



Luton DART (Direct Air-Rail Transport) Part II: An Engineer's Outlook

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Section Engineer

Collaborate

Monitor

Luton DART

Luton DART (Direct Air-Rail Transit) is a £225m scheme constructing a double-shuttle, fully-automated people-mover to transport passengers between St Pancras and London Luton Airport in just 30 minutes. The latest system technology and design innovation is capable of operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week with a cable-driven system that is energy efficient and environmentally friendly - and driverless! Complementing the airport operator's recent £160m transformation programme, the scheme will deliver a truly world-class passenger experience at London Luton Airport.

Two of the UK's leading engineering and construction contractors VolkerFitzpatrick and Bedfordshire-based Kier have formed a joint venture - VolkerFitzpatrick-Kier (VFK) - as the lead contractor responsible for building and completing civils works for the state-of-the-art Luton DART. Works include the Luton DART Parkway and Luton DART Terminal stations, the Gateway Bridge over Airport Way, a viaduct leading out from Luton DART Parkway Station along with a tunnel and approaches to the airport terminal. A world class engineering project requires world class planners and engineers!

Ryan's Story

Ryan is a Section Engineer responsible for delivering the project's viaduct, a major and bespoke civil engineering challenge. Design results in engineering from first principles the solutions to logistics, formwork and construction methods. Not being able to use off the shelf processes and materials means added

complexity and tight timelines (plus a lot of work for Ryan). It's critical for Ryan that he always has a detailed and accurate plan to ensure his team and subcontractors are delivering to targets. That way, when delays are incurred, he is able to take action or resequence to make up for lost time.

Like many other Engineers, Ryan previously managed his lookahead on spreadsheets. Using a tool that wasn't fit for purpose meant every interaction with his plan was a time-consuming and tedious process. For him, maintaining an accurate plan often meant various versions emailed back-and-forth between himself and the wider team until everyone was on the same page. What seems like a basic and mundane part of construction management was significantly eating into his limited time every day.

Since using Planner, Ryan can plan and communicate work to his team in a fraction of the time. How much less?

"There is a massive difference in the time it takes to resequence works. Planner is an easy bit of kit to use, that 3 hour job now can take me 2 minutes".

With the entire project on Planner, Ryan no longer needs to keep teams informed of updates by email. The project has one central plan that is always up to date and Planner automatically sends notifications of planned work to the users. Zainab and the Planners ensure that lookahead plans follow the master schedule and Ryan and the engineers are able to build, change and communicate their lookahead plans in a single environment. When issues arrive, the whole team know immediately and can take steps to mitigate before any more time is lost.