

Alstom to refurbish CrossCountry's Voyager fleet in £60 million upgrade

- Iconic fleet to receive both an interior and exterior refresh at Alstom's Derby facility
- New seats, tables and flooring to be installed on Voyagers from 2025

19 August 2024 – Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has signed a contract to refurbish CrossCountry's Voyager trains, transforming the on-board experience for customers. The contract, valued at around £60 million (€70 million) will see the trains receive an interior refresh – including new seats and tables – while their exteriors will be repainted in CrossCountry's new livery.

The work will be carried out at Alstom's historic Derby Litchurch Lane facility and encompasses 312 cars, comprising 136 Voyager (Class 220) and 176 Super Voyager (Class 221) vehicles respectively. 252 cars belong to the existing CrossCountry fleet, while an additional 12 trains – totalling 60 additional carriages – will be added following their release from Avanti West Coast.

Additional enhancements will see the trains fitted with new carpets, improved lighting and a new passenger counting system. Sustainability will be at the heart of the refurbishment; the Voyager's new seats will be at least 95% recyclable and 98% recoverable, while lighter materials used throughout the trains will help reduce fuel and carbon emissions.

Design work will commence immediately, with physical work in Derby set to commence from next year until 2027. Around 100 Alstom staff will work on the contract, supported by many more in the company's UK supply chain.

"For more than 20 years, CrossCountry's Voyagers have proudly served towns and cities across Great Britain – travelling millions of miles in the process. We now look forward to giving these iconic Alstom-built trains some well-deserved TLC with a comprehensive overhaul that will include new seats, on-board technology enhancements and an exterior repaint," said Peter Broadley, Managing Director, Services UK and Ireland at Alstom.

He added: "Not only will the refurbishment delight fare-paying customers with increased levels of comfort and accessibility, the overhaul programme will support UK suppliers and skilled jobs across the country."

Owned by Beacon Rail, who are funding the upgrade, the Voyagers operate across the CrossCountry network, from Aberdeen, Scotland, to Penzance, England.

"We're delighted to be moving forward on the refurbishment of our Voyager fleet which will transform the passenger experience for customers on our long-distance routes," said Adrian Hugill, Fleet and Engineering Director at CrossCountry.

He added: "We look forward to working with colleagues at Alstom and Beacon Trains to give the ever-impressive Voyager fleet a new lease of life on the CrossCountry network."

Last year, Alstom signed an eight-year extension to its Train Services Agreement (TSA) with CrossCountry. The contract extension, valued at around £825 million (€950 million), sees Alstom continue to maintain, overhaul, service and clean CrossCountry's Voyager and Super Voyager fleet until 2031 at their primary depot – Central Rivers in Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire.

Meanwhile, in June 2024, Alstom signed a contract worth around £370 million (€430 million) for 10 new nine-car Avenra trains for the Elizabeth line to help meet growing passenger demand.

Like the rest of the fleet, the additional Avenra electric multiple unit (EMU) Class 345 passenger trains will be built at Alstom's Derby Litchurch Lane Works, the only UK facility that designs, engineers, builds and tests trains for domestic and export markets.

Also built by Alstom, Voyager and Super Voyager inter-city trains have already served passengers across England, Scotland and Wales for over two decades. Operating at speeds of up to 200 km/hour, they have clocked up over 427 million miles of service.

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