

Historic Grade II Listed TfL Rail station no longer “at risk” after renovations return it to former glory

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Grade II listed Hanwell station will be removed from the Heritage at Risk Register by Historic England following extensive renovation work by Transport for London (TfL).

The nineteenth-century station, which will be served by the Elizabeth line, has been upgraded to meet modern standards while retaining its historic character through careful restoration. The station is now more customer friendly with improved accessibility and customer information, and new spacious facilities.

The original station buildings have been repaired, re-painted and restored to the traditional Great Western Railway cream and golden brown colour scheme. Historic signs on the platforms have also been carefully restored, and on the staircases, timber handrails and cast-iron balustrades have been given a new lease of life with lighting upgraded to brighter, energy-saving LEDs fitted in the traditional hanging lanterns. A derelict building on platform 2 has been turned into a new, spacious waiting room with beautiful period features, while the waiting room on platform 3 has also been refurbished to match. New customer information screens displaying live travel information including local bus departure times now make the

customer experience even better.

The accessibility of the station has been transformed through this refurbishment. Customers using Hanwell TfL Rail station now benefit from step-free access from street to platform after the installation of lifts. The lift on platform 2 was built using specialist equipment and required hand excavation over a period of weeks so that the historic timber canopy could be left in place. Additionally, the customer toilet has been converted into an accessible facility and an accessible ticket office window has been installed. The station will be one of 41 step-free stations on the Elizabeth line when the railway opens for passengers in the first half of 2022.

Hanwell Station was originally opened by the Great Western Railway in 1838, although the buildings on site today date from a station rebuild in 1877. The station was Grade II listed in 1972 but was already falling into a poor state of repair at that point. Despite having had some work done in 2000, deteriorated signage and peeling paint on platform canopies and buildings showed that the station was in need of a lot of work when TfL and its operator MTR Elizabeth line took over the management of the station in 2017.

In 2020, London Borough of Ealing pedestrianised the area outside of the station to create a paved forecourt, improving access to the station for those walking and cycling. Both Ealing and Historic England provided advice and added expertise on the station conservation project.



Following the completion of the improvement works, Historic England and London Borough of Ealing have

agreed Hanwell can be removed from the Heritage at Risk Register, and the change will be reflected in the new register, which is due to be published in October.

Peter Herridge, TfL's Station Enhancement Manager, said: "Our team, including colleagues from our operator MTR Elizabeth line, has worked closely with the Railway Heritage Trust, the London Borough of Ealing and Network Rail to carry out these improvements while preserving the rich heritage of this 19th century station. Our friends at Didcot Railway Centre also provided some invaluable guidance and inspiration to help us with the finishing touches.

"It was a real collaborative effort and delivered not only step-free access, but vital new facilities that customers will benefit from for years to come. Working with the local borough's conservation officers in Ealing, we were able to get consent to undertake this restoration. Getting to the stage of the station being removed from Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register shows that this work was well worth the effort."

Emily Gee, Regional Director for Historic England in London and the South East, said: "Hanwell has been given a new lease of life thanks to the careful restoration and improvement works by TfL over the last few years. The Victorian character of the station really shines through and we hope all users appreciate the new spaces and intricate details now revealed for many years to come."

Julian Bell, leader of Ealing Council, said: "Preserving Ealing's outstanding heritage has always been a priority for us and I am delighted to have been able to work alongside our partners TfL to ensure the historic features of Hanwell station are protected long into the future.

"Not only has the renovation eliminated any risk of losing this valuable local heritage, the station has also been upgraded and modernised with new lifts, waiting room, toilets and a refurbished platform. Working with TfL, we have also completed work to improve access to the station for those walking and cycling by creating a paved forecourt.

"We will continue to work with TfL to improve transport options for local commuters, improve access and reduce journey times wherever possible."

These upgrades have been part of a wider programme of accessibility improvements across the TfL Rail network in preparation for the Elizabeth line, which will bring an extra 1.5 million people to within 45 minutes of central London. As well as opening up more of the transport network for those with accessibility needs, the transformational railway will reduce journey times, create additional capacity and protect social distancing.



Hanwell has also benefitted from a doubling in service frequency, moving from two to four trains per hour in either direction and shorter, old trains have been replaced with longer, modern, more spacious Elizabeth line trains providing a significant increase in capacity.

The latest government guidance requires everyone to stay at home wherever possible, with TfL services continuing to run for those who need to travel for legally permitted reasons. This includes travel to work where it cannot be undertaken from home, to shop for necessities, seek medical assistance, visit a support bubble or for education.

Photo credit: Transport for London