



Sep 05, 2024 09:30 BST

## Charity train ride marks end of the line for West Midlands Railway's popular Class 323 fleet

A special charity train ride will be held later this month to bid a fond farewell to an electric train fleet which has served rail passengers in the West Midlands for more than 30 years.

The Class 323 fleet has been in operation on the Cross City Line through Birmingham since 1994, connecting the city with Sutton Coldfield, Lichfield, Redditch and Bromsgrove.

More than three quarters of the 26 trains in the fleet, operated by West Midlands Railway (WMR), have already been replaced by brand new electric trains as part of the company's £1billion investment programme. The final few Class 323s still in operation are due to leave service by the end of this month.

To celebrate the fleet's contribution to rail travel in the region, WMR has partnered with the Branch Line Society to arrange a special day trip aboard a pair of the final Class 323s in service on Sunday 29 September 2024.

John Doughty, West Midlands Railway engineering director, said:

“For more than 30 years the Class 323 fleet has been the backbone of the railway in the West Midlands, carrying countless millions of passengers.

“Times move on and our new Class 730 fleet is proving popular with customers with its modern features like air conditioning, power points at every seat and significantly increased capacity.

“We know many of our customers, colleagues and rail enthusiasts have a soft spot for the Class 323s, so we were delighted to arrange this charity tour with the Branch Line Society.

“We hope the event will give everybody a chance to share their memories of the Class 323s and say a fond farewell, while raising money for good causes at the same time.”

The farewell trip will see a pair of Class 323s operate a day-long round trip between Birmingham New Street and Liverpool Lime Street. The event will be primarily run by volunteers, with proceeds from ticket sales going to Scotty's Little Soldiers and Brain Tumour Research.

During their lifespan the Class 323s have cumulatively provided hundreds of millions of passenger journeys and travelled millions of miles across the West Midlands rail network. The trains are known for the distinctive whining noise they make when accelerating.

Tickets, priced £64.60 for adults and £32.30 for children, are on sale now. Places are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information – and to secure your place – visit the Branch Line Society website: [BLS Fixture \(branchline.uk\)](http://BLS Fixture (branchline.uk))

---

## **About West Midlands Trains**

For further information on this release, email [press.office@wmtrains.co.uk](mailto:press.office@wmtrains.co.uk)

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast Main Line to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street and Birmingham Snow Hill.

For more information on these services visit [westmidlandsrailway.co.uk](http://westmidlandsrailway.co.uk) or [londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk](http://londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk)

If you have been sent this press release, this is because we believe this to be of interest to you.

To sign up for all future releases, visit our newsroom and subscribe to our updates. You can unsubscribe to our releases at any time.

## Contacts



### **Press Office - Media Use Only**

Press Contact

[press.office@wmtrains.co.uk](mailto:press.office@wmtrains.co.uk)

03300 955150