

# Essex's community rail heroes recognised with awards

October 21, 2022



Greater Anglia has recognised a number of volunteers in Essex who have given their time to help bring life to their local stations.

At the annual Station Adoption Awards ceremony, a number of volunteers were thanked for their contributions with well-deserved awards by the operator.

Neil Bromiley and Robert Fletcher, who volunteer at Ingatestone station, received the 'Best Personal Contribution' award for their work to bring the station to the heart of the community.



*Neil Bromiley and Robert Fletcher, Ingatestone station adopters*

They have worked tirelessly installing history boards at the station to help to inform visitors about the area's past, transformed the car park borders with their gardening skills, and kept the waiting room stocked with useful information. Their efforts helped place Ingatestone station to become a finalist in the Station of the Year at the National Rail Awards this year.

Alan Neville, Greater Anglia's customer and community engagement manager, said, "Neil and Robert are excellent ambassadors for community rail and station adoption and we are so grateful to have them on board.

"They give so much of their time, helping to promote the railway and in keeping Ingatestone station looking fantastic and their efforts are hugely appreciated by us and the local community.



“They are extremely deserving recipients of this award and I would like to thank them for everything they do.”

Bob Barnes, a volunteer at South Woodham Ferrers station was Highly Commended in the Judges’ Special Award for his tireless efforts and enthusiasm to drive forward station projects, such as the installation of history boards to inform people about the town’s past and the creation of station murals.



*Murals at South Woodham Ferrers station*

He also spearheaded working with a local charity, Greater Anglia and the Essex and Suffolk Community Rail Partnership to install a free water dispenser on the platform for passengers to use.

Rita and David Gibson were named ‘Best Newcomers’. They recently adopted Cressing station and won the award for their efforts to brighten the platforms with attractive planters and flower tubs and for creating a history board which is now on display.

Rayleigh and Colchester were jointly named the 'Best Medium Station' recognising the efforts of its station adopter groups to transform both stations – at Colchester with the installation of flower tubs, and at Rayleigh, for the project by The Friends of Rayleigh Station, the Essex & South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership, Greater Anglia and the Town Council transform a piece of wasteland adjacent to the station to create an accessible garden space for the whole community to enjoy.

Rochford was named the 'Most Improved Station' recognising the efforts of volunteers, Sophie Whiting, Susan Willis Green and Adele Sayer whose energy and enthusiasm has seen the station receive a floral makeover with flower planters installed on the platforms, and a warm welcome created at the station entrance with red, white and blue cascading flowers to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The group also has plans to create a wildlife garden next year.

Hockley was named the best staffed station recognising the work of its dedicated group of adopters who have done a huge amount of work this year to improve and maintain the station garden.

Greater Anglia's Station Adoption initiative sees people getting involved with their local rail station to help bring about improvements for their communities.

Alan Neville, Greater Anglia's customer and community engagement manager, said: "Our station adopters are real heroes who achieve amazing things to benefit their communities and make them better places to live with their enthusiasm to bring rural stations to life and restore their links to the communities they serve.

"The adopters know their stations and the needs of their community well and we are happy to support their aims through small grants and facilitating improvements.

"I am delighted that we can also recognise and thank them through the Adopter Awards – we've seen some fantastic and innovative projects this year and I would like to thank them all for their continued hard work."

*Credit: Greater Anglia*