

# Corporate Newsletter – November 2025



## *Stakeholder Newsletter*

02 December 2025

### *Tricia's update*



As winter sets in and the year draws to a close, I want to share how our services have performed this autumn and highlight some exciting developments at Northern.

A year ago, cancellations were as high as **11.2%**<sup>1</sup> including many pre-cancelled trains (those services cancelled the day before). Today they are down to **2.96%**<sup>2</sup> in **November**, with none pre-cancelled - great news for our customers.

This improvement reflects hard work across Northern and Network Rail, and the decision to reduce Sunday timetables in the North West to stabilise performance. The performance challenge in the North West was also impacting the wider network and affecting other days of the week, so it was important that we took action when we did.

I know many of you are keen to understand how close we are to reaching a new agreement with the RMT Trade Union on Sunday working which can be put to referendum with our conductors. While I can't give you a timescale at this point, I can tell you that we have made good progress in talks so far. In the meantime, the level of service we are confident of providing is captured in the current timetable, while some conductors are entitled through their contract to not work on

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*1 November 2024: figure comprises on the day cancellations and pre-cancellations (also known as P-codes), cancellations caused by Northern and external factors.*

*2 November 2025: figure comprises on the day cancellations (as there were no pre-cancellations during this period), cancellations caused by Northern and external factors.*

Sundays.. Once a new agreement is through a referendum, we will keep the timetable under review and restore as many services as possible, as quickly as we can.

On punctuality, **time-to-3 (T-3)** was **73.1% in November**, just below our 74.67% target but better than last November. Indeed, September and October were also better than the same months last year, which is an improvement in the right direction. There's a lot of work going on to further improve T-3, including reviewing some of the training and briefings our traincrew receive and optimising our rostering to be as effective as it could be. We are also working with Network Rail on reducing infrastructure incidents and recovering services more quickly following an incident.

Looking ahead, we've taken a big step toward **new trains**: major manufacturers have been invited to submit final tenders, aiming to replace two-thirds of our fleet over the next decade. We've also launched our '**30 by 30**' plan to grow annual journeys by 30 million by 2030, aligned with regional economic goals. Read more about this on our [website](#).

And finally, thank you for all the support you've given us during 2025. Looking ahead, we're committed to working even more closely with our partners to deliver further improvements. These are exciting times for the rail industry, and together we can continue to build a railway that connects communities and drives growth across the North.



**Tricia Williams**  
Managing Director



## Timetable changes from 14 December

We'll be introducing our next timetable from Sunday 14 December, as part of the national timetable change. This update is part of a wider improvement across the rail network, with some areas seeing new routes, faster journeys, and revised train times to make travel easier and more reliable.

We are encouraging customers to check their journey before travel, as many services will be changing. Customers can see changes to journeys from 14 December using our [timetable comparison tool](#), or plan their journey through our [online journey planner](#)

### **Find out more about the East Coast Mainline changes:**

The December timetable change includes a wider set of timetable changes for other operators. This is the result of £4billion invested on the East Coast Mainline over the past decade, including the East Coast Upgrade. Full information is [available via their website](#).

## **Transpennine Route Upgrade – Christmas & New Year work**

Over the Christmas period and into the new year, major improvement work is taking place to upgrade the railway between Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds, and York.

This work is part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU), the multi-billion-pound infrastructure programme that's transforming the railway in the North, and will bring a faster, more reliable, accessible, and sustainable railway across the Pennines.

On Tuesday 23 and Wednesday 24 December, the railway line between Huddersfield and Dewsbury will be closed as work continues to upgrade signalling, realign tracks to enable faster line speeds and deliver a better Mirfield station for our customers, with longer platforms, a new station entrance and improved accessibility, with a lift to Station Road and the car park to enable step-free access.

Major upgrade work will be carried out near Church Fenton, between Leeds and York, from Saturday 27 December to Sunday 25 January, across three phases. During this month of work, TRU engineers will be:

- Upgrading the signalling, including the installation of 70 new signals
- Remodelling tracks in the Church Fenton area, allowing for line speed increases down the line, speeding up journey times
- Re-aligning platforms 3 and 4 at Church Fenton station, with a new passing loop to enable faster trains to overtake slower ones

As with any engineering work, we advise customers to check before they travel. More information can be found on our [Check Before You Travel](#) webpage.

## **30 million more journeys by 2030**

Alex Hornby, our Commercial and Customer Director has unveiled our ambitious strategy to grow annual customer journeys +30 million by the end of 2030. The plan aims for sustainable, long-term growth through organic demand, better performance, and targeted interventions. It complements wider industry goals and the vision of Great British Railways, demonstrating that Northern is actively shaping its own path toward a stronger, more reliable and more customer-focused railway.

[Read more](#)





## Highlights from Our Community and Stakeholder Conferences

Our annual Community Rail and Stakeholder conferences held in November proved extremely popular this year and allowed us to celebrate shared progress as well as exploring challenges. The Community Rail event, which was attended by 127, highlighted the vital role of local engagement. Attendees received updates on performance, passenger growth and future plans, and enjoyed an inspiring presentation from Dave Carlisle of Friends of Buxton Station on pollinator projects.

The Stakeholder Conferences in Liverpool and York focused on key priorities including performance, growth, and safety for women and girls. A video message from Lord Hendy and discussions on Great British Railways plans set the tone for conversations about the future of rail. Interactive workshops explored accessibility, social value, and our new trains programme, giving attendees the chance to meet the teams driving these initiatives. The materials from the conference are [available to view via our website.](#)

Both events reinforced our commitment to collaboration and partnership. Thank you to everyone who joined us and contributed to these important discussions.



## ***In the News***







## £2 train tickets offered to customers travelling to Christmas markets in Yorkshire

For people travelling to Halifax, Scarborough, Harrogate, Knaresborough, and Skipton for the markets, we are offering discounted tickets. On selected Northern routes, adults can buy single tickets for £2 and child tickets are £1. These tickets are available for purchase at station ticket offices, from ticket machines, and on the Northern website or app. They must be bought at least three days before travel.

The £2 tickets are available to customers travelling to the following markets:

- The Piece Hall Christmas Market in Halifax – November 14 to December 21 (on Fridays, Saturday and Sundays)
- Harrogate Christmas Fayre – December 5 to December 14
- Knaresborough Christmas Market – December 6 to December 7
- Skipton Christmas Market – December 7 and December 14

## ‘We Speak Up’ – supporting White Ribbon Day

White Ribbon Day is an annual event dedicated to raising awareness and preventing violence against women and girls. It marks the start of **16 Days of Activism**.

This year’s theme is “We Speak Up”, encouraging everyone to challenge behaviours that have become normalised - there’s a strong call for everyone to speak up if they witness or overhear something that isn’t right.

At Northern, we’re taking part in our own 16 Days of Activism to help tackle this issue and our actions include:

- Hosting a stand at Leeds Station on 25 November
- Workshops for colleagues
- Drop-in sessions at selected stations

There are plenty of resources and information available on the White Ribbon Day website:

[White Ribbon Day 2025 — White Ribbon UK](#)

## New fares will be introduced in Greater Manchester to make train travel simpler

In December, train travel for those in Greater Manchester has been made easier. From 7 December everyone who buys a ticket between two Greater Manchester stations will be given the options of anytime or off-peak. Narrowing down the ticket types will allow people simpler train travel.

The new fares will be valid on rail services run by all operators and all single journeys will be half the price of return trips. Overall, the change will mean the average fare in Greater Manchester will fall by 5.6%.

[Read more](#)

## Over 8 million journeys in a month!

In October we saw the highest customer travel figures since before the pandemic, with 8.1 million journeys made between 14 September and 11 October 2025—an 8.3% increase on the same period last year and the busiest four-week window since February 2020.

The surge was boosted by our Flash Sale, which sold a record 150,000 advance tickets from just £2. Despite disruption from Storm Amy, we still achieved a post-pandemic record, reflecting growing confidence in rail travel across the North.

[Read more](#)

## Honouring Remembrance Day Across Our Network

We're proud of the heartfelt efforts from our teams and communities to mark this important day of remembrance. Tricia Williams represented Northern at the 'Poppies at Paddington' event at Paddington Station, laying a beautiful wreath hand-made by our colleagues. Members of our Armed Forces were also in London representing Northern on Remembrance Sunday to march past the Cenotaph along with representatives from Network Rail and other train operators. And across our network, stations paid tribute to those who have served and continue to serve in the armed forces. At Bingley Station, the station adoption group created a stunning poppy display as part of the commemorations.



## Campaign to Attract More Women into Rail

Attracting, engaging, and retaining the very best colleagues is vital for Northern, and last week marked an important milestone with the launch of our new recruitment campaign: **“We’re not Northern without Her.”**

The campaign aims to encourage more women to consider a career in rail, particularly in roles traditionally dominated by men. It shines a spotlight on the incredible women who keep Northern moving every day - celebrating their contribution and inspiring others to join them.

The initiative is being rolled out across our network, appearing at stations, on ticket machines, and across all digital channels to reach women from a wide range of industries and backgrounds.