

Family shellshocked when Network Rail workers reunite them with tortoise missing for eight months

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A family in Knebworth were left shocked after their beloved tortoise, Twin, who had been missing for eight months, was found by three **Network Rail** workers.

John Keeley, Matt Cooke and Tony Russell were carrying out railway inspections along the East Coast Main Line last month, when they spotted Twin walking alongside the track.

The trio couldn't believe their eyes, but sprung into action to rescue Twin and bring her to a place of safety. After removing Twin from harm's way, John, Matt and Tony brought her to a car park to discuss what to do next. They decided to take Twin to a nearby vets to see if she was microchipped and to get her checked over.

Although Twin was given a clean bill of health, she wasn't microchipped so the team were unable to locate her owners. Unsure of what to do next, the team decided to look after Twin overnight and continue the search for the owners.

The following day, John visited shops and café's in Knebworth to see if anyone had lost a tortoise. Although this didn't bring any joy, a café owner agreed to post about the tortoise on their Facebook page to help spread the word.

The power of social media proved fruitful, with Lizzie Jeanes, spotting the post and contacting John to claim Twin.

Twin, who was now being looked after in Welwyn Garden City, was driven the five miles back to Knebworth. After eight months, Twin was reunited with Lizzie and her two children Charlie, 10, and Connie, 8, as well as with another tortoise named Joey, who Twin has lived with since 1952.

John said: "It's not every day you see a tortoise on the railway, so we definitely did a double take when we spotted Twin!

"Although we weren't really sure if we'd be able to find the owner, we knew someone would be missing her, so we knew we had to try our best. It took a few days, but the power of social media really helped us and allowed us to deliver Twin home safe and sound.

"Lizzie, Charlie and Connie were delighted and they sent us a card to say thank you, so we're glad to have helped."

Lizzie said: "I was absolutely elated when I heard that Twin had been found. When she went missing, we searched high and low for her, but we'd given up hope when she'd been missing for eight months.

"I can't thank the team enough for reuniting us once more with Twin, who has been in our family for 70 years. We're all delighted."

Photo credit: Network Rail