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Extra services on the way for the Chase Line

Train users will be able to enjoy increased services on the Chase Line later this month, following investment from West Midlands Railway.

The revised timetable from 20 May will see the re-introduction of two trains per hour during the day between Rugeley, Cannock and Birmingham as part of a £200 million project to improve rail services in the area.

Recent track and signalling enhancements will enable trains to travel faster along the route, and the completion of electrification works later this year

will pave the way for a brand new twice-hourly electric train service to Birmingham Airport and the NEC, and hourly to London via Coventry & Milton Keynes from mid-December

The new four-carriage trains will provide hundreds of extra seats, and over the next few months, work will be undertaken to extend the platforms at every station along the Chase Line - including Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley, to accommodate the longer trains.

Richard Brooks, customer experience director for West Midlands Railway, said “The growth of the Chase Line is a success story everyone can be proud of. It has gone from being a freight line to becoming a major West Midlands commuter route in a generation. We are doubling the number of off-peak services in May and in December; we will be adding new direct services to London as part of our £1 billion investment in the West Midlands rail network.”

Councillor Gordon Alcott, Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader said “We are pleased to see the benefits to the improved Chase Line rail service being introduced later this month. This will be initially through more frequent diesel services and faster, electric services. From December they will introduce direct services to the NEC, the Airport and London Euston.

“The opening of the £160m McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Cannock at Mill Green in 2020, which will be adjacent to Cannock rail station, has 11 million consumers living within a 90 minute catchment, and with 39 million people visiting Birmingham each year, the Council is confident the current boom in passengers numbers will continue.

“The Council has made investment into rail stations a priority and the current Chase Line Station Alliance work by the West Midlands Combined Authority, Local Enterprise Partnerships and West Midlands Trains, will hopefully lead to improved station facilities at Cannock.”

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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.

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