

Volunteering spotlight



I'm Eddie...

I'm a Customer Service Manager in the South East Route and also the lead for our Community Rail partnerships. I often use volunteer leave to support local community rail initiatives, which not only improves local relationships but also teaches me more about the area I work.

What did I do?

I have spent some time with the Sussex Community Rail Partnership (SCRP) over the last year looking at potential options for community schemes and volunteer work along the Seaford to Brighton railway line. London Road station was identified as a potential area for work, as they already have an active and effective station adoption team working with Southern Rail, part of Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR). I arranged a volunteer day to work with the SCRP lead, the station adoption team leader and staff from GTR.

Network Rail's IP Southern team contacted me shortly afterwards; they were looking to arrange a team volunteer day. They liked the sound of the London Road project so we agreed for five members of the team to join me for the day.

The work involved litter clearing the area around the station, weeding, leaf clearing and carrying out maintenance of raised flower beds within the community garden of the station.

What did I give and get?

It was easy; I just gave my time and effort for five hours. I enjoyed the work and it was nice to be out of the office and getting my hands dirty. At the end of the day, I got the feeling that a bond has been made between staff from Network Rail, GTR, Southern, the SCRP and the local community. Not only is it great to have good relationships with our stakeholders, but I feel like our bond has assisted to repair any instances of reputational damage that we may have experienced.

What have I learned?

There are massive benefits from the small effort that was needed to organise the day. The station now looks cleaner and more inviting so the station adoption team, local community and station users are really pleased. Working closely with GTR was of great benefit to both parties so I now need to encourage more people to do this in their local area.

For more information please get in touch...

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