

Underground in bloom

What's new on the Tube



IF your local Tube station has looked a little brighter over the past few months, staff may have been taking part in this year's Underground in Bloom competition.

Staff from 68 competing stations, depots and train crew sites have been potting, planting and pruning in a bid to grow the most beautiful flowers, ripest fruit and tastiest vegetables. Staff tend the gardens in their free time.

This year's competition was particularly special as the Tube is celebrating its 150th anniversary, with extra points awarded for 'greener' gardens and entries incorporating the anniversary theme.

Hampstead Tube station was one of many stations that impressed the judges, winning three awards, which included the coveted Best Overall Award.

Phil Hufton, chief operating officer for London Underground, said: 'I'd like to thank all our staff for transforming our stations, depots and train crew sites into



places bursting with colour during the 150th anniversary of the Tube.

'Our staff have spent their spare time putting a lot of work into these wonderful gardens and I know it's appreciated by our customers. With so many excellent entries it was tough to choose winners; I congratulate all those who won. Every entrant should be proud of their achievements and I am already looking forward to next year's efforts.'

The competition entries were judged earlier this month by London Underground judges, with the winners receiving shopping vouchers as prizes.

■ Northfields (above, left) and Epping (above) were among the stations to impress the judges and scoop awards

THE Tube carries more than a billion people each year – and demand keeps growing. But much of the infrastructure is very old, some dating back to the 1860s, so modernisation is essential. This is already well under way, with some parts already finished. But to completely rebuild and renew the network will take about another decade.

How the upgrades benefits you:

- More trains running more often
- More capacity across the network
- New trains and more reliable signals
- More step-free access so the network is easier for everyone to use
- Key stations that are less congested at busy times
- Extra security features for your peace of mind



Tube improvement plan – post weekend update



A CLOSURE on the Northern line allowed upgrade work to continue. Pat Hansberry, the line's general manager, explained: 'A small section of the Northern line closed over the weekend so we could test our new signalling system. Once the upgrade is complete next year it's going to let us run trains faster, so we can put more of them on the line for you.'

A closure on the Central line allowed for 420metres of track to be replaced at Leytonstone. To make the most of the closure, platform improvement work was also carried out at Buckhurst Hill. The same closure will take place again this weekend on the Central line.

The work is all part of the Tube improvement plan which, when completed, will offer a more reliable service and smoother journeys.

Keep up with the improvement plan and how it might affect you at tfl.gov.uk

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