



Operated by West Midlands Trains

## On Track - January 2023 Newsletter





Happy New Year!

Welcome to this edition of **On Track** - your monthly news update from West Midlands Trains. As promised last time, this edition comes in a new format; we hope you like it.

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 the latest developments across our network, including timetables, station developments and projects supporting our communities.

If you have any questions about our business, please do not hesitate to get in touch using the contact details at the foot of this email.

## **New Timetables / Industrial Action**

New timetables on West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway are now in operation.

Due to industrial action impacting services over the Christmas period, many passengers have not yet had the opportunity to feel the full benefits of the timetables, which are designed to provide a reliable, regular service across the network and came into effect on December 11.

With further industrial action scheduled between Tuesday 3 January and Saturday 7 January, the first full week of the new timetable for many commuters will be w/c Monday 9 January.

We'll be gathering feedback from passengers through a series of surveys and meetings throughout January and February - look out for more information on this in the coming weeks.

For more information on the new timetables click [here](#) (LNR) or [here](#) (WMR).

For information on how industrial action is impacting services, click [here](#) (LNR) or [here](#) (WMR).

## **Wellbeing sessions at Birmingham New Street**





A series of free fitness and wellbeing sessions are being held at Birmingham New Street to help passengers get the New Year off to healthy start.

The sessions are being run by the Impact4Life group thanks to funding from the WMT Customer and Communities Improvement Fund.

Sessions include information on mindfulness, stress management, pilates and more. Visit the stall on the New Street concourse on Mon 16 Jan, Sat 28 Jan, Thu 16 Feb and Tue 28 Feb.

## Penalty Fares to increase



The standard Penalty Fare on West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services will rise to at least £100 this month under new national rules.

Currently, passengers who do not buy a ticket before travelling must pay a Penalty Fare of £20 or twice the applicable full single fare (whichever is greater).

From Mon 23 Jan the Penalty Fare will increase to £100, plus the price of the full single fare.

## Travel for Ukrainian refugees



A scheme offering free rail travel to Ukrainian refugees arriving in the United Kingdom has been extended.

The initiative was rolled out in March 2022 in response to the conflict in the eastern European country,

For more information click [here](#).

## Camp Hill Line: New stations information sessions



Drop in sessions for passengers to learn about three new railway stations being built on the Camp Hill Line in the

Drop-in sessions for passengers to learn about three new railway stations being built on the Camp Hill Line in the West Midlands are being held in coming weeks.

The events are run by West Midlands Rail Executive, which is managing a £61million investment in facilities at Kings Heath, Moseley and Pineapple Road (Stirchley).

The events give the chance to meet the team behind the construction of the stations and ask questions.

The free sessions take place on:

- Thu 26 Jan, 12–2pm, Kings Heath Community Centre, Heathfield Rd
- Sat 28 Jan, 10am–12pm, Moseley Hive, Alcester Rd
- Wed 1 Feb, 5–7pm, Stirchley Baths, Bournville Lane

## West Midlands Rail Programme nominated for industry award



A collaboration designed to improve the rail network in the West Midlands has been nominated for an award.

The West Midlands Rail Programme (WMRP) has been shortlisted at the Spotlight Rail Awards, which highlight excellence in the industry.

The WMRP aims to encourage economic growth and support wider regeneration projects as well as:

- reducing congestion on the roads
- improving the passenger experience
- connecting isolated communities to the railway
- reducing journey times

For more information on the programme click [here](#).

## In Depth: How we are tackling anti-social behaviour





We have seen a significant rise in serious anti-social behaviour (ASB) impacting our network over recent months, writes **Shaun Keeling**, Head of Security for West Midlands Trains.

We know this is a wider societal problem we can't address alone but we can play our part in working with partner organisations to deliver a robust and co-ordinated response to this issue.

While there are no quick-fixes to tackling ASB, we are proactively taking a multi-agency approach, where our senior conductors, revenue protection and security managers work alongside the British Transport Police (BTP), Safer Travel Partnership, local authorities, youth groups and MPs.

Together with these groups we can facilitate a range of measures including travel safety officers, rapid deployment using CCTV, 'designing out' crime and increasing awareness and engagement.

On the West Midlands Railway network, the Chase Line between Birmingham and Rugeley, via Walsall, has been a particular hot spot for ASB, affecting our passengers and colleagues, as well as our volunteers who work tirelessly to enhance the station environments.

We are working closely with Network Rail and BTP in particular to share information on incidents and ensure all issues are reported properly. As a result of these issues being highlighted, BTP have stepped up their patrols alongside our own revenue protection presence on the Chase Line to apprehend and deter those committing ASB (an overt patrol is shown in the photograph above).

Front line colleagues are being supported through the provision of conflict management training as well as the forthcoming roll-out of body-worn cameras.

On the London Northwestern Railway network, Lidlington station has suffered from an increasing level of anti-social behaviour over the last 18 months and has become a regular gathering point for young people on weekday evenings during term time and during the school holidays. There has also been a corresponding increase in anti-social behaviour around Lidlington.

In response, we were pleased to award funding to the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership, Friends of Lidlington Station and Lidlington Church from our Customer and Communities Investment Fund (CCIF) scheme for a youth engagement project aimed at reducing ASB in the area.

The scheme started in November providing diversionary activity for young people, engaging them in the design and production of artwork at Lidlington station and involving them in the work of the Friends group. The aim is to foster understanding for young people over their role in society and the consequences of their actions, develop new skills and increase community pride and cohesion.

Alongside this project we have been working with Network Rail and BTP to raise awareness locally of the ASB at the station via the town newsletter and a letter to residents and businesses seeking support to reduce the number of young people putting themselves and others at significant risk. We have also reached out to local schools to highlight the dangers of the railway and the impact their

ASB is having on passengers and our volunteer groups.

Next month we will welcome a new Security and Suicide Prevention Manager into the business, whose role will have a specific focus on the prevention of crime and ASB.

Remember, you can always report ASB on board trains or stations to the on-board train crew or by contacting the British Transport Police via text on 61016. In an emergency, always dial 999.

## Santa visits Abbey Line



The Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership brought some festive cheer by joining forces with London Northwestern Railway to run a special "Santa train".

West Midlands Trains managing director Ian McConnell, pictured above (centre) was among those joining in the fun on the services between Watford and St Albans.

## Christmas cheer at Shenstone





The Friends of Shenstone Station held a Christmas tree festival to brighten up platforms. The fun event was designed to promote community retailers.

Wooden trees, such as the one pictured above, were put up at stations on the Cross City Line with proceeds from the event going to The Railway Children Charity.

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