

Correspondence from Northern

Steve Hopkinson, Regional Director for Northern said:

I can only apologise for the poor performance that our customers have experienced across West Yorkshire over the last few weeks.

There are four key areas that (combined) have led to the challenging time:

- A number of severe weather events (such as the widespread flooding)
- The effects of Autumn, and our issues around low adhesion.
- Poor fleet reliability, and in particular the new class 195 diesel fleet.
- Traincrew availability issues.

The introduction of the new trains fleet, despite all the positivity surrounding it – has also brought with it some short/medium term reliability issues that is expected with a new fleet.

Our main problems have surrounded the deployment of the Automatic Selective Door Operation (ASDO) software, windscreen wiper faults, door faults and crew confidence.

We have fixes in for all these, and I expect to see the reliability of the fleet (and in particular on the Calder Valley) steadily improve over the coming weeks.

In December we will introduce another 5 x class 195 diesel trains that will further enhance the Leeds to Chester/Manchester Victoria (x3) and York to Blackpool (x2) services.

There will be 5 x diesel trains introduced to our Leeds to Nottingham and Lincoln (via Sheffield) services at the December timetable change (15th).

Our customers have suffered with reduced capacity as a result of us operating some of our class 158 fleet on the Penistone line (for Autumn resilience), and some short term engine reliability issues with the 158 fleet also.

Traincrew has been affected by the need to release up to 30 Drivers across our Leeds and Sheffield depots per day.

I am confident of performance improving as we move out of the peak Autumn period and into December, with our new trains operation gaining stability and credibility also.

I have also implemented a revised trajectory of Driver training from this week, with a complete pause on all new trains training from the 9th December until the 6th January.