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## CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to your Branch Newsletter which is the first for some time. Not that there has been a shortage of news to report, as last year's collapse of the sea wall at Dawlish has provided plenty. But we do need more help to run the Devon and Cornwall branch, both from our existing members and by recruiting more. Last October 11<sup>th</sup> the Railfuture Board organised a meeting in Birmingham to discuss membership, and via the branches has requested that every member recruits a new one. To join Railfuture see <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/join/>. So over to you please.

Last year at a meeting held at Devon County Council to discuss the options after Dawlish, both Chris Bligh and I challenged the view that the Okehampton line would provide a slow 1 hour 40 minute journey time between Exeter and Plymouth. We believe that trains would only be this slow if they stopped at every possible station and a few a new ones as well, or if trains were held for long periods of time at intermediate stations. In fact we estimate that it would be around 54 minutes non-stop from Exeter to Plymouth, with a top speed of 90 mph between Exeter and Okehampton. And with a new Meldon Viaduct, and route improvements at Cowley Bridge Junction and Coleford Junction, only 52 minutes.

Chris Bligh, who is involved in the campaign for the Okehampton line (Northern Route) and also works on the railway, has joined Railfuture. So we welcome him as a new member and all other new members as well. Chris Bligh's report can be seen on page 12.

### **Railfuture Devon and Cornwall**

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## ***Exeter to Salisbury and Waterloo Line Developments***

The Exeter to Waterloo, and Bristol to Weymouth lines have always operated in isolation at Yeovil, with very limited opportunities for connections. In October 1966 Yeovil Town station closed and was replaced by a shuttle service between from Yeovil Junction and Pen Mill, with 15 trains each way. However this was stopped in May 1968. Since then there has been no direct connection.

A key Railfuture policy is to restore rail services between the two lines. To achieve this we support Devon County Council's aspirations for a half-hourly Exeter to Axminster service, but extended through to Yeovil Junction and Pen Mill stations. This would connect with the Weymouth and Dorchester to Bristol line, a route which has outline plans for an hourly service. When needed, Penzance to Paddington trains would take over the new Exeter to Yeovil paths, but continue to serve the intermediate stations on their way back to the normal route at Castle Cary. The new service would need additional passing loops for example in the Crewkerne area.



*A South West Trains service departs Yeovil Junction for Waterloo on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014. Railfuture would like to see regular services taking the left hand divergence to Yeovil Pen Mill.*

A competing idea would be to link additional Exeter to Yeovil trains to the existing half hourly Salisbury to Waterloo service. However, the Devon to Dorset connections would be dependent on Bristol to Weymouth trains running via Yeovil Junction on a new Yeovil South Chord. The South Chord idea has been around for at least 35 years, but nothing has ever happened. Also without a new passing loop around Dinton the hourly Waterloo to Salisbury service can only be extended every 2 hours to Yeovil or hourly in one direction only.

Accordingly we have suggested that our proposed hourly Exeter to Yeovil service alternates between Pen Mill and running forward to London Waterloo via Gillingham. This is what was written in Railfuture's response to the Wessex Route Study Consultation by Chris Austin (15<sup>th</sup> February 2015). Extract as follows:

**West of England Route and Castle Cary – Weymouth line.**

We note that the improvements at the west end of the route which will provide two trains an hour between Exeter and Axminster form part of the Western route study, which also refers to improving capacity between Exeter and Yeovil Junction for diverted First Great Western services when required. However, in terms of infrastructure planning, we believe that this should be compatible with extending the second train east from Axminster every hour to Yeovil Junction then alternately to Yeovil Pen Mill for Weymouth line connections and on the other hour to pick up the path at Gillingham or Salisbury of the second train to London each hour.

Given the performance characteristics of the electric trains that will replace the class 159 units, more dynamic loops are likely to be required and this would also be true if further capacity increases were required for resilience, given the higher frequency of service and the role of the western end of the line as a diversionary route. This suggests that in the long run, it may be that the additional capacity is best achieved through providing more sections of double track. This might also allow consideration of accelerating some services, with calls focussed on the busier stations, although we accept at this point, the need is for capacity for more trains rather than significant journey time reductions.

As a tactical point, the opportunity to consider extending Tisbury loop into the station, for both resilience and journey time reductions, should be taken now, while the adjacent site is disused. The time saving of extending the Tisbury loop would absorb much of the additional time that would be needed to serve a new station at Wilton

## **A New Vision from South West Trains**

Out of the blue South West Trains have come up with some exciting proposals for service enhancements from the December 2015 timetable change. In total there would be 17 trains each way between the two Yeovil stations.

With the exception of the 14:50 semi fast from Waterloo to Salisbury, there would be a half hourly service from Waterloo to Yeovil

between the 12:20 and 19:20 Waterloo departures. Those trains terminating at Yeovil would do so at Yeovil Pen Mill after reversal at Yeovil Junction. The 14:50 cannot run beyond Salisbury as it would conflict on the single track at Dinton with the established 16:18 Gillingham to Waterloo. In the South West Trains proposals this service would start from Yeovil Pen Mill at 15:45. Improvements between Yeovil and Exeter are restricted by the longer lengths of single track, but there would be a new 13:43 Yeovil Pen Mill to Exeter train.

A curious feature of the proposed timetable are a number of trains between Waterloo, Salisbury, and on to Yeovil via Westbury, Frome, Bruton and Castle Cary. These places are poorly served by the Bristol to Weymouth service so must be welcome, but the trains also have a stock positioning role that bypasses the limitations of the single track west of Wilton.

New journey possibilities include the 05:10 and 15:25 from Exeter St Davids having onward connecting at Yeovil Junction for Castle Cary, Frome and Westbury, with the main Devon beneficiaries being Honiton and Axminster. Looking at the proposals in conjunction with the current timetable (Table below) it can be seen that Weymouth to Exeter via Castle Cary is likely to remain the optimum route, but some journeys may prove to be quicker via Yeovil Junction such as the 17:30 from Weymouth. Early morning connections in either direction would be possible, although with very long journey times.

Weymouth d)	05:33	06:40	08:53	11:10	13:10	15:08	17:30	20:21
Yeovil PM a)	<u>06:20</u>	<u>07:30</u>	<u>09:41</u>	<u>12:05</u>	<u>14:08</u>	<u>15:56</u>	<u>18:23</u>	<u>21:06</u>
	d)	06:28		13:04		16:30	18:30	21:30
Yeovil Jc a)	<u>06:34</u>			<u>13:09</u>		<u>16:36</u>	<u>18:35</u>	<u>21:35</u>
	d)	07:07		13:39		16:39	18:45	21:41
Exeter SD a)	08:21			14:42		17:42	19:47	22:47
<i>Or from Weymouth via Castle Cary</i>								
Castle Cary a)	<u>06:33</u>	<u>07:43</u>	<u>09:54</u>	<u>12:19</u>	<u>14:22</u>	<u>16:09</u>	<u>18:36</u>	<u>21:18</u>
Castle Cary d)			10:31	12:35	15:50	16:41	19:19	21:26
Exeter SD a)			11:21	13:27	16:59	17:33	20:09	22:17

Exeter SD	d)	05:46	08:51		12:17	15:01		18:03	19:49/55
Castle Cary	a)	06:39	09:42		13:06	15:53		18:54	20:46
Castle Cary	d)	07:14	10:00	11:04	13:06	16:09	18:06	19:06	22:08
<i>Or from Exeter via Yeovil Junction</i>									
Exeter SD	d)	05:10				14:25	16:24		19:25
Yeovil Jc	a)	06:14				15:27	17:28		20:28
	d)	06:42				16:15	18:16		21:18
Yeovil PM	a)	06:47				16:20	18:21		21:23
	d)	07:35	10:14	11:18	13:20	16:24	18:22	19:19	22:23
Weymouth	a)	08:24	11:03	12:09	14:09	17:10	19:12	20:10	23:13

So it is not an ideal timetable, but probably the best that could be expected within the constraints of the single track. It should receive our support, but we must continue to campaign for improvements.

## Western Greyhound Padstow Buses

The bus company went into liquidation and ceased running services on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March. One key bus rail link affected was the 555 Bodmin Parkway to Padstow service via Bodmin and Wadebridge. From 16<sup>th</sup> March Plymouth City Buses took over the hourly service, but revising most Bodmin Parkway departure times to run 9 minutes earlier at 21 minutes past the hour. Unfortunately the 19:21 is not running beyond Bodmin, and there is no longer a last bus at 22:10 from Bodmin Parkway to Padstow. This has been a Cornwall County sponsored service. From Padstow buses still depart at around 30 minutes past the hour from 06:25, but the last service is now at 19:25 instead of 20:30. (To check times 01752 662271 until 16:00)

## Devon Buses Threatened with Cut Backs

As mentioned in Railwatch No. 143 Devon County Council is considering severe cut backs to subsidised buses. Members are encouraged to make their own responses to the consultation.

**Comments to Devon County Council can be made until Monday 20 April 2015.** Web site <https://www.toughchoices.co.uk>

The following summarises those of concern to Railfuture and which will form the basis of our submission to the County:

<b>Devon CC Proposals</b>	<b>Railfuture Comments</b>
<p><b>Service: 1</b>, proposal 2, <b>Saving</b> - £54,263, <b>journeys/year</b> 30,430</p> <p>Five Monday to Saturday 1/1B Exeter - Cullompton – Willand buses to be withdrawn from the 19:30 onwards. Includes 23:15 which continues to Uffculme and 4 return buses to Exeter.</p> <p><i>Services cover former stations on the Exeter to Taunton line.</i></p>	<p>Two buses operate this route. One should be retained for a basic service.</p> <p>The 19:30 from Exeter to Willand to run the normal 1B route to Uffculme and Tiverton Parkway. From there picking up rail/bus passengers for Uffculme, Willand, Cullompton and Bradninch. The last bus would be at 22:30 from Exeter to Willand and Uffculme</p>
<p><b>Service: 5</b>, <b>Saving</b> - £25,448, <b>journeys/year</b> 20,430</p> <p>Monday to Saturday and Sunday services to be withdrawn from Exeter at 20:30, 21:30, 22:30, and 23:30 on the route to - Cowley Bridge - Newton St. Cyres – Crediton. Plus the corresponding return journeys to Exeter.</p> <p><i>Services cover inadequate late evening rail services to Newton St. Cyres and Crediton</i></p>	<p>This bus service should be retained particularly as the parallel railway has no service at this time, except for the 20:55 and 22:49 trains on Fridays only from Exeter (Central station). The latter does not call at Newton St. Cyres.</p>
<p><b>Service: 25B</b> <b>Saving</b> - £13,268, <b>journeys/year</b> 1,000</p> <p>This concerns the Monday to Saturday service from Taunton to Bampton and Dulverton. It is not clear what level of service would continue to be supported by Somerset County Council.</p> <p><i>This service acts as a bus rail link from Taunton station covering places in Somerset no longer served by rail on the closed line to Barnstaple plus Bampton in Devon.</i></p>	<p>The evening service from Taunton to Wiveliscombe, Bampton and Dulverton has already been lost.</p> <p>The service from Tiverton to Bampton and Dulverton is not an effective alternative as there is no direct rail connection.</p> <p>Financial support should continue and if possible in the future be increased by either or both counties for the reintroduction of an evening service.</p>

<p><b>Service: 30 Saving</b> - £6,330 Some Monday to Saturday Chard to Axminster and return bus services would be withdrawn. The 08:25 (Saturday), 10:29, 12:29, and 18:00 Chard - Axminster buses and corresponding return workings.</p> <p><i>This service is the closest substitute for the closed line to Chard.</i></p>	<p>This service acts as a bus rail link to and from Axminster station in Devon to Chard in Somerset.</p> <p>Evening services to Chard from both Axminster and Taunton have already been lost. Financial support should continue and if possible in the future increased by either or both counties for the reintroduction of evening services.</p>
<p><b>Service: X38 Saving</b> - £11,877, <b>journeys/year</b> 6,112</p> <p>The 3 Sunday buses from Exeter to Plymouth via - Ashburton - Buckfastleigh - South Brent - Bittaford and Ivybridge would be withdrawn.</p> <p>South Brent - Bittaford and Ivybridge are covered by other buses and the Ivybridge train service. Ashburton and Buckfastleigh would be reliant on 4 Stagecoach 88 buses to Newton Abbot.</p> <p><i>The X38 partly covers the former Ashburton branch and closed stations on the Plymouth to Exeter line.</i></p>	<p>Irrespective of cuts to the X38 bus, the 88 from Ashburton should be extended within Newton Abbot to the railway station.</p> <p>Timetables for the Stagecoach Gold service from Paignton to Plymouth, for South Brent - Bittaford and Ivybridge, should clearly show times at the nearest stop to Totnes railway station.</p> <p>On some Sundays South Devon heritage railway trains link Buckfastleigh to Totnes, but different timetables for different Sundays make journey planning complex. A simplified timetable is needed.</p>
<p><b>Service: 59 Saving</b> - £47,474, <b>journeys/year</b> 5,000</p> <p>Seven Monday to Saturday journeys would be reduced to 4 on the route from Plymouth to Plympton - Sparkwell - Lutton - Cornwood - Lee Moor - Wotter - Shaugh Prior - Bickleigh – Roborough. So only one bus needed instead of two.</p> <p><i>This service covers the closed Cornwood station on the Plymouth to Exeter line and Bickleigh and Shaugh Bridge on the Great Western Plymouth to Tavistock line.</i></p>	<p>The review of service 59 should take into account journeys that might be generated by the new Hemerdon Tungsten mine and whether some buses should run to it.</p> <p>If proposed cuts go ahead a full circular service should be re-established to achieve a 2 hourly service from places such as Cornwood to Plymouth by using clockwise or anticlockwise routes. Instead of terminating at the George park and ride site at Roborough, buses should continue to Plymouth city centre via Derriford and the railway station.</p>

<p><b>Service: X64 Saving</b> - £6,081, journeys/year 5,504</p> <p>The two Sunday and public holiday buses from Exeter to Kingsbridge and Salcombe via Totnes would be withdrawn. The 93 summer Sunday Dartmouth to Plymouth via Kingsbridge bus is also proposed for withdrawal, to leave no Sunday buses in this part of the South Hams.</p> <p><i>The X64/164 between Kingsbridge and Totnes is the closest replacement for the closed railway to Kingsbridge.</i></p>	<p>The X64/164 between Totnes, Kingsbridge and Salcombe should be developed as a bus rail link and not reduced. The early morning Saturday service might also be withdrawn.</p> <p>The Sunday 09:05 from Exeter bus station provides a useful tourist link to Salcombe returning at 17:35. This must be retained. In between the bus returns to Exeter, but only gives a stay of 1 hour 40 minutes. We suggest that the bus is used instead to run an additional services between Totnes railway station, Kingsbridge and Salcombe.</p>
<p><b>Service: 82 Saving</b> - £10,282, journeys/year 1,396</p> <p>This operates on summer Saturdays and Sundays from Exeter at 10:25 via St. Davids station, Moretonhampstead, Princetown, Yelverton and Tavistock then returning at 16:15. The bus is used for an additional Tavistock to Postbridge return journey during the day.</p> <p>It is assumed that the First 48 Sunday bus from Wembury and Plymouth would continue to serve Dartmoor from the Plymouth direction.</p>	<p>At minimum the Sunday 82 service must be retained. It is an important component of the Sunday Dartmoor Rover Network and there are no alternative Exeter to Moretonhampstead buses (359) on Sundays.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to a Plymouth destination instead of Tavistock so as to attract its use for shopping journeys into Plymouth.</p> <p>On all days the 359 Morteonhampstead to Exeter service should run inbound via Exeter St. Davids station.</p>
<p><b>Service: 86 Saving</b> - £30,602, journeys/year 6,055</p> <p>The late evening 21:45, 22:45 and 23:45 buses would be withdrawn from Plymouth to Tavistock and two return services. On Sundays 5 evening buses from the 18:45 onwards would be cut.</p> <p><i>Covering former rail services on the closed Plymouth to Tavistock line via Yelverton and Horrabridge.</i></p>	<p>A 20:45 departure is far too early for the last Monday to Saturday service from Plymouth to Tavistock on weekdays and 17:45 too early on Sundays.</p> <p>A 22:45 bus from Plymouth to Tavistock should continue to run daily, but also serve Plymouth railway station. On weekdays this would connect with the 19:03 service from London Paddington.</p>

<p><b>Service: 187 Saving</b> - £12,168, journeys/year 628</p> <p>The summer Sundays (and public holidays) Okehampton to Gunnislake bus service via Sourton, Lydford, Brentor, Mary Tavy, Tavistock and Morwellham would be completely withdrawn. At the same time it is proposed to withdraw the alternative service 11 that runs twice daily on Sundays and public holidays between Barnstaple, Okehampton and Tavistock.</p> <p><i>Covering the closed Okehampton to Tavistock railway line.</i></p>	<p>The loss of this service would dismember the long established Dartmoor Sunday Rover network.</p> <p>The normal 187 service must use two buses, but a compromise would be one bus operating a 2 hourly Okehampton to Tavistock service in connection with the 2 hourly summer Sundays Exeter to Okehampton rail service. This would maintain circular services around Dartmoor. Some buses might need to run directly from Lydford (Memorial) to Mary Tavy to ensure that connections were maintained at Okehampton railway station.</p>
<p><b>Service: 678 Saving</b> - £5,503, journeys/year 1,000</p> <p>The daily bus from Cheriton Fitzpaine, Thorverton, Brampford Speke, Upton Pyne and Exeter St. Davids station to Exeter would be cut to 3 times a week and only twice via Brampford Speke.</p> <p><i>Covering Brampford Speke on the closed Exeter to Tiverton railway line.</i></p>	<p>It is suggested that some service 55B buses between Exeter and Tiverton via Thorverton are diverted via Upton Pyne and Brampford Speke and to include a journey to work time service to and from Exeter.</p>

## North Devon and Torridge Local Plan

A period of additional consultation is being over the six weeks from 20<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015. See <http://consult.torridge.gov.uk/> for documents and reply by email to [localplan@northdevon.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@northdevon.gov.uk) or [localplan@torridge.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@torridge.gov.uk) by 5pm on **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**. By post: -

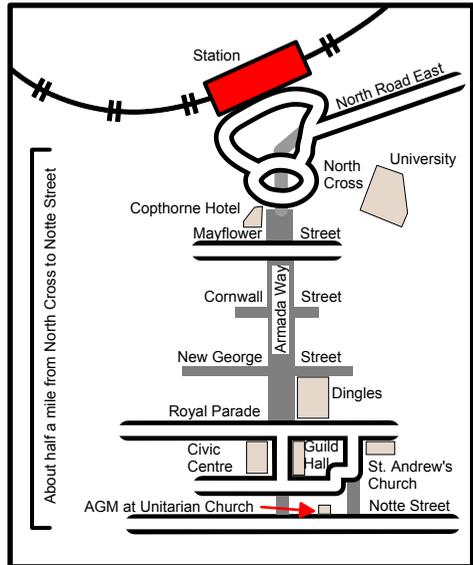
- Planning Policy Team, North Devon Council, Civic Centre, Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 1EA; or
- Planning Policy Team, Torridge District Council, Riverbank House, Bideford, Devon, EX39 2QG

## Notice of Branch Annual General Meeting

Our AGM will be on Saturday 18th April 2015 at the Unitarian Church, Notte Street, Plymouth, PL1 2AQ.

The venue is situated in the centre of Plymouth near the Guildhall and Civic Centre.

To get there from the railway station, walk towards the North Cross roundabout and through the pedestrian subways to Armada Way. Then straight down past Dingles on your left, and after crossing Royal Parade you will have the Civic Centre on your right. Cross the next road which is Princess Street, and turn left into Notte Street to find the Unitarian church.



Bus routes 16 (four an hour taking 7 minutes) and 47 (two an hour taking 4 minutes) leave from the stop in Saltash Road just outside the station area. Alight at Royal Parade and then walk through to Notte Street.

### Provisional Agenda

13:30 Talk by Railfuture Board member Philip Shelton

14:00 Open Forum

14:45 Tea/coffee

15:15 The AGM

15:45 Any Other Business

16:15 End of meeting

### Other Meetings

Railfuture Severnside Annual  
General Meeting 2015  
Saturday 11th April in  
Melksham.

## **Alternative Dawlish Routes (Report from Chris Bligh)**

The South West Peninsular Rail Task Force has given Government its 3 point plan for improving the rail lines in Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. It calls for newer rolling stock, electrification and both a Dawlish Avoiding Line (DAL) and reopening of the Northern Route.

This was what the South West asked for in one voice.

The current main line via Dawlish has to remain as the main route because of the major population centres along its length. Breakwaters are needed around Dawlish as it is NOT the sea height that does the damage but the wave action. Additionally the cliffs around Teignmouth will need significant rock bolting. We can see from the Harbury Tunnel landslide how long this can take to put right. Teignmouth at least is more solid than soil.

A fully dual track Northern Route with a brand new Meldon Viaduct was quoted as £875m. However, part of the feasibility study currently being undertaken will look at whether a single line with long dynamic loops can perform as well and whether the original viaduct is repairable. A reopened Northern Line would improve services on the Tarka line from Exeter to Coleford and go at least part way to helping improve frequency. Suggestions from campaigners for the Northern Route have also asked for the feasibility study to look at easing of curves at Coleford and Crediton. This has been done on some reopened lines in Scotland. This would improve line speed crucially to 90mph-110mph throughout between Exeter and Sampford Courtenay.

This feasibility study is massively important and there have been reports of Network Rail personnel at Meldon Viaduct and also Sourton (Parkway?) which is currently NOT on the national rail network. It is the order that these things are done that matter. I believe we should:

(A) Strengthen the Current Route.

(B) Then rebuild the 'Northern Route' before any Dawlish avoiding line for the following reasons:-

1. Keep connection. Plymouth lost £600.000 per day when Dawlish was closed. Devon and Cornwall lost up to £1.2 billion in total.
2. Ready diversion that would be instantly available if the line is blocked between Plymouth and Newton Abbot. For instance with train failure, line blockage or fatality. Especially as the units serving the South West will all be based at Plymouth, at least for the next 10 years! A Dawlish Avoiding Line would not do this.
3. A new population brought within reach of rail in a very 'transport poor' area.
4. Extension of Devon Metro.
5. Economic regeneration. Torridge has the lowest average wages of any area in England and the economies of Exeter and Plymouth would benefit as a result also.
6. When the current route is electrified it is likely to be closed for lengthy periods. For instance, this summer Box tunnel is closed for 6 weeks in July and August and East of Bath the line is closed for the whole of August due to electrification. This will need to be done on the current line notably for Marley Tunnels between Plymouth and Totnes as well as other places.
7. Whilst it should not be considered a 'slow' route it is half the price of the cheapest Dawlish avoiding line and a third of the cost of the route that saves the most time (6minutes).

(C) Finally build a Dawlish avoiding line but think bigger! By this time the Deficit should have been eliminated.

Just building a Dawlish avoiding line will still result in trains taking 35 minutes from Plymouth to Newton Abbot. Extending the route to Totnes would save an additional 6 minutes for an extra 8 miles. To Plymouth would save 10-12 minutes for 18 miles or so to Hemerdon Bank. Plymouth wants journey times to London in the order of 2 hours 15 minutes. This is really only achievable if a fast route is built to Plymouth. Doing the above would mean a modern Voyager type train stopping at Totnes and Newton Abbot would take 33 minutes and a shade under half an hour non-stop.

*Editor's Note. Perhaps a little slower. Exeter to Newton Abbot via 7 mile tunnel (Option 2) at 11 minutes, 2 minutes dwell time in Newton Abbot and 21 minutes to Plymouth assuming no Totnes bypass and the existing line in from Hemerdon to Plymouth. Add 4 minutes if stopping at Totnes.*

## Chuley Rd, Ashburton Revised Master Plan October 2014

This Chuley Road proposals by the Dartmoor National Park planning authority would see much of the former Ashburton station site covered with new housing. Although Railfuture has no plans to campaign for reopening at the present time it would seem wrong for the opportunity to be lost for the future or needing to buy numerous homes for demolition. An alternative route alongside the A38 bypass would be possible, but require civil engineering work to reduce the gradient as the road is rising towards Alston Cross at this point.



*The former Ashburton terminus (left picture) in use as a garage and viewed towards Buckfastleigh. Beyond (right picture) only a few industrial buildings occupy the trackbed, such as the white building next to the old goods shed. Photo 4 May 2013.*

As also mentioned in the April Railwatch No 143, we wrote to the Dartmoor National Park planning authority on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

The growing use of the local railway network in Devon suggests that Ashburton with a population of just over 4,000 and Buckfastleigh around 3,600 together have future potential to support a daily rail service. This could be every 2 hours to Totnes, Ivybridge, Plympton (new station) and Plymouth, Assuming a 45 mph top speed between Ashburton and Totnes the journey time to Plymouth would be 50 minutes. This would open up employment, educational and leisure opportunities for local residents, in Plymouth, and also give them convenient access to London and northbound trains at Totnes. The South Devon Railway might also wish to run heritage steam services into Ashburton so bringing tourists to the local shops and cafes.

Ashburton is little more than 2 miles from the existing track at Buckfastleigh, but the Chuley Road plans make no mention or provision for a restored rail service. Railfuture requests that this aspect of the plan is revised to leave space for a

railway. From a heritage perspective the old station would be the first choice, but an alternative might be to re-route the line alongside the A38 to provide a single platform station close to the proposed medium/short stay car park with 23 spaces (labelled site 9 on page 8 of the Chuley Road, Ashburton Revised Master Plan). This would be convenient for all the proposed new houses and still be within a short walking distance of Ashburton town centre.

We also realise that a station on the south side of the development would be physically possible around the area marked 20 and allocated for 56 long stay parking places. However, we would be concerned that this would be further from the town centre and be too isolated for passengers alighting there after dark.

It is therefore the considered opinion of Railfuture that the Chuley Road Master Plan is redesigned to take into account protection of a corridor of land for a restored railway into Ashburton. This could be the old railway route or a new route.

## **Note on Exeter to Taunton New Local Stations**

The Local Authorities between Exeter and Taunton are active in pursuing the case for re-opening stations at Wellington and Cullompton. The business case looks promising from both stations and the preferred idea is to extend the current Cardiff to Taunton service as this will also improve connections from Exeter to Bridgwater and Weston super Mare. Railfuture Devon and Cornwall has been represented at meetings.

## **The Mid Devon Local Plan**

This Local Plan is currently under review and mainly concerns housing allocation. However, under Policy S2 it is stated that, 'The Council supports the reopening of a railway station at Cullompton and the Local Plan allocates a possible site for this'. It also appears under **Policy CU8 East Cullompton Transport Provision**. Of course the only realistic station site is the old one, as curvature is too tight and track cant too steep for anything south of the old site.

The consultation is open to 27<sup>th</sup> April. Reply by post to **Local Plan Review Consultation, Forward Planning, Mid Devon District Council, Phoenix House, Tiverton, EX16 6PP** or email [localplanreview@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:localplanreview@middevon.gov.uk)

## Picture Gallery



1) The Okehampton line remains deserted and overgrown at Nymet Tracey near Bow on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2015. Meanwhile passengers were being taken by bus between Exeter and Plymouth due to engineering work on this and two other Saturdays in March. On an upgraded and fully reopened line trains would be here and travelling at 90 mph or more.



2) A quiet scene on National Cycle Route 3 on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March. This uses part of the Tiverton to Tiverton Junction (Willand) line that Railfuture would like to see re-opened. Plenty of room for a single track *and* cycleway on this wide trackbed.



3) Topsham station on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March. The Exmouth line is always busy, even in the early afternoon, as here. With the new station under construction at Newcourt the line is set to get even busier.