

Latton Basin, Swindon

[Connecting communities with the environment] – a social performance case study

The project

The electrification work as part of the Railway Upgrade Plan can be disruptive to the local community. The community no longer has a positive view of the railway due to late night working, weekend possessions and the introduction of new structures. As a flagship delivery platform, the team behind the High Output Plant System (HOPS) felt a need to mitigate this, and give back to the local community.

The Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal Trust is working to reinstate the Canal from Melksham to Abingdon, through the heart of Swindon. Latton Basin is a keystone to this project, as it is the link between the Canal and the Thames and Severn Canal. Amey and Network Rail joined forces to help the community group with physically demanding tasks and brought with them industry leading health and safety practices.



The key benefits delivered

Benefit to society: As a result of the partnership, Latton Basin is progressing towards being ready to see boats return. This would deliver an economic boost to the rural community and restore a heritage asset which has been derelict for 100 years. The canal will provide a wetland habitat for a variety of wildlife and enhance the aesthetic of the local area.

Benefit to the business: The reputation of Network Rail is enhanced by offering our services and expertise to local volunteer groups seeking to enhance the Western Region. Since volunteering, HOPS have had increased team morale and collaborative working.

Lessons learned

- Network Rail is reliant on a good relationship with our lineside neighbours and the wider community, so it's essential to engage with them early in project before disruption begins.
- Local volunteer organisations appreciate interaction with large organisations, and it's a way we can be a better neighbour. This support does not always have to be monetary, as the skill and time Network Rail offered generated value for the organisations.
- Sharing objectives with principal contractors enables the impact of any community relations activities to be enhanced.

Who to contact for more information

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