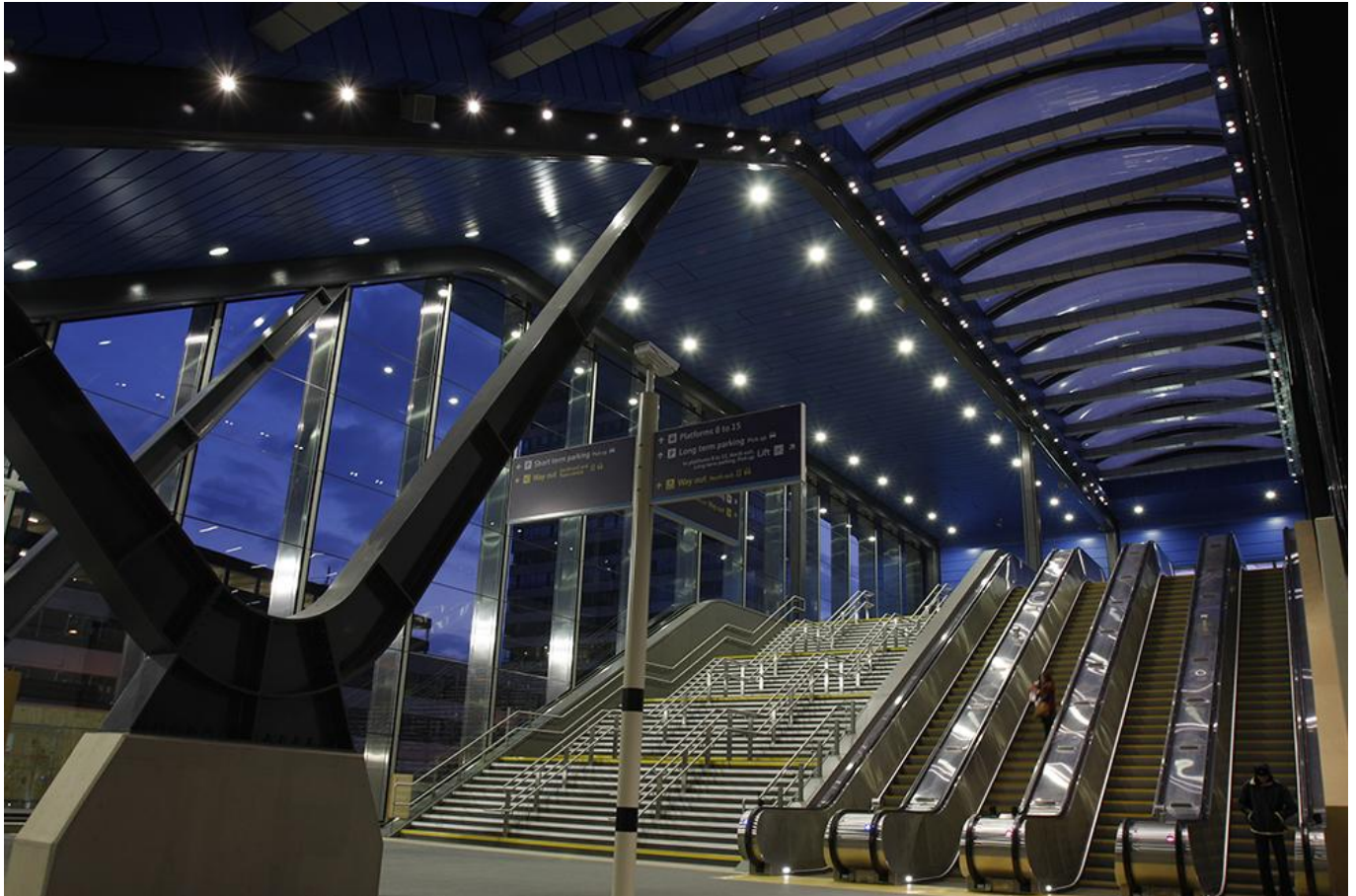


Network Rail's 'open data' programme gets lift-off

October 15, 2020



Almost 1,500 lifts and 300 escalators across some 500 stations around the country will soon be directly 'live' reporting their working condition. Passengers will be able to see which lifts and escalators are working, helping them plan their journeys through stations with real-time knowledge of the access available.

Network Rail is releasing an open data source with live data on the status of lifts and escalators at around 370 stations nationwide, building up to the full complement of 463 stations over the next 12 to 18 months.

Speaking about the development Martin Frobisher, Network Rail's technical and engineering director, said: "Putting passengers first is at the heart of everything we do and with our greater use of technology and remote condition monitoring of thousands of our assets, we can leverage the brilliance of our UK based app developers to turn this data into something really useful for our passengers, especially those with accessibility needs.

"And with the continuing 'Access for All' programme, we are aiming to double the number of stations with lifts on the network over the next 10 years, helping more and more passengers to easily access Britain's

railway.”

Previous open source data releases have quickly resulted in app and web developers using the information to create easy to use apps that are hugely beneficial to passengers when planning journeys.

This latest development, delivered through Network Rail’s research and development programme, uses monitoring devices on lifts and escalators to create an ‘application programming interface’ which gives live asset condition to third parties through an open data source. This allows the third parties, such as web and app developers, to create travel planner apps to provide live lift and escalator availability information to passengers.

The data comes from monitoring kit that provides constant condition information on Network Rail’s lift and escalator assets. Currently 80% of lifts and 60% of escalators are fitted with this equipment with the remaining sites to be installed over the next 12-18 months.

Network Rail will be making the information available for passengers on its own website in the next few months. Working together with the Rail Delivery Group, plans are also in place to incorporate the information into the National Rail Enquiries website. This contributes to the new rail technical strategy launched on 13 October, using technology to make the railway easy to use for all, reliable and easy to maintain.

Photo credit: Network Rail

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