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More seats and extra services for Shropshire rail passengers from May

Passengers across Shropshire will benefit for more seats and extra services when West Midlands Railway introduces its new timetable in May.

The train operator is introducing a range of improvements this Spring, including additional services and extra carriages between Shrewsbury, Telford, Wolverhampton and Birmingham New Street. The changes will benefit passengers travelling for both work and leisure – including those using rail services during evenings and weekends.

From 19 May, there will be two trains per hour on weekdays and Saturdays,

between Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton and Birmingham New Street. The additional service that will operate each hour will call at Shrewsbury, Wellington, Telford, Shifnal, Codsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham New Street – reducing journey times for many passengers.

Additional carriages for the services will be brought to the route from the Chase line in Staffordshire, where £100m of electrification work has recently been completed.

There will also be earlier morning and later evening services operating between Shropshire and the West Midlands. Passengers will be able to arrive into Wolverhampton from 0615 and Birmingham from 0640 from Monday to Saturday. Trains to Shrewsbury will also continue to depart Birmingham until around 2230 on weekdays and 2300 on Saturdays.

West Midlands Railway will also be introducing an hourly Sunday service on the route. This will replace the current two-hourly service frequency on the line. Sunday services will arrive into Birmingham New Street from 0930, with the final service departing just before 2200.

For passengers travelling to catch trains from Penkridge, additional calls will be added to the Birmingham New Street – Liverpool Lime Street route, to give the station a half hourly service on weekdays and Saturdays. With many of these trains also continuing through to London Euston or Birmingham Airport, passengers will be able to connect with a wider range of direct, long-distance services. This will provide an affordable option for passengers travelling to Liverpool, Birmingham Airport or the capital.

Richard Brooks, customer experience director for West Midlands Railway, said: “The May timetable changes will bring benefits to passengers across our network. For passengers on the Shrewsbury line, the timetable enhancements being introduced this Spring, will provide a more frequent service throughout the week, with more seats and better connectivity when travelling by train.

“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%.”

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

ENDS

***For information on how other parts of the West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway networks will benefit from our new timetable, see the related content associated with this release.**

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

About West Midlands Trains

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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