



Welcome!

Meeting demand on the West Coast



Chief Executive Tony Collins discusses the rising demand for West Coast services.

The Virgin Trains formula of innovation and customer service has seen passenger numbers on our network grow from 13m in 1997 to 30m in 2012. I expect to see healthy growth continuing...

There must be scope for further development of services if the towns and cities served by the West Coast route are to prosper. West Coast services cannot stand still until the delivery of HS2. So I was very disappointed when Network Rail turned down our recent proposals to offer new direct services from London to Blackpool and to Shrewsbury.

Network Rail claimed that just eight services a day would compromise its ability to deliver punctual services, not just for Blackpool and Shrewsbury but across the West Coast network. The Office of Rail Regulation has been clear that Network Rail has not been doing everything it should to deliver reliable infrastructure. So the answer to improving reliability is that Network Rail should up its game, not that it should stand in the way of innovation.

Stakeholders in the Blackpool and Shrewsbury areas have made clear to us the importance they attach to the services we have proposed. Other timetable improvements such as additional stops at Motherwell also depend on using capacity which would be released by the introduction of new services to Blackpool. We hope that commitments by Network Rail to improve its performance will be realised and have re-submitted a proposal to run these trains from May 2014.

Your journeys

Major infrastructure works to improve punctuality

Improvement work on the West Coast Main Line at Watford will get underway in 2014 to improve the punctuality of train services on Britain's busiest mixed-use railway line. The work will involve the complete closure of the route through Watford Junction for 16 days in August

The area around Watford is one of the most intensively-used high-speed sections of



track in the country. Network Rail begins an £81m improvement scheme in May next year, which will continue into 2015. The work will involve five periods when the line will be completely closed, including 8 – 25 August.

Normally Network Rail would have carried out work of this kind over a number of weekends, requiring train services to be replaced repeatedly by alternative transport. The work at Watford would have required 54 complete weekend closures of the line, disrupting passengers for well over a year. By carrying out the work in five longer closures, engineers expect to be able to install the new signalling, replace track and junctions earlier and avoid disrupting rail travel plans for a large number of weekends throughout 2014 and 2015.

Working closely with Network Rail and other train operators, Virgin Trains will ensure that during these closures all customers have a reliable way of travelling to and from London principally by being able to use other operators' services but in some cases by taking a replacement coach service for a short portion of the journey.

[Click here to go to Network Rail's Watford improvements pages](#)

It's e-as-y



1 million customers opt for the convenience of e-tickets.

Since customers were given the option of using e-tickets in September 2008, over 1m Virgin Trains' customers have travelled with an e-ticket. E-tickets represent added convenience for our customers. When booking on-line it's simple to choose the e-ticket delivery option. A ticket is then e-mailed to the customer within two hours. It can then be printed off, avoiding the need to wait for a postal delivery or having to stop off at a Fast Ticket machine to collect card tickets.

Our Trains

All aboard the Musical Express



80 orchestra members + 140 young performers + 50 volunteers + 1 Pendolino = The Liverpool Philharmonic Musical Express.

A talent-packed charter train headed from Liverpool to London on 31 August to perform at the BBC Family Prom. Based around the popular children's book *We're Going On a Bear Hunt* the Albert Hall audience sang, danced and applauded its way through the concert. Professionals from the Liverpool Philharmonic were joined by youngsters from its youth choir and pupils from Faith Primary School in Everton, where the orchestra's In Harmony project is based. The project sees every child in the school learning an instrument, along with many of the staff!

Arranged through our specialised group travel team, the train was full of chatter and noise on the outward journey but rather quieter on the return journey after two rehearsals and a concert with an audience of 5,000.

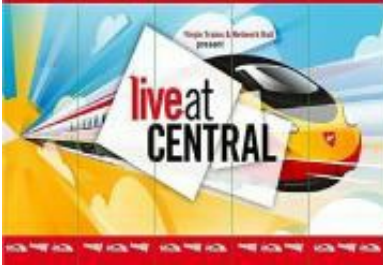
[Click here to find out more about hiring a Virgin train](#)

[Click here to find out more about In Harmony Liverpool](#)

Our destinations

That's Glasgow entertainment!

Many people arrive in Glasgow on a Friday evening eager to grab hold of what the city has to offer the weekend visitor. We want the entertainment to start as soon as they arrive...



Virgin Trains, in partnership with Network Rail and supported by Most Entertaining Ltd, is presenting the latest celebration of various music genres under the 'Live at Central' banner. Brass Tracks, Brass Trap, Kate Dunn and the Fair City Singers are the line up for successive Fridays in September.

A listed building, Glasgow Central is the busiest station in Scotland and will be a major transport hub for next year's Commonwealth Games.

Wolverhampton man reunited with station staff who saved his life



Virgin Trains has defibrillators at all of our stations, and we are installing them on all of our trains.

In March Norman and Jean Brotherton, were passing through Wolverhampton station on their way to Yorkshire for a week's holiday when Norman stopped breathing. The stations' defibrillator was used by staff trained by the West Midlands Ambulance NHS Trust.

When Jean raised the alarm Virgin Trains people sprang into action. Kim Weaver-Davis comforted Jean, while Dave Whitehouse and Stuart Vickers administered CPR. Their colleague Steve Wade raced to collect the station's defibrillator.

After about eight minutes of CPR and one use of the defibrillator the Virgin Trains team handed over to a paramedic. At his point Norman's heart was beating, but he was unconscious. He remained in hospital for 20 days.

Reunited at Wolverhampton station, Norman said: "I don't know anything at all about that day or for the two days after. All I know is that I was sitting on a bus and I died. The staff at the train station are wonderful people and I owe them my life."

All Virgin Trains stations have defibrillators and staff trained in their use. Train Managers have been trained during the summer in anticipation of the installation on defibrillators on all trains over the next couple of months.

Our people

The Red Track to success



12 people joined Virgin Trains in August, combining work with studying for a degree in Business Management. They start - in Virgin fashion - with a treasure hunt.

The Red Track Crew have been employed on three-year contracts while they study with Manchester Metropolitan University for BA (Hons) qualifications. One member of the crew currently works for Virgin Trains, while two others served internships with us. Their first task is to travel our network finding the answers to a 100-question treasure hunt. Once that is over the hard work will start. During their first year each member of the crew will spend three months on-board, three at stations and three with our control and resources departments.

Railway world

Virgin Trains and Network Rail working together on suicide prevention

Network Rail has appointed a Virgin Trains secondee as suicide prevention manager for the West Coast route in England.

The appointment runs alongside a five year programme which has seen train operating companies and Network Rail working with Samaritans to reduce the risk of suicide.

Virgin Trains secondee David Johnson's role will see him work with both Samaritans and British Transport Police, as well as passenger and freight operators to help reduce incidents of suicide.



David's appointment is in response to recommendations contained within the final report of the West Coast South Reliability Programme produced by Virgin Trains' Chief Operating Officer Chris Gibb while he was also on secondment to Network Rail.

A partnership with Samaritans has also seen thousands of railway staff taking part in courses designed to reduce the risk of suicides. Support posters and signage from the Samaritans at stations and other priority locations is also contributing to reducing the devastating impact that suicides have upon both railway workers and local communities.

In addition, Network Rail continues to invest significant sums on active and passive suicide mitigation measures across the LNW and other routes. These include the installation of additional station and lineside fencing, improved CCTV systems and enhanced security lighting, as well as a continuing programme of staff training.

[Click here to visit Samaritans website](#)

On our way to sustainability



Our second report on sustainability was published in August. The updated report details Virgin Trains' commitment to working towards a sustainable business for a sustainable planet.

Copyright © 2013 West Coast trains Ltd, subsidiary of the Virgin Rail group Ltd. Registered in England No. 3007940. Registered Office: The Battleship Building, 179 Harrow Rd, London, W2 6NB.

Newsletter Marketing Powered by Newsweaver