

# Press Release

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## **CROSSCOUNTRY ADDS EXTRA TRAINS FOR CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL**

Horseracing fans travelling to the 2009 Festival at Cheltenham Racecourse are set to benefit from additional train services operated by CrossCountry.

Race goers from across Britain, Ireland and mainland Europe will flock to the historic Cheltenham Racecourse between 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> March and are being advised to avoid traffic jams and congestion by taking the train.

Aside from CrossCountry's 94 daily scheduled services stopping at Cheltenham, there will also be four extra CrossCountry services operating from Birmingham New Street and Bristol Temple Meads to help cater for the expected increase in visitors attending the four-day racing festival.

Passengers are being advised to book in advance via [crosscountrytrains.co.uk](http://crosscountrytrains.co.uk) to buy their tickets and even make use of CrossCountry's latest online e-ticket and save time by printing the ticket at home.

Andy Cooper, CrossCountry's Managing Director said; "The Cheltenham Festival is a highlight in the national racing calendar so it makes so much sense for us to help with congestion and operate these extra trains. Apart from the 94 train services we operate into Cheltenham each weekday, we are well prepared for the extra demand, and hope that we can help transport as many racing fans as possible to Cheltenham for what promises to be a fantastic four days."

Cheltenham Racecourse Managing Director Edward Gillespie commented; "Getting to The Festival by train is one of the least stressful ways to travel and we are delighted that CrossCountry Trains is putting on these additional services. It is sure to benefit hundreds of our mutual customers."

CrossCountry operate 94 services every day into Cheltenham. For further train information, and to book your tickets in advance, log on to [crosscountrytrains.co.uk](http://crosscountrytrains.co.uk)

CrossCountry's four additional Cheltenham services from Birmingham New Street and Bristol Temple Meads between 10-13 March are as follows:

**Birmingham New Street**

**10:10** Birmingham NS > **10:58** Cheltenham > **11:54** Bristol Temple Meads

**15:10** Birmingham NS > **15:56** Cheltenham > **16:50** Bristol Temple Meads

**Bristol Temple Meads**

**13:08** Bristol Temple Meads > **14:06** Cheltenham > **14:59** Birmingham NS

**18:09** Bristol Temple Meads > **18:51** Cheltenham > **19:41** Birmingham NS

The Festival at Cheltenham attracts the best steeplechasers and hurdlers from across Britain, Ireland and Europe to compete for a record £3.5m in prize money in the most dramatic Cotswold setting.

**An overview of the 2009 Festival:**

- Tuesday 10 March** - **Smurfit Kappa** Champion Hurdle Day
- Wednesday 11 March** - **Seasons Holidays** Champion Chase Day
- Thursday 12 March** - **Ladies Day and Ladbrokes World** Hurdle
- Friday 13 March** - **totesport Cheltenham** Gold Cup Day

ENDS

**Please find Notes to Editors, CrossCountry facts and figures below and on following page. For more information feel free to contact us on 0121 2006115 or by email to [communications@crosscountrytrains.co.uk](mailto:communications@crosscountrytrains.co.uk)**

**Notes to editors**

- In partnership with totesport, CrossCountry has ensured that there will be betting slips and race cards available to customers on certain Cheltenham services to help them prepare for the Festival

- CrossCountry started operating on 11 November 2007. The franchise, which is the most extensive in the UK, will run until 31 March 2016. For further information on CrossCountry services and future franchise plans log on to [www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk](http://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk)
- CrossCountry is part of the Arriva group which operates transport services in twelve European countries, employs more than 40,000 people and provides more than one billion passenger journeys every year. For more information about the Arriva group visit [www.arriva.co.uk](http://www.arriva.co.uk)

**CrossCountry facts and figures:**

STATIONS SERVED: 118

ROUTE MILES: 1,654

WEEKDAY SERVICES: 293

PASSENGERS CARRIED: Over 30 million passenger journeys a year anticipated

ANNUAL TRAIN MILEAGE: Approximately 16 million

EMPLOYEES: Approximately 1,700

LONGEST TRAIN SERVICE: (SX) 08.20 Aberdeen to Penzance (699 miles)