

Bury St Edmunds station opens new accessible entrance

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A £1.6m scheme to improve access to Bury St Edmunds station has officially opened.

Greater Anglia has worked with West Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council and Network Rail to create a new entrance on the northern side of the station, off Fornham Road.

Funding for the project included a grant from the government's Access For All Scheme, as well as financial contributions from Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk Council.

The work also included the reinstatement of a Victorian undercroft – discovered on old records from when the station was built in 1847 – which passes beneath the railway lines, to link both sides of the station and make access easier.

The new underpass has enabled Greater Anglia to increase the size of the booking hall to accommodate two new retail units and a new ticketing hub with automatic ticket vending machines.

The new entrance and booking hall was officially opened in a ceremony on Friday 12 August with

representatives from Greater Anglia, West Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council, Network Rail and the Bury St Edmunds Rail Station Group.

Greater Anglia's Asset Management Director, Simone Bailey, said, "We are delighted that the work is now complete. It has completely transformed that station, opening up the northern side to create a larger booking hall and throughfare allowing customers to easily access and exit the station from both sides.

"I would like to thank our partners who made this project possible, and customers for their patience while the work was carried out."

Cllr Glossop, Cabinet Member for Growth, West Suffolk Council, said: "We are delighted with the improvements to the Bury St Edmunds train station that were made possible through securing Access for All funding, which West Suffolk Council matched. The refurbished entrance, alongside the enhanced station lobby provides a welcoming gateway to the town. The investment into the new connection to additional car parking on the north side of the station will also make travel by train easier. We believe this transformation will provide a better passenger experience to those using the station and rail service and provides additional travel options to the community."

Councillor Alexander Nicoll, Suffolk County Council Deputy Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy, said: "I am delighted Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk Council have been able to work with Greater Anglia to help fund and deliver this new access at Bury St Edmunds railway station.

"The completion of this project will be critical for people who use the rear of the building to access the platforms. Suffolk County Council is keen to deliver sustainable transport access to our key towns as much as possible and we look forward to working with Greater Anglia in the future on the implementation of more cycle parking and better cycling and walking access to the station."

Jo Churchill MP, said: "The meetings at the station over the past few years highlighted the need to make improvements. I am delighted that we are now seeing the next phase of investment and enhancement come to fruition and deliver the facilities we need. Access from the car park, a better retail offer add to the other improvements to make the station better able to service our community and, showcase the lovely town we live in to all those that visit us and use the station."

John Popham on behalf of the Rail Station Group, said, "The Rail Station Group greatly welcomes the completion of the new northern entrance to the station which saves those using the new car park a long walk round to the existing southern entrance.

"It now only remains for the repair of the station's northern embankment brickwork to complete the outstanding work on the station as soon as funds are available. Greater Anglia are to be congratulated for their positive approach to undertaking the major repair backlog that they inherited."

Sarah Jane Crawford, Principal Programme Sponsor, Network Rail, said, "We want everyone to be able to use our network so we're pleased to have supported Greater Anglia in delivering improvements to Bury St Edmunds station. They'll make a real difference to people's journeys."