**Tuesday 22 August**

**Virgin Trains urges customers to think ahead this August bank holiday during London Euston closure**

* *No services to or from London Euston on Saturday 26 & Sunday 27 August*
* *Virgin Trains’ services on both routes expected to be very busy over August bank holiday weekend*

Virgin Trains is advising customers wishing to travel over the August Bank Holiday via its east coast and west coast routes to plan their journeys and reserve seats in advance. There will be no services into or out of London Euston on Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 August due to Network Rail carrying out HS2 enabling works. As a result, services will be disrupted and are expected to be busier than usual.

Virgin Trains services on the west coast route will start and terminate at Milton Keynes Central or Rugby – with no trains running into or out of London Euston. Reduced services will run to Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester all day Saturday and Sunday until 12pm on Monday 28 August. Customers are asked to avoid travel on Saturday or Sunday unless necessary, and to plan their journeys in advance. Those who need to travel over the August Bank Holiday will face longer journey times via alternative routes. More information about alternative routes is available from: [www.virgintrains.co.uk/spanner](http://www.virgintrains.co.uk/spanner)

On the east coast route, Virgin Trains services between London Kings Cross and Scotland are expected to be extremely popular due to the Edinburgh Festival, as well as those seeking alternative routes to and from London. Customers should reserve a seat before they travel and expect services to be busier than usual.

A spokesperson for Virgin Trains said: “There will be no trains into or out of London Euston on Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th August while Network Rail carries out preparatory work for HS2. We expect our services on both routes to be very busy from Friday to Monday, and are advising customers to avoid travelling on our west coast route on Saturday or Sunday unless necessary. If customers choose to travel, we strongly recommend they book their tickets in advance, make a seat reservation, and allow longer to get to their destination. They should also double-check the National Rail Enquiries and Virgin Trains websites before travelling.”

Antonia Buckland, high speed rail sponsorship director for Network Rail, said: “The advice to passengers planning travel to or from Euston station this bank holiday is clear: plan your journeys on days other than Saturday and the Sunday and only travel by train on those days if absolutely essential. If you do travel, trains will be busier than usual, journeys will take longer and unless you have reserved one, you won’t be guaranteed a seat. Travel between Scotland, the North West, West Midlands and London on the Saturday and Sunday is discouraged and the whole rail industry – Network Rail, HS2 Ltd and train operators – is working together to give passengers plenty of warning and information about the planned disruption.”

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**About Virgin Trains**

Stagecoach and Virgin are working in partnership to operate the East Coast and West Coast inter-city routes under the Virgin Trains brand. Together, they are on track to revolutionise rail travel across the UK.

The combined network connects some of the nation’s most iconic destinations including Glasgow, Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Leeds, York and London.

Virgin Trains is committed to delivering a high speed, high frequency service, offering shorter journey times, more comfortable travel and excellent customer service. Customers consistently rate Virgin Trains as one of the top long-distance rail franchise operators in the National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) commissioned by industry watchdog, Transport Focus.

On the East Coast route, £140m is being invested to create a more personalised travel experience. We have already invested over £40m in our existing fleet, including £21m refurbishing interiors and £16m towards improving the engines of our trains. Customers can now benefit from 42 additional services between Edinburgh and London every week, and an extra 22 Saturday services between Leeds and London – a total of 1.74 million additional seats since May 2016. 2018 will see the introduction of completely new Azuma trains being built in the UK by Hitachi.

The West Coast route has a proud record of challenging the status quo - from introducing tilting Pendolino trains, to a pioneering automated delay repay scheme and becoming the first franchised rail operator to offer m-Tickets for all ticket types.

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