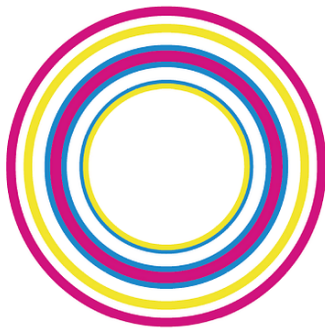




Operated by West Midlands Trains



school for
social
entrepreneurs
midlands

West Midlands Trains and the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) have announced a new partnership, to help encourage the growth of social enterprises in the region.

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Improving opportunities for social change: West Midlands Trains and the School for Social Entrepreneurs enter new partnership

West Midlands Trains and the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) have announced a new partnership, to help encourage the growth of social enterprises in the region.

As part of the agreement, West Midlands Trains will be providing mentoring

for the school's students to help in the development of a range of initiatives.

The two organisations will also be working together to help bring vacant rooms in station buildings back to use, by creating spaces for social entrepreneurs to work from. Over 170 businesses are being assessed for the scheme. These not for profit ventures all strive to make a positive contribution to the social, economic or environmental well being of the area.

Many social enterprises are run by survivors of various social problems, who want to help others and make a positive contribution to their local community. They are also completely self-funded through their activities.

Furthermore, West Midlands Trains is also looking at the potential for social enterprises to become part of the company's supply chain – giving organisations the chance to expand and grow.

Francis Thomas, head of corporate affairs at West Midlands Trains said: "Our partnership with SSE is an important step in our commitment to support the progress and prosperity of the communities we serve. We manage over 150 stations across the rail network. Many of these have great potential to be used more effectively and it would be exciting to see a variety of social enterprises using these spaces."

Charles Rapson, CEO of SSE Midlands said: "We are delighted to partner with West Midlands Trains. This will help us continue to develop Social Enterprise in the region – not for profit businesses that address social issues. Over the past 5 years, the 176 businesses we have helped start have created over 300 jobs, generated over half a million hours of volunteer support and helped more than 25,000 disadvantaged people across the region. The partnership with West Midlands Trains helps towards our continued efforts over the next five years."

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

About the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE)

The School for Social Entrepreneurs brings together people who want to change things for the better. People tackling urgent issues like poverty, education, inequality, health, climate change and much more. Every year, SSE helps more than 1,000 people learn how to transform their communities and help people in need.

SSE supports social entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs and charity leaders. The school also runs courses that equip students with the skills and networks needed to create lasting change, as well as like connecting them with funding and mentoring.

Our 11 schools are changing lives across the UK, Canada and India

For more information visit www.the-sse.org

About West Midlands Trains

West Midlands Trains operate 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 operate 1,300 services a day, manage 150 stations and provide 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 operate 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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