

SENRUG PRESS RELEASE 5th SEPTEMBER 2016

MORPETH TO GET TRAIN BOOST BONZANNA

Morpeth is set to enjoy a massive boost to its inter-city rail services as Virgin Trains East Coast today announced they will double the number of weekday services calling at the station from December.

The 2 direct evening services from London to Morpeth at 16:30 and 18:30 will be augmented by a morning service leaving London at 09:30 and an early afternoon service at 13:30, giving 4 trains from the capital to Morpeth every weekday. The new services also mean that Morpeth will get additional trains to Edinburgh at 12:57 and 16:57, making a total of 6 Virgin Trains services from Morpeth to Scotland (7 on Fridays).

Travelling to London, new direct services will leave Morpeth at 15:15 and 19:56 every weekday. Passengers from Edinburgh will also enjoy additional direct trains to Morpeth at 14:00 and 18:30. The 18:30 train used to run up to May 2016 and has been re-instated following representations from SENRUG as it was particularly convenient for commuters, those attending business meetings and leisure travellers returning to Morpeth after a day trip to the Scottish capital.

Emma Vincent, General Manager Virgin Trains East Coast said “the improvements we are announcing today at Morpeth are part of a wider £140m investment we are delivering which saw the introduction of 42 new Anglo-Scottish services last May. All our services now offer free wifi to Standard Class passengers who book through our website, and we are in the process of rolling out BEAM, an industry leading on board entertainment system giving passengers access to around 200 hours of TV and film, as well as magazines and games. So Morpeth passengers have much to look forward to, and our team here at Virgin are looking forward to welcoming them on board one of our trains soon”

Dennis Fancett, Chair of SENRUG – The South East Northumberland Rail User Group – commented: “These new train services at Morpeth are the culmination of lengthy negotiations between us and Virgin Trains in which we have explained the size of the market at Morpeth and the population the station serves. We are pleased that Virgin has listened to our arguments and are now doubling their train services at the town. Those people who have grown accustomed to using their car because there wasn’t a sufficient choice of direct rail services now have the opportunity to leave their car at home and try out the ease and comfort of high speed train travel, and we certainly hope people will take advantage of the significantly enhanced range of rail services that will be available from December”.

Virgin Trains are also looking at introducing similar improvements to the Saturday and Sunday train services at Morpeth in due course.

Ends (450 Words)

Notes for Editors

Attached photo caption: Dennis Fancett, Chair of SENRUG, welcomes more Virgin Trains East Coast services at Morpeth.

SENRUG – The South East Northumberland Rail User Group is a voluntary pro rail campaign group: contact Dennis Fancett Chair, tel 01670 825500 or 07810 353651, e: chair@senrug.co.uk www.senrug.co.uk

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