

# In The News | 21st March 2024 | Latest Rail News

March 21, 2024



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A new railway line between Staffordshire and Manchester Airport would likely be the best way to improve connectivity between the West Midlands and North, BBC News reports.

Work commissioned by Mayors Andy Street and Andy Burnham has provisionally found that, of three options unveiled last month, a Staffordshire to Manchester Airport line would provide the best combination of benefits and costs.

A private sector group has been exploring options after the Northern leg of HS2 was scrapped. The proposed 70-mile line would run between HS2 and Handsacre in Staffordshire.

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Northern leaders plan to write to Government about Avanti West Coast, demanding that the train operating company is stripped of its franchise as soon as possible.

At a board meeting of Transport for the North yesterday, members voted to request the removal of Avanti West Coast from the West Coast Main Line route.

BBC News reported that Metro Mayors Andy Burnham, Steve Rotherham, Tracy Brabin, Oliver Coppard, and Jamie Driscoll expressed their disappointment, stating that “a continuation of the current situation is unacceptable to the North.”

A spokeswoman for First Group acknowledged that service had been “below expectations on some days”, adding: “Our team at Avanti West Coast, and everyone connected with the train operator, are all working hard with a singular focus on delivering the service that customers expect.”

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South East Northumberland Rail Users Group (Senrug) has expressed concerns about a new rail timetable on the East Coast Main Line, stating that it could result in Northern stations losing services.

According to BBC News, the proposed timetable (which is set to be launched later this year) would mean fewer trains for Durham and Carlisle, as well as Morpeth, Alnmouth, and Berwick.

Glen Sanderson, the Conservative Leader of Northumberland County Council, echoed the group’s concerns, calling the proposal “mad”.

Train operators Northern and LNER and Northern stated that the timetable has yet to be finalised.

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And finally, an appeal to support the redevelopment of a Mid-Wales heritage railway will be launched this Friday, Insider Media Ltd reports.

The £4 million ‘Preserving our Past, Building Our Future’ project is set to take place at Talylln Railway, a unique preserved railway in Southern Snowdonia.

It will see facilities at two stations redeveloped, “carrying the line into the future.”

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