



APRIL 2022

Careers, Creativity and the Commonwealth - Mural

In partnership with Avanti West Coast and Brink Contemporary Arts

CRP Officer: Julia Singleton-Tasker



Key Pillars:

- A. Providing a voice for the community
- B. Promoting sustainable and healthy travel
- D. Support social and economic development

CRP Aims:

1, 2, 3, 5, 6., 9



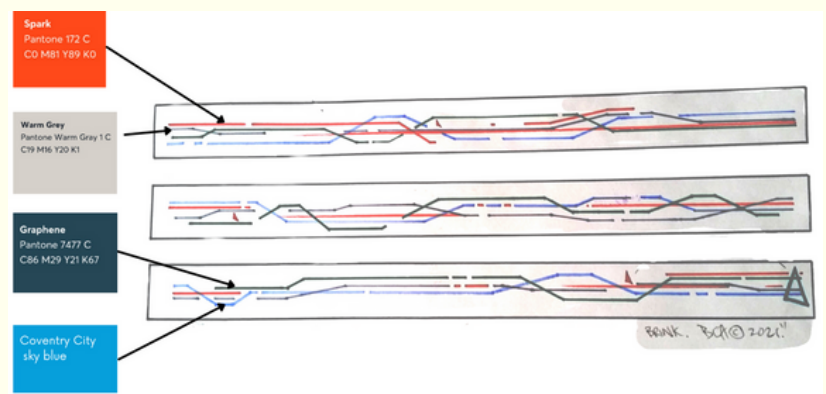
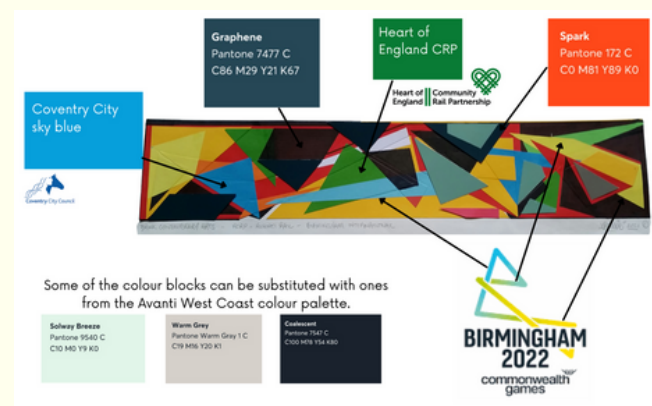
Overview

Aims

As part of the Avanti West Coast funded project Careers, Creativity and the Commonwealth, the Heart of England CRP wanted to provide an inspirational and eye-catching mural for people travelling to Commonwealth Games events by train and arriving at Birmingham International. In addition, we aimed to improve the station environment, support local artists, showcase contemporary street art and have a piece of art that represents how the railways connect our communities.

Inspiration

Using the current Avanti locomotive graphics as a starting point for inspiration, the mural concept embodies a subtle sense of movement. Future transport and infrastructure developments are implied by angular shapes and forms, the spectrum of colours reference the varied national flags of the Commonwealth countries, whilst the use of blue is a contextual hint to the Coventry City of Culture 2021. The low wall mural uses the Avanti West Coast Brand palette and, viewed from above is like a railway network, with movement. We envisage seeing it at speed as you arrive and in reverse when departing. At the start of the low wall mural is a nine square chequered flag motif to hint at the City of Culture and a nod to the two tone music movement that started in Coventry.





Overview continued

Installation

On the 26th April, Lord Numb from Brink Contemporary Arts began work on the mural mapping out the abstract shapes on the higher wall, before adding the colour and detail. Over several days, and in between rain showers, the mural began to come to life with rail users and staff coming to see the progress. Network Rail kindly supplied the safety barriers for the



duration of the work, to ensure that the artists were working in a safe place and to ensure that there was no risk of passengers coming into contact with wet paint. Towards the end of the week, the low wall 'rail network' was completed with the chequered flag bringing the final connection between Birmingham and Coventry.

Legacy

The Heart of England CRP will be using the mural at Birmingham International to engage with schools based on the Coventry - Birmingham Line. Along with Lord Numb, they will be developing lesson plans that encourage students to see stations as destinations in themselves and they will give them the opportunity to visit the mural, before creating their own designs based on the theme of connections. The importance of staying safe on the railways and how to be a good rail citizen will be introduced and discussed with the students before going on the train.





The Finished Mural





Feedback and Media

Avanti West Coast featured the mural in their press release about timetable changes. The full article can be read [here](#). CRN also included the mural in their newsletter <https://communityrail.org.uk/new-mural-celebrates-arrival-of-commonwealth-games-in-birmingham/>

Malcolm Holmes, Chair of the Heart of England CRP and executive director for West Midlands Rail Executive, said: *“The mural at Birmingham International is testament to what can happen when we take the time to consider how we can make the maximum impact in the community. Not only will the mural provide a spectacular welcome to passenger, including visitors to the 2022 Commonwealth Games, but it will provide a valuable educational tool to promote creativity, rail safety and good citizenship. It will also encourage students to see stations as destinations in themselves, furthering our ambitions to create a truly community-based rail network”*



“The mural brings a wonderful splash of colour to the station, transforming an area of the platform that typically would not garner anyone’s attention. The Heart of England Community Rail Partnership and Brink Contemporary Arts deserve great credit for their creative use of the wall as a canvas, and in do so bringing to life our support for the Commonwealth Games and UK City of Culture, in such a visual way. It’s been great to see the reaction of our customers.”

**Craig Mortiboys, Regional Growth Manager – West Midlands
Avanti West Coast, Partnership & Strategy Directorate**



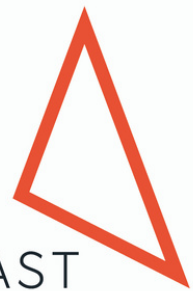
Costs

ITEM AND COMPANY	COST
Design and delivery of mural <i>Brink Contemporary Arts</i>	£10,000
TOTAL COST	£10,000

With thanks to...



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