



# Making rail accessible

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Helping older and  
disabled passengers

AVANTI  
WEST COAST





# Contents

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|  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Introduction  | 5  |
| 2. Assistance: what is available<br>and how to get it  | 6  |
| 3. What to expect: our commitment<br>to customers at every stage of<br>the journey:<br>• Before you travel | 11 |
| • Help at the station  | 16 |
| • Help on the train  | 23 |
| • If things don't go as planned  | 29 |
| 4. Where to get more information<br>and how to get in touch  | 35 |





# 1. INTRODUCTION

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**Welcome to Avanti West Coast and Making rail accessible: helping older and disabled passengers.**

**We run the high speed long distance trains service and 16 stations on the route between London, the West Midlands, Manchester, Merseyside, North Wales, Glasgow and Edinburgh.**

## The stations we manage

- Carlisle
- Penrith North Lakes
- Oxenholme Lake District
- Lancaster
- Preston
- Wigan North Western
- Warrington Bank Quay
- Runcorn
- Crewe
- Stockport
- Macclesfield,
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Stafford
- Birmingham International
- Coventry
- Rugby

Our trains call at a further [33] stations operated by other Train Operating Companies or Network Rail shown on the map at the back of this leaflet.

## We also manage Ticket Offices at:

- London Euston
- Birmingham New Street
- Manchester Piccadilly
- Glasgow Central

## And, provide Customer Service Teams at:

- London Euston
- Milton Keynes Central
- Birmingham New Street
- Manchester Piccadilly
- Liverpool Lime Street
- Glasgow Central

We are committed to delivering consistently excellent service making journeys easy and convenient for all our customers. Our vision is to provide an accessible and welcoming railway for all, and we will ensure that the needs of disabled or older customers are properly considered in all aspects of service delivery, enabling them to travel confidently and independently.

This leaflet provides information to help you plan your journey, particularly if you think you, or someone travelling with you, may need additional help. **It explains:**

- Everything you need to know about travelling with us, from planning your trip to arriving at your destination relaxed and refreshed
- The additional assistance we can provide and how to obtain it
- The information, services and facilities we provide for disabled or older customers at all stages of your journey
- How we will help you if your train is delayed
- Where to get more information if you need it
- How to contact us and provide feedback on our services in relation to accessible travel.

You can find more information about the accessibility of our stations and services, and our plans to improve these in our Accessible Travel Policy, available on the [avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP) page of our website.



## 2. ASSISTANCE:

# What is available and how to obtain it

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### For Immediate Travel

You can turn up at any station that is accessible to you and request assistance onto a train from a member of staff, by using a help point or by contacting us using the details on the back page of this leaflet. We will endeavour to provide the help you need as quickly as possible.

The accessible features of each of the stations where our services call are detailed on our website [avantiwestcoast.co.uk/stations](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk/stations). Station accessibility information is also available from our Assisted Travel Team or from National Rail Enquiries at [nationalrail.co.uk](http://nationalrail.co.uk).

We will always do our best to provide you with the help you need. All our on-board and station staff are encouraged to look out for customers with specific needs and offer appropriate help.

In addition to our station teams, every Avanti West Coast service has an onboard team who will be able to assist you to get on and off our trains.

During times of disruption, it may be necessary to provide alternative transport (at no additional cost to you) to an alternative station. Please be aware this may take some time to provide whilst we source a vehicle appropriate to your needs.

## If you are able to plan your journey in advance

If you, or a person travelling with you, are likely to need assistance during your journey, we can help you to plan ahead and make the arrangements you need in advance. Please call our Assisted Travel Team or complete the online webform available at [avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP)

Our Assisted Travel Team can provide the latest information on accessibility arrangements on stations and trains across the UK and help you arrange assistance before you travel. Assistance can be provided wherever you need it across the National Rail network using "Passenger Assist", a system used by all UK train operators to coordinate assisted travel. Because it's a national system you can use it to book assistance for your entire journey irrespective of the number of connections or train services you need to take, with one call.



## **Our teams can help with every aspect of planning your journey including:**

- Booking assistance for getting on and off the train, as well as getting to and from the platform. This includes help connecting between train services and from the platform to and from onward transport, such as taxis, car parks and public transport where these are in close proximity to the station
- Request a ramp to be provided for getting on and off the train
- Request help with luggage
- Making seat reservations, including for dedicated wheelchair user spaces or priority seats on trains
- Make onward travel reservations on services operated by other train companies (where seat reservations are available)
- Provide information and reservations for travelling with scooters or other mobility aids
- Purchasing travel tickets, (including, where available cheaper advance fares). This can be done at the same time you call to book assistance, all within a single transaction.
- Check the accessibility and facilities on trains and stations across the UK rail network.

Our staff are trained to assist customers with both visible and hidden disabilities but please note that our staff are not able to accompany you throughout your journey, or provide personal care, such as help with eating, taking medication or using the toilet. If you need this kind of help you should travel with a companion.

We will always do our best to provide the assistance and help you need, but if access to and from trains at the station you plan to use is not possible, (for example if the station is not staffed at the time you wish to travel, because of a physical

feature or where there is no second person on board the train service that you plan to use). We will provide alternative transport e.g. by taxi, to the nearest accessible station which meets your needs at no additional cost. When you book assistance, we will discuss with you the type of alternative transport you require so that we can make sure that the vehicle provided meets your needs.

## Requesting Assistance

Our Assisted Travel team are available 08:00 to 22:00 daily, except Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

### To contact them:

Call: **0800 0158123**

Text phone: **0800 015 8124** (for deaf or hard of hearing customers)

Online: Visit [avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP) and complete the webform

We recommend that you contact our Assisted Travel Team no less than **24 hours** in advance of your journey to let us know what help you need to ensure that we are able to make the necessary arrangements. If you need to travel within 24 hours, please telephone our team and they will do their best to help you.

If you request assistance using the webform, our Assisted Travel Team may contact you to discuss or confirm certain details to ensure you receive the assistance you need. For more general advice about assisted travel, you are best to contact our team by phone or text relay as advice cannot be given using the webform.

We recognise that it is not always possible to know your arrangements with 24 hours' notice which is why we are committed to reducing the notice period required for booking Passenger Assist. From 1 April 2020, you will be able to book Passenger Assist anytime up to 10pm the evening before your travel.

## JAM Card

JAM, stands for 'Just a Minute'. It is a card-based scheme designed to help you communicate with our teams if you have dementia, speech impediment or other disability which affects your communication. Showing a member of our team a JAM card lets them know that you need a little more time, and that you have a hidden disability.



You can download the JAM card app from the App Store (iOS) or Play Store (Android) to show staff, or you can order a physical card free of charge from [www.jamcard.org](http://www.jamcard.org).

All our on-board and station teams have been trained to recognise the JAM card and have completed hidden disability awareness training and many have been given a JAM pin badge to wear that lets you know that they are trained to understand how to respond when presented with the card.







### 3. WHAT TO EXPECT:

Our commitment  
at every stage  
of your journey

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## BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

### Journey planning and information

We know it is important for you to be confident that information we give you is accurate and consistent, especially if your journey involves changing platforms and trains.

Our Assisted Travel team can provide advice to you about every aspect of your journey from train times, to station staffing hours, to the latest accessibility issues at each station. They will confirm this information to you when you book assistance so that you know what to expect at every stage of your journey, and they can provide you with a copy of the station access information for reference if required.

Additionally, we will ensure the information displayed on our website, and the National Rail Enquiries website, is accurate and up to date. Where we receive notification of a change, for example, reduced availability of lifts or accessible toilets at stations or temporary restrictions because of building works, we will update online information within 24 hours.

At stations, where possible, we will advise waiting customers if we are aware that on-train accessible toilets, or other accessible features are out of action, or when trains with different facilities are being used on our services.

# Tickets and Fares

## Buying a Ticket

Tickets can be bought from the ticket office at staffed stations, at stations with self-service ticket vending machines, by phoning our Customer Resolution Team, online at [avantiwestcoast.co.uk](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk), via our app which is downloadable from the App Store (iOS/Apple) or Play Store (Android) or by contacting our Assisted Travel Team.

Where it is difficult for you to purchase a ticket before you travel due to your disability you will be able to buy tickets on-board the train or at your destination. You will still receive any fare reductions that you are entitled to, and no penalties for ticketless travel will be applied.

## Railcards

### Disabled Persons Railcard

Disabled Persons Railcard is available to people with one or more of a range of disabilities. They are valid for one year, or three years, and they give you and your companion discounts on standard and First Class tickets throughout the national rail network. A one-year Railcard costs £20 or a three-year Railcard costs £54.

If you have a Disabled Persons Railcard, we'll give you a discount of up to 34% when you buy your tickets online or at the ticket machine. At the ticket office, you just need to show your Railcard when you buy them. You need to carry your Railcard with you when travelling and show it with your valid ticket during any ticket inspection.

If you don't already have a Disabled Persons Railcard, you can find out more and apply for one by going online to [disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](http://disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk), by calling National Rail Enquiries on 0345 748 4950 or 0345 605 0600 (minicom for those with hearing impairments), or by picking up a leaflet from your local ticket office. You will need to supply proof of disability as part of your application.

## **Senior Railcard**

Senior Railcards are available to anyone aged 60 and over. They are valid for a one year or for three years and give you up to a third off standard and First Class tickets for journeys throughout Great Britain.

If you have a Senior Railcard, we'll give you a discount when you buy your tickets online, at a ticket office or from a ticket machine. At the ticket office you just need to show your Railcard when you buy them. You also need to carry your Railcard when you travel for when your tickets are checked.

If you don't already have a Senior Railcard, you can find out more and apply for one by going online to [senior-railcard.co.uk](http://senior-railcard.co.uk), by calling National Rail Enquiries on 0345 748 4950 or 0345 605 0600 (minicom for those with hearing impairments), or by picking up a leaflet from your local ticket office.

## **Concessionary Fares - without using a Railcard**

Discounts are also available in some cases where you do not have a Railcard. If you are blind or visually-impaired and travelling with a companion, or you travel in your own wheelchair, you are entitled to the concessions detailed below. Please be aware these cannot be purchased from the ticket vending machines and should be purchased from station ticket offices or the assisted travel team. If there is no ticket office at the station where you board you may pay the concessionary fare, without penalty, during the journey or at your destination.

You may also be entitled to travel using a regional concession. You should contact your local authority for more details.

## **Blind or visually-impaired customers travelling with a companion**

If you are registered as blind or visually-impaired and you are travelling with a companion, the concessionary discounts below apply to adult fares only for both you and your companion. You cannot get a discount

if you are travelling on your own, unless you have a railcard. You must show a document confirming your disability when you buy your ticket and when travelling. It must be either a CVI/BP1/BD8 certificate or documentation from a recognised institution, for example, Social Services, your Local Authority or Blind Veterans UK.

If you are blind or visually-impaired, you can buy one adult season ticket that enables a companion to travel with you on National Rail services only at no extra cost (so two people travel for the price of one). It doesn't have to be the same person travelling with you on every journey. Please take evidence of your visual impairment with you to prove your eligibility.

## **People who stay in their own wheelchair for a rail journey**

If you remain in your own wheelchair during a journey and you do not have a Railcard, you are eligible for the concessionary discounts on both adult and child fares. The discounts apply if you are travelling alone and are available to one adult companion travelling with you.

## **Concessionary Fare Discounts**

**The following discounts apply:**

| <b>First Class/Standard</b> |                |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Anytime Singles or Returns  | <b>34% off</b> |
| Anytime Day Singles         | <b>34% off</b> |
| Anytime Day Return          | <b>50% off</b> |

In many cases, Off-Peak, Super Off-Peak or Advance tickets may cost less than the discounted Anytime Fare. Our Assisted Travel Team or ticket office staff will make you aware if there is a cheaper fare available at the time of purchase.



# **AT THE STATION**

## **Assistance at Stations**

### **Meeting your assistant**

If you have booked assistance please go to the designated meeting point at the station (listed at the end of this leaflet), where you will be met by the member of staff assigned to assist you. Alternatively make yourself known to any member of station staff in the ticket office, on the ticket gates or the platform. Our team can be identified by their Avanti West Coast uniform.

Alternatively, if you have requested assistance from the station drop off/pick up point, taxi rank, other public transport or car park within close proximity of the station, staff will be on hand to assist you.

We recommend that you arrive at the station at least 20 minutes before the departure of the train. Our team will assist you to the platform, helping you to collect any tickets you might need on the way and ensure you successfully board the train.

### **Accessible Station Facilities and hours of operation**

All the stations that Avanti West Coast operate are staffed during the times that trains call there. They all have Customer Information Screens and Public Address Systems, seating, hearing loops within ticket offices and customer information points, a taxi rank and accessible set down area. They all have Secure Stations Accreditation status.

You can access the full details of all the facilities at each station either on our website [avantiwestcoast.co.uk](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk) or on the National Rail Enquiries website [nationalrail.co.uk/stations](http://nationalrail.co.uk/stations).

## **Using unstaffed stations**

Some of the stations where our trains call at are not staffed, or only have staff at set times of day. You can find details of the times when staff are available and assistance can be provided for each station on the National Rail network at [nationalrail.co.uk/stations](http://nationalrail.co.uk/stations)

If you are able to access an unstaffed station without the need for assistance, our on-board team will be pleased to help you get on and off the train. Please ask a member of staff when the train arrives or press the help point giving plenty time to advise a member of staff of your required assistance. If you require assistance to get to or from the platform or are planning to board another operator's train (where there may not be a second member of staff who is able to assist) we advise you to contact our Assisted Travel team in advance of travel. The Assisted Travel team will be able to discuss your needs with you and book your assistance, arrange alternative transport to the nearest most convenient accessible station or advise of alternative options. The Assisted Travel team contact details are displayed on Welcome posters near our station entrances in the event that you arrive at the station and are not able to access the platform unexpectedly.

## **Connections to other train services**

When making train connections, please allow yourself enough time to transfer between trains. Our Assisted Travel Team will advise you on connection times when you are making your booking. In some cases, especially where an interchange takes place at a larger station, they may recommend allowing a longer connection time to those displayed in journey planners on websites or apps to allow sufficient time to cross the station. Where alternative journeys are recommended, our Assisted Travel Team can amend seat reservations and tickets to match, ensuring no additional cost is incurred.

## **If platform alterations occur at short notice, our teams will:**

- Update customer information screens at the station and make additional announcements
- Seek to identify customers with disabilities and provide any assistance you need
- Try to give sufficient time to allow you to board the re-platformed train

If you need to change your journey due to service disruption, our members of staff will coordinate your revised journey and any assistance you require. If you have booked assistance, we will also inform other operators and stations about the changes to your journey, so they can still provide the assistance you need.

## **Intermodal connections**

If you are changing between modes of transport (e.g. from train to bus), we can provide assistance to help you make the connection as long as the interchange is within the immediate station area.

We encourage taxis operating from our stations to provide wheelchair accessible vehicles. Where we manage taxi ranks at our stations, we give priority to companies with accessible vehicles.

## **Accessible Station Features**

All our stations have posters displaying information about the station, facilities and accessibility. The posters include a station map, the contact details of our Assisted Travel Team and those of any other operators who use the station.

Some of our stations have information points where you will be able to get information about services and accessibility, timetables, fares, connections and confirmation of any assistance booked through Passenger Assist. Where stations do not have an

information point, the ticket office will provide this service. We place timetables, posters, information leaflets and other materials in a position that both wheelchair users and standing customers can access.

We have help points at all our stations. Staff answering these help points will be able to help you with local information, train running details, make arrangements for staff to assist you, and information relating to other operators and stations.

All our stations are fitted with audio and visual real-time customer information systems, giving clear and consistent information regarding train departures and delays or disruption. This includes up to date train running information on customer information screens on all platforms where services call. We also make audio announcements when there are any changes to the schedule and when a train is approaching.

At times of disruption, our staff will also be able to provide you with information about how services are running and the best alternative arrangements. They will update information screens as soon as they can and make announcements to keep customers informed of the situation.

We are committed to improving the accessibility of all facilities at the stations at which our services call. During the franchise we will be investing in significant improvements to the accessibility of the stations we manage, and we will also strive to work proactively with other station operators to provide consistently easily accessible facilities. We will keep you updated about our progress on our website and in future versions of our Accessible Travel Policy.



## Station Wheelchairs

All our stations have wheelchairs which are able to be used by staff to assist customers for transfers around the station. At some of the larger stations we serve such as London Euston, Manchester Piccadilly and Glasgow Central buggies are also available.

## Ramps

We have ramps to use to avoid the step from the train to platform, or vice versa, at all the stations where our services call and on-board all our trains. Our on-board staff will help you on or off the train at any stations where there are no station staff available to assist you.

## **Luggage**

We can provide help to older and disabled customers with luggage at our stations and when boarding and alighting trains.

National Conditions of Travel apply, which means you can travel with a maximum three items. We ask that customers requesting assistance consider the size and weight of their luggage, as staff members must be able to safely lift and carry items.

There is no charge for this service, however, customers should be reminded that this is not a porter service.

## **Left luggage**

We do not provide a left luggage service at our stations; however accessible facilities are provided at some of the larger stations operated by Network Rail including London Euston, Birmingham New Street, Manchester Piccadilly and Glasgow Central.

## **Car parking**

Where we have car parking facilities at our stations, we provide marked bays for Blue Badge holders, which are within the chargeable parking area so the normal car parking rate will apply.

We always locate parking bays for Blue Badge holders in accessible locations close to the station and ensure that spaces are larger than standard spaces to allow for easier access. We monitor the use of our car parks to make sure that designated spaces are not being used by people without Blue Badges.

## **Station Teams**

### **Staff training and briefing**

We provide our staff with regular training, briefings and updates so that they can always provide you with the most up to date information, including information about other operators' services and the accessibility of other transport from the station such as buses.

## ON THE TRAIN

All our trains have an onboard team who have received comprehensive training in how to support older or disabled customers. They will be happy to help you.

They will provide timely, helpful and clear announcements and will ensure these are made in sufficient time for customers, especially those with reduced mobility, to prepare to alight, at least two minutes before arriving at each station. Additionally, all our trains have public address equipment and a visual display in each coach showing the train's destination and the next stop.

Our team will make announcements about any alterations to the normal service, including delays.

If your hearing, vision or mobility is impaired, please advise the Train Manager as soon as you can (e.g. when your ticket is being checked), for example if you have difficulty hearing announcements. Please also let us know if you require assistance to access the train's facilities (e.g. catering) or if you may need particular help.

Where Passenger Assist has been booked, we aim to provide a member of staff to help you off the train as soon as possible. Where trains terminate their journey (such as London Euston) it can take a little longer to meet you. However, we will endeavour to assist you within five minutes of your train's arrival. If you need help getting off the train and have not booked assistance in advance, you should advise the Train Manager who will arrange this for you.

## **Seats on trains**

Seat reservations can be made on all Avanti West Coast Trains services free of charge, when you buy your ticket. We strongly recommend older or disabled customers reserve a seat to ensure you can access the on-board facilities which have been designed to meet your needs. Reservations can be made up to three months before the date of travel and up to two hours before the train begins its journey. This also applies to the priority seats, wheelchair user spaces and companion seats. If you plan to travel on a train which leaves its starting station early in the morning you will need to book by 10pm the evening before.

If you have been provided a seat reservation with your ticket and need to make use of a priority seat or wheelchair user space, our Assisted Travel Team can make this change, and where possible will reserve companion seats for those travelling with you.

## **Accessibility and our trains**

We operate two different types of train: Super Voyager and Pendolino trains. Both are fully compliant with the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (RVAR). You can find out more information about these standards by visiting [gov.uk/government/publications/accessible-rail-transport/accessible-rail-transport](http://gov.uk/government/publications/accessible-rail-transport/accessible-rail-transport)

All Pendolino trains have an on-board shop where you can buy food and refreshments during your journey. If you are unable to visit the shop, please tell a member of our on-board staff who will be pleased to serve refreshments to you at your seat. On Super-Voyager trains, refreshments can be purchased from the trolley as it passes through the train.

## **Wheelchair User Spaces**

All our trains have dedicated wheelchair user spaces available in both First and Standard Class. These are conveniently located close to entrance doors and near to a universal accessible toilet.

The wheelchair user spaces are accessible by wheelchairs with a maximum width of 70 centimetres and a maximum length of 120 centimetres.

On Pendolinos, we provide one wheelchair user space in First Class, (in coach J) and two wheelchair user spaces in Standard Class, (in coaches B and D).

On Super Voyager trains, we provide one wheelchair user space in First Class, (in coach E), and one wheelchair user space in Standard Class, (in coach A). When two 5-car trains run together, one wheelchair user space is additionally provided in First Class (in coach L), and one in Standard Class (in coach G).

The carriages with wheelchair user spaces are identifiable by a symbol on the train exterior door.

All wheelchair user spaces feature a small table, with facing companion seat.

Wheelchair user spaces can be reserved at the same time as booking assistance.

A minimum of one companion seat will be provided. Where you are travelling as part of a group, we will endeavour to provide seats in the vicinity of the wheelchair user space, but this may not always be possible, particularly on busier services.

If at the time of requesting assistance, all the Standard Class wheelchair user spaces are already booked, you will be provided with a complimentary upgrade to First Class. This upgrade facility is also available for one travelling companion. If you specify that you wish to travel in First Class, we will charge you the appropriate First Class fare or upgrade.

On the rare occasion the wheelchair user space you have reserved is in use by another customer when you arrive, our on-board team will make the space available, or arrange for you to use an alternative wheelchair user space on-board so you can carry on your journey as planned.

If you have not reserved a wheelchair user space, we will allocate any unreserved wheelchair user spaces on a first come first served basis.

## **Priority Seats**

Super Voyager and Pendolino trains have 'Priority Seats' in each carriage for customers who need them. These seats are located near the doors and have additional legroom, which may be useful for people travelling with an assistance dog. You can reserve these seats through Passenger Assist. If you don't book ahead there are some non-reservable priority seats and wheelchair user spaces, you can use but it is on a first come first served basis.

We do ask our customers to give up priority seats for people who need them more, but it's not always obvious that someone needs a seat. Our on-board team will be happy to help ensure priority use of these spaces is given to customers who need them.

Priority seats are only made generally reservable when all other seats on the train have been reserved.

## **If you have not made a seat reservation**

If you are an older or disabled customer and you have not made a seat reservation, we will make every effort to ensure you can find a seat. If you are unable to find seating on-board, please contact a member of the on-train staff, who will be pleased to assist you.

If you do not have a seat or wheelchair user space reserved, and we are unable to travel on an alternative service within an hour of your intended journey time, we will provide alternative accessible transport for you and your companion.

## **Assistance Dogs**

We welcome guide or assistance dogs on our trains and they are allowed to travel in all carriages.

If you are travelling with an assistance dog and don't have a priority seat reserved, talk to station staff before you board. They will help you to find a priority seat. If there are no standard class priority seats available, we will upgrade you for free to ensure there is sufficient room for your dog to lay down.

## **Walking Frames and Rollators**

Walking frames and rollators may be carried on-board any Avanti West Coast service. We recommend booking assistance to help with any luggage you may have, to help you with boarding/ alighting from the train, and to assist you to your seat. Where your journey starts or ends or a transfer is needed at a larger station, it may be best to make use of a station wheelchair or buggy. Our Assisted Travel team can assist you with making suitable arrangements.

If you use a walking frame or rollator, we would recommend that you make use of the priority seating which is available throughout the train. Once on the train, please fold your walking frame or rollator and store it in one of the luggage racks provided or between the seats.

## **Scooter carriage**

We understand that scooters are useful for many people – but carrying them on trains can cause problems because of their size, weight and manoeuvrability. Safety is our top priority. If you have a scooter which is up to 70cm wide and 120cm long, and that weighs less than 300kg when you are seated in it, you can take it on any Avanti West Coast train service. These dimensions have been informed by the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations for wheelchairs, and the weight limit determined by the maximum allowed weight on the ramp between the platform and the train.

Please be aware that scooter users are required to transfer to a seat whilst travelling for safety reason, recommended by the scooter manufacturers.

If you have a model which is capable of being folded and carried as luggage it can be taken on any of our trains.

If you are travelling with a scooter, we recommend contacting our Assisted Travel Team who will be able to arrange assistance for you when boarding or alighting the train.

Remember that when making a journey that involves more than one train operator you may find that each operator's policy relating to scooters varies. Our [Assisted Travel Team] will be able to help by both booking assistance and advising you on each operator's policy on scooter carriage.

Full details of our trains, with diagrams illustrating the layout and the location of facilities and features of relevance to disabled customers, are shown on our website [avantiwestcoast.co.uk/trains](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk/trains)

## **IF THINGS DO NOT GO AS PLANNED**

We hope that you will not experience disruption during your journey, however, issues can occur which affect our services.

When services are disrupted, we will do everything possible to ensure that our disabled customers and those with impaired mobility are able to continue with their journeys, proactively taking your needs into account in both our contingency plans and the service we provide on the day.

### **Planned Disruption**

Planned disruption is any change to the regular train service which we are aware of in advance, such as engineering works, or on occasion where we run an amended timetable due to significant or expected issues relating to weather or infrastructure.

When you plan your journey our Assisted Travel Team will be able to advise you of any planned disruption that might affect your plans and advise you of the best options.

### **Alternative Transport**

Where planned disruption requires train services to be replaced by road transport, we will work with our suppliers and local transport companies to provide accessible coaches or buses. This is not always possible, particularly at short notice. If we are not able to provide an accessible coach or bus, a taxi suitable for your needs will be provided at no extra charge to you.

# Disruption During your journey

## At the Station

We will make announcements at all our stations to update customers during disruption and will update our customer information screens with latest travel information.

Customers can also use help points provided at stations, or find updates on our app, social media profiles or using journey check by visiting [avantiwestcoast.co.uk/live](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk/live). Station Information notices at the entrance to our stations show contact details for both our Customer Resolutions and Assisted Travel teams who can also provide help and advice.

Severe disruption will also be communicated in the form of banners across the top of rail websites such as national rail and [avantiwestcoast.co.uk](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk).

If disruption occurs before the train has left the station, we normally offer the next available service and we will arrange to move your booked assistance to that service.

If platform alterations occur at short notice Station staff, where available, will be able to assist you to the correct platform. **Our teams will also:**

- Update information screens and make announcements.
- Look out for visually-impaired customers and will assist where required
- Try to give sufficient time to allow those needing extra help to board the re-platformed train.

Where facilities that affect disabled travellers are out of use e.g. accessible toilets, we will try to advise you of this before you join the train and discuss alternative arrangements with you. We will also report the fault to our maintenance teams so that it can be fixed quickly.

If service disruption occurs whilst you are on the train, our on-board team will be able to advise and assist you. The Train Manager on each of our trains has the details of all customers who have booked assistance. If you haven't booked assistance in advance but require help or advice, you should make yourself known to a member of the team. All on-board staff are encouraged to provide the highest levels of customer service and empowered to resolve appropriate issues "on the spot". If a train terminates before it has arrived at its destination, the onboard staff will arrange assistance for you for your onward travel.

If you need to change your journey due to service disruption, staff will coordinate your revised journey and any assistance you require. If you have booked assistance, we will also inform other operators and stations about the changes to your journey so they can still provide the assistance you need. If we are not able to run train services at all and you wish to travel on a different day, we can help you to make a new booking.

If services are going to be disrupted for a longer period of time, or if we are aware more than 24 hours before you travel that there is going to be a problem and you have booked assistance, our Passenger Assist Team will try to contact you to make you aware of the changes and provide advice, including helping you make new arrangements where appropriate, or arranging a refund.

## **In the event of an emergency**

Keeping our customers safe is our priority. Our emergency plans for stations and trains include how to support older or disabled customers during an emergency. All our on-board and station staff are trained in emergency procedures and they will supervise any action that needs to be taken. Safety information is provided on all our trains with clear diagrams and pictures, and in the rare event of an emergency on a train, our on board team will advise and help you. In nearly all cases the safest option is for all customers to remain on the train and wait for instructions until our team have fully assessed the situation. If you do have to leave the train between stations, the emergency services will provide equipment and help you get off the train safely. If we need to evacuate an unstaffed station, we will use the station Public Address System and Customer Information Screens to alert you.

## **Redress**

Our teams work hard to provide you with the help and assistance you need to be able to complete your journey with ease. However, we recognise that sometimes things do not go as planned.

If the assistance you have booked is not provided or does not meet your requirements, please let a member of staff or our Assisted Travel team know at the time so that we can resolve the issue.

If you need to provide feedback after travelling, please contact our Assisted Travel Team. Contact details can be found in section 4 of this leaflet.

Where things have not gone as planned, we will use feedback provided to improve how we work and the approach of others who provide the assistance service on our behalf.

Where assistance has been booked on our services but has not been provided, as confirmed by us, we will provide compensation and a full response.

You can claim this by contacting our Assisted Travel Team. You will need to provide a copy of your train tickets, along with your Passenger Assistance reference number, which can be found on your confirmation email.

If you have a concession card entitling you to free travel, redress for assistance failures will be considered on a case by case basis.

We will coordinate a response to your complaint, should your journey have involved multiple train companies, and we will provide you with a full explanation, including why it happened and what mitigating actions we intend to take as a result

Where both Delay Repay and Assisted Travel compensation could apply, you will be entitled to whichever value is the highest but will not be able to claim both.







## 4. WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

and how to get in touch

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### More information about our Accessible Travel Policy

You can find more information on our wider commitments as an organisation to our older or disabled travellers and our strategy for delivering improvements in our Accessible Travel Policy on our website, [avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP) along with full details of the accessibility of our stations and our trains. All these documents are available to download in Word and PDF formats or on request from our Customer Resolution Team.

If you want another copy of this leaflet it is also available from all staffed stations where our services call and is widely available in community facilities along our route.

We will review and update our Accessible Travel Policy each year to include any changes to our operations or services.

#### **We offer our Accessible Travel Policy in alternative formats, specifically:**

- Braille
- Audio
- Large Print
- Easy Read

You can ask for an alternative format by contacting our customer relations or assisted travel team. We will respond to your request within 7 days.

## **How to get in touch**

For any queries about the accessibility of our stations or services, or to plan assistance, contact our Assisted Travel Team.

Our Assisted Travel team are available 08:00 to 22:00 daily, except Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

### **You can contact them:**

Call: **0800 015 8123**

Text phone: **0800 015 8124** (for deaf or hard of hearing customers)

Online: Visit [avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk/ATP) and complete the webform

### **Alternatively, you can contact the national assistance line:**

Call: **0800 022 3720**

Text Phone / Minicom: **0845 60 50 600**

Text Message: Text **60083** and National Rail Enquiries will send you a text message with the number you need to dial from your textphone.

For more general queries, including on the day of travel, you can contact our Customer Services Team

**By social media:** You can find us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Search [@avantiwestcoast](https://twitter.com/avantiwestcoast)

**Call:** 24 hour Customer Service number **0345 528 0253** or Free phone **0800 015 8124**

# How to provide feedback or make a complaint

We value your feedback. If you have any comments on this document, the accessibility of or indeed any aspect of our service or stations, or if you are interested in getting involved in one of our [Station Accessibility Panels] at a station near you, we'd like to hear from you.

Call: [0345 528 0253](tel:03455280253)

Online: Visit [avantiwestcoast.co.uk/contact](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk/contact) and complete our easy to use webform to provide your feedback.

By post: **FREEPOST Avanti West Coast,  
Customer Resolution Team,  
Victoria Square House, 81 New Street,  
Birmingham, B2 4BA**

## **Customer Comments Form:**

Fill in one of our FREEPOST customer comment forms available at any of our stations or from our Train Managers.

Our Customer Relations Team will respond to you, and if requested to do so will reply in an alternative format e.g. large print.

## **If you are not happy with how a complaint is dealt with, please contact the Rail Ombudsman on:**

Website: [railombudsman.org](http://railombudsman.org)

Email: [info@railombudsman.org](mailto:info@railombudsman.org)

Phone: [0330 094 0362](tel:03300940362)

Textphone: [0330 094 0363](tel:03300940363)

Post: [Freepost - RAIL OMBUDSMAN](#)

If you would like to get involved with our work to improve the accessibility of rail services for disabled people, please contact Customer Relations team.

# Assistance Meeting Points

| Station                         | Meeting Point                                       |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Carlisle</b>                 | Information kiosk left of main entrance to station  |
| <b>Penrith</b>                  | Customer service office platform 1                  |
| <b>Oxenholme</b>                | Customer service office platform 1                  |
| <b>Lancaster</b>                | Ticket office                                       |
| <b>Preston</b>                  | Information kiosk within waiting room on platform 3 |
| <b>Wigan North Western</b>      | Ticket office                                       |
| <b>Warrington</b>               | Ticket office                                       |
| <b>Runcorn</b>                  | Customer service office in ticket office            |
| <b>Crewe</b>                    | Ticket office                                       |
| <b>Stockport</b>                | Ticket office                                       |
| <b>Macclesfield</b>             | Customer service office platform 1                  |
| <b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>           | Ticket office                                       |
| <b>Stafford</b>                 | Ticket office                                       |
| <b>Wolverhampton</b>            | Ticket office                                       |
| <b>Birmingham International</b> | Ticket office                                       |
| <b>Coventry</b>                 | Customer service office platform 1                  |
| <b>Rugby</b>                    | Ticket office                                       |



Visit us at

 [avantiwestcoast.co.uk](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk)

## Customer Resolutions

 [customer.resolutions@avantiwestcoast.co.uk](mailto:customer.resolutions@avantiwestcoast.co.uk)

 0345 528 0253

 FREEPOST Avanti West Coast,  
Victoria Square House, 81 New Street,  
Birmingham, B2 4BA.

## Social Media

 [twitter.com/avantiwestcoast](https://twitter.com/avantiwestcoast)

 [facebook.com/avantiwestcoast](https://facebook.com/avantiwestcoast)

