

Changing track with a career in the rail industry

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“As more people return to rail and trains become busier, it may become more challenging to socially distance. We’re helping passengers plan ahead with better information and new online tools.”

Aged 40 - Bedfordshire local Vanya Felix decided to take a leap of faith and leave her longstanding career in optics to come and join the railway. Next month marks three years of her role as an Airport Host for Thameslink.

“I worked in the optics industry for a really long time and just felt like I’d hit a brick wall. I’d worked my way up over the years and there wasn’t anywhere else I could go, so I thought ‘it’s time for a change.’”

“When I joined the railway, I was completely overwhelmed by the number of customers we had every day at the airport! Once I got my bearings, I became much more confident and I really enjoy the role - but of course, it’s been totally different over the past year.”

“As lockdown came into force and travel was for essential reasons only, the airport was like a ghost town. We left our usual airport desk to help at Luton Airport Parkway station instead, which was a good

opportunity because I got a feel for how a usual ticket office works and I also got to know the team at the station better. I'd always see them as I travelled to and from work, but we only ever had time for a quick hello. It was also nice for colleagues to support each other at a tough time when there was lots of uncertainty in the air."

"Leaving your comfort zone can be a scary thing, but I would encourage everyone to just jump in and do it if they're not happy or are looking for a new challenge. It's never too late to try something new and with the right team supporting you - you can't go wrong! Life's too short, I'm so glad I changed career when I did. Now that things are starting to get back to normal, I'm looking forward to helping customers with their travel needs."

Photo credit: Govia Thameslink Railway