

Officers drive reduction in graffiti on railway – London and South East

January 25, 2021



An increase in patrols targeting graffiti on the rail network across London and the South East has led to a significant reduction in vandalism.

British Transport Police increased patrols across December and early January as part of Operation Sirius – a plan to disrupt and deter graffiti on the railway over the festive period.

The efforts, which were led by officers dedicated to tackling graffiti crime, reduced the number of offences by nearly 30 per cent.

BTP Inspector Matt Goldspink, the lead for the theft of passenger property and graffiti team, said: “Tackling graffiti crime is a core priority for BTP officers across London and the South East.

“This vandalism goes far beyond just making trains look unsightly. It ensures carriages need to be taken out of service and cleaned, which leads to less trains on the railway and ultimately delays, frustrated passengers and high bills for the rail industry.

“These offenders also put their own lives at risk which is a key concern. Breaking into rail yards or trespassing on the railway is extremely dangerous, and ignorance of this fact can have life-changing or deadly consequences.

“We’ll continue to target this crime type throughout the year and ensure those we arrest face the consequences.”

Operation Sirius ran from Monday 7 December 2020 to Saturday 9 January.

In that time 61 graffiti related crimes were recorded. During the same period last year 92 graffiti related crimes were recorded.

Most recently, officers have arrested two men on suspicion of criminal damage related to graffiti.

The first, a 28-year-old man from Lambeth, was arrested on Monday 11 January after black spray paint was sprayed on a wall outside Waterloo station.

He has been released while officers carry out further enquiries.

The second man, aged 36 from Croydon, was arrested on Tuesday 12 January at East Croydon station.

Aside from criminal damage, he was also arrested on suspicion of two counts of trespass, theft and a drug offence.

BTP continues to investigate an incident, which was reported on boxing day, of extensive graffiti on the northbound Bakerloo line and northbound Victoria line platforms at Oxford Circus station.

Officers are pursuing several lines of inquiry.

Photo credit: British Transport Police