

West Midlands Trains

Business Update

June 2020



How the rail industry is helping to beat Covid-19

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Operated by West Midlands Trains

Timetable increased as lockdown eases - but passengers still urged to stay away

Seven weeks of a significantly reduced West Midlands Trains timetable came to an end on Monday 18 May 2020 with the reinstatement of many services across the network.

Changes included the reinstatement of West Midlands Railway trains between Hereford and Worcester and the London Northwestern Railway service through the Potteries.

Both routes were temporarily suspended in April due to the impact of an increased number of railway staff self-isolating.

Despite the additional services, WMT is asking customers to **stay away from the train unless they have no other option.**

With social distancing advice still in place, capacity on trains remains limited and passengers are being asked to save carriage space for those who need it most by not travelling.

Those who do travel are being strongly urged to follow government advice to wear **face coverings** while travelling.

Other measures such as **one-way systems** at larger stations are in operation while passengers are also encouraged to **avoid travelling at peak times** and to **buy tickets in advance** online.

Julian Edwards, managing director of WMT, said: "I would like to thank all the people who have stayed away from the railway during the national emergency.

"Since the travel restrictions have been in place we've been able to help thousands of key workers make essential journeys across our network.



Passengers are being urged to travel only if necessary.

"The well-being of our customers and staff is our top priority which is why we are asking our passengers to act considerately and think very carefully if they really need to travel by train."

Elsewhere on the network, bus replacement services remain in use on the Marston Vale and St Albans Abbey branch lines.

Passengers are also being urged to check their journey times using live departure each time they travel to avoid unnecessary waiting times on station platforms.

One-way systems, floor markers and reduced gatelines to help customers socially distance

Stations across the West Midlands Trains network are being refitted with signage to help passengers maintain social distancing on their journey.

One-way systems to help customers navigate the station concourse have been introduced at larger sites such as Birmingham Snow Hill and Milton Keynes.

Elsewhere, floor stickers have been rolled out to help passengers stand apart and reminders about safe use of lifts and staircases have been introduced.



Contactless or card payments are encouraged.



Staff jackets to encourage social distancing.



Workers install the new one-way system at Milton Keynes station.



Cleaning regimes have been stepped up on trains and at stations.



Social distancing advice is being displayed at stations.



Floor markings at the station gateline.

Huge publicity campaign launched to inform passengers of new travel rules

A major publicity campaign has been launched to inform passengers of the latest changes to train travel as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

During the lockdown West Midlands Trains has rolled out thousands of new information posters and created bespoke signage for stations and trains.

Key messages have included instructions on how to maintain social distancing and the installation of new one-way systems at some larger stations.

The company worked closely with local, national and rail industry media to generate hundreds of pieces of coverage to keep customers up to date.

Highlights of media coverage included features on BBC Midlands Today, ITV Central and a discussion on BBC Radio 4 consumer programme You & Yours.

West Midlands Trains commercial director Andy Camp said: "In these fast-moving circumstances we have worked hard and quickly to keep customers up to date on the latest advice and timetable changes."



West Midlands Trains head of corporate affairs Francis Thomas speaks to ITV Central.

New station at Wolverhampton open for business



The new station concourse at Wolverhampton.

A major milestone has been reached in the redevelopment of Wolverhampton station as the new building opens to the public.

Phase one of a two-phase development is now complete with the new facility open to the public from Monday 25 May 2020.

A brighter concourse, modern ticket machines and new toilet facilities are just some of the benefits of the new building.

Train services have continued throughout the building project, which is being led by Wolverhampton Council. Phase two will see the demolition of the old station building, allowing the creation of more retail units and a customer waiting room.

Jonny Wiseman, head of customer experience for West Midlands Railway, said: "This bright, modern building will bring huge benefits to our customers at Wolverhampton and the wider region.

"For now the railway is reserved for only the most essential journeys but we can look forward with excitement to this superb facility serving the whole community for many decades to come."

Graffiti blow as vital carriages forced out of action

West Midlands Trains has issued a warning that vandals could be risking public health following a spate of graffiti incidents on trains.

West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway are currently running longer trains on many routes to help passengers practice social distancing.

However, following a spate of recent vandalism incidents, the operator is having to divert an increasing number of resources to time-consuming graffiti removal, with carriages taken out of action.

Among the incidents recorded in May 2020 were attacks at yards in Coventry and Wolverhampton.

Lawrence Bowman, deputy manager director for WMT, said: "It is more important than ever we have as many carriages as possible available for use.

"It is soul-destroying for our cleaning teams who are working so hard to face this pointless additional workload to get carriages back on the tracks."

To report crime on the railway to the British Transport Police, call 0800 40 50 40 or text 61016.



A damaged London Northwestern Railway - Class 350.

Community Rail groups keep up the hard work at home during outbreak

With volunteers currently unable to visit stations due to coronavirus, ingenious Community Rail group members have been finding new railway projects to work on at home.

The Friends of Nuneaton group has been busy restoring first-class luggage trolleys which will be relocated to the station when lockdown is lifted.

The Friends of Berkhamsted have been babysitting plants, shrubs and trees to be planted at the station in future.

Vicky Cropper-Clark, head of stakeholder and community for London Northwestern Railway, said: "The safety of our passengers, staff and volunteers is our top priority which is why we have asked our community groups to pause any on-station projects during the coronavirus outbreak.

"However, we've been impressed to see volunteers keeping busy at home and we look forward to the day when we can welcome them back to put their projects into use."

To learn more about getting involved at your local station, visit wmr.uk/communityrail or lnr.uk/communityrail



Frank, from Friends of Nuneaton Station, with a revamped trolley.

Planning application submitted for Moseley station

The reopening of Birmingham's Camp Hill railway line to passengers has taken a major step forward after plans for a new station at Moseley were submitted.

Birmingham City Council has already given the green light to new stations at Kings Heath and Hazelwell.

Moseley is the final station planned to reopen as part of the reintroduction of passenger services to the line.

The Camp Hill line stations closed during 1941 and the line has since only been used by freight and non-stop passenger services. The new stations will provide regular services into Birmingham New Street with quick journey times.

Andy Street, West Midlands Mayor, said: "These planning milestones are superb news in marking another major step towards reopening the Camp Hill line to passengers.

"I am pleased that following some initial concerns expressed by residents we are working together through the plans. Public transport is critical to our future and despite coronavirus we must press on with our plans."



An artist's impression of how Moseley station may look.

Image: Mott McDonald

About us - West Midlands Trains

As a company our mission is to provide quality rail services and develop sustainable travel. Central to our company ethos are the communities we serve. We work closely with a regional network of volunteers and community rail partnerships. We are proud to work with our dedicated station adopters who take huge pride in their neighbourhood stations.

If you ever have any questions or feedback on what we're doing in your area, please contact:



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**Face coverings
should be used on
our services**

For the latest on travelling during the coronavirus outbreak, visit our dedicated web pages at wmr.uk/coronavirus and lnr.uk/coronavirus