

Briefly

Work will continue overnight this weekend (Feb 6 - 7) to upgrade communications on the M40 and M42 with the dismantling of the old gantries, which will affect traffic travelling northbound from M40 junction 15 to junction 3A of the M42. The overnight closures are: total closure of the M40 northbound between junction 15 & junction 3A of the M42 and lane 3 of the M40 at the divergence of the M42 from junction 3A to junction 16 of the M40. Fully signed diversion routes will be in operation from junction 15 of the M40 and junction 3A of the M42.

Work is due to start this Tuesday to install new traffic signals at junction 1 inbound slip road on the M32 in Bristol. The signals will regulate the flow of traffic joining the motorway. The work, which is being carried out during off-peak periods and overnight is expected to be completed by mid-March. It will involve installing part-time signals that will automatically come in to operation during periods of peak congestion.

Two major improvement schemes which will provide quicker, safer and more reliable journeys on the M27 were opened by transport minister Andrew Adonis. From this week, two months ahead of schedule, motorists have been fully benefitting from a £36m scheme to widen 2.5 miles of the motorway by providing an additional lane in both directions between Junction 3 (M271 to Southampton) and Junction 4 (M27/M3 Interchange). The stretch, which is now four lanes in each direction, is equipped with gantry and other electronic signs providing real time information for drivers.

Tickets go on sale this week for the UK Coach awards on March 27 at London's Tower Hotel. Full details will be on the website www.ukcoachwards.co.uk later this week.

Stanley Coach Travel awarded Coach Marque

North East family operator gains quality standard

Stanley Coach Travel has joined the league of quality coach operators following its admission to the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)'s Coach Marque quality standard scheme.

Andrew Scott, transport manager and partner told *CBW*: "Having sold our bus operations to Go North East in October 2007, we focussed on our coaches. We re-invested the capital generated from the sale back into our business. We wanted to increase quality. We re-joined CPT and set the aim of joining the recognised quality standard that is Coach Marque. In June last year we started work towards that aim - the full kit and caboodle! We had our audit in early December, which included matters such as maintenance procedures. We officially became members of the scheme at the Coach Marque conference in Stratford on Avon on 18/19 January."

Asked how he felt, Mr Scott replied: "We're absolutely delighted with the news. I feel it helps to give us the edge over other suppliers. This is particularly the case with schools for example, where the provision of transport falls on a senior member of the management team. Coach Marque shows we've got systems in place - it's all written down and audited, and therefore provides reassurance to our customers."

Graham Messenger, coaching executive at the CPT told *CBW*: "I'm delighted to welcome another operator to the Coach Marque table. I was on the Coach Marque stand at the recent Excursions event (*CBW* 867), and there seemed to be a tremendous amount of interest in what we offer."

Stanley Travel was founded in 1961 by Robert McGill Scott,

who along with his wife Ann, and their sons, Andrew and Ian, still own the firm. From humble beginnings with a pair of taxis operating from the centre of Stanley, the firm now operates a fleet of over 60 vehicles with around 100 employees, making it the largest taxi operator and a major employer in Derwentside.

Over the years, the firm grew to become much more than just another taxi company, and following the introduction of several 12, 16 seat and 24-seat mini coaches, 'Stanley Taxis & Mini Coaches' was born. In 1988, a further landmark was reached following the awarding of the firm's first local bus service

contracts by Durham County Council, operating under the 'Stanley Buses' banner.

At the same time, the coach fleet was expanded, with the addition of 33, 53 and 57 seat vehicles, as well as a 51 seat wheelchair accessible coach, one of only a handful in the area.

Following the sale of the bus operations to Go North East in October 2007, it was decided to focus on the taxi and coach work, allowing the firm's holiday and day trip programmes to be developed. The company's engineering business was also developed, undertaking outside contract work under the banner of 'Stanley Fleetserv'.



CoachMarque accolade for Stanley Coach Travel

AM wants a green future in LCO

Welsh Lib Dem Shadow Minister for Transport and Cardiff Central AM, Jenny Randerson has won the opportunity to introduce a private member's Legislative Competence Order to create a greener future for communities across Wales.

The Proposed "Major Development Travel Plans" LCO will seek the powers from Westminster to ensure all major developments in Wales have to address issues such as access to public transport, walking and cycling facilities and adequate parking at the planning stage.

Jenny Randerson said: "I am delighted to have been lucky enough to win through in the LCO ballot, particularly as I am also pursuing a private Member's Measure as well.

"I am often contacted by constituents to raise issues about how so many developments, be they commercial, or housing take no account of how people get there. The idea of this proposal is to get the powers here in Wales so that we can address that issue, helping to encourage public transport."