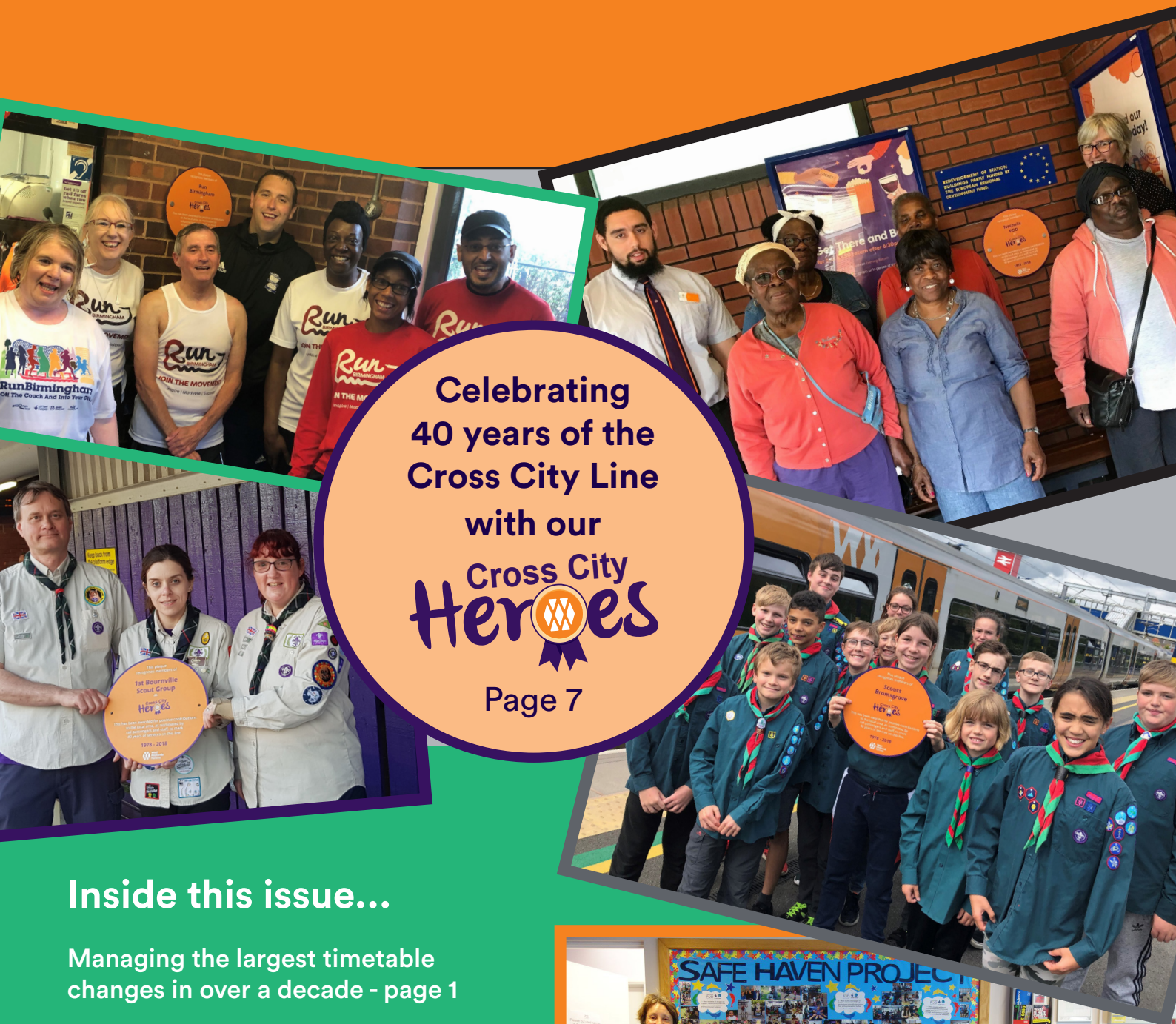


West Midlands Trains

Business Update

August 2019



Celebrating
40 years of the
Cross City Line
with our
Cross City
Heroes
Page 7

Inside this issue...

Managing the largest timetable changes in over a decade - page 1

Over £740,000 to be spent on improving cycle facilities - page 2

Staff uniforms win award - page 5

Heart of England Community Rail Partnership is launched - page 8



Our new timetable - two months on

Our new timetable, which launched on 19 May, was the biggest change to rail services on our network for a decade.

Over 2,500 alterations have provided new services, better connections and a big increase in capacity. Around 150,000 more passengers are using our services each week – with trains running earlier in the mornings, later in the evenings and more frequently on many routes. We've also recruited 200 new train crew across the business to facilitate the changes.

Passengers have also been introduced to new types of train on their local

routes with the introduction of the new timetable. Extra Class 172s have started operating on the Snow Hill, Hereford, and Nuneaton to Leamington routes, Class 350 electric trains can now be seen on the Chase Line between Rugeley and Birmingham and three Class 230s are out and about on the Marston Vale Line.

Overall, the introduction has gone well. However, we have identified some areas where we need to improve.

On our London Northwestern Railway services, we have moved quickly to put more capacity into key peak services

between Apsley and London Euston.

Our long-distance Chase Line services are improving but there is still a lot of detailed work we need to do to get performance up.

On the Birmingham-Hereford route we are focused on finding more capacity for our passengers.

This situation should be eased in December when we are due to take delivery of 10 more Class 350 units from TransPennine Express.

Action we have taken since May

Snow Hill Lines

We have reallocated units in order to provide an additional carriage for the 1713 departure from Birmingham Snow Hill to Worcester Shrub Hill from Tuesdays to Fridays

We have also been able to make changes to allow for the reintroduction of five carriages on the 0708 departure from Leamington Spa to Birmingham from Tuesdays to Fridays.

Chase Line

We have declassified First Class on a number of morning peak time services between Rugeley Trent Valley and Birmingham.

As too many trains bound for Rugeley were being cancelled or terminated short at Hednesford, we have been focusing on contingency plans as a priority.



Apsley and Kings Langley

We increased the size of the busy commuter 0800 service from Apsley from eight to 12 carriages in response to demand post-timetable change.

We also introduced a new stop at Kings Langley on the 1650 departure from London Euston along with the removal of the 1716 stop at Apsley from this service.

Two additional evening peak time services have been operating from Watford Junction to London Euston, departing at 1644 and 1743.

The services have been created by turning empty stock moves into passenger services

These new services have helped manage the flow of passengers through the station during the evening peak, as well as providing additional capacity for passengers travelling back to London from nearby attractions such as Warner Brothers Studios.

National Rail Passenger Survey results published

The latest National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) results have been published and we are pleased to have achieved 84% overall satisfaction from our passengers.

While slightly above the national average of 83% across the sector, we are not complacent. As we continue to invest £1bn into our services and work with partners on schemes across our network, we hope to improve these scores. We have seen improvements in our NRPS scores, compared to Spring 2018, in provision of information (+6%), upkeep of station buildings (+5%) and overall satisfaction in stations (+6%).



Passengers benefit from transformed Longbridge station



West Midlands Railway head of corporate affairs Francis Thomas with partners at the unveiling of the newly revamped Longbridge station.

Passengers using the Cross City Line are feeling the benefit of major improvement work at Longbridge station.

The outside of the station has been totally transformed with a new entrance, glazed roof and cladding, while inside a new larger concourse, ticket office and accessible toilet have been built.

The £1.7million project was overseen by Network Rail as part of a nationwide £70million scheme known as the National Stations Improvement Programme.

Additional funds for the completion of the project were also provided by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership.

National praise for scheme offering free travel to University open days

A pilot scheme launched by West Midlands Railway offering free rail travel to students attending Open Days at the University of Worcester has earned national praise.

Prominent social mobility campaigners have argued the cost of travelling to attend university Open Days can put off students from applying to their preferred course.

In response we have agreed to pilot a scheme offering free travel on West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway networks for upcoming open days at Worcester.

The scheme is the brainchild of West Midlands Trains integration and accessibility manager Jon Harris, who said: "We are committed to making rail travel sustainable and accessible for all our passengers. Under our successful Way to Work scheme we offer free travel to job interviews, work experience and training courses for job seekers, new university and college graduates and those about to begin apprenticeships. We are pleased to partner with the University of Worcester and will be closely monitoring the scheme's success."

Ross Renton, pro vice chancellor at the University of Worcester, said: "We know how important Open Days are for prospective students as a chance to ask questions, speak to lecturers and to get a feel for whether it is the place for them. We hope this step will help make travel costs less prohibitive for people visiting the University of Worcester so they can see what we have to offer."



New station for Wolverhampton moves a step closer



West Midlands Railway head of customer experience Richard Brooks, centre, with partners at the topping out of the Wolverhampton station roof.

The Wolverhampton Interchange project hit new heights with the completion of the roof on phase one of the new railway station.

Contractors Galliford Try finished laying the foundations earlier this year following the demolition of the former British Transport Police building and a section of the current station next to Platform 1.

The roof is now watertight, the ground floor and first floor slabs have been fitted, and work has begun on installing external cladding.

Work has also started on the ground floor and first floor partitions, installation of internal services and the windows are due to be fitted.

The scheme is part of a £150 million transport hub to provide an attractive commercial gateway to those entering the city by national rail, bus or tram.

Final completion for the project is due next year.

Cycle rail grants and station travel planning in full swing

Over £740,000 is being invested to improve cycle facilities at our stations. The Department for Transport has awarded us £371,000 through their Cycle Rail programme, a sum which is being match funded to deliver major improvements.

We will use the investment to encourage people to reduce their carbon footprint and to promote sustainable and healthier travel choices, such as cycling, when travelling by train.

We hope that by improving the facilities available at stations, cycling can be made an easier and more convenient alternative for commuters and leisure travellers alike.

Initiatives planned include:

- Providing around 250 more cycle spaces on the network;
- Improving facilities at 300 spaces to encourage their use;
- Increasing cycle capacity at busy commuter stations;
- Adding spaces at stations with many short car journeys;
- Trialling smart sensors to improve cycle security.

The Cycle Rail investment will also go towards supporting the 'Stations as Places' station travel planning programme.

This scheme aims to assess in detail how people travel to and from 90 different stations across our network.

We will use the data to help us make access to the railway even easier for passengers. We are in the process of conducting these surveys at key locations across the rail network.

Questionnaires for Community Rail groups on the Abbey and Marston Vale lines will explore how we can unlock the community value and leisure/commuter potential of these lines.

To complement the passenger surveys we are gathering feedback from our staff to understand the day-to-day issues affecting our passengers. Information on upcoming community workshops will also appear in stations over coming months.

In Birmingham we are working with Colmore Business Improvement District to encourage use of sustainable travel methods ahead of 2020 Clean Air Zone launch.

We are also working with Birmingham City Council and local businesses to deliver free travel advice roadshows offering journey planning information to help employees ditch the car.

For more information email jon.harris@wmtrains.co.uk



Car park improvement schemes under way

We are currently undertaking a range of improvements works at our station car parks.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) will be rolled out across 25 station car parks this year.

CCTV will be introduced to an extra twelve locations while more stations will benefit from brighter, low energy, lighting. This is in addition to a programme of resurfacing and remarking of parking bays.

As improvements are made, 12 stations will see charges introduced. The stations are: Winsford, Penkridge, Shifnal, Albrighton, Codsall, Shenstone, Coleshill Parkway, Hagley, Great Malvern, Ledbury, Henley-in-Arden and Park Street

By introducing charges at these stations, we will not only be able to fund the planned improvements, but also hope to reduce 'rail heading' at some key locations.

This occurs when motorists drive extra miles to avoid paying car park charges and can lead to residents being unable to park at their local station due to motorists driving from further down the line.



Smartcard trial to make ticketing simpler begins

We are trialling a new Smartcard on selected London Northwestern Railway routes to help make ticketing simpler.

Smartcards topped up online eliminate the need to queue at a ticket office to purchase season tickets. The cards are also longer-lasting than a paper ticket.

They can be used to purchase Weekly, Monthly and Annual season tickets, and can be applied for online.

Tickets can be loaded to the Smartcard from our website or from our Ticket Vending Machines located at stations.

Trial participants are being recruited online, ahead of a planned roll out later this year.

So far, the scheme has been trialled at:

- West Coast Main Line stations from Kings Langley to Long Buckby
- The Abbey Line between Watford North and St Albans Abbey
- The Marston Vale Line between Bletchley and Bedford

If this trial is successful, we plan to offer season tickets and Travelcards into the London area, to cover tickets stations between Watford Junction and London Euston, as well as Travelcards across the TfL area. For more information visit londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk/smartcard



Developer Forum launched

On June 4 we hosted our inaugural Developer Forum.

Held in Wolverhampton, we welcomed over 40 delegates from planning and transport consultancies, commercial property and housing developers, regeneration agencies, housing associations and local authorities.

Along with West Midlands Rail Executive, National Express and other operators we discussed improving links between the planning process and the railway.

Themed 'Open for business', speakers outlined ways of working with the development sector included West Mids-based transport consultants (Atkins and ITP) and bus operators.

West Midlands Trains commercial director Andy Camp and integrated transport lead Jon Harris encouraged attendees to speak to us so we can help deliver sustainable housing, commercial and employment developments across our network.

More breakfast briefings are planned on the LNR network in September, followed by a Developer Conference later in the autumn.

You are warmly invited to future events - to find out more you can email jon.harris@wmtrains.co.uk



Clean Air Day with Colmore BID

We supported this year's national Clean Air Day events by teaming up with the Colmore Business Improvement District in Birmingham.

West Midlands Railway joined other local transport providers, politicians, health advisers and members of the public in the city centre for Clean Air Day 2019.

The annual event is part of a UK-wide campaign which is designed to tackle air pollution by encouraging people and society as a whole to adopt behaviour which is more environmentally-friendly.

We joined Birmingham City Council, Brompton Bicycles, Midland Metro Alliance, National Express West Midlands and Public Health England in St Philip's Cathedral Square, to provide advice and information about the movement to improve our air quality across Birmingham and the wider West Midlands.

The event followed recent announcements around the proposed Clean Air Zone charging scheme aimed at reducing air pollution in Birmingham city centre.

We spoke to over 200 people about our sustainable travel initiatives as well as surveying over 100 people about how they travel to and from their local railway station. The surveys will form part of a wider project to improve connectivity across the region.



Accessible travel lounge is now open at Birmingham New Street

Passengers who require help to get on and off trains at Birmingham New Street station now have a dedicated waiting lounge to make travelling by train a more pleasant experience.

The new assisted travel lounge opened at the station on 10 June at a special event attended by Network Rail, train operators and other partners involved in improving accessibility at stations.

Assisted travel is offered to all passengers who need help getting between trains and the station concourse.

Last year nearly 59,000 people took advantage of the service at Birmingham New Street.

The new area provides a welcoming waiting space for people with additional mobility and sensory needs and a dedicated team to help them while they are in the station.

To make it easily accessible during opening hours the lounge door will always be open, with bright multi coloured signs to aid the visually impaired.

There are 24 seats at different heights in the new lounge - an increase of 140% from the former waiting area in the main station reception. There is also a water bowl for service dogs.



Representatives from Network Rail, train operators and accessibility groups at the opening of the new accessible travel lounge at Birmingham New Street.

Calm Corner opens at Crewe station



Partners including LNR open The Calm Corner at Crewe.

Passengers at Crewe station now have access to a new waiting room, specifically designed to offer those with hidden disabilities a safe and calm environment.

The Calm Corner, pictured left, is one of the first of its kind on the rail network, brought to life through the work of train operators at the station, Network Rail and advice from a number of partner charities, including the Alzheimer's Society as part of our year-long partnership.

The room is decorated in a calming grey and green colour scheme, with a 'living wall' and plants to complement the colour scheme. Furniture in the room is designed to be comfortable and provide relaxed atmosphere.

A children's play table also features for younger travellers, as well as a special 'memory corner' to help support those living with dementia.

The 'memory corner' has been designed to help trigger memories for those who may have used Crewe station for many years - with a collection of historic photos of the station. In due course, it is hoped this collection can grow, with contributions from passengers, families and other supporters.

10,000 passenger assists at Watford Junction

Dedicated rail user Sister Russi became the 10,000 customer to be assisted at Watford Junction station in June. She has been travelling through the station for 30 years.

Platform announcer James Hepburn, pictured right, was the lucky team member to perform the 10,000th assist.

Preliminary data findings suggests that only 938 of the assists recorded since December 2017 have been pre-booked - meaning 9,062 assists have been unbooked requests, often at late notice via the customer's departure station or from the team onboard the train that they are on.

The team at Watford Junction were proud to be able to present Sister Russi with a £25 voucher to mark the occasion.



Platform team leader Jamie Walsh, station announcer James Hepburn, platform assistant Fiona Flavien and duty station manager Amanda Noonan with regular passenger Sister Russi at Watford Junction station.

New uniforms win award

New uniform for London Northwestern Railway and West Midlands Railway employees won 'Best Design of the Year' at the 2019 Professional Clothing Awards.

Staff at the train operators were issued with their new uniform earlier this year, following months of consultation to put together the final design.

The uniform includes everything from trousers and skirts, shirts, ties, shell jackets and coats for staff working at stations, on trains and at maintenance depots across the rail network.

Following the introduction of the LNR and WMR brands in December 2017 the train operators wanted to bring in a uniform that reflected the change but was also practical and comfortable for those in customer-facing positions to wear every day.

The final design was heavily influenced by staff and finalised in conjunction with designer Debbie Johnson.



Debbie is an experienced and established designer, who has worked with a number of famous names.

Adrian Thompson, HR director for London Northwestern Railway and West Midlands Railway, said: "It's fantastic to see the design of our uniform being recognised against huge brands across the world and different industries."

"Designing and implementing a uniform is no mean feat, so it was critical that the design had our people involved from the start and hard work in helping us with this was really paid off."

"Our staff can now be easily recognised by passengers out on the rail network in their award-winning uniforms."

Following the rollout of the new uniforms, over ten tonnes of old uniform was donated to The Salvation Army Trading Company.

This is being used to provide affordable workwear for those in need, or is being recycled into sound proofing, mattress filling and other uses.

The Professional Clothing Awards were held in London in June, hosted by Strictly Come Dancing star Anton Du Beke.



Pictured are Robin Walker MP, second from left, and Lord Faulkner of Worcester, far right, with members of the Cotswold Line Promotion Group.

Parliamentarians join user group visit at Worcester depot

We opened up the doors of our Worcester maintenance depot for members of the Cotswold Line Promotion Group following a request to see the inner workings.

The group was joined for the excursion by politicians Lord Faulkner and Worcester MP Robin Walker on Friday 28 June for the behind-the-scenes tour.

CIHT Award for Kenilworth station

Kenilworth Station was highly commended at the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) Awards with Warwickshire County Council, SLC Rail, the Department for Transport and Network Rail.

The station was one of only three projects to be shortlisted in the CIHT's national Best Public Transport Project category.

The CIHT commended the project that brought a station back to Kenilworth for the first time since it had initially closed in 1965.

Building on the site of the former station, and using some of its former features such as the station sign and stained glass windows. The station was completed last year and now offers hourly journeys along the Leamington to Nuneaton line.

Partners in the Kenilworth station project, including Jane Fisher, projects and transition director at West Midlands Trains.



Top award nomination for staff member who assisted ill passenger



Euston dispatcher Scott Nickels has made the short list for this year's National Rail Awards. Scott has been recognised for excelling in a very tense, life-threatening situation at London Euston station.

Scott has also been recognised for being a kind, helpful, approachable individual and team member who regularly goes beyond his daily duties

On Sunday 15 July 2018, staff at London Euston station were made aware of a first aid incident in which officials on the platform were requesting urgent assistance as a woman had collapsed on the train.

Scott ran to the scene and immediately assessed the passenger, recognising she was unresponsive and pulseless. He ran around the platforms to collect the defibrillator and returned to the woman to begin CPR. Scott continued with CPR until the passenger regained a pulse.

By the time the paramedics and a further ambulance crew had arrived the lady had regained consciousness. The woman was transported to hospital and has since made a full recovery.

Scott used his previous experience to assess the situation and recognised the severity of the medical emergency. Without Scott's immediate actions and effective CPR, the situation could have led to a tragic outcome.

Scott was praised by the paramedics for his professionalism throughout the whole incident and has since been commended by the Royal Humane Society with the Resuscitation Certificate for which he was nominated by a fellow colleague.

The nomination for the National Rail Award for Outstanding Personal Contribution of the Year follows a previous nomination for Rail Person of the Year at the prestigious Railstaff awards in 2018.

Also nominated at the National Rail Awards is London Northwestern Railway-operated Northampton station, in the Large Station category, and West Midlands Railway-operated Malvern Link station in the Small Station category.

The awards ceremony takes place in London in September.



Tuneful staff perform in Lichfield Festival choir

Tuneful staff members took to the stage at this year's popular Lichfield Festival for a special choral performance of Handel's Messiah on Monday 8 July.

The choir - which was made up from a mixture of local residents and West Midlands Trains employees - was created in a single day.

We were once again principal sponsors for the annual event, which took place over 10 days in the cathedral city.

Choir participant and West Midlands Trains performance improvement manager Tom Jones at Lichfield Cathedral ahead of the big show.

'A Mystery Play for Chelmsley Wood' evolves

We have been sponsoring an artist residency project around Martston Green in the Chelmsley Wood community. As part of this project a local artist has been running a number of workshops to create 'A Mystery Play for Chelmsley Wood'.

Over the course of the workshops the shape of the project has evolved and instead of producing a formal play and performance, artist Chris Alton is working towards creating a set of public realm artworks which he hopes might act as prompts, props, or backdrops that encourage everyday 'micro plays' and new interactions to occur in Chelmsley Wood's public spaces. The long-term hope is that the workshops and artworks will inspire future Mystery Plays to be written and performed in Chelmsley Wood.

The artworks Chris is working toward producing with the community are:

- A set of flags for MAPA that have come out of the set / backdrop making sessions
- A set of large scale text works with 'lines' / 'micro scripts' produced in the creative writing workshops.

Eastside Projects is exploring whether these could be installed on existing poster sites, as printed banners or panels fixed to walls/fencing and possibly one of the series as small murals. We hope that these works could be installed across multiple sites - Marston Green Station, Three Trees Community Centre and possibly CW Shopping Centre and MAPA. Chris is also interested in exploring the possibility of recording some of the young people at MAPA reading the lines / micro scripts and playing these on the tannoy system at Marston Green.

The artwork is set to be installed at launch event at the start of August.

Celebrating 40 years of the Cross City Line with Cross City Heroes



Community groups from across the West Midlands had their achievements recognised along the Cross City Line.

Under the 'Cross City Heroes' initiative, West Midlands Railway ran a competition in conjunction with the West Midlands Railway Executive calling for groups to be nominated for celebration on plaques installed at their local railway stations.

The awards celebrate 40 years of passenger services on the Cross City Line, which runs between Lichfield, Birmingham and Redditch/Bromsgrove.

Passengers, residents and railway staff nominated local clubs, charities and other groups that have made a positive impact on their local area. The plaques were installed in June.

Fay Easton, head of stakeholder and community for West Midlands Railway, said: "We received a fantastic range of nominations for our Cross City Heroes competition and it is fantastic to see the plaques take pride of place at stations along the line, reminding communities of the amazing work these groups do."

"Scouting is all about developing skills for life, and being able to use public transport and get out into the community is one way in which Scouting helps young people prepare for their future. As a Scout group we've used the train for days out from Scout camp and even travelled to an international camp in Holland using the train, underground and overnight ferry. Getting to and from camp using public transport is as much of an adventure as the camp itself! We are delighted that our group has been recognised as one of the Cross City Heroes and to have had the opportunity to meet the people who run our trains and railway at Redditch station today."

Sally Payne, group leader for 1st Astwood Bank Scouts

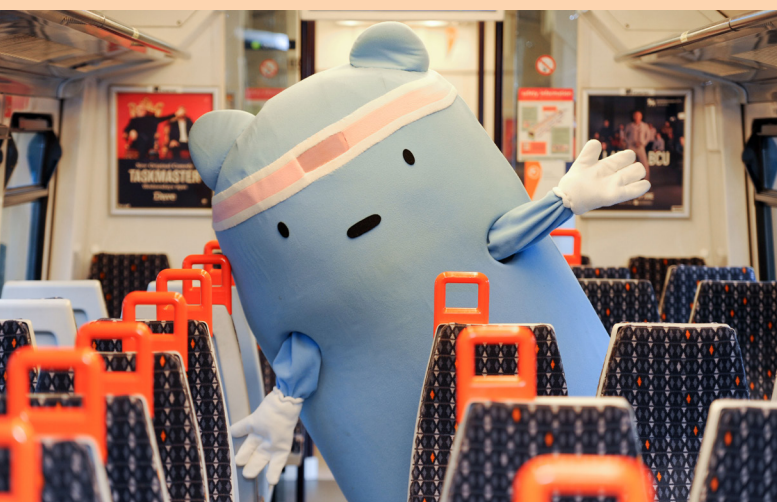


"It is an honour that Friends 2 Friends has been recognised for the member's achievements and so important that the members themselves realise how important they are to their community. To be chosen by West Midlands Railway is even more special as public transport is so important for our members to get from place to place. Our group use trains for outings, to get to appointments and more and this is a big factor in increasing independence. On behalf of all our wonderful members, carers and volunteers I would like to say a big thank you for choosing us a Cross City Hero." Alison Wellon, Friends 2 Friends co-ordinator

"We were so thrilled, and humbled, when we heard we had been recognised as 'Cross City Heroes'. Inspired by the vending machines which dispense short stories to commuters in Canary Wharf, London, we chose to celebrate our award by handing out poems and excerpts all about trains and travel, along with book suggestions and information about our fabulous local library and all it has to offer. A great journey becomes even more enjoyable with something interesting to read and along with some classic texts we were delighted to be showcase writing by a local author, Martin Tracey and also Twitter's unofficial Poet Laureate, Brian Bilston."

Zoe Toft, Chair of FOLIO Sutton Coldfield

West Midlands Railway sponsors Sutton Community Games



As we continue to work towards getting closer to the communities we serve, West Midlands Railway was proud to provide sponsorship for this year's 'Sutton Community Games'.

This local event, which took place at Wyndley Leisure Centre, featured a fantastic weekend of events for those of all ages.

We were on hand during the event to talk about our services and upcoming improvements - including the exciting new trains for the Cross City Line which are on the way.

Sutton Games founder Dennis Kennedy said: "It was great to have West Midlands Trains on board as a partner for the 2019 version of the Sutton Games.

"We've been very lucky to have terrific support since founding the Games back in 2012.

"I am very proud businesses and organisations connected with our town want to support it so passionately which has kept it free for everyone to attend."



Representatives from the 11 partners in the new CRP gather for the launch event of the at Leamington Spa station.

A new CRP for the Heart of England

West Midlands Railway is playing a key role in an exciting new partnership to support and promote community engagement at railway stations across the Heart of England.

The train operator has joined with ten other organisations to form the 'Heart of England Community Rail Partnership' (CRP).

This new collaboration will help facilitate various community activities at railway stations across the region.

The Heart of England CRP area covers stations between Stratford-upon-Avon / Leamington Spa and Tysley, as well as stations to Nuneaton and West Coast mainline stations between Marston Green and Coventry.

Community Rail Partnerships already exist in other areas across the country and have been a real asset in supporting local residents in their activities.

A dedicated Community Rail Officer will soon be appointed to work solely on the Heart of England CRP and support the growth of these initiatives across the region.

Fay Easton, head of stakeholder and community for West Midlands Railway, said: "The Heart of England Community Rail Partnership is a unique and significant venture and the first of a number of partnerships planned across the West Midlands

Railway network over the coming months.

"Through the work of the CRP we are particularly focused on bringing community rail activities to our urban and rural stations, enhancing the platforms, promoting community cohesion and economic development, plus tackling issues like loneliness.

"Our committed station adopters run many successful gardening, art and literary projects at our stations, with the potential to see many more new and enterprising ideas developed across the Heart of England through the support of the CRP.

"The investment being made into this new CRP is part of our wider commitment to expand the company's community rail agenda, with the aim of having engagement at every one of our 114 stations across the West Midlands."

Alongside West Midlands Railway and West Midlands Rail Executive, the partnership also includes Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP), Chiltern Railways, CrossCountry, Vintage Trains, Coventry City Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Warwick District Council and Warwickshire County Council. Shakespeare Line Promotion Group has also been instrumental in the creation of the partnership.

Ledbury station renamed to mark poetry festival

West Midlands Railway took our sponsorship of the Ledbury Poetry Festival to the next level by agreeing to rename Ledbury station for the duration of the 10-day long event.

We added the additional signage to Ledbury railway station and also sponsored the reading of a special poem which recognises the work of community groups at stations across the West Midlands Railway network.

'Pride of Place' was written by Steve Pottinger from a Black Country Trio known as 'Poets, Prattlers and Pandemonialists'. Steve read the poem as part of the week's festivities at The Poetry Stage at the Ledbury Celebration on Sunday 14 July. The performance formed part of six hours of non stop poetry music and entertainment on the final day of the Festival.

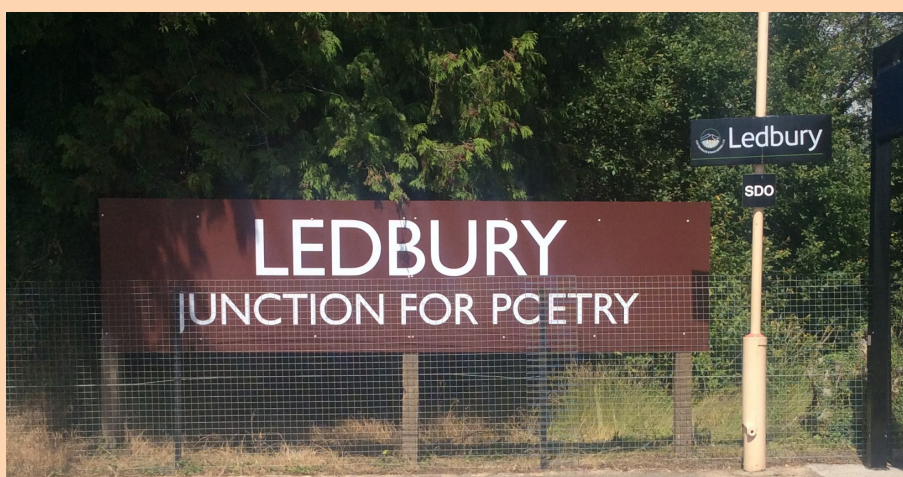
We also hosted a special 'Poetry Chair' at the station where passengers were invited to take a moment to sit down and put together their own literary piece, which may be published onto the Ledbury Poetry Festival website.

Fay Easton, head of stakeholder and community for West Midlands Railway, said: "This was a fitting way to recognise the impact of poetry, particularly in light of the special poem we commissioned last year.

"The poem is a literary thank you to volunteers who brighten up stations on our network and will soon be found displayed at fifty of our stations."

Phillippa Slinger, from Ledbury Poetry Festival, said: "We are delighted to partner with West Midlands Railway. Over the years many poets have stood on the platform and so to have the station named as the junction for poetry was very fitting."

The Festival ran from Friday 5 until Sunday 14 July. For more information visit poetry-festival.co.uk/



Local school installs map at Winsford station

A new map is now on display at Winsford station, thanks to the hard work of pupils from schools situated near to the popular Cheshire station.

The artwork was produced by students from Winsford High Street School and St John's, whose efforts were co-ordinated by Derek Johnson.

Derek is the lead adopter for Winsford station and also runs the Cross-Hatch Community Gallery and Makerspace in Winsford town centre.

The colourful artwork shows a map of the town centre, including its main attractions and famous buildings.



The new map on display at Winsford station in Cheshire.

Abbey Line fun day a great success!

On 30 May we joined with Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership (CRP) and local volunteers for their annual fun day.

The event took place at the St Stephen Parish Centre near Bricket Wood station and was a great opportunity to meet with the local community and promote our Abbey Line services.

The event featured musical entertainment and children's activities as well as a display of photographs from down the ages.

The CRP and volunteers do a fantastic job at brightening up stations along the line, work is appreciated by rail passengers and residents alike.



Vicky Cropper and Hasan Mulla of London Northwestern Railway at Abbey Line Fun Day.

All hands on deck at Watford Junction

We enjoyed a helping hand from a team of Network Rail volunteers to clear out the overgrown planters on Platform 9 at Watford Junction.

A small 'army' of staff mobilised in June to roll their sleeves up and generously give up their time in order to make the station look smarter and tidier.

Other, similar, 'Corporate Volunteer' days have been taking place across our network.

These days have provided a great opportunity to network with staff at other organisations, and to showcase the fantastic work that our station adoption groups undertake across our network.

We're really grateful to the them for giving up their day to help improve one of our busiest stations.



Volunteers in action at Watford.

Cheddington station celebrates 180 years



It was great to welcome school pupils and teachers to Cheddington station to hear about the 180-year history of the site from historian Alan Vassey.

A class of youngsters from Cheddington Combined School enjoyed a short presentation and came armed with many questions about the station to a special event which took place in June.

Free breakfast was also provided to commuters during the morning peak to mark the 180th anniversary of the station.

The event was organised by senior conductor Marc Davies and local duty station manager Nancy Booth.

From left: Senior conductor Marc Davies, duty station manager Nancy Booth and local historian Alan Vassey with a special display at Cheddington station.

Community Rail Conference is declared a huge success

Thank you to everyone who attended our annual Community Rail Conference on 3 July in the beautiful surroundings of St George's Hall in Liverpool.

It was great to welcome over 70 attendees to hear about what we're doing to support community rail across our network and to enjoy a boat trip on the Mersey followed by afternoon activities.

The crucial role played by community rail partnerships and station adopter groups up and down the country was highlighted at the Conference, which was hosted by West Midlands Trains.

The audience heard from guest speakers including West Midlands Trains managing director Jan Chaudhry-van der Velde and Linda McCord, senior stakeholder manager at the Transport Focus watchdog.

Fay Easton, head of stakeholder and community for West Midlands Railway, said: "Our mission is to put stations back into the heart of communities and that can only happen with the support of local people. Across the West Midlands Railway network there are hundreds of volunteers who donate their time to making stations locally-loved and dozens of stations have been formally adopted by community groups. We were very pleased to welcome some of these hard-working people to join us in Liverpool as an acknowledgement of their incredible support."

Vicky Cropper, head of stakeholder and community for London Northwestern Railway, said: "From the fantastic community artwork on our trains in Marston Vale to our upcoming Amazing Women By Rail project and the beautiful new designs at Tamworth Station, the impact our volunteers have on our environment is clear for all to see. All along the London Northwestern route we have a small army of volunteers whose hard work often goes unrecognised which is why we wanted to celebrate their achievements in this public way."

Following the conference station friends and adopters were treated to a cruise on the Mersey Ferry and tours of some of Liverpool's most famous buildings.

Facts and Figures

- Across the UK there are more than 1,000 station improvement groups and more than 60 formal Community Rail Partnerships
- In the past year, across the West Midlands Train network alone, more than 40 stations have been formally adopted
- Last year the first Community Rail Partnership in the West Midlands Railway network area – Heart of England CRP – was launched, with another CRP due to launch in Worcestershire later this year
- West Midlands Trains will host this year's Community Rail Awards in conjunction with the Association of Community Rail Partnerships in October 2019



About us - West Midlands Trains

We operate almost 1,300 train services a day over our West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway networks, manage 149 stations and provide over 75 million passenger journeys each year. We are investing £1 billion into our rail network to deliver new trains, improved routes and station upgrades. This will include 413 new train carriages across the network and space for an extra 80,000 passengers into Birmingham and London at peak times.

Central to our delivery of rail services are the communities we serve and we have plans to expand our community rail partnerships, increase the numbers of stations adopted and introduce schemes to regenerate platform buildings working with local social entrepreneurs.

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



Fay Easton

Head of community and stakeholder, WMR

fay.easton@wmtrains.co.uk



Vicky Cropper

Head of community and stakeholder, LNR

vicky.cropper@wmtrains.co.uk

Sign up to our press releases at: <https://bit.ly/2EFmwd0>



@WMRailwayNews / @WestMidRailway

@LNRailwayNews / @LNRailway



Performance update

Period 2 - 29 April - 25 May

Period 3 - 26 May - 22 June

PPM
86.1%

MAA
86.7%

PPM
87.4%

MAA
86.7%

Reliability - 95%

Reliability - 97%

Our performance has unfortunately dropped following the introduction of our new timetable – with lower PPM figures than we had hoped for during P2 and P3. We are working on solutions to improve on these figures, focussing on a number of identified areas across the network that are proving challenging.

Additionally, a couple of fatalities on the West Coast Mainline during May had a significant impact during P2, as well as a cable theft between Coventry and Rugby.

During P3, another combination of challenges played a part in bringing our PPM down to just 81.6%. These included overhead line problems near Coventry, a suicidal person at Carpenders Park, signalling problems in various locations and flooding affecting Snow Hill Line services.

Reliability dipped slightly during P3. This can be attributed to the fact that many of our trains are now doing more mileage following the introduction of our new timetable. However, we are working to make sure we can improve on this figure in the longer term.



Key Terminology

• 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.



Cashless vending machines trial

Passengers using Birmingham Snow Hill and Northampton stations can now benefit from the latest in Japanese technology with the arrival of new cashless vending machines.

The state-of-the-art machines include a screen displaying real-time train information for passengers as well as informative maps of the local area and rail routes.

The modern machine allows users to pay for their purchases with credit or debit cards rather than scrambling for change – and a unique QR Code scanner will enable any promotional discounts to be applied.

The machine is customisable for wheelchair users, allowing the user to switch the display to a lower level.

The machine is already in use at a number of railway stations in Japan and is being introduced at Northampton as part of a 12-month trial scheme.

The new Japanese-inspired machines now available at Birmingham Snow Hill.

Inspiring the next generation at Tyseley Open Day

We were able to support the Tyseley Depot Works Open weekend again this year, which took place in June.

We have a class 172 train on the coal stage block for visitors to get on board. "Children" of all ages were allowed to sit in the drivers seat, have their picture taken and experience the view that our drivers have.

Tyseley staff were on hand to answer any questions (there were plenty) that

Upcoming improvement works planned

West Coast Mainline

Saturday 24 - Monday 26 August (Bank Holiday weekend)

Reduced timetable to and from London Euston. Passengers are advised to plan ahead at londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

Ledbury to Hereford

Saturday 14 September until Sunday 20 October

Rail replacement buses between Ledbury and Hereford on Saturdays and Sundays. Not all weekends will be affected. For the latest information check

nationalrail.co.uk



visitors had about our trains and the railway in general.

Thomas the Tank Engine Safety books were given out and that were well received by the visitors over the weekend.

Judging by the positive feedback received by many of the staff in the depot it appears that lots of our younger visitors were left considering a future on the railway!

