

IRO Midlands News

Work starts at Euston

Work on the redevelopment of Euston station has started in July as Network Rail sets about expanding the retail offering and improving the customer experience at the station in a £12.5m development running until late 2015.

The first stage of the work involves clearing the area outside the front of the station, removing the existing kiosks and replacing them with 'grab and go' food units. This work is to provide more space and a better atmosphere. The new units will open next year.

Hamish Kiernan, Commercial Retail Director at Network Rail said *"More than a million people use Euston station every week and this number is only set to grow further. Our plan for Euston will provide more space and a better atmosphere for passengers as well as an attractive mix of food, drink and shopping options for people travelling to or through the station."*


The present station food court is to be converted into an expanded retail area, and this should be complete by the end of 2015. As part of this work, a new balcony will be constructed inside the station similar to that introduced at London Waterloo and the older one at London Liverpool Street. This will provide a seating area, bar and dining areas—all by accessible by lifts, stairs and escalators.

The station will remain open throughout the work, which is intended to be completed with minimum disruption to passengers and customers. The station is a key location for Virgin Trains and London Midland Trains.

Chiltern leases six Class 68s for mainline ops

Chiltern Railways is to spend £15m on a lease of six new Class 68 locomotives for use on its mainline services between London Marylebone and Birmingham Snow Hill.

The Class 68s will be supplied and maintained by Direct Rail Services (DRS), based in Carlisle. DRS will assist with the commissioning of the new locos, which are being built by Vossloh. Numbered 68010 to 015 they are expected to be in service by the winter of this year.

Rob Brighouse, Managing Director for Chiltern told Rail Technology Magazine that *"The introduction of the new locomotives marks yet another key investment milestone for our Birmingham to London Marylebone route."* 



Main entrance of Euston in 2009
© Richard Rogerson at geograph.org.uk

Inside this issue

- Dates for your diary..... [2](#)
- Around the Midlands [2](#)
- Redditch branch in pictures [2](#)
- Mike Hoptroff in 60 seconds [3](#)
- What we do..... [4](#)
- Meet the team [4](#)
- Membership statistics [4](#)

Your views count!



If you have comments or suggestions about this newsletter, or would like

to submit a story, picture or suggestion, please get in touch—we'd love to hear from you!

Email your thoughts to:
m.chairman@railwayoperators.co.uk



Dates for your diary

2014-15 Season

Our new programme of events begins in September. If you haven't been to one before we hope very much to see you at any or all of the ones in the next few months.

8 September 2014 (Derby)

CP5 Integrated Planning—How East Midlands are taking on the challenge. The development of 'geographical regions' with the aim of integrating various types of engineering work at the early planning stages is viewed as critical to an effective delivery of numerous works on the Midland main line in CP5. Richard Walker, Route Delivery Manager for the East Midlands Route, will discuss the challenges faced and the benefits to be had. *East Mid-*

lands Trains Academy, Hudson Way, Derby. 1730-1930.

6 October (Rugby)

Visit to the new ROC (Rail Operating Centre) at Rugby. *Places limited. Contact Rachel Heath for more information.*

3 November 2014 (Milton Keynes)

Everyone Home Safe Every Day. Nick Millington, Track Director Safety and Assurance for Network Rail, will talk about the Track Safety Alliance, Safety Contracts and the push to change culture and behaviours. *Network Rail Quadrant, Elder Gate, Milton Keynes. 1730-1930, Contact Rachel Heath for more information.*

“This is a huge programme of work and will mean a much-needed improvement to the line.”

Around the Midlands

East Midlands Trains joined in the centenary commemorations of the Great War by lighting a candle at each of its stations, as part of the national Lights Out campaign (August 4). [🌐](#)

London Midland has received praise from Redditch MP Karen Lumley for the rail replacement services put in place during the Redditch Branch improvement works, due to complete on August 31st (August 4). [🌐](#)

Network Rail has reminded passengers via its media centre to check their journeys on the West Coast main line which will be closing on three separate occasions in August (June 22). [🌐](#)

Virgin Trains claims to have carried around 40,000 additional passengers to and from Glasgow during the Commonwealth Games, an increase of over 55% (August 4) [🌐](#)

Redditch Branch Improvements in pictures



Courtesy of the Network Rail Infrastructure Projects Team, these pictures show the new platform construction at Alvechurch taking shape, electrification masts being installed and the new junction at Weights Lane. The picture below shows one of the construction sites.





Mike Hoptroff in 60 seconds



Mike Hoptroff is Head of Train Service Planning and Performance at Virgin Trains.

When and why did you join the railway? I joined in 1998. I was lucky enough to earn a place on Railtrack's General Management Graduate Training Scheme which for me was a natural choice following on from a degree in Geography.

What was your first job? After training I became a ZPA, or Zone Performance Assistant, in Hastings Kent.

What do you think of the IRO? The IRO plays an essential role in providing relevant skills training for railway operations people. The development of degree-level qualifications has been a hugely positive step forward.

Proudest moment? Managing a successful project to relocate our Control Centre in Birmingham. It was a proud moment to see the new centre up and running, and working well, after weeks of hard work.

Next big thing? We've got new services to Shrewsbury and Blackpool in 2014 which we're working on and the direct award has unlocked a number of exciting projects to improve customer experience too.

And finally, cat or dog? Cat!

What we do

The IRO Midlands area promotes railway operations, and the role of operators, as fundamental to the success of the railway.

Our objective is to connect members with experience and learning opportunities that broaden their understanding of railways, grow solid cross-industry and inter-disciplinary awareness, develop their knowledge and enhance their skills.

We aim to achieve this through a friendly and informal network which promotes

- ✓ mentoring and support for personalised learning and professional development
- ✓ a yearly programme of events exploring contemporary themes in the rail industry
- ✓ visits to front-line rail-industry facilities and
- ✓ advancement of the IRO education programme delivered by Glasgow Caledonian University.

The UK rail industry is a complex place. Our vision is for confident, well-aware operators to be at the forefront of the industry today and in the future.

Meet the team

Secretary	Julia Stanyard MIRO. <i>Customer Manager, Network Rail.</i> m.secretary@railwayoperators.co.uk
Treasurer	Doug McLellan MIRO. <i>Operations Standards Specialist, London Midland.</i> m.treasurer@railwayoperators.co.uk
Events Programme Manager	Rachel Heath AIRO. <i>Business and Planning Manager, High Output, Network Rail.</i> m.events@railwayoperators.co.uk
Visits Coordinator	<i>Vacant</i>
Communications	<i>Vacant</i>
Cross-industry liaison	<i>Vacant</i>
Mentoring & PDP	Colin Robey MIRO. <i>Head of Operations Rail and Rapid Transit, Centro.</i>
Committee advisors	Peter Bowes MIRO. <i>Safety and Environment Director, Virgin Trains.</i> Martin Ward MIRO. <i>Driver Manager, East Midlands Trains.</i>
Chair	Mike Christelow MIRO. <i>Technical specialist, Traffic Management, Network Rail.</i> m.chairman@railwayoperators.co.uk

IRO Midlands membership statistics, July 2014

During 2014 our membership has grown by 90 and now stands at 579 in total. The graphs below give a breakdown by membership grade, age profile and grade split by sex.

