CREWE

Crewe is a major route intersection on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) with three separate routes entering from the south - Stoke, Shrewsbury and Stafford (WCML south), and three from the north - Manchester, Chester and Warrington (WCML north).

There is a major freight yard at Basford Hall, south of Crewe on the west side of the main line. So heavy has freight traffic always been in this area that a complex network of lines bypassing the station was constructed between 1896 and 1901, known as the independent lines. These allow access to the Basford Hall freight yard from five of the six converging routes, the only one missing being that from Stoke.

An eight hour timetable is provided from 06:00 with services starting to tail off after 14:00, the final service ending at 14:40.

During operation the following points should be noted:

> Services into platform 6 entering from south of the station often exit towards Manchester, so they should stop at the mid-platform signal to access to the Manchester crossovers.

> Services into platform 1 should stop at the appropriate mid-platform signal because there are occasions when two services (one from the north and one from the south) use the platform at the same time, change direction, then exit.

> Be aware that freight arrival times at Salop Goods Junction and Basford Hall Sidings are often not in the same order as departure times. The longest waiting times are at Basford Hall so siding numbers are suggested in the service descriptions to avoid conflicts.

> Avoid signalling freights too far ahead as other freights often need to cross their paths.

> Freight services that don't stop at Basford Hall Sidings should use either the up or down independent lines.

> Freight services from the independent lines (via Salop Goods Junction) must always use the slow lines when re-joining the main line.

Created by the RailOSDevTeam