



A message from David



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We are fully into our £140 million investment programme, providing an amazing onboard experience for all our customers. Since March 2015, we've already invested £45 million. This year alone, we've refurbished our current fleet of trains, introduced a brand new menu created by TV Chef James Martin and launched our groundbreaking onboard entertainment app, BEAM, so customers can watch their favourite films and TV shows for free as they travel. Plus we launched free on-board WiFi for our standard class customers and we've also invested in free customer WiFi at our stations.

We've also given our First Class Lounges a makeover, added hundreds of extra spaces in our car parks and started to roll out new, more user friendly ticket machines.

In May, we were delighted to introduce 42 new weekly services between London and Edinburgh, and a set of further new services mostly between Leeds and London this December. These extra services mean that we're now offering 10,000 extra discounted advance tickets each week.

And in August we opened our new Customer Solutions Centre in Gosforth, bringing back in-house the team who provide assistance to customers via email, phone and Live Chat. The centre is also home to the team who assist customers with Group Travel and VIP bookings. All part of our commitment to transform every element of our customers' experience.

On top of this, this year we're paying £70 million more to Government than Directly Operated Railways paid when the franchise was in public ownership.

But, we've only just started! We've got even more planned for next year as we gear up for the launch of the Azuma in 2018, which will see even more services on the East Coast, built here in the UK by Hitachi.

I'd like to thank you for all your feedback and support in the last year – stakeholder engagement is always valued at Virgin Trains, as it helps to make our services even better. Finally, I want to wish you all a Happy New Year and I very much look forward to working with you in 2017!

13,000 new seats in our timetable



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The Leeds to King's Cross route has had ten more trains added over the weekend, with 5,000 extra seats on the route. London – Edinburgh also sees some additional services over the weekend. Some of the changes we've made include a late-night service from King's Cross to York on Fridays and our extra services add up to give customers six additional departures between Edinburgh and Newcastle.

Our new timetable will see a boost to services in Northumberland, with more services to Morpeth and Alnmouth.

Helping passengers during the Christmas rush

We've become the first train company to improve our information screens at stations to help customers find a seat on their train.

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Pictograms on the information screens will now display reservation levels for each carriage between the departure station and the next calling point. This is to help customers without reservations identify where they are most likely to find a seat. The screens will also show approximate boarding times and estimated arrival times at each station. These are in place at all our managed stations as well as King's Cross,



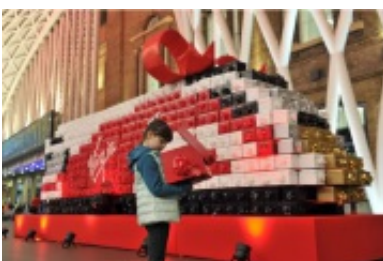
Increasing car parking and cycling spaces across the route



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We've recently completed a project to create over 900 new car parking and 500 cycling spaces along our route. After listening to feedback from our customers, we've added over 900 car parking spaces to stations along our route including Darlington, Wakefield Westgate and Peterborough. In addition to these spaces, we're currently working to increase capacity for cyclists. Over 500 spaces will be available by the end of the year, contributing to a total of 2,000 spaces across our route.

Our Christmas train arrives at King's Cross



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A life-size replica of our Azuma train was unveiled at King's Cross 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 King's Cross, 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.

Supporting the call for investment on the East Coast



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David Horne spoke at the event, highlighting the additional seats we have recently added to our timetable, as well as the expanded timetable delivering new services to destinations such as Bradford, Harrogate and Middlesbrough. Network Rail also outlined their proposition for a programme to improve performance and capacity levels on the East Coast Main Line – implementation of which depends on Network Rail securing commitment to invest an extra £3 billion on the route between now and 2024.

You can sign the petition [here](#).

Our latest Innovation projects



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We've delivered several new initiatives this year, including wireless chargers in all of our first class lounges so passengers can easily power up their devices. In October we launched our Explorer App at King's Cross, which helps customers navigate their way around the station. The app provides sign translation for our international passengers and real time travel data. We'll be rolling this out to all stations along our route and

it's free for iOS and Android users to download.

We're planning to launch even more projects to benefit our passengers, so look out for announcements in the New Year.

Launching Platform 0 at Doncaster



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The launch is part of Network Rail's £21m programme of improvements at the station, which will also include track adjustments and improved signalling. We have also launched the 05.07 weekday service from Doncaster to King's Cross, as well as the 22.57 weekly departure from King's Cross calling at Doncaster which will provide business travellers and theatre goers with additional services. A total of 19 additional

services are scheduled to call at Doncaster every week.

Locomotive named to celebrate Newcastle's Mayoralty



A Virgin Trains locomotive has been named the "Lord Mayor of Newcastle" to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the city's Mayoralty and Freeman.

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A ceremony was held in December to commemorate the anniversary of a charter granted to allow the city's Freeman to elect a Mayor of Newcastle. The ceremony was held at Newcastle Central Station by the Olympic gold medallist Jonathan Edwards OBE, who is also an Honorary Freeman of the city.

The train naming is part of Newcastle City Council's commemoration of 800 years of the Mayoralty, and we continue to work with communities across our route to promote their history and heritage.

Marking one year of our Sunderland service



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In December 2015, Virgin Trains launched a daily return service between Sunderland and London, naming one of our cars the 'Spirit of Sunderland' to mark the arrival of the service. We worked closely with the council to launch and promote the service.

This year we presented the commemorative plate to Councillor Henry Trueman, Deputy Leader of Sunderland City Council. Virgin Trains is looking to continue to

grow our presence in Sunderland, and we plan to introduce an additional return service between the city and London from 2020.

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