

# Teenager wins Dartmoor Line logo competition

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Teenager Tom Watts has won a competition to design a logo marking the launch of the Dartmoor line next week.

The 16-year-old took top place in the art contest, which had been organised by Great Western Railway. To design the roundel, he imagined taking part in the region's Ten Tors Challenge.

Tom's winning work will feature on station signs, posters, timetables and a special train livery.

The year-round passenger services between Okehampton and Exeter will commence on Saturday 20 November, marking the first reopening under the government's Restoring Your Railway programme, which looks at ways to return old lines and stations into service across the country.

It has been 50 years since regular passenger services last ran along the route, and its reopening is expected to boost local businesses, the tourism sector, and provide greater access to education and work for thousands of people who live locally.

GWR launched its 'Design the Dartmoor Line logo' competition in April and it was also promoted by the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership and Network Rail.

GWR head of strategic service development, Matt Barnes, said: “We wanted a logo that symbolises Dartmoor and Tom’s design does that perfectly. The Dartmoor tors are iconic and visible for miles around – if you’ve enjoyed the breath-taking beauty of Dartmoor you will have encountered one of these granite masses.

“We’re excited to be returning year-round passenger services along this route for the first time in 49 years and Tom’s roundel design will become a permanent fixture on the Dartmoor Line.”

Network Rail senior sponsor, Kevin Miller, said: “We are delighted to see the Dartmoor Line roundel design unveiled. It is particularly fitting that the winning logo has been designed by local Okehampton teenager, Tom Watts, and signifies how important the reopening of this line is to the local community.

“We are now in the final stages of our work to upgrade the railway ready for the return of regular passenger services and look forward to celebrating the arrival of the first regular service in nearly 50 years next Saturday, alongside our partners and the local community.”

Tom was hoping to take part in the Ten Tors Challenge, the inspiration for his winning design, during his time at Okehampton Community College, but the event hasn’t taken place since 2019 because of Covid-19.

The challenge is traditionally attempted by 2,400 teenagers operating in 400 teams of six, navigating routes of 35, 45 or 55 miles over the northern half of Dartmoor.

Tom now hopes to compete in next year’s event alongside students at Exeter Maths School, where he started in September.

Tom said: “I was surprised yet delighted to have won this competition. I think it is incredible that my logo design will be associated with the Dartmoor Line for many years to come!

“The silhouette of the walker in my logo represents me next year, doing Ten Tors with Exeter Maths School. It also represents the freedom given by the moors, welcome both during and after the restrictions of the pandemic.”

Tom lives in Okehampton and will use the Dartmoor Line to travel between home and school.

*Image supplied by Great Western Railway.*