

Network Rail volunteers help to restore two Bristol murals

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Volunteers from Network Rail joined the Severnside Community Rail Partnership and local residents to help clean graffiti from community murals at Redland and Montpelier stations in Bristol earlier this month.

The murals were created in 2019 by artists Dave Bain and Zoë Power in collaboration with students from Cotham Gardens Primary School. Over 85 children were involved in designing the artwork, assembling imagery and shapes inspired by the local area and celebrating their favourite aspects of the community.

The murals are located at known graffiti hotspots and had been painted to deter vandalism and brighten up Redland and Montpelier stations. Unfortunately, they'd been spray painted and defaced in recent months, so the team of volunteers got to work with water, brushes and elbow grease to remove the worst of the damage.

Thankfully, the original artwork had been coated in specialist anti-graffiti varnish, so the team were able to restore the murals to their former glory in short order. Passengers can once again enjoy the splash of colour at both stations as they're travelling on the rail network in Bristol.

Máedóc Ellis, Network Rail's community support manager for community rail, said: "Graffiti makes the railway look untidy for passengers and those who live nearby, so it was great to be able to assist the Severnside Community Rail Partnership and local residents to bring the murals back to life and cleanse them of unsightly graffiti.

"Working with community groups to enhance station environments brings further social benefits to the railway and helps to promote sustainable travel while bringing people together on projects that benefit the wider community. We'll continue to work with Severnside Community Rail Partnership and local residents in Bristol to make sure our network is safe and welcoming for everyone."

Faye Keane, Severnside Community Rail Partnership community development officer, said: "We were delighted to have the support of Network Rail volunteers to clean the vibrant murals at Redland and Montpelier, both of which had huge community input from local schools.

"It was also an opportunity to bring along the newly formed 'Friends of Redland & Montpelier Stations' to try their hand at tag removal - something they had been a little anxious to attempt themselves.

"The volunteer activity caught the attention of the local station users, allowing them to see the people behind the good work done to keep the station environments welcoming and creative. I'd like to say a big thank you on behalf of Severnside CRP to those who gave up their time."

Photo credit: Network Rail