



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

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GREAT CENTRAL TO INTRODUCE NEW PULLMAN STYLE DINING TRAIN

SIX CARRIAGE SET DESIGNED TO TARGET CORPORATE ENTERTAINMENT AND CHARTER MARKET

£175k funding in place and work has begun

The Great Central Railway's famous on train restaurant service will take a spectacular leap forward over the next twelve months with the creation a new exclusive dining set. Six carriages will be finished in Pullman style livery to allow the railway to move into the corporate entertainment market and develop its charter train business.

The overhaul of the six carriages will cost in excess of £175,000 and funding is in place thanks to a major sponsor. Work has started on upgrading and converting three of the six vehicles already and the entire set should be complete within twelve months.

Bill Ford, president of the Great Central Railway said, "I am overwhelmed by the generosity of our sponsor. To be able to advertise a completely new, Pullman style dining train, finished to a very high standard, will enable us to develop our on train catering business. We are already famous for it but the new train will help us reach entirely new markets. It will be promoted to the corporate entertainment sector, or to people wishing to charter their own exclusive dining train."

The work involves six carriages. At the heart of the set is a dedicated kitchen car (number 1525) which will be completely overhauled and redesigned. This vehicle has already been sent to outside contractors to start work. Two first class open dining carriages (numbers 3079 and 3042) are being significantly upgraded and will offer eighty four seats. They will be marshalled either side of the kitchen vehicle to allow

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY
Great Central Railway, Great Central Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 1RW
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liveried stewards to serve from both ends. Two bar cars will be located alongside each dining car. The first, (vehicle 1100), has a lounge and bar area and was formally part of the national collection. The second bar vehicle (number 4758) is a conversion from a former second class compartment carriage and will feature a lounge area. The final vehicle is a full brake carriage which will be upgraded to act as part exhibition area and part train stores. The whole set will be finished in Umber and Cream Pullman style livery.

"The whole train will have an exciting and exclusive ambience," continued Bill. **"The exciting innovation will be the two bar cars which will give diners the chance to meet and socialise before and after sitting down to eat. Along with the exhibition area it makes the whole train ideal for corporate entertaining and our marketing team are already lining up potential clients."**

The new Pullman Style train will work alongside the existing first class train, allowing the railway to run charters and wedding trains at the same time as continuing its popular range of dining services. The double track GCR network, together with the soon to open Swithland signal box will allow trains to be stationed in long loops while the main lines remain clear, giving more than enough capacity for two dining trains to work at once.

With contract work underway on the kitchen car and one of the first class open carriages receiving attention at the GCR's Rothley carriage works, it is hoped the vehicles will be progressively launched into traffic from mid 2010 onwards. Some of the work will be undertaken in house and other elements by external contractors. The full train will be available to hire from 2011.

As a finishing touch the railway has received permission to call the train a 'Pullman service' and to operate it under names of previously famous rail services like Master Cutler, Golden Arrow and the White Rose.

ENDS
WORDS 609

NOTES

Voted number 12 on the list of the 50 greatest railway journeys in the world the Great Central Railway is the UK's only double track, main line heritage railway. It's the only place in the world where full size steam engines can be seen passing each other – just as it was when steam ruled the rails. The preserved railway celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2009, and is manned by around 700 volunteers and a small team of permanent staff. Preservation of this section of the Great Central Railway began in

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1969. The route was originally part of a main line from Sheffield to London. The 8 mile preserved section between Loughborough and Leicester is fully operational and the 4 stations reflect a different period of the railways 111 year history. Around 100,000 visitors a year come to the railway from all over the world.

Trains run every weekend of the year, bank holidays and daily in the summer. In addition, First Class Restaurant Car Services provide famous dining experiences, whilst passengers travel between Loughborough and Leicester. Childhood engine driver dreams can come true with a Drive a Train Experience. We also run a number of family events, including Santa Specials.

The railway has won a number of awards including "independent railway of the year", and a gold award for the East Midlands best visitor experience and is a quality assured visitor attraction as designated by Enjoy England.