

Brighter Journeys campaign arrives at Cardiff Central

May 18, 2022



Network Rail, Transport for Wales and the wider rail industry has teamed up with mental health charity, Chasing the Stigma, to support passengers' wellbeing with a colourful, floral surprise.

From Tuesday 17 to Thursday 19 May, passengers at Cardiff Central station will see a floral installation to support the campaign – which aims to make stations brighter and happier for passengers who are returning to the railway after the lifting of Covid restrictions.

It comes as new data shows that more than two thirds of adults in Wales (68%) say their mental health has been negatively impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, with 16% describing their mental health as poor*.

The vibrant exhibition will bring the outside in, with bursts of colourful flowers in bloom greeting passengers as they embark on their journeys. It's hoped the sensory installation will act as a pleasant surprise and lift people's spirits – making them smile as they head to work or for days out with their family.

Research shows that interacting with nature puts people in a more positive mindset and makes them feel more grounded and calmer. This campaign uses the power of nature to make people feel happier and

more connected to their railway station, while raising awareness of the **Hub of Hope app**, which signposts people to support services if they are struggling with their mental health.

Rupert Lown, chief health and safety officer at Network Rail, said: “We recognise that life since the pandemic is difficult for many people, with many challenges yet to be overcome. We hope that by running this campaign, we are bringing happiness and cheer to many passengers as they go about their daily lives, reminding them to take a pause and have a moment to connect with nature. And if they are struggling, the Hub of Hope is a great resource which offers a range of support services in their local area.”

Jake Mills, founder of Chasing the Stigma and Hub of Hope app, added: “It is great to be working with Network Rail and the wider rail industry on the Brighter Journeys campaign. Nature is really important for mental health, so we hope commuters enjoy seeing these floral installations and they put a smile on people’s faces.

“We also hope that this acts as a reminder that no one is ever alone, and mental health support is available at any time, you don’t have to be in crisis to get help. If anyone is struggling or knows someone who needs help, please download the Hub of Hope app.”

Bethan Jelfs, Director of People & Change at Transport for Wales, highlights the importance of looking out for one another and the support options available. **She said:** “Mental Health Awareness Week is a timely reminder of the need to take care of ourselves and each other. That’s why we’re supporting Brighter Journeys and encouraging customers who may be struggling to share and download the Hub of Hope app.”

Brighter Journeys will signpost people to share and download the Hub of Hope app if they or someone they know are struggling with their mental health. The Hub of Hope – provided by Chasing the Stigma – is a free app that connects people to more than 4,000+ mental health support services and groups across the UK. It is available on iPhone, Android and desktop (www.hubofhope.co.uk) and directs people to the nearest relevant local support using either the postcode typed in by the user or the location of the web browser or mobile device. Searches can be filtered by specific concern/type of support required, for example peer-to-peer groups, NHS or voluntary groups. For those needing immediate help, the app has a ‘Need Help Now?’ button that connects users directly to Samaritans or Crisis Text Line’s messaging service.