



## Rail User Group Awards 2023

### Recognising and Rewarding Excellence among Rail User Groups

*Let the oxygen of publicity breathe fresh life into your campaigning for a bigger better railway!*

Railfuture's ninth Awards for Rail User Groups (known for short as the RUG Awards) will be presented after our Annual General Meeting on Saturday 15 July 2023. Our next Awards will as before aim to recognise and reward various achievements over the past year among the country's c.300 RUGs, and others, affiliated to Railfuture or not, in helping to fulfil Railfuture's mission: to be the number one advocate for the railway and rail users.

For some general clues as to what's involved you can do no better than draw on the experience of the first eight years' RUG Awards. The key website links are [www.railfuture.org.uk/RUG+Awards](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/RUG+Awards) also [www.railfuture.org.uk/Rail+User+Groups](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Rail+User+Groups) and also [www.railfuture.org.uk/Rail+User+Express](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Rail+User+Express) plus coverage in our quarterly national magazine Railwatch at [www.railwatch.org.uk/backtrack.php](http://www.railwatch.org.uk/backtrack.php)

The six **award categories** for **2023** open for nominations are:

- 1 – Best social media promotion
- 2 – Best website – the Adrian Shooter Award
- 3 – Best newsletter – the Paul Abell Award
- 4 – Best new group – the Oliver Lovell Award
- 5 – Best campaign
- 6 – Best campaigner – the Clara Zilahi Award
- 7 – Judges' Special Award (not open to nominations, at the Judges' sole discretion)

***The closing date for your nominations/submissions will be 23.59 on Saturday 8 April 2023.***

There are **no** application forms. Just one nomination in any category will be enough for the nominated **website, social media promotion, newsletter, new group, campaign, or individual campaigner** to be considered; these awards will not be decided by popular vote but on merit by an expert panel of independent judges. The same person or group can nominate in more than one category. RUGs and individuals can nominate their own **social media promotion, website, newsletter, new group, campaign**, as well as others; no self-nominations in category 6, though! The **Judges' Special Award** is reserved to the sole discretion of the judging panel, which as usual we plan to include our Vice-Presidents.



For **best social media promotion** and **best newsletter**, please confirm your wish to be considered for an award by sending an email to [roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk) or a letter, and in either case please **post** a paper copy of your latest and **up to** the three other most recent newsletters, or disc/memory stick etc, to **Roger Blake, 70 Dynevor Road, Stoke Newington, London, N16 0DX**.

Please, **do NOT email the newsletters** themselves, otherwise you will overload Roger's Inbox! A website link to newsletters which can be downloaded is welcome, but not a substitute for hard copy. *Lessons from previous years:* Roger very strongly advises the use of strong padded envelopes for postal submissions, and the use of Signed-for Delivery, and addressed to him in person.

For **best website**, which will be judged at any time during May-June, again please send an email or letter confirming your entry, with a link to your website, to [roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk)

For **best new group, best campaign, and best individual RUG campaigner**, please email or post your nominations to Roger with your supporting submissions of up to 150 words each. A limited selection of supporting evidence can be sent to him by post, or by email if just plain text.

All submissions must please:

- identify the individual making the nomination,
- indicate if the nomination is personal/on behalf of a group and if so in any particular capacity,
- include a full postal address and at least one telephone number where possible.

The primary intention is that these awards are open to Railfuture members and RUGs affiliated\* to Railfuture, with direct eligibility to entry being one of the benefits of membership. However, we do recognise that many currently non-affiliated groups and their members do sterling work in a wide variety of ways which should not be allowed to pass unremarked. Such groups should nevertheless be able to enter the Awards competition by, preferably, being able to identify at least one currently-subscribing Railfuture member, by name and ideally with membership number or postcode.

*\*The Directory of Rail Users Groups on the national website Rail User Groups page shows affiliated RUGs with an 'A'*

The national website [www.railfuture.org.uk/join](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/join) has details of how to join Railfuture, including online payment using a credit or debit card, or Paypal for its existing account-holders. The RUG Awards prizes include a year's membership of Railfuture, as a 'free introductory offer' for non-member RUGs whom we trust will then renew their affiliation, or as a bonus for existing members.

All nominees will have their current membership status (individual or affiliated RUG) confirmed together with date of expiry of any current subscription. Non-members are asked to confirm a wish to apply for individual or RUG membership if a prize-winner. Railfuture wishes to be inclusive and while all membership applications are ultimately at the discretion of the national Board of Directors, it is very rarely withheld.

With apologies for all the terms and conditions (at least not in unreadable small print!), do feel free to raise any queries with Roger Blake as above. As in previous years, there's a couple of months after nominations close so that our Vice-Presidents have good time in which to be able to pay you a visit during May-June while they are in your area. They will meet to adjudicate in late-June.

Finally, whenever you eventually book for the AGM, please let Roger know if you have done so in order that we know whether to look out for you. Be there to collect your framed RUG Award, have the occasion photographed for your own local publicity, and – in a continuation of last year's practice – have the opportunity to make a brief presentation on your award-winner!

