

# Banbury North Signal Box

[Respecting cultural history and rail heritage] – a social performance case study

## The project

When local community groups objected to the demolition of Banbury North Signal Box, they set up Project Crossover to save the box from demolition. As they couldn't raise sufficient funds, they instead worked with Network Rail and Chiltern Railways to defer the demolition by 10 weeks and deliver free rail heritage tours to members of the public. Over 3,000 people visited the signal box to learn about signalling, rail history, rail safety, and careers in the industry.



## The key benefits delivered

Benefit to society: School visits brought the rail industry to life for young people, who got the opportunity to ring bells, pull levers, and understand the engineering skill that underpins the rail industry. Improved rail safety knowledge and respect for rail heritage were also delivered.

Benefit to the business: Improved reputation with local communities, meaning an anticipated reduction in complaints and objections to the project. Over 30 Network Rail staff volunteered and saw first-hand the importance of caring for communities and working in partnership with the local community during major enhancement projects.

## Lessons learned

- The early 'Requirement Engineering' phase of re-signalling projects (GRIP 1-3) needs to ensure alignment with the Network Rail social performance strategy.
- Early engagement with local groups such as museums, schools, civic societies and rail heritage groups is vitally important to understand needs and aspirations of the local community.
- As a public body Network Rail must properly plan for the recovery of public assets, such as signal boxes.

## Who to contact for more information

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