

New line and platform promise improved services for passengers on Midland Main Line

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Work to give passengers in the East Midlands and Bedfordshire access to faster journeys with more seats available on board more environmentally friendly trains has taken another step forward this week.

On Sunday (20, December 2020) the new fourth track between Bedford and Kettering and the new platform at Wellingborough station were brought into use. These are the latest completed improvements as part of the Midland Main Line Upgrade, which will deliver a brand new, improved timetable for passengers in 2021.

Gary Walsh, Route Director for Network Rail's East Midlands Route, said: "This is a really exciting time for all passengers using the Midland Main Line as we start to see the benefits of many years hard work by hundreds of people across the rail industry.

"We're now working with our colleagues at East Midlands Railway to support driver training and the introduction of electric powered trains on the route, as well as carrying out final testing and assurance with the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). We're well on track to deliver significant improvements for passengers next year. We'll also be able to transport even more freight by rail, keeping lorries off the roads and

supporting our economy to 'build back better'."

At Wellingborough station as well as building platform 4, the existing platforms have been extended and improved to reduce stepping distance onto trains. The canopies have been refurbished, new waiting shelters, lighting, CCTV and fencing has been installed and the footbridge has been extended to platform 4. Stanton Cross Developments LLP contributed to the footbridge extension as part of its Stanton Cross development.

Lisa Angus, Transition and Projects Director at East Midlands Railway, added: "The Midland Main Line Upgrade has been made possible by the skill and hard work of so many people, right across the rail industry. As such, these latest milestones are an incredibly proud moment for all of us.

"However, we still have a huge amount of work in front of us to deliver on this investment and introduce the major timetable enhancements in 2021. Pleasingly, despite the huge challenges COVID has created for all of us, that is also on track and we look forward to achieving further milestones in the weeks and months to come."

Lee Barrett, Operations Director for Bovis Homes and a representative of Stanton Cross Developments LLP, promoters of the Stanton Cross project, added: "Our investment in Wellingborough station is key to the strategic vision for Stanton Cross. We are committed to creating a sustainable new community with the infrastructure in place to provide excellent connectivity. The upgraded station stands to benefit all those who will live and work at Stanton Cross."

Photo credit: Network Rail

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