

## A Refreshing Look for Virgin Trains East Coast

When Virgin Trains East Coast took over the east coast franchise in 2015 it made the decision to refurbish and rebrand its fleet of trains. One of the particular challenges facing Virgin Trains East Coast was to select a flooring that was aesthetically appealing, compliant with all fire and safety standards, whilst being hardwearing and easy to clean. Forbo Flooring has the widest portfolio of flooring products for rail therefore could easily tick all of the boxes required. With an innovative approach, the project was completed within 18 months from initial design conception to installation.



*[Image left] Standard Class, with Tessera Alignment FR as the chosen floor covering  
[Image right] inside First Class both images feature Tessera Alignment FR*

On this design-led project Virgin Trains East Coast used the skills of Charles Greenway and Graham Love from Atlantic Design who approached Forbo Flooring in 2015. We learned why they chose Forbo Flooring over other companies in the market:

*“Atlantic Design has worked with Forbo Flooring for many years, their willingness to listen and respond to our requirements has resulted in some excellent solutions for our clients.”- Charles Greenway, Atlantic Design Director.*



*[Image left] Left to right: Graham Love (Atlantic Design), Raymond Koomen (Designer at Forbo Flooring), Bob Summers (UK Key Account Manager – Transport at Forbo Flooring) and Charles Greenway (Atlantic Design)  
[Image right] Virgin Trains East Coast Train Crew*

The project's timescale spanned from June 2015 to January 2017 and the refurbishment took place at two depots: Edinburgh Craightinny and London Bounds Green. Two fleets of long haul intercity vehicles comprised the project; Yellow Rail took care of floor installation for the work at London Bounds Green and TXM projects did the same at Craightinny.

A total of 412 coaches, comprising of 30 nine car MKIV Electric sets and 15 nine car HST Diesel trains plus a number of spares vehicles underwent refurbishment. The majority of the work on the electric fleet was undertaken and Bounds Green depot with the Diesel sets and some electric sets being done at Craightinny depot.

For any rail interiors project, compliance with stringent safety standards and easy cleaning characteristics are mandatory. However, design also remains a crucial element if passenger satisfaction is to be achieved. This is why Virgin Trains East Coast chose floor coverings that would ensure visual appeal, yet also satisfy passengers' comfort levels - paramount on longer haul journeys.

Bryan Winslow, Fleet Materials & Procurement Manager at Virgin Trains East Coast commented:

*"We used Forbo Flooring as their floor coverings had been used in other Stage Coach Group projects, for example East Midlands Trains and we had heard good feedback. They could match our desired style and brand preferences".*

### Product Choices

Tessera Alignment FR is a tufted multi-height loop pile carpet manufactured from 100% solution dyed nylon 6.6 yarns. It was chosen because its composition means that the carpet is a cost effective and convenient alternative to wool-based flooring traditionally used in saloon carriage interiors.

Charles Greenway, Director at Atlantic Design explained:

*"From a design and maintenance perspective the Tessera FR product is unique. When reviewing floor covering products for the Virgin Trains East Coast refurbishment, we took our client along to review the Tessera FR we had specified on the East Midland HST fleet six years earlier. It became clear that performance was exceptional, the original design being still vibrant and in excellent condition. We required something new for Virgin Trains East Coast and the design and production team at Forbo worked patiently with us to develop the custom 'velocity' pattern with increased density along the aisle to hide wear. It was not a difficult decision to select Coral Duo for the entrance areas due to its unique high-performance and attractive appearance."*



*Fitters installing Coral Duo into a vestibule*

With Coral Duo, passengers entering the train vestibule are met underfoot by a moisture-removing surface that helps to reduce wet and dry soiling from the soles of shoes and suitcases. It also helps to prevent premature wear and tear to interior floor coverings, which in turn minimises cleaning and maintenance costs. The way it is engineered also

protects passengers by reducing slip hazards, especially important with the rail industry's concerns to comply with DDA requirements.



*Bob Summers, UK Key Account Manager (Forbo) seated in First Class inside*

Forbo Flooring's products are tested to withstand high volumes of traffic which is especially reassuring considering the dramatic increase in rail passenger numbers over recent years. With ridership predicted to continue to rise, flooring was chosen by Virgin Trains East Coast with longevity in mind.

*Bryan Winslow concluded: "We have no negative feedback and are extremely satisfied with the result. We are particularly pleased with the way in which Forbo dealt with any initial issues and the performance of the floor coverings has proven to be a success."*

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To find out more about the full range of Forbo's flooring solutions available to the transport industry, please visit [www.forbo-flooring.com/transport](http://www.forbo-flooring.com/transport). Alternatively if you wish for a Forbo Flooring representative to contact you or to send in an enquiry then please email: [transport@forbo.com](mailto:transport@forbo.com)

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