

# Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

No 6 August 2009

**railfuture** *Yorkshire*

## All Change on the East Coast Main Line – Again!

by Graham Collett

The rumours were correct. On 1st July, the Transport Secretary- Lord Adonis – announced that the government intended to take the East Coast (EC) rail service, run by National Express (NE), into state ownership. NE EC (who only took over the route from GNER in 2007) had stated that it expected to default on payments due under its franchise. The government - who had refused to renegotiate the £1.4bn contract with NE EC – gave assurances that services would continue as normal and that all tickets would be honoured. The franchise is expected to be re-let – assuming there is a new buyer. Yet NE EC claims it is very much still in business for the present and is not being “renationalised”!



So what does all this mean for EC rail users? Even if NE EC do still “hand back the keys” and no bidder is found, then presumably it will be business as usual. Yet nobody seems clear what will happen about the extra trains which NE EC were due to run from December 2010 (semi-fast to/from York etc) – see YRC No 4).

In either case, there are likely to be further attempts to cut costs beyond those already made by the current operator. These are bound to impact on the service offered, booking office opening hours etc , so **watch out and alert your local rail users group or Railfuture Officers immediately!**

### Forthcoming Railfuture Yorkshire Events

Saturday 19th September Branch Meeting in Harrogate (see page 4 for details)

Saturday 14 November Railfuture National Re-openings Conference in Corby (for details see <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=Corby%20conference>)

Saturday 16 January 2010 Branch Meeting in Dewsbury (details in next YRC)

Saturday 13 March 2010 Branch AGM (for details see December YRC)

### Press Date for December 2009 issue

Contributions in the form of articles, letters or news snippets will be welcomed by the Editor. Please email (preferred) [collettgh@talktalk.net](mailto:collettgh@talktalk.net) or post to: Graham Collett (YRC 7), 16 Wilstrop Farm Rd Copmanthorpe York YO23 3RY by Friday 30 October.



York Station, showing the open views from the footbridge  
(photo Graham Collett)

## York Station Barriers Rejected by Council – Campaigners Celebrate Success!

by Graham Collett

York rail users are over the moon following a decision by a City of York Council Planning Committee to reject proposals by National Express East Coast (NE EC) to install automatic ticket barriers at York station. The decision was based on the serious adverse effect that these barriers would have had on the historic fabric of the station - which is listed Grade II. The barriers and their associated steel and glass fencing would have had the effect of partitioning off part of the station concourse, preventing access to station facilities for non-ticket holders and blocking a direct pedestrian and cycle route to the Leeman Road area and the National Railway Museum.

This hard fought battle, led by the lobby group Campaign Against Barriers at York Station, has united rail users with those who care about the station. As with the Sheffield barriers scheme, through access across the station to bus routes, taxis, the station car parks and the City Centre would have been lost. It is not known yet whether NE EC will lodge an appeal against the decision.

## Corus (Scunthorpe) Visit Report

by Phil Watson

Twelve members made the long trip to North Lincolnshire for our June tour of the steelworks site. Despite my fully loaded car running very late, and only just scraping in for the special train, Nina shepherded the members arriving at Scunthorpe Station for the short walk to Corus. The trip was wonderful with 15 miles of internal lines being covered, giving a superb insight to how the works functions and we had an excellent commentary throughout. Members have expressed an interest in returning next year to do the shorter Brake Van tour. A little outside our Branch area, but well worth the effort. Our thanks to the Appleby-Frodingham Railway Preservation Society [www.afrps.co.uk](http://www.afrps.co.uk) (and to Phil for organising such an interesting trip - Ed)

## Freight News by Tony Ross

The CEMEX Sheffield rail siding is to see a further increase in aggregates traffic from Peak Forest - see [http://www.cemex.co.uk/ac/ac\\_pr\\_20090623.asp](http://www.cemex.co.uk/ac/ac_pr_20090623.asp). The sidings are to the east of the ex-Midland main line into Sheffield, accessed from Mill Race Junction, just before and to the north of the old Attercliffe Road station. The sidings are also used for metals traffic to Liverpool. The Yorkshire & Humber Rail Utilisation Study indicates that Attercliffe currently handles 8 trains per week.

In July, GB Railfreight joined EWS (DBSchenker) and Freightliner in hauling power station coal trains originating in Hull Docks.

## Woodhead back on the Westminster Agenda by Andrew Oldfield and Graham Collett

Sheffield Hillsborough MP Angela Smith put a strong case for reopening the Woodhead route to business and regional development representatives at a meeting held in June. She indicated that there is political support at Westminster for this scheme, which has also been backed by the regional development organisation *The Northern Way*. The Woodhead route was included in a report issued in June by the Association of Train Operating Companies recommending a number of lines and stations for reopening

[http://www.atoc.org/general/ConnectingCommunitiesReport\\_S10.pdf](http://www.atoc.org/general/ConnectingCommunitiesReport_S10.pdf) (our thanks to the Sheffield Star [www.thestar.co.uk](http://www.thestar.co.uk))

## Branch Key Contacts

**Chairman: Chris Hyomes**

12 Monument Lane

Pontefract WF8 2BE

Email: [chrishyomes@supanet.com](mailto:chrishyomes@supanet.com)
**Secretary: Nina Smith**

14 Bank Terrace Hebden Bridge

HX7 6BU

**Press Officer/ Parliamentary**
**Liaison Officer: Peter Yates**

26 All Saints View Woodlesford

Leeds LS26 8NG

Email: [petyates53@uk2.net](mailto:petyates53@uk2.net)
**Treasurer: Andrew Oldfield**

14 Long Lane, Worrall, Sheffield

S35 0AF

**Newsletter Editor &**
**Information Officer:**
**Graham Collett**

16 Wilstrop Farm Rd

Copmanthorpe York YO23 3RY

Email: [collettgh@talktalk.net](mailto:collettgh@talktalk.net)

please note new Email address)

**Membership Secretary and  
Visits Organiser: Phil Watson**

8 Millfield Close, Wilberfoss, York

YO41 5PP

Email: [watson804@btinternet.com](mailto:watson804@btinternet.com)
**Yorkshire Rail Campaigner on the  
Web**
<http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=Yorkshire%20Branch>

## Chairman's Column by Chris Hyomes

Within the next ten months, there will be a General Election and irrespective of which political party comes to power, the inevitable public spending cuts will follow. Hopefully, as we start to move out of recession, more goods will start to be moved around the country and more people will start to travel again as unemployment falls. It is therefore essential that our public transport infrastructure is not penalised in any spending cuts.

After the recent expenses scandal, I'm sure our sitting and prospective MPs will be only too keen to listen to their constituents' views, so I urge you all to write to them and speak to them personally, to make them aware of the importance of your local rail service. If you have any issues with your local station ask them to accompany you and make sure they see the problems at first hand.

At our last branch meeting in Selby it was decided to update our Branch Strategy Document, published a number of years ago by our previous Branch Chairman Peter Davies. This will form the basis of our next meeting in Harrogate. If you have any ideas or suggestions for the Strategy, please contact me in advance of the meeting.

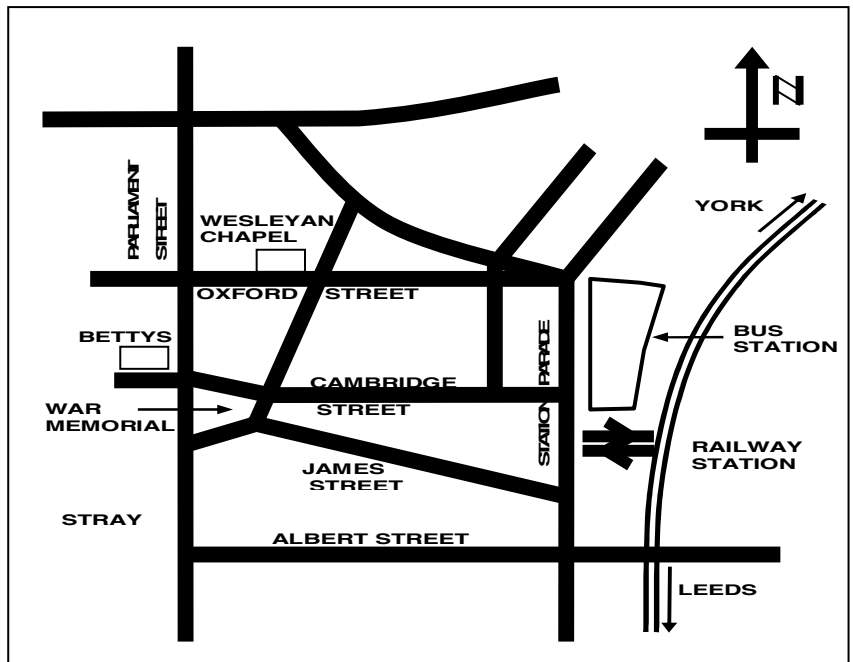
## Wakefield Kirkgate: First the Bad News, then the Good News! by Graham Collett & Chris Hyomes

Despite the assurances given earlier in the year, and our Chairman's strongest efforts (well done Chris), there was no sign of action by late July. This prompted a personal visit by the Transport Secretary, Lord Adonis. Following his visit (which also included Pontefract Monkhill) he wrote to Iain Coucher, Chief Executive of Network Rail. His hard-hitting letter included the following "Kirkgate is probably the worst 'medium-large' station I have seen in Britain. It is a largely derelict, grade II listed building, which brings shame to Britain's railway. It is unwelcoming, bleak and inaccessible. However, a recent grant of £300,000 for improved security systems .... has still not been spent.... Similarly, the shuttle bus service to and from the town centre has been discontinued ... because the car park has become dangerous and requires resurfacing.". Then, just as things seemed to get even worse (a passenger was attacked by youths with baseball bats only days after his letter was published), a miracle happened! On 10 August, Metro announced that car park repairs (allowing the return of the free city shuttle bus) were to commence that week. "This is just the first stage in making the station more accessible and more attractive," said Metro Chairman Cllr Ryk Downes. Included in the same announcement <http://www.wymetro.com/news/releases/WakefieldKirkgateCarParkrefurbishment.htm> are details of a 2 year improvement scheme drawn up by a steering group, comprising Metro, Network Rail, Northern Rail, Wakefield Council and the Railway Heritage Trust. **(continued on page 4)**

**Railfuture Yorkshire  
Autumn Meeting:  
Saturday 19th  
September 2009  
Wesleyan Chapel,  
Oxford Street  
Harrogate  
starting at 1pm**

**Come along to put your  
views on the Branch's  
Future Strategy.**

**Everyone welcome.**



### Selby Rail Users Update by Reg French

The long awaited improvements to make the station entrance DDA compliant started in July. The difficulty of crowding on the 16.38 commuter service from Leeds has been partially resolved by First TransPennine now using a class 185 train. The once excellent service provided by Hull Trains has been in difficulties due to problems with the class 180 Adelante Units transferred from First Great Western. Hull Trains, with Grand Central and National Express East Coast (who have all now acquired some of these units) are jointly trying to seek a solution to these problems.

### Minsters Rail Campaign News by George McManus

**The Minsters Rail Campaign** [www.minstersrail.org.uk](http://www.minstersrail.org.uk) put the case for reinstating the York – Beverley – Hull rail link directly to Lord Adonis when they met him in Hull in May. For more details see the Hull Daily Mail report <http://www.thisishullandeastriding.co.uk/news/Minister-hears-case-Beverley-Hull-rail-link/article-935708-detail/article.html> Campaigners also had a fantastic day in Market Weighton on Giant Bradley Day, carrying 500 passengers on their mini train up and down the High St and attracting a number of new members. A report from East Riding of Yorkshire Council supporting the campaign has gone to the Local Government Association under the Sustainable Communities Act consultation. This also attracted publicity in the Hull Daily Mail <http://www.thisishullandeastriding.co.uk/news/Rail-campaigners-right-track/article-1120270-detail/article.html>

### Wakefield Kirkgate (continued from page 3)

The plans include enhanced CCTV coverage, the removal of the spine wall and redundant canopies on platform 2, and refurbishment of the platform 1 canopy. Other planned improvements include refurbishment of the subway and lighting, and refurbishment of the lobby area. Metro is also seeking funding from the Department for Transport's *Access for All* programme for modern customer information screens. A longer term Vision for Kirkgate includes a new glazed footbridge with staircases and lifts linking all platforms, which would replace the subway. This enhanced vision also includes a staffed booking office and retail facility, a multi-modal interchange with a car park, taxi and drop off point and cycle storage facility.

We strongly welcome such long overdue improvements. Kirkgate has a much improved train service – the station now needs to live up to this! (our thanks to the Wakefield Express [www.wakefieldexpress.co.uk](http://www.wakefieldexpress.co.uk) and Metro [www.wymetro.com](http://www.wymetro.com))