

School pupils working with fellow rail volunteers deliver a world first

March 24, 2022



Secondary school pupils, working with fellow railway volunteers, have created what's thought to be the first "geocaching" adventure based on a railway line.

The pupils, from Woodrush Academy, Worcestershire, volunteer at their nearby railway station at Wythall. They built a smartphone-based adventure for the Shakespeare railway line as part of their IT studies.

The Friends of the Shakespeare Line (FOSL) look after and support over 90 volunteers as part of the Community Station Partnership, that covers all 21 stations between Birmingham and Stratford upon Avon. FOSL asked Woodrush Academy if the students could build a smartphone-based geocaching adventure for the Shakespeare Line railway route to enable visitors, particularly families, to enjoy the hidden gems along the line.

The students at Woodrush, who also carry out planting, artwork, and biodiversity activities at the railway station, jumped at the chance, and the result is the "Shakespeare Line" adventure. Officially launching on the smartphone-based app "Adventure Lab", which [Geocaching.com](https://www.geocaching.com) provides [here](#).

“Adventure Lab is a new app from Geocaching HQ that allows you to create, play and share unique outdoor scavenger hunts, experiences, and games,” said Bryan Roth, Geocaching HQ co-founder and president. “There are currently more than 30,000 Adventures worldwide, and we’re excited that the community will be able to learn more about the Shakespeare Line thanks to the efforts of Woodrush Academy students and The Friends of the Shakespeare Line.”

The adventure encourages people to use the train to visit the locations along the line to find information or answers to complete the experience.

Andrew Reece from Woodrush High School said, “The students have enjoyed creating this app to encourage the public to explore the railway line and see what’s on offer in the local communities at each station. Students researched the local areas and developed their ICT skills as they worked on creating the features and functions of the app supported by their ICT teacher Mr Cuffe. This is another example of Woodrush students engaging with the local community whilst enhancing pupils’ skills and ability to work in a team.”

Fraser Pithie, who leads the Friends of the Shakespeare Line group of volunteers, added, “We are pleased to be the first railway line in the world, and consequently the UK, to have a smartphone-based geocaching adventure based on a railway route. The students and staff at Woodrush Academy have done the line and local economy proud with the work they have done to develop the adventure.

“The Shakespeare Line has lots of little gems along its route for people and families to explore on a day out. What we have developed here is a leading element to help increase usage of the train through a leisure-based activity that also supports the local economy”

West Midlands Railway (WMR), who operate the train service along the route, has also wholeheartedly welcomed Geocachings’ Adventure Lab app and the students’ work at Woodrush Academy.

Fay Easton, WMR’s head of stakeholder and community, says, “Over the past two years, the Friends of The Shakespeare Line have worked tirelessly at our stations for the benefit of local communities and passengers. Their works in landscaping, arts and local tourism have been stunning, and the launch of this rail-based adventure as a ‘world first’ is a remarkable project delivered by the volunteers and one that will help attract passengers to the railways. I for one, cannot wait to sign up to the Adventure Lab.”