

GB Railfreight complete £1.5 million upgrade to Eastleigh and Bescot LDCs for Network Rail

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GB Railfreight (GBRf) has completed two major upgrade projects funded by Network Rail worth over £1.5 million, aimed at improving vital Local Distribution Centres (LDCs) in Eastleigh and Bescot.

Both LDC's act as a focal point for the shunting, marshalling and preparation of trains needed to support vital engineering works carried out by Network Rail.

The work on Eastleigh LDC, in Hampshire, has been two years in the making with GBRf replacing old cabins with updated facilities that provide full recreational capability, offices for management, a meeting room, as well as a vantage point that overlooks the yard. Alongside this, GBRf undertook a car park overhaul, maximising the potential parking for those operating onsite.

Staff officially relocated to the new facility on 1 June, moving from temporary accommodation which has been a welcome change.

The West Midlands-based Bescot LDC has undergone a series of works to repair and renew underinvested and unsafe track at the site. The project included the removal of abandoned buildings, lighting upgrade

works, installation of Armco crash barriers, new safe walking routes and safety steps, and reinstatement of siding 1 which has been derelict for many years by using recycled rail and sleepers.

Backed by Network Rail Supply Chain Operations (SCO) and the Network Rail Freight Safety Improvement Fund, Bescot LDC has been hugely improved to prevent derailments.

Mike Black, Supply Chain Services Director of Network Rail said: “Local distribution centres may not instinctively sound like the most critical part of running a railway, but they’re absolutely vital to maintaining and renewing the railway, and keeping our passengers and freight moving.

“The improvements delivered at Eastleigh and Bescot are part of our wider strategy to modernise supply chain operations sites in order to make working practices even safer and more efficient while also improving performance.”

David Golding, Asset Director of GB Railfreight, said: “Our partnership with Network Rail has seen the completion of both projects on time and within budget, providing the facilities needed to ensure the smooth running of LDCs, which are a vital part of our infrastructure system in the UK. This work will help to bring LDCs into the twenty-first century, as we see demand for UK-wide possession and support services increase post-pandemic.”

Photo credit: GB Railfreight