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## Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership receives Government accreditation

The Community Rail Partnership supporting the St Albans Abbey to Watford Junction railway line has received the official seal of approval from Government.

The Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership has become one of the first partnerships in the country to be awarded official accreditation by the Department for Transport, following a process looking at how the partnership is run, how it uses funding and how it benefits the line and the community it serves.

The Community Rail Partnership is best known for its Halloween and Santa events but it also undertakes a year-round programme of projects to improve stations, work with local schools on Introduction to the Railway and Railway Safety. It also arranges various art projects, volunteering and encourages more people to use the railway. Recent projects include a new mural at Watford Junction station and the Abbey Days Out scheme promoting local attractions along the line.

Vicky Cropper, community and stakeholder manager at London Northwestern Railway, said:

“I’m delighted that the hard work of the Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership has been formally recognised by the Department for Transport and they have been awarded Accreditation status.

“This significant achievement is a reflection of how hard working the community rail partnership is and the positive impact they have on the diverse communities they engage with.”

Group chair Derrick Ashley, of Hertfordshire County Council, said:

“The award recognises the hard work that our members have put in over the years, and the fantastic response we have had from local people along the line. Importantly it also means that the Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership is able to apply for government funding to help deliver even more projects to improve the line and encourage more people to use this local rail service.”

The partnership is currently working towards its next public event in the summer, a Community Rail Carnival to celebrate Hertfordshire Year of Culture.

Anyone interested in the Partnership’s events and activities or becoming actively involved is invited to visit the website at [www.abbeyline.org.uk](http://www.abbeyline.org.uk)

For further information on this release, call our press office on 03300 955150 or email [press.office@wmtrains.co.uk](mailto:press.office@wmtrains.co.uk)

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast mainline to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street.

For more information on these services visit [westmidlandsrailway.co.uk](http://westmidlandsrailway.co.uk) or [londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk](http://londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk)

The West Midlands Trains franchise started on 10 December 2017 and will run until 2025/26.

West Midlands Trains operates 1,300 services a day, manages 150 stations and provides over 80 million passenger journeys a year. Over the course of the franchise, West Midlands Trains will be investing £1 billion into the rail network to deliver new trains, improved routes and station upgrades. This will include 400 new train carriages across the network and space for an extra 85,000 passengers into Birmingham and London at peak times.

The franchise is a joint venture between Abellio (70.1% share) and East Japan Railway Company / Mitsui & Co., Ltd (29.9% share in a 50:50 split). Abellio is the international passenger transport subsidiary of the Dutch national railway company, Nederlandse Spoorwegen. In the UK, Abellio operates ScotRail and Greater Anglia train services, Merseyrail services in a joint venture with Serco and buses through Abellio London. For more information visit [www.abellio.com](http://www.abellio.com)

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