

Community heroes from Worcestershire to have Great Western Railway train named in their honour

August 26, 2021



Former Syrian TV reporter Mazen Salmou and community group champion Charlotte Marsland will unveil their own train as Great Western Railway celebrates their heroics with a train named in their honour.

Mazen, from Bromsgrove, and Charlotte, from Stourport-on-Severn, were chosen as BBC Make a Difference Superstars for selflessly helping others at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Originally from Syria, Mazen has made his home in Bromsgrove and set off on a one-man mission to “help the community that has welcomed me”.

Charlotte, a trainee driver with West Midlands Trains, set up a Facebook group to help isolated people and was described as having “outstanding and unselfish devotion to the people of Stourport-on-Severn”.

The pair were selected as BBC Make a Difference Superstars by judges following a link-up between the BBC and GWR to celebrate those people going above and beyond to help others in their communities.

Now their names are to feature at either end of an Intercity Express Train as GWR continues to honour BBC Make a Difference Superstars from nine regions across the network.

Great Western Railway Interim Regional Development Manager (East) Tom MacLachlan said: “Mazen and Charlotte went to incredible lengths to support their communities and we’re thrilled to add their names to the side of an Intercity Express Train.

“The GWR has a long and proud history of naming trains after Great Westerners – past and present heroes from across our network – and it’s a real treat to add these two community stalwarts to that list.

“It was a privilege to partner with the BBC Make a Difference campaign and the stories which featured on BBC local radio were truly overwhelming.”

Head of Audio and Digital for BBC England Chris Burns said: “We have been amazed by the response of many listeners to our Make a Difference campaign on Local BBC Radio, as listeners have been helping each other out throughout the pandemic.

“It has been humbling to learn about the kind-hearted efforts of so many in our communities and Mazen and Charlotte are great examples to the rest of us. Congratulations to them and to the team at BBC Hereford & Worcester.”

Photo credit: Great Western Railway