

## In The News | 22nd March 2024 | Latest Rail News

March 22, 2024



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Labour has privately indicated to the rail industry that it plans to resurrect part of the northern leg of HS2, Whitehall sources have told The Telegraph.

An article in The Telegraph says Louise Haigh, the shadow transport secretary, and her team are said to have suggested they want to reverse Rishi Sunak's decision to axe the high-speed route between Birmingham and Crewe.

That is despite the fact that Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, has publicly said it is "not possible" to revive the project because the Government has "blown the budget".

At the Tory conference in October, the Prime Minister cancelled the HS2 line north of Birmingham to save £36 billion, pledging that the money recouped would be redirected towards improving local road, rail and bus services across the North.

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Meanwhile The mayors of the West Midlands and Greater Manchester have revealed the preferred option to improve connectivity between the two regions.

An article on The Business Desk says Andy Street and Andy Burnham say the best option is to create a new railway line from HS2 at Handsacre, Lichfield to Manchester Airport after the pair commissioned work with a private sector consortium.

Former HS2 boss Sir David Higgins has worked alongside the group consisting of Arup, Arcadis, EY, Skanska, Dragados, Addleshaw Goddard and Mace, which have assessed three options to alleviate a congested West Coast Mainline and boost connectivity.

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The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) has released its passenger rail usage statistics for Q3 (October – December 2023).

These statistics show the volume of passenger journeys, kilometres and revenue on Great Britain's main line network.

ORR recorded 417 million rail passenger journeys in Great Britain over the last quarter. This represents a 20 per cent increase on the 348 million journeys made between October to December 2022.

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East Midlands Railway (EMR) has announced that a £60 million project to refurbish its fleet of Class 360, Class 158 and Class 170 trains has begun.

The programme, which leverages significant private sector investment, is being delivered in partnership with Angel Trains, Siemens, Porterbrook, and Eversholt.

All the work will be carried out in the UK, providing a significant boost to the supply chain. Together with the introduction of the new Aurora Intercity trains, this will mean that all of EMR's trains will either be replaced with new trains or refurbished.

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