



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

Celebrating 40 years of preservation in 2009

Date: 4th July 2009

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY NOW TESTING AT 75mph

**“Private main line” commences its first job
at new maximum speed.**

The Great Central Railway in Leicestershire has just commenced its first testing work at a top speed of 75mph or 120 kmph. Following an approach from a client, the railway gained HMRI / ORR permission to raise its maximum speed from 60mph to 75mph under certain strictly controlled testing conditions.

The railway has carried out a number of high profile testing and training contracts in the last few years. In 2007 the 'Hybrid HST' spent several months in Leicestershire proving itself before further trials on Network Rail. While it continues to run a diverse range of heritage services, the GCR is now marketing itself also as a 'private main line test track' to the rail industry.

The work on this occasion involved brake tests at speed with a new design of wagon. Meanwhile, noise testing to a new international standard is ongoing for another customer.

"The 75mph testing is going very smoothly from our point of view" said Bill Ford from the Great Central. "We invested to secure this contract, fettling our track to the required standard and embarking on a series of driver training days. A considerable amount of time was spent drawing up the necessary paperwork to gain approval. The higher speed means we can pitch for even more contracts, delivering track access in daylight hours to professionals for testing, training and commissioning."

The higher speed limit of 75 m/h applies over a stretch of the GCR's down line, and is applicable to diesel traction only. Steam traction testing is limited to 60 m/h, and the lines carrying passenger trains remain limited to 25mph. The railway currently has no plans to increase the speed of its heritage services.



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

The locomotive involved in the first contract is Class 45 'Peak' D123. Potential clients wishing to use the GCR for any kind of testing or training work can contact the booking office on 01509 230726.

ENDS
WORDS 334

NOTES ABOUT THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

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 has been operating for over 36 years, 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 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 railway's 110 year history.

Trains run every weekend of the year, bank holidays and daily in the summer. In addition, First Class Restaurant Car Services provide 4 or 6 course meals, whilst travelling between Loughborough and Leicester or childhood dreams can come true with a Drive a Train Experience. We also run a number of family events, including "Days Out with Thomas the Tank Engine", Bonfire Night and 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.