

New zero carbon freight service launched

January 22, 2023



Network Rail and Varamis Rail, the UK's newest train operator, have worked together to launch an innovative, zero carbon freight service.

The service, which launched last week, will run between Scotland and the Midlands, Monday to Friday. Targeted at express parcels and third-party delivery companies, it will primarily deal with next day delivery of consumer goods.

Industry partners, Eversholt Rail, have converted a number of fully electric 4-car trains formerly used in passenger service to enable them to carry freight while Network Rail provided the necessary operating licenses, contracts, and train paths for the service to operate. This followed trial operations of the service, which commenced in October 2022, to test the robustness and practicality of the service, and enabled logistics companies to test the service..

Georgie Newby, Network Rail's Senior Commercial and Customer Relationship Manager, said: "I'm delighted that we've been able to support the launch of this innovative new service from the latest Freight Operating Company to join the network. It is the result of hard work and dedication across multiple organisations, all working closely together to deliver a great, zero carbon service for logistics companies to use. We look forward to delivering other innovations to keep growing the amount of parcel logistics

transported by rail.”

Varamis Rail Managing Director, Phil Read, added: “As the UK’s newest Train Operator, Varamis Rail is keen to promote the sustainable benefits that the railway has to offer to the UK economy along with Network Rail. The increase in online shopping and home deliveries over recent years has accelerated the demand to find a more environmentally friendly solution to moving our parcels, products, or light goods around the UK; one solution is the electrified rail network.

“Varamis Rail is incredibly appreciative of the support it has received from Network Rail to enable a start-up of its operations and we look forward to building on this relationship as the rail industry looks to play its part in decarbonising’ the UK.”

The new service, which launched on the 09 January, is fully electric, supports Network Rail and the rest of the rail industry, as an environmentally friendly alternative to road haulage. It gives access to urban rail stations located within the heart of city centres and is expected to benefit the rail industry in the future as an example of best practice.