

# In The News | 23rd February 2024 | Latest Rail News

February 23, 2024



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The HS2 and Rail Minister Huw Merriman has written a letter to UK train manufacturers and rolling stock companies about the current and expected rolling stock procurement opportunities.

It comes after the Managing Director of Alstom UK and Ireland warned in December that there were six weeks of manufacturing work left at the Derby site.

The letter says: “Despite the challenging conditions we continue to face, new competitions are now underway to replace trains on Northern, Transpennine, Southeastern and Chiltern, subject to business case approval.

“There are also several major fleet upgrades underway, including an upgrade of GTR’s Electrostar fleets, a planned refurbishment of the Cross Country Voyager fleet, and a major refurbishment of the Pendolino fleet which is being carried out by Alstom at its Widnes site.”

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The owners of the UK’s highest railway say there is no timescale yet for reopening the attraction following its latest problems.

An article on the BBC website says the Cairngorm funicular, near Aviemore, was closed for four years from September 2018 due to structural issues with the track.

It was reopened to the public in January 2023 following £25m (\$32m) of repairs before it was closed again in August due to snagging issues.

Owners, public agency Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), said it could be months rather than weeks before it was back in service.

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More than £20 million will be invested to improve the Metrolink network over the next 12 months, to ensure services remain safe and reliable for years to come.

The UK’s largest light rail network has 99 stops across 64 miles of track – more than 700 million journeys have been made on the trams since opening in 1992.

The £21.4 million funding – from the government’s City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) – will ensure the network keeps on delivering safe, reliable and accessible services for millions more people into the future.

Approved by the Bee Network committee on Thursday, the work is part of a planned £147 million package to maintain, upgrade and improve the network up to 2027.

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Southeastern has unveiled its first Centre of Excellence for Train Presentation.

The £1.5 million investment has created a dedicated interior repair and heavy cleaning operation within the existing Grove Park depot in south east London.

Two 12-carriage platform level walkways have been installed, which markedly improves access to the train for cleaning.

[Click here for more details.](#)

*Photo credit: Southeastern*