

Two new stations on the way

LOCAL ACTION



NEARLY READY: Coleshill Parkway station

Picture: Nigel Cripps

Disappointing news is emerging about Coleshill Parkway station which will not open for business until this autumn even though the station itself is complete and should have opened in March.

The ramp to the road bridge that provides access to the car park has to be replaced because Centro says the "fill material" does not meet official requirements.

The railway station includes a new two-platform stop for trains on the Birmingham to Nuneaton railway line.

Trains will serve Birmingham, Leicester, Peterborough, Cambridge and Stansted Airport.

The £9million interchange includes facilities for buses, pedestrians and cyclists.

The scheme is co-funded by the Department for Transport, Warwickshire County Council, John Laing, and developer contributions secured by North Warwickshire Borough Council.

Andy Pearson, director of rail projects at John Laing, said: "Coleshill Parkway will provide commuters, residents, employees of Hams Hall

and users of Birmingham International Airport with a convenient alternative access to rail travel."

Network Rail has also announced it is to build a new £12million rail station for Bromsgrove, on the other side of Birmingham. Passenger numbers at the station have grown by 400% in 11 years.

The new station will have longer platforms able to take six-car trains and a much bigger car park.

It will be built on a brownfield site next to the existing station which will be redeveloped.

Network Rail route director Peter Strachan said that if funding could be sorted out, the station could be completed by the end of next year.

Central Trains managing director, Steve Banaghan, added: "Bromsgrove station, as currently configured, is a considerable constraint on the operation of train services from Hereford and Worcester.

"The new station is the right answer as it provides the opportunity to 'future-proof' both the station and the infrastructure, to maximise the benefit to freight and passenger services."

Railfuture AGM 2007: Resolutions

Train doors

This AGM urges train operators to implement and extend the facility for selective door opening, so there is nothing to prevent trains stopping at stations when the platform is shorter than the train. At such stations passengers wishing to alight should simply be told to move to those coaches that are adjacent to the platform.

Walk-on fares

This AGM reaffirms its commitment to the walk-on railway, and affordable Saver and cheap day return fares valid on any train by any reasonable route outside recognised peak periods without the need to book ahead. Any moves to require pre-booking on any part of

the network, or to price-off Saver or cheap day return business, will be strenuously resisted.

High-speed rail

This AGM welcomes the completion of High Speed 1 from the Channel Tunnel to St Pancras, and congratulates London & Continental Railways on this achievement. We urge the UK Government to make early plans for a "High Speed 2" line from London to the Midlands as the next step in the development of a UK high speed rail network that will deliver economic benefits to the Midlands and the North so that the skills and experience gained in building High Speed 1 will not be lost by disbanding the technical teams involved.

East Anglia

By Nicholas Dibben
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■ ■ Extra capacity 1

The branch has attended two meetings with First Capital Connect to discuss ways of providing extra peak hour capacity on the services between King's Cross and Peterborough-Cambridge. FCC is to get four additional trains and is looking at revising the timetable to make the best use of track capacity and to match stopping patterns with demand.

■ ■ Extra capacity 2

The branch attended a stakeholder briefing by Network Rail prior to the issue of the East Anglia route utilisation study. The study suggests a number of options for increasing capacity and improving reliability on the routes out of London Liverpool Street to East Anglia and associated branches. Unlike in some previous RUSs, there are no plans to withdraw services. In fact the study highlights some overcrowding issues on rural lines.

■ ■ New user group

The Cambridgeshire village of Manea has set up a rail services action group to campaign for a better service at their station. Many trains pass through the station but very few actually stop. The group was set up following a parish council survey of residents.



North West

By Trevor Bishop
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■ ■ Selective door safety

North West branch put forward a motion to the Railfuture AGM calling for train operating companies to implement selective door opening at stations where the platform is shorter than the train. Passengers should simply be told to move to those coaches that are on the platform.

At Congleton station in Cheshire there is an eight-carriage limit on southbound services and a seven-carriage one northbound for Voyagers even though they have selective door opening. If Virgin chose to use HSTs however, that would be fine, because, with grandfather rights, they can stop with a simple announcement to passengers to move to the front carriages.

■ ■ Northern Pacers

Railfuture North West England has been trying to unravel the implications of Northern Trains' announcement regarding extra trains, but it seems that Pacers will be removed from service, but only in Leeds and Liverpool. It looks as if long-suffering commuters in Manchester will have to endure the delights of Pacer travel for a while longer.

The *Manchester Evening News* recently ran an article about "the sardine special" – otherwise known as the 8.14 from Urmston to Manchester – where it highlighted the statement from Transport 2000, that it is in the top 10 of the most overcrowded services in Britain. While discussions elsewhere have been successful in bringing in better trains, in Manchester talks are apparently still continuing.

