

Making rail family friendly with a UK first at London King's Cross

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London North Eastern Railway (LNER) will open the first Family Lounge on the UK rail network at London King's Cross Station this week.

The Family Lounge has been specially designed to help make rail more family friendly and to give families a dedicated space to wait for trains, with plenty on offer to keep children entertained and parents relaxed.

Located on the main concourse next to the Travel Centre, the Family Lounge is easy to access and boasts a variety of seating options including beach huts with table-top games, a soft play area and an impressive bespoke designed Hornby train set which is certain to entertain children and parents alike.

Children will be inspired with a heritage wall featuring items that have been donated by the National Railway Museum in York as well as video content from LNER's award winning 'In the driver's seat' series, which gives viewers a glimpse of what it is like to be an Azuma train driver.

As part of the creation of the Family Lounge, the Travel Centre has also been refurbished, with a moss wall now separating the two areas, complimenting the green credentials of rail travel, and will provide a

comfortable breastfeeding space.

The new facility is designed to welcome more families who choose to travel by train, with a recent survey conducted by UK parenting network Mumsnet, finding that an easy travel experience is important to 93 per cent of people when planning a day trip.

Abu Siddeeq, LNER head of customer service, said: "As a father with young children, I know how much I appreciate it when businesses are truly family friendly.

"From having a safe space to play to being able to sit together as a family whilst taking a break from travelling, the Family Lounge has been specially designed with families of all ages in mind and is bound to make a huge difference to those using the station."

To ensure the Family Lounge is of benefit to families, LNER consulted with the Campaign For Family Friendly Trains, a group of parents and carers working for better facilities for children and their families on the UK rail network.

Nick Flynn from the Campaign for Family Friendly Trains, said: "The Family Lounge at King's Cross Station will be a fantastic way for families to pass the time before their train departs and is an excellent step towards creating a more family-friendly railway.

"We welcome LNER's significant effort in creating this space and were delighted to be consulted at the design stage. We hope the concept will be reproduced at stations across the country and encourage the rail industry to continue to think about the needs of families onboard such as dedicated spaces for prams and at stations."

Helen Cavanagh, head of passenger experience for Network Rail's East Coast Route, said: "We've worked really closely with LNER on this project, so we're delighted that the Family Lounge will soon be available for use.

"Over the past few years, we've been working hard to improve King's Cross station for our customers, with work to refurbish toilets and install new seating on the concourse just some of the ways we have done that. The new Family Lounge will further improve passenger experience, and we look forward to families reaping the benefit."

The Family Lounge at King's Cross Station will officially open on 12 October and is open to families travelling with all train companies operating from London King's Cross.