

Competition to find new headquarters of Great British Railways launched

A competition to find the new headquarters of Great British Railways has been officially launched by the government.

Towns and cities across England, Wales and Scotland have been invited to apply to be the organisation's new home.

The government said the body would be a "single guiding mind that ends the fragmentation of the rail industry and drives benefits and improvements across the network for passengers and freight customers".

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The new headquarters will be based outside of London and the government said would "bring a number of high-skilled jobs to the winning location".

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said: "Our railways have kept this country moving for almost two hundred years, but it's time to kickstart a new age that will shape our network for the next two hundred.

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"I'm calling on people across the country to make the case for why the true home of the railways is on your doorstep."

The GBR Transition Team will shortlist the best applications in May, after which a public vote will help determine the winning location.

Applications will be measured against six criteria:

- Alignment to Levelling Up objectives
- Connected and easy to get to
- Opportunities for Great British Railways
- Railway heritage and links to the network

- Value for money
- Public support

Leader of the Great British Railways Transition Team Andrew Haines said: “This is the chance for cities and towns across the UK to pitch to be a key part of an exciting chapter in the history of Britain’s railway.”

The formation of GBR to run and plan the rail network was announced in May last year as part of widespread reforms launched by Mr Shapps in the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail.

GBR will absorb Network Rail and take on many functions from the Department for Transport to end fragmentation of the industry.

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