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Wembley-bound football fans urged to plan their journeys this bank holiday

Aston Villa, Shrewsbury Town and Coventry City fans heading to Wembley this weekend are being urged to plan ahead and check before they travel if travelling to London by train.

Around 90,000 football fans from the three clubs are set to flock to Wembley for the play-off finals over the bank holiday - but planned upgrade work by Network Rail between Birmingham New Street and Coventry means there will be no trains between the two for the whole weekend.

To help Coventry Sky Blues fans travel to watch their team at Wembley, London Northwestern Railway is providing extra services on bank holiday Monday.

The service details are as follows:

- Coventry – Wembley Central – dep. 11:10 arr. 12:39
- Wembley Central – Coventry – dep. 18:37 arr. 20:01

A major resignalling project between Birmingham New Street and Coventry, via Birmingham International, means there will be bus replacement services in operation or diverted journeys which will take longer to get to or from London Euston from Saturday 26 May until Tuesday 29 May.

Chiltern Railways will be strengthening its services between Birmingham, Wembley and London Marylebone with 10,000 extra seats over the bank holiday weekend. However, trains are still expected to be much busier than usual and queuing systems will be used if needed at stations along the route.

Service alterations on the London Northwestern network over the bank holiday weekend include:

- On Saturday, Sunday and Monday, services between Birmingham New Street and London Euston will run between Coventry and London Euston only. Replacement buses will call at all stations between Birmingham New Street and Coventry.
- Between 1200hrs on Saturday and 1200hrs on Sunday, trains between Birmingham New Street and Liverpool Lime Street will only run between Birmingham New Street and Crewe. Buses will replace trains at all stations between Crewe and Liverpool South Parkway. Customers for Liverpool city centre are advised to use alternative train services from Crewe or to join Merseyrail services from Liverpool South Parkway.

Service alterations on the West Midlands Railway network over the bank holiday weekend include:

- On Saturday, a replacement bus service will run between Birmingham New Street and Tame Bridge Parkway, calling at all stations.

- On Saturday, buses will run between Lichfield Trent Valley and Birmingham New Street, calling at all stations. The service between Lichfield Trent Valley and Redditch will not resume until 1030hrs on Sunday morning.
- From Saturday until Monday, services from Birmingham New Street to Malvern will terminate at Worcester Shrub Hill. No trains will run to or from Worcester Foregate Street. A replacement bus service will be in operation between Worcester Shrub Hill and Hereford.

Andrew Conroy, customer experience director at London Northwestern Railway, said: “Engineering works are never convenient for anyone, but we’re working with other train companies to help people complete their journeys whilst the work takes place.

“It is a big weekend for football fans across the West Midlands. We are moving as many people and trains as we can but the message is plan ahead and allow more time for your journey.”

Martin Frobisher, Network Rail route managing director for the London North Western route, said: “These upgrades are a vital step towards us being able to provide better, more reliable journeys for the millions of passengers who travel on the railway from London to Carlisle via the West Midlands and the north west of England.

“The work we do is essential to keeping people and goods moving. Improvement work on the railway is planned years in advance, ahead of any short-term scheduling of sporting events and knowing which teams will compete in finals.

“There is never a good time to carry out big pieces of work but we plan it over bank holidays, which are traditionally quieter times, to affect as few people as possible.”

ENDS

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.

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