

West Yorkshire Combined Authority **Rail Strategy**

Our requirements



West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire



Rail investment in West Yorkshire

Our rail network is critical to our ambition for a leading transport network for West Yorkshire. A network which is cleaner, greener and better connected – both within West Yorkshire and the rest of the UK.

Hundreds of thousands of people rely on rail travel in our region for getting to places of education, social, and leisure destinations and of course, for work. We're committed to making the trains work for them. We want a network that enables our economy to flourish and our people to thrive.

We also want to design better ways for rail journeys to integrate seamlessly with other parts of our transport system. Making it easier to undertake journeys using trains, buses, walking and cycling and our future mass transit network.

To deliver our ambitions, we want to work with government to secure reform and investment in our railways and create a reliable, more cost-effective and easier-to-use network.

West Yorkshire needs significant investment in its rail network to support economic growth, improve accessibility and deliver against our decarbonisation targets. Our region

is at the heart of the North's rail network, so investment here unlocks reliability and capacity benefits and enables our region to contribute to a stronger and faster growing national economy.

What we need are:

- New and improved stations including a Leeds Station that is fit for purpose and a new station replacing Bradford Interchange.
- Much better rail connections to Sheffield and the Midlands
- Improved services and reliability on the Penistone line and between the five towns in the district of Wakefield as well as securing more and better rolling stock
- Electrification of our railway lines with the Calder Valley line identified as a priority.

These are based upon the assumption that the Government remains committed to the full completion of the TransPennine Route Upgrade, new lines between Manchester and Marsden and Huddersfield and Bradford, and electrification between Leeds to Bradford (via New Pudsey), Leeds to Sheffield and Leeds to Hull.

Our requirements

● A Leeds Station that is fit for purpose

Expand the Leeds Station with new platforms, footbridge and more circulation space to cope with capacity constraints.

Leeds is the busiest rail station in the North with over 40 million passengers expected by 2043. We need more capacity in this station to cater for additional passengers and more train services.

We need an expanded Leeds Station with more platforms, footbridge and pedestrian circulation capacity, plus improvements to approach tracks. This would allow more capacity to run more frequent, longer and more reliable services. This would also provide much better arrangements for pick up and drop off and interchange with bus, taxi and the future mass transit network potentially using previously safeguarded land.

● A new station for Bradford

A new through station for Bradford replacing the terminus at Bradford Interchange.

We need to ensure that commitment remains to a new through Bradford rail station, integrated with existing and future transport networks, supporting employment and economic growth in the city, as well as a new rail link to Huddersfield. Delivery of this needs to be accelerated to ensure Bradford has faster and frequent services across the Pennines to Manchester and capitalises on the benefits from the significant investment in the TransPennine line via Huddersfield.

● Connectivity to Sheffield and the Midlands

Improve connectivity between West Yorkshire and Sheffield and the Midlands

Leeds and Sheffield are home to over 1.4 million people with an economy worth £50 billion. The two cities are less than 30 miles apart, but there is only one express service which is overcrowded, unreliable and takes 41 minutes.

In the short term we want the long-promised additional hourly fast service between Leeds and Sheffield introduced. In the longer term, we're asking for the line to be electrified and significantly upgraded, which will allow for more frequent and faster services between Leeds and Sheffield. Delivering faster services will also improve our connectivity to the Midlands as well.

● Electrifying the Calder Valley line

Electrification of the Calder Valley line between Bradford, Halifax, Preston and Manchester Victoria

The Calder Valley line is one of the busiest in the North, connecting multiple communities across the Pennines and serves over 10.8 million passengers every year.

There is currently a proposal to electrify the Calder Valley line between Leeds and Bradford and we're asking for a further commitment to electrify the whole line between Bradford, Halifax, Preston and Manchester Victoria, including the links via Brighouse to the TransPennine mainline at Huddersfield and Dewsbury.



Improving services on the Penistone line

Provide more frequent and quicker journeys between Huddersfield, Barnsley and Sheffield.

The Penistone line connects villages across the Pennines and improvements to this route, including a half-hourly service, would improve access to jobs, education and health services while reducing car travel.

The previous government already committed £48m of investment on the Penistone line but we need an additional £69 million to deliver half-hourly services between Huddersfield and Barnsley.

Connectivity to the five towns and Bradford

Improve rail services to Pontefract, Castleford, Knottingley, Normanton and Featherstone and reverse cuts to Bradford services.

We want to make rail travel easier for people who live, work and travel to and from Pontefract, Castleford, Knottingley, Normanton and Featherstone.

We're asking for a number of small interventions which would improve rail services. This includes an hourly service between Sheffield, Pontefract and York, extending Leeds – Knottingley services to Goole, introducing a new direct service between Leeds, Pontefract and Doncaster and creating regular services between the five towns and Bradford.

We are also asking the Secretary of State to reverse a decision to cut daytime train services between Bradford and Ilkley / Skipton from two per hour to only one – better connectivity, not worse, within West Yorkshire as well as to London is vital to drive Bradford's economy and to make a success of its year as Capital of Culture.

Improve rail services with more and better rolling stock

While there will be new rolling stock coming to our network, the new rolling stock will not be in place until 2029/ 2030. At the moment, trains are frequently leaving passengers on platforms, especially on Leeds – Doncaster line, and Northern's commitments will only increase the pressure on its overstretched fleet.

We are asking the government to look at an interim plan to provide sufficient capacity to cater for the immediate needs of rail travellers in West Yorkshire right now, by increasing Northern's fleet with a small number of additional units from existing fleets that are being replaced elsewhere in the country.

In the longer term, we are also asking the Government to invest in more and much better rolling stock to improve the onboard experience, enable growth and new services and make rail the sustainable choice for travel in West Yorkshire, and with electric traction playing an increasing role alongside a rolling programme of network electrification delivering a sustainable, cleaner, low emission railway.



Find out more

[westyorks-ca.gov.uk](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk)

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