



## **PRESS RELEASE - immediate issue**

### **Norwich in Ninety One year down the track**

The Norwich in Ninety rail campaign is this week marking its first anniversary with a renewed call for improvements.

The campaign brought together key private and public stakeholders to bring about a better service on the mainline between London and Norwich.

It builds on the Down the Line campaign launched by Regional Cities East, and was established by partners including Shaping Norfolk's Future, Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Chamber of Commerce.

The campaign has developed a long term vision for the line which includes:

- A ninety-minute journey time between Norwich and London.
- More reliable services, improving upon recent performance that has been poor compared with similar routes
- New, spacious, clean and comfortable Inter-City style trains
- The introduction of a new wi-fi service, and providing an office on the move for business passengers, while improving journey times and reliability
- More train capacity to overcome peak hour crowding, particularly at the southern end of the route - but without down-grading to commuter-style carriages

Over the past year some important steps forward have been made to realising this vision, including:

- Significantly raising the profile and economic importance of the line with former Transport Secretary Lord Adonis and current Transport Secretary Philip Hammond and DfT officials
- Production of an independent report which showed upgrading the Norwich to London line would bring £3.7bn in economic benefits
- The introduction of Wi-fi on Inter-City services
- Some faster peak and off-peak trains between Norwich, Ipswich and London and some addition carriage capacity
- The announcement of investment in train cleaning equipment and customer service staff by National Express East Anglia
- The introduction of more trains on the southern end of the route to ease congestion

The campaign is now being backed by partners in Suffolk and Essex including Suffolk County Council, Essex County Council, the Haven Gateway Partnership and the East of England Development Agency because of the significant economic benefits improving the line will bring to all three counties.

Norwich in 90 is also a key priority of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership because of the importance of the Norwich to London line to both Norfolk and Suffolk.

Over the next few weeks the focus of the campaign will be to lobby for more improvements under the short term franchise contract which is being let by the Department of Transport this year and to see greater improvements when a new long term franchise is let in 2013.

In the short term it is seen as essential that the momentum built up to deliver the improvements is not lost because of the two-stage franchise process.

The campaign will be lobbying for:

- Provision of free wi-fi services to all passengers
- Improvements to reliability
- Continued improvements to cleanliness
- Improvement to customer services

Mike Burrows, deputy chairman of Shaping Norfolk's Future said: "The Norwich in Ninety campaign has been a really good example of partners working together and lobbying hard for improvements which will make a real difference to the economy of Norfolk. We know there is much more to be achieved but we have made a positive start."

Andy Wood, joint chairman of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Development Group and chief executive of Adnams, said: "Improved transport links are critical to the success of the economy of Norfolk and Suffolk. Improved journey times and reliability on the Norwich to London line will bring significant economic benefits to Suffolk and Norfolk, Ipswich and Norwich."

Caroline Williams, chief executive of Norfolk Chamber of Commerce said: "Achieving improved train travel between Norwich and London continues to be high on the agenda for Norfolk businesses. It is great that we have made progress and the business community needs to continue driving this campaign to achieve all our aims."

Chloe Smith, Norwich North MP said, "It is incredibly important for everyone who uses the rail service to get a faster, cleaner, more reliable service, especially when fares have had to go up."

That requires all parts of the industry to pull together and I am please the Government is doing its bit by re-tendering the franchise.”

Simon Wright, MP for Norwich South, said: "I'm very pleased that the Norwich in Ninety campaign has been so successful in raising the profile of rail issues in the county. Decent transport links are vital for Norwich and the whole of Norfolk.

“The government has recognised that bigger benefits can be drawn from longer rail franchises, and it's vital that we all now work together through the campaign to develop our vision for the long term of the Norwich to London service and work to make that vision a reality through the franchising process.”

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