

Heritage stations restored for Manchester to Wigan passengers

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Two heritage railway stations on the Manchester, Atherton and Wigan line have been improved for Northern passengers.

Victorian platform canopies at Walkden and Swinton stations have been repaired and restored by Network Rail as part of a £750,000 Great North Rail Project investment.

The canopies were built 131 years ago in 1890.

The recent renovations involved structural repairs and repainting steelwork, including their original ornate columns.

Netting was also installed to stop birds from roosting in the heritage structures which protect passengers from poor weather.

This has secured the Victorian canopies for people using the line for many years to come.

Clive Euston, scheme project manager for Network Rail, said: “We take great care to look after our heritage buildings and work at Walkden and Swinton stations shows how we’re building back better as the country emerges from the coronavirus pandemic.

“This Great North Rail Project investment of £750,000 we hope will make a huge difference for Northern passengers on the Manchester to Wigan line, creating a cleaner and brighter environment and improving their journeys for years to come.”

Chris Jackson, regional director at Northern, said: “Our aim is to make a positive impact for the North and, working with colleagues at Network Rail, the improvements to the canopies absolutely achieve that for our customers in Walkden and Swinton.

“We have a proud rail heritage and it’s fantastic that the Great North Rail Project is not only improving infrastructure to provide better journeys, but is also preserving the vitally important history of rail in the north of England.”

Simon Elliott, TfGM’s head of rail programme, said: “Our local railways are steeped in history and projects like this are really important as not only do they help to preserve its original features, it also makes for a much more pleasant experience for those using and passing through the stations.”

The railway improvement work started in February and finished on Friday 11 June.

Passengers will also benefit from accessibility improvements at Walkden station as part of the government’s Access for All scheme.

Plans to install a new lift which will provide step-free access to the platforms are being developed and the upgrade is due to be completed by 2024.

To read more about how Network Rail looks after heritage structures, visit:

www.networkrail.co.uk/who-we-are/our-history/working-with-railway-heritage/

Photo credit: Network Rail