

Press Release
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Game-changing new railway wins leading industry award

On Friday June 23, the Bicester to Oxford Collaboration was named winner of the prestigious Cross Industry Partnership Award for the delivery of the Chiltern Railways' Oxford to London service and the first phase of the East West Rail programme at the Rail Industry Innovation Awards 2017.

Rob Mole, East West Rail project manager at Network Rail, speaking on behalf of the collaboration, said: "The Oxford to London project and East West Rail Phase One were achieved by combining technical design excellence and digital engineering with collaboration between client, designer and contractor.

"This openness of spirit created a strong sense of trust and integrity, encouraged open channels of communication and a 'one team' mentality. It provided a positive environment in which new approaches could be nurtured and drew on the expertise of each organisation."

The Bicester to Oxford collaboration consists of Chiltern Railways, Network Rail, Carillion Buckingham Joint Venture, Atkins, Siemens and RSK.

This large scale and complex multidisciplinary project involved a significant number of major stakeholders throughout the lifecycle of the project. The scope of the project evolved, from its inception as a Train Operating Company (TOC) with a vision to create a new route connecting Oxford to London Marylebone station, to the realisation of its status as one of the defining rail infrastructure programmes of our times.

Chiltern Railways, an Arriva UK Trains company, had already committed £130 million to construct the stations and infrastructure. The establishment of the much broader £320-million East West Rail programme necessitated the opening of communications channels with multiple stakeholders, from initial feasibility stage through to the commissioning of the scheme.

Rob continued: "Establishing the right mechanisms to maximise the collective performance of each organisation was paramount to the success of the project."

Our collaborative working method has been key to the success of opening three new stations and achieving the first new dual track railway in 100 years between London and Oxford with 100mph line speed. Additionally, closing 37 existing level crossings has enabled us to achieve a safer railway for all.

One of the most valuable examples of the high standards of collaborative working culminated in the "Bat Deterrent Lighting" at Wolvercote tunnel. This involved working closely with Natural England and their specialists to develop an innovative solution to manage the wellbeing of bats, by deterring them from flying around when a train is approaching and travelling through the tunnel.

The Oxford to London project and East West Rail Phase 1 (EWR1) sit within the broader suite of works which is being carried out to boost regional connectivity between Oxford and Felixstowe, driving social cohesion and galvanising local economies by connecting people and businesses to jobs and services. The project provides the first new railway from the capital to a major UK city in over 100 years, via a new chord line, connecting the Chiltern Mainline to London Marylebone.

EWR1 was commissioned to improve a 16-kilometre section of railway between Oxford and Bicester, transforming it from a single track branch line to a modern 100mph twin-track railway. This not only meant

that a new line was open to passengers; its capacity was also significantly improved by its upgrade from single to twin-track status and increased line speed to 100mph.

The scheme had a phased opening, with the line from Oxford Parkway opening in October 2015 with the Prime Minister in attendance. The completed line was officially opened to passengers in a ceremony led by the Secretary of State for Transport, Chris Grayling, on 12 December 2016.

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Notes to editors:

The benefits of East West Rail Phase One:

- Opening of the new line between Oxford Parkway and Oxford city centre
- Provision of the infrastructure for a direct train service between Oxford and London Marylebone completing the first new rail link between a major British city and London in over 100 years.
- Support of the wider objectives of the East West Rail programme

East West Rail Phase One included:

- Construction of a new Oxford Parkway station at Water Eaton
- Upgrade of Bicester Village and reconstruction of Islip station
- Construction of a connecting embankment and chord line between this route and the Chiltern Mainline railway
- Seven new over bridges
- Six reconstructed or strengthened under bridges
- Eight new footbridges
- Numerous stretches of widened earthworks and retaining walls
- Replacement or extension of 35 culverts
- Closure of 37 of 38 level crossings
- Repair, strengthening and track formation lowering through Wolvercote tunnel
- Provision of improved access to the railway corridor for future maintenance
- 11 kilometres worth of highway access to various local private properties
- Installation of a brand new signalling system.
- Passive provision for the proposed "electric spine"
- Renewal of 16 kilometres of track formation and drainage
- Double tracking of 16 kilometres of rail line and an increase in line speed from 20mph to 100mph.