

West Midlands Railway celebrates breaking records during Commonwealth Games

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West Midlands Railway (WMR) has thanked passengers after confirming record-breaking travel numbers during the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, which finish today (Monday).

In total, the operator estimates approximately two million journeys were made on rail in the West Midlands during the Games, with records broken at a number of individual stations close to venues.

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In addition to its usual staff, more than 170 volunteers from WMR were deployed on stations during the Games, putting in more than 2,500 additional hours on platforms across the West Midlands. Those supporting the efforts on the front line included train drivers, senior conductors, fleet technicians, cleaning staff and more from across the business.

In addition to assisting passengers, WMR volunteers handed out 40,000 free water bottles and 70,000

bags of sweets to Games-goers – even joining in with singalongs of unofficial sporting anthem ‘Sweet Caroline’ on many platforms.

Day tickets to Commonwealth Games events included free travel on public transport in the West Midlands. Rail transport during the Games was provided through collaborative working between WMR, Network Rail, other train companies, Transport for West Midlands and the West Midlands Rail Executive.

Ben Roberts, head of Commonwealth Games at WMR, said: “The Games have put Birmingham and the wider West Midlands on the international map and I am delighted we have been able to play our part in delivering a successful transport operation.

“I would like to thank our passengers – both Games-goers and regular customers – for their good humour and understanding at busier times when queuing systems have been in use.

“I am proud of our staff across the network who have put in a momentous effort to help the many thousands of passengers travelling on our services and I hope the spectators enjoyed their Games experience as much as we enjoyed keeping them moving.”

Unprecedented numbers were recorded at University station (hockey and squash) in south Birmingham, which was used by more than 150,000 passengers during the Games, including 31,000 on Monday 1 August alone.

Records also tumbled at the newly-redeveloped Perry Barr station (athletics and opening/closing ceremonies) with more than 25,000 passengers passing through during the 12-day event. Network Rail reported that Birmingham New Street station has seen some of the busiest days in its history during the Games.

Malcolm Holmes, executive director of West Midlands Rail Executive, said: “With more than one million Games tickets sold, staging this event was a monumental challenge for our rail network but thanks to a lot of hard work from across the industry it is one we have passed with flying colours.

“It has been a pleasure to see busy platforms across the West Midlands over the past 11 days. It has been a great example of cross-industry working through the Grand Railway Collaboration as our train operators have kept their regular customers and Games-goers moving.”

For information on WMR services, visit www.wmr.uk.