

RIA's Rail Fellowship Programme returns with first physical visit since Coronavirus

May 20, 2021



On Friday, the Railway Industry Association (RIA) demonstrated that the rail industry is getting back to normality, through its leading engagement programme, the Rail Fellowship Programme.

Coronavirus has led to physical tours being put on hold, but the first in-person visit held since the pandemic provided the perfect opportunity for rail suppliers to demonstrate the continuation of their great work during this challenging period. In recent years, the RIA Rail Fellowship Programme has become a staple for industry, organising MPs and Parliamentarians to visit local sites. This gives decision makers first-hand knowledge of the day-to-day work that goes on in rail supply.

Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Transport, and Richmond Park MP Sarah Olney, became the inaugural member of the 2021 RIA Rail Fellowship, and other MPs are already signed up to take part in visits in the coming months.

Upon arrival, Sarah Olney was introduced to representatives from RIA, Alstom and London Overground operator Arriva Rail London, before being led on a socially distant guided tour of the depot, meeting London Overground operator Arriva Rail London, depot workers and witnessing the work going on on-site

to keep London Overground services moving. The tour was followed by a discussion of the challenges facing the rail industry, the impact of Coronavirus, and the progress of Alstom's new growing business, following the acquisition of Bombardier Transportation

Max Sugarman, Public Affairs & PR Director at the Railway Industry Association, said: "The railway industry has worked incredibly hard to continue to deliver for our country throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, keeping the UK moving and ensuring production lines continued during this difficult time.

"By relaunching the RIA Rail Fellowship Programme, we have the chance to thank rail businesses on the ground and showcase their work to MPs and decision makers, highlighting just how vital the UK rail sector is to the country.

"Thank you to Sarah Olney for being the inaugural member of the RIA Rail Fellowship, Class of 2021, and for championing rail, which really is valuable to all of us who work in the sector."

Will Tanner, Communication Director, UK & Ireland said: "Our depots have worked hard throughout the pandemic doing their bit to keep the country moving, while keeping our own people safe. We are delighted to welcome Sarah Olney to Willesden and very pleased to be part of the RIA's excellent fellowship programme."

Sarah Olney MP said: "I was extremely grateful for the opportunity to visit Willesden Junction depot and see first-hand the work being undertaken to help transform public transportation and boost sustainability.

"I believe it is imperative that as we rebuild our society post-pandemic and rethink the public transport we use, we embrace our environmental obligations and explore ways of drastically reducing harmful emissions."

Photo credit: Railway Industry Association