



Transport for
West Midlands



Midland
Metro Alliance

Connecting SANDWELL & DUDLEY

ISSUE 8 OCTOBER 2020

Welcome

Welcome to 'Connecting Sandwell & Dudley', a bi-monthly publication designed to keep those working and living in the area up-to-date on the progress of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension which we're building on behalf of Transport for West Midlands (TfWM).



Getting Around

We appreciate that everyone will have a different journey; the following is to assist you to plan ahead:

Works are continuing to take place on Castle Hill in Dudley to allow contractors working on behalf of Transport for West Midlands to progress utility upgrades and diversions for the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension.

The overflow car park at Dudley Port Railway Station remains closed to allow heavy goods access to the railway corridor where the Metro is being constructed.

The main Park and Ride car park, including provisions for disabled and car sharing bays, remains open throughout the works.

Cycle storage provision remains in place at the railway station which is also regularly served by buses.

Dudley Port Park & Ride

Overflow closure
From Monday 24 August

Plan ahead



Plan ahead:
www.metroalliance.co.uk

In addition, Lower Church Lane in Tipton is closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic from Monday 26 October with this closure expected to last for up to two weeks.

Following this, from early November 2020, Horseley Road, also in Tipton, will close for a two-week period, too.

The road closures are required to allow structural assessments to take place safely.

Finally, from early November until 24 December 2020, a small section of the Tame Valley canal will close to both waterway and towpath traffic as a bridge is replaced. A short diversion map is available on our website.

Those who need to travel are being advised to plan ahead and leave more time for journeys.

New life for old track thanks to the Metro extension

Track from a disused railway line that was removed as part of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension has been given a new home after being donated to the Severn Valley Railway by Transport for West Midlands and the Midland Metro Alliance.

More than one mile of track has been removed from along the disused railway corridor and given to the heritage railway line to help with its annual track replacement programme. The donation has come as a welcome boost to the much-loved heritage steam and diesel attraction, which recently reopened its doors after closing in March due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street, said: "We are great supporters of our heritage railways and know that many thousands of people enjoy reliving the golden age of steam with a ride on the Severn Valley Railway. So it is fantastic that the track from the former South Staffordshire Railway, which we don't need as part of our Midland Metro expansion plans, will be recycled and once again used on an active railway line. The Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension will help bring huge economic benefits to the region, which is why it is so important for us to support local businesses, particularly as they bounce back from the Covid-19 crisis."

Sonny Hudson, Delivery Manager at the Midland Metro Alliance, added: "I am pleased that during construction for the extension we have been able to help preserve heritage for generations to come. Being part of the team that helped remove the rail makes it ever more rewarding to see it in its final position. The Midland Metro Alliance puts sustainability at the heart of everything it does and this project is not just about putting spades in the ground but supporting the communities across the Midlands, whether that be through local employment, charity support or donations such as this. We couldn't be happier to have donated to such a worthy organisation."

The donated rail was loaded on to one of Severn Valley Railway's heritage diesel trains at Eardington Halt Railway Station before making the journey along the 158-year-old route to a storage site where it will be stockpiled before being used to replace some of the existing rail in future track re-laying operations. The much-loved attraction runs a fleet of steam trains along a 16-mile route from Bridgnorth in Shropshire to Kidderminster in Worcestershire. It reopened to the public in August and is running regular services using its extensive fleet of compartment stock, to enable groups to travel in their own secure and private accommodation. Tickets can be booked at www.svr.co.uk.



How can I get further information?

For further information or to view past issues of the newsletter please visit:
www.metroalliance.co.uk

or email:
communications@metroalliance.co.uk

Alternatively, you can follow:

[company/midland-metro-alliance](https://www.linkedin.com/company/midland-metro-alliance)
 [@midlandtram](https://twitter.com/midlandtram)
 [Midland Metro Alliance](https://www.facebook.com/MidlandMetroAlliance)
 [@midlandmetroalliance](https://www.instagram.com/midlandmetroalliance)

Connecting SANDWELL & DUDLEY

ISSUE 8 OCTOBER 2020

Plan ahead if you use Walsall Canal this winter

Sections of the Tame Valley, Walsall and Old Main Line Canal are set to close to both boat and towpath traffic during the autumn and winter as preliminary works for the tramway continues. The closures will take place to enable structural assessments and bridge replacements on three structures along the 11-kilometre route to ensure they can meet the needs of a modern light rail network.

The first canal closure will get underway in the vicinity of Walsall Canal Bridge between from 2 November until 24 December 2020, with the towpath in this area also closing to pedestrians during this time. A handy diversion route for cyclists and pedestrians is available for this closure here.

Following this, in the new year, Tame Valley Canal and towpath will close from early January 2021 to early February 2021. Finally, the Old Main Line Canal in Tipton will close, from February until mid-March 2021 when all of the work on the canals in this area is expected to be completed. The towpath along this canal will close February until April.

People living or travelling through the area are also being advised that they may notice the movement of construction machinery ahead of construction taking place and the alliance's dedicated stakeholder liaison team have written to those in the immediate area who may use the towpaths.

Ian Collins, Midland Metro Alliance Project Director, said: "We recognise that there will be some disruption to those who use the canals and towpaths and have been working closely with the Canal & River Trust to communicate the closure to those who are affected. We have scheduled this activity during the autumn and winter months when we know usage of our historical waterways is generally lighter. This will help us to minimise the impact on boaters and those walking along the towpath. These bridge works are essential to ensure that they can meet the Metro's future operational requirements. It is great that the people of Sandwell can now see construction for this highly anticipated route beginning to ramp up in what is an exciting time for the project."

Adnan Saif, Regional Director for the Canal & River Trust in the West Midlands, added: "We fully support these works to strengthen and replace structures along our waterways for the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension. I have no doubt that the Metro will bring more visitors to our amazing canal network, while also providing another form of sustainable travel to our many users with stops planned just a stone's throw away from some of the area's most popular attractions. The canals in the West Midlands are a historic legacy and vital part of the regional infrastructure providing unique spaces for people to enjoy and improve their wellbeing. We will continue to work with the Midland Metro Alliance to ensure that boaters and local residents are familiar with the plans and alternative waterway routes and facilities."

MMA recognised by Considerate Constructors Scheme

The Wednesbury to Brierley Hill worksites have been recognised for excellence by a national scheme.

The Midland Metro Alliance was recently awarded certification in the Considerate Constructors Scheme at the "performance above compliance" tier.

Assessors from the CCS said the worksites demonstrated 'excellence' and they 'praised' efforts to keep the public informed and the consideration given to both the workforce and the environment by adhering to the Scheme's Code of Considerate Practice.

You can find out more about the Considerate Constructors Scheme by visiting <https://www.ccscheme.org.uk/>.



Bridge demolition progressing ahead of schedule in Tipton.

Work to remove an aged bridge deck in Tipton is progressing at pace.

In fact, the team working in Coneygree Road moved from preliminary devegetation works to full demolition more than ten days ahead of schedule. In order to allow the works to take place, a localised road closure, for a period of up to six weeks, is in place but it is expected that both Coneygree Road and Victoria Road will open slightly ahead of schedule following the bridge work moving speedily through to demolition. Later in the construction programme, a new structure will be erected in the street.

The alliance's dedicated Stakeholder Liaison Officer has been keeping locals updated on progress and those living close to the activity have had great things to say about the team on site.

Heather, who lives in Coneygree Road, said: "I live next to the railway bridge and the team have been friendly, helpful and have been very respectful of my property. The work to take the bridge down has been very efficient and everyone has worked hard to ensure we still have access to our property, with deliveries and bin collections facilitated by them. All in all, I'm very happy."



Mr and Mrs Webb of Coneygree Road with MMA team member John Williamson

Project Director helps to inspire future engineers

A Project Director at the Midland Metro Alliance took a trip down memory lane when he made a virtual visit to his former university to inspire students embarking on an engineering career.

Ian Collins shared his own experiences and career journey with a group of 50 engineering undergraduates and masters students from the University of Birmingham.

The Zoom webinar, which was run by Ian's former tutor and British Palestinian engineering academic Professor Kamel Hawwash, covered Ian's time studying engineering at the university to his current position at the Midland Metro Alliance.

Ian said: "I was honoured to be virtually invited back to my former university where my career in engineering began. So much has changed since I studied there in 1994 but it was great to be able share my story with some of our future engineers. I hope that my career journey has helped to inspire the students to continue on their chosen paths."



How can I get further information?

For further information or to view past issues of the newsletter please visit:
www.metroalliance.co.uk

or email:
communications@metroalliance.co.uk

Alternatively, you can follow:

 [company/midland-metro-alliance](https://www.linkedin.com/company/midland-metro-alliance)
 [@midlandtram](https://twitter.com/midlandtram)
 [Midland Metro Alliance](https://www.facebook.com/MidlandMetroAlliance)
 [@midlandmetroalliance](https://www.instagram.com/midlandmetroalliance)



Connecting SANDWELL & DUDLEY

ISSUE 8 OCTOBER 2020

Showcasing our colourful competition winners

In the last edition of Connecting Sandwell & Dudley, we published an image highlighting some of the local venues and attractions along the Metro route and asked talented youngsters to share their colourful creations with us.

In the end, we had a tough time picking just five entries, so the following seven local youngsters can look forward to seeing their designs on hoarding next year as work ramps up!

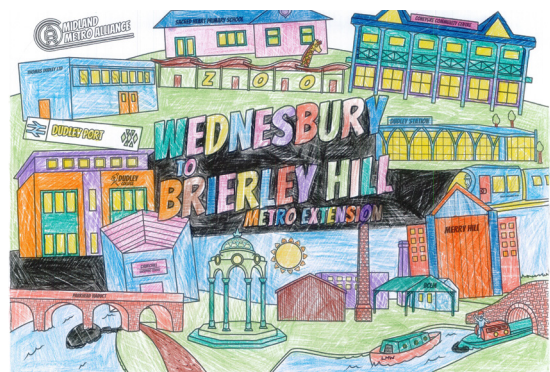
Well done to all who entered and to our special seven winners!



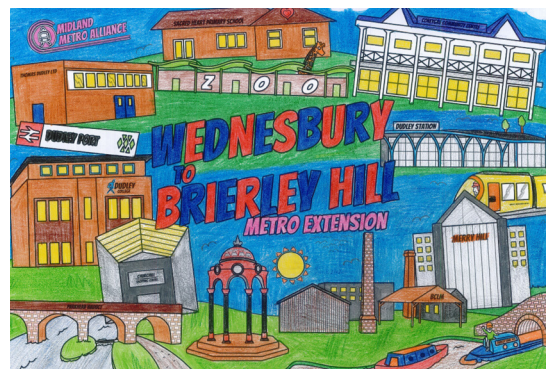
Alice



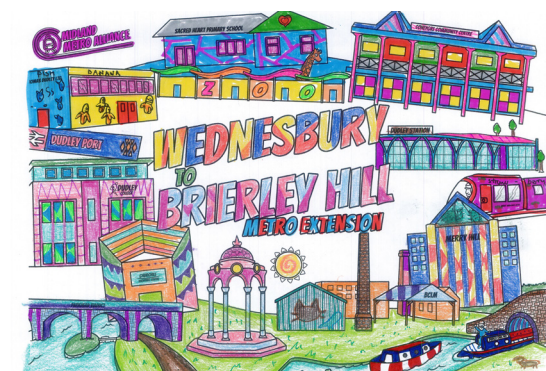
Joelle



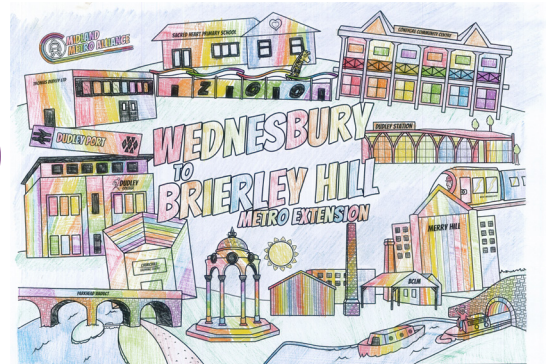
Martha



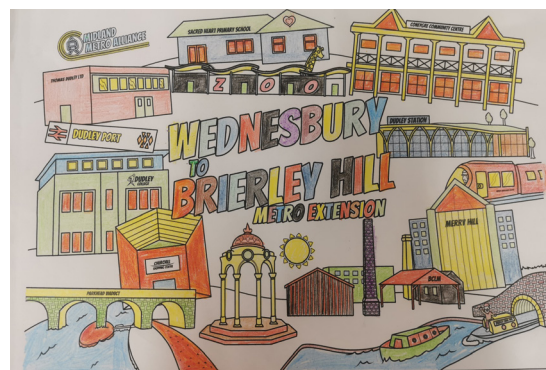
Oscar



Lauren



Lily



Luca



How can I get further
information?

For further information or to view past issues
of the newsletter please visit:
www.metroalliance.co.uk

or email:
communications@metroalliance.co.uk

Alternatively, you can follow:

 [company/midland-metro-alliance](https://www.linkedin.com/company/midland-metro-alliance)
 [@midlandtram](https://twitter.com/midlandtram)
 Midland Metro Alliance
 [@midlandmetroalliance](https://www.instagram.com/midlandmetroalliance)