



Press Release

29th January 2009

To: News editors & journalists
Immediate Release: 29th January 2009

Thursday 29th January 2009

Network Rail & London Midland launch new infra-structure at Milton Keynes Central Station

MK Rail Users launch their **CA**mpaign for **Rea**l **Ra**il

Thursday 29th January will be a red letter day for Milton Keynes rail travellers. The new infrastructure, 2 years in the building, is going to be officially opened. The significant investment by the Government in the massive upgrade of the West Coast Main Line includes a total re-modelling of Milton Keynes Central station, including a new platform and conversion of another to through running. The extent of the West Coast Main Line upgrade is such that effectively we almost have a brand new railway.

MK Rail Users have at first hand witnessed the excellent engineering feat undertaken by Network Rail and its contractors. The Milton Keynes Central Station project is testimony to the best in British railway engineering and ***MK Rail Users*** is delighted to be invited to celebrate this wonderful achievement.

On the same day ***MK Rail Users*** will also be celebrating the official re-launch of their new website which can be found at www.mkrailusers.org.uk. On this site travellers can find important up to date information on rail travel from Milton Keynes & Bletchley, news, comment and links to our Train Operating Companies, Network rail and other related organisations such as British Transport Police who want to work with ***MK Rail Users*** to fight crime on the railway.

It is therefore all the more regrettable that since the introduction of the new timetable on 14th December 2008, the service being delivered to MK commuters has been execrable. Any regular traveller will already be well aware of the cancellations, service disruptions, poor communication and poor quality of information experienced since then.

Because of the virtual disintegration of the rail service over the past month, ***MK Rail Users*** are launching a campaign - **CA**mpaign for **Rea**l **Ra**il. What do we want **CA**RR to achieve?

1. Trains that run on time and to timetable.
2. When there are problems, these are dealt with properly with replacement services and clear and prompt communication with travellers.
3. To develop a railway service that is fit for purpose and fulfils the aspirations of needs of the rail travelling public of Milton Keynes

MK – CAmpaign for Real Rail

London Midland's Passenger Charter says:

"This Passenger's Charter sets out our commitment to you as our customer on the levels of service we aim to provide. We aim to get the basics right and to deliver a service that is punctual, reliable, clean, safe and that continually improves your perceptions of us as a respected transport provider."

What is our response to this? **FAILED.**

That's all MK Rail Users want **GET THE BASICS RIGHT.**

Over the coming months, **MK Rail Users** will be applying pressure on the rail industry in general, and London Midland in particular, to deliver on what they promise. At a time of economic downturn, **MK Rail Users** will lobby Government agencies and MPs to ensure that obligations agreed at the time their franchises were awarded are fulfilled and not re-negotiated to reduce service levels rather than improve upon them.

Any travellers who have an opinion to express or information about service failures they want to share with us, please log onto our website www.mkrailusers.org.uk and give us their experience so that we can utilise those comments in the campaign.

ENDS

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Notes to Editors:

1. MK Rail Users was formerly known as the Milton Keynes and Bletchley Rail Users Group.
Also included with the press pack release, being handed out at the MKC Station launch
2. Facts about Rail travel from Milton Keynes & Bletchley
3. London Midland's False Promises
4. Profile of Chair, Philip Lawton & campaign Co-ordinator, Rupert Lodge