

# Network Rail colleagues help to produce protective gear for NHS

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Network Rail employees have worked together to help one colleague's partner make protective gowns for NHS nurses in Northamptonshire.

In response to a shortage of essential kit at their local Kettering General hospital, David Rose, infrastructure maintenance protection coordinator at Network Rail, and his partner Lynn Wilson, are using their time at home during the Coronavirus pandemic to produce protective gowns – known as scrubs – for the NHS using her sewing machine.

The pair had come up with the idea last week, but weren't sure how they could print the large, A0 pattern needed for the gowns, so David used an internal message board to ask for colleagues' help.

David said: "I asked if anyone knew if we had the capability within Network Rail to print what Lynn needed, as the places recommended to me were fully booked up.

"It became clear that our printers at The Quadrant in Milton Keynes were equipped for super-size printing. The next challenge was how to get the print-outs to us in Kettering."

Mark Allen, discipline manager at Network Rail, spotted David's post and offered to help. He said: "I live in Milton Keynes and had plans to check on my in-laws in the Kettering area, so I was more than happy to pop into The Quadrant and do the printing. It was a real quick-win and something we had the resources for already – it just made sense.

"The day after I read David's post, I was able to deliver the pattern to them – all while maintaining a safe distance. It actually happened to be their 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary that day – it was heart-warming to see them putting this first."

Lynn – who also volunteers at her local food bank – is now busy producing scrubs and storage bags to NHS standards and has no plans to slow down.

Lynn said: "The gowns I'm producing are part of the nationwide effort by sewing groups called For the Love of Scrubs. It was set up to coordinate people to make as many sets as possible and I'm keen to do my bit.

"Having the proper size pattern has been a huge help – before that I was trying to stick 72 sheets of paper together to create the size I needed, which was quite tricky. This means I can get on with sewing and get these vital supplies to our fantastic NHS staff."

*Photo credit: Network Rail*