

CrossCountry says bigger fleet will “transform customer experience”

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CrossCountry has announced that it has secured five additional Voyager trains from rolling stock company Beacon Rail, boosting its capacity. The news comes after the long-distance operator secured seven extra Voyager trains in October 2023.

The 12 extra trains – comprising 60 additional carriages in total – will strengthen CrossCountry’s long-distance services from May 2025, increasing capacity on north-south routes by over 36,000 seats per week. Combined with a new timetable proposed from May 2025, they will help CrossCountry to provide more services, as well as longer trains across the network – particularly on its busy Reading to Newcastle corridor.

Extra trains will be progressively introduced into service on CrossCountry routes from June 2024 following their release from Avanti West Coast, providing a crucial uplift in capacity of around 12,000 seats per week in time for the busy summer holiday period.

Though the extra trains will be brought into service as quickly as possible, a further move to relieve crowding on some of CrossCountry’s long-distance services this summer will see temporary changes to the timetable – meaning busier services will make fewer station calls from June to September only.

Adjusting these calling patterns – at Wakefield Westgate and Chesterfield, Basingstoke and Winchester – encourages passengers making shorter journeys to switch to other operators, providing more capacity for

CrossCountry customers making longer journeys.

Also announced is the complete refurbishment of both of CrossCountry's train fleets – including Turbostar trains which operate regional services from Birmingham to Cardiff, Nottingham and Stansted Airport – transforming the on-board experience for customers across all CrossCountry routes by summer 2026.

Julian Edwards and Scott Maynard, CrossCountry's Interim Managing Directors, said: "We're delighted to announce these transformational changes in fleet and on-board experience, which customers will start to benefit from as soon as this summer.

"Our teams are working hard to ensure the smooth introduction and refurbishment of extra trains and we look forward to working with colleagues at Alstom and Beacon Trains to give the ever-impressive Voyager fleet a new lease of life on the CrossCountry network."

Rail Minister, Huw Merriman MP, said: "More seats, services and refurbished trains will make for a better passenger experience, helping to relieve crowding. As well as benefiting those travelling with CrossCountry, this important investment in upgraded trains also builds on our record of supporting the rail supply chain."

Peter Broadley, Alstom's Managing Director of Rolling Stock and Services for UK and Ireland, said: "For more than 20 years, CrossCountry's Voyagers have proudly served towns and cities across Great Britain – travelling millions of miles in the process. We now look forward to giving these iconic Alstom-built trains some well-deserved TLC with a comprehensive overhaul that will include new seats, on-board technology enhancements and an exterior repaint.

"Not only will the refurbishment delight fare-paying customers with increased levels of comfort and accessibility, the overhaul programme will support UK suppliers and skilled jobs across the country."