



# 2024 HEART OF GOLD WINNERS

## Rising Star Winner Sponsored by Furrer+Frey



### **Sophie Styles-Hudson** Apprentice & Graduate Programmes Planner - Network Rail

Sophie, an Apprentice & Graduate Programmes Planner at Network Rail, has quickly made a significant impact. Despite being relatively new to the company, she has demonstrated exceptional kindness, empathy, and dedication to supporting early careers.

Sophie's commitment to her work extends beyond her primary role. She actively seeks out new responsibilities and offers support to the wider HR team, showcasing her versatility and dedication.

Admired by her peers and colleagues, Sophie is a rising star within Network Rail. Her passion, drive, and commitment to both people and her work make her an invaluable asset to the organisation.

We congratulate Sophie on her recent promotion and wish her continued success in her new role.

## Rail Hero Winner Sponsored by Freightliner



### **Grace-Anne Stephenson** Station Assistant Dispatch – Arriva Rail London

Grace, a dispatcher at Norwood Junction, is a true gem. With her eight years of service and motherly nature, she's affectionately known as "Aunty Grace" by both staff and customers.

On July 6th, a train was delayed due to an incident involving a young woman. Grace, noticing the commotion from her break, quickly intervened. She discovered the woman was distressed and in need of help. Grace approached the woman with compassion and empathy, offering comfort and support. She helped calm the woman down and ensured her safety, even accompanying her to a restaurant to eat and regain her strength. The woman expressed her gratitude and revealed that Grace had saved her life. Two months later, the woman gave birth to a healthy baby, a testament to Grace's care and support.

Grace's story is an inspiration to us all. Her compassion, empathy, and dedication to helping others are truly remarkable. She has not only saved a life but has also shown her colleagues the importance of kindness and understanding in the workplace.

## Wellbeing Champion Winner Sponsored by Healthshield



### **Ian Watson** Driver Manager - TransPennine Express

On July 5th, 2021, Ian's life took an unexpected turn. While Ian was driving, a man decided to end his life in front of Ian's train. This traumatic event deeply affected Ian, leading him to seek support from Andy's Man Club, a peer-to-peer support group for men.

Following the loss of a friend to suicide and through his own journey of recovery, Ian became passionate about helping others struggling with mental health. He became a Mental Health First Aider at TPE, raising awareness, challenging stigma, and providing support to colleagues.

Ian actively participates in Andy's Man Club, facilitating support groups and promoting open conversations about mental health, establishing two new AMC groups in his local community.

Ian's efforts have been instrumental in raising awareness and reducing stigma surrounding mental health within the railway industry. He's been involved in various TPE initiatives, including the Campaign to End Loneliness and launching TPE Chatty Benches. He's also been heavily involved in breaking the stigma elsewhere in the railway at conferences and events.

Ian's story is a testament to the power of resilience and the importance of supporting those in need. His dedication to mental health advocacy is an inspiration to us all.



HEART OF GOLD AWARDS

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## Star Team Winner Sponsored by Healthshield



### Route Crime Security & Suicide Prevention Team Network Rail NW&C Region

A relatively small team of passionate, determined and inspirational people, who genuinely care about other people. With a goal to protect local communities and support the industry, making the railway as safe as possible, human life is at the heart of all they do.

The team work closely with Samaritans, other charities, the British Transport Police, Train Operators, the NHS, Local Authorities and Public Health Teams. They promote training and awareness on how to spot signs; looking out for people in need of help and how to approach vulnerable people. They install signs and posters promoting campaign toolkits for suicide prevention, mental health and trespass warnings. They visit many locations to assess risk and vulnerabilities and identify and promote delivery of infrastructure enhancements.

The team organise safety awareness events throughout the year; promoting education and community awareness and intervention to make young people, passengers and staff safer. This includes mental health and suicide prevention awareness and signposting through charity partnerships such as Samaritans and their volunteers beyond the railway and into communities. The team also promote post incident support for staff and passengers and support each other as well as their rail colleagues.

## Inspirational Volunteer Winner Sponsored by Railway Benefit Fund



### Susan Smith Team Organiser - Network Rail

Susan has been a pillar of strength for those battling cancer. Despite her own personal journey with the disease, she has dedicated herself to supporting others facing similar challenges and has set up a cancer support group at Network Rail.

Susan's compassion and empathy are truly inspiring. She has offered invaluable support to countless colleagues, providing a listening ear, guidance, and encouragement. She has even supported colleagues as they wait in waiting rooms for their oncologist, not something everyone would be capable of or strong enough to do.

She never has an off day, is always available and positive for everyone who needs her, and is a true example of empathy, resilience and kindness.

Susan is a true inspiration, and her impact on the lives of her colleagues is immeasurable.

## Lifetime Achievement Winner Sponsored by Railpen



### Frances Phillips On Board Services Manager - Avanti West Coast

Frances has worked in rail for over 30 years. She is a valuable member of the team, serving as a Company Councillor, RMT Union Rep, and Service Manager. Known for her empathy and compassion, Frances has always been there to support her colleagues, both personally and professionally. She has gone above and beyond to help others, even during her own personal challenges.

Respected by all, Frances is a dedicated team player who leads by example. She is always fair and consistent, demanding the same from others.

Frances' nickname, "the Dragon," reflects her strong leadership and determination. While she may be demanding, she is always fair and supportive.

We are grateful for Frances' contributions to our team. Her dedication, compassion, and leadership make her an invaluable asset.