

## 1 Purpose

This document provides recommendations on how to engage local communities and the environment – both of which are essential to the successful running and continued growth of the railway. This guidance helps to build relationships with local communities and environmental stakeholders.

Specific advice on stakeholder mapping and community engagement can be found in the *Being a Caring Neighbour Guidance Note NR/GN/ESD11*.

“Social value” is the term used to describe the social and economic benefits created as a result of a project or piece of work. This guidance note shows how we can go above minimum requirements to deliver social value. Relevant volunteer opportunities are suggested with organisations such as the Environment Trust, and can be found at the end of this guidance note.

## 2 Environmental engagement

Communities are often very passionate about local environmental issues and, like many of us, they take get pride in caring for the green space around them. Having read the *Being a Caring Neighbour Guidance Note NR/GN/ESD11* and identified your key stakeholders, you can use this information to support environmental activities. The diagram below shows the range of stakeholders required to positively connect communities with the environment.



### 3 Environmental activities during construction

Local communities value their surrounding environment, and Network Rail has a responsibility to connect schools and neighbours to opportunities for environmental protection and education. When on site:

- Identify ways to reduce your carbon footprint through sustainable construction activities, in partnership with the <http://www.lowcarbon.co.uk/training/volunteering/> 
- Speak to your Network Rail environment team to see if there are national programmes you can support at a local level;
- Hold public information events to let local communities know of changes to their surrounding environment, such as removing trees or vegetation;
- Deliver environmental projects in the local community, and engage school groups to be a part of this to improve their environmental understanding, such as:
  - Planting a wild flower garden or vegetable garden with the help of a local school;
  - Using under-utilised land to create wildlife habitats with environmental charities.
- Support local wildlife by planting specific varieties of species of plants/trees – the Woodland Trust promote ways of doing this, including free trees for communities and schools in their <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/communities/> 

- Develop an eco-workplace project which could involve developing environmentally led concepts within the site, such as; cleaning up gardens or outside spaces, making a food or native flower growing area, arranging composting facilities, rainwater harvesting or improving recycling;
- When removing lineside vegetation, maintain a secure site by ensuring entrances are fully closed to discourage trespassers;
- Reduce fuel consumption by developing a green travel plan for your workforce to minimise environmental damage, such as car pools, bike lanes and walking routes where possible;
- Manage waste to prevent lineside litter contaminating rivers, canals and surrounding land;
- Ensure all waste is placed in the correct bin, for example, food waste to a compost bin, recyclable plastics in the recycling bin;
- Remove all waste from site after works to ensure lineside neighbours are not negatively affected by the presence of railway workers;
- Participate in national environmental campaigns, such as { HYPERLINK "<http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean>" } organised by Keep Britain Tidy;
- Encourage team members to turn off electrical appliances and equipment when not in use to reduce energy consumption;
- For any waste timber on site, consider opportunities for { HYPERLINK "<http://www.communitywoodrecycling.org.uk/>" } to optimise resource efficiency, while providing benefits to local communities.
- Gardening Mentors and Project Station Gardens are available via { HYPERLINK "<https://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/>" } who teach project teams how to grow organic food and how to engage with the wider public to introduce 'grow your own' to the local community, and how to create/enhance horticultural displays and gardens at a particular station.

## 4 Example activities and volunteering

Volunteering in your local community is another way you can help to connect communities with the environment, and some suggested opportunities are listed below:

Support global issues with **Greenpeace**

Reduce water contamination with the **Canal and River Trust**

Plant trees as part of forest projects with the **Woodland Trust**

Learn food growing skills without the use of fertilisers and pesticides with **Nurture through Nature**

Help to ban bee-harming pesticides with **Friends of the Earth**

Donate unwanted items to charity instead of sending them to landfill

Improve, conserve and protect your local area with the **Environment Trust**

Promote recycling with **Brighter Futures Together**

Encourage biodiversity by setting up bird homes to provide shelter and support nesting birds

**Network Rail employees:** You are entitled to up to 5 days volunteer leave. This can be taken for any UK registered charity or one of the three types of community engagement activity:

(i) Community Safety, (ii) Early Engagement or (iii) Community Rail. For more details, visit

{ [HYPERLINK "http://connect/volunteering"](http://connect/volunteering) }

To view all environment and social KPIs and how they are to be reported, please refer to the *KPI Guidance Note NR/GN/ESD22*.