

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE REPORT

I'm pleased to present the committee's report into the key activities undertaken during 2020/21 alongside its anticipated activities for 2021/22.

An environmental sustainability advisory committee had been originally created in October 2019 to provide support and advice to the executive in the development of Network Rail's environmental sustainability strategy which was approved by the Board in July 2020. The original committee, chaired by Sharon Flood, had been instrumental in developing and endorsing an overarching environmental sustainability strategy and ambitious vision to meet the expectations of all of Network Rail's stakeholders including passengers and freight users, staff and the wider public.

Following publication of the strategy in September 2020, the Board established this committee to provide support and oversight into its implementation of the strategy.



David Noyes,
chair, environmental sustainability committee
 15 July 2021

Committee members	Formal appointment to the committee	Number of meetings attended during the year
David Noyes	September 2020	3/3
Rob Brighthouse	September 2020	3/3
Mike Putnam	September 2020	3/3
Fiona Ross	September 2020	3/3

Committee attendees

Internal: The chair of the Board, chief executive, managing director – Route Services, managing director – Eastern region, managing director – System Operator, group safety and engineering director - Technical Authority, chief environment and sustainability officer, and head of strategic communications.

External: Representative from the Department for Transport, and a representative of the Sustainability Rail Executive (SRE) of the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB). The committee also invites expert advisers to attend meetings at periodic intervals.

Role and responsibilities of the Committee

The current role of the committee involves supporting and, where appropriate, providing oversight of and guidance to the executive in the implementation of the environmental sustainability strategy, ensuring that Network Rail is keeping abreast of wider environmental issues as well as co-ordinating its programmes with the wider industry.

Principal activities during the year

The first half of 2020/21 was dedicated to the development and launch of the sustainability strategy. From September, the committee was involved in making sure that Network Rail:

- had a sound plan of action to deliver this ambitious strategy with an appropriate resourcing plan
- had the right key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the targets that have been set and that activities that would enable achievement of the goals are recorded
- had effective supply chain strategies to deliver the strategy's objectives
- had effective sharing of the lessons learnt across both Network Rail and the rest of industry to identify and implement best practice
- worked with external partners and bodies to develop a whole-of-industry approach to sustainability
- had a robust communications and engagement plan to support implementation.

In September 2020, Network Rail also published its traction decarbonisation network strategy (TDNS) interim business case which sets out the different ways that Network Rail could contribute to the reduction of direct carbon emissions from trains.

In October 2020, Network Rail continued to demonstrate its commitment through the publication of the science-based carbon reduction targets making it the first railway in the world to set targets that would help limit global warming to 1.5 degrees.

The biodiversity action plan was published setting out how biodiversity targets would be achieved, and a training programme launched to support people in better biodiversity management across the Network Rail estate.

In December, the committee approved the proposal to be the 35th signatory of the International Union of Railways Climate declaration.

Planned activities for 2021/22

The next twelve months will see the committee continue to build momentum with delivery of the environmental sustainability strategy milestones. The regions will continue to develop their own local plans to align with the corporate strategy and reflect the specific challenges and opportunities relevant to their geographical areas.

The 2021 committee workplan will involve oversight and review of resourcing to deliver the ambitious plan, and roll out of technology to deliver a cleaner and greener railway. It will also monitor the roll out of electric charging points for electric vehicles; the plan for the next stages of electrification; development of the Social Value Strategy; baselining for whole-life carbon in assets; minimising waste and recycling; and joint plans with supply chain partners targeted at carbon emissions reductions. Network Rail will be supporting the Government as it hosts the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow in June 2021.