

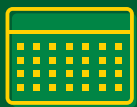


How Nexus completed

a successful railway

blockade with our support.

Supporting Nexus with 6 different categories of trackside-approved rental equipment, enabling them to work 24/7 on replacing 2000m of dated metro line with modern infrastructure.



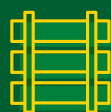
Supporting a 5-day metro blockade.



6 different equipment categories delivered.



3500 tonnes of new ballast.



2000m of rail renewed with modern infrastructure.



Helping Nexus to complete their works prior to the prescribed deadline.

Nexus is the public body responsible for planning, managing and improving public transport in the Tyne and Wear region. Within their remit, Nexus owns and operates the Tyne and Wear metro, the UK's busiest light rail network outside London.

With construction for the metro network first starting in the 1970s, Nexus have been progressing with their Asset Renewal Programme which involves performing upgrades to key portions of the existing infrastructure, including tracks and overhead lines.

Challenges

From Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February, Nexus planned a blockade to perform key upgrades across 2000m of track, from Chillingham Road station through to Walkergate station. This meant laying 1000m of new geotextile, replacing existing timber sleepers with 1360 concrete sleepers, replacing the rail track itself and distributing 3500 tonnes of new ballast throughout the stretch, tamping and design alignment, as well as associated signalling and overhead line works - a major undertaking within such a short period of time.

Considering the disruption that rail closures have on travellers, it was crucial that their modernisation works went exactly to schedule so that they could swiftly reopen the route. To complete the works within the allotted time period, Nexus required a multitude of trackside rental equipment delivered on time and to quality to ensure that they remain operational 24/7, day and night.

Solution

Due to the size and scale of Sunbelt Rentals, we were uniquely placed to support Nexus from all project angles.

Given that the works continued through the night, sufficient lighting was paramount, so we deployed 14 x tower lights to ensure the track itself, car park and the supporting compound had safe and sufficient levels of light. To support Nexus carry out tasks on-site, we delivered a telehandler for lifting, rollers for the manoeuvrability of track, triple wackers for ballast compaction, and survey equipment for bulldozer control and the automation of blade height for cutting.

To support the more rail-specific requirements, we delivered equipment such as the Pandrol CD400 IQ clipper machine with an operator working 4 x 8-hour shifts. This walk behind machine helps clip and de-clip fastening systems on the track, driving efficiencies by covering 4 clips in the time it takes a person to cover just one clip.

Our equipment and services supplied at a glance

- 14 x Tower Lights
- 12m Telehandler and Bucket
- 7 x Back-to-Back Radios
- Cooper Rollers
- 2 x Triple Wackers
- SPS930 Total Stations
- G1622ir Dula Grade Laser Kits
- Amber Trolley
- Fast Clip Rollers and Spanners
- Robel 34.01 Clipping Machine
- 1 x Safety & Communications Bus
 - 25 x det comms
 - 2 x tandem lift det comms
 - 15 x air fed masks
- 1 x Pandrol CD400 IQ Clipper
- 1 x Pandrol CD400 IQ Clipper - Operator (shifts below)
 - Tuesday 17/02/26 | 08:00 – 15:59
 - Wednesday 18/02/26 | 15:00 – 23:00
 - Thursday 19/02/2026 | 23:59 – 07:59
 - Friday 20/02/26 | 08:00 – 16:00

Underpinning all of this was the delivery of equipment to keep those working trackside safe and compliant. Firstly, we provided back-to-back radios, which enabled personnel to communicate quickly and effectively throughout the entire site, which is key when lifting or manoeuvring kit into position, as well as providing the green light for passing into certain areas. Moreover, the PPE equipment that we delivered, including the air fed masks helped keep personnel safe from excess inhalation of possibly harmful dusts and fumes.

All of this combined to create a wrap-around solution for their on-site requirements, however this wasn't just an equipment provision project. Our in-house rail experts attended site throughout the blockade to run product familiarisations and be a general point of support should it be needed. Outside of working hours, Nexus had experts at hand by simply calling our 24/7 National Rail Operations Centre (NROC), meaning they would never be left without a solution for the job at hand.

“ Sunbelt Rentals provided outstanding support to Nexus during the Chillingham Road rail project, supplying critical rail plant hire, site lighting, and PPE. The commitment shown by their rail experts - their technical knowledge, hands-on approach, and availability at all hours - was instrumental in ensuring the blockade works were delivered safely, efficiently, and to programme. ”

Tommy Millar

Works Delivery Manager for Civils and Rail at Nexus

Result

Supporting Nexus was an excellent demonstration of how we can pull different types of equipment together from all four corners of Sunbelt Rentals to deliver a truly wrap around solution.

Our single point of contact meant that Nexus' project manager needed to communicate with just one person, and thanks to our interoperability of services and expertise, we were able to source the very best equipment for the job, delivering it on time and with backups to avoid disruption.

We are proud to have played our part in this blockade, supporting Nexus to complete their works ahead of schedule and avoid any delay-associated hourly fines, but most importantly getting the route back to an operational state for thousands of passengers to use once again.

2000m of rail renewed

Delivered ahead of schedule

Passengers moving again

Leave the how to us.

