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Community Rail Week: Network Rail staff help brighten Bucks & Beds stations for passengers and communities

Network Rail and community rail partners have joined forces in Bletchley and Ridgmont on the Marston Vale line this week to enhance both stations for passengers and help to build community spirit.

Passengers and local people are benefitting from new planting and brighter stations today (Wednesday 21 May) after volunteers from Network Rail, guided by local community rail partners, completed a variety of gardening and maintenance activities on Tuesday. This collaborative effort is part of an

ongoing initiative to improve railway stations while engaging with the local community.

The event was planned to coincide with Community Rail Week, which runs from Monday 19 to Sunday 25 May, celebrating the vital role of community involvement in local railways. This event also ties into Railway 200, the celebration marking 200 years of railways in Britain, by highlighting how community involvement continues to shape the future of our railway.

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At Bletchley station, teams worked with the Friends of Bletchley station adoption group, and at Ridgmont, with the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership to ensure continued community involvement and care for these stations.

Activities included:

- **Sanding planters:** Volunteers sanded down existing planters to prepare them for a fresh coat of paint, ensuring they are both attractive and durable.
- **Painting and planting:** The freshly sanded planters were painted and filled with new plants, adding a splash of colour and life to Bletchley station.
- **Building a rose garden:** Volunteers helped construct a beautiful rose garden at Ridgmont station.

- **Clearing vegetation:** Efforts were made to clear overgrown vegetation around the Ridgmont station car park, improving visibility and accessibility for station users.

Carole Bayliss, strategy director for Network Rail's West Coast South, said:

"Our Community Rail Week volunteering events at Bletchley and Ridgmont stations are a fantastic example of how we can work together to make a positive impact on our stations for the communities they serve. The improvements made will benefit passengers and create a more welcoming environment for everyone.

"I want to thank our community rail partners and all of the volunteers for their commitment and enthusiasm in making the event a success."

Cara Higgs, London Northwestern Railway community strategy manager, said:

"We are proud to work with hundreds of volunteers across our network who dedicate thousands of hours every year to keep our stations looking their best.

"Our station teams were delighted to welcome Network Rail volunteers to Bletchley and Ridgmont during Community Rail Week to join in this great work. This week is the perfect time to celebrate and thank all those who give so much to supporting their communities."

Stephen Sleight, officer for the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership, said: "Community Rail Week is a week of activity across the country, with large numbers of volunteers carrying out activity coordinated by the Community Rail Partnership network.

"The work Network Rail has carried out at Ridgmont and Bletchley stations this week means an enormous amount to the community rail partnership, as well as the Friends of Ridgmont, Friends of Bletchley station groups and Rail to Roots gardening group. I'd like to thank all of our volunteers for their work in making stations on the Marson Vale line better for everyone."

To find out more about Network Rail's commitment to working with local communities visit: www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/community-rail/

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