

West Midlands Trains Business Update

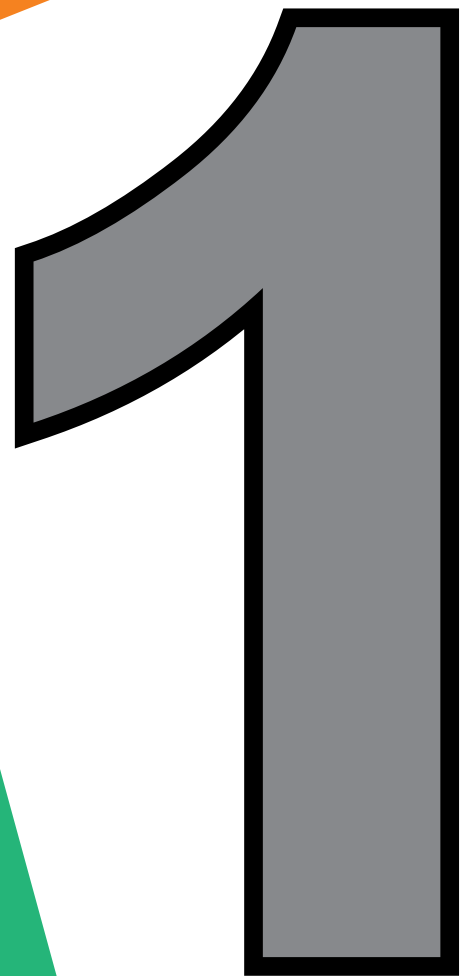
January 2019

We are one!

Monday 10 December 2018 marked one year since we began operating West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services. We have already made significant progress in investing £1bn into local rail services and our network. Over the past 12 months we have:

- ▶ **Made significant progress in the introduction of new trains, the first of which will enter service this year.**
- ▶ **Opened Kenilworth station and introduced a new service for the town.**
- ▶ **Started operating electric trains at Bromsgrove.**
- ▶ **Implemented first to last gatelines at a number of stations across our networks.**
- ▶ **Provided compensation for passengers delayed by 15 minutes or more.**

As we continue with our investment plan we will be introducing thousands of extra seats during peak times, new trains, improved timetables and better facilities over the next seven years. In this issue we will be looking at some of these achievements and what you can expect from us over the next 12 months.



One year of West Midlands Trains

What have we achieved and what are we doing?

Before the franchise began, we placed an order for £700m of new trains. New electric trains will operate on routes to and from London Euston, and also on the Cross City line in Birmingham. We are also introducing new diesel units on a number of routes. Our new fleets will be a significant contributor to increasing capacity across our network by around 25%. We also introduced a Delay Repay scheme to compensate any passengers delayed by 15 minutes or more.



The new Kenilworth station building



Marking the introduction of electric services at Bromsgrove. Left to right: Ken Pollock (Worcestershire County Council), Richard Brooks (WMT), Cllr Roger Lawrence (West Midlands Rail Executive) & Richard Dugdale (Network Rail)



An impression of a new Bombardier Aventura unit in LNR livery. These new electric units will operate on routes across both our London Northwestern Railway and West Midlands Railway networks.

In April 2018, we began operating trains to and from the new Kenilworth station. An hourly service now runs in each direction between Leamington Spa and Coventry, with increased capacity and timetable improvements due over the next 12 months.

In July 2018, we began operating electric trains to and from Bromsgrove. This extended the Cross City line, and increased number of trains to and from Birmingham New Street from 45 to 132 everyday.

From Spring 2019, refurbished Class 230 units will be introduced on the line between Bedford and Bletchley. These new trains will increase capacity on the route by around 25%.

In October 2018, first to last gate lines were introduced at key stations across the network, to help improve security and reduce ticketless travel.



Snow Hill is one of a number of stations to have a staffed gate line in place from first to last train everyday.

Adrian Shooter (Vivarail) and Jan Chaudhry-van der Velde inspecting a Class 230 unit at Long Marston depot



From May 2019, passengers will see vast improvements with the introduction of a new timetable across our network. This will not only create more direct services across the rail network, but will also make better use of carriages, to enable longer trains and enhanced Sunday services on some routes.

Other improvements due in 2019 include new digital information screens, further rebranding of trains and stations and new uniforms for staff.

Investing to improve

More details on our £1bn investment plans can be found on our websites.

We will also be contacting our stakeholders ahead of our May 2018 timetables, to go through what our new timetables will mean for you.

We are planning to hold a Stakeholder Conference this spring - more details to be confirmed

£2.3m upgrade for Lichfield Trent Valley

Work is underway to install new lifts at Lichfield Trent Valley station to ensure it's accessible for everyone by the Summer. Network Rail has started work on the £2.3 million 'Access for All' upgrade, which will transform the way people with mobility needs use the railway. Passengers using the Cross City line and West Coast Mainline services will soon benefit from the improvements, with step free access introduced to all three platforms. The investment has come directly from the Department for Transport's 'Access for All' programme, which was launched in 2006 to

improve accessibility at railway stations nationwide. Michael Fabricant, MP for Lichfield, said: "Having campaigned for years for this improvement, I was very pleased to meet with Network Rail to show me where they plan to install the two lifts that will give disabled access to all platforms. This will be a major improvement to this important local interchange railway station."

MP for Lichfield, Michael Fabricant and customer experience director for West Midlands Trains, Richard Brooks



£1.7m refurbishment at Longbridge

A £1.7 million refurbishment programme at Longbridge station is currently underway. Work is part of the £70 million National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP) to transform stations across the country. The work is improving the appearance of the station; by enhancing the entrance, replacing the old windows and installing a

new roof covering with canopy. The existing station rooms are being demolished to create a larger concourse area, with new flooring, new façade, automatic doors, a new accessible toilet and ticket counter. The project is due to be completed in the Spring.

Platform improvement at Watford Junction

Until May 2019, platforms 10 and 11 at Watford Junction will be undergoing a multi-million-pound overhaul. The work will see platform 10 extended by 90 metres, increasing the number of carriages it can handle from eight to twelve. Overhead line equipment will also be upgraded, and customer information systems on the platform brought up to date. Platform 11, which is currently made from wood, will be entirely rebuilt to modern construction standards. Step-free access to and from platforms 9, 10 and 11 will be protected during the work and trains will be operate as normal.

Plans for new Kidderminster station revealed

Plans have been unveiled for Kidderminster's new station building, ahead of major redevelopment work starting this year. A new glass fronted station building will be built, which will house a café, fully accessible toilets and indoor seating area.

Outside, the forecourt will be reshaped with a new drop-off and collection zone, relocated taxi rank and new traffic flow arrangements. The new layout will improve pedestrian safety and increase access during the busiest times. Work on the station is part of a £50 million

spend by Worcestershire County Council to improve rail services in the county. For more information on the plans visit worcestershires.gov.uk/kidderminsterstation



Passengers to benefit from new real-time information system

Passengers travelling on London Northwestern Railway services to and from London Euston and Liverpool, will soon benefit from a new, on-board passenger information system.

Trains on these routes will be fitted with 22 inch screens in each carriage, to provide real-time service updates and onward travel information.

The new passenger information system will help get updates to

travellers quicker and in a more user friendly format.

The system has been developed by KeTech and Axion, and will be fitted to 50 Siemens Class 350 trains. Passengers will see the systems put into use between May 2019 and May 2020.

The trains operate London Northwestern Railway services to and from London Euston, and also between Birmingham New Street and Liverpool Lime Street. They are

also used on West Midlands Railway services between Walsall and Wolverhampton.

The trains due to be fitted with the new system are part of a fleet that will continue to operate across our networks, when new Bombardier Aventura units are introduced from 2021 onwards.



Coming soon - the Development Forum

We will soon be hosting our first 'Development Forum'. As part of our integrated transport planning agenda, we will be looking at ways we can work with housing developers to make the railway more attractive for potential passengers. The forum hopes to follow the success of our inaugural Transport Integration Forum, which was held last summer. The event was a catalyst for a range of important conversations around how we can link train travel into other modes of public transport. We will be inviting

a range of developers and house builders from across our network to the Development Forum. For more information, contact **Jon Harris** - jon.harris@wmtrains.co.uk



New Snow Hill Station entrance will give passengers direct link between trains and trams



Passengers using Birmingham's Snow Hill Station are to get a new entrance so they can switch seamlessly between local rail and tram services.

An image of how the new eastern entrance will look was released in December by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), part of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).

TfWM also announced the appointment of leading independent infrastructure specialist Barhale to build the £1.5 million project.

The scheme involves opening up another of the arches under the Victorian viaduct that carries trains and the West Midlands Metro trams into the city centre.

At the moment passengers wanting

to get from the West Midlands Metro stop at St Chads to trains in Snow Hill Station have to walk down a flight of external steps and then along A4440 Queensway before turning into Livery Street and accessing the station through its second entrance.

Alternatively they have to walk past the Snowhill Three, Two and One office developments and into the main Snow Hill entrance.

The new third entrance will remove both of these external walks and instead give passengers a direct way into the station from the tram stop. Rail passengers wanting to catch a Metro service will also get direct access without having to leave the station.

Introducing... West Midlands Stations Alliance

The West Midlands is at the forefront of rail development with the creation of the West Midlands Railway brand and significant investment programme underpinned by a series of collaborative frameworks and alliances between rail industry and local authority organisations. West Midlands Station Alliance (WMSA) brings together West Midlands Trains, Network Rail and West Midlands Rail Executive in a unique operator-owner-local government alliance. Stations are gateways to both the rail network and the communities that they serve and the opportunity is being taken to work together to deliver real improvements to existing facilities at the same time as becoming more efficient in the way we deliver investment, and create a long-term plan for each station.

Our West Midlands Stations Alliance vision is:

“We will develop stations as quality, accessible gateways between communities and the railway, supporting the changing needs of our passengers, residents and visitors.

Stations in the West Midlands will be community assets, supporting the wellbeing and development of the areas they serve through involving local community and business.”

For more information on West Midlands Stations Alliance, you can contact **Steve Leyland** at steve.leyland@wmre.org.uk.



Mobilisation lead for West Midlands Stations Alliance, Steve Leyland

Personalised travel planning continues

Our station and personalised travel planning scheme has been continuing across our network. Over the past couple of months, we have been undertaking passenger survey work on trains on the Cross City Line. We have been asking passengers about how they travel to and from the station on our busiest commuter route. The results are being assessed, and will help inform future developments on the line.

Way to Work provides tickets for jobseekers

Long term jobseekers and graduates are among those who can now benefit from our new ‘Way to work’ scheme. Under the new initiative, we are now offering up to six complimentary interview journeys and up to 3 months of season tickets to those in need of a bit of extra help back into employment. Applications to the scheme can now be made online at bit.ly/2skHgA4

Overhead wires now live on the Chase line

Recently installed overhead power lines between Walsall and Rugeley Trent Valley are now live, ahead of new electric services starting to operate on the route from May. Electrification will allow a faster and more frequent service to run. Network Rail has been raising awareness of railway safety among young people by visiting schools in the West Midlands and Staffordshire area as part of the upgrade project. During the visits, primary and secondary school age children have been learning about the dangers of trespassing on the railway and the new risks that overhead line equipment poses, along with the devastating consequences of ignoring the risks. Once the new timetable is implemented in May, we will be able to release the diesel trains on the line to strengthen services elsewhere on our network.

Work is ongoing to complete the electrification of the line in time for trains to operate from May



Lost Property charges dropped

Customers will no longer be charged for retrieving lost property or cash from our stations.

It comes following a review into the lost property scheme we inherited when we began operating in December 2017.

David Whitley, head of customer experience strategy, said: “We identified that there were significant improvements that could be made to the system in place for reuniting customers with their lost items. We

want to make the process as easy as possible. Dropping the charges is just the first step. Many people may be put off by needing to make numerous phone calls to track down their possessions – so we are now working on a website to make this process easier for both customers and staff.”

We will be launching the new website early this year.





Life saving efforts at Milton Keynes recognised at Railstaff awards

London Northwestern Railway staff have been recognised for contributing to life saving work across the rail network. The Milton Keynes Escalation Team, won 'Rail Safety Team of the Year' at the 2018 Railstaff Awards.

The team is made up of representatives from London Northwestern Railway, Virgin Trains, Network Rail, Samaritans, British Transport Police and Thames Valley Police.

Between July and November 2017, a series of suspected suicides around Milton Keynes raised cause for concern.

The incidents were having a huge impact on the local communities and on the rail industry.

In response to the incidents, the group was formed, undertaking various actions, including information sharing, community engagement, improving interventions and promoting support services.

Two further members of London Northwestern Railway staff received Highly Commended Awards in other categories.

London Euston dispatcher, Scott Nickels, was awarded Highly Commended in the

'Rail Person of the Year' category. Scott has been involved in a number of life-saving interventions, including assisting a passenger who suffered a serious fall down an escalator at the station.

Samantha Wood, station customer service assistant, was awarded Highly Commended in the 'Samaritans Lifesaver Award' category. Samantha was recognised for her actions in engaging with a suicidal customer at her station, preventing a potential incident.

Honorary Alderman Mrs Anne Underwood and Brenda Lawrence, head of stations for West Midlands Railway



West Midlands Railway awarded special recognition for supporting British Transplant Games.

West Midlands Railway has been awarded a special recognition for supporting this year's British Transplant Games.

We provided free travel for over 2,500 competitors and other visitors during the event, which took place at venues across Birmingham from Thursday 2 until Sunday 5 August.

The award was presented by The Lord Mayor's Deputy, Honorary

Alderman Mrs Anne Underwood, at a special celebration in Birmingham on Wednesday 14 November.

The games helped to raise the profile of the ongoing need for donors to join the Organ Donation Register, with over 76,000 additional sign ups following this year's event. The 2018 British Transplant Games also contributed £1.8 m to the West Midlands economy.

We're searching for your Cross City heroes!

We are looking for the West Midlands' Cross City Heroes.

We have opened a competition to find deserving community groups near to stations along the line from Redditch and Bromsgrove through to Lichfield.

The campaign is part of celebrations to mark the 40 year anniversary of the Cross City line, which has grown over the years to become the busiest commuter route outside of London. These Cross City Heroes could be local charities, young people's clubs, sports

teams or other community groups who make a difference to people's lives in the area.

We would like to find those who may not have received the recognition they deserve and we would like to hear how they are making an impact to those around them.

A group will then be selected for each of our 24 stations along the route. Winning groups will receive a plaque of recognition at their local station, the chance to preview the features of the



new trains for the route, and ten free tickets of journeys on our services in use in their fundraising efforts. Follow the campaign on social media at [#crosscityheroes](https://twitter.com/crosscityheroes). To make a nomination go to westmidlandsrailway.co.uk/crosscityheroes



Vicky Cropper and Friends of Apsley station planting up some winter boxes

Welcome to some of our new London Northwestern station adopters

With Vicky Cropper now looking after our community rail partners across our London Northwestern Railway network, we are delighted to welcome on board a number of new groups.

We would like to welcome Friends of Apsley and Friends of Berkhamsted to our fold. We also hope to be able to announce new groups at Acton Bridge and Stone very soon.

We would like to get to around 300 adopters across our networks, so if you are interested in setting up a group at your local London Northwestern Railway station, please contact **Vicky Cropper** - vicky.cropper@wmtrains.co.uk

Community Rail Reports now available

Fay Easton and Vicky Cropper have been working on our latest community rail reports. These documents outline our current position and ambitious aims for community rail during our franchise. In the West Midlands, we are looking to introduce community activity at all of our 114 West Midlands Railway stations. Across our London Northwestern Railway network we are committed to continuing to support our three extremely engaged Community Rail Partnerships, and increase our number of station adoption groups from the current 26.

Both reports are now available at bit.ly/2AEVUGJ

RSC Rush tickets launched



We have partnered with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) to offer train and theatre tickets for under £20.

The new Rush Tickets will be available for shows in Stratford-upon-Avon, with a return ticket to Birmingham Snow Hill coming in at a combined price of under £20 per person.

The offer will be available from midday every Friday, offering a limited number of tickets to see shows the following week at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and Swan Theatre in the town.

For more information go to bit.ly/2GRZe1G

Festive trains a success again this year

It's been another great Christmas for Marston Vale CRP and the Abbey Line CRP, with the ever-popular 'Santa Specials' attracting many families again this year.

On Saturday 9 December, visitors enjoyed a festive train ride to and from Bricket Wood station to visit Santa's Grotto at St Stephens Parish Centre.

On Saturday 15 December, Santa was on-board services between Bedford and Bletchley.

Thank you to everyone involved in making the events a success, especially our Community Rail Partnerships, who organised the entertainment and helped publicise these events to our customers.



Autumn performance

Our first autumn was marked by improved joint working with Network Rail, to deliver the necessary mitigations to keep the railway safe and punctual for passengers. Between October and December each year, thousands of tonnes of leaves fall on the tracks, stick to damp rails and become compressed into a smooth, slippery surface – much like black ice on roads. Joint focus groups for the Cross City route and Abbey Line helped to deliver improved performance during the leaf fall season. As well as the usual railhead treatment trains being in operation, there was also considerable vegetation management work undertaken on the Cross City line, together with bespoke adhesion equipment fitted to both trains and the line.

The autumn timetable on the Cross City

line was in place from 15 October until 7 December. This year, the timetable was a significant improvement for commuters compared to previous years, with services keeping the most used stops in place during the morning and evening peaks.

On the Abbey Line, a new facility in the yard at Watford Junction, enabling trains to be topped up daily with sand to assist adhesion on slippery rails was a major factor in improving performance along this route. There was no autumn timetable implemented, which was also an improvement for passengers. Seasonal cancellations due to a shortage of sand and slippery rails was down 80% compared to 2017, with just 18 cancellations due to these causes in 2018.

P8 - P10 performance

During P8 and P9, we unfortunately came in below our target for PPM. During P8, a cable theft at Blackwell caused significant disruption on the Cross City line, causing around 4000 delay minutes. During P9, a 50 mph speed limit across all mainline routes on our network due to high winds was the biggest cause for delays and cancellations. A number of fatalities during the period also caused significant disruption. Both PPM and reliability improved during P10, with the biggest challenges come from two fleet issues. The number of fatalities has remained steady but high across the last 3 periods and work has continued with Samaritans increase awareness of how passengers can assist those in need.



London Northwestern Railway operates most reliable electric trains

Our Siemens 350/3 fleet won at this year's Golden Spanner award as the most reliable First Generation Electric Multiple Unit in the UK.

The trains are part of a fleet that operates over 80 services a day to and from London Euston and were recognised for running an average of 138,000 miles between technical incident over the past year.

We will continue to operate the 350/3 units alongside new trains that are currently being built to operate on the route. New AVENTRA Class 730 units, currently on order from Bombardier, will significantly increase capacity on the West Coast mainline from 2021.

Period 8 14 Oct - 10 Nov	Period 9 11 Nov - 8 Dec	Period 10 9 Dec - 4 Jan
PPM 83.8%	PPM 79.6%	PPM 88.5%
MAA 85.6%	MAA 85.3%	MAA 85.8%
Reliability 96%	Reliability 96%	Reliability 98%

Key

- **PPM (Public Performance Measure)** is the % of trains arriving within five minutes of their advertised times.
- **MAA (Moving Annual Average)** is the average PPM over the last year to date.
- **Reliability** is the % of trains that ran for the whole of their journey.

Get in touch

We hope you find this WMT Business Update useful and informative. If you would like to speak with our Corporate Affairs team for more information, please contact:

corporate.affairs@wmtrains.co.uk / 0330 095 5150

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