

East Sussex railway clean-up is a load of rubbish

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Over 3 tonnes of fly-tipped rubbish have been cleared from a level crossing in East Sussex to maintain a safe and reliable railway for passengers and a better-looking lineside for our neighbours.

Thornwell Road level crossing near the village of Wilmington lies near the busy A27 Eastbourne to Lewes road and is a prime target for litter and fly-tipping by members of the public. Not only is this a nuisance for people living alongside the railway but it can also cause problems for the railway itself.

Network Rail's maintenance team cleared junk from on and around the level crossing which included an old kitchen, garden items and builder's rubble.

Litter attracts rats to the railway and rats like to chew on signal cables, which can lead to signal failures, delays and even accidents.

Tracy Partridge, level crossing manager at Network Rail said: "It's amazing what our maintenance teams uncovered during the clean-up operation – items cleared have included ripped-out kitchen units which were dumped carelessly. We have a duty to the community to remove this blight from their area – but we

would rather invest our time and money renewing and enhancing the rail network.

“This is why we urge anyone who has information about fly-tipping to call the British Transport police and help us fight this costly anti-social crime.”

Jonathan Pine, British Transport Police Inspector, said: “Fly-tipping is sometimes seen as an eyesore or a nuisance, but it is a hugely antisocial criminal offence. It is costly to clean up and a purely selfish act. BTP work closely with Environment Agency colleagues to actively support prosecution of offenders using a variety of methods.”

Cllr Roy Galley, Cabinet member with responsibility for Street Scene at Wealden District Council, said: “We are grateful to everyone who has responded to our appeal for information about this very dangerous environmental incident that occurred on 31 January at Thornwell Road level crossing and our investigation continues. All fly tipping is a criminal offence, but this one could have resulted in a serious accident.”

Following the success of the clean-up, Network Rail will continue to monitor the area to remove further litter and crack down on fly tippers with the help of relevant authorities.

If anyone encounters or has information regarding fly-tipping on the railway, they should report it to the British Transport Police on 0800 405 040.

Photo credit: Network Rail