Press Release

26 November 2024

Avanti West Coast marks White Ribbon Day after achieving accreditation

- *Railway industry colleagues joined together in a choir for White Ribbon Day.*
- *Avanti West Coast is now an accredited White Ribbon organisation.*
- *Part of the operator's mission to deliver a safe railway for everyone.*

A choir featuring colleagues from Avanti West Coast and industry counterparts joined together to mark White Ribbon Day (Monday 25 November) with a special performance to raise awareness for the organisation's campaign to prevent male violence against women and girls.

The intercity operator attained its White Ribbon accreditation last month and to highlight the awareness day, a choir which included participants from Avanti West Coast as well as British Transport Police, West Midlands Trains and East Midlands Railway, was organised at Birmingham New Street station.

White Ribbon is the UK's leading charity to engage men and boys to end gender inequality aggression against females by addressing root causes and long-established attitudes in society.

As an accredited organisation, Avanti West Coast will continue to embed the charity's values into its business. These include ensuring that the operator remains a positive and safe working environment for women, encouraging more male leaders across the workforce to promote equality, and supporting local communities across its route.

The work with White Ribbon reinforces Avanti West Coast's efforts to make the railway a safer place for all, building on their Safeguarding on Rail Scheme accreditation which it received last year for its work to protect vulnerable young people and adults at risk. It is also delivering comprehensive safeguarding training to all colleagues in the business to help identify people who may need help.

In addition, Avanti West Coast has introduced a dedicated safeguarding mobile application for employees to record and report concerns. This has enabled the operator to respond better to vulnerable people at risk, with support from the British Transport Police and well-being charities.

Avanti West Coast's Safety Director, David Whitehouse said: "It was great to have colleagues join us from across the industry to support such a worthwhile cause and

get people talking about the work needed to prevent violence against women and girls.

"Becoming a White Ribbon accredited member is an important step in our efforts to make the railway a safe environment for everyone. We want all who travel with us to feel secure as well as for our staff to be part of a positive and inclusive working culture."

White Ribbon UK's Chief Executive Officer, Anthea Sully, said: "It's vital that women and girls are and feel safe on public transport. The work that Avanti and partners in the rail industry are doing to support this to happen means everyone, especially men, can better understand the role of allyship and their responsibility in creating positive cultures that enable safe spaces.

"It should not be for women to carry the burden of keeping themselves safe, White Ribbon UK calls for men to show allyship to women, to think through how their behaviour and actions can make a positive difference to the issues women face. That is why this year's White Ribbon theme is 'it Starts with Men'. It is fantastic to see organisations across the transport network working together to create such positive impact and raise awareness."

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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.

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

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About White Ribbon UK

White Ribbon is the UK's leading charity engaging men and boys to prevent violence against women and girls. Our mission is to prevent men's violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes — harmful and dominant masculine norms. We strive to change long-established attitudes, behaviours and systems around masculinity that perpetuate gender inequality and men's violence against women.

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For more information about White Ribbon UK: www.whiteribbon.org.uk/about-us

White Ribbon Day information: www.whiteribbon.org.uk/wrd24