

Press release | **For immediate release: 6 October 2017**

From the Association of Community Rail Partnerships | news@acorp.uk.com

Walthamstow community art project scoops national award for its transformative effect on local station

Local artist Farah Ishaq and Arriva Rail London have taken a national award for their transformative Walthamstow art project at the annual Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP) Community Rail Awards dinner, held in Derby on 5th October.

They beat off strong nationwide competition to win the Community Art Schemes Award, on a showcase night for the community rail movement, with their project aiming to bring St James Station back into the heart of the community.

‘Mural for St James Street’ was designed for the two empty alcoves under the station’s railway bridge. It depicts the contrast between the open countryside of Walthamstow Marshes and the city, and aims to capture moments of stillness in everyday chaos. It provides a positive focal point in the station, and forms an important part of wider regeneration in Walthamstow, including new cycle lanes and pedestrianised areas.

The project, led by local artist Farah Ishaq, was commended for capturing the hearts and minds of commuters, business people and local residents, to the point that much of the project costs were covered by crowdfunding. Various community groups including the E17 Art Trail, university, friends, neighbours, shopkeepers, local businesses, and estate agents lent their support.

The Community Rail Awards, now in its 13th year, recognises the important and often unsung work carried out by community rail partnerships, station friends and other community rail groups across the country. The awards shine a light and reward the breadth of important work happening across this major grassroots movement, helping to share good practice, spread the word about community rail’s contribution to mobility, sustainability, prosperity and wellbeing, and encourage more people to get involved.

The Awards were hosted by ACoRP chief executive Jools Townsend and managing director of East Midlands Trains Jake Kelly, and attended by more than 400 community rail officers, chairs, volunteers and partners, plus senior government and rail industry figures.

Jools Townsend, chief executive of the Association of Community Rail Partnerships, said:

“We are delighted to present this award to Farah Ishaq and Arriva Rail London for their inspirational community art project at St James Station. Mural for St James has had a transformative effect, and most importantly it provides a positive focal point that local people can be proud of, and helps to reconnect the station with the community. Community rail projects like this around the country are making stations into brighter, more welcoming gateways for their communities, and helping people to get the most from their railways. However, this project stood out as capturing the hearts and minds of commuters, business people and local residents, so it is a worthy winner of this award. Congratulations to everyone in the Walthamstow area who helped to make this wonderful project happen.”

The full list of award winners can be found at

<https://acorp.uk.com/eventsawards/cra17/cra17winners/>

ENDS

Notes for editors

Community rail is all about ensuring communities get the most from their railways, and promoting rail as a key part of sustainable, healthy travel. There are more than 50 community rail partnerships around Britain, working at a grassroots level along railway routes to connect the community with the train operator and other local partners. They deliver a range of activities to engage and benefit local people and support the development of the railway. More than 1,300 smaller community rail groups, such as station friends, work locally, often involving volunteers in ensuring the station is a welcoming and productive hub for the community. [Read about the value of community rail.](#)

The Association of Community Rail Partnerships is the membership body for community rail partnerships, representing over 80 community rail lines, and more than 1,300 local groups. ACoRP works to empower, support and champion the community rail movement, helping community rail partnerships and groups to:

- Enhance the railways' contribution to local sustainable development and community wellbeing, including by maximising access to and use of the railways
- Ensure the community has a voice and plays a part in the development and improvement of our railways, so this meets community needs and aspirations and delivers maximum social benefit
- Communicate the development and importance of our railways to local communities, enhancing understanding and pride, and promoting rail as a key part of sustainable, healthy travel.

See www.acorp.uk.com, [follow and tweet us @ACORPOffice](#), or [find us on facebook](#).

For further details, images and comments, including to be put in touch with the winners, contact Nik Schofield (Communications & Marketing Manager) on news@acorp.uk.com or 01484 548926 or 07376 124964.