

# West Midlands rail revolution promised as new 30 year strategy approved

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A revolution in rail services across the West Midlands is outlined in a new 30 year investment strategy.

The Rail Investment Strategy, published today by the West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE), sets out short, medium and long-term plans to provide improved rail services across the whole region.

In the short-term, this includes the return of passenger services and stations on the Camp Hill Line and Wolverhampton to Walsall line.

It also sets out a clear target to achieve regular high frequency services of two, four or six trains an hour at all stations, with busy urban stations receiving a service every ten minutes and quieter local stations at least every half hour during the day.

In the medium-term, the strategy builds on the benefits HS2 will bring to the region and supports the Midlands Rail Hub proposals being developed by Midlands Connect.

The aim is provide a joined up set of proposals to shape the development of the West Midlands up to 2047.

Chair of the West Midlands Rail Executive and leader of the City of Wolverhampton Council cllr Roger Lawrence said: “We are delighted to launch our strategy for delivering better rail services across the whole region over the next thirty years.

“We very much appreciate the time and effort which our partners and stakeholder consultees put into developing their responses.

“We are pleased that our approach received wide and strong support. The Strategy will support the exciting regeneration and growth plans that exist across our partner authorities, recognising the role that rail plays in connecting people, communities and businesses.”

The strategy sets out seven key aims:

### **1. West Midlands Trains franchise quick wins: 2018-2026**

Working with the West Midlands Railway franchise, which WMRE co-manages with the Department for Transport, to deliver £1 billion investment in a range of promised improvements including cross-Birmingham connectivity, better Sunday and evening services, new Camp Hill and Walsall-Wolverhampton services, new stations, more train capacity and reliable performance.

### **2. High frequency ‘6-4-2’ rail services**

These are minimum standards of six, four and two trains per hour at stations.

### **3. Midlands Rail Hub: 2026-2032**

Working with Midlands Connects to make the case for new services across the wider region and dramatically increasing capacity through the Midlands Rail Hub scheme.

### **4. Our high growth rail corridors: 2018-2032**

Developing the high-growth corridors set to see the greatest economic and population growth to 2032 and which can benefit most from new and enhanced connectivity.

### **5. High Speed 2: 2026 and 2033**

Supporting and working closely with HS2 to maximise the capacity and new local and regional opportunities it releases for the West Midlands.

### **6. Radical change towards 2047**

Starting work now to identify the radical infrastructure change needed after delivery of HS2 and the Midlands Rail Hub including development of new rail lines and introduction of new technology.

### **7. Supporting rail-freight development and growth**

Seek to maximise the benefits of freight to the region, including through use of capacity released by HS2.

The Strategy has been drawn up by the WMRE in collaboration with Midlands Connect, the Department for Transport and the wider rail industry. It has been finalised following a period of public and stakeholder consultation.

The Strategy also commits to producing a supporting 'Prospectus for Rail', which will be published in 2019, setting out our overall ambitions for the revolution in rail services.

As with any ambitious plan, it is recognised that not all of the plans may end up being funded or delivered in practice. This particularly applies to the longer-term projects.

The strategy will also inevitably evolve over time to take account of changes in circumstances.

The full strategy is available on the [WMRE website](#).

Malcolm Holmes, executive director of WMRE, said: "Our strategy shapes the new era for rail travel by West Midlands. It evidences our ambitious plans to work together with Midlands Connect and the rail industry to transform the train services and physical network to support the needs of the region.

"We are hugely excited to be in an ambitious and determined period of delivering this strategy"

Laura Shoaf, managing director of TfWM, said: "Investment in our services and network will help to make sure that our infrastructure is ready for the growth created by HS2 and creates a transformed rail network to support living, working and investing in our region."

Maria Machancoses, director of Midlands Connect, said: "We are proud to support this strategy which, alongside our own wider regional vision, makes sure passenger and freight services are transformed for decades to come.

"The Midlands is experiencing a rail revolution, with an unprecedented level of collaboration across the region. Passenger services are improving, and HS2 will put the Midlands at the heart of the national network. But this is just the start: it's important we work together with WMRE and other partners to make sure there is a long term plan for the region's rail network."