

## Opinion-sounding for new bus role



Passenger Focus is progressing its bus, coach and tram work

Passenger Focus manager David Sidebottom and his colleagues have been laying the groundwork for our new bus passenger representation role by visiting a range of national stakeholder organisations as well as local authorities, Passenger Transport

Executives and bus operators. He has sounded out their views on issues affecting passengers and the industry and what Passenger Focus's priorities should be, as well as fact finding about operations, routes and contractual arrangements.

Issues common to all are concessionary fares, punctuality and quality partnerships. Local authorities are looking carefully at the latter, and David has been talking about how Passenger Focus could influence them in the same way as rail passenger franchises. This would also entail a methodology for measuring their effectiveness.

Among visits in the East Midlands, David talked to passenger groups about our passenger representation plans at the TravelWatch East Midlands Conference.

## Rebuilding King's Cross station

Passenger Focus is carrying out research to understand passengers' needs and concerns about the redevelopment of King's Cross station, now underway. In a joint project with Network Rail, First Capital Connect, Grand Central, Hull Trains and National Express East Coast,

we are probing views about aspects of the project, including arrangements on the small number of occasions when timetables will have to be amended, and how the rail industry should communicate with passengers during the project.



Passenger views sought

## Passenger managers to work for better East Midlands train services

Passenger Focus has found record numbers of people across Great Britain are satisfied with their train journey

Launching the Autumn National Passenger Survey 2008 in the Winter 2009 Passenger Voice bulletin, the rail watchdog has reported that 83% of passengers are satisfied with their rail journey.

Although passengers rate their overall experience quite high, Passenger Focus has identified several areas where

improvements must be made. Passenger Focus managers Paul Fullwood, Susan Tibbett and Guy Dangerfield will be working with train operators in the East Midlands to make certain passengers' concerns are addressed in 2009.

Full results can be found at [www.passengerfocus.org.uk](http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk)

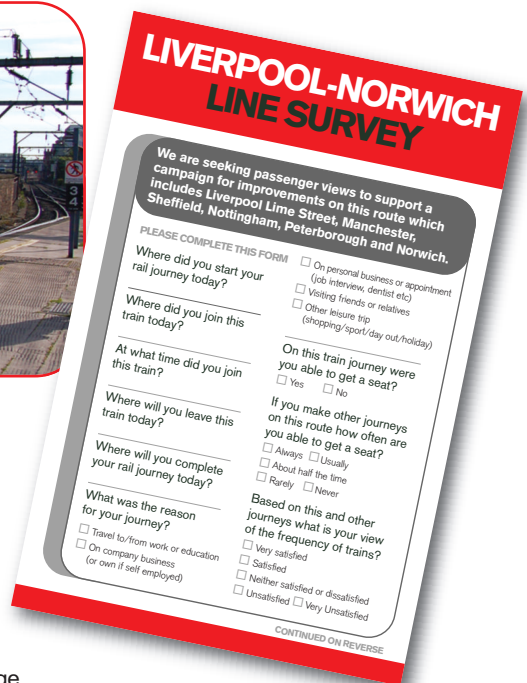
### East Midlands

Train Operating Company (TOC)	Overall % satisfied	Passengers' satisfaction up	Passengers' satisfaction down
CrossCountry	84	Car-parking facilities	Sufficient room for all passengers to sit/stand
East Midlands Trains	81	Connections with other forms of public transport	Availability of staff on the train
National Express East Coast	88	How well the company dealt with delays	Connections with other forms of public transport
Northern	82	Personal security on the train	Car-parking facilities

Image: Matt Ingham



# Liverpool to Norwich passenger survey results



**A**cute overcrowding on East Midlands Trains' (EMT) services between Liverpool and Norwich remains a major concern for passengers. Passenger Focus, working with volunteers from TravelWatch East Midlands, has presented passenger survey results to the industry.

"Nearly one in ten passengers told us that they were unable to get a seat"

Nearly one in ten passengers told us that they were unable to get a seat on the day, with over a third getting a seat for about half of their journey, rarely or never. Perhaps as a consequence of the crowding, only a third of passengers

were satisfied with the space for luggage or the on-board catering. However, satisfaction with the frequency of the service remains high, with more than half satisfied, and nearly two-thirds satisfied with journey-time. More than half were satisfied with the ease of making connections, which is important considering that for nearly half of the passengers surveyed, this service forms only part of their journey.

The survey received over 1600 responses from passengers. The findings have been made available to both EMT and the Department for Transport.

## New stations for East Midlands Trains

New stations at Corby and East Midlands Parkway featured in the East Midlands Trains franchise bid. Passengers had anticipated services calling at both these stations from December 2008, but it is now predicted that services will commence in early 2009. Corby's new station will provide a peak-time through service to London St Pancras, with shuttles to Kettering at other times also planned. Passenger Focus supported the establishment of this service although we recognise that its first timetable is not ideal.

East Midlands Parkway, adjacent to East Midlands Airport and junction 25 of the M1, has three objectives – to attract long-distance car users from the M1 onto rail, to provide park-and-ride rail links for local commuters into Nottingham, Leicester and Derby, and to provide a rail/bus link to East Midlands Airport.

## New 'regional' area on Passenger Focus website

In February Passenger Focus will launch a new section on our website to show the work we are doing on behalf of passengers around the country. The new area of the site will show our work by region and nation, train operating

company, route and issues such as getting a seat or fares and ticketing. It will also feature Google Maps™ technology which will allow website users to view any Passenger Focus work with a specific geographic location.



## Catering changes on East Coast

5 January saw changes to catering offered on National Express East Coast services. On many trains the traditional restaurant car has been replaced with a concept of at-seat dining in first class, with food still cooked to order on board many trains. Passenger Focus will be monitoring how the new style is received by passengers – consistent delivery of the 'offer' will be critical to its success.