

Avanti West Coast names Pendolino train in honour of Railway Benefit Fund

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Avanti West Coast has named one of its Pendolino trains 'Railway Benefit Fund' to mark the start of the charity's week of fundraising.

The charity's president and record producer Pete Waterman, a long-time supporter of the railway, joined a small number of invited guests including attendees from Network Rail, Alstom (who maintain Avanti West Coast's fleet) and other train operating companies at a ceremony at Liverpool Lime Street station.

They unveiled the new name as part of the drive to kickstart Railway Family Week which is hoped will raise £50,000 for good causes.

The Pendolino, number 390155, is expected to travel over a quarter of a million miles in 'the next year, helping to raise the profile of the charity and highlight their support to railway families, past and present, who have fallen on hard times.

"It's a real privilege for the Railway Benefit Fund to be recognised in this way," enthused Pete Waterman. "The Pendolino is such an iconic train and we can't thank Avanti West Coast enough for their support. It's

been a tough year for everyone, especially charities, so this week is all about raising money to fund the great work the Railway Benefit Fund does to support railway families up and down the country.”

In the past year, the charity has supported the ‘railway family’ in many ways, with help ranging from financial assistance to funding of home schooling equipment for children during lockdown.

“We’re extremely proud that one of our Pendolino trains will bear the name ‘Railway Benefit Fund,” said Phil Whittingham, Managing Director at Avanti West Coast.

“The charity has been supporting our people and the wider industry for over 160 years and we couldn’t think of a better way to show our support for the Railway Family Week.”

Tim Shoveller, managing director for Network Rail’s North West & Central region and Railway Benefit Fund chairman, said: “The past year has been tough for so many people, including our railway family who’ve worked tirelessly to ensure key workers and millions of tonnes of critical goods (like medicine and food) can continue to travel across the country.

“This event is a great way to kick off Railway Family Week. Colleagues across the industry have been using the charity’s founding year, 1858, to complete challenges to help raise £50,000 so the RBF can continue supporting those in need. I’ll be completing my challenge this week by swimming 1858m non-stop.”

Photo credit: Avanti West Coast