**EMBARGO – 00:01 10th October 2016**

**Virgin Trains launches world’s first onboard mindfulness channel**

* ***First travel company in the world to launch dedicated mindfulness channel to mark World Mental Health Day on 10th October 2016***
* ***The channel features exclusive meditative videos and ‘real time’ footage of the West Coast and East Coast routes***
* ***The content is available exclusively on Virgin Trains on-board entertainment system, BEAM***

To mark World Mental Health Day, Virgin Trains has worked alongside the Mental Health Foundation to become the world’s first travel company to launch a dedicated channel promoting positive mental health.

The new ‘Be Mindful’ channel showcases the UK’s first real-time video of a train journey, taking a cue from the Scandinavian trend for ‘slow television’. It also features six specially shot videos of calming locations from across the UK including St Margaret’s Loch, Lake Windermere, the Yorkshire Dales and Loch Lomond.

The mindfulness channel has been curated to inspire a more relaxed and positive state of mind for travellers across its entire routes, and has launched exclusively on BEAM, Virgin Trains’ complimentary on-board content platform.

The real-time, slow films have been filmed from the driver’s cab, running at over four hours in each direction. The West Coast route films run between London Euston and Glasgow Central, whilst the East Coast route runs between London King’s Cross and Edinburgh Waverley.

The six meditative films focus on areas of outstanding natural beauty as chosen by Virgin Trains staff, and will aid passengers to relax and unwind, whether they’re on a short journey or travelling the whole route. The six locations are St Margaret’s Loch, the Yorkshire Dales and Berwick-Upon-Tweed on its East Coast route, and Alderley Edge, Lake Windermere and Loch Lomond across the West Coast.

Patrick McCall, Co-Chairman for Virgin Trains, said, “We know a lot of our customers lead busy and stressful lives, so we wanted to launch an exclusive channel to make their journeys an even more positive and relaxed experience. Here at Virgin Trains we pride ourselves on continuously improving our customers’ on-board experience and that includes their positive mental health. Teaming up with the Mental Health Foundation, we’ve worked hard to curate a fantastic range of mindful content for our customers to enjoy.”

Mark Rowland, Director of Fundraising and Communications for Mental Health Foundation, said, “We’re delighted to be working with Virgin Trains to launch the world’s first mindfulness channel on-board. A train journey can be a great time for reflection – a perfect excuse to dedicate some time to yourself, disconnecting from the pressures of modern life and taking a step towards becoming more mindful. We want this to be the first step in equipping Virgin Trains’ customers with the tools to manage their mental health and wellbeing successfully.”

The ‘Be Mindful’ channel is available exclusively on BEAM across both the east coast and west coast routes.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors:**

The Mental Health Foundation is the official charity partner for Virgin Trains West Coast in 2016 and 2017.

**About Beam**

BEAM, the complimentary on-board content hub where the story will be featured, gives customers access to an array of free entertainment through their own device. With around 200 hours of incredible films, TV episodes, magazines and games, this digital story by David Baddiel will be the first of its kind on the platform.

**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 £21m to completely revamp our existing fleet and customers can now benefit from 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.

Visit the Virgin Trains Media Room - [http://mediaroom.virgintrains.co.uk](http://mediaroom.virgintrains.co.uk/) - for the latest news, images and videos. Subscribe [here](http://www.mynewsdesk.com/follow/47939) for regular news from Virgin Trains.

Press Office: 0845 000 3333.

**About Mental Health Foundation:**

The Mental Health Foundation’s mission is to help people understand, protect and sustain their mental health.

Prevention is at the heart of what we do, because the best way to deal with a crisis is to prevent it from happening in the first place. We inform and influence the development of evidence-based mental health policy at national and local government level. In tandem, we help people to access information about the steps they can take to reduce their mental health risks and increase their resilience. We want to empower people to take action when problems are at an early stage. This work is informed by our long history of working directly with people living with or at risk of developing mental health problems.

The Mental Health Foundation is a UK charity that relies on public donations and grant funding to deliver and campaign for good mental health for all.

**Website** [**www.mentalhealth.org.uk**](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

**Twitter** [**@mentalhealth**](https://twitter.com/mentalhealth)

**Facebook** [**www.facebook.com/mentalhealthfoundation**](http://www.facebook.com/mentalhealthfoundation)

**Be Mindful Online**

Be Mindful is the Mental Health Foundation’s [online mindfulness course](http://www.bemindfulonline.com/), enabling anyone, anywhere, to easily and effectively learn to practise mindfulness in their daily life and enjoy the benefits.