



Avanti reduced timetable – passenger experiences

Transport User panel survey results

September 2022

What we did

- On 31 August Transport Focus sent a survey to 18,894 members of its Transport User Panel.
- 595 responses were received by 5 September including 165 who had travelled since 14 August, 269 who had planned to travel but cancelled and 340 who are planning to travel in the coming weeks (before end November).
- The questions were designed to pick up the passenger experience of planning, amending and making journeys in their own words – clear themes emerge.
- This report details the passenger experience and key findings.

Key findings

It is clear from our own observations and evidence gathered from our Transport User Panel that the primary aim of certainty and meeting the key principles (outlined on page 4) is currently not being met. This had led to passenger detriment in the following areas:

- information provided prior to travel confusing
- a lack of timely information to make an informed decision
- unable to amend reservations as timetable not published until a few days in advance of travel
- double booking of reserved seats
- reservation system on trains not activating
- short-notice cancellation occurring on a daily basis
- services full and standing
- erratic provision of catering
- impact of poor journey experience leading to passengers considering alternative travel options in future
- timetables and tickets not being available when passengers are looking at future travel dates are putting people off travelling by rail

Continues...

Key findings

- concerns that reduced timetable will lead to a poor journey experience (overcrowding) putting people off travelling
- refund process cumbersome, slow and uncommunicative
- the late availability of information for future travel is not only inconvenient but making people anxious
- passengers with disabilities or additional needs are put off travelling.

The reduced timetable has been operating for just over a month and is failing to meet reasonable passenger expectations. Transport Focus wants to see immediate improvement on the issues we have identified that will meet passenger expectations and improve the passenger experience.

Timetable – to provide certainty

The most important thing train operators can do in the event of disruption is to consider the perspective of their passengers. Our research tells us passengers want the following principles to be followed:

- **Inform me** – passengers need clear, comparable, and timely information to be able to make decisions. Be open and transparent, let passengers know the frequency of services on each route, duration of reduced timetable and any capacity constraints.
- **Reassure me** – give passengers confidence that you know what you are doing. Passengers should be able to access services at a price and quality that suits their needs. Ease of making/amending reservations, timetable is published well in advance, access to full range of fares and an enjoyable journey experience at stations and onboard, providing a visible and empathetic staff presence.
- **Reparations** – be clear on my rights as a consumer to redress and compensation.

Providing certainty together with meeting the above principles would improve the passenger experience.

Issues for those who have travelled since 14 August

Mixed experiences with information before travel

Changing tickets / refunds experience not always good

Still experiencing delays and cancellations

Train issues – reservations, crowding, catering

Positive and negative experience with staff

Had an impact on future behaviour

Information received before travel (1)

“The revised timetable announcements were quite clear on Avanti Coast website and Twitter - the table Avanti provided was helpful. What was VERY confusing though was that on the AC app, you could pick an OUT journey and a RTN journey but then when you went to pay, it would say 'seats not available'. But not which leg of the journey. This caused so much confusion and was very frustrating as you ended up trying all variations to get the same error message, but the UX gave you the impression there were seats available. In the end, I just checked Trainline everyday until I saw all journeys on there then booked an Open Return.” **Euston to Liverpool**

“Bought at Liverpool Lime Street on 25 August. I check on the National Rail website before making any journey on Avanti because the timetable (and availability of trains) seems so erratic.”
Northampton to Liverpool

“I booked an advance ticket directly with Avanti West Coast for this journey. I was contacted in advance to say the timetable had changed, and that even if my booked train was running, my seat reservation was now invalid and I would need to cancel and re-book to book a seat. This was not practical, as the seats now available were higher cost than I originally paid. I was able to look up the new timetable and see that my original train was still running. In the event, the train wasn't too busy and I was able to easily find an available seat (I think this was because the previous train to London was running 40 mins late, so lots of people got on that one, leaving mine fairly quiet). However, I overheard confusion from other passengers, who both had the same seats booked (presumably the earlier booking not knowing their seat booking was now invalid).” **Carlisle to Preston**

“I knew about changes from Twitter. However I specifically asked (through Twitter) if the seat reservation I had now booked directly with Avanti (Std class open off-peak return - no advance tickets available) would be honoured or would someone be sat in my seat already, or would I be asked to move at some point in the journey. I was given assurance that no one would be sat in my seat or would I be asked to move.”
Penrith to Euston

“Online booking was chaotic. Timetable Information was confusing.”
Manchester to Euston

Information received before travel (2)

"I booked the 10.05 departure...then I was emailed a week later that this train had been cancelled checked the trainline website, and with 3-4 days to go the original train was rescheduled, bit puzzling but I got my correct train in the end"

Watford Junction to Wolverhampton

"All dealings direct with Avanti . No notifications at all from them about the revised timetable, but fortunately I keep myself informed about transport issues. When on 12th August they revealed their revised timetable I could see that my train wasn't going to run and - as advised - booked a new ticket for the nearest equivalent train. I got an advance ticket at roughly the same price as I had originally paid. I have been told the refund of the original ticket has been processed, but it hasn't got through to my account yet. Initially my new train did not appear on the departure screens at Euston, but after staff made enquiries, it did - much later than other trains. At the first stop (Crewe) the train was apparently held by the signaller for a few minutes, because it was not on the list he was expecting! Secondly, the whole booking process encouraged seat reservation, but on the day that was abandoned. Thirdly. My return train (two days later) appeared still to be running so I didn't do a replacement booking. However it transpired that Avanti (again without notification) regarded all pre-existing seat reservations as invalid and had been issuing new ones. However, as they weren't actually enforcing reservations the number of disputes was not as great as might have been expected." **Euston to Glasgow**

"Train we reserved seats on was cancelled. We were not notified. We visited Avanti website to learn that our train was cancelled and there was a new timetable. We were able to use our tickets on the train before or the train after the one we had booked. We had booked an advance ticket via Avanti website."

Whaley Bridge to Euston

"We were not able to book until a few days before as on the website they said all trains were booked up And after speaking with the ticket office it was clear that this was not the case"

Crewe to Euston

"Booked in advance with Trainline using a Two Together Railcard. We were advised of the new timetable and were offered the option to change, postpone or a full refund on the price of our tickets."

Euston to Liverpool

Experience changing tickets/getting refunds

“We bought advance tickets to go to Liverpool for the day - reorganised after problems in July. We got to Wigan and after some delay were told there “would be a coach” which “had left the station”. We gave up and came home, missing our trip to Liverpool. We have automatic refund but have heard nothing from Avanti about a refund.” **Oxenholme to Wigan**

“On the two occasions I’ve booked to travel in the Standard Premium carriage then Avanti has declassified the service and I’ve not been able to take my seat as it was occupied by someone else. So I paid additional monies for a service I wasn’t able to use and when contacting their customer services I am told it will take 4-weeks to get back to me - so I have no certainty of getting refunded for that premium cost to the ticket.” **Rugby to Euston**

“I was unable to book tickets at the time I wanted to do so because no tickets were being sold pending the introduction of the revised timetable. I had to keep going back to the Avanti website to check when the new timetable was published and tickets became available. Around a week before the journey, the new timetables were published and tickets became available and I was able to book. However, tickets for my preferred return journey date were not available so I decided to book tickets to return one day earlier than planned. I found all the info on the Avanti website but made the booking on Thetrainline.com as the Avanti system was too hard to use to get what I wanted. I bought two standard adult returns.”
Euston to Conwy

“Booked full price off-peak return ticket before advance tickets were available as I needed to secure a bike reservation. I usually always get advance tickets so it was much more expensive, for a reduced service. (As it happened it was so delayed I got all my money back, but that's another story)” **Wemyss Bay to Carnforth**

“I was in first class which was fairly quiet so I had no trouble getting a seat. There however was no catering in first class due to a technical fault & the train was delayed by over half an hour due to a late running slower train. I had no trouble claiming delay repay which was promptly paid into my account but I’m not sure how I claim for the lack of catering”
Birmingham to London

Some are still experiencing delays and cancellations on the day

“ I was using a Freedom of the North West 4 in 8, Day 1. Bought at the Carlisle ticket office I caught the 0850 Euston as far as Preston to then get the 1017 Blackpool to Euston which would stop at Crewe At Preston I found that the Blackpool Euston train was cancelled from Preston and the next one was 1117. Too late I understood that the train from Carlisle which I had got off was calling additionally at Crewe. It had gone by then. No station announcements or platform staff action that I was aware of. Possibly the only announcement was made to the passengers on that train by the train manager taking over at Preston.” **Carlisle to Crewe**

“ . The train was very busy and was delayed 15 minutes on the outward journey We had booked assistance and this was provided”
Wigan to Glasgow

“Timetable is unreliable. My husband waited over an hour at Euston last evening as one train was cancelled and the next two trains were posted as delayed.” **Milton Keynes to London**

!My outward journey was on the revised timetable, but the train was cancelled with no notice - and inadequate minibusses put on, which could not take me travelling with large luggage - no acceptance of ticket on XC - so was over 2 hours delayed ...and meant I missed next connection - so ultimately was closer to 3 hours late. Train itself was quiet and a smooth journey in the physical sense. Staff on platform helpful - staff at rail replacement busses not so helpful.”
Edinburgh to Telford

“Booked direct with Avanti. We were attending a wedding on 30 August and wanted to travel on the 29th. Despite the announcement that tickets would be made available 7 days before travel the 29th were only announced on 26th. There were then only one time where tickets were available at an extortionate price . We therefore decided to travel a day earlier which meant we had to incur an extra nights hotel cost in Central London. On the actual day of travel our scheduled train was cancelled at approximately 14.30. Our tickets were for the 15.05. We signed up for e-mail ticket alerts but received none .We received no notification of the cancellation. We found out as we checked the website before travelling and were able to get an earlier train. Tickets were Standard Premium. Cancelled train was £61.75 per person.” **Runcorn to London**

On board – issues with reservations/crowding and catering

“We checked online on the morning of travel and saw that our train was due to run. There were very many people on the platform and the train was late in and 20 minutes late departing. We were fortunate to be close to a door when the train came in, so were able to sit in the seat numbers we had booked. Ten minutes later, another passenger showed us that he also had booked one of our seats. He moved on, saying he would try and find a seat elsewhere. People had to stand the entire journey, as did more when the train made its subsequent scheduled and unscheduled stops. Early on, it was announced the buffet car would not open, due to the overcrowding. No-one came through checking tickets, I guess for the same reason.”

Liverpool Lime St to Euston

“No seat reservation. Absolutely appalling overcrowding. Few staff available to help at Euston. Train absolutely filthy, really hot, and smelly toilets. Feel sorry for the poor staff having to deal with this. Avanti are an absolute joke.”

Euston to Manchester

Boarded the train to find someone sat in my seat and also to be told that all seat reservations had been cancelled and it was a free for all. Train was already busy. Furthermore, the type I had booked (confirmation received - window, table, backwards facing) bore no relation to the seat on the train (not a table seat not backwards facing - train was in reverse). I did manage to find a seat though at least, but had to ask someone to move their bag so I could do so. Station experience was ok, but they chuckled when I said I had a reservation and had been told I'd be able to take up my seat.” **Penrith to Euston**

“Timetable allegedly confirmed at the last minute but Avanti were still cancelling trains at short notice. Unable to make a seat reservation. Ended up sitting in Premium Standard just to avoid the overcrowding. Unable to access catering as the train was so busy. Staff on platform were charming and directed to unreserved coach which was actually half a coach and already overcrowded. This is one of the very worst experiences of train travel...”

Euston to Liverpool

“I booked through LNER. I was not told about any changes to my booking. On the outward journey all the seats were double booked so we ended up sitting on the floor. On the return journey the train I had booked didn't run and we got home two hours late.” **Euston to Manchester**

Experience with staff

“Staff as usual were very helpful but there was no seat reservation and this did cause some issues amongst passengers”

Crewe to Euston

“Station was busy but it's August in Edinburgh so expected. The train was an hour late but the Avanti West Coast Staff at Waverley were very helpful. Train relatively quiet for a Friday afternoon...”

Edinburgh to East Didsbury

“I was advised to take the following timetabled train as the one I'd booked for was no longer running. I couldn't use the original reservation for the seat - carriages were allotted differently (ie carriage E which my 1st class ticket was booked for wasn't a 1st class carriage in the train I caught). Fortunately the train didn't seem too busy considering it was accommodating many passengers from the earlier train that hadn't run. I was able to find a seat without a problem once the ticket inspector had confirmed I was ok to travel on this train and take a seat in any vacant 1st class seat. Bizarrely I had been told by 2 members of staff before departure that my ticket was standard class.”

Birmingham to Euston

“We travelled on an earlier train than the one we had booked. We had no seat reservations on this train, but we were lucky and were able to find available seats. The train was packed and standing. The enquiry staff at Piccadilly were helpful.”

Manchester to Euston

“Train was over 30 minutes late, train was busy but seats available, didn't see any staff on train”

Milton Keynes to Birmingham

“The train was quiet as for some reason the train was not listed on any website such as Avanti or National Rail. I only knew it was running from a PDF on Avanti's own website. There were no staff available had I have needed help.”

Crewe to Carlisle

“Masses of staff at Crewe trying to help everyone. Train incredibly busy with people standing between carriages. Didn't use catering”

Carlisle to Wolverhampton

Impact of the experience

We travelled to London on 12th August. We were notified that the train we had booked for our return journey was cancelled whilst we were there. On the web site it stated that only 1 train an hour would be running and we could get on any train with our tickets. On arrival at Euston it was chaos. Hundreds of people trying to get on the train. The only seats we could find were in a coach with broken air con (it was in the high 30's that day). The shop announced the fridges were broken and shop closed. There were mothers with babies in tears. It was far too hot to stay in there (over 40 degrees) people were stood and sat in every doorway. Eventually we went to the premium economy coach. Initially staff said we would have to return but even they realised it was dangerously hot in there. If we had realised this would happen we would have driven down. We would certainly think twice about going by train in future.

Euston to Stockport

The revised timetable is causing me to consider making fewer journeys - both my regular trips (Stafford to London and Crewe to Glasgow) have been impacted badly, particularly the northbound journey. With the unpredictable reliability of TransPennine Express at the same time, travelling to and from Scotland is something of a lottery just at the moment. **Glasgow to Crewe**

Not even going to try for a month. Using personal car. **Stockport to Euston**

I am furious about late timetable for weekend trains. I travel regularly to see family and have had stress about return journey. It has also become very expensive (even with Senior Rail Card) as no advance ticket available. **Manchester to London**

Better a slimmed down timetable they can run that lots of cancellations. But they really do need a policy on seat reservations. Either just cancel them all - or make sure existing ones are honoured.

Edinburgh to Rugby

Issues for those who changed their plans because of timetable reduction

Had a real impact on people's plans

Unreliability has put people off rail travel

Possibility of overcrowding a concern

Refunds applied for – outcome awaited

The situation has had a real impact on people's plans

"We planned to collect our grandchild for a stay with us in Chester, travelling to London on 14th August and returning with her on 15th. Both the trains we had booked were cancelled and we were not allowed to book tickets on another train. We would also have returned her by train at the end of the week. We ended up doing all the journeys by car, which was tiring and un- environmental. We also planned to visit a sick friend in Kent 5th - 8th September. Again, both our booked trains have been cancelled and we have abandoned the trip. We try to visit London monthly for family and the current situation is very damaging to our life."

Chester to London Euston

"Planning to spend a week in the Lake District, along 2 others travelling by train from London to Penrith. Could not travel as no trains on to Penrith on 1st October or for the return journey on 9th October. Plans have had to be cancelled as no other way to reach the area."

Cardiff to Penrith

"Avanti don't show trains for Saturday 24th. I was assured when I made my holiday let booking that the tickets would be released in due time but they haven't been. We could get to Betws-y-Coed on Monday 19th Sept but we can't return as no possible journeys exist. There is one train that leaves after 6pm & gets into Euston at 12:40 am where we'd be stuck getting an expensive cab as trains don't leave Euston till 4:30am!!! Good grief. I've had to cancel our holiday. I am NOT happy & wish we'd been given the correct information in the first place as I never would have booked. Same on Avanti. Shocking service or rather lack of service."

Betws-y-Coed to Euston

"I was due to go to a funeral in Essex on the Monday but I gave up planning the trip when I heard about the uncertainty."

Clitheroe to London Euston

"I needed to travel for work on this date and several after. I've had to rearrange work and reschedule lots of meetings."

Glossop to London Euston

The unreliability of the situation has put people off booking tickets

“I had planned my trip and looked at the times/prices and went ahead and booked a hotel for myself and my children. I then went to book my tickets as the trip was now within 12 weeks but saw that the tickets were not for sale and they would not be releasing a timetable. I can't take the risk of waiting until just before my journey, particularly with young children, but also the hotel is non refundable. It's left us in a complete mess to be honest and I'm having to try and look at alternative options such as flying or driving and getting a train from elsewhere.”

Sandwell and Dudley to Edinburgh

“I made the journey by other means. I had been trying to book and reserve a first class seat for this journey and return the next day for several weeks. Every time I checked, I could not book at all, and got messages saying the timetable had not been finalised, and to check back another time. I needed to be certain of my booking and timings, so this was totally useless to me. Eventually, at the end of July, I investigated alternative means of getting from Salisbury(my actual starting station) and Liverpool, and booked that for the return trip. On 12th August, the Avanti timetable was finally shown on the website, and tickets could be booked. This was far, far, far too late, and my alternative worked beautifully, to the extent I have used it since.”

Euston to Liverpool Lime Street

“The lack of trains means those that are running may be over crowded, making for a deeply unpleasant experience. Other service providers (LNWR, Chiltern) affected by overspill passengers. Avanti advance tickets have largely disappeared and prices are far too high, especially for a variable quality of service. There are still frequent cancellations making the whole prospect unreliable. As a result, I've decided not to go.”

London Euston to Birmingham

“I planned to visit Lancaster for the day, but the lack of a clear timetable on a weekend day that would have busy made me decide the whole thing would be unreliable. So I didn't go.”

Milton Keynes to Lancaster

“The tickets haven't been released so you can't buy tickets to travel on that day yet. I was going to attend a concert but I can't buy concert tickets if I don't know I can travel to the concert. Tickets seem to be released just a few days before at which point the concert I was going to attend will be sold out.”

Manchester to London Euston

The possibility of overcrowding has been a particular issue for some

“Unable to guarantee a seat on a particular train so was not prepared to run the risk of travelling on a crowded train. I am 77 and there is no way I could cope with standing all the way to London. I therefore made alternative arrangements by travelling to Leeds and going to London St Pancras via the east coast main line. Such a pleasant journey with no stress whatsoever.”

Manchester to London Euston

“Reduced level of services suggested there could be severe overcrowding and uncertainty particularly in getting return journey. I am 74 years old and could not risk the likelihood of standing on such a reduced level of service.”

Milton Keynes to Birmingham

“I was notified that my outward journey had been cancelled and that instead of two trains an our there would only be one. I decided to cancel my tickets for two reasons. First, there was only one train an hour to Wilmslow so I had no idea if there would be any seats on the hour before or after my train. Secondly, I didn't fancy fighting my way onto the train and sitting on the floor because I lost my reserved seat. I could not see how it was possible to provide a seat for two trainloads onto one train. I was only going for the day for a family event which I missed.”

London Euston to Wilmslow

“The lack of trains and the prospect of overcrowding made me cancel my trip to London”

Manchester to Euston

“Intended to travel from Glossop to Manchester and then down to London. Decided less frequent trains meant more crowded trains so drove to Chinley parked up and travelled to Sheffield . From there we used EMR to go to London.”

Glossop to Herne Hill

People are expecting refunds for cancelled trips, but few have heard anything as yet

“The train we had booked on had been cancelled. Therefore there were potentially two train loads of passengers trying to get onto one. There were no seat reservations and we didn’t want to stand all the way to London. We knew we could get a full refund, therefore I cancelled our tickets. I had booked our tickets via Raileasy, who processed my refund the same day and I received my refund a few days later. We were also due to make two other journeys from Stoke to Manchester in September and London to Stoke in October. I cancelled these too approximately two weeks ago. However one of those journeys was booked direct with Avanti - all I’ve had back from them is an automated reply and no refund yet.”

Stoke on Trent to London Euston

“I was going to travel on a CrossCountry service from Manchester Piccadilly to Southampton Central on the 13 August, returning on the 25. I had to purchase separate tickets. The onwards was already refunded by CrossCountry. With the return with Avanti, had to go through the process of filling out a form and wait 25 days? Still haven't heard from them. I ended up driving.”

London Euston to Manchester

“We had bought tickets in advance then Avanti restructured their timetable and our trains (outward and return) were both cancelled. We rebooked on Chiltern Trains and claimed a refund from Avanti - which has still not been forthcoming!”

Birmingham to London Euston

“Train times changed and did receive prior notice. New times didn’t work so cancelled these tickets as I had purchased well in advance. Made a refund claim but nothing received yet. Went on Chiltern trains instead.”

Birmingham to London Euston

Those who are planning journeys before end November

Real uncertainty around plans even in short term

Inconvenience and anxiety as a result

Late availability causing issues around making plans

Lack of information provided doesn't help

Among those still planning to travel there is a great deal of uncertainty

“I cannot yet book a ticket for this journey as the timetable has not yet been finalised. There appear to be advance tickets available, but I don't know if the train they're for will be running. The strike announced today for 26 Sep adds further uncertainty. I can't make plans and finalise costs as I would usually like to.”

Oxenholme to Preston

“By now I would have booked hotels for my visit to Cumbria in November, but given the uncertainty of rail services, both the reduced number of Avanti trains and possible rail strikes, I will not be able to book hotels until much near my date of travel.”

London Euston to Oxenholme

“We have an evening connection on Eurostar to Brussels at 18.04 on 30/10/22. Originally I had planned for us to leave St Pancras at 15.04 but the uncertainty of being able to get to London on Avanti made me push back the departure to 18.04 with a commensurately late arrival in Brussels and our accommodation. My thought processes are in fact to avoid Avanti completely, use an off peak ticket and travel via EMR through Sheffield OR drive down south. Avanti have created immense uncertainty and cast a pall over our trip and I shall avoid them in future.”

Manchester to London Euston

“Tickets have been purchased but the National Rail website says the journey planner for the journeys involved has not been finalised. So will the trains we want to go on actually run?”

Stockport to London Euston

“We do not know [if we will be affected]. Avanti say they will review the timetable on 14th September, so until then we cannot say that our train journey is affected or not. It is most disconcerting.”

London Euston to Holyhead

For some the situation is not just inconvenient, it is making them anxious

“I’d normally travel on a Monday morning - second train (first off-peak journey available). But given the uncertainty I’ve switched to Sunday. There are only three direct trains to London on this day. Each taking just under four hours (normally it’s just over three). The journeys it’s changed are around four and a half hours long. If I didn’t take the 1207, I wouldn’t arrive at my accommodation until after 2000. This is ridiculous. Furthermore. Tickets only went on sale for this date yesterday (30 August) five days before travel. This is abysmal. I know the seat reservations will mysteriously “failed to download” as they have on my two previous journeys. This causes me massive anxiety. I hate confrontation or challenging people sat in my seat or asking people to move bags of seats. Everyone is annoyed and tensions heightened. Avanti’s management of the situation is astonishing. Furthermore, their statement on their website and the tweet on Twitter (which is closed for reply) blames Avanti staff for in effect refusing to work overtime. That’s mismanagement if you can only run a service on goodwill and people working more hours than they’re contacted to do.”

Penrith to London Euston

“I am hoping that the train I want to take runs and is not too full. There is a lot of uncertainty and anxiety associated with the Avanti part of this journey.”

Portsmouth to Urmston

“Have bought advance tickets but I’m anxious about train not running to timetable and I’m already making alternative plans for destination.”

Carlisle to London Euston

“We are supposed to be going to an event in Paris for which we have booked Eurostar, and it’s causing me so much anxiety. We have absolutely no idea what trains will be running to London, we’ll just have to make sure we book one with about 3-4 hours changeover time (previously with Virgin one hour was always enough). I did think about cancelling the trip but I’m not going to let this absolute abomination of a company ruin my plans.”

Manchester to London Euston

“Don’t know if I will be able to travel by train yet, depends if trains are still cancelled, if so I will travel by car because otherwise trip will be too stressful.”

Manchester to London Euston

The late availability of tickets and timetable information makes planning journeys difficult

“My husband and I are meeting friends in Manchester for the weekend, a trip that has been planned for over 6 months. 4 of us from London have not been able to book Avanti train tickets yet. My husband and I have had to pay extra for our hotel booking to get flexibility to cancel if Avanti service fails and we have to cancel. One traveller is a hospital doctor and has to travel back same day 10/9 to be on call 11/9. She is very concerned about getting back to London from Manchester to meet this commitment. Avanti are making what should be a fun weekend very stressful.”

London Euston to Manchester

“Timetable still not confirmed, no advance tickets available. Had to book at the station - because reservations are blocked, Avanti have also blocked booking tickets without reservations.”

Birmingham to London Euston

“Tickets were made available for my intended travel date a little over a week before my intended travel date. I was able to purchase advance tickets as the train I required to be in Edinburgh in time was one of those scheduled to run. It is difficult to organise meetings and required physical attendance at properties when I am unable to guarantee being able to travel without taking multiple trains and enduring a very expensive 4 hour alternative route.”

Warrington to Edinburgh

“[I’m] unable to book tickets far enough in advance not to complicate other arrangements, also meaning that hotel costs are higher because of lack of advance booking time.”

London Euston to Birmingham

“We are not certain whether the trains will be running on this date so we have postponed booking till there is more certainty.”

Preston to Edinburgh

Many are not impressed by the level of information that they have received

“I am planning to visit family in London. I was unaware of the change in timetable until I saw it in the news a few days ago. I am not reconsidering whether to use the train and drive instead. Trains between Manchester and London are always overcrowded even with normal timetables and I do not wish to be crowded in to a train with my partner and 1 year old child. I have not been given enough information on the revised timetable, without seeing it on BBC news I would not have known about the revisions.”

Manchester to London Euston

“No information from Avanti re revised timetable either via their app or email - I have an account, heard about the changes on the BBC news.”

Lancaster to London Euston

“Bought two advance singles for a trip to London before Avanti announced mass cancellations, and both tickets have since been cancelled. This is a pain in that I'd deliberately booked specific travel times around other booked activities, but not disruptive enough to cancel the trip as I'm able to travel on the train departing before or after. This information was fairly easily found but I'm due to travel tomorrow and haven't actually been notified of the cancellations. If I hadn't looked proactively beforehand I wouldn't have known at all.”

Coventry to London Euston

“I have no information other than through the media but am not considering booking tickets until the last minute so I can have max certainty about whether the journey will be running or whether I need to find an alternative route.”

Stockport to London Euston

“Already have ticket so booked seat reservations only, on checking the Avanti website the times have changed and train runs 13 minutes earlier though no-one has advised me of this (yet).”

Milton Keynes to Preston

Passengers with disabilities or additional needs

Passengers with disabilities or additional needs are put off travelling

Comments from those with disabilities

"I had a days work in Birmingham. I needed to be there by 8 am. I have a disability which makes travelling by train difficult. There was a slower train available but this would stop at many stops and increase the risk that someone would catch my leg with the bag or luggage. I was faced with the choice of either having to drive to Birmingham or lose a days pay. I decided to drive but I found this very difficult because of my disability and I had to leave very early and return very late as I had to stop at service stations en-route. I normally travel using the assister travel scheme which I find makes things far more manageable. I was exhausted by the time I came home."

Milton Keynes to Birmingham

"Reduced trains on a weekend where they are usually vastly oversubscribed was a real barrier for me. I have a disability that means I need things to be predictable and quiet where possible. I ended up using a competitor that was more reliable."

London Euston to Manchester

"There was not a through train at the time I wanted to travel. I had to use a Transport for Wales train to Chester, and change trains there. As I have difficulty walking, there was not enough time for me to change platforms. I had to wait an hour for the next train."

Llandudno to Crewe

"Absolutely disgraceful. Purchased a first class off peak single. Selected a specific seat (priority seating for my disability) and had confirmation of reservation. Purchased via Diversity Business Travel system. On the day no reservations applied whatsoever, huge overcrowding resulting in declassification of my carriage, meaning I didn't get the first class service or my seat. Finally got a seat but only later in the journey." **Crewe to London**

"No trains were running on the date I planned to travel, and only limited replacement bus service was available. I am disabled and unable to make long bus journeys so we had to book a taxi instead, at a significantly higher cost."

Edinburgh to Manchester

"Unable to book - I am disabled and could not risk travelling with being unable to get seating and or support."

Euston to Glasgow