

Press Release

16 September 2024

Avanti West Coast's Crewe station hosts event to honour Pete Waterman

- *Train named in honour of Pete Waterman*
- *The 'surprise' event took place at Avanti West Coast's Crewe station*
- *Renown music produce overwhelmed and totally unaware prior to the unveiling*

Avanti West Coast has hosted an event which saw a Freightliner locomotive named after Pete Waterman OBE in recognition of his contribution to the railway industry.

The loco naming, which took place at Avanti West Coast's Crewe Station, was arranged as a collaborative celebration by the Railway Benefit Fund Charity, Avanti West Coast and Freightliner, where Pete was awarded the naming with a presentation from Tim Shoveller, CEO Freightliner Group.

In the last 5 years Pete has held the role as President of the Railway Benefit Fund, a charity which provides support to current, former, and retired UK railway people and their families.

In his time as Charity President, Pete has raised donations of almost £2 million pounds which goes towards sustaining the charity and providing much needed support to railway people and their families. In the region of 3,000 grants have been awarded, with over one-third of these grants specifically supporting the children of these families.

Andy Mellors, Managing Director for Avanti West Coast said: "Pete is a passionate advocate for the railways and it's people, so we're incredibly privileged to have hosted the naming ceremony at Crewe station in his honour. It's a fitting tribute to one of the railway's biggest supporters, someone who always goes out of his way to help others and promote all that is good about the industry."

Jo Kaye, CEO, from the Railway Benefit Fund charity said, "Pete is a well-known railway devotee who passionately champions the railway industry and its workforce. He has been instrumental in making our fundraising events a success, always finding the time to engage with railway workers nationwide, actively supporting and promoting all range of media and hospitality events. This loco naming is a true acknowledgement of his contribution and a huge thank you from the charity and all the families we have been able to support as a result of his great work".

Tim Shoveller, CEO Freightliner Group said, "I have known Pete throughout my railway career, he is a true railway supporter, always happy to give up his time and contribute to the benefit of the railways. His passion and love for the industry, people and even the model form is clear to see. On 27th April 2024, Pete and his Railnuts team set a Guinness World Record for the 'Largest Portable Model Railway', with an overall and official track length of 690.4m / 2279ft. It really is a pleasure and honour to be naming a Freightliner Locomotive in Pete's name."

Pete Waterman was more formally recognised for his work in the music industry for which he was awarded an OBE in the 2005 Queen's New Year's Honours list. Loving the experience of travelling on trains, he wrote his first lyrics sat on Rugby station, which gave him his inspiration and held his first job aged 14 working for the British Railway. He continues to hold the role as Charity President for the Railway Benefit Fund and give up his time to raise awareness and benefit for the charity, the railway people and families it supports.

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Notes to Editors

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 and will replace our Voyagers. 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.

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<https://newsdesk.avantiwestcoast.co.uk/>

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