

## Two Walsall Railway Stations are being Reintroduced



*An artist's impression of the new Darlaston (left) and Willenhall railway stations (right)*

Railway stations will return to Willenhall and Darlaston after more than half a century and are expected to be completed by summer 2022. Walsall Council's planning committee gave the green light to applications by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) for new facilities in Willenhall and Darlaston. The decision has been met with widespread joy with hopes that it could help revitalise both areas.

The original stations in Darlaston and Willenhall were shut in 1965 and the lines have only been used by through trains ever since.

The new Darlaston station will be constructed on the old A B Waste Management site in Cemetery Road and will feature a new station, two platforms, a footbridge, steps, and a 300-space car park. Willenhall's new facility will see old industrial buildings in Bilston Street and Rose Hill demolished to make way for the station two platforms, footbridge and a 33 space car park as well as improved pedestrian crossing facilities in Bilston Street.

Walsall Council leader and committee chairman Mike Bird said: "It is a huge investment here by both the combined authority and the Government in Walsall - money allocated to actually bring back into the life the railway system that was unfortunately shelved back in the 1960s. It is an exciting time for Walsall, this is probably one of the biggest regeneration schemes we've seen to make people able to connect to the wider region."

Earlier this year, bosses said two new hourly services will call at the stations once they have been opened. One will be a direct Walsall to Wolverhampton route while the other will be a Wolverhampton to Birmingham service, calling at the existing Tame Bridge Parkway station as well as Darlaston and Willenhall.

Adam Hicken, who represents Willenhall North, said: "This will put Willenhall and Darlaston back on the map, quite literally in the case of the railway network. This is going to boost opportunities for over 60,000 people. It will help people to find new jobs further away, be able to travel to work more quickly, boost income for local businesses and make our two towns more desirable for homebuyers and renters."



The original Darlaston (James Bridge) Station which closed in 1965

Willenhall Station

