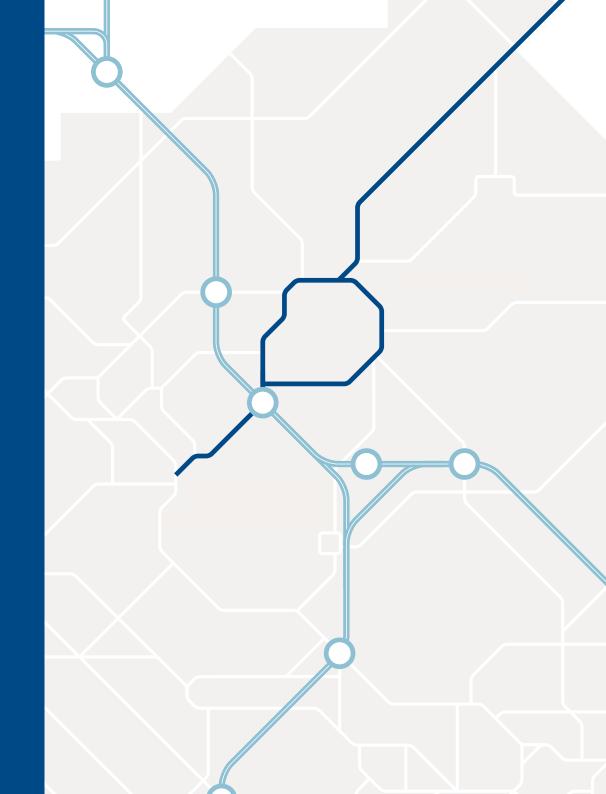
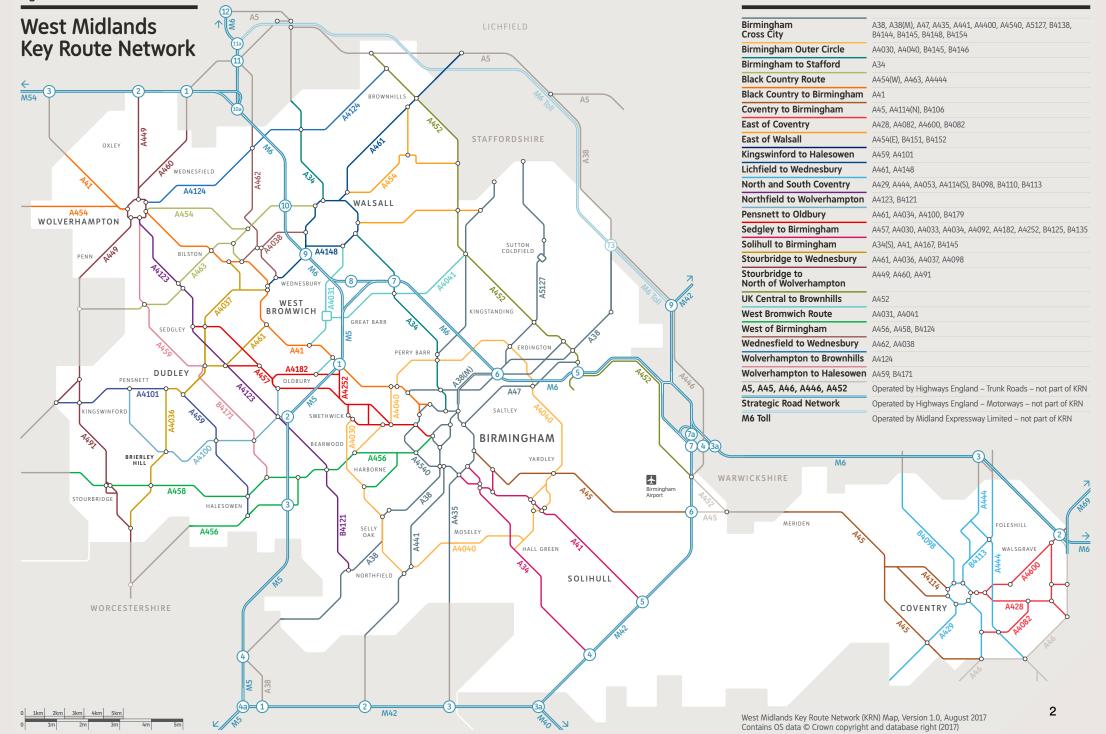
West Midlands Key Route Network

Lichfield to Wednesbury







The Lichfield to Wednesbury route is a 12 mile/20km strategic section of the West Midlands Key Route Network (KRN), providing long distance regional connectivity from the District of Lichfield, in Staffordshire, to the strategic centres of Walsall and Wednesbury. This route is important for freight, commuters and access to leisure activities.

The route forms part of the Eastern Opportunity Area in Walsall, an area which contains local and high quality industrial, and established residential areas.

Across the region the route provides an important strategic link, particularly for freight traffic requiring connectivity to the M5, M6, M6 Toll and A5 strategic roads. It connects directly to the M6 at junction 9. In Lichfield, the route connects with the A5 at the A461/A5 Muckley Corner junction and access to the M6 Toll is enabled via the A5.

Within Walsall, this route enables the movement of goods and services along the spine of the Borough. It is essential for access to employment opportunities, education and to Walsall Arboretum, a significant local asset for leisure. It also provides access to Walsall Manor Hospital, on the West of the Walsall Ring Road (A4148). The Lichfield to Wednesbury route is formed of the A461 and A4148.

In the Black Country this route forms crucial connections to seven other routes on the KRN, these are:-

UK Central to Brownhills

A461/A452 Shire Oak junction

East of Walsall

- A461/B4152 junction
- A461/A454 Mellish Road junction
- A4148/B4151 Broadway North/Sutton Road/Gillity Avenue junction

Birmingham to Stafford

- A34/A4148 Birmingham Road junction
- A34/A4148 Green Lane junction

West Bromwich Route

 A4148/A4031 Broadway West/Weston St. junction

Wednesfield to Wednesbury

• A4148/A4038 Brown Lion junction

Black Country Route

 A4148/A454 Wolverhampton Road junction

Black Country to Birmingham

 A41/A461 Dudley Street/Black Country New Road

The route is predominantly single carriageway throughout most of its length. There are however, some sections of dual carriageway north of Walsall Town Centre and along Pleck Road on the A4148 (Walsall Ring Road), where the route provides direct access to the town centre. There are further dual carriageway sections where the A461 approaches the M6 at junction 9, and where it approaches the A462 Trouse Lane and the A41 Black Country New Road.

Along the section north of Walsall, the A461 is characterised by the presence of residential properties. In the centre of Rushall the route changes to provide more of a place function as a number of services are located in this centre. To the north of Rushall the route again becomes mostly residential, until it reaches Walsall Wood where again it changes to perform more of a place function. North of Walsall Wood the route provides a link directly into Lichfield where it changes from residential built-up areas to more of a rural link.

The A4148 Ring Road encompasses Walsall Town Centre and circulates traffic around the town providing access to outlying areas and to the M6 motorway. It is particularly important for access to leisure activities at the Walsall Arboretum and at the Waterfront, including the Art Gallery. The Broadway section to the south of the town provides access to the Walsall campus of the University of Wolverhampton.

The southern A461 section of this route, links directly to the M6 at junction 9 and is essential for public transport across the Black Country, linking key logistics, retail and other commercial businesses to the M6. This section is also important for pedestrian access particularly to Wood Green and Stuart Bathurst secondary schools. The route terminates in Wednesbury where it provides access to local services and links to the A41 for destinations across the region.

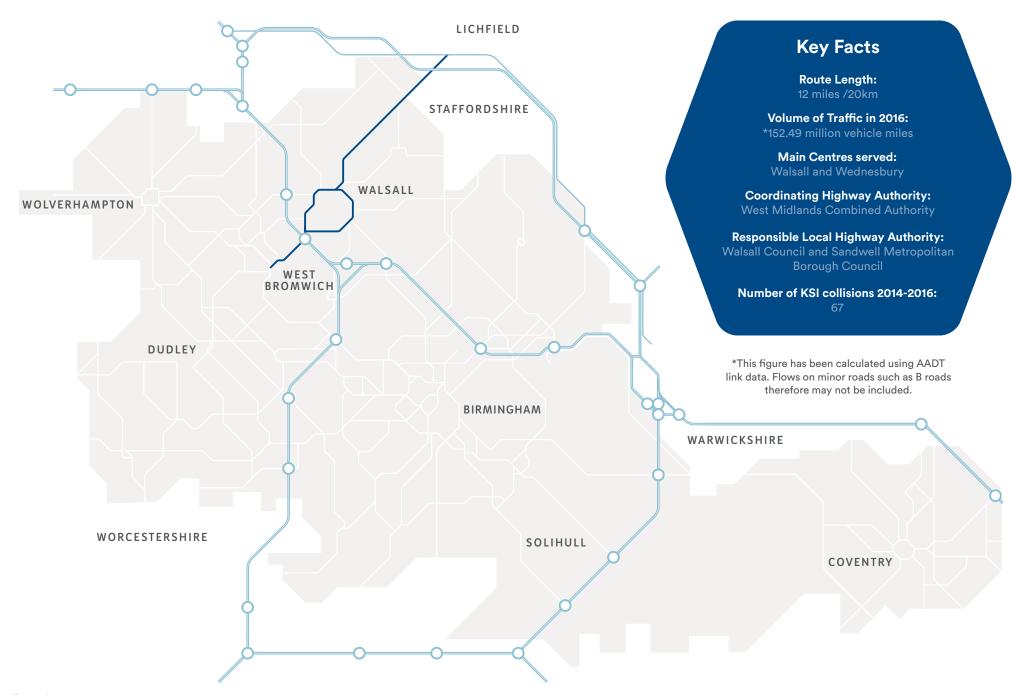


Figure 2 5

Congestion, Delay, Reliability

This route represents 3% of the total length of the West Midlands Key Route Network. According to the latest data available from 2016, this route had a minimum annual average daily flow (AADF) of 12,500 vehicles, a maximum of 34,700 with an average of 22,000 AADF.

The route experiences significant volumes of traffic, particularly on the:

- A461 between its junction with B4152 Salters Road, Shire Oak, and its junction with the A4148 Broadway North at Walsall Arboretum;
- A4148 Pleck Road/Old Pleck Road/Bescot Road from its junction with the A454 Wolverhampton Road to A461 Bescot Road, Bescot: and
- A461 Bescot Road/Wood Green Road/ Walsall Street between the A4148 and Wednesbury.

The locations of the most significant congestion-related delays (>60 sec/km) are set out in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: AM Peak Congestion Related Delays

Road	Location	Direction
A461	Walsall Street/Wood Green Road, Wednesbury to M6 Junction 9	Inbound to Walsall
A461	Bescot Road, A4148 Wallows Lane to M6 Junction 9, Bescot	Outbound from Walsall
A4148	Pleck Road, A454 Wolverhampton Road to Rollingmill Street	Anticlockwise
A4148	Pleck Road/Blue Lane West/Littleton Street West/ Broadway North, Moat Lane to Rowley Street	Clockwise
A4148	Broadway North, Walhouse Road to A461 Lichfield Street	Anticlockwise
A4148	Broadway North, A34 Birmingham Road to B4151 Sutton Road	Clockwise and Anticlockwise
A4148	Broadway West, Lord Street to Bescot Crescent, Palfrey	Clockwise
A461	Lichfield Street/Lichfield Road, Redmires Close, Rushall, to A4148 Broadway North	Inbound to Walsall
A461	Lichfield Road, Cartbridge Lane to B4154 Pelsall Lane, Rushall	Outbound from Walsall
A461	Lichfield Road, New Street Shelfield to B4154 Daw End Lane, Rushall	Inbound to Walsall
A461	Lichfield Road, Four Crosses Road to Spring Road, Shelfield	Outbound from Walsall
A461	Lichfield Road, A452 Chester Road to B4152 Salters Road, Shire Oak	Inbound to and outbound from Walsall

Peak hour journey time on the route has been compared with the equivalent free flow time, which is based on the average journey time between 22:00 – 06:00.

On this route the journey time in the AM Peak is mostly 50% higher than the free flow time. However the section from Rushall to the A4148, along Littleton Street West, Pleck Road and Wood Green Road, all show a journey time that is 150% higher than (i.e. 2½ times) the free flow time.

A particular impact of the congestion is to create problems with access to Walsall Manor Hospital, Wednesbury industrial premises, Walsall Enterprise Park, Maybrook Industrial Estate and north Aldridge industrial area where businesses may supply or rely on just-in-time deliveries.

Average Speeds

The average speed for the route in the AM peak is less than 20mph throughout most of the route. The areas approaching the M6 at junction 9 are particularly slow during the morning peak period.

The sections of the route with an average peak speed of less than 10mph are as follows:

- M6 J9 Roundabout
- Pleck Rd, Rollingmill Street to Wolverhampton Road/Blue Lane West
- A4148 Blue Lane West/Littleton Street West, Pleck Road to A461 Lichfield Street
- A4148 Broadway, A4031West Bromwich Road to Delves Road
- A461 Lichfield Rd, B4154 to Mill Road/ Spring Road

Table 2: PM Peak Congestion-Related Delays

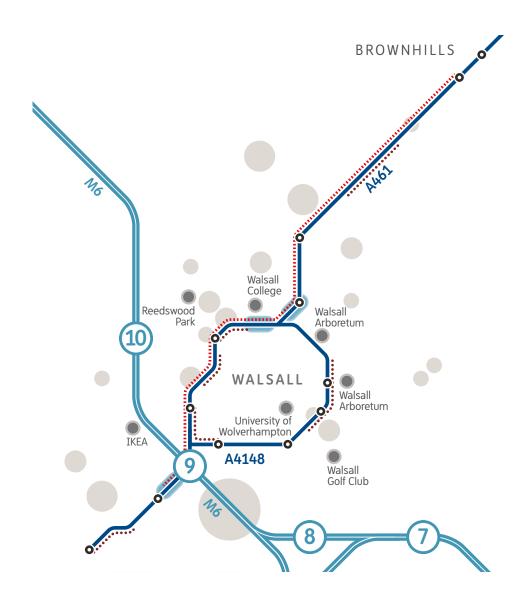
Road	Location	Direction
A461	Wood Green Road, Myvod Road to M6 Junction 9	Inbound to and outbound from Walsall
A461	Bescot Road, A4148 Wallows Lane to M6 Junction 9, Bescot	Outbound from Walsall
A4148	Bescot Road, A4038 Wednesbury Road to A461 Bescot Road	Anticlockwise
A4148	Pleck Road/Blue Lane West/Littleton Street West, Moat Lane to A461 Lichfield Street	Clockwise
A461	Lichfield Road, Redmires Close to B4154 Pelsall Lane, Rushall	Outbound from Walsall
A461	Lichfield Road, New Street Shelfield to B4154 Daw End Lane, Rushall	Inbound to Walsall
A461	Lichfield Road, Four Crosses Road to Spring Road, Shelfield	Outbound from Walsall
A461	Lichfield Road, Coppice Road, Walsall Wood to A452 Chester Road, Shire Oak	Outbound from Walsall

Junction Capacity Issues

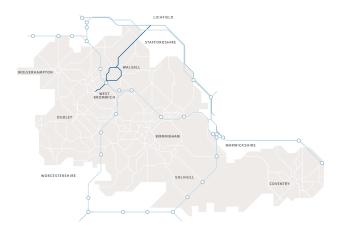
There are currently several junctions along the route where the evidence suggests there are capacity issues restricting the free flow of traffic; these are:-

- A461/A452 Chester Road junction
- A461/B4152 Salters Road junction
- A461/A454 Mellish Road junction
- A4148/B4151 Broadway North/Sutton Road/Gillity Avenue
- A4148/A34 Birmingham Road junction
- A4148/A4031 Broadway West/Weston Street/West Bromwich Road junction
- A4148 Broadway West/Bescot Crescent junction
- A461 Wood Green Road/Woden Road East

West Midlands Key Route Network Lichfield to Wednesbury







Improving Road Safety is critical to the overall vision of the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan – Movement for Growth. The development of a new West Midlands Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan will make reference to the current West Midlands forecasts to achieve a 40% reduction in Fatalities and Serious Injury casualties by 2020, from the 2015 baseline.

During the 2016 calendar year, we noted the following key statistics:

Collisions

- 143 collisions, involving 275 vehicles
- Main contributory factor: Failed to look properly (pedestrian) (15% of all collisions)
 - o The Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) ratio for this group is 10% with 2 serious collisions.
- Main contributory factors
 - o Slippery road (due to weather) (7% of all collisions, 11% serious collisions)
 - o Poor turn or manoeuvre (7% of all collisions)

Casualties

- Total casualties: 193
- Killed and Seriously Injured: 25
 (13% of all casualties, down 2% when compared to 2015 figure of 24 of 179)
 - o Killed: 1 (0.5% of all casualties, down by 1.2%)
 - o Seriously injured: 24 (12% of all casualties, down by 0.8%)
- Slights: 168 (87% of all casualties)

Casualty Types

We noted the following key statistics in relation to casualties falling into specific groups:

- Pedestrians: 19 (a reduction of 8% compared to 2015)
- Powered Two wheel vehicles: 19 (a reduction of 6% compared to 2015)
- Pedal cyclists: 13 (a reduction of 0.07 % compared to 2015)
- Car occupants: 141 (an increase of 14% compared to 2015)

KSI Clusters

There are a number of KSI clusters along the A4148 (accounting for 20 of the casualties) which passes through a mostly built up area. There are KSI clusters in the vicinity of the Wallows Lane/Bescot Road junction and the A4148/B4151 junction, and on Pleck Road, Blue Lane West and Broadway North. On the A461 section of this route, there are KSI clusters on Lichfield Road with two separate fatal accident locations.

In Sandwell, there is limited provision for cycling on this route. The Wood Green Road section of the route is heavily used by school children. The M6 at Junction 9 poses a significant barrier to active travel including children accessing schools.

In Walsall, along A4148 Pleck Road, there is a shared use bus lane on approach to the A454. On Wolverhampton Road/Blue Lane West shared footway facilities for cycling and walking up until it meets Green Lane. As the route continues along the A4148, there is shared use footpath on Littleton Street until Hatherton Street junction. There is also some sections of shared use between Hatherton Street and the Arboretum junction.

The Arboretum Junction poses significant safety issues for active travel due to current layout.

There is a shared bus lane on the Lichfield Road arm (Northbound). There is further limited provision between Arboretum Junction and the Crescent Junction. The remaining ring road does not have provision for cycling. Travel through this section of the route in Walsall tends to be take place through the centre rather than on the Ring Road.

Along the A461 north of Walsall there is limited provision for cycling, however the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 5 runs parallel on the old rail line. The NCN 5 needs upgrading and improvement to remove the overgrowth of trees.

The STDEP Strategic Cycle Network has identified several 'Priority Corridors' for cycling in the West Midlands. There are two corridors that intersect with this route as they cross the Walsall Ring Road.



The A461 within the West Midlands and the western side of the A4148 are well served by a number of high frequency bus services operating every 10-30 minutes. These services provide access to Walsall Town Centre, Walsall Manor Hospital and Wednesbury and other communities for retail, leisure and employment. The eastern side of the A4148 is not well served.

The average bus speed along this route is 12.1mph (data taken from the 10/10A bus route). The average total number of daily bus trips is 41,249.

The bus corridors are part of the Core Bus Network in the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan - Movement for Growth but are not identified for Sprint investment.

In terms of rail, the route serves Walsall Station for journeys to Birmingham and Rugeley and, to the south of Walsall, Bescott Stadium is just off the corridor. The Midland Metro route crosses the corridor at Wednesbury where there are Metro stops (Wednesbury Parkway and Wednesbury Great Western Street) and the Metro depot. At present there are no plans to extend the Midland Metro in the corridor.

The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan Movement for Growth identifies the Wednesbury
- Walsall - Brownhills corridor for tram-train
or rail as part of re-opening the line between
Stourbridge and Lichfield, but it is not part of the
HS2 Connectivity Package.

Table 3: Main Bus Routes

Road(s) Served	Frequency	Route No.
A461 Walsall - Rushall and Walsall Wood - Shire Oak	Every 20 mins	997
A4148/A461 Bescot - Wednesbury	Every 20 mins	Nov-13
A461 Walsall - Walsall Wood	Every 10 mins	10/10A
A461 Walsall - Shelfield	Every 20 mins	89
A461 Shire Oak - Walsall Wood	Every 30 mins	937
A461 Walsall - Rushall	Every 30 min	3/3A
A461 Walsall - Rushall	Every 20 mins	8
A461 Walsall - Rushall	Every 30 mins	35/35A/35B
A4148 Manor Hospital - Pleck	Every 20 mins	39
A4148/A461 Walsall - Wednesbury	Every 10-20 mins	311/313
A4148 Palfrey - Bescot - Manor Hospital	Every 60 mins	637

^{*}Note- All daily averages have been obtained by analysing 15 days data (Mon-Fri) during the month of March 2017.

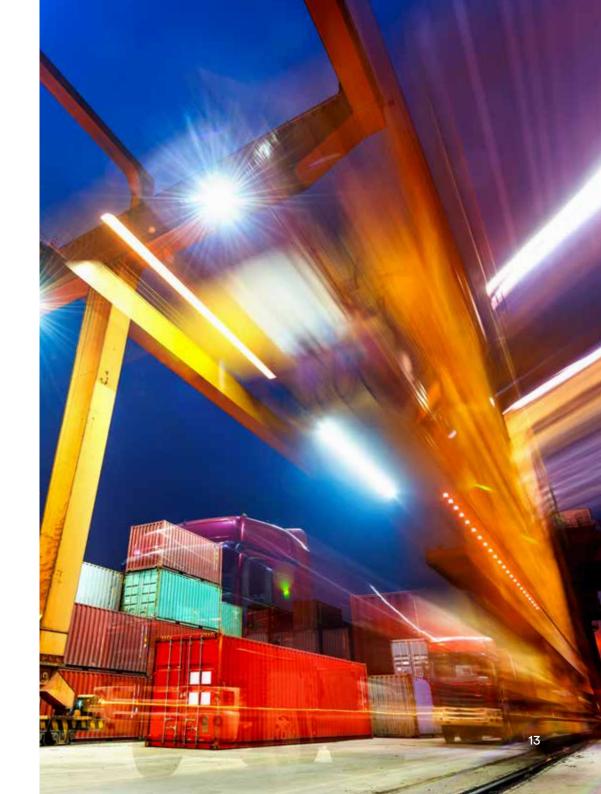
The AADF data for 2016 has been used to analyse HGV flows on each respective route. The average number of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) using the route on a daily basis was 1,024, which represents 5% of all vehicular traffic. The route falls within the top 25% for HGV movements, when compared to the other routes on the West Midlands KRN. The following sections of the route have in excess of 1,000 HGV flows per day:

- A461 Sandhills to the B4154 junction at Rushall;
- North-western section of the Walsall Ring Road (A491 to A454); and
- A4148 Bescot Road/Wallows lane junction to A41 Black Country New Road.

The latter is where the route connects to the M6 at junction 9. The M6 is of national importance; in total, between the Midlands and North West in 2014, approx. 45.5m tonnes of goods were transported (MDST data); a significant amount of this travels on the M6.

In addition, a large number of road haulage companies are located in the Walsall area due to this close proximity to the M6, which again serves both a local and national role.

There are also a number of industrial estates in close proximity to this route such as Westgate Trading Estate and Anchor Brook Industrial Estate to the West of Aldridge, accessible from the A461 via Stubbers Green Road. A large landfill site is located here also.



Resilience

The route has parallel strategic roads, the A4124 to the north and A454 to the south. There are two routes around Walsall Ring Road. To the south of Walsall the A4038 and A4031 both parallel the A461, the former on the north and the latter on the south. There is a considerable degree of resilience contained within the Walsall networks. However, certain critical sections can cause grid-lock, including on the motorway network, particularly in the Wednesbury/Bescot area where the Axletree Way trading estate and IKEA store have impact on M6 junction 9.

There is a lack of intermodal network resilience due to the lack of rail based transport, but the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan - Movement for Growth plan proposes introducing rail serviced on the Stourbridge – Brownhills line and between Walsall and Wolverhampton with stations in the route corridor.

Given the existing capacity constraints in the peaks in the Walsall network, a restriction on any of the roads will have considerable adverse implications for journey times on the remainder of this route and surrounding routes.

Diversion Route

In conjunction with the Birmingham to Stafford KRN route, the southern section of the A4148 is used as an Emergency Diversion Route (EDR) by Highways England when there are closures or major incidents on the M6 motorway southbound between junctions 9 and 8, whilst at the same time the southern part of the A461 is used as an EDR in conjunction with the Black Country to Birmingham KRN route.

The southern part of the A461 is also used as an EDR when there are closures or major incidents on the M6 motorway northbound between junctions 9 and 10, this time in conjunction with the Black Country to Birmingham KRN route and the Black Country Route KRN routes.

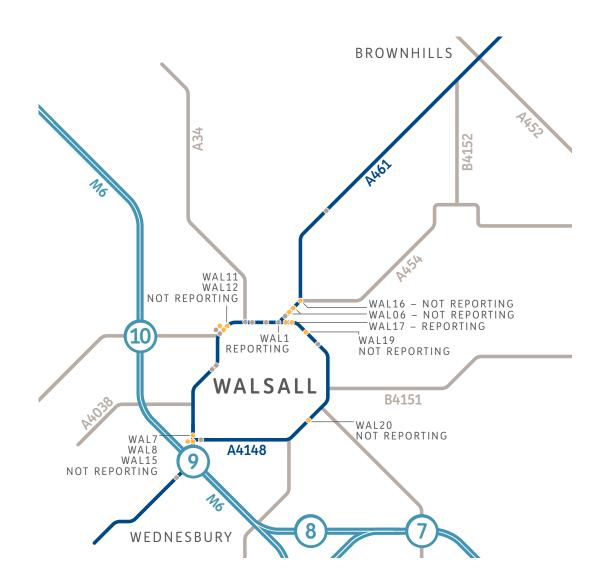
In conjunction with the Black Country Route and Black Country to Birmingham KRN routes, the northern section of the A4148 is used as an EDR when there are closures or major incidents on the M6 motorway southbound between junctions 10 and 9.

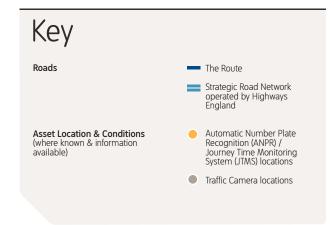
Flooding

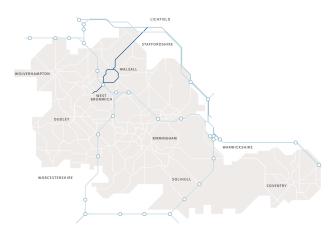
Flooding on this route impacts on the overall performance, safety of road users and affects the lives of those living in the vicinity. The evidence gathered indicates that there are some areas on this route that pose flood risk. These include:

- The section of the A461 between Winterley Lane and The Parkway
- Along Lichfield Street between Mellish Road Island and the Arboretum junction
- The northern approach to M6 Junction 9 along Wood Green Road

West Midlands Key Route Network Lichfield to Wednesbury





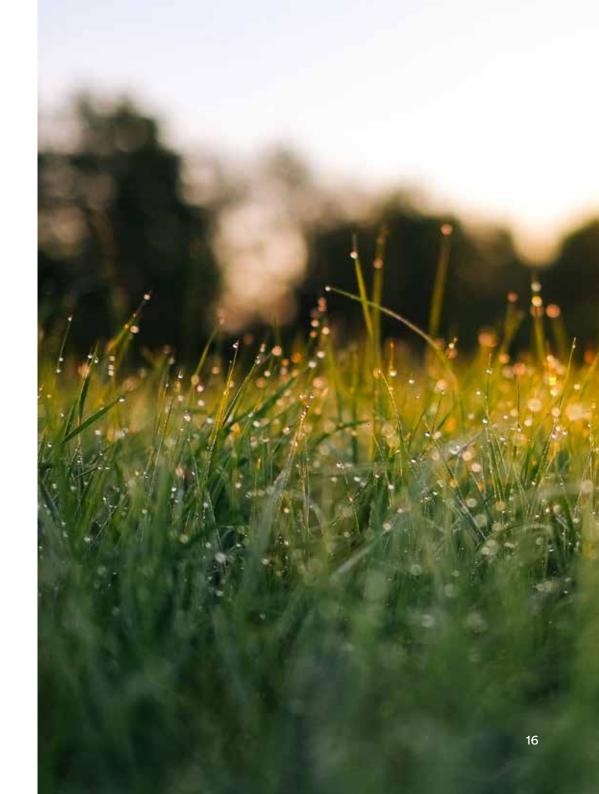


There are inequalities in health between the local authorities within the West Midlands – at local authority level the lowest healthy life expectancy at birth for men is 56.4 years, and the highest is 63.8 years. Amongst women the lowest is 59 years and highest 67.9 years. Similarly there are inequalities in healthy life expectancies within each local authority. Closing this gap in health inequalities and increasing the healthy life expectancy by 2030 is an objective of the WMCA's Strategic Economic Plan.

The route passes through communities where both male and female healthy life expectancies are in the lowest 25% of areas within the WMCA area and are considerably lower than the national average of 83, particularly around where this route meets the M6 at junction 9.

The route falls within the Sandwell and Walsall Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) declared for Nitrogen Oxide (NO₂).

The West Midlands has significant air quality problems. Every year there are between 2,000 and 2,400 deaths caused by air pollution. This is a huge health issue for people in the region, increasing the risk of lung disease and heart disease. There are parts of our region where considerable action such as the introduction of Clean Air Zones (CAZs) is required by Government to improve air quality.



Across the West Midlands the local authorities have a statutory duty to maintain its highway network in a safe condition. This also includes carrying out routine maintenance of highway assets which could include up to 12 specific groups. An Asset Management Plan is produced which aims to ensure that any future issues with the assets could be address in a proactive way.

Carriageway Condition

The carriageway condition across the Lichfield to Wednesbury route is in a fair and safe condition. Over the past six years there has been a systematic planned programme of capital maintenance carried out on the A461, A4148.

Footway Condition

The footway condition across the Lichfield to Wednesbury route is in a fair and safe condition. Over the past six years some sections have benefited from a systematic planned programme of capital maintenance that has been carried out on the A461 and A4148.

Structures

There is 1 highway structure, an underpass, identified on the Lichfield to Wednesbury route, which is systematically inspected and maintained. The overall condition of this structure is good.

Refer to the Technical Annex for further details on asset condition.



Development proposals directly affecting this route

Housing

• Portway 375 dwellings (2020-25)

Employment

• No significant proposals

Development proposals indirectly affecting this route

Housing

• No significant proposals

Employment

- Various Sites in Brownhills 300 jobs (2017-20)
- Wider Wednesbury area 4800 jobs (2017-30)

Committed Transport Improvements (as outlined in Movement for Growth - 2026 Delivery Plan for Transport)

• A461 Corridor Traffic Signal Upgrade

AADF - Annual average daily flow

AQMA – Air Quality Management Areas

DfT – Department for Transport

EDR – Emergency Diversion Route

HGV - Heavy Goods Vehicles

HLE – Healthy life expectancy

HS2 - High Speed Rail Two

JTMS - Journey Time Measurement Systems

KRN – Key Route Network

KSI - Killed or seriously injured

LE – Life expectancy

LEP – Local Enterprise Partnership

LSOA – Lower Layer Super Output Areas

MDST - MDS Transmodal

MSOA - Middle Layer Super Output Areas

PIA - Personal injury accidents

SRN – Strategic Road Network

STDEP - Sustainable Transport Delivery Excellence Programme

TfWM – Transport for the West Midlands

TCG - Tactical Co-ordination Group

UKTI – UK Trade and Investment

UTMC – Urban Traffic Management Control

VMS – Variable Message Sign

WM - West Midlands

WMCA - West Midlands Combined Authority

AADF Data:

AADF counts for A roads on each route: https://bit.ly/2fbapuc

Route Safety:

Reported casualty and accident rates by urban and rural roads, road class, road user type, severity and pedestrian involvement, Great Britain, 2015.

Committed Schemes:

West Midlands Combined Authority. Movement for Growth: The West Midlands Strategic Transport plan.

West Midlands Strategic Cycle Network:

West Midlands Combined Authority Board Report, 20 January 2017, item 4.3 - Strategic Cycle Network https://bit.ly/2hrrCAi

Freight Information:

MDS Transmodal Data. Provided in Confidence for Midlands Connect Freight Study.

Enterprise Zones:

https://bit.ly/2uZLDTe https://bit.ly/2u7DCN1

Road Haulage Companies:

UK Trade & Investment Road Haulage Industry, Midlands Hauliers. Provided in Confidence for Midlands Connect Freight Study.

National Cycle Routes, Sustrans:

https://bit.ly/18FFBsT

HS2 Connectivity Package:

HS2 Growth Strategy, Connectivity Programme. GBSLEP. https://bit.ly/2woBqxp

Average Speeds and Congestion Data:

West Midlands Strategic Highways Phase 2: Key Route Network Definition and Outline Performance. Produced by Mott Macdonald for West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority. March 2016.

Route Safety:

Department for Transport. Reported Road Casualties Great Britain, annual report: 2015. https://bit.ly/2hrcldb

Air Quality Management Areas:

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, March 2017 AQMA Dataset. https://bit.ly/2fEdulf

Male and Female Healthy Life Expectancy:

Office for National Statistics. Life Expectancy (LE) and Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) at birth for males by Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs) in England, 2009 to 2013. Published 2015. https://bit.ly/2vwtxd1

Childhood Obesity:

Public Health England. National Child Measurement Programme data from 2012/13 to 2014/15, aggregated by MSOA. Published 2016 https://bit.ly/2p3ocVV

Younger Population:

ONS: 2011 Census aggregate data. Population aged 0-17, as a percentage of total population by LSOA.

Older Population:

ONS: 2011 Census aggregate data. Population aged 65+, as a percentage of total population by LSOA.

Living with a Disability:

ONS: 2011 Census aggregate data. Households with at least one person living with a disability, as a percentage of all households by LSOA.

Unemployment:

ONS: 2011 Census aggregate data. No adults in employment in household, as a percentage of all households by LSOA.

West Midlands Cycling Charter:

https://bit.ly/2xbg4oK