

# Regional Customer Panels

## February 2021

### Feedback and Actions

24 May 2021



## What we did:

Our Commercial Partnerships team wanted to review how we can enhance both the booking and journey experience by adding extra features for customers.

To learn more we spoke with panel members in order to understand their recent journeys, their level of interest in a number of proposed ancillary options and had conversations about other partnerships or services they'd like to see in the future.

We did so via a survey with over 300 customers which was followed by five focus groups, each with 5-6 customers of mixed age, gender, preferred class of travel and reason for journeys, with a follow up poll to test new ideas from the groups.

The key themes are summarised in this report along with the actions being taken.

## Planning a journey

From our research, the top priorities for planning a journey are:

- Visiting loved ones
- Having a break
- Researching multiple options to get the best deal
- Booking accommodation and one-off events first, as these are seen as less readily available

Avanti West Coast has a Price Promise that means we guarantee you'll get the best price tickets for our trains when you book on our website or app.

Ticket Alerts are available to notify customers when Advance tickets become available. Click [here](#) to learn more.

The team are also looking into the potential of offering information about one-off or small events and activities and discounts on attractions.

## At the point of booking

From our research, the top priorities for booking tickets are:

- Integrating assistance options into the Avanti West Coast app
- More flexible tickets and pricing (i.e. flexible travel options)
- Access to food and drink options that meets customer requirements

In June, we'll be making improvements to the seat reservation system so that customers can change a journey or reserved seat themselves using our website and app.

We'll also be making enhancements to our Seat Picker service on our website as well as adding the feature to our app in July.

A trial is planned later in the year for pre-ordering food and drink to be delivered onboard.

The team are also introducing flexible Season tickets to offer additional value for customers later this summer.



## Travelling to and waiting at the station

From our research, the top priorities for getting to and waiting at stations are:

- Integrated travel options to/from the station
- Reducing crowding
- More information about where to stand on the platform
- Pick-up options such as groceries and gifts

We've introduced a trial for integrated taxi bookings with our partners at [Minicabit](#). The two-month trial started on 10 May and covers six of our stations.

There's a new feature in our app which shows how busy each coach on an Avanti West Coast train is in real time. You'll see it on the Live Times tab. Recent busy train information is also published on the website to inform customers.

Early boarding is currently offered to those who need assistance. A Priority Boarding trial is planned at London Euston over the summer on select services.



## On the train

From our research, the top priorities for onboard our trains are:

- Peace and quiet
- Greater safety and control
- Dedicated coaches (i.e. family coach or quiet coach)
- Ability to report bad behaviour on the app
- Cheap last-minute First Class upgrades
- Improved WiFi

Future development will enable customers to change their seat reservation onboard through our app.

We've introduced a new WiFi supplier at stations and onboard providing a better connection and seamless transition.

We've welcomed At-Seat Order into Standard coaches from 12 April so customers can order food and drink to be delivered direct to seat. This also gives customers an additional opportunity to see a member of staff face to face.

We've launched a new way to travel for those looking for extra space onboard. Standard Premium is now available on all Pendolino services.

