

## RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE



### The Client

→ ALSTOM is a world leader in the energy and transport industries, with a presence in more than 70 countries and a workforce of more than 100,000.

### The Background

→ After years of under-investment in UK railways, there was no longer a suitable test track where new trains could be put through their paces.

Introduction of Virgin's high-speed tilting train for the upgraded West Coast Main Line would mean carrying out significant improvement work on a 13-mile stretch of old line that was perceived as disused by the surrounding communities.

Although nominally used for testing, many residents were unaware that trains still ran along its length. Station houses had been converted into homes and a restaurant had even extended onto one of the platforms.

A communications campaign would need to reassure residents that noise from frequent high-speed trains would cause no problem, that steel electrification masts were visually acceptable, and that the work was essential for the future of the UK rail system.

### The Solution

→ Working across two local authority areas, Pendragon established community liaison groups, a school visits programme, a sponsorships and donations budget and built good contacts with local authority members. Trackside residents received personal visits and ongoing contact, while construction problems were addressed via Freephone and Freepost inquiry lines.

### The Result

→ Both local authorities approved the upgrade work with minimum local opposition, and the Pendolino is now in regular service between London and the North.

