OUI CZC COMMUNITY

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE c2c COMMUNITY











CONTENTS

Digital drive How we're closing

Safe and secure

Living our plan, working with our partners

the digital divide

Our c2c journey Early impressions from some recent joiners

Station stories

Updates on our key works to improve access

Peter Hubbard 'Nothing beats a railway job'

Community is all From our Ultra Marathon to

Accent Essex

A proud track record

Over the past 12 months we've...

Won Train Operator of the Year (UK National Transport Awards)

Been awarded Outstanding Stakeholder Contribution (Female Police Association Awards)

Seen two colleagues win win major awards: Kelsey Pasfield, Operations Team Coordinator (Young Rail Professionals) and Shabana Haroon, Customer Delivery Manager (Rail Staff Awards)

Won 3rd place in the **Community Rail Awards** for our c2Sanitary project (developed as part of Thurrock's Next Top Boss programme, with Thurrock Council)

Been shortlisted for awards including the Women in Rail Awards' Employer of the Year (Training & Development) and National Transport Awards (Rail Operator of the Year and Campaign of the Year)

Welcome

from c2c Managing Director, Rob Mullen

Welcome to Your c2c - our new, bi-annual stakeholder magazine. It's your quide to our operational and service updates, people and progress, including our 10-year Net Zero Strategy.

c2c train services officially transferred from Trenitalia UK into public ownership, as c2c Railway Limited under the ownership of the Department for Transport Operator (DFTO), on 20 July.

Prior to the change, I had the pleasure of welcoming the Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP, and the DFTO Chief Executive Officer Robin Gisby, and members of the DfT team to Upminster. What's important is that we're still the same c2c that our customers, colleagues and stakeholders know and value so highly – committed to providing a high quality, industry-leading service for our customers.

On pages 8 and 9 you can read about key improvement works being delivered by our Asset team, Network Rail and delivery partners, including to deliver step-free access at Southend East and Chalkwell as part of the government's Access for All scheme.

Community rail remains part of our DNA. We've had a fantastic past year supporting our charity partners including Southend YMCA, planning our Ultra Marathon for Gold Geese (page 14) and welcoming new talent through our work with The King's Trust. We're delighted to continue our Platinum Partnership with Southend United Football Club too.

Earlier this year, c2c joined with a group of major UK businesses, organisations and educational institutions, known as The Purpose Coalition, to launch a landmark report, 'Breaking Down Barriers'.

It highlights the steps to drive social mobility across our East London and South Essex rail route, helping to break down barriers to opportunity and transform communities.

We'll bring you more on our progress on this and much more in future issues of Your c2c.

Enjoy!

Rob Mullen

The power of digital progress

Our digital ambition is necessary to keep pace in an increasingly digital world – and help close the digital divide. It's already improving our services, from ticketing and reliability to our project management and ways of working.

We're proud to be among the leading UK rail operators on innovative ticketing and smart technology, for more accessible and affordable travel and we were the first fully contactless national rail network.

Insight, skills, service

Closing the digital divide means making new tools and technology easier for our staff and customers. Take our Microsoft Champions volunteers – from director level to customer delivery staff – to drive hands-



on training with AI tools such as Copilot. Or our Wayfinding app to help customers navigate our stations.

We're unlocking new insight and value from our data for more efficient, longerterm planning, including in our project management office (PMO). Our 'Customer Room' project is giving us a detailed, real-time picture of how customers use our services. And an upgrade to our 15-yearold IT network will improve reliability by giving more control at each station – and help us introduce newer technologies more easily.

Head of Digital Elisabeth Udofia said: "Digital progress brings a powerful new range of options for our services, staff and customers. We are committed to developing our retail systems to be inclusive, accessible and supported by alternatives that bridge the digital divide."



fully contactless national rail network



1million

taps

10,000+



'We're ready to adapt'

We're equipped to face short and longer term challenges in a changing railway

landscape, says our Chief of Staff Stephanie Michael.

"We just want to move trains from one place to the next safely and efficiently for passengers – that won't change under the ownership and governance of Department for Transport Operators (DFTO)."

Devolution in key areas of our network will give c2c a louder voice in local decision making. And the Essex Thameside Study will arguably impact on the funding and infrastructure to support the growing population.

Stephanie added: "We're a lean, agile operator with more than 700 colleagues, but we punch above our weight as the eighth largest UK train operator in terms of our passenger numbers – over 37 million a year.

"We will continue to provide great services for our customers – and we will adapt successfully to the new normal."



Sustainable in every sense

Our 10-year sustainability plan – our Net Zero Strategy – is about measurable progress in a new phase of our journey.

We're proud to be one of the UK's most popular and punctual operators – and the current Train Operator of the Year (2025). Our industry is changing, but our commitment to providing an industry-leading, sustainable passenger service will not.

Our services are now under public ownership and managed by the UK Government's Rail Owning group, Department for Transport Operator (DFTO).

Our Net Zero Strategy is about hardwiring sustainable progress into our operations – delivering on our network-wide commitment to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, and protect biodiversity.

Net Zero is also about creating a railway that supports healthier communities and long-term resilience. And it's the focus for our energy, passion and responsibilities in an exciting new phase.



Unlocking opportunities

To help us unlock the benefits of our community-led network we're benchmarking our progress and activities against key 'Purpose Goals,' laid out in *Breaking Down Barriers*, a social report developed with The Purpose Coalition.

c2c Managing Director Rob Mullen said: "Our commitment to communities is at the heart of everything we do, and we strive to make a positive impact on the lives of those we serve."

Our six goals focus on some of the key life stages and target areas seen as critical to breaking down barriers to opportunity in the UK:

Fair career progression

















Read the full 'Breaking Down Barriers' report at: www.purpose-coalition.org/impact-reports/c2c

Our Mission

Sustainable success means making progress in core areas, such as improving safety, reducing financial and environmental risks and boosting our communities.

It means investing in energy-efficient technology and modern rail solutions. It also means improving stations infrastructure, colleague training and deepening our links with the many communities along our network.

Net Zero is about "taking control of the things we can affect."

Rob Mullen Managing Director, c2c



Proving our performance

Our Net Zero Strategy gives us milestones and measurable targets as part of a collective mission. Our performance is regularly reviewed by the Department for Transport (DfT) and we work towards targets and KPIs (set by the DfT) in several core areas, including customer experience, net subsidy, operational performance, service quality and ticketless travel.



Safety

Safety underpins everything we do, from running depots and trains to improving customer safety and colleague wellbeing. Close partnerships with local communities and organisations, including British Transport Police, Stamp Out Spiking, White Ribbon and Missing People, for example, help us drive safety and security across the network.



Finance

Under our service agreement, we'll work closely with Network Rail and DFTO to improve operational performance and customer experience and reduce our net subsidy – the difference between our operating costs and revenue. It means we'll build trust in the way we operate – and deliver economically sustainable growth.



Community

From health initiatives to value for money fares, we're committed to driving social value and positive change, through strong community relationships and working with organisations across our network.

Many of our colleagues live locally and as an organisation we work closely with local businesses, councils, and stakeholders to support regional development and improve rail connectivity for passengers. Our local school connections help raise awareness of rail safety, career opportunities



Inspiring opportunity, growing talent

Our learning and development culture is about delivering opportunity and growth.

We're passionate about improving industry access for all and developing our talent, whatever their background, career route or role. Our incredible mix of people – of different ages, backgrounds and cultures – is a major strength.

Head of Learning & Development (L&D) Jess Lake said: "We support each other like family. We want to create meaningful experiences that help people develop in ways that suit their goals and create fair and equal opportunities for all."

Working closely with local schools and colleges helps us to raise awareness of careers in rail, from interactive activities in classrooms to engaging stands at careers fairs.

Committed to L&D

100%

frontline staff benefit from a dedicated, tailored training programme



people managers currently on our first 'On Track' programme giving them leadership tools and insight





No stopping Shabana

Shabana Haroon is one of our 41 current apprentices. She gained a distinction in her Level 3 Apprenticeship in Operations Management in June – and is now targeting a Level 5 in Rail Operations Management.

Shabana said: "I really appreciate all the support and opportunities the L&D team has given me."

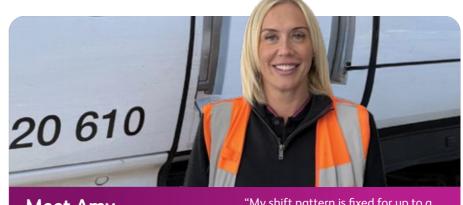


'I feel lucky to be at c2c'

Office coordinator Lindsey Keeling is one of four people now in full-time c2c roles thanks to The King's Trust 'Get into Railways' Programme, supporting young people aged 18 to 30 who face barriers to employment.

"I would thoroughly recommend The King's Trust programmes to any young person struggling to get into work. I feel really lucky to be working at c2c."





Meet Amy

Shoeburyness Depot Supervisor Amy Burrows, 39, swapped driving – as a shunter – for a depot-based role just over a year ago.

She said: "I think you can go wherever you want here – if you just put the effort in! c2c gives us plenty of support and opportunities to progress.

"My shift pattern is fixed for up to a year ahead so that really helps me plan my home life – especially as I have two daughters."

Amy played a key role as our first service under public ownership got off to a smooth start on Monday 21 July, making sure the first rebranded train left the depot cleanly.



Clear on conservation

We see our proud collaboration with Essex Wildlife Trust going a long way – just like the recently installed 'talking' telescope we funded.

The telescope was installed for visitors at the trust's Thameside Nature Discovery Park visitor centre in February. When activated, it gives a 90-second narration of the site's history – and a view stretching to Southend Pier on a good day!

'Leigh Link' launch

We're delighted to support the 'Leigh Link' bus service, an exciting new integrated travel milestone on our route.

Customer Delivery Manager Lee Stanbrook and Head of Commercial Growth Steve Knights joined other Southend community members to welcome in the new service and take the inaugural journey from Leigh-on-Sea station to Southend Airport.

Southend City Council and Stephensons of Essex worked together to introduce this new bus route – our customers will also be able to buy c2c and Leigh Link tickets through PlusBus.





Meet Ash

Driver Ashley Harrison, 47, says his c2c train driving job is a perfect fit and he's felt at home in a train cab since his first day.

"I absolutely love it! I'm a very practical person and being a driver just suited me from the start."

As a member of a c2c People Group, Ashlev also has an active role in staff issues and recognition, including meeting directors and other managers.

"I'm not shy and will speak up to try to find a positive solution if we have any issues. c2c openly encourages us to have a voice."





Basildon platform renewals

Work is underway to reinstate the full length of platform two at Basildon station.

Begun in late July, it will help to reintroduce 12 and 10 car trains calling at Basildon in the Shoeburyness direction in time for the December 2025 timetable change.

We will work hard to minimise disruption to residents and commuters and platform two will remain open throughout the work.



Making Barking station fit for the future

C2C

Barking station is the busiest on our route and links our customers with the rest of London and beyond.

A major, complex programme of work to give the

people of the borough a station fit for the

installation of the new gate line will

start by the end of the year.

future remains on course for completion in early 2026.

In recent months, our Asset team has worked alongside Network Rail and contractors to deliver a new, upgraded ticket office for an improved ticket-buying experience for all. Work on the

There will soon be more retail options for customers and the look and feel of the station will continue to improve, for example with new outside lighting.

As ever, our people make this happen – a huge thank you to our station colleagues for keeping Barking running as the work takes place.

Rainham station platform renewals

Trains via Rainham are now fully operational after a huge team c2c effort on phase one of an upgrade to the 1960s station.

Work to renew substantial lengths of the platforms, both more than 50 years old, started in July. The improvements will support the station's operation and improve customer experience.



The re-decking of
Rainham's two platforms will last
for decades to come and I would
like to extend a heartfelt thanks to
all the teams across the business
whose work was imperative to
keeping this project on track."

Donna Thorpe, c2c Interim Asset and Property Director

Access for All at Grays

There is now step-free access at Grays station. Thank you to the stations team for helping customers while the work to build the lifts took place.



Access for All at Southend East and Chalkwell – coming soon

Work at both these stations to build lifts will begin before the end of the year, making journeys via Chalkwell and Southend East stations easier for all.

Alongside Network Rail and principal contractor Octavius, we ran multiple dropin sessions for customers and residents, featuring our Area Manager for Essex Darren Williams.

Thank you to ClIr Daniel Cowan, Leader of Southend City Council, and his team who have helped us keep residents up to date, as well as Rob McAvoy, CEO of Project Southchurch, who kindly lent us Belle Vue Baptist Church for one of the drop-in sessions.

We were also thrilled to host campaigners Jill Allen-King OBE and Anna Firth at the Chalkwell session.

We look forward to continuing to work alongside the community as construction starts.







Network gains

A snapshot of some of our performance highlights in the past year

Service

83%

overall Customer Satisfaction score



We're strong on accessibility, timeliness, wayfinding



We'll improve train toilets and station facilities 84

punctuality / reliability score vs 79 (London & Southeast) in Transport Focus Survey

Environment (vs 2023/24 targets)

4 8.8%

better (carbon emissions, Infrastructure Electricity CO2e)

Louise & Hannah

17.8% better (carbon

better (carbon emissions, Infrastructure Gas CO2e)



(

42.7%

On target (zero non-hazardous waste to landfill)



Sister Act

Customer Delivery Managers and Canvey Island sisters Louise Williams and Hannah Gerrish make being on the c2c frontline a family affair!

Louise, who joined us straight from college 31 years ago, said: "c2c holds a very special place in my heart. It's where I met my husband, who also dedicated 40 years to the company. Now I have the joy of working closely with my sister – and best friend – Hannah. The railway has a unique family feel – it's more than just a job; it's a community."

Hannah joined us as a Booking Office Clerk in 2002 before returning to c2c in 2024 after 19 years in different roles with Essex Police.

"Having seen the values and culture firsthand from my sister and brother-in-law I knew this was where I wanted to be. Starting my new role with Louise, one of the most experienced and knowledgeable members of the c2c team, by my side has made my return feel effortless and genuinely rewarding – she's always there for me, whatever the hour!"

Safety means 'seamless' journeys

"We want to create a seamless end-to-end experience for people using our services," says Head of Revenue Protection and Security Iain Palmer.

Our three-year security strategy (2025-27) guides our mission to work towards our 'Net Zero' objectives to prevent ticketless travel, while delivering a safe and secure rail network for c2c, its staff and customers.

Iain said: "If we don't live our strategy every day, it means people may get hurt or go missing, or worse.

"We've built a very strong working relationship with the British Transport Police (BTP) over many years, especially through our Enhanced Police Service Agreement (EPSA). That gives us the insight and continuity to be effective."

Local progress, national issues

Our third Safeguarding Conference again brought our colleagues, senior managers and partners face to face. We also welcomed Stamp Out Spiking CEO Dawn Dines, after we recently became the first TOC to partner with the national campaign.

Iain said: "Dawn is an inspiration. We're very keen to lean on her experiences to work out how to lobby for changes in laws where needed to make the railway safer and more secure."

The team also works with the BTP on Operation Imperial, to help prevent anti-social behaviour as more people travel to the coast during the summer.

Iain said: "We want to take our excellent progress with local partners on critical issues, such as violence and intimidation against women and girls (VIAWG), or county lines activity, and do the same at a national level."

Meet our new Safeguarding & Security Manager, and amateur strongwoman competitor, Kamaldeep (Kam) Wallis. "Staff welfare and reducing assaults are paramount, and creating a safer railway environment is at the heart of c2c's values," said Kam.





We're re-accredited under the 2025/26 Safeguarding on Rail Scheme – and recorded a £1.8m impact overall as part of the Rail Safe Friendly programme (July 2023 to April 2025)





'We get great support'

Sgt Jay Bibby leads the BTP team of five dedicated to policing our network – based at Benfleet station.

He said: "c2c has a strong connection with people living along the route – they do get behind our safety initiatives." Public facing events focus on prevention of key issues like violence and intimidation against women and girls (VIAWG) through awareness, plain clothes intervention – and using the right language.

"We get great support and access from Iain and the wider c2c team," said Sgt Bibby. "Working together helps us achieve much more with safety and security on the network."

10



Knees-up for Basildon's 50th

The 50th anniversary of Basildon station's opening saw a good old fashioned knees-up by passengers, and charity and business partners.

There was pie and mash from local favourite,
Robins, cupcakes from a local baker, and a rousing 'Happy Birthday' led by Cockney Pride's Pearly
King and Queen.

Wilko Johnson – honouring a local legend

We honoured rock 'n' roll icon, Essex native and co-founder of the legendary band Dr. Feelgood, Wilko Johnson, with a specially commissioned train nameplate at a ceremony at Southend Central station in June

Former bandmate John B Sparks joined Wilko's family members and friends for the event, which featured live music from some of the cast from the West End show, 'Wilko: Love and Death and Rock and Roll'.



Some of our colleagues share a bit about what they do, where they've come from and where they want to go with c2c

Chloe Clark, trainee mainline driver (Street to Seat)

"My dad has worked for c2c for the past 28 years – to follow in his footsteps is a dream come true for me!

I've really enjoyed meeting with people on my course and the trainers are amazing – they can't do enough to support us. c2c is a supportive, rewarding and a positive place to work."

Charles Haynes, trainee mainline driver (Street to Seat)

"I'm loving the training. It's very intense and not for everyone but once you get to the practical elements it's a blast. The culture here is safe, honest and welcoming.

"I hope to move on to mentor new drivers and then work in the Operations Training department if all goes well!"



'Nothing beats 2000's a job in rail'

As Railway 200 celebrations continue up and down the country, we asked c2c Rolling Stock Engineer and train history buff Peter Hubbard about his years on the railway.

Within just 50 years of the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway on 27 September 1825, there were 17,000 miles of route track nationwide.

Products could be transported to market anywhere in the country in a few days. The railway turned fishing villages into ports and mining communities into industrial centres.

Railway 200 reminds us of this historical and cultural significance – and highlights the growing importance of the railway's green credentials.

Varied opportunities

Rail has offered me many opportunities, from extensive engineering training, first as an apprentice technician in 1979, then during a long and varied career in engineering management. I've designed modifications to Electric Multiple Units, analysed

reliability data, commissioned new trains and tested brake performance. I've worked in many places, from Bournemouth to Germany.

I've led teams and served as a member of the Rolling Rock Standards Committee, to review and update industry standards, for nearly 20 years.

As one of the day-to-day management team at East Ham depot, I've dealt with issues from software changes to train cleaning audits, and as one of c2c's 'On-Call Fleet Managers, I've attended serious incidents including derailments and fatalities.

For anyone wanting a career with good training, variety, discount travel, teamwork and knowing that you are part of an industry providing a vital service to thousands of people, then there's nothing better than a job on the railway.

Courtney Muller, Learning & Development Manager

"I moved to c2c after a decade spent working in L&D in the finance sector. I've always been passionate about helping people grow and reach their potential, whether that's through leadership development,

onboarding, or creating engaging learning experiences."

Tony ParkinFire Safety Manager

"I am new to the rail industry. c2c has a good reputation as a train operating company and it appealed to me. I'm looking forward to engaging with people to create a fire safety culture that everyone, from top to bottom, engages with and believes in."

Muhammad Farooqi, trainee mainline driver (Street to Seat)

"I always wanted to join the railway industry – my grandfather worked for Pakistan Railways. There are a lot of opportunities here – for me the sky's the limit!

> "I enjoy dealing with customers and making sure they reach their destination safely. I've found the culture here friendly, safe and strong on equality."





In the Community

Olympic hero joins Chafford's 30th

Local hero and Olympic javelin medallist Fatima Whitbread MBE was back at Chafford Hundred to unveil the re-installation of the original station plaque on its 30th birthday.

Opened on 26 May 1995, the station today boasts the busiest single-track platform in Europe. Thurrock MP Jen Craft, Councillor Qaisar Abbas and Councillor Aaron Green, representing West Thurrock and South Stifford ward, also joined us.



Lilianjeen among 'amazing' Basildon volunteers

c2c Community Star award winner Lilianjeen Ogbonna, pictured above at this year's Basildon Borough Volunteer Awards, set up a culture-sharing organisation after moving to the UK.



7

Lifesaving kit across our route

We've now installed lifesaving, community-accessible defibrillators at all 26 of our stations on the route. The units are accessible to local communities and colleagues and available 24/7.

Strong accent on identity

A partnership launched at Southend Central in early September is putting the accent firmly on fighting prejudice.

Accent Essex sees c2c join with University of Essex and young women from Southend to celebrate the Essex accent and encourage girls to proudly 'talk back' to prejudice.

The partnership is the latest development in research by Dr Tara McAllister-Viel from the University's East 15 Acting School and saw Essex author and University of Essex Chancellor Dr Sarah Perry as guest University of Essex

The launch featured spoken word performances from Write2Speak cofounder Yossi Goodlink and Essex poet and performer Hollie Dee. Commuters and residents can listen to pre-recorded poems written by students from Westcliff High School for Girls about their accents and how they are perceived.

The audio can be accessed via QR code, and listeners can share things they love about their accent on a dedicated YouTube channel.



c2c's Ultra Marathon for Gold Geese

More than 170 hardy souls pulled on their running shoes and headed for Essex on Saturday 13 September for c2c's second ultra marathon in aid of local children's cancer charity, Gold Geese.



As the charity's strapline says, "We Fly Together" and we were so proud to welcome hundreds of wonderful people across the finish line at Thorpe Bay.

Arranged in partnership with XNRG, the 50-mile route started at Upminster and the 30-mile route began at Tilbury.

It was a real team c2c effort, with Rob Mullen our Managing Director taking part again. At the time of going to print, almost £20k had been raised.

Rob said, "For all the things I've done at c2c, this is an event with a real legacy for me. I just can't think of a more worthy charity for us to raise money for."



'Proud to partner' Estuary 2025

c2c was proud to partner with the acclaimed Estuary Festival for Estuary 2025 in June. Local artist Damilola Odusote's 'Call Me Back' touring installation took pride of place at Tilbury Town station. The reimagined 1990s phone box was inspired by his early years as a foster child in Tilbury. It featured QR codes linked to audio recordings collected from local schools and residents.



Three decades of a vital service



c2c joined a community party to celebrate one of Southend's most cherished services and its three decades of support for people who are facing homelessness or challenging circumstances.

As part of our continued support for Southend YMCA's Newlands Supported Accommodation, we donated essential food items and bedding.

Pride is 'who we are

We were delighted to sponsor both the Thurrock and Basildon Pride events this year.

As a main sponsor of the recent Basildon event, c2c took pride of place in the parade on 6 September.

Head of HR Gemma Platt said: "Supporting Pride reflects who we are and what we stand for: a workplace and a world where everyone can be their authentic selves."



14



Southend United. A place where family, friends and football combine to not only have the 90 minutes of unity, but a lifetime of common purpose. I've loved The MIGHTY Shrimpers for over 45 years now!"

Iain Palmer



Southend United has a special place in my heart, my connection with it started young. My dad is a lifelong supporter and after marrying my mum at St Mary's Church (opposite the Roots Hall ground), he dashed over to check the score straight after the ceremony!

"c2c and SUFC are both deeply rooted in the local community and share a passion for bringing people together – it's the perfect match."

Gemma Platt



c2c and The Shrimpers: The perfect match

We're so proud of our sponsorship of Southend United Football Club – many of our colleagues are feverish fans too!



Southend United became special to me from a young age. I was born in Tottenham and was introduced to Southend when Spurs played there in the 1989 Rumbelows Cup. I took a day off school for that away leg, and the energy from that trip was unforgettable. I now live just around the corner from Roots Hall, which is amazing!

"I've always believed in the strength of local communities. Southend, much like my old neighbourhood in Tottenham, thrives on that community spirit."

Paul Meenan



I was hooked from my first game at Roots Hall – I'm now definitely a Shrimper! From the first meeting with the SUFC team to discuss working together, it became clear we were speaking the same language, with the local community at the heart of what we do. I'm so proud to have played a part in bringing the partnership to life."

Alice Shimali

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