

April 2022

# Stakeholder Newsletter

Heart of  
England || Community  
Rail Partnership



## "IF WE HAD NO WINTER, THE SPRING WOULD NOT BE SO PLEASANT" - ANNE BRADSTREET, THE WORKS OF ANNE BRADSTREET

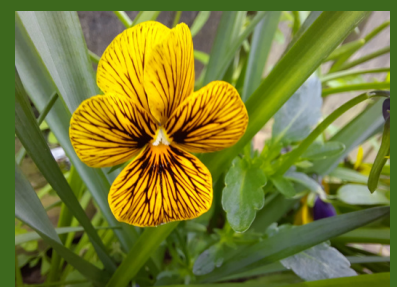
Julia Singleton-Tasker, CRP Officer

Since our last newsletter that has been a huge amount of activity in the Heart of England. Projects that have been delayed are in full swing and we have several events coming up in May. We have also welcomed Malcolm Holmes as the new Chair of the CRP. Malcolm has a wealth of experience in the railway industry and I'm looking forward to working with him to develop more exciting projects for the CRP. There is more change in the air with Covid restrictions being lifted, however we are still encouraging passengers to wear face masks if they can.

The main highlight of Spring for me, is travelling to stations and seeing the stations bloom with life and colour that has been .... by the station volunteers.

### NEWS & STORIES FOR THIS ISSUE:

- New Chair
- Project Updates
- Coventry Station Community Day
- Community Rail Week and Rail Trails
- Station Adoption Updates
- Funding Opportunities
- Upcoming Events



Spring colour at Berkswell Station



## New Chair Appointed

On Wednesday 9th March, the Heart of England CRP held its annual AGM. Attended by volunteers, TOC representatives, local authorities, project partners and more, the meeting saw the launch of the Heart of England CRP's 2021 Annual Report. The meeting was held online and offered attendees the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback to the CRP.

During the AGM, Malcolm Holmes, Executive Director of WMRE, was voted in as the new Chair of the Heart of England CRP. Malcolm has over 25 years of experience in the railway sector, held senior posts at Chiltern Railways and LOROL and has been the Executive Director at WMRE for the past 3 years.

Malcolm said: "Community rail plays a vital role in developing our railways. I've seen the positive impact the CRP are having and look forward to being more involved."

We are delighted to welcome Malcolm as our Chair and we look forward to working with him to expand and promote community rail in the West Midlands.



Read our full 2021 Annual Report [here](#)



Rugby Station is now officially part of the Heart of England CRP. Managed by Avanti West Coast, Rugby is a beautiful station with bags of potential for community rail activities and a fantastic staff who have been most welcoming to us.

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](mailto:juliasingletasker@warwickshire.gov.uk)



# Project Updates



## Birmingham International

If you've been travelling through the station this week, you may have noticed a bit of a transformation on Platform 1.

As part of our Careers, Creativity and the Commonwealth project funded by Avanti West Coast, we have been working with Brink Contemporary Art to create a stunning piece of art that will be a real feature when people arrive for Commonwealth Games events in the summer.



In March, Emily from [Emily Kaye Illustrations](#) and Katie from [Katie Jones Art Studio](#), led a group for two workshops exploring artistic techniques and how they can help with feelings of anxiety when travelling by train and in unfamiliar situations. We enjoyed two beautiful days exploring Jephson Gardens and Mary Arden's Farm and we'll be displaying a final piece soon at Leamington Station! See the photos of the day on our [Flickr page](#).

## Connect Day

On April 11th, the Heart of England Community Rail Partnership and CrossCountry collaborated on a Connect Day to educate and inspire Arkwright Engineering Scholars to consider a career in rail. With hands on activities, virtual depot tours and careers presentations from CrossCountry, Chiltern Railways, Siemens and Thales, we were able to provide Scholars the opportunity to learn more about the different pathways into the industry and the variety of engineering roles available. It was a great day and we want to thank all the contributors for taking the time to come and talk to the scholars about life in the railways.



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# Coventry Station Community Day



Have fun at the Coventry Station Community Day on Saturday 7th May, a free family-friendly event celebrating both the development of Coventry's railway station and its 60th anniversary. With food, music, performances and plenty of activities for all ages. The day then concludes with a grand finale from Highly Sprung, with their new outdoor aerial show IN TRANSIT.

Coventry Station Community Day is organised by Highly Sprung and the Heart of England CRP. Jointly funded by Avanti West Coast and Coventry City Council. Featuring a talented line-up with poet John Bernard, dancer Louis Lewinson and

more names to be announced soon. Delicious food will also be on offer from the likes of Coventry legend G Kitchen, with more tasty treats on the way!

The day will conclude with a grand finale from theatre company Highly Sprung, a stunning aerial performance that tells stories of movement, migration and innovation in the city.

Celebrating Coventry's industrial heritage and looking forwards to a greener future. Expect mesmerising aerial, bold choreography and a beautiful story to enchant audiences of all ages. The performance will feature a professional cast alongside over 100 children from local schools, creating a joyous community atmosphere.

**DAYTIME EVENT:** Unticketed, just drop in from 12pm-3.30pm

**IN TRANSIT:** Free but ticketed, performances at 5pm & 7pm

**Audio Described & BSL  
Easy Read version of the  
performance available  
via digital download**

**View the line up on the Heart of England CRP website:**



Coventry based Poet, Rapper & Writer John Bernard.

Broadcaster, Philanthropist,  
Humanitarian and  
Singer/Songwriter extraordinaire  
Sandra Godley.



Playhem at the Promenade with  
Coventry Transport Museum.



# Community Rail Week and Rail Trails



Community Rail Week runs from the 23rd - 31st May and this year, we will be encouraging people to 'Try a Train' and try our new Rail Trails! We have been working with the Long Distance Walkers Association, the Rambler's Association and the Millenium Way Group to produce a variety of walks from each of our 36 stations. the first 5 of which will be ready to download from our website on the 23rd May. Be one of the first to try one of the trails with our free guided walk on Wednesday 25th May.

**Wednesday 25th May**  
**Coventry Arena - Bedworth**

**RAIL Trails**

Discover The Heart of England by Rail

Join us for an easy-paced 3.5mile walk following our Rail Trail up to Bedworth - with maybe a cheeky stop at the Mayor's Cafe in the Miner's Welfare Park.

The walk and train travel are free and we'll be catching the train from Leamington Spa at 10.03am. Join us there or at the start of the trail at Coventry Arena Station

To sign up or for more information email:  
[HeartCRP@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:HeartCRP@warwickshire.gov.uk)

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# Station Adoption Update



## Lapworth

Lapworth Station Adopters have managed to secure some funding from Lapworth Parish Council, and are starting to see pledges from local businesses, which means that they have just placed their first order for 3 planters to be placed on the platforms at Lapworth Station!

They have also prepared 'Sponsorship Pack' to try and drum up some more support and we're looking forward to seeing what this wonderful bunch do next!



## Marston Green

We are actively looking for volunteers at Marston Green Station. The current adopters have done a fantastic job at brightening up the station and engaging with the local school, but unfortunately volunteer numbers greatly declined following 2 years of Covid. If you know anyone in the area who might like to get involved with the station, then please do put them in touch with us.



## Berkswell

Unfortunately there are times when the hard work of volunteers at stations gets ruined by a selfish and thoughtless few. The much-loved community bookcase at Berkswell was recently destroyed and we're working with the adoption group to find a new bookcase and to ensure that measures are taken so this doesn't happen again.

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# Funding Opportunities



## WMT

WMT have announced the launch of their Customer & Communities Improvement Fund for 2022/3. The closing date for applications is 11th May with the project criteria listed on the website, groups need to have a not-for-profit, social enterprise status with dual signatory bank accounts and well-researched project plans. For more details visit <https://www.westmidlandsrailway.co.uk/about-us/your-community-your-fund/apply-funding>

## Commonwealth Games: Small Station Projects Fund

Station adoption groups can apply to the Heart of England CRP's fund in preparation for the Commonwealth Games. For more details and how to apply, please email us at [juliasingletontasker@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:juliasingletontasker@warwickshire.gov.uk)

## Small Projects Fund

Our next application window for our Small Projects Fund will be the 1st - 30th July.

Station adoption groups can apply for up to £175 a year directly from the Heart of England CRP to purchase things like seeds, tools, and CRN membership.

## 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/](http://www.communityrail.org.uk/join-us/station-adopters-small-groups/)



Happy faces from our Leamington Subway  
Engagement workshops with artist [Melissa Keskinilinc](#)

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# Upcoming Events



## **Coventry Station Community Day**

**Date:** 7th May 2022, 12:00pm - 08:00pm

**Location:** Station Square, Coventry Railway Station

A day of community activities, transport innovation and performances from the best of the Coventry Art Scene, culminating in two stunning performances of In Transit from Highly Sprung.

## **Community Rail Week**

**Date:** 23rd - 29th May 2022

**Location:** Nationwide

Community Rail Week is returning and CRN are encouraging all our members and partners to consider how they can get involved and make use of this great awareness-raising opportunity.

## **Rail Trail Guided Walk**

**Date:** 25th May 2022

**Location:** Coventry Arena - Bedworth, with option to take the train to and from Leamington Spa Station

Details in newsletters, email [HeartCRP@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:HeartCRP@warwickshire.gov.uk) for more info or to reserve your place on the walk.

## **Community Rail Awards 2022**

**Date:** 5 Oct, 2022

**Location:** Manchester Central Convention Complex

We're pleased to confirm that this year's Community Rail Awards will take place on Wednesday 5 October 2022, at Manchester Central Convention Complex. We're delighted to announce our headline sponsors are Transport for Greater Manchester and Northern Trains. Please make a note of 5 October and other key Awards deadlines below:

- Entries open: Monday 9 May
- Event bookings open: Monday 9 May
- Entries close: Monday 20 June
- Shortlist announced by: Monday 8 August
- Event bookings close: Friday 9 September

You can register and find out more about all CRN events [here](#).

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