



Auto Delay Repay



In October Virgin Trains became the first operator to offer automatic delay repay (ADR) to passengers. The system calculates the money due to a customer in the event of a delay and automatically pays the compensation directly onto the card they used for purchase. The compensation is calculated under the existing Delay Repay scheme.

In October Virgin Trains became the first operator to offer automatic delay repay (ADR) to passengers. The system calculates the money due to a customer in the event of a delay and automatically pays the compensation directly onto the card they used for purchase. The compensation is calculated under the existing Delay Repay scheme.

ADR is available to Virgin Trains customers travelling on the West Coast Mainline who purchased their Advance tickets through www.virgintrains.com or the mobile app. Around 3.5 million customer journeys could benefit from the scheme.

Many additional passengers could also benefit simply by purchasing their Advance tickets through the website, which guarantees the cheapest fares with no booking fees.

We expect this new system to result in an additional £2.8 million being paid to passengers in compensation within the next year, on top of the existing level of compensation. This is because many people simply do not claim at the moment, and is based on current website use and levels of previous delays.

Phil Whittingham, Managing Director, Virgin Trains on the West Coast said, "We're proud of our record of customer service at Virgin Trains and are always looking for new ways to innovate for the benefit of customers. So we're delighted to be the first train company to automatically refund cash directly back onto customers' payment cards should they be delayed by more than 30 minutes. This will be available to customers who book through our website or app, so the more people who book with us, the more we can help in this way. This is just one of a range of innovations we have planned for the coming year, all of which are aimed squarely at the most important person - the customer."

New Stirling-London service delivered



A new Virgin Trains service connecting Stirling and Falkirk to London has been launched by Scotland's Transport Minister.

A new Virgin Trains service connecting Stirling and Falkirk to London has been launched by Scotland's Transport Minister.

Derek Mackay was joined by the council leaders of Stirling and Falkirk to see off the inaugural 5.26am departure on December 14 and welcomed the role it will play in supporting Scotland's economy.

The weekday service will cut rail journey times to the UK capital by 46 minutes and ensure passengers don't have to change trains, with a new direct return service

departing King's Cross at 3pm.

It has been welcomed by business leaders, politicians and tourism representatives, who joined Virgin Trains bosses onboard the first departure.

The service launch marks an early step in ambitious plans to transform rail services to Scotland after Virgin Trains began operations on the east coast route in March.

A new fleet of 65 faster, greener, more comfortable trains will be introduced by Virgin Trains on the east coast from 2018, allowing it to provide more seats, accelerate journeys and attract more people to rail.

Stirling is the fifth of Scotland's seven cities to benefit from an early-morning Virgin Trains service to London. Next May Edinburgh will gain a further five services, with departures for King's Cross leaving every half hour for most of the day.

Mr Mackay said: "I am pleased to launch this service from Stirling to London and I am confident that it will be a major draw for tourists, students, business and residents and deliver significant economic benefits to Stirling and the wider locality.

"It will bring further attention to Stirling's diverse and growing business base, its splendid University and business Innovation Park, its impressive cultural and sporting facilities and its historical attractions."

Johanna Boyd, leader of Stirling Council, added: "Stirling is an outward-looking city and city region keen to connect and to work with the business community, to explore the opportunities that allow them and us to thrive in partnership.

"Our vision for Stirling as a Council is very much about opening up and encouraging new opportunities to create a truly vibrant city and city region, attractive to new players. We will continue to support the growth of those local businesses that have played such an important role in the development of our economic strength to date.

"This new Virgin Trains service, connecting Stirling directly with the UK capital, is very much the kind of ambitious innovation we welcome."

Warrick Dent, Safety and Operations Director for Virgin Trains on the east coast, said: "This is exciting day for us as we connect another of Scotland's cities with a direct, early-morning service to London and start our journey to transform passenger services to Scotland.

"We've been really encouraged by the feedback from people in Stirling, particularly among businesses who have told us how much they value having this additional service, which will get them to and from London faster and without having to change trains."

Mike Cantlay, Chairman of VisitScotland said: "From the UK's capital city to Scotland's heritage capital, this new direct service from London to Stirling is great news for Scottish tourism.

"Londoners will be able to escape the stresses of daily life to discover this beautiful historic city with its spectacular castle, cobbled streets and Renaissance churches and mansions. Visitors can also awaken their inner Braveheart with a trip to the National Wallace Monument or soak up the atmospheric Bannockburn battlefield which includes a centre that harnesses 3D technology to bring the epic Scottish Wars of Independence to life.

"We look forward to welcoming even more visitors to both Stirling and Falkirk with this exciting new service."

Ross Martin, Chief Executive of Scottish Council for Development and Industry, added:

"Inter City Connectivity is a crucial element of SCDI's mission - driving economic growth - and this announcement represents another great step forward, linking Stirling directly to London.

Living in Larbert, just a nine minute local train trip away, this new intercity service will make a huge difference to me personally, making my engagement with Westminster and the City of London, on behalf of our wide and diverse membership, so much easier, quicker and more comfortable."

One of the passengers onboard the first service who expects to be a regular passenger in the months ahead is John McNally, MP for Falkirk.

He said: "I usually get the train down to London on Sunday to get to Westminster. Having the early morning direct departure from Falkirk means travel to London on the Monday will be a much simpler option," he said.

"Being able to work onboard means I can get ready for the week in London on the way there. It's also really positive to see Scotland supported by strong rail links to England."

First Minister launches Virgin Trains' Flying Scotsman

Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, has unveiled Virgin's new 'Flying Scotsman' train, celebrating one of the most famous names in railway history.

Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, has unveiled Virgin's new 'Flying Scotsman' train, celebrating one of the most famous names in railway history.



Virgin Trains, which runs a four-hour 'Flying Scotsman' express service from Edinburgh to London, has re-liveried a locomotive to promote rail travel to and from Scotland.

This marks a major milestone in the 'Virginising' of its fleet of trains into a distinctive Virgin red, as it continues to attract more people to travel on its trains, particularly between the UK's two capital cities.

The unveiling took place at Edinburgh Waverley station in October on the same day that Virgin Trains announced a £16m contract to refurbish engines for its High Speed Trains, which are serviced and maintained at its Edinburgh depot.

Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland, said: "For over 150 years the Flying Scotsman service has connected Edinburgh and London by the historic East Coast rail route. It is wonderful to see the name of the Flying Scotsman train kept alive on the route with a new, contemporary design.

"I am also delighted that the refurbishment of Virgin's diesel engines will draw on the local skills and talents of the Craiginny workforce."

David Horne, Managing Director at Virgin Trains on the east coast route, said: "We are thrilled to continue the legendary name of the Flying Scotsman.

"Flying Scotsman trains brought style to the railways for many years. Our new train is a design twist on the legendary Flying Scotsman, recreating the glamour of rail travel for the 21st century, using our distinctive Virgin brand and style.

"The re-livery of our fleet in Virgin red is now almost complete, but we felt we just had to create a unique look to promote our Flying Scotsman and travel to and from Scotland.

"We look forward to welcoming customers on-board and providing them with a great Virgin customer experience."

West Coast back up to speed after flooding



Virgin Trains services on the West Coast Main Line are expected to get back up to speed this weekend after further repairs to sections damaged by flooding in Cumbria two weeks ago.

Virgin Trains services on the West Coast Main Line are expected to get back up to speed this weekend after further repairs to sections damaged by flooding in Cumbria two weeks ago. Parts of the railway were submerged by eight feet of water amid unprecedented rainfall on December 5, leading to a suspension of all services; passengers travelling between Scotland and England were diverted via Edinburgh on the East Coast Main Line for two days until the line reopened. Network Rail engineers worked around the clock once the floodwater receded to repair the damage and are

expected to complete further repairs to the worst affected areas this weekend. This will ensure that temporary speed restrictions that have affected journeys between Scotland and England can be removed.

Christmas Train Community Competition



A West Coast Pendolino train has been transformed into a Penguilino and an East Coast Class 91 has become a Claus 91. The designs came from the winners of the Christmas Train design competition, nine-year-old Amber Maxfield and 11-year-old Madeleine Deakin.

A West Coast Pendolino train has been transformed into a *Penguilino* and an East Coast Class 91 has become a *Claus 91*. The designs came from the winners of the Christmas Train design competition, nine-year-old Amber Maxfield and 11-year-old Madeleine Deakin.

The competition attracted hundreds of entries from all across the UK and was judged by a panel headed by children's author Jill Murphy.

The two trains will run up and down on the West Coast and East Coast routes over the Christmas period, each bearing the name of its young designer.

Patrick McCall, Chairman of Virgin Trains, said: "We loved the concepts that these two young designers came up with and are proud to have their ideas transform two trains. It's fantastic that both the East Coast and West Coast services have come together to make our customers' journeys throughout December extra special - especially on their way home for Christmas."

Diana Gerald, Book Trust chief executive, said: "This project has been a great opportunity to inspire children to use their imaginations and we were really impressed with the quality of entries. We received everything from family party scenes to our most beloved Christmas characters."

Email Newsletter Software by Newsweaver