



L-R, John Doughty (WMR engineering director), Richard Parker (Mayor of the West Midlands), Ian McConnell (WMR managing director)

Oct 27, 2025 09:37 GMT

£70million upgrades complete at key West Midlands Railway depot

A significant milestone in improving train service reliability in the West Midlands has been reached following a £70million investment into a key railway depot in Birmingham.

West Midlands Railway (WMR) and Mayor of the West Midlands, Richard Parker, officially announced the completion of the redevelopment of Tyseley Traction Maintenance Depot (TMD) at a special event on Friday 24 October.

Local representatives and rail industry experts had the chance to tour the upgraded site which maintains and services 94 trains.

WMR carried out the works as part of the £1bn investment in new rolling stock and depot upgrades with Tyseley specifically modified to support its new Class 196 fleet in addition to more efficiently supporting the WMR Class 172 fleet and CrossCountry's Class 170 trains.

The Class 196 fleet entered service in 2022 and runs on the lines from Birmingham to Hereford and Shrewsbury, and between Nuneaton, Coventry and Leamington. The 26-train fleet features intelligent air conditioning, charging ports at every seat and modern digital information screens.

To accommodate the 96-metre-long Class 196s, Tyseley Depot's main shed has been extended, increasing indoor capacity from 29 to 38 vehicles, with improved inspection facilities and new train lifting equipment. A solar farm of 302 panels has been installed on the shed roof, estimated to generate 124,000 kWh and save 58 tonnes of carbon per year.

John Doughty, WMR engineering director, said: "These upgrades come as part of a wider £1billion investment into new fleets and infrastructure across our network. The new facilities at Tyseley mean we can efficiently maintain the new and existing train fleets based at the depot, helping to lessen the impact of disruption and improve the reliability of our service.

"I'm delighted to see this project come to fruition and look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have on our customers' journeys with us."

WMR carries millions of people on its network each year, with passenger numbers continuing to grow. To keep the network running, Tyseley employs over 200 staff members from the local area including 130 technicians and 10 management positions. The depot is central to WMR's engineering apprenticeship programme, with 16 apprentices at the site.

Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands, said: "This investment in cutting-edge equipment and a modern depot means the region's train fleets will be better looked after and kept in tip-top condition. This will improve reliability, meaning fewer delays and better journeys for everyone in the West Midlands.

“This vast site employs hundreds of people in high-quality engineering jobs and I am especially pleased to see the apprenticeship programme still growing with 49 new starters in the last year.”

The three-year upgrade project was funded in partnership with Angel Trains and the Department for Transport. Building work was carried out by Spencer Rail Engineering, part of Spencer Group.

Mike Halliday, managing director for rail at Spencer Group, said: “It’s been a pleasure to be involved in this project. From the outset, the focus has been to complete the works on time and within budget, and we’ve done it.

“Credit must go to West Midlands Railway for allowing us to be involved in the early stages of the project’s development to find an affordable, well thought-through solution, and the results speak for themselves.”

About London Northwestern & West Midlands Railways

For further information on this release, email press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

London Northwestern & West Midlands Railways 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

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

0330 095 5626