

BUSINESS BRIEFING

Smoother ride without delays

TRACK replacement work which will ensure a smoother ride for rail passengers on their way through Suffolk has been completed - with no delay to services.

Network Rail took advantage of maintenance work already scheduled for last weekend to bring forward the renewal of points machines and rollers at Haughley Junction, near Stowmarket, to improve reliability and reduce friction.

The junction is used by trains on the London-Norwich, London-Peterborough and Ipswich-Cambridge routes and the the "doubling up" of work was designed to minimise disruption.

Patrick Hallgate, Network Rail's route director, said: "By working efficiently, doing extra work alongside this regular maintenance, we are eliminating future disruption that would have been caused by a separate points replacement - and, as all the work was done at night, train services were not affected."

Andrew Goodrum, business director mainline for regional train operator One, added: "We welcome the ongoing investment by Network Rail in the Norwich to London mainline.

"By regularly upgrading and replacing infrastructure at busy junctions such as Haughley we can help to ensure that passengers receive a more reliable and consistent level of service."

Moving in on new overseas market

East Anglia-based Abels Moving Services is set to expand its international business through a tie-up with Unique Living, a leading UK-based international estate agent and property finder specialising in the northern Mediterranean countries.

The exclusive deal will bring Abels' removals and relocation experience to Unique Living's customers looking to move to areas such as the Algarve, Costa del Sol, Mallorca, Menorca, Cyprus or the French Riviera.

Neil Pertoldi, Abels' head of international services, said: "We understand the stress people go through when moving home, magnified when that move is international, and we do everything we can to ensure the move is as stress-free as possible."

Revamp a shoe-in

A Colchester department store is set to launch a new men's and women's footwear department on February 24.

Williams & Griffin will close its existing shoe department on Saturday, January 27 for four weeks of major refurbishment. Half will re-open in mid-February with the whole scheme due to be finished on February 24.

The new 2,500sq ft area, also including fashion experts Jane Shilton, will include new flooring, lighting and contemporary fittings. Shoe brands on offer will include Ted Baker, Timberland, Crocs, Josef Seibel, Tommy Hilfinger and Gola.

Turkish destination

A low-cost airline is set to begin a new twice-weekly service from Stansted Airport to the Turkish "Riviera".

SunExpress will be flying out to the picturesque city of Antalya on Mondays and Thursdays from February 8 on a journey which will take four hours from the UK.

The airline is also introducing a non-stop service between the UK and Turkey in March when it links up with Izmir, Turkey's third-largest city and second-largest port, with a connecting service to Ercan, in Northern Cyprus.



FOR ART'S SAKE: Successful artist Stephen Taylor's 6ft x 3ft oil painting entitled Spring West Bergholt

Artist turns businessman to broaden horizons

A SUCCESSFUL Essex artist is set to launch his prints export business in New York in March.

Stephen Taylor, of Colchester, combines traditional oil painting techniques with digital photo analysis to create contemporary images.

He spent four years painting an ordinary farm field close to where John Constable drew his inspiration, painting the scene in different lights, day and night and producing a striking series of panoramas which were first exhibited at King's

College, Cambridge. He returned to paint a single oak tree in the same field over a period of three years in all seasons.

A selection from the collection, which was first displayed at Shoreditch in London, will be shown at

Artexpo in New York when Mr Taylor launches his new export prints business www.stephentaylorprints.com.

The paintings, which will be available as limited edition prints for the first time, include a series of 20

oak trees in giclee as well as 6ft panorama prints which reproduce paintings taking up to three years to complete.

In the run-up to launching his business, he was advised by UK Trade & Investment, which he said was "very helpful".

Fresh move to boost tourism prospects

LIFT PROFILE: Campaign in wake of publicity over killings

By Duncan Brodie
Business Editor

SUFFOLK'S tourism promotion campaign is back on the road following the negative images of the county which dominated the news headlines in the weeks before Christmas.

A Suffolk Tourism Partnership team has just returned from promoting the county's groups offer at the London Excursions exhibition - the first public event the partnership has attended since the killing of five women made Ipswich the focus of the national and international media in December.

The STP team used the event, aimed at coach operators and group travel organisers, to pro-

mote the second, enlarged, edition of the partnership's Suffolk Groups Guide, highlighting the range of excursion opportunities the county offers.

Supporting the STP were a number of its tourism partners, including Visit Ipswich, Visit Suffolk Attractions and Bury St Edmunds Tourism, each promoting their respective places to visit in addition to representing the whole county.

Scott Dolling, the partnership's destination marketing manager, said: "It is vital that, despite the huge news agenda in December, we continue to press home all the positive elements of Suffolk.

"Groups is an important area for Suffolk's tourism industry to build upon, especially in attracting the out-of-season trade and from all

our partners' perspectives, we were able to do this constructively at 'Excursions' and recent events didn't appear to be a factor."

Jim Brown, the STP's sustainable tourism project officer, who attended the exhibition on behalf of the partnership, said: "We were busy all day with inquiries from coach operators and group organisers and whilst a number knew of the county, it was a great opportunity to reinforce what the county has to offer and also try to encourage more reasons for them to visit."

David Stainer, manager of Ipswich Tourist Information Centre, said: "We were extremely reassured with the number of group organisers who came to find out more about Ipswich and the county as a whole, and it seems as though public perception remains positive."

Future lies in the fine print

AN Ipswich print firm is investing in a £2million press which it hopes will open up new markets.

Ancient House Press, based on the Hadleigh Road Industrial Estate, is equipping itself with a Mitsubishi Diamond 3000 Tandem Perfector 12 colour press which will enable it to target the financial and automotive sectors.

The press's unique design ensures a perfect register between front and

back, improving printing quality and reducing paper waste by more than 2%.

As part of the investment, the company is also buying the Mitsubishi Intelligent Press Control software to minimise waste and Mitsubishi Colour Control System MCCS 2 to measure and control colour.

AHP joint managing director Allison Berry said: "We are delighted to start 2007 with the announcement of a further

investment, enabling us to deliver the highest-quality work efficiently."

Joint managing director Michael Underdown said they had looked extensively at the market place, and the Mitsubishi press came out "well ahead" in quality and new technology.

"The print market is about staying ahead of the game, and you have to continually look and invest in state-of-the-art equipment," he said.



DEAL: From left, Thomas Doliwa and Phil Murphy, of Mitsubishi Presses, with Allison Berry and Mike Underdown, of Ancient House Press
Photo: CONTRIBUTED