



Rail Executive



Consultation

West Midlands Rail Franchise

Moving Britain Ahead



December 2015

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Welcome to the consultation for the new West Midlands rail franchise.
- 1.2 This document has been produced in partnership between the Department for Transport's (DfT's) Rail Executive and West Midlands Rail Limited (WMR), an organisation representing 14 partner authorities of the West Midlands area. This reflects ongoing work to provide more local input into deciding and managing how local rail networks are run.
- 1.3 We would like the views of all stakeholders in order to help us plan the future of rail services, stations and other supporting services provided in the West Midlands rail franchise through this consultation, which runs between 15 December 2015 and 22 March 2016. This includes passengers, communities, businesses, rail groups, local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships, unions, rail industry employees and other organisations.
- 1.4 The West Midlands rail franchise is currently operated by London Midland (owned by Govia – a partnership between the Go-Ahead Group and Keolis). It is made up of local services that run in the West Midlands region, long distance services between Liverpool and Birmingham and Crewe and London and shorter distance services that run into London from Northampton. There are also branch lines from Bletchley to Bedford and Watford Junction to St Albans Abbey. A map showing where services run is provided in Appendix A.
- 1.5 London Midland currently operates over 1,300 services every weekday and serves 170 stations (directly managing 145) under the existing Franchise Agreement. We are now starting the process to select a rail company to operate and develop these services and stations from October 2017 when the current franchise finishes.
- 1.6 We are now thinking about what we want the next operator to deliver. This gives us the opportunity to look again at the services provided by the West Midlands franchise and ensure they meet the needs of the people and areas they serve and cater for high levels of passenger growth.
- 1.7 Our vision for the new franchise is to deliver a rail service fit for modern life that can support the growth of the West Midlands, the wider franchise area and the country, building on the improvements recently agreed with London Midland which will be delivered between April 2016 and October 2017.

- 1.8 The West Midlands franchise requires significant subsidy through taxpayers' money – the second highest amount of any franchise in England – so we also need to ensure services provide value for money for the taxpayer and fare paying passenger.
- 1.9 We want the new franchise to lay the foundations for rail services in the West Midlands region to be increasingly specified, managed and decided locally rather than by Central Government, helping to provide a network that is more responsive to local requirements through a process known as devolution.
- 1.10 We welcome your views on all aspects of the rail service offered so we can ensure the new franchise delivers the best possible railway for passengers, communities and businesses.
- 1.11 While this consultation is about services currently provided by London Midland, we are also interested in your views on connections between West Midlands franchise services and those provided by other rail companies.

The Department for Transport and rail franchising

- 1.12 Most rail services in England are operated under contractual agreements between the DfT and selected train companies. These are known as Franchise Agreements and each one covers specific train services and stations. These are normally on particular rail lines or in a geographical area. There are 16 rail franchises in England overseen by the DfT.
- 1.13 Each franchise agreement runs for a fixed period of time. Towards the end of each agreement a formal process is undertaken to decide how services and stations in the next franchise agreement should be operated and select a train company to do this. This is called a franchise competition.
- 1.14 In some cases another party, such as a Local Transport Authority, may be a signatory to and manage some of the franchise obligations in a Franchise Agreement.
- 1.15 The DfT is running the new West Midlands franchise and competition process. West Midlands Rail Limited (WMR) is collaborating in this consultation and the specification, which sets out what the new rail franchise will deliver for passengers. WMR will also jointly manage local services in the new franchise providing more local input as part of the journey to further devolution for services in its area.
- 1.16 An important part of the competition process is gaining the views of the public and stakeholders on what the new franchise should deliver through consultations such as this one. Your responses to this consultation will help us decide what we ask for in the franchise. They will also be provided to train companies to consider when submitting their proposals to operate the franchise.

1.17 The West Midlands Franchise competition formally commenced on 8 December 2015 with the publication of the West Midlands Franchise Prospectus, and has a series of planned stages leading up to the start of the new franchise in October 2017, running broadly in line with the processes set out in the Rail Franchising Competition Guide published in June 2015¹. The timescales and processes for the Competition are summarised in Appendix B.



Britain's Railway Industry

1.18 Great Britain has a large and highly valued rail network. Passenger numbers are increasing and so is the amount of money provided through passenger ticket sales and other services (passenger revenue).

1.19 A number of organisations work together to help people and goods move around the rail network safely, effectively and in a way that best meets the needs and aspirations of passengers and businesses. These include:

- Private sector train operating companies (TOCs) which run passenger train services and operate most stations, normally through franchise agreements.
- Network Rail which owns and operates the fixed railway infrastructure including track, signalling, overhead wires and major city centre stations.

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/443621/franchise-competition-guide.pdf

- Train leasing companies (known as ROSCOs) which own and lease out passenger trains.
- Private rail freight companies which carry goods around the country.
- High Speed 1 Limited (HS1) is the company that holds the concession to operate Britain's first high speed railway between St Pancras in London and the Channel Tunnel, connecting with international high speed routes between London and Paris/Brussels.
- High Speed 2 Limited (HS2) is responsible for developing proposals for a new national high speed rail network. Phase one provides a new high speed rail line between London Euston and Birmingham.
- The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) is the independent industry regulator that ensures Network Rail and train companies are acting legally in terms of health and safety and consumer protection. They also manage track access and regulate Network Rail costs and charges.
- Transport Focus is an independent organisation which gathers the views of public transport and road users across the country to understand what customers want, what works well and what could be improved. More details on Transport Focus can be found at www.transportfocus.org.uk
- The rail industry also works closely alongside a range of other organisations and stakeholders to improve and develop services. These include Local Transport Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Unions and Rail User Groups.

West Midlands Rail Limited (WMR)

- 1.20 The West Midlands contributes £110bn a year to the economy and is regarded as an engine for growth due to its strategic location in the heart of the UK and its key role in manufacturing, engineering, innovation, science and technology and skills development. Therefore, making sure the region has the right network of road and rail services that allow for easy movement of people and goods both locally and nationally is essential to the UK's status as a global economy.
- 1.21 The majority of rail services in the West Midlands rail franchise operate in the West Midlands region, although there are a substantial number that also run outside the area to destinations including Crewe, Liverpool and London.
- 1.22 WMR is a partnership of local transport authorities in the West Midlands area working together to play a greater role in the specification, management and delivery of local rail services in collaboration with the DfT. It is a limited company, with a board of directors made up of the leaders or cabinet members of the local transport authorities involved. These include the seven metropolitan district authorities in the region (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton) and seven shire and unitary authorities (Herefordshire, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Telford

and Wrekin, Warwickshire and Worcestershire). Representatives from Local Enterprise Partnerships also attend meetings of the board.

- 1.23 WMR's aim is to provide a modern rail network for the region which is more responsive to the needs of passengers and businesses and supports economic development, job creation and the needs of society and the environment. It focuses on five key areas:
- **Capacity** – rail passenger numbers in the West Midlands have more than doubled from 37 million in 2005/6 to over 78 million in 2013/14, the highest rail growth of any region in the UK. This growth is predicted to continue so we want to make sure that services have sufficient capacity to cater for this.
 - **Connectivity** – connections to some key places such as city centres or airports by train are sometimes poor, especially in the early morning, evenings and on Sundays. We want to make it easier and quicker to travel round the region, ensuring services connect effectively and run at the times and to the places people want to travel to better support new areas of housing, job creation, business and economic growth.
 - **Customer focused** – we want there to be a focus on performance and quality for the customer, so that trains are more likely to run to time, stations and trains have better services and amenities, people feel safer, information is reliable and easy to find, and to make it easy for passengers to get to and from the station and pay for their journey.
 - **Clarity** – we want to provide a rail network that is easy to understand and use to help make existing passengers feel happier and more confident in using the train and attract new passengers. This includes providing a strong local identity with core values of excellent customer service and good communication.
 - **Cost effective** – we recognise that the new West Midlands rail franchise needs to provide high quality, customer focused services whilst providing value for money for the taxpayer and the passenger.
- 1.24 WMR is helping to inform how services and stations are provided in the region from October 2017 by helping to set out what the new franchise operator will need to deliver.
- 1.25 This forms part of the collaboration between the DfT and WMR announced by the Secretary of State for Transport in March 2015 and is the first step in the process towards having more control of planning and overseeing rail services in the region.
- 1.26 After the franchise has commenced in October 2017, WMR will continue to work jointly alongside the DfT to ensure the new operator provides the right levels of service with a more local focus, which includes a locally based management team.



- 1.27 It is hoped that the new franchise will begin to pave the way for full rail devolution in the future. This will include a requirement for the operator of the new franchise to look at how local services within the West Midlands area could be separated from the long distance and London/branch line services. A map showing how this could work is provided in Appendix C.
- 1.28 This is in line with the Government's devolution agenda, a key part of which is to transfer decision making about rail services to appropriate local bodies.
- 1.29 West Midlands Rail will also work alongside the new West Midlands Combined Authority on a wider local devolution package agreed by West Midlands Local Authorities and Government in November 2015. This package includes a growth deal² with an £8 billion ten year investment plan to drive economic growth and improve local transport. £4.4 billion has been committed to an HS2 Growth Strategy to maximise the benefits of HS2 and the capacity it will release. A key focus will be the delivery of a series of rail improvements to ensure nowhere in the West Midlands metropolitan area is more than 40 minutes from a High Speed Rail station. More information can be found at www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk
- 1.30 More information on West Midlands Rail is available at www.westmidlandsrail.com

² <http://www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk/assets/docs/WestMidlandsDealDocument.pdf>

The new franchise – our joint vision and objectives

- 1.31 The DfT and WMR are looking to the new West Midlands franchise to deliver a rail service fit for modern life that can support the growth of the West Midlands, the rest of the franchise area and the country whilst transforming the current rail offer.
- 1.32 The rail network and the communities it serves are going through constant change. This provides a number of opportunities and challenges to the rail network which we and the train companies need to consider when deciding what the new West Midlands franchise will provide and how services and stations will be operated and managed.



- 1.33 We want to ensure we make the most of any opportunities to deliver improvements through investment, passenger growth, new technology and innovation.
- 1.34 We also need to think about the medium and long term future, and make sure this franchise sets the foundations to take advantage of future improvements, developments and changes as much as possible.
- 1.35 We are aware that there are a number of challenges that we, the operator and other partners need to work together to manage and overcome to ensure we provide the best rail network possible for passengers. This includes overcrowding and catering for further growth, train and staff availability and service disruption caused by unplanned events and rail improvement works.

1.36 Our joint key objectives are:

- **Better for the economy** – Support the current and predicted growth in jobs, housing, industry, leisure and tourism and retail with a distinct focus on each of the following markets (see Appendix A for maps):
 - West Midlands’ local and regional services;
 - long-distance services along the West Coast Mainline from Liverpool to Birmingham and from Crewe to London; and
 - Services to/from London including branch lines.

Ensure there are the right services and capacity to cater for current users and future growth throughout the day and week.

- **Better for the passenger** – Deliver high quality services and stations, reduce delays and cancellations, and achieve significant improvements in customer satisfaction. Provide affordable, easy to use services at the times and to the places that people want to travel both now and in the future supported by the provision of accurate and timely information.
- **Better for communities** – Increase engagement between the operator of the new franchise and the communities it serves.
- **Better for staff** – Deliver a franchise which demonstrates a genuine pride in developing staff over the long term, aiming to improve staff satisfaction, motivation and retention, and deliver best in class customer service.
- **Better for taxpayers** – Make the most of the significant investment being made to make improvements to the rail network (summarised in Appendix D). Making sure the right level of service is provided to reflect travel patterns and demand, ensuring resources (funding, staff and trains) are used in the areas that need it most. Make improvements efficiently, providing value for money.
- **Maximising the benefits from investment in infrastructure** – Supporting the development of a safe and accessible network to modernise and meet the requirements of a modern railway.
- **Supporting devolution** – Develop a plan for the future specification and management of local services to pass to West Midlands Rail in a future franchise, providing a structure for the delivery of those rail services that is focused on the needs of the West Midlands.
- **Supporting HS2** – Work with HS2 and Network Rail as a partner on relevant works to enable the delivery of the new high speed rail line between London, the Midlands and Crewe. Ensure that the foundations are in place for the West Midlands to be

ready for the opening of HS2, supporting the HS2 Connectivity Programme being delivered through the recently announced West Midlands £8bn growth deal³.

- 1.37 Both the DfT and WMR are also committed to ensuring that rail fully plays its part in supporting low carbon, environmental and wider sustainability objectives.
- 1.38 We are looking for an innovative and ambitious train company to work with us to deliver services that meet passengers' needs and aspirations.
- 1.39 Both we and the train company will continue working in partnership with a wide range of local and regional stakeholders to achieve this.



³ <http://www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk/assets/docs/WestMidlandsDealDocument.pdf>

The consultation process – a chance to use your influence – by Transport Focus

- 1.40 Our research⁴ into passenger understanding of, and desire for involvement in, the franchise process led to our emphasis on *Passenger Power!*⁵ and a call for more recognition of the customer within the franchising system.
- 1.41 Recent announcements of franchise policy have made welcome commitments to a greater emphasis on the quality of the passenger experience and enhanced arrangements for engagement and communication with customers.
- 1.42 This stakeholder consultation presents a fantastic opportunity for individuals and organisations alike to get involved and influence the future of their rail services. People and groups can use the benefit of their local knowledge and expertise to bring key issues to the attention of the Department for Transport, West Midlands Rail and, ultimately, the bidders for the franchise. Using any available data – be that locally gathered or derived from research by organisations such as Transport Focus or ORR – will help build a robust and evidence-based case. This strengthens the argument and can demonstrate the benefits a proposed initiative could bring.
- 1.43 The Department must specify a contract that suits the needs of a wide range of passengers while providing value for money for the taxpayer. When responding to this consultation it makes sense to be mindful of this bigger picture. However, with a commitment to putting the passenger experience at the heart of franchising, it is important that the DfT hears clearly the aspirations of the users of the service and the communities that the franchise serves.
- 1.44 An effective approach is to focus on what can realistically be achieved during the lifetime of a franchise and provide specific and relevant input. The cost and trade-offs of any scheme must be considered. It is also worth noting that many things can benefit passengers which can be delivered at little or no cost. Increased transparency and openness and providing tailored, personalised communications will improve the relevance of information. Ensuring a culture of customer service and empowering staff to respond proactively and effectively to passenger needs will also bring benefits.

⁴ <http://www.transportfocus.org.uk/research/publications/giving-passengers-a-voice-in-rail-services>

⁵ <http://www.transportfocus.org.uk/key-issues/passenger-power>

1.45 Consultation events being held by the DfT and WMR offer a chance for you to hear first-hand about plans for the new franchise and an opportunity to ask any questions. Providing a response to this consultation ensures that your views will be heard. Don't miss this vital opportunity to contribute to the franchising process and inform the decisions being made about the future of your railway. Timing is all important so make sure you know the key dates and deadline for responding.



How to respond

- 1.46 The consultation period begins on 15 December 2015 and ends at 23:45 on 22 March 2016. Please ensure that your response reaches us before the closing date. If you would like further copies of this consultation document, it can be found on the DfT website at bit.ly/west-midlands-franchise.
- 1.47 Please respond by filling out the online survey at <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/west-midlands-franchise/>

1.48 If you need an alternative format of this document (Braille, audio, CD, etc.) please contact us at:

West Midlands Consultation
Department for Transport
4/15 Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR
0300 330 3000 (switchboard)

1.49 You can also respond in writing to the above address or by email at:
westmidsconsultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk

1.50 When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation.

1.51 If responding as an individual, to make sure we can make best use of the information you provide and make focused changes where necessary, it would be helpful if you could please provide the following details:

- First name and surname
- First half of your postcode
- Your nearest station (not necessarily the one you use)
- Where you normally travel from and to on the train
- The times you most regularly travel on the train
- How frequently you travel on the train
- The purpose of your most regular rail journey i.e. commuting, leisure or business
- Any specific accessibility needs you have which could include, but is not limited to, wheelchair access, pushchair access, English is not your first language, you are blind or partially sighted, capability impairments

1.52 If responding on behalf of a larger organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were gathered.

1.53 There will be a series of public and stakeholder events organised for people to come along and ask questions to inform their response to the consultation. Dates and venues for the events will be published online at bit.ly/west-midlands-franchise

Freedom of Information & data protection

- 1.54 Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
- 1.55 If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.
- 1.56 In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the DfT or WMR.
- 1.57 The DfT and WMR will at all times process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties for other purposes. Individual consultation responses may be shared with bidders in an anonymised format as part of the franchise competition.
- 1.58 By providing personal data in response to this consultation, you consent to the DfT and WMR, or third parties contracted to the DfT and WMR, processing your personal data for the purpose of analysing responses to this consultation.
- 1.59 It would be very helpful to Rail Executive if, as part of its analysis of responses to this consultation, it was able to take into account certain *sensitive* personal data that you may wish to provide in response to this consultation. In providing your responses to the DfT and WMR by email or post please indicate whether you consent to the DfT and WMR, or third parties contracted to the DfT or WMR, processing your sensitive personal data for the purposes of analysing responses to this consultation.

2. The West Midlands Franchise

2.1 This section provides you with information on the current West Midlands franchise to help you respond to the consultation.

Services

2.2 Train services that run as part of the West Midlands franchise (those currently operated by London Midland) serve a number of the UK's major towns and cities including London, Birmingham, Liverpool, Coventry and Wolverhampton. They can be split into three markets:

- Services between Northampton and London Euston and branch lines from Bedford and St Albans, used by a high number of commuters
- Local and regional services in the West Midlands area used by commuter, business and leisure travellers
- Long distance services along the West Coast Main Line from Liverpool to Birmingham via Crewe and Crewe to London via Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford, Lichfield and Milton Keynes. The franchise also provides direct services between Birmingham, Coventry and London, directly competing with those provided by the West Coast franchise (services currently operated by Virgin Trains)

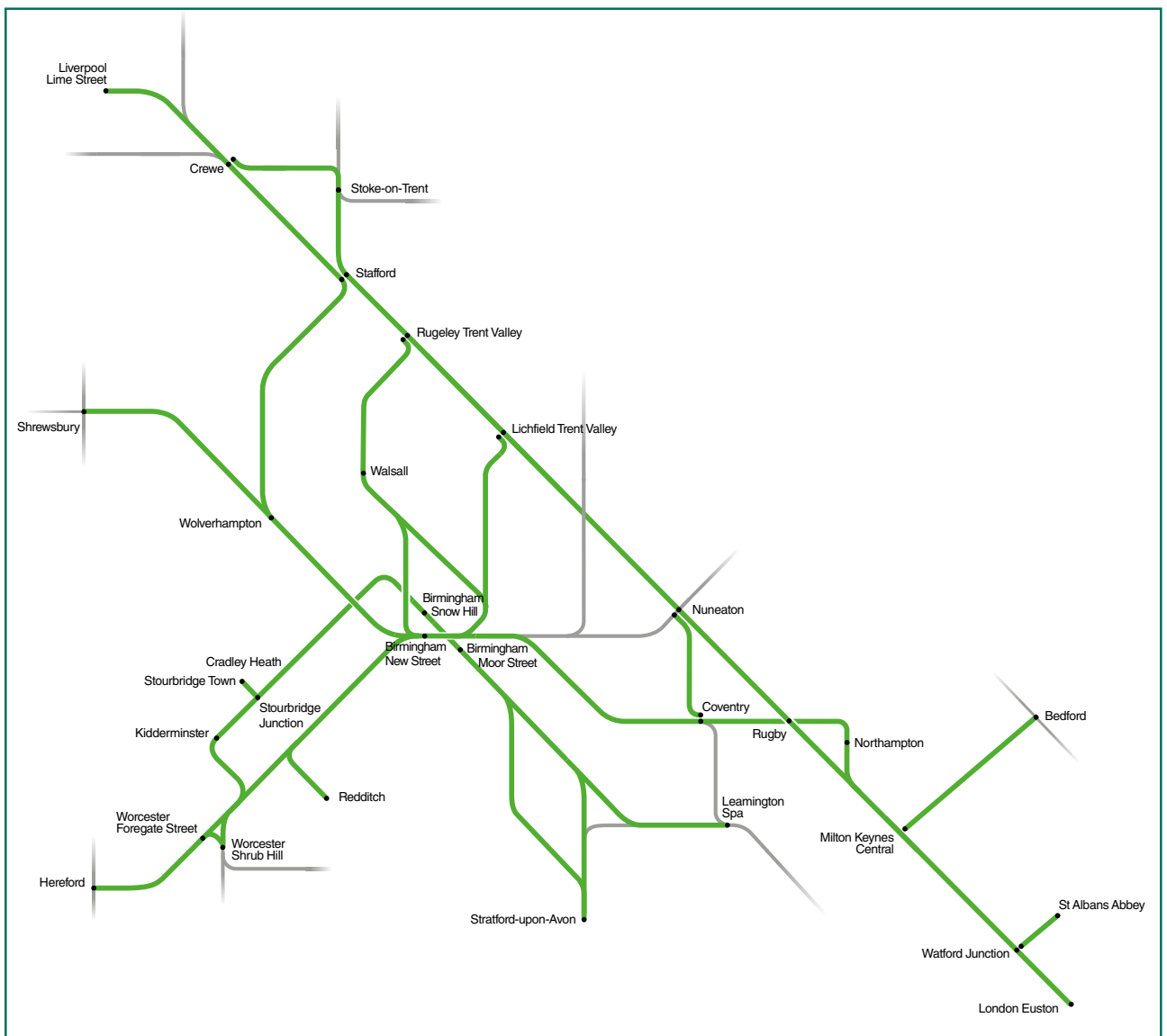
2.3 Appendix A provides a full route map of services and stations plus maps of each market area.

2.4 Over 1,300 services are currently provided every weekday. Most passenger journeys are made in the Birmingham area (52%) or between Northampton and London (36%).

2.5 Other operators that provide services on the same routes as the West Midlands franchise include Arriva Trains Wales, CrossCountry Trains, Chiltern Railways, Great Western Railway, Transpennine Express, Northern and Virgin Trains.

2.6 Some services and stations within England that currently run as part of the Wales and Borders Franchise may be moved into this and/or another franchise in a process known as remapping. This comes as a result of the Government’s agreement in principle to devolve responsibility for the next Wales and Borders franchise to the Welsh Government⁶. We will consult separately on any remapping proposals.

Route Map



⁶ See pages 30/31 in https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408587/47683_CM9020_ENGLISH.pdf

Train fleet and stations

2.7 Currently services are provided by 173 trains which are a mixture of electric and diesel powered vehicles (plus two gas-powered lightweight railcars on the Stourbridge Branch Line). The fleet has a relatively young average age of around 11 years, almost half the age of the national average. However, there is a mixture of new and older trains – some of the electric vehicles are over 20 years old and due a refurbishment. A full list of the current train fleet is provided in Appendix E.



2.8 170 stations are served by the franchise, 145 of which are managed directly by the current operator. A full list of stations is provided at Appendix F. More than 17,000 car park spaces are provided at a number of these stations of which 47% are free. Many car parks are full from early morning.

2.9 Four new stations are due to be open by the time the new franchise starts: Coventry Arena in Coventry, Bermuda Park and Kenilworth in Warwickshire and the relocation and reconstruction of Bromsgrove in Worcestershire.



Usage and performance

- 2.10 On a national level, passenger journeys by train have almost doubled over the past 18 years from 845.7 million in 1997/98 to 1.65 billion in 2014/15, rising faster than any other major European rail system.
- 2.11 Over 65.3 million journeys were made on West Midlands franchise services from the start of April 2014 to the end of March 2015. Usage has grown by an average of 4.5% a year over the past five years and this growth is expected to continue. This has caused a number of issues with overcrowding across the franchise area which need to be addressed.

2.12 Rail use to, from and within the West Midlands region itself has been higher than any other Great British rail region as highlighted in figure 2.1.

Region	Passenger growth since 1995/1996	Passenger growth since 2003/2004	Passenger growth since 2012/13
West Midlands	240%	135%	6%
North West	205%	119%	7%
Yorkshire & the Humber	163%	75%	3%
London	120%	66%	6%
South West	118%	58%	2%
East Midlands	113%	34%	1%
East of England	110%	36%	4%
Wales	99%	48%	2%
South East	98%	44%	3%
North East	95%	47%	4%
Scotland	85%	55%	1%

Figure 2.1 Growth in Passenger Journeys to/from and within regions from 1995/96 to 2013/14

- 2.13 The performance of West Midlands franchise services – those that arrive on time (punctuality) every time (reliability) – has been mixed over the past eight years. It is a key issue for passengers and a driver of demand. The performance of West Midlands trains not only impacts on its own customers, but also on those of the many other operators with which they interact on the rail network.
- 2.14 The punctuality and reliability of train operators is assessed against the Public Performance Measure (PPM) which shows the percentage of trains arriving at their destination within five minutes of the timetabled time.
- 2.15 As shown in figure 2.2, the current operator London Midland is achieving a Moving Annual Average (MMA) of 87.7% PPM, which is below the national average of 89.5%. There is a national target to reach 92.5% by March 2019.

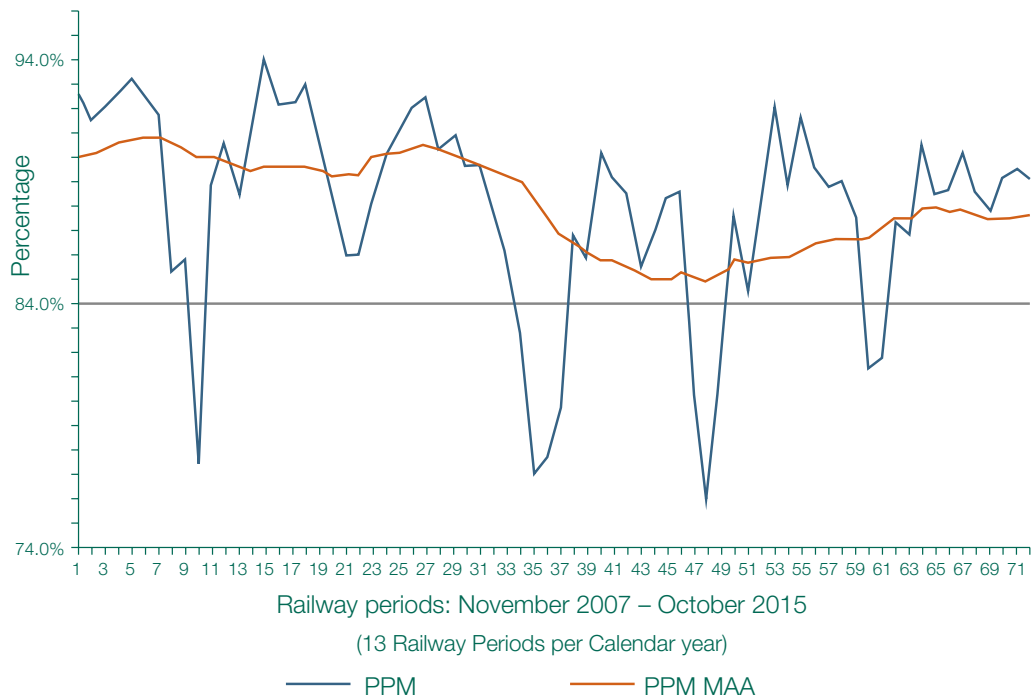


Figure 2.2 – London Midland PPM performance

Customer satisfaction

- 2.16 Transport Focus undertakes two rounds of rail surveys every year in spring and autumn, covering 54,000 passengers a year. It also undertakes detailed studies into specific areas of customer satisfaction.
- 2.17 In spring 2015 satisfaction with existing West Midlands franchise (London Midland) services was 84%, 4% higher than the national average.
- 2.18 The biggest areas for improvement compared to national measures were in the cleanliness of trains, connections between rail services (or to bus/tram services) the availability of staff and facilities on stations.
- 2.19 Through focus group work undertaken in December 2014 with London Midland customers, Transport Focus reported the key drivers of dissatisfaction as being:
- The frequency of disruption and delays (punctuality & reliability)
 - How the train company deals with delays including missing stations to make up time and providing information to passengers
 - Overcrowding and the need for more capacity/more regular services
 - The need for more services later at night, at weekends and for events

- 2.20 Positively, passengers identify that London Midland services are reasonably priced, but offer a “no-frills” service compared to other train companies. It is felt, however, that the choice of tickets could be simpler.
- 2.21 Passengers also consider staff as friendly and helpful when sought out at stations and on trains.
- 2.22 The top 10 passengers’ priorities for improvements for current West Midlands franchise services are:⁷
1. Value for money of train tickets
 2. Ability to get a seat on the train
 3. Frequency of trains at the times when passengers want to travel
 4. More trains arriving on time
 5. Less frequent unplanned major disruption
 6. Being kept informed about delays
 7. Fewer trains being cancelled
 8. Accurate and timely information available at stations
 9. Less disruption due to engineering works
 10. Inside of the train is maintained and cleaned to a high standard

Forthcoming improvements

- 2.23 In early December 2015 the DfT agreed a new £13 million deal with London Midland for the delivery of train services between April 2016 and October 2017. This will see a number of improvements for passengers including:

Improved connections

- Two extra evening services every weekday from London to the Trent Valley, providing an additional 2,300 seats from Euston each week.
- Earlier services to central Birmingham on Sunday mornings from surrounding towns including Rugby and Lichfield.
- New Sunday services from Longbridge, Dorridge and Whitlocks End.
- These services give more than 900 extra seats every week, benefiting shoppers, workers and local businesses.

⁷ Source: Transport Focus London Midland Rail Franchise Passenger research – July 2015

- An extra daily return service on the Abbey line, between Watford Junction and St Albans Abbey, providing an extra 3,400 seats every week.
- A better customer experience.
- Free Wi-Fi on long-distance services between London Euston, Birmingham, Crewe, and Liverpool, and a commitment that free Wi-Fi will be rolled out on all services when the next fully-competed franchise starts.
- New and upgraded ticket machines at selected stations, with new ‘click and collect’ capability and contactless payment options.
- More than 400 extra car parking spaces across 3 stations – Watford, Hemel Hempstead and Tamworth.

Tough new targets

- London Midland will have to meet new targets for passenger satisfaction, punctuality and cleanliness.
- Extra drivers, conductors and on-board staff to be recruited to ensure improvements are delivered.

2.24 London Midland will also install CCTV on cross-city Birmingham services to improve security, and equip station staff with tablets to improve the information given to customers. The operator will also be required to work with the Smart Cities Partnership to introduce smart ticketing on trains, building on the existing Swift smartcard scheme, to provide seamless and more convenient journeys for passengers.

2.25 More information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-contract-to-make-journeys-better-for-west-midlands-rail-passengers>

2.26 There are also a number of improvements planned to the railway and stations during the next West Midlands franchise, details of which are provided in Appendix D.

3. Question Areas

3.1 The following four sections of this document (4, 5, 6 and 7) contain a series of questions on which we would like your views on services provided through the West Midlands franchise (unless otherwise stated). A map demonstrating where these services operate is provided in Appendix A.

3.2 The questions are split into four themes:

Theme A: Responsive to passengers' needs and aspirations

Questions in this area are focused on providing a railway for all that gives passengers what they want and need and attracts more people to the rail network.

Theme B: Services that cater for competitive growing economies

This question area seeks views on how we can provide improved, dependable services that connect people with employment, retail, education, tourism and leisure and support the significant and emerging economic growth across the franchise area.

Theme C: Making sure you feel valued and safe

This area looks into how the railway is operated and managed to provide improved customer satisfaction and performance. Ensuring customers and stakeholders have the opportunity to be involved and input into how their railway is operated and responding to customers' expectations for improved security and information.

Theme D: A considerate, sustainable railway

We want to make sure we provide a railway that makes the most of and builds on what we've got in the areas that need it most and where services are delivered in a way which is efficient, effective and considerate of the environment and society. This section aims to collect your views on how we can best achieve this.

3.3 Please use the information in this document to help you answer the questions. We would be grateful if, wherever possible, you could explain why you have given the answer you have and provide any evidence that supports your response. We look forward to receiving your views.

4. Question Area A – Responsive to passengers’ needs and aspirations

Improving access to the rail network – a railway for all

- 4.1 Since 1995/96, Britain’s railways have seen incredible growth in passenger numbers rising from 760 million journeys to 1.6 billion journeys in 2014/15. However, there are still parts of our society that do not travel by train for a number of differing reasons, such as disability, cultural, financial or perception based reasons.
- 4.2 A key priority for the DfT and WMR is to provide a railway that is accessible to all members of society, attracts more users and is easy to use. We have been working with members of the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) and have obtained feedback from accessibility and equality groups to understand barriers to using the rail network.
- 4.3 We are keen to understand from a wide range of users and non-users with different needs what reasonable changes would make it easier and more enjoyable for them to use the railway and encourage them to use the network more often.
- 4.4 We would like to know about all parts of the journey from planning your trip and buying tickets to arriving at the station, using the train and onward travel.

Q1: Thinking of the journeys you make by train, or journeys you could make by train but where you decide to use an alternative transport mode instead:

- *what specific changes could be made to make the railway easier and more attractive to use for all; and*
- *why do you think these changes would help?*

Please provide your reasons why and details of the journeys you refer to where possible.

Improving access to the rail network – the whole journey experience

- 4.5 We recognise that passengers' journeys rarely start or end at a railway station. We need to consider the whole journey experience for passengers, from planning their journey and leaving their starting point to when they arrive at their ultimate destination.
- 4.6 Car parking and drop off areas are provided at a number of stations in the West Midlands franchise area by a range of organisations including the train operator, local authorities and Centro.
- 4.7 Many of the car parks across the franchise area are full from early in the morning. We will be asking the new operator to look at how best to manage car parking capacity and charging, including working with other car park providers.
- 4.8 There are several benefits of encouraging people to travel to stations by sustainable modes of transport such as bus, tram, walking or cycling, rather than driving. These include environmental and health benefits, reduced congestion, managing car park capacity issues, better connectivity for key centres without direct rail network access and making sure that getting to the railway station doesn't create a barrier for current non users.



- 4.9 We want to see improved connections and integration between different modes of transport to encourage and enable more people to travel from their origin to their destination by sustainable means: walking, cycling and public transport.
- 4.10 The West Midlands area has an extensive bus, tram and rail network and some strong established partnerships between authorities and bus operators. We are considering how the new West Midlands franchisee can work with these partners to improve connections between trains and other modes of public transport, by for example, co-ordinating timetables.
- 4.11 We will also ask the operator to consider how journey planning, ticketing, marketing initiatives, signage and information can be improved to encourage more people to use train services by making them easier to get to. This will also include co-operation with multi-modal smart ticketing schemes being delivered in the area covered by the franchise.

Q2a: Do you use your nearest railway station?

If you do not please let us know the reasons why.

Q2b: Thinking of your train journeys as a whole, how could we improve your experience of:

- ***Finding information and planning your journey***
- ***Accessing your railway station in an environmentally friendly way such as by walking, cycling, tram or bus***
- ***Accessing your railway station by private car (including car parking and drop off areas)?***

Please let us know the reasons why.

If you are aware of any examples of particularly good or particularly poor connections between transport modes at stations, either within the franchise area or more widely please let us know including reasons why these are particularly good or poor.

Stations for passengers and communities

- 4.12 Railway stations are an essential part of the rail network and the communities that they serve, and should provide an attractive gateway to both train services and the local areas in which they are located. Investment to ensure that stations meet the expectations of passengers and the community has to be carefully prioritised in order to make sure the railway is affordable and accessible for all. This is supported by the Rail Delivery Group's recent Vision for Stations Report (2015)⁸.

⁸ <http://www.raildeliverygroup.com/what-we-do/publications.html?task=file.download&id=623>

- 4.13 Through the National Rail Passenger Survey and representative focus groups, passengers have told us that facilities could be improved, particularly at smaller, more rural stations. We recognise that different types of stations and users (commuters, business and leisure) have different requirements and expectations.
- 4.14 Significant investment has been made to improve a number of stations within the West Midlands franchise area such as new stations, station redevelopments, new ticket offices and waiting shelters, improved information and ticket buying facilities. Schemes have also been delivered to make some busier stations accessible for all through the provision of measures such as new footbridges, lifts and ramps. However, we recognise that there is still more to be done and that further investment is needed.



- 4.15 We recognise the importance of stations to both the passengers and communities they serve. We aspire to improve satisfaction in stations to make them attractive to use and, where appropriate, a destination in their own right through providing services and amenities to local areas. We will therefore be asking bidders to suggest how they can work with partners to build on investment already made in stations and provide new and improved facilities in the most cost effective manner. We will also ask them to set out how they plan to keep stations clean, tidy and well maintained in an effective and efficient way.

4.16 To facilitate this, we are keen to further understand the priorities for stations from passengers, stakeholders and communities across this franchise area including why some passengers choose to use stations that are not nearest to their origin. We would also like to know what priorities non-users have and what station facilities would encourage them to use the rail network.

Q3: Please list, in priority order, the facilities you would like improved or introduced at the station(s) you use or could use?

For each point that you raise, please provide the name of the station(s) that you are referring to and why you think these improvements are needed.



Comfort on board

4.17 Transport Focus has identified that the facilities provided on board trains in the West Midlands franchise area do not meet passengers' aspirations, especially on services from London Euston to Crewe and on the Birmingham to Liverpool route. Additionally, trains are sometimes regarded as basic with some issues with cleanliness also reported. Bidders will be asked to provide proposals on how they can improve the service offered to customers on board trains, in particular on longer distance services.

4.18 We know passengers value free Wi-Fi on board trains. That is why the Government has made a commitment to provide free on train Wi-Fi across England by the end of 2018. Bidders for all new franchises are required to set out how they will deliver this in their proposals.

Q4: Thinking of the train journeys you make, how important are the following on board passenger facilities to you on short distance and long distance train services (1= very important; 15 = not important).

If you do not make one of these kinds of journeys please leave blank.

<i>Facility on board train</i>	<i>Importance on short distance train services (1–40 minutes)</i>	<i>Importance on long distance train services (over 40 minutes)</i>
Luggage space		
Cycle storage		
Audio passenger information e.g. announcements		
Visual passenger information e.g. next stop information		
First class areas		
Catering		
Tables		
Seat trays		
Staff presence		
Plug sockets		
USB sockets to charge USB devices		
Pushchair/wheelchair space		
Baby changing facilities		
Suitable toilets		
Free Wi-Fi		

Where possible, please explain why.

Please also identify any other on board passenger facilities not listed above that you deem very important and you think should be improved or introduced. This can include any comments you have about the presentation or cleanliness of your train.

Please note capacity and seat availability is covered in the next section.

- 4.19 Trains on some routes within the West Midlands franchise area are very busy, with overcrowding and difficulty moving through the train being key concerns for passengers as reported by Transport Focus. This is especially the case on some commuter services into London and Birmingham where large numbers of customers are standing in confined areas and on occasion some passengers are being left behind.
- 4.20 With train use continuing to grow significantly, options to increase capacity for passengers need to be explored and bidders will be asked to include detailed plans on how they can do this based on current passenger usage and predicted growth.
- 4.21 This could be achieved in a number of ways including carefully planning the number/length of trains operated on which routes at which times and looking at opportunities to increase the train fleet to provide more or longer trains. However, this may not be affordable or operationally deliverable in all areas of crowding due to constraints such as platform lengths and space within timetables and at stations to fit extra trains in.
- 4.22 Bidders will be asked to look at options for adapting the current train fleet on some shorter distance services to increase capacity where it cannot be provided in other ways. Ideas that may be explored include providing fewer seats but more standing space and wider aisles to help people board and alight busy services more easily, or removing/reducing some on board facilities like first class seating or toilets. Another option might be reviewing the times at which full size cycles can be carried, especially in the West Midlands where they can currently be taken on to peak services, whilst ensuring adequate storage is provided at stations.



Fig 4.1 Example of an alternative seating layout which allows more comfortable standing room on some shorter distance services

- 4.23 Bidders will also be asked to consider innovative solutions to encourage more passengers to travel at quieter times where they have the option to do so. This might be through new ticketing schemes which could be linked to smart technology or providing passengers with better information on which are the busiest services and train carriages.

Q5: We are looking carefully to see what opportunities there are to either extend or provide additional trains to deliver more space/standard class seating for passengers to help reduce overcrowding.

If we cannot create all the additional capacity we need in this way, how do you think we could enable more people to travel and improve the railway's ability to cater for passenger growth (e.g. altering carriages, removing/reducing on board facilities or introducing innovative solutions)?

Where possible, please provide reasons for your answer.

Better connections

- 4.24 We recognise that changing trains can be a barrier to using the railway for particular journeys, making train travel feel complicated and providing an additional level of uncertainty for the passenger.
- 4.25 Connecting between rail services (both within the West Midlands franchise and to services provided by other operators) therefore needs to be as easy, quick and attractive as possible. This means wherever possible services need to be well timed and regular, with clear and timely information provided.
- 4.26 Good connections between train services play a key role in supporting economic growth by significantly reducing journey times between key centres where there are not direct links and making them more attractive to visit. This is also important in providing links to airports.
- 4.27 West Midlands franchise services stop at a number of stations where connections can be made to other rail services. These include London Euston, Watford Junction, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Coventry, Birmingham New Street, Smethwick Galton Bridge, Wolverhampton, Shrewsbury, Stafford, Crewe and Liverpool Lime Street. Appendix F provides a list of all stations highlighting those that provide interchange.
- 4.28 There are also some stations where currently West Midlands franchise services are provided as through services even though they are not contractually required. An example of this is at Northampton where services between London and Birmingham provide a direct through service. This means people going beyond Northampton in either direction do not need to change trains but that any disruption affects a greater number of people as it impacts on both ends of the route.

- 4.29 We are also aware that in some existing cases it is currently difficult and unattractive to connect between trains, for example it currently takes up to two hours to travel from Coventry to Leicester or from Wolverhampton to Derby by train due to the timing and frequency of connecting services.
- 4.30 We want to make sure changing trains is as easy as possible for the customer in the new franchise. We will be asking bidders to explain how they will improve connections between both West Midlands Franchise services and those provided by other companies. We will also ask them to set out what additional measures they can provide to make changing between trains easier, such as improved information, consideration of which platforms to use, and where possible ensuring connections can still be made during disruption.

Q6: Thinking about stations served by the West Midlands franchise, are there any particular locations where you feel that connections between rail services could be improved?

If relevant please provide specific details about the services, times and locations where train times are not coordinated as well as they could be.

Please also provide information on any other factors at stations or on trains that would make changing between services easier and more attractive for you, including your reasons where possible.

5. Question Area B – Services that cater for competitive, growing economies

Ensuring rail services meet the needs of the areas and passengers they serve

- 5.1 Major investment is being made by Government, Network Rail, local authorities, train companies and other bodies to improve the railway (as outlined in Appendix D).
- 5.2 This investment provides a significant opportunity to further develop rail travel in the West Midlands franchise area by providing new opportunities for service enhancements. We want to ensure that the most is made of the money spent on rail improvements for passengers and the taxpayer by asking the operator to provide the best possible services as a result.
- 5.3 In addition, a number of new developments have taken place in towns and cities across the franchise area including new areas of leisure, retail, housing, industry and employment. Birmingham and Liverpool John Lennon airports are both expanding to cater for an increasing number of air travellers. This also applies to East Midlands and Manchester Airports which are served by important connecting services.
- 5.4 How people travel has changed significantly in recent years as economic activity has continued to grow. More people are using the railway, and people are choosing to travel at different times such as evenings and at weekends to new or alternative destinations. The markets for commuting, education, business, tourism and leisure will all continue to change and it is therefore necessary that rail services provided by the West Midlands Franchise can meet the future needs of existing and prospective passengers and the growing economies in the franchise area.
- 5.5 There are opportunities for services between key centres and transport hubs to be altered to reflect changed patterns of demand. This includes the possibility of providing new services to new destinations, altering or introducing services to improve cross regional links and reopening rail stations or lines to passenger services.

- 5.6 There is also the recently announced West Midlands Devolution Deal⁹ which includes a 10 year transport improvement “Connectivity Programme”¹⁰, the draft implementation plan for which will be submitted to Government early in 2016. Meanwhile the pan-regional Midlands Connect initiative is developing a package of wider transport investment in partnership with Network Rail, which is designed to maximise the economic growth potential of the Midlands.
- 5.7 We are looking at areas where timetables can be improved to provide services at times when and to places where more people now want to travel. For example, as we move increasingly towards a 24/7 society, passengers and stakeholders have given strong feedback that early morning, evening and Sunday services need to be improved in some areas to meet changing demands. Please see section 2.23 for details of improvements that will be introduced before the start of the next franchise.
- 5.8 If we want to make changes and deliver improvements to better meet passenger needs they will need to be both affordable and offer value for money. Due to the challenges we face with funding, staffing and train availability, we need to balance our aspirations for a railway that supports expected passenger growth, delivers economic benefits and meets passengers’ needs and aspirations whilst at the same time being affordable through focused and targeted use of limited resources.
- 5.9 Of the 16 rail franchises in England, the West Midlands franchise requires the second largest amount of taxpayers’ money to provide the services it operates. In order to make improvements such as more trains, new services and new/ improved facilities we have to demonstrate they provide value for this taxpayers’ money and are affordable within the funding in the franchise. This means they need to demonstrate economic and social benefits, and cover their costs by generating money, for example through more ticket sales. If this cannot be achieved, we need to identify and look at under-used services so that, where appropriate, we can redistribute resources to where there is a more significant need. This will enable us to make sure all the available resources are best matched to the journeys passengers want to make whilst also making services more attractive.



⁹ <http://www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk/assets/docs/WestMidlandsDealDocument.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://centreforenterprise.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/HS2-Connectivity-Package.pdf>

5.10 There are a small number of services provided in the West Midlands franchise that are very lightly used or where the frequency of service appears higher than demand may justify. One example is a late night service from Worcester to Gloucester on Friday evenings only. This regularly carries fewer than 10 passengers which means that the average amount of taxpayers' money used to subsidise the service per passenger is four times higher than that for other West Midlands franchise services.

Q7: In order to make improvements to the network, we would like your views on how specific train services could be changed to better meet demand with a focus on the following areas:

- **Where demand merits it, increasing service frequency:**
 - **In the peak and/or off peak period**
 - **During evenings, Saturdays and Sundays**
 - **In the early morning (i.e. before the peak period)**
 - **Over the Christmas and New Year period**
- **Where demand is low and resources/funding could be better used in areas that need it more, decreasing service frequency:**
 - **In the peak and/or off peak period**
 - **During evenings, Saturdays and Sundays**
 - **In the early morning (i.e. before the peak period)**
 - **Over the Christmas and New Year period**
- **Increasing or decreasing service levels on a seasonal basis to better match travel patterns during these times**
- **Reducing the number of stops at stations used by few people to provide quicker services for through passengers**
- **Increasing the number of stops at stations where demand is higher than the current train frequency merits**
- **Adjusting the times of first and/or last services where this better meets today's travel patterns**
- **Introducing new routes or services and providing new links to stations including those not currently served by the franchise e.g. to other regions**
- **Reopening railway lines currently not used by passenger services**

Considering the areas set out above, are you aware of any opportunities to improve, reduce or change rail services to make better use of resource and meet the needs of existing and prospective passengers?

Please provide reasons and evidence to support your views where possible.

Potential third party promoted schemes

- 5.11 We may consider proposals for schemes from third parties such as Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships which could be delivered in the new franchise. These proposals could involve the provision of new or additional services or, in certain circumstances, a reduction in the level of service.
- 5.12 The operator will be required to work with the promoters of third party schemes that will be implemented during or beyond the new franchise period.
- 5.13 Any proposals for third party promoted schemes must:
- comply with the objectives of the franchise (as set out in section 1);
 - be operationally deliverable;
 - demonstrate value for money for the passenger and the taxpayer; and
 - be funded by promoters for at least an initial three year period (for which the promoter will need to provide evidence of funding).
- 5.14 We welcome proposals for any future third party schemes. For further information, please see “Conditions relating to the funding of new or enhanced services promoted by Local Bodies”, which is included at Appendix G.



- 5.15 Some services between stations operate with irregular gaps between trains. This is generally either due to the way the timetable is set to reflect usage, for example on the Cross-City North route between Four Oaks and Lichfield, or because a mixture of fast, limited stop services and slower services that call at several stations operate on the same lines, for example between Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury.
- 5.16 In these situations, it may be possible to make changes to the service pattern in order to operate a service with a more evenly spaced timetable. The advantages and disadvantages of doing this are:

Advantages:

- A timetable for passengers that is easier to understand and remember
- More regular connections to other services
- Links to new stations
- Better reliability
- A shorter gap between trains at some stations
- Better spread of passengers over services reducing overcrowding
- The ability to run a similar level of service with slightly fewer trains, although overall capacity for passengers could stay the same through train lengthening

Disadvantages:

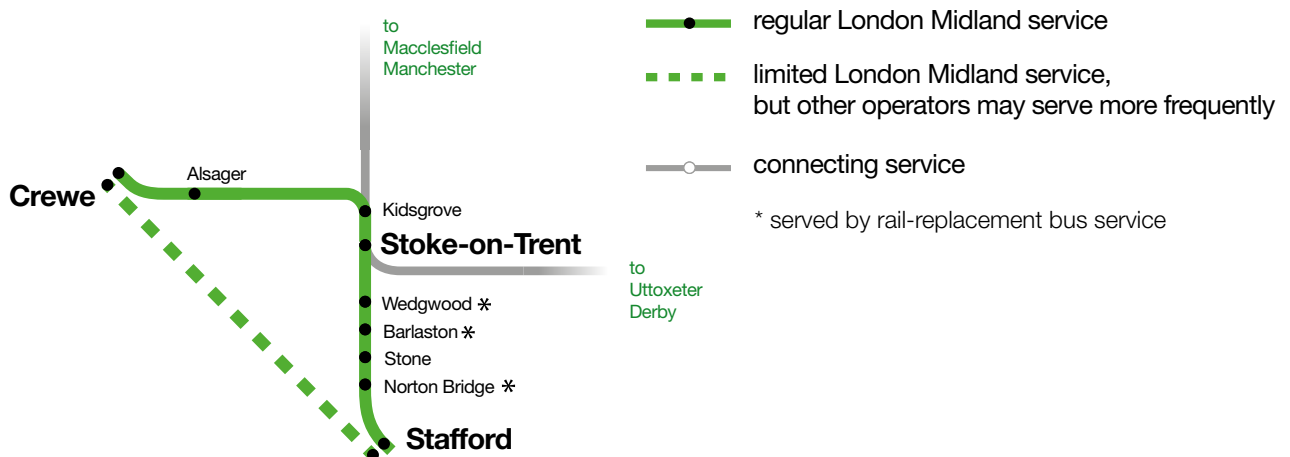
- Some journeys could be longer if the regular pattern for a service calls at more stations
- Fewer trains calling at some stations

Q8: Considering the information outlined above, and assuming the same amount of seats would be provided per hour, in principle would you prefer either:

- **A service that operates to an evenly spaced timetable so that gaps between trains are regular (with potentially fewer trains/longer journey times); or**
- **A service that operates at irregular times with more trains per hour, however there may be a mixture of long and small gaps between services at some stations.**

Please explain your reasons. If you are aware of any routes or locations where you feel that a more evenly spaced timetable can or should be operated please provide details.

- 5.17 London Midland currently provides an hourly service from London Euston to Crewe via Stoke-on-Trent. This provides the main service at stations between Nuneaton and Stafford including Atherstone, Tamworth, Lichfield Trent Valley and Rugeley Trent Valley. It also provides the local service between Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe.



- 5.18 Since the Trent Valley part of the service was introduced in 2008, passenger numbers have grown significantly. There is an issue, however, that some of the stations between Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe have shorter platforms that can only cater for four carriages. This means trains either have to be limited to four carriages and often become crowded or they are longer but have to run directly from Stafford to Crewe, missing out Stone, Stoke-on-Trent, Kidsgrove and Alsager.
- 5.19 We would like people's views on whether the current service should continue to operate as it does now, or whether a direct route from Stafford to Crewe should be run at all times, providing a consistent timetable and allowing longer trains to operate. It is possible that this service could be provided by another operator through another franchise.
- 5.20 For those passengers using the current service between Stafford and Crewe at Stone, Stoke-on-Trent, Kidsgrove and Alsager this would mean having to change trains at Stafford to travel to London. However, despite needing to change trains, initial investigations show that this could lead to a journey time saving for passengers as connecting services to London would be quicker than the current through service. For example, the journey time from Stone to Euston could be reduced from around 2 hours 14 minutes to around 1 hour 45 minutes if timetables between connecting trains can be co-ordinated at Stafford. The operator would also be required to deliver measures to make sure that changing between trains at Stafford meets the needs of passengers.
- 5.21 We would also ensure that there is no reduction to the number of services per hour at each station between Stafford and Crewe via Stoke-on-Trent. We are currently

exploring options for through services to alternative destinations for passengers at these stations, for example to Birmingham. We are therefore keen to understand as part of this consultation whether people would prefer a link to a destination other than London and if so where people would wish to go. We will then use this feedback together with business case work to inform which option we proceed with.

5.22 The benefits and disadvantages of changing the current service to run directly from Stafford to Crewe are outlined below:

Benefits of a direct route:

- Quicker services to Crewe from all stations between Nuneaton and Stafford
- Longer trains can operate throughout the day, therefore helping to manage overcrowding and cater for future growth
- A more consistent timetable can be provided for all stations as all trains will take the same route
- New through services to other destinations e.g. Birmingham for stations between Stafford and Crewe via Stoke-on-Trent
- Potential for reduced journey times to London for stations between Stafford and Crewe via Stoke-on-Trent despite having to change trains
- No reduction in trains calling at any station

Disadvantages:

- Loss of a through service to London for Stone, Stoke-on-Trent, Kidsgrove and Alsager – passengers would have to change at Stafford
- Loss of links from regional stations such as Nuneaton and Lichfield to Stoke-on-Trent
- Fares to London may differ if the interchange is onto another operators' service

Q9: Considering the information outlined above, which of these options would you prefer and why?

- ***Maintaining the current direct London Midland service from London Euston to Crewe via Stoke-on-Trent; or***
- ***Operating the current Euston to Crewe service directly from Stafford to Crewe, and providing an alternative service for stations between Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe which would provide new links to destinations south of Stafford.***

Where possible please provide your reasons. If you have a priority for which new destinations an alternative service between Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe should serve please let us know here.

- 5.23 The railway stations in Barlaston, Norton Bridge and Wedgwood in Staffordshire have been served by replacement bus services since 2004.
- 5.24 We will be looking at whether services can be delivered by rail rather than replacement bus services at one or more of these stations. To do this, we currently intend to carry out a separate public consultation in 2016 to understand what is most important locally when looking at the future of these stations.
- 5.25 This will take into account a number of factors including the views of the public, affordability, local regeneration, ease of getting to the station, and the positive and negative impacts rail services can have on local communities.

Managing disruption

- 5.26 Passengers and stakeholders have told us that it is a priority for trains to arrive and depart on time (punctuality), every time (reliability). Frequently delayed and cancelled trains have been highlighted by Transport Focus as a key area of concern for West Midlands franchise passengers, particularly commuters.
- 5.27 Our aspiration is for the new West Midlands franchise operator to become best in class for reliability and punctuality. This will be driven through set targets and regimes which are designed to keep delays and cancellations to a minimum and encourage continuous improvement in areas within the franchisee's control and influence.
- 5.28 For the new franchise, the operator will be expected to demonstrate how they will proactively improve reliability and punctuality and manage problems in ways that are focused on the needs of customers rather than what is perhaps operationally straight-forward.
- 5.29 This will include a plan outlining measures to reduce the occurrence of problems happening and reduce the impact of issues on passengers as well as contingency plans for main routes in case things do go wrong. It will also mean ensuring measures are in place to avoid shortening trains wherever possible during busy peak periods.
- 5.30 While disruption can be caused by unplanned situations arising such as signalling problems, broken down trains, trespassers or weather, it can also be the result of known issues such as necessary safety and improvement works being undertaken on the railway.
- 5.31 During the course of the new franchise there will be significant work carried out to deliver improvements to the rail network.
- 5.32 There may be times when these works cannot be undertaken during normal engineering hours which mean trains either cannot operate, need to use an alternative route or need to terminate at a station short of their final destination.

- 5.33 The operator will be required to work with rail industry partners like Network Rail, HS2 Ltd, other rail companies and local transport authorities during the delivery of rail projects to keep any resulting disruption to a minimum through areas such as:
- ensuring trains terminate at stations that enable people to travel on to their desired destination with as little disruption as possible;
 - lengthening of any trains which can still run through to their destination; and
 - changing stopping patterns to allow as many trains to get to their destination, if possible, without causing punctuality or reliability problems.
- 5.34 We will be asking the new franchise operator to speak to passengers and stakeholders to make sure they operationally manage both planned and unplanned disruption in the most customer focused way.
- 5.35 A particular focus will be needed on the provision of information in disruption, which has emerged as the biggest area of overall dissatisfaction for rail passengers in work by Transport Focus. This is despite developments in the methods through which information is communicated, such as real-time information screens, social media, websites and announcements.
- 5.36 We will be seeking proposals from the operator as to how they can use both existing and new channels of communication to ensure people are kept up to date during disruption before they set off on their journey, at the station and on the train.
- 5.37 We will also encourage consideration of new ways in which the operator can communicate with their passengers including use of innovative and smart solutions, including advocating partnerships with technology providers. However, we recognise that the basics also need to be right including accurate information at stations, on train announcements and staff being available to provide information when needed.

Q10: During railway disruption what information would you like to know, and when and how would you like to receive it during:

- ***Known disruption such as engineering works***
- ***Unplanned disruption such as signalling issues?***

Please provide your reasons and examples of where this works well either by the existing train company or elsewhere on the wider rail/public transport network.

Managing major events

- 5.38 Rail services in the West Midlands franchise area provide transport to a number of locations where major events are held including sporting stadia, for example Wembley, Villa Park and Coventry Arena, large exhibition centres like the NEC at Birmingham International and major organised events such as Birmingham’s German Market and the Cosford Air Show.
- 5.39 Rail use also changes at certain times of year, for example in the run up to and over the Christmas period.
- 5.40 Passengers have fed back that they believe that the timing, capacity and frequency of services is not appropriate for some major events e.g. evening concerts, and that more could be done to support passengers and the events themselves.
- 5.41 We would like bidders for the West Midland franchise to set out how they can cater for these events in a way that best supports the needs of customers and attracts more people to travel by rail while also supporting the leisure and visitor economies of the locations the events are held.

Q11: In what ways can the franchise operator provide better services, ticketing and information for passengers to serve major events?

Please provide details of any specific events, the reasons why services need improving and any examples of best practice you are aware of.



6. Question Area C – Making sure you feel valued and safe

Fares and ticketing

- 6.1 The price of travelling by rail is an important issue for customers and is a key factor in whether someone chooses to travel by train or not, especially when they have alternative options available. For example, 53% of rail commuters in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area have a car available for their journey but choose to use the train instead.
- 6.2 Many fares in the West Midlands franchise area are at levels that are comparable with those for similar journeys elsewhere on the local transport network including those for other rail services, bus and tram. However, a key factor behind the price customers pay for fares lies in which fares are capped by Government (regulated fares) and which can be freely set by the train operator itself (unregulated fares).
- 6.3 There are also examples where fares were initially set at a lower level for historic policy reasons (for example to encourage travel to a new station) but which now mean they are inconsistent with fares for similar journeys. For example, one route where fares are much lower than on other similar routes is on the Rugeley to Birmingham line (Chase Line) where, unlike any other route, Zone 5 nTrain season tickets are available outside the West Midlands Metropolitan (Centro) Area. This means that passengers from Rugeley to Birmingham, a journey of some 25 miles, can travel for as little as £4 per day.
- 6.4 We want to ensure that customers feel they are valued and being treated fairly, while attracting more people to the rail network and generating revenue/income to pay for improvements. We would also like to see people paying similar fares for comparable journeys, with prices that are appropriate to the services they are receiving. To achieve this we intend to review how fares are regulated within the franchise and look at whether there are opportunities to both better protect passengers in a clear, fair and consistent way whilst encouraging innovation from the operator to introduce new ticket types to benefit customers.

Q12a: What are your views on the value for money you receive for your train journeys in the franchise area when compared to other transport choices available to you?

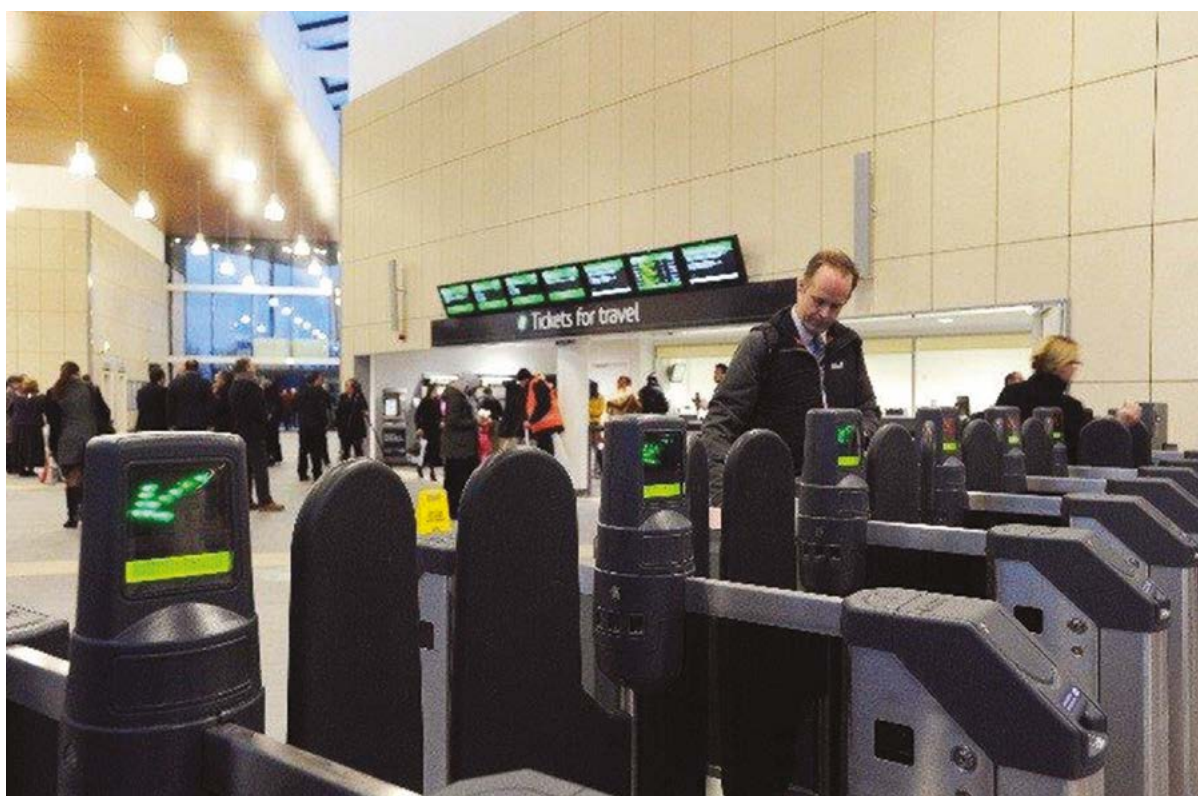
Q12b: Does the range of ticket types available meet your needs or are there specific examples of new types of fare that you would like to see introduced?

Where possible please give the reasons for your answer.

Paying for your journey

- 6.5 Stakeholders and customers tell us that making it easier for passengers to pay for their journey and reducing the number of people travelling without tickets are important issues that the new franchise operator will need to address.
- 6.6 Passengers expect to get the best possible deal when booking rail journeys. It is clear that ticket buying habits are changing with more people purchasing their tickets online and at ticket machines.
- 6.7 We expect the new West Midlands franchise operator to improve passenger satisfaction in relation to fares, ticketing and retail by providing passengers with widespread and easy access to the full range of tickets, ensuring that they have all the information they need to select and purchase the most appropriate ticket for their journey.
- 6.8 To achieve this, we will ask the future operator to work with partners to introduce more modern ways for people to pay for their journey. This includes making greater use of new technology, looking at trends in passenger behaviour, reviewing the opening hours of ticket offices and considering the role of station staff, while also considering how they can make the back-office systems involved in ticket sales more efficient.
- 6.9 We will also be asking the new operator to work with the DfT, WMR, local authorities and other stakeholders to deliver improvements to enable a significant increase in the use of smart ticketing by ensuring it is available across a wide range of media, for example smartphones, tablets, printing at home, etc. and allow seamless travel across the boundaries of different transport authorities. This includes a strong aspiration to withdraw magnetic strip ticketing by 2018.
- 6.10 We are aware that a number of journeys in the West Midlands franchise area are made without a valid ticket either intentionally or because there is no option to buy a ticket. This is a particular problem on certain routes and can be attributed to a range of factors including unstaffed stations, a lack of suitable and available ticket machines and gates and a lack of ticket checks due to overcrowding or conductors being busy with door operation, dispatch and announcements. We are undertaking a “ticketless travel” survey in spring 2016 to better understand the scale and location of the problem.

6.11 Ticketless travel understandably makes those who do buy a ticket feel aggrieved. The train company also loses a proportion of its income as a result. It is therefore important from both a passenger and operational perspective to reduce the amount of ticketless travel and make it easier for passengers to pay for their journey. There are a number of initiatives and improvements the new operator could be asked to deliver to address these issues.



6.12 To help inform what bidders should focus on with regards to paying for journeys and reducing the number of people that travel without a valid ticket, we would like your views on what you think the priorities are.

Q13: We want to make it easier for passengers to pay for their journey and reduce the number of people travelling without tickets. Some of the potential options to help achieve this, subject to affordability and deliverability, could include:

- a) Providing suitable, working ticket machines at more/all stations, including unstaffed stations, to ensure that passengers always have the ability to purchase a ticket before they travel, including when booking offices are closed;**
- b) Promoting and developing new and innovative options for how people pay for their journey, such as the wider roll out of smart ticketing (where journeys are paid for with an electronic card), bank card or mobile phone payments and working with other retailers to sell tickets;**
- c) Removing the Permit to Travel machines, encouraging passengers to use the ticket machines at stations to ensure they have a valid ticket to travel;**
- d) Promoting and looking at options to increase the range of services available from the booking office – for example some areas such as Merseyside use rail station ticket offices to provide attraction tickets and tourist information at key locations;**
- e) Undertaking a review of ticket office opening hours so that they offer a consistent and easy-to-use option for passengers;**
- f) Further roll out of ticket barriers;**
- g) Ensuring that ticket barriers, where provided, are in use consistently;**
- h) Looking at options to provide better visibility of staff and ticket checking on-train, in particular to ensure that passengers undertaking intermediate journeys away from major stations are likely to have their ticket checked; and**
- i) Continuing and developing arrangements to prevent and deter ticketless travel to ensure that passengers are strongly encouraged to purchase a ticket, with staff available to support the process.**

Considering the options above and any other ideas you may have, in order of importance please list what you think are the priorities for the new operator to focus on to:

- a) ensure it is as easy as possible to pay for your journey; and**
- b) deter people from travelling without a valid ticket?**

Please provide your reasons and state if you are aware of any specific locations where it is difficult to buy tickets or where people travel without a valid ticket.

Personal security

- 6.13 Personal security levels on the railway are good, with recorded offences per passenger journey being very low at just 0.003%. However, perceptions of personal security are still a key barrier to using the rail network. Research by Transport Focus has identified it as an issue that is very important to passengers as captured in its publication “Perceptions of Personal Security on the Railway”.
- 6.14 The new franchise provides an opportunity for bidders to develop plans to improve people’s perceptions of personal security on trains and at stations.
- 6.15 This could include more/improved CCTV coverage, lighting improvements, increased staff presence and obtaining Safer Stations Accreditation. It should also involve closer working with British Transport Police, the West Midlands Safer Travel Partnership, local authorities, policing units, communities and businesses. We will ask bidders for the new franchise to set out how they will approach improvements to health, safety, anti-social behaviour and security for customers, staff and suppliers.
- 6.16 West Midlands franchise passengers have fed back that they value the presence and availability of staff on trains and at stations to provide reassurance and assistance, and so they can provide information and sell/check tickets. Bidders will be asked to provide proposals as to how they will provide a greater level of staff presence.
- 6.17 At the moment it is difficult for staff on some trains to spend more time passing through carriages as they are required to operate doors, dispatch trains and in some cases make next stop announcements. Therefore one way that bidders might wish to explore is looking at how some of these responsibilities can be picked up by other staff. For example, door operation and dispatch of the train could be undertaken by the driver rather than the conductor in what is known as “driver controlled operation” (DCO).
- 6.18 This means other staff on-board the train are able to focus on customer service and revenue protection. It does not mean that we are looking to have trains without a member of staff in addition to the driver on board. It is our intention that staff will be employed in valuable skilled jobs that respect their position in the railway and enable them to progress in rewarding and fulfilling careers. We want the railway to be an employer of choice to attract and retain high quality people.
- 6.19 We are keen to understand key issues and areas where people have safety and security concerns to help inform bidders during the development of their plans to address these issues.

Q14: What could be done to improve security to make your train journey better and encourage more people to use rail services?

This could include on the way to or at the station or on board the train.

Where possible please provide specific details and your reasons why.

Customer experience

- 6.20 Improvements to passenger satisfaction are a priority for both the DfT and WMR. We are investigating ways to ensure the operator improves satisfaction through targets. Our aspiration is for the new West Midlands operator to be the best of its class in the area of customer satisfaction.
- 6.21 Through work with Transport Focus we have identified key areas where passenger satisfaction is at a good level and where there is a need for a focus on improvement.
- 6.22 In focus group work, customers said they view the current service as one that is reasonably priced but which offers a “no frills” service when compared with other train companies. They also fed back that they would like to feel more valued as customers.
- 6.23 We will be asking train companies bidding for the new franchise to provide plans setting out how they will improve the overall quality of service delivered to passengers. They will be asked to find innovative ways to increase the level of customer satisfaction over and above current levels. We will be seeking improvements that above all enhance the overall quality of the service experienced by passengers and encourage new or increased usage. This will include areas not specifically referenced elsewhere in this consultation document such as cleanliness, compensation for delays, customer service from staff on train and at stations, and ideas for schemes to reward regular users.
- 6.24 We are keen to understand what service levels customers expect, in particular in the areas of customer service, information and dealing with customer compensation, comments, queries and complaints, so we can make the rail network more attractive to both existing and new users.
- 6.25 As mentioned previously, accurate and timely information is a priority for passengers. People want to be able to plan their journey easily from their origin to their destination, and be given all the information they need to make an informed choice about which services to use.
- 6.26 This could include information on which trains are busiest, journey times for different services (i.e. some services depart later but arrive earlier than others due to their speed and number of stops), services offered on board or at stations and how easy it is to get to the station by public transport, car, on foot or by bike.

6.27 With the advancement of technology and communications the opportunity to provide passengers with better quality, more timely, broad (but relevant) and responsive information should become easier, and we expect the operator to make best use of these developments for passengers.

Q15: What represents good service for you on your rail journey and what could be improved or introduced to make you feel more valued as a customer and encourage you to recommend the railway to others?

Please state whether you are referring to long or short distance services and give reasons including any relevant examples of outstanding customer service experiences, related or unrelated to passenger rail services.

Q16: How could the provision of information on rail services be improved and what additional information would be of use to you when planning or making your journey e.g. seat availability, journey times, and connection information?

Where possible please provide reasons for your answers.



Local identity and ownership

- 6.28 In some areas of the country, trains and stations have a brand that represents the area in which they are located rather than one that is specific to the train company running the service. This provides a long lasting, strong and consistent identity for rail services, stations, staff, marketing and publicity in a specific area which could then be used across the wider local public transport network i.e. for bus and tram. It also removes the need for train companies to undergo changes to branding every time a new franchise is let.
- 6.29 As part of the devolution of West Midlands' rail services, the new operator will be asked to separate the franchise into two sets of services known as business units. One business unit would comprise of West Midlands local services and the other would be made up of the services that run between Liverpool and Birmingham and Crewe and London (including branch lines) along the West Coast Main Line. A map showing how this might work is provided in Appendix C.
- 6.30 As part of this process we will consider the value of having a specific brand for each set of services which provides a clear and identifiable network for passengers. This could be similar to that provided in Liverpool with Merseyrail.
- 6.31 A local brand carries values that represents local customers' needs and aspirations and encourages a greater sense of ownership by local communities. It needs to be linked to plans to provide more local management of rail services by allowing specific targets and standards to be created that are relevant to the area. This can be threaded through the operation of local services with the DfT, and WMR where relevant, working with the new train company and its staff to determine and incorporate these values and ensure they are supported and promoted.

Q17: Should the railway have its own identity representing the areas it serves rather than the train company that operates the services e.g. a specific brand on services that run within West Midlands area?

Please give us a reason for your response to help us understand your view.

7. Question Area D – A considerate, sustainable railway

Communities and the rail industry working in partnership

- 7.1 In many areas of the country formal partnerships exist where communities work together with their local train operator and other organisations to influence and support improvements to rail services, stations, signals and tracks. These include Community Rail Partnerships and station adoption or sponsorship schemes and are usually supported by representatives of the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 7.2 The Department for Transport works closely with the [Association of Community Rail Partnerships \(ACoRP\)](#), the umbrella organisation for community rail partnerships, rail user groups and volunteers who work with community rail.
- 7.3 Research has shown that community rail partnerships reduce costs and generate revenue. They provide many wider benefits to the passengers and areas they serve for example by reducing anti-social behaviour and providing a more local, friendly face to the railway which can also help to save money in the operation of the railway. They also provide a range of economic, social and environmental benefits including supporting regeneration.¹¹
- 7.4 Evidence shows that passenger use tends to grow faster on rail lines with formal community schemes by increasing awareness of local rail services, raising satisfaction and helping to attract and secure more funding for improvement projects, for example Ridgmont station between Bletchley and Bedford (The Marston Vale Line). Some stations like Ridgmont have out of use rooms or buildings that can provide premises for local groups or businesses to use. The regeneration scheme at Ridgmont has brought new life to a once redundant station building as office space for local businesses, a heritage centre and a popular tea room that serves the local community and railway users.
- 7.5 We are keen to see the development of more formal community schemes in the West Midlands franchise area in line with the Community Rail Development Strategy. At present there are only two formal Community Rail Partnerships in the West Midlands

¹¹ <http://www.acorp.uk.com/values2015.html>

franchise area (on the Abbey Line and The Marston Vale Line) and we would like to see this grow to emulate the many successful partnerships seen in other areas of the country.



- 7.6 We are currently working with partners to investigate how communities, organisations and users can play a more active role in their rail station and service to help provide the facilities that passengers and the local area need and aspire to have.
- 7.7 To support this, we will expect the operator of the new West Midlands franchise to provide funding and investment in these partnerships, and indicate how they propose to work with communities over the life of the franchise.
- 7.8 Additionally we would like to encourage local communities, local businesses and local government to build on existing partnerships and come forward with their own proposals to partner train operators with either station adoption or Community Rail Partnerships.
- 7.9 We would also like to encourage the operator of the new West Midlands franchise to develop joint working arrangements with heritage railways and operators within the franchise area. This could include marketing or the operation of joint services, for example for special events, where financially and operationally feasible.

Q18: How could communities, businesses and/or other organisations within the public, private and voluntary sectors be encouraged to play an active part in the running of the railway stations or services in their area?

If you are an individual or group that would like to become involved in a Community Rail Partnership or Station Adoption please contact us at westmidsconsultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk with community in the title of your email.

A considerate, sustainable railway

- 7.10 It is a priority for both the DfT and WMR that the new West Midlands franchise operator provides rail services in a sustainable way that is considerate of the environment, its social and economic impact, its workforce, equality and wellbeing within the area it serves.
- 7.11 We will be asking train companies bidding for the West Midlands franchise to set out how they can provide rail services (including all the support functions it needs) in a way that respects and helps to maintain the environment. This will include waste avoidance and reduction, recycling, better energy and carbon performance and the reduced use of water and other resources where possible.
- 7.12 We will expect bidders to outline how they can support economic growth and work with local communities to listen to passengers, residents and businesses – involving them in decisions that affect their lives and making sure that rail services are responsive to social needs.
- 7.13 We will ask the new operator to have a particular focus on its workforce, supporting equality, diversity, health and wellbeing. We want to make sure staff feel valued and that the training is available to develop and retain people in the industry and attract new people.
- 7.14 In specifying the new franchise, we are considering the views of stakeholders, including those representing disabled passengers' needs, as well as the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010:
- to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
 - to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

- 7.15 In line with the Public Contracts (Social Value) Act 2012, we will also be considering how the West Midlands franchise can improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area it serves.
- 7.16 In August 2014 the Government introduced a Family Test to ensure that all Government policy making takes into account the impact it may have on family relationships.
- 7.17 We will consider how the new franchise may impact on families, having regard to the questions posed by the Family Test. Further details and guidance on the application of the Family Test to new Government policies may be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/family-test-assessing-the-impact-of-policies-on-families>
- 7.18 We will be asking bidders how they can help both local and national government in their commitments to have due regard to all the aspects outlined above in the development and delivery of passenger services. We are keen to understand your views as to where these areas can be improved to help inform companies when setting out their plans.

Q19: Based on your experience or knowledge of the railway, how do you think train services, railway stations and supporting services should be delivered so that they consider and support the environment, equality and the communities/areas they operate within?

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 To conclude this consultation we would like to give you the opportunity to provide any views, comments or areas of best practice you have not had the opportunity to give through the specific question areas.

Q20: If there are any additional areas that you think it is important for us to consider that have not already been addressed in this consultation please explain them here.

A summary of all questions is provided in Appendix H. The online survey is available at <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/west-midlands-franchise/>

What happens next

- 8.2 Following the conclusion of the consultation process, the DfT and WMR will be working together to analyse all the responses and to use them to inform what we put into the specification – the document which sets out what we want the operator of the new West Midlands franchise to provide. We will publish a report which will summarise stakeholder views and how they have been fed into the specification. This will form a key reference document for the bidders, and is expected to be published in summer 2016.
- 8.3 Those who respond to this consultation will receive a copy of this document via email when it becomes available. Paper copies will be available on request.

Consultation Principles

The consultation is being conducted in line with the Government's key consultation principles. Further information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>

If you have any comments about the consultation principles please contact:

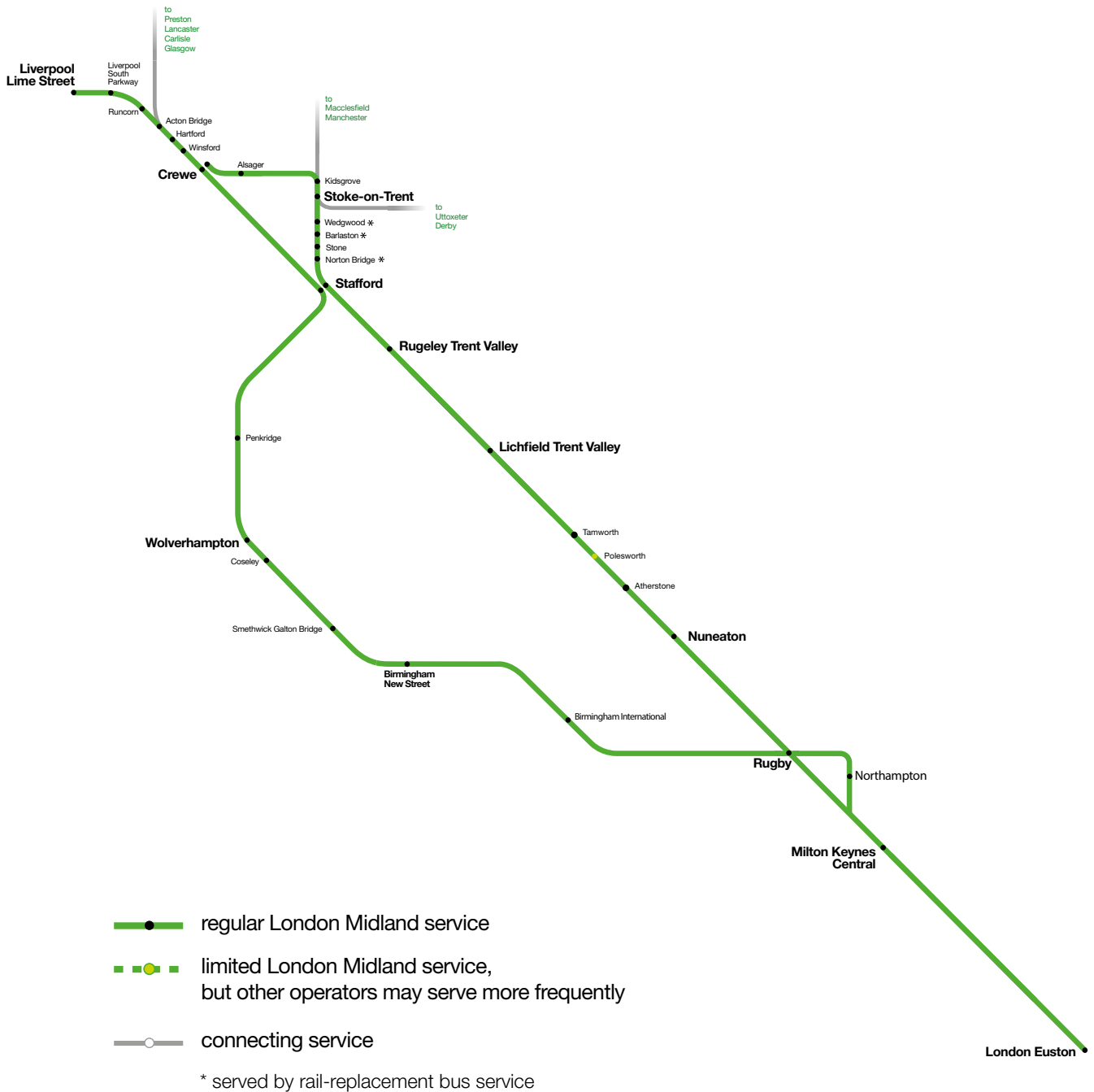
Consultation Co-ordinator
Department for Transport
Zone 1/29 Great Minster House
London SW1P 4DR

Email: consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk

West Midlands Franchise Route Map – London Commuter



West Midlands Franchise Route Map – Long Distance West Coast mainline



Appendix B: franchise process & timescales

Franchise process

The West Midlands Franchise Competition will broadly follow the processes set out in the Franchise Competition Guide, published in June 2015¹².

Any deviation from this process will be documented and advised to interested parties. For example, the pre-qualification process (the process which shortlists the train companies that can bid for a franchise competition) set out in the Competition Guide has been superseded by the introduction of the PQQ Passport Qualification process which allows the selection of a group of train companies that can then bid for a number of franchise competitions over a set period. An OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) Notice was issued in September inviting train companies to put themselves forward for any franchise competitions over a four year period including West Midlands, South Western and InterCity West Coast.

Franchise timescales

An indication of the proposed timescales for the West Midlands Franchise Competition is given below. This is intended as a guide and we reserve the right to depart from the timetable.

December 2015

Bidder Day (for train companies to meet the franchise team)

Issue Expressions of Interest to selected train companies, inviting them to submit bids for the West Midlands franchise

Public consultation starts

January 2016 – March 2016

Series of consultation events

March 2016

Public consultation closes, analysis of responses takes place

Receipt of applications from train companies in response to Expressions of Interest

¹² https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/443621/franchise-competition-guide.pdf

April 2016

Shortlist train companies to create a list of bidders for the West Midlands franchise

July 2016

Publication of Stakeholder Briefing Document outlining how responses to the public consultation have informed what we are asking for from the new West Midlands franchise operator

Issue Invitation to tender to bidders, setting out what they will be required to deliver and asking for proposals and costs for doing so.

November 2016

Receive bids from shortlisted train companies in response to the ITT

November 2016 – June 2017

Analyse bids and select train company to operate the new franchise

June 2017

Award contract for the new franchise to the successful bidder

June 2017 – October 2017

Handover from current operator

October 2017

New franchise starts

Appendix D: major schemes

This appendix provides a list of some of the major railway and station schemes in the West Midlands franchise area delivered in the last five years, and due to be delivered in the next ten years.

Schemes delivered in last five years

Birmingham New Street Gateway

This saw the major redevelopment of Birmingham New Street station, Phase 2 of which opened in September 2015 and provided platform improvements, easier access to the concourse by stairs, escalators and lifts, a new high quality shopping area (Grand Central) within the station including a major new department store (John Lewis), new entrances and walkways to improve access to the station on foot, a new taxi and drop off area and new public information systems. Some works to Navigation Street bridge and platforms will continue in 2016.

The redevelopment of Birmingham New Street forms part of a much wider investment package for the city. The extension of Midland Metro from Birmingham Snow Hill Station through the heart of the city to Birmingham New Street is due to be completed in early 2016 and further extensions will connect the tram network to Wolverhampton Station and public transport interchange by and the Birmingham Broad Street conference and leisure area by 2019.

Access for All

Schemes to improve accessibility by delivering step-free access have been delivered at the following stations: Acocks Green, Berkhamsted, Crewe, Hemel Hempstead, Fenny Stratford, Hereford, Leighton Buzzard, London Euston, Northfield, Selly Oak, Shirley, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sutton Coldfield and Wembley Central.

Other schemes to make the railway easier to use and more accessible have been delivered at a large number of stations across the network, including the provision of improved Disability Discrimination Act compliant seating, portable ramps, information displays and accessible toilets and ticket windows.

National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP) and other station enhancements

NSIP schemes have been delivered by London Midland in partnership with Network Rail and Centro along the Chase Line between Birmingham and Rugeley including at Bloxwich, Bloxwich North, Landywood, Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley Town.

Other improvements include a new ticket office at Lichfield Trent Valley, a new station building at Northampton, refurbished waiting rooms at Birmingham Snow Hill and car park expansions at many locations across the Franchise area. Chiltern Railways has also made improvements at Warwick and Leamington Spa, both stations served by the West Midlands Franchise.

Centro area car parking

Centro has recently undertaken a major programme of expanding Park and Ride provision with over 850 additional spaces being provided since February 2014 at Longbridge, Kings Norton, Rowley Regis, Stourbridge Jn Yardley Wood and Four Oaks (still underway). This brings Centro's car parking provision to more than 8,000 spaces at 38 stations.

West Midlands rail re-signalling

£350 million has been spent over ten years upgrading the signalling systems on the West Midlands rail network including the areas around Coventry, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Water Orton.

Redditch Line Passing Loop

A new passing loop has been provided at Alvechurch on the Barnt Green to Redditch Line which allowed the frequency of the Redditch to Birmingham Cross City Line service to increase from half-hourly to three trains per hour from December 2014.

Schemes due to be delivered in the next ten years

Walsall to Rugeley electrification

This scheme provides the overhead electric power lines and other associated equipment/ track changes to enable electric trains to run between Birmingham, Walsall and Rugeley Trent Valley. This will allow quicker journey times, more frequent off peak services, more seats, fewer delays and fewer cancellations. A further benefit of this scheme is that it will free up much needed diesel trains (which are in short supply) to run elsewhere on the rail network.

Bromsgrove station

A new station at Bromsgrove is currently being provided by Centro and Worcestershire County Council which includes significantly improved passenger facilities, longer platforms and a much bigger car park. The station is currently under construction and due to open in Spring 2016.

Bromsgrove electrification

The rail line between Birmingham and Barnt Green has the equipment to allow electric trains to run, but this does not continue for the 3.5 miles between Barnt Green and Bromsgrove where diesel trains have to operate. This project will provide new overhead electric power lines to Bromsgrove and will allow Cross City Line services that currently start/terminate at Longbridge to be extended to/from Bromsgrove. This will deliver a significant frequency enhancement at Bromsgrove (from hourly to four trains per hour) and complements the new station scheme.

Stafford Area Improvement Scheme

This scheme aims to improve the performance of trains between Manchester/Birmingham and London/Liverpool by building a flyover where there is currently a flat junction between two lines. This is being done in three phases:

- Phase 1 – Line speed improvements between Crewe and Norton Bridge will increase the speed at which trains can operate on the ‘slow’ lines from 75mph to 100mph.
- Phase 2 – Stafford re-signalling, a new loop for freight trains and an upgrade to the signalling, telecoms and power supplies.
- Phase 3 – Flyover constructed at Norton Bridge with completion expected by December 2017.

East West Rail

East West Rail will deliver improvements so that direct rail services can run between Oxford/Aylesbury and Milton Keynes/Bedford. It is split into two phases:

- Phase 1 will enable services between London Marylebone and Oxford via Bicester and will have no impact on the West Midlands franchise.
- Phase 2 will deliver the works east of Bicester to Bedford and Bletchley. This will allow direct trains to run from Bedford to Oxford/Reading and from Milton Keynes to London via Aylesbury.

HS2

HS2 is the new railway connecting London with the West Midlands (Phase One), before running on to Crewe (Phase 2A) followed by Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield (Phase 2B).

HS2 will provide a new rail line which will deliver a huge increase in the number of trains and passenger capacity on our main north–south routes, not only on the new railway itself, but also by freeing up space on the current rail lines allowing for significant improvements in intercity, commuter and freight services. This increased capacity, combined with reduced journey times between our major towns and cities will stimulate economic growth in the Midlands and the North.

Construction is due to begin in 2017. The Additional Provision 3 (AP3) was submitted to Parliament in September 2015 and describes the planned High Speed 2 scheme for Euston and construction phasing. The petitioning period closed in October 2015 and the Bill is progressing through Parliament with Royal Assent planned for December 2016.

Phase One will open in 2026 followed by Phase 2A to Crewe in 2027, and Phase 2B in 2033.

To ensure that the benefits of HS2 are maximised across the West Midlands area a HS2 Connectivity Package has been produced which is designed to provide the step-change in regional public connectivity and capacity required to improve access to the two new HS2 Station Hubs. This is being partly funded by the recently agreed West Midlands Combined Authority devolution deal with Government.

Kenilworth station

Warwickshire County Council is promoting a project for a new station at Kenilworth which is currently planned to open in 2017. The station will be located on the Coventry to Leamington Spa Line and will include two 100 metre platforms capable of being used by four car trains, with provision for these to be lengthened in the future. The scheme also includes track and signalling changes at Leamington Spa.

Coventry to Nuneaton Upgrade (NUCKLE Phase 1)

This scheme is being promoted by Coventry City Council and will provide new stations at Coventry Arena and Bermuda Park, along with extended platforms at Bedworth by early 2016. A new bay platform will be installed at Coventry Station alongside other infrastructure changes to facilitate a half hourly service by 2018.

Wembley Central Platform Extensions

This scheme extends platforms 5 & 6 at Wembley Central station.

Hereford Turn-back

This scheme will deliver a turn-back at Hereford at either Platform 1 or Platforms 1 and 2 to allow trains to turn around and reverse.

Station redevelopments including major schemes within the National Stations Improvement Programme

There are a number of station regeneration projects either planned or underway:

- A substantial redevelopment of Wolverhampton station
- The creation of a new entrance and footbridge at Coventry
- A new ticket office at University station
- Major improvements to Longbridge station

- A new station frontage at Stafford
- A redevelopment of Kidsgrove station
- New bridge and lift access at Telford Central station
- Shrewsbury station upgrade including refurbished toilet facilities including the provision of a disabled toilet, redecoration of the external platform areas, refurbishment of the station canopies and resurfacing of the car park. CCTV and lighting on the footbridge will also be improved.

Access for All

Schemes to improve accessibility by delivering step-free access are in the process of or are due to be delivered at Berkhamsted, Kidsgrove, Lichfield Trent Valley, Stechford, Tring, Warwick and Worcester Shrub Hill.

Birmingham New Street area re-signalling

This scheme will renew the signalling systems and provide enhancements on routes around and through Birmingham New Street station. The scheme could be used to deliver journey time and reliability improvements and potentially provide capacity to allow more services to operate. New facilities will be installed to allow trains to turn around in times of disruption. The project is split into a number of phases with work programmed to be carried out up until December 2018.

Birmingham Snow Hill station redevelopment

Birmingham City Council and Network Rail are currently working together alongside a private developer (Ballymore) and Centro on a proposal for a major redevelopment for Snow Hill station and its surrounding area. The Draft Masterplan includes the following proposals, over a 20-year period from 2015:

- The reconfiguration of Snow Hill Station through the removal of the multi storey car park and its replacement with a new office development. A new concourse area will be created and new walking routes provided through the station;
- The reconfiguration and revitalisation of adjacent streets and land to create new connections and development land;
- Extending the amount of high-quality office space around the station; and
- Major improvements to the public realm, cycling provision and integrated transport.

Appendix E: train fleet

The current London Midland train fleet comprises of the following trains.

Diesel and electric vehicles are also known as diesel/electric multiple units (DMUs/EMUs). They are often joined together to make longer trains. The below table shows how many vehicles of each type there are and how many trains they are then made into.

Train type	Number of vehicles	Number of trains	Maximum speed (mph)	Build dates
Class 139 Flywheel LPG gas powered lightweight railcars	2	2	20	2007-08
Flywheel LPG total	2	2		
Class 150/2 diesel vehicles	6	3	75	1985-86
Class 153/1 diesel vehicles	8	8	75	1987-88
Class 170/5 diesel vehicles	34	17	100	1999-00
Class 170/6 diesel vehicles	18	6	100	2000
Class 172/2 diesel vehicles	24	12	100	2011
Class 172/3 diesel vehicles	45	15	100	2011
Diesel (DMU) total	61	135		
Class 319/4 electric vehicles	28	7	100	1987-88
Class 323 electric vehicles	78	26	90	1992-93
Class 350/1 electric vehicles	120	30	110	2004-05
Class 350/2 electric vehicles	148	37	100	2008-09
Class 350/3 electric vehicles	40	10	110	2014
Electric (EMU) total	110	414		
Overall total	173	551		

Appendix F: stations served by the franchise

Station Name	County or Unitary Authority	District or Unitary Authority	Station Facility Owner	Entries and exits in 2013/14	Interchanges
Acocks Green	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	415,420	–
Acton Bridge	Cheshire	Vale Royal	London Midland	16,612	–
Adderley Park	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	61,388	–
Albrighton	Shropshire	Bridgnorth	London Midland	89,358	–
Alsager	Cheshire	Congleton	East Midlands Trains	98,046	–
Alvechurch	Worcestershire	Bromsgrove	London Midland	159,572	–
Apsley	Hertfordshire	Dacorum	London Midland	486,374	–
Ashchurch	Gloucestershire	Tewkesbury	First Great Western	83,840	–
Aspley Guise	Bedfordshire	Mid Bedfordshire	London Midland	12,884	–
Aston	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	484,232	51,631
Atherstone	Warwickshire	North Warwickshire	London Midland	99,974	–
Bart Green	Worcestershire	Bromsgrove	London Midland	260,706	35,725
Bearley	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	1,220	–
Bedford Midland	Bedfordshire	Bedford	First Capital Connect	3,471,747	42,514
Bedford St.Johns	Bedfordshire	Bedford	London Midland	162,880	–
Bedworth	Warwickshire	Nuneaton And Bedworth	London Midland	70,106	–
Berkhamsted	Hertfordshire	Dacorum	London Midland	1,659,838	–
Berkswell	West Midlands	Solihull	London Midland	263,740	–
Bescot Stadium	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	136,546	–
Billbrook	Staffordshire	South Staffordshire	London Midland	120,548	–
Birmingham Bordesley	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	12,434	–
Birmingham International	West Midlands	Solihull	Virgin Trains	4,858,978	66,195
Birmingham Moor Street	West Midlands	Birmingham	Chiltern Railways	6,229,634	393,486
Birmingham New Street	West Midlands	Birmingham	Network Rail	34,748,984	5,193,618
Birmingham Snow Hill	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	4,435,982	257,662

Station Name	County or Unitary Authority	District or Unitary Authority	Station Facility Owner	Entries and exits in 2013/14	Interchanges
Blake Street	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	338,302	–
Blakedown	Worcestershire	Wyre Forest	London Midland	89,252	–
Bletchley	Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes	London Midland	927,512	80,126
Bloxwich	West Midlands	Walsall	London Midland	43,540	–
Bloxwich North	West Midlands	Walsall	London Midland	47,426	–
Bournville	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	1,027,470	–
Bow Brickhill	Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes	London Midland	36,836	–
Bricket Wood	Hertfordshire	St. Albans	London Midland	43,110	–
Bromsgrove	Worcestershire	Bromsgrove	London Midland	570,994	–
Bushey	Hertfordshire	Watford	London Overground	1,136,518	–
Butlers Lane	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	202,862	–
Canley	West Midlands	Coventry	London Midland	254,502	–
Cannock	Staffordshire	Cannock Chase	London Midland	247,942	–
Cheddington	Buckinghamshire	Aylesbury Vale	London Midland	75,250	–
Cheltenham Spa	Gloucestershire	Cheltenham	First Great Western	1,924,750	180,043
Chester Road	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	799,256	–
Claverdon	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	2,654	–
Codsall	Staffordshire	South Staffordshire	London Midland	115,406	–
Coleshill Parkway*	Warwickshire	North Warwickshire	London Midland	213,284	–
Colwall	Herefordshire	Herefordshire	London Midland	65,210	15
Coseley	West Midlands	Dudley	London Midland	407,098	–
Cosford	Shropshire	Bridgnorth	London Midland	83,652	–
Coventry	West Midlands	Coventry	Virgin Trains	5,961,070	329,976
Cradley Heath	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	726,046	–
Crewe	Cheshire	Crewe And Nantwich	Virgin Trains	2,511,958	1,261,846
Danzey	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	7,272	–
Dorridge	West Midlands	Solihull	Chiltern Railways	638,136	–
Droitwich Spa	Worcestershire	Wychavon	London Midland	538,724	66,819
Duddeston	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	190,348	–
Dudley Port	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	418,896	–
Earlswood	West Midlands	Solihull	London Midland	36,516	–
Erdington	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	831,112	–
Euston	Greater London	Camden	Network Rail	41,911,706	3,474,091

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Station Name	County or Unitary Authority	District or Unitary Authority	Station Facility Owner	Entries and exits in 2013/14	Interchanges
Fenny Stratford	Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes	London Midland	26,424	–
Five Ways	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	1,447,006	–
Four Oaks	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	622,922	–
Garston (Hertfordshire)	Hertfordshire	Watford	London Midland	85,532	–
Gloucester	Gloucestershire	Gloucester	First Great Western	1,314,800	59,325
Gravelly Hill	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	684,258	–
Great Malvern	Worcestershire	Malvern Hills	London Midland	526,374	61
Hagley	Worcestershire	Bromsgrove	London Midland	489,934	–
Hall Green	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	378,488	–
Hampton-In-Arden	West Midlands	Solihull	London Midland	124,716	–
Hamstead	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	251,300	–
Harrow & Wealdstone	Greater London	Harrow	London Underground	2,853,282	319,263
Hartford	Cheshire	Vale Royal	London Midland	229,570	–
Hartlebury	Worcestershire	Wychavon	London Midland	22,122	–
Hatton	Warwickshire	Warwick	Chiltern Railways	42,330	–
Hednesford	Staffordshire	Cannock Chase	London Midland	181,000	–
Hemel Hempstead	Hertfordshire	Dacorum	London Midland	1,924,504	30,028
Henley-In-Arden	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	123,538	–
Hereford	Herefordshire	Herefordshire	Arriva Trains Wales	1,103,764	51,758
How Wood (Hertfordshire)	Hertfordshire	St. Albans	London Midland	32,574	–
Jewellery Quarter	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	386,252	–
Kempston Hardwick	Bedfordshire	Bedford	London Midland	7,032	–
Kidderminster	Worcestershire	Wyre Forest	London Midland	1,585,050	–
Kidsgrove	Staffordshire	Newcastle-Under-Lyme	East Midlands Trains	181,710	10,354
King's Langley	Hertfordshire	Three Rivers	London Midland	666,230	–
King's Norton	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	1,141,914	–
Landywood	Staffordshire	South Staffordshire	London Midland	109,942	–
Langley Green	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	170,504	–
Lapworth	Warwickshire	Warwick	Chiltern Railways	32,728	–
Lea Hall	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	476,752	–
Leamington Spa	Warwickshire	Warwick	Chiltern Railways	2,241,038	144,371
Ledbury	Herefordshire	Herefordshire	London Midland	195,348	6

Station Name	County or Unitary Authority	District or Unitary Authority	Station Facility Owner	Entries and exits in 2013/14	Interchanges
Leighton Buzzard	Bedfordshire	South Bedfordshire	London Midland	1,664,590	–
Lichfield City	Staffordshire	Lichfield	London Midland	643,078	–
Lichfield Trent Valley	Staffordshire	Lichfield	London Midland	969,034	73,454
Lidlington	Bedfordshire	Mid Bedfordshire	London Midland	25,980	–
Liverpool Lime Street	Merseyside	Liverpool	Network Rail	14,236,791	1,001,217
Liverpool South Parkway	Merseyside	Liverpool	Merseyrail	1,785,444	758,117
Long Buckby	Northamptonshire	Daventry	London Midland	275,960	–
Longbridge	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	797,536	–
Lye	West Midlands	Dudley	London Midland	82,662	–
Malvern Link	Worcestershire	Malvern Hills	London Midland	296,934	20,191
Marston Green	West Midlands	Solihull	London Midland	609,652	–
Millbrook (Bedfordshire)	Bedfordshire	Mid Bedfordshire	London Midland	16,460	–
Milton Keynes Central	Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes	London Midland	6,285,973	435,433
Northampton	Northamptonshire	Northampton	London Midland	2,783,020	3,645
Northfield	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	775,418	–
Nuneaton	Warwickshire	Nuneaton And Bedworth	London Midland	1,120,552	562,930
Oakengates	Telford And Wrekin	Telford And Wrekin	London Midland	54,620	–
Old Hill	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	179,494	–
Olton	West Midlands	Solihull	London Midland	412,504	–
Park Street	Hertfordshire	St. Albans	London Midland	31,734	–
Penkridge	Staffordshire	South Staffordshire	London Midland	202,128	–
Perry Barr	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	665,270	–
Polesworth	Warwickshire	North Warwickshire	London Midland	702	–
Redditch	Worcestershire	Redditch	London Midland	942,216	–
Ridgmont	Bedfordshire	Mid Bedfordshire	London Midland	27,396	–
Rowley Regis	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	887,746	–
Rugby	Warwickshire	Rugby	Virgin Trains	1,926,866	79,789
Rugeley Town	Staffordshire	Cannock Chase	London Midland	145,370	0
Rugeley Trent Valley	Staffordshire	Lichfield	London Midland	134,396	30,267
Runcorn	Halton	Halton	Virgin Trains	706,040	22,679
Sandwell & Dudley	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	789,470	–
Selly Oak	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	2,407,212	–

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Station Name	County or Unitary Authority	District or Unitary Authority	Station Facility Owner	Entries and exits in 2013/14	Interchanges
Shenstone	Staffordshire	Lichfield	London Midland	174,440	-
Shifnal	Shropshire	Bridgnorth	London Midland	133,230	-
Shirley	West Midlands	Solihull	London Midland	332,984	-
Shrewsbury	Shropshire	Shrewsbury	Arriva Trains Wales	1,801,680	215,896
Small Heath	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	112,338	-
Smethwick Galton Bridge	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	561,658	424,350
Smethwick Rolfe Street	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	403,220	90
Solihull	West Midlands	Solihull	Chiltern Railways	1,662,460	26,916
Spring Road	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	164,778	-
Stafford	Staffordshire	Stafford	Virgin Trains	2,038,160	264,676
St.Albans Abbey	Hertfordshire	St. Albans	London Midland	180,444	-
Stechford	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	384,500	-
Stewartby	Bedfordshire	Bedford	London Midland	16,012	-
Stoke-On-Trent	Stoke-On-Trent	Stoke-On-Trent	Virgin Trains	2,647,156	186,864
Stone	Staffordshire	Stafford	London Midland	103,472	-
Stourbridge Junction	West Midlands	Dudley	London Midland	1,276,010	415,810
Stourbridge Town	West Midlands	Dudley	London Midland	483,434	-
Stratford Pkwy	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	34,996	1,731
Stratford-Upon-Avon	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	986,542	18
Sutton Coldfield	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	1,429,544	-
Tame Bridge Parkway	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	521,164	-
Tamworth	Staffordshire	Tamworth	London Midland	1,025,700	316,903
Telford Central	Telford And Wrekin	Telford And Wrekin	London Midland	1,070,700	7,851
The Hawthorns	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	432,706	-
The Lakes	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	13,124	-
Tile Hill	West Midlands	Coventry	London Midland	502,952	-
Tipton	West Midlands	Sandwell	London Midland	282,460	-
Tring	Hertfordshire	Dacorum	London Midland	789,238	76
Tyseley	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	197,504	7,522
University	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	2,845,270	-
Walsall	West Midlands	Walsall	London Midland	1,282,914	10,091
Warwick	Warwickshire	Warwick	Chiltern Railways	562,582	-
Warwick Parkway	Warwickshire	Warwick	Chiltern Railways	620,032	-

Station Name	County or Unitary Authority	District or Unitary Authority	Station Facility Owner	Entries and exits in 2013/14	Interchanges
Water Orton*	Warwickshire	North Warwickshire	London Midland	40,752	–
Watford Junction	Hertfordshire	Watford	London Midland	6,412,858	561,634
Watford North	Hertfordshire	Watford	London Midland	116,810	–
Wellington	Telford And Wrekin	Telford And Wrekin	London Midland	581,986	–
Wembley Central	Greater London	Brent	London Underground	2,973,376	40,853
Whitlock's End	West Midlands	Solihull	London Midland	129,144	–
Widney Manor	West Midlands	Solihull	London Midland	341,308	–
Wilmcote	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	20,538	–
Wilnecote*	Staffordshire	Tamworth	London Midland	90,858	–
Winsford	Cheshire	Vale Royal	London Midland	176,612	–
Witton	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	270,666	–
Woburn Sands	Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes	London Midland	42,828	–
Wolverhampton	West Midlands	Wolverhampton	Virgin Trains	4,406,594	335,915
Wolverton	Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes	London Midland	389,130	–
Wood End	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	11,734	–
Wootton Wawen	Warwickshire	Stratford-On-Avon	London Midland	10,614	–
Worcester Foregate Street	Worcestershire	Worcester	London Midland	1,833,902	196,352
Worcester Shrub Hill	Worcestershire	Worcester	London Midland	968,834	89,286
Wylde Green	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	522,236	–
Wythall	Worcestershire	Bromsgrove	London Midland	54,992	–
Yardley Wood	West Midlands	Birmingham	London Midland	386,012	–

* Station operated by London Midland, but not served by train services operated by the franchise.

Rail stations at Barlaston, Norton Bridge and Wedgwood in Staffordshire are currently served by replacement bus services.

Appendix G: Conditions relating to the funding of new or enhanced services promoted by local bodies

The Department for Transport will consider resourcing the provision of new and enhanced services where:

- The promoter has engaged at an early stage with the Department for Transport, the TOC and Network Rail, and all have indicated that there is merit in the scheme being developed further.
- The promoter demonstrates, and has Network Rail and TOC endorsement, that the enhancement is deliverable in planning, engineering and operational terms, including being consistent with Network Rail's Route Utilisation Strategy.
- The scheme is affordable at the time when funding is being sought.
- The enhancement package (including any service reductions proposed to fund it) must demonstrate a reasonable business case (Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) in excess of 1.5) before implementation.
- The promoter accepts the risk on any capital investment required and identifies a funding source.
- The promoter agrees to fund any additional subsidy requirements arising from the provision of the new service for a period of three years (and remains on risk for a Department for Transport decision not to support the scheme) OR identifies decrements elsewhere or new revenue sources (which would need to be agreed with the Department for Transport) on the local network including fares increases above RPI+1% or +3% (where applicable) which would contribute to a reduced overall subsidy requirement.
- The promoter should provide information to the Department for Transport on usage throughout the three year trial period. After Year 2, the promoter would assess the financial and economic performance of the service based on Year 2's results.
- Should continuing the service demonstrate a BCR in excess of 1.5, subject to affordability within the available budget, the Department for Transport would consider taking on the responsibility of funding its continuation after Year 3 alongside other services within a franchise, OR if funding is not available, invite the promoter to identify decrements to enable the service to continue.

- Should continuing the service demonstrate a BCR of between 1.0 and 1.5, the Department for Transport and the promoter would negotiate but with no presumption of Government funding.
- Should the BCR be less than 1.0, the Department for Transport would not provide any funding.
- The Department for Transport would not propose to take any financial responsibility for a period of three years.
- For new stations being served by existing services, although the promoter might have to provide some pump-priming funding until the station becomes established, the Department for Transport would expect that fare income would cover additional operating costs and that no additional subsidy would be required after three years.

Appendix H: summary of consultation questions

Question area A – responsive to passengers’ needs and aspirations

Questions in this area are focussed on providing a railway for all that gives passengers what they want and need and attracts more people to the rail network.

Q1: Thinking of the journeys you make by train, or journeys you could make by train but where you decide to use an alternative transport mode instead:

- *what specific changes could be made to make the railway easier and more attractive to use for all; and*
- *why do you think these changes would help?*

Please provide your reasons why and details of the journeys you refer to where possible.

Q2a: Do you use your nearest railway station?

If you do not please let us know the reasons why.

Q2b: Thinking of your train journeys as a whole, how could we improve your experience of:

- *Finding information and planning your journey*
- *Accessing your railway station in an environmentally friendly way such as by walking, cycling, tram or bus*
- *Accessing your railway station by private car (including car parking and drop off areas)?*

Please let us know the reasons why.

If you are aware of any examples of particularly good or particularly poor connections between transport modes at stations, either within the franchise area or more widely please let us know including reasons why these are particularly good or poor.

Q3: Please list, in priority order, the facilities you would like improved or introduced at the station(s) you use or could use?

For each point that you raise, please provide the name of the station(s) that you are referring to and why you think these improvements are needed.

Q4: Thinking of the train journeys you make, how important are the following on board passenger facilities to you on short distance and long distance train services (1= very important; 15 = not important).

If you do not make one of these kinds of journeys please leave blank.

Facility on board train	Importance on short distance train services (1–40 minutes)	Importance on long distance train services (over 40 minutes)
Luggage space		
Cycle storage		
Audio passenger information e.g. announcements		
Visual passenger information e.g. next stop information		
First class areas		
Catering		
Tables		
Seat trays		
Staff presence		
Plug sockets		
USB sockets to charge USB devices		
Pushchair/wheelchair space		
Baby changing facilities		
Suitable toilets		
Free Wi-Fi		

Where possible, please explain why

Please also identify any other on board passenger facilities not listed above that you deem very important and you think should be improved or introduced. This can include any comments you have about the presentation or cleanliness of your train.

Please note capacity and seat availability is covered in the next section.

Q5: We are looking carefully to see what opportunities there are to either extend or provide additional trains to deliver more space/standard class seating for passengers to help reduce overcrowding.

If we cannot create all the additional capacity we need in this way, how do you think we could enable more people to travel and improve the railway's ability to cater for passenger growth (e.g. altering carriages, removing/reducing on board facilities or introducing innovative solutions)?

Where possible, please provide reasons for your answer.

Q6: Thinking about stations served by the West Midlands franchise, are there any particular locations where you feel that connections between rail services could be improved?

If relevant please provide specific details about the services, times and locations where train times are not coordinated as well as they could be.

Please also provide information on any other factors at stations or on trains that would make changing between services easier and more attractive for you, including your reasons where possible.

Question area B – services that cater for competitive growing economies

This question area seeks views on how we can provide improved, dependable services that connect people with employment, retail, education, tourism and leisure and support the significant and emerging economic growth across the franchise area

Q7: In order to make improvements to the network, we would like your views on how specific train services could be changed to better meet demand with a focus on the following areas:

- ***Where demand merits it, increasing service frequency:***
 - *In the peak and/or off peak period*
 - *During evenings, Saturdays and Sundays*
 - *In the early morning (i.e. before the peak period)*
 - *Over the Christmas and New Year period*
- ***Where demand is low and resources/funding could be better used in areas that need it more, decreasing service frequency:***
 - *In the peak and/or off peak period*
 - *During evenings, Saturdays and Sundays*
 - *In the early morning (i.e. before the peak period)*
 - *Over the Christmas and New Year period*

- *Increasing or decreasing service levels on a seasonal basis to better match travel patterns during these times*
- *Reducing the number of stops at stations used by few people to provide quicker services for through passengers*
- *Increasing the number of stops at stations where demand is higher than the current train frequency merits*
- *Adjusting the times of first and/or last services where this better meets today's travel patterns*
- *Introducing new routes or services and providing new links to stations including those not currently served by the franchise e.g. to other regions*
- *Reopening railway lines currently not used by passenger services*

Considering the areas set out above are you aware of any opportunities to improve, reduce or change rail services to make better use of resource and meet the needs of existing and prospective passengers?

Please provide reasons and evidence to support your views where possible.

Q8: Some services between stations operate with irregular gaps between trains.

In these situations, it may be possible to make changes to the service pattern in order to operate a service with a more evenly spaced timetable. More information on the passenger advantages and disadvantages of this are available on page 38.

Considering this information, and assuming the same amount of seats would be provided per hour, in principle would you prefer either:

- *A service that operates to an evenly spaced timetable so that gaps between trains are regular (with potentially fewer trains/longer journey times); or*
- *A service that operates at irregular times with more trains per hour, however there may be a mixture of long and small gaps between services at some stations.*

Please explain your reasons. If you are aware of any routes or locations where you feel that a more evenly spaced timetable can or should be operated please provide details.

Q9. The West Midlands franchise currently provides an hourly service from London Euston to Crewe via Stoke-on-Trent.

Passenger numbers have grown significantly. There is an issue however that some of the stations between Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe have shorter platforms that can only cater for four carriages. This means trains either have to be limited to four carriages and often become crowded or they are longer but have to run directly from Stafford to Crewe, missing out Stone, Stoke-on-Trent, Kidsgrove and Alsager.

We would like people's views on whether the current service should continue to operate as it does now, or whether a direct route from Stafford to Crewe should be run at all times, providing a consistent timetable and allowing longer trains to operate. It is possible that this service could be provided by another operator through another franchise.

We would ensure that there is no reduction to the number of services per hour at each station between Stafford and Crewe via Stoke-on-Trent. We are currently exploring options for through services to alternative destinations for passengers at these stations, for example to Birmingham.

More information on this including passenger advantages and disadvantages are available on page 40.

Considering the information outlined above, which of these options would you prefer and why?

- **Maintaining the current direct London Midland service from London Euston to Crewe via Stoke-on-Trent; or**
- **Operating the current Euston to Crewe service directly from Stafford to Crewe, and providing an alternative service for stations between Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe which would provide new links to destinations south of Stafford.**

Where possible please provide your reasons. If you have a priority for which new destinations an alternative service between Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe should serve please let us know here.

Q10: During railway disruption what information would you like to know, and when and how would you like to receive it during:

- **Known disruption such as engineering works**
- **Unplanned disruption such as signalling issues?**

Please provide your reasons and examples of where this works well either by the existing train company or elsewhere on the wider rail/public transport network.

Q11: In what ways can the franchise operator provide better services, ticketing and information for passengers to serve major events?

Please provide details of any specific events, the reasons why services need improving and any examples of best practice you are aware of.

Question area C – making sure you feel valued and safe

This area looks into how the railway is operated and managed to provide improved customer satisfaction and performance. Ensuring customers and stakeholders have the opportunity to be involved and input into how their railway is operated and responding to customers' expectations for improved security and information.

Q12a: What are your views on the value for money you receive for your train journeys in the franchise area when compared to other transport choices available to you?

Q12b: Does the range of ticket types available meet your needs or are there specific examples of new types of fare that you would like to see introduced?

Where possible please give the reasons for your answer.

Q13: We want to make it easier for passengers to pay for their journey and reduce the number of people travelling without tickets. Some of the potential options to help achieve this, subject to affordability and deliverability, could include:

- a) Providing suitable, working ticket machines at more/all stations, including unstaffed stations, to ensure that passengers always have the ability to purchase a ticket before they travel, including when booking offices are closed;**
- b) Promoting and developing new and innovative options for how people pay for their journey, such as the wider roll out of smart ticketing (where journeys are paid for with an electronic card), bank card or mobile phone payments and working with other retailers to sell tickets;**
- c) Removing the Permit to Travel machines, encouraging passengers to use the ticket machines at stations to ensure they have a valid ticket to travel;**
- d) Promoting and looking at options to increase the range of services available from the booking office – for example some areas such as Merseyside use rail station ticket offices to provide attraction tickets and tourist information at key locations;**
- e) Undertaking a review of ticket office opening hours so that they offer a consistent and easy-to-use option for passengers;**
- f) Further roll out of ticket barriers;**
- g) Ensuring that ticket barriers, where provided, are in use consistently;**
- h) Looking at options to provide better visibility of staff and ticket checking on-train, in particular to ensure that passengers undertaking intermediate journeys away from major stations are likely to have their ticket checked; and**
- i) Continuing and developing arrangements to prevent and deter ticketless travel to ensure that passengers are strongly encouraged to purchase a ticket, with staff available to support the process.**

Considering the options above and any other ideas you may have, in order of importance please list what you think are the priorities for the new operator to focus on to:

- a) ensure it is as easy as possible to pay for your journey; and**
- b) deter people from travelling without a valid ticket?**

Please provide your reasons and state if you are aware of any specific locations where it is difficult to buy tickets or where people travel without a valid ticket.

Q14: What could be done to improve security to make your train journey better and encourage more people to use rail services?

This could include on the way to or at the station or on board the train.

Where possible please provide specific details and your reasons why.

Q15: What represents good service for you on your rail journey and what could be improved or introduced to make you feel more valued as a customer and encourage you to recommend the railway to others?

Please state whether you are referring to long or short distance services and give reasons including any relevant examples of outstanding customer service experiences, related or unrelated to passenger rail services.

Q16: How could the provision of information on rail services be improved and what additional information would be of use to you when planning or making your journey e.g. seat availability, journey times, and connection information?

Where possible please provide reasons for your answers.

Q17: Should the railway have its own identity representing the areas it serves rather than the train company that operates the services e.g. a specific brand on services that run within West Midlands area?

Please give us a reason for your response to help us understand your view.

Question area D – a considerate, sustainable railway

We want to make sure we provide a railway that makes the most of and builds on what we've got in the areas that need it most and where services are delivered in a way which is efficient, effective and considerate of the environment and society. This section aims to collect your views on how we can best achieve this.

Q18: How could communities, businesses and/or other organisations within the public, private and voluntary sectors be encouraged to play an active part in the running of the railway stations or services in their area?

Q19: Based on your experience or knowledge of the railway, how do you think train services, railway stations and supporting services should be delivered so that they consider and support the environment, equality and the communities/areas they operate within?

Q20: If there are any additional areas that you think it is important for us to consider that have not already been addressed in this consultation please explain them here.