



Newsletter

Sir Peter Hendy CBE RBF Patron



Welcome to the second newsletter of 2021.

I am delighted and honoured to become a Patron of RBF and will support fundraising efforts and help to raise awareness of the charity's crucial work in the rail industry.

The last 16 months have been particularly difficult for the Railway Family, and staff have worked tremendously hard to keep Britain moving during this time. The RBF have stepped in to help many railway workers through tough situations, which is why I am delighted to show my support and would encourage others to get involved too.

Network Rail will once again be supporting RBF in 2022 with their next 'Railway Family Week'. The charity is funded solely by donations so relies on events like this to continue their invaluable work.

The first ever Railway Family Week, held in April 2021, raised over £50,000 for the charity. Next year's event will be held in the last week of April and is hoped to raise an even bigger total to provide help through a particularly challenging time.

Railway Family Week is something the whole industry can pull together to make a success and I am inviting organisations and industry leaders to pledge their support. If you want to find out more and make a pledge, please email Patron@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk - thank you.

Enjoy reading this issue and see you soon!

Sir Peter Hendy CBE

Your Opinion Matters

Here for the Railway Industry through changing times

Rail is changing and the RBF will be here, every step of the way, as we have been for more than 160 years.

We can guide you through life's unexpected events or changes in circumstances, offering advice and financial support to those who need it.

It is important that we adapt to changes and understand what employees past and present are going through to ensure we remain relevant and current. With this in mind, we created a survey and received over 1,000 responses from across the industry - from rail companies to supply chain organisations, from current workers to those who have retired.

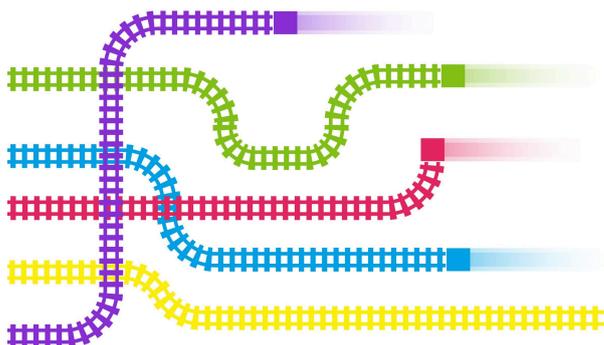
Findings showed that many are worried about loss of earnings leading to more financial difficulties and this in turn resulting in stress and anxiety.

By gathering your opinions, we can now evaluate and shape the services we offer to ensure we are providing what is needed, particularly around financial resilience and mental health.

"We are working on some exciting projects to improve the services we offer and look forward to sharing them with you very soon - watch this space!"



Ryan Morgan and Kate Price,
RBF Welfare Officers



RAILWAY FAMILY WEEK

25th- 30th April 2022

Pledge your support by emailing
patron@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk

Heart of Gold Awards

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All about the Trains

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Ambassador Month

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Out and about - it's been a long time coming!

What a great feeling to be back out seeing familiar faces and gaining some new supporters along the way.



A great night was had by all at the Rail Freight Group Awards where we celebrated some very worthy winners and raised over £2,600 for RBF in the raffle.



We joined Ambassadors Ronnie Hardman and Gaynor Laurie from Merseyrail and Kim Wheeler from Network Rail for bake sales which raised over £300 for RBF.

We were so grateful to Railtex and Infrarail for giving us the opportunity to exhibit at the NEC for 3 days in September. We were also presented with a generous donation of £1,000.



Thanks to Women in Rail and Nimble Media for letting us host 'Bring on the Beans' challenge at the Big Rail Diversity Challenge - great fun and a little bit messy - well done to the challenge winners Network Certification Body (NCB).



See you at the RFG and Rail Forum Midlands Christmas lunches!

We would love to get involved in your event, so please get in touch - events@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk

Have you spotted the Railway Benefit Fund Pendolino?

During Railway Family Week, we were honoured that Avanti West Coast named one of its Pendolino trains 'Railway Benefit Fund'.



Our President Pete Waterman joined a small number of invited guests including attendees from Avanti West Coast, Network Rail, Alstom and other train operating companies for an unveiling ceremony at Liverpool Lime Street station in April.

The RBF Pendolino, number 390155, is on course to travel over 200,000 miles in the first 12 months. Traveling up and down the West Coast line, the train helps to raise the profile of RBF and highlight the support given to railway families, past and present, who have fallen on hard times.

Have you spotted our Pendolino out and about? If you do, make sure to share a snap with us on social media using #RBFPendolino. There's also a stunning photograph of the Pendolino in our 2022 Calendar!

Heart of Gold Awards

The 4th year of our Heart of Gold Awards and we have elevated the awards with four new categories, which have kindly been sponsored by Abellio Rail Replacement, Amaro, Furrer+Frey and Railpen.



2021 has been another difficult year. However, it has also brought out the best in people and we were inundated with nominations for our colleagues in the Rail Industry who have gone the extra mile and shown some amazing acts of kindness to celebrate and honour.

It was a tough task to select 3 from each category for the shortlists as there were so many worthy nominations. With over 7,000 votes, there was so much support for all our shortlisters and it was so close but our winners are below. You can read the full stories and see all our shortlisters at www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/events/heart-of-gold-awards-2021

Congratulations to everybody who took part - you should be extremely proud of yourselves - we are!



Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

Sponsored by **ARR**
Part of the abellio Group

Siggie Cragwell
Govia Thameslink Railway

At 82, Siggie is Thameslink's oldest staff member and has been working in rail for 59 years. Siggie's 'fan club' is legendary and he can often be found surrounded by passengers who just want to say hello.

RBF RAILWAY BENEFIT FUND Heart of Gold Awards 2021



Rising Star Award Winner

Sponsored by **RAILPEN**

Paul Scott
Southeastern

Following the loss of a number of rail industry colleagues to suicide, Paul was determined to turn the tide, relentlessly pushing for greater awareness of mental health challenges, whilst raising money for charity.

RBF RAILWAY BENEFIT FUND Heart of Gold Awards 2021



Going the Extra Mile Award Winner

Sponsored by **Furrer+Frey**
Overhead contact lines

Jennifer Birdsall
Avanti West Coast

Jennifer has a small army of fans at Warrington Bank Quay Station. She always looks after the train spotters and elderly travellers, and over the years has assisted multiple suicidal individuals.

RBF RAILWAY BENEFIT FUND Heart of Gold Awards 2021



Team Award Winner

Sponsored by **Amaro**

Hatch End Station Team

Arriva Rail London

The team at Hatch End Station, have been working together to make their station a wonderful place to be, running book exchanges, raising money for charity and creating award winning flower displays.



RBF RAILWAY BENEFIT FUND

Heart of Gold Awards 2021

Congratulations to our Virtual Marathon Runners!



On Sunday 3rd October our runners Colin Melia and Lindsey Roberts from Merseyrail and Michael Polley from Arriva Train Care took on the Virtual London Marathon 2021.

All of our runners had a fantastic day and for Michael and Lindsey it was their first ever marathon experience! Our runners have been fundraising for months for this event- as a result they have raised an amazing £1,592 between them!



It's all about the trains...



We were honoured to attend the train naming for Hixon at Stafford Station and be presented with a replica plaque. This was in memory of those who lost their lives in the terrible accident at the level crossing in Hixon 1968. The event was made possible by Cross Country Trains, Network Rail, Avanti West Coast, Great Western Railway, North Staffs Community Rail, ASLEF, Railway Mission and the community of Hixon.



We were very proud of our President, Pete Waterman, who put on an exciting model railway event at Chester Cathedral over the summer. The 74ft bespoke model railway of the West Coast Main Line was visited by hundreds of people of all ages and will return next year bigger and better!



Pete Waterman was aboard the Avanti West Coast 'Royal Scot' train as it attempted a London to Glasgow trip in record time. Network Rail and The Railway Magazine were part of the event which raised £1,000 for RBF and only just missed the record by 21 seconds!



Avanti West Coast and ALSTOM offered enthusiasts the chance to own some eagerly sought-after railway artefacts. An auction of Super Voyager nameplates and Crewe Station signs, as well as the chance to tour the Central Rivers depot, raised £3,600.



In May the East Midlands 125 Farewell tour, with EMR and the Branch Line Society, raised £3,300 from ticket sales and a raffle. The journey from St Pancras International to Leicester was a great send off.



Mortons Media, Angel Trains, Gemini Rail Services at Wolverton Works, and South Western Railway raised £250 auctioning a Class 442 EMU driver's seat. Antony, who won the driver's seat, also had a tour of Wolverton works when collecting it.

Our pledges to make a difference

RBF recently joined the NSPA, an alliance who care about suicide prevention and are willing to take action to reduce suicide and support those affected by suicide.

We signed the Railway Mental Health Charter which provides targeted actions and resources for improving mental health in your organisation.

We joined the Women in Rail and Railway Industry Association, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Charter, a commitment to work together to build a more balanced higher performing sector.



In the swing on our Annual Golf Day

The sun was shining and a great day was had by all at our 17th Annual RBF Golf Day!

This year's RBF Annual Golf Day was held on 23rd September at Hendon Golf Club, London. After being postponed three times due to the pandemic, it was fantastic to see some familiar and new faces out enjoying themselves on the green again.

Congratulations to this year's winners Knorr-Bremse who scored an incredible 113 points. Well done also to second place Deploy UK and third place GB Railfreight.

A huge thank you to CSIS for sponsoring the day and to Deploy UK, VTG and Angel Trains for sponsoring the competitions. Also, thank you to Caledonian Sleeper and Hornby, amongst others, for generously donating raffle prizes.

We'd like to give a special mention to John Fitzgerald who was instrumental in organising the day and has been doing so all of the 17 years!

Would you like to join us for a great day of fundraising and competitions at our 2022 Golf Day?

Email fundraising@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk to register your interest.



Words of thanks we'd like to share ...



“ I can't describe how grateful we are for all the help and support from RBF. The RBF has helped us to pay for a private assessment to help guide and understand our daughter's needs. This will help our family greatly in finding the support for our daughter and our family's wellbeing.”



“ The RBF helped me at one the lowest points in my life. I was able to move house, focus on recovering and get on with my life. I don't know what I would have done without them.”



“ The RBF helped me in my time of crisis. I had just moved 90 miles away to start a new job, I had a relationship breakdown due to domestic violence and that person left me in a lot of debt, I was in arrears with my rent and my life was spiralling downhill. I reached out to RBF reluctantly, I was so relieved to receive support at such a crucial time. I honestly don't know what I'd have done without them.”



“ The RBF helped me when I was in financial hardship and going through a really tough time. With their assistance I managed to pay some priority bills and get some much-needed food shopping. I cannot thank the team enough for their support. ”

Ambassador Month



This September saw RBF hold our first ever Ambassador Month! An opportunity to celebrate the work of our volunteer Ambassadors and raise awareness of the real difference they make within the rail industry. An RBF Ambassador is somebody who is passionate about helping their fellow rail worker and wants to get involved and do their bit for the industry they love. The RBF Ambassadors help to fulfil our aims by being representatives for RBF at stations, depots and offices across the rail industry. They play a crucial part in spreading awareness of the charity and how RBF can help support people working in rail.

We've got great Ambassadors but we need more - contact Faye (fmaloney@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk) to sign up!

"I have signed up as an Ambassador as I want to help and support my railway colleagues, especially in our current difficult social climate. A little kindness goes a long way and we never know when we may ourselves have to reach out for help. It is a privilege to have this opportunity to act as an Ambassador."
Donna, ScotRail, Stirling



"Having been on the railway for almost 40 years between us and working with some incredibly kind and caring people we feel that the RBF is the ideal charity for rail staff to support."
Kevin and Maria, Southeastern



"The RBF do some fantastic work to support people working in rail. The last year has been tough for everyone but one of the things I learnt was to do more good, and this gives me a great sense of pride."
Robert, ORR



"It was a no brainer for the two of us (father and son) to become Ambassadors. We both can't wait to get stuck into the role and continue to support our railway family."
Tim and Craig, Merseyrail



Children's Fund - A Winter's Tale

The winter months can be really expensive for families on a budget. The temperature drops, the fuel bills get higher and children need coats, boots and wellies which they have grown out of since last year - and that's without the expense of Christmas, the most exciting and magical time of year for our little ones.

If you work in the rail industry, your gross household income is less than £40,000 per annum and you are in receipt of Child Benefit, then you can apply for our Children's Fund. A quick and easy application for up to £300 to help with some of the essential costs for your children this winter.

To apply email support@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk