

First Great Western

A three-way partnership between train operator First Great Western, Network Rail and the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) resulted in the creation of a new platform at Swindon station, which is bringing real benefits to customers.

Swindon's platform 4, which won the Station Excellence of the Year Award at the HSBC Rail Business Awards, has been open for less than a year and is now saving hundreds of minutes per week on journeys.

The completion of the platform was the first major project championed by the Great Western Joint Board, which comprises representatives of train companies, freight operators, contractors, Network Rail and other industry bodies working together to boost performance and customer service. The board lobbied the SRA and work commenced in October 2002 with the platform opening in June 2003.

The 300 metre-long platform has eliminated conflicting train paths that caused delays and, because trains can approach and depart faster, further time is saved. Improvements include a new lift, disabled access, covered waiting area, low level



The new platform at Swindon means the station is no longer a major bottleneck.

counter help desk, café, toilets (including disabled), baby changing facilities and new plasma information screens.

Alison Forster, Managing Director of First Great Western, said: "The three-way approach between Network Rail, the SRA and ourselves demonstrated that the rail industry can bring real benefits to customers through joint objectives and a common focus. Swindon was a major bottleneck before the new platform opened, but now the performance enhancements it has provided are exceeding expectations.



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