**3rd July 2015**

**400 million customer journeys and counting**

* *Virgin Trains says thank you as major milestone is reached*

Friday 3rd July 2015 marked a special day in Virgin Trains’ history as it exceeded 400 million customer journeys.  The major milestone was reached in super fast time with record numbers now travelling on the West Coast Main Line.

Since taking over the route in 1997, Virgin Trains has worked hard to transform services on the key long distance line leading to a surge in rail popularity that has seen passenger figures more than double to 34.5m in the last twelve months.

To help mark the occasion, customers at Crewe Station, the iconic interchange used by so many on the West Coast Main Line, were treated to homemade cup cakes. Bearing the simple message ‘400m’ and ‘Thank You’ they were eagerly devoured by those looking forward to their weekend.

“This is just our little way of saying thank you,” explained Heather Hodkinson, Station Manager for Crewe. “We’ve been overwhelmed by the support we’ve received from our customers. The challenge of course now is to build on this. Next stop 500 million!”

**Ends**

ENDS

**About Virgin Trains**

Virgin Trains is the brand name of Virgin Rail Group (VRG), which is owned by Virgin Group (51%) and Stagecoach (49%). Virgin Trains has operated the West Coast passenger train franchise since 1997, serving key UK cities including London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow. In June 2014 the Department for Transport (DfT) awarded VRG a new franchise until at least April 2017.

Virgin Trains is committed to delivering a high speed, high frequency service, offering shorter journey times, more comfortable travel and excellent customer service. We provide the most frequent long-distance rail service in Europe (London - Manchester and London – Birmingham, both every 20 minutes).

Since 1997, Virgin Trains has introduced over 70 new trains at a cost of £1.5 billion. The service carries more than 34.5 million passengers a year and Virgin Trains employs approximately 3,290 staff.

Virgin Trains customers consistently rate the company as one of the top long-distance rail franchise operators in the National Passenger Survey (NPS) commissioned by industry watchdog “Passenger Focus”.

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