

# TRU Sustainable Development Report 2024



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## We're on track to a better, more sustainable future

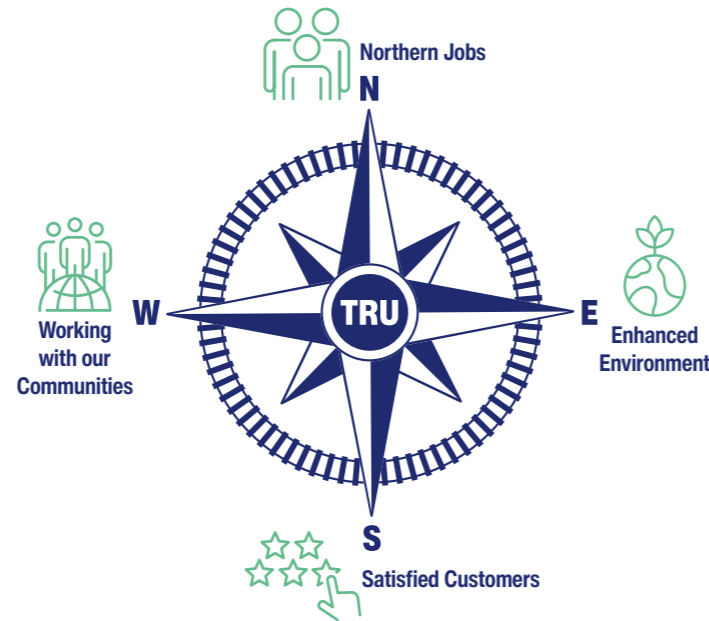
First introduced in 2023, the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU) Sustainable Development Strategy, 'Our Guiding Compass', is instrumental in shaping the programme's substantial investment throughout the North and driving multiple benefits for the programme. Our Guiding Compass marked a first in the rail industry by taking an Enterprise approach and partnering with the train operators TransPennine Express and Northern Trains, Freight Operators and Network Rail regions to generate a legacy beyond the completion of the upgrade. Together, we are transforming journeys across the North and better connecting towns and cities through more frequent, faster trains – running on a cleaner, greener and more reliable railway.

To achieve our goals, we've outlined our Sustainable Development Strategy to 2035. As we progress well into this strategy, it is the perfect time to reflect on our journey towards a better, more sustainable future. To monitor and reflect on our progress, this report summarises our work and some of our key achievements in driving sustainable development from April 2019 to March 2024.

## The four pillars

Our Guiding Compass comprises four strategic pillars that steer sustainable development for TRU. These pillars help us maximise opportunities to serve our customers and communities, ensuring progress towards a better, more sustainable future every step of the way.

TRU will accelerate change by creating **Northern jobs** for local people. We will balance building and operating a railway that **enhances the environment** whilst ensuring we **satisfy customer needs**. All the while **working with our communities** to ensure we're all heading in the right direction.



## By 2035 we aim to:

<p>Deliver a <b>minimum 50p value to society</b> for every <b>£1 spent on construction</b> on the TRU programme</p>	<p>Improve <b>customer satisfaction</b></p>	<p>Provide <b>step free access</b> to a <b>minimum 99%</b> of the customers using the route from intermediate stations</p>
<p>Achieve <b>BREEAM Infrastructure V6 Whole Project Award 'Excellent'</b> rating</p>	<p>Reduce <b>carbon impact during construction</b> by up to <b>30%</b> from initial designs</p>	<p>Engage with over <b>100,000 young people</b> through our <b>inclusive education programme</b></p>
<p>Create <b>tens of thousands of jobs</b> both directly and indirectly, including <b>8,000 new</b> and <b>safeguarded</b> roles as well as <b>590 apprentices</b> during construction</p>	<p>Reduce the carbon used to operate the railway by <b>230,000 tonnes of CO2e</b> – leading to a total saving of <b>6 million tonnes of CO2e over a 60-year period</b> after work is complete</p>	
<p>Spend a <b>minimum 25%</b> with <b>local businesses</b> to drive further growth in the north</p>	<p>Retain and enhance the natural landscape to <b>increase biodiversity</b> and deliver a <b>minimum 10% net gain</b></p>	<p>Deliver <b>25,000 hours</b> volunteering in the community to develop job skills and shape public spaces alongside the communities that use them</p>

## An Introduction from our TRU Programme Director



Over a year ago, we launched 'Our Guiding Compass' to challenge the programme to integrate best-in-class sustainable development principles throughout our design and construction phases – a focus shared across the whole Enterprise. By adopting an Enterprise-wide approach to delivering TRU, we are already seeing benefits in supporting our customers throughout our work. We've also challenged station designs and are enhancing connecting services to improve accessibility and connectivity.

Sustainable development is a core vision of TRU; with social, economic, and environmental outcomes situated at the very heart of a successful rail upgrade. This allows us to deliver an efficient programme that responds to our stakeholder's needs during periods of disruption and beyond.

For instance, the transition towards greener, hybrid trains – a process made easier through our Enterprise model – has already been implemented along certain sections of the route, eliminating the need for diesel fuel in those areas. These new trains reduce our carbon impact, noise and air pollution but also enhance timetable performance in the long run. Additionally, our carbon reduction targets for building materials, fuel and transport are driving significant challenges in our design and construction, helping us keep costs and our whole life carbon impact down.

We have introduced long term habitat conservation management plans across the Network Rail estate that will provide a positive biodiversity legacy and wider environmental benefits for local communities.

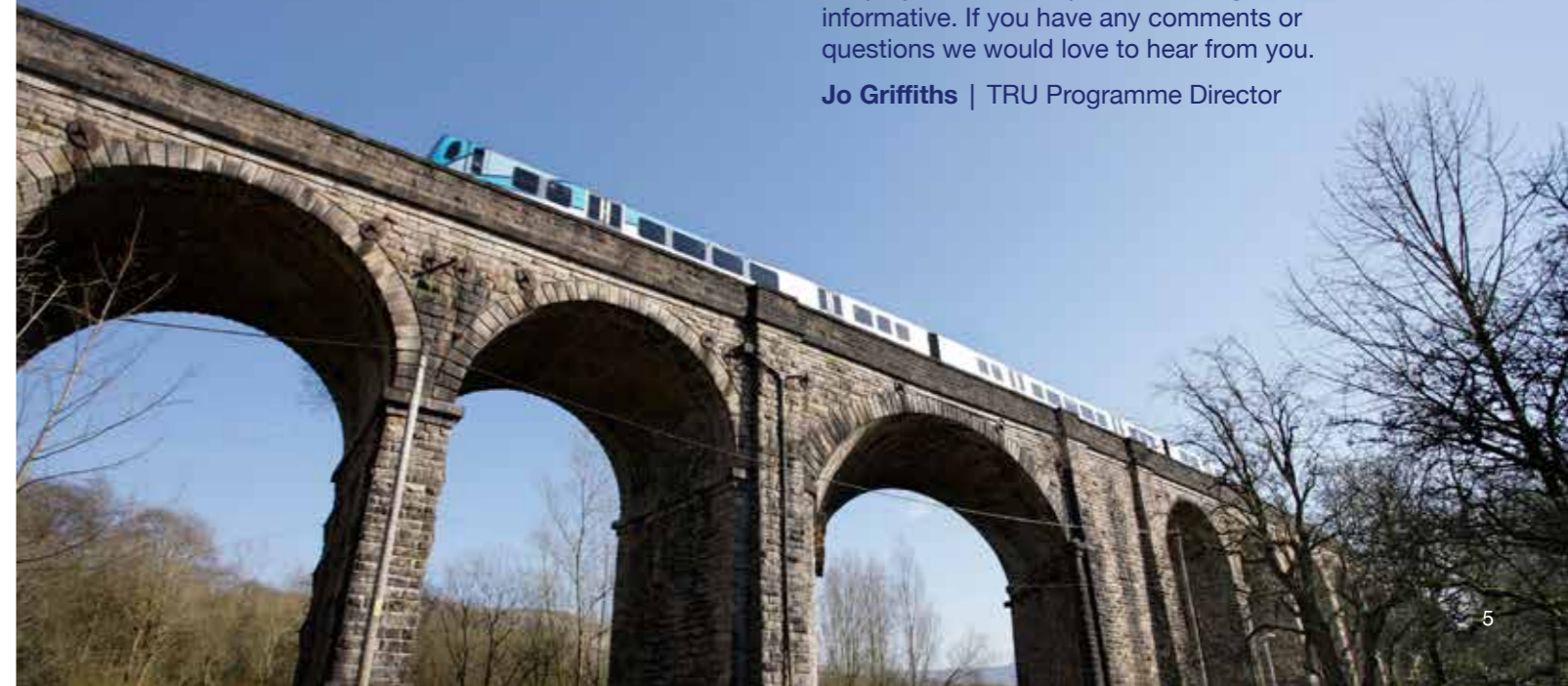
Our programme also prioritises young people and employment, aiming to strengthen the Northern economy through apprentices, placements, jobs, and skills creation. These initiatives have the potential to cultivate future leaders of the rail industry by identifying and nurturing new talent alongside local schools, colleges, and universities.

Finally, Our Guiding Compass motivates us to advocate within our communities along the route. We engage with charities and community groups to support the regeneration of spaces and places, and to respond to and support community needs, especially in high-impact areas.

We are committed to reporting progress annually on performance between April and March. As this is our first report, we have summarised our work in driving sustainable development from April 2019 to March 2024 and indicated how our work aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. As a programme, we are very proud of what we are achieving, but understand this is just the beginning. Without sustainable development at the core of TRU, we would be unable to deliver the best social, environmental, and economic value to the North.

I hope you find the report interesting and informative. If you have any comments or questions we would love to hear from you.

**Jo Griffiths** | TRU Programme Director



# How Our Guiding Compass is driving a more sustainable railway

It is crucial we make a meaningful, positive difference. By holding ourselves to a verified standard, by monitoring progress and by measuring the success of embedding sustainability throughout the programme, we are ensuring we deliver a truly sustainable programme and a social value return on investment.

As we are now delivering more construction on the ground, we are making sure we are not only legally compliant but striving to achieve best practice and working towards a mature sustainability culture to do so. We have a culture of driving continual improvement, leaving a legacy beyond the core environmental benefits that TRU will deliver and our obligations.

## Our progress to-date

We are utilising BREEAM Infrastructure, an independent evidence-based sustainability assessment, rating and awards scheme for civil engineering, infrastructure, landscaping and public realm projects, to drive, assure and measure sustainability on TRU. Our goal is to achieve a BREEAM Infrastructure 'Excellent' Rating across the programme.



## Our key objectives

*We will achieve a BREEAM Infrastructure 'Excellent' rating across the independent assessment of our programme.*

- ✓ We have already seen early success, with the Leeds Station Capacity Project securing an 'Excellent' rating and a final BREEAM Infrastructure Whole Project Award score of 78.8%.
- ✓ In addition, we have also achieved a BREEAM Infrastructure 'Strategy' Stage assessment rating of 'Excellent' for Project W1/2A (Manchester Victoria to Stalybridge).
- ✓ These achievements and lessons learnt will pave the way for further successful strategy, design and construction stage assessments across the various TRU Projects over 2024/25 and beyond, culminating in a final BREEAM Infrastructure rating for the TRU Programme.



Leeds Station



Leeds Station Capacity Project

## Leading the way with our Leeds Station Capacity Project

The BREEAM Infrastructure success on the Leeds Station Capacity Project was particularly noteworthy, as BRE (Building Research Establishment), the organisation overseeing the standard, confirmed it as “the first BREEAM Infrastructure V6 Whole Project Award (WPA) for Network Rail”. The project included the creation of Platform 0, which increased capacity at the third busiest station within the UK (outside of London). Work to minimise the bottleneck on the western approach to Leeds Station has reduced congestion, supporting TRU’s overall goal of improving passenger journeys and reducing carbon emissions through electrification.



Hilary Benn MP presents TRU with the first BREEAM Infrastructure V6 Whole Project Award (WPA) for Network Rail

### Highlights include:

#### SCORING AN IMPRESSIVE 98%

under the ‘Communities and Stakeholders’ assessment category, through developing strong partnerships with local schools and charities including the Trussell Trust and St George’s Crypt.

#### Achieving scores of 40 POINTS

or above in all three site visits under the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS), classifying the project as ‘excellent’.

#### DONATION

of the Victorian style canopy columns to the Bolton Heritage Railway for re-use.

#### COLLABORATION

between contractors to enable on-site material re-use such as the 60 tonnes of crushed granular sub-base material from track and Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) construction and reused on site as backfill material.

#### RESPONSIBLY SOURCED

Around 90% of the track and Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) material was sourced responsibly.

#### USE OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

including electric mini-diggers and battery powered handheld tools such as Hytorc Guns and Stihl Saws.



## Measuring our impact every step of the way

**Deliver a minimum 50p value to society for every £1 spent on construction on the TRU programme.**

- ✓ We are embracing new methods to measure the impact of social value by using innovative tools to calculate the impact of our sustainable development activities. This allows us to review and focus on delivering activities which drive the greatest impact and social outcomes for the communities we serve, such as working with disadvantaged communities and under-represented groups.
- ✓ The Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT) was developed by Network Rail and The Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB), with the support of TRU, as an online tool to specifically monitor and measure the social value of rail projects and day-to-day operations. By leading the way with the adoption of the RSVT, we are going further to hold ourselves to account.
- ✓ The RSVT, along with innovative mapping software, allows TRU to assess the impacts of our sustainability activities based on where they are occurring whilst also making informed decisions when targeting new locations to maximise our impact and ensure we offer good social return on the investment of TRU. Utilising the original RSVT methodology, based on the progress across our sustainability activities featured in this report, TRU calculates that we have **provided around £1.4 billion in social value to the North** between April 2019 and March 2024, exceeding our targets.



TRU team volunteering in local school

**“TRU calculates that we have provided around £1.4 billion in social value to the North between April 2019 and March 2024.”**

### A look ahead:

Over the next year, we look forward to the successful completion of a further four ‘Strategy’ Stage BREEAM assessments across our projects along the route. Additionally, we expect completion of the programme’s first ‘Design’ stage assessment for the Manchester Victoria to Stalybridge section following the earlier success at the previous stage.

Also, to keep pace with research on social value measurement, we are now working closely with Network Rail and RSSB to develop and integrate a brand-new RSVT methodology. We are also working with the Department for Transport on how to integrate the tool across the transport sector. We will report future progress and continue to innovate and harness data to drive our approach.





# We're creating thousands of Northern Jobs

At its heart, TRU aims to help the North prosper, with faster, more frequent services that deliver better connectivity, increase productivity and fuel regional job creation. This not only supports economic growth by empowering employees and business through improved connectivity but also drives job creation within the programme itself.

The construction and operation of TRU is already creating a wealth of employment and business opportunities along the North Transpennine corridor. We are encouraging new entrants into the rail industry through work experience and apprenticeships, while also taking steps to ensure our team reflects the rich diversity of the communities we serve. TRU is also working collaboratively with local businesses of all sizes to foster a legacy of economic growth in the region.

## Our progress to-date

TRU is already contributing to the local job market. We're currently on **target for 60% of the project workforce living within 25 miles of the route and 80% within 40 miles**. We're working closely with the **National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR)** to be well-prepared to meet future skill gaps and demands, as well as supporting the growth of the rail industry.



Highlights include:



**270**  
**APPRENTICES**

employed across the programme at all levels across a range of disciplines.



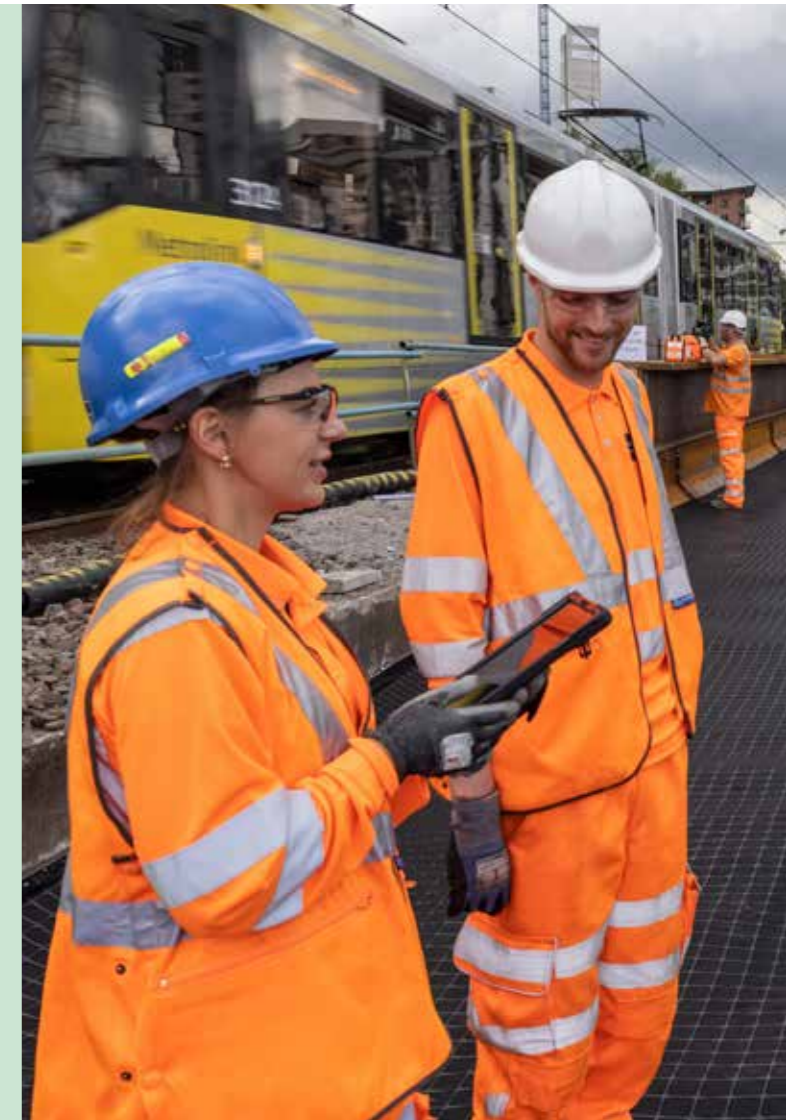
**66%** OF SPEND

outside of the TRU framework is going to local suppliers within 25 miles of the route.



**12,500**

work experience days delivered to young people and 3,900 days for adults.





## Our key objectives

### Creating more jobs for local people

**Create tens of thousands of jobs both directly and indirectly, including 8,000 new and safeguarded roles as well as 590 apprentices created during construction.**

- ✓ TRU remains dedicated to fostering regional growth in the North. One key approach is supporting local employment by integrating local people into the programme, offering apprenticeship schemes, and providing training and varied experiences. This not only strengthens the regional economy but ensures we have the right skills to deliver the best route for our communities.
- ✓ We have engaged with **NSAR** to model the types of jobs required to deliver the programme and the skills gap. Our aim is to be a catalyst for skills development across the route. We're in the process of developing new approaches to drive job creation and implement focused recruitment based on programme timelines, locations and skill requirements. Additionally, we are closely collaborating with local authorities to plan for skills development of local workforces.
- ✓ The development of young people is crucial to our strategy. We have prioritised entry-level opportunities and have **employed 270 apprentices across various levels and disciplines**. This achievement is significantly ahead of our target to reach 590 apprentices by the end of the programme. This progress not only strengthens regional capacity but also supports both our programme and the industry as a whole.
- ✓ This year, we initiated a partnership with Kirklees College and the Job Centre Plus to deliver a sector-based **Work Academy**. The aim is to encourage local unemployed people to obtain a **Construction Skills Certificate Scheme (CSCS)** card. All successful participants will be guaranteed a TRU job interview. Already, **two long-term unemployed residents from Huddersfield have been employed on TRU through this scheme**. One is assisting in the construction of a compound and associated infrastructure, while the other will be working on a similar project at Weaving Lane in Ravensthorpe.



TRU apprentices with former Minister for rail Huw Merriman and TRU team at the announcement for TRU second funding phase at Ravensthorpe

- ✓ We have also been actively engaging with schools, colleges and universities to provide work experience and work placement opportunities. In August 2022, Ewan was placed with our Sustainability Team on a summer Internship at our Joseph Lynn Hub in Leeds. He joined the team for a 12-day placement and was an integral part of the team, contributing to meetings and competing ecological surveys, environmental guides and posters for site compounds. As a result, Ewan has since returned to TRU as a Graduate, securing employment within the TRU programme.
- ✓ Another success was Callum, a student at Leeds College, who was first introduced to TRU when we delivered a Mock Interview Day. As a result, he contacted TRU and was offered a 2 week placement for project management and civil engineering in Batley. His placement was so successful, he joined TRU via Amey as an apprentice later that year.
- ✓ TRU has also attended Jobs Fairs at HMP Leeds and HMP Wealstun, engaging with more than 180 offenders that are due for release, providing a pathway to potential employment whilst reducing reoffending rates.



### Spending more money with local businesses

**Ensure a minimum 25% supply chain spend with local businesses to drive further growth in the North.**

- ✓ It is crucial that our programme boosts the supply chain within a 25-mile radius of the route, fostering economic development through stronger local companies, increased employment and greater spend further down the supply chain. Local supply chain spending has a recognised multiplier effect, where every £1 spent has a broader impact on the local economy.
- ✓ By supporting local enterprises, we have already begun building a network of local suppliers. This means that two-thirds of our spend outside of the TRU framework is allocated to partners within our target radius – around £445 million, significantly exceeding our 25% target. Meanwhile our spend with Small and Medium Enterprises is around £231m.

**“I’ve been given valuable opportunities to learn and develop my skills within TRU. Being part of a project so close to my home near Leeds is not only convenient but also meaningful, as it directly impacts me as a local resident. I’ve also been able to volunteer around TRU, something new for me. This project has opened doors to a career and experiences I might never have had otherwise.”**

**Ewan | TRU Graduate Sustainability Advisor**



Ewan works with TRU sustainability team in our Leeds office

### A look ahead:

Over the next year, we are redeveloping our approach to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion to help drive our jobs and skills development in a way to support under-represented groups. We'll also be working closely with local authorities, for locations where we will be undertaking significant works like Huddersfield, Deighton and Shipley to drive local employment and business engagement.



## We're enhancing the environment

**We take our environmental impact seriously. TRU is protecting the natural environment through the design, delivery, and operation of the future electrified route. We are focusing on carbon, noise, and air quality impacts, that will be significantly reduced by running electric or bi-mode trains.**

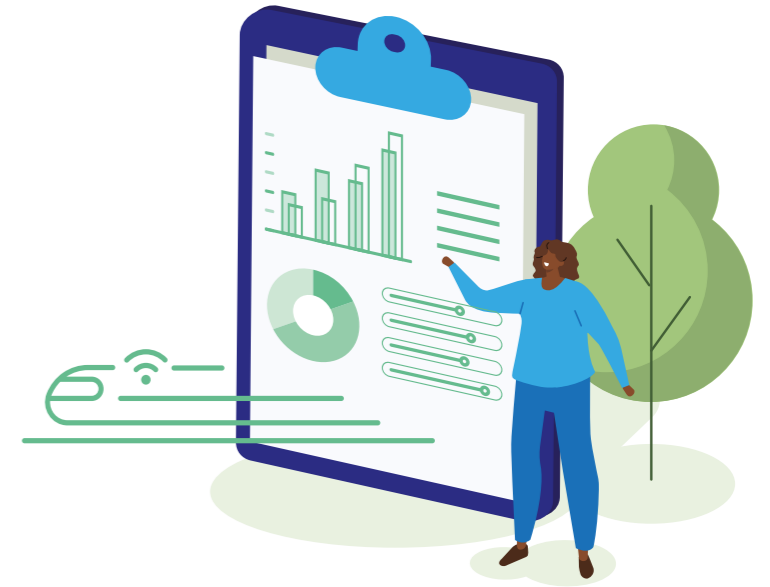
We acknowledge there are carbon emissions associated with constructing the electrification programme. So, TRU is ensuring we reduce infrastructure emissions by adopting circular economy principals and supporting sustainable, responsible sourcing. Whilst delivering the programme, we will ensure environmental compliance, minimising pollution during construction. We're committed to exploring opportunities to maximise biodiversity, avoid or reduce whole life carbon emissions and generate renewable energy on or near the route every step of the way.



The disused bowling green in Micklefield now transformed into a stunning wildflower meadow

### Our progress to-date

We are seeing encouraging results from initial tests of the first hybrid trains carried out along our newly electrified lines. Our long-term aim is to ensure that every train on our network is hybrid, enabling fully electric travel for all journeys between our stations.



### Highlights include:

#### **NEW ELECTRIC TRAIN TESTING**

Installation of Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) between Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge Stations Fully electric passenger trains will be active on the route before the end of 2024.

#### **25 FOOTBALL FIELDS OF LAND\***

across 6 plots of land proposed for new habitat creation and enhancement to help the project deliver a positive biodiversity legacy.

\*Approximate equivalent

#### **CARBON TRAINING**

made available across the programme encouraging carbon reduction ideas from across the Enterprise.

#### **REUSE OF 20,000 TONNES OF SOIL**

and 13,000 tonnes of excess aggregate from Leeds to York to help minimise waste.



## Our key objectives

### Reducing our carbon footprint

**Reduce the carbon used to operate the railway by 230,000 tonnes of CO2e by 2035 – leading to a total saving of 6 million tonnes of CO2e over a 60-year period after work is complete – the equivalent of taking...**

 **6 million petrol or diesel cars off the road for a year!**

- ✓ In line with government objectives, we are committed to creating a cleaner and greener transport sector. We will also improve noise and air quality along the route for local neighbours by removing diesel trains. In March 2024, a **successful electric test train ran between Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge Station**. The replacement track allows for faster speeds, 25 new signals enable closer spacing of trains and a higher speed railway junction at Stalybridge enhances overall efficiency. **More electric passenger trains will be active on the route before the end of 2024.**

- ✓ TransPennine Express retired the Nova Three diesel fleet in December 2023 replacing them with the hybrid Class 185. The reduction in diesel consumption achieves a **saving of 3.4kg of CO2e per km** travelled along the route. Further carbon savings will be gained as more parts of the route become electrified. This will enable TransPennine Express' Nova One, a bi-modal fleet, to operate in electric mode over diesel mode.
- ✓ **More electric trains are due to be tested between York and Church Fenton** later in the year. Further carbon savings will be gained as soon as more parts of the TRU route become electrified, meaning that TransPennine Express Nova one will be able to operate more in electric mode rather than diesel mode.



First electric train test run between Manchester and Stalybridge



### Cutting whole-life carbon

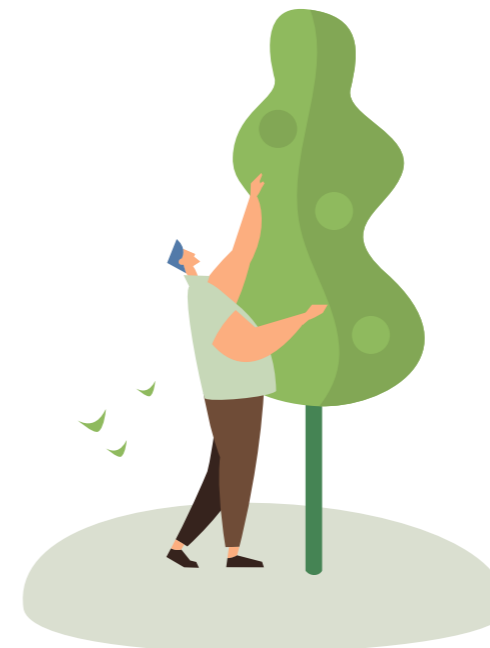
**Reduce carbon impact during construction by up to 30% from initial designs.**

- ✓ We have an important role to play in ensuring the infrastructure we build is as carbon efficient as possible. Our team have strengthened our carbon processes and competencies by training over 130 of our people, laying the best foundations for future success in incorporating carbon reduction into our project designs. We are **committed to align with PAS2080**, the global standard for managing buildings and infrastructure carbon.
- ✓ Through cross project collaboration between TRU and Rail Electrification Alliance (REAL), we moved **13,000 tonnes of leftover construction material** from two REAL sites to several TRU sites. This material was used to build roads and construction hubs at Manston Lane, Barkston Ash and Huddlestone. By reusing this material, **we saved approximately 1,200 tonnes of carbon** that would have come from using new materials. Additionally, our Materials Management Plan helped us **reuse around 20,000 tonnes of soil and other materials**, which prevented waste and allowed us to reshape the land.



The use of solar equipment on TRU compounds

- ✓ Using low carbon materials, equipment and processes help keep our impact low. We are deploying low carbon technology across many of our operations as part of a longer-term transition to fuel efficient construction. **Solar-powered lighting, generators and Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) powered excavators** are being introduced across our sites, from Miles Platting in Manchester to Dewsbury, Leeds and York. We have tested low-carbon concrete across the programme and are working with suppliers to **use recycled and reused railway sleepers**. We're exploring every option. For example, we are developing a new approach to Mining Remediation in order to **lessen the carbon impact of the grout** required at Marsh Lane and Richmond Hill, Leeds. Our team in Castleford also recognise their dependence on traditional tarmac products, so the Sustainability Team worked closely with the Castleford Team to use **tarmac alternatives that led to a saving of 2 tCO2e** – the equivalent of powering 1.3 households for a year.





## Championing biodiversity net gain

**Reduce biodiversity impacts during construction and then deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity.**

- ✓ We have set ourselves an ambitious goal to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). BNG quantifies the biodiversity value of the site prior to construction. We then need to deliver a project that is measurably better for biodiversity. We will achieve this through avoiding or minimising impacts to important habitats where possible and then enhancing or creating new high value habitats for biodiversity.
- ✓ Our objective is to deliver biodiversity benefits as close as possible to where the impacts occur, maintaining strong biodiversity along the route and providing benefit to the local wildlife and communities. We have developed a biodiversity net gain hierarchy to ensure that we are better able to inform decision making throughout the design and construction process and ultimately provide the best possible outcomes for biodiversity.
- ✓ We now have a growing number of examples where designs have been changed to avoid and minimise biodiversity impacts. We are working closely with Network Rail to look at delivering improved biodiversity on their estate to help the agenda of delivering biodiversity enhancement onsite where works are occurring or as close as possible. We have helped develop the process to **ensure these sites are safeguarded in perpetuity and the management is fully funded over at least the next 30 years.** This long-term investment will help the project achieve a positive legacy for biodiversity and local communities. Not only does this benefit TRU but also Network Rail in its wider national agenda of delivering biodiversity net gain across its estate by 2035.

- ✓ We are currently proposing **long-term conservation management across 6 plots of land**, which combined are equivalent to **approximately 25 football fields and will generate around 90 biodiversity units.** We will need in the region of four times this amount of conservation management by the time TRU is complete. This includes a site at Colton Junction directly on the TRU route and further sites at Biggin, Hambleton and Selby, Fairfield and Guide bridge in Manchester.
- ✓ Under Network Rail's great crested newt (GCN) Organisational Licence, which is designed and managed by **NatureSpace Partnership**, we have also invested in the additional **creation and management of 2.5ha of high biodiversity value terrestrial habitat.** These habitats will be managed and monitored to ensure they are benefitting not only **great crested newts**, but a wide range of species and the environment, way into the future. NatureSpace invest in long term, landscape scale conservation projects, so TRU has contributed to part of a larger scale conservation project in our region.

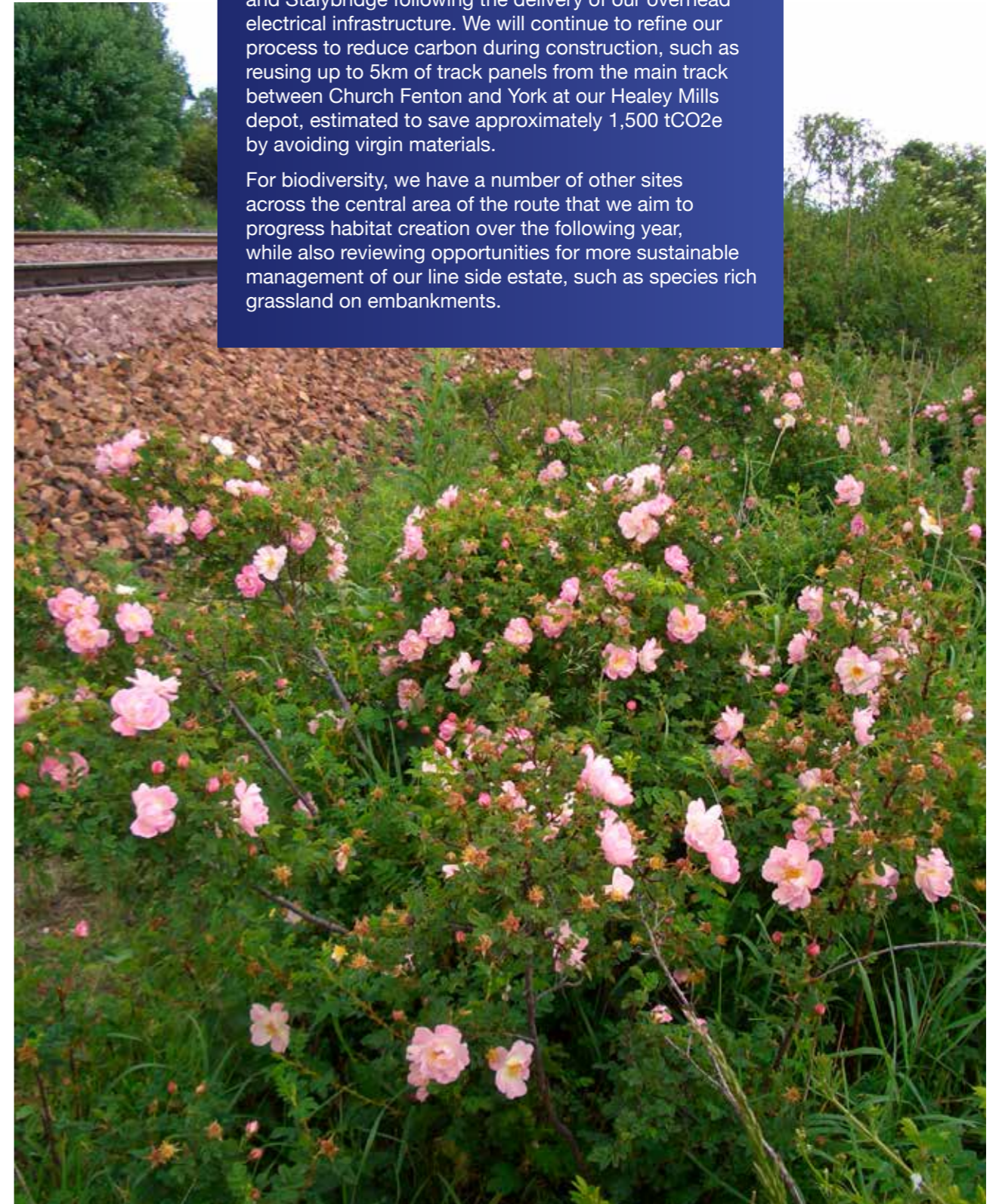


Great Crested Newt

## A look ahead:

We will deliver a significant milestone in 2024 by operating the first electric trains between Manchester and Stalybridge following the delivery of our overhead electrical infrastructure. We will continue to refine our process to reduce carbon during construction, such as reusing up to 5km of track panels from the main track between Church Fenton and York at our Healey Mills depot, estimated to save approximately 1,500 tCO<sub>2</sub>e by avoiding virgin materials.

For biodiversity, we have a number of other sites across the central area of the route that we aim to progress habitat creation over the following year, while also reviewing opportunities for more sustainable management of our line side estate, such as species rich grassland on embankments.



# We're pushing boundaries to enhance customer satisfaction

Customers and our local neighbours remain at the heart of our approach to delivering TRU. We are committed to delivering faster, cleaner, greener, and more frequent trains with greater capacity, on a more resilient railway that is fit for the future. We will provide safe, reliable, interconnected, and accessible travel for customers to ensure the railway can support people's commute and leisure activities in a way that can work for all.

TRU is making it easier and more comfortable to travel by train across the North. We're modernising the railway so customers can enjoy smooth journeys between all stations and beyond. This will encourage more people to choose the train as their first choice of travel between towns and cities, taking more cars off the roads.



## Our progress to-date

TRU is on a journey to increasing capacity and reliability by adding to the number of train services and improving journey times. We understand that these essential works may be causing inconvenience for our customers. To improve, we're setting new standards to hold ourselves accountable – measuring everything from comfort and reliability to speed, number of seats and cleanliness.

Furthermore, Transport for the North (TfN) conducted research into Transport Related Social Exclusion, identifying that some communities along the route experience very high levels of exclusion for jobs and opportunities. This work alongside customer feedback and local authority evidence has been used to prioritise Stations Fund allocation and First and Last Mile projects.



## Highlights include:



upgrade to all platforms at Morley Station and Garforth Station.



Our First and Last Mile projects at Castleford and Morley have increased CCTV, lighting, and highway and wayfinding improvements which enhance the customer journey.



Art project at Greenfield station



Greenfield station is the first TRU Routes to Roots station art project, with the station hosting artwork produced by Year 11 students from the local area, and supported by a professional artist.



## Our key objectives

### Enhancing station access

**Provide step free access to a minimum 99% of the customers using the route from intermediate stations.**

- ✓ In addition to modernising our rail infrastructure, we are also working on making our stations more accessible for everyone in the community. Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE) is a significant issue for many communities along the route, particularly for passengers with reduced mobility. When trains and buses are not well connected or accessible, it limits people's access to jobs, education, training, and health services.

- ✓ Through this work, we are proud to be on track to deliver 99% Step Free access. We've **upgraded facilities at Morley Station and Garforth Station with new footbridges and lifts, creating step free access for the first time** across both stations. Furthermore, our new Stations Strategy Working Group and Accessibility Task and Finish Group are actively exploring options to drive this number higher.



Newly upgraded Morley station improving accessibility for all passengers



### Improving customer satisfaction

**Support customers and communities throughout disruption and drive the best possible service.**

- ✓ To ensure the customer experience is fully integrated into our programme, the Train Operators, Northern Trains and TransPennine Express, are fully embedded into the TRU Enterprise and lead our customer delivery team. To maximise our effectiveness, the Customer Delivery Team uses a 'plan, do, review' approach and consider customer feedback integral to shaping our plans to deliver the best possible customer experience. It is through this work, and wider industry collaboration with key stakeholders that we mitigate the impact on customers during construction, support them through the transition and ensure they feel listened to every step along the way.
- ✓ A key component of our approach is the **TRU Customer Panel, comprising of around 1,600 people** across the route, designed to be representative of our customer base. We regularly engage with this panel to better understand the demographics and behaviours of our customers and share our thinking to better adapt our service and design.
- ✓ Our **'Mystery Shopper'** programme provides detailed insight into our customers' journey during planned engineering works, helping us to continually monitor, understand and respond to the customer experience as a result of TRU's delivery. Between October 2023 and March 2024, we have undertaken over **420 mystery shopper audits**.



- ✓ We also consider the perspectives of our TRU employees and other stakeholders through 'lessons learned' meetings and workshops and informal conversations. These valuable insights have driven broader improvements, such as increasing the number of staff on the ground to support customers, including TRU Customer Delivery Managers and Rail Replacement Coordinators.

We have also made changes to **rail replacement bus stops to improve safety and accessibility for customers**



and safety for everyone by positioning them closer to the railway.

- ✓ Our Station Strategy Working Group has developed a **design toolkit focusing on areas such as signage, seating and opportunities for green roof shelters**, to drive further improvements at stations to make them more pleasant places for customers to use.
- ✓ We remain committed to engage better with local businesses both on the route and those who are station tenants. We will ensure they are aware of any upcoming planned disruptions so they can keep their customers informed to minimise any potential negative impact to their business.



Our customer team member assisting travelers with information at the station



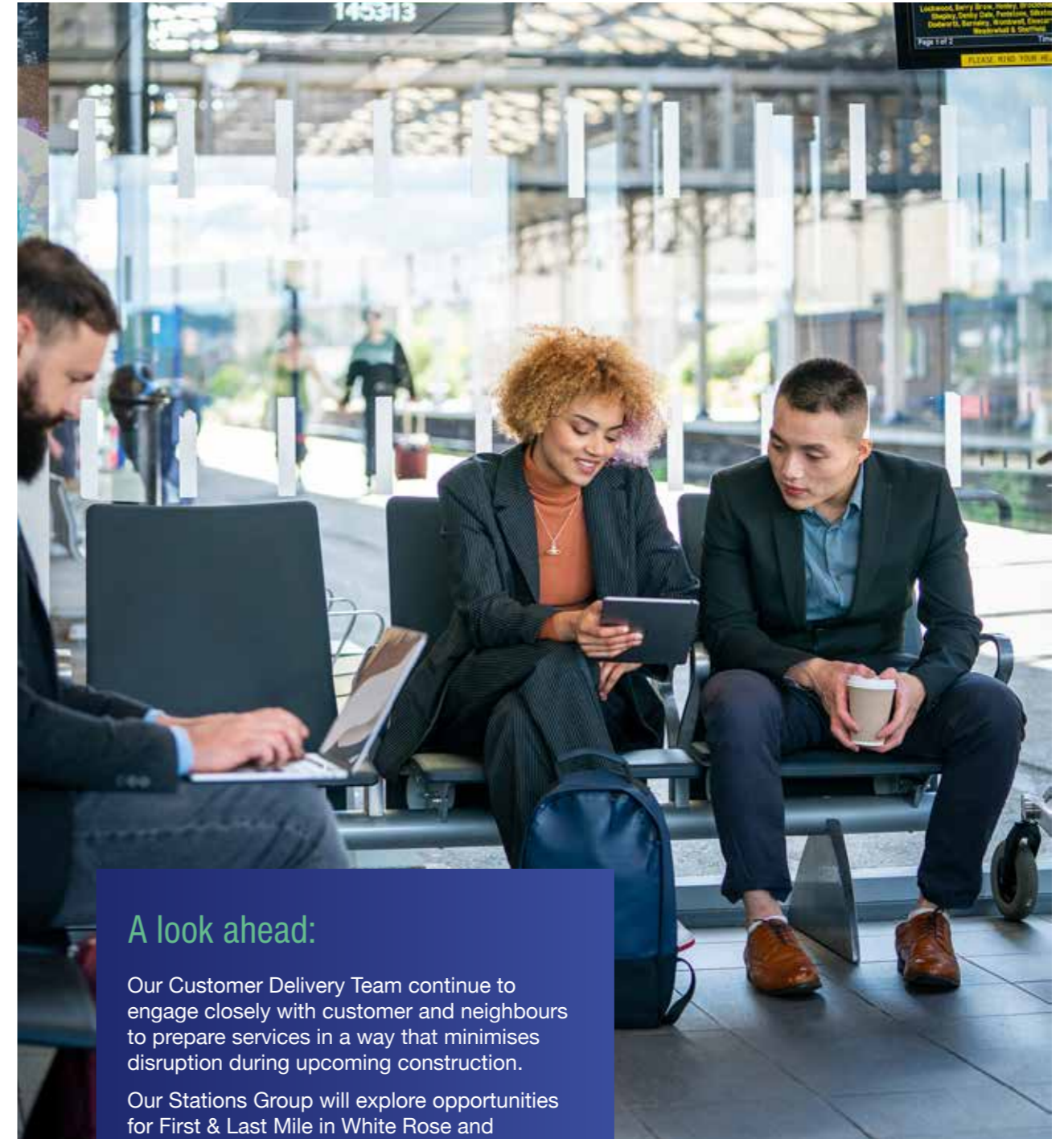
## Enabling ongoing journeys

Offer more connectivity and sustainable travel options for customers through *First and Last Mile*.

- ✔ It's critical our services align well with other modes of transport and how the community uses them. A better-connected railway can play a key role in reducing social exclusion caused by transport, boost local economies and improve health through active travel.
- ✔ We are working closely with local authorities, community organisations and business forums to develop proposals to improve journeys to and from stations. This could involve establishing stronger connections to other modes of transport, improving transport infrastructure, or creating the conditions for a mode shift to active travel. In 2024, the first major **First and Last Mile projects commenced**, such as improving station access and connection to active travel at stations in **Morley, Mirfield and Deighton**, improving CCTV, lighting and way-finding at **Castleford station**, and key research at **Huddersfield station** with more improvements planned.
- ✔ In 2024, as part of First and Last Mile, we funded **Environmental Projects in Kirklees (EPIKS), an active travel community group based in Kirklees**, to begin consulting and engaging with 100,000 residents who live close to Huddersfield station to understand barriers to accessing the station. The project is expected to be completed during 2025.
- ✔ By responding to the National Audit Office (NAO) recommendations to work with local authorities to improve end to end journeys, the First and Last Mile programme has embarked on an innovative programme improving customers' experience and encouraging and supporting a move to active and sustainable travel and promoting the benefits of the upgraded route. The programme will be evaluated and provides a legacy for communities along the route as well as future rail upgrade programmes.



TRU team hold an information session, providing customers with details about the upcoming blockade



### A look ahead:

Our Customer Delivery Team continue to engage closely with customer and neighbours to prepare services in a way that minimises disruption during upcoming construction.

Our Stations Group will explore opportunities for First & Last Mile in White Rose and Huddersfield, while engaging with local communities for new station artwork projects in places like Ashton-under-Lyne. Our Community Relations and Social Value teams will also work closely with stakeholders around our key construction sites to generate plans to support specific needs of neighbours.



## We're working closely with our communities

TRU is committed to improve the lives of those living in the communities where we operate. We will strive to keep our communities safe, minimise disruption and invest in wellbeing, education and community spaces to leave a net positive impact on society.

### Our progress to-date

We're already working closely with communities along the route to deliver wider socio-economic benefits through design, construction and beyond. We are investing in inclusive education for tens of thousands of local children throughout our communities that focuses on their wellbeing, skills development and safety, to ensure we leave a positive impact on society.

Highlights include:



**44,500 CHILDREN**

have been engaged with along the route through over 570 different STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) events.



**TRU 'CONES' BOOK**

developed with children's author, Chris Madely, to engage young children and raise awareness of the different jobs involved in rail and construction.



**11,450 HOURS**

have been volunteered by employees for community and charitable organisations along the route.



TRU volunteers work with Canal and River Trust at Lock 2 near Deighton





## Our key projects

### Inspiring the next generation

Engage with over 100,000 young people through our inclusive education programme.

- ✓ We are working hard to inspire the next generation to explore career opportunities in rail, particularly in areas most in need of support. **We have delivered 44,500 engagements with children along the route through over 570 different STEAM events.** This progress marks us ahead of schedule to deliver our overall target of reaching 100,000 students by 2035.
- ✓ Since 2019, TRU has engaged **480 students from Manchester Islamic School For Girls** in STEAM sessions, inspiring under-represented groups to pursue careers in engineering.
- ✓ We have collaborated closely with children's author, Chris Madeley, to create the **TRU 'Cones' book**. Her latest book tells the story of four cones traveling along the TRU route, learning about the upgrade work taking place. This 'Route into Rail' initiative allows us to engage local primary school aged children to consider a career in rail using materials that directly relate to their environment. Since December 2023, **we've engaged 1,300 students with book readings and accompanying lessons across nine schools**, including Spring Grove Primary School in Huddersfield and Park View Community School in Manchester. Engagement with primary school aged children is key to introduce the rail and construction careers early as this is not often undertaken until high school.
- ✓ We have also focused on inspiring women to pursue careers in engineering, a group currently under-represented within the rail and construction industries. To foster aspirations for future female engineers and challenge stereotypes, we hosted an **engineering careers event for Year 3 and Year 6 students at Swillington Primary School** in Leeds.



STEM Fest in Bradford

**"I am delighted to have written this book for the TRU programme – I think it's a great way to engage children with the railway and its importance for the North."**

**Chris Madeley** | Cones | Author



Volunteering project to create an outdoor learning space for Teach me Happy, York



### Giving back to the community

**Deliver 25,000 hours volunteering in the community to develop job skills and shape public spaces alongside the communities that use them.**

- ✓ To ensure a community-centric, people-led outreach programme, we identified local needs along the route to understand key challenges faced by residents. This enables local delivery plans to be produced and deliver activities that meet the wants and needs of the community.
- ✓ We've delivered over 1,430 days of volunteering, including 55 days with our long-standing community partner, Mustard Tree Manchester, 112 days with Teach Me Happy in York and 108 hours with Chevin Forest in Leeds.

- ✓ For 30 years, **Mustard Tree** has supported people across Greater Manchester facing poverty and homelessness. **Teach Me Happy**, in York is an alternative learning provider catering for young people with special educational needs, disabilities and poor mental health who are not able to access mainstream schools or receive the level of support they require to thrive. Our volunteerism has transformed their teaching by creating a brand-new outdoor learning space. Since 2022, we have volunteered extensively with the **Canal and River Trust**, where we sponsor a section around lock 2 at Deighton, delivering a total of 61 days of work clearing vegetation, painting, removing graffiti, litter picking and much more.

### A look ahead:

We will be working closely with local authorities to have focused engagement with schools and charities close to where our most significant works are taking place.

Also, to further embed our support within local communities, 2024 marks the launch of our TRU Community Fund, which will **distribute £175,000 to schools, charities and community groups** to create or regenerate spaces and places that support key community services in disadvantaged areas along the route. We will aim to work closely with the funded projects to support via volunteering and generate lasting partnerships in the community. Watch out for more on this ambitious new approach and further funding that will be released during the remainder of TRU.

# We're on track to a brighter future

**TRU has been striving to be industry leading in Sustainability since 2019 and we have seen great success to date by delivering value to our local communities through extensive engagement with schools and creating employment opportunities for young people across the route.**

We have also been laying the foundations for a greener railway that will leave the route with greatly reduced carbon emissions and healthier biodiversity than when we started. With our new Our Guiding Compass Strategy, we laid down a new challenge to ensure we not only deliver our legal obligations but go beyond these to generate a legacy of sustainability on TRU. We did this by further advancing our targets, and utilising the close integration of Network Rail, TransPennine Express and Northern. While it is early days, we are seeing positive results from our Enterprise approach with the train operating companies to ensure a more accessible railway, customer focused delivery, efficient design of our construction and services and stronger engagement with our communities.

We have already delivered ambitious designs that challenge our carbon impact, tested new state of the art low carbon trains and laid the foundations to restore and improve lineside biodiversity.

To add to this, we have been leading the way on our social value delivery with an outcome focused approach delivering tangible, positive impacts which is evidenced by our performance to date.

Finally, we are working to improve safety, accessibility and customer experience, with a 1,600 people strong stakeholder panel supporting our many stakeholder events. Meanwhile, we have finished work on Morley and Garforth to provide step free access across those stations for the first time.

I and the rest of the leadership team are extremely proud that what we have delivered to date, is an industry leading approach to sustainability which we are sharing back into Network Rail and across the rail and construction sectors. TRU has a long journey ahead, but our strategy and our partners are setting us up to deliver a sustainable railway fit for all of our communities and for the future. I look forward to the next year ahead and furthering our work in industry leading environmental management and positive social value impact.

**Anna Humphries** |  
TRU Head of Sustainability



## What's next?

We are committed to publishing a TRU Sustainable Development Report annually, to be published on our website.

To learn more about our sustainability goals – or play your part in the progress visit [www.thetrupgrade.co.uk](http://www.thetrupgrade.co.uk) for regular updates on our work.

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