



West
Midlands
Trains

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JUNE 2022



On Track

Perry Barr Station • RMT ballot • Tyseley works

Welcome

Monthly news update from WMT

Welcome to *On Track* - your brand new monthly news update from West Midlands Trains.

West Midlands Trains runs services under the West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway brands, connecting communities across the country.

Through this newsletter we aim to bring you up to date with all the latest developments across our network, including timetable changes, station developments and any major planned engineering projects.

If you have any questions about our business, please do not hesitate to get in contact using the details on the final page of this newsletter.

Perry Barr

Station open after £30m rebuild



West Midlands Railway services are once again calling at Perry Barr station after a £30m rebuild.

The station closed its doors in May 2021 for the work, which has seen the installation of passenger lifts, new waiting areas and much-improved public realm.

Services resumed calling at the station on Sunday 29 May and a public celebration event is being planned later in the summer.

The station will be a key location for next month's Birmingham Commonwealth Games as it serves the flagship Alexander Stadium for athletics events.

RMT ballot

Union members vote for action

Members of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) at Network Rail and 14 train operating companies, including West Midlands Trains, have voted for industrial action.

This development raises the possibility of strike action on the railway this summer. At the time of writing no dates for action have been announced by the RMT.

Up-to-date information about how industrial action may affect journeys is available on our websites at wmr.uk/industrialaction and lnr.uk/industrialaction



Engineering work

Four-day closure at Tyseley



Passengers in the West Midlands are being urged to plan ahead of a major four-day closure affecting routes on the Snow Hill Lines via Tyseley.

Network Rail is carrying out £3m of improvements between Monday 20 June and Thursday 23 June to upgrade tracks ahead of the Commonwealth Games.

The work, which will improve access to Tyseley depot for trains, means no services will run between:

- Birmingham Moor Street and Spring Road
- Birmingham Moor Street and Dorridge

Rail replacement transport will be in operation and passengers are asked to plan ahead.

Denise Wetton, from Network Rail, said: “There is never an ideal time to shut the railway and a midweek closure for work like this is rare but after reviewing passenger numbers we have found it is the least disruptive time to make these essential improvements.

“The upgrades will benefit journeys across the wider West Midlands and provide passengers a more reliable railway through our major summer of sport.”

Check www.wmr.uk/plan for journey information.

Lichfield

Trent Valley platform reopens

Platform 3 at Lichfield Trent Valley station has reopened following the completion of emergency strengthening works.

The four-week closure had meant Cross City Line trains were temporarily unable to serve the station and access between Platforms 1 and 2 was restricted.

Cross City Line services will resume at Lichfield Trent Valley over the Jubilee bank holiday weekend.

Marston Vale Line

Timetable boost for passengers

Users of the Marston Vale Line are reporting an increased number of passengers following the reinstatement of the full timetable on the route.

Earlier this month the final rail replacement buses were withdrawn from the timetable for the first time since the pandemic following increased train crew availability.

Stephen Sleight, from the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership, said: “We are delighted a full service has been restored. Our line provides a vital link for the communities along it and great days out including Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre, the Forest Centre & Millennium Country Park as well as Bletchley Park.”

“We have already seen a significant increase in travel enquiries since the full service resumed as well as lots of ‘Try A Train’ journeys for Bedford College students during Community Rail Week.”

Northampton

Comedian celebrates ticket hunt



Comedian Mark Watson has sung the praises of an interactive art display at Northampton station.

The ‘All Aboard To Northampton’ ticket wall features a space for every station in the country – that’s more than 2,500 - with passengers invited to fill in gaps if they travel to Northampton from that location.

Panel show regular Mark, writing on Twitter, said: “As a.. heavy user of the rail network for 20 years, I loved this. [It is unlikely] ever to be finished because paper tickets [are] all but gone [but that] sort of adds to it.”

If you’re heading to Northampton and think you can fill in a gap on the ticket wall, just speak to station staff.



Community News

Deadline closes for grant fund

Applications for the popular 'Your Community, Your Fund' scheme have now closed.

The scheme invites community groups to put forward projects which enrich communities across the West Midlands Trains network.

Bids were received from a number of social enterprise groups, showing schemes with tangible community benefits and an emphasis on inclusion, education, the environment and increasing rail travel.

Many proposals included matched funding, including through volunteer time, with schemes including making use of disused station buildings, arts projects and even railway-inspired poetry.

The programme will be formally launched next month.

For more see wmr.uk/ycyf and lnr.uk/ycyf

What a save!

England goalkeeper on board



West Midlands Railway senior conductor Dom was quick off the mark to grab a selfie after bumping into a former England goalkeeper on the network.

Dom, who shares his experiences working on the railway through his Twitter account @YamYamGuard posted: "Walking into work and I meet the legend that is @BenFoster! Class meeting you."

Jubilee celebrated

Flowers and flags for occasion



Station adopters across the railway network have come together to celebrate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee over the long bank holiday weekend.

On the West Midlands Railway network, volunteers have planted stations with patriotic red, white and blue flowers as well as purple and silver varieties.

Keep your eyes open for displays at Coseley, Hednesford, Wylde Green and along the Shakespeare Line between Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon.

At Stourbridge Junction, staff have decorated the station with patriotic bunting, with even station cat George, pictured above, getting in on the fun.

For London Northwestern Railway, benches on the Abbey Line in Hertfordshire will be specially decorated.

If you are celebrating the Jubilee on the rail network you can Tweet us your pictures to @LNRailway and @WestMidRailway.

#RailStars

Unsung staff heroes hailed



West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway are celebrating the unsung heroes of the network through our #RailStars initiative.

First in the spotlight were WMR's Tom Harty, who helped a passenger during a mental health crisis at Wolverhampton, and Simon Barker from LNR, who drove an ill passenger at Hemel Hempstead to hospital in his own car. Visit our Twitter pages - @LNRailway and @WestMidRailway - for more #RailStars.



Contacts



Charlotte Ritchie, Head of External Comms and Engagement
charlotte.ritchie@wmtrains.co.uk



Andrew McGill, Public Affairs Manager
andrew.mcgill@wmtrains.co.uk



Peter Williamson, Accessibility Strategy & Projects Manager
peter.williamson@wmtrains.co.uk



Fay Easton, Head of Stakeholder & Community, West Midlands Railway
fay.easton@wmtrains.co.uk



Tim Bellenger, Head of Stakeholder & Community, London Northwestern*
timothy.bellenger@wmtrains.co.uk

**Vicky Cropper-Clarke is on maternity leave*



Operated by West Midlands Trains