

Avanti West Coast announces increase in services

September 23, 2022



Avanti West Coast (AWC) is increasing its services as the first stage in a recovery plan to step up the timetable on its network.

The operator will be adding around 70 extra services a week on its busiest route between London Euston and Manchester Piccadilly, compared with the current timetable. Introducing these additional services will provide around 40,000 extra seats a week on the West Coast main line (WCML). There will also be additional services on the London to Birmingham route.

AWC said that there will then be a further increase of the timetable in December which will see three trains an hour on the London to Manchester route, an additional service to the West Midlands taking services to and from Birmingham to at least half-hourly, and the return of direct services to North Wales.

These extra trains follow an intensive analysis of the number of additional services that can be provided in a reliable and sustainable fashion AWC said.

They also take account of the significant number of drivers who will be entering passenger service

following recruitment and training – nearly 100 between April and December this year, said AWC.

The services are being targeted at the busiest routes and times and are not dependent on overtime working the operator confirmed.

From next week until early December, up to 10 extra trains a day, over and above the existing timetable, will run between Manchester Piccadilly and London Euston on both weekdays and weekends. These services will begin to be introduced on 27 September, from when Avanti West Coast will run an additional 10 trains on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays and six additional trains on Wednesdays.

At the same time, on the Birmingham route, AWC will introduce four additional trains a day (two in each direction) on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays.

Tickets for these services will be available for purchase over the coming days. The remaining additional services will be introduced as soon as possible.

Following this, in mid-December, AWC will continue its recovery with a significant step up of the timetable. Further additional services will be added to Manchester, Birmingham and North Wales as well as maintaining regular services to Liverpool and Scotland. Overall, there will be more than 260 services a day on weekdays, compared with around 180 a day before December and 245 in May 2022.

Barry Milsom, AWC executive director of operations and safety, said: “We know we’re not delivering the service our customers rightly expect and we apologise for the enormous frustration and inconvenience this is causing.

“The decision to reduce our timetable in August was not taken lightly but our customers and communities deserve a dependable train service, so we’ve been working hard to rebuild our timetable in a resilient and sustainable way.

“Resolving this situation required a robust plan that allows us to gradually increase services without being reliant on traincrew overtime. We are now in a position to start delivering this incremental increase in services, followed by a further increase in December. We’ll continue to review our timetable beyond December with our industry partners.

“We’re working with our people, their union representatives, and industry partners to match the resources we have to demand, so we can deliver reliable services across our network to all our customers and communities.

“We would like to thank our customers for their patience and understanding during this period.”