

Thameslink completes £5.7m upgrade of St Albans City station

December 21, 2020



Community leaders and Thameslink gathered last Friday to celebrate the £5.7m upgrade of St Albans City station that has transformed passenger facilities and freed up space for passengers to move around more easily when they return in greater numbers after the pandemic.

MP Daisy Cooper unveiled a plaque with Leader of St Albans City and District Council Chris White and Thameslink Customer Services Director Jenny Saunders who said the work would help future-proof the station for decades to come.

The main station building at St Albans City has been extended over two storeys ready to house a premier-brand High Street convenience store, and by moving staff rooms to a new building on platform 4, there is now space for a new waiting area with a coffee shop, new toilets and an additional ticket gate which will bring another ticket gateline into use.

To support the additional retail at the station we have doubled the power supply to increase capacity.

On the central platform, 2 and 3, there's a new all-glass waiting room and extra space for peak-time

commuters getting on and off trains when they return in greater numbers after the pandemic. This has also created room for a second footbridge, which Network Rail will start building in the new year as part of a separate £6.4m project to further reduce congestion.

On platform 4, a new station entrance building has been built at the Ridgmont Road entrance with a wider entrance, two more ticket gates, new, accessible toilets and twice the number of ticket machines, again, all designed to make it easier for commuters when they begin travelling in greater numbers.

The new Ridgmont Road entrance building also has somewhere to lock up bikes, which Thameslink continues to promote as part of its commitment to boost sustainable travel. There are more than 220 extra spaces in bike racks across the station with double-stack racks replacing single-tier on the main entrance side, fencing and, now, complete CCTV coverage, for better security.

And capacity of the station's power supply has been doubled to accommodate the needs of the new retail store – a project which would normally take up to 12 months completed in just four.

St Albans City is Thameslink's busiest station north of London with more than 7.5 million people passing through its gates in the 12 months to April 2019 – a 2.6% rise on the year before, attributed to the extra services and longer trains Thameslink has introduced.

Thameslink Customer Services Director Jenny Saunders said: "Pre-COVID, passenger numbers were increasing at St Albans City thanks to the improved frequency and longer trains we've brought in. This project has not only improved facilities for our passengers but will make it easier to get around the station when numbers return. Together with the new footbridge to be built next year, this will future-proof the station for decades to come.

"The upgrade of St Albans City complements the multimillion-pound station improvement programme we're delivering across our network and I'm really impressed that the project team and our principal contractors Walkers Construction have overcome the challenges of C-19 to finish this job while at the same time ensuring everyone's safety."

Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said: "I'm really pleased to see this important upgrade delivered in time for Christmas, and I want to thank everyone working on this project for their hard work and dedication despite the challenges faced in the pandemic.

"With a new entrance on platform 4, a new waiting room and an enhanced station concourse, these improvements will make a real difference to passengers for years to come."

MP Daisy Cooper said: "It's great to see this new investment in St Albans City Station. Many of us are incredibly proud of our city, and we can now enjoy coming home on the train or welcoming visitors to a train station that is spacious, modern, and welcoming. With the additional secure space for locking up bikes, it'll be great to see more residents make the shift out of their cars and onto two wheels to complete their train journey."

Leader of St Albans City and District Council Chris White said: "I'd like to thank Govia Thameslink Railway,

the Department for Transport and Network Rail for this long-awaited redevelopment of St Albans City station. St Albans City is one of the busiest stations outside London and this welcome investment is a positive move for our residents, businesses and visitors alike. It frees up space to make the island platforms safer, adds new facilities and improves access at the Ridgmont Road entrance which faces St Albans City centre.”

Photo credit: Govia Thameslink Railway

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