

## Press

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Southampton, UK  
25 September, 2013

### All aboard! Rail depot open day celebrates 10 year partnership

Southampton residents are being invited to a behind-the-scenes look at a working train depot on 12 October, as Siemens and The South West Trains – Network Rail Alliance celebrate 10 years in partnership.

Entrance to the Northam Traincare Facility 'Whistle Stop Tour' open day is free with activities, demonstrations and experiences for all the family to enjoy. Siemens employees will be hosting stalls, a cake sale, raffle and steam train ride on the day to raise money for the south east branch of the Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association. This is a charity close to the hearts of the rail technicians based at Northam, following the diagnosis of one of their colleagues with the progressive disease earlier this year.

The open day will showcase the technology and dedicated maintenance team behind the 172-strong fleet of South West Trains operated Siemens Desiro Class 444 and 450 trains based at Northam, along with upcoming improvements to the fleet such as CCTV and Wi-Fi.

Steve Walker, South West Trains Fleet Director at Siemens, said: "We opened our doors for the first time last year and received a great response from those that joined us. Our 10 year anniversary seemed like an excellent opportunity to invite even more people to see how much work and preparation goes into ensuring that our trains are safe, clean, well maintained and comfortable for rail passengers."

He continued: "I'm sure that people frequently pass by and wonder what goes on behind the depot gates. Now they have a perfect opportunity to see for themselves, enjoy a great

family day out and help raise money for a worthy cause close to our hearts at the same time.”

Christian Roth, Engineering Director for the South West Trains – Network Rail Alliance said: "We're pleased to be partnering with Siemens on this event. As we continue to invest and improve on our technology and trains, the work we do with Siemens at Northam – one of the major maintenance facilities on our network – is vital to helping us provide a better service to our passengers both now and in the future.”

Pamela Fry, Regional Fundraiser at the Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association added “It’s great news that our charity has been chosen to benefit from the open day. We currently support around 40 people and their families affected by motor neurone disease in the south east, including a member of the maintenance staff for Siemens. We look forward to joining staff from Siemens and South West Trains to welcome as many people to this unique event as possible.”

In addition to other on-site activities, visitors will be able to walk underneath a train, watch wheels being ‘turned’ (to eliminate any imperfections), and have the opportunity to sit in a driver’s cab. Experts will be on hand to highlight different features on the trains, provide more technical insight and answer any questions.

The event is open to all and runs from 10:00 to 17:00, with last entry at 16:00. Visit [www.siemens.co.uk/whistlestoptour](http://www.siemens.co.uk/whistlestoptour) for more details or you can find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/WhistleStopTour](https://facebook.com/WhistleStopTour)

***Please note:*** access to the vast majority of the depot is on a level surface, however space for wheelchairs and pushchairs may be limited in some areas. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

**Ends**

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**Siemens – Rail Systems**

As part of the Siemens Infrastructure & Cities Sector, Siemens Rail Systems Division provides expertise and technology in the full range of rail vehicles – from heavy rail to metros to trams and light-rail vehicles. In the UK, the Division employs around 700 people and maintains over 350 Siemens passenger trains for First TransPennine Express, South West Trains, Heathrow Express, Greater Anglia Franchise (Abellio), Northern Rail, London Midland and ScotRail. The company will also be supplying Eurostar with its new high speed fleet of trains.

**South West Trains – Network Rail Alliance**

On 30 April 2012, South West Trains and Network Rail formed a joint Alliance to deliver train services from London Waterloo to the south and south west of England, which is one of the busiest rail networks in Europe, operating around 1,700 trains a day. This new joint Alliance is a first for the UK rail industry. South West Trains is part of Stagecoach Group, a leading international public transport group with extensive operations in the UK, United States and Canada. Stagecoach employs around 35,000 people, and operates bus, coach, rail, and tram services.

**About motor neurone disease (MND) and the MND Association**

- The Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association is the only national organisation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland dedicated to the support of people with MND and those who care for them.
- The Association funds and promotes research to understand what causes MND, how to diagnose it and, most importantly, how to effectively treat it so that it no longer devastates lives.
- MND is a rapidly progressive and fatal disease. It can affect any adult at any time and attacks the motor neurones that send messages from the brain to the muscles, leaving people unable to walk, talk or feed themselves.
- The cause of the disease is unknown and there is no known cure. Around 5,000 people in the UK have MND at any one time, with half of people with the disease dying within 14 months of diagnosis.
- It kills five people every day in the UK.

For more information please see [www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)