

Station is reborn



The station master's hat from a station that closed 39 years ago was proudly displayed when transport minister Rosie Winterton opened a "replacement" in September.

The original Coleshill station in Warwickshire opened in 1832. The new station is an integrated rail and bus interchange, served by

regular trains from Birmingham to Stansted Airport, also putting Nuneaton, Leicester, Peterborough, and Cambridge within easy reach of local residents and businesses.

The £8.35million investment will make it easier for people who drive on the heavily congested M42 to park the car and take the train.



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East Midlands

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■ ■ Station survey

In July TravelWatch East Midlands and Passenger Focus organised surveys of passenger facilities at five large stations. Railfuture provided the manpower for the survey at Loughborough. The results were to be published at a Travelwatch East Midlands *Charging or Choice* event in Leicester in October.

■ ■ Stagecoach

We congratulated Stagecoach on winning the East Midlands franchise, in the hope of starting a constructive dialogue. Their website has now gone live at www.eastmidlandstrains.co.uk listing planned improvements. These include faster trains on the Midland main line, a direct London-Lincoln service, increased capacity on most routes, Smartcard ticket technology, station upgrades and better car parking.

■ ■ Sunday non-services

We hope Stagecoach will ensure there is no repeat of Sunday 12 August, when "staff shortages" and engineering works meant there were no trains on many Central Trains routes. TravelWatch East Midlands reckoned this was the worst day ever for cancelled trains, and it was in the middle of the school holidays. Bus substitutions (where they were provided) are not acceptable on the longer distance routes.

■ ■ Floods

Central Trains performed better in response to the floods in the Sheffield area, which also hit the northern part of our region. Whereas Northern Trains failed to provide an adequate bus service when the Sheffield-Worksop line was out of action, CT quickly organised an efficient bus service between Worksop and Mansfield.

■ ■ Freedom of (not all) information

A request to the DfT for a copy of the Invitation to Tender document issued to bidders for the East Midlands rail competition has been refused. It is the DfT's opinion that "the public interest in maintaining the Section 22 exemption, and therefore not disclosing the ITT at this juncture, is overriding". The release of the ITT will commence after the new franchise has begun operation. Source: DfT website.

■ ■ National Forest Line

A petition is being raised to Leicestershire County Council calling on it to support the reopening of Leicester-Burton line. For further details contact: eric.goodyer@charnwood-labour.co.uk or phone 01509 844473.

■ ■ Corby station

Plans for the new Corby station have been submitted by North Northants Development Company together with English Partnerships. The station will cost £3million, and a further £5million will be spent on upgrading track and infrastructure. Work is expected to start in March, with the first trains running in December 2008 – an hourly service to London. Railfuture will continue to campaign for services north of Corby. In particular, a useful connection to the East Coast main line at Peterborough could be made if the Manton chord is restored.

■ ■ Level crossing safety

Alan Duncan MP was at Oakham level crossing in his constituency for the launch of a campaign to warn road users of the dangers of ignoring red lights or weaving round barriers at level crossings.

■ ■ Fare dodgers

Central Trains prosecuted 140 fare evaders following a crackdown at a number of stations in the Midlands during June and July. The offenders paid an average of over £200 in fines and court costs.