

Programme of public engagement

To re-start our face-to-face engagement with communities across the East West Rail (EWR) route, we are planning to hold a series of public events.

Event types

The events will provide local residents with an opportunity to understand the project development process and anticipated timescales, and speak face-to-face with members of the team.

The events will be drop-in style sessions, open to all, and tailored to provide information about the EWR project specific to the local community.

The events will also provide an opportunity to look at what we consulted on last year – as we are still reviewing the 9,000 responses received during the 2021 consultation and considering how the feedback is used to inform plans for the railway.

These events will sit outside of the formal consultation process providing an additional opportunity for residents to talk to members of the EWR Co team present at the event. We will use display boards, plans and other materials to help explain and provide information on our proposals and our planned next steps.

Comments cards will also be available at every event so that people can provide us with any information they would like us to take into account.

In addition to these events for the wider community, we are writing to those residents and businesses potentially directly affected by our proposals to arrange one-to-one surgery appointments with our land team colleagues.

Venues and timing

We want to make sure as many people as possible have an opportunity to come and talk to us at a time that suits them. We are planning for the events to run from 2pm-8pm. Exact timings may vary depending on room availability in venues but we will make sure people have the opportunity to attend during the day and early evening.

It is critical that the venues are accessible and, as far as possible, situated within the communities along the route. We will need to make sure venues are able to safely accommodate the anticipated number of attendees which may limit the number of available options in some areas.

We would be happy to consider suggestions on possible venues from the members of the Local Representatives Groups (LRGs).

Promotion

To make sure as many people as possible know about these public events, we will ensure details are widely publicised.

As details for each event are finalised, we will publish them on our website and social media channels, as well as issue press releases to local media. We will also share details with all local elected representatives in the area, local authority officers and other partners so they can reshare via their channels to help reach as many people as possible.

We would be keen to receive any additional suggestions from the members of the LRGs on how to promote the events in their area.

A public event in: Bedfordshire

Having reviewed several event spaces in the area, we believe the Wyboston Lakes Resort provides the best option for the community here. It sits within the area covered by the Bedfordshire Group, with ample parking and access to local transport. The venue is fully accessible allowing a wide range of participants to engage fully with the event and has rooms of a size that be scaled up to accommodate the anticipated number of attendees.

We propose providing scheduled transport through local villages into the event for those residents without access to a private car, or those who do not feel comfortable accessing the venue by public transport. If you have any views on the stops and routes the scheduled transport should take, let us know.

We feel it is important that residents and businesses potentially directly affected by our proposals have the opportunity to speak to us. We are in the process of scheduling a series of surgery-style meetings with these individuals, which we anticipate will end no later than 10 May.

We have made a provisional booking for a public drop-in event at the Wyboston Lakes Resort on the first available day after those meetings close – Wednesday 18 May – and we will confirm the booking once the Group has considered the proposal and given feedback.

Event Summary

When: 2pm-8pm, Wednesday 18 May

Where: Wyboston Lakes Resort

What: Public drop-in session with EWR Co team

Why: An opportunity for residents to talk to the EWR Co team and share information outside of a formal consultation