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THE BI-ANNUAL FOR MEMBERS OF THE CHARTERED INSTITUTION OF RAILWAY OPERATORS



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BULLET



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GB Railfreight Names Locomotive in Honour of CIRO's 25th Anniversary

GB Railfreight



This May, GB Railfreight (GBRf) and the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators celebrated 25 years of partnership and professional development with a special locomotive naming ceremony.

The event took place at the historic London Waterloo station on 28th May, attended by representatives of CIRO and GB Railfreight, industry press and rail enthusiasts, keen to get a glimpse of the newly named Chartered Institution of Railway Operators' in all her glory.

This latest honour from GBRf follows a similar recognition in 2008, when Class 66 locomotive 66728 was named 'Institution of Railway Operators' to acknowledge CIRO's contributions to rail industry training and professional development. At the time,

then-IRO Chief Executive Chris Daughton reflected on the momentous occasion, stating:

"The locomotive naming demonstrates just how far we have come as an organisation, and we look forward to seeing it in action on the railways." Since then, CIRO has grown significantly, achieving Chartered status in 2021 and expanding its membership to over 13,000 rail professionals. Its influence in the industry has deepened through a range of education and training initiatives, including apprenticeships, academic programmes, and industry-endorsed learning schemes. Today, CIRO continues to play a pivotal role in upskilling rail professionals and fostering best practices across the sector.



A Tribute to CIRO's Legacy and Future

Speaking at the ceremony, CIRO Vice Chair of the board Phil James expressed his gratitude for this tribute from GBRf:

"As we celebrate 25 years of CIRO, this locomotive naming by GB Railfreight is a fitting tribute to our legacy and the impact we have had on the industry. It represents the strength of our partnerships and our ongoing commitment to developing skilled professionals in railway operations. We are incredibly grateful to GBRf for this honour and look forward to seeing the locomotive in service, carrying our name into the future of rail."

John Smith OBE, Chief Executive Officer of GB Railfreight said

"This is a fond milestone to mark, as CIRO was formed just before I set up GB Railfreight. The sector has changed a lot since 2000 and will change a lot in the coming years, but what has been a constant is CIRO,

which has done some vital work helping skilled professionals progress across the railway."

The naming ceremony served as both a celebration of the past and a commitment to the future of railway operations, underscoring the shared dedication of CIRO and GBRf to professional excellence in the industry.

Celebrating CIRO's Silver Jubilee

This locomotive naming is part of a year-long programme of events marking CIRO's 25th anniversary. Throughout 2025, CIRO will host a range of activities, including:

- Member Showcases – Sharing stories from professionals whose careers have been shaped by CIRO.
- Industry Events – Bringing together key figures to discuss the future of railway operations.

- The Jubilee Celebration Event in June – A flagship gathering to commemorate this milestone.

These celebrations align with the Railway 200 campaign, marking 200 years of rail transport in the UK. As CIRO looks ahead to the next phase of its journey, the newly named locomotive will serve as a lasting tribute to its enduring impact on the industry. As it travels across the country, it will symbolise CIRO's continued commitment to advancing railway operations and supporting the professionals who drive the sector forward.

With a proud past and an ambitious future, CIRO remains at the heart of professional development in the railway industry, ensuring that the next generation of rail leaders are equipped with the skills and knowledge to meet future challenges.



By Jason Wade, Regional
Director Northeast, Northern
Trains & CRO Board Member



The Northumberland Line: A Regional Revival

In December 2024, after more than 60 years without passenger services, the Northumberland Line welcomed its first passengers — marking a significant milestone in transforming regional connectivity.

This isn't just about the reopening of a railway; it's about unlocking new opportunities and reinvigorating communities that had been left behind. Since then, the momentum has continued to build.

We now run a half-hourly service Monday to Saturday and hourly on Sundays, with an end-to-end journey time of just 35 minutes — a significant improvement over local bus services, which can take nearly three times as long.

With new stations open, thousands of journeys completed, and the final elements of the project due by the end of 2025, we can confidently say: this is a transformational success.





Delivering More Than a Railway

We've seen an incredible response from customers. Since launch, the line has recorded over 250,000 journeys — five times the original forecast — with customer satisfaction scores above 90%, the highest in the region and well above the Northern average.

Almost 27,000 journeys were made during the busiest week (23–30 March), when thousands of Newcastle United fans travelled to the city centre for the club's open-top bus parade.

Punctuality has also remained strong, with the route regularly achieving 95% of services meeting the T-3 target. Customers frequently comment on how quick and convenient the new link is. Many are using rail for the first time, accessing new opportunities in employment, education, and leisure.

A standout innovation is our first-of-its-kind ticketing solution, allowing passengers to tap in on the Northern network and tap out on the Nexus Metro — and vice versa. The offer is simple, flexible, and value-focused, with single-leg pricing and capped day rates for Nexus Pop card users. We're encouraging customers to buy before they board, with station materials promoting digital ticketing via the Northern app and website. To support this, our TVM (ticket vending machine) at Ashington is being restocked at least twice a week.

A Project Years in the Making

The Northumberland Line has long been the subject of hope and political commitment, with communities across the region advocating for its return. Its revival is a testament to persistence, collaboration, and long-term planning.

The £298.5 million project brought together a multi-stakeholder partnership: the Department for Transport, Network Rail, Northern Trains, Northumberland County Council, and Nexus. Together, these organisations shared a common vision — to reconnect communities with better transport links and vital opportunities.

Passenger services officially resumed in December 2024, with newly built or refurbished stations at Ashington, Seaton Delaval, and Newsham now operational. Services connect directly to Newcastle, with peak fares capped at £3 for a single journey, making the line affordable and accessible. Introductory fares as low as £1 have also been offered, ensuring wide access for commuters, students, and residents alike.

The remaining stations — Bedlington, Blyth

Bebside, and Northumberland Park — are progressing well and are on track to open by the end of 2025. Once complete, the line will unlock even more potential for communities across southeast Northumberland.

Overcoming the Complexities

Reopening a disused freight line to modern passenger standards was no small feat. Upgrades were needed to tracks, signals, and crossings, as well as the construction of new platforms and station infrastructure.

We also faced the logistical challenge of opening a new Conductor depot at Ashington, creating direct local employment, and training over 100 Conductors and Drivers to ensure safe, reliable operations.

But this wasn't just an engineering project — it was about uniting stakeholders behind a shared vision and executing it with precision and dedication. One of the most satisfying aspects has been how well operations have performed. At Northern, we understood that reliability from day one was critical — and the results have exceeded expectations. The service is not only supporting daily commuters but is also attracting weekend travellers, tourists, and a wide range of new users.

A Rapid and Remarkable Uptake

Public enthusiasm for the service was immediate. On day one, over 3,500 passengers used the line. By the end of the first month, more than 50,000 journeys had been made — remarkable figures for a new service.

This surge reflects how deeply the service meets a longstanding regional need. Faster, more frequent, and more affordable links to Newcastle offer real advantages to commuters, students, and local residents.

Parents now have the option to drop children at the station instead of facing long, congested commutes. Young people can more easily reach education and training opportunities, and businesses in towns like Ashington and Blyth are already seeing increased footfall thanks to improved connectivity.

The Bigger Picture: Transforming the North's Connectivity

The Northumberland Line is more than just a local rail service — it's a national statement about the value of regional investment. It's a cornerstone of the UK's levelling-up agenda, providing economic





opportunity to some of the North East's most disadvantaged communities.

Connecting these communities to jobs, training, and education in Newcastle is vital to boosting local economies and reducing inequalities. The line is also part of the UK's shift toward sustainable transport. Each train journey helps reduce road traffic and emissions, supporting the country's decarbonisation goals.

Class 158 trains used on the line are comfortable and accessible, with space for bikes and

wheelchairs, charging points, and free Wi-Fi. These features make travel between rural and urban areas easier and more inclusive.

Looking ahead, Northern Trains plans to enhance its fleet, advance smart ticketing, and integrate more sustainable practices. The Northumberland Line is well-positioned to adopt future technologies and serve as a modern, efficient transport link. We are also exploring future cross-regional rail partnerships to extend connectivity further.



Celebrating the Impact: A Growing Success

One of the most rewarding aspects has been the overwhelming positive response from communities. Every station opening has felt like a celebration, with residents and businesses gathering to mark the return of passenger services.

These moments underscore the line's value — not just as transport, but as a lifeline. It provides better access to healthcare, work, and leisure, improving quality of life across the region.

Beyond operations, the line is contributing to regional regeneration. It is easing road congestion, reducing journey times, and helping to stimulate economic growth.

We've built strong community relationships, including with local schools involved in the project over time. We've provided rail education, safety sessions, and opportunities for schools to contribute vibrant artwork displayed at stations — which genuinely enhances the environment. Each station also has adopters — local volunteers who act as our eyes and ears and help maintain the community connection. Partnerships with local attractions are also

developing. For example, Ashington Town Football Club now offers half-price admission to home games on presentation of a valid rail ticket. Given the growth in demand, we've added extra carriages for special events and plan to increase all Sunday services to four carriages later this year. In the longer term, securing additional rolling stock will be essential to meet growing weekday and Saturday demand.

What's Next: A Vision for the Future

The Northumberland Line is already a success story in motion, but we're just getting started. Our next focus is completing the final stations by the end of 2025 and embedding the service into the region's wider transport network.

We'll continue to listen to passengers, gather feedback, and refine services to meet evolving needs. Looking forward, we see huge potential: better integration with freight, newer train technology, and more robust regional transport planning.

Our goal is to make the Northumberland Line a central pillar of the North East's transport ecosystem — delivering lasting economic and social value for generations to come.







The Transformation of Managing Weather in the UK Rail Industry

I seek to demonstrate the transformation that is now taking place within the UK rail industry in paving a new way in the management of adverse and extreme weather in the face of a changing climate.

The transformation is more than just an engineering one. It is about a transformation of culture. Throughout the history of rail travel in the UK men and women have trained to manage major incidents from terrorist attacks at stations to the evacuation of derailed trains. There are an army of trained staff who hold these competencies and are tested on them regularly. However, how many of our rail staff are trained to interpret a weather forecast, or have the right competencies around risk reduction planning?

Managing incidents is important and can save lives but reducing the risk of incidents in the first place by thorough analyses and planning is vital. Quite often a weather forecast will highlight a risk by breaching a set threshold well in advance of the event itself. Much of our operational planning prior to the event is focused on preparing to respond. For example, if a low-pressure system forecasted to impact Cornwall in two days-time was highlighted to the Western Route Operations Control, teleconferences would be held and assurance that resources were available to respond to the potential impact of the low-pressure system would be checked. Wind gusts breaching the thresholds of extreme weather would invoke actions such as having mobile operations managers and vegetation management resource at the ready with chainsaws, prepared to remove any trees that might fall foul the running lines. Equally, trains may be requested to run at a reduced speed, or the line closed entirely over the period that the wind gusts are forecasted to arrive across the geographical forecast area.

For many years Routes and train operators have agreed these mitigations and implemented them when certain weather thresholds are breached in a two to five-day forecast provided to the rail industry by the specialised forecast provider to all

controls daily.

Weather forecast information is being used in a single dimension. It provides a 'heads up' so that resource can be mobilised. Could we not use the historical forecasts and historical observed (actual) weather data to pre-empt the effect of each forecasted weather event? Can we learn to anticipate or even measure the impact of a forecasted weather event to move the focus on managing weather events to a more proactive rather than reactive approach?

Much has been learnt over the last ten years regarding the management of natural hazards such as earthquakes.

"The ways in which we deal with hazards are too often primarily reactive – following a disaster, we engage in search and rescue. There is no denying that these activities reduce loss of life and property and need to be continued. However, a move to a higher level of hazard reduction will require increased efforts to anticipate disasters and their effects".¹

An increased effort to anticipate disasters before they become disasters is to understand the point or points of failure and to seek to reduce or even eradicate them, where possible. Essentially this requires information, complex information that requires analyses at a holistic level. It is not about the inspection of individual assets or the tolerance specification of a new installation. It is, instead about gaining an understanding of how the railway comes together as a system and how that systems health or 'homeostat' is regulated by the environmental factors that impact it every second of every day over years and years. This of course includes factors well outside of the railway boundary fence such as adjacent land use; water systems; geological and topographic influences; and social; economic and political factors. Once we start to understand the systemic vulnerabilities to our homeostat, we can begin to measure its true health and plan to keep it optimal.

¹ E A Keller & D E DeVecchio Natural Hazards 2019 Pg24

Celebrating a Career of Impact: Andrew Pennington Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

At the inaugural Rail Industry Planning Awards—known as the Golden Planners—held in Manchester on 25 March 2025, the rail industry gathered to celebrate innovation, excellence and contribution in train planning.

Among the evening's most memorable moments was the presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award to Andrew Pennington, a respected figure whose dedication has helped shape the future of operational planning.

Currently working as Operations and Planning Projects Specialist supporting CIRO and Avanti West Coast, Andrew was recognised for a career spanning more than three decades—during which he has played a central role in developing planning strategy, mentoring colleagues and raising professional standards across the industry. The award was presented by Mark Hopwood CBE, Managing Director of Great Western Railway and CIRO Board Member, who praised Andrew's lasting influence:

"It was a great honour to be invited to speak at the conference, as well as being asked to present this special Lifetime Achievement Award to Andrew Pennington. Andrew has been recognised for decades of commitment not only to the train planning discipline but also for his significant role in developing train planners over many years – a richly deserved accolade!"

Andrew's extensive experience includes senior roles across South Western Railway, Great Western Railway, Silverlink, Southeastern, and Merseyrail. His time as Head of Planning at the South Western Railway Alliance saw him lead train and access planning through complex operational environments, balancing capacity and performance with commercial efficiency.

Today, through his work with CIRO, Andrew continues to champion the development of training that meets the operational realities of the modern rail network. His efforts reflect

CIRO's values; professional and accountable, knowledgeable, collaborative, inclusive, member focused and innovative, as he helps shape industry-wide learning that empowers planners at every stage of their career. "Andrew's understanding of the challenges facing train planners, coupled with his strategic insight and passion for professional development, has made him an invaluable contributor to the industry," said CIRO CEO Phil Sherratt, who also attended the event and presented the Practitioner of the Year Award.



Recognising Professional Excellence

CIRO's presence and support at the Golden Planners reflects our ongoing commitment to recognising excellence across all areas of rail operations. Events like this help reinforce our mission: to lead, inspire and accelerate the growth of rail professionals, cultivating collaboration to support the success of rail organisations, now and in the future.

Andrew's award is not only a personal honour, but also a celebration of the train planning profession as a whole. His dedication to mentoring and supporting emerging talent exemplifies CIRO's belief in inclusive, member-focused development, and we are proud to have him as part of the team shaping our operational future.

Please join us in congratulating Andrew on this well-deserved recognition.

CIRO Connect Wins Prestigious Training Excellence Award at Spotlight Rail Awards 2025

On 20 March, CIRO Connect was named winner of the Training Excellence category at the Spotlight Rail Awards 2025, recognising the programme's innovation and impact since its 2024 launch.

Held at the Royal Lancaster Hotel, London, the awards celebrate outstanding contributions across the rail sector.

The win highlights CIRO Connect's success in addressing critical workforce challenges, including skills shortages, leadership development, and knowledge transfer. Designed as an immersive, expert-led 12-session programme, it equips professionals with the practical skills and cross-industry insight needed to succeed in today's evolving rail landscape.

Adam Fenton, CIRO's Chief Operating Officer and a key figure behind the programme, said:

"This award is a testament to the passion and dedication that went into developing CIRO Connect. It's an incredibly proud moment for our team."

Carol Deveney, Transport Projects Consultant and course leader, added:

"CIRO has been bold, collaborative, and forward-thinking throughout. This is the kind of programme I wish existed 20 years ago."

CIRO Connect's momentum continues, having also been shortlisted for the Skills Development Excellence award at the Rail Business Awards 2025 and named a finalist at the upcoming Women in Rail Awards 2025—affirming its role in promoting inclusion and future-proofing the workforce.

With 75,000 rail workers expected to leave the industry by 2030, and skills shortages already costing the UK economy up to £181 million annually (NSAR), high-quality training is more urgent than ever.



CIRO Connect responds to this need, offering training in:

- Incident & Emergency Management
- Operational Planning & Performance
- Leadership Development
- Cross-Industry Knowledge

The programme strengthens both individuals and organisations—supporting a resilient, efficient, and future-ready rail industry.

Following this award milestone, CIRO Connect will expand further in 2025, continuing to bring new insights, expert guidance, and practical skills development to professionals across the sector.

To explore how CIRO Connect can support your organisation's training goals, contact learning@railwayoperators.co.uk or visit www.ciro.org/ciro-connect.



Blowing the Whistle for Excellence in Railway Operations

Golden Whistle Awards 2025

On Friday 7th March 2025, the great and the good of the rail industry gathered at the elegant Marriott Grosvenor Square in Mayfair, London, for the annual Golden Whistle Awards – a prestigious event that shines a spotlight on operational excellence across the sector.

Now a key fixture in the railway calendar, the Golden Whistles bring together professionals from across the industry to collectively recognise those delivering outstanding performance—both as individuals and as teams.

Organised by Modern Railways in partnership with CIRO, and the valuable contribution of the CIRO South East Area Council, the event combines a morning conference, a networking lunch, and a celebratory awards ceremony to operational excellence of individual and teams across the industry over the past 12 months.

Ahead of an insightful key note speech from Alex Hynes, CIRO CEO, Phil Sherratt, and Andrew Haines,

CEO of Network Rail, held on-stage conversation which offered valuable perspectives on the evolving landscape of railway operations and leadership.

Most of the Golden Whistle Awards are determined through rigorous, data-driven analysis carried out by the CIRO SE Area Council—ensuring that every award is firmly rooted in measurable performance. In contrast, the Outstanding Individual and Team Awards winners are chosen by a CIRO and Modern Railways judging panel from a growing pool of impressive nominations submitted by industry peers, recognising exceptional contributions that go beyond expectations.

Winners in each category were presented with a gold whistle for best-in-class performance and a silver whistle for most-improved performance.

We congratulate all the winners and look forward to witnessing their continued contributions to the advancement of railway operations.

2025 GOLDEN WHISTLE AWARDS



On Time Moving Annual Average Awards

London South West:
Gold – Greater Anglia
Silver – West Midlands Railway

Regional:
Gold – Merseyrail
Silver – Transport for Wales

Long Distance:
Gold – Greater Anglia
Silver – TransPennine Express

Minimising Delay Minutes Awards TOC/FOC:

Gold – Greater Anglia
Silver – Freightliner Heavy Haul

Network Rail Routes:

Gold – Scotland
Silver – Wales and borders

Freight Performance Awards

Based on arrival to fifteen moving annual averages scores of FOCs.

Gold – Rail Operations Group
Silver – Freightliner Heavy Haul

London Underground Line Performance Awards

Gold – Northern
Silver – Jubilee

Irish Rail Performance Awards

Right time – Limerick to Galway
Delay minutes – Cork to Mallow

Outstanding Individual Awards

Gold – Ian Brightmore, Network Rail
Silver – Simon Rawlings, Chiltern Railways
HC – Jamie Geraghty, National Rail and John Badrock, National Rail

Outstanding Team Awards

Gold – Mendip Rail Recast Project (Freightliner, Network Rail, Mendip Rail, Heidelberg Materials, Aggregate Industries)

Silver – Christmas 2024 Strategic Co-ordination and Passenger Handling Teams (Network Rail, Rail Delivery Group, Department for Transport, East Midlands Railway, Govia Thameslink Railway)

HC – Coffee Cup Run (LNER, Network Rail)

Lifetime Achievement Award

Dick Fearn

CIRO Board of Governor Election 2025

We are currently inviting rail professionals to apply for a prestigious senior position on the CIRO Board of Governors, which is open for nominations until 14th June.

This year we are inviting representation from the following two sectors to ensure that there is variation on the Board from across the railway operations profession.

- Freight sector (excluding Network Rail)
- Train Operating Companies (TOCs)

Nominees should hold current Member or Fellow level membership or be able to demonstrate that they are actively working towards this.

Further information including full criteria can be found here:

<https://www.ciro.org/elections-applications/>

Voting-members (Associate, Member and Fellows) will be able to vote between 14th July – 10th August.

Further communications will be sent including a unique voting link.



CIRO Board of Governor Changes

At the end of 2024 Ellie Burrows FCIRO and Tom Joyner ACIRO stepped down from the CIRO Board of Governors and moved onto new ventures.

Ellie has been instrumental, as Chair, in transitioning CIRO from one CEO to another as well as bringing about CIRO's first Board elections which happened last year. Tom has also dedicated several years to CIRO supporting the Institution's strategic direction in this evolving landscape. We extend our gratitude to both Ellie and Tom and wish them well in their new ventures.

As Ellie and Tom's tenures came to an end we welcomed two new faces to the Board. Chris Jackson FCIRO, Managing Director of

TransPennine Express and Jason Wade FCIRO, Regional Director for Northern.

Both Chris and Jason bring vast experience and expertise that will help steer CIRO into its 25th year and beyond.

Commenting on the appointments, Phil Sherratt, CIRO's CEO, said:

"We are excited to have two strong advocates of CIRO joining the Board. Chris and Jason bring a wealth of operating knowledge and experience, and I look forward to working with them as CIRO celebrates its 25th anniversary year and embarks on the next stage of its development".



Notice of the Annual General Meeting of CIRO

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators (Company Registration No. RC000952), whose registered address is Beacon Building, 2nd Floor, Stafford Enterprise Park West, Weston Road, Stafford, ST18 0BF, will take place on Saturday, 4th October 2025.

The AGM provides an important opportunity for members to engage with the governance of the Institution, hear about key developments over the past year, and participate in decisions that shape our future direction.

Members do not need to attend in person to have their say, as voting will be available by post. Full details of the venue and any in-person

attendance options will be announced shortly in the Events section of our website: www.ciro.org. The AGM pack, including the formal agenda, and supporting information, will be available to download from our website in advance of the meeting.

We encourage all eligible members to review the documents and take part in the voting process to help guide the Institution's continued development.

For more information and updates, please visit: www.ciro.org





Building Confidence, Efficiency and Collaboration: CIRO & RDG Launch New Traincrew Management Development Programme

CIRO, in partnership with Rail Delivery Group (RDG), is proud to introduce the Traincrew Management Development Programme – a new initiative designed to strengthen leadership capability among Traincrew Line Managers across the UK rail industry.

Piloted in spring 2025, the programme offers immersive, scenario-based learning aligned with the latest RDG Guidance Notes and the Traincrew Competency Framework. With a focus on real-world challenges, the course is designed to equip line managers at team, depot, and regional levels with the essential skills to lead confidently in one of the sector's most operationally complex and vital roles.

"For too long we haven't sufficiently invested in the development of our Traincrew Leaders. This has to change," said Chris Jackson, Managing Director of TransPennine Express and Chair of the Traincrew Board. "This programme will support the current and future cohort of leaders so they feel confident in managing relationships, utilisation, efficiency, and performance. This course, with its blend of in-person and virtual training, will develop our capability to face into the challenges and opportunities of the future."

A Holistic Approach to Operational Leadership

The programme covers a range of critical topics, including Traincrew Working Arrangements, Resource Planning, and Long-Term Planning. Participants will learn how to deploy and utilise traincrew more efficiently, while also gaining tools to enhance service delivery and operational reliability.

Importantly, the programme doesn't stop at technical knowledge. It also addresses the people side of traincrew leadership – including how to work productively in unionised environments and build collaborative relationships with employee and trade union representatives.

By tackling both the day-to-day responsibilities of Traincrew Managers and the wider organisational

context in which they operate, the programme aims to enhance decision-making, drive efficiency, and foster stronger cross-network collaboration.

Designed by the Industry, for the Industry

Holly Hancock, Business Development and Projects Manager at CIRO, played a key role in the programme's conception and development. She commented:

"This programme has been carefully built in collaboration with industry partners, and every element is rooted in the day-to-day realities that traincrew managers face. From shaping the course content to piloting it with experienced professionals, our goal has been to create something that is practical, relevant, and genuinely impactful for the individuals and organisations involved."

A Platform for the Future

The pilot programme has been met with strong support from industry leaders, and we believe would be the foundation for future professional development across the sector. Following its pilot phase, the course will be refined with input from participants and stakeholders, with a view to expanding access in the months ahead. Phil Sherratt, CEO of CIRO, welcomed the pilot and its significance:

"This programme exemplifies the kind of strategic partnership and forward-thinking development that our industry needs. By investing in the leadership skills of those managing traincrew – one of our most limited but vital resources – we are setting the stage for long-term improvements in operational performance and workforce engagement."

As CIRO continues to champion excellence in railway operations, initiatives like the Traincrew Management Development Programme reflect its commitment to developing people at every level of the profession.



“

This course, with its blend of in-person and virtual training will develop our capability to face into the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Endorsed by Chris Jackson
Managing Director, TransPennine
Express and Traincrew Board

25 Years of Progress: CIRO's Silver Jubilee Year

In 2025, the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators (CIRO) marks its Silver Jubilee, celebrating 25 years of advancing professionalism in railway operations.

Founded in 2000 as the Institution of Railway Operators (IRO), CIRO has grown into an internationally respected chartered body, welcoming its 13,000th member this year.

This milestone year will be celebrated through a series of events and activities that honour CIRO's legacy and its aspirations for the future. Many of these celebrations will align with the Railway 200 campaign, which commemorates two centuries of rail transport in the UK.

This dual celebration will reflect on the transformative impact of railways and explore the next stage of evolution in parallel with ongoing industry reforms under the government's Plan for Rail and the establishment of Great British Railways (GBR).

Members can join these celebrations through multiple opportunities, including special events, memorabilia and profile showcases:

- **Members' Celebration – 11 June 2025:** A flagship event honouring the people at the heart of CIRO. Members will gather to celebrate, share stories, and reflect on CIRO's lasting impact. This event will celebrate the milestone, provide an opportunity for members to share their experiences, and reflect on the Institution's impact over the years.
- **Collaborative Industry Events:** Bringing together leaders and professionals to discuss the future of railway operations in the context of GBR reforms and technological innovation.
- **Limited Edition Commemorative Items:** Exclusive items for CIRO members, including a special limited edition commemorative box set of the new Operators' Handbook.



- Member Showcases: Stories from members whose professional journeys have been shaped by CIRO and who, in turn, have contributed to the growth of the rail industry.
- CIRO invites its members, stakeholders, and the wider rail community to participate in this momentous year of celebrations. Together, we look forward to honouring the past, celebrating the present, and shaping the future of railway operations.

"As we celebrate 25 years of CIRO, we reflect on the incredible journey that has shaped us into the leading professional body for railway operations. This anniversary is not just about looking back—it's about looking forward. CIRO remains committed to supporting the rail industry by developing skilled professionals, fostering collaboration, and

driving innovation. I invite all our members and industry partners to join us in celebrating our achievements and shaping the future of railway operations together."

—Philip Sherratt, CIRO CEO

Join us in marking this momentous year – whether at one of our celebratory events, by sharing your CIRO story, or simply connecting with fellow members to reflect on how far we've come.

Explore our full list of activities at:

www.ciro.org/celebrating-25-years-of-ciro-2025-activities-announced/



Inspiring the Next Generation: CIRO Joins the Railway 200 Exhibition Train

As the rail industry celebrates 200 years of passenger journeys in the UK, CIRO is proud to be part of the Railway 200 Exhibition Train – a unique, interactive touring experience designed to engage communities and spark imaginations across the country.

We're delighted to announce that CIRO will be exhibiting at the very first public stop of the train's national tour, hosted at Severn Valley Railway from 30th June to 5th July 2025. As part of this historic initiative, we'll be connecting with school-age children and young visitors through a series of fun, educational and interactive activities, all designed to introduce them to the often-overlooked world of rail operations.

From decision-making games and railway-related puzzles to live demonstrations and hands-on challenges, our goal is to bring rail operations to life – and to showcase the many exciting careers and pathways available across the modern rail industry.



"We're incredibly proud to be part of Railway 200's exhibition programme," said Holly Hancock, CIRO's Business Development and Projects Manager.

"This is a brilliant opportunity to open young people's eyes to the fascinating world behind the scenes of train journeys – from signalling and scheduling to control rooms and customer



service. We want them to see that there's a future for everyone in rail."

The Railway 200 Exhibition Train will visit locations across the UK throughout 2025, telling the story of the railway's past, present, and future – and highlighting the role the sector will play in a greener, better-connected future.

The campaign also ties in with CIRO's 25th Jubilee celebrations – a special year where we reflect on our history and heritage, while actively helping to shape the next chapter of the railway. We're proud to be inspiring young minds, championing rail careers, and supporting the future of rail operations as part of this nationwide initiative. Come along and join us at the Railway 200 Exhibition Train at Severn Valley Railway, or at any of our planned events throughout 2025.

Find out more about CIRO's Jubilee programme and event schedule.



CIRO Achieves Cyber Essentials Plus

CIRO proudly announced in early 2025 that it had successfully achieved Cyber Essentials Plus certification— a major step forward in strengthening our cyber resilience and protecting of member data.

As a membership organisation representing over 13,000 professionals across the rail industry, data security and integrity have always been central to CIRO's operations. Achieving this certification provided assurance to members, partners, and stakeholders that the organisation was operating with the highest standards of security, integrity, and accountability when it came to handling sensitive information.

What Is Cyber Essentials Plus?

Cyber Essentials is a UK Government-backed certification scheme that outlines a baseline of technical controls to help organisations guard against common cyber threats. Cyber Essentials Plus builds upon this foundation by requiring a hands-on technical audit, making it a more robust demonstration of effective cyber security practices.

To gain certification, CIRO underwent a comprehensive assessment by an independent IASME-approved auditor. This included vulnerability scanning, endpoint testing, and detailed checks on system configurations—ensuring that CIRO's digital infrastructure was resilient against the most prevalent forms of cyber-attack.

Why It Matters for Our Members

For CIRO, safeguarding the personal data and trust of its members remains a top priority. The

certification confirms that strong systems and protocols are in place to secure information and digital assets, giving peace of mind to the entire CIRO community.

In an increasingly digital operating environment, cyber security had become not just a necessity but a fundamental responsibility. From accessing member benefits to engaging with learning platforms and partner systems, members and stakeholders could be confident in the security of their interactions with CIRO.

Continuing the Journey

Reflecting on the achievement, CIRO's IT Manager, Zoe Bull, said:

"The Cyber Essentials Plus process was rigorous but extremely valuable. It gave us the opportunity to strengthen our internal systems, demonstrate our commitment to best practice, and engage our teams in conversations about cyber resilience. More importantly, this isn't the end—we're continuing to pursue further accreditations that will strengthen our processes and increase our organisational robustness."

Achieving Cyber Essentials Plus was more than just a milestone; it reflected CIRO's investment in secure systems and ensuring the highest standards of data protection within the modern rail industry. With a forward-looking approach, CIRO remains committed to reviewing and enhancing its cyber security landscape to meet the demands of an evolving digital future.

For more information on how CIRO protects your data or to learn about its digital strategy, visit:

www.ciro.org



Working Together for a Better Railway: CIRO's Strategic Partnerships in 2025

At CIRO, collaboration is more than just a value – it's a driving force behind our efforts to shape a stronger, more inclusive future for the rail industry.

In 2025, we've built a series of strategic partnerships rooted in shared values and a commitment to real progress. From advancing innovation and inclusion to supporting wellbeing across the sector, these partnerships reflect CIRO's mission to work with others for the benefit of all in rail.

Partnering for Progress: Industry Collaboration in Action

A key part of our strategy is aligning with organisations that champion innovation, safety, and professional development. This year, we've deepened our partnership with the Rail Forum, strengthening our ties with supply chain, infrastructure, and rolling stock communities.

As part of this partnership, our CEO Phil Sherratt was proud to speak at the 'Maximising Opportunities in CP7: Innovation for Industry Performance' event, hosted by Rail Forum – demonstrating our active role in driving performance and future-focused thinking across the sector.

During the event, Phil and Rail Forum CEO Elaine Clark took the opportunity to officially sign the partnership agreement between the two organisations, witnessed by CIRO Board member Jason Wade and Rail Forum Membership & Engagement Director Catherine Appleby.

We're also proud to be working with the Heritage Railway Association (HRA), representing over 300 heritage and tourist railways across the UK. Together, we're offering tailored corporate membership packages designed specifically for heritage rail companies – helping their teams access professional development, align with wider industry standards, and connect with the broader rail operations community.

Championing Inclusion: Partnering with Women in Rail

Inclusivity is one of CIRO's core values. Our ongoing partnership with Women in Rail (WIR) reflects our belief in a fairer, more diverse rail industry where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

In 2025, we were proud to be a partner of both the Women in Rail Awards – which celebrates the individuals and organisations driving gender equality in rail – and the Big Rail Diversity Challenge, a dynamic team-building event that champions inclusion through fun, cross-industry



Rail Forum



collaboration.

We're also thrilled to share that CIRO was shortlisted for a Women in Rail Award this year, in recognition of our CIRO Connect programme – a platform that fosters community, mentoring, and career development for professionals at all levels.

Supporting the Rail Community: Our Charity Partnerships

Beyond professional development, CIRO is committed to supporting the people behind the railway. That's why we're working closely with key sector charities that provide vital services to rail workers and their families:

- Railway Children – protecting vulnerable children on transport systems and the streets
- Railway Benefit Fund – offering financial and practical support to current and former rail staff
- Transport Benevolent Fund – providing health and welfare services to public transport workers
- Railway Mission – delivering emotional and

spiritual care through chaplaincy

In 2025, we're helping raise the visibility of these organisations by featuring them at CIRO events throughout the year, and we'll also be actively supporting their fundraising activities. As an example, in 2024, members of the CIRO team took part in the Rail Trail Walk to support Railway Children – and we're gearing up to do it again this year, stepping up to raise awareness and funds for children at risk on transport networks.

Growing Impact Through Partnership

At CIRO, we are always looking for opportunities to collaborate with like-minded organisations that share our passion for professional excellence, inclusivity, and the wellbeing of the rail community. We believe that meaningful, values-led partnerships are key to driving positive, lasting change across the industry.

If you believe your organisation could work in synergy with CIRO to create impactful initiatives that benefit rail, we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch at hello@railwayoperators.co.uk to explore how we can work together.





CIRO's Next Chapter: A Bold Vision for the Future

CIRO has unveiled a bold new mission and set of values to guide its work over the coming years – part of a two-year strategy led by CEO Phil Sherratt, who joined the Institution in October 2024.

This marks a pivotal moment in CIRO's evolution as it continues to lead professional development across the rail industry.

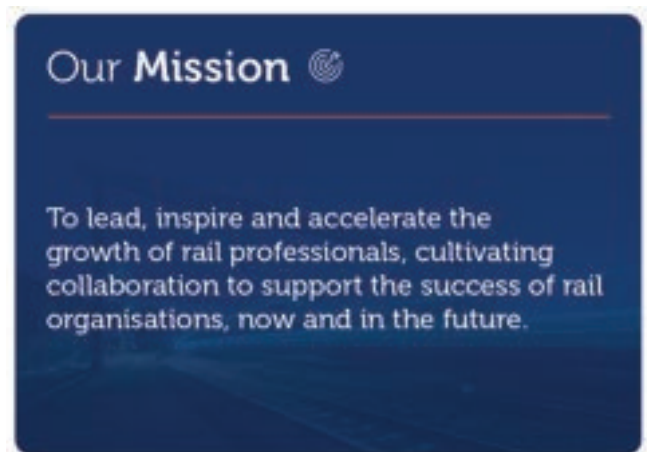
CIRO's updated mission, "To lead, inspire, and accelerate the growth of rail professionals, cultivating collaboration to support the success of rail organisations, now and in the future," highlights its dedication to enhancing professional standards and supporting rail organisations through this period of change. This mission directly supports the goals outlined in the UK government's rail reform agenda, which aims to create a "simpler, better railway" that delivers for passengers and freight customers.



The refreshed values that define CIRO also reflect its commitment to government plans, industry stakeholders, and rail professionals:

- **Member Focused:** Ensuring members remain at the core of CIRO's work.
- **Inclusive:** Promoting fairness, diversity, and equity across the rail industry.
- **Collaborative:** Strengthening impact through strategic partnerships and collective efforts.
- **Professional and Accountable:** Upholding the highest standards of ethics and excellence.

- **Knowledgeable:** Driving lifelong learning and informed decision-making.
- **Innovative:** Embracing creativity and ambition to lead progress in the industry.



Jim Meade, CEO of Irish Rail and Chair of CIRO's Board of Governors, commented:

"As Chair of CIRO, I am proud to see the Institution take this next significant step in its journey. Over the past 25 years, CIRO has become an integral part of the rail industry, and as we look to the future, it is vital that we continue to evolve and remain relevant to the industry's changing needs. Our new mission and values will ensure that CIRO continues to provide essential support and leadership to rail professionals, helping them navigate the opportunities and challenges ahead."

CIRO invites members, partners, and rail professionals across the sector to engage with its new mission and values – and to join in building the next chapter of rail's professional future. More information on CIRO's updated strategy and values is available at www.ciro.org

CIRO's Promotional Video: A Powerful Reflection of Our Mission & Impact

In March 2025, CIRO proudly premiered its new promotional video at the prestigious Golden Whistle Awards, hosted by Modern Railways.

More than just a film, it's a heartfelt celebration of the people, partnerships, and purpose that define CIRO's journey—told through the voices of those we've helped to thrive.

The film blends candid interviews, behind-the-scenes footage, and striking rail visuals to bring CIRO's impact to life—highlighting how our support translates into real-world success for members and employers alike.

The video has since been widely shared across the sector and beyond, receiving an overwhelmingly positive response from members, employers, and stakeholders. Bringing together voices from across the CIRO community, it highlighted the real-world impact of the Institution's work and the strength of its partnerships across the industry.

A Story Told by the Sector

Featuring contributions from CIRO members, staff, employer partners, and board members, the video highlights how CIRO has helped professionals grow and thrive at every stage of their journey. Our CEO, Philip Sherratt, opened the film with a message reinforcing CIRO's commitment to close industry collaboration and its evolving role in supporting operational excellence.

One of the most inspiring voices in the film was Maro Sakpere BEng (Hons), ACIRO, a graduate of CIRO's Passenger Transport Operations Manager Programme. Reflecting on his journey, Maro shared:

"Despite holding other academic qualifications, CIRO gave me the practical, real-world insight into

railway operations and stakeholder management that I needed to take my career to the next level. This film isn't just about qualifications—it's about community. CIRO understands that real impact happens when you invest in people."

Bringing Our Strategic Vision to Life

The release of the video closely followed the January 2025 launch of CIRO's refreshed mission and values, introduced as part of a two-year strategic plan under CEO Philip Sherratt's leadership. As we mark our 25th anniversary, this new direction underscores our commitment to developing railway professionals, supporting organisational success, and contributing to wider rail reform.

The film brings to life CIRO's mission:

"To lead, inspire, and accelerate the growth of rail professionals, cultivating collaboration to support the success of rail organisations, now and in the future."

It also reflects our values—member focus, inclusivity, collaboration, professionalism, knowledge-sharing, and innovation—not through statements alone, but through the lived experiences of our community.

Our Sincere Thanks

We are deeply grateful to those who helped bring this project to life, including Jim Meade, Emma Lowe, Ellie Burrows, Glen Merryman, and Maro Sakpere, whose contributions represent the breadth of CIRO's reach and the strength of its community.

Discover the stories shaping the future of rail - Watch the full video at: www.ciro.org



Maro Sakpere, Fleet Service Engineer, GTF & CIRO Learner

Unlocking the Power of Non-Technical Skills: The everyday habits that keep us safe, effective & well



By Max Bladon FCILT MCIRO, The Mental Wealth Company

We all rely on non-technical skills (NTS) every day, whether we realise it or not. These vital abilities shape how we work, how we make decisions, and how we support one another.

When it comes to safety-critical roles, mastering these skills isn't just helpful: it can be lifesaving.

So what exactly are non-technical skills? They're the social, cognitive, and personal skills that work alongside technical know-how, helping us carry out tasks effectively and safely. According to the Railway Safety and Standards Board (RSSB), there are seven key categories of NTS, each essential to reducing errors, improving safety, and boosting team performance.

At The Mental Wealth Company, we go one step further adding wellbeing as an eighth category. Why? Because when we're mentally and physically well, everything else gets better too.

The 8 Core Non-Technical Skills:

1. Situational Awareness – Staying tuned into your surroundings, anticipating what might happen next.
2. Conscientiousness – Approaching every task with care, consistency, and reliability.
3. Communication – Sharing information clearly and effectively, especially under pressure.
4. Decision Making & Taking Action – Solving problems and making sound decisions when it matters most.
5. Co-operation – Working with others in a respectful, supportive, team-focused way.

6. Workload Management – Handling tasks calmly, prioritising effectively—even when things get busy.
7. Self-Management – Having the inner motivation and confidence to show-up and perform.
8. Maintaining Wellbeing – The foundation that supports all the above—because when we're well, we work well.

How Can You Build These Skills?

You don't need fancy tools or complex systems. Often simple, everyday wellbeing habits make the biggest difference:

- Prioritise quality sleep
- Take regular breaks to recharge
- Eat foods that fuel your energy
- Stay hydrated throughout the day
- Get moving; whether it's a light stroll or more intensive exercise

These small changes can strengthen your other NTS helping you show up at your best, day after day.

Want to Know More?

Our NTS courses are designed to support individuals and teams working in high-pressure environments. To learn more or get in touch, visit: <https://thementalwealthcompany.co.uk/contact-us/>



Thank You, Annette – Marking a Remarkable CIRO Journey

This March, we said a fond farewell to Annette Shipley ACIRO, CILIP, our esteemed Deputy Chief Executive Officer, who retired after five years of exceptional service to the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators.

Annette's time at CIRO was defined by visionary leadership, deep dedication, and a genuine passion for supporting the development of others. From her early work leading the apprenticeship function, through to her pivotal role as interim CEO during a period of transition, Annette helped shape CIRO's continued growth and transformation.

A Lasting Impact

Her influence has been felt across the organisation—building strong employer relationships, expanding professional development opportunities, and ensuring CIRO's apprenticeship provision remains relevant, rigorous, and aligned to the needs of the modern rail industry. In her most recent role, Annette provided steady, compassionate leadership as interim CEO, guiding CIRO through change and setting the stage for future success.

Paying tribute, Jim Meade, CEO of Iarnród Éireann and Chair of the CIRO Board, said:

"I want to put on the record my thanks to Annette for her phenomenal contribution. Annette has been a rock of support through a period of leadership transition for CIRO and deserves great credit for getting us to where we are now. On behalf of the Board, I offer my heartfelt thanks to Annette and wish her well in the future."

A Creative Tribute

To mark Annette's retirement, we commissioned a bespoke illustration from artist Emma Joustra—a joyful and personal tribute that reflected the warmth, energy and individuality Annette brought to her work. It's a celebration not just of her achievements, but of the positive spirit and supportive presence she has been to so many within the CIRO community.

With Gratitude

Everyone at CIRO extends their deepest thanks to Annette for her invaluable contribution to the institution—and to the wider rail industry. She leaves a legacy of empowerment, excellence and integrity, and we wish her the very best for a happy, fulfilling retirement filled with new adventures and well-earned rest.





“

Annette has been a rock of support through a period of leadership transition for CIRO and deserves great credit for getting us to where we are now.



Block Signalling Course



Phil Graham MBE MCIRO, Level Crossing Safety Specialist at Network Rail

When I joined the railway in 1973, most major railway towns still held voluntary classes in signalling and operational rules.

Officially titled "Safe Working of Trains Courses," the courses were known as "Block Classes" as they focused heavily on Block Signalling Regulations. These were two-year courses with 12 lessons per year, offered twice to suit shift workers. Each lesson ended with written questions, and a three-hour exam capped each year.

Personal Involvement

I took the course by correspondence in the mid-70s while working as a Booking Clerk. My first tutor, Inspector W. Roberts, offered little feedback beyond red ticks and occasional encouragement. Nevertheless, I passed the final exam with 86%, earning a certificate and £5, presented by the Divisional Manager at Liverpool's Rail House. The second year was much tougher. My tutor,

Inspector R. Woods, offered more rigorous and often discouraging feedback. My first paper came back covered in red pen and low scores—even with open books! I considered quitting, but persevered. Gradually, my marks improved. Lesson 12 earned me a perfect score and a note: "Excellent answers." I topped the London Midland Region with 96% and received a £20 cheque and certificate from the Chief Operating Manager in Crewe.

Though I never met either of my tutors, I remain especially grateful to Inspector Woods. His insistence on precision and understanding left a lasting impression and shaped my professional values. The success I found from these courses set me on a path into railway management.

Becoming a Teacher

My next encounter with a Block Class came in 1986 when I became Assistant Area Operations



Above : It was largely due to my voluntary training that I received the M.B.E. for 'services to the rail industry' from Prince William at Windsor Castle on 7th December 2021.

Manager in Birmingham. I attended classes led by Harold Hook at Stanier House. Inspired, I considered continuing the class after Harold retired—but I was soon promoted to Area Operations Manager in Teesside.



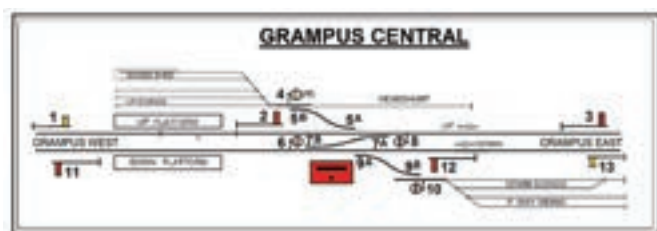
Above : The lever frame is a demonstration model made by the Railway Signal Company of Fazakerley in Liverpool in 1890. Students have a diagram to follow. The layout is considerably enhanced by the imagined provision of some hand-worked siding connections on each side of the main line. I call the location “Grampus Central”.

There, I found an existing informal class run by Signalling Inspector Steve Shields and Traffic Manager Jan Garrill. I attended and suggested they adopt the more structured “Safe Working of Trains” syllabus. They agreed, but by the next year, both had moved on. So, I took over.

After some back-and-forth with the York HQ Education Department (they initially required a minimum number of students), I was allowed to run the class as long as I didn’t seek payment. I ran it in Middlesbrough for two years.

Growing the Class

Over time, I opened the class to everyone—heritage railway staff, contractors, retirees, job-



Above : All students have a copy of this diagram in front of them.

seekers, and enthusiasts. As privatisation reduced BR’s footprint, mine became the last surviving Block Class nationwide. I am grateful to signal engineers Bruce Macdougall for wiring my Block Instruments and Steve Sherlock for making them work over the internet!

Technology helped the class evolve: visual aids, videos, and email replaced chalkboards and Roneo’d papers. Even after retiring in 2014, I continued teaching. I invested in a model lever frame and working Block Instruments that link my home in Knaresborough with Steve’s in York. I simulate live train movements as “Grampus Central” Signaller, with students following diagrams on their PCs. The setup brings the subject vividly to life.

Adapting to Modern Times

COVID-19 moved the class online in 2020 and 2021, today, I offer each lesson four times—twice online and twice in York. Online attendance has grown significantly thanks to support from CRO, with students joining from around the world. In 2024, 341 people enrolled, the majority attending online. The course is over two winters and goes from Absolute Block and semaphore signals through to ETCS and cab signalling.

The Future

I’m now approaching 40 years of running the class and have no plans to stop. It’s a privilege to contribute to so many people’s railway journeys. Whether sparking careers or deepening passion, the course remains free and open to all. I hope to welcome more students when the 2025/2026 course begins in September.



Above : Like father, like son. My eldest son, Ed Graham receiving his 2017 Block Class certificate from Network Rail Route Managing Director, Rob McIntosh at York Railway Museum.



Get the most out of your Corporate Membership

Recently some of the CIRO team have been out and about visiting some of our corporate members to help promote the benefits that are available to staff.

We were invited to attend Network Rail's Ops conference and were really happy to chat to colleagues about their next professional development opportunities with CIRO.

In April, we were also invited to the Elizabeth Line for a tour and learned about their day-to-day operations, which helped the team to learn about the challenges and successes that affect our members.

As well as this, we also hold online sessions for corporate members to highlight the benefits of CIRO membership and to ensure that employees are getting the most out of their membership.

Please get in touch with us if you work for a corporate member and would like to find out more about how the CIRO team can help you to discover all of the free resources and activities available to employees of your organisation - Email membership@railwayoperators.co.uk Or to find out how CIRO can work with you to find a solution to your training and competency challenges get in touch at: learning@railwayoperators.co.uk

Welcome to Swanage Railway and Great Central Railway

CIRO is proud to welcome two new heritage railways to its growing network of corporate members: Great Central Railway and Swanage Railway.

Their membership signals a shared commitment to the continued development of professional standards, operational excellence, and collaboration across all areas of the rail industry.

Great Central Railway: A Living Legacy of Mainline Heritage

Based in Leicestershire, Great Central Railway (GCR) is the UK's only double-track, mainline heritage railway. Running between Loughborough and Leicester North, GCR recreates the golden age of steam with a unique operational setup that allows full-sized trains to pass each other—just like the national network.

Originally part of the London Extension of the Great Central Railway, completed in 1899, today's preserved line is an award-winning tourist attraction and education resource. GCR is also spearheading the ambitious Reunification Project, which will reconnect its preserved section with Nottingham via a new bridge, forming an 18-mile heritage corridor in the East Midlands.

This initiative highlights GCR's dedication to preservation, education, and sustainable tourism.

Swanage Railway: A Coastal Heritage Gem

Swanage Railway, located in Dorset, operates a historic rail line through the Isle of Purbeck, connecting the seaside town of Swanage to Norden via the picturesque Corfe Castle. The line offers visitors a nostalgic journey through spectacular countryside on steam and heritage diesel services.

Rebuilt almost entirely by volunteers after the original line was closed in 1972, Swanage Railway is a testament to community spirit and dedication. Today, it serves not only as a popular visitor attraction but also as an important educational and training site, offering young people and enthusiasts the chance to gain real-world railway experience in a heritage setting.



GREAT
CENTRAL
RAILWAY



Celebrating Career Progression: Why Upgrading Your CIRO Membership Matters

At the heart of the railway industry are the people who keep it moving, professionals committed to safety, innovation, and operational excellence.

Two such individuals, Craig Evans FCIRO and Kirsty Mitchell MCIRO, (also featured on page 49) have recently upgraded their CIRO memberships, marking significant milestones in their careers. Their stories not only spotlight personal achievement but also serve as inspiration for other members to take the next step in their own professional journeys.

From Platform to Policy: Craig Evans, FCIRO

Craig Evans' journey through the railway industry is a testament to both curiosity and continuous learning. Starting out as a Guard at just 18, Craig's passion for rail operations led him through roles as a Depot Driver and Mainline Driver on Greater Anglia's Great Eastern Main Line.

His desire to broaden his understanding of the industry inspired him to pursue a Rail Operations Management degree through CIRO and Glasgow Caledonian University, a decision that propelled him into leadership as a Driver Training Manager.

Craig's career path continued to evolve with a move to Freightliner in 2021, where he became an ETCS Operations Specialist.

There, he shaped training strategies, supported system design, and led a simulation project that paved the way for two dedicated training facilities. Today, as Operations Lead for New Technology Introduction at the Rail Delivery Group, he's playing a key role in implementing digital signalling and innovation projects.

Craig recently upgraded his CIRO membership to Fellow, a recognition of two decades of dedication to the rail industry.

"A conversation with a CIRO Fellow and a CIRO webinar gave me the final push," Craig shares. "The process was clear and well-supported."

Now, I've taken on a mentorship role myself. I'm passionate about supporting others, just as I was supported."

His advice to fellow members? "Upgrading your CIRO membership ensures it reflects your professional journey. It's a powerful way to gain recognition and access valuable learning and networking opportunities."



Breaking Boundaries: Kirsty Mitchell, MCIRO

Kirsty Mitchell's (also featured on page 49) career began with a nudge from family. Her aunt suggested she apply for a Grade 2 Signaller role at age 19. That advice sparked a journey through the ranks of rail operations, from signalling to Local Operations Manager, and later into Route Control and senior network delivery positions.

Kirsty's transition into leadership wasn't without its challenges, managing peers, balancing motherhood, and undergoing heart surgery all shaped her path. In 2023, she stepped up as Head of Control, later joining Northern on secondment, gaining insight from the train operating company perspective.

Despite academic interruptions, Kirsty recognised her industry experience spoke for itself. She upgraded from Associate to Member via the professional route, a move that boosted her confidence and reaffirmed her place in the profession.

"Applying through the professional route validated my expertise beyond academic achievements," Kirsty explains. "It positioned me well for the future, and I'm already working toward Fellowship."

She encourages others to explore their options:

"There's more than one route to upgrading. It's not just about degrees, your experience counts. Talk to others, find a mentor. I'm always happy to help demystify the process."

Encouraging Growth Across the Network

Craig and Kirsty's stories are more than individual success narratives, they are examples of how CIRO membership upgrades can empower professionals to reflect on their experience, boost their confidence, and actively shape the future of the industry.

For those considering an upgrade, the message is clear: you don't need to wait for the perfect moment or a particular qualification. Whether you've accumulated years of hands-on experience or you're actively developing your academic credentials, CIRO provides multiple pathways to advance your professional standing.

Mentorship, community, and recognition. These are the hallmarks of CIRO's growing membership network. With more than 13,000 professionals



already part of this community, upgrading your membership can open doors to new opportunities, leadership roles, and lifelong learning.

As Craig puts it: "Step out of your comfort zone. Embrace change. Surround yourself with knowledgeable and supportive people."

Or, in Kirsty's words: "Be curious. Say yes to opportunities, even the scary ones and find a mentor who inspires you."

Find out about upgrading your membership on the CIRO website, or get in touch with the team on membership@railwayoperatos.co.uk



CIRO Congratulate the First Graduating Cohort of CIRO Connect

CIRO is pleased to congratulate the first cohort of CIRO Connect, who this year completed their course and graduated from the year-long immersive learning experience.

They were joined by CIRO CEO Phil Sherratt, CIRO COO and course designer Adam Fenton, and CIRO Fellow and Board member Rachel Heath. Each participant received a certificate to commemorate their achievement and a CIRO membership badge to represent their upgrade to the associate level of CIRO membership.

The cohort spent a year immersed in an expert-led learning journey around the POD Framework. Covering 12 essential aspects of learning for successful and effective railway operators, the POD Framework is CIRO's recognised skills development pathway. Each day of the CIRO

Connect course covers one element of this Framework, with the full 12 days encompassing an immersive and detailed overview of the rail industry.

CIRO Connect was created to address the need for a structured, comprehensive training programme tailored to the rail industry. One of the core aims of CIRO Connect is to plug the skills gap that is emerging across an ageing rail workforce.

By basing the course structure on the POD Framework, participants gain a holistic set of skills and knowledge that spreads across all aspects of the industry. The experiential and innovative learning style helps participants apply this knowledge in practice and critically implement the course teachings directly into their roles.

Alongside the significant achievement of winning the Training Excellence category at the prestigious Spotlight Rail awards (read more about this on page 4), CIRO Connect has been shortlisted for Skills Development Excellence at the Rail Business Awards and Best Training or Development Programme at the Women in Rail Awards. The recognition of CIRO Connect across the industry is strongly valued by CIRO, who thank the team, subject matter experts, and learners who have contributed to its success.

The learners have had an overwhelmingly positive experience, commenting on the level of understanding the course has given them, the impact it has had on their work, and the excellent delivery of the course by the lead tutor, Carol Deveney:

"It's that holistic understanding. Quite often in your day job as rail professionals, we're pigeonholed into a certain area, whereas CIRO Connect really encourages us to think more outwardly. It's not only interesting but really important. I'd honestly recommend it to anybody who is interested in rail or who works in the rail industry. Particularly for people new to the industry because it can be quite overwhelming, and there's so much to learn. Having a structured program is undeniably useful to anybody who is new to the industry."

– Sara Flower, course participant

"As someone who didn't have much experience in the industry when starting CIRO Connect, I could sit in meetings, and some concepts could go straight over my head. Actually, having someone explain them to you who's been involved in the industry for such a long time and who delivers the content in a way that is digestible and easy to understand has been really useful, and I've thoroughly enjoyed it so far.

"CIRO Connect helped me gain a wider understanding of the rail industry and get my head around certain concepts that either didn't mean much to me before, I hadn't had much exposure to before, or just didn't understand."

– Charlie O'Donnell, course participant

"It's all about understanding the industry. I had no exposure to the way the railway operates; I've never

understood the intricacies of it. That's the biggest thing I've taken away from the sessions and the most helpful thing about it.

"One of the most enjoyable things about it is the way it's been delivered. Carol has been absolutely incredible, and through that delivery, it's helped me to kind of visualise things, instead of just reading out of a handbook or a guidebook. It's helped me to gain a better understanding, and this comes off the back of how it's structured."

– Jack Wheelhouse, course participant

Carol Deveney herself has commented on the innovative nature of the course, and the impact it will have on the industry:

"I hear 'Innovation' set out as an intention for training sessions. That means truly committing to creativity and trying new ideas to bring innovation into the learning experience. It takes courage to step away from the traditional methods. Of course, it is what needs to happen if we want different results.

CIRO embraced this from the outset for the CIRO Connect programme. They have been collaborative, adventurous, forward-thinking, and driven the creation of a programme I wish I could have attended 20 years ago!"

– Carol Deveney, course leader

As CIRO Connect expands across the industry, we are excited to recruit for the launch of a new cohort based in London in September 2025. To find out more or register your interest in this launch or future cohorts, contact: learning@railwayoperators.co.uk





CIRO Launches New Master's Course with Keele University

In early 2025, CIRO officially launched a much-anticipated rail-focused MBA programme in collaboration with Keele University.

This is CIRO's first academic partnership with Keele University and highlights the fantastic resources within CIRO's local county of Staffordshire.

The innovative MBA combines the traditional focus of an MBA on essential business disciplines, practices, skills, and knowledge with specialised rail-focused modules. By combining core areas such as leadership, finance, and strategic marketing with rail-specific studies, participants will develop a dual perspective: a strong foundation in general business management and a deep understanding of the intricacies of railway operations. The course supports students in blending academic excellence with practical skills, equipping them with the tools for success in senior leadership roles in the rail sector.

With a curriculum designed to meet the demands of the ever-evolving rail sector, this programme equips professionals with the expertise to lead confidently. Core business modules cover leadership, strategy, finance, marketing,

people management, human resources, digital transformation, and research methods. In the second year of the programme, CIRO delivers two rail-focused modules: Comparative Railway Operations and Railway Systems Integration, providing essential industry context.

The MBA is currently eligible for apprenticeship levy funding due to its embedding into the Level 7 Senior Leader Apprenticeship. This levy-funded opportunity will enable rail professionals to gain access to affordable, industry-specific, master's-level higher education.

The launch of this programme follows the incredible success of CIRO's degree course and the demand from its students for further opportunities to progress their studies. After two years of behind-the-scenes planning, CIRO was proudly able to answer this call from its students. Speaking on the launch of the programme, CIRO CEO Phil Sherratt commented:

"This is an exciting expansion to the CIRO offer and is a fantastic partnership between two Staffordshire-based organisations.

“Our degree students thrive on our courses and have an eagerness to grow and learn. Their ambition to progress even further has to be acknowledged and respected; therefore, we’re thrilled to offer an MBA course alongside Keele University.

“Senior Leader Apprenticeships offer a rigorous standard of professional development for managers and leaders. Our industry is continuously growing and evolving, so a highly educated and focused workforce with a passion not only for rail but for quality leadership is exactly what’s needed to support the future of rail operations.

“This latest development in CIRO’s offering fits perfectly with the institution’s vision for the future of rail operations. It plays a crucial role in developing the skills of rail operators and giving our industry leaders the recognition they deserve.”

The course is ideal for rail professionals looking to progress into senior leadership roles and enhance their strategic and operational expertise in the rail sector, all while achieving a globally recognised qualification. Students will develop the advanced skills and strategic mindset required for senior management, and gain the confidence to lead teams, oversee complex projects, and drive innovation in the rail sector.

Through a combination of business knowledge and rail-specific insights, graduates will be able to address industry challenges, optimise operations, effectively manage resources, and contribute to

the growth of the rail network.

This will all be achieved while continuing to work, supported by a flexible hybrid model, allowing students to apply new knowledge directly to their role and drive an immediate organisational impact. This learning culminates with a comprehensive company-based project, where students bridge theory and practice into a tangible work-based application.

Prospective students of the MBA should have at least three years’ relevant work experience, a 2:2 honours degree, and GCSE Maths and English at Grade C (4) or equivalent. In circumstances where applicants can demonstrate significant experience, the requirement for a formal academic qualification may be waived. The requirement for GCSE Maths and English at Grade C (4) or equivalent is also not applicable to all applicants, and our advisors will be able to help with this upon enquiry. Apprentices will also need a dedicated mentor within their business to provide ongoing support and guidance.

Those interested in applying for the course should contact learning@railwayoperators.co.uk. The programme has multiple intakes per year, subject to government funding. Our advisors are ready to guide you through the application process, answer your questions, and provide detailed information about the course. They’ll explain the modules you’ll study, the programme structure, and everything you need to know to take the next step in your professional development.



Our degree students thrive on our courses and have an eagerness to grow and learn.

Applications Are Open for CIRO's Academic Courses

CIRO's popular academic courses are currently accepting applications for intake in September 2025.

Delivered in partnership with Glasgow Caledonian University, these courses have introduced over 1,000 graduates of Railway Operations Management to the industry since their establishment 20 years ago.

There's a course suitable for all rail professionals, no matter the stage of their career. If you're looking to develop your knowledge of railway operations management and enhance your skills, now is the time to consider enhancing your career prospects with an academic course.

Graduates gain professional recognition in the industry, improve their job prospects, and finish their courses with essential skills plus a supportive network of like-minded railway professionals.

Those new to the industry should consider the Certificate of Higher Education in Railway Operations Management. This work-based learning course is delivered through six modules over one year, culminating with the planning of a work-based project. Key development aims of the course are to equip students with the knowledge, understanding, and skills for effective railway operations management. All six modules focus on improving your confidence and competency in railway operations.

Professionals with some experience in railway operations are suited to the Diploma of Higher Education in Railway Operations Management. Delivered through five modules across two years, this work-based course enhances commercial awareness and helps achieve continuous improvements in vital rail skills. The course is specifically designed to help you think critically and solve associated problems, with learners carrying out an independent project in their workplace.

More experienced rail professionals looking to

significantly enhance their learning will find opportunity in the Bachelor of Science Degree in Railway Operations Management. This course is delivered through five modules over two years and is supported by work-based learning, including implementing a work-based project. Graduates of the course gain a high level of understanding in a range of railway operations disciplines and are challenged to think outside of their day-to-day roles and embrace the latest developments in railway operations.

CIRO is also proud to offer a scholarship opportunity specifically for those from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds who are ready to progress their careers but facing financial barriers. This scholarship will offer two fully funded places on the Certificate level of study for the September 2025 intake.

Zahid Hussain, who received the scholarship in 2023, shared that he "got to a point where I thought if I don't do it now, I won't ever do it. So, I explored the opportunity of a scholarship and was able to get it. A career is such a short window of



opportunity, and very rarely do the stars align for you to do it like this.”

Degree graduate Surendar Reddy Yalamareddy appreciates the support that was given during his studies, saying that “the resources provided were invaluable, from personalised mentoring to insightful discussions that encouraged critical thinking. I felt truly valued as a participant, with the program constantly recognising and supporting my learning needs.”



Diploma graduate Kirsty Mitchell encourages those interested in the course to go for it: “My advice would be don’t delay! I wish I would have done this programme earlier on in my career and specifically my management career. I am proud

to be on this journey with CIRO and what I have achieved so far.”



Those interested in applying for an academic course should use the application form on CIRO’s website or contact learning@railwayoperators.co.uk. Our advisors are ready to guide you through the application process, answer your questions, and provide detailed information about the course.

More information can also be found at one of our open evenings. You can find more information about these here: <https://www.ciro.org/whats-on/>

“

My advice would be don’t delay! I wish I would have done this programme earlier on in my career and specifically my management career.”

Kirsty Mitchell

Discover Your Path in Railway Operations: Join Our Academic Open Evening

Whether you've already registered your interest for this year's intake or are just curious about the possibilities, come along to an open evening to find out more about CRO's academic courses. You can speak to the team and receive first-hand insight from current and former students.

The evenings will answer:

- Which level of study is right for me?
- What funding options are available?
- What is expected of me as a student?
- How much time will I need to invest?
- What does the application process involve?
- What support will be on offer?
- And any other questions you have.

The next events will be held online at the following times:

- Tuesday 24th June 2025, 17:30-18:30
- Tuesday 5th August 2025, 17:30-18:30

If you're interested in attending, email learning@railwayoperators.co.uk to receive a joining link.





“Attending an open evening contributed massively to my decision to apply and ultimately led to my acceptance into the Degree programme!” –

Macdonald Boella



The Operational Planning Masterclass Goes International

In January of this year, the popular Operational Planning Masterclass was held overseas for the first time.

The course tutors, Edmund Waddelove from Network Rail and Luke Gardner from TransPennine Express, travelled to Dublin to deliver the course to a group of learners from Iarnród Éireann.

This presented unique opportunities for the tutors to present the course content in the Irish context and for the participants to take part in a specialist course recognised by CIRO. The discussion around the similarities and differences of rail in the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom proved fruitful and interesting for all involved.

Barrie McElhinney, Strategy & Scope Development Manager at Iarnród Éireann, organised and took part in the course, commenting:

“The team were very accommodating in developing a specific masterclass for our needs. The masterclass itself was very informative in a number of areas, and the knowledge gained will be useful in project delivery”

The Operational Planning Masterclass introduces the specific tasks of operational planning, illustrating how the timetable is fundamental to a railway business by generating revenue and influencing costs. Participants are guided through the topic using hands-on activities and provided with the essential tools and techniques for operational planning.

Following the processes that take a timetable from specification to implementation, learners are introduced to case studies that illustrate the challenges of producing a timetable, and how to succeed. The course also demonstrates the Operator’s role in developing business cases

and project appraisal, helping participants to feel confident in presenting new ideas in their workplace.

Andrew Tomlinson, Research Fellow at the Institute for Transport Studies at The University of Leeds, took part in the course in 2023, and found it to be a unique opportunity to gain knowledge not usually available to the public:

“What intrigued me the most about the Operational Planning Masterclass was its unique course content. With limited publicly available information on the subject, it was the perfect opportunity for someone like me, who is genuinely interested in deepening my knowledge in planning.”

David Fox, Planning & Performance Manager at Lumo, also found the course expanded

their perspective on a niche topic, with good opportunities for critical discussion and networking:

“I would recommend the course to absolutely anyone who has any interaction with train planning, I think it helps give you a much broader understanding of what’s going on in the industry. Having those people in a room together sparks some good conversation and debate, and you start seeing things from different peoples’ point of view.”

The next Operational Planning Masterclass is being held in Manchester from the 21st-23rd of November 2025. Places on this course are filling quickly, and so prospective participants should contact learning@railwayoperators.co.uk soon to register their interest and reserve their place.



I would
recommend
the course to
absolutely anyone
who has any
interaction with
train planning.”

**David Fox, Planning &
Performance Manager, Lumo**

Tom Swift Honoured with Inaugural Caroline Tuff Award for Excellence

As part of the graduation ceremony for the Glasgow Caledonian University /CIRO academic programmes, Certificate student Tom Swift has been awarded the Caroline Tuff Award for Academic Excellence.

Introduced for the first time this year, the award will be given annually to the top-performing student on the GCU/CIRO Railway Operations Management programmes. This award has been developed in memory of the late Caroline Tuff, who led the programmes and was a supportive colleague and friend to both organisations.

Tom Swift studied the Certificate in Railway Operations Management with CIRO and GCU as part of his Level 4 Passenger Transport Operations Manager Apprenticeship course. His outstanding performance on the Certificate distinguished him as the winner of this award and recognised his immense effort throughout.

Speaking upon receiving the award, Tom shared:

"I'm so delighted with the award; it was a real surprise and made my graduation even more special."



This award reflects a stream of strong academic cohorts comprised of rail professionals ready to implement their learning into the industry in innovative ways. Reflecting on the occasion, CIRO Chief Operating Officer Adam Fenton stated: "Today's graduates exemplify the very best of our industry. Their determination to excel both academically and professionally is truly inspiring. It's an honour to celebrate their success and to witness the bright future they represent for railway operations."

The Certificate in Railway Operations Management is the first level of CIRO's academic programmes.

Followed by the Diploma and Degree programmes, there's a course suitable for rail professionals at all stages of their careers. Applications for the September 2025 intake are now open, and more information can be found on page 48.

“

I'm so delighted with the award; it was a real surprise and made my graduation even more special.”

Introducing Rail Master: A Whole System View of Rail – CIRO's Newest and Most Advanced Online Course

CIRO is pleased to launch our latest and most advanced online course, Rail Master: A Whole System View of Rail.

Specifically designed to build upon the popular Rail Pro: 12 System Elements of Rail course, this offers an opportunity for learners to go one step further in a self-paced online setting.

To make our opportunities convenient for both employers and individual learners, our online courses are now organised into three levels of learning. Beginners can benefit from Introduction to Rail, a classic course offering the most essential knowledge needed for working on the railway.

Moving up a level, the Rail Pro: 12 System Elements of Rail course covers each section of CIRO's POD Framework, encouraging holistic learning about railway operations.

Finally, the new Rail Master: A Whole System View of Rail course takes this a step further, covering 14 aspects of rail in detail and offering critical reflection. Each course is supported by activities and assessed by quizzes to ensure learning outcomes are met.

Topics covered by Rail Master: A Whole System View of Rail include an introduction to essential aspects of railway operation, management skills, customer service, the organisation of the railway business, operational planning, performance management, safety management, emergency management, train movement control systems,

and railway economics.

By taking a deep-dive into 14 distinct aspects of the rail profession and connecting these topics along the way, the course produces a 'Whole System View' of railway operations. Participants are encouraged to reflect on their profession throughout each topic and to bring different ideas together in ways they may not have done so before. The depth of the course makes it ideal for mid- to high-level professionals looking to gain a detailed whole-system perspective of the rail industry.

The course also supports different learning styles, as all written content is paired with narrated videos, and the activities involve different skills such as research, reflection, and hands-on tasks.

To ensure the high quality and usability of Rail Master: A Whole System View of Rail, the course has been piloted within the September 2024 academic course cohorts, who have used the course to support their studies.

The first student to complete the course, Lawrence Ruler, found it to be a useful way of expanding his operational understanding of rail when coming from a commercial background: "I will refer back to it throughout the degree course for sure." Those interested in enrolling in the course or finding out more should contact learning@railwayoperators.co.uk expressing their interest.

CIRO Release the Fourth Edition of the Operators' Handbook



Twelve years after the publication of the first edition of the Operators' Handbook, CIRO is pleased to release the fourth edition of the essential text on railway operations.

This publication follows five years since the previous edition and provides a vital update on key topics within rail.

With each chapter covering one section of CIRO's POD Framework, the book provides a thorough overview of railway operations and supports a whole-system view of rail. In this new edition, readers are also given access to an exclusive bank of online video resources to support learning through each chapter.

David Franks, CIRO Fellow and ex-Chair of the Board, introduces the book with an outline of the value it has for rail professionals and the wider industry:

"This handbook provides an overarching description of how to manage a wide range of operational issues. However, it does not simply establish minimum competence levels; it describes what first-class operational professionalism looks like and aims to push the boundaries of expertise within railway operations. The advice in this handbook will help you improve your knowledge of the 'art' of operations so you can focus on the right issues. This is critical in the drive for continuous improvement in all aspects of a train service."

Commenting on the release of this new edition, CIRO Board Chair and Chief Executive of Irish Rail, Jim Meade, has shared:

"Published in CIRO's 25th anniversary year, this fully updated version of the handbook is a valuable resource for operators at all stages of their careers. Whether you're new to the industry, an experienced professional, or a leader shaping the future of railway operations, the insights and tools within are designed to help you succeed. As the rail industry continues to adapt to new technologies, sustainability goals, and passenger expectations, this handbook supports your journey to excellence in 2025 and beyond."

CIRO is indebted to the wide range of original authors and subsequent reviewers who have previously given freely their wide operations experience during the production of the first three editions of the handbook. With this new release, CIRO is especially thankful to the contributors of the fourth edition.



A valuable resource for operators at all stages of their careers."

Order inquiries for the new edition of the Operators' Handbook should be directed to learnserve@railwayoperators.co.uk The publication is available as a hardcopy and an e-copy.

This year, a limited-edition version of the handbook is available as a Silver Jubilee Commemorative Box Set. For more information, see page 24.

Working Together on End-Point Assessment: How CIRO Becomes Your EPAO

As a professional Institution focused on the growth and success of rail professionals and organisations, CIRO is proud to offer End-Point Assessment (EPA) services that align with the real operational needs of the industry.

In our November 2024 edition, we announced CIRO's Ofqual approval to deliver EPAs for two additional standards:

- Rail Infrastructure Operator – Level 3 (ST1378)
- Transport Scheduler – Level 3 (ST1438)

Since then, we've successfully launched both standards and are now actively assessing apprentices on the Rail Infrastructure Operator programme—alongside our established delivery of the Train Driver – Level 3 (ST0645) EPA.

This growth reflects CIRO's mission:

To lead, inspire, and accelerate the growth of rail professionals, cultivating collaboration to support the success of rail organisations, now and in the future.

As a specialist EPAO for operational roles, we understand what high-stakes, safety-critical work looks like—and we ensure that the final stage of an apprentice's journey is delivered with rigour, fairness, and clear relevance to industry practice.

What's the Process for Working with Us?

If you're considering CIRO as your End-Point Assessment Organisation, here's what to expect:

1. Initial Conversation

We start by understanding your delivery model, timelines, cohort sizes, and the standards you offer—ensuring everything aligns from the beginning.

2. Service Agreement

We'll formalise our partnership through a clear service level agreement covering responsibilities, timeframes, pricing, and communication protocols.

3. Onboarding and Support

We provide access to our systems, guidance documents, and dedicated support to help you prepare for gateway and beyond. We're here to make sure assessments run smoothly and professionally.

4. Assessment Delivery

CIRO's assessments are delivered by experienced industry professionals who understand the standards and reflect the realities of rail operations. We deliver results promptly and submit claims for certification in line with agreed timescales.

5. Ongoing Engagement

Our relationship doesn't end at assessment. We maintain regular contact, offer reviews and updates, and provide support as apprenticeship standards evolve. We're committed to your success long after the first cohort completes.

A Word from CIRO

"At CIRO, we don't just assess against a standard—we assess for the future of the industry. Our role as an EPAO is part of a wider commitment to supporting rail professionals throughout their careers, and to ensuring employers get the workforce they need to thrive."

— Sam Turner Joint Head of Awarding Organisation (Head of Product Development and EPA)

Let's Start a Conversation

We welcome discussions with rail organisations and training providers who are delivering—or planning to deliver—apprenticeships in the standards we assess. If you're looking for a trusted EPAO with operational insight and industry focus, we'd be happy to help.

epa@ciro.org
www.ciro.org/epa

Rolling Out Excellence: CIRO and Network Rail's Initial Signaller Training Programme Expands Nationwide

At the beginning of the year, we announced the launch of the CIRO AO-endorsed Diploma in Initial Signaller Training (IST) programme, a significant advancement in the professional development of railway signallers. Since then, the programme has successfully begun its rollout across the UK, with multiple Network Rail training centres now delivering the 10-week course.

This collaboration between the CIRO Awarding Organisation (CIROAO) and Network Rail is gaining strong momentum, with regional centres now operational at Bristol Parkway, Basingstoke, Bristol, Newport, Perth, Shettleston, and Newtongrange. With each new location, the IST programme is helping to build a more consistent, professionalised pipeline of skilled signallers ready to support the safe and efficient running of the rail network.

A Training Programme Built for Operational Excellence

Delivered through a blend of classroom theory and immersive virtual simulator training, the IST programme equips participants with core knowledge in signalling regulations, operational communication, and safety procedures. Designed with direct input from industry professionals, the course ensures that signallers leave their training with the skills and confidence needed to meet the demands of a fast-paced operational environment.



At the heart of this initiative is a shared commitment to quality. Network Rail's robust internal training assurance is complemented by CIROAO's external endorsement and quality monitoring — a dual-layer approach that ensures learners are held to the highest professional standards.

Collaboration in Action

Earlier this year, representatives from CIRO visited the second cohort of IST learners at the York training facility to celebrate their journey toward final assessment. It was a meaningful moment — not only for the learners, but also for the wider teams behind the programme, who have worked collaboratively to shape and deliver a training experience that sets a new benchmark for signaller development.

Reflections from Those Involved

"The IST programme represents an exciting step forward in shaping the future of railway operations. Our collaboration with CIRO marks a pivotal moment in the professionalisation of our signaller colleagues... We are shaping the future of the rail industry and driving innovation across the network."

— Justin Willett FCIRO, Director of Operational Capability, Network Rail

"This programme stands as a testament to our ongoing commitment to advancing professional development within the rail industry and underscores CIRO's mission to lead, inspire, and accelerate the growth of rail professionals."

— Nadine Schmid, Head of Awarding Organisation Centres and Quality Assurance, CIRO



What's Next?

As delivery expands across the UK, the IST programme is already having a tangible impact – supporting signaller readiness, operational safety, and the wider ambition of a resilient, future-focused workforce. CIRO and Network Rail continue to explore further opportunities to collaborate on endorsed programmes that reflect real industry needs.

For more information on how CIRO AO can help enhance your organisation's training delivery, visit:

www.ciro.org/awarding-organisation

or contact us at:

ciroao@railwayoperators.co.uk

“
The IST
programme
represents
an exciting
step forward
in shaping
the future
of railway
operations.”



Next Stop: Leadership – How Apprenticeships are Powering Careers in Rail



Sarah Vernon BSc (Hons) PGDip FCMI
Head of Apprenticeship Programmes, CIRO

As the UK rail industry faces a growing workforce crisis, with almost a third of employees aged 50 or over and more than 47,000 expected to retire by 2030, apprenticeships are proving to be one of the most powerful tools for tackling the challenge head-on. But the real value of apprenticeships isn't just in the statistics.

It lies in the personal stories of the people who've used them to transform their careers — and the organisations that are reaping the benefits.

To mark National Apprenticeship Week 2025, CIRO hosted a webinar bringing together a panel of former apprentices and employer leads to reflect on the impact apprenticeships are having across the industry.

A Launchpad for Leadership

For many, apprenticeships have opened the door to entirely new roles and career paths.

"I did the Level 3 Team Leader apprenticeship, and it helped me move up into a Service Delivery Trainer role at Northern," said Rob Bowman, Service Delivery Trainer for Conductors at Northern.

"It formalised my development, helped me understand where I wanted to go, and gave me the confidence to work across the business — from frontline teams to senior leadership."

Tina Thompson MCIRO, Fleet Procurement Business Change Manager at LNER, echoed this sentiment. Having completed the Level 5 Operations Departmental Manager

apprenticeship, Tina credits the programme with helping her reframe her experience, strengthen her leadership approach, and progress in her career.

"It allowed me to rethink everything I thought I knew," she said. "It helped me organise my thoughts, understand my leadership style, and plan effectively — not just for myself but for my team. I probably didn't realise how much it would change the way I work until halfway through."

Practical Skills, Real Progress

For David Card, an Operations Management Graduate at Network Rail, the Level 4 Passenger Transport Operations Manager apprenticeship has helped bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world operations.

"I studied French and German at university," he shared, "so this was a totally different learning experience — but one that really grounded me in how the railway works. Each teaching block gave me something I could immediately reflect on and apply to my role. The apprenticeship has helped me track my development in a way I wouldn't have done otherwise."

Bill Jeram, now Production Manager at Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), came into rail from an aircraft engineering background and used his Level 4 apprenticeship to make the leap into management.

"Apprenticeships teach you how to ask the right questions," he said. "They help you see the bigger picture, not just what's in front of you. I went from overalls to a suit, and that wouldn't have happened without this programme. It's structured, it's flexible, and it's totally changed how I approach the job — and how others see me, too."

Not Just for School Leavers

Apprenticeships still carry the reputation of being for young starters — but CIRO's data and real-world experience tell a very different story.

"Over 70% of our apprentices are over the age of 25," explained Sarah Vernon BSc (Hons) PGDip FCMI, Head of Apprenticeship Programmes at CIRO.

"We work with people moving into leadership for the first time, as well as experienced professionals who want to sharpen their management skills or take their next career step. The journey is tailored, inclusive, and transformational."

That inclusivity was key for Bill Jeram, who completed his apprenticeship while raising a

young family. "It doesn't matter how old you are — you can always learn. I've got a two-year-old at home and a busy life, but this programme helped me change direction. And it wasn't just for me — my whole team benefits from what I've learned."

Strategic Benefits for Employers

Rail companies are increasingly viewing apprenticeships as more than just a training route — they're becoming a core part of workforce and succession planning strategies.

"We're huge advocates," said Alex Hooper, Apprenticeship Lead at East Midlands Railway (EMR).

"We use apprenticeships from Level 2 to Level 7 across the business — from engineering to head office roles. They give people real hands-on experience, build confidence, and create clear progression pathways. And when we see people step up or sideways into new roles, that's a huge return on investment."

Adam Smallwood, Apprenticeship Programme Manager at LNER, agreed: "Apprenticeships support our strategic workforce planning. They help us develop the skills we'll need not just today, but in two or three years' time. Plus, the rail-specific context of CIRO's programmes gives our people the confidence to apply their learning directly to their roles."

The Journey Continues

At the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators, our apprenticeship programmes are designed not only to equip individuals with practical, real-world leadership skills, but to help rail companies build a succession-ready workforce. What sets CIRO apart is our focus on management and leadership development, delivered with deep rail contextualisation — giving apprentices the advantage of learning how to lead effectively within the unique operational realities of the rail industry.

Whether it's supporting early-career professionals like David Card and Rob Bowman, enabling mid-career progression for leaders like Tina Thompson MCIRO and Bill Jeram, or delivering long-term strategic value as outlined by Alex Hooper and Adam Smallwood, our apprenticeships develop confident, capable leaders who can meet the demands of a modern railway.

To explore how CIRO Apprenticeships can support your organisation's leadership pipeline, visit www.ciro.org/apprenticeships or contact Sarah Vernon at sarah@railwayoperators.co.uk to start the conversation.

Passing the Baton: Welcoming New Leadership in CIRO's Midlands and North East Area Councils

As CIRO continues to grow and evolve, two of our long-standing area council chairs have recently handed over the reins to new leaders.

Rachel Heath FCIRO has passed the Chair of the Midlands Area Council to Bronnie Clarke, and Jason Wade FCIRO has stepped down as Chair of the North East Area Council, making way for Adrian Caffrey ACIRO.

Both Rachel and Jason have served with dedication and distinction, contributing not just to their area councils but to CIRO as a whole. While they are stepping back from their Area Council Chair roles, they will remain closely involved as Governors on CIRO's Board.

We caught up with them—and with Bronnie and Adrian—to reflect on the past, celebrate the present, and look ahead to what's next.

Reflecting on 17 Remarkable Years – Jason Wade FCIRO

Jason joined CIRO's North East Council in 2007 and became Chair just a year later. Over the next 17 years, his leadership helped the council flourish into a consistent source of insight, connection, and learning.

"Leading the area in delivering a varied events programme that offers members insight into all aspects of railway operations has been something I'm really proud of," Jason said. "We've also explored topics outside the usual operator scope, which helped members build a more rounded view."

One standout memory for Jason was an overseas study visit: "My favourite event was a trip to Ireland hosted by the CIRO Irish Council. It was my first time visiting both Northern Ireland and the Republic, so it was a culturally and professionally enriching experience. Plus, spending time socially with fellow members helped build genuine friendships."

Though stepping back was not an easy decision, Jason felt the timing was right. "Being Chair gave me immense personal satisfaction and

helped grow my professional network. I've seen both the Institution and the North East Area grow significantly. But I believe in giving others the chance to gain the kind of valuable experience I've had."

Of Adrian, Jason says, "He's been a valued member of our council for many years and is perfectly placed to take the area to even greater success."

A Decade of Dedication – Rachel Heath FCIRO

Rachel joined the Midlands Area Council in 2013 and took on the role of Chair in 2015. Her leadership has helped open doors and create connections across the industry.

"What I'm most proud of is continuing the legacy of previous chairs—offering opportunities for people to deepen their understanding of operations and grow their networks," she shared. "I often speak with people who say CIRO introduced them to ideas and contacts that changed their career paths. That's something really special."

Her favourite events? "Family social days, without a doubt! It's a chance for everyone who supports us in our day jobs to enjoy time together. I particularly love our SVR visits—it's close to my heart, being based in my hometown."

Rachel is confident that Bronnie is the right person to carry things forward. "Bronnie is everything we need in a CIRO council member—enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and aligned with CIRO's future vision. I know she'll do a fantastic job, and our members will continue to benefit from the council's excellent work, especially as we move toward a more integrated GBR model."

Meet the New Chairs

With Bronnie Clarke and Adrian Caffrey now at the helm of the Midlands and North East Area Councils respectively, we sat down with them to hear about their career journeys, interests, and visions for the future.

Adrian Caffrey ACIRO
CIRO North East Area Council Chair

Role and Railway Journey: Adrian is currently seconded as Head of Performance at Northern, where he leads a team driving exciting improvement projects. He began his railway career in 2007 as a conductor based in Leeds—a role he held for nearly a decade.



"That experience was a great intro to railway operations," Adrian said. "I've always believed in grabbing opportunities when they come along, and that mindset has really shaped my path."

Passions Beyond the Railway: Adrian is a seasoned traveller, having visited nearly 80 countries. "I love immersing myself in different cultures. Myanmar and Japan are two of my favourites," he said. "I usually travel by rail when abroad—every journey is a chance to learn more about international railway operations."

His Role as Chair: As Chair, Adrian leads a group of passionate volunteers in organising events that support member development and professional growth.

"It's all about creating opportunities for connection, learning, and shared insight," he said. "We want our events to reflect the latest in railway developments, from new rolling stock to digital technologies like ETCS."

Why He Joined the Council: Adrian credits CIRO with broadening his understanding of the railway system and helping him take his career to the next level.

"I started as a conductor and used CIRO's resources to explore beyond operations. When I

got the chance to join the council, I took it—and it's opened up so many opportunities."

A Standout Moment: "One of my highlights was attending the Chairs' meeting in London. It coincided with an event for CIRO degree students and gave me a glimpse into how CIRO is shaping the next generation of railway professionals."

His Message to Members: "With membership set to reach 14,000 this year, I'd say: take full advantage of what CIRO offers. Talk to your local council, attend events, and don't be afraid to get involved."

Looking ahead, Adrian's council will be focusing on events tied to current industry shifts—including performance improvement, new technologies, and infrastructure changes. "And we're always open to feedback," he added. "If members want to see something specific, or even present themselves, we'd love to hear from you."

Bronnie Clarke
CIRO Midlands Area Council Chair

Role and Railway Career: Bronnie is Head of Control for Network Rail East Midlands. Her team manages daily operations and oversees longer-



term planning, including engineering work and special events.

"No two days are the same," she said. "The variety keeps you sharp, and there's always a new challenge to tackle."

Life Outside of Work: Bronnie spends her downtime outdoors with her two Labradors and recently picked up Canicross—a sport that combines running with dog-walking. "I also read a lot," she adds. "Autumn is perfect for a good horror novel!"

Her Journey to Chair: Bronnie's involvement with CIRO began with studying for her degree and has since evolved to tutoring other students. "When the opportunity to join the council came up, I thought—why not? I've benefited so much from CIRO, and I wanted to help others do the same."

Though she joined the Midlands Area Council just a month ago, Bronnie is already making connections and planning for the future.

Advice for New Members: "When I first started attending CIRO events, I was nervous. Everyone seemed like an expert. But once you walk through that door, you realise how welcoming it is. You'll learn something new and probably make some great connections too."

What's Next for the Midlands Council: "We've got some exciting things planned—events on major railway planning, PIMS, and a family day at Crich Tramway. We're already booking sessions for later in the year."

Like Adrian, Bronnie sees CIRO's growth as a signal of the industry's commitment to learning and development. "There's so much to explore within the railway. CIRO helps people see what's possible and supports them in achieving it."

The Heart of CIRO – Our Volunteers

None of this would be possible without the incredible volunteers who serve on our area councils. They dedicate their time and energy to creating the engaging events and opportunities our members enjoy throughout the year.

Whether you're a long-standing member or have just joined our growing community, we encourage you to explore how you can get involved. From attending your first event to stepping forward as a presenter or council member, there are many ways to contribute and grow.

To Rachel and Jason—thank you for your years of inspiring leadership. And to Bronnie and Adrian—welcome to your new roles. We're excited to see where you'll take us next.

Look out for Adrian and Bronnie's full interviews coming out in the coming weeks.

Interested in volunteering?

Visit our website or speak to your local area council to learn how you can get involved.





Leading with Legacy: Three Area Chairs Unite to Celebrate Progress and Inspire the Future

At a recent North West and Wales Area event in Manchester, a special moment unfolded that highlighted the power of continuity and shared experience in leadership. Chris Mackenzie, current NW&W Area Council Chair, was joined by his two predecessors, Carl Phillips and Clive Evans, in a rare and meaningful gathering that marked their collective impact on the region.

This was more than just a North West and Wales Area event, it was a reunion, symbolising CIRO's enduring commitment to collaboration and growth. With each chair bringing their unique insights to the role, Chris, Carl and Clive were able to share valuable perspectives on how the council has evolved and where it's headed. Together, they paint a picture of an Area Council strengthened by committed leadership, and one that will continue to develop for the future.

The trio reunion provided an opportunity to reflect on how the CIRO North West and Wales Area had developed under their combined tenures as Chair, and discuss ways to build on this collective foundation for the future. This serves as a powerful reminder of the value of CIRO's institutional memory. By embracing past experiences and building upon them, the North West and Wales Area Council continues to evolve, offering superb learning and networking opportunities for CIRO members.

"It was good to meet up with former and current Chairs and to reflect on the continuity of Area events in the NW from the very early days back in the early noughties. The opportunities to bring people of different experiences and generations together during the period of immense industry change was valuable and positive. It is good to see the NW Area is thriving, a special note of thanks to Tom Cox who has run the family days each summer since the beginning". – Clive Evans MCIRO

"Volunteering on area council has given me an excellent insight into the generational changes in how we operate railways. It has also allowed me to work with a fine team, to support members' personal growth in the operations discipline, with all train operators, Network Rail and industry suppliers supporting our ongoing learning and development goals". – Carl Phillips FCIRO

"In these times of ever competing priorities between business' the CIRO has helped me personally and I hope those in the area in which I have the privilege to continue to serve as Chair, to bring the industry together, to share experiences and help take all that corporate memory through to the next generation of railway staff". – Chris Mackenzie ACIRO

North East: Transpennine Route Upgrade

By Jason Wade, Regional
Director Northeast, Northern
Trains & CRO Board Member



The North East Council were delighted to host a presentation from Sara Kettlewell, Liam O'Shaughnessy and Adam Sellers, from the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) team.

The presentation was delivered both in-person and on-line, to provide the best opportunities for members to hear about this significant rail upgrade project.

The team gave an overview of the work done so far and also of the structure of the TRU project team, which operates under an Enterprise model – which is not a legal entity but allows everyone to work together, from a multitude of different organisations.

The project is a whole system – infrastructure, timetable and trains – all of which will deliver an enhanced train service. A complex project, there are 58000 activities on the West side of the project alone!

Customers are at the heart of TRU, with a customer promise of:

- Minimises impact – using diversionary routes – high quality rail replacement
- Peace of mind – keeping customers and colleagues safe, especially during times of disruption – A dedicated Customer Delivery Team is in place to support, providing a permanent resource of experts to help
- Well informed – proactive and clear communication – ensuring all stakeholders are closely involved
- Continuous learning – using Customer Satisfaction scores and direct feedback from customer and colleagues, there will be a series of lessons learned workshops

The project is focused on providing customers with

a voice – encouraging open feedback, and uses media such as QR codes, daily surveys, mystery shoppers. There is also focused feedback via specific customers, a customer panel and workshops.

We also saw a forward look to the next stage of TRU delivery:

- Stalybridge to Diggle – Transport and Works Act submission
- York to Church Fenton performance
- Resignalling
- Freight development (gauge clearance and passing loops)
- ETCS capability
- Deighton and Ravensthorpe upgrades

The presentation provided a great insight into the project that was then supplemented by a comprehensive Q&A discussion on a number of topics. The North East Council would like to offer their thanks to Sara, Adam and Liam for joining us and delivering a great event.

Visit CRO TV to view the recording of this event.

Need access to the CRO Members Portal?

Contact us at:

membership@railwayoperators.co.uk

TRANSPENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE

We're transforming the Transpennine route

- More reliable journeys**
To bring passengers smoother, on-time journeys
- Better stations**
Bringing passengers a better travel experience
- Greener travel**
Move more goods by rail to remove over 1,000 lorries off the road each day
- More trains, more seats**
Up to six fast services every hour between Leeds and Manchester
- Faster journeys**
Travel to your favourite towns and cities more quickly

North West & Wales: Network Rail Air Operations

By Chris Anderson MCIRO

On 17 March 2025, the CIRO North West & Wales Area held a Network Rail Air Operations event, hosted by Chris Ashworth, National Aerial Survey Specialist within the Air Operations Team. The event was kindly hosted at the WSP office in Manchester.

The purpose of the event was to gain a better understanding of the day-to-day work carried out by the Air Operations Team and to explore what support they can offer Routes and Regions across the country. Based in Milton Keynes, the team currently operates wherever the work takes them,



covering all parts of the United Kingdom.

The Air Operations Team primarily uses helicopters, but with advances in technology, drone operators are also part of the team. Drones are proving useful, although they are currently limited by the requirement for line-of-sight between the operator and the drone.

Both helicopters and drones are equipped with specialised cameras and sensors that monitor the condition of the railway infrastructure. These systems inspect assets to ensure equipment is fully operational and safe to use. Conducting inspections from the air enhances performance while maintaining safety—crucially, it eliminates the need for a line blockage, so there's no disruption to train services or on-track activities.

Chris explained that the resolution of the aerial camera equipment is so high that the team

can survey up to 70 track miles in just one hour. Inspections are carried out both visually and thermally from approximately 1,000 feet above ground level—an impressive demonstration of how advanced the technology has become.

When faults or failures are identified, a Laser Range Finder (LRF) can pinpoint the issue with millimetre-level accuracy, allowing ground teams to respond quickly and precisely.

The types of surveys conducted include:

- Visual – Inspections of route crime, route proving, post-storm impacts, trespassing, and ad-hoc events.
- Thermal – Monitoring of point heating systems, AC overhead lines, DC third rail lines, E&P power transformers, and vegetation.
- Photographic – Aerial imaging for the 'Routeview' site, and coverage of major incidents including fires, landslips, derailments, stations, bridges, and viaducts.

Any faults identified are reported directly to the relevant Route Control Team, while other imagery is uploaded to the Routeview website, which hosts a comprehensive image library covering approximately 400 yards on either side of the railway.

Not all Network Rail routes currently make use of helicopter operations. However, those that do report that the insights and services provided by the Air Ops Team are extremely valuable to their daily activities. For example, the North West Route signs up to over 300 hours of flying time per year, while the Scotland Route signs up to over 600 hours.

On behalf of the CIRO North West & Wales Area, I would like to extend our thanks to Chris Ashworth for sharing the fantastic and fascinating work his team does for the railway industry. We hope to host similar events in the future to give more CIRO members the opportunity to hear from the Air Ops Team.

To find out more about Network Rail Air Operations, visit the [Network Rail website](https://www.networkrail.co.uk)

Scotland: Enabling Safer & Faster Access Through Technology

The CIRO Scottish Area were delighted to host their most recent event online.

On 8th May, Craig Milne, Planning and Logistic Director for Scotland's railway shared with members how Scotland is leading the UK in using emerging technology for safer and more efficient access to the railway infrastructure to undertake maintenance renewals and enhancement works.

Craig highlighted the need for change and to modernise the outdated manual protection processes in place for possession support staff safety and to improve access efficiency. With 14,000 possessions each year in Scotland, required to maintain a reliable, safe and affordable railway, there is a huge opportunity to deliver improved efficiency within the infrastructure access process.

The solution introduced in Scotland through the Resonate Digital Platform, consists of three main products:

- Scalable – the main signalling control system running the train service
- Luminate – the traffic management system managing the train service
- Initiate – delivering the engineering track access protection system

Focusing on the Initiate system, Craig explained how Initiate integrates the delivery of the timetable planning and engineering track access planning processes and how Scotland embraced and implemented this technology.

The adoption of this new technology involved a massive process change, with impressive implementation timescales from initial presentation to Network Rail in February 2024 through to the go live pilot in January 2025.



So what are the benefits? Craig described how the core benefits of the system met Scotland's Railway's five strategic priorities; everyone home safe, running a reliable train service, reducing the net cost, tackling climate change and integrating track and train, explaining how the change delivered tangible benefits across all five priorities.

Does the system deliver? The statistics shared by Craig clearly show that the system does what it is supposed to do in a live environment, delivering on the safety and productivity benefits:



Craig's pride in the delivery of this programme, and what has been achieved so far, is evident and he closed his presentation by sharing what's next for Scotland's Railway including West of Scotland Signalling Centre.

We would like to thank Craig for sharing his tremendous presentation and the recording of this event is available for members on CIRO TV.

Members Portal: www.ciomembers.org

South West & Wales: CIRO Visit Bristol Temple Meads

By Paul Stanford FCIRO

Following the relaunch of the Wales and West CIRO in February; the first visit of the year occurred in late April.

19 people attended a superb tour of Bristol Temple Meads, hosted by colleagues at Network Rail and Great Western Railway.

Aside from being an architectural masterpiece; the station has seen continual growth in train numbers and footfall over the last twenty years. Currently it is served by 580 trains a day; on weekdays, with annual footfall of 10 million per annum.

The station is undergoing a massive transformation; including a full refurbishment of the spectacular train shed roof; spanning 4 lines and dating from 19th century and the provision of a new Eastern end entrance; to link with the

extensive wider University development of the St Phillips area of Bristol.

The visit saw the party witness work in hand to refurbish the station roof; with a walk in the service tunnel under each platform to feed the station with supplies and remove domestic waste and then witness the impressive new eastern entrance, to serve the university campus opening to the public in September 2026. Aside from watching station operations during a fascinating visit.

Attendees said what a privilege it was to see a busy station functioning, on a tour led by the very people responsible for its daily operation. We are most grateful to Calum MacKay, Susan Evans and Gabby Colwell of Network Rail and Ben Scott and Harprit Manku from GWR, for making the visit both possible and enjoyable.



Area Council Events Roundup

Since the last edition of Bulletin, the CIRO Area Councils have been extremely active organising superb events programmes across all the UK and Ireland regions with a wide variety to visits, in-person, hybrid and online only events.

We were especially delighted to attend the relaunch of CIRO in the South West and Wales in February and join the CIRO Scottish Area online at the beginning of May: Improving safety and increasing engineering access on Scotland's Railway, and celebrating excellence in operations with the South East Area Council at the Golde Whistle Awards.

You can read about some of the recent events that have been taking place in across the regions in this edition of Bulletin and you can also find details of the upcoming events on the CIRO website – there are family fun days being planned (details of the North East's and North West and Wales' have already been posted on the website and ones in the Midlands and Ireland are in the planning process), online talks and visits.

Also coming later this year... CIRO's ANZ Area are looking to hold their inaugural event and we will be holding our annual Rail Ops Conference in-person for the first time, in October – details to be announced soon so keep an eye out for this over the coming weeks.

We were really pleased to welcome Ololade Da-Silva-Ojo to the Membership Team who's introduced the bi-weekly events comms to keep you informed about upcoming events – we'd love to know your thoughts on this.

Where possible our events are recorded and these are available via CIRO TV on the Member's Portal, to watch at a time to suit you.

If you have any suggestions regarding events that you would like to see in the future, please let us know – there's an Event Feedback Form, or alternatively you can email Liz Walker at events@railwayoperators.co.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.



