

VT2005/026 (DE)

3 March 2005

Virgin Trains' people at Wolverhampton win new West Coast team award

A six-strong Virgin Trains' onboard team at Wolverhampton has won the new West Coast Trains Team Award for excellent service to customers. Service Manager Tessa Hollis, Assistant Service Manager Rachel Harthill and Customer Service Assistants Andrea Baker, Tara Kennedy, Gordon Fletcher and Mark Lewnes secured a "hair's breadth" victory over colleagues in Manchester.

Presenting the certificates in a ceremony at London's Melia White House Hotel, former passenger watchdog chairman David Bertram said: "The Wolverhampton onboard people achieved victory by a very narrow margin for their delivery of consistently high levels of customer service."

"During one of my mystery shopper Virgin Trains journeys they made travel a delight with their caring, courteous and helpful approach to customers. Nothing was too much trouble for them."

In judging the competition Mr Bertram made more than 100 journeys on Virgin West Coast trains and rated the quality of all staff he encountered at between 90 and 100 per cent, making selection of the winning team a difficult task. Onboard teams from Euston, Manchester, Preston and Glasgow were all on the competition short list.

Thanking all the teams for their sterling efforts, Virgin West Coast Managing Director Charles Belcher said: "We have launched these awards to recognise excellence of staff working on a railway undergoing a massive quality transformation thanks to new trains and infrastructure.

"I am delighted to say that they have all done us proud, and I know that they are determined to keep up the good work."

- more -

Wolverhampton Onboard Customer Services Manager Martin Phillips said: "We always try to give our customers the best possible service, and it is gratifying to all concerned that their efforts have been recognised in this way. They are delighted that their hard work, commitment and initiative has enabled them to set a gold standard in customer service."

ENDS

**For further media information contact the Virgin Trains Press Office on
0870 789 1111 or visit our media web site at www.vtmediaroom.com**

Images of Virgin Trains

Images of Virgin Trains and the company's operations are available on request from the Press Office and may be freely reproduced in articles.