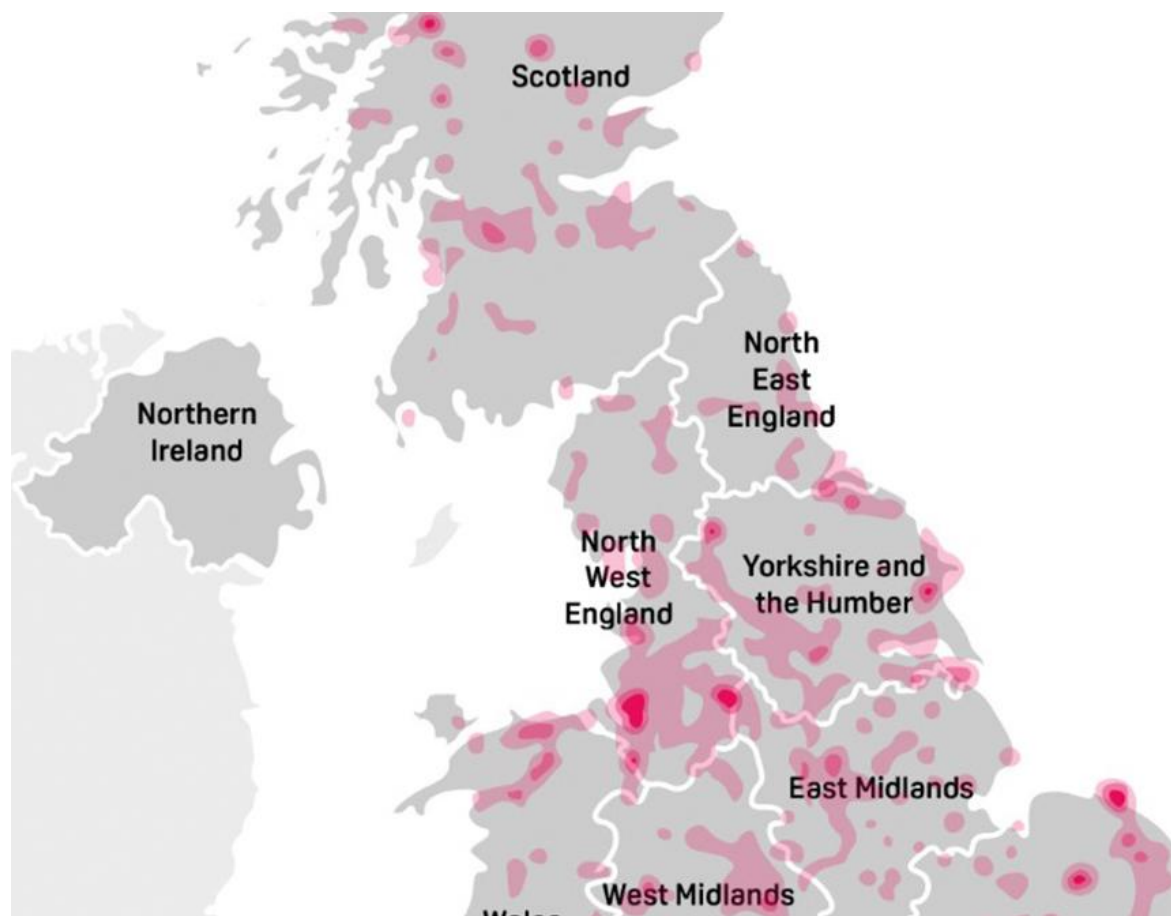


Real-time passenger data highlights where trains are most needed to support key workers during COVID-19 outbreak

March 23, 2020



Transport technology specialist, Zipabout, has revealed a map of the UK highlighting real-time passenger demand for rail services during COVID-19 outbreak.

The map highlights Greater London, Edinburgh and West Sussex as the top three regions for demand, closely followed by West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester.

This data could be instrumental in helping the government and rail industry plan its reduced timetable, at the same time as supporting the vital travel of key workers.

The map reveals the scale of journey planning and information requests from millions of passengers for week commencing 23rd March. The busiest stations are likely to be London Kings Cross, Euston and Paddington in the Greater London area, followed by Edinburgh, Leeds, Manchester Piccadilly and surprisingly Gatwick Airport rail station.

The transport sector has widely been acknowledged as one of the key industries to suffer from the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. When comparing passenger demand week by week Zipabout's real-time passenger communication platform, Passenger Connect, highlights a further decrease in demand by an average of 64 per cent for week commencing 23rd March.

The data, provided by Zipabout, reveals the scale of impact Coronavirus has had on the rail industry in just two weeks, with the change in passenger behaviour reflective of the government's ongoing advice to work from home as well as to avoid all "non-essential" travel and contact with others.

Daniel Chick, Technical Director and founder of Zipabout, said: "Despite large numbers of the population working from home, there will still be people reliant on the rail network and wider public transport system, most noticeably key workers such as those in the NHS and other public services. Our data is based on the real-time interactions of millions of passengers looking for information about rail services, meaning that we are able to identify real demand in unprecedented detail, potentially even identifying their reason for travelling. This gives rail companies and the government the power to identify which services are crucial and need to continue running."

As well as being able to support with demand management, Passenger Connect delivers more than one million personalised journey messages to passengers every month.

Alex Froom, Chief Product Officer and founder of Zipabout, said: "In light of the recent decision to run reduced rail services, the provision of passenger information has never been more important. In these uncertain times, key workers will need a way of receiving accurate personalised journey information so they can continue to get to work. Our platform already provides this through a number of channels, so if you're a key worker just search for National Rail on Messenger to begin receiving live updates straight away."

For more information visit the Passenger Connect website passenger-connect.com

Photo credit: Zipabout