



Apr 04, 2019 14:56 BST

More railway stations across the West Midlands to become accessible for all

Three stations operated by West Midlands Railway will benefit from funding to introduce vital upgrades to provide step free access to all platforms.

Smethwick Rolfe Street, Wellington and Worcester Shrub Hill have all been chosen to benefit from Department for Transport (DfT) 'Access for All' programme funding.

In the first for the rail industry, the train operator worked on the bids for funding in conjunction with Network Rail and West Midlands Rail Executive

as West Midlands Stations Alliance.

The stations will, subject to a feasible design being possible, receive an accessible route into the station, as well as to and between every platform. This will involve the installation of lifts, but also work to improve other features such as handrails and treads on staircases.

Richard Brooks, customer experience director for West Midlands Railway, said: “We are committed to making our stations and services accessible to everyone. It is important that our stations are brought up to modern standards, and the DfT Access for All funding continues to be a vital part of this ongoing transformation.

“We want to thank everyone who supported our bids, and we will work closely with our partners to ensure the improvements being planned will provide facilities that can benefit passengers for years to come.”

Malcolm Holmes, executive director for West Midlands Rail WMRE, said: “Access for All is a great example of the value of working together in the rail industry. This funding will deliver the improvements which make a real difference to the ease of access for all users of these stations. This is part of our wider commitment to deliver a transformation in rail for West Midlands”.

Patrick Cawley, director of route sponsorship at Network Rail, said: “While millions of pounds has already been spent making stations more accessible for passengers across the West Midlands and beyond, there is still work to do. We welcome the announcement by the Department for Transport on the latest stations to benefit from the ‘Access for All’ funding and we will work closely with West Midlands Railway to help deliver these improvements.”

DfT Access for All funding is already supporting railway station improvements across the region. Projects are ongoing to install lifts at Stechford, and to make all platforms fully accessible at Lichfield Trent Valley.

Across the country, 73 railway stations will be receiving funding. This is in addition to the 24 station projects that are ongoing.

In July 2018, West Midlands Railway submitted bids for improvements at 22

stations across the West Midlands.

For more information on the Department for Transport Access for All programme go to <https://bit.ly/2K86f5L>

ENDS

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 operates 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 operates 1,300 services a day, manages 150 stations and provides 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 operates 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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Press Contact

press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

0330 095 5626