

# West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Levy Expenditure 2020-21



West Midlands  
Combined Authority

The costs of running Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) form part of the combined spend of the West Midlands Combined Authority. The costs of TfWM are funded by a specific transport levy of £114.7 million: this levy is paid by each of the seven Metropolitan Councils of the West Midlands on the basis of their published population figures. The councils must take account of the cost of the levy in setting their council tax levels, after allowing for grants which they receive towards this cost, and this is why we are providing detailed information on the spend in this area. More than half of the levy funds the National Travel Concessionary Scheme for free or half fare bus, train and tram travel for those who qualify, as well as funding subsidised bus services.

TfWM, part of the WMCA, is building a healthier, happier, better connected and more prosperous West Midlands. TfWM is accountable for formulating transport strategy and policy, project delivery and incorporating strategic highways, freight, rail, bus, tram and rapid transit networks.

TfWM works alongside the seven Metropolitan Districts to ensure that the 2.9 million people who live and work in the region benefit from an effective transport system that meets the economic and environmental needs of the West Midlands, as well as providing access to jobs, managing congestion and offering seamless connectivity for people and goods across the UK and overseas markets.

It is responsible for the delivery of public transport and helps deliver 327 million passenger journeys per annum in the region. TfWM also covers the delivery of Swift smart ticketing, promotion of walking and cycling, the use of real time journey information for journey planning and explores the use of new technologies.

TfWM manages 12 bus stations and provides around 12,500 passenger stops, stands and shelters and many strategic interchanges. Multi-operator passenger information is produced for each location, with Real Time Information (RTI) displays at 1,343 shelters and 109 stops showing live departures. RTI is also found at all local rail stations and Metro stops.

TfWM works in partnership with operators to develop integrated ticketing that meets customer needs. It oversees the National Travel Concessionary Scheme for West Midlands' residents, with just over 435,000 registered card holders who made nearly 53 million journeys last year. It also subsidises socially necessary bus services at a cost of £10.7 million.

Swift, which is the brand used for TfWM's transport smartcard now has 106,000 registered card holders undertaking more than 4.8 million journeys per annum in the West Midlands, making it the largest smartcard scheme outside of London.

TfWM provides over 9,000 Park and Ride spaces at rail and rapid transit stops across the region. It also works with operators to provide other improvements such as through the West Midlands Bus Alliance and West Midlands Grand Rail collaboration. As owners of the West Midlands Metro, TfWM also promotes and develops Line One and its planned extensions and patronage on this mode continues to increase and currently stands at 7.9 million passengers, in comparison to 7.1 million the previous year; an increase of 11.3%.

Ring and Ride (primarily funded by TfWM) is the main demand-responsive transport service for people in the West Midlands with limited mobility. A total of 112 buses provide around 671,000 trips a year for its 13,000 registered users.

As a forward-looking region, we are at a pivotal time as we undergo economic growth faster than any other region outside of London. The recently re-confirmed HS2 route – connecting Birmingham to London, with the first trains operating as early as 2028 would act as a catalyst for economic growth. We are also embarking on a series of instrumental events such as the Coventry City of Culture 2021 and Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. Yet at the same time, we must acknowledge the problems we face as a region where air pollution shortens average life expectancy and is exacerbated by traffic congestion which is costing our economy £1 billion per year. There are also many people socially excluded, which further limits their opportunities.

Despite these challenges, establishment of the WMCA has provided us with a broad array of opportunities. The Future Mobility Zone and the implementation of 5G offers the West Midlands the opportunity to innovate and develop tangible transport solutions. We are at the heart of research and development of new approaches to mobility, connectivity and place making and we aim to embed our transport activity into the wider WMCA requirements, to fully integrate with infrastructure investment programmes to build stronger, inclusive communities.

Approximately half of the WMCA's planned capital investment consists of transport expenditure. TfWM's Investment Programme will consist mostly of investment in Metro and Sprint bus rapid transit networks as well as local rail enhancements with seven new and improved stations across the region being planned.

The Transforming Cities Fund Programme will also provide a package of transport measures covering the delivery of the Wednesbury Brierley Hill Metro extension, Birchley Island improvements, a new Interchange for Dudley, various bus priority measures and a region-wide cycling programme. Additionally, investment in 5G, land remediation and the Collective Investment Fund will support several transport schemes.

Such investment will transform connectivity across the region and over the next decade, there will be an integrated metropolitan rail and rapid transit network with enhanced suburban rail services; through new stations and five Metro light rail extensions.

During this period of change, TfWM will ensure the West Midlands keeps moving through improved monitoring and travel demand management techniques.



In the past year, TfWM has achieved key milestones towards delivering a healthier, happier, better connected and more prosperous West Midlands:

## Bus

- The West Midlands Bus Alliance; continues delivering on its 50 deliverables for improving bus operations, reducing fares and improving passenger satisfaction.
- Established a Network Performance Board through the West Midlands Bus Alliance, to monitor patronage, journey speeds and reliability.
- Continued the roll out of 140 new zero emission buses and retrofitted 515 buses to improve air quality.
- Sprint - our bus based rapid transit mode has progressed its delivery programme for new routes and agreed an operating model.
- Approved plans to deliver the A34 and A45 Sprint schemes.
- Secured a £28.5 million investment package with partners to deliver an enhanced bus network, covering prioritised cross city bus routes across Birmingham and the Black Country.
- Upgraded bus shelters, including rebranding 1,000 existing shelters and adding over 120 new ones.
- Ensured the new provider for the Ring and Ride service, West Midlands Accessible Transport (a wholly owned subsidiary of National Express West Midlands) and its transition has not impacted on service provision and its users.
- Improved Walsall bus station and developed plans for a new Dudley bus and Metro interchange.
- Developed initiatives to enhance Coventry's bus offer to support the City of Culture 2021.
- Used powers from the Bus Services Act, to support an integrated network and optimised opportunities for bus growth.
- Effectively managed the networks infrastructure during major events, including Velo 2019 and the Cricket World Cup and delivered the largest Boxing Day bus service outside London.



## Rail

- The West Midlands Grand Rail Collaboration (GRC) through the West Midlands Rail Executive was launched; aiming to tackle train service performance, simplify fare structures, enhance the quality of trains and stations and improve reliability.
- Secured outline business case approvals and planning permission for new stations including Kings Heath and Hazelwell.
- Started construction of Longbridge's new 629 strategic multi-storey Park and Ride facility as well as continued development for future Park and Ride expansions.
- Through the West Midlands Trains franchise, delivered network rebranding, timetable enhancements, station improvements and other benefits for passengers.
- In partnership with Midlands Connect, continued development of the Midlands Rail Hub and HS2 Connectivity Package, to maximise the benefits of HS2 in the West Midlands.
- Ongoing delivery of the West Midlands Rail Programme of investment schemes to support the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and the wider economic objectives of WMCA.
- Undertook feasibility studies to support in the delivery of the West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy.
- Established the West Midlands Stations Alliance.



## Metro

- Commenced passenger services on the Centenary Square Metro extension.
- Continued with delivery of the Edgbaston extension including the closure of the Five Ways tunnels and Broad Street.
- Continued delivery of the Wolverhampton city centre Metro extension.
- Commenced construction work on the Wednesbury Brierley Hill Metro extension.
- Ordered 21 new 3rd Generation Urbos Trams to operate on the extended Metro network.
- Commenced retrofitting of batteries to the existing trams for the Centenary Square and Wolverhampton Metro extensions.
- Completed the rebranding of the tram fleet and continued to improve the customer experience.
- Grew patronage on the West Midlands Metro by 11.3%.
- Opened a new 196 space Park and Ride site on Metro Line One at Bradley Lane in Walsall.



## Swift

- Created a ticketing system for easy to use and affordable payments across the transport system including the introduction of the Swift “One App”.
- Delivered improved information at our bus stations and on our website.
- Produced a Fares and Payment Strategy to support the roll out of Swift on Rail, Apps and Swift Account Based Ticketing with Best Value Capping.
- Extended the pilot half fare concession scheme for all 16 to 18-year-olds living in the region for younger people at school, college, in work or training or undertaking an apprenticeship.
- Enhanced contactless payment procurement.
- Continued to develop Swift smart ticketing across all transport modes and on mobile phones and enhanced the availability of Real Time Information.
- Through West Midlands Trains, invested in smart infrastructure on the rail network with many stations equipped with Swift validators and ticket vending machines, providing more local rail tickets on the Swift system.
- Continued research on diversifying Swift into different modes and sectors (e.g. hire bikes, paying for parking and Swift on taxis).

## Customer Services

- Improved the customer experience through developing an integrated Customer Contact Centre. This in turn provided a single point of contact for people wishing to engage with our organisation and the products available.
- Continued the roll out of the new West Midlands Network branding as part of an integrated transport system; providing an identity that builds trust and confidence.
- Continued investment in new ticket machines, to support smaller operators meaning gaining close to 100% of bus services on RTI.

## Network Resilience

- Continued to ensure safety and security on the network through the Safer Travel Partnership and established the Strategic Road Safety Partnership with local authorities, West Midlands Police and West Midlands Fire Service.
- Launched phase one of the Regional Transport Coordination Centre (RTCC) to provide a multi-agency and single view point of road works which disrupt the transport network - allowing cross-partner projects and programmes, improving customer information about disruptions and assisting with mitigating the impact of congestion.
- The RTCC, planned, coordinated and communicated events such as Velo 2019 and the Cricket World Cup while handling any unplanned disruption across the network.



## Network Resilience continued

- Supported the recent closure of Broad Street and the Five Ways Underpass, to enable the Edgbaston Metro extension. This included communication with residents and workers through engagement events.
- Developed new disruption branding alongside the new West Midlands Network branding to provide reliable information on upcoming works. This included rebranding the Network West Midlands website to [wmnetwork.co.uk](http://wmnetwork.co.uk)
- Delivered on targets within the Local Transport Policing Plan (through the Safer Travel partnership) which have helped reduced crime on the network by 3% from last year.
- Progressed the delivery of bus-related byelaws to address anti-social behaviour on the network.
- Engaged on the Commonwealth Games Strategic Transport Plan for Birmingham 2022 and developed a procurement strategy for transport operations for the event.
- Developed a programme of works to minimise the impacts of congestion on bus routes to support the delivery of early Clean Air Zone bus measures.

- Continued to deliver behaviour change programmes alongside partners and worked with businesses and communities to lessen the impact of roadworks and provided alternative travel choices.

## Sustainable Travel

- Managed the Better Streets Community Fund totalling £2 million to help communities across the West Midlands improve their streets for cycling and walking.
- Completion of the second Managing Short Trips initiative for cycling infrastructure in the Black Country.
- Delivered improved cycle parking facilities at public transport interchanges across the region.
- Continued development on the delivery of the new West Midlands cycle hire scheme.
- Established the Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Programme.
- Began development of the Future Mobility Zone with partners.

**It's a sign!**



**Disruption is coming.**  
How will you change your journey?



**TfWM is responsible for developing and setting a transport strategy for the West Midlands and has a duty to produce the statutory local transport plan. In setting and delivering the region's transport strategy, we collaborate with partners and stakeholders to make the case for investment and further devolution to enable the transport system to support sustainable inclusive growth.**

TfWM is reviewing the West Midlands transport strategy to respond to challenges beyond 2026 and consultation on future options is planned to take place this year.

In the next 12 months, TfWM will also deliver its 2020/21 Capital Programme, including asset maintenance and upgrades, and continue to develop more detailed transport proposals to support Coventry's City of Culture in 2021 and the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, as well as the following initiatives:

## Bus

- Set out a regional delivery plan for a 'vision for bus' to Government which will include proposals on zero emissions bus fleets, a delivery road map and an enhanced bus network plan.
- Continue to support the bus network as the backbone of the West Midlands public transport network and maintain customer satisfaction targets at/or above 85%.
- Commence the delivery of the Sprint A45 route to the Airport and the A34 Sprint route to Walsall.
- Progress the development of the wider Sprint Programme up to 2026.
- Work with bus operators to continue the roll out of Euro VI buses as a minimum standard by April 2021 to deliver cleaner and greener vehicles to meet the Clean Air Zone and other air quality requirements.
- Continue the roll out of the bus shelter modernisation programme including digital advertising to enhance bus stops and shelters, whilst improving accessibility.
- Identify bus-based Park and Ride sites for the Commonwealth Games and for new Sprint routes, in line with Park and Ride policies.

## Bus continued

- Continue creating Bus Network Development Plans; taking an area-by-area approach to exploring ways to reduce congestion on the roads, improve bus travel times, and ensure bus travel is affordable.
- Complete detailed design, consultation and commence delivery of the infrastructure for Birmingham's first cross city bus routes services; launching in 2022/23.
- Continue to deliver safe, effective services at TfWM's twelve bus stations and two travel shops.
- Plan for delivery of a new multi modal interchange facility for bus and Metro customers in Dudley.
- Carry out a full refurbishment of Coventry Pool Meadow Bus Station ahead of Coventry becoming City of Culture in 2021.
- Continue to enhance our bus stops and shelters to improve accessibility.
- Further develop the Electric Vehicle and alternative fuels programme, including introducing new Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Trial new Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) initiatives and continue with ongoing improvements to the Ring and Ride service.
- Extend travel centre opening times to improve customer service support and the retail offer for our customers.
- Enhance the bus network and associated infrastructure to support wider programmes such as HS2, Coventry's City of Culture and the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.
- Refresh the West Midlands Bus Alliance deliverables to support wider WMCA strategic objectives.

## Rail

- Work with West Midlands Rail Executive and the rail industry to deliver more reliable train services in the region.
- Support the introduction of improved new rail timetables in May and December to provide more resilient services and capacity.
- Continue to support the delivery of further improvements through the West Midlands Trains' franchise, including new trains and station improvements.
- Continue delivery of the West Midlands Rail Programme of station projects including new stations on the Camp Hill line and at Willenhall and Darlaston, and the upgrade of University station.
- Partner with Midlands Connect and other stakeholders on medium- and long-term major schemes, to enhance the capacity of our rail network.
- Continue to develop proposals to deliver enhanced rail services to support the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

## Rail continued

- Continue to co-manage the new West Midlands rail franchise with West Midlands Rail Executive and the Department for Transport.
- Continue enhancing Park and Ride facilities for customers and work with operators to provide transport improvements to stations including the roll out of pre-bookable parking spaces.
- Explore options to manage demand for Park and Ride in a financially sustainable way.
- Pilot new schemes for electric vehicle charging points at stations.
- Continue to be a full and active member of West Midlands Rail Executive partnership of local authorities, with an increased role in the management of local rail services in the region.
- Undertake exploratory work in support of potential further devolution of local rail services.

## Metro

- Continue to invest in the Metro network and progress with procurement of the 3rd Generation Trams, in line with the Metro Investment Programme.
- Continue to extend the Metro Network to better serve our residents and businesses including exploring Very Light Rail schemes.
- Continue progressing with the Edgbaston Metro extension and Wolverhampton city centre Metro extension ahead of opening of passenger services.
- Continue progressing with construction works on the Wednesbury Brierley Hill Metro extension.
- Secure approval of a full business case and commence construction of the Birmingham Eastside Metro extension to Digbeth town centre.
- Progress development of a full business case for the East Birmingham to Solihull Metro extension and submit a Transport and Works Act application for powers.
- Progress with West Midlands Metro Off-Vehicle Ticketing options and enhanced ticketing mechanisms.

## Swift

- Deliver a 'super portal' under the West Midlands Network website to create a single view of our network.
- Continue to provide information to passengers in a range of traditional methods including paper as well as digital formats.
- Work in partnership with transport operators to develop integrated ticketing that meets all customer needs.
- Continue to provide free fares for the elderly and disabled through the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme.
- Continue the roll out of Swift smart ticketing across all transport modes and on mobile phones and enhance the availability of Real Time Information.
- Initiate new partnerships to develop tailored travel support packages for low-income groups such as the unemployed, young people, apprentices and trainees.

## Network Resilience

- Continue to invest and develop the region's Key Route Network (KRN), including shared management powers and responsibilities of the 605km KRN covering air quality, road safety and bus lane enforcement.
- Manage the West Midlands Network through improved coordination of travel information and traffic data - organised through the RTCC.
- Continue to keep travellers informed and moving, through mitigating any impacts of the wider regional transport investment programmes, by using travel demand management techniques.
- Through our Safer Travel Partnership, continue to explore ways to make public transport safer and help overcome perceived and actual barriers through seeking Government approval to introduce various bus byelaws.
- Continue to deliver travel advice for businesses, educational establishments and communities; targeting interventions where delivery of the transport infrastructure will have the greatest impact.
- Enhance communications around travel disruption, including planned and unplanned works with partners.
- Deliver the Regional Road Safety Strategy in partnership with local authorities and key stakeholders and produce a regional road safety action plan.

## Network Resilience continued

- Deliver on the actions outlined in the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Strategic Transport Plan to support the delivery of the games covering all modes and all client groups and ensure readiness for Coventry City of Culture in 2021.
- Continue working with the Government to secure further devolved transport powers and funding – including the case for devolved moving traffic contraventions.
- Continue to develop a pipeline of projects for highways investment that can help improve performance and road safety on the region's major roads.
- Secure major road network and national roads fund investment by working with Midlands Connect and Highways England.
- Develop a common data environment to manage customer communication during events, disruption and infrastructure works.

## Active Travel

- Deliver on the region's Cycling Charter Action Plan.
- Roll out the regional cycle hire scheme.
- Progress with the development and delivery of TfWM's Capital Programme and the Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Programme.
- Continue development and promotion of the West Midlands Cycling and Walking Network.
- Support and engage nationally, regionally and locally to maximise the profile and uptake of walking and cycling throughout communities.

## Transport Innovation

- Deliver and further develop the Midlands Future Mobility initiative and Future Mobility Zone, including local authority business cases and demonstrators.
- Create new partnerships to develop and explore new technologies, such as Connected and Autonomous Vehicles and support the Mobility as a Service vision.



## How we spend the Levy money

| CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING | 2020/21<br>£M | 2021/22<br>£M | 2022/23<br>£M |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Transport                       | 307.3         | 502.3         | 348.6         |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>        | <b>307.3</b>  | <b>502.3</b>  | <b>348.6</b>  |
| Grants                          | 177.9         | 288.7         | 236.8         |
| Borrowing                       | 129.4         | 213.6         | 111.8         |
| <b>Total Funding</b>            | <b>307.3</b>  | <b>502.3</b>  | <b>348.6</b>  |

| TFWM BUDGET SPENDING   | 2019/20<br>£M | 2020/21<br>£M |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Concessions for elderly and disabled people                    | 51.2          | 51.0          |
| Child Concessions  | 7.6           | 7.9           |
| Rail and Metro Concessions                                     | 4.6           | 4.6           |
| Accessible Transport   | 7.3           | 6.8           |
| Subsidised Bus Services  | 9.4           | 10.7          |
| Bus Stations, Infrastructure and Monitoring                    | 4.8           | 4.7           |
| Integration (inc. Safety & Security and Passenger Information) | 6.5           | 6.9           |
| Rail & Metro Services  | 4.7           | 6.2           |
| Network Resilience   | 1.8           | 2.6           |
| Commonwealth Games   | 0.0           | 1.4           |
| Strategic Development & Transport Governance                   | 2.5           | 2.7           |
| Business Support Costs   | 3.8           | 3.9           |
| Financing Costs  | 11.6          | 10.5          |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>                                       | <b>115.7</b>  | <b>119.7</b>  |
| Use of Reserves  | 1.0           | 3.6           |
| Commonwealth Games Grant                                       | 0.0           | 1.4           |
| <b>Funded by District Levy</b>                                 | <b>114.7</b>  | <b>114.7</b>  |

| COUNCIL       | POPULATION       | LEVY £M      | %             |
|---------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Birmingham    | 1,141,374        | 44.9         | 39.1%         |
| Coventry      | 366,785          | 14.4         | 12.6%         |
| Dudley        | 320,626          | 12.6         | 11.0%         |
| Sandwell      | 327,378          | 12.9         | 11.2%         |
| Solihull      | 214,909          | 8.5          | 7.4%          |
| Walsall       | 283,378          | 11.1         | 9.7%          |
| Wolverhampton | 262,008          | 10.3         | 9.0%          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>2,916,458</b> | <b>114.7</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |

The cost of the levy is equivalent to £39.34 per resident of the West Midlands (£39.60 in 2019/20).

The net cost per resident is not the same as the cost funded by council tax which will be lower and will vary depending on how each Council determines the funding of their overall expenditure.

## Glossary

**Patronage** – number of passengers travelling.

**Sprint (bus rapid transit network)** – Sprint has features similar to West Midlands Metro but operates on roads rather than tracks.

**Multi-operator passenger information** – combined information for all operators.

**Integrated ticketing** – tickets which can be used on more than one journey eg bus to rail.

**Disruption branding** – new consistent look for publicity for when there is disruption.

**Demand Responsive Transport** – door to door service for people with mobility needs.

**Key Route Network (KRN)** – The KRN is mainly made up of A-roads and some B-roads with the remainder consisting of a small section of the A38 (M) Aston Expressway.

## Alternative format

**If you would like this leaflet in a format more suited to your needs, please call 0345 303 6760 or e-mail [customerservices@tfwm.org.uk](mailto:customerservices@tfwm.org.uk)**

West Midlands Combined Authority produces this leaflet to give you a summary of the work it does to improve all aspects of public transport.

To find out more about the work West Midlands Combined Authority does, including new projects and public consultations please visit our website.

[wmca.org.uk](http://wmca.org.uk)



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