

Vivarail fast charging system demo at Rail Live



VIVARAIL is to use Rail Live to showcase its new fast charging system, developed to replenish its battery-powered D-Train.

The company says the system can recharge a Class 230 in minutes.

"The idea is that charging infrastructure would be placed at termini, and the train would recharge during the turnaround time," Vivarail's Head of Marketing Alice Gillman told RAIL.

"There are so many branch lines across the country where you have layovers at each end. You might need a charging point at each end, but this could maintain the existing timetable on every one that we've looked at. The train can now run 60 miles between charges."

Vivarail's recharging apparatus includes sections of third and



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fourth rail, with train-mounted shoe gear made of carbon ceramic in order to withstand the heat generated by a rapid drawing of electric current.

As an alternative to the charging apparatus, Vivarail says the battery D-Train could also be recharged from 25 kV overhead wires, assuming the set were to be fitted with a pantograph.

Converted from former London Underground 'D78' vehicles, the Class 230s are intended as low-cost, low-maintenance rolling stock available in different versions. Three diesel-powered sets are now at Bletchley for Marston Vale Line

services.

Confirmation by Vivarail that it would bring its battery-powered train and fast charging gear adds to the announcement by Porterbrook and the Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education that the June event will be used to display the UK's first full-sized hydrogen train - 'HydroFLEX' (RAIL 874).

The industry event, the only exhibition to bring together the entire industry in a real railway environment, is also to feature speakers including Network Rail

Vivarail Chief Executive Adrian Shooter with battery-powered 230002. This year, the company will exhibit its new fast charging apparatus as well as a Class 230 at the event.JACK BOSKETT/RAIL.

Chief Executive Andrew Haines, and Department for Transport Deputy Director of Industrial Strategy Shamit Gaiger.

Rail Live is now in its second year, since being relaunched in 2018 by RAIL magazine publisher Bauer Media in conjunction with the Rail Alliance. It takes place at the Quinton Rail Technology Centre at Long Marston on June 19/20.

Last year's event included live

demonstrations by organisations including the British Transport Police, as well as a direct train to the show from London Paddington. In addition to rolling

stock, Rail Live includes displays of a range of plant. Around 5,000 people are expected to visit in 2019.

■ Rail Live is a trade show for individuals working in the rail industry. You will need to register with a verified industry email address to attend. The event is on June 19/20.



The Quinton Rail Technology Centre is the perfect venue to display 'yellow plant'. JACK BOSKETT/RAIL.

For more information...

Regular updates and more information on attending Rail Live is available at www.raillive.org.uk

■ For more information on visiting the show, contact Katie Gordon-Hill at raillive@bauermedia.co.uk

■ To enquire about exhibiting or for information about sponsorship opportunities, contact Julie Howard (julie.howard@bauermedia.co.uk)

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Britain's first hydrogen train - the 'HydroFLEX' - will be displayed at Rail Live. A Class 319 reserved for the 'FLEX' project is seen at Long Marston. JACK BOSKETT/RAIL.



Whiteball Tunnel work completed

Network Rail reopened the Taunton-Exeter St Davids route on March 9, after completing work in Whiteball Tunnel.

During the project, two robots named Ivy and Holly relined the walls of the tunnel with a specialist concrete mix designed to limit loose masonry and bricks falling on the track.

During the three-week closure of the route, Network Rail also renewed track at Marley Tunnel in Devon. Buses replaced trains between Exeter and Taunton, while a restricted service ran between Plymouth and Exeter.

Rail Alliance and research centre join forces

The Rail Alliance and Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education (BCRRE) have announced the formal integration of the two organisations.

Launched in Birmingham on March 11, the merger was described as a powerful new approach for industry and academia to work in partnership to address railway challenges, and to provide small and medium-sized enterprises in particular with greater access to cutting-edge research and development.

According to the two parties, organisations will now be able to join the Rail Alliance community free of charge, provided they can demonstrate a genuine commitment to growing their business in rail as well as supporting

the UK rail supply chain.

Members will be able to engage with BCRRE specialists to develop products and solutions, and have assistance in accessing test and trial facilities, as well as access to programmes including DIGI-RAIL and Rail Mentor to help fund the development and adoption of innovations.

BCRRE Managing Director Alex Burrows said: "This is a golden opportunity for the rail industry, especially SMEs, bringing together a wide range of talents in one team that combines world-leading capabilities across a large number of research areas with real industry expertise and know-how. This is an extremely compelling offer that brings significant opportunities to

all parts of the rail supply industry."

Mike Noakes, head of rail at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), added: "Rail Alliance and BCRRE coming together like this really furthers BEIS' Industrial Strategy agenda, helping to blend the innovative juice of the SME community with the academic and scientific rigour and mass of BCRRE and the UK Rail Research and Innovation Network.

"This Government's modern Industrial Strategy relies on industry identifying where it can excel and, in partnership with government, making that happen. Rail Alliance and BCRRE coming together can make a real difference to UK rail and UK plc."

Delay Repay 15 extends to Anglia and GWR

Delay Repay 15 is being introduced by Greater Anglia and Great Western Railway from April 1.

Passengers using single, return and weekly tickets will be eligible, but not those using monthly and longer season tickets.

The scheme means that if their journey is delayed by between 15 and 29 minutes, passengers on a single ticket can claim back 25% of their fare, and those on a return can claim back 12.5% - regardless of the cause of their delay.

Currently, on both GA and GWR, the scheme is for those delayed by 30 minutes or more.

The longer tickets will not be included yet because their existing compensation scheme is provided through season ticket discounts.

Transport Focus Chief Executive Anthony Smith welcomed the move and said it was something the watchdog had pressed Government for.

"It's now important that these two train operators actively encourage passengers to claim, making it quick, easy and automated as soon as possible," he said.

Smith added that over the next 12 months the watchdog will campaign to ensure passengers affected by delays can claim compensation.

Rail Minister Andrew Jones said: "Reliability is our top priority, but it is right that when things go wrong people are compensated fairly and quickly."

GWR Managing Director Mark Hopwood said: "We do all we can to get people to their destinations on time, but when things do go wrong customers need to trust in a fair system that easily compensates them for the delay."

GA MD Jamie Burles added: "We've worked in close partnership with the Department for Transport to offer this significant benefit during the existing franchise as soon as possible, meeting our customers' aspirations to see this upgrade earlier than expected."

The DR15 scheme was first introduced on Govia Thameslink Railway in 2016, and is to be rolled out across other franchises as they are renewed.

News In Brief

Platform extension

Work to extend Platform 2 at Prudhoe station, to accommodate longer trains for Northern, was due to begin on March 23 (after this issue of RAIL went to press). The project forms part of the Great North Rail Project.

Stratford upgrade

Network Rail began a £1.5 million upgrade of Stratford-upon-Avon station in mid-March. The project includes new waiting and seating areas, better retail facilities, accessible toilets and better cycle facilities.