

Stakeholder Newsletter

Tricia's update



24 September 2025

Dear Stakeholder,

With real improvements already delivered in reliability, accessibility and support for communities across our network, Northern is proud to share some of the progress we've made and how we're continuing to strengthen partnerships and deepen our impact across the region as we move towards Great British Railways.

Performance remains our top priority. Over the summer, our teams have worked hard to maintain services during periods of disruption, including extreme weather and infrastructure challenges. We've made improvements in reducing cancellations caused directly by Northern, and we're continuing to invest in fleet reliability and operational resilience. While we haven't lost sight of the fact that we are running a reduced timetable in the North West, we are delivering stable performance for customers and are now working on improvements. It is towards this aim that we have made changes to the structure of our operations teams which includes changes to our regional structure. I'd like to reassure you that, while the Regional Director role no longer exists, we are still very much available to speak to you, so please stay in touch!

As part of our commitment to building a sustainable seven-day railway, we are having regular meetings with the Conductor Employee Council to progress a new set of Terms and Conditions for our conductor colleagues. We're now at the proposal stage, working constructively to reach an agreement in principle that supports both operational success and long-term investment in our colleagues.

This month we welcomed stakeholders at roundtables in Newcastle, Manchester and York, bringing together representatives across local government, the rail industry, business, education and community. These sessions have been invaluable in helping us understand shared challenges, explore opportunities, and identify where we can strengthen collaboration to deliver better outcomes for the North. Thank you to everyone who gave their time to join us!

Looking ahead, the industry is preparing for the biggest timetable change on the East Coast Main Line in over a decade, due to go live on Sunday 14 December. For Northern, this means faster journeys between Leeds and Sheffield and improved services in the North East. We're working closely with industry partners to ensure a smooth transition and maximise the benefits for passengers.

We're proud of the recognition our teams have received for their work. At the 2025 National Rail Awards, our St Annes-on-the-Sea station was Highly Commended for Small Station of the Year, and the successful "Try the Train" programme, which is delivered in partnership with Community Rail Lancashire, was Highly Commended for Accessibility Achievement of the Year. These awards reflect our commitment to making rail travel more inclusive and welcoming for all. We've also launched our [Breaking Down Barriers to Opportunity impact report](#) in Parliament, developed in collaboration with the Purpose Coalition. This report outlines how Northern is aligning its operations with national goals to tackle inequality and create opportunity.

As we celebrate 200 years since the first passenger train journey, we've marked the occasion with a commemorative train unveiled at Manchester Victoria, highlighting colleagues who've dedicated over 45 years to the railway. Our Heaton TrainCare Centre also celebrated its 150th anniversary this month, opening its doors to the public – it really was a fantastic weekend which showcased everything that's great about our industry.

Thank you to all our stakeholders for your ongoing support and collaboration. Together, we're building a railway that not only connects the North, but also champions its ambition and diversity, helping the region reach its full potential.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tricia". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the start of the first letter 'T'.

Tricia Williams
Managing Director

Timetable changes coming this December

From Sunday 14 December 2025, Northern's timetables will be updated to reflect key improvements across our network.

What's Changing?

The new timetable introduces several enhancements designed to improve connectivity and journey times:

- **Faster journeys:** A new hourly fast service between Leeds and Sheffield will offer quicker connections between two of Yorkshire's largest cities.
- **More services in the North East:** Additional trains between Middlesbrough and Newcastle will increase capacity and make travel easier for work, study or leisure.
- **Better onward connections:** Upgrades to the East Coast Main Line will support faster, more frequent long-distance travel, improving reliability and convenience for Northern customers.

Planning ahead

Usual train times may change, so we're encouraging customers to check their journey before travelling. From **Sunday 21 September**, updated schedules will be available in online journey planners, as well as on posters and digital screens at stations.

To make it easier to see what's changed, we'll also be launching a **timetable comparison tool** — allowing customers to quickly check for updates to their usual route. A link to the tool will be shared once it's live.

Travelling further?

For more details on the wider East Coast Main Line changes, including quicker journeys between London, Yorkshire, the North East and Scotland, visit **ecmltimetable.info**

Staying informed

Customers can fill out [this short form](#) to receive updates, reminders and alerts about changes that could affect their journey.

Contact us

Please get in touch with any questions or queries you have.

Contact us

Please get in touch with us with any questions or queries you have



Darren Allsopp, Stakeholder Manager
Yorkshire, Humberside and Lincolnshire:
darren.allsopp@northernrailway.co.uk



Matt Croasdale,
Stakeholder Manager for the North East:
matt.croasdale@northernrailway.co.uk



Owain Roberts,
Stakeholder Manager for the North West:
owain.roberts@northernrailway.co.uk



Claire Glavina,
Corporate Stakeholder Manager
claire.glavina@northernrailway.co.uk



Northern unveils Railway 200 commemorative train

Northern has unveiled a specially designed train to mark 200 years since the birth of the modern railway. The Class 158 train, revealed at Manchester Victoria, features striking artwork across its exterior and interior, celebrating key milestones in railway history — from George Stephenson's pioneering steam locomotive to the nationalisation of British Railways and Northern's own fleet upgrade in 2018.

Developed with support from the National Railway Museum, the train also honours 39 long-serving Northern colleagues, each with over 45 years of service. Their names are proudly displayed inside the carriages, recognising their contribution to the railway and inspiring the next generation of rail professionals.

[Read more](#)



In the News



Commuter numbers continue to rise

Northern has welcomed a steady return of commuters over recent months, with thousands heading back to the office and choosing rail as their preferred mode of travel.

Season ticket usage — typically associated with regular commuting — has grown by nearly 10% over the past year. Annual and Monthly Season Ticket sales rose by

13%, while Weekly and Flexi Season Tickets, popular with hybrid workers, increased by 4%. Around **175,000 journeys** are now made each week using these tickets.

In Leeds, peak-time travel has seen a notable uplift, with passenger numbers rising by **9% in the morning** and **8% in the evening**. To meet demand, Northern has added extra carriages to key services, including those between Leeds and Doncaster.

[Read more](#)



£10 million upgrade transforms Lea Green Station

Northern has officially opened new facilities at **Lea Green station in Merseyside**, following a £10 million upgrade that enhances the customer experience and supports sustainable travel.

The improvements include a new station building with a ticket office, waiting room and toilets, alongside a multi-storey car park that more than doubles park-and-ride capacity to 450 spaces. The station remained open throughout the works, which were delivered by Northern and funded through the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's Transforming Cities Fund.

Northern's Managing Director, Tricia Williams, said: "This transformation reflects years of hard work and investment, and we're proud to deliver facilities that better serve our customers and the wider community."

[Read more](#)



Northern's mission to break down barriers to opportunity

Northern has reaffirmed its commitment to driving social mobility and regional growth with the launch of the **Breaking Down Barriers to Opportunity Impact Report**, produced in partnership with the Purpose Coalition and unveiled in Parliament on 8 September.

The report highlights Northern's £6.2 million investment in local communities - a 29% increase on the previous year - and showcases initiatives that support employment, skills development and access to opportunity. These include 869 apprenticeships, over 6,000 hours of colleague volunteering, and targeted programmes like Track to the Future, which helps young people from disadvantaged backgrounds into rail careers.

Northern's Customer and Community Impact Fund has also backed grassroots projects such as Olympias Music Foundation and Work For All.

Managing Director Tricia Williams said: "This report reflects our commitment to making a difference for the communities we serve — every single day."

[Read more](#)