

SWR completes £70m 'Desiro' refurbishment

January 10, 2020



South Western Railway (SWR) is pleased to announce the final refurbished Desiro train has entered passenger service on one of Britain's busiest railway networks.

SWR's £70 million refurbishment programme, which began in December 2017, modernised all 172 Class 444 and 450 trains to improve the onboard experience for customers travelling long-distance between London Waterloo, Weymouth, Poole and Portsmouth stations.

The final refurbished train, a Class 450, joins the existing Desiro fleet which boast better interiors with state-of-the-art features, including improved Wi-Fi and access to SWR|Stream, new inductive charging tables and power sockets to help customers stay connected, refashed toilets and ergonomically designed seats throughout for more comfortable journeys.

The completion of this rollout means customers will now benefit from 1,305 additional seats in standard-class as well as trains that are equipped for years to come. The refurbishment was completed by the trains' original manufacturer, Siemens.

The investment, which was financed by Angel Trains, one of Britain's leading train leasing companies, is

part of SWR's wider £1.2bn plan to offer customers more capacity and frequent trains, quicker journey times and better connectivity, together with station improvements and a better, smarter ticket buying experience.

Later this year, customers on SWR's suburban Windsor and Reading routes will welcome the introduction of the new Class 701 trains, whilst some Class 442 trains have already been reintroduced as part of the new January [timetable which offers 80 more services](#).

Neil Drury, SWR's Engineering Director, said: "This massive refurbishment programme is a huge investment by SWR which offers customers, using our long-distance services, a quality on-board experience.

"I'm proud to see the final refurbished Class 450 train in the programme enter service, and by the end of this year, more trains will roll-out to help us fulfil our promise of offering 52,000 extra seats over the course of the franchise."

Sambit Banerjee, Managing Director of Siemens Mobility's Rolling Stock business in the UK, said: "The full refurbishment of the 172-strong Class 444 and Class 450 'Desiro' fleet is a highly complex and demanding project, which was achieved through very close collaboration with SWR.

"We are extremely proud to achieve this very significant milestone in this project and to be contributing to an enhanced experience for SWR's passengers."

Kevin Tribbley, CEO of Angel Trains, said: "Investing in the development of rolling stock that reflects the evolving needs of today's passenger is a crucial part of modernising our railways. We're delighted to have supported this ambitious refurbishment project, which will modernise the 'Desiro' fleet and enable SWR to better serve its passengers."

Photo credit: SWR