

South Western Railway announces start date for new Managing Director

March 5, 2021



Claire Mann will take up her role as Managing Director of South Western Railway on 22 March 2021.

Claire began her career in transport as a customer service assistant and then a train driver for Heathrow Express and has since held a number of senior leadership roles at organisations including the Docklands Light Railway, Arriva Trains, First Great Western (now GWR) and London Overground. Most recently, Claire moved within TfL to become Director of Bus Operations, where she was responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the capital's 9,200-strong bus fleet.

Claire takes over the role from interim Managing Director, Mike Houghton, who returns to his role as Chief Operating Officer, and joins SWR as it begins planning for the return of more passengers as COVID restrictions are eased.

Claire Mann, SWR's incoming Managing Director, said: "I can't wait to join the excellent team at SWR and to start shaping the company's role in the UK's recovery. The railway has played a vital role in keeping our key workers moving through lockdown and will be pivotal in helping people reconnect with each other as we emerge from the cloud of COVID."

Steve Montgomery, First Rail Managing Director, said: “Claire brings a wealth of experience to the role and her passion for delivering an excellent customer experience is a perfect fit, as SWR delivers its £1.2bn programme to transform the railway. With the roll out of the new Arterio fleet and Island Line transformation both set to be delivered this year, it is an exciting time for the customers and communities SWR serves, and we are delighted to have Claire in the driving seat.”

Steve Murphy, MTR UK Chief Executive Officer, said: “Claire’s experience both on the front line of the railway and in senior roles across transport will be invaluable as she drives the SWR team to deliver great journeys for all our customers, and we are fortunate to have her on board. I’d also like to take this opportunity to thank Mike Houghton for the excellent job he has done as interim Managing Director over the past three months.”

Photo credit: South Western Railway