



Press release: **Embargoed until 00.01 Monday 18 October**

From the Community Rail Network | news@communityrail.org.uk

Seven out of ten young people want the country to ‘Go Green by Train’ to tackle the climate emergency

The inaugural Community Rail Week, 18-24 October, is involving hundreds of community rail partnerships and volunteer groups running the ‘Go Green by Train’ campaign with activities to promote their local railways, and giving communities and young people a voice on green transport.

The campaign launch is at 10.30am 18 Oct at Manchester Piccadilly, with students from Bury College. Photo, film and interview opportunities are available (details below).

Organised by Community Rail Network and sponsored by Rail Delivery Group, the campaign week is focusing on young people’s views, voices and futures, as a new survey is released exploring travel habits and attitudes to green travel among 1,000 16–24-year-olds: ¹

- Seven in ten (70%) young people are keen to see more people using trains in the future, with the vast majority (90%) saying the environment and climate emergency is an important issue to them;
- Around half (48%) travel by train at least once a month, but one in six (17%) have rarely or never been on a train, or can’t remember when they last did;
- While 94% have a station near enough for them to use, most (67%) admit there are factors getting in the way of them using trains, including practicalities with walking, cycling, or getting a bus to the station, being worried about cost, or driving or getting lifts being more convenient.

With greener transport recognised as a fundamental part of the solution to the climate emergency, Community Rail Week and the ‘Go Green by Train’ campaign looks to drive change at community level through the efforts of 74 community rail partnerships and 1,000 station friends groups across Britain – working to help people get out of their cars and onto trains and other sustainable modes. Activities and events during the week include sustainable travel workshops, creative competitions and exhibitions, ‘Go Green by Train’ pledge campaigns, engagement with schools and youth groups, ‘try the train’ trips, and question time style sessions with young people discussing the environment and transport.

Transport has a huge role to play if the UK is to reach its target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 100% of 1990 levels, or ‘net zero’, by 2050. Figures show that:

- Transport is now the largest emitting sector in the UK, making up 27% of domestic emissions in 2019; ²



- Rail accounted for just 1% of domestic transport emissions in 2019, despite representing 10% of the total distance travelled, and is the greenest form of transport after walking and cycling; ^{3, 4}
- One train can remove up to 500 cars off our roads; ⁵
- For a 30-mile journey, travelling by train instead of by car can reduce emissions by up to 86%. ⁶

Jools Townsend, chief executive of Community Rail Network, said: “As we approach the international climate talks in Glasgow, Britain’s community rail movement is coming together to highlight the great importance of green travel at a local and global level. Transport is now the biggest contributor of UK greenhouse emissions, so we face a pressing challenge to decarbonise the way we get around, for the sake of future generations – plus our communities can benefit now from reduced traffic and pollution. Rail, combined with buses, walking, cycling, and shared mobility, provides a huge part of the solution: shifting as many journeys as we can onto these modes, breaking down green travel barriers, and reducing car use can help us forge a more sustainable, healthy, inclusive future.

“We’re excited to launch our first Community Rail Week with events and activities in communities across Britain, raising awareness and exploring how we can enable and empower more people to feel confident and able to go green by train.”

Andy Bagnall, director general at the Rail Delivery Group, said: “Trains are inherently green so when people go by rail it’s more than a journey – it’s literally helping to save the planet!

“In future, we want trains to be the backbone of a decarbonised transport network so, as well as supporting initiatives like Community Rail Week, we want to work with government to reform ticketing and fares – if it’s easier for people to find and buy a good value ticket, more people will use rail as a green alternative to other ways of travelling.”

Media launch event:

Media are invited to join Community Rail Network, its members, partners and young people at **10.30-11am at Manchester Piccadilly Station** for the national launch of Community Rail Week and the Go Green by Train campaign.

Please sign in at station reception first. The reception is at the top of the escalators from the Fairfield street entrance, the bottom of the escalators down from the main concourse, just behind the small WH Smiths Outlet. The photo call will take place on Platform 10.

A group of young people from Bury College who are working alongside Community Rail Lancashire to learn more about rail confidence, rail travel and the environment will be there with Go Green by Train pledge cards.

Photo, filming and interview opportunities include with chief executive of Community Rail Network Jools Townsend, chief executive of Transport for the North Martin Tugwell, plus vox pops with young people and community rail partnerships.



For further details, images, comments, and interviews, and to attend the media launch, contact Kerri Worrall on 07810 188631 or Nik Schofield on 07376 124964 news@communityrail.org.uk

Notes to editors:

1. For information about Community Rail Week visit: communityrail.org.uk/community-rail-week-go-green-by-train/
2. For details on COP26, go to ukcop26.org/
3. Community rail is a grassroots movement spanning Britain that is made up of community rail partnerships, which work along railway lines or across regions, and volunteer station 'friends' groups, to connect communities with their railways. There are 74 community rail partnerships and 1,000 station friends volunteer groups across Britain. www.communityrail.org.uk
4. Community rail involves working with train operators, local authorities, and other partners to involve local communities with their railways and stations, promoting sustainable travel, social inclusion, and local development, and helping communities to have a voice in rail and transport development.
5. Established in 2000, [Community Rail Network](https://www.communityrail.org.uk) supports those working and volunteering in community rail and their partners. It shares best practice and connects community rail partnerships and groups together, while working with governments at different levels, the transport industry, and voluntary sector to champion community rail and shares its insights on sustainable and inclusive transport development.

References:

- 1) Survey of 1,024 16–24-year-olds carried out by YouthSight in September 2021 on behalf of Community Rail Network
- 2) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957687/2019_Final_emissions_statistics_one_page_summary.pdf
- 3) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/energy-and-environment-data-tables-env>
- 4) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942425/rail-factsheet-2020.pdf
- 5) <https://media.raildeliverygroup.com/news/national-rail-double-arrow-logo-goes-green-in-new-campaign-ahead-of-cop26>
- 6) <https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Modal-shift-report-FINAL-FOR-WEB.pdf>