



Brenda Lawrence with British Transplant Games competitors

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West Midlands Railway to provide free train travel to competitors at this year's British Transplant Games

West Midlands Railway is offering free train travel between Birmingham New Street and University stations to over 2,500 competitors at this year's British Transplant Games.

The annual event is taking place from Thursday 2 until Sunday 5 August across Birmingham. Transplant recipients of all ages will participate in a variety of sports, to celebrate the life-changing impact of organ donation.

Spectators are encouraged to travel to the games by train, with regular services running between the University campus and city centre. On arrival, rail travellers will be welcomed by a team of Journey Makers, armed with giant foam fingers and brightly coloured tabards. These volunteers will provide directions to venues and passenger assistance on the platform.

West Midlands Railway staff will also be taking part in the 5k Donor Run on Saturday 4 August. The run is a unique opportunity for transplant recipients, donor families and other supporters to come together and raise awareness of the Organ Donor Register.

Brenda Lawrence, head of stations for West Midlands Railway said: “It’s great to be able to support the games, as we are committed to making our services accessible and inclusive for all our customers.

“We are also excited to have our Journey Makers on board, who will help improve the experience for those travelling to and from events on our services.”

James Neuberger, Chair of the British Transplant Games Local Organising Committee, a Trustee of Transplant Sport and Consultant Transplant Physician at Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham, is looking forward to the celebrations.

He said: “Thousands of people are expected to arrive in Birmingham across the course of the British Transplant Games weekend and thanks to the generosity of West Midlands Railway, they will be able to travel quickly and effortlessly between venues, meaning they get to enjoy as many events as possible.

“Support from organisations like West Midlands Railway goes a long way to help make sure the weekend goes smoothly and we are hoping that a competitor presence on the trains will not only help people have the best possible experience at the Games, but also help spark conversation with other travellers about organ donation.”

The British Transplant Games aim to celebrate the life-changing effects of transplantation and raise awareness of the huge benefits that organ donation brings to both donor families and recipients, encouraging the public to

discuss their wishes with their families and join the Organ Donor Register.

For further information on West Midlands Trains, London Northwestern Railway or West Midlands Railway call our **newsroom** on **03300 955150**.

About the Westfield Health British Transplant Games

The Westfield Health British Transplant Games aims to demonstrate the benefits of transplantation, encouraging transplant patients to regain fitness, whilst increasing public awareness of the need for more people to sign the NHS Organ Donation Register, Anthony Nolan Register and discuss their wishes with their families.

Over 7,000 people in the UK are estimated to be waiting for an organ transplant, with three people dying each day whilst waiting to find a match.

This year's Westfield Health British Transplant Games will be held in Birmingham from 2nd August – 5th August 2018.

The Westfield Health British Transplant Games Birmingham 2018 Local Organising Committee is Chaired by Transplant Sport Trustee, Professor James Neuberger.

The Games, the flagship event of Transplant Sport, have been staged annually since 1978 in a number of host cities including Sheffield, Portsmouth, Newcastle, Cardiff, Birmingham, Exeter, Liverpool, Bolton, Belfast, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Leicester, London, Manchester, Norwich, Loughborough, Bath and Coventry.

The Westfield Health British Transplant Games are organised by Sheffield-based events company, MLS Contracts Ltd and supported by not for profit health insurance provider Westfield Health.

In Birmingham, the Westfield Health British Transplant Games have partnered with Birmingham City Council, University of Birmingham, Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham Charity, Birmingham Children's Hospital Charity and Sport Birmingham.

For more information on The British Transplant Games please visit www.britishtransplantgames.co.uk.

About Transplant Sport

Transplant Sport is a charity established in 1978 to encourage organ donation, recognise the donors and donor family, support transplant recipients and their families, encourage everyone to participate in sport and help them lead a healthy and fulfilling life.

www.transplantsport.org.uk.

About Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham Charity

QEHB Charity is part of a group of four hospital charities, supporting patients, families and staff by providing 'added extras' which cannot be provided by the NHS. The Charity funds cutting edge technology such as 'Heart in a Box' which keeps a donated heart beating outside of the body, extending the amount of time that surgeons have to perform the transplant. This piece of technology will increase the number of heart transplants that are carried out at QEHB by up to 50%.

The Charity also helps to fund some of the incredible research that takes place at the hospital, and there are members of staff working at the hospital who are employed thanks to donations to the Charity. QEHB Charity is proud to provide 'home away from home' accommodation for patients at the hospital, with the 18-bedroom Fisher House providing accommodation for military patients and their families since 2013.

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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