



Malcolm Holmes (West Midlands Rail Executive), Andy Street (West Midlands Mayor) and Richard Brooks (West Midlands Railway) at Smethwick Galton Bridge

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Evening rail services to boost region's night time economy

Workers, sports fans, concert goers, theatre buffs and shoppers will all benefit from more evening services when West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway introduce new timetables this May. More frequent evening services and later last trains are part of a range of service improvements being introduced by the train operators. There will also be direct services to more destinations, extra capacity and enhanced timetables across the region.

Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street was joined by West Midlands Trains and the West Midlands Rail Executive at Smethwick Galton Bridge to promote improved evening services and better connections.

Later evening services will provide more opportunities for passengers wishing to socialise and enjoy leisure activities in towns and cities or needing to finish work shifts later to get trains home.

Services between Birmingham New Street and Coventry will have trains up to 45 minutes later than under the current timetable, including a 0040 departure from Birmingham on weekdays.

On the Cross City North, four trains an hour will operate in the evening after 1900, and also later with the introduction of a new 2340 departure from Birmingham New Street to Four Oaks on weekdays, and a 2325 departure on Saturdays.

Services calling at local stations to Wolverhampton will see an additional train from Birmingham New Street at 2355 on Mondays to Fridays (2338 on Saturdays).

Services from Birmingham Snow Hill to Kidderminster, Dorridge and Whitlocks End are doubled in frequency during the evening after 1900 on Mondays to Saturdays.

For passengers at stations such as Smethwick Galton Bridge, this will mean better connections between services throughout the evening – with additional trains to both Birmingham New Street and Birmingham Snow Hill.

Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street, said: “This is great news for those many people who are working in the evening. Whether this is in hospitality and catering, in retail, at the airport, at a hospital or just staying late in the office, there are more services to get you home. We have a vibrant and hugely diverse evening economy in the West Midlands and it is really positive that we are supporting shift workers and those going out in the evening and weekends.”

Richard Brooks, Customer Experience Director for West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway, said: “Rail has a massive role to play in the

prosperity of the region and train travel has never been more popular. So it is important that our timetables provide a frequent and reliable services across the West Midlands. The changes we are making this Spring will open up new opportunities for passengers to travel by train at various times throughout the week for both work and leisure – with the additional earlier, later and weekend services operating direct to more destinations than ever before. However, this isn't the whole story. We will also have a further timetable change in two years time, where passengers will see further benefits from the introduction of new trains onto the network, which when fully operational, will increase capacity by 25%."

Malcolm Holmes, Executive Director for West Midlands Rail Executive, said: "The improvements in the new May timetable are a great example of how partners are working together to transform the railway for people in the West Midlands. Later evening services and better connections gives people more flexibility to work and socialise when they need and choose too"

The new timetable will operate from Sunday 19 May. There will be changes to the time and formation of some services, so passengers are advised to check their train times and to plan ahead for the changes. The new timetable is now live on journey planning systems and can be found at www.westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or www.londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

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About West Midlands Trains

For further information on this release, call our press office on 03300 955150 or email press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast mainline to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across

the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street.

For more information on these services visit westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

The West Midlands Trains franchise started on 10 December 2017 and will run until 2025/26.

West Midlands Trains operates 1,300 services a day, manages 150 stations and provides over 70 million passenger journeys a year. Over the course of the franchise, West Midlands Trains will be investing £1 billion into the rail network to deliver new trains, improved routes and station upgrades. This will include 400 new train carriages across the network and space for an extra 85,000 passengers into Birmingham and London at peak times.

The franchise is a joint venture between Abellio (70.1% share) and East Japan Railway Company / Mitsui & Co., Ltd (29.9% share in a 50:50 split). Abellio is the international passenger transport subsidiary of the Dutch national railway company, Nederlandse Spoorwegen. In the UK, Abellio operates ScotRail and Greater Anglia train services, Merseyrail services in a joint venture with Serco and buses through Abellio London. For more information visit www.abellio.com

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