

# Network Rail confirms the appointment of three new directors in the Wales & Western region

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Network Rail has announced that Nick Millington MBE has moved into the permanent role of route director on the Wales and Borders route, Marcus Jones has been appointed as the new route director for the Western route, alongside Sophie Bancroft who takes on the role of operations director, also for the Western route.

Nick Millington MBE began his career on the railway more than 30 years ago and has strived to improve safety by leading Network Rail's 'Safety Task Force', successfully reducing near misses by 70% over a three-year period. His dedication to improving the safety of his railway colleagues and charity work was celebrated in the King's New Year Honours, 2023, where he was appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE). [You can read Nick's story in the March edition of Rail Director here.](#)

Nick has been interim route director for Wales and Borders, since June 2022, taking over from Bill Kelly, who dedicated six years to the role.

Marcus is set to join Network Rail from June 2023, making the move from his current role as train service delivery director at MTR Elizabeth line.



*Marcus Jones*

A railway veteran, Marcus has worked on the railway for most of his career – almost 20 years, including on the Anglia route with Network Rail and with train operators across Britain. He was also awarded a British Empire Medal in 2020 for his contributions for transport during the COVID-19 pandemic.

David Davidson has been leading the Western route on an interim basis, and will start his new role as route director for Kent in the Southern region this summer.



The Western route is also set to welcome Sophie Bancroft to the team, as operations director, this June.



*Sophie Bancroft*

Sophie has spent 15 years at TfL, delivering excellent customer service in London Underground's stations, trains and service control functions. Sophie has broadened her skills by working in strategic functions and being an advocate for diversity in the workplace. Sophie is also a non-exec director for the London Transport Museum.

Sophie replaces Keith Andrews who, after 32 years at Network Rail is retiring following a very successful career in the industry.

The three new directors for Wales and Western will play a key role in boosting performance, safety and resilience, working closely with train operating partners, freight customers and industry colleagues to deliver a greater railway across the region.

Michelle Handforth, regional managing director for Network Rail Wales and Western region, said: “I am excited to announce our three new director appointments across Wales and Western – huge congratulations to them all.

“Marcus’s knowledge of the operational railway and experience in the critical Thames Valley corridor between Reading and London Paddington, and Sophie’s passion for putting people and customers at the heart of everything she does, will both be incredible assets to the Western route.

“With Nick’s leadership, I’m confident we will continue to improve performance, working as one team with TfW and Amey Infrastructure Wales. I know Nick will drive a forensic approach to safety and performance, making our railway in Wales more resilient and meeting the needs of communities across Wales.”

Nick Millington MBE, route director at Network Rail for Wales & Borders route, said: “The Wales & Borders route has been my home for some time now and I have enjoyed every day working as interim route director.

“Thankfully, I have a great team and have developed some fantastic new relationships with our partners at Transport for Wales and Amey Infrastructure Wales, and I know these partnerships will help us to deliver a safe and efficient railway for our passengers and customers.

“I look forward to delivering the best possible railway for Wales and Borders.”

Marcus Jones, newly appointed route director at Network Rail for Western route, said: “I am truly delighted to be stepping into this new role. It’s going to be a great experience coming back working within Network Rail, and I look forward to working with new, and some old, faces as well as our partners to improve performance.

“I have dedicated my career to delivering a railway service that passengers and train operators truly deserve and will continue to do so in this new role.”

Sophie Bancroft, newly appointed operations director at Network Rail for Western route, commented: “I’m really excited to start my new role at Network Rail. I have spent my whole career at TfL learning, developing and working with great people to deliver an effective operational service.

“I can’t wait to work with a new team, in an industry that I love, to help improve performance with our partners across the route.”

*Photo credit: Network Rail*