Press Release

18 December 2023

Avanti West Coast extends its partnership with Railway Benefit Fund

- *Avanti West Coast to partner with Railway Benefit Fund for a further 12 months*
- *Crewe based charity to provide support for Avanti West Coast employees, past and present*
- *Avanti West Coast lend additional support to the charity's Christmas campaign*

Avanti West Coast has announced it is extending its partnership with Railway Benefit Fund until the end of September 2024.

The aim of the partnership is to support as well as improve the general and financial wellbeing of current, former, or retired Avanti West Coast employees.

The Crewe based charity, who were founded in 1858, offer bespoke care and advice to railway families. In the past twelve months have helped over 1,000 individuals struggling with hardship.

Working closely with Avanti West Coast's Human Resources team, they will deliver training sessions to colleagues to increase the awareness of grants available to those who find themselves struggling financially.

They will also support Avanti West Coast's Health and Wellbeing activity throughout the year, with attendance at events, and work together to increase the number of volunteer time to support the charity.

The West Coast operator will also support Railway Benefit Fund's Christmas Vouchers for Rail Children appeal, providing 100 youngsters from families supported by charity throughout the year with some extra festive cheer.

Kelly Burton, Health and Wellbeing Partner at Avanti West Coast, said: "The Railway Benefit Fund are the unsung heroes of the industry. They've been supporting our people and the wider railway family for over 160 years.

"Their work is invaluable, even more so in recent times, and we're proud to continue our partnership with them."

In the previous years, the charity has supported the 'railway family' in many ways, with help ranging from financial assistance to funding of home schooling equipment for children during lockdown.

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One of Avanti West Coast's flagship Pendolino trains was also named 'Railway Benefit Fund' in April 2021 to celebrate the partnership.

Jo Kaye, Chief Executive Officer at the Railway Benefit Fund said: "We are delighted to have renewed our partnership with Avanti West Coast for the fourth consecutive year. By working together, we continue to improve the financial wellbeing of current, former and retired railway employees."

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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 are returning to the rails, with a £117m investment that's delivering best in class comfort. Rebuilt using sustainable materials wherever possible, including tables made from recycled plastic bottles, our upgraded fleet offers 25,000 brand new seats, free Wi-Fi, onboard recycling and much more.

New Hitachi trains are set to replace our Voyager trains from 2024, leading to a 61% cut in carbon emissions. Quieter and roomier, with more reliable Wi-Fi, wireless charging for electrical devices and a real-time customer information system, the new 23-strong fleet is 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/

Press Office: 0845 000 3333

About Railway Benefit Fund

The Railway Benefit Fund is the charity that solely supports railway people and their families. Founded in 1858, and now based in Crewe, they offer bespoke care and advice to railway families to help them through tough times.

www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/

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