

Annual Business Plan

2025-2026

GTR

Great Northern

GX
GATWICK EXPRESS

SOUTHERN

ThamesLink/

Executive summary

In 2025 the UK rail industry will celebrate 200 years since the operation of the first passenger service in rail. This incredible milestone reminds us that the railway is an ecosystem built and sustained by people to connect places, enable economic growth and bring people together.

To meet the evolving needs of our passengers, we must innovate and challenge ourselves to think creatively. This Annual Business Plan, developed with industry insights, showcases our strategic approach to addressing this challenge.

Rooted in our purpose...

'We create great journeys everyday for a sustainable future'

... this annual plan will enable GTR to deliver strong operational and financial results, while adapting to the challenges of today's railway. GTR is already at the forefront of key initiatives essential to building a thriving railway and a stronger economy for Britain's future. This plan is a key milestone part of our ambitious 5 year strategy, which will continue to see GTR drive sustainable growth, increasing revenue while continuously delivering efficiencies and reducing taxpayer support.

This year, with a major East Coast timetable change planned in December 2025, our focus remains on delivering **the basics brilliantly** as we know that reliability, safety and clear communication are essential to building trust with our customers. Providing a dependable service, a safe and secure network, a timetable and service proposition that meets the need of our communities are all top priorities for GTR, our people and our customers.



GTR is already working in a strong partnership with NR Sussex route and several industry partners. This plan includes specific initiatives that will drive even further improvement in these areas, with an emphasis **on deepening our collaboration with** the Department for Transport (DfT), the British Transport Police (BTP), Network Rail (NR) and our community groups. Collaboration is at the heart of our approach to truly meet local needs, and our partners are key to improving punctuality and delivering the facilities and services all our customers expect, including those who may need extra support.

In line with our commitment to reducing taxpayer subsidies, we will double our efforts to **attract customers** by inspiring people to travel by rail, encouraging additional travel where capacity exists, presenting the value for money element of our services and ensuring they are innovative and responsive to the customers and communities we serve.

Efficiency will also be a key priority. GTR will continue to **work smarter and spend wisely**, ensuring that this business plan delivers value for money and that the investment made by the Department generates a strong return.

We are mindful that as the UK's largest private rail operator, GTR has an important role to play to **lead the way within the rail sector**. As such, we will **leverage our extensive leadership, technical and local knowledge, share insight with the industry** for the benefit of customers and employees, and so we can once again be a thriving and financially sustainable Industry. That is our responsibility to the country and to the taxpayer, as well as to the customers and communities we serve. This approach is further supported by our parent companies – Go Ahead Group and Keolis – who provide significant expertise in public transport management.



Ensuring diversity within our company is key to fostering fresh perspectives and delivering better outcomes for our customers. At the same time, we are dedicated to supporting industry efforts to enhance accessibility and investing in sustainable infrastructure. By prioritising these initiatives, we strive to create a meaningful and lasting impact on our communities, economy, workforce, and environment, **ultimately strengthening our social value**.

We look forward to playing a key role in the year ahead, ensuring a bright future for our railway and all the dedicated people who work to deliver great journeys for our customers every day.



Angie Doll

Chief Executive Officer, GTR



John Gerrard

Chief Financial Officer, GTR

Leadership, management and resourcing

Focusing on delivering the best possible service for customers

We will continue to foster a culture of strong leadership and provide opportunities for colleagues to develop their skills and careers.

By focusing on delivering the best possible service for customers, creating a safe and sustainable railway, and delivering value for money for customers and taxpayers, our teams will help deliver on our key commitments.

We will encourage a spirit of open collaboration and knowledge sharing, especially with industry partners such as DfT, British Transport Police, other operators and Network Rail.



Focus areas include:

- **Maintain GTR's leading role** in the establishment of the Rail Data Marketplace.
- Complete the **rollout of body worn video equipment** to our customer-facing teams.
- Additional **investment in security and safeguarding** that will benefit both our customers and our people through initiatives such as the introduction of a live monitoring safeguarding desk and an enhanced education programme, working with schools from across our route.
- To measure perceptions of **safety and security** from both our customers and people, then develop improvement plans that will be presented to the Department for consideration and approval by January 2026.



○ People

Maintaining a talented workforce

We will continue with the roll out of our People Change Programme to enable a capable, engaged, inclusive workforce that can deliver this Annual Business Plan (ABP).

Financially self-supporting

This programme, including our focus on culture change, will set us up so we can meet our longer-term ambition of being a financially self-supporting operator by the end of our contract with the Department.

Focus areas include:

- Ensure our **driver workforce plan is updated** to help manage the expected increase in retirements within our driver grades over the next few years, ensuring we continue to have sufficient drivers to resource the timetables we operate.
- Deliver the actions identified in our **Culture Change Plan** to enable our long-term desired culture vision.
- Continue to deliver the **People Change Programme** to ensure GTR remains a great place to work for our people.



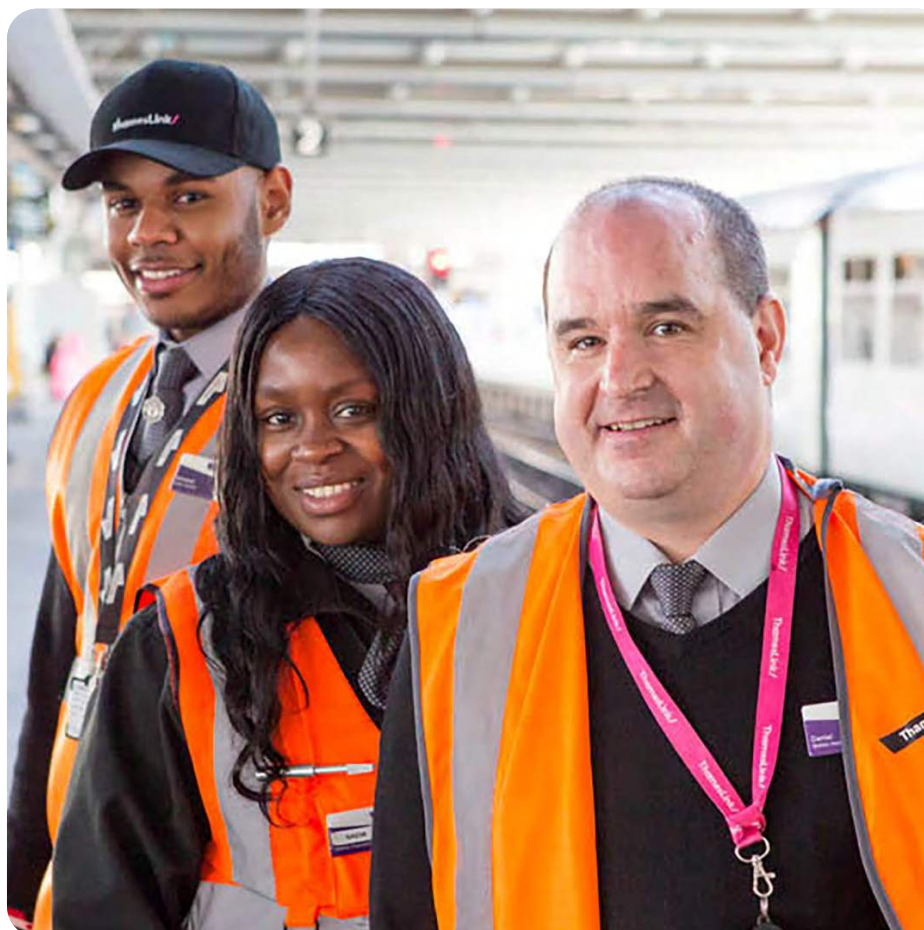
Collaboration

Protecting the financial future of railways

GTR will continue to collaborate effectively with Network Rail and other industry partners to improve the net financial position of the railway, whilst continuing to deliver against the priorities for our customers, communities and stakeholders and in doing so achieve the overall outcomes the Secretary of State wants to achieve from Operators.

Focus areas include:

- Working closely with Network Rail, we will take a more **integrated approach** that focuses on the whole railway system costs and improved outcomes for customers.
- We will work collaboratively with industry partners to support **new infrastructure schemes** that address some of our current operating constraints.
- Implement the joint strategy with South Western Railway and Southeastern Railway, where **improved customer outcomes** can be delivered by working more effectively together.





○ Train service operations

Matching emerging demand while delivering efficiencies

GTR will continue to work collaboratively with the DfT, Network Rail and industry partners to develop timetables meeting the future needs of customers for travel across our route.

This will be supported by robust plans and strategies for how we manage our people and our train fleet. The key theme for this area, and for the whole business plan, is to drive improved operational performance for our customers, working collaboratively with Network Rail and our industry partners to deliver the initiatives already funded and identify opportunities for further improvement.

Focus areas include:

- Work collaboratively with Network Rail and other operators from the route to **identify opportunities** to drive significantly improved operational performance.
- Identify opportunities to make better use of the data we hold to drive **improved fleet performance**.
- Deliver the May 2025 and December 2025 **timetable enhancements**, including the East Coast timetable recast.
- Robust and well thought out plans for how we **manage our train fleet and people**, as the key enablers to a high-performing railway.
- Continue to play a leading role in the implementation of the **East Coast Digital Programme**, building on the successes seen in 2024/25.





Customers and communities

Realising the social and economic benefits of our rail network

GTR continues to make use of the insights available to us to understand the priorities for our customers, assess the extent to which we're meeting them and to identify areas for further improvement.

Working with local communities

We will continue to work extensively with stakeholders from across our route to ensure our service delivers for the communities we serve. Our increased understanding and adoption of social impact will help shape how we most effectively achieve this.

Focus areas include:

- Develop and deliver a programme to drive **improvement at our stations and in our communities**, supported by our Customer & Communities Improvement Fund and Stations Improvement Fund.
- Quantify the social impact of GTR activity and include this within our annual **Social Value Report**.
- Continue to support employability schemes, such as the **King's Trust**.
- Continue to support Community Rail Partners and other **community groups** across the estate.
- Continue to collaborate with industry partners to drive better outcomes for customers, such as through the adoption of the new industry wide **Customer Experience Standards** self-assessment tool.
- Continue to engage with our colleagues to support Mind, our corporate charity partner, as well employee-proposed charities through **GTR's 'Lost and Fund' initiative**.





Revenue and marketing

Delivering a sustainable future for the railway

Achieving robust revenue and demand growth is key to ensuring a sustainable future for the railway and underpins our key strategic aim of reducing GTR's financial subsidy requirement to zero.

Our Revenue and Marketing plan outlines how we are going to drive additional patronage and revenue, undertake targeted revenue protection activity and continue to deliver all this activity in the most cost-efficient way.

Focus areas include:

- Integrate our marketing, revenue management, fares and other commercial areas with a **simplified ambition** to ensure rail is the go-to choice for leisure travel.
- Additional focus on revenue protection, making sure that we are delivering for taxpayers by **collecting all revenue owed** and passing that through to government.
- Continue to complete targeted action to **build the longer-term perception of value**.
- Optimise our fare structure to grow yield and **simplify choices for customers**.
- **Maximise the effectiveness** of our retailing and marketing financial resources to achieve the best ROI.
- Utilise our owned channels to promote rail travel in a **cost-efficient** way.





Focus areas include:

- Make use of DEFRA modelling data to **assess long term flood risks** from across our estate.
- Continue to collaborate with Southeastern Railway, South Western Railway and Network Rail Southern Region to **develop joint plans and share best practice**.
- Increasing opportunities for **waste segregation** at GTR stations.
- Develop and implement a GTR **Environment and Sustainability Strategy** that is fully aligned to the requirements of the Sustainable Rail Blueprint.
- Over the course of the 2025/26 business year, GTR will deliver dedicated projects that **enhance biodiversity across the network**.

○ Environment and sustainability

A world leader in sustainable transport

GTR will support and encourage the creation of an even cleaner, greener railway to help spearhead the nation's ambition to become a world leader in sustainable transport, as well as a key proof point in encouraging rail travel as a green travel mode. Our focus will continue on reducing energy consumption and striving for even more effective waste management.



○ Accessibility

Serving the broadest range of customers

This plan outlines GTR's approach to identifying priorities and efficiently delivering improvements for disabled people's journeys, both on GTR services and wider.

Improving inclusivity

This includes describing how we will drive more inclusive passenger communications for those with disabilities and additional needs. To underline the importance of this area to GTR, we have appointed the Chief Customer Office as the executive-level sponsor for accessibility within the organisation.



Focus areas include:

- Deliver the Minor Works programme to **remove barriers to independent travel**, as approved by the Department.
- Submit a periodic **KPI report** to the Department that includes measures of the delivery of assistance to customers.
- Share the **quarterly assistance complaints report**, currently submitted to the ORR, with the Department each period.
- By no later than 30 September 2025, **submit proposals to the Department** for driving improvement against the top 5 categories, as measured in the ORR assistance-related complaints report.