



One of the three RAF commemorative tokens that are currently making thier way across the country.

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Stone station takes part in RAF centenary celebrations

On Sunday 9 September, Stone station will be helping to celebrate 100 years of the Royal Air Force.

Members of the local Stone and Stafford branches of the Royal Air Force Association (RAFA) will pass over a commemorative RAF token as it travels across the country. The token, one of three in total, arrived in Stone on Sunday 2 September. The tokens will eventually arrive at the Birmingham Military Tattoo on 24 November.

Amongst the group will be the Mayor of Stone, Kristan Green and Chairman of the branch, Jim Davies. They will be joined by a group of local RAFA colleagues. The token-bearers will meet with members from the Stafford branch at Stone station, before continuing their journey to Stafford station.

The tokens began their journeys on 25 March 2018, travelling through 85 RAFA branches in the South West, Midlands and in Wales. The trip involves a number of different modes of transport, including road, boat, bike, air and rail.

The RAFA is a charity which provides support to all serving and ex-serving RAF personnel and their dependents.

Francis Thomas, head of corporate affairs at West Midlands Trains, said: “It’s a milestone year for the RAF, celebrating its 100th anniversary and we’re extremely proud to be playing our part. Having the token make part of its journey on our network is a huge privilege and we wish the various RAFA branches the best of luck as they help the token make its journey to Birmingham in November.

Jim Davies, chairman of the RAFA Stone branch, said: “For one hundred years the men and women of Stone who served in the Royal Air Force would have travelled to and from their units through Stone railway station. It is therefore very appropriate that the RAF100 Token is being taken by rail courtesy of West Midlands Trains. Let us also not forget the hundreds of thousands of the United States 8th Army Air Corps who would also have passed through Stone Railway Station going to and from their Replacement Depot at Yarnfield during World War II.”

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 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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