

FEBRUARY 2026

# FOCUS

## **A NEW ERA FOR AVIATION** *Reshaping the sector*



**LONDON UPDATE**

**THE FACES SHAPING  
UK AVIATION**

**DRONES TAKING  
FLIGHT**

**SAF POWERS  
CLEANER FLIGHTS**



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# Aviation and economics

**There is little doubt that aviation is an emotive issue at local, national and international levels and for good reasons, against a background where the need to reduce environmental damage is fundamentally important and where tangible progress is being made both in the air as well as on the ground.**



**A** viation is fundamentally important to the way in which today's economies function as well as providing the means for material societal benefits associated with travel and connectivity. These include the benefits of travelling for a vacation but also the ability to see easily, and as regularly as is affordable or desirable, friends and families in a world where there is increasingly a mobile work force.

If we want to visualise a world with less air travel all we need to do is to cast our minds back to the eruption of the Isafjordur volcano in 2010 which closed a large part of European airspace for eight days or more recently, albeit for different reasons the virtual cessation of passenger air transport at various times and for various periods as a result of restrictions associated with the pandemic.

When I started following and analysing the industry, it was reckoned that passenger traffic grew at some twice the rate of economic activity measured by real GDP. In reality economic activity both drives aviation and aviation contributes to economic activity although generalisations are always dangerous. As with everything in life, the relationship is somewhat more complex, amongst other things changing as economies mature, with a need to explicitly take into account 'supply side developments'.

In terms of passenger numbers, the leisure sector is by far the largest and here from an analytical perspective it is important to be clear which end of the telescope you are looking down and to distinguish between origin markets, which provide the economic benefit and destination markets which receive it and in essence create a virtuous circle but where travellers are not of equal value.

Perhaps unsurprisingly as we are an island, UK originating travel has always accounted for the majority. Between 2010 and 2024, the share of UK origin traffic using London area airports has increased from some 54% to 63%.

Given the inescapable importance of economic activity as a driver of airline traffic there is also a need for the UK to grow in absolute terms rather than continue to in effect 'flat line'. Similarly, whilst aviation will help to deliver growth, a missing element for the UK overall remains an environment that will deliver meaningful, sustained, and sustainable economic growth. ☹

**CHRIS TARRY FCILT**  
Chair, CILT Aviation Policy Group  
CILT(UK)

**THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS**

28



**SALLY DIXON MBA FCILT**

Aviation Consultant,  
Azimuth Associates

Sally has worked with airports on acquisitions, strategy, and innovation, including air traffic forecasting, since 2000. She lectures at Cranfield and Kingston University, spent nine years on Manston Airport's DCO strategic team, and began her career as a planning and forecasting analyst with Reuters.

36



**LAUREN TURNER**

Operations Director,  
East Midlands Airport.

Lauren oversees airfield operations, fire service, air traffic control, and business resilience at East Midlands Airport (EMA). She joined EMA as a security officer and has progressed through roles spanning airfield security, control room operations, and airport duty management.

39



**KATHERINE THEOBALD**

Researcher,  
University of Southampton.

Katherine is a PhD researcher at the University of Southampton investigating the effects of vibration on medical products transported by drone. A chartered civil engineer with six years' experience in highway and infrastructure design, she was the 2023 winner of the University of Southampton 3 Minute Thesis Grand Final.

48



**GEOFF MAYNARD FCILT**

Managing Director,  
Altra Capital.

Geoff is a transport and aviation consultant with senior experience across rail and air sectors, including as strategic adviser to the chairman of British Rail and on major airport projects such as Heathrow T5 and Beijing's 2008 Olympics terminal. He is Chairman of Greener by Design, the Royal Aeronautical Society's sustainability think tank, and a visiting lecturer at Brunel University.

# CONTENTS

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## The sky's no limit

**W**elcome to our special aviation issue, where we explore the transformative changes and innovations reshaping the industry across the transport and logistics landscape.

In this issue, we are thrilled to bring you an insightful industry update from Chris Tarry, Chair of the Aviation Policy Group. His expertise and deep understanding of the sector provide a comprehensive look at the key developments and trends shaping aviation today.

We also dive into the world of drones and their revolutionary applications in the UK. From last-mile delivery to infrastructure inspections, drones are

proving to be a game-changer in various industries. Our article explores the most exciting use cases and the regulatory landscape enabling their adoption.

Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) takes centre stage as we examine its role in decarbonising the industry. We delve into the latest advancements in SAF production, the challenges in scaling up its use, and the pioneering airlines and airports leading the charge in this green revolution.

In our exclusive interviews, we sit down with two newly appointed Aviation Ambassadors who are making waves in the industry. First, we have the Operations Director at

East Midlands Airport, who shares her vision for the future of regional airports and the strategies they are implementing to boost efficiency and sustainability.

Our main interview features Emma Garnham from DHL. Emma takes us on a captivating journey through her career, from her humble beginnings in a travel agent call centre to her current leadership role at DHL. She shares the invaluable lessons learned along the way and how her unique perspective has shaped her approach to driving innovation and excellence in logistics.

**MEL STARK**  
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**AVIATION**

**20  
THE INTERVIEW**



After 25 years in airport operations, Emma Garnham has witnessed first-hand the invisible teams and labour which keep aircraft on schedule and passengers happy. As one of the newly appointed Aviation Ambassadors, she shares her journey from high street travel agent to training and compliance director for DHL Supply Chain, and why she believes there's a career in aviation for everyone.

**18  
NAVIGATING TURBULENCE**

CILT's aviation expert reports

**24  
SPECIAL DELIVERY**



Use cases for drones

**28  
AIR CARGO'S HIDDEN DEPENDENCY**

Where do we go next?

**32  
WINGS OF CHANGE**

Focus unpacks the London airport agenda

**36  
OPENING DOORS TO AVIATION**



Meet EMA's Operations Director

**39  
SHAKEN NOT STIRRED**



Medical drone delivery

**44  
TURNING WASTE INTO VALUE**

A continuous improvement case study

**48  
AVIATION'S PATH TO NET-ZERO**

A SAF update

**FOCUS FEATURE**

**46  
THE RACE BEHIND THE RACE**

Backstage at the Formula-E

**REGULAR FEATURES**

**3 MESSAGE FROM CHRIS TARRY**

Aviation and economics

**6 NEWS**

News from the worlds of logistics and transport

**10 POLICY WATCH**



Oxford Circus pedestrianisation and more

**51 FORTHCOMING COURSES**

Find out the dates for our forthcoming courses and qualifications

**52 WHAT'S ON**

List of CILT's Regional, Sector and Corporate events

**53 COMMUNITIES**



News from around the UK

**60 MEMBER RECOGNITION**



List of members who are celebrating their membership anniversary

**62 MEMBER ELECTIONS**

We recognise those members who have been elected to new grades



**Mel Stark**

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**LOGISTICS & TRANSPORT FOCUS**

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# FROM THE WORLDS OF LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORT

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## CILT(UK) website launch

We are pleased to announce that we have launched the new CILT(UK) website. This is a major step in modernising how we engage with members, partners and the wider profession.

### Why a new site is needed

- The previous platform no longer reflected the scale and ambition of CILT(UK)
- Members reported challenges finding essential services, content and tools
- Outdated systems limited our ability to update content and integrate key services
- A modern website is essential to support member retention, attract new audiences and deliver our strategic goals

### What's improved

- **Simpler navigation and clearer structure** – making it easier and faster for users to find what they need
- **Better member journey** – improved visibility of benefits, CPD, events, insights and opportunities
- **Modern look and feel** – presenting CILT(UK) as the leading voice in logistics and transport.

### New features available at launch

- **New eLibrary** – access to over 13,000 ebooks, journals and trusted business information anytime, anywhere to support professional development and decision-making
- **CILT(UK) Resource Hub** – a central home for webinars, case studies, *Focus* magazine, policy updates and more. Search by keyword, sector or topics such as AI, environment and supply chain trends
- **Improved join process** – prospective members can check eligibility, understand benefit tiers and apply for the most relevant membership grade based on experience and skills

Helen Hardy, CEO (interim) CILT(UK), explained: *“This new website marks an important step in strengthening how we deliver value. More than a refreshed digital presence, it provides a strong foundation for a digitally confident CILT(UK), enabling us to better support learning, CPD, best practice and policy engagement - while ensuring our members and the wider profession remain at the heart of everything we do.”*

We will share further communications once the website goes live and updates on additional features in the very near future. ☹

## University of Manchester gains CILT(UK) accreditation



CILT (UK) has granted accreditation to the University of Manchester’s MSc in Transport and Urban Planning, recognising the program’s innovative approach to bridging the divide between transport and land use planning.

The degree aims to equip a new generation of practitioners with a fully integrated, cross-disciplinary skill set to address the critical disconnect between transport and urban development. By reducing the necessity of travel and prioritizing sustainable, low-carbon modes, the program’s holistic ethos directly contributes to reducing energy consumption, tackling emissions and pollution, and driving a tangible transition to sustainable futures.

“Achieving Net-Zero requires a fundamental rethink of how we plan our towns and cities,” said a University of Manchester spokesperson. “We’re thrilled to receive CILT accreditation for our MSc in Transport and Urban Planning, which validates our commitment to empowering students with the knowledge and tools to create truly sustainable urban environments.” ☹

## Pathways & Progress: Women in Supply Chain and Transport – CILT(UK)



Join CILT(UK) for an inspiring one-day event celebrating the voices, journeys and impact of women across the logistics, supply chain and transport sectors.

### Event details

- Venue: CEVA – EMG
- Date: 5 March
- Time: 8:30am – 3:00pm GMT

### What to expect

- Inspiring speakers sharing real-world career journeys
- Practical strategies for leadership and professional progression
- Insight into emerging trends in logistics and supply chain
- Panel discussions on confidence, resilience and inclusion
- Valuable networking with peers and industry leaders

### Who should attend

- Women and men at every stage of their career
- HR, L&D and DEI professionals
- Anyone passionate about inclusive career pathways

### CPD accreditation

- 3.5 Experiential CPD Hours
- Mapped to LE1.1 – Leadership, Development, Organisational Culture & Change Management

Be part of the conversation shaping the future of our industry and book your place on this event today. ☹

## 35 under 35 submissions are now open for 2026



The Institute is looking to recognise 35 logistics, transport and supply chain professionals as part of its prestigious annual initiative.

Submissions are now open to all professionals under the age of 35 regardless of their position, organisation or if they have a CILT(UK) membership.

Our programme has come a long way since it was first launched in 2022 and is now in its fourth year. The selected individuals will be featured in the March edition of CILT's monthly magazine, *Focus*.

Anna-Jane Hunter FCILT, Chair of CILT(UK) said: *"The Institute's 35 under 35 is a fantastic opportunity to champion the incredible talent from across the industry. You are not only the future of the sector but your stories also play an important role in retaining and attracting new talent. We look forward to viewing your submissions and look to celebrate rising stars across the sector."*



Last year's cohort featured outstanding individuals from companies such as Wincanton, Amazon, CEVA Logistics, UPS, Evri, Network Rail, Europa Worldwide, Arriva and Maritime Transport.

To find out more, visit the CILT(UK) website: [www.ciltuk.org.uk](http://www.ciltuk.org.uk) ☹

## Obituary

### David Scotney FCILT

It is with regret that we note the death of David Scotney after a long illness. David was a well-known figure in Scottish transport circles having come north from Tyne & Wear to join Lothian Regional Council at a time when they were consulting on a possible Edinburgh Metro, and later became the author of a definitive book on 2'6" gauge railways. David was elected to the Committee of the then Chartered Institute of Transport's Scottish Section in 1996 and was subsequently the Scottish representative on the Institute's National Planning Committee and later he was elected to the Institute's Strategy Committee.

In 1999 he was elected as UK Chairman to the Institute's National Planning Group and was also the Scottish Section's Vice Chairman in the year leading up to the Institute's merger with the Institute of Logistics. When the Scottish Region visited Almond Valley Heritage in April 2016, it was David who drove our train on the narrow-gauge railway there. Our extend condolences to his family. ☹

### Reginald Harman FCILT

Reginald 'Reg' Harman, former Director of Policy at the Chartered Institute of Transport (CIT), passed away in December at the age of 82.

Reg served as the Director of Policy at CIT during the 1990s and beyond, actively participating in various aspects of the Institute's interests and activities. He was involved in the naming of a diesel locomotive 'The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport.'

As a transport planner, Reg worked primarily in the public sector with organizations such as Hertfordshire County Council and the London and South East Planning Conference (Serplan). He also contributed to regional planning studies, focusing on public transport operations and their impact on land use planning. Reg was a strong proponent of integration in transportation systems.

Reg possessed extensive knowledge of European transport practices and published several professional articles on high-speed rail and urban tramway networks.

Reg Harman's contributions to the transport industry will be remembered by his colleagues and those who benefited from his expertise. Our condolences go out to his family and friends. ☹

## AI WILL 'TURBOCHARGE' BRITAIN'S TRANSPORT NETWORK

The government will continue to invest in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital technology to improve Britain's road and rail network, according to the Chair of the Transport Select Committee.

Addressing industry leaders in Parliament at The Transport AI summit on Tuesday, organised by Chamber UK, Ruth Cadbury MP also praised the government's commitment to tackling potholes and train delays by working with specialist providers.

In a wide-ranging speech, she also underlines the importance of road maintenance and faster connectivity for driving economic growth and job creation.

MPs and businesses leaders at the event were also given a demonstration of Robotiz3d, an autonomous pothole detection, prevention, and repair technology.

Attendee Graeme Stewart, head of public sector at Check Point Software said: "With AI set to play a major role in the future of the UK's transport infrastructure, it's crucial that the necessary security safeguards are put in place to protect these operations from outsider threats."

## SCOTLAND TO RAISE HGV SPEED LIMITS ON TRUNK ROADS

Transport Scotland has confirmed plans to increase speed limits for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) over 7.5 tonnes on the country's trunk roads, bringing them in line with those in England and Wales.

Under the proposals, HGVs would be permitted to travel up to 50 mph on single carriageways (up from 40 mph) and 60 mph on dual carriageways (up from 50 mph). The current 60 mph limit on motorways will remain unchanged.

The proposal comes out of the National Speed Management Review and aims to improve safety by narrowing the speed gap between HGVs and other traffic, which could reduce risky overtaking and smooth traffic flow.

The haulage community, including groups like the Road Haulage Association and Logistics UK, has broadly welcomed the change, citing benefits such as reduced travel times, improved fuel efficiency, lower emissions, and wider economic advantages.



## DFT APPOINTS 10 NEW AVIATION AMBASSADORS TO INSPIRE NEXT GENERATION

The government has announced 10 new Aviation Ambassadors with a goal of inspiring future pilots, engineers and air traffic controllers into the sector.

Starting their voluntary roles on 28 January, the ambassadors are aviation professionals who have been recruited to work closely with the Department for Transport (DfT) to help meet the goals of its Generation Aviation programme.

First launched in 2021, part of their role includes going into schools, hosting workshops, and using social media to reach primary, secondary and college students across England.

Individuals chosen to be part of the DfT's Aviation Ambassadors Group will serve for a two-year period and cover a breadth of career paths such as ground handling and airfield safety to commercial flying, customer service, and aviation law.

## MAJOR UPDATES TO UK MARITIME LEGISLATION FROM JANUARY 2026

The government has confirmed a wide-ranging set of updates to UK maritime legislation, reflecting recent changes to international maritime law agreed through the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The new requirements will come into force on 1 January 2026, fulfilling a commitment made to Parliament.

The changes are made using existing ambulatory reference provisions in UK secondary legislation. This means that where UK law refers to international maritime conventions and codes, it automatically applies the most up-to-date international standards, ensuring the UK remains aligned with its global maritime obligations.

The amendments cover the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) and the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Convention. All amendments have been agreed internationally and are focused on enhancing safety, environmental protection and seafarer welfare.

## GOVERNMENT UNVEILS NEW ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

The government has published its first road safety strategy in over a decade, setting a target to reduce deaths and serious injuries on Britain's roads by 65% by 2035.

The strategy includes consultations on lowering the drink-drive limit in England and Wales, introducing a minimum learning period of three to six months for learner drivers, and mandatory eyesight testing for drivers over 70.

Approximately four people die on Britain's roads daily. In 2023, one in six road fatalities involved drink driving. Drivers aged 17 to 24 represent 6% of licence holders but are involved in 24% of fatal and serious collisions.

Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander said: "Every life lost on our roads is a tragedy that devastates families and communities. For too long, progress on road safety has stalled. This strategy marks a turning point."



## NEXT ISSUE

Young professionals



- 35 under 35
- Early-career success stories
- The rise of youth-led start-ups
- Digital natives reshaping the sector



## Oxford Street pedestrianisation

**T**he proposed pedestrianisation of Oxford Street West represents one of the most significant changes to London's transport and public realm in a generation. The London Region Committee has responded to Transport for London's consultation to support the ambition of a more people-focused street, while setting out the practical considerations required to ensure the scheme succeeds operationally as well as aesthetically.

Oxford Street has always been more than a shopping destination. For over a century it has functioned as a working street: carrying some of London's busiest bus routes, accommodating taxis, enabling deliveries and waste collections, and supporting the daily movement of workers, visitors and residents. CILT(UK)'s response recognises the clear benefits of pedestrianisation in reducing crowding, improving safety and enhancing the overall experience for pedestrians. However, it also

emphasises that these benefits will only be realised if the supporting transport and logistics systems are carefully planned and managed.

A key theme of CILT(UK)'s response is accessibility. Buses have long been the most accessible form of transport on Oxford Street, particularly for disabled people, older users and those carrying shopping. With relatively long walking distances to Underground and Elizabeth line stations, the bus remains a lifeline. CILT(UK) has therefore urged TfL to examine carefully the impacts of diverting bus routes, drawing on lessons from previous bus rationalisation in the West End, where reduced accessibility and unexpected shifts to taxis or private hire vehicles have sometimes increased congestion rather than reduced it.

Servicing, deliveries and waste also feature prominently. Retailers on Oxford Street rely on early-morning deliveries, often extending beyond the very early hours, particularly for fresh food and fast-moving consumer goods. Evening and night-time waste

collections are similarly essential. CILT(UK) supports consolidation and zero-emission freight, but stresses that access windows must reflect real operational needs to avoid displacement onto unsuitable surrounding streets.

The response also highlights risks associated with traffic displacement. Oxford Street has historically accommodated buses and heavy vehicles that are less suited to narrower local roads. Re-routing HGVs and buses onto constrained streets can create safety, congestion and environmental problems for those who live and work nearby.

Finally, CILT(UK) has encouraged a phased, adaptive approach, with pilots, monitoring and the flexibility to adjust the scheme as impacts become clearer. Oxford Street's transformation offers a rare opportunity to modernise a historic corridor, but success will depend on respecting how the street has always worked, while carefully shaping how it must function in the future. ☹

# **Strategic Rail Policy Group** **responds to the Great** **British Railways Bill**

**T**he Strategic Rail Policy Group has submitted written evidence to the Public Bill Committee currently scrutinising the Great British Railways (GBR) Bill.

While both CILT(UK) and the Strategic Rail Policy Group strongly welcome the Bill's objective to reunify track and train, the Group believes that several clauses require revision or further scrutiny.

This is essential to ensure the legislation is robust, future-proofed, and capable of standing the test of time beyond a single Parliamentary term or different individual Secretaries of State.

The submission focuses on those elements of the Bill that are likely to have the greatest long-term impact on the rail industry, its users, and the wider economy.

## **Protecting access for Freight & Non-GBR Passenger operators**

A central concern is the future access, use and charging arrangements for non-Great British Railways operators, particularly freight.

30% of train services will be operated by train operators outside GBR, so how these operators are protected when seeking access and use, along with the charges they will face is important to

the balance of transport services across the whole of Great Britain.

Under current proposals, GBR would be legally required to prioritise its own current and future operational needs. The Group has suggested the need for safeguards to ensure fair and transparent access, usage and charging for freight and passenger non-GBR operators, whose services play a vital role in supporting economic growth, sustainability, and national supply chains.

The Group asked the Committee to give further scrutiny to the proposed role of the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), noting concerns that its responsibilities are proposed to be diminished. It also highlights the need for protections for both freight and passenger non-GBR operators, given that GBR will become a single, state-owned monopoly provider of network capacity.

## **Financial stability and long-term planning**

The submission also considers the Bill's proposed financial arrangements, particularly the continuation of five-year funding cycles for infrastructure. While multi-year funding might appear to offer the potential for stability, the Group believes past experience has shown this to be less predictable than perhaps thought, and that a five-year

cycle may actually hinder the integration of operational costs with infrastructure costs, which would unlock better, more integrated decisions.

Transparent, predictable funding mechanisms are essential for long-term planning, workforce confidence, and supply chain investment. But they also need to better reflect events as they emerge. The Group recommends that the Bill more clearly set out how funding decisions will be made, reviewed, and aligned with strategic objectives.

## **Aligning rail reform with devolution**

Finally, the Group highlighted the importance of considering the GBR Bill alongside the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.

To realise the full benefits of devolution, the GBR Bill must be fully aligned with proposed wider local and regional governance structures, particularly within England. This will enable communities, city regions, and devolved authorities to play a meaningful role in shaping rail services that reflect local economic, social, and environmental priorities.

The closer alignment between these two pieces of legislation will help ensure rail services are better integrated with local transport, housing, and regeneration strategies.

## **Looking ahead**

The Strategic Rail Policy Group's submission emphasises CILT(UK)'s ongoing role in promoting a modern, integrated, and user-focused rail system, which is part of a broader transport network across the whole of Great Britain.

While the reunification of track and train is widely welcomed, the Group believes the success of Great British Railways will depend on getting the detail right – particularly on access, regulation, funding, and devolution.

Hopefully addressing these points, Parliament has the opportunity to create a rail framework that delivers lasting benefits for passengers, freight users, communities, and the wider economy. ☹



# CILT(UK) hosts annual lunch at House of Lords

**C**ILT(UK) hosted its Annual Institute Lunch at the House of Lords, providing exclusive industry insights and valuable networking opportunities for delegates from across the logistics, transport and supply chain sector.

The event featured keynote addresses from Baroness Valentine and Lucy Hayward-Speight, Head of Transport Policy at TfL.

Baroness Valentine, who has an extensive career in the sector and previously led London First for many years, delivered an insightful update on forthcoming rail sector projects and the decision regarding Heathrow's third runway. She emphasised the importance of ensuring Heathrow's expansion is carried out sensitively, taking into account environmental and social considerations, a position that aligns with the Institute's own recommendations.

Following lunch, Lucy Hayward-Speight provided an update on TfL's achievements over the past year, new innovative projects on the horizon and she outlined the ongoing challenges facing London's transport network.

Our Institute events continue to facilitate the sharing of best practice and promote collaboration, with the overarching aim of driving continuous improvement across the sector.

We would like to thank all of those who attended, and we hope you enjoyed the event, and can't wait to see you at more of our events this year. ☺





**Our Institute events continue to facilitate the sharing of best practice and promote collaboration.**





***“I truly believe  
there is a career  
for everyone  
within our  
industry.”***

# Emma Garnham

*After 25 years in airport operations, Emma Garnham has witnessed first-hand the invisible teams and labour which keep aircraft on schedule and passengers happy. As one of the newly appointed Aviation Ambassadors, she shares her journey from high street travel agent to training and compliance director for DHL Supply Chain, and why she believes there's a career in aviation – the industry that never sleeps – for everyone.*

***You've spent 25 years in airport operations – can you take us through your career journey and what initially drew you to aviation?***

I didn't enjoy school, and left at 16 to work in a high street travel agent on a YTS scheme. I became a branch manager by 20, then moved to American Express working in the travel department for Platinum card holders. But working in a call centre wasn't for me, and I gladly took a six-month summer contract for a new ground handler at Gatwick, Groundstar, who looked after Monarch Airlines. This makes me feel old now that neither still exist!

I started as a check-in agent and loved every second – the people, the public, the airport. I was then offered a permanent role and the opportunities flew in from there. I've worked across operations, administration, planning, vetting, resourcing and training. Fast forward 20-plus years to my current role, where I lead an incredible team and oversee all training and compliance for 5000-plus colleagues across operations.

What I didn't expect when I took that six-month contract was how diverse the career paths would be. Ground handling isn't just one job – it's an entire ecosystem of roles that all need to work in together. That's what's kept me engaged for 25 years.

***Ground handling often operates behind the scenes. What aspects of the role do you think would most surprise people who only see the passenger-facing side of aviation?***

The complexity of the operations. Safety and punctuality depend on so many 'invisible' teams. It can be physically demanding, working to incredibly tight turnarounds.

When you go on holiday, you've probably waited a good 12 months for it. You drop your bag off, see somebody standing there looking beautiful in their uniform, and then you won't see them again. People see the check-in desk, the airline crew, they sometimes spot a baggage handler on the tarmac, but they don't see the coordination happening across multiple teams to make sure that aircraft turns around on time and gets back in the air safely.

You've got ramp colleagues who have less than 35 minutes to turn the aircraft around – it's got to be unloaded, reloaded. There are whole teams of people working in the belt location, allocators sitting in offices, supervisors out in the operation. You probably only see one or two of them in your entire airport journey. Those invisible teams are a huge piece of the logistical puzzle.

***What are the biggest challenges in attracting and retaining talent in your field?***

It remains a very competitive market, with seasonal opportunities and varying pay structures. The complex vetting process can also turn people away from the industry. There's still a mix of perception around the varied roles and opportunities available.

When we came back after Covid there was a real shift. We lost a lot of skill and capability over the pandemic because many of the longstanding workforce found new opportunities while on furlough. The recovery was significant – travel and tourism courses were empty, and there was a lot of caution from young people. It created a huge challenge for two or three years. Now we see the complete opposite. The courses are full, work experience is exciting, and there's much more outreach.

But from a recruitment perspective, there are still challenges. The industry uses very technical language, so when we're advertising for roles, people don't necessarily know what they mean. Everyone recruits at the same time – every ground handler and airline working to the same timeframe – so there's steep competition. Because operations are seasonal, there's a lot

of explaining around contract lengths to give people confidence that it's the right choice, a viable career path, and that it's stable and transferable.

**Can you describe the roles and progression pathways available within ground handling that people might not be aware of?**

Ground handling offers a broad mix of frontline, technical and leadership roles, with progression typically starting from entry level operational roles. These build a great foundation to move into supervisory, management, or functional roles.

I've done everything – planning, resourcing, vetting, compliance, training, operational roles. I've been up at 3am and worked 24-hour shifts, all sorts over the years. But every part of that becomes the grounding and foundation for however you want to move through the industry. It's relationship led. We've all worked together for a long time in different roles and formats.

The functional roles wrap around everything else – supervisory roles, finance, planning, training, compliance, HR. Every role that exists in day-to-day business exists under one umbrella within the industry. Stepping sideways, promotions, progression, even zigzagging to learn something new is available and encouraged.

**What current skills gaps are you seeing in the ground handling sector, and how is the industry working to address these?**

The skills gap for the entry operational roles has definitely recovered since the challenges we saw after COVID. The gaps we see currently are around digital capability, data analysis and delivery of new technologies into our operations.

We're in such a privileged position of what we can offer people from a career perspective. Whether it's your entry level role in customer service and you want to progress to crew, or you want to work on the ramp and progress to engineering or flight deck, or even data rich data analyst roles, financial advisor roles – there's such a broad range and scope of opportunity.

**Through your work, what emerging trends or technologies do you see shaping the future of airport operations?**

Airport operations will be shaped by AI-driven decision making. Smart stands (technology allows aircraft turns to be performed from a central control room, removing the need for operators to attend every arriving aircraft), self-maneuvring equipment and autonomous vehicles – these all have a place as the future goes on. We have so much data, and data is the power that's going to prop up every other area as we move forward.

We've got to move quickly, but we can't do it alone. The technology has to work hand in hand with the airport infrastructure, regulators, airlines, and ground handlers – it's all connected, if one part isn't working, everything can become fragile, aircraft aren't flying, revenue is compromised and passengers end up frustrated because they're not where they need to be, when they need to be there.

**Why is it important to broaden perceptions of what an aviation career can look like?**

I truly believe there is a career for everyone within our industry. We need the next generation to be influential in shaping the future of our operations. There's so much variety, and there's a lack of knowledge around the diversity of roles that are available.

We need to educate and change traditional mindsets causing young people to only associate pilots and cabin crew with aviation. We can provide the knowledge so they can see the opportunities ground handling has to offer. They can work in this dynamic, exciting industry doing something they love.

**As one of the Aviation Ambassadors, what does this role mean to you, and what are your goals for inspiring the next generation?**

It's a privilege to have been appointed as an ambassador. I believe that everyone should be given an opportunity for a career they can be proud of, regardless of circumstance. I've worked alongside some incredible young people who have shown real passion and determination to reach

their potential, and that makes me incredibly proud.

We have a responsibility to use the platforms around us to support the next generation. This work is where my heart is, so to become an ambassador and have a wider reach means we can discover even more incredible people. Everyone in the group comes from different backgrounds and has had different experiences, so the ten of us working together will be much stronger than approaching it individually.

Ground handling has never been represented before either, so having this platform and wider voice is incredible. If you've got the passion and the will, we can teach you everything else. When you see where these young people have come from, how hard they've worked and how they've come out the other side still pushing to achieve and chase down their dreams – it just makes you so proud.

**What excites you about your career in aviation and ground handling, and what continues to draw you to the industry?**

It's an industry that never sleeps! The pace, the diversity and the opportunities it brings. I have worked in the industry for a really long time, but I am still learning. With so many career options available, why would I work anywhere else? ☺



*“We have a responsibility to use the platforms around us to support the next generation.”*

Emma Garnham



# Navigating turbulence

From regional airport growth to evolving passenger trends and regulatory challenges, Chris Tarry offers a sweeping view of the key issues policy makers must confront in the post-pandemic era. [↪](#)



Author: **CHRIS TARRY FCILT**  
Chair, Aviation Policy, CILT(UK)

## SPECIAL FEATURE



What is certain is that, despite the wish of the government to press ahead with the expansion of Heathrow, there are many questions that remain to be answered

**W**hilst CILT(UK) has acknowledged the government's recent announcement on Heathrow, we are not at all convinced that what is currently being proposed will, neither meet the needs and requirements of the airlines, let alone a raft of environmental and other conditions, nor prove to be affordable. Indeed, it also appears that any project that might go ahead may be different from the one outlined in the November statement.

What has been put forward still appears to be rooted in the conclusions of the reports from the Airport Commission, which were published some 10 years ago and which assumed that a new North West Runway would be operational at Heathrow by 2026.

It is perhaps useful to consider how the market has changed since the Commission's report. This is not only how demand has developed but also how it has been accommodated in ways that the Commission either failed, or partially failed to recognise. All of this has a material bearing on the shape and size of the expansion that might be needed at Heathrow now rather than what was concluded when the report was published.

What then has happened to demand over the period since the Commission reported. Although there we experienced the effects and impacts of Covid, it does little to change our conclusions. Whilst passenger numbers for Heathrow for 2024 and 2025 would appear to be much in line with the assumptions made in the report, growth at Gatwick, Luton and

Stansted has been far in excess of what had been expected. Indeed in 2025 passenger numbers at: Gatwick will be at a level that the Commission was expecting between 2040 and 2050; Luton will be 4 million higher or almost 30% higher than forecast for 2050 and at Stansted close to the level forecast for 2030.

The structure of traffic has also changed at Heathrow where the number of transfer passengers in 2024 was some 6 million lower than in 2016, against the background where none of the airlines operates a demand aggregation model there. This reflects an increase in generally more profitable point to point passengers and also where options for passengers in markets either side of Heathrow have increased, including for the UK regions, with

There is a need to recognise that an airline will only fly a route that has the potential to contribute to cash and, hopefully profit, within a reasonable period of time; they do not generally have some esoteric target to fill or a need to 'plant flags in maps'





more direct services. UK origin traffic has also become more important at the airport with the share increasing from 42% in 2019 to 48% in 2024, which may be a reflection of a decline in the relative attractiveness of London.

At the simplest level the central case set out in the Commission's report suggested that passenger numbers in the London area would grow from 135 million in its base year of 2011 to reach 241 million by 2050. Heathrow was expected to contribute 68 million additional passengers, chiefly from a third runway and all other airports in the region 38 million. It was assumed the then prevailing limits at the other airports would remain where they were at 47 million for Gatwick, 14 million for Luton, 35 million for Stansted and 7 million for London City.

Since then, there has been a significant increase in planned capacity at the other airports; Gatwick is now 80 million by 2050, Luton 32 million, Stansted 51 million and London City 9 million. Compared with 2011, this represents an increase of 105 million. To put it another way this new figure is some 67 million higher than contained in the Airport Commission's Report and one that is equivalent to the growth that the Commission had expected to be delivered by a new runway at Heathrow. Clearly an outcome that should change the view on what

might actually be needed at Heathrow given the government's policy of Making Best Use, of existing capacity.

We do not doubt that there is a need for at least some expansion of capacity at Heathrow and in the first instance terminal capacity. An issue highlighted in the H8 Masterplan is that an increased number of passengers experiencing on an increasingly regular basis what HAL's management refers to over-crowdedness with a further decline in the passenger experience.

However, it is less than clear whether this needs to include a 3,500-metre runway, with all of the inevitable dislocation and disruption that would bring along with the associated new terminals. At the moment we are aware of what some of the operators don't want but there is little in the public domain in respect of what might be acceptable and affordable to them.

In the absence of an indication from HAL of how high the new charges would be, to fund £33bn in 2025 prices for the new runway and some £15-16 billion for the redevelopment of the Central Area, it is of course possible to make some 'back of the envelope' calculations. A not unreasonable conclusion is that the increase could represent some 75% of the current average yield achieved by easyJet.

In terms of UK connectivity, it is important to look at the developments at regional airports in terms of increasing direct services and services to other connecting points



**The Commission's report suggested that passenger numbers in the London area would grow from**

**135**

**million in its base year of 2011 to reach 241 million by 2050.**



Whilst passenger numbers for Heathrow for 2024 and 2025 would appear to be much in line with the assumptions made in the report, growth at Gatwick, Luton and Stansted has been far in excess of what had been expected



Of course, there is clearly no guarantee that the passengers will come at any price and where the charges at the other airports in the London area which are already materially lower will, in relative terms be even lower still if the Heathrow project as currently envisaged moves to fruition.

There is then the issue of financing and here the notion that today's passengers should even fund pre planning costs, let alone all of the costs of the new construction, bearing all of the financial risk is just wrong. If the project has the potential that the promoters suggest, then they should fund it all through a traditional project finance approach through equity and debt and then begin to recover these costs and the operating costs when it comes 'on stream'. This provides an additional incentive for capital spending efficiency to ensure realistic user charges.

Indeed, this not only provides a time to move away from a RAB based method of economic regulation but also to ensure that there is no confusion at the CAA in respect of what its primary duty is, to consumers

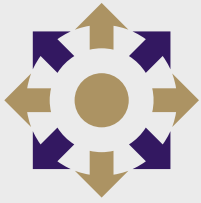
and users, and its secondary duties are, which include enabling licensees to finance their activities. These duties appear to have been reversed in its latest publications, CAP 3149 and CAP 3195, as it seems to be taken as given that the proposal made by Heathrow is in the best interests of consumers and users taking into account all other options that now exist but where the necessary independent analysis is conspicuous by its absence. We and others would contend not only that this remains an open question, but that considerably more work needs to be done to demonstrate whether and why this is might be. The job of the CAA is not just to 'rubber stamp' the existing proposal.

Of course, developments at Heathrow have also been couched in terms of potential benefits for the UK. In terms of UK connectivity, it is important to look at the developments at regional airports in terms of increasing direct services and services to other connecting points. Here it is important to recognise how traveller behaviour becomes established where this is

unlikely to change following an expansion of Heathrow. Connectivity from regional airports continues to improve and the introduction of more A321neoLR and XLRs is already providing new options. There is a need to recognise that an airline will only fly a route that has the potential to contribute to cash and, hopefully profit, within a reasonable period of time; they do not generally have some esoteric target to fill or a need to 'plant flags in maps'.

What is certain is that, despite the wish of the government to press ahead with the expansion of Heathrow, there are many questions that remain to be answered where, given what has been happening not only at London's other airports as well as in the regions, it is unclear whether what is currently proposed, meets the needs of the users, let alone is affordable. There are numerous examples in the UK to demonstrate that there is a need to avoid ever more expensive vanity projects delivering uncertain economic value and it is important that the expansion of Heathrow is not, or does not become, one of these.





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**Drone delivery trials are multiplying, from Amazon's commercial launch in Darlington to NHS blood samples being flown between hospitals. *Focus* examines the various drone pilots reshaping UK logistics and how regulation is keeping up with technology adoption.**



# Special delivery

## SPECIAL FEATURE

**A**mazon has secured regulatory approval to launch the UK's first commercial drone delivery service, marking a significant milestone for delivery logistics. On January 9 this year, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) approved airspace changes around Darlington, County Durham, clearing the way for Prime Air operations to begin operating in the local area. By January 13, Amazon had already confirmed that it had successfully started drone operations out of its Darlington fulfilment centre, although customer deliveries were not yet being made.

The full service is expected to launch later this year, with drones flying at altitudes between 55 and 85 metres to drop packages weighing less than five pounds directly into customers' gardens within a 7.5-mile radius. For eligible customers in the town, Amazon promises deliveries in under

two hours, operating flights 12 hours daily, seven days a week.

Originally planning for 21 flights per hour from two launchpads, Amazon scaled back to 10 flights per hour from a single temporary structure after Darlington Borough Council granted conditional planning permission, citing insufficient evidence about how drone noise would affect residents.

Amazon has faced opposition from local residents around Darlington, who are concerned about the noise from drones. Critics describe the drone noise as sharp, tonal, and high-pitched, contrasting with the familiar hum of road traffic. Amazon maintains its drones generate a maximum of 72 decibels – comparable to a washing machine and less disruptive than delivery vans.



Amazon has successfully started drone operations out of its Darlington fulfilment centre



London isn't the only place in the UK where drones are being used to address medical needs

Amazon's global drone operations have faced setbacks internationally, including two drones crashing into a crane in Arizona last October, and noise complaints in Texas that led to the closure of College Station operations in August 2025. The company initially trialled drone delivery in Cambridgeshire nearly a decade ago before abandoning UK operations due to airspace restrictions.

## Drone-based medical deliveries take new heights

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust launched a pilot scheme in 2024 with healthcare logistics company Apian and drone operator Wing to transport blood samples between its two central London hospitals. The service delivers samples from patients undergoing surgery who are at high risk of bleeding complications, with the drones transporting materials between rooftop landing sites at Guy's Hospital and the laboratory at St Thomas' Hospital.

The difference in delivery times is significant, especially in the realm of healthcare where every second counts towards someone's life. Road couriers using vans or motorbikes can take more than 30 minutes to move samples between the two hospitals, while drone delivery completes the journey in under two minutes. By June 2025, the trial had delivered over 5,000 patient samples.

The CAA regulates the drone operations, working alongside NATS air traffic management services to ensure safety protocols are maintained throughout the flights. Apian announced expansion plans for the network in June 2025, including developing additional routes focusing on NHS pathology networks, with plans to connect centralised hubs like the SYNLAB laboratory in Blackfriars, which processes tens of millions of tests monthly.

London isn't the only place in the UK where drones are being used to address medical needs. This year, a new trial in Wales could have a life-saving impact to rural healthcare services. The Dragon's Heart project, funded by Innovate UK and the UK

Department for Transport, is developing an autonomous drone delivery network to support the Welsh Blood Service and Welsh Ambulance Service. Led by Snowdonia Aerospace Centre, the initiative aims to improve the transportation of blood donations processed in south Wales, which can currently take several hours to reach destinations in west and north Wales when transported by road.

The drones being developed for the project weigh around 25kg, and feature vertical take-off capability before transitioning to fixed-wing flight mode, allowing them to cover distances up to 100 kilometres and operate in challenging wind conditions of around 30 knots. Blood products are transported in temperature-controlled compartments within the drone body.

Test flights are taking place at Llanbedr airfield in Gwynedd, which provides restricted airspace and sea access for safe prototyping. The project partners are developing autonomous detect-and-avoid technology that enables drones to identify threats and reroute mid-flight. Hinging on the pilot's success, an operational prototype may be available in 2027.

## Changes in regulation and procurement

In October 2025, the CAA published its Future of Flight roadmap, setting out a pathway to routine Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations by 2027. The roadmap addresses one of the industry's biggest challenges: enabling drones to safely share airspace with crewed aircraft while flying over cities and infrastructure. For logistics operators, this regulatory shift could unlock new ways to inspect railways and power lines, security inspections, and new modes of delivery for shopping and medical supplies. The CAA's chief executive Rob Bishton described the roadmap as setting out "sensible and effective regulation that will enable the UK drone industry to continue to develop and grow."

Alongside commercial regulation, the CAA introduced updated rules for all drone operators effective from January this year. The changes



The global drone and robotics market is projected to increase from

£55

billion in 2024 to

£122

billion in 2030.

lower the threshold for mandatory registration and testing, with the Flyer ID requirement now applying to drones over 100 grams rather than 250 grams. This impacts an estimated 500,000 drone users – a significant portion being amateur, not commercial – who will need to complete a free online theory test to legally operate their device.

Businesses are seeing the market's potential, with UK consultancy Drone Major recently launching the world's first managed procurement platform for the drone industry in December 2025. The platform connects vetted global suppliers with buyers through a business-to-business marketplace, coordinating end-to-end supply chain management including compliance, logistics and delivery.

Having secured CAA approval for the UK's first BVLOS flights over Critical National Infrastructure in May 2025, Drone Major's initiative is positioned to help British SMEs and startups access opportunities in a rapidly growing market. The global drone and robotics market is projected to increase from £55 billion in 2024 to £121 billion in 2030.





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# Air cargo's hidden dependency



**i** Author: **SALLY DIXON FCILT**

**The UK's air cargo relies heavily on EU airports, with an estimated 40% never touching UK runways. This significant dependency on foreign infrastructure poses risks to supply chain resilience and economic security, yet remains largely invisible in UK policy and public debate.**

Efficient air freight enables businesses to expand markets and operate globally

**B**ritain's trade depends far more on northern European airports than is widely recognised.

An estimated 40% of UK air cargo never touches a UK runway, instead being trucked to and from EU hubs such as Frankfurt, Paris Charles de Gaulle, Amsterdam Schiphol and Brussels.

This represents substantial, real demand for air freight services that is effectively outsourced overseas. Yet it remains largely invisible in UK airport planning, policy-making and public debate. That blind spot should concern shippers, logistics providers, government and the wider economy alike.

### **A structural weakness in UK freight**

The UK currently lacks both the dedicated air cargo capacity and the strategic planning levers required to handle its own air cargo demand. As a result, goods essential to the UK economy, including food, pharmaceuticals, electronics, and manufacturing components, are routinely routed via EU airports.

This dependence adds cost, transit time and emissions, while weakening supply-chain resilience. Air freight underpins modern economies: disruption at any point in the system can rapidly affect availability of goods, inflation and public wellbeing.

Delays at borders, reductions in capacity at European hubs, such as planned slot constraints at Schiphol to meet environmental targets, or geopolitical shocks, all pose direct

risks to UK economic security. Yet the UK continues to rely on overseas infrastructure for cargo that originates from, or is destined for, British businesses and consumers.

### **Road feeder services: normal practice, exceptional dependence**


Road Feeder Services (RFS), cargo trucks operating under airline codes between airports, are a standard component of global air logistics. What is unusual is the scale of the UK's reliance on them.

Based on airline data and information from the Heathrow Airline Operators Council, around 1.7 million tonnes of cargo per year may be entering or leaving the UK by truck, RFS and cargo bumped from flights or deliberately routed via EU airports by non-airline-coded trucks due to UK capacity constraints.

In effect, the UK has embedded EU airports into its critical national logistics system, without formally acknowledging or planning for that dependency.

### **Trade, growth and border friction**

Efficient air freight enables businesses to expand markets and operate globally. Without trade growth, the government's ability to fund infrastructure, public services and industrial strategy is fundamentally constrained.

However, border friction since Brexit has contributed to declining trade performance. As Rachel Reeves, 

then Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, noted in her 2024 Mais Lecture, the UK is 'too exposed to global disruption – but also too closed to global trade. Queues at our ports, empty shelves, soaring prices, and red tape holding our exporters back.' There is little evidence this situation has materially improved.

## A critical data blind spot

The UK's dependence on EU air cargo hubs was clearly demonstrated during the Manston Airport Development Consent Order process, including Planning Inspectorate hearings and subsequent High Court and Court of Appeal cases. Data obtained from airlines in 2018 and compared with Heathrow Airline Operators Council figures in 2021 showed the scale of the issue.

Yet airline schedules alone do not provide a complete picture. Although the post-Brexit New Computerised Transit System records every cross-border movement, the system only allows one declaration to be viewed at a time, making meaningful analysis impossible.

Freedom of Information requests to the Department for Transport, HMRC, the Home Office and the Prime Minister's Office have confirmed that government cannot quantify the UK's reliance on EU airports for air freight.

This is a serious policy failure. Without accurate data, effective planning for supply-chain resilience, emergency preparedness or freight capacity cannot occur.

## Why the risk is growing

While this dependency is not new, its impact is intensifying. Evidence suggests some EU trucking companies are reducing or withdrawing UK services. Key reasons include driver reluctance to face long delays at Short Straits crossings and the lack of adequate facilities such as secure parking, sanitation, food and rest areas.

The challenge is exacerbated by an ageing driver workforce and persistent recruitment difficulties. Long absences from home, high training and insurance costs, poor job perception, particularly among women, and competition from other sectors all compound the problem.



The UK continues to rely on overseas infrastructure for cargo that originates from, or is destined for, British businesses and consumers

Meanwhile, anecdotal reports of stock shortages, including pharmaceuticals, are increasingly common and deeply concerning.

## Compounding risks to UK supply chains

Reliance on EU airports creates multiple vulnerabilities:

- **Delays and emissions:** Long trucking routes add cost, time and carbon to goods that could fly directly
- **European slot constraints:** Cargo flights are particularly vulnerable when capacity is reduced
- **Border fragility:** Delays at Dover and other crossings disproportionately affect perishable, high-value and time-critical goods
- **Geopolitical exposure:** Russia's war in Ukraine, instability in the Middle East, sanctions, piracy, pandemics and climate shocks all heighten risk in long, exposed supply chains
- **Early warning signs:** Operator withdrawals and NHS stock-out reports point to deeper structural fragility

## National economic consequences

Air cargo underpins export competitiveness, inward investment, and participation in global just-in-time supply chains. Without secure access to air freight, the UK risks:

- **Reduced competitiveness and missed trade opportunities**
- **Higher consumer prices**
- **Food and medical supply insecurity**
- **Reduced resilience during national emergencies**

- **Falling behind international peers expanding dedicated cargo capacity**

As McKinsey logistics consultant Soufiane Daher notes, air cargo is central to achieving several UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, including zero hunger and sustained economic growth. For a major trading nation, continued reliance on foreign airports to handle domestic freight demand should prompt serious strategic reflection.

## Key differences between other countries and the UK

- **Germany plans cargo explicitly and nationally, rather than leaving capacity to market forces or passenger-led airport expansion**
- **The Netherlands measures and manages cargo dependency even when reducing capacity; the UK neither measures nor mitigates it**
- **France aligns airport policy, industrial strategy and customs operations; the UK treats them as largely separate domains**
- **The US plans freight holistically and publishes data needed to manage risk**
- **Singapore assumes disruption will occur and plans capacity accordingly; the UK largely reacts after the fact**

## A call for strategic action

Addressing this hidden dependency requires:

- **Accurate, accessible public data on UK air freight flows**
- **National planning for dedicated cargo capacity and contingency routing**
- **Cross-party political focus on supply-chain security**
- **Structured engagement with industry on resilience, airport capacity and long-term trade strategy**

Without action, the UK risks discovering this vulnerability only when the system fails.





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# Wings of change

**London's aviation network hosts some of the busiest airports in the world. High levels of business and leisure thoroughfare, and cargo operations cause considerable strain for each of the four airports' infrastructure, and there are currently major upgrades in store for Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton and Stanstead airports. Here, *Focus* unpacks where each airport is at in its development, and what's in store for 2026 and beyond.**

## Heathrow's third runway gets green light as government selects £49bn plan

**H**eathrow Airport has been operating at near-full capacity and pursuing expansion plans for over a decade. The airport's long-debated third runway expansion took a significant step forward in November 2025 when the government selected Heathrow Airport Limited's proposal as the basis for the project, over a rival proposal offered from the Arora Group. Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves says the expansion could create over 100,000 jobs, although there is little detail in respect of the types and timings. According to a report by Frontier Economics, it could contribute an additional 0.43% to UK GDP by 2050, assuming that the runway opens in 2035.

The estimated £49 billion expansion (in 2024 prices) includes the construction of a new north-western runway up to 3,500 metres in length (estimated at £21 billion, including associated motorway works), a new terminal called T5X (£12 billion), expansion of Terminal 2, three new satellite terminals, and closure of Terminal 3 (£15 billion). The project also involves realigning and widening the M25 motorway between junctions 14 and 15, diverting it 130 metres to the west via a new road tunnel beneath the airport. Once complete, the expansion will increase Heathrow's annual capacity from approximately 84 million to 150 million passengers and raise flight movements from the current level of 480,000 (the current legal cap) to some 756,000 annually.

When the November announcement about the proposal went public, Heidi Alexander, Transport Secretary, said that they were acting "swiftly and decisively to get this project off the ground".

"Heathrow is our only hub airport which supports trade, tourism and hundreds of thousands of jobs, underpinning prosperity not only in the South East but across the UK. Today is another important step to enable a third runway and build on these benefits."



The government also made it clear the expansion must be financed entirely by the private sector with no cost to taxpayers.

The expansion has faced opposition from environmental groups and London Mayor Sadiq Khan, who has raised concerns about emissions, noise pollution, and air quality. The expansion would require demolishing much of the villages of Harmondsworth, Sipson, and Longford. Khan has argued that the second runway in store for Gatwick Airport renders the current Heathrow airport expansion unnecessary.

"Aviation is important for our economy, but I support a better Heathrow, not a bigger one. The noise pollution already affects more people than all major European hubs combined – and that's with just two runways."

The reviewed draft Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) – the policy framework that will guide the planning decision – is expected to be published for public consultation by summer 2026, which will guide further consent submissions and final decisions around Heathrow's expansion. Beyond the expansion challenges, airports are also facing increased rates bills following recent revaluations. Heathrow, already Britain's biggest rate payer with a 2024 bill of £116 million, has warned of an 'eye-watering multiple-fold increase' from the Valuation Office Agency's revaluation and has urged the Treasury to address the increases.

## London Luton Airport expansion will double passenger capacity to 32 million by 2043

London Luton Airport received UK Government approval in April 2025 for a £2.4 billion expansion that will transform it into one of Britain's major airports. The Development Consent Order (DCO), granted by the Secretary of State for Transport, will enable the airport to nearly double its annual passenger capacity from 18 million to 32 million by 2043.

The expansion includes construction of a new Terminal 2, extensions and modifications to the existing Terminal 1, additional taxiways and aircraft stands, and improvements to surface access infrastructure including enhancements to the Luton Direct Air-Rail Transit (DART) system.

The project will also incorporate landscape and drainage infrastructure to support the expanded footprint. The airport operator estimates the project will generate an additional £1.5 billion for the economy annually and create up to 11,000 jobs.

Alberto Martin, Chief Executive Officer of London Luton Airport, said the expansion would put Luton at the heart of a collective mission to achieve sustainable economic growth, and that it was a generational opportunity to transform the town and the region's economy.



The airport has said ‘with airport expansion at the heart of the Chancellor’s growth mission, it’s important that all government policies align to support this ambition’.

## Gatwick secures approval for dual-runway operations, increasing capacity by 35%

As the UK’s second-busiest airport and Europe’s busiest single-runway operation, London Gatwick has long faced capacity constraints that limit its ability to meet growing demand for air travel in the South East. Currently handling approximately 280,000 flights and some 43 million passengers in the latest 12 months, the planned new runway and associated terminal facilities will enable the airport to grow and is a clear demonstration of the “making best use” policy in action.

Its Northern Runway Project represents a strategic response to these constraints. The aim of the project is to bring the airport’s existing Northern Runway, currently only available when the Main Runway is out of use and also used as a taxiway, into routine operational use to address longstanding capacity issues and support the government’s economic growth objectives for the region.

A distinctive feature of the expansion is the legally binding “Green Controlled Growth” framework, which places maximum limits on the airport’s noise, operational greenhouse gas emissions, air quality, and surface access impacts. The scheme also includes wider sustainability measures, such as enhanced solar energy generation, rainwater harvesting and improvements to Wigmore Valley Park and other surrounding green spaces.

Paul Kehoe, chair of Luton Rising – the Council owned company which owns Luton Airport – said the Green Controlled Growth framework represents the most far-reaching commitment to the sustainable operation of an airport ever put forward in the UK.

A significant point of contention has been the additional environmental impacts of the expansion. In December 2025, the expansion plans survived a legal challenge when the High Court dismissed a judicial review brought by Luton and District Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise (LADACAN), who argued greenhouse gas emissions from inbound flights were wrongly excluded from environmental assessments and that the government failed to adequately consider the environmental impact on the Chilterns National Landscape.

The expansion’s approval in April represented a significant milestone for the project, which has been in development since 2019 when initial statutory consultations began. Whilst the changes to business rates faced by the airport following the Autumn 2025 Budget will have little or no impact on expansion plans, the airport is expecting to witness its business rate bill more than double by 2029, with HMRC payments anticipated to climb from just under £7m to £14.5m within three years.



The project reached a milestone in September 2025, when Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander granted development consent, citing the demonstrated need for additional aviation capacity in south-east England and significant economic benefits. Approval was conditional on stricter noise controls and further requirements recommended by the Examining Authority. A key condition to be met before the runway becomes operational is that 54% of passengers will need to arrive by public transport; however if this is not satisfied there are alternative targets that relate to the number of vehicle movements and investment in road improvements.

The privately-financed expansion, which will cost £2.2 billion, will reposition the airport's existing standby runway 12 metres north, enabling dual runway operations for the first time with the potential to increase movements from some 261,000 in 2024 to some 386,000. The project will deliver taxiway reconfigurations, expansion of both North and South terminals, a new pier, and 18,500 additional car parking spaces. Road improvement works include enhanced surface access and forecourt management, addressing capacity constraints and improving connectivity at the airport.

Economic projections indicate the expansion will inject £1 billion annually into the UK economy and create 14,000 jobs across construction, operations, and ancillary services. At peak construction, up to 3,200 workers will be employed on-site.

Like the other London airports proposing major expansions, Gatwick Airport is facing a major increase in business rates.

The mix of airlines at Gatwick continues to evolve with an increasing number of Heathrow operators also now offering flights from Gatwick; most recently Air France. Additionally in November 2025 both Air Arabia and Jet2 announced plans to operate from Gatwick, with Jet2 proposing to launch six aircraft and 29 routes, adding nearly 900,000 seats for summer 2026.

## Stansted Airport secures approval for £1.1 billion transformation

London Stansted Airport has secured planning approval and commenced its £1.1 billion transformation programme. Uttlesford District Council approved the airport's application in December 2025, to increase its annual passenger capacity from 43 million to 51 million. This will be achieved without exceeding the existing 274,000 annual flight cap, relying instead on airlines deploying larger, more fuel-efficient aircraft.

The £600 million North Western Main Terminal Expansion will extend the existing Norman Foster-designed terminal by one-third (16,500m<sup>2</sup>). The upgrade improves passenger flow and addresses current capacity constraints through an expanded security hall with next-generation screening technology, additional baggage reclaim capacity, and enhanced immigration facilities. According to the government announcement, the project will deliver "a larger security hall, an airfield taxiway upgrade and an overhaul of gate rooms."

Stansted aims for 50% of passengers to use public transport (in 2024 this figure was 47%), supported by planned improvements to M11 Junction 8 and enhanced Stansted

Express rail services, a modal shift aiming to address growing regional connectivity demands while relieving impact on local roads and reducing congestion.

The airport's 35-year-old Track Transit System will be decommissioned this year and replaced by pedestrian "skylink" bridges connecting the terminal to satellite buildings. During the transition, buses will provide gate access.

Flights from Stansted currently serve 40 countries. About 4,500 new jobs are expected to be created from the airport's latest plans, with airline operators already planning for increased capacity. From March this year, Turkish Airlines will be operating at Stansted Airport, conducting 14 weekly flights to Istanbul, and boosting cargo routing options for East Anglian exporters. Although there is capacity for growth, the challenge for airlines will be in competing for appropriately timed slots.

Construction of the airport's 14.3MW solar farm is currently underway, which will comprise of 24,000 panels when completed. The solar farm – also part of the £1.1 billion upgrade – is the first of its kind at a London airport and part of Stansted's net zero carbon by 2038 commitment. At peak, the solar farm will generate enough energy to power around 6,000 homes.



# Opening doors to aviation



## Lauren Turner, Operations Director at East Midlands Airport and member of the Aviation Ambassadors Group, has had an impressive rise through aviation, and her career showcases the opportunities available within aviation for those willing to take the leap. Here, Lauren speaks to *Focus* about her journey, and offers insight on the keys to building both individual careers in aviation and stronger airport operations for the future.

**W**hen Lauren started as a security officer at East Midlands Airport over 12 years ago, she hadn't pictured a long-term career in airport operations. "I was quite lucky and really fell into aviation rather than planning it," she reflects. "At that stage, I didn't necessarily envision a long-term career in airport operations, it simply felt like a great opportunity to get into an interesting environment."

However, within six months, she realised this was where she wanted to be. "No two days were the same, and that really appealed to me," she says.

### A career built on initiative

After her early years in Airport Security, Lauren moved into Airfield Security. "That's where I really found my passion," she says. From there, she progressed to the Control Room, responsible for aircraft stand planning and coordinating responses to incidents and emergencies.

"It really was the heart of the operation, and it gave me invaluable insight into how an airport functions in real time," Lauren recalls. Looking to get back onto the airfield, she moved into an Airfield Operations Supervisor role, responsible for day-to-day safety, marshalling aircraft, inspecting runways, and ensuring compliance.

Lauren says she then made the 'bold' jump to Airport Duty Manager. "That role gave me a deep understanding of how all departments work together and depend on each other to keep the airport running safely and efficiently," she explains. From there, she progressed to Airfield Operations Manager, then Head of Airfield Operations, before taking on her current position as Operations Director last year.

Now responsible for Air Traffic, Airfield Operations, Command and Control, Business Resilience, and Rescue and Fire Fighting Services (RFFS), Lauren says the dynamic nature of operations is what keeps her in the game.

"Operations is fast paced, one minute I could be in a strategic meeting, and the next I might be chairing a tactical response to an incident. It's that mix of strategy, problem-solving, and immediate action that makes the role so rewarding."

### Navigating 'self-led' success in airport operations

Lauren describes her career progression as 'self-led'. "I've always taken ownership of my own development, rather than waiting for opportunities to come to me," she says. "That has meant stepping outside my comfort zone, volunteering for new challenges,

and being curious about how different parts of the aviation industry work."

"There hasn't always been a clear roadmap for progression, and there have been some knockbacks along the way. For me, it's about how you get back up and stay resilient."

Looking back, Lauren says she would have appreciated clear guidance, and honest feedback around progression – something that shapes how she develops others today.

"I'm keen to share my own experiences, both the successes and the knockbacks to help people build resilience, confidence, and a clear sense of direction."

Lauren brings a level-headed approach to her role. "That perspective keeps you grounded, reminds you what the work is really like day to day, and helps you make decisions that are fair, practical, and human – not just procedurally correct," she says.

"Leadership is about staying humble, valuing the people doing the work, and never losing sight of the experiences that shaped you. That's what builds trust and credibility."

### Paving the way for young aviation professionals

Recently joining the Aviation Ambassadors Group, Lauren is actively working to improve career guidance in the industry. "Many young people still associate aviation only with pilots or cabin crew," she notes. "Part of my role is to raise awareness of the full airport community and the wide range of careers that keep airports running, from Air Traffic Control and Airfield Operations to RFFS."

Working for Manchester Airport Group (MAG), Lauren sees significant potential for young people. "There are great opportunities for everyone, and part of my role is opening those opportunities up to young people," she explains. "It's also important for them to understand that you don't always need higher education or a degree – there are excellent apprenticeship schemes and alternative pathways available across the industry."





## Addressing industry turbulence, and workforce gaps

"Working in the aviation industry is challenging because it is so closely driven by the wider UK economy," Lauren explains. "Fluctuations in economic conditions can have a direct impact on passenger demand, operational priorities, and investment decisions."

East Midlands Airport is in its third year of a £120 million investment programme delivering significant improvements. "While this is encouraging, managing large-scale projects alongside a live operational environment does present its challenges," she acknowledges.

"Balancing day-to-day safety, resilience, and performance with major infrastructure change requires careful planning, coordination, and strong collaboration across all teams."

She also points to generational gaps in the workforce. "I've seen departments where the majority of staff retired within just a couple of years of each other, resulting in a huge loss of skills and experience in a very short time."

east midlands airport  
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## Departures

**East Midlands Airport is in its third year of a**

# £120

**million investment programme delivering significant improvements.**

"The biggest recruitment challenges are in highly technical roles, such as Air Traffic Control and Airfield Engineering, where experience and specialised skills are critical," Lauren says. "Addressing this requires working closely with the industry to develop apprenticeships and accessible pathways for young people to enter these careers."

## Digital transformations, and keeping sustainability at the forefront

Lauren anticipates that digital transformation, particularly AI-driven technologies, will reshape airport operations. "Airports are moving away from manual, reactive processes toward more connected, data-led operations that can anticipate and adapt to disruption," she says.

"AI and advanced technologies will support smarter decision-making, helping airports predict demand, manage passenger flow, respond to incidents more effectively, and recover faster when things go wrong," Lauren says. However, she's quick to point out that leaders should be keeping people at the front of the transition.

"This shift will strengthen operational resilience; however, it also represents a significant change. Managing that uncertainty through strong leadership, clear communication, and workforce engagement will be critical."

Lauren Turner, Operations Director at East Midlands Airport and member of the Aviation Ambassadors Group





# Shaken not stirred

## The impact of vibration on medical goods transported by drone.

**T**he use of cargo drones for the transport of medical goods has received increasing attention in recent years<sup>1</sup>, particularly as healthcare logistics seeks solutions that are faster, lower-carbon, and more responsive to demand. In the UK, drone trials have frequently highlighted medical deliveries as a

desirable use case, with the potential to support urgent, unusual, or patient specific consignments<sup>2</sup>. However, while much attention has been paid to speed, cost, and emissions<sup>4</sup>, far less consideration has been given to the physical environment experienced by medical goods during transport, and whether emerging modes expose them to new forms of risk.



Author: **KATHERINE THEOBALD**

Transportation Research Group, Boldrewood Innovation Campus, University of Southampton



***Packaging design, payload placement, and operational planning all play a role in managing vibration risk and must be considered alongside vehicle or platform selection.***

This project examines one such risk: vibration. All transport modes subject their cargo to vibration, arising from road surfaces, engines, propulsion systems, and operational manoeuvres. For many goods this presents little concern, but for modern pharmaceuticals, particularly liquid biologic medicines, vibration could be a critical factor affecting product quality<sup>4</sup>. These medicines are becoming increasingly important in cancer treatment and are characterised by complex molecular structures that are believed to be sensitive to vibration.

Traditionally, the safe transport of medicines has been established through long operational histories, conservative packaging standards, and incremental adaptation. New transport modes such as drones lack this legacy, meaning that assumptions of equivalence with existing modes cannot be relied upon. If drones are to be deployed safely and at scale within healthcare supply chains, their impact on medical goods must be systematically understood rather than inferred.

This research set out to quantify the vibration environment associated with different transport modes, including vans, electric vehicles, cargo bikes, and a range of drone platforms, and to assess how this vibration interacts with sensitive medical products. Vibration was measured during real-world journeys and flights using tri-axial accelerometers, capturing both overall vibration levels and their frequency content. This distinction is important, as vibration magnitude alone may not describe its potential to cause damage. The frequency at which vibration occurs can be equally significant, particularly for liquids, where repeated agitation at certain frequencies may accelerate degradation mechanisms.

Drone vibration profiles were found to differ markedly from those of traditional road-based modes. While overall vibration levels were higher, drones consistently also exhibited dominant high-frequency components associated with their propulsion systems. In addition during drone flight, vibration exposure varied significantly across different stages of flight. Payload

configuration, drone architecture, and route characteristics were also shown to influence the level of vibration experienced by the cargo.

To determine whether these vibration environments resulted in meaningful impacts on medicine quality, live transport trials were conducted in which real and representative pharmaceutical products were flown and subsequently analysed by pharmaceutical scientists at Kings College London using established laboratory techniques. Across the trials undertaken, primarily focused on the cancer treatments, monoclonal antibodies, no degradation beyond acceptable limits for patient use was recorded. This suggests that drone delivery can be compatible with medicine stability under certain conditions.

However, these findings must be interpreted cautiously. The flights conducted as part of the research were of relatively short duration and took place under favourable weather conditions, reflecting the current operational constraints of drone trials rather than the realities of routine service deployment. As such, the absence of observed damage does not imply that vibration is negligible, but rather that the tested scenarios did not exceed the tolerance of the medicines involved.

To address this limitation, the research progressed to laboratory-based vibration testing. Using vibration shakers capable of replicating real transport vibration profiles, medicines were exposed to controlled and increasingly severe vibration environments. Crucially this approach also enabled additional testing opportunities, independent of weather, regulatory, or scheduling constraints. Despite subjecting samples of monoclonal antibodies to more severe vibrations at a range of frequencies for longer durations within the limitations of the available equipment once again any recorded changes in quality were within the quality limits acceptable for patient use.

The outcome of this work is not a simple classification of drones as safe or unsafe, but rather a framework through which vibration exposure, medicine sensitivity, and logistics decisions can be assessed together.

From a logistics perspective, this highlights that mode choice should not be evaluated solely on cost, speed, or emissions, but also on the physical environment imposed on the cargo. Packaging design, payload placement, and operational planning all play a role in managing vibration risk and must be considered alongside vehicle or platform selection.

For professionals these findings reinforce the importance of treating vibration as a measurable and manageable transport risk, rather than an unavoidable by-product of movement. As supply chains adopt new technologies, particularly those lacking long operational histories, evidence-based assessment becomes essential to avoid unintended consequences.

Drones may yet form part of a resilient and flexible healthcare logistics system, particularly for specific, high-value use cases. However, their adoption should be guided by a clear understanding of how they interact with the goods they carry. By linking transport vibration to medicine stability, this research provides one tool to support informed decision-making, ensuring that innovations in logistics enhance patient care without compromising safety.

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# Featured Events 2026



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**26 January**

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Awards for Excellence: Entries Open

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LRN Call for Abstracts: Close

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NEW  
DATE



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# Turning waste into value



Author: **JOHN CHETTY MBE FCILT**  
Director HLI, Wilson James Ltd

## How continuous improvement is redefining logistics across critical national airport infrastructure.

**W**aste has long been accepted as an unavoidable by-product of construction in complex, high-assurance environments. Whether in nuclear new-build, major hospital redevelopment, defence estates or aviation projects, similar patterns persist across Critical National Infrastructure (CNI): surplus materials, fragmented planning, limited reuse options, and a cultural default toward over-ordering 'just in case.'

But Heathrow Airport is demonstrating that this cycle can be broken through its Logistics Integration Service delivered by Wilson James (WJ).

### A working example of what's possible

Through WJ at the Colnbrook Logistics Centre (CLC), Heathrow now operates an enterprise-level material interception and redistribution model, one refined every year through structured Continuous Improvement (CI). This system identifies surplus materials early, catalogues them digitally, and reallocates them to live projects across the airport estate in consultation with multiple stakeholders.

The results from recent cycles speak for themselves:

- c. £2M in efficiencies delivered through CI-led logistics innovation
- More than 230 tonnes of surplus materials reused or recycled
- c. £1M in material reuse value across programmes
- 22 tonnes of carbon savings achieved through reuse streams

These gains were delivered in one of the most regulated, space-constrained

and operationally sensitive environments in the UK. If this level of optimisation is possible in aviation, where the margins for error are uniquely narrow, it is achievable across the wider CNI landscape.

### What Heathrow's model reveals about the future of CNI delivery

Heathrow's approach is not industry-specific. It is a transferable framework illustrating what happens when CI is embedded into logistics governance rather than treated as an optional enhancement.

#### 1. Compliance becomes proactive, not reactive

CI provides an auditable, evidence-led approach aligned with the demands of regulators across nuclear, defence, aviation and healthcare. Logistics assurance is no longer a periodic activity, it becomes part of daily operations.

#### 2. Predictability improves, so does programme resilience

Where outages or delays carry outsized consequences, CI helps stabilise the system. Structured learning, iterative planning, and insight-driven decision-making strengthen overall delivery confidence.

#### 3. Circularity stops being aspirational and becomes operational

Material interception, reuse and controlled reverse logistics shift from ad-hoc good practice to standardised business process, reducing cost, carbon and procurement pressure.

#### 4. Data turns into decision intelligence

When CI is embedded within digital delivery platforms, real-time logistics data becomes a strategic asset, enabling smarter scheduling, spatial

optimisation, and carbon forecasting. Data becomes actionable intelligence.

The message is clear: CI in logistics is no longer theoretical. Heathrow has shown that it is both practical and transformative.

### Why this matters now

Across the UK, investment in CNI is accelerating. With that growth comes renewed scrutiny on resilience, sustainability, compliance and value for money. Yet many organisations still treat logistics as transactional, a necessary but peripheral function.

Heathrow's experience challenges this mindset. It demonstrates that logistics, when governed strategically and enhanced through CI, becomes a central enabler of programme success. It unlocks predictability in environments where uncertainty is costly. It drives out waste where inefficiency has previously been tolerated. And it builds circularity into the heart of operations, not the margins.

### A pathway for industry

The Heathrow model offers a blueprint for others: a reminder that the frameworks, expertise and tools required to deliver this transformation already exist through Wilson James. What is required next is organisational will, the willingness to elevate logistics, embrace CI, and view waste not as an inevitability but as a solvable design challenge.

In an era of rising expectations and increasingly complex delivery environments, the organisations that thrive will be those that treat logistics as a strategic function. Heathrow provides the evidence; the opportunity now exists for CNI more broadly to follow suit.



# The race behind the race

Focus takes an exclusive look at F1's logistics operations.



**T**he roar of engines and the smell of burning rubber might dominate the senses at a Formula One race, but behind the glamour lies one of the world's most complex logistics operations. CILT(UK) was granted exclusive access to DHL's operations at Silverstone ahead of the British Grand Prix to discover what it takes to deliver the world's largest motorsport.

Following last year's fascinating glimpse into Formula-E logistics, CILT(UK)'s Communications Co-ordinator Gianluca Spataro set out to uncover DHL's sustainability initiatives within Formula One and learn about the monumental task of 'delivering' assets for a global sporting event.

## The paddock perspective

Behind the F1 pit lanes at Silverstone, DHL's motorhome logistics control centre buzzes with activity. Here, Christian Polhammer, Formula 1's Operations Manager, and Simon Price, Event Logistics Manager at DHL Motorsport, orchestrate what they call "the race behind the race."

The numbers are staggering, across the 2025 Formula One season, DHL delivers 24 races spanning five continents, transporting up to 1,200 tonnes of freight per race. The operation covers 133,000 kilometres in air distance alone, equivalent to circling Earth's diameter ten times.

## The clockwork of global motorsport

The logistics choreography begins approximately ten days before each race, with equipment and materials arriving via a carefully coordinated multimodal transport system. Ocean freight, air freight, and road freight work in harmony, utilising containers designed for seamless transitions between transport modes.

"The final straight happens step-by-step ahead of the race weekend," explains Christian. "Everything is delivered and in place by Wednesday evening, ready for the race days to begin, before it's all repeated for the next race."

## Monaco: The ultimate challenge

When asked about the most logistically demanding race on the calendar, Christian doesn't hesitate: "The Monaco Grand Prix is the biggest challenge for us in Europe." This year proved particularly demanding, with Monaco positioned as the middle leg of the season's second triple-header, sandwiched between races at Imola and Barcelona.

"It nearly brought us to the point where we couldn't do it, but we did. I don't know how, but we did," Christian explained.

Monaco presents unique challenges that stretch the limits of logistics planning. With over 35,000 residents packed into just 2 square kilometres, it ranks amongst the world's most densely populated places. The principality sits precariously between mountains and sea, bordered by France and Italy, with streets never designed for modern logistics operations.

Imagine navigating a 61-foot-long, 40-tonne HGV through Monaco's narrow streets, now multiply that by 500 vehicles. Unlike permanent circuits, Monaco uses public roads, meaning the track, grandstands, and paddock infrastructure must be constructed from scratch each time.

Despite these challenges, Polhammer maintains the team's unwavering commitment: "Speed is non-negotiable. Everyone in the paddock, everyone we work with, no matter what it takes, we have to achieve it."

## The green revolution in motorsport logistics

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing Formula One logistics isn't geographical but environmental. With F1 targeting carbon net-zero by 2030, DHL's sustainability initiatives have become crucial to the sport's future.

When asked about DHL's most sustainable transport mode within F1 operations, Simon Price offers a measured response: "If I was hazarding a guess, I would say road freight."

The numbers support his assessment. During F1's European leg, 51 trucks run on HV100 biofuel (Hydrated Vegetable Oil), reducing emissions by an average of 83%. GPS monitoring optimises routes for minimal fuel consumption, whilst carbon-insetting measures track freight movements to reduce emissions across operations and value chains.

Aviation sustainability presents different challenges. DHL employs Boeing 777 aircraft, which reduce carbon emissions by 17% compared to legacy aircraft. Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) cuts emissions by 80% per flight compared to conventional aviation fuels, with 20% of F1 cargo flights currently using SAF.

## Sustainability hurdles

Price believes DHL are "ahead of the game" in meeting 2030 carbon reduction targets, but acknowledges significant obstacles remain. Global availability of sustainable fuels poses ongoing challenges, despite DHL's worldwide presence.

"Sometimes you struggle to get the amount we require, and therefore we even occasionally bring our own fuel truck to refuel our trucks," Polhammer explains. Price adds: "For some races, we're having to send a tanker driven on HVO fuel to locations to supply fuel for our trucks."

As sustainable fuel markets mature, both managers express optimism that supply will eventually meet their ambitious demands, supporting Formula One's transformation into a more sustainable spectacle.

The logistics operation behind Formula One represents one of the world's most complex transport challenges, where precision timing meets environmental responsibility. As the sport races towards its 2030 net-zero target, companies like DHL are proving that even the most demanding logistics operations can evolve without compromising the speed and reliability that defines Formula One.

For more insight into the Monaco Grand Prix logistics challenge, watch *'Building The Impossible: The Making Of The Monaco Grand Prix'* on F1's official YouTube channel.

SAF is made from renewable or waste-derived sources and must meet strict sustainability criteria set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation





# SAF: Aviation's path to net zero

**Sustainable Aviation Fuel has emerged as the aviation industry's most practical near-term tool for reducing carbon emissions, but recent assessment from the International Air Transport Association suggests the transition is proving complex. *Focus* finds out more.**

**D**ecember figures from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) estimated that global Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) production was expected to reach 1.9 million tonnes in 2025, double the output in 2024. Yet, these 1.9 million tonnes represented just 0.6% of total jet fuel consumption in 2025. IATA said production growth was also projected to slow significantly in 2026, estimating it would reach 2.4 million tonnes. Despite the demand for SAF, the expected increase in production capacity is stalling – something IATA says can be attributed to poorly designed mandates.

At current price levels, IATA reported that the SAF premium cost the industry an additional \$3.6 billion (US)

in 2025. In some mandated markets in Europe, airlines were paying up to five times more than the price of conventional jet fuel and double the market price of SAF itself.

## **The UK's first year with a SAF mandate**

The UK introduced its SAF mandate last year, requiring a fixed proportion of SAF to be blended into jet fuel. It started at 2% in 2025 and will gradually increase to 10% in 2030, and 22% by 2040. The mandate applies to all major aviation fuel suppliers, with only very small suppliers exempt.

Geoff Maynard, a member of the Aviation Policy Group at CILT(UK), explains the rationale behind the current blend levels. "The targets have been set at levels that reflect



current SAF availability; pushing for higher percentages too soon would risk shortages," he notes.

So far, UK suppliers have met the target, although full end-of-year data for 2025 is still being finalised. The approach closely mirrors the European Union's requirements, which also started with a 2% requirement in 2025. However, IATA's recent assessment suggests these mandates may not be delivering the intended boost in production capacity. Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General, indicated that instead of helping shift the aviation industry into a more sustainable future, the mandates may have hindered progress.

"SAF production growth fell short of expectations as poorly designed mandates stalled momentum in the fledgling SAF industry," Willie noted. He said that to continue decarbonising aviation, policymakers would need to work with the airline industry to design incentives that would work.

## Understanding SAF and its limitations

SAF is made from renewable or waste-derived sources and must meet strict sustainability criteria set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation. According to IATA, SAF can reduce lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions by up to 80% compared to conventional jet fuel, and approved SAF can be used as a direct replacement for conventional jet fuel without altering aircraft or engines.

This capability is what makes SAF the most practical solution currently available. Alternative technologies such as hydrogen and battery-electric aircraft face significant technical hurdles. Batteries are too heavy for long-distance flights, and liquid hydrogen demands much larger storage volumes than existing aircraft can provide.

"SAF is not the complete answer to aviation's climate challenge – but it is the most practical and effective tool available today," Geoff says.

"Meeting future SAF requirements will depend on continued investment and stable, long-term policy. With the right support, the UK is well placed to take a leading role in sustainable aviation."

## Government seeking views on crop-based fuels

While the current UK mandate only permits fuels made from wastes, residues or recycled carbon, the government has opened a call for evidence on the potential use of crop-derived SAF. The consultation, which runs until 16 March, is currently seeking insights on feedstock availability, costs, environmental impacts and sustainability risks,

including effects on land use, biodiversity, water and food production.

The government wants to assess whether crop SAF could form part of the UK's long-term low-carbon aviation strategy without compromising sustainability. The consultation does not propose immediate policy changes but aims to inform future decisions on SAF feedstocks.

**For more information, visit: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)**



## The cost challenge and policy response

At present, SAF is about twice as expensive as traditional jet fuel. As the mandate continues and the blend levels of SAF increase, the cost difference will become more noticeable for airlines. To make the transition more feasible, the UK government has invested £63 million through its Advanced Fuels Fund to support UK SAF production plants.

New legislation – the Sustainable Aviation Bill – will also create a government-backed body that guarantees price support. If the cost of producing SAF exceeds the market price, this body will make up the difference, funded through a levy on aviation fuel suppliers. This is designed to give investors long-term confidence to build new plants and expand capacity. The bill completed the committee stage in December 2025, and the following report stage is yet to be scheduled.

## Looking ahead to e-SAF

E-SAF, or power-to-liquid fuel, is made by combining green hydrogen (produced using renewable electricity) with captured carbon dioxide. While it offers higher emissions reductions than current SAF types, it is significantly more expensive to produce.

The UK has set an e-SAF mandate starting in 2028, rising from 0.2% to 3.5% by 2040, while the EU's e-SAF requirement begins in 2030. These mandates come as global industry bodies warn against repeating past policy mistakes made with conventional SAF. Marie Owens Thomsen, IATA's Senior Vice President for Sustainability, cautions that given the low SAF production volumes, global approaches towards e-SAF policy need to be different.

"Faced with such facts, regulators must course-correct, ensure the long-term viability of SAF production, and achieve scale so that costs can come down. Mandates have done just the opposite, and it is outrageous to repeat the same mistakes with e-SAF mandates," said Marie.

IATA warns that without strong production incentives rather than consumption mandates, global supply will fall short of targets, with compliance costs potentially escalating to €29 billion by 2032. Many airlines that committed to using 10% SAF by 2030 may be forced to reevaluate these targets as production fails to keep pace with demand.



# FORTHCOMING COURSES

For queries and to stay up to date with online courses, contact the relevant department.

**CILT Awarding Organisation:**  
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**PTRC Courses:**  
020 7348 1970 or [info@ptrc-training.co.uk](mailto:info@ptrc-training.co.uk)

☞ 01536 740166 ☞ [pd@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:pd@ciltuk.org.uk) ☞ [info@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:info@ciltuk.org.uk)

## CILT ONLINE COURSES

### FUNDAMENTALS OF BUSINESS PLANNING SYSTEMS



Location: e-Learning  
Register:  
[ciltuk.nimble-elearning.com](http://ciltuk.nimble-elearning.com)  
CPD hours: 2

### SUPPLY CHAIN PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS



Location: e-Learning  
Register:  
[ciltuk.nimble-elearning.com](http://ciltuk.nimble-elearning.com)  
CPD hours: 2.5

### FUNDAMENTALS OF STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT



Location: e-Learning  
Register:  
[ciltuk.nimble-elearning.com](http://ciltuk.nimble-elearning.com)  
CPD hours: 1.5

## AWARDING ORGANISATION

### AEO CERTIFIED PRACTITIONER

Centre: Morley Consulting Ltd  
Location: Live Virtual Classroom  
Booking: [www.morley-consulting.co.uk](http://www.morley-consulting.co.uk)  
CPD hours: 22

### ADVANCED CUSTOMS PRACTITIONER



Centre: Morley Consulting Training Ltd  
Location: Live Virtual Classroom  
Booking: [www.morley-consulting.co.uk](http://www.morley-consulting.co.uk)  
CPD hours: 12

### CERTIFICATE OF CUSTOMS COMPETENCY



Centre: Morley Consulting Training Ltd  
Location: Live Virtual Classroom  
Booking: [www.morley-consulting.co.uk](http://www.morley-consulting.co.uk)  
CPD hours: 28

### DIPLOMA IN PRACTICAL TRADE COMPLIANCE

Centre: Morley Consulting Training Ltd  
Location: Live Virtual Classroom  
Booking: [www.morley-consulting.co.uk](http://www.morley-consulting.co.uk)  
CPD hours: 12

## LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

### TRANSPORT MANAGERS CPC BLENDED LEARNING FOR PASSENGER TRANSPORT

3 March  
14 April - Exam  
(One day per week for approx 6 weeks)  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning & Online Classrooms  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)  
CPD hours: 59

### TRANSPORT MANAGERS CPC BLENDED LEARNING FOR ROAD HAULAGE

5 March  
14 April - Exam  
(One day per week for approx 6 weeks)  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning & Online Classrooms  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)  
CPD hours: 59

### TRANSPORT MANAGERS EREFRESHER FOR ROAD HAULAGE

9 & 16 March  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning & Online Classrooms  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)  
CPD hours: 9

### TRANSPORT MANAGERS CPC BLENDED LEARNING FOR ROAD HAULAGE

30 March (Virtual day)  
20-24 April (In-person training week at Corby)  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: Corby  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)  
CPD hours: 59

### TRANSPORT MANAGERS EREFRESHER FOR PASSENGER TRANSPORT

13 & 16 April  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning & Online Classrooms  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)  
CPD hours: 10

### CILT(UK) LEVEL 3 PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATE IN LOGISTICS, SUPPLY CHAIN AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

April  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning & Online Classrooms  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)

### CILT(UK) LEVEL 5 PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE IN SUPPLY CHAIN AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

April  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning & Online Classrooms  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)

### CPD EARNING SHORT COURSES

Online - anytime  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)  
CPD hours: Various

### OLAT - ROAD HAULAGE EARNING

Online - anytime  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)

### TMPCP FOR PASSENGER TRANSPORT VIA SELF STUDY

Online - anytime  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)  
CPD hours: 40

### TMPCP FOR ROAD HAULAGE VIA SELF STUDY

Online - anytime  
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre  
Location: e-Learning  
Booking:  
[learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk)  
CPD hours: 40

# WHAT'S ON

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 Events  
 01536 740148  
[events@ciltuk.org.uk](mailto:events@ciltuk.org.uk)

- CILT Corporate
- CILT Forums
- CILT National
- CILT Regional
- CILT Association

## FEBRUARY

4th

**CURRENT AND FUTURE TRENDS IN UK NATIONAL AND REGIONAL RAIL FREIGHT**

*Physical attendance:*  
(Registration 17.45)  
18:15 - 19:45

*Virtual attendance:*  
18:15 - 19:15

**Location:** University of Kent Business School, Sibson building, Parkwood Road, Canterbury CT2 7PE

**Speaker:** Julian Worth, Chair, Rail Freight Forum, CILT(UK)

**Cost:** Members: Free  
Non-members: Free

**CPD hours:** 1

10th

**SOUTH EAST AIRPORTS UPDATE**



17:30 - 19:00

**Zoom Webinar**

**Speaker:** Paul le Blond

**Cost:** Members: Free  
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT

**CPD hours:** 1.5

17th

**STUDENT MEMBERSHIP PRESENTATION**

14:00 - 15:00

**Zoom Webinar**

**Speaker:** Julia Ohela, Membership Recruitment Manager; Jean Miller, Knowledge Centre Coordinator

**Cost:** Members: Free  
Non-members: Free

**CPD hours:** 0.5

24th

**TYRE PRESSURE MONITORING FOR TRAILERS**

11:30 - 12:30

**Zoom Webinar**

**Speaker:** Mark Toghil, UK and Ireland Sales Manager, Aspoek Systems

**Cost:** Members: Free  
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT

**CPD hours:** 1

9th

**EVIDENCE ABOUT THE IMPACT OF ROAD TRANSPORT ON PUBLIC HEALTH**

18:00 - 19:00

**Zoom Webinar**

**Speaker:** Professor Adrian Davis

**Cost:** Members: Free  
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT

**CPD hours:** 1

**THE CHANGING FACE OF TRANSPORT PLANNING**

13:00 - 14:30

**Zoom Webinar**

**Speaker:** Paul Lulham

**Cost:** Members: Free  
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT

**CPD hours:** 1

19th

**VISIT TO JOHN LEWIS, FENNY LOCK DISTRIBUTION CENTRE**

Group 1: 10:30 - 15:30  
Group 2: 12:30 - 15:30

**Location:** John Lewis Distribution Centre - Fenny Lock NDC, Fenny Lock Roundabout, Bletchley MK1 1NY

**Cost:** Members: Free  
Non-members: £10 inc. VAT

**CPD hours:** 1.5

26th

**LONDON STUDENT CONFERENCE 2026**



09:30 - 16:00

**Location:** University of Greenwich, Old Royal Naval College, Park Row, London SE10 9LS

**Speaker:** Various

**Cost:** Members: Free  
Non-members: Free

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# COMMUNITIES

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www.ciltuk.org.uk/forums

## CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION

## Participation in the 2025 RI Logistica Conference

In December, three members of the Central Southern Region of CILT(UK) were honoured to be invited to the 2025 RI Logistica Conference, hosted at the Diamond Light Source laboratories at Harwell, Oxon. This prestigious event brought together experts from across Europe to address the complex logistical challenges facing research infrastructures.

### The role of RI Logistica

RI Logistica is a coalition dedicated to supporting research infrastructures by fostering in-house expertise. The goal is to enable these organisations to tackle a wide range of logistical issues using industrial best practices. The challenges encountered in the research sector are diverse, ranging from shipping minuscule, sometimes hazardous samples, to transporting vaccines under tightly controlled temperature conditions, and even relocating enormous scientific equipment across continents.

### Key facilities and coalition members

Alongside the UK's Diamond Light Source and the national Synchrotron and Cryo electron microscopy facilities at the Harwell Campus, the RI Logistica coalition brings together leading large-scale scientific and research facilities from across Europe. Notable members include CERN, the renowned particle accelerator situated on the Swiss-French border, and the



European Spallation Source (ESS), a multidisciplinary research centre in Sweden and Denmark based on the world's most powerful neutron source. The coalition also encompasses numerous other national high-powered x-ray and laser facilities throughout Europe.

### Ongoing engagement and future plans

CILT(UK) members have been actively involved with Diamond Light Source for some time, assisting in the

planning, upgrading, and disposal of sensitive, varied, and often exceptionally large scientific facilities and equipment. Over the coming years, this work is set to continue, including the provision of military logistics support for certain aspects of the programme through the Defence Forum, in collaboration with Group Captain Phil Cane FCILT.

### Conference highlights and CILT(UK) contributions

During the conference, participants engaged in discussions on a wide array of current issues. Topics included the donation of equipment to Ukraine, managing and mitigating logistic risks and the complex task of transporting obsolete research equipment from Trieste, Italy, to Uzbekistan to bolster their research capabilities. The three CILT(UK) members – Mick Conmy FCILT and Simon Harris CMILT from Diamond Light Source, along with Chris Markey, Chair Central Southern Region – made valuable contributions to both discussions and breakout sessions. Their collective logistics experience and extensive professional networks, developed through Regional CILT(UK) events, were instrumental in illuminating several persistent logistical challenges within the research community.



ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

## Electrifying transport depots grant scheme

One of the biggest issues affecting operators considering Battery Electric Heavy Goods Vehicles is the cost of deploying depot charging infrastructure to maintain commercial operations. Few operators are likely to have sufficient power to support a charging system for all of its trucks or other heavy duty vehicles without an energy upgrade. The Government's Depot Grant Scheme offered a valuable opportunity to cover up to 75% of the cost of installing new EV charging infrastructure but was only available for a limited time.

Receiving financial support for infrastructure investment could play a crucial role in rebalancing the total cost of ownership (TCO) when evaluating battery electric trucks and charging infrastructure as a combined investment. On-site depot charging means reduced or no reliance on public charging networks and provides greater control with energy costs, charging scheduling, and optimising charger utilisation.

Key discussion points from the session included:

### Timing

Urgency was required to apply for the grant by 28 November 2025. If a Battery Integrated Charger solution isn't a preferred option and a grid application is required as part of installing chargers there is a risk the installation won't be completed by 31 March 26 and hence they may be issues with the grant payout.

### Eligibility

Some will miss out or the grant won't favour them, for example, a third-party logistics transport provider mostly using customer depots can't apply for funding at customer drop off and pick up locations to enable BEV routes from their depot.

### Opportunities

What are the opportunities available to transporters considering BEVs charging infrastructure via the scheme.

### Application process

Graeme described the process and information required. The two-stage application was considered on a first come first serve basis until the funding allocation is used up.

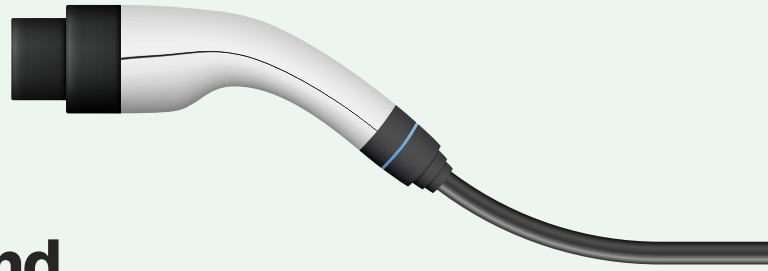
The application portal for grant funding was closed at the time of writing and it is understood that the scheme was oversubscribed. It remains to be seen if a second round of applications will be opened.

Erinion are helpful and willing to support those thinking about charging infrastructure in the industry transformation to battery electric systems.

For more information, please contact: Graeme Bamford, [graeme.bamford@scania.com](mailto:graeme.bamford@scania.com)

**Geoff Clarke**

Chair, Environment & Sustainability Forum, CILT(UK)



## Electric bus depot visit and first charge scheme

Leicester is a busy cosmopolitan city that is famous for many things, such as its Roman history, King Richard III, culture, diversity, sports, the National Space Centre and the city where Thomas Cook started his travel company. The city has a good network of bus services with a proactive council that is supporting the use of electric buses. First provide a significant part of the public transport for the city including the use of an all-electric bus fleet operated from the Abbey Lane depot. This event was a chance to hear about the operation and have a tour of the busy depot with its multiple charging points.

As the meeting commenced at 11am on the 11th of the 11th month, we started with silence to remember particularly the bus men who went to war and lost their lives serving their country.

This was followed by a presentation on the First Bus Operation at Leicester by Charlotte Convey of First Bus. Charlotte started on the graduate scheme and has progressed in the business to be Operations Manager at Leicester.

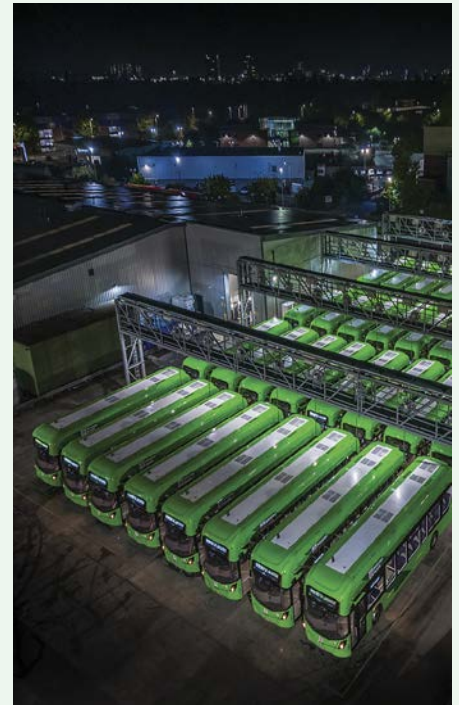
The Leicester depot went electric in 2023 and now has 86 Wrightbus Electroliners of which there are 68 Kite single deckers and 18 double deckers. The buses are under warranty and subject to Wright's aftercare service which includes having their engineers based at the depot. There are also 6 re-powered double deckers at the site. They have a good power to weight ratio and a sweetspot and are currently outperforming the other electric vehicles. Electric vehicles offer a smoother ride for passengers and are much quieter than their diesel equivalent. Reliability has improved and it is easier to fix an EV at the roadside.

The routes are largely city-based running on arterial roads into the city. The area has a flat topography. There are 200 drivers operating either from the depot or the city centre bus stations. The buses work from early in the morning until the last vehicle returns to the depot at midnight. Most of the vehicles are charged during the night taking around 8 hours and have enough power to last the day. Only one of the summer vehicle roster boards requires a vehicle to return to the depot for a daytime top up. However in the winter around 11 boards require vehicles to return to the depot.

The Local Council is supportive of public transport and has worked closely with First Bus and the other operators in working towards a zero emission public transport network. They have installed several bus priority measures.

Andrew Gwilliam gave a Presentation on the Decarbonisation Project and the First Charge Scheme. In terms of charging, First ruled out having pantographs, favouring plug-in CCS2 connectors. Many of the chargers are mounted on a gantry system with pull down connectors. This helps save space in the yard.

First has launched First Charge, a scheme that allows the general public including commercial truck and van operators to use the ultra-rapid chargers in the depot at a time when they would be otherwise idle. So companies can register and then send vehicles for charging between 9am and 4.30pm to a site knowing they will be in a secure, efficient and reliable location for a speedy recharge. First plan to have around 15 locations around the UK available by the end of 2025. First has already got several Third Party customers that charge their vehicles during the day including van operators, and six heavy goods vehicle

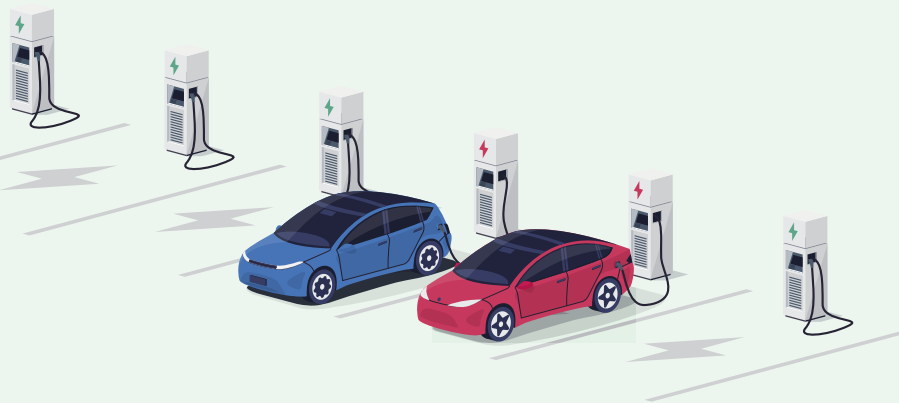


operators. Andrew explained the scheme in more detail. The freight drivers plug in the chargers themselves and tap a fuel/credit card or APP to access a charge. Collaboration such as First Charge is likely to be popular across the sector.

Following the presentations there was an interesting Q&A session with discussion. After this we went on a Depot visit which included inspecting the chargers, looking at the three types of buses and observing the maintenance workshop. There was a diesel bus from another depot in the workshop partly for staff to learn their maintenance skills. First are looking to take on third party maintenance work. It has also retained the diesel tank for the moment for flexibility. Overall the move to an all electric operation has proved to be positive and popular with staff and passengers alike. It has made a major contribution to improving air quality in Leicester.

**Geoff Clarke**  
Chair, Environment & Sustainability Forum, CILT(UK)

## ENVIRONMENT &amp; SUSTAINABILITY



## Journey to decarbonisation case studies

Three speakers from large organisations discussed their journeys to decarbonisation. One discussed electrification, another, a hydrogen vehicle trial, and the third covered various fuels and connected transport as a way of reducing emissions.

### Nikki Hunter

Nikki is Sourcing Lead for the Decarbonisation Programme and Sustainability Champion in Network Rail, she outlined the organisation's journey to decarbonisation.

Using 4.6 billion kWh annually, Network Rail is the largest user of electricity in the UK (2% of the national total). With a road fleet of about 9,000 vehicles, the Network Rail decarbonisation journey is ongoing. They aim to be zero emission for their car fleet by 2030 and their van and HGV fleet by 2035. The webinar covered the transition to renewable energy, increasing energy efficiency, EV fleet transition and touched on measures to decarbonise trains including the use of battery trains. Nikki covered how far they have come, what still needs to be done and the transition to renewables. There have been many challenges and successes along the way.

### Stephen Offley

Stephen is Transport Lead, Net Zero team, Wales & West Utilities, he highlighted a view held by many in utility companies that to achieve a suitable rapid acceleration of decarbonisation, hydrogen is urgently needed for road transport as an 'and'

zero emission technology for HGVs, but also for light commercial vehicles with high-energy duty cycles, especially the latter that don't have a 'return to base' operating model.

The company operates 300 cars, 1,300 LCVs and 58 HGVs. Although the HGVs are just 4% of the fleet, they use 15% of the fuel. 75% of LCVs vehicles tow a trailer and operate continuously at maximum gross weight whilst 30% of LCVs are equipped with a 30kW on-board power system to provide on-site energy for pneumatic and electrical tools. On-board/site power generation accounts for an average of 19% of the energy requirement for that cohort. A detailed study conducted by Cenex in 2020/21 revealed that around 50% of fleet journeys could not be completed by Battery Electric Vehicles but 95% of the journeys could be completed by a hydrogen fuel cell vehicle.

Consequently, the organisation ran a 4-week trial of a hydrogen FCEV light commercial vehicle in early 2024 and at the time of writing a further trial (different OEM) of longer duration is being planned. As there is no permanent hydrogen refuelling infrastructure in the area (Wales/Southwest England) they have sourced a supply of green (renewable) hydrogen and a suitable transportable refueller. The 2024 trial was limited to 350 bar operating pressure, but the new trial will be at 700 bar to unlock the full vehicle capability.

The gas distribution and transmission networks have tremendous potential to help decarbonise road transport in a hydrogen-enabled future – currently, it transports fuel for only a relatively small number of CNG-fuelled HGVs.

Several transport-related innovation funded studies are either completed or in-flight – Costain is working on a follow-on project to a study completed early in 2025 which considered the issues associated with connecting a public hydrogen refuelling station to a re-purposed gas network carrying hydrogen.

### Paul Reid

Paul is Chief Officer, Fleet, Facilities and Transport for Highland Council.

Paul discussed his time with NHS Glasgow where he ran 400 vehicles. He conducted a route optimisation project which resulted in a 30% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions. A Connected Transport project helped reduce emissions by taking services to communities. These included using converted buses as Mobile Surgeries, Clinics and Assessment Centres, Dental Units and a Wellbeing Unit. Benefits included a reduction in single car use, where one journey replaces many, it tackles deprivation in Healthcare and acts as a Community Led Healthcare system.

He discussed some of his current project work at Highland Council. The operation includes HGVs, running on various fuels, diesel, Electricity, HVO, Hydrogen and LNG Gas. His advice on factors to consider with alternative fuelled vehicles covered, range, the skill set in Workshops, additional maintenance requirements, reliability, the need for additional Driver Training and the importance of doing Risk Assessments.

**Geoff Clarke**  
Chair, Environment & Sustainability Forum, CILT(UK)

## 2025 event summary

The Environment and Sustainability Forum marked 2025, a landmark year in the development of alternative fuelled vehicles and the wider route to decarbonisation with a busy programme of 12 events plus a further 13 sessions on related themes.

The majority of the online and in-person events were organised and held in conjunction with regional groups and other Forums. Also, there were related topics in several nationally organised events including a CILT Partnership Day, the East of England Net Zero Summit, the Annual Conference 'Chain Reaction' at

Silverstone and a webinar by VEV. The most common theme running through the whole year was exploring the 'Journey to Decarbonisation' which had 6 specific events from February's 'Starting the Journey' to November and December's presentations where we featured the journeys of 6 different organisations to hear the progress they are making.

We held joint events looking at decarbonisation in different modes of transport in conjunction with related Forums including Aviation (2), Maritime (3), Rail (3 plus input in 2 more), and Bus & Coach (3). We also held an online session looking at the Defence sector.

I would like to thank members of the E&S Forum's virtual committee for their help in putting together an interesting and successful programme. At least 10 members helped organise or host events or do presentations themselves. Also one of the younger members of our virtual committee, Ross McKenzie, who is currently based in the USA, wrote an article based on a transport and supply chain conference he attended at California State University. It is entitled AI, skills and the future of transport and can be read on page 44 of *Focus* – November 2025.

**Geoff Clarke**  
Chair, Environment & Sustainability Forum, CILT(UK)





# Innovating the future of defence supply chains

**I**n today's modern defence environment, the ability to deliver critical supplies at speed and scale gives armed forces a clear operational advantage. Once seen as a background function, logistics now sits at the heart of mission readiness – shaping how quickly and effectively the UK's armed forces can respond to complex and unpredictable situations.

Through the UK Ministry of Defence's Logistics Commodities and Services Transformation (LCST) Programme, Leidos has spent more than a decade proving that innovation and integration deliver tangible, measurable results. That experience now underpins the company's focus on the next generation of supply chain capability – one that connects people, technology and infrastructure to keep the UK's defence operations moving efficiently, securely and sustainably.

By linking legacy systems with modern platforms such as automated picking, robotics and real-time data visibility, Leidos aims to provide commanders with a single, coherent picture of demand, stock and transport. This level of insight allows logistics to anticipate challenges – giving decision-makers the confidence to act with speed, precision and foresight.

This agility is reinforced by secure, cloud-based systems and built-in cyber resilience. Secure identity management, real-time threat detection and hardened infrastructure are designed to help supply chains stay operational even under pressure. As operational needs evolve, so too must the systems that sustain them – enabling constant readiness in an increasingly uncertain world.



Leidos works to identify weak points in procurement, storage and distribution helping to address them before they become vulnerabilities, strengthening the supply network from end to end. In contested or disrupted environments, that resilience can determine operational success and sustain the tempo of missions when it matters most.

But technology alone is not enough. Leidos brings deep, frontline experience to ensure that innovation works in practice, not just in theory. Working with trusted suppliers and SMEs, we combine technical expertise with human insight, supporting local jobs, communities and sustainable practices that strengthen both defence capability and the wider economy.

As new challenges emerge – from interoperability with allies to the integration of artificial intelligence, automation and greener logistics – Leidos is shaping the next generation of supply chain capability for the UK's defence sector.

Readiness is no longer a support function. It's a decisive advantage – and one that Leidos is helping to deliver with purpose and precision.

***Secure identity management, real-time threat detection and hardened infrastructure are designed to help supply chains stay operational even under pressure.***

# Expert voices



**T**he success of our qualifications relies heavily on staying connected with industry realities and emerging trends. Behind every qualification we develop stands a group of passionate industry experts who provide invaluable guidance and insights through our Advisory Groups. These professionals bring decades of hands-on experience to help shape and refine our qualifications, ensuring they remain relevant and forward-thinking.

In this series, we'll introduce you to these industry leaders who contribute their expertise to our development process. Through these profiles, you'll get to know the professionals helping to bridge the gap between education and industry needs.

## **What is your view of the future of passenger transport?**

Customer expectations will continue to grow, as innovations of the past become expectations of the future. In the early 1900's there was no expectation of a roof on the top deck of a bus! Our challenge is to meet and exceed modern expectations so that the bus network doesn't just become a social service for those unable to drive. Attracting those who have a choice is the key to a thriving network.

I expect to see greater local ownership and pride in the industry across the country in the coming years. This is the ingredient that has been increasingly lacking from some bus companies and some local authorities as financial constraints led to reduced public transport teams and large regional operating areas. Fixing this doesn't necessarily require a change in financial ownership, just knowledgeable people who are invested in the area they serve.

## **Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?**

Whilst this may not sound ambitious, I hope to be where I am now running Reading Buses! It is literally my dream job, and there is such a variety of things to keep me occupied even after 7 years in the role. I can't imagine doing anything else.

## **Do you have any words of advice for the next generation?**

It is an industry that is fundamentally all about people – those who we transport and those we employ. However perfect you make a system, it will always need somebody to manage it. To do that you need to care about what you are doing and the people around you, and about all the details. Getting a bus on the road is the absolute minimum standard, but still a lot of work!

## **Robert Williams FCILT Chief Executive Officer Reading Buses**

### **What was your initial training and what qualifications have you taken or needed to complete?**

I did a degree in Physics with Computing at Warwick University, and applied for a student placement at Stagecoach South Midlands to see whether a career in the bus industry would be for me. I ended up staying with Stagecoach for 16 years! The first order of business was to obtain my bus driving licence. Over the years I did various in-house training courses from scheduling through to employment law, but equally, I was involved in a wide range of projects that provided valuable real-life experience. I did my Transport Manager CPC through CILT(UK) in 2012.

### **Was it easy to pursue a career in this industry?**

My first job was as a conductor for Reading Mainline on their fleet of Routemaster buses. I was 17 and still at school, and worked Saturdays and school holidays. Whilst I initially saw it as a chance to earn a few pennies from a hobby, it actually gave me 'front line' experience of customer service and an insight into how things were organised behind the scenes. There were some difficult moments including being thumped by somebody who got caught on my

ticket machine a few weeks before my A-level exams, through to football hooligans wrecking a bus, but I enjoyed the vast majority of the time.

As with anything, passion and dedication make a significant difference, as does working with like-minded knowledgeable individuals. I feel lucky to have been in the right place at the right time to work with some of them throughout my career.

Before I completed my student placement a reorganisation created a permanent commercial officer role in Oxford that I successfully applied for, from which I progressed to becoming Commercial Manager. I then moved to Devon to be Commercial Director for the South West before returning to my home town of Reading.

### **What is challenging about working in the industry?**

Bus operations are on the go 24/7, and anything can happen at any time, so it can be hard to switch off. A lot of people have to make the right decisions at the right time for everything to go smoothly, and it can be frustrating when they don't.

### **What is rewarding about working in the industry?**

I find it rewarding seeing the fruits of our efforts out on the road every day. The bus network is a very visible part of a town, and our team makes that happen. A lot of people are impacted if we change something, so it is important that it is something they either want or at least understand.

# MEMBER RECOGNITION

We continue our member recognition in listing those celebrating their membership anniversary in February. This list was compiled on 5th January 2026 and includes those members who qualify up to 28th February 2026.

## 5 years (2021)

James Cullane CMILT  
Hafeez Ullah Khan CMILT  
Valerie Walker CMILT  
Ching Pong Poo CMILT  
Patrick Treanor CMILT  
Kimberley Pettingill CMILT  
Adam Lappin CMILT  
Paul Johnson FCILT  
Christopher Gemmell FCILT  
Samir Boukhalfa FCILT  
Mark Watts FCILT  
Donald Hunter FCILT  
Richard Taylor MILT  
Stuart Hird MILT  
Darryl Harwood MILT  
Lysa Murphy  
David Gubbins  
Ian Hesketh  
James Osborn  
Kieran Arron

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## 10 years (2016)

Richard Lewis CMILT  
Jonathan Collacott CMILT  
Stephen Lauwrens CMILT  
Paul Scott CMILT  
Thomas Reddy CMILT  
Daniel Stevenson CMILT  
Gary Wood CMILT  
Caleb Moore CMILT  
Barry Fearon CMILT  
Laurence Chapman CMILT  
Simon Scaife CMILT

Kayley Nicholls CMILT  
Christian John CMILT  
Martin Lilley FCILT  
Nikita Jones FCILT  
Kirsty Spurrell MILT  
Clair Obami MILT  
Stephen Quigley MILT  
Chris Polack

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## 20 years (2006)

James Eastham CMILT  
Darren Thrower CMILT  
Richard Thomas CMILT  
Shaju Chacko CMILT  
Janet Davies CMILT  
Geoffrey Nuzum CMILT  
Steven Meyerhoff FCILT  
Han Yap FCILT  
Gareth Stevens FCILT  
Peter Owen MILT  
Hugh Pettingell MILT

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## 30 years (1996)

Stephen Hunter CMILT  
Christopher Cole CMILT  
Graham Dean CMILT  
Ian Bury CMILT  
William Davies CMILT  
Michael Hibbert CMILT  
Christopher Spry CMILT  
Craig Williams CMILT  
Andrew Hamer CMILT  
Maurice Brown CMILT

Peter Condouriodise CMILT  
Chris Cook FCILT  
Thomas McGuffog FCILT  
Simon Pratt MILT  
Stephen Lee MILT  
Nicholas Simpson MILT

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## 40 years (1986)

Nicholas Tetley CMILT  
David Schofield CMILT  
Keith Dear CMILT  
Adrian Jones FCILT  
John Gillam FCILT  
Alan McKinnon FCILT  
Barry Evans MILT  
David Sim

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## 50 years (1976)

John Carr FCILT

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## 60 years (1966)

Barry Graham CMILT  
Ian Carter CMILT  
David Armstrong CMILT

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# ALAN MCKINNON FCILT



*“I’m very grateful to CILT for the opportunities it has given me as a founding member of its Logistics Research Network, Chair of its Professional Development Policy Committee and recipient of its Sir Robert Lawrence award. This has helped me to bridge the worlds of academia, industry and public policy and broaden my professional horizons.”*

**i** Alan has spent 47 years researching and teaching logistics both in the UK and internationally. He now holds emeritus professorships at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh and Kuehne Logistics University in Hamburg, an institution he helped to establish as its first Dean of Programmes. He has published extensively in journals, books and reports on many different aspects of logistics and been an advisor to several governments, parliamentary committees and international organizations, including the World Bank, UN, International Transport Forum, European Commission and World Economic Forum. Much of his research has focused on the environmental sustainability of logistical activities, particularly their decarbonisation.

# GARETH STEVENS FCILT



**i** Gareth is a senior leader at Cardiff Bus and an established leader within the UK bus and public transport sector. Gareth reflects on a career characterised by senior leadership responsibility, strategic oversight and sustained contribution to the bus industry.

At Cardiff Bus, he operates at a strategic leadership level, helping to shape organisational direction while maintaining a strong understanding of operational delivery. His role spans service performance, workforce engagement and organisational resilience, supporting the effective delivery of a critical public service within a complex and evolving operating environment.

# NIKITA JONES FCILT



*“CILT membership has been pivotal in my journey. It represents more than professional recognition, it’s a community of thought leaders driving progress in logistics and transport. For me, becoming a Chartered Fellow was a defining moment, and CILT has given me a platform to influence, inspire, and help create an inclusive, future-ready profession; because when we raise the bar for ourselves, we raise the bar for the entire industry.”*

Gareth has a particular professional interest in sector leadership, executive capability and the long-term sustainability of bus services. He values CILT(UK) membership as a respected professional forum that promotes leadership standards and collaboration across the transport profession.

# MEMBER ELECTIONS

We continue our member recognition in listing those celebrating their membership anniversary in February. This list was compiled on 3rd October 2025 and includes those members who qualify up to 30th November 2025.

## The following members have been elected to Institute Membership and are now entitled to use the post-nominals **MILT**

**Akoji Adujo Adama**, Logistics Associate, United Nations World Food Programme

**Muzingaye Sibanda**, Professional Carer, Cera Care

**Sarah Jeffrey**, Stations Consultant, EJS Consulting

**Mohamed Abdelaziz**, Logistics Supervisor, Drilling & Petroleum Services Company (DPS)

**Ajayprasanna Seenivasan**

**Tsz Kai Chan**

**Shailender Singh Kuwar**, EU Planning Administrator, DHL Supply Chain

**Neil Crowhurst**, Assistant Bus Sales Manager, Ensign Bus Company Ltd

**Alexander Dodd-Jones**, Director, DoJo Services Ltd T/A Les Jones Transport

**Rebecca Davies**, Manager, Rochdale Skip Hire Ltd

**Ajinkya Patki**, Sponsor, Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd

**Samantha Blake**, Supply Assurance Manager, London Borough of Islington

**Nicola Baker**, Logistics and Transport Manager, Gamechanger Farming

**Oliver Hague**, NT Operations Support Analyst, Yusen Logistics UK

**Wojciech Kozdroj**, Managing Director, TLC Compliance Ltd

**Mouayd Zaghrat**, Logistics and Purchasing Coordinator, Magma Ceramics (Jemmtec) Ltd

**George Attoh-Ammah**, Warehouse Supervisor, DSV Air & Sea Ltd

**Samuel Burton**, Distribution Team Lead, Caribbean Bottlers (Coca-Cola) Ltd

**Tracey Matthews**, HGV Driver, Aldi

**Bankole Salawu**, Production Operator, E+i Engineering Ltd

**Lewis Bonthrone**, Regional Fleet and Transport Manager, Cencora Alliance Healthcare

**Gloria Kigen**, Director, Logistics Management, Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (KEMSA)

**Ben Clements**, Head of Planning, GXO

**Gary Milligan**, Area Account Manager – Scotland, Force One Ltd

**Toni Wilson**, Corporal Logistics, Royal Air Force

**Richard Kwamena Dondorful-Amos**, Customer Service Coordinator, Biocair International

Trevor Lee

## The following members have been elected to Chartered Membership and are now entitled to use the post-nominals **CMILT**

**Samuel Opoku Mensah**, Logistics and Shipping Manager, Benjiworth Group Ltd

**Christopher Johns**, Regional Supply Chain Manager, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

**Karthik Devarajan**

**Elaine Park**, Transport Contracts and Operations Officer, Shetland Islands Council

**Aidan Hearfield**, Logistics Manager, National Gas

**Joshua Martin**, Business Development Manager, The Go Ahead Group

**Amber Hill**, Principal Rail Consultant, WSP

**Sue Walnut**, Managing Director, WalnutWorks Ltd

**Linus Yu**, Principal Aviation Advisor, Mott Macdonald

**Alison Bryan**, Senior Managing Consultant, Atkins Realis

**Matt Wilkins**, Head of Operations, Interpet Ltd

**Douglas Waight**, Booker

**Samuel Nyarko Koranteng**, Mobile Patrol Officer, First Response Group Ltd

**Tony Clegg**, General Manager, Diamond Bus Northwest

**Ian Wilkin**, Head of Accessible Transport, Lancashire County Council

**Adrian Wong**, Global Manager, Sample Logistics

**Sarah Jacobs**, Regional Manager, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

**Michael Hammond**, DGM Navy/Air Assistant Team Leader, Civil Service

**Daniel Rothwell**, Logistics Team Leader, BAE

**Abbi Morland**, Operations Manager, Hellmann Worldwide Logistics

**Brian Cowan**, Senior Consultant, Engage Technical Solutions Ltd

**Michael Craigie**, Executive Manager Transport Planning/Chief Officer ZetTransCILT, Shetland Island Council

**Samuel Davenport**, Associate Transport Planner, W S P Group Plc

**Aleks Koszel**, Transport Manager, System 6 Kitchens Ltd

**Evanthia Thanou**, Lecturer, Aston University

**Janet Davies**, Senior Supply Chain Manager, Mental Health First Aid England CIC

**Adam Bardsley**, Senior Consultant, AECOM Ltd

**Pete Birch**, Fleet Operations Manager, Cambridge City Council

**Will Holliday-Jones**, Head of Logistics, Cooksongold

**Thomas Sheldon**, Logistics and Supply Chain Manager, Signet Trading Ltd

**Sajesh Kumar C P**, KPI and Performance Management Manager, AtkinsRealis

**Aswin Santhosh Kumar**, Logistic Officer, Mid and South NHS Trust

**Artem Koverznev**, Global Category Manager, BSH Home Appliances GmbH

**Simon Katembeko Kagumire**, Principal Logistics Officer, Ministry of Works and Transport

**Jodie Lunnon**, Lifting Services IC, Ministry of Defence

**Ryan Ashe**, Senior Regional Logistics Planner, Foreign & Commonwealth Office

**Sara Smith**, Quality Manager, Therismos

**Mabel Amoo**, Freight Manager, ES Global

**Ivan Miguel Hernandez Morales**, Manager, SAP Supply Chain, EY Professional Services Ltd

**Sanjeeve Thavarajah**, Supply Chain Director, Al Meera Consumer Good Company (Q.S.P.C)

**Stephen Moffatt**, Lead Road Vehicle Compliance Manager, Network Rail

**Wayne Arnold**, DES OD-InventoryMgmt-364, Civil Service

**Caroline Taylor**, Head of Regulatory Licensing and Governance, Serco Group Plc

**Steve Lloyd**, Programme Manager, Rail Delivery Group

**Ilona Majewska**, Operations Manager, Ministry of Defence

**James Casey**, Global Director, Engineering Solutions, DP World Contract Logistics

**Neil Edwards**, RQMS(M), Army Karl Sawyers, Ammunition Technician, Army

**Aaron Darling**, TLS Manager, Civil Service

**Gareth Lawson-Mckittrick**, WO2 Supply Chain, Royal Navy

**Lauren Lewis**, Senior Station Operations Consultant, WSP

**Ronnie Leonce**, Logistic and Supply Chain Manager, Ministry of Defence

**Louise Rogers**, Deputy Head of Supply Chain, Logistics and Transport, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

**Zhenghong Li**, Founder & Director, Immensus International SA

**Gildas Griffiths**, Deputy Head of Clinical Logistics, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

**Marc Bransby**, Deployment Project Manager, Dexory

**Muhammad Adil Bin Saad**, Purchasing Coordinator – Corporate Supply Chain, HCA Healthcare UK

**Martyn Jones**, RQMS, Army

**Mark Gleaves**, Key Supplier Manager, Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA)

**Alexander Lock**, Procurement & Logistics Manager, Elecsis Ltd

**Lewis Mcilwain**, Senior Regional Fleet Operations Manager, Amazon Logistics

**Nana Bright Obeng-Mensah**, Logistics Coordinator, National Lottery Authority

**Yasir Rizvi**, Head of Procurement, Property Finder

**Martin Brown**, Fleet Compliance Team Leader, City of Edinburgh Council

**Anna Poultney**, Logistics & Manufacturing Manager, Siemens Mobility Ltd

**Matthew Treasure**, Logistics Information Systems Ld, MOD

**Mark Allen**, Warehousing and Disposal Manager, Civil Service

**Meng Tang**

**Tim Spiers**, Logistic Operations Manager, Civil Service

**Christos Danatsidis**, Ships Stores Supervisor, Lagardere Travel Retail

**Scott Marketis**

**Simon Gardner**, Delegated Driving Examiner, Cardiff Bus

**Chris Lima**

**Mark Woodworth**, Transport Director EMEA, Univar Solutions

**Emma Smith**, General Manager, Transport, Next PLC

**Chris Last**, Associate Director, Amentum

**Tim Deakin**, Editor, routeone

**Craig Shipley**, Technical Director, Atkins

**Kevin Read**, Director of Logistics, QE Facilities Ltd

**Katie Griffiths**, Managing Director, Lets Go Travel Wales Ltd

**Tim Mueller**, Manager Business Development Worldwide, FedEx

**Dr. Junaid Talat Butt**, Senior Logistics Expert, Saudi Industrial Development Fund

**Chris Bosworth**, Director, Bosworth Aviation Consultancy Ltd

**Andy Morris**, Logistics Manager, NG Bailey

**Andy Clark**, Senior Operations Manager, DE&S

**Murray Gascoyne**, National Logistics Director, Kuehne Nagel

**Jon West**, Head Logistics Field Army HQ (ACOS Log), Army

**Christian White**, Head of UK & US Fleet, The Modern Milkman Ltd

**Darren Briggs**, Director, Arup

**Pam Sahota**

**Roger Kilshawe-Fall**, Regin Construction Services Ltd

**Mahmoud Almadhoun**, Assistant Professor in Logistics & Supply Chain Management, The Community College of Qatar

**Alex Silver**, Partner, Master Planning & Buildings, Worley

**Andrew Fenton**, Coach Hire Manager, Edwards Coaches Ltd

**Greg Bamford**, Head of Logistics, COOK Trading Ltd

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**The following members have been elected to Chartered Fellowship and are now entitled to use the post-nominals FCILT**

**David Ramsay**, Workforce Planning & Optimisation Lead, C & C Group Plc

**Kenny Otto**, Head of Supply Chain, Royal Papworth Foundation Trust

**Philip Tucker**, Operations Director UAE & KSA, Classic Fine Foods UAE

**Janine Norton**, Consultant, Linden Supply Chain Services

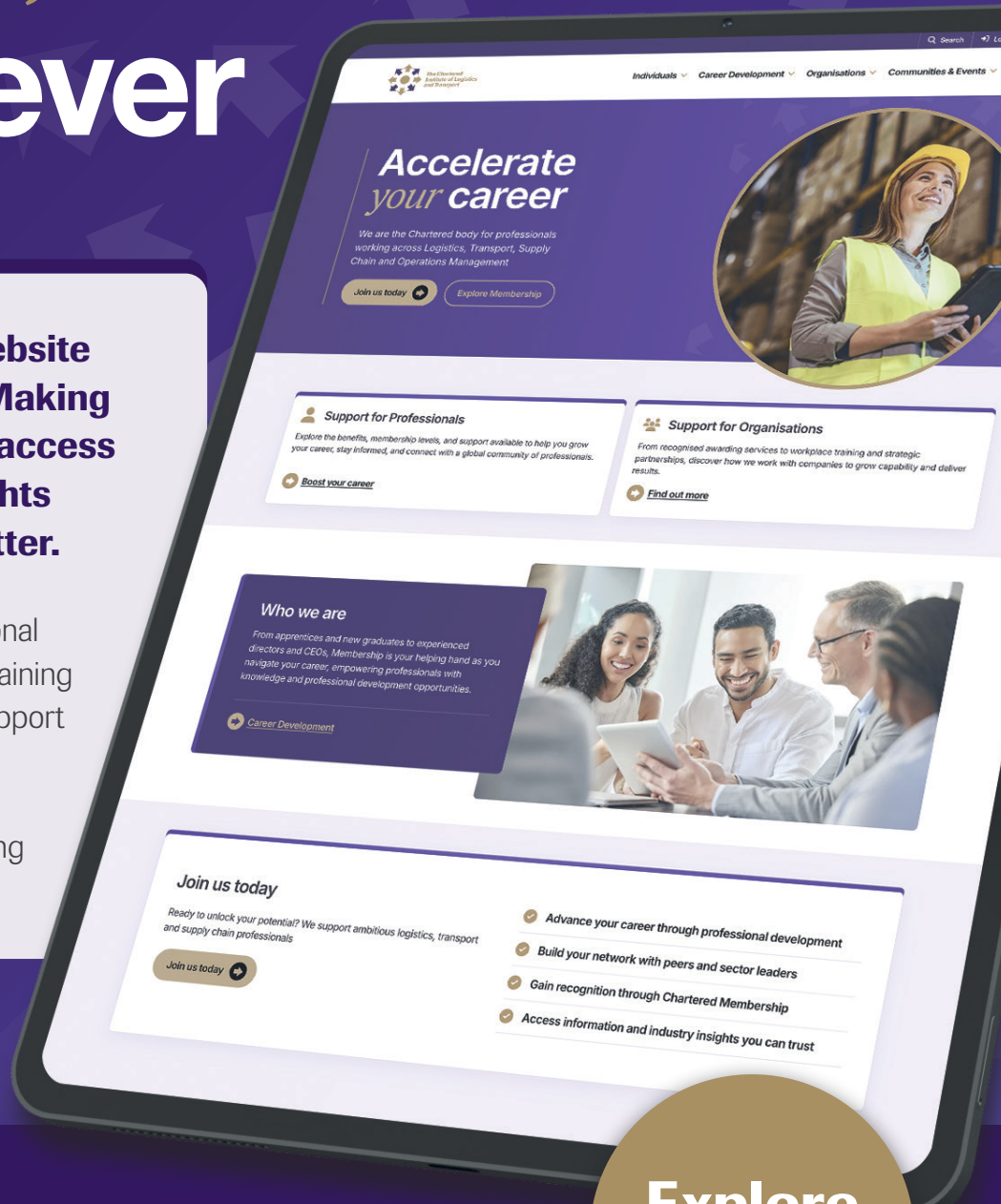


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