

Our Cycle Promise



Our vision for 2024 – 2025



Produced in partnership
with Sustrans

Version 2



NORTHERN

Go do your thing



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Welcome

Our Customer Promise, first published in September 2016, highlighted the publication of a Cycling Promise, **this was** available to our customers in July 2017.

This is the **second** publication of our Promise, which demonstrates our

commitment to cycle-rail travel. The combination of cycle and rail journeys offers a reliable, low cost, time and space efficient way to travel in a way which is environmentally friendly, healthy and enjoyable. Many cycle-rail-cycle journeys provide the fastest overall way to travel door- to-door.

You gain reliable journeys, without the need to search for a parking space, wait for a bus or a taxi and get some exercise that can make you feel good. With local and national agencies we can bring more homes and destinations within 10 to 20 minutes easy riding from a train service, via cycle routes and regular roads.

This fits perfectly with our overall commitment to customer service and environmental sustainability.

Northern is **owned by the Department for Transport, OLR Holdings Ltd (DOHL) along with LNER, TransPennine and Southeastern.**

Northern provides around 2,500 local and regional services every day to more than 500 stations across the North of England and are committed to increasing the number of cycle-rail users and our Cycling Promise details how we plan to do this.



Tricia Williams
Managing Director



Working with others

We are committed to increasing the number of cycle-rail users and to encourage modal shift but we can't do this on our own. Our Cycle Promise has been developed in consultation with Sustrans the charity that is the custodian of the National Cycle Network (NCN) and takes initiatives to make smarter travel choices possible. This Promise is also aligned to national policies such as the Williams Shapps Review for Rail and the Department for Transport's vision in 'Gear Change'.

In making this Promise we will:

- maintain and develop the Cycle-Rail Forum for the North which will continue to meet regularly bringing together train operating companies, local authorities, transport authorities, cycling organisations and individual cycle users to help us resolve problems and invest wisely and effectively in our stations and trains
- work with our industry partners including other operators, and the Cycle Rail Working Group (which includes industry experts from Network Rail, Active Travel England and Rail Delivery Group)
- Listen to comments from cycle users about our facilities and services and respond accordingly
- work with local Community Rail Partnerships and other third sector organisations that share our enthusiasm for cycle-rail travel
- work with other organisations and private sector businesses including developers to enhance our offering to cycle-rail travellers with products and services they need.

Making your journey easier

We want you to enjoy smooth, accessible and integrated journeys whether you are travelling from home to work, school or college, travelling to new places or familiar ones or travelling for leisure and recreation. We will look at journeys from our customers' perspective and work with others to deliver improvements.

To and from your local station

Our aim is to make cycling to and from our stations a safer and more convenient means of transport.

We will do this by:

- working with local authorities to create safer, more comfortable routes to stations
- Linking with the emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) in our towns and cities
- improving signage and wayfinding to and from stations
- installing prominent station locality maps showing access to local cycling infrastructure, the National Cycle Network and other cycling routes where opportunities exist
- collaborating with local operators and shops where appropriate to develop meaningful solutions for the communities around stations
- investigating the opportunity to link the PlusBike app to our website providing an easy way to see what is available in and around our stations.



At the station

Through the ongoing accessibility work we will strive to ensure access to and through our stations is smooth and easy, not only for cycle-users but also for users of wheelchairs, pushchairs, prams and non-standard cycles.

We will look to:

- provide appropriate cycle storage provision based on the local need; for example; stands, racks, lockers (where appropriate), shelters and hubs offering an improved range of facilities and services
- establish a standardised approach to design through to implementation, ensuring that all new facilities are built, maintained and cleaned to the correct standards (Standard for Public Cycle Parking) and follow appropriate guidance (Cycle Rail Toolkit 3)
- monitor demand for cycle parking in partnership with local Cycle Rail Forum members, local Community Rail Partnerships and using Northern insight gathered via regular Cycle Parking Audits etc.

- ensure where facilities are provided that they are clearly signed and provided with suitable security provision (such as CCTV)
- promote good bike security and encourage registration of cycles working in partnership with the British Transport Police
- look at what enhancements can be provided at new and existing facilities. This will include consideration of public pumps and/or basic tools where deemed applicable and where these can be funded and maintained
- promote where possible the provision of cycle repairs and spares in partnership with commercial firms, social enterprises or charities
- consider installing charging points for electric-assist pedal cycles.

We will work with our partners in the Cycle-Rail Forum for the North to look for suitable enhancements that will assist integration between cycle and rail travel.

On the train

We would like to welcome you and your bicycle to our services, however, space can be limited. You can take your bicycle free of charge on all of our services.

All trains have enough room to provide two dedicated bicycle spaces on board – some trains have more. Bicycle spaces cannot be reserved on current services and space is allocated on a first come, first served basis. We understand that two spaces is insufficient for families for example and will seek to provide more spaces as the train fleet evolves and funding becomes available.

The current fleet is continuing to change, but detail of the train types and location of wheelchair, cycle and spaces for larger luggage will be provided on our website as these details become available.

Welcome aboard!

Some hints and tips for travelling on our trains with a bicycle:

- allow enough time to buy your ticket and get to the train. This may include the use of ramps and lifts
- please ask our staff about what you need to do to get your bicycle on the train
- look out for the green bicycle stickers over the train doors to show you where to board
- where provided, secure your bicycle on the train using the straps to avoid your cycle moving whilst on your journey
- if other cycle-users board your train, ask them where they are getting off and organise bikes accordingly

We will not charge for the carriage of bikes, although we can only allow one bicycle per person on any service.

We welcome customers with folding bicycles, which are considered to be luggage if they can be stored, folded down on the train and placed in available luggage space. Bicycles which can be dismantled and packed into a bag or box and also placed in luggage spaces are also treated as luggage*. You may be asked to cover your folded bike when it is placed with other luggage - a lightweight cover is recommended.

- bags/cases exceeding 90cm x 120cm x 30cm are likely to be refused as outside acceptable 'suitcase' limits



We will

- consider how best to store cycles on all our services including marking the location of the designated cycle spaces on the inside and outside of every train
- identify the possibilities for delivering additional flexible space on our services when reviewing safe ways of using existing carriages directly or after refurbishment and in the design of new trains
- aspire to consult with the Cycle-Rail Forum on all future projects where appropriate
- review how we may be able to advise customers about lightly-loaded and / or off peak services
- review the ability to offer inclusive cycling to those who use cycles as mobility aids, noting that for many in this group it is not possible to have a driving licence and the combination of cycling with train travel provides fulfilling opportunities for independent travel.

Our people

Our people are our greatest asset and we know from feedback from the Cycle-Rail Forum for the North that, in general, their flexible approach to accommodating our customers with bicycles has been appreciated.

Developing our service to cycle-users depends crucially on the continued goodwill of our staff and we will:

- identify representatives of operational staff to contribute to the Cycle-Rail Forum for the North
- explore the opportunity of becoming a cycle-friendly employer.

Publicity and promotion

New and better facilities for cycle-rail users need to be widely publicised and actively promoted.

The publication of Our Cycle Promise provides an opportunity for more positive engagement and looking ahead we will:

- continually improve our publicity to provide users with current and accurate information about services on Northern trains and at stations including information on cycling policies. We will do this using printed and digital communications and social media
- form a community of registered cycle-rail users for targeted promotions and information sharing activities
- work with our industry partners to ensure that the national PlusBike app is available to our customers
- raise the public profile of cycle-rail travel with on station and on board advertising of facilities

- where available, promote cycle hire directly to businesses and organisations that share Northern's environmental objectives and to employers within cycling catchment of our stations
- seek opportunities to promote rail travel by association with local and national events.



Future Investment

We are keen to invest in cycle-rail projects and we will look for opportunities where this is possible. This is something we will work on together with the Cycle-Rail Forum for the North to see where opportunities are and where that investment opportunity can be best used.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Whilst working with the Cycle-Rail Forum, we are keen to obtain feedback from our customers and our Forum attendees to review investments and enhancement to our customer experience to learn whether these have been successful or need to be improved.

Our Cycle Promise will be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if needed.

This will ensure Our Cycle Promise is delivering for our customers whilst taking into account our modernised fleet and route network.

Useful links

Northern. As well as Our Cycling Promise, Northern's website includes useful information about stations and facilities, hints and tips on cycling and suggestions for exploring the Northern network. Link: www.northernrailway.co.uk/cycling

Cycle-Rail Forum for the North. The Cycle-Rail Forum has its own website maintained by the volunteer secretariat and including information on forthcoming meetings, copies of presentations from past meetings and hints on how you can get involved. Link: <https://sites.google.com/view/cyclerrailforum/Home>

Sustrans. Sustrans stands for sustainable travel. It is the national charity that works for and with communities, helping them come to life by walking, wheeling and cycling to create healthier places and happier lives for everyone. Link: www.sustrans.org.uk

Cycling UK. Cycling UK has championed the cause of cycling for more than 140 years. It promotes all forms of cycling, protects the interests of existing and would-be cyclists and inspires people across the UK to discover the joys of cycling. Cycling UK's website includes advice on travelling by train. Link: www.cyclinguk.org

Cycle-Rail Working Group (CRWG). The CRWG brings together the rail industry and key stakeholders with an interest in encouraging cycle rail integration. Sustrans provides administration support to the group with funding from Active Travel England. CRWG's website contains links to **Standards for Public Cycle Parking** (June 2021) and to a series of Cycle-Rail Toolkits culminating in **Cycle-Rail Toolkit 3** (June 2023) containing advice and guidance to train operators and others. Link: www.cyclerrail.co.uk

Active Travel England. Active Travel England is the government's executive agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England. Link: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/active-travel-england

Rail Delivery Group (RDG). RDG is a membership organisation for train operators that works on behalf of the industry to create a simpler, better railway for customers. RDG collects travel statistics and operates the National Rail website and app. Both website and app give access to the useful Plus Bike journey planning tool. Links: www.raildeliverygroup.com ; www.nationalrail.co.uk

TransPennine Express (TPE). The TPE website contains useful information about travelling with a bike on TPE services. Link: www.tpexpress.co.uk/travelling-with-us/travelling-with-a-bike

TransPennine Trail (TPT). The TPT is an exciting route for walkers, cyclists, wheelers and horse riders linking the North and Irish seas, passing through the Pennines, alongside rivers and canals and through some of the most historic towns and cities in the North of England. The 370-mile Trail passes close to over 40 Northern stations. Link: www.transpenninetrail.co.uk

TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU). The TRU, is a transformative, multi-billion pound railway programme that will better connect passengers in the North between Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds and York. The project has a strong sustainability agenda including for "First and Last Mile" travel. Link: www.thetrupgrade.co.uk