

Along MID CHESHIRE Lines

Published by the Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership www.midcheshirerail.org.uk

Leave the car at home and explore the heart of Cheshire by train Beautiful countryside and bustling towns are within easy reach by rail. See inside for more, including details of places to visit, activities to enjoy, tickets for travel and information about the Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership (MCCRP)

The Mid Cheshire Line

From quiet villages to major towns and cities, the Mid Cheshire Line has it all.

From Chester in the west to Stockport and Manchester in the east, the train is an ideal way to explore the heart of the county.

Between Chester and Northwich the line passes through beautiful Cheshire

countryside, the highlight of which is Delamere Forest. Towards Manchester, its stations are remarkably convenient for shoppers and diners alike.

The market town of Altrincham was granted its charter in 1290. Today, purveyors of fresh food and an eclectic array of crafters jostle for position alongside award winning kitchens, bars and cafés in the town's historic market hall.

Northwich Viaduct from Hunt's Lock

NORTHWICH Gratan

Plumies Plumies Plumies

Ashley Hale

OCKPOR

Greenbank

Cuddington

CHESTER Mouldsworth

Delamere

Manchester's Metrolink system and Bee Network both meet the Mid Cheshire Line at Altrincham's award-winning transport interchange

Knutsford and the old town in Stockport both cater for those in search of quirky and



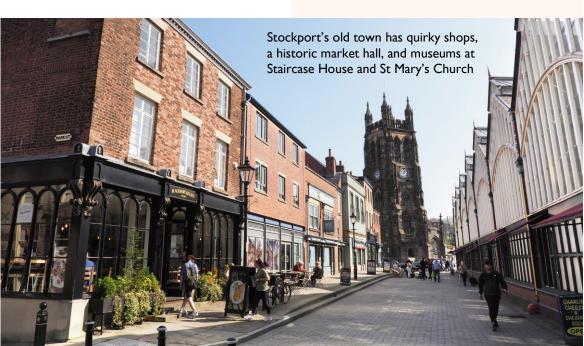
distinctive shopping, as well as a wide range of food and drink.

There is a remarkable amount of sightseeing to be done using the Mid Cheshire Line. Call at Northwich to visit the Lion Salt Works, or see the Hat Museum and the World War II Air Raid Shelters in Stockport. For details of attractions near all of the stations on the Line, visit our website, which has a page about each station.

Entertainment

The Mid Cheshire Line is known for its evenings out on 'Music Trains,' arranged by the Community Rail Partnership. Musicians set up and play in a carriage of a normal service train, starting from Chester or Altrincham. They play on the way to a gig (in a country pub or a club). Then everyone goes to the venue for the music, food and a drink. By way of an encore, the band play again on the return train at the end of the evening. Expect to hear jazz, blues, folk and pop – from an eclectic roster of musicians – from April to October. Visit our website for where and when the next Music Trains will run..

Elsewhere, in addition to the world class selection of venues in Manchester, seek out events in smaller, more intimate settings, including, for example, the Plaza in Northwich, the Garrick Theatre in Altrincham or the Plaza in Stockport. June sees the annual Knutsford Festival, bringing major stars of folk music to the town. website: www.knutsfordmusicfestival.com



Out and about

The Mid Cheshire Line passes through some of the most attractive countryside in the county and makes a great starting point from which to discover what the outdoors has to offer.

Walkers and cyclists alike have plenty of opportunities. Leaflets giving full details of



150148

Combine great walks around Mobberley with a visit to one of its pubs. Food and drink at the well-regarded Railway is to be found next to the station. (Inset) The location of cycle storage is clearly identified on the outside of Northern's trains.



walks based on routes near stations on the Line are available; among the most popular are the MCCRP's own *Rail Walks* booklets, which were all updated in 2020, covering Cheshire West, Knutsford and Greater Manchester (near the Mid Cheshire Line).

A particular highlight is Delamere Forest. With a wide range of walking and cycling trails, the Go Ape attraction and a

great choice of places to eat and drink, this is a deservedly popular attraction. There are said to be views of seven counties from the top of Old Pale, the hill that overlooks the forest, reached by a stone pathway from the visitors' centre. Delamere also hosts gigs as part of Forest Live; artists to have appeared there in recent years have included the likes of Jools Holland, Tears For Fears and Paul Weller.

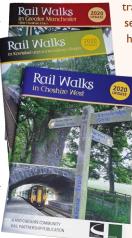
Village pubs

Several stations on the Mid Cheshire Line benefit from having a nearby public house. Why not leave the car at home and take the train for a relaxed meal, or a drink, away from the hustle and bustle of town life. Here are four of our favourites that you are sure to like; all serve a great selection of home cooked food and a wide range of drinks.

The Goshawk, next to Mouldsworth station is a beautiful, 19th Century, former coaching inn featuring a cosy public bar and relaxed restaurant. It welcomes well behaved dogs, handy after you have enjoyed a long walk around nearby Delamere Forest and the surrounding area. There is a dog wash for muddy boots and mucky paws, and there are always plenty of treats on the bar!

The Golden Pheasant is a 200-year-old wayside inn a few steps from Plumley station. It has been family owned for almost a century and is now home to the JW Lees *From Hop to Glass* garden, which won Best Show Garden at the 2018 RHS Tatton Flower Show. It regularly hosts the MCCRP Music Train events.

The Railway Inn is next to Mobberley station. This rural, freehold village pub serves



traditional bar food alongside a seasonal selection of delicious homemade dishes. Its owners take particular pride in serving beautifully kept local ales.

The Greyhound is just a couple of minutes' walk away from Ashley station. With roaring log fires in the winter and a beautiful beer garden for those long summer days, it is a perfect place to visit for food and drink at any time of the year

An historic journey

The Mid-Cheshire Line has its origins in railways promoted by three separate railway companies in the 19th century.

The Cheshire Midland Railway was opened to passengers between Altrincham and Knutsford on 12 May 1862, then completed to Northwich on 1 January 1863. The West Cheshire Railway opened between Northwich and Helsby in 1869, following the route of what is now the Mid Cheshire Line as far as Mouldsworth. The railway between Mouldsworth and its original terminus, at Chester Northgate, opened in 1874.

Between Manchester and Altrincham the railway followed the route that is now taken by trams on the Altrincham branch of Metrolink. Look at the tram stops between Altrincham and Stretford and their railway

One of the best preserved stations on the Line is at Hale. The station buildings, canopies, footbridge and signal box are all Grade II listed structures. MCCRP has been involved with strategic partners working to develop a conservation for the station.

(Inset) Hale station shortly after the turn of the twentieth century.



origins are easy to spot.

From the mid 1860s, the Line fell under the auspices of the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC), at the time the second largest railway company in Britain. The CLC survived independently during the period of the Grouping, until the railways were nationalised in 1948. A number of branches ran from the line, notably the Middlewich branch from Northwich, and from Cuddington to Winsford along what is now the Whitegate Way. Until 1969, trains ran into Manchester Central (now used as a venue for events and exhibitions), after which they terminated at Oxford Road.

It was in 1990 that Mid Cheshire Line trains were diverted onto the less direct route that passes through Stockport to Piccadilly, as part of preparations for the creation of the new tram line.



friends' group has again been recognised, this time by Cheshire Best Kept Stations. Cheshire is the only county in England to have a best kept station competition; it recognises the efforts of volunteers across the county. It was established in 2003, when Helsby won the first award and two other stations were commended. Since then it has grown to a major event at which

Greenbank station, just west of Northwich, was known as Hartford & Greenbank until May 1973, when it was renamed to avoid confusion with nearby Hartford station on the West Coast Main Line. The picture above, taken sometime during the 1960s, shows the presentation to its station master of an award for its prizewinning gardens. Now the station is

unstaffed, but its

awards are made in some fifteen categories; the photograph below shows the winners at a recent awards ceremony.

Several stations on the Mid Cheshire Line have been recognised. In 2023, Altrincham Interchange was named the overall winner of Cheshire Best Kept Stations.

Ticket to ride

You must have a valid ticket for every part of your journey, and the plethora of tickets can seem a little confusing. This is a guide to the tickets you could be using if you are travelling on the Mid Cheshire Line.

For complete flexibility in your travel times, an **Anytime** ticket is perfect, having no restrictions on the time of day that you can travel. You can also break up your journey at stations along your route. Because they allow you complete flexibility in terms of when you travel, Anytime tickets are more expensive than Advance or Off-Peak tickets.

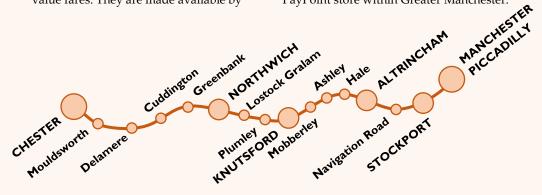
Off-peak train tickets allow you to travel in peace and quiet, avoiding the busy commuter times. Offering more flexibility than Advance tickets, they can be purchased up to and including the day of travel. Off-peak deals may only be available at specific times, on certain days or routes, but we'll let you know if these apply to you when you book your ticket.

An **Advance** train ticket, enables you to choose the best time to travel at the lowest available fare. Advance fares are available on selected routes across the Northern network, but have limited availability. Book ahead to take advantage of these great value fares. They are made available by train operators up to eight weeks ahead of travel but, subject to availability, you may still be able to get a last-minute bargain. The earlier you buy, the lower the price!

If two of you are travelling together, Northern's **Duo tickets** are a great way for to get out and about by train whilst saving a little cash. There's no need for a Railcard either, simply buy your ticket and travel together to save 25%. Only available on certain routes, and during off-peak times.

Day Ranger tickets give you the freedom to explore a chosen area, by train, for a day. Just hop on and off the train as many times as you wish. **Rover** tickets allow you to travel on four out of eight consecutive days within your chosen area, or on seven consecutive days.

The **GM Wayfarer** ticket, marketed by TfGM, gives travel for a day anywhere in Greater Manchester and in parts of Cheshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire and the Peak District. Linked to the TfGM Bee Network, it is valid on the Mid Cheshire Line between Northwich and Manchester and lets you travel on any Bee Network bus at any time. You can also travel on Metrolink trams or any train after 9:30am Monday to Friday, and at any time on weekends and bank holidays. As well as on the train or at a staffed station, it can be purchased at a TfGM Travelshop, or at a PayPoint store within Greater Manchester.



	Online	Mobile	Train			Railcard discount	
Anytime	✓	~	~	✓	✓	Yes	
Off peak	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes	
Advance	✓	~	×	✓	✓	Yes	
Season ticket	~	✓	×	✓	×	No	
Flexi Season ticket	✓	✓	×	✓	×	No	
Northern DUO	~	✓	✓	✓	×	No	
Cheshire Day Ranger	×	×	✓	✓	×	Yes	
South Pennines Day Ranger	×	×	~	✓	×	Yes	Stockport and Manchester Piccadilly only
GM Wayfarer	×	×	✓	✓	×	No	Northwich to Manchester Piccadilly only
Coasts & Peaks Rover	×	×	✓	✓	×	Yes	
North West Rover	x	×	✓	✓	×	Yes	

A **Season Ticket** is a simple way to save money on your regular journeys. Choose from weekly, monthly or annual season tickets, along with more specialised offers, such as the **Flexi Season Ticket** if you only commute two or three times a week.

If you can, it's generally better value to purchase a Season Ticket with a longer duration; for example, an Annual Season Ticket covering 52 weeks can actually cost the same as 40 Weekly Season Tickets, the equivalent of 12 weeks of free travel. A Flexi Season ticket gives you eight days of travel in 28 days – at any time between two nominated stations - offering flexibility and savings if you are not tied to the workplace. Unlike traditional season tickets, you only pay for the days on which you travel.

Northern is committed to supporting older and disabled people, families with pushchairs and small children, and those who need more time to board or alight to use the railways confidently. More details can be found on Northern's online Accessibility Hub. There are now more ways to buy your ticket than ever before. On the Mid Cheshire Line, the stations at Chester, Northwich, Knutsford, Hale, Altrincham, Stockport and Manchester Piccadilly have ticket offices, where a member of staff can help you purchase your ticket.

Most Mid Cheshire Line stations have ticket machines, from which you can buy tickets (using a bank card) or collect those you have bought online. Only certain types of tickets are available, and you may not always be able to buy the cheapest ticket for your journey at a machine.

A wider range of tickets is available online or using a mobile device.

While you should always try to buy your ticket before you travel, there may be circumstances when you need to buy a ticket from the conductor on the train.

Remember that, if you are claiming a Railcard discount, you must carry your Railcard with you and have it ready for checking throughout your journey.

Timetable Chester – Altrincham – Manchester Piccadilly

		Monda	ay to Sa	aturday	1							
			SX		SX							
Chester	d	0556	0630	0648	0714	0756	0856	0956	1056	1156	1256	1356
Mouldsworth		0608	0642	0701	0731	0808	0908	1008	1108	1208	1308	1408
Delamere		0613	0648	0706	0736	0813	0913	1013	1113	1213	1313	1413
Cuddington		0618	0653	0711	0741	0818	0918	1018	1118	1218	1318	1418
Greenbank		0623	0658	0716	0746	0822	0923	1023	1123	1223	1323	1423
Northwich		0628	0703	0722	0751	0828	0928	1028	1128	1229	1328	1428
Lostock Gralam		0632	0707	0725	0755	0831	0932	1032	1132	1232	1332	1432
Plumley		0635	0711	0729	0758	0835	0935	1035	1135	1235	1335	1435
Knutsford		0641	0717	0735	0804	0840	0941	1041	1141	1241	1341	1441
Mobberley		0646	0722	0740	0808	0845	0946	1046	1146	1246	1346	1446
Ashley		0649	0726	0744	0812	0849	0949	1049	1149	1249	1349	1449
Hale		0653	0730	0748	0816	0853	0953	1053	1153	1253	1353	1453
Altrincham		0657	0735	0752	0820	0857	0957	1057	1157	1257	1357	1457
Navigation Road	_	0700	0737	0755	0822	0859	0900	1100	1200	1300	1400	1500
Stockport	а	0714	0751	0809	0837	0913	1014	1114	1214	1314	1414	1514
Manchester Piccadilly	а	0726		0819		0925	1025	1125	1225	1325	1425	1525

		Monda	ay to Sa	aturday	'							
									SX	SO	SX	SO
Chester	d	1456	1556	1656	1756	1856	1956	2056	2156	2155	2252	2253
Mouldsworth		1508	1608	1708	1808	1908	2008	2108	2209	2207	2304	2305
Delamere		1513	1613	1713	1813	1913	2013	2113	2214	2213	2309	2310
Cuddington		1518	1618	1718	1818	1918	2018	2118	2219	2218	2314	2315
Greenbank		1523	1623	1723	1823	1923	2023	2123	2224	2223	2319	2320
Northwich		1528	1628	1728	1828	1928	2028	2128	2229	2228	2324	2325
Lostock Gralam		1532	1632	1732	1832	1932	2032	2132	2233	2233	2327	2329
Plumley		1535	1635	1735	1835	1935	2035	2135	2237	2236	2331	2332
Knutsford		1541	1641	1741	1841	1941	2041	2141	2242	2242	2336	2338
Mobberley		1546	1646	1746	1846	1946	2046	2146	2247	2247	2341	2343
Ashley		1549	1649	1749	1849	1949	2049	2149	2250	2250	2345	2346
Hale		1553	1653	1753	1853	1953	2053	2153	2254	2254	2349	2350
Altrincham		1557	1657	1757	1857	1957	2057	2157	2258	2258	2353	2354
Navigation Road		1600	1700	1800	1900	2000	2100	2159*	2300	2300	2355	2357
Stockport	а	1614	1714	1814	1914	2014	2114	2214	2314	2314	0010	0011
Manchester Piccadilly	а	1625	1726	1825	1925	2025	2125	2227	2324	2325	0028	0021

		Sunda	y					
			-	Z			Z	
Chester	d	0903	1056	1259	1503	1703	1906	2059
Mouldsworth		0914	1107	1310	1514	1714	1917	2110
Delamere		0919	1113	1316	1520	1719	1923	2116
Cuddington		0924	1117	1320	1524	1724	1927	2120
Greenbank		0928	1122	1325	1529	1729	1932	2125
Northwich		0934	1128	1331	1535	1734	1938	2131
Lostock Gralam		0937	1131	1334	1538	1737	1941	2134
Plumley		0940	1135	1338	1542	1741	1945	2138
Knutsford		0945	1140	1343	1547	1746	1950	2143
Mobberley		0950	1145	1348	1552	1750	1954	2148
Ashley		0954	1148	1351	1555	1754	1958	2151
Hale		0957	1152	1355	1559	1758	2001	2155
Altrincham		1001	1156	1359	1603	1802	2005	2159
Navigation Road		1003	1158	1402	1606	1804	2007	2202
Stockport	а	1018	1213	1416	1620	1819	2022	2216
Manchester Piccadilly	а	1027	1222	1432	1632	1830	2036	2226

* 2200 on Saturdays SO Saturdays only SX Monday to Friday only Z Stops additionally at Heaton Chapel and Levenshulme

		Monda	ay to Sa	aturday	,							
		SO	SX									
Manchester Piccadilly	d	0606	0610	0709	0810	0910	1010	1110	1210	1310	1410	1510
Stockport		0615	0619	0719	0820	0919	1019	1119	1219	1319	1419	1519
Navigation Road		0630	0634	0733	0834	0934	1034	1134	1234	1334	1434	1534
Altrincham		0632	0636	0736	0836	0936	1036	1136	1236	1336	1436	1536
Hale		0635	0639	0739	0839	0939	1040	1139	1239	1339	1439	1539
Ashley		0638	0643	0743	0843	0943	1044	1143	1243	1343	1443	1543
Mobberley		0642	0647	0747	0847	0947	1049	1147	1247	1347	1447	1549
Knutsford		0647	0652	0752	0852	0952	1054	1152	1252	1352	1452	1554
Plumley		0652	0656	0756	0856	0956	1058	1156	1256	1356	1456	1558
Lostock Gralam		0656	0700	0800	0900	1000	1102	1200	1300	1400	1500	1602
Northwich		0700	0705	0805	0905	1005	1107	1205	1305	1405	1505	1606
Greenbank		0705	0710	0810	0910	1010	1112	1210	1310	1410	1510	1611
Cuddington		0710	0716	0816	0916	1018	1118	1216	1316	1416	1516	1616
Delamere		0715	0721	0820	0920	1022	1122	1220	1320	1420	1520	1621
Mouldsworth		0720	0727	0825	0925	1027	1127	1225	1325	1425	1525	1625
Chester	а	0731	0739	0837	0939	1039	1139	1237	1337	1437	1537	1637

Manchester Piccadilly- Altrincham - Chester

	Mon	day to S	aturda	у							
		SX		SX						SX	SO
Manchester Piccadilly	d 1610		1710		1810	1910	2009	2110	2210	2313	2321
Stockport	1619	1708	1719	1754	1819	1919	2019	2119	2219	2322	2330
Navigation Road	1634	1723	1734	1809	1834	1934	2034	2134	2234	2338	2344
Altrincham	1636	1726	1737	1812	1836	1936	2036	2136	2236	2340	2347
Hale	1639	1728	1740	1815	1839	1939	2039	2139	2239	2343	2349
Ashley	1643	1732	1744	1818	1843	1943	2043	2143	2243	2347	2353
Mobberley	1647	1735	1748	1822	1847	1948	2047	2148	2248	2351	2357
Knutsford	1652	1740	1753	1827	1852	1953	2052	2153	2253	2356	0002
Plumley	1656	1745	1758	1832	1856	1958	2056	2157	2257	0001	0006
Lostock Gralam	1700	1748	1801	1836	1900	2001	2100	2201	2300	0005	0010
Northwich	1705	1753	1806	1840	1905	2006	2105	2206	2305	0009	0015
Greenbank	1712	1758	1811	1846	1910	2011	2111	2211	2310	0015	0020
Cuddington	1717		1816	1851	1916	2016	2116	2217	2316	0020	0026
Delamere	1721		1821	1856	1920	2021	2120	2221	2320	0025	0030
Mouldsworth	1726	1809	1825	1910	1925	2026	2125	2226	2325	0030	0035
Chester	a 1742	1819	1837	1920	1937	2038	2137	2238	2337	0041	0047

Sunday

Manchester Piccadilly	d	0906	1103	1310	1509	1709	1909	2104
Stockport		0920	1114	1319	1519	1719	1919	2113
Navigation Road		0934	1128	1333	1533	1733	1933	2127
Altrincham		0937	1130	1335	1535	1735	1935	2130
Hale		0939	1133	1338	1538	1738	1938	2132
Ashley		0943	1137	1342	1542	1742	1942	2136
Mobberley		0947	1140	1345	1545	1745	1945	2139
Knutsford		0952	1145	1350	1550	1750	1950	2144
Plumley		0956	1150	1355	1555	1755	1955	2149
Lostock Gralam		1000	1154	1359	1559	1759	1959	2153
Northwich		1005	1158	1403	1603	1803	2003	2158
Greenbank		1010	1204	1409	1609	1809	2009	2203
Cuddington		1015	1209	1414	1614	1814	2014	2208
Delamere		1020	1214	1419	1619	1819	2019	2213
Mouldsworth		1026	1220	1425	1625	1825	2025	2219
Chester	а	1037	1230	1435	1635	1835	2035	2231

SO Saturdays only SX Monday to Friday only

These timetables are valid from 2 June 2024; always check online for the latest train times

Who we are

Along Mid Cheshire Lines is produced by the Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership (MCCRP), a stakeholder organisation founded in 2003 to promote increased usage of the Mid Cheshire Line and to develop and improve facilities along the route.

MCCRP is made up of key stakeholders along the Mid Cheshire Line including

- Cheshire Association of Local Councils
- Cheshire East Council
- Cheshire West & Chester Council
- Forestry Commission
- Knutsford Town Council
- Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association
- Network Rail
- Northern Trains Limited
- Northwich Town Council
- Stockport Council
- Trafford Council
- Transport for Greater Manchester. Northern Trains is the main funding

partner of MCCRP and works collaboratively with its board and other local stakeholders to promote the Line,



improve stations and realise patronage growth. Other funding partners include

- Avanti West Coast
- Cross Country Trains
- Cheshire East Council
- Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association
- TransPennine Express
- Transport for Greater Manchester MCCRP welcomes approaches from commercial and non commercial organisations to join the partnership.

The priorities for the Partnership are:

- To work with key partners through a Mid Cheshire Strategy Working Group to improve Mid Cheshire Line services
- To promote and market the Line
- To improve stations on the Line
- To improve levels of community involvement on the Line
 email: railofficer@midcheshirerail.org.uk

The Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association (MCRUA) works alongside MCCRP, but the aims of the two organisations are quite distinct. While MCCRP promotes travel on the Line, the rôle of MCRUA is to campaign for better rail services across Mid Cheshire. Its longest-standing campaign is for the reopening of the Middlewich Branch, from Northwich to Crewe, with stations at Middlewich and Gadbrook Park. A number of individuals are, of course, interested in and involved with both organisations and MCRUA has "provided" many volunteers for MCCRP in recent years. MCRUA regularly publishes The Mid Cheshire Rail Report, free to its members. website: www.mcrua.org.uk

Along Mid Cheshire Lines is published by the Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership The Council Offices, 78 Church Road, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 5PB





www.midcheshirerail.org.uk Follow MidCheshireCRP on 👎 💥 🧿 🔮

For details of train times and fares on the Line: visit National Rail Enquiries at www.nationalrail.co.uk, or Northern at www.northernrailway.co.uk. Alternatively, telephone Northern's Customer Experience Centre on 0800 200 6060. Always check your departure and journey times online before travelling.