday 23rd October 2024**

**Time: 12:00 - 16.30**

**Location: The Pump Rooms, The Parade, Leamington Spa CV32**

Chiltern look forward to celebrating the work of our Stakeholders and Community Groups with a networking lunch. Join us for an engaging event featuring business updates from Chiltern Railways and insights from external partners including the Community Rail Network and Baker Street Quarter Partnership.

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