

# National Cycle-Rail Awards



## Case Study: Customer Service Excellence

### First ScotRail - 2006 Winner

#### i) Background

First ScotRail leased a five-strong Class 322 fleet originally built in 1990 and designed for transporting airline passengers with lots of baggage on the Stansted Airport express line. The refurbishment was necessary to improve performance and in particular enhance the journey experience for our customers – and especially those who wanted to bring their cycles on the trains now serving the Edinburgh-North Berwick route, an important commuter and tourist route.

#### ii) Project description

The challenge was to transform the internal layout of carriages to make them more suitable for commuters – and cyclists, in contrast to their original design and purpose of transporting airline passengers with lots of baggage. In addition, the rolling stock lease stipulated the Class 322 units must be returned in the same “condition” as supplied.

#### iii) Project objectives

The project set out to provide dedicated storage for eight cycles on each train – compared to none previously. It also aimed to increase seating capacity from 252 to 293 – and to improve the trains’ performance. They are now the most reliable and punctual services in Scotland

#### iv) Project partners and responsibilities

First ScotRail worked in partnership with Kilmarnock-based train engineers Hunslet-Barclay to devise solutions which means that, at the end of the franchise, the cycle storage could be removed and first class reinstated if still deemed necessary under the leasing agreement.

A knock-on effect of fitting cycle storage was that the number of seats would have to fall. In fact, by reducing the amount of luggage space, an extra 41 seats were provided on each train – crucial, given rising demand from commuters and tourists to travel by train rather than road.

#### v) Project financing

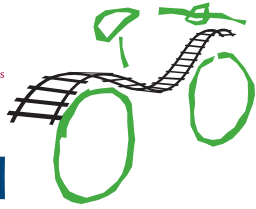
A total of £3m was invested by First ScotRail in leasing and refurbishing the five-strong 1990-built fleet.

#### vi) Success measures

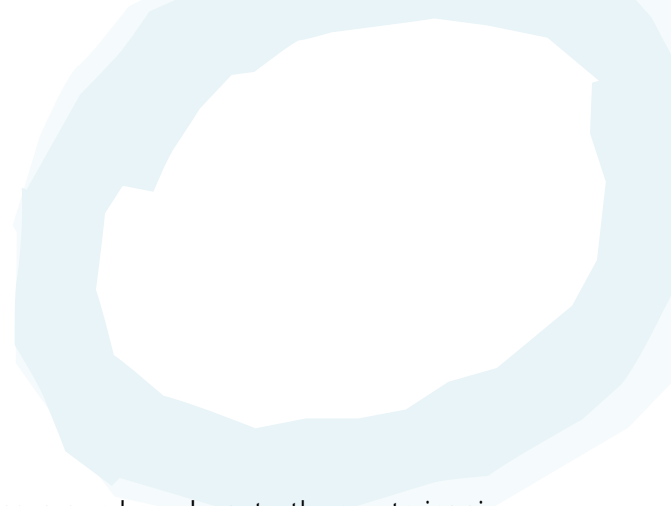
Objectives included enhancing the journey experience for our customers on the commuter route – also popular with tourists visiting North Berwick’s magnificent coastline, and especially cyclists, who visit because of its many cycle paths.

Of course, performance was also crucial and the investment has contributed to reliability and punctuality.

The transformation from the original design and purpose of transporting airline passengers with lots of baggage has also been widely commended.



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SPOKES, the cycling organisation, said: “We welcome and extra spaces and new layout ...the new trains give a strong message that first ScotRail is paying attention to cyclists.”

Passenger Focus said: “The bike racks on the 322s are being well used.”

## **vii) Summary**

The Edinburgh-North Berwick route is popular with commuters, day trippers, and cyclists – each with different needs. The refurbishment took their wishes into account, benefiting all – from improved reliability to extra seats to turning up with bicycles as and when it suits. Tourism received a boost – as did business, including First ScotRail which has received many a “thank you” for meeting customers’ wishes.

## **viii) Contact and further information details**

[www.firstscotrail.com](http://www.firstscotrail.com)

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[www.spokes.org.uk](http://www.spokes.org.uk)  
[www.cyclingscotland.org](http://www.cyclingscotland.org)  
[www.pathsforall.org.uk](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk)

