

# Protecting and promoting the environment

We have policies in line with guidance from a range of conservation bodies. We carry out ecological surveys before we carry out vegetation works and we put environmental protection in place before we start.

This includes:

- monitoring and protecting active bird nests until the young birds have fledged.
- protecting bats and other protected species
- obtaining permissions to work in protected sites



Our overall aim is to change the habitat within eight metres of the railway from woodland to grassland, promoting biodiversity whilst reducing the risk to train passengers and railway workers.

# For more information

There is more information on our vegetation management programme available on our website at: [networkrail.co.uk/managing-railways-habitats/](http://networkrail.co.uk/managing-railways-habitats/)

If you have any further questions please contact us at: **03457 114141** or [crwest@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:crwest@networkrail.co.uk)

*“We have seen too many examples in recent years of fallen trees or large branches striking trains following numerous severe weather events. Action has to be taken to reduce this trend.”*



Ian Prosser, HM chief inspector of railways and director of railway safety at the Office of Rail and Road (ORR)



**Keeping the railway safe in your area**

Managing vegetation on the railway



*Working for you*

## Managing vegetation on the railway

Overgrown bushes and trees close to the railway are dangerous. They can hide signals, reduce visibility, and damage or even derail trains.



**400** damaged trains every year

Every week we have safety incidents caused by trees and overgrown vegetation. Below is just one of the many safety incidents reported:

**To:**  
**Subject:** Lineside Vegetation - TRK103 obscured by vegetation 17.00  
**Reply-To:** NRWES Incident Controller Thames Valley

### Network Rail Western Route

**Time:** 17:11 on 13/06/18

Signaller TVSC Newbury has reported that the Driver of 2K65 1645 Bedwyn - Reading has reported that TRK103 on the Up Westbury approaching Kintbury is obscured by vegetation.

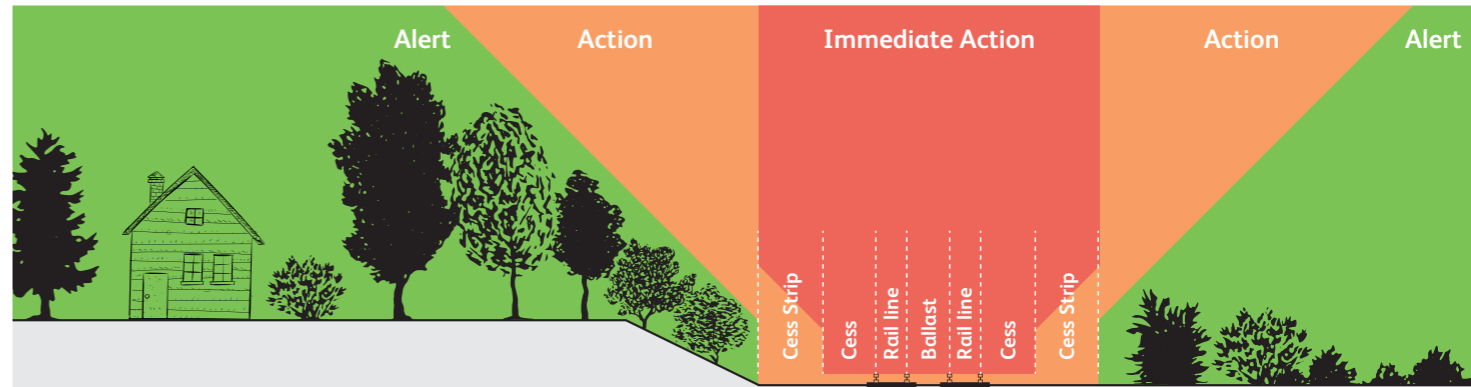
Signaller cautioning trains.

P/way advised ETA TBC.

**From:** NRWES Incident Controller Thames Valley  
**Contact:** 085 82205 / 01793 389 205  
**Status:** NEW  
**Message:** 1318260563.1 at 17:11 on 13/06/18

Last year fallen trees and branches hit more than **400 trains** putting many passengers at risk. The damage caused costs the taxpayer around **£100m a year**.

**£100** million in yearly costs



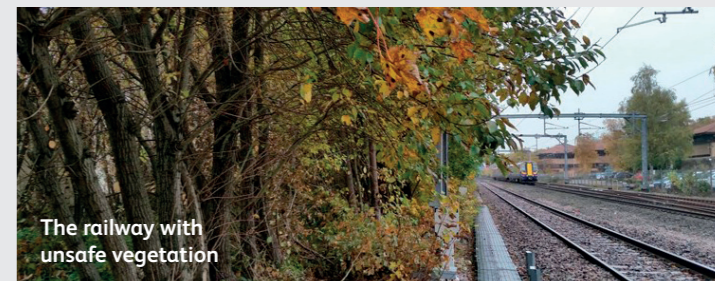
## What are we doing near you?

We will be conducting ecological and biodiversity surveys of the area on both sides of the railway. We will then put in place any measures we need to protect nesting birds and other protected species.

Working at night (or in the day, when it is safe to do so) our teams work along the railway line to reduce the vegetation and trees back to safe levels.

We cut back trees that pose a safety risk between six to eight metres from the actual rail, or to the boundary fence if that is closer.

If there are trees outside of our boundary which might endanger the railway we will talk to the landowner to agree a plan of action to keep the railway safe.



The railway with unsafe vegetation



The railway with vegetation removed with a safety buffer