

In The News | 1st October 2021 | Latest Rail News

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Welcome to the railway news round-up.

In today's headlines, the workers union UNITE says a spate of serious incidents have been reported on a section of HS2 being delivered by a Skanska/Costain Strabag (SCS) joint venture in London.

A report from Construction News said the trade union has claimed several accidents had caused safety

shutdowns that could delay the project, and it is 'crying out' for union safety reps.

A spokesperson for UNITE said workers on the joint venture will be "rightly worried for their safety", and the fact that no worker has been killed is "simply a matter of luck".

HS2 said all health and safety incidents are "fully investigated", while the JV claims UNITE has been offered access to its sites but not taken up the offer.

Meanwhile, HS2 is celebrating a construction milestone with the first mile of tunnel completed this week underneath the Chiltern hills just outside London, Construction Enquirer reports.

The project's tunnel boring machine was launched in May and is expected to take three years to complete the 16km long tunnel, which is being driven from the south at Maple Cross towards the north portal at South Heath.

To celebrate the milestone HS2 has released a series of images and a video of the first section of tunnel completed by the machine, named Florence - after Florence Nightingale - by local school children.

A £1 million revamp of Weymouth train station has been approved despite councillors referring to the plans as "half-baked" and falling far short of what the town needs Dorest Echo reports.

The scheme will see one bus stop, dedicated to the Wessex bus company, with a re-worked forecourt and car park, but local MPs say it fails to meet the need for an integrated transport exchange.

Dorset Coast Forum, which has secured grant funding for the project, says the new pedestrian area within the station forecourt will be safer and support visitors with limited mobility and those with pushchairs and wheelchairs.

Finally, Scot-Rail will be bringing the spirit of Christmas to Fife this December with a special Santa Express train service running as part of a charity initiative.

The festive trains will run from Edinburgh in partnership with the operator and the Railway Children charity.

Children on board the five trains will receive treats, activities and entertainment, including a visit from Father Christmas, with all ticket sales going to the charity, which supports vulnerable street children around the world. That it from today's round-up, for the latest in rail news visit news.railbusinessdaily.com

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