

# Over £50,000 raised for Yorkshire hospice in rail industry fundraiser

July 6, 2021



Network Rail teams joined colleagues from across the rail industry to help operate a charter train in aid of Martin House Children's Hospice – a hospice which provides family-led care and support for babies, children and young people with life limiting conditions across West, North and East Yorkshire.

Martin House Children's Hospice was chosen after rail staff witnessed first-hand the support they offer when a member of staff at Network Rail's route operating centre unfortunately lost her disabled son whilst receiving support from the hospice.

300 passengers joined the service each day, raising around £50,000 so far, with all profits going to Martin House. This was the third charter train that Network Rail has helped to organise, with the previous two raising over £40,000 for the charity.

This year, ticket sales had to be limited to 50% for the event to run safely in line with COVID guidance. However, to help boost fundraising, rail industry partners including Northern and DB Cargo have donated 'money can't buy' prizes to be auctioned online until Friday 9 July. Prizes include a family day ticket for up to 5 people using Northern services, a DB Cargo cab ride and a visit to Neville Hill depot in Leeds.

The cross-industry event was organised by Branch Line Society – a UK-based voluntary association for railway enthusiasts – with key support from Network Rail, DB Cargo, Direct Rail Services, Scottish Railway Preservation Society and Freightliner. The train, which is not part of the regular rail service, visited locations in Scotland, the North of England and Yorkshire using the following route.

- Friday 2 July: From Edinburgh to York via the Settle-Carlisle line, stopping at Glasgow, Wakefield Euro port and York.
- Saturday 3 July: York circular trip via the East Midlands, stopping at Doncaster, Rolls Royce, Sinfen and through freight lines around Toton depot.
- Sunday 4 July: York circular trip, stopping at Meadowhall, Penistone, Huddersfield, Manchester East and Crewe Basford Hall. Return to York via the Hope Valley line.
- Monday 5 July: From York to Scotland, stopping at Leeds, Harrogate, Hartlepool Docks, Tyne Yard and the Tyne Valley lines.

Jerry Dickinson, Route Control Manager for Network Rail's North and East route who helped organise the event, said: "We are indebted to the many organisations and individuals who have given up their time to plan and deliver this event, and grateful to the large number of passengers who booked to join us on the charity charter train.

"We're honoured to be supporting Martin House, a unique place that supported a member of our control team with her disabled son who sadly passed away, and a charity that many colleagues have relied upon for support, respite and care during difficult times."

Emily Sharman, regional fundraiser at Martin House, said: "We're delighted that Network Rail and their partners have supported us again with their third charter train trip. We know it's been particularly challenging to organise, given all the restrictions and uncertainty caused by the pandemic, so we're thrilled it's been such a huge success, and we can't wait for the next one.

"Martin House relies on the support of our community to keep on providing care to seriously ill children and their families, so events like this are vital to us."

Tony Baxter, Regional Director at Northern, said: "We are pleased to be able to support Martin House Children's Hospice by donating a visit to our Neville Hill depot in Leeds as well as a family day ticket for up to five people using Northern services to help raise money for this worthwhile cause.

"One of our key goals is to make a positive impact in the north of England and we hope that by continuing our support for our local communities we can achieve this."

Richard Corser, Account Manager Special Trains, DB Cargo, said: "DB Cargo UK is delighted to have been appointed train operator for the Branch Line Society's special charter train in support of Martin House Hospice.

"Working collaboratively with both Network Rail, other freight operators and stakeholders we worked very hard to deliver a challenging itinerary over the whole of northern England and Scotland visiting unusual parts of the railway network. Our staff are proud to have been involved in the opportunity."

For more details of the auction visit

<https://www.32auctions.com/organizations/86026/auctions/105903?r=1&t=all> or to donate  
visit <https://www.justgiving.com/BranchLineSociety>

*Photo credit: Network Rail*