



PRESS RELEASE: National Transport Trust Awards 2025

The Tanfield Railway announced as winner of the 2025 President's Award

The world's oldest railway, the Tanfield Railway, Gateshead, has been announced as the winner of the National Transport Trust's 2025 President's Award



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Commenting on the award, National Transport Trust Chairman Stuart Wilkinson said, "The Tanfield Railway in Gateshead was, for most of its life, hauling coal from the pits around the Tanfield area to the River Tyne. It started around 1725 as a gravity wagonway with horses hauling the empty cauldron waggons back to the pits. Rope haulage followed on some sections and later conversion to a conventional railway, steam hauled with rope hauled inclined planes.

"The railway formed part of an extensive network of colliery railways and predates the Stockton & Darlington and the Middleton Railway in Leeds (which was the first railway created by an Act of Parliament in 1758). In its later years, it carried some passenger traffic as well, but was closed in 1964. Marley Hill engine shed was open until 1970 and was then taken over by volunteers who prepared a number of steam locos. Limited running started in 1973 leading up to the full opening of the line through to East Tanfield in 1992.

"To celebrate their tricentenary, the energetic people at the Tanfield Railway built a replica wooden cauldron waggon, and invited the oldest working steam locomotive in the UK to join the resident five steam locomotives on the day. What's more, they managed to get a 30 minute programme about them shown on BBC2 in July.

"On behalf of the National Transport Trust and our President, Lady Judy McAlpine I would like to congratulate the Tanfield Railway on their immense contribution to our transport heritage."

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The National Transport Trust

Founded in 1965, (as the Transport Trust), the National Transport Trust is the UK's only national charity established to promote and encourage the preservation and restoration of Britain's unique transport heritage in all its forms – by air, land (road and rail) and water (sea and inland). The Trust is managed within a very streamlined structure, with the Board of Trustees representing the wider interests of the nation, for whose benefit the Trust exists.

Help us to help them

In order to help the UK's the preservation movement the Trust depends on its members and therefore encourages all those who share our aims to join us. Membership of the Trust is open to private individuals and affiliated organisations. You can help us to help others too; become a member, donate to the trust or you might even consider leaving the trust something in your will. This last part is vital to our work, see here for more: [National Transport Trust legacies](#)

National Transport Trust

Old Bank House, 26 Station Approach, Hinckley Wood, Surrey, KT10 0SR, London
United Kingdom

Tel: 0207928 6464

Email: info@nationaltransporttrust.org.uk

Web: www.nationaltransporttrust.org.uk

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