

## Adeline Ginn

### General Counsel, Angel Trains and Founder & Chairman, Women in Rail

**S**ome people were born to work in transport, as though it was in their blood. Adeline Ginn is one of those people. She has been interested in the industry from an early age, coming from a family of sailors.

Adeline was born in southwest France and chose to study French law when she left school. But an exchange programme in the UK sparked her interest in English law.

Keen to indulge her interest in transport, she went on to study for a Masters degree in Aerospace and Maritime law in Montreal (Canada), with a healthy dose of rail and road law thrown in.

After a stint working at the English Bar and then in private practice, a job came up at rolling stock owner Angel Trains in 1999 and she has never looked back.

"I started as a junior lawyer, then I led the international legal side of the business and then, when I came back from maternity leave, I was made General Counsel.

"I'm leading a team of lawyers and the business is our client. Part of our role is very much understanding the commercial and political dynamics in our industry which means that, while we are lawyers, it's not strictly a legal job. I love the industry because I love the people. They're really passionate, kind and caring."

People are what has kept Adeline at Angel Trains for nearly 20 years and counting. She thrives on working with an engaged team of people. Over the years it has allowed her to better understand the needs of others in the industry, leading her to what she is probably best known for on the railway - founding networking group Women in Rail.

While on a business trip with Angel's CEO Malcolm Brown back in 2011, she described to him her frustration at the amazing female talent that was leaving the industry through the lack of a supportive network.

"Malcolm said to me: 'It's all well to point this out, but what are you going to do about it?'. I said I would like to create Women in Rail and he said he would support me. And we've been on an incredible journey ever since."

Adeline set up a LinkedIn group for the organisation in 2012 and launched the network to the rest of the industry a year later. It took on charitable status in June last year and has just celebrated its fifth anniversary with the first Women in Rail Awards in April.

"I didn't really have a goal at the beginning, I just wanted to create a network for women that was supportive. It has expanded into so much more."

This year her goal is to re-launch the already very successful Women in Rail a cross-industry, cross-company mentoring programme and make it into a transferrable, sustainable and scalable professional setup for the industry, believing that mentoring is key to enabling fresh talent to succeed.

With a team of more than 100 volunteers across the country, everything Women in Rail achieves, from staging networking events to holding development workshops and a mentoring programme, is run on a voluntary basis by people who also have a day job.

"My aim is to set the charity up as a financially independent organisation, to move forward in a more structured way. The last few years have made me realise how much difference we can make and that our work is key to the success of our industry."

**"I meet the most amazing and inspiring people"**

Between a full-on day job and running Women in Rail on the weekends, Adeline is also balancing being a mother and a wife.

"I've always been a keen runner. At the weekend I take an hour for myself to go for a run. That's the only 'me' time I can afford so my children and my husband both respect it. I get all my frustrations out and take time to reflect and think! I also take

the time to play with my children. If I let my hair down, I can be a bit of a clown with them!"

But busy though she may be, she wouldn't change her life.

"I wouldn't dream of leaving the industry or slowing down with Women in Rail. It gives me a sense of purpose and enables me to give something back to an industry I am passionate about. I meet the most amazing and inspiring people and feel truly privileged. Very few people in the rail industry want to leave it. Most of the women I speak to have fallen into rail by accident but stay by passion." ■

