Press Release

16 April 2025

Coventry station brightened up with £600,000 investment to replace skylights

- *Skylights dating back to the 1960s on platform 1 replaced and new signage installed throughout the station.*
- *Avanti West Coast, Network Rail and Railway Heritage Trust have jointly invested £600,000 in project.*
- *Continued investment to further transform experience for Coventry customers.*

A project to replace the skylights at Coventry station has now been completed thanks to a £600,000 investment from Avanti West Coast, Network Rail and the Railway Heritage Trust.

The work saw all 27 skylights – which were over 60 years old – on platform 1 replaced, as well as new wayfinding signage installed throughout the station to improve the experience for customers.

Built in the 1960s, the previous skylights were at the end of their lifespan as well as being extremely dirty with no means to maintain. Each new structure, which enables more natural light through, consists of eight panels that can be individually removed to be cleaned. Furthermore, access points to the roof have been installed at either end of platform 1 to ensure that the maintenance of the new skylights can be easily carried out. New energy-efficient LED lighting has been situated alongside the skylights to reduce energy consumption at the station.

The skylights and signage work are part of an ongoing transformation at the Avanti West Coast managed station. In 2022, the £82million purpose-built new look main building and multi-storey car park with a connecting footbridge to all four platforms opened.

Over the last three years, the customer experience has been further improved with the opening of retail outlets in the new station building, and the installation of a new courtyard area on platform 1 for customers to use whilst they wait for their trains.

In addition, Avanti West Coast also worked with the Railway Heritage Trust to renovate the station's unique tiled walls, whilst also providing a more prominent display for the old steam train nameplate 'City of Coventry'.

Dean Duthie, Engineering and Infrastructure Director at Avanti West Coast, said: "Walking along Platform 1, the work has made a remarkable difference where customers will see a more vibrant look and feel from the natural light streaming through the new skylights.

"Coventry station boasts a rich railway history and has always been an important gateway to the city. It is undergoing a huge transformation to ensure that rail customers are given the best experience possible through easy accessibility, availability of shops, simple wayfinding and a relaxing atmosphere."

Federica Labanca, Principal Route Engineer at Network Rail Central route, said: "We're really pleased to have been able to support this fantastic station improvement project for passengers.

"At Network Rail, we take great pride in working with our industry partners to preserve and enhance Britain's iconic railway stations whilst making sure they meet the needs of the modern-day passenger.

"We hope that regular station users and visitors to the city enjoy the new station experience for many years to come."

Tim Hedley-Jones, Director of The Railway Heritage Trust said: "Our twentieth century railway heritage is just as important as that dating from the nineteenth century. Network Rail and Avanti West Coast are to be congratulated on looking after this iconic Grade II listed station so well.

"Having clear natural light and visible signage for passengers waiting for trains is an important part of the customer experience and we are pleased to have supported this work with three grant awards".

Cllr Naeem Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities at Coventry City Council, said: "We welcome this latest investment in Coventry Station, which continues to build on the significant improvements made in recent years.

"It's great to see upgrades like these enhance the station's architectural heritage while also meeting modern-day needs. The new skylights and signage absolutely strike that balance, helping to improve the customer experience while preserving the unique character of the station."

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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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About Network Rail

We own, operate and develop Britain's railway infrastructure; that's 20,000 miles of track, 30,000 bridges, tunnels and viaducts and the thousands of signals, level crossings and stations. We run 20 of the UK's largest stations while all the others, over 2,500, are run by the country's train operating companies.

Usually, there are almost five million journeys made in the UK and over 600 freight trains run on the network. People depend on Britain's railway for their daily commute, to visit friends and loved ones and to get them home safe every day. Our role is to deliver a safe and reliable railway, so we carefully manage and deliver thousands of projects every year that form part of the multi-billion pound Railway Upgrade Plan, to grow and expand the nation's railway network to respond to the tremendous growth and demand the railway has experienced - a doubling of passenger journeys over the past 20 years.

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