

Green light for open access services between London and Stirling

March 8, 2024



The **Office of Rail and Road (ORR)** has agreed that **Grand Union Trains**, an open access operator, can start a new train service between London and the city of Stirling. The new service will begin from June 2025.

ORR said that its latest access decision will provide more choice for passengers, bring private sector investment to the railway, and boost competition.

Grand Union Trains will introduce four new return services per day between London Euston and Stirling stations. These services will also call at Milton Keynes Central, Nuneaton, Crewe, Preston, Carlisle, Lockerbie, Motherwell, Whifflet, Greenfaulds and Larbert. Larbert, Greenfaulds and Whifflet will receive their first direct services to London.

ORR found that the proposed services would increase choice for passengers, significantly increasing direct journey opportunities to and from London and central and southern Scotland, while making use of existing capacity on the network.

The new services will be the first run by an open access operator on the West Coast Mainline. Open access operators run services independently of government funding as they do not have a franchise agreement with government.

Following ORR's decision to approve new Grand Union Trains services between Carmarthen in south Wales and London Paddington in 2022, ORR has now approved open access services on three of Britain's major routes.

Stephanie Tobyn, Director, Strategy, Policy and & Reform, said: “Our decision helps increase services for passengers and boost competition on Britain’s railway network. By providing more trains serving new destinations, open access operators offer passengers more choice in the origin and price of their journey leading to better outcomes for rail users.”