

Thameslink showcases future of commuting at London Blackfriars

- **Many new trains 50% longer, all feature latest in real-time information and fully accessible**
- **Designed for high capacity, high intensity service from 2018**

24 May 2016: Thameslink is this morning (Tuesday) set to showcase the future of commuting when it unveils the spacious new Siemens Class 700 Thameslink train at Blackfriars station. Fifty per cent longer than almost every train in the Thameslink fleet, the train on show to media and stakeholders can carry up to 1,750 people seated and standing – the equivalent of 21 double-decker buses – and will be running on many routes to London from Sussex, Surrey, Kent, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

The design is essential to meet the huge growth in passenger numbers that has soared 40% in the past decade.

When the first train enters service, passengers will notice:

- Wider doors and aisles to make getting on and off easier
- Spacious walkways between carriages to make it easier to move through the train to give a greater sense of security
- Two-by-two seating to create more room
- Lots of luggage space – essential for airport travellers
- Adaptive climate-controlled air conditioning which adjusts to the number of passengers to keep things comfortable
- Electronic signs showing which carriages have more space to sit or stand
- Screens with real time service information
- Fully accessible toilets for disabled passengers and those with pushchairs or needing baby changing facilities
- Spaces for full sized bikes in the off-peak; storage for fold-up bikes in the peak

Govia Thameslink Railway CEO Charles Horton said: “Not only will many of these trains be longer and more spacious, they’ll be cutting edge with real-time information from around the network and the Tube, and excellent facilities for people with disabilities.

“These trains have been designed to carry up to 1,750 people in climate-controlled comfort, which is essential to meet the huge growth in passenger numbers that have soared 40% in the past decade. “And their wide doors, open interiors and state-of-the-art real-time passenger information systems will help us run a high frequency, high intensity service with over 80% more seats across the heart of London in 2018.”

Rail Minister Claire Perry said: “This is another significant milestone for the multi-billion pound Thameslink Programme. Projects like this show how our record £40 billion investment in the railways is delivering better journeys for passengers across the South East and beyond. “This impressive new fleet of hi-tech trains will make a real difference to commuters and leisure travellers, with more space and better information screens. I look forward to seeing the improvements to passengers’ journeys as these trains are introduced to the Thameslink network.”

Steve Scrimshaw, Managing Director Siemens Rail Systems UK, said: “We at Siemens are delighted to be showcasing the Class 700 train today; it’s yet another example of our innovation and investment in the Thameslink Programme. Today’s event gives commuters the first real insight as to what their future journeys will look like and we are excited at how our innovations in terms of technology and capacity will transform passenger journeys across the network. Passengers will benefit from easier access made possible through the wider doors and greater space – changes that will make a big difference to everyday travel.”

Andy Pitt, Executive Chairman of train owners Cross London Trains (XLT), said: “This showcase event marks another important milestone in the Thameslink Programme. Cross London Trains is delighted to have provided the finance for this new state-of-the-art Class 700 train fleet which will bring significant benefit for passengers. I am really looking forward to seeing the first of these trains in passenger service in the next few weeks.”

Nick Gray, Network Rail’s Thameslink Programme Sponsor, said: “Launching this new generation of trains at such an iconic station symbolises what the Thameslink Programme is doing to transform rail travel across London. We have worked closely with our colleagues at Thameslink and Siemens to get the infrastructure ready for these trains to create a more reliable, regular and modern service.”

Ends

Editor’s notes

Contacts

Roger Perkins, GTR press officer, 07711149245, email press.office@gtrailway.com

Silke Thomson-Pottebohm, Siemens press officer, 07808 822780, silke.thomson-pottebohm@siemens.com

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