

Three years after COVID lockdowns, the rail industry remembers

February 2, 2023



On 23 March, three years after the first lockdown, the rail industry is coming together to hold a Memorial Day to celebrate the vital role played by its people during the pandemic, while also remembering those from the industry who lost their lives to the virus.

The National Railway Museum in York will host a memorial service for hundreds of employees who helped to keep key workers and essential goods moving throughout the pandemic. The service will also be streamed live to enable the entire railway family to tune in and join in to mark and commemorate the contribution the railway made to keep Britain functioning and to recognise the personal sacrifice and loss experienced by the railway family.

Organised by the Railway Mission, the idea of a service of commemoration was formulated following a conversation between Liam Johnston, executive director of the Railway Mission, and Rachael Etebar, director of people and culture at British Transport Police, a minute's silence will also be held at midday and observed in railway offices, depots, and stations across the country.

Liam Johnston, executive director of the Railway Mission, said: "The service will be a time to reflect on our

individual experiences of pandemic, and it's an opportunity to express our appreciation to those who kept the railway moving and who kept us safe."

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill, Network Rail chairman, added: "The railway and its people played a vital role during the pandemic keeping our essential rail arteries open and ensuring key supplies and key workers got to where they needed to be. Sadly, the pandemic took its toll on our railway family and our memorial will be a welcome pause in our busy daily lives to stop, reflect and remember."

Reflecting on the work of British Transport police during the pandemic, Rachael Etebar, Director of People and Culture at British Transport Police, said: "we are immensely proud of BTP officers and staff, who worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic with railway partners to keep the railway running safely, ensuring key workers could get to their workplace to care for those impacted by Covid. Sadly, the pandemic made an unforgettable impact on everyone, I hope this event offers a moment of reflection for all. It is important that those who kept the country running, ensured individuals were safe and protected are thanked for their duty and service in the face of severity while remembering the loss of our colleagues and friends."

The country is incredibly grateful to all those who worked through the pandemic, the NHS and emergency services, but as a nation we should remember and acknowledge the incredible work done by the Railway Family. For more information about how to be involved visit www.railwaymission.org

23  **Rail Industry**
03  **Memorial**
23  **Day**