

Brighter Journeys in Leicester to support passengers' mental health

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Network Rail, together with the wider rail industry and national charity, Chasing the Stigma, is making Leicester station brighter and happier for passengers returning to the railway this autumn and helping anyone struggling with their mental health to access support.

After a challenging 18 months for many and with more people gradually returning to the workplace, the new mental health campaign, Brighter Journeys, aims to bring the outdoors into the station environment and put smiles on passengers' faces.

From Monday (11 October), an art installation which includes a burst of colourful flowers in bloom, a nature themed soundscape and uplifting poems by James McInerney will be at Leicester station.

As well as brightening up the station, it will signpost those struggling with their mental health to support services, including the Hub of Hope app. The app – provided by Chasing the Stigma – is the only service of its kind that brings together all the mental health support options available to someone in any given area.

While home working may have become a common part of pandemic life, a new survey by Network

Rail* reveals the nation is now heading back to work as passengers readjust to life after lockdown.

The findings from YouGov show over half of UK adults in the East Midlands (55%) travelled to their workplace for most of their working week in August, when lockdown restrictions were fully lifted across the country. Meanwhile, 51% of people in the region said being around colleagues can boost their own and others mental health and wellbeing, and 58% said returning to the workplace provides a sense of human connection.

Lauren Cokayne, Community Safety Manager for Network Rail's East Midlands route, said: "After a challenging 18 months for many people, we are working with the wider rail industry and Chasing the Stigma to prioritise mental health and wellbeing – as more passengers across the East Midlands return to the railway.

"The Brighter Journeys installation at Leicester station will help anyone struggling with their mental health by signposting them to support services, as well as brightening up the station and providing an outdoors environment for passengers."

Neil Grabham, Customer Services Director at East Midlands Railway, said: "It is vital that when people are struggling with a mental health issue, they understand how to access help and support in their local area.

"Our team at Leicester station are proud to support this project and hope it raises awareness about this important subject."

This campaign forms part of Network Rail's efforts to reduce suicides across the rail network alongside train operating companies and British Transport Police. Ongoing measures are being taken to prevent such incidents from taking place, including training thousands of industry staff and running campaigns such as Small Talk Saves Lives with Samaritans and British Transport Police, which calls on the public to trust their instincts and start a conversation if they see someone who might need help.

Brighter Journeys, however, has been created with the input of suicide prevention and mental health experts to signpost those struggling with their mental health to support services much earlier on in their mental health journey.

*Survey was carried out by YouGov from 13-14 September 2021 with a total sample size of 2161 adults. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+)

For more information about Network Rail's work to support mental health and reduce suicides, visit our [website](#). You can find out more about the Small Talk Saves Lives campaign [here](#)

Sadly, the railway is often the location for tragedies because people deliberately come onto the infrastructure. Supporting people who are struggling with their mental health is one important part of our work with the community and will be the focus for the activity in Leicester on Monday 11 October.

This will be followed with a day of action on Friday 15 October where railway colleagues will be on the

station to highlight the dangers (and delays to rail services) caused by trespass and vandalism on our network.

Photo credit: Network Rail