



A Class 350 train London Northwestern Railway train leaving Kings Heath depot in Northampton

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Siemens and West Midlands Trains to open their doors to support Rail Week 2018

This autumn, families and rail users are invited to a behind-the-scenes tour of Kings Heath Traincare depot and the National Training Academy for Rail (NTAR) in Northampton.

On Saturday 13 October, the two facilities will open their doors to the public as part of Rail Week 2018 and Government initiative 'Year of Engineering'.

The events are hosted by Siemens and NTAR, in partnership with West Midlands Trains. It is the first time the public have been able to visit the sites since 2012.

Kings Heath depot is home to the Siemens Desiro Class 350 fleets, which operates London Northwestern Railway services to and from London Euston, Birmingham and Liverpool. The facility opened in 2006 and the trains are maintained by Siemens on site.

Visitors to Kings Heath will be able to see a train up on jacks, take a walk underneath a train in the maintenance pit and sit in a driver's cab. They will also be able to learn about the technology involved in keeping the trains safe, reliable and comfortable for the travelling public.

In NTAR, visitors will get to grips with the latest rail equipment and technology that supports world-class training of rail apprentices, technicians and managers across the country, as well as find out about careers within the rail industry.

The day will also feature rides on the 'Hydrogen Hero'. This is the first fully operating hydrogen train in the UK, which will be on display in partnership with The University of Birmingham.

The event is free via pre-booked tickets, but through voluntary donations, the event will be supporting to two local charities - Headway Northampton and Headlines Craniofacial Support. Both of these organisations have been nominated by Siemens employees.

Will Wilson, Managing Director of Rolling Stock at Siemens Mobility Limited, said: "Over the last eight years, Siemens has opened one of its train maintenance sites to the public as part of its very popular 'Whistle Stop Tour' series, giving adults and children an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the innovative work carried out at an operational rail depot to inspire them into careers within our industry.

"This event is only possible thanks to support from our customer West Midlands Trains and partner NTAR, and we are delighted to be working with them."

Simon Rennie, General Manager of NTAR, said: “We are proud to be opening the doors of the National Training Academy for Rail to the public for the first time.

“This is a fantastic opportunity to not only showcase the latest rail equipment and technology involved in the training of rail apprentices, technicians and managers across the country, but provides a platform for us to engage with the next generation, ultimately helping us to attract top talent to the sector.”

Neil Bamford, Engineering Director for West Midlands Trains, said: “We’re thrilled to be partnering with Siemens to open up these facilities during this year’s Rail Week.

“We want to give the local community, and particularly our younger visitors, a real insight into the technology, innovation and expertise that’s involved in running a fleet of trains. With record levels of investment being made into the rail network, it’s really important that we inspire the next generation of railway employees. Over the coming years will need more people than ever to deliver on the planned improvements on the railway – so it is a great time to be supporting these events.”

For further information on this release:

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Notes to editors:

Full details of events on 13 October:

This free hands-on family event is on Saturday 13 October 2018 and runs from 10:00 – 17:00, with last entry at 16:00.

Tickets must be pre-booked for this free event and are available from www.siemens.co.uk/whistlestoptour from 8 September

You can book an hour arrival slot. You can spend as long as you wish at the site (event will close at 17:00)

The traincare depot is unsuitable for children under the age of three years old, however babes in arms may be brought onto the site (without a ticket) and remain in the covered area in the car park where there are refreshments. No buggies / pushchairs can be accommodated on site due to space restrictions and there is no facility for these to be stored.

As a working train maintenance facility, there are some uneven surfaces and unavoidable stairs to climb to visit some of the attractions. Anyone in a wheelchair or requiring assistance should please let us know in advance at rollingstock.gb@siemens.com and we will advise further. All visitors are advised to wear flat, comfortable shoes as quite a bit of walking will be involved in your visit.

No parking is available on site (except for pre-booked disabled parking), therefore please use public transport. The site is located a short walk from Northampton train station and Northampton town centre where there are large chargeable public car parks and bus station. The entrance to the site from Northampton centre / rail station is on **Spencer Bridge**, where a marshalled gate can be found. This is on a busy road, so drop offs here are not permitted. Anyone being dropped off should use the main Heathfield Way entrance and a land train will take you to and from the main site

Anyone requiring a disabled parking space should contact us at rollingstock.gb@siemens.com in advance and also display their blue badge on the day.

For more information and to keep updated on the event, join us at <http://www.facebook.com/whistlestoptour>

About National Training Academy for Rail

NTAR is a joint project between the National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR), and government, with industry partner Siemens. The academy plays a leading role in the new railway skills development programmes being driven by NSAR – working with the market to make sure that industry priorities are met. We specialise in vital traction and rolling stock training: offering unrivalled facilities and courses, with our Northampton centre acting as a hub to support and deliver services to customers across the country

About Rail Week 8 -14 October 2018

The dedicated week of activity aims to address the skills shortage in rail-related roles and inspire a generation of young people through a series of events, visits and talks. The events for people at schools, colleges and universities aim to encourage them to consider careers in this great industry. Rail Week will also include a widespread schools outreach programme, facilitating ambassadors to get into the classroom and deliver inspirational activities designed for Rail Week.

About Year of Engineering

The Year of Engineering is a government campaign, which celebrates the world and wonder of engineering. It also forms an important part of our Industrial Strategy which is committed to boosting engineering across the UK, ensuring everyone has the skills needed to thrive in a modern economy.

This press release and a press picture / press pictures/ further material is available at siemens.co.uk/press

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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