



Welcome to the Red Letter

A message from Phil



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We were the first train company to introduce m-Tickets across all our routes, with customers able to buy these on our app and online to send to their mobile. In the summer we launched BEAM, our complimentary on-board streaming service with over 200 hours of content available. We've also seen Wi-Fi installed at all our managed stations, carried out a range of station improvement works along the route and extended our booking horizon to six months. All these initiatives have been to improve our services for our passengers. Next year we'll be celebrating 20 years of running the West Coast Main Line, and we're committed to continuing our record of pioneering initiatives to improve our services. On behalf of everyone at Virgin Trains, I'd like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Unveiling our Station of the Future

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We've unveiled our vision for the station of the future at Birmingham International. The ticket office at the station has been transformed, with the traditional booking office window now a thing of the past. We've installed a welcome desk with service pods for customers purchasing tickets, more user friendly information screens, touch screen information points and improved ticket machines. Our new open plan design allows for more staff presence on the concourse,



floorwalkers to assist with travel requests, free Wi-Fi and refurbished toilets. These changes are being driven by our customers, more of whom are arriving having already bought paperless tickets. We were delighted to be joined by the local MP Rt Hon Dame Caroline Spelman, who was on hand to formally open the new station.

Holding regular prison recruitment fairs



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We're making prison recruitment fairs a regular part of our talent-hunting process. Every three months we will be holding recruitment events within prisons across the UK to identify talented candidates and help end reoffending. We currently have 27 people across the West Coast who were recruited through our ex-offenders programme and have established partnerships with HM Prison Service, the Scottish Prison Service and private prison operators to identify inmates nearing the end of their sentences.

We have been actively recruiting ex-offenders since 2013 and recently gave evidence to MPs on how businesses can support ex-offenders into the workplace.

Our Christmas train arrives at Birmingham New Street



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A life-size replica of our Pendolino train was unveiled at Birmingham New Street to spread Christmas cheer, with over 1,000 presents given away by Virgin Trains. The 12m long by 2m high replica was presented to lucky passengers travelling through New Street, with presents including iPads, folding bikes, Virgin balloon rides and pamper days. We also hosted a Facebook Live event, which allowed people to tune in for the chance to win a present online.

Launching our new Bike Hub at Preston



We've officially opened our new bike hub at Preston, transforming the facility for cyclists using the station.

We've officially opened our new bike hub at Preston, transforming the facility for cyclists using the station. The Hub offers a secure space for up to 200 cycles, making it the largest on the West Coast Main Line. It also features a specialist cycling shop, managed by Leisure Lakes Bikes, a family-run business based in Preston. Virgin Trains is a member of British Cycling's Choose Cycling Network and we have invested nearly £500,000 as part of our latest scheme to improve facilities for cyclists. We were joined by Mark Hendrick, the MP for Preston who opened the facility.

Expression of Interest published for the new West Coast Partnership

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The new franchise will combine the current services run by Virgin Trains on the West Coast Main Line with the initial High Speed 2 services. It will also be responsible for designing and running the initial high speed services from 2026, which covers the first three to five years of HS2.

The invitation to tender is expected to be published in November 2017, with the new franchise scheduled to start in April 2019.

Changes to our Railcard policy



We've recently introduced changes to our policy on refunding customers who have forgotten their Railcard and travel on one of our services.

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Customers will be able to obtain a refund if they find their railcard following their journey and take it to their local ticket office managed by Virgin Trains. This follows an announcement by the Department for Transport, who have announced that this

policy is due to come into force on all train companies by March 2017.

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