**Friday 13 May**

**Virgin Trains’ sandwich is not just any sandwich; it’s Sandwich of the Year**

Virgin Trains has been recognised in two categories at the British Sandwich Awards: The Sammies 2016.

Virgin Trains came top in ‘The New Sandwich Award’, which recognises the best pre-packed sandwich released in the last year. The judges were impressed with Virgin Trains’ Scottish smoked salmon and lemon mayonnaise sandwich on dark wholemeal bread, which is served in First Class on the west coast route and named it the best in the awards’ ‘Standard Category’.

The train operator was also recognised for its sandwiches available in the on board shop and First Class on the west coast franchise, being named joint runner-up for the ‘En-route Sandwich Retailer of the Year’, which champions the sandwich offerings along major travel routes and travel hubs.

Amanda Smit, Head of Catering at Virgin Trains on the west coast, said: “We’re passionate about the food we serve on board our trains and always strive to offer our customers great quality and value, as well as something different to what they’d expect on a journey along the West Coast Mainline travelling at 125mph. We believe our food is tasty and sometimes better than that of the high street and we’re thrilled to have been recognised at these prestigious awards.”

ENDS

**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. This includes a major fleet revamp, smarter stations and exciting new routes. From May 2016, there will be 42 additional services (22,000 extra seats) per week between Edinburgh and London. 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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