



M-ticketing - a franchise first!



We are proud to be the first franchised train company to offer m-Tickets across all ticket types and routes, on both the West Coast and East Coast Mainlines. The bar-coded m-Tickets which customers download to their smartphones or other mobile devices will be offered for journeys on Virgin Trains services purchased through our (east coast) website or app.

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The app means that customers can both buy and use their tickets on their mobile for maximum convenience. It also means that customers wanting to buy their tickets on the day can download the app via the free Virgin Trains station Wi-Fi, avoid queues, and select their ticket via a simpler interface than ticket machines.

This follows on from our participation in the industry pilot scheme looking at making buying and using train tickets simple. As part of this pilot we have been able to increase our overall mobile ticket sales to over 170,000 since July 2015, from less than half that amount.

Both companies are looking at ways to bring m-Tickets to even more customers and move away from paper tickets completely, which are easily lost or confused with tickets for other journeys. We will only remove all tangerine tickets once we are sure all of our customers are ready for the change.

Rail Minister, Claire Perry commented, "We want to build a 21st century railway that provides better journeys for all, and much simpler and smarter ticketing is a vital part of that. We have been clear that we will support the industry with ticketing innovation but that we also want rail companies to do what is best for their passengers, without government interference. The expansion of mobile tickets means more Virgin Trains customers can enjoy the benefits of this new

technology, and it will help us get rid of outdated paper tangerine tickets.”

Graham Leech, Group Commercial Director, Virgin Trains added, “We always want to be on the side of passengers and make their experience with us the best it can be. That’s why we love innovating for our customers, which is why we were the first train company to introduce automatic delay repay and why we’re now the first franchised operator to bring in m-Tickets in this way.”

*The m-Ticket offering goes live on the following dates:

- 23 February: West coast journeys can be booked via the app for mobile m-Ticket fulfilment (excluding season tickets)
- 1 March: East coast journeys can be booked via the east coast website for mobile m-Ticket fulfilment (Applies to all routes and ticket types except journeys to Leeds, Stevenage and North of Edinburgh where m-Tickets are available on Advance fares only). Excludes season ticket holders.
- Early April: the Virgin Trains app and the Virgin Trains (east coast) website will both sell m-Tickets for both franchises.

Leading the way on passenger satisfaction

91%

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The result means we continue to beat the long distance sector average for overall customer satisfaction.

May 2016 timetable changes confirmed



We are very pleased to announce a number of customer-focused timetable changes which have been agreed with the Department for Transport and which take effect from 15 May 2016.

These changes came about as a result of us working together to identify, develop and implement ideas to improve our timetable for our customers and stakeholders.

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The changes are summarised below:

- Improved connectivity and journey opportunities at Tamworth and Lichfield on weekdays, by more services stopping there to/from the North West, including the 07.55 Manchester to Euston and 18.40 Euston to Manchester. There will also be more Saturday and Sunday calls at Lichfield.
- Improved connectivity and journey opportunities at Nuneaton by stopping the 08.35 Manchester to Euston there on weekdays.
- Improved connectivity and journey opportunities at Rugby by stopping the 12.10 Euston to Chester and 10.40 Glasgow to Euston there Mondays to Saturdays.
- More standard class capacity and faster journeys from Euston on weekday evenings, by accelerating the 19.00 Euston to Manchester and 19.07 Euston to Liverpool, and 18.46 Euston to Preston (Fridays only), and moving stops to services with more capacity.
- Improved performance, connectivity and journey opportunities on weekdays by stopping the 16.30 Euston to Glasgow service at Warrington, Wigan, Preston, Lancaster, Penrith and Carlisle, rather than just Preston.

Seat reservations for all these services and others commencing 16 May 2016 can now be made, up to 12 weeks in advance of travel.

Flash seat sale (1-3 March)



This week we're launching a 3-day seat sale across the route. Tickets will be available to buy from 1st-3rd March, for travel between 18th March and 2nd May.

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We are offering a mix of First Class and Standard Class tickets, with prices ranging one way from £4 (London to Midlands), £10 (London to North West) and £14 (London to North & Scotland).

Tickets are available to buy through our website and app.

Anglo-scot services resume



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The full cross-border timetable resumed on February 22 following work to reinforce a damaged pier of the bridge, near Carstairs, and raise the track to its normal level. The crossing sustained heavy damage during unprecedented levels of rainfall in December which washed away foundations, weakening the second pier.

Customers travelling between Glasgow and Carlisle had been using an hourly shuttle service via Dumfries while Edinburgh passengers had a bus replacement as far as Carlisle, both of which added around an hour to normal journey times.

Network Rail had previously advised that the West Coast Main Line would open at the beginning of March but were able to accelerate the repair work after a run of dry weather.

Anna Doran, General Manager at Virgin Trains commented: "We're delighted to be back to normal sooner than anticipated, as Network Rail completed the works to Lamington viaduct ahead of schedule. It has been great to see our Pendolinos at Glasgow and Edinburgh again and to welcome passengers onboard. We would like to thank our customers for their continued patience and support over the last few weeks and we look forward to them travelling with us soon."

Station updates



We have introduced wifi at several managed stations on our route and improved our retail facilities in recent months.

Wifi at stations

WiFi has been introduced at Lancaster, Oxenholme, Penrith, Preston, Warrington Bank Quay and Wigan North Western stations. Customers waiting to board their trains can now easily access the WiFi on their personal smart phones, tablets and computers.

Retail improvements

Customers at Stoke-on-Trent station have seen the retail / ticket office area on Platform 2 transformed as part of our £20m station investment programme. Similar schemes at Coventry and Stafford are close to completion, all three driven by the desire to improve the customer experience and engagement with our station teams.

Supporting flood hit communities

At the end of January, we announced a partnership with VisitEngland, as part of



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The £1m Love the North campaign was funded by Central Government to promote staycations across flood-affected regions of England. As part of the partnership, we are offering 30% discount on Off Peak Advance fares to destinations in the affected areas on both the East Coast and West Coast Mainlines, to show support for the local communities and businesses. The offer is available for travel from mid February – mid May and has been available to book for three weeks (Tuesday 9 February – Tuesday 1 March).

Engineering works



Easter improvement works are scheduled to take place from 25 - 30 March. We are working with Network Rail to minimise disruption during this time and ensure customers are advised of the scheduled improvement works. We are advising customers to check their journey in advance.

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From 25 -28 March, London to/from Birmingham New Street/Wolverhampton, Manchester Piccadilly, Liverpool Lime Street, Glasgow Central and Edinburgh services, will be affected. Along these routes there will be alterations or reduced services.

On 28 March, London to/from Birmingham New Street/Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury, and London to/from Manchester Piccadilly services, will be affected.

From 29 - 30 March, London to/from Birmingham New Street/Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury services, will be affected.

Full details are available on our website.

Celebrating Global Scouse Day



We supported Global Scouse Day in February with a number of fun initiatives. Scouse, a lamb based dish, was served on 31 services, exporting the local delicacy along the West Coast Main Line at 125mph to the West Midlands, Manchester and Scotland.

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Scouse, a lamb based dish, was served on 31 services, exporting the local delicacy along the West Coast Main Line at 125mph to the West Midlands, Manchester and Scotland. This forms part of our commitment to bring regional and innovative food to all of our customers and the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Councillor Tony Concepcion (pictured), was one of the first to tuck in!