**EMBARGOED until 00.01 on April 1 2015**

**Train on the Train with Virgin’s new Fitness Coach**

***Plans for first ever gym carriage unveiled by Sir Richard Branson***

From April 1 2015, Virgin Trains is replacing traditional seats with exercise bikes, cross trainers and running machines to create the world’s first ever on-board travelling gym on its fleet of Pendolinos and Super Voyager trains.

Named ‘Fitness Coach’, one carriage on each train will be packed full with state-of-the-art gym equipment that’s been hand-picked with the help of fitness experts at Virgin Active.

In a ground-breaking move, the kinetic energy generated from each Fitness Coach will be harnessed and returned to the Grid increasing Virgin Trains’ energy return to 30 per cent.

Early drawings of the pioneering ‘Fitness Coach’ have been unveiled today via Virgin Trains’ Twitter feed. They show how the ‘Fitness Coach’ will put an end to sedentary journeys and give the joy of movement to every passenger no matter how busy their schedule or how near or far their final destination.

It will contain state-of-the-art equipment including the Queenax functional training frame and monkey bars that will run the length of the carriage, a Virgin Active Grid inspired floor, plyo-box obstacles and a revolving climbing wall.

Workout stations throughout the carriage will be stocked with rowing machines, running machines, a rotating climbing wall and TRX Rip Trainers allowing passengers to literally push, pull, bend, squat, twist and lunge their way to their final destination, burning up to 700 calories an hour.

To ensure passengers make the most of their workouts, on-board staff will all attend a Virgin Active training course so they can offer training advice whilst checking tickets.

Sir Richard Branson said, “Success isn’t just about having a healthy mind, it’s about having a healthy body too, and this starts with being active. No matter how busy I get, I always factor an hour’s exercise into every day and I want to help other people do the same. To be able to finally combine the expertise of Virgin Trains and Virgin Active is a dream come true and I can’t wait to burn some serious calories as I travel around the UK.”

Passengers will able to ‘bolt on’ their gym experience by selecting ‘Add Fitness Coach’ during the booking process for as little as £5 extra per journey.

[www.Virgintrains.co.uk/fitnesscoach](http://www.Virgintrains.co.uk/fitnesscoach)

**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 32 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”.

Visit the Virgin Trains Media Room - [www.virgintrains.co.uk/mediaroom](http://www.virgintrains.co.uk/mediaroom) - for the latest news, images and videos. To receive new content, as it is published, go to [**Follow Virgin Train**](http://www.mynewsdesk.com/follow/47939)**s** and click on ‘Create account’.

Press Office: 0845 000 3333. Company website: [www.virgintrains.co.uk](http://www.virgintrains.co.uk).

**About Virgin Active Health Clubs**

Virgin Active has over 12,000 employees looking after over 1.3 million members in 263 health clubs. It currently operates in nine different countries worldwide: South Africa, UK, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Australia, Namibia, Thailand and Singapore.

Since being formed in 1999, Virgin Active has achieved consistent double digit revenue and profit growth. Virgin Active is owned by CVC Capital Partners and Virgin Group. For more information, please go to [www.virginactive.com](http://www.virginactive.com)