

# In The News | 15th December 2020 | Latest Rail News

December 15, 2020



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In a UK-first, Hitachi Rail and Eversholt Rail have signed an exclusive agreement aimed at bringing battery power – and fuel savings of more than 20 per cent – to the modern Great Western Railway Intercity Express Trains.

The line between Penzance and London is only partially electrified, with the majority of the 300-mile journey requiring diesel power.

The partnership is looking at batteries replacing a diesel engine as a power source on an existing Hitachi-built five-carriage train – currently known as a bi-mode for its ability to switch seamlessly between electric

and diesel power.

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Improving rail links between cities in the North and Midlands should be the first priority of a new approach to end stop-start investments and help level up the UK as part of a wider economic strategy, according to a major new report by the National Infrastructure Commission.

The Commission was asked by the Prime Minister in February 2020 to undertake an assessment of proposed major rail schemes to help inform the government's Integrated Rail Plan.

The report highlights the strategic case for major rail investment across the North and Midlands, and the need for the government's forthcoming plan to set out a rolling programme of affordable investments.

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Network Rail has submitted planning applications for two new railway stations in Scotland.

An application has been submitted to Scottish Borders Council's planning team for a new station at Reston.

An application has also been submitted to East Lothian Council for a new railway station in East Linton.

[Click here for more details.](#)

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Finally, and East Midlands Railway has successfully delivered unique driver training programmes to allow the introduction of two new trains into its fleet.

Due to the impact COVID-19 had upon training, new agreements were forged in collaboration with EMR union colleagues to ensure training could be delivered safely.

To keep the teams safe during the pandemic, all of the 'close contact' training requires drivers to enter into COVID-secure training bubbles.

Every instructor and trainee takes a COVID-19 test every week, prior to training. This alongside daily safety declarations and temperature checks.

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*Photo credit: Hitachi*

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