Press Release

25 June 2024

Final Pendolino refurbished as part the UK's biggest fleet upgrade

- *All 56 Avanti West Coast Pendolino trains now fully refurbished*
- *Last train leaves Alstom's Widnes depot after event to mark the successful completion of the project*
- *The £117m investment has helped to deliver a step change in onboard experience*

A £117m refurbishment programme of Avanti West Coast's iconic Pendolino fleet has concluded after the final completed train went into service this week.

The departure of the last Pendolino from rail manufacturer Alstom's Widnes facility marked the end of the project – the UK's biggest ever fleet upgrade. It has seen 574 refurbished carriages delivered in just over two years, at a rate of one completed train every two weeks.

The last train, 390020, entered into service yesterday (Monday 24 June) – working the 08:43 service from Liverpool Lime Street to London Euston.

The Pendolinos have served routes between London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Edinburgh for close to 20 years and the upgrade has returned the whole Pendolino fleet to an 'as new' condition.

Customer benefits of the fleet overhaul include:

- 25,000 new, ergonomic Standard Class seats;
- Conversion of one First Class carriage on each of the 35 eleven-carriage Pendolinos to provide more than 2,000 extra Standard Class seats;
- The introduction of a new onboard shop;
- Improved lighting;
- Refurbished First Class and Standard Premium seats;
- Greater use of technology with customer-friendly passenger information screens;
- Additional luggage space in Standard Class;
- Power points at every seat;
- Refurbished toilets; and
- New carpets throughout using sustainable British wool.

Andy Mellors, Managing Director at Avanti West Coast said: "The refurbished Pendolinos, together with our new Evero fleet, are a key part of our mission to transform rail travel for our customers on the west coast route.

"The Pendolino is an iconic train, and now even better than before, offering customers a much-improved travel experience, with innovation and sustainability at its heart."

Peter Broadley, Alstom's Services Managing Director UK who hosted an event at Widnes to mark the completion of the project, commented: "Alstom's successful completion of the UK's biggest ever fleet upgrade demonstrates our commitment to enhancing the journey experience for fare-paying passengers while, at the same time, supporting the growth of sustainable rail travel in the UK.

"This milestone highlights the dedication and expertise of our team at Widnes. They have worked tirelessly in partnership with colleagues at Avanti West Coast, Angel Trains and our wider UK supply chain to elevate the interior refurbishment of rolling stock to another level. We are immensely proud to see the entire Alstom-built Pendolino fleet returning to service in peak condition."

UK suppliers are also benefitting from 80 percent of the £117m investment, which is financed by Angel Trains, one of the UK's leading train Asset Management companies.

Malcolm Brown, CEO of Angel Trains, said: "A huge thank you to both Alstom and Avanti West Coast for making the UK's biggest ever fleet upgrade possible. It's significantly transformed our iconic trains, and I'm positive that passengers will enjoy the comfort and connectivity when they travel on one of our refurbished Pendolinos.

"This is exactly what the partnership between our businesses set out to achieve together, and I'm certain that it will encourage people to make a positive decision to travel by train on the West Coast Main Line.

"To demonstrate our commitment to continue developing talent within our suppliers and industry, Angel Trains is excited to announce that we're sponsoring two apprentices to join Alstom's Widnes facility later this year. I wish them every success in what I hope will be a long railway career ahead."

The investment in the Pendolino fleet is just part of the changes that have taken place on the west coast route. These include the ground-breaking Standard Premium and innovative Superfare tickets which continue to grow in popularity, and recent launch into service of the brand-new Evero fleet.

Ends

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 refurbed 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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