



# Women in Rail

End of Year Newsletter  
December 2020



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## A few words from the Chair...



Dear Colleague,

The last few months have been challenging for many of us in the UK and worldwide.

We endured the global pandemic and lockdowns.

Many experienced increased loneliness and anguish, especially women and people from ethnic minorities who have been disproportionately affected by the crisis.

We observed acts of hatred against station manager Belly Mujinga and George Floyd and reacted to support the Black Lives Matter movement.

We saw an alarming rise in domestic violence.

All the while, we also witnessed amazing dedication, kindness and compassion from carers, key workers, doctors, nurses and many in our industry, including the Women in Rail team of volunteers.

Throughout the crisis, the determination, commitment and passion of the Women in Rail Trustees, Regional Leaders and their Steering Committees to support Women in Rail members across the country, albeit virtually, has been stronger than ever.

We hosted over 52 virtual national and regional events, from mental health webinars to career development workshops via quiz nights and online pamper and aromatherapy sessions.

We shared almost daily inspirational quotes and messages of hope on our social media channels and continued to campaign vigorously in the trade press for better equality, diversity and inclusion in UK rail, encouraging companies to renew their EDI efforts during the crisis.

Similarly, our flagship events' partners, guests and sponsors showed tremendous understanding, with many agreeing to transfer their sponsorships to 2021 or, in the case of The Big Rail Diversity Challenge, to a virtual platform.

As we see a glimmer of hope for the future with the roll out of a COVID vaccine, we want to thank you all again for your continuous support of our charitable work. It has been a trying year, but we continued to reach out and help each other as one strong knit community in UK rail. A family.

I wish you a peaceful holiday and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Best wishes,

Adeline

## 2020...

### March: Women in Rail Mentoring Programme goes virtual

As soon as lockdown began, we transferred our cross-company Mentoring Programme to a virtual platform, ensuring our 340 mentors and mentees, including 12 pro-bono pairs, continued to benefit from our mentoring Masterclasses and events.



### 26<sup>th</sup> March and every Thursday thereafter: we supported the Clap for our carers campaign

We used our social media channels to openly support the Clap for our carers campaign and encourage our members to do the same, recognising the hard work and publicly saying “Thank You” to all those involved in caring for others during the pandemic.





## April: we shared useful links

We issued a letter to all our members containing links to organisations offering support to individuals and families affected by the pandemic - NHS support and volunteering lines, local foodbanks, domestic abuse helplines, mental health and wellbeing resources but also online training courses on CV writing and interview techniques.

**Mental health and wellbeing:**

- MIND: <https://www.mind.org.uk/> - the website contains an "I need urgent help" tool. Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm)
- For families: please contact Home Start: <https://www.home-start.org.uk/using/category/support-for-families-during-covid-19>
- Anxiety UK - charity providing support if you have been diagnosed with an anxiety condition. Phone: 03444 775 774 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.30pm) Website: [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)
- Bipolar UK - A charity helping people living with manic depression or bipolar disorder. Website: [www.bipolaruk.org.uk](http://www.bipolaruk.org.uk)
- CALM - the Campaign against Living Miserably, for men aged 15 to 35. Phone: 0800 58 58 58 (daily, 5pm to midnight) Website: [www.thecalmanet.net](http://www.thecalmanet.net)
- Men's Health Forum - 24/7 stress support for men by text, chat and email. Website: [www.menshealthforum.org.uk](http://www.menshealthforum.org.uk)
- Mental Health Foundation - provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities. Website: [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)
- No Panic - Voluntary charity offering support for sufferers of panic attacks and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). Offers a course to help overcome your phobia or OCD. Phone: 0844 967 4848 (daily, 10am to 10pm). Calls cost 5p per minute plus your phone provider's Access Charge. Website: [www.nopanic.org.uk](http://www.nopanic.org.uk)
- OCD Action - support for people with OCD. Includes information on treatment and online resources. Phone: 0845 390 6232 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5pm). Calls cost 5p per minute plus your phone provider's Access Charge. Website: [www.ocdaction.org.uk](http://www.ocdaction.org.uk)

Other useful sites:

- [www.bikehiticall.com](http://www.bikehiticall.com) and [www.rcthrink.org](http://www.rcthrink.org)
- For wellbeing webinars, please see the Women in Rail website: <https://www.womeninrail.org/events/women-in-rail-weekly-webinars-in-collaboration-with-neuroscientist-organisation-minerva-engagement/>

Women in Rail - London Fruit & Wool Exchange, 1 Duval Square, London, E1 6PW  
t: [www@womeninrail.org](mailto:www@womeninrail.org) | [www.womeninrail.org](http://www.womeninrail.org)  
Registered in England and Wales - Company Number 8835710  
Registered Charity Number 1147835

**is available for download**

ral: Moodfit  
r you're experiencing anxiety, depression, or high levels of stress, Moodfit is designed  
so feel better."

Dear Colleague,

We hope you and your loved ones are safe and well.

In these difficult times, many organisations are offering support to individuals and families affected by the pandemic. Similarly, a few platforms are offering free training on CV writing, presentation and interview techniques.

We thought it would be helpful to share some of these details with you - please do forward to anyone you think may need support.

**NHS - To receive support or volunteer:**

- To volunteer, contact NHS England: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2020/03/your-nhs-needs-you-the-call-for-volunteer-army/>
- To receive volunteer support from a NHS volunteer, please call: call 0800 196 3646.

This support is for (among others), for people aged 70+ years with underlying health conditions, people who are the 'extremely vulnerable', people who are pregnant, with a disability, a heart condition, a chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, a serious heart conditions etc. Support includes collecting shopping, medication or for a telephone 'check in and chat'

**Foodbanks**

- Phone number: 01722 580 180
- Website link with additional information: <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/>
- For details on receiving food deliveries: <https://www.which.co.uk/news/2020/04/how-can-coronavirus-vulnerable-households-get-food-deliveries/>

**Refuge (domestic abuse):**

- Freephone helpline: 0800 2000 (24/7)
- Website link with additional information: <https://www.nationalhelpline.org.uk/>

Women in Rail - London Fruit & Wool Exchange, 1 Duval Square, London, E1 6PW  
t: [www@womeninrail.org](mailto:www@womeninrail.org) | [www.womeninrail.org](http://www.womeninrail.org)  
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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fp43gc@ywtj> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU>

are a few free YouTube videos [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU).

video about the S.T.A.R. interview technique: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU>

extensive to ask the [youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU)

about general top tips for [youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU)

ation skills and offers public speaking tips to improve skills and [youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU)

seo on improving presentation skills: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QF5nU1R9yU>

to have a support network in place closer to you - these links will take


[local-council.org/](https://www.local-council.org/) (England), [local-council.org/](https://www.local-council.org/) (Scotland) and [local-council.org/](https://www.local-council.org/) (Wales).


out if we can support you further.

London Fruit & Wool Exchange, 1 Duval Square, London, E1 6PW  
t: [www@womeninrail.org](mailto:www@womeninrail.org) | [www.womeninrail.org](http://www.womeninrail.org)  
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## May through to September 2020: free 30 minutes wellbeing webinars

We hosted free 30 minutes wellbeing webinars in collaboration with neuroscientist Minerva Engagement. This initiative was hugely successful with over 300 attendees on some sessions. Topics included "How to stay connected when socially isolated", "How can we switch between focused attention and mind wandering and why is it important?", "How can we regulate emotions and alleviate anxiety in order to flourish?", "How can we stay positive and challenge our negative thoughts?" and "How can building awareness of our nervous system impact our wellbeing and resilience?", among others.






Applied Neuroscience for High Performance & Wellbeing

Client Login | Menu

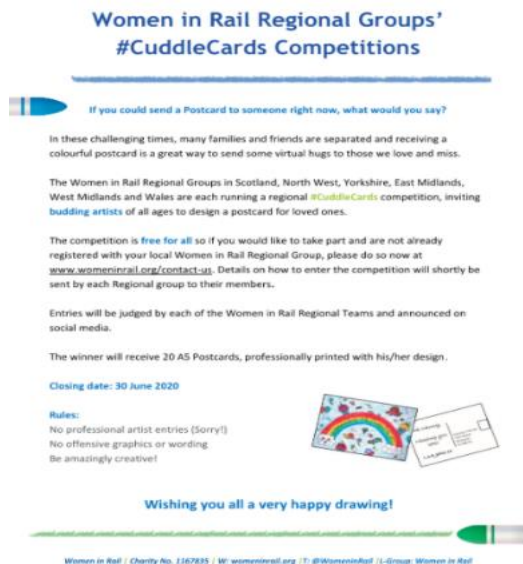
The Team

WITH A SHARED PASSION TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



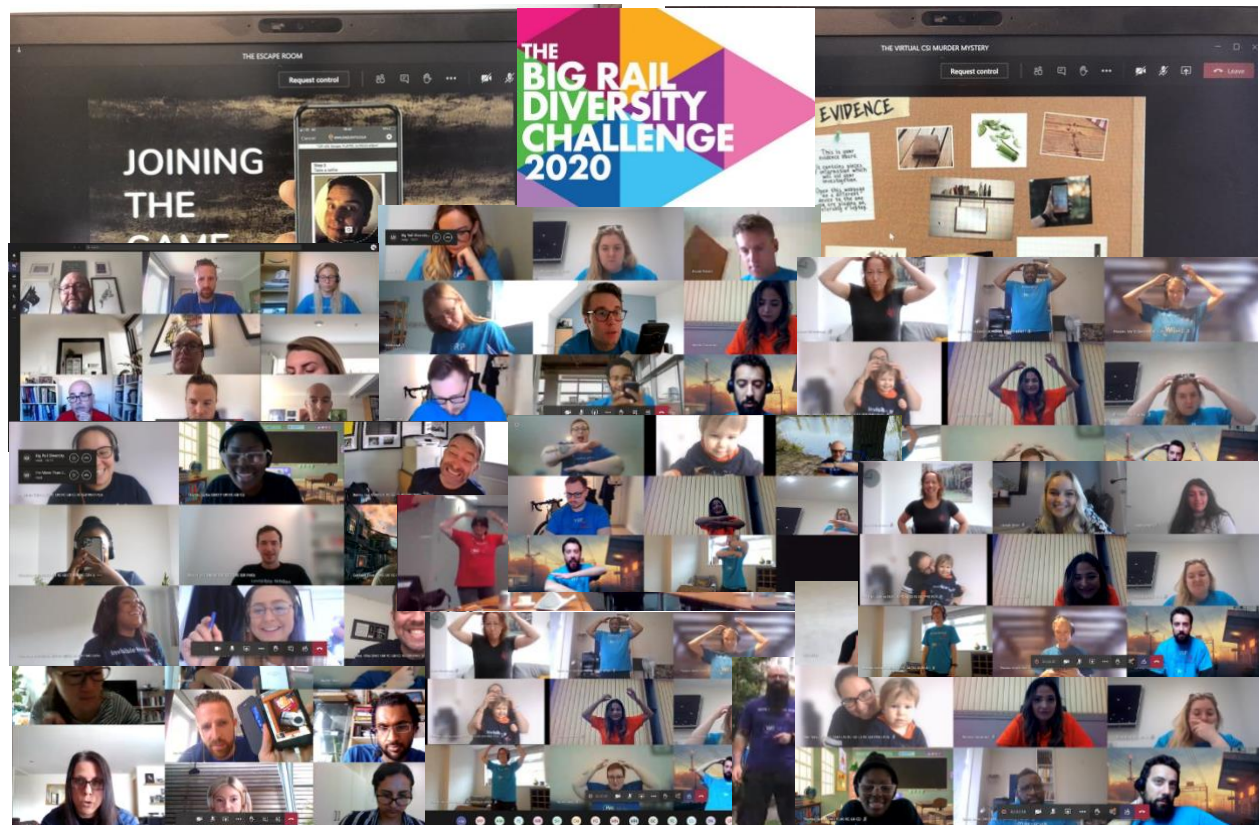
## June 2020: we helped parents keep children busy during Half-Term with our CuddleCards competition

Our CuddleCard competition encouraged budding artists to design a card for loved ones they could not visit during lockdown. The winners received 20 postcards professionally printed with their design.



## June 2020: we held a virtual Big Rail Diversity Challenge 2020

We adapted our flagship event, The Big Rail Diversity Challenge, to a hugely successful remote morning Microsoft Teams session which saw over 100 participants go head-to-head in various mental challenges.



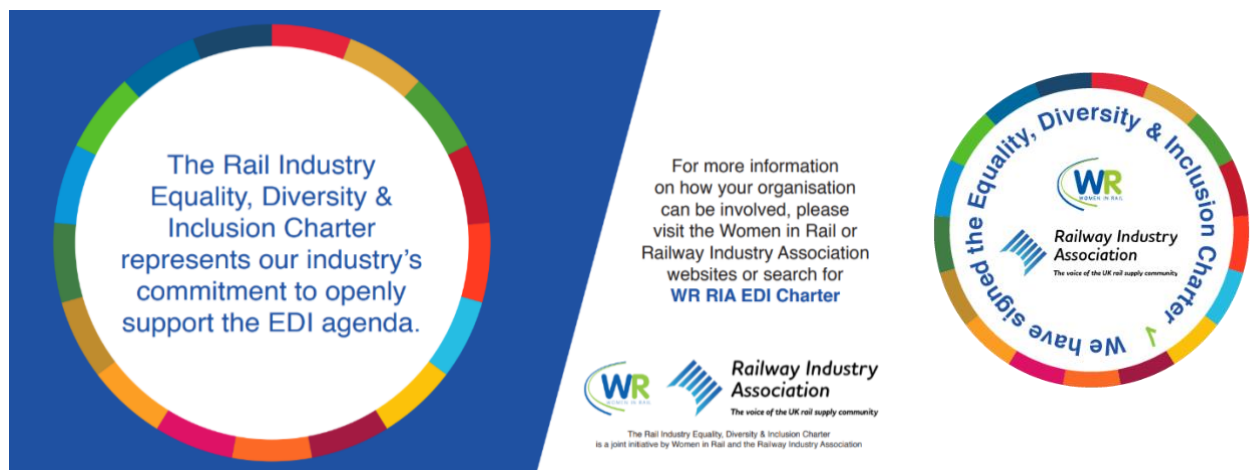
## September 2020: Digital Women in Rail Awards 2020 release

We celebrated the winners of the Women in Rail Awards 2020 through a digital supplement. We are looking forward to welcoming the winners on stage, next year, for a well-deserved round of applause.



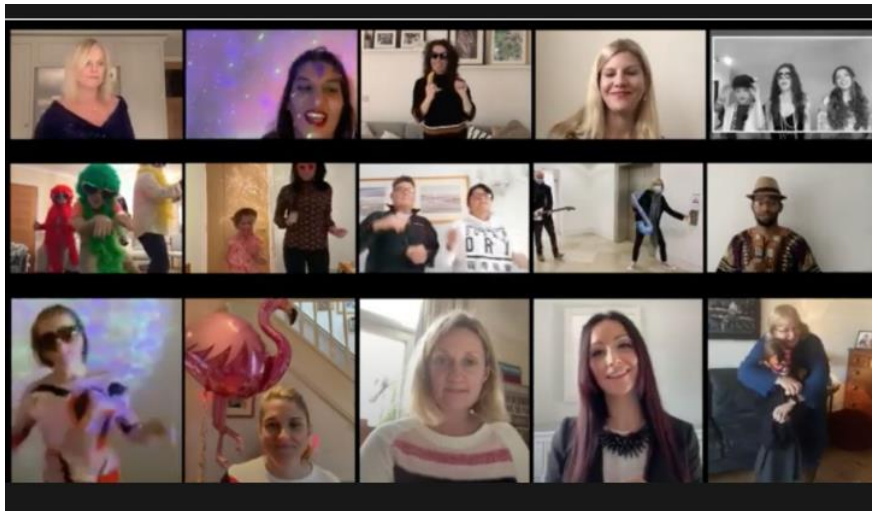
## November 2020: we launched, in collaboration with the Railway Industry Association, a joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter

The joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter is a voluntary initiative open to all companies working in the UK rail sector who wish to play a key role in promoting innovation, agility and positive change in our industry. To date, over 140 companies have signed up to the Charter which is fantastic.





## November 2020: we helped raise monies for Rail Aid with our “We Are Family” video



## December 2020: we launched our Reverse Advent Calendar initiative to help vulnerable people and struggling families during the festive season.



Women in Rail is proud to vulnerable people and encouraging every

*Reverse Advent*

Not sure what to include in your Reverse Advent guide of what you can put in your basket or box.

**Store Cupboard**

- o Cereal
- o Pasta
- o Rice
- o Lentils, Beans & Pulses
- o Tea
- o Coffee
- o Sugar
- o Biscuits
- o UHT Milk
- o Fruit Juice
- o Stuffing Mix
- o Cooking Sauces

**Baby Supplies**

- o Nappies
- o Baby Wipes
- o Baby Food

**Toiletries**

- o Deodorant
- o Toilet Paper
- o Shower Gel
- o Shaving Gel
- o Shaving Razors
- o Shampoo
- o Soap
- o Toothbrushes
- o Toothpaste
- o Hand Wipes

**Tinned Items**

- o Soup

Women in Rail is proud to support the UK's most vulnerable people and struggling families by encouraging everyone to create a

*Reverse Advent Calendar*

Now more than ever vulnerable people and families are struggling to provide for their loved ones. A Reverse Advent Calendar is a wonderful act of kindness, love and generosity and a way to support those less fortunate and help recreate some of the wonder and magic that children find in Christmas.

**How does a Reverse Advent Calendar work?**  
Using a basket or box wrapped in gift paper, simply put aside every day for 24 days an essential item.



Throughout the year, we continued to showcase all forms of diversity, celebrate our members' faith and cultures and support global and national awareness initiatives



Diversity is being invited to the party;  
inclusion is being asked to dance.

Verna Myers



Happy Diwali  
FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS



Rail to Refuge

women's aid  
until women & children are safe

White Ribbon Day  
25th November 2020




WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY

Inter Faith Week  
8-15 November  
www.interfaithweek.org





You can be anything you want to be, just turn yourself into anything you think that you could ever be.

Freddie Mercury





DECEMBER 2 INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY



MOVEMBER



Rail Wellbeing LIVE  
Inspiring healthy lives across the railway

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN IN ENGINEERING DAY  
23 June 2020




National Inclusion Week 2020  
28 September - 4 October

Save the date




International Day of People with Disability

Pioneers of Female Engineering



are proud to support



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN IN ENGINEERING DAY  
23 June 2020

 <p><b>Sarah Guppy - Inventor</b> Contributed to the design of Britain's infrastructure. Developed several domestic products. Her first invention, a method of making safe piling for bridges, was patented in 1881.</p>	 <p><b>Victoria Drummond</b> The first female Marine Engineer. The first female member of the Institute of Marine Engineers.</p>	 <p><b>Dorothy Donaldson Buchanan - Civil Engineer</b> The first female member of the Institution of Civil Engineers.</p>	 <p><b>Delia Derbyshire - Electronic Music Engineer</b> English Musician and Composer of electronic music. Pioneer in sound engineering with the BBC Radiophonic Workshop during the 1960s, including her electronic arrangement of the theme music to the famous sci-fi series, Doctor Who.</p>
 <p><b>Alice Perry - Civil Engineer</b> The first woman to graduate in Engineering in Ireland or Great Britain. The only woman to have held the post of County Surveyor (County Engineer) in Ireland.</p>	 <p><b>Dame Caroline Haslett DBE, JP - Electrical Engineer</b> The first secretary of the Women's Engineering Society. The first director of the Electrical Association for Women (which she co-founded) responsible for such workers as the 1935 'All-Electric House'.</p>	 <p><b>Beatrice Shilling - Aeronautical Engineer</b> Responsible for correcting a serious defect in the Rolls-Royce Merlin engine during the Second World War. She also was a well-known racing motorcyclist.</p>	 <p><b>Mary Ferguson - Civil Engineer</b> The first female fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers.</p>



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

18TH JULY - 17TH AUGUST 2020



SOUTH ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

#SouthAsianHeritageMonth



international MEN'S DAY UK



It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.  
(Audre Lorde)



## The Women in Rail Regional Groups



## Women in Rail Scotland

[Scotland@womeninrail.org](mailto:Scotland@womeninrail.org)



**Shona Clive**  
*Chair of Women in Rail Scotland*





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## ***WR Scotland Steering Committee***



***Eva MacInnes  
(COWI UK)***



***Gail Blythe  
(Siemens)***



***Lisa McGhee  
(QTS)***



***Sarah Alexander  
(Dentons)***



***Lorna McDonald  
(Hitachi)***



***Lorna Gibson***



***Lorraine Brown  
(Network Rail)***

***[Scotland@womeninrail.org](mailto:Scotland@womeninrail.org)***

The current Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the way we have operated this year, which has had both a positive and negative impact. From a positive perspective, we have adapted our programme of events so that they can be delivered virtually, which has meant, in some cases, we have been able to reach a wider audience as there are no travel or time considerations to be made. On the downside, we have missed the face-to-face networking aspect of our events and the connections we usually make with our members and that they can make with each other. It is also more difficult to be interactive when you have a large virtual group together.

However, despite Covid, we continue to thrive in our third year, with an increasing membership and steadily growing network of like-minded organisations supporting us.

We gave a warm welcome to two new members of our Steering Group this year; Lorna McDonald from Hitachi and Sarah Alexander from Dentons who have proved to be valuable members of the group. We also said a fond farewell and big thank you to original steering group member, Lorraine Brown from Network Rail, who relocated to Australia with her husband.

A big thank you to our fantastic steering group that also includes Gail Blythe, Siemens, Lisa McGhee, QTS, Eva McInnes, COWI and Lorna Gibson, QTS. They have all worked very hard this year to make it a success.

We have held and supported a number of events this year including: -

### Sunday 8 March - International Women's Day

Our members took part in this year's International Women's Day #EachforEqual campaign and can be seen striking a pose to show their support.



Our steering group member, **Gail Blythe** from Siemens, was also profiled in [this terrific piece](#) by Edinburgh Trams which highlights the managers of the three organisations who employ the greatest number of staff in operating Edinburgh Trams. Each of these managers are all female, which is a great boost for other women considering a career in rail.





International Women's Day



“

Be yourself, work hard, treat others as you would want to be treated yourself, aim high and have fun!

”

Gail  
Siemens Mobility Infrastructure Maintenance Manager

“

Believe in yourself, trust your instincts, women can do anything they want to and be authentic.

”

Sinead  
CAF Project Manager

“

Never feel intimidated or like you don't have a voice, work hard and show them who is boss – being a woman is amazing, don't apologise for it!

”

Sarah  
Edinburgh Trams Operations Manager



International Women's Day



International Women's Day



International Women's Day



Women in Rail Scotland was also delighted to be invited by co-chairs Hazel Fisher, Network Rail and Nicola Dawson, ScotRail, to join Network Rail's Inspire Scotland International Women's Day event in Atrium Court in Glasgow. It was a fantastic event with an introduction from Alex Hynes, ScotRail Alliance Director and key speakers including Susan Anderson, Network Rail who is one of our members.



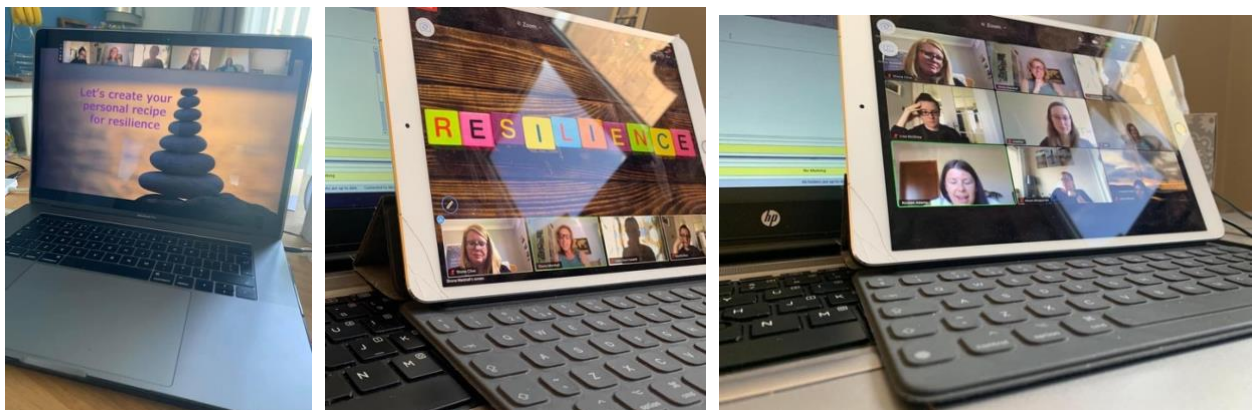
## April: Keep safe

In April, when the first Covid lockdown took place, we sent out an Keep safe message to our members and gave an update of our plans to move events online.



## 26 May: Building personal resilience

On the 26 May, Shona Marshall from The ASM Difference led Women in Rail Scotland's first virtual event called '**building personal resilience**'. This really practical and insightful interactive workshop gave our members an opportunity to learn about what resilience is and how to reframe what might be getting in the way of their ability to feel resilient. This was a particularly timely session given the Covid pandemic where we found ourselves in uncharted waters and many of us felt like we were being thrown off balance on a daily basis.



## June: CuddleCards competition

A huge big well done to **Sophie Dawson** aged 7 who designed the winning entry for the Women in Rail cuddle card competition in Scotland.

Sophie's fantastic parachuting squirrel won the hearts of all the Women in Rail Scotland steering group members.

A big thank you to everyone who took part too.

*Cuddle cards winner announced!*





## 23 June: Being as productive as practical



On the 23rd June, Shona Marshall ran a second fantastic workshop called **'being as productive as practical'** in which our members were given an opportunity to learn new tools and techniques to enable them to prioritise and increase concentration and focus, leading to a greater sense of achievement. During this particular time when many of us felt overwhelmed by the demands, distractions and decisions of our current lives, it is no surprise we often doubt if we are using our time productively, so this event was a perfect antidote to rethinking the expectations we have of ourselves.



## July: survey report issued



In 2019, we launched a survey to **find out what challenges women face in the rail sector in Scotland** so that we could develop a targeted strategy and agenda for the years ahead. The response was great with insightful feedback which was developed into a report that was shared with our members in July this year.

The findings also gave us an opportunity to champion and support the challenges that mattered to our members. You can find a copy of the report on the Women in Rail website.

### **20 July: A second survey issued – the impact of Covid**



We recognised that the Covid pandemic has changed the way we work and live and may have had an impact on some of the 2019 survey results both negatively and positively, so we launched a second survey to determine the impact and reshape our agenda accordingly. The report will be issued shortly.

### **5 August: Managing mental health during these challenging times**

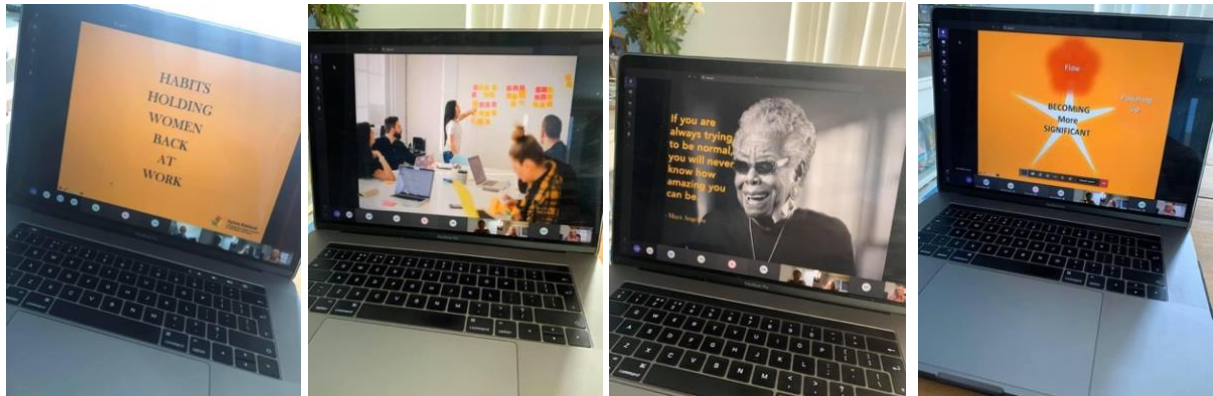


We were delighted to welcome David Beeney to our third virtual event of the year. David, a qualified Mental Health Counsellor affiliated to the BACP and a trustee for Mind, hosted a special seminar for Women in Rail Scotland 'Managing Mental Health During these Challenging Times'. The webinar focused on the best ways of maintaining our emotional resilience during the coronavirus pandemic and also considered how we stay emotionally connected with our colleagues as we work remotely. A fantastic event with lots of positive feedback from our members.

### **20 August: Habits that hold women back at work**



August saw the start of a series of Women in Rail Scotland event led by the fantastic Sylvia Baldock, a coach, author and professional speaker among many other things. 'Habits that hold women back at work' was a very insightful session jointly hosted by Women in Rail Scotland and Network Rail's Inspire Scotland. We had a terrific turnout of members from both groups and a great Q&A session. Thanks to Inspire Scotland for joining us.

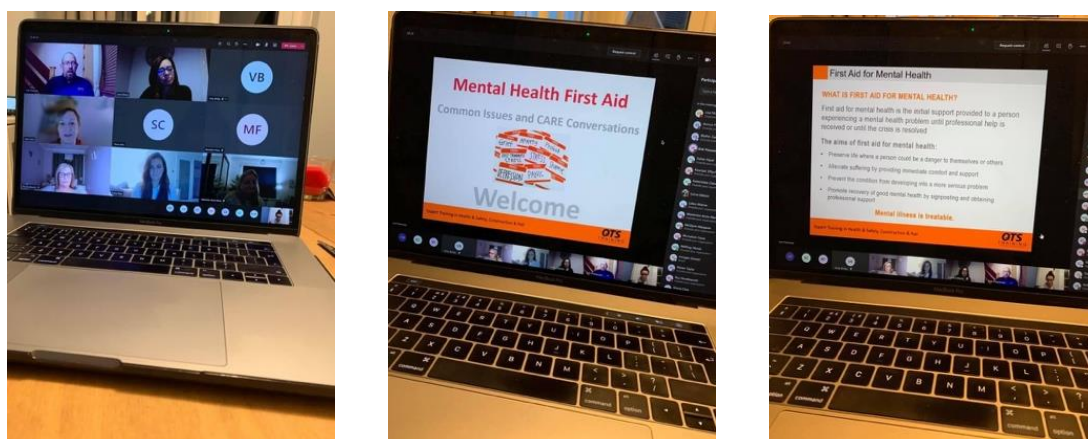


### 7 October: Becoming more significant

In a second virtual event held by Sylvia Baldock called 'becoming more significant', our members heard how to recognise their own unique talents and skills and understanding the value we bring to our workplaces and some techniques to overcome 'imposter syndrome'. Sylvia's infectious energy and inspiring tone led us through some practical tools to develop confidence, self-awareness and self-esteem and how to make the right first impression every time.

### 29 October: Mental Health First Aid Workshop

With mental health being of such prime importance during the Covid pandemic, we ran a second mental health workshop with the fantastic Erik Preissman from QTS. Many thanks to QTS for co-hosting this session with Women in Rail Scotland. Erik very ably discussed the key role of mental health and first aiders and the importance of using non-judgmental communication skills to encourage someone who seek professional help.





## October: Women in Rail Scotland Rail Professional magazine coverage



## 28 October: Glasgow's Black History



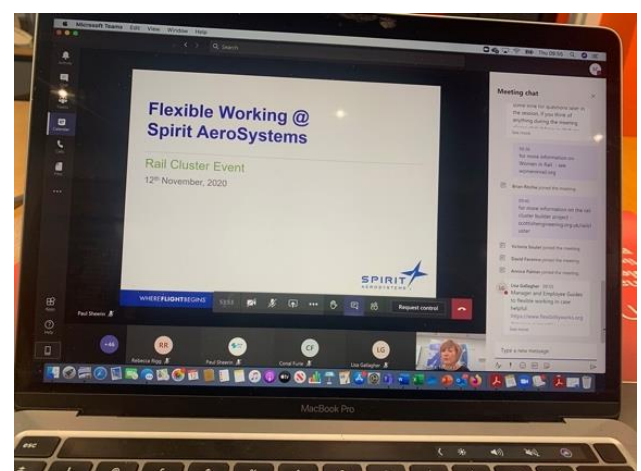
This Black History Month, Women in Rail Scotland shared an insight into Glasgow's Black History with its members through an original spoken word piece supported with images. While many cities such as Glasgow played their part in the abolition of the slave trade, they also benefitted and today Glasgow seeks to raise greater awareness of the contributions made through slavery.

A short video has been produced and evokes a mix of emotions in its attempt to educate and ensure that the past continues to be remembered while we build a more diverse and inclusive society for the future. With thanks to Sharon Salmon, Chair of Network Rail's employee network Cultural Fusion for sponsoring the piece; written by Rajinder Pryor; research and oration by Kirsty Diamond. Rajinder Pryor is Network Rail's Engagement Lead, Communications (Network Services) and we are delighted she got in touch with us to share this really insightful piece of work. Thank you Rajinder.

## 12 November: Flexible Working



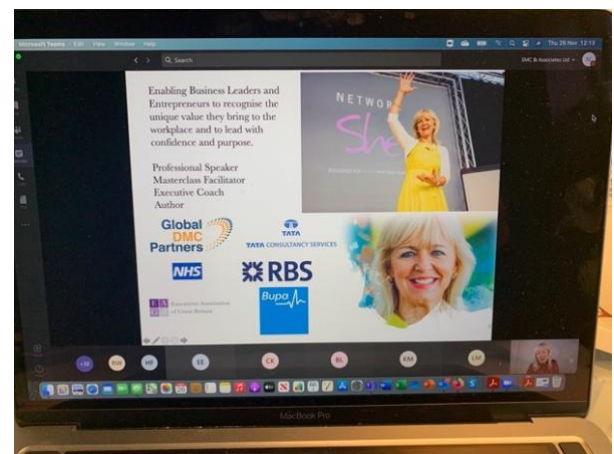
Lisa Gallagher from Flexibility Works, one of Scotland's leading flexible working experts and Nicola Spence from Spirit Aerospace were our key speakers at our online flexible working event in November. Lisa gave us lots of practical flexible working guidance and Nicola talked about how Spirit Aerospace manages flexible working as well as giving us a hugely inspiring insight into her career pay and how flexible working has been particularly beneficial with managing her family commitments. We ran this event jointly with our friends at Scottish Engineering an important like-minded and supportive organisation since our launch in 2018.



## 26 November: Presenting online with passion, power and presence



We were delighted to have the marvellous Sylvia Baldock back once again to conclude our formal events programme this year with a great fun and very helpful online session called ‘presenting online with passion, power and presence’. A very timely topic for all of us doing many Teams, Zoom, Webex or other online platforms for communicating, Sylvia had us taking part in interactive actions such as warm up exercises for the vocal chords, tongue twisters, breathing exercises, presentation content advice, lighting tips and much, much more. A great way to end a fantastic year packed full of things to keep our members connected. A huge thanks to Sylvia for her support this year.



## Never Mind the Gap initiative

Women in Rail Scotland is really pleased to be supporting the wider Women in Rail Never Mind the Gap initiative. With so many people being adversely affected by the current situation, it is a great initiative to help women back into work and into an industry they might not have considered before.



## Women in Rail North West

[NorthWest@womeninrail.org](mailto:NorthWest@womeninrail.org)



***Anna-Jane Hunter***  
*Chair of Women in Rail North West*



## ***WR North West Steering Committee***



***Daniela Cordosa  
(Network Rail)***



***Nina Lockwood  
(Intuitive Recruitment)***



***Jenny McKinney  
(KeolisAmey Metrolink)***



***Lucja Majewski-Kent  
(FTPE)***

***[NorthWest@womeninrail.org](mailto:NorthWest@womeninrail.org)***

This year has certainly been a strange one for all of us. We started off the year strong, with two really well attended events in the first quarter. We've then had a bit of everything thrown at us: Maternity leave, lockdown, furlough, redundancy, new jobs...and that's just our Steering Group!

This year has certainly been a strange one for all of us. We started off the year strong, with two really well attended events in the first quarter. We've then had a bit of everything thrown at us: Maternity leave, lockdown, furlough, redundancy, new jobs...and that's just our Steering Group!

Despite all this we have managed to keep in touch with our steering group and our members throughout. Virtual platforms have offered us a lifeline and we have focussed on keeping well during these difficult times.

As well as our Women in Rail events, we have continued our successful partnership with the YRP in July, with two of our steering group (Anna-jane and Nina) taking part in a 'To my Future Self' careers advice event. We look forward to working with YRP again in 2021.

With fewer opportunities to promote the need for diversity and inclusion in person, Anna-jane took the opportunity to highlight issues with the succession pipeline in rail in her July/August editorial piece for Rail Technology Magazine.

We would love to have done more in 2020 but now we look to the future. Following a successful planning ahead session in November, the North West region have decided to focus on three areas in 2021: building on our health and wellbeing work, focussing on frontline and 'junior' leaders, and sharing best practice of practical steps towards improving EDI.

**We would like to thank all the sponsors and friends of WR for their support in 2020. This includes: Transpennine Express, Fission Rail, ARUP, YRP and Transport for the North.**

### **10 January: Festive get together sponsored by Fission Rail**

Kindly hosted by Fission Rail, this was a relaxed networking event where we belatedly celebrated the success of Women in Rail in 2019. We were joined by friends new and old from the North West area and had a great time sampling the new trend in office accommodation at the We Work offices in Manchester.



### **9 March: International Women's Day Corporate Athlete Event**

This event, kindly hosted by ARUP, was held in conjunction with International Women's day. Jeannette Jackson, Director of The Manchester Stress Institute and human performance scientist at MiHP guided us towards peak performance with her talk on 'The Corporate Athlete'!





Jeannette is a performance nutritionist and stress resilience expert, specialising in workplace health and wellbeing and as such, the perfect speaker for an event where we were inspired to be the best version of ourselves with tools and techniques to take away and start implementing immediately. These included tips on diet, mindfulness, and positive affirmations to support both our physical and mental health. We could have listened to her all night, but we wrapped up the event with some networking over drinks and a fantastic buffet.

### **13 and 14 August: Pamper & Zoom Sessions**

Our two fundraising events were hosted by Suzanne Thorneycroft from WR West Midlands who is a qualified massage therapist and independent consultant for Neal's Yard Remedies. The sessions were held on-line via Zoom using samples sent in advance and offered us a chance to wind down and enjoy some self-care. We also managed a few laughs as we watched the various approaches to application and removal of the products...it turns out even with the same very clear instructions some of us get it wrong! At a time when personal services such as beauty therapy have been hard hit by government restrictions, we were delighted to help out and Suzanne kindly donated to Women in Rail a percentage of the profit from products sold as a result of the event.



## Women in Rail Yorkshire

[Yorkshire@womeninrail.org](mailto:Yorkshire@womeninrail.org)



***Dr Amy Pressland and Jennie Pitt***  
*Chairs of Women in Rail Yorkshire*



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## ***WR Yorkshire Steering Committee***



***Clare Brint  
(NR)***



***Sarah Birtles  
(NR)***



***Caroline Littler  
(LNER)***



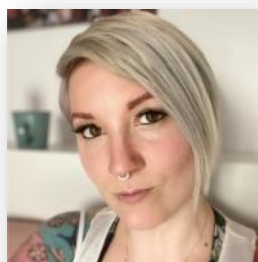
***Anna Vinogradova  
(Northern)***



***Gema Garcia Anton  
(Clancy)***



***Helen Townend  
(Amey)***



***Frances Rogalski  
(NR)***

**[Yorkshire@womeninrail.org](mailto:Yorkshire@womeninrail.org)**



The Yorkshire committee had big plans for 2020 including the aim to host a Christmas black-tie ball in York's elegant The Principal hotel. As we approached the end of February, and news of a global pandemic grew in volume, we made the sensible decision to hold off finalising our Christmas event. Little did we know how salient that decision was going to be.

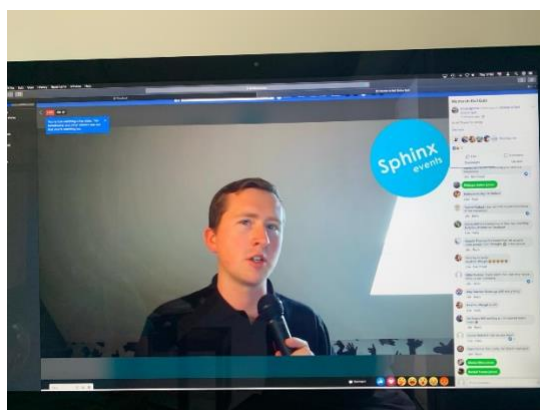
### 5 March: Turn up your strengths

Our first and only in-person event of the year. Led by Leadership coach Gill How, we held this breakfast workshop sponsored by LNER complete with Pret croissants and fruit pots, in celebration of International Women's Day. Attendees were invited to flip previous thinking on its head and instead of correcting our weaknesses, we worked on bolstering our strengths to build our self-esteem and ultimately our careers.



### 7 May: Quiz

We were thrilled to arrange the Women in Rail National Quiz, hosted by Sphinx. Over 100 members attended which was fantastic!

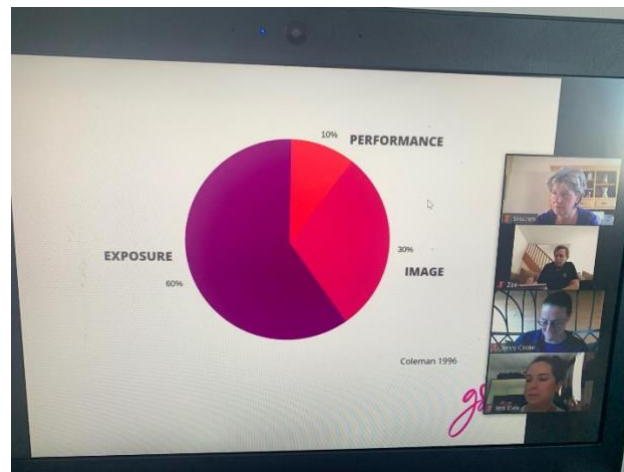


### 20 May: Self-promotion is not a dirty word

With the world in flux as Covid-19 spread rapidly around the world and the UK went into a national lockdown, the Yorkshire committee pivoted to online events.

Whilst we missed the face-to-face gatherings, we were offered the opportunity to gather a broader audience for our events, and surprisingly we found that more members were able to attend a 90-minute online workshop.

The first event of our digital series stemmed from the need to replace in-person networking to raise your profile online. This interactive session led by self-promotion expert Gemma Stowe was about helping women with career progression and particularly becoming comfortable with promoting yourself at work to increase visibility and create opportunities.



### June: CuddleCards

We took part in the Women in Rail CuddleCards competition. Our winner was Emily, with this beautiful drawing!



### 26 June: Overwhelm first aid

In the early part of the national lockdown, the Yorkshire committee felt strongly that women may be susceptible to feelings of overwhelm; as primary caregivers, and often having to juggle home-schooling, domestic chores and full-time jobs, we recognised that women had a lot on their plates during lockdown. Thus, our second digital offering, sponsored by Clancy Consulting, focused on learning how to manage the feeling of overwhelm where everything feels too much.

Wendy McCristal from the Mental Health Company guided participants through the Overwhelm First Aid process which helps people prioritise and organise tasks at work and at home in order to reduce the risk of burn out.

### 15 July: Turn up your strengths in the face of Covid-19

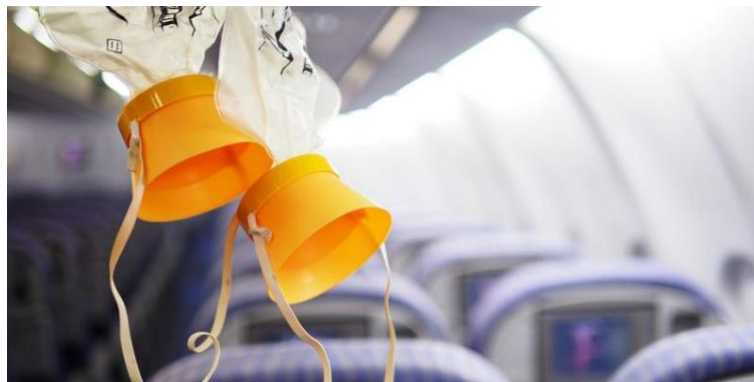
By July, as lockdown measures were being eased, we offered WR Yorkshire members a follow-up session to Gill How's Turn up your strengths workshop, albeit in digital format and with the focus on Covid-19. Gill showed us how our strengths have an enormous impact on how we think, feel and behave, and that they are particularly important during times of global and local distress.

Attendees of this session reported that they felt uplifted and emboldened by this workshop; with remote working the norm this year, people expressed difficulty identifying the 'normal' social cues and feedback markers that come with face-to-face working. With so much negativity around, it was a well-timed event to remind us that we all have a unique set of strengths, which can help us navigate choppy waters.

### 29 July: Putting on our oxygen masks

The final event of the digital series before the summer break was a follow-up to the Overwhelm First Aid session led by Wendy McCristal. In this workshop, Wendy impressed on participants the need to put on our oxygen mask before helping others. She showed why self-care is essential, and especially so now when our normal levels of resilience are being tested to their limits.

Wendy explained how to set healthy boundaries to protect yourself and loved ones and turn our grumpier selves into better versions of ourselves, whose self-care needs are met.

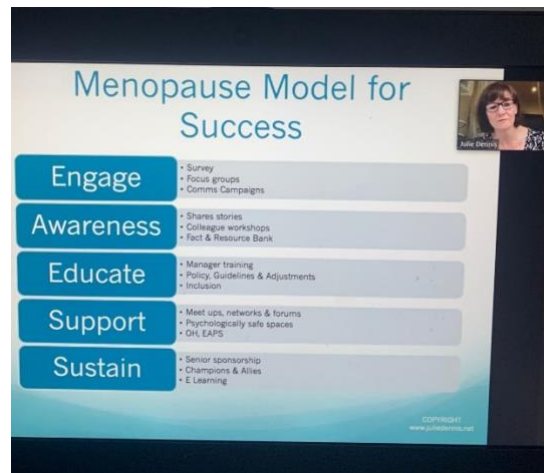


### 13 October: Menopause, the HOT topic

After a 6-week 'summer break', the WR Yorkshire committee hosted a workshop on a topic which has grown in visibility in recent times. Sponsored by LNER, Director of Menopause at Work, Julie Dennis, led an honest, funny and highly informative session on the menopause. Whilst this session was aimed at women near menopause age, or going through it, WR Yorkshire members reported how useful they found the session as colleagues and line managers. This interactive workshop helped to reduce the stigma surrounding the menopause and encourage constructive workplace conversations.

As news of the 2<sup>nd</sup> national lockdown grew to a crescendo, the WR Yorkshire committee decided to practice what Wendy McCristal had preached in her Mental Health sessions and commit to self-care and prioritisation. In other words, the weariness of 2020 was felt by our members and committee alike, and thus we decided to focus our efforts on designing the 2021 calendar. And thus our 2020 events calendar was complete.





## WR Yorkshire steering committee

In a year that has prevented in-person committee meetings, the WR Yorkshire committee has actually grown closer and stronger: we have seen into one another's homes with the advent of Zoom meetings, and with all that that comes with including pets, children, WIFI challenges, and configuring camera angles. Moreover, the committee members have supported one another in informal and unlabelled peer coaching through this unprecedented year. And despite a pandemic life events continued for the committee: we had two committee members return from Maternity leave, new jobs, projects, challenges and successes.

## November 2020: We featured in the November issue of Rail Professional Magazine



VIEWPOINT | 31

**Women in Rail** Amy Pressland & Jennie Pitt

**Women in Rail Yorkshire: Capitalising on WFH during Covid-19**

**Amy Pressland**, Head of Learning and Development at DB Cargo (UK) Limited and **Jennie Pitt**, Inclusion and Engagement Manager at LNER, Chairs of Women in Rail Yorkshire look back at the year when everything changed

What a year it's been. If anyone had told us in January 2020 when rail commuters made their ways in packed trains around the UK network that our carriages would be mostly empty for months on end during the Spring and Summer of 2020, we would have been severely doubtful. Or we might have thought you were barking mad. Little did we know when we hosted our annual WR Yorkshire International Women's Day celebration event, facilitated by leadership coach Gill How in York, that it would be last time we met in person, committee and members alike, in 2020. At this event, in which Gill guided WR Yorkshire members through a workshop on identifying our strengths to progress in work, there were murmurings of Covid-19 and how it might affect the country. Two weeks later the national lockdown was announced.

the country. As such, the WR Yorkshire committee have always been aware that members often travelled from far away to attend our in-person events. Moreover, we had committed in 2019 to host at least one event per year in a different Yorkshire city in order to better serve our members and their communities.

One of the silver linings of Covid-19 has been that our events can now reach every part of the region as members found themselves predominantly working from home, and with altered timetables as a result of school closures.

**2020 events**  
There is widespread evidence that Covid-19 has had an increased impact on women, whether that be as a result of increased caring duties at home, loss of jobs or being placed on furlough. Consequently, the WR Yorkshire committee quickly scrapped our planned schedule of events and designed events which would support women during the uncertainties of 2020, and that could be delivered online. Working from home (WFH) has afforded a different kind of flexibility for women.

During lockdown we offered events to members across the Yorkshire region which included light-hearted quizzes, and workshops on self-promotion, using your strengths to your advantage, overwhelm first aid, and menopause awareness. We found that hosting WR Yorkshire breakfast sessions increased attendance. During these sessions members were very honest about the challenges they face working from home, juggling a new way of working with caring responsibilities, conducting all business online and being house-bound with little relief at the end of the working week.

We hope that in 2021 we will be able to meet our committee and members again in person, however hosting events online has been a surprisingly positive experience and one we will incorporate into a hybrid approach in WR Yorkshire.

Amy Pressland is Head of Learning and Development at DB Cargo (UK) Limited and Jennie Pitt is Inclusion and Engagement Manager at LNER

### **Driving the Diversity Agenda in a New Sector**

After 8 years working for LNER, Jennie Pitt one of WR Yorkshire co-chair's is leaving the industry to start a new role as Head of Diversity & Inclusion, Engagement, Relations & Policy at Engie. Jennie will remain actively involved in WR and will continue to co-chair the Yorkshire group alongside Amy Pressland.

On reflection, the WR Yorkshire committee are proud to have been able to serve our members and provide useful workshops during the toughest of years. We have learned collectively this year. And as 2020 draws to a conclusion, there is a twinkle in our eyes as we look ahead to the possibilities that we may find in 2021....

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## Women in Rail West Midlands

[WestMidlands@womeninrail.org](mailto:WestMidlands@womeninrail.org)



***Claire Burrows***  
*Chair of Women in West Midlands*





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## ***WR West Midlands Steering Committee***



***Rose Rees  
(Midland Metro Alliance)***



***Lorraine Warner  
(Network Rail)***



***Suzanne Thorneycroft  
(QI Performance)***



***Sarah McKee  
(Eiffage Kier)***



***Joanna Seabright  
(Cross Country Trains)***



***Liz Riddell  
(Alstom UK)***

***[WestMidlands@womeninrail.org](mailto:WestMidlands@womeninrail.org)***

2020 has been a challenging year for everyone and we have all had to adapt to new ways of working. Whilst we have missed seeing our members in person, it is great that technology has permitted us to keep in touch virtually. Thank you to all our members old and new for making the effort to keep in touch with us and to engage with the events we have been able to run. It has also been fantastic to engage with members outside our own region in a way that wouldn't have been possible in person because of geographical distance between us. It has been lovely to be more connected across the regions in this way. Thank you also to our committee who have continued to provide invaluable support and to ensure that we are able to offer interesting and relevant events to our members. Below are some of the highlights from this rather strange year and we look forward to a hopefully more normal 2021.

## May: coverage in Rail Professional magazine for the West Midlands steering committee

Women in rail

Claire Burrows



VIEWPOINT | 33

## Women in Rail's message of supporting women and attracting female talent instantly resonated with me

**Claire Burrows**, legal director at law firm, Shakespeare Martineau, and Chair of Women in Rail West Midlands talks about her role as a Regional Leader for Women In Rail, helping to grow the organisation outside of London and its importance for promoting diversity and career opportunities within the sector

A

side from my role in Women in Rail, I am a legal director at Shakespeare Martineau, specialising in commercial disputes. I advise clients both in and out of the industry in relation to managing risk and litigation, hopefully avoiding or mitigating the latter!


My involvement with Women in Rail began in 2016, when I was introduced to the group's founder, Adeline Ginn, who was looking to expand out to the regions. The group's message of offering a support network to women in the industry and helping to attract and retain female talent instantly resonated with me and I began working with Adeline to grow a regional presence.

Our first event was hosted by Shakespeare Martineau and aside from showcasing an amazing panel of inspiring women speakers, was the birth of the first regional group for Women in Rail, here in the West Midlands. From there, under the guidance of a number of hugely motivated committee members, our group grew and I was asked to formally lead the region in February 2018.

The group is highly relevant for many of my clients and it is great to be able to support both them and the wider industry to promote diversity and career opportunities in the sector. I am particularly keen on getting our young talent engaged with the sector and developing and progressing themselves within the industry.

Since inception, the membership of the West Midlands group has expanded to almost 400 members. Our steering committee has a wide and varied skillset and many committee members do not

come from typical rail or engineering backgrounds, showing just how wide the industry is and the variety of roles that are within it. As well as my legal experience,



we have committee members working in recruitment, education and marketing (to name a few) and of course engineering as you might expect too.

In the last few years we've had plenty of moments to be proud of. These include working closely with groups such as Bodyguard Workwear looking at how to make female PPE better-fitting and safer, to our yearly presence at Rail Live, where I've twice had the pleasure of welcoming the Secretary of State for Transport to our stand and telling him all about Women in Rail, what we do and why we do it.

We're currently going through challenging times but the resilience and close bond of the group is shining through. It's often hard to get together face-to-face as a committee amongst the demands of daily work and life, but the current COVID-19 pandemic has shown us what is possible with modern technology. We have already enjoyed Zoom drinks with other regional leaders and we have lots of exciting opportunities coming up for our members, including virtual quizzes, webinars and Q&A sessions.

While we are embracing these new approaches due to the current climate, they are also highlighting the possibilities for us all to continue to feel much closer and more connected once this is all over.

Claire Burrows is a legal director at law firm, Shakespeare Martineau, and Chair of Women in Rail West Midlands

To find out more about the work of Women in Rail West Midlands, please e-mail [WRWME@womeninrail.org](mailto:WRWME@womeninrail.org)

## June: Innovation in the Rail industry (with Young Rail Professionals)

This event ran in conjunction with the Young rail Professionals was very heavily subscribed and we were fortunate to have Alex Burrows, Director of the Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education at the University of Birmingham, talking to us about all things innovation and most especially their HydroFLEX project (the UK's first hydrogen train).



## June: CuddleCards

We took part in the Women in Rail CuddleCards competition. Our winner was Amy, with this beautiful drawing!



## July/August/November: Pamper and Zoom

This popular series of events was sponsored by committee member Suzanne Thorneycroft and the Serenity Massage Company and helped us to make “just 5 minutes” for ourselves in our daily routine. Participants were treated to a virtual facial and proceeds from products bought on the night helped raise funds for both Women in Rail and the Haven Charity in Wolverhampton.





### September: Macmillan Coffee Morning

This annual event and a regular on the West Midlands calendar went virtual this year. Despite working remotely, we were still able to catch up with our members over coffee and to raise funds for MacMillan.



### November: Putting on your oxygen masks

This engaging session sponsored by Wendy McCristal and the Mental Wealth Company focussed on self-care and its importance for our mental health.



Self-Care – What are my needs?				
Needs are the things that keep you, as a minimum, at 'OK'. If you are less than OK, you may feel exhausted, grumpy or a bit off it. They are different to wants or desires. What do your needs look like right now?				
Need	What do I specifically need?	How much	How often	What
Sleep	Ins bed lights out	8 hours a night	6 days out of 7	What
Hydration	Drinking clean tap water	3 pints	Every day	Spiritual
Food	Fruit & veg	5 portions	Every day	Relational
Exercise	Walking	2 miles	3 times per week	Physical
Recreation time	Reading in a quiet room/garden space	30 minutes	5 days per week	Psychological
Relational	Meet up with friends (on zoom)	1 hour	Once a week	Physical
Relational	Chat around the dinner table	30 minutes	Every evening	Physical
Education	Read articles, books	10 minutes	Once per fortnight	Physical
Spiritual	Time in nature	5 minutes	Every day	Physical

## December: Virtual Christmas Drinks in aid of St Basils

We enjoyed the opportunity to network virtually and to mark the Christmas period with a fun quiz and a celebratory drink, whilst also raising funds for a very deserving charity caring for the homeless in the region.



## Women in Rail East Midlands

[EastMidlands@womeninrail.org](mailto:EastMidlands@womeninrail.org)



***Sarah Reid***  
*Chair of Women in East Midlands*





## ***WR East Midlands Steering Committee***



***Lucy Chance-Arke  
(Network Rail)***



***Charlotte Cruise  
(Shorterm Group)***



***Amy Ogden  
(Bombardier)***



***Caitlin Richardson  
(Mott MacDonald)***



***Caitlin Webb  
(CoMech Metrology)***

***[EastMidlands@womeninrail.org](mailto:EastMidlands@womeninrail.org)***

**What a year this has been. Having started the year with lots of plans to take Never Mind the Gap to a national initiative and deliver some different opportunities for our members, we have ended the year having a whole new approach to supporting our members. Here are the highlights....**

## Never Mind the Gap

In 2019 we piloted our Never Mind the Gap initiative to attract more women into the rail industry. Designed to provide free training and two-week work placements for women who want to get their career on track. We targeted women who were currently not in employment, either through a career break (i.e. moving on from caring), redundancy or otherwise, and had not had the chance to fulfil their potential.

This year we developed a Never Mind the Gap guide detailing the necessary steps required to successfully run this programme and encourage more women to get into rail. We aim to launch a coordinated cross industry programme across the UK in 2021 and we will decide on the right time for this when the local teams are established, and the government guidelines allow.

## Women in Rail East Midlands Events

In a year where social interaction has been somewhat challenging, the Women in Rail East Midlands Team have been committed to provide members with a varied programme of virtual events. Our series of events encouraged networking and provided invaluable opportunities for personal development.

Women in Rail Open Evening	17-Dec-19
Tapas and Salsa Night (Postponed)	26-Mar-20
Lockdown Quiz	11-Jun-20
Spa Experience Relaxation Workshop	20-Aug-20
Mental Health Seminar	24-Sep-20
Staying Resilient in Challenging Times	22-Oct-20
Employability Workshop – CV Writing & Job Searching	27-Nov-20
Employability Workshop – Interview Skills	03-Dec-20

## 17 December: Women in Rail Open Evening

Inspired by the Women in Rail Never Mind the Gap initiative, Shorterm Group hosted an evening with two major clients; Bombardier Transportation and Motherson Rolling Stock Systems to help promote opportunities for women within their organisations. Always keen to attract a diverse workforce, Shorterm Group specifically recognised the opportunity to promote these within the active recruitment drive for over 600 mechanical and electrical assembly workers required throughout 2020.

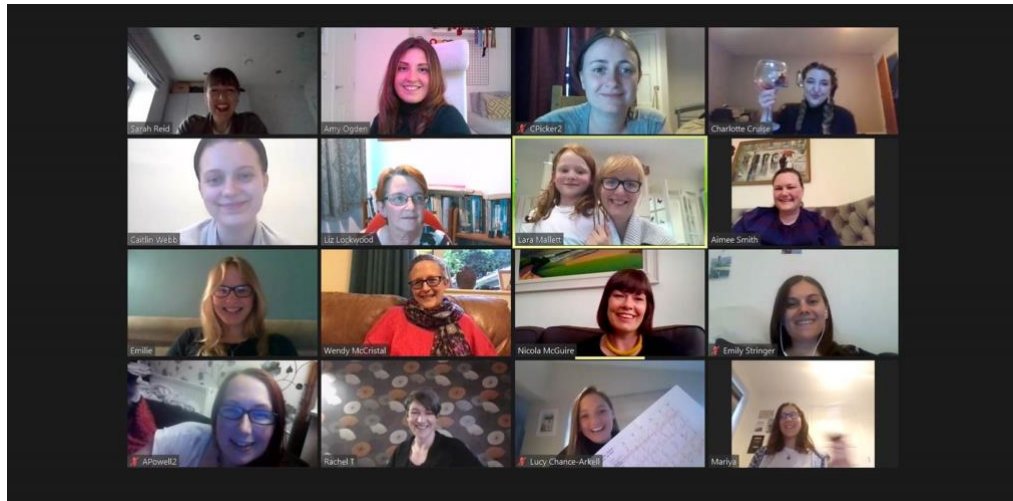


## Tapas & Salsa Evening

Despite popular demand, due to government guidelines and introduction of a national lockdown we took the decision to postpone our Tapas & Salsa evening. Subject to future guidelines we hope to reschedule the event in 2021.

## 11 June: Lockdown Quiz

After four months of limited social interaction during lockdown, we hosted a Women in Rail East Midlands Lockdown Quiz. The well attended event provided a social platform for networking, as well as some heathy competition amongst attendees.



## June: CuddleCards

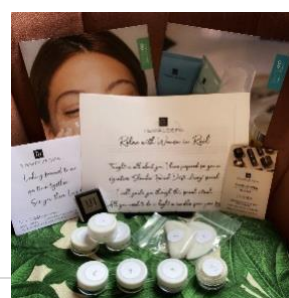
We took part in the Women in Rail CuddleCards competition. Our winner was Miriam, 13, with this beautiful drawing!



Stay well rainbow  
made from photos of my house and garden

## 20 August: Spa Experience Relaxation Workshop

Hosted by Temple Spa, this self-care interactive session encouraged attendees to take some time for themselves. Each participant was sent a Temple Spa kit in advance to help de-stress with a neck and shoulder ritual, deep breathing techniques as well as facial and hand massage to release tensions.



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### 24 September: Mental Health Seminar

For many of us our working and living environment changed completely over the last year. Led by Wendy McCristal of The Mental Wealth Company, this session provided attendees with an opportunity to understand the role of individual emotions in such a difficult time. The session focussed on the normal role of fear; long term impact on the body and explored ways to help you and those around you.



### 22 October: Staying Resilient in Challenging Times

Again, recognising some of the challenges associated with the current working environment, this session encouraged attendees to identify ways of staying resilient and resourceful. Hosted by Alex Hayward, an experienced Executive Coach and founder of Lattitude Consultancy, we explored how staying resilient is not just a matter of learning how to handle the pressures of work, but also how we can release ourselves from the pressure we place on ourselves.



### 27 November: Employability Workshop: CV Writing & Job Searching

The first of two employability skills workshops hosted by Charlotte Cruise, focuses on CV writing & formatting (targeted specifically to the rail sector). The session also encourages participants to identify skills and match these to employers/vacancies, finding opportunities and exploring available resources & approaches that can be used to secure your ideal role.



### 3 December: Employability Workshop: CV Interview Skills

Our second workshop will explore different types of interviews commonly used in the industry; phone, video, face to face and competency/assessment centres. Address any basic do's and don'ts, how to prepare for each type of interview, what to expect from them and assessment criteria.





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## Women in Rail Wales

[Wales@womeninrail.org](mailto:Wales@womeninrail.org)



**Amanda Newton**  
*Chair of Women in Rail Wales*



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## ***WR Wales Steering Committee***



***Claire Partridge  
(Network Rail)***



***Alison Thompson  
(Network Rail)***



***Ceri Taylor  
(TfW)***



***Gemma Southgate  
(TfW RS)***



***Christine Fernandes  
(CAF)***

***[Wales@womeninrail.org](mailto:Wales@womeninrail.org)***

After taking over the chair from Joanne at the end of 2019 our focus has been to increase the Women in rail members in Wales working with all major stakeholders who operate in Wales.

This year I must say has been a very challenging and tough year both personally and professionally with the significant impact of Covid 19 on all of us, we have held very few events in 2020 but we excited to move into 2021 with several significant events coming up.

As a Wales team we are looking to attract, support, empower and work closely with women from the railway industry supporting them in their development, networking, building confidence and capabilities. The Women in rail team in Wales has joined the Welsh Government who have just launched its Transport Diversity working group in Wales with members of the group from Rail, Bus and Air with a focus on Diversity and Equality throughout the transport industry.

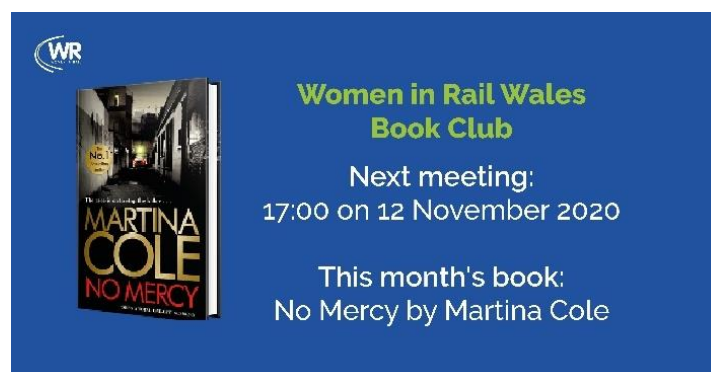
#### May: Launch of WR Wales Book Club

In May, we launched the Women in Rail Wales Book Club. We met every 4 weeks on a Thursday at 17:00 to discuss the book and socialise with new and current members over a drink or two.

Our first book was Michelle Obama's Becoming. This book was uplifting, empowering and exciting, just what we need in the current living situation!



In October, we moved on to Martina Cole's No Mercy, 'a heart-stopping rollercoaster ride of a read'!



### July: Coffee Club

In the summer, we started our coffee club which consisted of a catch-up over coffee. This enabled us to keep in touch with each other during the difficult months of Covid.



### November: Welsh Government's Diverse and Equality Working Group

We joined the Welsh Government's Diverse and Equality Working Group, working with Key Stakeholders in Wales to promote diversity and equality in the workplace.



### 17 December: Christmas Quiz

On Thursday 17 December, we held our Christmas Quiz, a chance to socialise with new and current members and spread some festive cheer!





### **2021: Never Mind the Gap initiative**

Next year, Women in Rail Wales will be supporting the national Women in Rail Never Mind the Gap initiative. With so many people being adversely affected by the current pandemic, it is a great way to help women back into work and into an industry they might not have considered before.

### **New members**

We are always keen to welcome new members to join Women in Rail Wales everyone welcome we are looking for more volunteers to join our committee. Please do get in touch we would love to hear from you!

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## Women in Rail South

[South@womeninrail.org](mailto:South@womeninrail.org)



***Ruth Busby and Samyutha Bala***  
*Chairs of Women in Rail South*



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## ***WR South Steering Committee***



***Anna Carder  
(Network Rail)***



***Ebony Soltani-James  
(ESJ Smart Marketing)***



***Allison Phillips  
(Imperial College Healthcare  
NHS Trust)***



***Vicky Ager  
(Amey)***



***Jenny Simms  
(Colas Rail)***

***[South@womeninrail.org](mailto:South@womeninrail.org)***

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2020 has been a tough year for all of us with Covid significantly impacting our personal and work lives. As a result, Women in Rail South have not been able to be active during this year. However, we are hopeful and excited for 2021.

After four years leading the group, Anna Delvecchio stepped down as Chair. We are incredibly grateful to Anna for her dedication and commitment in establishing the group.

From 2 November 2020, Ruth Busby and Samyutha Bala took on the role as co-chairs, alongside the brilliant committee members from across our rail industry.

Ruth joined the rail industry in 2018 as HR Director for GWR and has championed the people agenda since her arrival. At the heart of the agenda is connecting the understanding of how people drive business success with the importance of kindness and empathy.

Achieving inclusion and diversity is a passion for Ruth and has been a key feature throughout her career. Before joining GWR Ruth worked in several sectors including defence, higher education, and the civil service. Ruth is a qualified leadership coach, a Chartered Member of the CIPD, and trained mediator.

Samyutha (Sam) joined GWR and the rail industry in 2014, after a varied career including stints in theatre, project management and as a dentist. She started off dispatching trains at London Paddington and has held a variety of roles in the 6 years she has been with GWR.

Sam was a founding member and co-chair of GWR's Women's staff network and is passionate about the amazing role women play in the rail industry. She is looking forward to working with Ruth and the WR South Group and meeting some brilliant women and men who believe in a common cause.

As a team we want to support and empower women from across our network to develop personally and professionally, build confidence, and make connections across companies that will make our sector stronger.

That is why we are making big plans for 2021 that will provide those in the rail industry, and those who are thinking about joining, the opportunity to make connections, learn new skills and insights, come together on issues that matter, and most importantly have some fun.

Plans include running a number of events centred around:

- Personal development, including Personal Impact and Gravitas;
- Professional development, with insights into the latest developments in rail from senior leaders in the industry;
- Networking opportunities – how could we not include an infamous Zoom quiz or two;
- Awareness events, working with other charities including women's refuges; and,
- A launch event for the South West.

We are also exploring establishing a Women in Rail South book club, and introducing a regular podcast, featuring women in and on our wonderful railways.

We are always keen to welcome new members to join Women in Rail South – women and men and are looking for more volunteers to join our committee. Please do get in touch.



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## Women in Rail London

[South@womeninrail.org](mailto:South@womeninrail.org)



***Leila Rahimzadeh***  
*Chair of Women in Rail London*



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## ***WR London Steering Committee***



***Charo Barcena  
(SYSTRA Ltd)***



***Christine Fernandez  
(CAF Rail)***



***Katherine Stowe  
(Network Rail)***



***Lizzie Ooi  
(RDG)***



***Sandrine Geddis  
(Eurostar)***



***Susan Evans  
(AECOM)***



***Riya Patil  
(Hitachi Rail)***



***Anna Christina Maudet  
(Hitachi Rail)***

### 17 July 2020: Virtual Pub Quiz

The quiz was hosted on Zoom and included questions covering various general topics over 5 rounds and consist of joint question read-outs and private team answer sessions. It was a great evening!



### 9 December 2020: EMA, ERMA, and concessions – what is next and how can we all shape the railway of the future?

In December, we hosted a webinar on the future of rail.

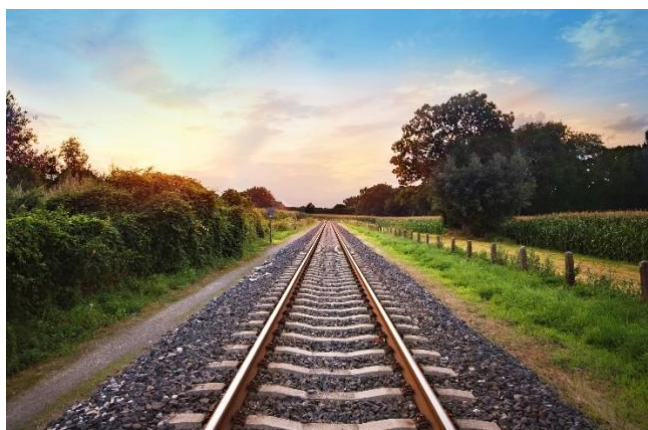
In the context of EMA, ERMA, a pending Williams Review and a concession-based railway, UK railway has gone through dramatic changes during 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly shaken the industry to the core.

Train operators had to run a maximum number of trains with a very limited number of passengers to allow for social distancing and ensure people who travel are kept safe. But what does this drastic reduction in income mean for operators and who takes over the risk? How can we upskill current railway employees and future generations to be able to address the challenge of a fixed cost heavy industry and falling travel demand?

While any future-gazing is difficult, we discussed what the railway of the future could look like and how we can all take part in shaping it.

Two speakers provided an overview of the changes which took place in the last 8 months and discussed what is likely to come. Tammy Samuel and Darren Fodey, Partners at Stephenson Harwood LLP explained the legal implications and Neil Robertson, Chief Executive of the UK National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR) discussed changes to our workforce and skillsets.

A very informative session!



## Women in Rail Malaysia



**Natasha Zulkifli**

*Founder and Director of Women in Rail Malaysia*



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2020 was a quiet year for Women in Rail Malaysia. Having to manage the challenges of COVID-19 from March 2020 onwards meant our events were curtailed. Nevertheless, we adapted and were able to organise several meaningful and enriching sessions with our members.

### **International Day of Women and Girls in Science**

On 11 February 2020, Women in Rail Malaysia working together with YTL Construction and Heriot-Watt University, celebrated International Day of Women and Girls in Science. Members of Women in Rail Malaysia spoke to 400 girls in Johor Bahru, visiting 3 premier secondary schools:

- Sultan Ibrahim Girls School
- Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Infant Jesus Convent
- Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Tun Fatimah.
- 

In all three schools, the girls were eager to learn and better understand what their options were for a career in the STEM space or domestic rail industry.

There is much Women in Rail Malaysia is committed to doing for young girls everywhere, given that the first strategic objective for Women in Rail Malaysia is to increase the quality of talent coming through to strengthen the rail industry.

Having organised career talks in schools since 2018, Women in Rail Malaysia is excited to continue to engage the young, as well as create better awareness about the future growth opportunities for women in the Malaysian rail industry.



## 8 March 2020: International Women's Day

On 8 March 2020, Women in Rail Malaysia came together in solidarity to celebrate International Women's Day by posting our members' photos on our Instagram account: [womeninrailmy](https://www.instagram.com/womeninrailmy)

Themed *Each for Equal*, our members struck the *Each for Equal pose* along with an individual quote from each member.

At Women in Rail Malaysia, we believe that an equal world is an enabled world, and that collectively each one of us can help create a gender-equal world.







## Knowledge Sharing Session – Non-Technical Job Opportunities in The Rail Industry

Every year, Women in Rail Malaysia together with SIPPYTL and the Johor State Education Department organizes a series of safety briefing sessions to school students related to the ongoing construction work for the Gemas-JB Electrified Double Track Rail Project.

This rail project is a 192km rail project stretching along the southern state of Johor and is currently the biggest railway project in Malaysia.

Women in Rail Malaysia has always actively engaged with school students and to date, has spoken to more than **3,500 school students** in the state of Johor alone.

On 26th and 27th February, Michelle Tan, a Project Manager from Gamuda and a member of Women in Rail Malaysia spoke to students from 4 primary and secondary schools.

Michelle encouraged the students to be more adventurous in life and told them to be brave and try new things. She taught the students how to set small targets and accomplish them and also reminded them to be

the best version of themselves, instead of trying to be somebody else. Most importantly, Michelle reminded the students about the importance of reading and encouraged them to cultivate a reading habit.

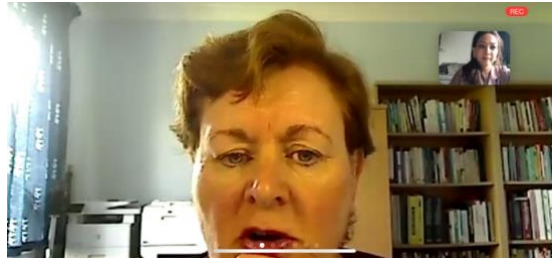
Women in Rail Malaysia strongly believes that these sorts of talks not only expose students to potential career opportunities, but will also ensure that the future Malaysian rail industry is more diverse and competitive.



### A Strength Skills Workshop

Due to mobility restrictions pursuant to the Covid-19 pandemic; Women in Rail Malaysia organized its first virtual workshop. The workshop was conducted by Gill How, a friend of Women in Rail Malaysia and a member of Women in Rail UK. Gill is a highly qualified business coach and leadership development expert and in 2 zoom sessions, helped our members discover their strengths and weaknesses, outlining how we could stretch those strengths and also master operating in tough circumstances.

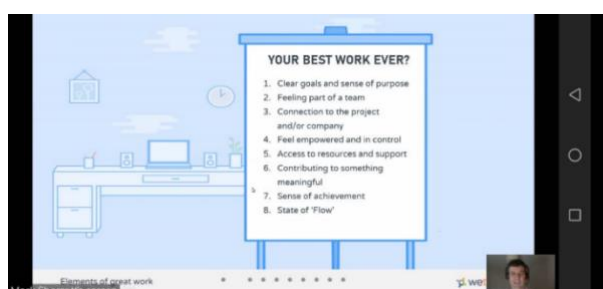
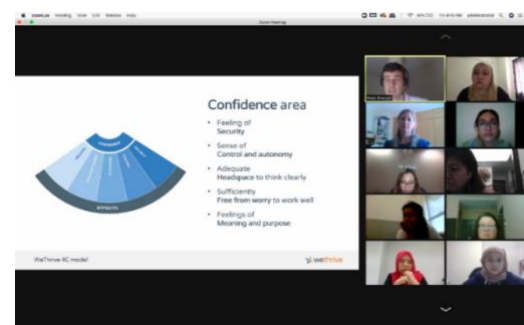




### The Secret to Motivation & Commitment: How to Build a Team that Cares

This second online workshop that was conducted on 23 October 2020 focused on strengthening and improving work culture. Almost 40 members of Women in Rail Malaysia signed up for this session. The speaker, Mark Sharratt, a Scotsman, is a much sought-after keynote speaker, consultant and executive coach. He believes that the ability to build strong enduring relationships is the secret to creating a high-performance team.

Through this online workshop, Mark taught the participants to become more resilient and also unlock their respective potential to harness opportunities for growth. This session helped the participants strengthen their culture, build team engagement and prepared them to meet both opportunities and challenges equally.



## Looking ahead to 2021...

We hope you enjoyed reading about our achievements in 2020. Here are some key dates for 2021. We look forward to seeing you at one of our events!

### **Women in Rail Mentoring Programme**

Kick-Off event: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021

register now to take part in the Women in Rail Mentoring Programme 2021:

[WRMentoringTeam@moving-ahead.org](mailto:WRMentoringTeam@moving-ahead.org)

### **Women in rail Awards**

20<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Nominate now [WRAwards@nimblemedia.co.uk](mailto:WRAwards@nimblemedia.co.uk)

### **Big Rail Diversity Challenge**

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021

Enter a team [info@bigraildiversity.co.uk](mailto:info@bigraildiversity.co.uk)

And of course, please visit the Women in Rail website and check the Regional Groups website pages for upcoming news and events!

Best wishes,

The Women in Rail Team

## Corporate Packages

*Please see details of our Corporate Packages at*

[www.womeninrail.org/contact-us](http://www.womeninrail.org/contact-us)

## RDG HRD Gold Partnership Members





## Gold Corporate Member



## Bronze Corporate Member





**Women in Rail**

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