

RIA Northern Ireland publishes its rail manifesto before Stormont elections

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The Railway Industry Association (RIA) Northern Ireland has published its manifesto for rail as May's Northern Ireland Assembly Elections approach.

Its manifesto sets out four key recommendations for the nation, where it says rail supports £900m in economic growth and 17,500 jobs. The recommendations include:

- **Provide a clear medium to long term rail investment strategy**, and recognise the importance of certainty to support cost effective rail supply chain delivery.
- **Work with the rail supply chain to develop a deliverable, long term rail decarbonisation strategy**. This will enable it to meet passenger and freight needs and Net Zero carbon goals, including on electrification, hydrogen and battery trains.
- **Place innovation at the industry's core and begin a programme of modern signalling renewals.**
- **Support the recommendations set out in the All-Island Strategic Rail Review.**

Neil Walker, RIA Northern Ireland Lead, said: "The upcoming Northern Ireland elections provide an opportunity to support the nation's economic recovery through rail investment, as passengers begin returning to the network post-Coronavirus.

"RIA Northern Ireland's recommendations, developed with RIA Members in the nation, focus on providing long term visibility for businesses, decarbonisation, innovation and signalling and supporting the All-Island Strategic Rail Review. By working with the rail supply chain in these areas, the Northern Ireland Government can help support a thriving railway system, thereby supporting greater investment, jobs and economic growth."