In a landmark coming together last year, the rail industry launched a joint plan, In Partnership for Britain’s Prosperity. This plan, delivered by the partnership railway, will secure the economic benefits from current investment by the public and private sectors, and enable further improvement and investment.

The plan was backed by business and passenger groups, including the Federation of Small Businesses, British Chambers of Commerce, CBI and Transport Focus.

In the plan, rail companies make four commitments to change and improve: to protect the benefits of investment and innovation to unlock extra economic benefits, improve journeys, better connect communities and increase jobs in rail, supporting the country as it leaves the European Union.

This was supported by independent research which shows how investment from both the public and the private sectors will secure almost £85bn of additional economic benefits for the country by connecting people to jobs, housing and new business opportunities. This is in addition to the existing £31bn of economic benefits the railway delivers each year.

The plan details the progress that the industry has made since it was restructured in the 1990s, when Britain’s railway ran a £2bn a year operating deficit (1997-98) compared to generating a £200m surplus today, benefiting taxpayers.

The plan is being delivered now. Over the last year, the Crossrail project was completed, allowing for improved journey times across the north; the first phase of Crossrail was delivered which will increase rail capacity across the capital by 10% when complete; and new stations were opened in Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire.

This past Christmas and New Year alone, 260 projects worth over £160m finished on time. This included signalling upgrades in Liverpool, electrification between Preston and Blackpool and the re-opening of London Bridge station: all of which support new housing and job opportunities across the country.

We look forward to delivering many more major upgrades: 2018 brings with it newly electrified lines to the west of England, the North West and Scotland to name just a few places, and a number of new trains to make our customers’ journeys faster and more reliable. Our aim is to work together to connect communities, building the economy and deliver a better railway across Britain.

As well as these key improvements to stations and track, new figures released in February reveal that 7,000 new carriages are being built for Britain’s railway. The new carriages represent an investment of at least £13.8bn by the private sector in rail.