

# Press Release

5 June 2025

## Avanti West Coast celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Stoke-on-Trent

- *Avanti West Coast and Stoke 100 celebrate a century of Stoke-on-Trent as a city*
- *First ever Stoke-on-Trent Day (5 June) marks official birthday of Staffordshire city*
- *Pendolino nameplate updated and unveiled to recognise Stoke-on-Trent's centenary*

Avanti West Coast has marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Stoke-on-Trent becoming a city with an updated nameplate that honours the centenary.

Partnering with the team behind Stoke 100 – a campaign to mark the city's century - the train operator unveiled a new nameplate for Pendolino 390129, which carries the name 'City of Stoke-on-Trent'. The design has now been changed to include '1925 – 2025' to recognise the centenary.

The nameplate which was unveiled at Euston – before the train, hosting city dignitaries including local MPs Allison Gardner, David Williams, and Gareth Snell, set off to Stoke-on-Trent for the official birthday celebrations.

At the station the train - which also carries the name 'Brett' on the cab ends in memory of a much-loved Avanti West Coast employee, Brett Hobson, who lost his battle with cancer in 2022 - was greeted by Lord Mayor of Stoke-on-Trent, Councillor Steve Watkins, special guests, as well as friends and colleagues of Brett.

They enjoyed local produce, including Titanic Brewery's Century Anniversary Ale, and a birthday cake to mark the occasion.

The day's activities took place on the first ever Stoke-on-Trent Day (5 June 2025) – exactly 100 years since it was granted city status by King George V – and are part of a wider programme of events throughout 2025 to mark the centenary.

Avanti West Coast were presented with a certificate by the Lord Mayor recognising their contribution to the inaugural Stoke-on-Trent Day, which will be an annual celebration held on 5 June to honour the city's history, culture, and the diverse communities that call it home.

Andy Mellors, Managing Director at Avanti West Coast, said: "It's an honour for us to take part in the official birthday celebrations of this fantastic city. We proudly serve Stoke-on-

Trent with our Pendolino trains and have a great team at the station who take pride in welcoming hundreds of thousands of people to and from the city by rail each year.

"Our Pendolino nameplate is a nod to the rich heritage of Stoke-on-Trent which has long been connected to the railway and comes as 2025 also marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the railway in the UK. The 'City of Stoke-on-Trent' will be making many more journeys on the West Coast Main Line and some of those will be bringing people together to celebrate this fantastic city."

Lord Mayor of Stoke-on-Trent Councillor, Steve Watkins, said: "It's a great honour to see Stoke-on-Trent's name carried proudly across the country on one of Avanti West Coast's iconic trains.

"This is a special moment in our Centenary year, reminding us not only of our proud past but also of the journey we continue to make as a city. It's a celebration of our identity, our communities and our place on the national map."

Gareth Snell, MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central, said: "I really appreciate Avanti West Coast's support to mark Stoke-on-Trent's centenary and host special guests ahead of the civic celebrations. With the City of Stoke-on-Trent Pendolino now honouring 100 years of this fantastic city, the special milestone will be recognised by many as the train journeys across the West Coast Main Line."

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#### About Stoke 100

Stoke-on-Trent is turning 100. In 2025, we'll celebrate a century since the city received its well-deserved status, honouring the rich history, vibrant culture, and unique identity that have made Stoke-on-Trent a global name. This year-long celebration isn't just about looking back. We'll be recognising the impact of our people and products on the world stage, while also setting our sights on the exciting years to come.

Our Stoke-on-Trent Centenary celebrations are for everyone who calls Stoke-on-Trent home. Whether you've always lived here, were born here and moved away or recently made Stoke-on-Trent your home. You are a Stokie to us.

<https://sot100.org.uk>

#### About Avanti West Coast

Avanti West Coast, operator of intercity rail services on the West Coast Main Line, is a joint venture between FirstGroup and Trenitalia, delivering a cleaner, greener railway that drives the West Coast forward.

We're on a mission to revolutionise train travel. Our refurbished Pendolinos returned to the rails in June 2024 following a £117m investment programme that's delivered the best in class comfort. Known as the UK's hardest working fleet, all 56 of these iconic trains have been transformed and now boast better seats, improved lighting, new interior carpets, customer-friendly passenger information screens, additional luggage space, power points at every seat and refurbished toilets.

Our new Evero fleet was introduced in June 2024. Built by Hitachi, the 23-strong fleet, consisting of 10 seven-carriage electric trains and 13 five-carriage bi-modes, will serve routes from London to the Midlands, Chester, North Wales and the North West, leading to a substantial cut in carbon emissions with an increase in seats, and offering improved comfort. Quieter and roomier, with more reliable Wi-Fi, wireless charging for electrical devices and a real-time customer information system, these new trains are the result of a £350m investment in sustainable travel.

We're tackling climate change wherever we can, from reducing energy and water use to training drivers in eco-driving techniques and sourcing food and drink from local suppliers. Our goal is to be net zero carbon by 2031. We're on track.

For the latest news, visit the Avanti West Coast Media Centre: <https://newsdesk.avantiwestcoast.co.uk/>

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