**Govia Thameslink Railway                                  Stakeholder newsletter                                  Period 7 2018**

Great Northern gave passengers on its suburban route a sneak preview of their new £240 million air-conditioned train fleet on Friday morning (28 September).

The 25 six-carriage Class 717 trains will replace mainland Britain’s oldest electric trains, the 40-year-old Class 313s, with a phased introduction due to run from late autumn this year to spring next year.

As well as air conditioning, Wi-Fi and power points, the new trains, built by Siemens with innovative funding by Rock Rail, will provide a 27% increase in capacity to address the near-doubling of passenger numbers on Great Northern in 14 years.

The new fleet will operate between Moorgate and Hertfordshire, to and from Stevenage, Hertford North and Welwyn Garden City. Friday’s trip left from Moorgate to Gordon Hill.

First passenger on board, Samantha Radford of Gordon Hill, said: “This is better for commuting, it’s so spacious. I will probably favour this with its air conditioning and better layout over the Underground; I think the air conditioning is a huge comfort issue, especially for anyone with small children or a health condition – it is going to make a massive difference. I also like the Wi-Fi and the fact you can charge your phone.