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New Manchester to London train service proposal unveiled by London Northwestern Railway

Proposals to run new train services between Manchester, the West Midlands and London Euston have been unveiled by rail operator London Northwestern Railway today (Monday 1 July).

The plans are designed to improve connectivity between the Midlands and the North West and provide more choice for passengers. Under the proposals, London Northwestern Railway's existing services between London Euston and Crewe would be extended through to Manchester Victoria and the current services between Stafford and Crewe would be extended to

Manchester Airport.

As well as bringing additional capacity to Manchester, the plans will create new direct links from Rugeley, Lichfield, Tamworth and Atherstone in the West Midlands to the city and Warrington, from summer 2026.

The services linking Manchester city centre to London would use the operator's brand-new Class 730 electric trains, which are manufactured in the Midlands by Alstom and will provide a significant increase in capacity, with each 10-car train able to carry more than 1,200 passengers. The proposal will see London Northwestern Railway working with local operators and Network Rail to determine the best overall solution, tying in with planned upgrades to Manchester Victoria station, the TransPennine route upgrade and other local improvements in the North West.

Ian McConnell, managing director of West Midlands Trains, operator of London Northwestern Railway, said: "This proposal puts passengers at the heart of the railway and is the common sense solution to increase connectivity between the North West and the West Midlands following the cancellation of the northern leg of HS2.

"With platform space at Euston at a premium, the best way to provide new journey opportunities to Manchester is simply to extend existing services, rather than trying to squeeze more trains onto the congested West Coast Main Line.

"Additionally, unlike the Open Access model, the millions of pounds of extra revenue our proposals would generate will be returned to the taxpayer, providing a win-win for rail passengers.

"Just as we have shown with our existing long-distance services to Birmingham and Liverpool, our green and environmentally-friendly new electric trains will provide an affordable alternative to the car and coach, with fares up to 50% cheaper than the main intercity operator."

Dominic Booth, chief executive officer of WMT's parent company, Transport UK Group, said: "Our new service proposals represent a significant step forward in enhancing the rail network between Manchester and London.

"By leveraging the new Class 730 electric trains, we will provide greater capacity and comfort for customers travelling to Manchester while also supporting the local economy by creating new job opportunities in the North West. This proposal aligns with our commitment to delivering efficient, sustainable, and customer-focused rail services across the UK."

In addition to the economic benefits of generating additional revenue and enhancing connectivity between two of the UK's largest city regions, the new services would also create new train crew and management jobs in the North West.

London Northwestern Railway will formally submit its plans to the Office for Rail and Road (ORR) later this year. If approved, the new services could commence from May 2026 once additional train crew have been recruited and trained.

For more information, visit www.lnr.uk/manchester

Ends

Notes to Editors

- West Midlands Trains runs more than 1,100 services per day between Liverpool, London and the West Midlands under the West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway brands.
- The existing hourly London Northwestern Railway service from London Euston-Crewe calls at London Euston, Milton Keynes Central, Rugby, Nuneaton, Atherstone, Tamworth, Lichfield Trent Valley, Rugeley Trent Valley, Stafford and Crewe.
- Under the proposals announced today this services could be extended to Manchester from May 2026.
- Transport UK Group is the only British-owned transport operator in the UK. It runs Greater Anglia, West Midlands Trains, East Midlands Railway and in partnership with Serco, Merseyrail. It also runs 11% of London bus routes. The company is led by a

dedicated team of industry experts with unrivalled experience in the sector who play a vital role in shaping the future of integrated public transport.

About West Midlands Trains

For further information on this release, email 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 or londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

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Press Office - Media Use Only

Press Contact

press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

03300 955150