



Welcome to the Red Letter

A message from David



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Welcome to our new look Virgin Trains stakeholder e-zine. The last few months have yet again been packed with exciting business developments and customer service improvements. Our new Edinburgh services were launched in May, giving customers an extra 42 services a week to choose from. This service expansion is just one part of a wider ambition to improve our timetable in the coming years, and I am delighted with the recent ORR decision on track access which granted us the paths to run our new timetable in full. This month has also seen the launch of BEAM, an industry leading on board entertainment coming to our fleet shortly, the roll out of the fantastic new James Martin menu, and the introduction of free Wi-Fi for all our Standard Class passengers who book through our website. As I said – it's

been a busy and exciting few months, and I look forward to hearing your feedback on these new initiatives!

Virgin launches 42 new Edinburgh-London services

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We launched our new services to Edinburgh on 16 May with the Secretary of State for Scotland, David Mundell MP appearing alongside David Horne and Martin Griffiths, chief executive of Stagecoach.

Our new timetable means that there are 42 additional trains connecting the UK and Scottish capitals every week, adding 22,000 seats to the weekly capacity and making the service near half hourly. As a result we've already seen a surge of bookings for journeys across the border, up by 15% compared with last year.

Green light for Azuma timetable



Our plans to run a new timetable from May 2019 to make full use of our new Azuma trains have been approved by the Office of Rail and Road.

We applied for a new nine-year track access contract to help us achieve major improvements to our timetable from May 2019, which would allow us to make full use of our *Azuma* trains. The Office of Rail and Road have now approved our application to run all our future services - a result which we feel is in the best interest of passengers, taxpayers, and communities along our route.

We are delighted that the benefits of our services have been recognised and we're looking forward to providing communities in Bradford, Harrogate and Lincoln with additional services, and introducing new ones to locations such as Middlesbrough and Huddersfield.

More improvements for our passengers



We're launching new menus, and free Wi-Fi for our passengers in Standard Class.

We're continuing to roll out even more improvements to our services, including a new menu with the chef and TV presenter James Martin. James has created a range of specially created seasonal menus for us, including a new chicken curry dish and a range of jams produced in Yorkshire - just for us! The menu is already available for First Class passengers, and we'll be rolling it out in Standard Class in the autumn.

We've also introduced free Wi-Fi for Standard Class passengers who book through our website, which is yet another part of our plan to invest in our services so it works for

our customers.

On-board entertainment beamed to your device

Customers can now stream around 200 hours of complimentary films, TV shows, magazines and games straight to their devices with our revolutionary new BEAM app.

At Virgin Trains, we've always prided ourselves on being industry-leading, and we're continuing to do that by launching our new on-board entertainment service, BEAM. It gives passengers access to around 200 hours of TV and film, as well as magazines and games. All they need to do is download the BEAM app from the Apple or Android store before they board one of our trains. It's also completely free for everyone on board, regardless of whether they're travelling in First or Standard class, and we'll be refreshing the content often, putting on four new films a month.



For the launch, we partnered with the Hollywood blockbuster *Independence Day: Resurgence* to deliver a red carpet event at Euston Station. Director Roland Emmerich and cast members Liam Hemsworth and Jeff Goldblum turned up to unveil the train wrap, each having a carriage decorated with their characters on the side!

Serving our communities along the route



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We're proud to support the many communities up and down the East Coast route. We recently launched a breakfast club at a North Tyneside primary school with the Greggs Foundation, partly paid for through charitable fundraising by our staff. This will provide a free and nutritious breakfast for around a quarter of the school's pupils, and we'll continue to work closely with the Greggs Foundation to bring this to more schools.

In Durham, we're working in partnership with the city's campaign to win the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom award. Station staff worked with young people to prepare the station to impress the judges when they arrive in Durham this summer. We've also teamed up with Darlington Football Club to sponsor their kits, and fans will be able to buy the new shirts from August!