

Green-fingered volunteers spruce up award-winning station garden

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Railway workers from the Wigan to Bolton electrification upgrades have swapped track for trowels to help out at a community garden in Hindley.

Thirteen workers from Network Rail, train operator Northern and contractors Murphy and Kier spent 6 hours on Wednesday 18 October helping the Friends of Hindley maintain the station's award-winning flowerbeds.

The day involved weeding, strimming, cutting back overhanging branches, painting and tidying up the space ahead of the winter.

The rail companies volunteered their time to say thank you to local people impacted by the major railway upgrades this year.

Nearby road Ladies Lane was closed for several months over the summer for its bridge to be completely demolished and rebuilt, and improvements made at the station, as part of a £78m investment to upgrade a 6.5-mile stretch of railway* to enable electric trains to run between Wigan and Bolton in the future.

Sarah Bull, Network Rail sponsor, said: "It's been great to get out and work together with members of the

community as a way to thank them for their patience after all of our disruptive work in the area this year.

“Fortunately our work in Hindley is nearly finished with the station platform improvements and new bridge built to allow for newer, greener trains to one day run between Wigan and Bolton.”

Sheila Davidson, from the Friends of Hindley station, said: “We really appreciate the days where Network Rail, Northern and the contractors are here to give us a hand. It’s a huge garden on both sides of the tracks, plus our allotment, so there’s lots of work to do, but the team did a great job.”

While Ladies Lane reopened in September, some work to the sides of the bridge and embankments is still taking place.

For more information on the Wigan to Bolton electrification programme you can visit:

<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/our-routes/north-west/wigan-to-bolton-electrification/>

*The 6.5-mile route has two railway lines running in either direction which means a total of 13 miles of track will eventually have overhead electric lines installed above to power cleaner, greener trains in future.