
Railway firm plans new Bradford to London link

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Bradford is to get an extra direct daily rail link to London if plans by train operator Grand Central get the green light.

An application has been made on behalf of Grand Central to the rail regulator to add a fourth daily service between Bradford Interchange and London King's Cross from December 2012.

The extra service will leave the Interchange at 8.30 am after starting at Mirfield, via [Brighouse](#) and Halifax, at 7.53am, with a return service from London King's Cross at 4.08pm.

Grand Central said the new service will cut the journey time between Bradford and London by around 40 minutes outbound, with the return journey due to be 20 minutes faster.

It will offer a new direct train for passengers at New [Pudsey](#) and Garforth and will also be the first time passengers at Leeds will have an alternative service to London King's Cross.

Grand Central said some tough decisions needed to be taken about which services to operate on the busy East Coast main line and the new service in the evening could impact on the existing 4.08pm East Coast service to Newark.

Grand Central and Alliance Rail Holdings, which has made the application for the new route, said they were working on solutions to allow both services to be accommodated but feel strongly that there is a real need for improvements to services to Bradford to be a priority in line with the recent Route Utilisation Studies carried out by the industry.

Grand Central managing director Richard McClean said: "Since Grand Central became an Arriva company in late 2011, a significant amount of attention has been focused on improvements to our trains to increase their reliability and availability.

"This focus has been borne out by the noticeable improvement in our trains performance which has resulted in increased passenger confidence and increasing numbers of passengers travelling.

“This has enabled us to look to increase the offer we can make to our passengers by introducing these important new trains, and we will continue to look for ways to introduce more services in the coming years”.

Grand Central said it had seen significant growth in passenger numbers using its services from Bradford Interchange which were launched in 2010.

Figures released in January by Passenger Focus revealed that 95 per cent of passengers were satisfied with the company’s services, making Grand Central the UK’s highest rated passenger company.

[Bradford Chamber](#) of Commerce chief executive Sandy Needham welcomed Grand Central's plans, saying: “People who work in Bradford and live on the south side of the city have particularly benefited from Grand Central's services.

“While the timing of the new service may not be early enough for many business people, this must be viewed as a positive and welcome development for the district as a whole.”

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