



Keeping the railway safe in your area

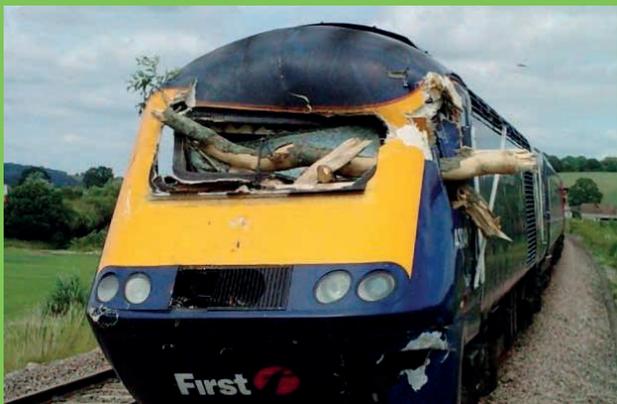
Managing overgrown trees and bushes





Managing trees and plants by the railway

Overgrown trees and plants close to the railway are dangerous and pose safety risks to trains, passengers and our workers. They can hide signals, reduce visibility, causing slips, trips, falls and damage or derail trains. Fallen trees can also lead to long delays for our passengers, which affects the entire UK network.



Every week we deal with problems caused by fallen trees and overgrown bushes. You can see details of one of these incidents in the report below:

Incident report			
Fault no/Status	460184 / CODED	Equipment Desc	PADDINGTON - BRISTOL - PENZANCE1 1:669:53:405: Up Slow/Local/Relief: UP RELIEF
Failed At	11/02/202 13:52:36	Place	MAIDENHEAD
Discipline	OFF TRACK	Suffix	TRACK (P-W)
Attend	LONDON OFF TRACK: TAR130	Maintain	WESTERN EAST DU
In Order	12/02/202 09:40:00	Reported By	NR Helpline
Rectify	12/02/202 09:40:00	Reported As	PADDINGTON - BRISTOL - PENZANCE1:0:0: 246:638:UP: PADDINGTON: BOUNDARY UPSIDE
Equip comments			
Details	Fallen tree, S1 Oklaories, Maidenhead MLN1, 23m802yds, Up Side. Tree has fallen into railway neighbours garden, described as 'quite large', no danger to property.		
Cause	Unsafe		
Action	Tree removed to restore, lia		

At the start of 2020, storms Ciara and Dennis led to more than 63 cases of fallen trees or branches on the tracks, between Paddington and Penzance. Thankfully, no passengers or train drivers were harmed.

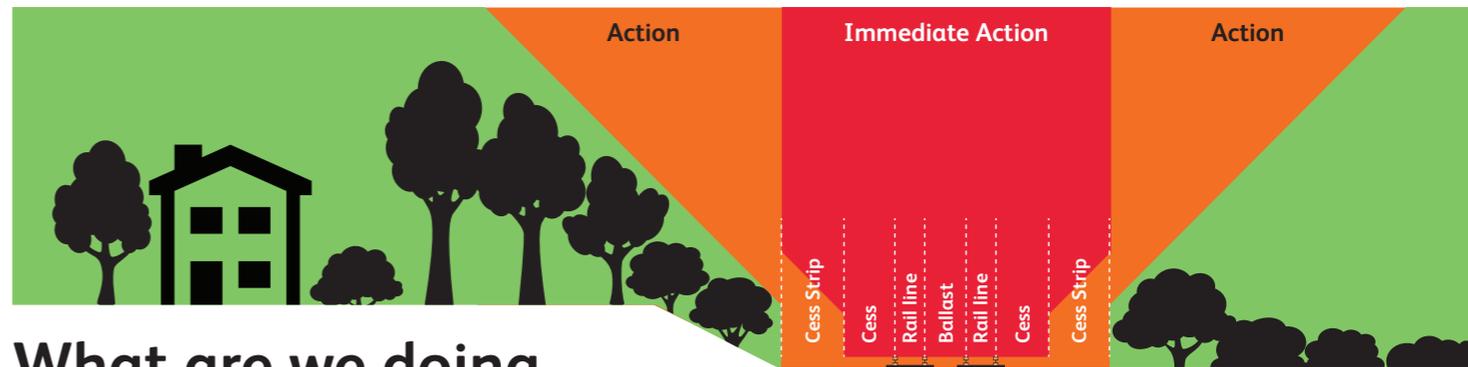


500

damaged
trains
every year

£100

million in
yearly costs



What are we doing near you?

First we'll be carrying out ecological and biodiversity surveys of the area on both sides of the railway. This will help us decide how to look after nesting birds and other protected species.

Our teams will then start working along the railway line mainly during the day (or occasionally at night) to cut back trees and bushes to safe levels.

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

If there are trees outside our boundary that could cause problems, we'll talk to the landowner to agree a plan of action to keep the railway safe.



Before

The railway with unsafe vegetation



After

The railway with vegetation removed with a safety buffer



Protecting the environment

Our approach is based on guidance from a range of conservation groups and includes:

- Monitoring and protecting active bird nests until the young birds have fledged
- Keeping bats and other protected species safe
- Getting permission to work in protected sites



We're working towards changing the habitat from woodland to grassland, within eight metres of the railway. This promotes biodiversity and makes the railway safer for both passengers and staff.

“We have seen too many examples in recent years of fallen trees or large branches striking trains, in particular following numerous severe weather events. We support the significant ongoing programme of vegetation management work being done across Network Rail to reduce risks from vegetation, in particular the risk from trees falling on the line. This action has to be taken to reduce risks to the travelling public.”

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



For more information:

On our Lineside and Habitat Management programme

Take a look at our website: [networkrail.co.uk/managing-railways-habitats/](https://www.networkrail.co.uk/managing-railways-habitats/)

If you have any questions, please contact us at: **03457 11 41 41**
or crwest@networkrail.co.uk