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West Midlands Trains to play central role at 2022 Games

As the Commonwealth Games on Australia's Gold Coast come to a close, West Midlands Trains has further pledged its support to make the Birmingham spectacle in 2022 a success.

The Midlands city was named host for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in December last year. With sporting events being held across Birmingham, providing efficient options for spectators to travel between venues will be highly important and preparations are already well underway to make this possible.

West Midlands Trains is working closely with Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and Birmingham City Council to help form a transport strategy with Games spectators at its heart.

Before the Games arrive in 2022, West Midlands rail passengers will see a £1 billion raft of new improvements across the region. These include new trains and greater capacity on the Cross City line by 2021, more frequent Sunday services in and around Birmingham and major electrification works across the network.

Several stations have also been earmarked for improvement including a rebuild of Perry Barr, which will serve both the Athlete's Village and the Alexander Stadium, major upgrade works at University and other improvements at stations across the network.

Additionally, the train operator is looking at introducing seven new stations across the West Midlands, subject to feasibility assessments. Proposed sites include Darlaston, Willenhall, Kings Heath, Moseley, Hazelwell, Merry Hill and the West Midlands Safari Park.

Richard Brooks, customer experience director at West Midlands Railway, said: "This is an incredibly exciting time for Birmingham and the West Midlands in general. People from across the world will be coming to our city to enjoy the Games and cheer on the athletes.

"Mobility is going to be central to the Games' success and we want to make every possible effort to help people travel in and around the city and venues. The improvements we have planned in the run up to 2022 are going to transform rail travel in the West Midlands and we're dedicated to offering visitors a service which is convenient, seamless and value for money."

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Notes to editors

For further information on West Midlands Trains, London Northwestern Railway or West Midlands Railway call our **newsroom** on **03300 955150**.

About West Midlands Trains

West Midlands Trains Ltd. will be running the West Midlands rail franchise from 10 December 2017 until 2025/6. Abellio has a 70.1% share of the company, East Japan Railway Company (JRE) and Mitsui & Co., Ltd. (Mitsui) own the remaining 29.9% in a 50:50 split.

About Abellio

Abellio is the international passenger transport subsidiary of the Dutch national railway company, Nederlandse Spoorwegen. Every day our people provide rail, bus and tram services to 1.7m customers across the UK, Germany and in the Netherlands. In the UK we operate buses through Abellio London, as well as ScotRail and Greater Anglia train services, and Merseyrail in a joint venture with Serco. In Germany we operate Abellio Deutschland, serving communities in North Rhine Westfalia, Saxony, Lower Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Hesse and Thuringia. Our role in transport extends beyond the journey from a-to-b. With our international heritage and our policy of sharing best practice, not just amongst ourselves, but across the wider transport industry, we provide thought leadership and truly innovative ideas which make a positive contribution to the communities we serve. For more information on Abellio visit www.abellio.com

About Mitsui

Mitsui is one of the most diversified and comprehensive trading, investment and service enterprises in the world with 139 offices in 66 countries as of March, 2017. Utilising our global operating locations, network and information resources, we are multilaterally pursuing business that ranges from product sales, worldwide logistics and financing, through to the development of major international infrastructure and other projects in the following fields: Iron & Steel Products, Mineral & Metal Resources, Infrastructure Projects, Integrated Transportation Systems, Chemicals, Energy, Food Resources, Food Products & Services, Consumer Services, IT & Communication, and Corporate Development Business. Mitsui is actively taking on challenges for global business innovation around the world. For more information, visit www.mitsui.com.

About JR East

East Japan Railway Company (JR East) was established in 1987, when

Japanese National Railways was divided as part of a package of railway reforms. JR East's railway business covers a 7,500 km (approx. 4,660 miles) network in the eastern part of the Japanese main island, including Tokyo Metropolitan area, and provides transportation services, comprising urban, suburban and high speed operations, for 17 million passengers on a daily basis. JR East also undertakes non-transport commercial activities, which account for more than 30% of the total revenue of JR East Group. JR East contributes to passengers and communities it serves by delivering high degrees of punctuality, reliability and comfort and also continues to pursue higher levels of safety and service quality through technical innovation. For more information, visit www.jreast.co.jp/e.

Contacts



Press Office - Media Use Only

Press Contact

press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

03300 955150