

# Network Rail and Vivarail bring the next-generation battery train to COP26

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Network Rail and Vivarail have announced that Vivarail's next-generation battery train will be launched at COP26 and will run daily services throughout the international climate change conference.

This zero-emission train uses new batteries, developed by Vivarail, to combine maximum range with the ability to recharge quickly. The result is a train that can travel for up to 80 miles on battery power and recharge in only 10 minutes using Vivarail's patented Fast Charge system.

Fast Charge's development was supported by an Innovate UK grant and will shortly begin its final stage of Network Rail approvals – a live trial on the Greenford line starting in early 2022.

At COP26, Vivarail will support the UK Government and wider rail industry's ambition to reach Net Zero and carbon reduction targets by bringing to life this emission-free technology to a number of audiences, including graduates and global partners. Inspiring the leaders and innovators of the future is key to reaching Net Zero and fulfilling the UK's carbon reduction targets.

As part of the spirit of collaboration across the rail industry for COP26, which will be held in Glasgow from

November 1, Vivarail has been helped by SLC Operations, Alstom and VTG with drivers, electrical charging and transport.

Last year, Network Rail became the first railway company in the world to commit to the most stretching science-based targets for reducing carbon. A key part of the strategy for achieving those targets is decarbonising traction energy through further overhead line electrification and using alternative fuels, including battery and hydrogen trains.

A hydrogen-powered train will also feature in a fringe event at COP26, announced earlier this year by Network Rail and Porterbrook. This will give guests, including leaders and climate experts, a first-hand experience of British technological innovation and expertise, and how alternative fuel trains of the future will play a vital part in building back better and greener from the pandemic.

Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris, said: “We are ambitious to make our railways even greener and I am delighted that Vivarail will launch their flagship battery train at COP26, thanks to investment from our Accelerating Innovation programme.

“Decarbonising the rail network is crucial to reaching net-zero by 2050 and this technology is another example of how we are building back greener.”

Martin Frobisher OBE, Network Rail’s safety and engineering director, said: “I’m delighted that we’re partnering with two thriving British companies in Vivarail and Porterbrook to showcase the future of rail in this country to the world at COP26.

“Rail is already the greenest form of public transport, and battery-powered trains will play an important role in our commitment to providing an even cleaner, greener railway for the future.”

Steve McBride, Managing Director of Vivarail, said: “It is a great honour to be asked to support such an important event. The achievement of an innovative British company like Vivarail to build a first in class train is a great example of our country’s ingenuity and ability to find new technologies and ways to do things.

“Our R&D team has spent 3 years developing these new batteries, working with specialists Hoppecke. The result is a new traction and charging system able to convert diesel stock or act as range extenders on other types of electric train. We are now ready to play our part in delivering an electrified network in the shortest possible time.

“We have already sold our first train to the United States – with a second on order. As part of the RDC family we have benefitted from insights and help from the US and Europe, so we know our products have ready export potential – helping decarbonise across the world.”

*Photo credit: Network Rail*