

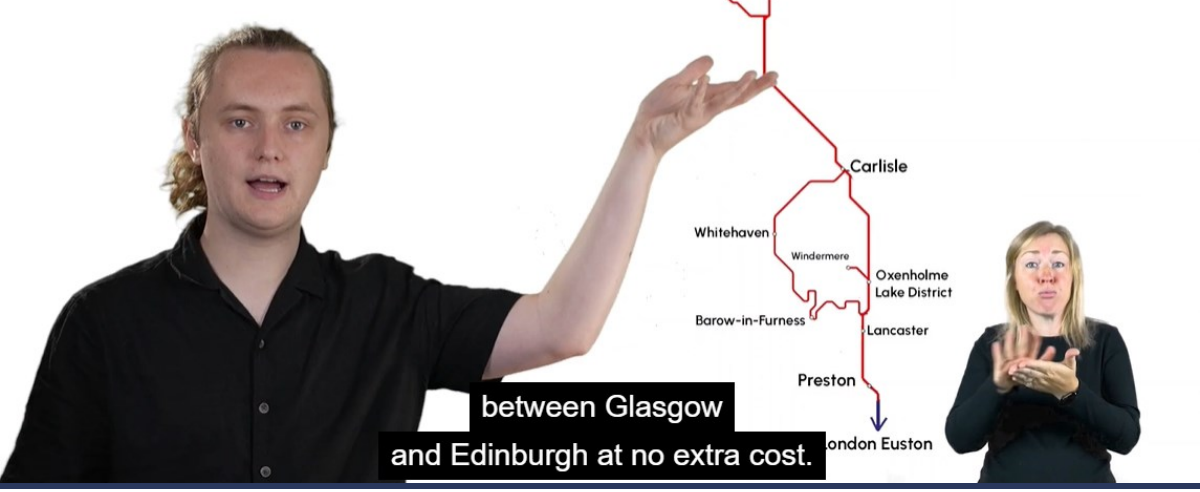


22 September 2025

Welcome! to the Smarter Information, Smarter Journeys (SISJ) Newsletter

The SISJ programme team continues to deliver simplified ways to keep the customer informed and enhance the customer experience at every step of their journey. Below are details of some of our in-flight projects, which are customer insight driven and are being created with, convenience, speed and consistency in mind – all addressing the needs of the customer when travelling by rail.

Do not travel north of Preston / Carlisle: major disruption expected today



Visual Disruption Map videos – unplanned

Today, we have gone live with videos for unplanned (on the day) disruption across the entire network. The videos provide travel advice during unplanned events such as flooding, signal failures, or infrastructure damage. Unplanned videos will be produced within thirty minutes of an incident being confirmed. In July we launched disruption videos in the North-West and Anglia regions only. This was a success, and the first 19 videos produced received nearly 50,000 views and covered key disruption events including Storm Floris (screenshot above) and the London Underground strikes.

The videos have received positive media coverage in [the Independent](#), [Evening Standard](#) plus another regional one-hundred publications e.g. Yorkshire Post. They have also been covered by various trade magazines e.g. [Rail Business Daily](#).

Just like planned disruption videos that have been available since December 2024, unplanned videos feature a presenter stood in front of a map of the rail network explaining what's happening, how services are affected, and what passengers should do next. Having this information in video format helps customers stay informed and make confident travel decisions during unexpected delays. The video content is regularly updated, made available on [National Rail Enquiries](#) and social media, and where possible includes British Sign Language to ensure accessibility remains at the heart of the project.

The videos are part of wider improvements to how the rail industry communicates with customers during disruption. Since December 2024, over 250 disruption videos have been produced, accumulating nearly 700,000 views. Feedback from customer and accessibility groups has been positive, demonstrating the value of clear, accessible communication during periods of disruption. Ninety-three percent of customers say they found the videos useful and that they help to cut through the confusion in disruption.

The Visual Disruption Maps project is also being positively recognised in the industry. The team were finalists in the Innovation category at the June RIA Rise Awards and at last week's National Rail Awards in the Customer Service Excellence category.



Extended Booking Horizon

The Extended Booking Horizon project, when completed, will enable customers to book train tickets up to six months in advance – currently the booking window is 12-weeks for most train operating companies (TOCs). This enhancement will bring the industry better in-line with other industries such as airlines and coach companies, as well as delivering additional revenue to the industry. The project is also delivering enhancements to the way customers can change their journey when their original service is cancelled; customers will either be automatically re-booked onto a new service or be able to select an alternative train service for themselves. Customers will have a far greater choice of alternatives to choose from than they do today.

Funding for the project has been secured, and the project started in July. The project team has been stood up and working group meetings between TOCs, third-party retailers, suppliers and Transport Focus have been held. Work is underway to finalise the design of the required systems changes and to agree the commercial policies that will underpin the enhanced change of journey offering.



Darwin Evolution

Darwin is the industry's system that provides customers with essential real-time train running information and is paramount to providing a positive customer experience. To ensure resilience and reliability in the years to come, the Darwin Evolution project was set up. This focuses on carrying out software development to rearchitect Darwin onto a modern infrastructure to help maintain the current high-quality and output levels.

Although no functional change will be delivered as part of the project, some services will be deprecated, others terminated, and uniform resource locators (URLs) will change. The expected project go-live is Q1 2026.

Recently the second Darwin Evolution webinar was held, where we walked through the technical documentation previously issued and answered queries about the upcoming changes. The session was attended by c.80 participants from TOCs, third party retailers, Customer Information Systems providers and other key stakeholders.

To ensure a smooth project go-live, industry collaboration is key. If you would like to know more about Darwin Evolution and the upcoming changes, please contact darwin.evolution@raildeliverygroup.com.



Better Information on the Impact of Disruption

Currently, if a train is running on time, but is likely to be delayed later in its journey due to disruption further down the line, the train will still show as 'on-time' in journey planners and at stations. This means that customers are not informed in a timely manner about possible disruption to their journey. SISJ has worked with industry partners to develop a solution that will allow TOC Control Rooms to flag trains as being "possibly delayed/cancelled", when an incident occurs. A business case to roll out this functionality to all TOCs was approved by Rail Delivery Group's governance and development has now started. SISJ will be working closely with the Customer Information Group to ensure the functionality is developed with the user in mind and is adopted by Control Rooms.



British Sign Language - Greetings

signature.org.uk

National Rail British Sign Language solution

As we aim to make our railway more accessible for all and enhance the passengers' experience, SISJ is looking to develop a business case that will propose solutions to deliver a more consistent way for the industry to present information in British Sign Language (BSL).

So far, we have engaged the British Deaf Association who have facilitated workshops with members of the D/deaf community in London, Derby and Pontypridd to help us deepen our understanding of D/deaf passengers' experience when travelling by train. We have also held sessions with TOCs to draft requirements.

Next we will focus on undertaking a pre-market engagement exercise to engage suppliers and gather costs. In addition, we will be carrying out further research with the D/deaf community to better define requirements.

Thank you for reading!

SISJ Programme Team

Get in touch!

We, as a team, are proud of the impact the SISJ programme is having in the industry and want to share our story. We would be happy to share developments with you either face-to-face or virtually. Please do contact us if you would like to hear more. Please do also let us know if you have any feedback on this newsletter – we welcome your thoughts (SISJProgramme@raildeliverygroup.com)