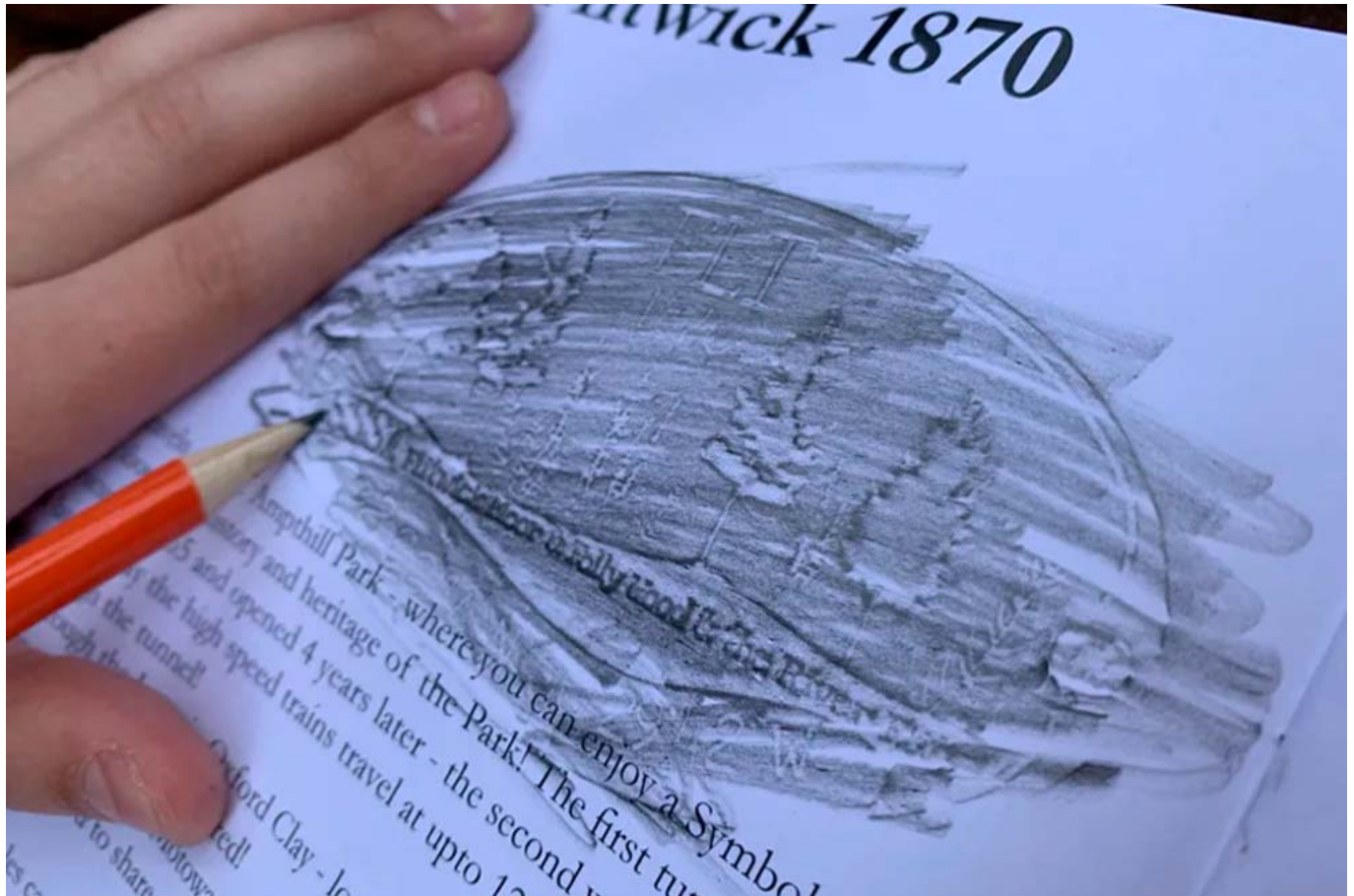


New children's activity trail to come to Beds and Herts

October 22, 2021



Thameslink has partnered with Mini Map-Makers and Beds & Herts Community Rail Partnership to launch a new, interactive trail in time for half term.

The idea behind the project is to promote the train line running from Bedford to St Albans and encourage children to learn about their surroundings.

The new 'Symbol Spot' trail, launching on Tuesday 26th October at the restored St Albans South Signal Box Museum, provides children and families with an activity booklet. The booklet is filled with things to look for and collect – such as letters, numbers, shapes and signs – at all eight stations from Bedford to St Albans.

The trail is suitable for all children over the age of five.

Symbol Spot encourages families to learn more about the local area by travelling by train to each station, where children can collect a total of eight plaque rubbings for their booklets. Each plaque has been uniquely designed to reflect the history and culture of each area. Children that collect all the plaque

rubbings in the Symbol Spot trail will receive a certificate and special coin.

Customer service director for Thameslink, Jenny Saunders, said: “This is a brilliant way to get kids outdoors and exploring this half term. After a year and a half of restrictions and lockdowns, we’re pleased to be welcoming our communities back to the railway, whilst supporting local economies. The trail launches next week and doesn’t have an end date – so we’d love lots of families to come and get involved and make the most of our £2 train tickets for kids!”

Cartographer and director at Mini Map-Makers, Alice Gadney, added: “I have immensely enjoyed developing the second Community Railway Symbol Spot on the Beds to Herts line with the amazing team at the Community Rail Partnership and at St Albans Signal Box. The evolving network of kind, friendly and incredibly helpful people have helped me create an exciting project that helps children learn about their rich doorstep history. I look forward to hearing their stories!”

Line Officer for the Beds & Herts Community Rail Partnership, Andy Buckley, added: “I’m delighted to announce the launch of Symbol Spot on the Bedford to St Albans City line – this creates exciting opportunities for families to have days out together on a train playing ‘eye-spy’, spotting from the train and at stations. Families will learn about rail safety and the history of our line and the countryside through which it passes. I am very pleased that the Beds & Herts CRP has been able to work with so many partners to bring this rail-based activity to our route and we look forward to welcoming families to the Symbol Spot trail.

The Beds and Herts Symbol Spot project will launch on Tuesday 26 October with a day of mapping and craft activities run by Alice from Mini Map-Makers, with prizes on offer. The pre-booked workshops will help children learn about map reading and cartography and can be booked [here](#).

Adults and families can ask for a Symbol Spot pack at Thameslink stations between Bedford and St Albans City when purchasing child train tickets from Wednesday 27th October and beyond.

Photo credit: GTR