

Briefly

A £76.8m scheme to ease congestion on A46 and M40 in Warwickshire has been given the go-ahead by Transport Minister Tom Harris. The scheme will create a new 1.8 mile dual carriageway to allow the A46 to bypass the notorious junction 15 of the M40. Currently A46 traffic must pass through junction 15 leading to delays on both roads, creating the potential for accidents and causing drivers to divert to other roads. Tom Harris said: "The A46 is a vital North-South route for the region, connecting Coventry with Stratford upon Avon and linking towns across Warwickshire to the M40, which in turn provides a vital link to the South-East. By cutting congestion and improving road safety this £70m of Government investment to will bring benefits to regional businesses and to both local drivers and those on longer journeys"

Three further closures have now been scheduled to complete the essential £2.3 million maintenance scheme at the A12 Bascule Bridge in Lowestoft. The Bascule Bridge will be closed from:-
■ 8pm Saturday 2 February to 6am Tuesday 5 February (58 hours) ■ 8pm Saturday 23 February to 6am Thursday 28 February (106 hours) ■ 8pm Saturday 15 March to 6am Monday 17 March (34 hours). Advanced signing and a signed diversion route will be in place on the closure days with parking restrictions along the route to keep it clear.

Overnight work on a £300,000 scheme to repair parapets on the New Linhay Bridge, over the A38 near Ashburton, is underway and will be completed before the Easter holidays. Traffic on the A38 will be diverted off and on the dual carriageway using the sliproads. Drivers wishing to cross the A38 over the bridge will be diverted onto the A38 to use the next junctions at Goodstone or Peartree.

Operators declare open season to the public

Open days at two big name operators this weekend

Two well-known, long-established operators will be opening the doors of their depots to members of the public this coming weekend. Parrys of Cheslyn Hay will be proudly showing off their Van Hool Astron T917 MAN coaches while Johnson Brothers of Hodthorpe will unveil its brand new £3m depot in Mansfield.

Parrys, based in Cheslyn Hay, near Cannock, Staffordshire will offer members of the public a rare opportunity for a look behind the scenes this coming Sunday (January 6).

A highlight will undoubtedly be the firm's brand new 2008 Van Hool Astron T917 MAN coaches, which at 14.4 metres long are quite some beasts. Their appearance has been eagerly awaited by many, following Parrys' decision to acquire the type after Neoplan opted not to construct a right-hand drive version of its Starliner II.

Other attractions will include reservations office, special offers, the opportunity to meet coach crews, a merchandise super sale, together with stands including Marriott Hotels, Eurotunnel and Queensmead Hotel, Isle of Wight.

Refreshments will be available on site as will car parking.

Meanwhile, Johnson Bros Tours Group, the high profile Nottinghamshire operator will be opening the doors of its new £3m depot in Mansfield.

The new premises will be known as Redfern Travel Mansfield and it will offer comprehensive maintenance and MOT testing facilities to PCV and HGV operators in the area. Additionally, it will be the company's main administrative and coach travel and holiday centre.

Lee Johnson said: "This has been a significant investment for us and we'd like to invite PSV and HGV operators to join us for the open day celebrations. They will be able to examine all the facilities and see exactly what we have to offer.

"We have had significant support from the trade suppliers and at least 20 will be having an exhibition stand. They include Alcoa, Automate, Autosound, Autosmart, BMC, Bowrings, Brendeck,

Dawsonrentals, Drinkmaster, Esker Bus & Coach, Everquip, Gauntlet, Heavy Duty Parts, LA Glass, Mistral, Moseley Group, NCA, Optare, P&P Clothing, Plaxton, S&G Coachworks, S&H Recovery, Tanvic Tyre Services, Transervex, Transtek and Wurth Products.

"The open day will be held on Saturday 5 January 2008 and we plan to start at 11:00 hrs. We will be providing food, tea and coffee for all visitors - so we'd appreciate a call or a fax from anyone planning to attend so we can organise how much to lay on. There will also be a cash bar. The proceeds from this, along with a flat fee we've charged the trade exhibitors, will all be donated to charity. I'd like to think we could raise between two and three thousand pounds for a good cause."

■ The location of Redfern Travel Mansfield is: The Sidings, Off Debdale Lane, Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield, Notts. NG19 8DA. Telephone: 01623 627653/627824 Fax: 01623 625787.

■ Parrys International is located at Landywood Green, Cheslyn Hay, West Midlands, WS6 7QX. Tel: 01922 414576, fax: 01922 413416 or e-mail: info@parrys-international.co.uk.



Johnson Bros will display its new depot while Parrys shows new MAN Van Hools to the public

