

Richard Isaacs has submitted his apologies for the meeting but provided the following information:-

1. The hot weather was causing issues with the fleet and infrastructure at the moment.
2. Additional Units

Introduction of Class 350 trains

I'm pleased to share the news that we've received government approval to progress to the next stage of receiving 37 Class 350 units from Porterbrook, to replace the Class 323s – our oldest class of electric trains.

As a government funded train operating company, we must ensure our fleet strategy represents good value for money, and we have been considering available fleets that would work on our network for some time.



The Class 350s are currently being stored at Porterbrook's Long Marston facility.

While performance of the Class 323s has greatly improved, thanks to the brilliant work from the team at Allerton TrainCare Centre, the Class 350s will bring additional benefits to our fleet. They'll offer customers an improved on-board experience, with increased capacity, air conditioning and dedicated cycle spaces.

Prior to entering service, they will also receive £25 million worth of modifications, including improvements for better passenger experience and refreshed interiors. This investment comes directly from Porterbrook and Siemens and is an example of how the Class 350s' introduction will support us to offer better value for the taxpayer.

It's important to note that the introduction of Class 350s will not impact the procurement of our brand-new trains. The new trains programme is ongoing and we'll continue to share updates with you when we have them. However, the Class 350s offer a practical, medium-term response to the operational challenges we would soon expect to see with the Class 323s as they approach end-of-life including increasing difficulty getting replacement parts, heavy maintenance and reduced fleet availability.

It will still be a while before we see the units in action, with the first five trains expected to be introduced late next year but, once available, we expect them to directly replace the Class 323s on their current South Manchester routes.

We'll continue to keep you updated and over the coming weeks we'll be having further discussions with colleagues in engineering, operations, stations and train presentation, to share the next steps as we prepare to welcome the units into our fleet.