

Network Rail worker in East Midlands supports the NHS during COVID-19 crisis

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A Network Rail worker in the East Midlands has been busy supporting vulnerable people and making face visors for NHS staff during the COVID-19 crisis.

Val Stephenson is a Level Crossing Manager in the region, based in Derby. As a key worker, she is one of thousands of Network Rail workers helping to keep the railway running reliably during the Coronavirus crisis. In her role, Val makes sure level crossings operate safely and efficiently, so people who cannot work from home can use the railway to get to their jobs, and so vital freight services can be transported across the country.

As well as helping to keep the railway running, Val wanted to do more to support vulnerable people who struggle to get out and about and has volunteered with a local group, the Hartshorne Helpers, to help those in need.

In her spare time, Val has also been creating face visors to help protect NHS staff. The parts have been produced using a 3D printer and then shared with volunteers who can make the vital protective equipment at home. Val shared the 3D pattern with workers at Network Rail, to get more people involved in producing

them.

The group have created over 3500 visors, which have been distributed to Derby Hospital critical care unit and local care homes. They will also be used at the Swadlincote assessment centre that is currently being set up.

Network Rail is encouraging more workers to sign up and volunteer their skills to help other critical services such as the NHS.

Val Stephenson, Level Crossing Manager for Network Rail, said: "Keeping the railway running during this time is absolutely vital, but I also really wanted to do my bit in the community to support vulnerable people. We have a great team of volunteers who make up the Hartshorne Helpers, and I enjoy helping those who can't get out.

"We wanted to support the amazing work done by NHS staff at Derby Hospital and in local care homes. I've quickly learnt how to put the face visors together, which will also provide extra protection at the new Swadlincote assessment centre.

"It's great to see people across Network Rail getting involved to support the NHS during these challenging times."

Photo credit: Network Rail