

West Midlands Railway clamps down on ticketless travel and antisocial behaviour on the Chase line

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West Midlands Railway has been clamping down on ticketless travel and antisocial behaviour on the Chase line.

On Friday (18 January), a total of 25 revenue protection managers were stationed at six locations on the line between Bloxwich and Rugeley Town from 1500 until 1830, as well as at Walsall station from 1200 until 1500.

It is the first time in nearly two years that the train operator on the route has put revenue checks in place at multiple stations on the line simultaneously.

During the exercise, 83 penalty fares were handed out. The team also issued six prosecution notices for

repeat offenders and fraudulent travellers.

The exercise came in response to increased and ongoing concerns, not only about fare evasion, but persistent antisocial behaviour and assaults to railway staff on the route.

West Midlands Railway has recently recruited an additional six revenue protection and security managers across the West Midlands region, to help tackle ticketless travel, antisocial behaviour and other issues reported to the team.

Steven Fisher, head of on board experience for West Midlands Railway, said: “We want to send a clear message to the minority who have been causing persistent issues on the line between Walsall and Rugeley – that we will be tackling fare evasion and antisocial behaviour, and that we have increased our staffing to enable us to do this more effectively. At the same time, we want to reassure our fare paying passengers that we are doing all we can to make sure everyone has a ticket when travelling on our trains and that all customers and staff can travel safely across our network.

“Where there is evidence that an individual has deliberately sought to fare evade, we can and do prosecute through the court system. This can result in a hefty fine and a criminal record for repeat offenders.”

The train operator is advising all passengers to purchase a ticket before travelling – either from station staff, ticket vending machines, online, or via the West Midlands Railway app. Passengers who don’t buy a ticket before travelling from a station where ticket buying facilities are available, may be issued with a penalty fare.

Penalty fares are £20 or twice the full single ticket price for a journey, whichever is greater.