

Crawley station's £6 million makeover

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Crawley's 1960s station has been given a £6 million makeover, with a brighter look to the concourse, a new plaza, and more wide ticket gates to give passengers a much better experience as they travel to the town.

Over the past year, Network Rail has been working with Southern, Crawley Borough Council and Arora Group to improve the station facilities and revamp the 1960s design to bring it up to modern standards.

Part of the work included extending the concourse, re-glazing the ticket hall, improving signage to make it easier for passengers making their way around the station and installing additional ticket gates that have been widened to improve accessibility.

Work also involved creating a new plaza at the front of the station which added a more vibrant and eye-catching feel to the station and local community.

Lucy McAuliffe, Network Rail's interim Sussex route director, said: "It's great to see that Crawley station has been given a new lease of life – this was the first major upgrade to facilities in over 40 years.

"The key focus of this project was to improve the overall passenger experience and make the surrounding

environment feel more welcoming to the wider community.

"The teams prioritised developing spaces for passengers to relax before and after making their journeys which is why a larger waiting area was created, along with a new café and retail units with direct access to the concourse.

"I'd like to thank passengers for their patience whilst we worked closely with our partners at GTR, Arora Group and Crawley Borough Council to carry out this work to bring up the station to modern standards."

Councillor Atif Nawaz, Cabinet member for Planning and Economic Development at Crawley Borough Council, said: "It's great to see the refurbished station concourse, which is already providing a much-enhanced experience for passengers. Crawley Station is a major gateway into the town centre and these improvements – coupled with those planned for outside the station – deliver a better environment for all station users."

Henry Smith, MP for Crawley, said: "76 years ago this week Crawley was designated as a new town and so after the public private partnership that has come together to fund a £6 million major revamp of Crawley railway station with new state-of-the-art facilities after many decades is a welcome gift to the Borough's passengers. As a regular commuter myself I look forward to the user-friendly services."

The expanded cycle storage facilities have also been installed at the station, making it easier for people to park and leave their bikes at the station using the two-tier, lift and lock facility – 44 additional spaces in total.

As part of a wider scheme planned for the area around the station – a new public footbridge over the railway will be built.

Keith Jipps, Govia Thameslink Railway, infrastructure director, said: "We're delighted with this comprehensive refurbishment. It's been a great team effort by Network Rail, Grove Developments and their contractors, who have worked with Crawley Council, Arora Group and ourselves to create a better experience all round for our customers. People using the station can now enjoy more space, new retail units, better shelter on the platforms, refurbished toilets and better cycle parking. We're looking forward to the next phase of improvements, for car parking.

"Keeping the station open throughout the year of work was a complex challenge. We're also very grateful to our customers, to our tenant, Metro Cars, and to our own station team for bearing with the inconvenience."

Sanjay Arora, Arora Group's chief operating officer, said: "Arora Group acquired Overline House and the land adjacent to Crawley station as part of a transformative project to bring forward over 300 residential units through a series of new developments and converting Overline House from office use to residential.

"With the intent of promoting wider area regeneration, Arora Group have invested significant funding into the station improvements and have project managed the successful delivery of the station upgrade through their construction division, Grove Developments, and their onward supply chain partners. This

marks the completion of the first phase of the overall redevelopment.”

The station refurbishments also form part of a wider programme of work which is being led by Crawley Borough Council and aims to redevelop Crawley town centre by improving the look and feel of the area.

Rowena Tyler, Southeast Communities Rail Partnership, said: “The station environment is now brighter and has a welcoming atmosphere. We hope to work with Station adopters, members of the community and GTR to help enhance it during this year. It’s a marvellous opportunity to connect the community with their local railway.”

Photo credit: Network Rail