

July 2021

Stakeholder Newsletter

Heart of
England || Community
Rail Partnership



SUMMER DAYS

Julia Singleton-Tasker, CRP Officer

'Freedom Day' has come and gone and although most of the Covid-19 restrictions have been relaxed, we are still encouraging passengers travelling by rail to wear masks if they can. It is fantastic to hear from volunteers returning to stations, making plans for the rest of this year and welcoming new volunteers joining the ranks. With Coventry City of Culture and the Commonwealth Games there is plenty to get excited about and lots of opportunities for us to demonstrate the value of community rail and how it can increase patronage and make a huge difference to our station environments.

Enjoy the summer holidays and please continue to look after yourselves and stay safe.

NEWS & STORIES FOR
THIS ISSUE:

CRP News:

- Rail Safety
- Days Out By Rail
- Current Projects
- 2022

**Commonwealth
Games**

TOC Update

Funding Opportunities

Events





Rail Safety

Our Safer Schools - Rail Safety video, for which we partnered with Chiltern Railways, is now available on our website, alongside lesson plans, presentations and resources for Key Stages 1 and 2. In June we taught our rail safety lessons to a Year 5 class at Kingsway Community Primary School in Leamington Spa and spent 2 days at Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School Coventry, teaching rail safety lessons to all classes Year 1 - Year 6. The lessons were very well received and we will be looking to engage with more schools in the new academic year. Find all our resources [here](#) and click on this [link](#) to read the full report of our Rail Safety Video project.



Community Rail Network have launched their Days Out By Rail campaign, which aims to inspire and encourage day-tripper and leisure travellers to jump aboard a train, for exciting, fun, eco-friendly outings. The eight-week initiative is raising awareness about rail as one of the greenest ways to travel, while enabling exploration of lesser-known spots as part of a day out, short break or staycation. Keep an eye on our Twitter and Instagram feeds for our Days Out in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull

If you have any information you would like to share on this newsletter, or if you would like to unsubscribe, then please email: juliasingletasker@warwickshire.gov.uk

Current Projects

In the Autumn we will be launching our Careers, Creativity, and the Commonwealth project, funded by Avanti West Coast. This project has two strands, the first being the addition of a mural at Birmingham International created by Brink Contemporary Arts. The second is working with the New Leaf Initiative and industry partners to provide a two week pre-employment course at Birmingham International, followed by 70 hour traineeships.

For details of other projects we are currently working on, please email us.



Nominations for the Community Rail Network Awards close on Monday 2nd August. To find out all the details of categories and how to enter, please follow this [link](#).



2022 Commonwealth Games



Next year we have another big event in the area with events for the Commonwealth Games being held in Warwick and Leamington Spa. This is an ideal time to start thinking about projects and events at stations that can encourage people to travel by train to go to these events. At the next stakeholder meeting we'll be discussing ideas leading up to the Commonwealth Games and how volunteers can get involved.

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TOC Update

West Midlands Railway

Changes to Snow Hill rail services due to staff availability

West Midlands Railway is making temporary changes to its timetables from Monday 2 August.

The train operator says the changes are necessary as Covid 19 has had a major impact on the ability to get new drivers trained to operate services. The timetable revisions will improve the reliability of the service provided. The changes affect services on the Snow Hill Lines between Kidderminster and Stratford upon Avon.

Before the pandemic, to improve under-lying performance and to make services more reliable, the train operator recruited over 100 extra drivers, but their training has been delayed due to Covid restrictions. West Midlands Railway says the Test and Trace 'pingdemic' has put further pressures on services that were already struggling to deal with the impact of Covid.

With other operators also having to make changes to their timetables, West Midlands Railway is advising passengers to check before they travel at www.nationalrail.co.uk.

Since July the train company has seen the number of staff having to self-isolate quadruple. This has resulted in trains being cancelled at short notice and some services having fewer carriages as the 'pingdemic' affects train maintenance depots.

Overview of what's changing (Monday – Saturday)

- Between 10.00 – 18.00 the hourly xx.15 departure from Kidderminster will no longer run
- In the opposite direction, the xx.01/03 departure from Stratford-upon-Avon will no longer run
- Some other services (or parts of some services) will also be cancelled
- Rail replacement transport will be provided
- Chiltern Railways will be adding additional calls at Widney Manor, Lapworth, Acocks Green, Olton, Small Heath, Dorridge and Tyseley in some hours of the day

The above changes will also apply to Saturdays from Saturday 7 August. Sunday services will remain unchanged.

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Funding Opportunities

Small Grants Fund - The second round of our Small Grants Fund closes today, the 30th July, and the next application window opens on the 1st October.

CrossCountry - CrossCountry have reopened their Community Engagement Fund. The fund aims to make significant impact within the communities they serve. Any project will be considered for inclusion, and there are no financial barriers to requests (subject to available funds). For more information on this please contact us.

Community Rail Network - If you are a member of CRN, then you can apply for grants of up to £1000. Membership for a year is £25 +VAT and you can find out more details here www.communityrail.org.uk/join-us/station-adopters-small-groups/

Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull Communities Fund - Apply for up to £2000 for projects focussing on youth opportunities, health and wellbeing or building stronger and cohesive communities. www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/coventry-solihull-warwickshire-communities-fund/



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Events

Heart of England CRP: Stakeholder Meeting

Date: 6 Sept, 2021 10:00 - 11:00

The next online stakeholder meeting will be on the 6th September. If you would like to attend, please email the CRP.



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Community Rail Network:

Community Rail Week - Go Green by Rail

Date: 18-24 Oct, 2021

Location: Nationwide

From the 18th-24th October will be the first annual Community Rail Week, sponsored by Rail Delivery Group. CRN are encouraging all members and partners to put the date in the diary and consider how you can get involved and make use of this great awareness-raising opportunity. With the run up to COP 26 focusing attentions on our climate and decarbonisation, this year CRN be focussing on stimulating sustainable travel, under the banner Go Green by Rail.



Community Rail Awards 2021

Date: 9 Dec, 2021

Location: Southampton

CRN are aiming to run a prestigious hybrid presentation event at the iconic Guildhall in Southampton, which will include both live and digital attendees.

Note: Entries will open and close later, on 14 June and 2 August respectively, and the live element of the event dependent on Covid 19 restrictions being lifted sufficiently to enable it to take place. [Take a look ahead to this year's awards.](#)

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