

## Christmas Train Specials

Ascott-under-Wychwood residents will be able to take the train to do their Christmas shopping again this year.

At the request of the Cotswold Line Promotion Group, First Great Western has agreed for the third year running to provide Saturday services at the station on the four weekends before Christmas.

As well as trains to Oxford and London, there will be the chance to visit Worcester's Victorian Christmas Fayre or Great Malvern for the afternoon on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November.

CLPG chairman John Ellis said: "We hope that residents in the local communities will make full use of the trains to Oxford, London, Worcester and other destinations.

The CLPG will continue to campaign for more services to stop at Ascott and Shipton, and heavy use of these Christmas trains will help, by showing that the communities would value more services." The following trains will stop at Ascott on

**Saturdays 30<sup>th</sup> November and 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> December.**

The 07.10 from Hereford to London will call at 09.03. The train is due to arrive in Oxford at 09.28 and London Paddington at 10.29.

The 11.21 from Paddington to Worcester and Great Malvern, which leaves Oxford at 12.23, will call at Ascott at 12.48, reaching Worcester at 13.44 and Great Malvern at 14.00.

The 15.21 from Paddington to Great Malvern (16.23 from Oxford) will stop at Ascott at 16.45.

In addition, on **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November** only, the 17.49 from Great Malvern (18.06 from Worcester Foregate Street) will call at Ascott at 18.59 to bring home afternoon visitors to Malvern and the Worcester Victorian Christmas Fayre.

More details of the services and fares are available on the journey planner at [www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk](http://www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk)

## Working to Secure High-speed Broadband

The District Council is exploring options to secure better high-speed broadband coverage for rural West Oxfordshire. Leader Cllr Barry Norton has announced that he wants the Council to look at possible ways to invest funding to improve faster coverage for more parts of the District for the benefit of residents and businesses.

Oxfordshire County Council has been working on a 'Better Broadband' project and recently appointed BT as its commercial partner to bring £25m of improvements to high-speed broadband coverage across the county. In West Oxfordshire, the improvements will mean 88% of premises in the District

would be served by high-speed broadband.

Speaking at a meeting of the Council on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, Cllr Norton said he believed that support should be given to extend coverage, where possible, to parts of the District not covered in the existing contract "as this will bring huge benefits to the local economy in rural West Oxfordshire where many people work from home or run local businesses."

A meeting will take place with the County Council and BT next month to examine further possibilities for improvements within the 'Better Broadband' project, and District Council members will be kept up-to-date with progress.