

Control panel provides new lease of life for Malton signal box

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After 55 years of reliable service, the signalling control panel at Malton signal box on the popular York to Scarborough line has been upgraded by L.B. Foster TEW Engineering, ensuring uninterrupted performance well beyond 2060.

Around 35 trains per day travel the 36-mile journey between York and Scarborough stations. Malton is the last surviving of four signal boxes. Originally known as Malton East, the signal box controlled the busy level crossing and junction towards Driffield. L.B. Foster TEW Engineering was commissioned by Network Rail to survey the existing panel and provide a proposal to manufacture a new like-for-like replacement as part of the CP6 lifetime extension works.

Pete Atkins, Senior Support Engineer (Signals) LNE, Network Rail, says: "This project has run extraordinarily smoothly, given the circumstances that we have all had to deal with related to COVID19 restrictions. From the original inspection and assessment of the panel at Malton, to the design, manufacture, on-site installation and testing, the team at L.B. Foster TEW Engineering has met our every ask, and more.

“The replacement panel includes some nice modifications that have been designed with the user in mind – such as integrating the Telephone Concentrator into the panel’s new work surface. It’s touches like that which make an ordinary job special.”

The new panel at Malton signal box was built over a 12 week period at L.B. Foster TEW Engineering’s manufacturing, assembly and testing facilities in Nottingham. This condensed three month period included the detailed design of the replacement panel, Network Rail approval, fabrication, assembly and extensive in-house testing.

Nigel Dobney is Senior Project Manager at L.B. Foster TEW Engineering. He says: “The advantage of our unique Mosaic system is its ability to be changed and altered with minimum disruption to normal operations in the control room environment. The flexibility of the Mosaic system allows us to install our full range of type-approved panel components into the grid/tile system, future-proofing the system and extending the life of the product for the stakeholders.”

Pete Atkins concludes: “With over 50 years of daily use, the old signalling control panel had really served its time and more. L.B. Foster TEW Engineering’s replacement panel now extends the life of the signalling system, providing a safer, more reliable solution for many years to come.”

Delivery and installation of the new panel involved disassembling the unit into manageable sections and delivering these in stages to Malton signal box. L.B. Foster’s team of experienced, on-site installers then reassembled the sections side-by-side with the original panel. The Network Rail testing team then pre-tested the panel utilising a new set of panel to relay room interface cables over a four day period, before disconnecting and removing the old panel. The new panel was then manoeuvred into its final position, commissioned and signed into service on Thursday 2nd July 2020.

The works fall under Network Rail’s Delivery Plan for CP6, covering the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2024.

For more information on L.B. Foster TEW Engineering’s control panel solutions visit www.lbfoster.eu

Photo credit: L.B. Foster TEW Engineering