

East West Rail bolsters Net Zero Carbon ambition

October 1, 2021



The East West Railway Company (EWR Co) yesterday announced more detail on its vision of becoming a Net Zero Carbon railway through its approach to design, construction and operation of East West Rail (EWR).

Speaking to a large audience at the *East West Main Line 2021* event at Oxford Town Hall, Dr Christopher Harris, Carbon and Sustainability Manager at EWR Co, outlined EWR Co's vision, which covers the whole life cycle of the railway – from conception to future operation – including:

- **Strategic decision-making** - Putting net zero carbon at the heart of all the important decisions being taken about the railway
- **Carbon reduction** - Reducing greenhouse gases, from construction and building materials right through to rolling stock and how the rail services are operated
- **Organisational readiness** - Setting and meeting carbon reduction objectives for EWR Co's workforce and partners to build the organisation needed to deliver a net zero carbon railway
- **Work with stakeholders** - Working with stakeholders such as local authorities and local supply chains to help meet its ambitions, both for the railway and the wider Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

Rail is already one of the most carbon-efficient ways to travel and reduces emissions caused by congestion on the roads. The UK's railways are set to get greener in line with national policy to remove diesel-only trains from the network by 2040 and a target for 100% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (compared to 1990 levels) by 2050.

Dr Christopher Harris, Carbon and Sustainability Manager at EWR Co, said:

"EWR aims to provide greener transport alternatives for people living and working between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge and our environmental commitments put carbon reduction at the forefront of our decision-making. We want to be bolder and are aiming to deliver a net zero carbon railway that provides an affordable and sustainable public transport alternative, linking communities to job opportunities and access to new homes across the region."

The event also included a panel discussion on *Decarbonising Rail Infrastructure* which featured representatives from Skanska, Ricardo Energy and Environment and the Rail Freight Group, as well as sessions with other EWR Co speakers including:

- Michael Shanks, Head of Environment at EWR Co, who outlined the other environmental commitments that are underpinning the development of the railway
- Vanessa Ralph, DCO Director at EWR Co, who provided an update on the approach and next steps to applying for a Development Consent Order
- Local authority speakers from the East West Main Line Partnership (previously the East West Rail Consortium).

Martin Taylor, Director at Peloton said:

"This is such an exciting project for the region, providing communities between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge with a vital new rail link. We're delighted that the team at EWR Co took the time to share progress on East West Rail and their current thinking on important issues such as delivering a net zero carbon railway, protecting the local environment, and DCO planning to our audience in Oxford. We would like to thank EWR Co for helping to make this event such a success."

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