

EMR urge the public to report reckless and dangerous incidents

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Having been targeted more than 20 times by people throwing items at trains, or leaving things on tracks, East Midlands Railway (EMR) has had enough.

The operator is urging members of the public to help them tackle dangerous incidents on its network, after a series of incidents in the past 12 months has caused a series of delays and damage.

Lucy Gallacher, emergency planning manager at East Midlands Railway, said: “These reckless acts must stop. They are incredibly dangerous for our customers and our staff. They not only have the potential to endanger lives but also lead to trains being damaged, delayed and services being cancelled.

“Even though we are putting in place a number of measures to help address the issue, the public can also play a really important part.

“If they see any items being thrown at trains or someone placing items on the track, they should contact British Transport Police immediately by texting 61016 or by calling 0800 40 50 40. Alternatively, people can call Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111.”

The items have included a microwave thrown on the tracks near Sunny Hill in Derby, a shopping trolley on a line near Leicester station and a bicycle placed on the tracks near Kettering station.

Bricks, stones and rocks were also thrown at EMR's trains 14 times throughout the year – smashing windows and potentially endangering lives of customers and railway staff – often causing so much damage that trains were taken out of service for repairs leading to delays and cancellations.

In April alone, youths caused serious damage to one of EMR's trains after they threw bricks at it off Bennerley Viaduct and days later another train sustained damage when a brick smashed one of its windows after being thrown from land near Clay Cross junction on the line to Sheffield.

To help address these incidents, EMR is installing high-definition CCTV that can be monitored in real time by the British Transport Police and is making use of the 'what3words' system to identify the exact location of any illegal activity. Footage and geographical data will also be supplied by EMR to the police to assist with any criminal prosecutions.

EMR's Community Rail team is helping to address the issue too by working closely with Network Rail's Community Engagement Manager and visiting schools to promote rail safety.

The public can also play a big part in helping EMR keep people safe by reporting any incidents to the police straightaway.

Eddie Carlin, embedded police inspector for the Disruption and Drones Tasking Team – East Midlands Main Line Route at British Transport Police, said: "We do not tolerate this mindless behaviour that endangers people's lives. We work closely with our partners at East Midlands Railway to patrol and catch those committing the crimes.

"We do this through a number of covert and overt operations and can use certain technology as deterrents. We also want to encourage parents to remind their children of the dangers of being near train tracks and the impact their actions can have.

"I'd encourage the public to report any incidents to us through our text number 61016, if you see a crime in progress call 999. Together we can make our railways a safer place to be."