

SERVICE AREA OPENING

The new purpose-built service area for the Merrick Forest Stages Rally will be officially opened on Saturday (Sept 1st) by South of Scotland MSP and Environment Minister Michael Russell.

Forestry Commission Scotland engineers have been working to get the facility ready in time for the Newton Stewart-based rally on September 8th.

Trees and shrubs have been cleared at the former engineering depot at Glencaird, north of Glentool Village, and an area of around 11,000 square metres has been levelled.

Access has been improved and an existing single-track road around the site will allow for a one way system in and out of service.

Rally organisers have invested £5000 in the facility, matched by funding from the Dumfries and Galloway Community Environment Regeneration Fund, which has European backing.

The Glencaird site is seen as part of the regeneration of the Glentool area. When not in use for rallying, it will be available for a range of outdoor events.

Following the ceremony at the service area, Mr Russell will go on to open the Glentool Fete.

The "Merrick" organisers have arranged for a variety of rally cars and support vehicles to be on display at the event.

They will include the Mitsubishi Evo 6 and Peugeot 205 of local competitors Craig McMiken and Mark McCulloch.