

# A big leap forward for the Ebbw Vale Rail Upgrade

November 30, 2022



Network Rail, SYSTRA and AmcoGiffen teams have worked 24/7 on the Ebbw Vale Frequency Enhancement '9-day' blockade, clocking up 10,000 hours and handing back possession on time and incident free.

The £70m Ebbw Vale rail upgrade funded by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council via a loan from the Welsh Government, the investment will allow a new hourly passenger service between Ebbw Vale Town and Newport. The existing line has to be closed periodically throughout the next year in order to make the major improvements and closure dates have been published on the [Network Rail website](#).

Our 'One team' approach ensured the success of the blockade pulling together the contracting teams supported by Network Rail's Construction Services team who removed and relaid the track. A great example of project delivery leading up to the new Control Period.

SYSTRA's Ebbw Vale Project Manager David Camacho, said, "The combined team worked tirelessly leading up to and throughout the blockade to co-ordinate these major works and deliver them successfully and safely within a tight nine day window.

“I am incredibly proud of the team we have created; we have carefully gathered together exactly the right expertise to deliver this timely rail upgrade.”

AmcoGiffen’s Operations Director for Wales and Borders, Andy Crowley said, “Our efforts at Ebbw Vale are a fantastic example of our ‘one team’ approach in action, as we work closely with our client Network Rail and Supply Chain Partners Siemens, Systra and Network Rail Construction Services to deliver the multitude of works.

“In line with the new CP7 strategy, we’ve reviewed our working practices to be collaborative and holistic in approach. This has brought an increased level of transparency and engagement to our intelligent client offering and supplier approach, allowing all the different teams to come together in a seamless, cohesive manner. Throughout this work, the safety of our 120-strong team was paramount, and I’m happy to report that this paid off in zero reported incidents.”

Between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> October major works were carried out on the Ebbw Vale Line which was temporarily closed for nine days. Key highlights of the work undertaken in October were:

**At Newport Rd Bridge:**

- 2 spans of bridge removed weighing 30t total
- 4 cill beams, 2 decks and 6 L planks installed weighing 150t total
- Steel suspended platforms installed in 3 lifts weighing total 50t
- 25 pre-cast concrete planks average length 5m installed
- 200 tonnes bottom ballast install including ballast ramps

**At Newbridge station:**

- a rail bridge over Bridge Street was replaced using a 650-tonne crane;
- 415metres of new track was installed, and platform extensions were carried out
- A 20m x 40 meters existing retaining wall was demolished involving 250 lorry loads of spoil removed before the embankment was regraded

**At Llanhilleth station:**

- 55 meters of platform foundation excavated
- 60m3 of concrete poured
- 1800 blocks laid