

# Cycling by train

A guide to using our services and facilities.

From 9 December 2007 until further notice

[www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk](http://www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk)



First Great Western welcomes customers who cycle to our stations and wish to travel on our services. The purpose of this guide is to explain our policy regarding the carriage of cycles, so that your journey can be easy, convenient and enjoyable.



**Important note:** Due to operational changes in the way our High Speed Trains (HST) fleet calls at shorter platforms from 9th December 2007, several key elements of our cycle policy have been revised. Please read this document carefully to check whether your journey has been affected.

#### Planning your journey

- Plan ahead to ensure you are able to take a cycle on your preferred service, and reserve a place if possible (this is compulsory on some services). Please see the sections on restrictions and reservations for more details.
- Allow plenty of time for the purchase or collection of tickets.
- Check whether there is any engineering work taking place that may affect your journey, as rail replacement buses unfortunately cannot carry cycles.
- Further information about our cycle policy can be found at: [www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk/cycles](http://www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk/cycles)

#### Getting to the station

- For the best cycle route to your station, please contact the local council or Sustrans (see back cover). First Great Western continues to work with local and other groups to improve access to stations, including better signage and more cycle storage facilities.
- All of our stations (where it is physically possible) now have

dedicated cycle storage, while many major stations also benefit from sheltered, secure, CCTV-monitored cycle parking. When you park your cycle, please take all removable valuables with you. We can't be held responsible for the loss of such items (or the cycle itself), so please lock your bike securely and remove all valuables.

**Note:** For more details about our cycle storage facilities, please go to [www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk](http://www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk) and look at the stations information pages.

- Certain stations also have cycle lockers - please enquire at the ticket office. There is also cycle hire available from some locations - please consult our website for further information.

Please note that in the interests of security First Great Western reserve the right to search all lockers, and any bags/panniers left on the bicycles.

- We undertake regular audits of cycle parking at our stations in order to identify any cycles that may have been abandoned. Typically we will tag all cycles during a 7 day period. This advises customers that any cycles left with a tag in place at the

end date (4 weeks hence) will be considered to have been abandoned.

All cycles abandoned at our stations are retained for a further 13 weeks (as per UK national rail guidelines). If they are unclaimed at the end of this period, they become our property, at which point we usually donate them to charity.

- If you intend to travel with your cycle, please arrive at the station in good time for your train - we recommend that you are on the platform at least five minutes before your train is due to depart.
- Cycling is not permitted anywhere on the station, so please walk with your cycle at all times.
- If there are ticket gates, please use the wide staff-operated gate for your convenience.

#### Train formations

Please note that First Great Western operate a range of differing train formations. These can be summarised as follows:

##### High Speed Trains

Known as HSTs, 7 or 8 carriages long with a power car at each end, operating long distances across the First Great Western area.

##### Adelante

Known as class 180, five carriages long, operating until Spring 2008.

##### Turbos

Known as class 165 or 166, 2 or 3 carriages long, operating on the London - Thames Valley routes

##### Diesel Multiple Units

Known as DMUs, includes class 142/143/150/153/158 units, 1 to 3 carriages long, operating in the West of England and Cardiff - Portsmouth / Weymouth.

Details of cycle storage for each type are detailed in this leaflet.

#### Boarding the train

- Platform staff can advise you where to stand to get your cycle onto the train. Alternatively, this guide contains information about our different trains and where cycle storage is located.
- Staff assistance is required for boarding all Adelante trains, and some long distance HSTs, with a cycle, so please ensure you are on the correct part of the platform. Whenever possible please tell platform staff that you intend to board. On a HST this is most likely to be either in Coach A, or in the front power car at stations with short platforms (see following sections for details).
- For Turbo/DMU please place your cycle in the vestibule area, as described on page 5.

#### Cycle storage on trains

- Once on the train, please secure your cycle in the appropriate location, but note that for safety reasons, cycles must **not** be locked onto anything on the train. If cycles are locked onto anything and cannot be unlocked in time, we retain the right to continue the journey without removing the cycle at your destination, so the train is not delayed unnecessarily. However, we would recommend that you lock your wheel to your frame, which will make the bike as secure as possible. Please take all removable valuables with you, as we can't be held responsible for the loss of cycles or items taken from them. Regular travellers may even consider possessing insurance for their cycles, as we are not able to cover your property in this way.

- We may need to remove cycles where they are causing an obstruction, particularly in the doorway areas of Adelante and HST services. Therefore please store your cycles in the correct part of the train.
- Tell the Conductor or Train Manager your destination, so he or she can ensure you have access to your cycle and that you can get it off the train as safely and quickly as possible. Also, please ensure you have taken all your belongings with you and be ready to alight when the train arrives at the station.
- Some Turbo/DMU trains are operated only by a driver; there is no Guard or Train Manager on board. In these circumstances, please follow the guidelines for storage given on pages 5 and 7.
- We operate a number of different types of train with different arrangements for the storage of cycles. Most trains do contain some dedicated cycle storage spaces, so please use these wherever possible. Details are shown on pages 4 and 5.

#### Platform lengths

- In summary, if you are travelling with a cycle from a short platform, your boarding point will always be at the front of the train. If you are travelling **towards** London, you will require staff assistance.
- A list of stations with full-length platforms where High Speed services call is shown over page. Between any of these stations, there will always be a minimum of six cycle spaces, located in Coach A (see over page). Please check to see whether either your origin or destination station is included. If either, or both, of your stations are **not** on the list, then your journey will require you to follow the procedure for using a short platform.

**Stations with full-length platforms:**

Bath Spa	Gloucester	Plymouth
Bridgend	Hereford	Port Talbot Parkway
Bristol Parkway	London Paddington	Reading
Bristol Temple Meads	Neath	Swansea
Cardiff Central	Newbury	Swindon
Carmarthen	Newport	Taunton
Cheltenham Spa	Newquay	Tiverton Parkway
Chippenham	Newton Abbot	Torquay
Didcot Parkway	Oxford	Westbury
Exeter Central	Paignton	Weston-super-Mare
Exeter St Davids	Penzance	Worcester Shrub Hill

**Important note:** If you are travelling with a cycle from Cheltenham to any station between Gloucester and Swindon, please note that the train will reverse at Gloucester. This means that in order to be able to get your cycle out of the front power car at these stations with short platforms (Stonehouse, Stroud and Kemble), you will need to load it onto the rear power car on departure from Cheltenham Spa.



**High Speed Trains (HSTs)**



These trains comprise of 7 or 8 carriages with a power car at each end.

**Important note:** From 9th December 2007, there are two distinct areas on a HST where cycles are conveyed:

**Area 1: Coach A, as previously: this will remain the normal cycle storage location under most circumstances.**

- Please use this part of the train to store your cycle if you are travelling on HST services between Bristol Temple Meads / Cardiff Central / Swansea and London Paddington. Also use Coach A on any other HST service when travelling between two stations with full-length platforms, or from any station with a short platform where Coach A is available. Please see the list above to check whether your station has full-length platforms.

- Number of dedicated cycle spaces: Six.
- Location: Rack in Coach A (at the opposite end to First Class, usually at the non-London end of the train), in a storage area accessible directly from the platform (not accessible from within the train).
- Staff assistance required to board: No.
- Cycle storage in vestibule areas: None.

**Area 2: The luggage area of the front power car: only to be used under certain circumstances as described below.**

- Please **only** use this part of the train to store your cycle if you are boarding at a station with a short platform and Coach A is **not** accessible.
- Number of dedicated cycle spaces: Three.
- Location: Straps in the front power car, at the very front of the train, in a storage area accessible only from the platform.

**What if the station is unmanned?**

Should you wish to board a High Speed Train at a station when there are no platform staff available, please bear in mind the following:

- If the station has a long platform (as listed above) please make your way to the guard's van at the end of coach A.
- If the station has a short platform (ie it is not listed above) please make your way to the rear area of leading power car.

- Staff assistance required to board: Yes.
- Cycle storage in vestibule areas: None.

**Note:** unless instructed otherwise, there are no cycle spaces available in the rear power car.

**Adelante trains**



These trains comprise of five carriages, with a driver's cab at each end of the train.

During the validity of the December 2007 timetable, all remaining Adelante trains on First Great Western will be removed from service. However, for the first few months of 2008 there will still be some of these train types in use, so please bear the below information in mind for travel on this type of train:

- Number of dedicated cycle spaces: Six (three at each end).
- Location: Racks at both ends of the train next to the driver's cab, in storage areas only accessible via the platform.
- Cycle storage in vestibule areas: None.

However, where a station has a short platform and access is only possible via the normal passenger doors, cycles may temporarily be stored in the vestibule of Coach E next to the First Class carriage (Coach D). The cycle should be moved to the dedicated area when the train reaches the next suitable station (i.e. there is a full-length platform).

- Staff assistance required to board: Yes.

**Turbo trains operating in the London and Thames Valley areas**



These trains are made up of either 2 or 3 carriages.

- Number of dedicated cycle spaces: Two on most 3-car trains; none on 2-car trains.
- Location: (Where applicable) in the vestibules of the middle carriage, accessed from the normal doors.
- Cycle storage in vestibule areas: Yes. Wherever possible, please keep your cycle near the doors and away from gangways. Ideally place your cycle on the right hand side of the train (looking forward), as there are generally fewer platforms on this side.
- Staff assistance required to board: No.

**Note:** Cycle storage in vestibule areas is at the Conductor's discretion, based on how busy the service is likely to become. It may be necessary to refuse to accept additional cycles, but existing bikes will be allowed to remain.

**DMUs operating in the West of England and also between Cardiff and Weymouth/Portsmouth.**



- Number of dedicated cycle spaces: At least two in most individual carriages; at least two on all trains.
- Location: Either cycle storage areas or tip-up seating areas close to vestibules.
- Cycle storage in vestibule areas: Yes. Please keep your cycle near the doors and away from gangways wherever possible.

- Staff assistance required to board: No.

**Note:** Cycle storage in vestibule areas is at the conductor's discretion, based on how busy a service is likely to become. It may be necessary to refuse to accept additional cycles, but existing cycles will be allowed to remain.

**Sleeper services**

- Number of dedicated cycle spaces: Three.
- Location: Rack in Coach A (at the opposite end to the sleeper coaches), in a storage area accessible directly from the platform (not accessible from within the train).
- Cycle storage in vestibule areas: None.
- Staff assistance required to board: No.

**Reservations**

Cycle reservations can be made on available services for no charge. Free reservations can also be made on the Cardiff – Portsmouth route and on a limited number of services between Bristol and Penzance.

Please refer to the contact details given for more information as to how to reserve your bike space.

Even if reservations are not compulsory on your train, we recommend that you reserve to be sure of getting a space on your chosen service.

**When to make a reservation**

- It is best to reserve as early as possible to ensure you get a space, but you should reserve at least 24 hours in advance.



### How to make a reservation

- Cycle reservations can be made at any railway station with a staffed ticket office. We suggest that you reserve your cycle space when you buy your travel ticket.
- Alternatively, call **08457 000 125** any day between 0700 and 2200 to reserve (calls may be monitored).

-If you purchase a rail ticket at the same time, then you may arrange for your travel ticket and cycle reservation to be posted to you first-class. Alternatively, you may collect your tickets at one of our stations.

-If you only wish to make a cycle reservation, you will be given a reference number. This can be used to obtain your reservation ticket at a staffed ticket office. If your station is unstaffed, please retain this number as proof of reservation whilst travelling.

### Travelling without a reservation

- Any non-reserved cycle spaces will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. This also applies on services where reservations are not available.
- In the event of cancellations or severe delays, you will be entitled to travel on a service other than the one you were booked on. This will be subject to there

being space available. Please retain all documentation as proof of reservation.

- Our staff have the right to refuse a cycle if there isn't enough space (in accordance with National Conditions of Carriage, section 2.47 a, b & c).

### Restrictions

**Important note:** Due to the changes in cycle storage locations described in this leaflet, there has been a change in the number of reservable spaces on some of our HST services. No other train types are affected.

Depending on the route, the number of spaces available varies as follows:

- All HST services starting or terminating at Bristol Temple Meads, Cardiff Central and Swansea (going to/from London Paddington): six reservable spaces on all journeys.
- All other HST services: three reservable spaces on all journeys, although a minimum of six spaces remains available for travel between stations with full-length platforms.

While in reality the number of spaces available at short platforms will often exceed three, this is the minimum guaranteed number of spaces at these stations. Hence only three spaces will be reservable along these routes in their entirety, with the remaining three spaces being available on a "first come first serve" basis.

### Peak restrictions

Due to the high level of demand on many of our services, especially at peak times, it's necessary to place some restrictions on cycles, though we seek to minimise restrictions as much as possible. This is to ensure that all customers who wish to travel are able to board in

comfort and safety. The restrictions are summarised below.

### Long Distance HST services and all Adelante services

This applies to all trains originating from or terminating at:

**Weston-super-Mare**

**Bristol**

**Cheltenham**

**Any station in South Wales**

**Any station west of Taunton**

### Monday to Friday morning peak:

- Reservations compulsory for all services arriving into London Paddington between **0700** and **1000**. All other services will accept cycles subject to normal capacity constraints.

### Monday to Friday evening peak:

- Reservations compulsory for all services departing from London Paddington between **1500** and **1900**. All other services will accept cycles subject to normal constraints.

### Other peak HST restrictions:

- There are certain other busy HST services in the West of England where reservations are compulsory. Please check our timetable booklets for details.

### Thames Valley HST services

This section applies to all stations between Oxford and London Paddington, and between Bedwyn and London Paddington.

### Peak times apply Mondays to Fridays and are defined as follows:

- morning peak – any service arriving at London Paddington between 0745 and 0945
- evening peak – any service departing London Paddington between 1630 and 1830

### Cycles may be taken during peak times to and from the following stations:

**Oxford**

**Didcot Parkway**

**Newbury**

**Reading**

**London Paddington**

Please note that reservations are compulsory for journeys on the above peak time services.

For journeys involving intermediate stations, cycles may not be carried on during the above peak

**Note:** Cycles are accepted on all High Speed and Adelante Train services at weekends and on public holidays, subject to normal capacity constraints. Reservations are not compulsory on these days.

### Turbo train services

Due to high levels of demand in London and the Thames Valley, there are also peak service restrictions on our Turbo trains as follows:

### Monday to Friday morning peak:

- Cycles are not permitted on any service arriving into London Paddington between **0745** and **0945**. This restriction applies between Reading and London Paddington only. West of Reading (as far as Tilehurst or Reading West but not to Reading itself), there are no additional peak restrictions.

### Monday to Friday evening peak:

- No cycles permitted on any service departing from London Paddington between **1630** and **1830**. This restriction applies between London Paddington and Reading only. West of Reading (from Tilehurst or Reading West but not from Reading itself), there are no additional peak restrictions.

**Note:** Cycles are accepted on all Turbo train services at weekends and on public holidays, subject to normal capacity constraints. Reservations are not compulsory on these days.

### Diesel Multiple services

### Monday to Friday peak times:

- Cycles are not permitted on any service travelling in the area bounded by Weston-super-Mare, BristolParkway and Bath Spa between 0730 and 0900, or between 1630 and 1830.

At other times there are no blanket restrictions, although on busy services the Conductor may limit the number of cycles to allow all customers to join the train safely. If you are not able to board one of these services as instructed by the Conductor, you will need to wait for the next service on which there is space for a cycle to be carried safely.

Additionally there are some services at busy times and on busy routes for which reservations are compulsory, particularly on the Cardiff – Portsmouth route.

### Engineering work

When lines are closed due to engineering work, many services are replaced by buses.

Unfortunately, we are not able to carry cycles on these bus services.

Please check

[www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk](http://www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk) or call **08457 48 49 50** before travelling, to see if your journey is affected.

### Different types of cycles

- Customers with folding bicycles and folding tricycles are welcome on all of our services, for any portion of the journey. Once folded down, these cycles may be stored in the usual luggage areas.
- Tandems can be carried on High Speed services. When being loaded into the rear of the HST power car, or onto an Adelante, please note that the front wheel must be removed, and the tandem hung by its rear wheel. This must be done before the train arrives at the platform.
- With the limited space we have available, we are unable to carry the following on any of our services:

- non-folding tricycles
- 'Rann' type trailers
- other three-wheeled vehicles
- motorcycles
- mopeds
- motorised cycles
- scooters

We hope that you have found this guide useful. Please contact our Customer Services Team (details on back cover) if you have any feedback about any of our products or services.

## For more information

### **First Great Western**

[www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk](http://www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk)

For tickets, information, real-time updates and offers

Contact us on **08457 000 125**

For tickets, comments and general enquiries

We are open 0700 - 2200 daily

### **National Rail Enquiries**

[www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

**08457 48 49 50**

For train times and fares

Daily, 24 hours

## Cycling groups

### **CTC**

The national body for all cyclists

[www.ctc.org.uk](http://www.ctc.org.uk)

**0870 873 0060**

### **Sustrans**

The sustainable charity working to promote walking, cycling and public transport use

[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

**0845 113 0065**

[www.cyclingengland.co.uk](http://www.cyclingengland.co.uk)