

# Manningtree rail station celebrates 175th birthday

June 16, 2021



Rail workers at Manningtree cut a cake to celebrate the rail station's 175<sup>th</sup> birthday today.

The station on the Norwich – London mainline, which also forms the terminus station for the Manningtree – Harwich Mayflower line was opened by the Eastern Union Railway on 16 June 1846.

However, it was rebuilt between 1899 and 1901 by the Great Eastern Railway and this is the station building that survives today.

Customer service team member, Stephen Brown, cut a cake for station colleagues to enjoy to mark the special occasion.

Assistant Area Customer Service Manager for Manningtree, Stephen Watts, said: “Overnight, in 1846 people in Manningtree went from relying on coach and horses to a railway service which was cheaper, quicker and more comfortable than the stage coach and for 175 years the railway has been a great asset to the area.

“The cake-cutting pays tribute to the railway pioneers of 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain and the fantastic team that works at the station today.”

Greater Anglia’s Customer and Community Engagement Manager, Alan Neville, said, “From its Victorian beginnings, Manningtree has seen many changes and improvements, up to the present day with the introduction of our brand new fleet of trains.

“With support from the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership and our team of volunteer station adopters who are doing so much to bring the station into the heart of its community, the station has a very bright future ahead.”

Manningtree recently became the first rail station in the currently to feature a ‘talking bench’ aimed at giving visitors interesting information about the area and tackling loneliness by offering somewhere for people to sit and talk.

The bench features a button which, when pressed, tells the story of the area and will provide interest to those waiting for trains – but is also aimed at tackling social isolation and loneliness by helping to provide a place for people to connect and chat.

The project was funded by the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership and Community Rail Network.

*Photo credit: Greater Anglia*