



**Chilternrailways**

# **Chiltern Railways**

Station Adoption  
Safety Briefing and  
Onboarding Pack

# Document information

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Reviewer: H Burr

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## Welcome



Above: Station adopters at Solihull

### **Thank you for volunteering to join a station adoption group on the Chiltern Railways network and becoming part of the wider community rail movement.**

By giving your time and energy, you help make our stations more welcoming places for customers and communities alike - and you play a real role in shaping the experience of everyone who travels through them.

Whether you are planting flowers, improving waiting areas, supporting community projects or helping create a friendly environment in another way, your contribution matters. We are so grateful to have you on board.

Before you begin volunteering at our stations, it is important that you complete your safety briefing and onboarding. This pack - and the accompanying form - will guide you through everything you need to get started safely and fully supported.

### **Why this briefing matters**

Our priority is simple: we want every volunteer to enjoy the difference they make and get home safely every day.

This safety briefing sets out the key information, expectations and control measures that help keep you, our customers and our colleagues safe when working at stations. Alongside this pack, your local Area Manager will also brief you on any site-specific risks and procedures relevant to your station.

Within this onboarding, you will find information on:

- General control measures to keep you and others safe while volunteering
- Station-specific safety arrangements and risk awareness
- Signing in and out procedures at staffed and unstaffed stations
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) and volunteer identification
- Expectations under the Community Rail Network Station Adopters Code of Conduct

## **Your responsibilities as a station adopter**

To begin volunteering with us, you will need to:

- Begin your onboarding process through your Lead Station Adopter
- Provide your personal details via our data collection form, within this pack
- Read and acknowledge the safety briefing before undertaking any activities on our stations

These steps help ensure everyone is properly supported, accounted for and able to volunteer safely.

## **Need help or have any questions?**

If you have any questions about the information in this pack or about volunteering at your station, please contact your Lead Station Adopter in the first instance. However, if you would like to speak to us, you can contact your local Area Manager or the Stakeholder Executive – we are here to support you every step of the way.

## Key rules to follow

These rules are in place to help you volunteer safely, confidently and responsibly while representing your station adoption group. They are designed to protect you, your fellow volunteers, our customers and railway colleagues, while ensuring that activities carried out at our stations remain enjoyable and risk-aware.

Please take a moment to familiarise yourself with the following guidance before beginning any work, and always speak to your Lead Station Adopter or local Area Manager if you are unsure about any activity or safety requirement



### Do

- ✓ Remain at least 1.25 metres (4 feet) away from the platform edge at all times while carrying out activities.
- ✓ Bring suitable hot or cold drinks to stay hydrated while volunteering.
- ✓ Wear your Chiltern-issued hi-vis vest and identification card, along with appropriate non-slip footwear and suitable seasonal clothing and gloves.
- ✓ Check for hypodermic needles ('sharps') before entering undergrowth or handling rubbish. Any sharps or human waste must be reported and dealt with by Chiltern Railways staff or the Local Authority Environmental Health team using appropriate specialist equipment.
- ✓ Check for nesting birds, great crested newts and bats before starting any activity and report any sightings. These species are legally protected - always seek advice from Chiltern Railways before commencing work if they are present.



### Don't

- ✗ Go onto, or anywhere near, the railway line.
- ✗ Allow those under 18 to participate in any station adoption activities or become a station adopter.
- ✗ Store items on station premises without prior written permission from the local Area Manager.
- ✗ Bring vehicles onto the Station without prior written permission from the local Area Manager
- ✗ Bring animals onto the station during activities.
- ✗ Undertake major works that have not been agreed in advance by Chiltern Railways.
- ✗ Enter areas marked 'staff only' or 'private' unless authorised by the local Area Manager.
- ✗ Light fires on station premises.
- ✗ Work at height on platforms, including using ladders or similar equipment.
- ✗ Use power tools unless they have been risk assessed and formally approved by the local Area Manager.
- ✗ Carry out any digging unless you have confirmed that underground services and cables are absent.
- ✗ Undertake any activity that could put yourself or others at risk.
- ✗ Shine lights at stations, as this may distract drivers.
- ✗ Hang objects on platforms without prior agreement from the local Area Manager.
- ✗ Bring alcohol or drugs onto station premises, or volunteer while under their influence.
- ✗ Install or use water butts unless risk assessed and approved by the local Area Manager.
- ✗ Use hosepipes without prior agreement from the local Area Manager.
- ✗ Work alone or carry out activities in the dark.

## Safeguarding and British Transport Police (BTP)

While volunteering at our stations, you may occasionally come across situations that require additional support. If you notice trespass on the railway, vandalism, suspicious items, anti-social behaviour, or customers acting in a way that causes concern for their safety or the safety of others, please report it as soon as possible. You are not expected to intervene - your role is to observe, keep yourself safe and pass information on.

If Chiltern Railways staff are present, notify them immediately. If the station is unstaffed or you are unable to locate a member of staff, you can contact the British Transport Police (BTP) directly:

 <p><b>Call</b> 0800 40 50 40</p>	 <p><b>Text</b> 61016 (non-emergency concerns)</p>	 <p><b>In an emergency, or if somebody is in danger</b> Always call 999</p>
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When reporting an incident, try to provide clear information such as the station name, platform number, a description of the situation and any relevant details about the people involved - but only if it is safe to do so.

Remember the railway's safety message: **See it. Say it. Sorted.** If something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts and report it. Speaking up early can help prevent incidents from escalating and ensures the right teams can respond quickly.

### Restrictions for those aged under 18

All individuals aged under 18 are not permitted to undertake activities within the station lease area under the station adoption scheme unless they are formally organised and supervised by a school, college, or recognised major association with appropriate safeguarding, supervision and insurance arrangements in place.

Chiltern Railways does not operate a safeguarding or insurance framework for independently arranged youth participation within the station environment. Where there is any uncertainty regarding eligibility or supervision arrangements, the Stakeholder Executive must be contacted before any activity takes place.

## Environmental health, planting and chemicals

Station adoption activities often involve gardening and light environmental improvements. Please take care to protect the environment, minimise disruption to our neighbours and ensure all activities remain safe for volunteers, customers and railway operations.

### Water use and environmental good practice

 <p>Use water responsibly and only where necessary</p>	 <p>Hosepipes must not be used unless specifically agreed in advance by your local Area Manager, as they can create trip hazards and may result in excessive water use.</p>	 <p>Do not burn waste materials on station premises.</p>
 <p>Avoid activities that may create excessive noise or disruption, particularly in residential areas near our stations.</p>	 <p>Report any fly-tipping, hazardous waste or environmental concerns to your local Area Manager as soon as possible — early reporting helps prevent risks from escalating.</p>	

### Planting guidance

When planting at stations, please choose species carefully to ensure they are safe, appropriate for the space and do not interfere with railway infrastructure or operations.

The following trees **must not be planted** due to their environmental impact, disease risk or potential to affect railway safety:

- × Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)
- × Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)
- × Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)
- × Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)
- × Black Poplar (*Populus nigra* var. *betulifolia*)
- × Lombardy Poplar (*Populus nigra* var. *italica*)
- × Small-leaved Lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*)
- × Common Lime (*Tilia* × *europaea*)

Do not plant trees or large shrubs with significant growth potential without first seeking approval from your local Area Manager and the Stakeholder Executive.

## Use of chemicals

Where possible, avoid the use of chemicals and consider natural or manual alternatives first. If you believe a chemical product (including weed killer) is necessary:

- ✓ Contact the Stakeholder Executive or your local Area Manager in advance with details of the product you intend to use.
- ✓ The Chiltern Railways HSSE team will carry out a COSHH assessment and confirm whether it can be used and what precautions must be followed.

If chemical use is approved:



Always read and follow the product's instructions for use, storage and disposal.



Never decant chemicals into unlabelled containers.



Never mix different chemical products.



Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as instructed.



Chemical weed killers must not be used unless formally approved through the process above.



## Planting and activity advice

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Thoughtful planning helps ensure your station adoption activities are sustainable and enjoyable for both volunteers and the wider community. Before starting any planting or improvement work, take time to consider what will work best for your station environment and your group's capacity.

### Choosing the right plants

- ✓ Consider the available space, local climate and seasonal weather conditions when selecting plants.
- ✓ Choose species that are suitable for the station environment - particularly those that are drought-tolerant or low maintenance where watering may be limited.
- ✓ Seek advice from local garden centres or horticultural groups on pollinator-friendly and insect-friendly planting options.
- ✓ Select plants that are robust enough to withstand busy station environments, including occasional contact from passing customers or luggage.
- ✓ Avoid plants that are toxic, have sharp thorns in high-traffic areas, or contain potentially harmful sap.

### Community and edible planting

- ✓ Consider using ornamental vegetables, compact varieties or dwarf shrubs where space is limited.
- ✓ Clearly label edible plants and include simple signage indicating when produce is ready for picking.
- ✓ Position edible planting in safe, accessible locations that do not obstruct passenger flow or create hazards.

### Planning your activities

Your initial meeting with the Stakeholder Executive and local Area Manager will help you understand the practical considerations for your station, including:

- Availability of water sources
- Suitable locations for planters or beds
- The station's overall capacity for adoption activities

When planning projects:

- Think about the ongoing maintenance required and ensure it aligns with the time and resources your group can realistically provide.
- Discuss ideas early with the Stakeholder Executive and your local Area Manager so activities can be planned safely and in line with station requirements.

## Staying safe on site

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The following guidance covers important day-to-day procedures to help keep you, your fellow volunteers and our customers safe while carrying out activities at our stations. Please take a moment to familiarise yourself with these expectations before volunteering.

### Signing in and out

To help us keep track of who is on our stations and ensure everyone's safety, all volunteers must sign in and out each time they attend.

#### Staffed stations

Sign in and out with the booking office on arrival and departure. Staff will provide the appropriate form for you to complete.

#### Unstaffed stations

Inform the Stakeholder Executive or your local Area Manager by text or email when you arrive on site and when you leave.

If your plans change or you need to leave earlier than expected, please ensure you sign out or notify the relevant contact so we know you have safely finished your activities.

### Reporting accidents and incidents

Slips, trips and falls are the most common cause of accidents at railway stations. Always keep your workspace tidy, contained and free from unnecessary hazards or trailing equipment.

If an accident or near miss occurs:

- ✓ Complete a Volunteer Accident Reporting Form as soon as possible after the incident.
- ✓ Send the completed form to the Stakeholder Executive and your local Area Manager.
- ✓ Seek assistance from station staff immediately if anyone is injured or requires support.

Reporting helps us learn from incidents and improve safety for everyone.

### Lone working

For your safety and wellbeing, station adoption activities must never be carried out alone. Volunteering should always take place either alongside fellow volunteers or when Chiltern Railways staff are present on site. Working alone at unstaffed stations is not permitted under any circumstances.

### Express trains

Not all trains stop at the stations where adoption activities take place. Express passenger services and freight trains may pass through at speed at any time.

- ✓ Always remain well clear of the platform edge.
- ✓ Secure tools, equipment and any items on wheels to prevent movement caused by passing trains.
- ✓ Stay alert to announcements and approaching trains while working on platforms.

## Community Rail Network (CRN) and CRPs

At Chiltern Railways we are proud to work with Community Rail Network (CRN) and our two local Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) to support community engagement on our route. Community rail is a national movement that brings together local people, organisations and train operators to improve stations, strengthen local connections and make rail travel more welcoming for everyone.

### Community Rail Network (CRN)

Community Rail Network is the national membership body for community rail organisations across the UK. It supports CRPs and station adoption groups with guidance, training, good practice resources and advocacy. The CRN's Station Adopters Code of Conduct sets expectations for all station adoption activity, and you are required to follow this as part of your volunteer work with Chiltern Railways. Key elements of the Code of Conduct include:

- Complying with all terms and conditions set out by the Train Operating Company (TOC) for station adoption.
- Seeking correct permission from the TOC before undertaking any work at a station.
- Operating within the community rail guidelines in the CRN's Station Adoption Guide.
- Ensuring the group acts in a way that reflects well on the station adoption movement and the rail industry.
- Handling any issues with the TOC internally and professionally, not through the media.
- Remaining open and inclusive to everyone, in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Never volunteering under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or going onto the track or lineside under any circumstances.

For more information about CRN and its national work, please visit the Community Rail Network website at <https://communityrail.org.uk>.

### Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs)

Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) are local organisations that bring together rail operators, local authorities, community groups and other stakeholders to improve railway stations, promote sustainable travel and ensure stations have a stronger connection with their communities. Chiltern Railways works closely with two CRPs - Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership and Heart of England Community Rail Partnership.



#### Oxfordshire CRP

*Banbury, Bicester North, Bicester Village, Kings Sutton, Islip and Oxford Parkway*

<https://www.oxfordshirecommunityrail.org/>



#### Heart of England CRP

*Dorridge, Hatton, Lapworth, Leamington Spa, Solihull, Warwick and Warwick Parkway*

<https://www.heartcommunityrail.org.uk/>

## Key contacts

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*To be completed by the Stakeholder Executive*

### **Area Manager contact details**

Full name

Mobile phone number

Email address

### **Lead Station Adopter contact details**

Full name

Mobile phone number

Email address

### **Stakeholder Executive contact details**

Full name

Mobile phone number

Email address

## Volunteer data collection form

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*To be completed by the prospective Station Adopter*

### Why are we collecting this information?

The primary reason for collecting this data from all our station adoption volunteers is to ensure their safety while on our stations and premises. It is essential for our staff to know who is participating in activities at any given time. Additionally, the information within this form allows us to:

- Maintain an accurate record of all station adoption volunteers.
- Facilitate communication between staff and volunteers.
- Issue identification cards and hi-vis vests as needed.

### How do we keep your data secure?

We take the security of your data very seriously. All information provided will be stored securely in our Tractivity platform and only accessed by authorised personnel. Your data will not be shared with third parties without your explicit consent. Your personal data will only be kept for the duration of your time as a station adopter. If you agree to receiving stakeholder comms, we will keep your data to continue to send these to you after which it will be securely deleted.

To find out more about how Chiltern Railways processes your personal data, please visit <https://chilternrailways.co.uk/privacy>.

### Consent and declaration

Having read the information above, I consent to Chiltern Railways processing my personal data as described. I also declare that I have read and understood the briefings in the Chiltern Railways station adoption safety briefing and onboarding pack. I understand that failure to obey the instructions in these briefings will result in my exclusion from the volunteering scheme. **Those aged under 18 are not eligible to join the station adoption scheme.**

Full name

Current date

Signature

**Personal Details**

First name

Last name

Email address

Phone number

Home address

**ID and Position Details**

Passport-style photo for identity card

**Communications Preferences**

Are you happy for us to send you stakeholder communications, for example, relating to our future fleet and service plans, as well as latest updates on our community rail and station adoption activity across the network, via:

 Email Post

**Emergency Contact Details**

First name

Last name

Phone number

Hi-vis size required

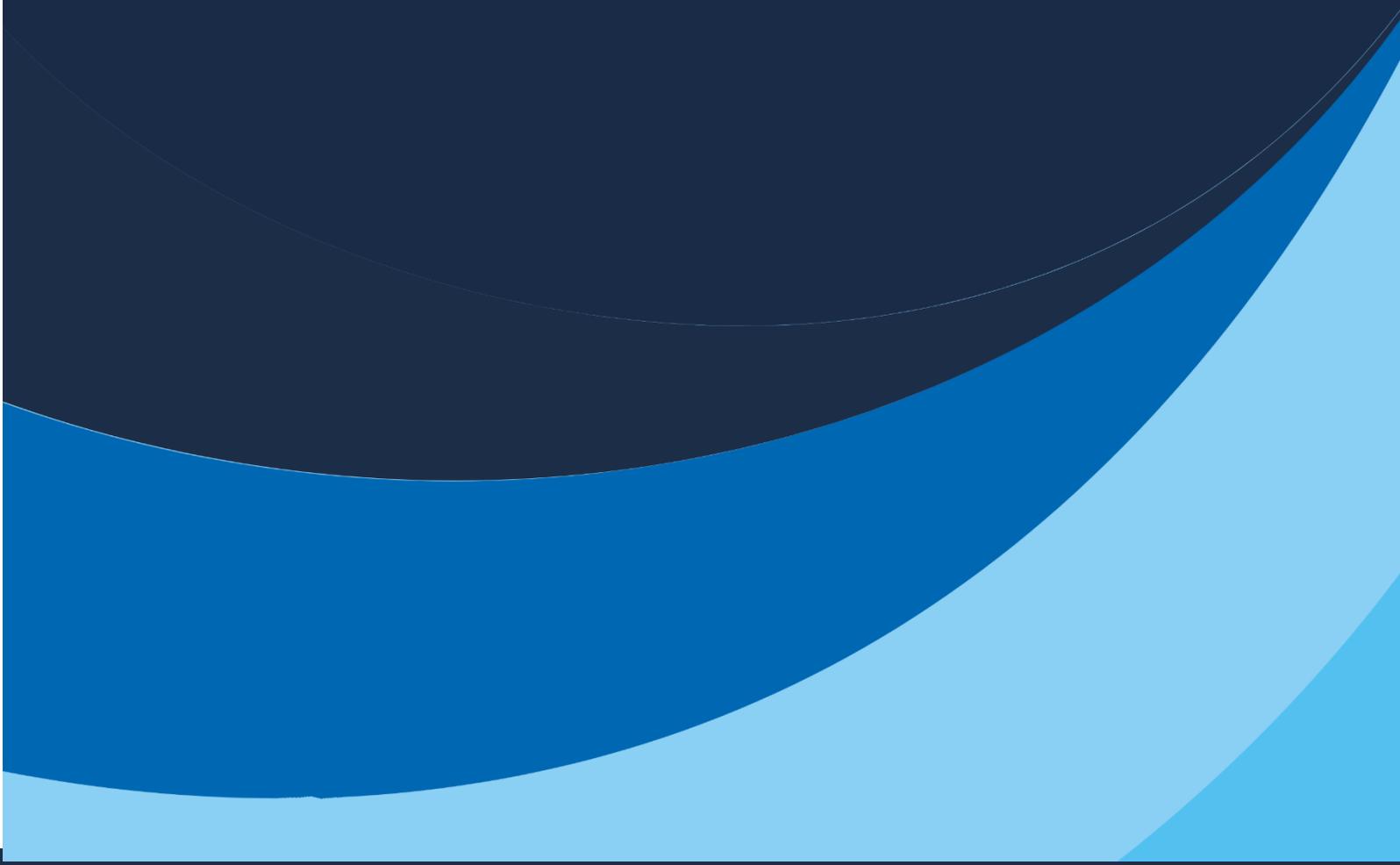
 Small Medium Large

Assigned station

Position in group

(for example, Chair, Treasurer or general volunteer)

**Chilternrailways**

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