MEDIA RELEASE

BUILDING TRUST

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SIKA AND VOLKERRAIL DELIVER GLOBAL FIRST IN TRAM AND TRACK RENEWAL

Sika® and VolkerRail have delivered a world first on one of London's busiest tram routes following the launch of a pioneering track maintenance solution developed by Sika®.

The South London tram renewal project in Croydon was the first site in the world to use an innovative machine to apply Sika's Icosit® KC 350/45 polymer rail grout, moving embedded track renewal away from traditional hand installation.

By applying Sika's high performance Icosit® grout using a controlled machine application method, VolkerRail were able to secure a speedy return to operation and achieve significantly reduced material losses thanks to the product's faster curing time and the improved accuracy of its placement.

The system was put into service on one of the capital's most active tram routes, which runs for up to 19 hours a day and carries around 17 million passengers annually. Working time was tight, so the team needed a durable solution that could be installed quickly, reliably, and without the risk of delays.

VolkerRail chose Sika's new system as an alternative to conventional labour-intensive hand-poured methods, which typically involve workmen pouring material from small 12 litre tins into the rail channel, a process that can result in material losses of 10 to 20 per cent. On this project, the Icosit® KC 350/45 grout was supplied in 200 litre lined drums and mixed and

pumped directly into place using a machine. That change alone reduced material loss to below five per cent and saw greater consistency of application along the rail run.

The material itself also played a key role. Icosit® KC 350/45 cures up to six times faster than more traditional systems, helping reduce track closure time. In service, the flexible grout, which is largely maintenance-free, absorbs movement rather than pushing stress back into the surrounding concrete. This helps maintain track alignment, reduce vibration and limit mechanical wear on both rail and rolling stock. It also helps to dampen the noise generated by passing trams, significantly reducing the impact for passengers and nearby residents and supporting quieter, more urban-friendly tram infrastructure.

The new system also brings environmental benefits. Larger 200 litre drum formats, which are recyclable, replace single-use tins, and the improved accuracy of machine installation supports more controlled and efficient delivery, cutting down on waste and reworking. When future rail replacement is required, the Icosit® material can be removed using hydro-blasting, leaving the trough clean, and once dried, the channel can be primed and prepared for the new rail - a significant improvement over traditional grout removal methods that require machines sawing into concrete. The new process reduces demolition, waste and disposal, creating a more efficient route for subsequent repairs and renewals.

David Collins, National Business Development Manager at Sika, said: "*This is the first time Sika® Icosit® KC 350/45 polymer has been installed by machine anywhere in the world. By combining faster curing with controlled application, we have demonstrated a more efficient way to deliver embedded rail renewals, and our solution provides a clear example of how rail replacement can be delivered more efficiently with improved performance, less waste and reduced disruption. The benefits extend beyond installation, and its elastic properties reduce*

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vibration and track noise, improving ride quality for passengers while also reducing the impact for residents living alongside tram routes. It's another example of how this groundbreaking system can deliver practical benefits both during installation and throughout the track's service."

Jamie Kelly, Programme Manager at VolkerRail, added: "*We were looking for a system that would allow us to work within tight access windows, reduce environmental waste and also maintain superior durability during the track's service life. The combination of Sika's material and machine application provides a clear example of how rail replacement can be delivered more efficiently and with less wastage. It's a real game changer for light rail embedment, giving us far greater control to place the material accurately and sustainably*."

With light rail networks across the UK facing renewal demand, Sika's Icosit® KC 350/45 in a machine-applied system provides a clear example of how rail replacement can be delivered more efficiently, with improved performance, less waste and reduced disruption.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Sika is a specialty chemicals company with a globally leading position in the development and production of systems and products for bonding, sealing, damping, reinforcing, and protection in the building sector and industry.

Sika has subsidiaries in 102 countries around the world, produces in over 400 factories, and develops innovative technologies for customers worldwide. In doing so, it plays a crucial role in enabling the transformation of the construction and transportation industries toward greater environmental compatibility.

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In the UK and Ireland, Sika provides market-leading solutions for building finishing, concrete, waterproofing, roofing, flooring, refurbishment, sealing & bonding, and industry, and have manufacturing sites in Welwyn Garden City, Preston, Leeds, Wishaw, Redditch, Goole, and Dublin with over 1000 employees and a turnover in excess of £309 million.

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