

What is Railcam ?

Railcam is a website broadcasting live streaming from various railway locations across the UK. Our locations now number over 40 throughout the UK, and include the East Coast Main Line, West Coast Main Line, Midland Main Line plus a number of preserved railways too.

We provide a comprehensive range of live railway data services, built around our highly successful live signalling track diagrams. Together, our systems allow users to track any train as it traverses the network. The live diagrams show trains moving in real-time, with full schedules and loco allocations just a click away.

The site has a busy chat room where members can exchange discussion, information and banter about the railway scene, or any day-to-day topic.

Railcam UK is now a Company Limited by Guarantee, **registration number 10167844**. Our success in the last few years has meant that we could no longer continue as an informal group. However, we remain volunteer-run and continue to operate on a not-for-profit basis.

Railcam UK complies with EU regulations controlling data protection and is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

How to Join

Railcam currently has over 15000 members worldwide. Our members range from railway staff, rail enthusiasts and people who just enjoy watching the scenery and weather on our cams.

It is totally free to register with Railcam. Members are able to view the cams, join in with the chat and view the mini-diagrams that run alongside the cameras so that they need never miss a train.

Social Media

We are very active on social media, making use of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, along with our own Live News section on the main pages of the Railcam website.

Our main aim is to keep members up to date with site news and developments, as well as a daily rundown of some of the more interesting or unusual working to pass our cameras. Each morning we publish a cam-by-cam rundown to our Facebook, Twitter and Live News pages which will include rail-tours, loco movements, test trains and much more. We also take advantage of our cameras' ability to take automatic stills and picking the very best of those to feature on our social media pages. Our auto-stills have picked up everything from unusual workings to waving drivers, not to mention a whole host of wildlife!

We also make extensive use of social media sites to share and promote events linked to our cams. We frequently promote events run by our preserved railway partners, such as galas and the like. Likes, Shares and Retweets from Railcam and our numerous members take your message to a whole host of people who may not otherwise see your message.

Cameras & other hardware

We use high quality Hikvision IP cameras as standard. We select the appropriate model, depending on the requirements of the site and its host, taking into account the requirement for sound, environment and need to be discrete.

The smaller Hikvision camera (right) is very unobtrusive. This can be used in locations where sound is not required. It comes in a variety of fixed focal-lengths which can be selected to suit the view which is available.



Our standard camera is (left) is a little larger, but if needed, can be painted to blend in with its surroundings. This is preferred, since the focal-length (zoom) can be set on-site and it supports the connection of a microphone.

In some cases, we may select a “PTZ” (pan-tilt-zoom) model, which can cover different views with a single camera.

Cabling is selected to suit the host’s needs, various colours can be used to ensure that the visual impact is kept to a minimum, we can also use flat ethernet cable that can be fed through windows or doors removing the need to drill any holes. All kit is funded entirely by Railcam, all we ask is that the host provides us with their broadband upload quota and keeps the camera lens clean.

How are the cameras funded?

Running Railcam is not cheap. We have invested in numerous top quality cameras recently, but that’s just the start. We also have to bear the costs involved with streaming all our cameras, servers for our web hosting and diagrams - plus and all the other bits and bobs of software and services which are involved.

Railcam operates a subscription system. Subscribers are given 'Supporter' status and subsequently gain access to exclusive Supporter-only cameras, RC Data and our comprehensive and highly-detailed live signal diagrams.

Hosting a camera for Railcam UK

If I host a camera, what will I get in return?

We are unable to provide payment to cam hosts at present but we do offer our hosts free access to the live signalling track diagrams, access to our host/admin chat room, previews of new website features and live webcams that are still under test.

What do I need to be able to host a camera?

Ideally the camera would be mounted within 100m of the host's Internet router. The camera is connected to the router by a single cable, which carries both data and power (low-voltage) via a PoE (Power-over-Ethernet) adaptor. This keeps things nice and tidy.

There is no need for the host to worry about their download speeds being affected as we would only utilise the little-used up-stream/upload side of the connection. It is however essential that the host has an "unlimited" / uncapped package.

We usually arrange for our install volunteers to carry-out the install work, but in some cases, we may choose to allow hosts to install cameras themselves. In such cases, we pre-configure the camera equipment and send them out for installation by the host, with support offered by telephone or email.

Once the camera is fixed and connected to the network, we will need to make a couple of small adjustments to the hosts networks broadband router to enable the video data to pass out to our broadcasting server. We will need either someone on-site who is familiar with "Port Forwarding", or for you to give us brief "remote control" access to a PC on your network. The Router "admin" password will also be required for this.

Contacting Railcam

We can be contacted via email at contact@railcam.uk or in writing at

Railcam UK Limited
3rd Floor
Regent Street
London
W1B3HH

Feedback from our hosts

I have hosted my cam now for a few months very easy to install with a little help from the good techno people at Railcam .. All up to date modern equipment provided at no cost to myself and the only thing I have to do is evict the spider-webs that occasionally form

I was made very welcome by all who run Railcam .

Andy - Portsmouth camera host

Being a railway enthusiast and living next to a major mainline is a delight Inevitably however, there will be times when life gets in the way of seeing those interesting movements that breaks the monotony of the usual fare. Having a Railcam at the bottom of the garden ensures that I will never miss a thing.

The helpful team at Railcam were friendly throughout the entire process and sent everything needed to establish the site - camera cable and all the electronic gismos to get it running. Despite the constant streaming of the camera there have been no noticeable changes to the wifi capacity or broadband bill! Once installed you barely notice its presence yet you reap the reward for having it there - train spotting from the warmth of the loung huzzah!

If there are any issues or problems the helpful support of the Railcam crew will always sort things out and they will always have my immense gratitude for it.

Peter - Watford camera host

As a long time railway enthusiast and internet user a recent upgrade to BT Infinity with an uncapped data usage package opened up a new avenue for me. Living in a Clitheroe property with unrestricted views of the Blackburn - Hellifield railway I had considered installing a webcam at the bottom of the garden from which to view passing steam locomotives pulling the weekly Fellsman on my various computers at both home and work.

A chance meeting with Adrian Bradshaw and Mike Birtles of Railcam.uk and a short discussion concerning privacy, broadband usage and internet security allayed my fears and we decided they should install a webcam on a three month trial.

The installation was relatively quick and unobtrusive and involved the laying of an Ethernet cable from the camera to an outhouse where it accessed the property's network.

As with most households my broadband usage is confined to downloading data for our various television computer tablets and mobile telephones and the uploading side is hardly used and almost non-existent The webcam takes advantage of the underused side of the data exchange.



During the trial it was found the webcam required very little maintenance - an occasional clean or reboot - and used only a small amount of the household's energy. Neither did it interfere with any of my family's internet devices all of which ran trouble-free.

It's a pleasure to host a rail cam and an enjoyable experience sharing discussions with other users in the various groups. Adrian Mike and the other members of the Railcam.uk team work in a very efficient and professional manner and are always on hand should one of those relatively rare technical issues crop up.

Being able to view trains passing my home from whatever location I should be in the UK and share with other like-minded enthusiasts makes for a very enjoyable pastime.

David Eaves - Clitheroe Cam host