

# QUARTERLY UPDATE



Winter 2024 20th December



Informing our rail community...



## MESSAGE FROM CHAIR

WILL ROGERS

The last quarter has been extremely busy for the Rail Forum team. We are acutely aware of the ongoing difficulties in parts of the rail sector with a very slow start to CP7 reported by many of you. Following discussions with Network Rail (NR) this led to a webinar in November and release of significant more information about current and anticipated spend, which is now available on their website. We are committed to continuing to work with NR on CP7 work bank visibility and the Rail Forum team are still keen to hear feedback from members on the current situation.

Since the last update the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Act has been passed. This paves the way for the train operating companies to be moved into public ownership as current contracts end. The first three to be nationalised during 2025: SWR, c2C and Greater Anglia were announced earlier in December. The second rail reform bill, which will create Great British Railways, is expected in the spring/summer of 2025. The Rail Forum team continue to engage with all key stakeholders as the industry prepares for these major transitions.

The last quarter has been particularly busy with events. The team have hosted a number of major events including our Annual Conference in Doncaster, a Vehicle Maintenance event, two innovation events and our ever-popular Christmas Luncheon. We also supported the 'launch' of Rail Campus Derby event for Derby City Council. Collectively these attracted over 1000 delegates from across a wide range of members (and beyond!). Looking forward there are several events planned for quarter one of 2025 including Infratalk in January (don't forget to book your place), a cyber security webinar, our biannual freight event and many more. I personally enjoy our events enormously, they provide a great opportunity to meet and talk to a wide range of members. These conversations help me to understand the vitally important role of the supply chain better and hear first-hand some of the challenges you are facing.

Finally, you will notice that this Quarterly Update has a refreshed look. This is part of our work to update the look and feel of all of our digital assets. You will see a few more changes as we move into 2025, all with the aim of ensuring our communications and information are clear, easily accessible and focussed on what members want and need.

W. Rogers

## NEW MEMBERS



We are delighted to welcome x14 new members who have recently joined us, these are to the left.

More information about each of them can be found on **page 41**.

Be sure to review our **Member Directory** to learn more about all Rail Forum members.





## INDUSTRY & POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT



As always, there's a lot to cover since the previous Quarterly Update. Just this month, new Transport Secretary, Heidi Alexander (MP for Swindon South) announced the first train services to return to public ownership following the recent Royal Assent of the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Act 2024.

The announcement outlines a phased transition of services, beginning with:

- South Western Railways - first to transfer, in May 2025
- c2c - expected transition by July 2025
- Greater Anglia - planned transition in Autumn 2025

The transition will be managed by DfT Operator Limited (formerly known as DOHL) and will eventually integrate into Great British Railways. The change is expected to deliver savings of up to £150 million annually in fees, with no additional cost to taxpayers.

[Learn more.](#)

This move delivers on Government's manifesto commitment to bring railways under public ownership but much more is needed to be done to achieve the reliability and affordability improvements that we all wish to see as part of rail reform, as well as freight growth targets.

### Combined Authorities Key Priorities / Challenges

We have been engaging with the Mayoral Combined Authorities and have met with several transport and policy leads. Integrated transport, active travel and modal shift are common threads, and our key messaging is that the supply chain can help deliver their transport priorities. A number of the Combined Authorities have raised stations costs as a challenge as well as making the case for electrification.

If any members would like to volunteer to share some information on these topics, please contact [Jemma](#).

### Integrated National Transport Strategy

At the end of November, Jemma represented Rail Forum in Leeds where former Transport Secretary Louise Haigh MP set out DfT's [vision for a new Integrated National Transport Strategy](#) (INTS) which joins up transport networks, empowers local leaders and drives economic growth.

The INTS will set out a clear vision for how transport across England can evolve over the next 10 years so that more places offer better, more seamless journeys door-to-door. A [call for ideas](#) to support the development of the strategy is now live, closing 30 January 2025.

While at the event, Jemma also caught up with two combined authority mayors; Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire and Nik Johnson, Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.



### Health Check Survey

Thank you to the 94 members who completed our 'Health of the UK Rail Supply Chain' survey.

The information has been instrumental in our discussions with DfT and DBT and the evidence (kept anonymous!) has been helping to reaffirm just how critical it is that investment is unlocked and that opportunities emerge now for the supply chain across both rolling stock and infrastructure.



## INDUSTRY & POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT



### Introductory Meetings

Elaine met with Lord Hendy, the new Rail Minister, and discussed the ongoing challenges for the supply chain and the urgent need for a rolling stock strategy and clear committed work bank from Network Rail. The opportunities presented by rail reform were also on the agenda.



Elaine also met with Laura Shoaf the newly appointed Chair of Shadow GBR. Here the focus was on reform, early priorities and the importance of culture change as part of the reform agenda. The crucial role that the supply chain has was, of course, emphasised.



Finally, Elaine met with Ruth Cadbury newly appointed Chair of the Transport Committee. The discussion touched on topics of interest for the committee and the role of the supply chain.



### Roundtable Discussion



In November, we hosted a roundtable discussion between Stuart Calvert, Capital Delivery Director in Network Rail and a number of Rail Forum members who are active in the Eastern region.



During the discussion we touched on a range of topics, including:

- Key Network Rail challenges and objectives
- How the supply chain can support
- The 'CP6 to CP7' transition
- Enhancement and innovation opportunities
- Local government devolution
- Rail reform opportunities

### Network Rail - CP7

Early November, Network Rail (NR) hosted a webinar ([see slides here](#)) for members of all the Trade Associations.

This followed conversations between Rail Forum with Andrew Haines and Clive Berrington about concerns expressed by members regarding the hiatus of work in CP7. We worked with colleagues across the Trade Associations to produce a [Joint Briefing](#) which also contains some commitments by NR and next steps.

NR committed to improving the visibility of their pipeline for suppliers and their CP7 capital frameworks spend, with upcoming anticipated spend forecasts, is [live on their website](#).

NR will refine and hone the document to address feedback provided and we continue to work closely together to ensure further outputs and updates are delivered.



### Liverpool Manchester Partnership Board

We met with Huw Merriman, the former Rail Minister, in his new capacity as Chair of the Liverpool Manchester Partnership Board. The Board will help to build the business case for the most ambitious new railway line possible between the Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester.





## INDUSTRY & POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT



### Supporting Rail Campus Derby

Rail Forum supported Derby City Council and GBRTT's Rail Campus Derby (RCD) launch which attracted over 200+ colleagues from across the industry to learn more about the plans for how GBR can add real value to the local area, to the industry and to the wider economy.

GBRTT & Derby City Council are still **seeking views** from organisations who would like to input into the vision and purpose of RCD and are keen to become a part of it.



### Industrial Strategy - "Invest 2035" Consultation

The "Invest 2035" green paper, issued in October 2024, was a consultation document seeking views on the Government's plans to establish a Modern Industrial Strategy (IS) for the UK. The document set out the case for identifying and supporting a number of priority sectors that can drive UK economic growth. We produced a **one-page briefing note** and invited members to input their views into our consultation response via feedback sessions.

Whilst the proposals do not identify rail as a 'priority sector' for its own IS our response highlights the critical enabling role that rail has for the wider economy (and delivery of the IS sector plans) and identifies the opportunities and barriers to growth within rail within named priority sectors e.g. professional services, digital and advanced manufacturing.

Members can access our response to the consultation **[here](#)**.

Interested in ...

# ROUND TABLE

or...

# POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

# activities ?

From time to time we organise roundtables or visits with various key stakeholders including but not limited to colleagues at DfT, DBT, the Cabinet Office, GBRTT, Network Rail, MPs and members of the Transport Committee; these could be focused on certain topics such as skills, decarbonisation, barriers to export etc. The purpose of these meetings is to address broad issues and opportunities for the supply chain and we do our best to invite a wide representation from members.

These meetings only work with small groups of 15-20 people, so they are not easily thrown wide open to everybody, and as such we maintain a list of interest from members.

**Please email [jemma@railforum.uk](mailto:jemma@railforum.uk)** to register your interest, clarifying whether your political engagement / roundtable interest is local (regional), focused on any particular themes, or any specific organisations.





## INDUSTRY & POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT



### Importance of Maintaining Rail Investment - Write to your MP

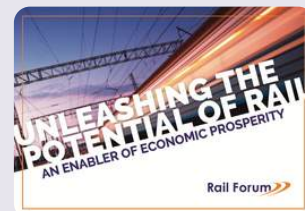
The rail industry needs a long-term plan for investment for both rolling stock and infrastructure, but it is crucial that we see investment now for the resilience of the rail supply chain and the sector as a whole.

Railway Enhancements are subject to the Comprehensive Spending Review which will conclude in Spring / Summer 2025. In the meantime, we continue to press the case for investment in the railway and wrote to Treasury in October to emphasise how any cut in rail investment would introduce significant latency to wider economic growth due to loss of skills, facilities, investment in technology and reduced investor confidence.

We encourage all our members to write to their local MP (if you are not sure who your local MP is, find out [here](#)). To help with sharing a consistent message, below are some suggested points to make.

- Rail investment is a critical enabler to wider economic growth. Railways help connect businesses to their customers and workforce, students to educational institutions and families to leisure opportunities.
- Investment in rail must be viewed as long-term in nature. Returns are not the same as for business investments, railways are built to last for decades so it's important to measure the financial return in an appropriate long-term way.
- Investment in rail is a demonstrable commitment to the UK achieving its net zero ambitions. Rail is a low carbon form of transport and investment can help drive modal shift from cars and trucks, improving air quality and reducing congestion as well as carbon.

We also encourage members to share our '[Unleashing the Potential of Rail: An Enabler of Economic Prosperity](#)' document which outlines five key policy changes that would drive significant benefits for customers, taxpayers and the rail supply chain.



### Parliamentary Newsletter

We produce a briefing newsletter for UK Members of Parliament and Peers. The most recent edition focused on how rail is an enabler of economic prosperity and the importance of maintaining rail investment.

We also highlighted our first edition [UK rail manufacturing capability brochure](#) which features 50 Rail Forum members!



### Autumn Budget - Briefing and Reactions

Following the Autumn Budget 2024 on 30th October, we produced a [briefing for Rail Forum members](#) which focusses predominantly on the rail and direct staff cost announcements.

There were some relatively positive signs in the budget for rail, for example the mention of a strategy for rolling stock manufacturing and a ten-year infrastructure plan, however we recognise that these don't help with the short-term pressures faced by many suppliers. In addition, the increased staff costs (NICs and minimum wage increases) will put further pressure on businesses with low margins.

Thank you to those members who shared feedback with us on announcements in the Budget, we have made Government aware of the challenges and will continue to raise these concerns.



## RAIL FORUM EVENTS



Since the last quarterly update we have held **8 events**... 4 face-to-face and 4 online.

Face-to-face events included:

- Annual Conference and Expo
- Vehicle Maintenance; Today, Tomorrow and Beyond
- Member hosted event – Testing Innovation in Rail
- Rail Forum Christmas Luncheon 2024

### Future Events

We are now looking forward to our popular online event 'InfraTalk' on 23 January. Check out the webpage [here](#) for details on the table hosts who will be available to chat to on the day.

Looking ahead we are now planning a number of events through to 2026 covering a great variety of topics.

All of our events will be displayed in our weekly Events Newsletter, access can be granted by contacting [Karen](#).



Check out the **events programme** for more details...

### Interested in becoming an **Event Partner**?



Rising popularity for in-person events requires larger venues. Our Event Partners support with these rising costs - helping us to make the best events possible.

**Contact Karen**

### Upcoming Events - Next Quarter



Click on the **event title** to find out more

We **thank all our event partners** who have agreed a partnership package with us so far this membership year. Your support is invaluable...



## CHARITY DONATIONS 2024

We are delighted to confirm that we have donated **£4,600** to Ethstat, our nominated charity during 2024.

This is a combination of funds raised through our charity golf day and Christmas Lunch raffle.



## RAILWAY 200

2025 is the 200th anniversary of the birth of the modern railway.

Railway 200 celebrates the past, present and future of rail. Find out how to get involved [here](#).

We will be sharing our plans and initiatives in support of Railway 200 in the new year!



## COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY - REBUILDING FUTURES ALLIANCE



For more information, contact:

[admin@rebuildingfuturesalliance.com](mailto:admin@rebuildingfuturesalliance.com)

Members may recall the presentation delivered by Chris Leech MBE at our recent annual conference about Rebuilding Futures Alliance.

Chris has been progressing this and a Community Interest Company (CIC) has now been formed.

We are delighted to confirm that Elaine will be joining the Board of RFA to help shape how the organisation can work with the industry.

### CHRIS LEECH, MBE

Associate Director for Penmark and Head of Responsible Business Practice for Tracsis PLC





## HR LEADERS GROUP (AND ALL THINGS PEOPLE & SKILLS)

Our next HR Leaders Group meeting is scheduled for 16th January (online) and will be a bumper edition with presentations on EDI from GBRTT and talent development from Network Rail; plus our regular employment law update. If you haven't made your HR Manager/Director aware of these sessions please do so as they really are useful.

The Derby College Rail Employment and Skills Academy Board has now been reformed and met in October. The next meeting is scheduled for January.

A key focus for the group will be to support the emerging vision for Rail Campus Derby, bringing all key skills partners together to deliver a number of KPIs.

If you would like to get involved please [contact jemma@railforum.uk](mailto:jemma@railforum.uk)



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - RAIL SAFE FRIENDLY



**Rail Safe Friendly** was launched in March 2023 and broadcasts rail safety video content about the dangers of trespassing on railways directly to schools via digital education provider [Learn Live](#).

The programme was inspired by the story of 11 year old Harrison Ballantyne who sadly lost his life at Daventry Depot while retrieving his football.

Already, over **7,000+** UK schools are on board with the Rail Safe Friendly programme and more than 100 industry partners from across the rail sector have sponsored and become partners.

“

*The support of the rail industry is pivotal in rail safety education being delivered to as many schools and youth organisations as possible, across the country.*

*Rail Safe Friendly is embraced by train operating companies, freight operating companies and small to large organisations working across the rail supply chain, with one goal, to ensure children receive vital knowledge to keep them rail safe.*

”



**STUART HEATON**

Managing Director  
Learn Live / Rail Safe Friendly





## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - GRIPPLE



### How Gripple can speed up your electrification projects...

Electrifying Britain's rail network is no easy task – but with the right solutions it can be achieved faster, safer and easier.



At Gripple, we have made it our mission to accelerate electrification through innovation, launching a range of game-changing OLE products designed to help engineers and contractors achieve more in each possession window, ensuring you never miss a deadline again. The SwiftLine Rail Dropper revolutionises dropper installations, offering contractors a pre-fabricated solution that can be installed in seconds without the need to cut, crimp and fix on-site. Features include its simple quarter turn catenary fixing and innovative Auto Torque contact clamp, which guarantees the correct torque every time.

In addition, the SwiftLine Rail Jumper has been engineered to further speed up and simplify the installation of overhead line equipment. Replacing fiddly and time-consuming PG clamps, the SwiftLine Rail Jumper can be installed tool-free, with minimal training while the auto-torque clamp technology guarantees right first time installation.

In addition to speeding up installation times, the SwiftLine Rail Jumper also provides enhanced protection for cables. Its strain relief fixings are designed to prevent damage at critical bend points, extending the life of the jumper cable by up to four times. This not only improves the durability of the equipment but also reduces maintenance costs and the risk of costly downtime due to cable failure.

**Work faster, install safer and make the most of every possession window.**



### A WORD FROM ELAINE...



As we come to the end of 2024 I would like to thank all of our members for your continued support and engagement. I also want to add a huge thanks to my team for their tireless work helping Rail Forum to be the best we can be for you. Whilst team members have shared several highlights in this update, I thought it might be worth mentioning a few 'less obvious' things we have done this year to improve things for members (and us)...

Back in the Spring we changed our online payment system to Stripe, meaning that all invoices since then contain an embedded secure credit card link as an option for speedy payment. We now use Microsoft forms for collecting and collating event feedback and wider survey responses and we are introducing new digital tools to allow us to provide better quality publications and more!

Our reputation for being accessible and caring for our members is extremely important to us and to me personally. I have enjoyed all the opportunities to meet with you during 2024 (yes, even the difficult conversations about the challenges facing the industry) and I look forward to continuing the various discussions throughout 2025.



**ELAINE CLARK**

Chief Executive Officer



## INNOVATION WORKSTREAM - UPDATE

### Testing Innovation at Long Marston

Whilst Cat was gallivanting around India, Dave stepped in to host our **event with Porterbrook in Long Marston.**

With a range of innovation speakers, including Ian Evley Innovate UK, Sharon Odetunde RSSB, Scott Heath Hitachi Rail, Rob Forde GCRE and Porterbrook's Andy Pawley. As is the case with these networking events, the focus is less about the formalities (you will find no powerpoint slides at them!) and all about making new connections.

The tour element really adds value and given the development of the Long Marston site, a great opportunity to get a sneak preview and to understand how delegate's innovations could be tested in this rail environment.

Huge thanks to Porterbrook for hosting!



MEMBER HOSTED

porterbrook



### Innovating Rail through International Collaboration

We hosted our first joint event with **European Rail Clusters Initiative** and **Innovate UK** which sought to explore how international collaboration can support rail innovation. We were delighted to hear from Network Rail, Irish Rail, South Western Railway and ERCI in the conference element, however (and without disrespecting our excellent speakers) the real gem was the networking meetings.

The B2Match platform worked really well and with decent (and brief) profiles completed, delegates had the perfect tools to be able to really pinpoint useful meetings and request them. Cat did 8 meetings and all were fab.

Our thanks to Cork Chamber for supporting this important event!



### Annual Conference - Innovation

We started our Annual Conference this year exploring innovation with a focus on how embracing innovation can deliver a better customer experience. Our first speaker, Richard Hastings from Nestle, couldn't have delivered a better presentation and members still reference the power of his presentation. After hearing from James McCaffery from Stadler with a focus on UK supply chain, we moved into a panel discussion, hosted by Michelle Craven-Faulkner and joined by Ian Evley, our dedicated rail advisor from InnovateUK and Robert Ampomah of Network Rail.

It's no surprise that this workstream led the conference. The importance of innovation can not be overstated. However, we must ensure that we understand, appreciate and recognise the value, energy, cost and risk that is invested into innovation. That is to say, we need to be better at embracing it, faster to introduce it, evaluate it honestly against current methodologies (and associated issues) and champion it at every level of our industry. It is time we look to be a bridge for innovation rather than a barrier to innovation.





## INNOVATION WORKSTREAM - UPDATE

### What's Coming Up?

We look forward to supporting the 2025 Rail Innovation Exhibition being held by Innovate UK on 13 February in London.

We are also cooking things up nicely with BCRRE for our next innovation networking event (12th March) where we will explore some specific areas of innovation, more on this in the next edition!

Going forwards, we really welcome your thoughts on any additional support and facilitation that we can offer to really help your ideas turn into something amazing for the industry.

Send any suggestions to [Cat@railforum.uk](mailto:Cat@railforum.uk), or speak with your Account Manager.

## THE CITY OF DONCASTER: THE PLACE FOR RAIL



### Doncaster's latest Rail news

**\*Breaking\*** Network Rail has taken over a lease of the former National College for High Speed Rail. Opening Spring 2025, it aims to create an industry leading facility providing bespoke training and education.

Freightliner's Operational Training Academy prepares drivers for the introduction of in-cab digital signalling and upskills drivers on European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) operations.

**\*Breaking\*** A bidder to reopen and operate the former Doncaster Sheffield Airport has been identified, with plans in place to develop a sustainable aviation cluster.

Doncaster's two rail freight terminals, Railport and iPort Rail offer state-of-the-art intermodal rail services with iPort Rail recently doubling its size and storage capacity.

The Business Doncaster team attended Innotrans in Berlin to promote our superb rail sector opportunities; to find out how we can help your business to invest, relocate or upskill your workforce contact: [info@businessdoncaster.co.uk](mailto:info@businessdoncaster.co.uk) or call **01302 735555**.





## Reflecting on the year through the lense of 'Innovation'...

Hi everyone 🙌

At this time of year we tend to reflect on past activities and in this piece I thought it appropriate to consider the impact of our innovation work theme which is coming up to 6 months old.

The initial objective was to build awareness of our collaboration, challenge some misconceptions about innovation and engage with stakeholders within the innovation ecosystem.

To build awareness and challenge some misconceptions I've presented at Rail Forum's Innovation In Rail event at the University of Derby, Testing Innovation in Rail event at Porterbrook's Rail Innovation Centre and participated in a panel discussion at the Rail Forum conference about Embracing Innovation to create a better customer experience.

It's clear that international markets are important for the rail supply chain and to build profile in that area I've judged the European Rail Cluster Initiative (ERCI) Innovation Awards, attended Rail Forum's Turkish Rail market briefing, and delivered a virtual business to business matching event attended by 80 business from the rail supply chain in UK and Europe, Unfortunately I didn't get over to InnoTrans, lucky you that did, but 2026 is firmly in my sights!

Along the way I've also supported three SME's through an Innovate UK Rail Investment Readiness programme, supported a Rail Forum member to apply for a grant, participated in the Network Rail open data huddle, and attended the Launching Rail Campus event in Derby. Colleagues across Innovate UK and the Department for Business and Trade are now aware and supportive of our collaboration too.

Plans are already in place to build on this momentum as we aim to support even more innovative SME's within the rail supply chain in 2025.

Finally, I wish you, your family and loved ones, a peaceful festive season and joyful new year.

**Ian**



**IAN EVLEY**

Innovation and Growth Specialist



At Rail Forum's Annual Conference in October, ERCI Vice President Veronica Elena Bocci personally delivered the certificates for the **Rail Forum Finalists** of the ERCI Innovation Award 2024 which included:

- **Complete Cyber** with Vault IoT which addresses cyber security and asset reliability in transportation systems;
- **KeTech Systems** with their dynamic real-time connected driver advisory system; and
- **Infinitive Group** for their IRRIS Millimetre Wave Radar: Stanchion detection project.

*\*Pictured receiving their certificates: Paul Warren of KeTech Systems and Ben Craze of Infinitive Group Limited.*





## EXPORT WORKSTREAM - UPDATE

### InnoTrans 2024...

... was bigger than ever and attracted rail people in their droves to Berlin. Indeed, many colleagues commenced their networking activities in the airports up and down the country! Three of the Rail Forum team headed over for a few days and goodness didn't we fit lots in! Numerous member visits, stakeholder meetings including international organisations, ERCI Innovation Awards, Speaker Slot (Elaine, with colleagues from AtkinsRealis), meetings with organisations such as CrossRail International and attending launches including the Stadler Class 99 (which was a personal highlight for Cat – such was the meeting of minds to deliver this exciting project – kudos to Stadler, Beacon and GB RailFreight).

We know that many members found the event hugely beneficial and it remains a must-attend for anyone in rail. That said, and as echoed in our members Innotrans Workshop – the costs for this event are high, the accommodation costs can be eye-watering and that's before you look at hospitality! It's absolutely essential to have a plan in place to maximise your time and effort... and there is no time like the present!

**Get those hotels and expo stands booked for InnoTrans 2026 (22-25 September 2026)**



### Rail Forum - Turkey



We feel compelled to include something from Turkey, given that it's nearly Christmas...

14th November was the DBT Rail Forum Turkey event which Yigit and colleagues in DBT Turkey delivered again to an exceptional standard. A number of members participated and the feedback was excellent.

The date has already released for next year already: **13 November 2025 in Ankara, if Turkey is a market for you (or you are not sure yet) this event should be in your diary!**

### Export Capability Brochure

As a reminder, we are encouraging ALL exporting members to contribute to the DBT Export Capability Brochure. This document will be used in UK embassy's the world over and remains an excellent tool to promote your capabilities across International Governments and railway operators.

For details on how to contribute, contact [cat@railforum.uk](mailto:cat@railforum.uk)





## EXPORT WORKSTREAM - UPDATE

### InnoRail

Following our Roundtable discussion with the High Commission to India and the Indo-British Trade Council in September, we were delighted to travel with a number of members to explore the InnoRail show (28-30 November), held in the RDSO campus in Lucknow. This was an excellent opportunity to understand the market, the opportunities and gather our thoughts on how we can support members with this market.

We enjoyed meeting with Director General and Executive Director from RDSO which has helped our understanding, and our visits to both Lucknow Station and Alambagh Metro Station proved informative.



As you may have picked up from our social media activity, India represents a huge opportunity for rail companies - great strategy, projects across metro, national network and high speed. The focus on NetZero by 2030 is clear...they plan to test their own Hydrogen train early next year and there is immense pride on the Vande Bharat vehicles – again home-grown. It is of course a market that has its own opportunities for UK and its cost-competitive position and big focus on Make-in-India mean that opportunities to enter this market are relatively niche and need sensible preparation (indeed all markets need this!). Picking up with DBT's Jake Rudham and Mukul Verma is definitely recommended.

We further enjoyed some time in Ahmedabad, visiting Allmarc fabrication specialists and an afternoon of presentations and 1:1 meetings with a range of Indian supply chain and stakeholders.

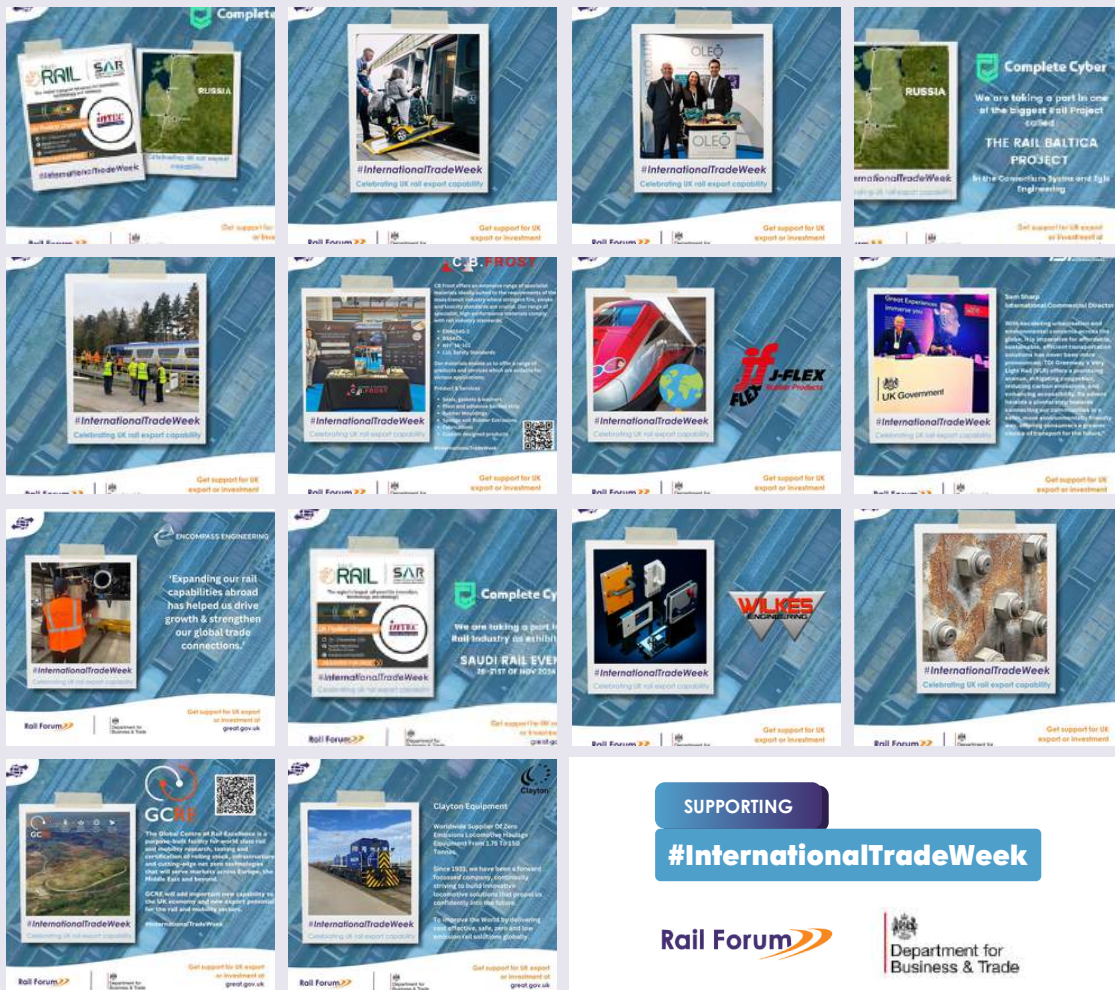


Our final day provided a bit of rest and some speed tourism, taking in a Jain temple, Gandhi Ashram and a beautiful step well, before hot footing to Mumbai for the return flight back.





## EXPORT WORKSTREAM - UPDATE



### International Trade Week

We were delighted to support the **DBT's International Trade Week** - check out these member posts...

Our thanks to those that supported this campaign using our **social media templates!**



### Looking Ahead

2025 will soon be upon us and a new tranche of events and support. **The Export Steering Group** have worked hard to shape our support activity and we have agreed to focus our efforts on the DBT SME Priority Markets – Ireland, Turkey, Canada and Australia.

We also continue to liaise with colleagues in ERCI regarding joint missions – Canada is definitely one to watch!

We continue to share opportunities from around the world in our mailer and those short notice ones in our Export Bulletins. Don't forget to use the wider membership network to speak with fellow exporters and maximise the community element of your membership to help shape your understanding of international markets.

### And lastly...

A fond farewell and our thanks to the amazing Tracey Grindal, DBT Canada, who has retired. Her knowledge and support for members entering and growing in the Canadian market has been key and we wish her the very best.

We await to hear who will be stepping into her very big shoes and will update in due course.



## PATRON MEMBER UPDATE - ALSTOM

## Alstom engineer awarded for her leadership in promoting EDI initiatives within the rail industry

Alstom is delighted to announce that Charlotte Briers, Rolling Stock Performance Lead and Chair of the Voices of Women employee resource group, has been awarded the esteemed Verena Winifred Holmes Award by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE). This accolade recognises her exceptional leadership in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives within the rail industry and beyond.

The Verena Winifred Holmes Award celebrates individuals who have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to valuing diversity and fostering inclusivity through innovative programmes. Charlotte's outstanding contributions include spearheading programmes such as the 'Be the U in inclUsive' roadshow, which visited most of the business' 37 sites across the UK and Ireland.

More recently, Derby-based Charlotte was instrumental in shaping Alstom's new sector-leading maternity and adoption policy for staff in the UK, which offers eligible employees full pay for up to 12 months. This policy is viewed as a critical part of Alstom's commitment to supporting female retention and attracting new talent into the organisation and wider rail sector.

In 2017, Alstom launched its biannual EDI census to identify improvement areas in the UK and Ireland. From the findings, the company developed and delivered the Alstom8 workshops to raise awareness and give practical advice on how to successfully drive inclusivity in the workplace. Alongside this, its four 'Voices of' groups – Cultural Diversity, Disability, Pride+ and Women – help to share lived experiences; challenge groupthink in its strategy and policies; have oversight of relevant key performance indicators (KPIs); and act as ambassadors.

“

*Charlotte has shown great leadership in her efforts to identify and break down barriers to the recruitment and retention of women in engineering. Inclusion is at the heart of our values and through her impressive work at Alstom, she has highlighted the strength of diversity, and the importance of driving change from within.*

DR ALICE BUNN | OBE

CEO at IMechE

Institution of  
MECHANICAL  
ENGINEERS

”

“

*I am deeply honoured to receive the Verena Winifred Holmes Award. This recognition is not just for me but for everyone at Alstom who believes in the power of inclusivity to drive innovation and growth. Together, we are creating a workplace where every voice is valued and heard. I'm proud to be part of this journey and look forward to continuing our efforts to make a lasting impact.*

”

CHARLOTTE BRIERS

Rolling Stock Performance  
Lead and Chair of the  
Voices of Women at Alstom

ALSTOM





## MANUFACTURING WORKSTREAM - UPDATE

*"Manufacturing is capable of great innovation and creative thinking"*

*"Let's celebrate and amplify the diversity of manufacturing"*

*"Buy locally wherever possible, but certainly from within the UK"*

### MANUFACTURING REFLECTIONS FROM OUR 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE PANEL

*"Manufacturing innovations - the pace of change is slower in rail than other sectors"*

*"We need to fly our flag more"*

*"UK manufacturers need to influence tender specs & decision makers"*

“

*It was a pleasure to host this discussion panel. The importance of UK manufacturing can not be overstated and the panel provided a broad array of themes exploring the value and reach of manufacturing – which we hope you found interesting and are now acting upon...*

**CAT APPLEBY**

Membership & Engagement  
Director

**Rail Forum**

”

“

*To see every single one of the 100s of delegates at this year's Rail Forum raise their hands, when asked if they really care about manufacturing growth in the rail sector, was extremely satisfying for me personally and encouraging for the 100s of members of Made in Britain that feed into this vital sector.*

*As a frequent rail user that travels for work and leisure on trains, it was for me a special privilege to know the senior leadership in both production, management and strategic network planning will be going greener and cleaner by procuring British-made wherever possible. This, to me, feels like the new age of the train...*

**JOHN PEARCE**

Chief Executive Officer



”

“

*There is a great deal of innovation across a wide spectrum of material types often for carbon reduction, light weighting and/or material substitution reasons. Rail is very open to innovation but I would argue that the rate of adoption is lower than in some other sectors...Why?*

*There is a great deal of innovation across a wide spectrum of material types often for carbon reduction, light weighting and/or material substitution reasons. Rail is open to innovation but I would argue that the rate of adoption is lower than in some other sectors...Why?*

- At times, lack of data and willingness to do a whole life cost assessment (vs first life cost)
- Ownership of costs and benefits can be with different stakeholders in rail (almost unique)
- At 'Option Selection' (old GRIP3) with the downsides of risk and penalties you will often be driven to do what you did before
- Standards and specifications are likely to underpin this behaviour

*Furthermore, we need a rail innovation 'funnel' that can get innovative materials assessed outside a bid and qualified prior to Option Selection.*

**STEVE BARBOUR**

Managing Director



”



## MANUFACTURING WORKSTREAM - UPDATE

### What's next for the manufacturing steering group?

We are delighted with the engagement and support for the UK manufacturing campaign which took place in early Summer and the feedback and reach of our UK rail manufacturing capability brochure.

The group have some developments in store for this workstream which includes a second edition and further focus on manufacturing with exciting plans for May as well as further collaboration with Made in Britain and Make UK.

Finally for those looking at Servitization, our **workshop on 27th March**, delivered by Aston Business School explores this concept and how it could work for you. It's ideal for anyone with a responsibility of securing sales, delivering services, growing revenues or seeking ways to scale their existing product and service portfolio. It will be particularly pertinent to anyone with a 'customer-facing' role or a business development executive keen to grow revenues.



### Steering Group Members

- Lee Coleman | Cembre
- Steve Barbour | Composite Braiding
- Tom Roberts | Signal House Group Ltd
- Nicola Islef | Transport Design International
- David Taylor | Datum Composites
- Jenny Dempsey | Diamond Rail Services
- Joanne Farms | Hydrum Engineering
- Neil Cross | Ibstock (Andertone Concrete)
- Nigel Hewson | Infotec
- Kyle Readdin | BCM GRC



### UK Rail Manufacturing Capability Brochure



Click. Use. Share.





## FINANCE LEADERS GROUP - UPDATE



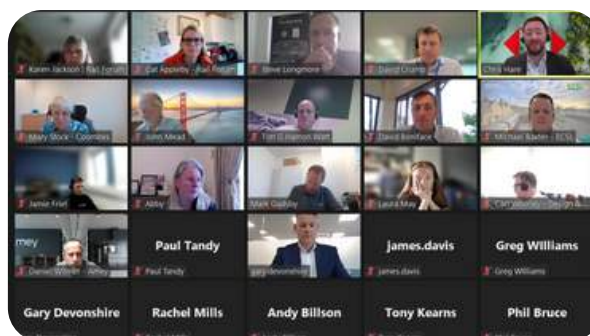
On 30th September, the Finance Leaders group met with a jam-packed line up of Chris Hare, Economist for HSBC and John Gerrard from GBRTT. John updated us on how Shadow GBR will be working, the objectives and the priorities, not least of all the £1bn shortfall. John has since moved on to GTR as their Chief Finance Officer and we hope he will return later in the year to this forum for an update from his new TOC perspective.

Chris's presentation was, as ever, amazing – he really is an excellent speaker. Great terminology including 'Magic lamp', 'fiscal black hole', 'pre-budget jitters' and 'creative destructive'.

Gary Devonshire, PKF SmithCooper, provided a great update on post-election activities and considerations again for budget. Of course since then, all things budget have been revealed - the biggy was the impact of national insurance and I know that many members have raised concerns about this.



Online  
#RFevent



**The next Finance Leaders Group will be on 20th January 2025, 3:00 – 4:30 (online).**

We are delighted to have Matthew Scotter - Stadler Rail on contract accounting for the new fleet, Samantha Turner – GBRX on how they are using the latest technological innovations to solve some of the industry's challenges, and Gary Devonshire - PKF SmithCooper with a Budget recap. Do please share this opportunity with your finance colleagues and any colleagues that may be interested in hearing from these speakers.



Register here for the next group meeting...



As ever, these events could not take place without the involvement and support of our group Chair Steve Longmore (Bridgeway Consulting) and vice-chair Mark Gadsby (Fishbone Solutions).





## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE



**CAT APPLEBY**

Membership & Engagement  
Director



I received a message on LinkedIn from a member recently. It said “just to let you know, out of the [Vehicle maintenance event] introduction I got a site visit back to [a] depot. Thank you for your help”.

It got me thinking about how members can measure the impact of their membership with us – its not all social's, photos and fun events 😊

Here are a few examples that we've been told by members:

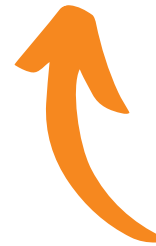
- Orders
- RFQs
- RFIs
- Site visits
- Meetings
- New supplier
- Collaborative partner
- New opportunity

These outcomes make it very easy to match our objective of value for money. Of course these 'bonuses' of membership only occur when you engage with the support but thankfully that remains simple and effective and inclusive (and can be used by the whole organisation).



- **Talk to your account manager** – we are your facilitator not only to the membership services, but wider support too.
- **Send us your news** – we can raise your profile.
- **Attend events** – use the roll call, learn from the speakers, gather intel, build your network, and not forgetting...get an introduction!

With four jam packed months left of this membership year, our challenge to you is to ensure you maintain the momentum and use your membership to the fullest.



**Ways to get the most out of your membership...**







## TEAM MEMBER UPDATE - KAREN



**KAREN JACKSON**

Events & Marketing Manager



I've had a busy year not only organising the Rail Forum events but also managing a small number of accounts.

In September, after a redistribution of accounts, I now manage a few more. I've caught up with the majority of them online over the last couple of months and I look forward to meeting up with the remainder in the New Year.



Events have once again grown and are ever more popular - in order to keep these free for members **we need more event partners.**

If you would like to discuss how an event partner package can help promote and support your business please [get in touch](#) or listen to a short summary clip [here](#)...



## My Member Accounts



Click on a logo to view their member directory



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - TXM CONSULT



### Safeguarding Knowledge: Building a Legacy for Future Generations

How many people do you know with over 35 years of professional experience? Likely just a few. I'm proud (and feeling a little old) to count myself among that group. How about those with less than 25 years? Too many to count. Those with 25 to 35 years—experienced enough to have shaped the past yet still driving the future—are a rare breed.

The rail industry faces a knowledge crisis. According to The National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR) Annual Rail Workforce Survey 2024, the workforce has declined by 9.4% to 220,500 workers. While the average age has decreased slightly to 44.1, and workers under 25 now make up 6.3% of the workforce, the proportion aged 31 to 49 has dropped by 20.6%. With a third of workers over 50 and up to 90,000 set to leave by 2030, decades of expertise are at risk. At TXM Consult, we are committed to bridging this gap.

Sharing knowledge is not just what we do—it's who we are.

**Mentoring:** Some of my most rewarding moments come from mentoring young professionals, sharing lessons from my own mistakes, and watching them grow. Working with Young Rail Professionals, we combine fresh ideas with steady guidance.

**Graduate Scheme:** We have developed one of the most robust schemes I have come across in my career. Our graduates tackle real-world challenges, guided by industry experts. Their curiosity keeps us sharp (and reminds us how many acronyms we use without explanation).

**Building a Community of Expertise:** We are evolving our operating model to ensure knowledge flows freely across teams, creating stronger outcomes for clients and the industry. At TXM Consult, our credibility is built on decades of hands-on experience and a proven ability to nurture talent and deliver results. We don't just deliver success for our clients; we future-proof industries. That is the legacy we are proud to build.



**MAGNUS CONN**

Regional Director | Scotland & Ireland



## Rail Forum

Support | Connect | Inform | Represent





## TEAM MEMBER UPDATE - WILL



**WILL BROAD**

Digital Marketing Executive



Reflecting on the year so far at Rail Forum since joining the team in late July, it's been an incredible experience that has exceeded all my expectations. Having previously worked in the rail industry, I was excited to bring my knowledge into a role that combines my passion for rail with my expertise in marketing. What I didn't anticipate, however, was just how supportive, engaging, and inspiring the Rail Forum team would be!



From day one, my colleagues have been welcoming, encouraging, and always ready to share their wealth of experience. It's such a privilege to work alongside a team that not only values collaboration but is genuinely passionate about supporting our members and driving the industry forward. Their dedication has inspired me to give my best in every project, and it's made the learning curve of a new position feel both exciting and fulfilling.



My role allows me to get involved in a wide variety of projects—from amplifying our brand communications and delivering strategic marketing initiatives to actively supporting event planning and delivery. Whether it's capturing the energy of an event, documenting key discussions, or helping bring our ideas to life, every day feels meaningful.



I'm especially proud to contribute to the ongoing evolution of the Rail Forum brand and all of our digital assets and marketing collateral. Since joining the team, I've spent a lot of my time getting my teeth into the fabric of our identity and offering. Much of my work has seen me refreshing our identity to better reflect our four pillars: **Support, Connect, Inform, and Represent.**

The changes we're making bring a modern, dynamic look to Rail Forum while staying true to our mission of 'Unleashing UK rail excellence, together' (I'm really proud of how much our new tagline resonates with our members!).



It's been a rewarding journey so far, and I'm excited to continue growing within such an inspiring 'railway family'...

Watch this space - we have some exciting surprises for you coming in the new year! 🐞





## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - OAKLIN



This year, the Department for Transport announced their five strategic objectives, aimed at delivering the "biggest overhaul to transport in a generation."

Among these priorities are a renewed focus on reducing the environmental impact of railway operations and promoting social values.

While the rail industry explores innovative carbon capture solutions, such as building carbon-absorbing algae farms along trackside, Oaklin has adopted a slightly more conventional approach to our environmental efforts by partnering with **Word Forest**.

Word Forest are a charity dedicated to reforestation areas of Kenya and have planted tens of thousands of trees, all while helping to develop sustainable livelihoods and enhanced education for locals. Oaklin's support has included direct sponsorship, as well as collaborating with teams to develop the organisation's long-term strategy.

Closer to home, Oaklin's commitment to social value is centred in our work with local community initiatives. Recently, members of our team served meals at a soup kitchen, supporting those experiencing food insecurity in London.

At Euston Foodbank, Oaklin volunteers have helped to sort and distribute essential supplies to individuals in need. These efforts embody our belief that corporate responsibility extends beyond serving our clients—it's about making a meaningful difference in the communities where we live and work.

Oaklin is proud to align its values with the rail industry's priorities, contributing to a greener and fairer future. From the rail tracks to the forests of Kenya, and everywhere in between, we are committed to making a positive impact.



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - ZF SERVICES



### **ZF Service UK has announced the appointment of David Morgan as the Global Head of the Centre of Competence (CoC) for Rail.**

This strategic appointment highlights ZF's commitment to advancing its rail division and supporting the growing demand for sustainable, efficient rail solutions.

Morgan, who has been with ZF since 2003, brings a wealth of experience from various sectors, including industrial, marine, wind turbine and off-highway. His in-depth knowledge of ZF's technology, combined with his expertise in both technical and commercial roles, will play a pivotal part in shaping the company's global strategy for rail.

Morgan will lead the expansion and development of ZF's rail capabilities, including its Centre of Competence in Nottingham. This facility is recognised as a global hub for the repair, overhaul and maintenance of driveline and bogie systems, as well as the reverse engineering of critical components.

The Centre's focus on innovation and sustainability is key to ZF's strategy of providing eco-friendly solutions such as the EcoWorld 2 gearbox and Smart Oil Plug. Morgan's appointment reflects ZF's ongoing investment in cutting-edge technologies that help rail operators reduce emissions and optimise the efficiency of their fleets, contributing to the futureproofing of the rail industry.



For more information on ZF Services UK and its rail solutions, visit [www.zf.com](http://www.zf.com)







## TEAM MEMBER UPDATE - JEMMA



**JEMMA SMALLS**

Communications, Policy & Public Affairs Manager



A busy quarter with lots of engagement with Government colleagues, combined authorities, and other key stakeholders - learn about our recent industry and political engagement on [pages 2-5](#).

From a member engagement perspective, I was delighted to attend the grand opening of **Siemens'** Goole Train Manufacturing Facility at the beginning of October. Siemens announced a new investment of up to £40m in addition to the £200 million investment in the Goole Rail Village.

At the end of October, I had the pleasure of attending a Diwali Celebration held at Derbyshire County Cricket Club as a guest of **East Midlands Railway** - it was a wonderful evening with fantastic company and it was great to catch up with Baggy Shanker MP of Derby South and Catherine Atkinson MP of Derby North - both of whom sit on the Transport Committee.

In November, I was thrilled to attend **NSAR's** Skills Symposium at the Foundling Museum in London where they shared their new **Annual Rail Workforce Survey 2024** report.... this is a must read document!



I was then delighted to attend **Modern Railways** Fourth Friday Club Golden Spanners. An interesting conference in the morning followed by a fantastic atmosphere for the Awards (check out the winners list which features a number of fantastic [#RFmembers here](#)).

It was brilliant to catch up with so many Rail Forum members across the day.... **West Midlands Rail Executive, EnPro Group, Modux, Encompass Engineering, Sperry Rail, Enigma Seven, Rail Positive Relations, Belvoir Rail, Amey, Porterbrook, Angel Trains, Rail Operations Group, Eversholt UK Rails Group, Stadler Rail, Flotec Industrial, Siemens, Chiltern Railways** and **West Midlands Trains** to name just a few! A big thank you to the Modern Railways team for their kind hospitality.

Then at the end of November, it was great to visit **Loram UK** at their RTC Derby engineering facility where they're currently testing Positive Traction's 08e battery-powered, zero-emission, shunting locomotive. I also got to see the progress on Loram's first RGX Rail Grinder - a specialist on-track rail re-profiling machine that's being built here in the UK!



To top it all off, an amazing Rail Forum Christmas Luncheon on the 6th December which saw lots of member catch ups and festive cheer!





## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - TVS RAIL SPARES



What a year 2024 has been for TVS Rail Spares! Despite the challenges facing the industry at the moment, we've managed to hit the following milestones in the last 12 months:

- We've sold infrastructure material to 40 new rail customers
- We've added more than 500 new items to our online catalogue
- We've received orders for more than 400 different PADS products
- We've hit 1,000 followers on LinkedIn
- We've launched the TVS Rail Spares Innovation Centre at Rail Live

Our online catalogue already had 10,000 items at the start of the year, and it's been great working alongside some great customers in the Tier 1 signalling marketplace to develop the product range further. We'll continue to listen to our customers so we can improve our service based on their feedback.

TVS Rail Spares have had a big focus on rail industry events in 2024. We've either exhibited or been represented at nearly 30 events this year; trying to get the message out about the value we can offer the industry.

We're looking forward to continuing this in 2025, starting with being an Event Partner for Rail Forum's InfraTalk event in January. We're absolutely delighted to be involved with the online event, which is one of the best ways to get to talk to Infrastructure contractors and suppliers. We'll also be at Rail Live, RIN events, Rolling Stock Networking and lots more in 2025 so keep an eye out for us!



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - AURA BRAND SOLUTIONS



### A Quarter of Milestones with Aura Brand Solutions

This quarter has been an exciting one for Aura Brand Solutions, marked by significant projects and partnerships within the rail industry. Among the highlights is our recently secured contract to rebrand 54 locomotives for Le Shuttle awarded to us based on trust, confidence and quality, having successfully delivered a prototype earlier this year ahead of Le Shuttle's 30-year anniversary. This project underscores our expertise in large-scale fleet branding and our commitment to delivering excellence on high-profile initiatives.

We're equally proud to have supported Tecforce, rail welding and engineering specialists, with a comprehensive rebrand to mark their 30-year milestone. The project involved designing a fresh new logo, alongside an updated colour palette, fonts, and imagery, which have been applied across their new website, head office and sales materials. It was a privilege to attend their brand launch, celebrating both their anniversary and the opening of their new technical department. Witnessing the positive response to the rebrand has been a highlight for our team. In addition, we were honoured to work with our long-standing customer, Greater Anglia, to deliver special Remembrance Day graphics. This project allowed us to play a small part in commemorating those who have served & sacrificed, reflecting the importance of this national remembrance.

We look forward to building on this momentum as we close the year.

Thank you to our customers and partners for trusting us to bring their visions to life.

**Here's to another quarter of successes!**







## TEAM MEMBER UPDATE - BOB



**BOB HODGSON**

Engagement Manager



It's been another really interesting and varied 3 months with a combination of supporting a number of major Rail Forum events, new member meetings and spending some time with our new Engagement Manager Laura May who joined the Rail Forum back in the summer.

The Rail Forum annual conference in Doncaster, the excellent maintenance event held in NTAR in Northants and the always very popular Rail Forum Christmas Lunch were the major events during the last three months and across the events it was really pleasing to see all the discussions and conversations taking place in the room.

One of the things I often mention when speaking with members is simply talk to people as you never know when they may need what you can offer especially as the rail is very incestuous and when people change roles they usually stay in the industry.

New member meetings included ExcelWraps based in Leeds where I learnt very quickly they don't do wraps but are experts in using Excel to analyse data and provide clear productivity improvements. Visits also included David Brown Santasalo in Huddersfield where they undertake the manufacture and overhaul of all types of transmission systems and Invictus Group based in Derby who as well as being in rail are also an important supplier to the nuclear and defence industries. It was good to see we really do still have many industry leading manufacturers here in the UK!

And finally it was really good to spend some time with Laura visiting members in the north including CWE where in reception they were proudly displaying the Siemens sustainability award they were presented with a few days earlier at the annual Siemens supplier day and Dual Invenitive who have a number of initiative products to enhance track safety during possessions.







## TEAM MEMBER UPDATE - LAURA



**LAURA MAY**

Engagement Manager



4 months in...

I have absolutely loved getting to know new colleagues and friends on sides of the industry I haven't had much exposure to in my career in Rail thus far.

Alongside sitting in on some of my fellow Engagement Manager's member meetings - I have also met some members who sit within my portfolio, which you can see on the panel to the right ->

As well as starting to build relationships with members, I have had the pleasure of meeting with key stakeholders and clients such as GBRTT, TfL, various teams within Network Rail, HS2 and those working on the TRU and EWR programmes.

I'm thrilled to have joined the team in time for our Annual Conference and Christmas Lunch as well as a couple of RINs, RIA and Network Rail supplier events, which have all given me additional opportunities to meet people and connect.



I cannot wait to get out in the new year and meet many more of our members and I am particularly looking forward to getting out and seeing first hand more of the fantastic work our industry is doing. Do let me know if an opportunity arises for me to come and join you out and about in the world of rail!



### #RFmembers I've met so far...

**SIS GROUP**

**UNIPART RAIL**

**OneBigCircle**

**SPL POWERLINES**

**OLE Limited**

**HARSCO RAIL**

**SPENCER British Engineering**

**Furrer + Frey**

**Bridgeway**

**cirret**

**Journeo**

**STORY**

**ADEY**

**CAIRNCROSS**

**RSP**

**eviFile**

**RTS Solutions**

**WESTON ANALYTICS**

**MORGAN SINDALL INFRASTRUCTURE**

**ARCADIS**

**SLC Rail**

**Tracsis**

**RICARDO**

**SIGNAL HOUSE GROUP LIMITED**

**tiDualInventive**

**ResoLex**

**RSS INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Rendel**

**Amey**

**ARUP**

**Severn Partnership**

**VVB INFRASTRUCTURE**

**SICUT**

**A.P.B. GROUP LIMITED**

**BCM GRC Limited**

**AEGIS**



Click on a logo to view their member directory



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - IBSTOCK (ANDERTON CONCRETE)



500 of The G-Tech dual copers (1220mm x 1160mm) were supplied to the southern station at Twickenham. The hazard yellow tactile replaced the painted yellow line because, comparing to a painted line, the blisters on the tactile make travellers aware they are standing on a line, thus making them more conscious to step back and move behind it.

Any chips or scratches would never damage the yellow tactile surface as the product is yellow throughout ensuring any minor defects would not show up.

One advantage to using the G-Tech dual copers is the faster laying time compared to conventional methods. This results in financial gain on labour costs and possession time. This was reiterated when 300 G-Tech dual copers were laid in a 72 hour single weekend possession at Twickenham Station.



**Ibstock**  
At the heart of building



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - SERCO RAIL TECHNICAL SERVICES



Serco Rail Technical Services are thrilled to announce that Daniel Saxton has joined the team as Director, bringing with him a wealth of expertise and a fresh vision to drive the business forward. Daniel's career spans over two decades, marked by leadership roles across the industry where he led TÜV Rheinland's UK Rail division and achieved remarkable growth.

With a proven track record in strategic planning, operational efficiency, and team empowerment, Daniel's approach is perfectly aligned with our vision. He is deeply committed to fostering a collaborative, high-performing culture, and values innovative thinking that have made him a highly respected leader in the industry. In his role, Daniel will oversee key strategic initiatives, focusing on aligning our goals with evolving market dynamics and enhancing our service delivery portfolio. His experience will be invaluable as we enter this new phase of growth, inspiring confidence that his leadership will bring out the best in our team.

“

*I'm thrilled to join Serco Rail Technical Services at such a pivotal moment, especially as we settle into our new premises on Pride Park. This move represents the exciting growth and renewed focus that the team is embracing, and I look forward to supporting and building on this momentum.*

*We will continue to deliver tailored, impactful solutions that meet our clients' evolving needs while driving meaningful progress and operational excellence. I can't wait to see all that we'll achieve together in this new space.*

”



**DANIEL SAXTON**  
Director

**serco**





## TEAM MEMBER UPDATE - DAVE



**DAVE ELLIS**

Engagement Manager



As we approach the end of the year, I as always, look back on far too many highlights within the quarter to capture them all. It was again filled with hugely enjoyable visits and member meetings, epitomised by the likes of my visit to the impressive Atkore facility in West Bromwich, also housing all Flexicon production and products. It really was the perfect example of the manufacturing prowess that exists here within the UK, that we should all be incredibly proud of and is captured within our UK Rail manufacturing capability brochure.



Equally, being so kindly hosted by EWR gave both myself and Laura a real insight into the once in a generation project which will connect businesses and communities between Oxford and Cambridge and across the region adding significant benefits throughout. What a privilege to see the new Winslow station, followed by the incredibly impressive Bletchley 'split level' station, with the West Coast Mainline running below. It was so good to hear all of the EWR team talk of just how much they want to engage with the UK supply chain and that the timing is perfect now with their 10 week consultation period still live until January 24th.



November saw the next in our Fleet Programme of events, Maintenance - Today, Tomorrow and Beyond. Looking out and seeing a full audience down at NTAR, hearing the thoughts on the future of maintenance from some incredible speakers and then watching just how much conversation and networking ensued in the subsequent networking breaks was so rewarding. Without doubt though, one of the genuine highlights from the quarter, was receiving the feedback from one of our event partners for the day, so essential as you all know, to the continuing success of our comprehensive events calendar, who said "being event partner really delivered on so many levels and this is what ROI should look and feel like, thank you so much all involved".







## TEAM MEMBER UPDATE - DAVE



Shortly afterwards it was good to then be involved in the next of our successful member hosted networking events, this time focussing upon Testing Innovation in Rail (hosted by Porterbrook) at their Long Marston Innovation Centre.

Our speakers helped to set the scene perfectly after which there was an incredibly lively networking lunch before a really enjoyable tour of the Long Marston site, highlighting just how much all round thought has gone into the development of the site and the opportunities on offer for companies of all sizes to trial their innovations.

These events are the ideal opportunity for some more focussed discussion and networking for a slightly smaller number of our members and if you are interested in potentially hosting your own, with some thinking around the overarching topic area and the value it could bring, please do [contact Cat](#) to explore.



#RFevent

Sometimes it's also important to take a moment to reflect. So what better way to end the year than a meeting with Suj at Structural Fabrications.

As I walked in I was very much reminded that the last time I saw the staircase heading up to their meeting room, it was actually the first week I joined Rail Forum, some 18 months ago.



How fortunate I am to have met so many incredible businesses and inspirational people from across our industry, that we are all proud to represent and I'm very much looking forward to a 2025 filled with so much more!





## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - JOURNEO



### CCTV and Passenger Counting Contracts Announced

Journeo has recently announced two contract awards for the provision of on-board CCTV and Automatic Passenger Counting (APC) solutions.

Under the contracts Journeo will provide CCTV and APC to almost 80 trains, as well as full support during the design phase and first fitment of the systems. All systems will be securely connected to the Journeo Portal, providing comprehensive data access, retrieval and sharing capabilities.

### MultiQ becomes Journeo

Following the acquisition of MultiQ by Journeo plc in 2023, MultiQ Denmark A/S is now called Journeo A/S. The change represents increased investment in the Nordic region by Journeo and recognises the potential of intelligent transport solutions for train, tram and bus.



“

*This makes perfect sense. The skills and reputation of MultiQ are a strong fit for Journeo. I expect to see Journeo customers in the UK benefit from our expanded expertise in accessible on-vehicle information and sustainable passenger information displays.*

*Likewise, customers in the Nordic region can now access a wider pool of experience in delivering transformative transport technology projects.*

”

**RUSS SINGLETON**

Chief Executive Officer

**Journeo**



## Why become an **EVENT PARTNER?**

Event Partners are the backbone of #RFevents!

**Our partnership packages deliver exceptional value, without breaking the bank.**

If you would like to discuss how an event partner package can help promote and support your business - contact [karen@railforum.uk](mailto:karen@railforum.uk)

“

*We were event partners at a recent Rail Forum event and **it really is what ROI should look and feel like**, thank you so much all involved...*

”

**Make your business stand out - become an event partner today!**



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - SYSTRA



### **SYSTRA Vision** Launches to Deliver Projects Safer, Faster and Greener

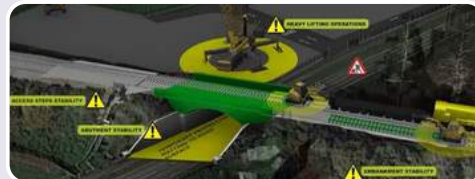
Transport engineering and consultancy specialist SYSTRA has introduced a new digital solution to deliver projects safer, faster and greener.

Launched at the TCR North event in November, SYSTRA Vision is a unique service that transforms railway project delivery, integrating advanced tools, processes, and specialist knowledge and experience to challenge and rethink traditional delivery approaches.

Aiming to rethink the safety culture and enhance collaboration between all teams involved in a project, the innovative solution utilises 3D models and adds the fourth dimension – time. By demonstrating the complex interaction of materials, plant and labour as work progresses, SYSTRA Vision brings the project to life so that all elements can be digitally trialled in any number of iterations to test efficiency, check all hazards are properly identified, and find the optimal approach.



SCAN HERE



*The idea was simple - if we can find a way to rehearse the interaction of materials, plant and labour, informed by all the foreseeable safety hazards, we can improve project sustainability, speed up construction, and improve safety. This innovative approach is now called SYSTRA Vision.*

*It's already in use on several major projects, including the Transpennine Route Upgrade, the East Coast Main Line Power Supply Upgrade, HS2 Main Works Civils and Old Oak Common Station, and is an award-winning solution, picking up an accolade at the SHEL Awards recently.*



**ANDREW DUGDALE**

Market Director

**SYSTRA**

Click Here →  
or

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**ANNUAL CONFERENCE** 2024

Welcome to Doncaster Racecourse


15TH OCTOBER 2024

**REFLECTIONS**



By Nigel Wordsworth







# Come and join us!

Places are limited for both events, on a first come first served basis, and limited to 2 per company.


To register your place, scan the QR code



Full event details can be found on the event page by scanning the QR code



To register your place, scan the QR code



**Derby Micklegate Hotel, DE3 0XX**

**MONDAY 3 | 3 | 2025 2-4 pm**

**Rail Forum**

**Rail Forum and IIOM UK Obsolescence Event**

- Overview of Obsolescence Management
- IEC 62402 OM standard introduction
- Case Studies
- Q&A session

Event is sponsored by **ALSTOM**

**MONDAY 3 | 3 | 2025 7.30 pm**

**TUESDAY 4 | 3 | 2025 9-4 pm**

**Networking dinner**

**IIOM UK Member meeting**



IIOM member meeting with networking and presentations on obsolescence topics from various industries.

Meeting is sponsored by **SET**

**iiom UK & IRELAND**  
International Institute of Obsolescence Management

Please contact the IIOM office for any questions: [admin@theiiom.org](mailto:admin@theiiom.org) / +44(0) 1727 676029

[www.theiiom.org](http://www.theiiom.org)


**Strategic  
Partner**  
**#RFevents**



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - SPENCER GROUP



### Spencer Group Completes Extension Works at East Midlands Rail Depot

Rail infrastructure specialist Spencer Group has completed the latest project in a long-standing partnership with East Midlands Railway (EMR).

After constructing EMR's original Under Frame Cleaning (UFC) centre at Etches Park Depot in Derby almost 10 years ago, Spencer Group recently returned to the site to extend the facility, increasing its capacity from two cars to five.

The extended facility will help the train operator improve the presentation of its carriages and maintain a much higher external cleanliness standard.

As part of the £5m project, Spencer Group's specialist rail engineering team also constructed a new two storey, 30 sq m (322 sq ft) staff welfare facility housing a canteen, locker rooms, changing rooms, meeting rooms and office space.

The team carried out all aspects of the project including the design, ground excavation, building the 75 sq m (807 sq ft) extension, including steelwork, and the construction of the new welfare building.



*Working on a live depot is always challenging and access is very restricted, so collaboration between all parties is essential for a project like this.*

*Throughout the project we've worked closely with the client to adapt to their needs and we've been on a design journey with them to implement changes to ensure the facility meets the needs of the team members who will be working there.*



**TONY CAIRNES**

Site Agent

**SPENCER**  
British Engineering



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - DERBY COLLEGE



### Get on board with skills drive...

Rail industry leaders have joined forces with Derby College Group (DCG) to address significant skills shortages within the industry.

DCG has relaunched its Rail Employment and Skills Board with new terms of reference to ensure the College works even more effectively in building a future rail workforce with the right skills, attributes and attitudes.

Chaired by Rail Forum CEO Elaine Clark OBE, the Board brings employers together with College managers to tackle a problem set to become even more acute as considerable numbers of staff reach retirement age.

Its input is also invaluable at a time of major reform for the industry through the advance of digital technologies and greater emphasis on customer service.

The Board advises the College on developing and delivering relevant courses and apprenticeships in subjects like Engineering, Digital, Professional Construction and Business. It also raises the profile of rail careers – and the huge potential they offer – to students.

#### Email:

[businessenquiries@derby-college.ac.uk](mailto:businessenquiries@derby-college.ac.uk)

#### Call:

01332 387 421



Members get involved at both a strategic and practical level, including:

- Attending open evenings and insight days to inspire students
- Providing placements, work-related visits and virtual events to enhance students' learning experience
- Assisting with staff training to ensure DCG teachers are best placed to support the industry
- Co-designing and co-delivering study programmes, including T Levels



### Companies contributing to the board:

ALSTOM

COLLIS  
ENGINEERING  
LIMITED



E M R



FRAZER-NASH  
CONSULTANCY  
A KBR COMPANY



LORAM

M  
MOTT  
MACDONALD

NetworkRail



### Special thanks to Rail Forum's Patron Members...

ALSTOM

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MTMS  
Managed Transport Maintenance Solutions

porterbrook

resonate



XRAIL

## STAKEHOLDER BOARD MEMBER - THOUGHT PIECE

**EMMA KNIGHT**

NetworkRail

Director of External  
Communications & Engagement

## Launching our New CP7 Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) Strategy

You will hopefully be aware that Network Rail published its new **CP7 SME strategy** back in November, and I thought it would be useful to provide a little more background on our strategy and why it has been launched.

We were pleased to have worked with our colleagues in the industry, including Rail Forum and the Railway Industry Association (RIA) to help develop the strategy so we're confident it will improve SME's experience of working with us.

We know that dealing with a huge organisation like Network Rail can sometimes feel a bit tricky but we are absolutely committed to making it easier. At the heart of our new strategy is a renewed focus on enhancing the transparency and visibility of opportunities with us and our supply chain.

We know how important it is to our present and prospective suppliers, regardless of their size, to have better visibility of our pipeline and we are fully committed to providing that. It will take us some time to get there, but we are improving with every step we take.

One of the first, and most important steps we have taken has been to share our **control period 7 capital frameworks spend** on our website. This will be updated every quarter.

Since publication of our strategy, we've started to develop an implementation plan. This involves collaboration and coordination across our regions and Route Services Commercial & Procurement teams so that SMEs get a consistent experience wherever they are and whichever commercial team they interact with. The implementation plan will include the activities required to deliver all key elements of the SME strategy with timelines, and we expect to have this all agreed by the end of January.

Happily, we have already delivered some improvements in line with the strategy and to help make life easier for SMEs. For example, in July 2024 we launched our **SME supplier guide** which aims to help SMEs bid for work with us and our supply chain. So far, it's had almost 400 views. We've also refreshed specific **information for SMEs on our website**.



As we look forward, we'll be sharing more pipeline information on a quarterly basis. We'll also keep the trade associations, such as Rail Forum, updated with our progress so they can help share our information more widely.





## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - TECFORCE

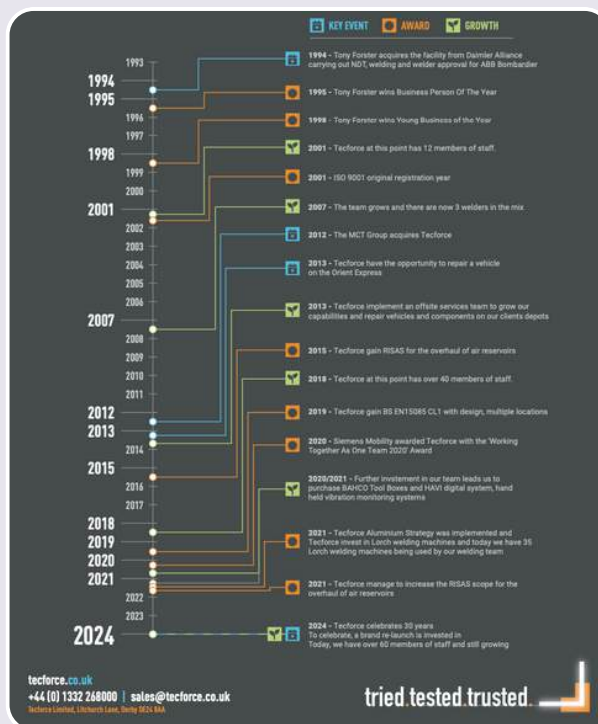


### Tecforce launch new brand to mark 30th Anniversary and new Technical Department opening

Tecforce, a trusted leader in rail industry welding and fabrication, proudly launched its new brand on Tuesday 5th November, marking its 30-year journey with a fresh new look and vision for the future. The rebranding, developed in collaboration with Aura, encompasses all brand touchpoints including a dynamic logo, new signage and a redesigned website. This brand transformation mirrors Tecforce's dedication to growth and quality, and unwavering commitment to welding excellence.

Since being founded in 1994, Tecforce has grown from its origins as a small materials department to an industry leader in welding, fabrication, and engineering solutions. The rebrand marks an exciting new chapter for Tecforce, coinciding with the launch of a state-of-the-art Technical Department at its Derby headquarters, an investment that enhances Tecforce's capabilities in providing comprehensive, top-tier solutions to its rail customers.

The launch event at the Litchurch Lane headquarters welcomed Tecforce employees for a day of celebration and excitement for the future, continuing to provide innovative solutions and exceptional service across the rail industry.



*This rebrand represents our dedication to our team, customers, and industry as we step confidently into the future. Our updated look reflects the expertise, energy, and drive that define Tecforce today.*

*Thank you to everyone who's been part of our journey so far.*



**STEVE CARTER**

Business Development Executive



We are delighted that **Bauer Media** is confirmed as our headline sponsor for **Rail Safety Week 2025**, which will take place across **16th - 22nd June 2025**.

Watch this space for the formal announcement!



In November we were delighted to announce our MOU with the International Institute of Obsolescence Management. Aptly signed at our Vehicle Maintenance event, obsolescence is increasingly impacting railway performance. We are thrilled that this MOU can bring together our memberships to explore mitigating obsolescence and managing obsolescence effectively.

The MOU will see Rail Forum and IIOM identify opportunities to collaborate together - in addition to hosting joint events, knowledge sharing, news updates and promotional activities. In practice, this has already commenced with the launch at the Vehicle Maintenance event which included guests from IIOM. We look forward to welcoming IIOM to our **Loco Maintenance** event at UKRL's premises in Loughborough on 27 February, and on 3 March, IIOM will host RF members for a **special rail event**. On 4 March, IIOM will host **their member's event** at which a number of places are available to Rail Forum members so don't forget to book both events!

We are very interested in getting member views on issues, impacts and further opportunities to develop this important strategic relationship.



For an informal discussion, please **contact** [cat@railforum.uk](mailto:cat@railforum.uk)



## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - UNIPART RAIL



### Enabling SMEs to accelerate new innovation into the Rail Industry

Unipart Rail is encouraging SMEs with innovative new technologies to make contact with our team that is actively accelerating new innovation into the sector. Whether you are an established Rail business or new to the industry and need some support to enter the market, we can help.



*Because of the very high standards in the rail industry designed to keep risk off the rails, our understanding of the complex systems that make the railways work is key to being able to reassure the market that the products that we champion are fit for purpose - and to communicate the performance-improving technologies that reduce risk, increase safety & reduce costs.*

**NICOLA KISSAGLIS**

Head of Product



**Have new technology across Signalling, Construction, Power, Traction & Rolling Stock or Safety?... [Let us know](#)**



*The UK Rail industry isn't short of innovation. We know there are lots of people and companies out there that have brilliant ideas - but can be daunted by the barriers to entry and scaling up in the rail sector - and my role is to identify these great innovations and help them navigate the complex commercialisation process by bridging the gap between industry challenges and customer needs that align with these innovations to ensure that the right opportunities are presented to a diverse range of customers in the UK and other global rail markets.*

*Nicola Kissaglis - our Head of Products - and her team then take those products and use our extensive network to find the opportunities and sell them into the market.*

**HARISH KATHIRESAN**

Head of Research & Innovation





## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - MACRAIL



### Transforming site access with biometric camera installation for TRU East

MacRail recently delivered a key project milestone, installing 15 biometric cameras on the eastern section of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU). Led by Managing Director, Adam Crago, and Head of Operations, Akis Ignatidis, this installation was executed with support from SAC Supervisors Jabran Fazal and Khalid Zaman, for efficient results. The TRU East project demanded advanced solutions to enhance their site access efficiency, while maintaining safety and compliance for the workforce. MacRail's innovative biometric cameras were their solution.

Due to their new functionalities, we believe that these cameras have the potential to change site access, both for TRU East and future projects. A standout functionality is the built-in video support. With the press of a button, workers can instantly connect to either a Site Access Coordinator (SAC) or MacRail's 24/7 Control Room. This human-centered approach ensures sign-in issues are resolved quickly & effectively.

In addition, the cameras also integrate directly with Fatigue360. This integration offers real-time data on time and attendance while updating fatigue and risk scores, providing project managers with the insights they need to maintain safety and productivity.

The successful deployment of these biometric systems marks a significant step forward for TRU's site operations. Stay tuned for more updates from MacRail, via our website and LinkedIn page, as we continue to redefine access management for infrastructure projects nationwide.

To discuss the use of biometric cameras on your projects, we're here to help. **Call our office on 01934 319810** or email us via [sales@macrail.co.uk](mailto:sales@macrail.co.uk)



**macrail**  
systems





## PREMIUM MEMBER FEATURE - SIEMENS MOBILITY



October 2024 saw the opening of the Train Manufacturing Facility at Siemens Mobility's Rail Village in Goole, East Yorkshire. The facility was officially opened by Secretary of State for Transport Louise Haigh and the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan.

The opening saw the announcement of a new investment of up to £40m for a Bogie Assembly and Service Centre at the site, which will incorporate and expand Siemens Mobility's current capabilities to overhaul bogies from UK trains.

This new investment will secure around 100 existing jobs and create up to a further 200. Overall, the Goole Rail Village will bring up to 1,000 new jobs to East Yorkshire, as well as around 1,700 supply chain job opportunities.

The investment in the new service centre, which is due to be operational towards the end of 2026, comes in addition to the previously announced investment of up to £200m in the Goole Rail Village.

This state-of-the-art facility will play a pivotal role in producing the next generation of trains for the UK, including the highly anticipated new Piccadilly line trains for Transport for London (TfL) that will transform rail travel across the capital.

All of Siemens' future UK train orders will be built at Goole, including the new Desiro Verve battery bi-mode trains which can replace Britain's aging diesel trains without having to electrify hundreds of miles more track in the next few years. This could save Britain's railways £3.5 billion and 12 million tonnes of CO2 over 35 years.



**SIEMENS**

Are you up to speed with our **latest updates?**



Stay in the know...

Subscribe to our newsletter (via the footer on [our website](#)) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#).

## NEW MEMBER PROFILES

Below is a list of new member profiles this quarter. If you wish to get in touch with the representatives mentioned, **please contact the Rail Forum team.**



**BRITANNIC EXPLORER**  
A BELMOND TRAIN  
UNITED KINGDOM

The Britannic Explorer, A Belmond Train: A new UK touring sleeper train that combines the pioneering history of rail travel with modern British culture, creativity, and lifestyle. Made up of 10x Mk3 coaches, we are looking to innovate with new materials, equipment, and technology to help remove component obsolescence and improve on our current sustainable journey.

**JAMES CLARKE**  
Chief Engineer



**GRIPPLE**  
Change the game

Gripple is a global manufacturer with purpose. Helping rail professionals maximise possession windows, its game changing OLE products accelerate rail electrification projects, addressing some of the most significant challenges in the industry.

**PAUL WHITTLE**  
Group Product Manager



**ti DualInventive**  
Transforming Rail Safety

Dual Inventive is a technology company specialising in the development of innovative products and solutions for the rail sector. We transform rail safety through safe and efficient remote-controlled track access.

We're looking forward to working with Rail Forum to build new connections and help us drive our strategy for 2025.

**ADAM DURNIN**  
Commercial Manager



**We are also delighted to welcome onboard...**

**MORGAN SINDALL**  
INFRASTRUCTURE



**DB Santasalo**  
David Brown Santasalo

**RSP**  
Rail Signalling & Power



**Yellow**  
RAIL

EXPERT • AGILE • PROVEN  
**ROLLING STOCK TECHNOLOGY**  
powered by Excelwraps

Learn **Live**



**GMT**

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas  
from the whole team at

 **Rail Forum** 

