

LNER Reserves rally to support communities

April 15, 2020



London North Eastern Railway (LNER) has launched 'LNER Reserves' enabling its people to volunteer to help the NHS, emergency services, charities and other organisations during the Coronavirus outbreak.

More than one hundred staff have already signed up to LNER Reserves hoping they will help make a difference for other people in their communities.

LNER Managing Director, David Horne said: "We have formed the LNER Reserves as part of our response to the current pandemic. It is a way for colleagues to get involved in volunteering right across our route.

"At LNER we're doing all we can to keep key workers moving during this challenging time, and we also want to stay connected to the communities we serve and help to support them."

Among those who have signed up is Duty Team Leader Stuart Rawcliffe, who is also a part-time fire fighter. Through that role, he has recently been trained to drive ambulances and has been temporarily freed up from his duties by LNER so he can support the NHS.

Stuart said: "I feel proud to be able to offer additional support to the ambulance service during the Coronavirus pandemic. It's great that the LNER Reserves helps people from around the business do the same."

LNER apprentice, Rene Kotlar has begun volunteering with a charity that fights food hunger and is helping their delivery teams distribute food.

He said: "I am really passionate about being an LNER Reserves volunteer. As a business, we have come together as a collective to try to make a positive difference by doing what we can to support those who need it the most."

After becoming an NHS Volunteer Responder, Customer Experience Host Julianna Laszlo has been providing telephone support for people who are self-isolating.

Julianna said: "I think that helping and being there for each other has never been so important in this difficult and extremely concerning time. I felt the urge to help and do what I can to assist my community and the NHS and show people that they are not alone."

The LNER Reserves is connecting staff with various organisations, including the NHS, emergency services, LNER partner charity Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM), FareShare, The Trussell Trust, Age UK and NCVO.

LNER is also supporting the following charitable organisations:

- Salvation Army in London: Heston, the Rail Gourmet base which supplies LNER at London King's Cross, donated fresh products that are included in the company's First Class offer to the Salvation Army to feed the communities they serve with a freshly prepared hot meal.
- Fareshare Leeds: Covering more than 65 community groups in Leeds and Bradford, provided over 5,000 meals to families and homeless people with donations from LNER.
- Fareshare Newcastle: Covering South Tyneside, Gateshead, North Tyneside, East Durham supporting food to vulnerable families.
- The Health Agency Edinburgh: Covering 17 primary schools, supporting 750 children and 350 families with a lunch box including fresh sandwiches.
- York City Council: Supporting homeless, rough sleepers and the most vulnerable families.
- Food Revival Leeds: LNER has donated fresh products so this group can support 10,000 families and people in isolation in Leeds and Bradford.
- The Foundry Leeds: Feeding NHS hospital staff with a home cooked Sunday lunch including Yorkshire puddings with the donation from LNER of 540 eggs. The Foundry team delivers 500 meals to the city's hospitals.
- Other charities and organisations supported with food donations include Food for All at London King's Cross, the Magic Hat Cafe at Newcastle and Ambulance stations in Scotland at Falkirk, Stirling and Sauchie.

Photo credit: LNER