



Jonny Wiseman of West Midlands Railway, Mayor Andy Street and Geoff Grant from Transport Focus with the special train

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Boost for Birmingham rail users as first passenger train in 80 years runs on Camp Hill

line

The reopening of a former railway line in south Birmingham moved a step closer today (Mon 16 March) after a local passenger train travelled the route for the first time in nearly 80 years.

The Camp Hill line has been closed to passengers since 1941 but plans, drawn up by West Midlands Mayor Andy Street, are in place to open the line up again with new stations at Moseley, Kings Heath and Hazelwell.

And these plans moved a step closer this morning when a West Midlands Railway (WMR) train, carrying the Mayor, WMR's customer experience director Jonny Wiseman and other representatives from across the rail industry, travelled along the line.

The train followed the route of what would be the re-opened line, pausing at the Moseley, Kings Heath, and Hazelwell sites before arriving into Kings Norton - and later returning to Birmingham New Street. The purpose of this inspection train was to explore how new passenger services on the Camp Hill line would work.

West Midlands Mayor Andy Street said: "I am delighted we are pressing ahead with plans to reopen the Camp Hill line to passengers, and it was great to be on the first passenger train to travel on the line in nearly 80 years.

"This line, which also represents another step forward in my 20-year transport plan for the West Midlands, will provide residents in South Birmingham with easier and faster connections to get to the places they need to go, whilst also offering people a real alternative to the car – helping to ease congestion and improve the air we breathe."

Today's inspection train comes as plans for the three new stations progress.

Kings Heath and Hazelwell stations have already been granted planning permission, with the application for Moseley due to be submitted imminently. The Government has already pledged £15million to help build the three stations, which will be led by Transport for the West Midlands and the West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) in partnership with Network Rail and WMR's parent company West Midlands Trains.

Jonny Wiseman, customer experience director for WMR, which will run the services on the Camp Hill line, said: "This is an exciting and visionary plan to transform local train services for our customers in the south of Birmingham. We are working closely with WMRE, Network Rail and the Mayor in order to turn this vision into reality.

"Passengers set to benefit from the quicker route along the Camp Hill line

can also look forward to travelling on the brand new train fleet we are introducing as part of our £1billion investment into the rail network.”

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 80 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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Contacts



Press Office

Press Contact
03300 955150

Andrew McGill

Press Contact
Media Relations Manager
andrew.mcgill@wmtrains.co.uk