

# Rail employees recognised in New Year's Honours List

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Railway workers have been recognised for their efforts in the Queen's 2022 New Year's Honours list.

Among those includes:

- Douglas Edwin Oakervee, receiving a knighthood for services to transport and infrastructure delivery
- Simon French, from the Rail Accident Investigation Branch, receives an OBE for services to railway safety.
- Marie Addison, from Northern Trains, receives an MBE for services to the community in Northumberland.
- Barry Macdonald Graham, Senior Rail Adviser from Northern Trains, receives an MBE for services to the rail industry.
- Laura Shoaf, from West Midlands Combined Authority, receives a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE).
- Richard Holliday, from TransPennine Express, who has been given the British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to for services to mental health in West Yorkshire..
- Milla Mazilu, Akthar Hussain and Vince James, from Network Rail, have been awarded the BEM.

### **Douglas Edwin Oakervee gets knighthood for services to transport and infrastructure delivery**

Douglas Oakervee CBE FRENG has become well known for his global contribution to engineering.

He played a crucial role for the UK Government, having been asked by the Prime Minister in 2019 to carry out a review of HS2. He assembled the Oakervee report in four months – recommending to the Prime Minister that HS2 should proceed.

He was appointed Chair of HS2 Ltd in 2012, where he led the business case and hybrid bill preparation for Phase 1 of the HS2 project and in 2013 deposited the biggest hybrid bill ever, and in an electronic format, a first for Parliament.

In 2020 he took on the Presidency of the Smeatonian Society of Civil Engineers, the world's oldest engineering society. During lockdown, he arranged stimulating debates on engineering issues of the day. His role as a special representative in China for the Institute of Civil Engineers cements experience and delivers tangible benefits for Britain's businesses in China and worldwide. Since 2017 he has been Chair of the Executive Group for Leeds University's Institute for High Speed Rail and System Integration.

### **Richard Holliday - services to charity**

TransPennine Express's Learning and Development Manager has been recognised in the Queen's 2022 New Year's Honours list. Richard Holliday has been given the British Empire Medal for services to mental health in West Yorkshire.

The railway worker, known as Rich, regularly gives up his time to provide life-saving support for Samaritans, and has been a strong advocate in raising awareness about suicide prevention on the railway.

He is passionate about creating opportunities for young people and helps lead TPE's annual apprenticeship programme, where individuals are also given the opportunity to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. Outside of work, between 2013 and 2018, he volunteered with Kirklees Council as an Appropriate

Adult supporting 10-17-year-olds in police custody.

Rich played an important role in supporting his colleagues through the Covid-19 pandemic, introducing 'Zoom elevenses' calls that anyone could dial into. He champions mental health awareness in the workplace and is open about his own experience in this area when providing support to others.

Reflecting on his achievement, the 47-year-old said: "I'm completely overwhelmed.

"I didn't realise I'd been nominated but am thrilled – what an incredible honour.

"Samaritans do such important work and I am proud to do what I can for them. Giving back to others is so important and I'm so happy that my contribution has been recognised in this way."

Matthew Golton, Managing Director for TransPennine Express said: "I am so proud to see Rich recognised in the Queen's New Year's Honours list.

"His passion and energy are infectious, and he uses this in the best possible way, by supporting and inspiring others."

### **Laura Shoaf - services to economic regeneration**

Chief Executive of the West Midlands Combined Authority, Laura Shoaf, has been recognised in the Queen's New Year's Honours List published today for services to economic regeneration in the West Midlands.

Laura receives a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) recognising her contribution for over twenty years to transport services and economic regeneration in the West Midlands.

Growing up in New Jersey in the United States of America, Laura first moved to the UK in 2002 and began her career as a Principal Consultant at GVA Grimley, a real estate consultancy.

From there she joined the Black Country Consortium as head of strategic planning, and then as Director of Transport. In 2016 she joined Transport for West Midlands as Managing Director and last year was appointed Chief Executive for the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Laura is a recognised expert in transport and regeneration policy, chairing the Urban Transport Group and securing unprecedented investment in transport in the West Midlands. She is also on the Board of Trustees for Cure Leukaemia and the Severn Valley Railway charitable trust.



Speaking on receiving the CBE, Laura said, “I was absolutely delighted when I received the letter from the Palace. It is such an honour to be recognised for the work that I and so many others have done in the West Midlands, which has been my home for over 20 years.

“This honour isn’t just about me, it recognises the hard work of the many talented, dedicated, and tenacious people I have worked with over the years. I accept this honour on their behalf as well.

“I have been fortunate to work with amazing people in my career, and it is only because of them that I am being recognised. The passion of my colleagues is what has helped drive the investment in transport systems and regeneration in the West Midlands, connecting people to jobs, to schools, and universities, to their families and connecting communities to each other. I am so proud of the work we have all done, and continue to do, to make the West Midlands a better-connected region.”

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands said, “Laura is so deserving of this very prestigious honour. Through her leadership the West Midlands has seen huge levels of development and investment in transport, which has supported the economic regeneration of the region.

“Only last month we secured over £1 billion of Government investment in our transport networks which will be spent on projects across the region, ensuring as many people as possible can access reliable public transport for a greener future.

“This honour recognises the hard work of Laura and the huge successes we have seen in transport and regeneration, right across the West Midlands.”

### **Milla Mazilu, Akthar Hussain and Vince James**

Milla Mazilu, Principal Programme Controls Manager at Network Rail, has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for her vital work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As well as carrying out her Network Rail duties, Milla has been volunteering with the Royal Academy of Engineering on a project called COVID-19 African Rapid Entrepreneurs (CARE). Through this, Milla has shared her expertise and has been essential in heading up projects for the academy and training other members in using new technologies.

The main aim of the CARE programme is to support African engineering entrepreneurs to make and supply Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which is effectively used in hospitals and clinics in sub-Saharan Africa.

Stuart Calvert, Head of Capital Delivery at Network Rail Wales and Western said: “I am delighted to see Milla receive this recognition, her passion for innovation and improvement extends not only in our work place but within volunteering work across the industry.

“To be able to support Royal Academy of Engineering with CARE shows Milla’s dedication to her profession, her desire to share that passion and the true team spirit that the railway is known for.”





Two other Network Rail employees across the business have been recognised in the New Year's Honours list, published on 31 December.

Akthar Hussain and Vince James have been awarded British Empire Medals (BEM) for various pieces of work – including crucial volunteer and community work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, boosting diversity in the rail industry, and helping ex-prisoners get the skills and qualifications they need for a career on the railway.

Network Rail chief executive, Andrew Haines, said: “I would like to congratulate Akthar, Milla and Vince for their inclusion in the New Year's Honours list.

“It makes me proud to hear about the incredible, selfless work employees are doing to improve the lives of others in their communities and further afield. As a company we benefit from their outstanding

commitment, and it is great to see their dedication acknowledged at the highest level.”