

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service given to North Norfolk Railway and The Watercress Line

June 2, 2022



Volunteers at the [North Norfolk Railway](#) and The Watercress Line have both been given The Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service

This is the highest award a local voluntary group can receive in the UK.

[North Norfolk Railway](#) operates along 5½ miles of restored track from Sheringham to Weybourne and Holt with almost all the tasks necessary to run the trains being carried out by a team of around 300 dedicated volunteers. The line is one of the county's most popular tourist attractions, welcoming around 165,000 passengers per annum with steam trains running daily from April to October.

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- **[North Norfolk Railway looking forward to 2022 season after strong performance in 2021](#)**
- **[Commercial Manager Changes Trains and Arrives at North Norfolk Railway](#)**

The **North Norfolk Railway** is one of 244 local charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups to receive the prestigious award this year. Their work, along with others from across the UK, reminds us of all the ways in which fantastic volunteers are contributing to their local communities and working to make life better for those around them.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service aims to recognise outstanding work by local volunteer groups to benefit their communities. It was created in 2002 to celebrate The Queen's Golden Jubilee. Recipients are announced each year on 2 June, the anniversary of The Queen's Coronation. Award winners this year are wonderfully diverse. They include volunteer groups from across the UK, including: a rural support group for farmers in Shropshire; a community magazine addressing isolation in the Western Isles; a running club engaging all ages in County Tyrone; a film academy and community hub based in South Wales, and a food bank in Greater London feeding vulnerable individuals and providing training opportunities.

Representatives of the railway will receive the award crystal and certificate from The Lady Dannatt, MBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk later this summer. In addition, two volunteers from the line will attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace in May 2023 along with other recipients of this year's Award.

Hugh Harkett, Managing Director, said 'We are very proud to receive this Award, our volunteers really are the life blood of the Railway and we are continually thankful for their dedication and support. The **North Norfolk Railway** is a not for profit enterprise so the support of volunteers is really crucial to our survival and we are delighted that the fantastic contribution they make has been recognised in this way.

He added, "The railway is always looking for new volunteers and we have a Volunteer Showcase this Saturday for potential new recruits where they can see how the Railway runs and have the opportunity to talk to experienced volunteers about how they can get involved."

Those interested in attending on Saturday June 4 are asked to get in touch with the Railway by email via enquiries@nnrailway.co.uk or by phone by 01632 820800, option 4 then 1. The Railway is particularly looking for volunteers to help with welcoming visitors and inspecting tickets, assisting in the gift shops and buffets and also helping run the ever popular dining trains.

Full details of the event and the **North Norfolk Railway's** daily services can be found at www.nnrailway.co.uk.

"Honoured and thrilled" at Award

Hampshire's heritage railway, **The Watercress Line**, runs over 10 miles from Alresford to Alton

It was given the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in recognition of the contribution made by the railway's many dedicated volunteers over nearly 50 years.

President of the Railway Richard Lacey said: "Everybody at **The Watercress Line** is truly honoured and thrilled that our efforts have been recognised by this award.

"Since 1974, our wonderful volunteers, working with our small core of paid staff, have driven the

restoration of the railway and reconnected Alresford to Alton by rail.

“Their skills, dedication and sheer hard work in restoring, operating and maintaining the railway and in delivering ground-breaking special events, such as our Steam Illuminations, has brought huge benefit to the local community.

“Without the enthusiasm and commitment of our extraordinary volunteers, none of this would have been possible.

“Being part of **The Watercress Line’s** volunteer team is a wonderful opportunity for people to come together to share experience and learn new skills and it brings value to the local community, as well as to the individual.

“I would like to send a huge thank you to all our volunteers, past and present, for all their contributions to our thriving enterprise. I hope that this award may tempt many more people to volunteer with us and benefit from what we have to offer.”

Representatives of **The Watercress Line** will receive the award crystal and certificate from The Lord-Lieutenant for Hampshire, Nigel Atkinson Esq, later this summer. In addition, two volunteers will attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace in May 2023, along with other recipients of this year’s Award.