

# Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

Number 50 – September 2020

## *Yorkshire* **railfuture**

President: Alan Whitehouse: Vice-Presidents: Mike Crowhurst, Alan Williams & Chris Hyomes

### 50 Not Out!

By Nina Smith



*Class 195 Calder Valley Blackpool North to York, taken from Bankhouse Wood, Copley, approaching Bank House Tunnel. Photo by JSW. See HADRAG Report on page 4.*



This is the 50<sup>th</sup> issue of the Yorkshire Rail Campaigner, and an enormous debt of gratitude is owed to its two editors. Graham Collett from 2008 to 2013, and Mark Parry subsequently. There is a lot of work in producing an issue of the Yorkshire Rail Campaigner and Graham and Mark have done a

tremendous job. So many thanks to Graham and Mark. All issues are available on the Railfuture website <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/branches/index.php?dashboard=Yorkshire&group=MAG>

I was surprised to read in the first issue (May 2008) that I had been elected as Yorkshire Branch Secretary. I really did not realise it was that long ago; I've also checked when I became Chair, and that was in March 2014. Again, how time flies when you are busy!

Graham and I are the only two branch officers from then who are still on the committee, although the then Chairman, Chris Hyomes, is now a Branch Vice president, and a Railfuture Board Member; Chris had been elected Chair that year to replace Peter Davies. The other officers then were Andrew Oldfield (who was Treasurer for many years), Phil Watson and Peter Yates.

**[Online Yorkshire branch meeting 26 September 2020 at 13:00](#)**

**KEY ISSUES FACING THE RAILWAY IN THE PRESENT CLIMATE.**

*Speaker, Peter Kennan, chair of Sheffield Chamber of Commerce's Transport Forum and board member of Transport for the North. Peter is also on the board of the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership with particular reference to the transport portfolio. Members online will be emailed the joining details.*

It has not been possible to hold any Branch meetings since the Annual General Meeting in January and, realistically, we may not be able to hold physical branch meetings until a vaccine against Covid is available and widely distributed. We are experimenting with having online speaker meetings (Webinars), with the first one planned for September 26<sup>th</sup> – details elsewhere. We are also investigating whether we can hold online Branch meetings, but there are technical details to be overcome, not the least being that I need to upgrade to a new computer!

### **THE BIG ISSUES – COVID 19, AND THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

At present (early August), train passenger numbers are well down because of the pandemic, but rising slowly. At around 25% nationally compared to early March (and probably lower in Yorkshire), numbers are nevertheless five times greater than at the lowest ebb of the lockdown. Anecdotally, it is particularly younger people who are returning to the trains. COVID19 is a strange and nasty virus. Some people have it without symptoms. Others die, or are scarred for life. Older people are more at risk of serious outcomes. Younger people are more blasé. The Train Operating Companies (TOCs) seem to be doing a very good job of rigorous cleaning and of trying to make train travel as low risk as possible, but TOCs seem to be behaving differently in their enforcement (or lack of it) of the wearing of face coverings. This needs to be stepped up. If conductors can't do it, then there need to be blitzes by British Transport Police and by TOC security personnel. People travelling without masks are putting other passengers' health at greater risk. Some well publicized fines might be necessary to achieve behaviour change.

Some previous passenger journeys have been lost for ever, due to unemployment, changes in working patterns and, perhaps, lifestyle changes affecting leisure travel. Passenger numbers will likely gradually rise, but will remain depressed until a vaccine is widely available. A vaccine is the only thing likely to have a major positive impact on people's confidence, especially older people and those with health conditions. Nevertheless, it is vital that the Government continues to support the railway in a way that guarantees its longer term survival, not least because there is an even bigger problem facing society. That challenge is the climate emergency. Whereas Covid 19 has had devastating consequences for a relatively small percentage of the population, and continues to do so, climate change is affecting, and will affect not just everyone on the planet, but the precious ecosystem on which all life on earth depends. The climate challenge requires a move to a very low carbon, if not a zero carbon, economy. The Department of Transport is currently consulting on the decarbonisation of transport, and the Branch Chair and secretary are both members of Zero Carbon Yorkshire which is campaigning on this issue.

We have to achieve a significant shift from private car and lorry journeys to buses, trams and trains, and it has to be a 'clean' railway. A massive electrification programme, to cover all freight and most passenger routes, is required, as is increased network capacity with route upgrades and new/reopened lines, as well as more local stations, full seven day timetables, lower fares and smart ticketing, and proper connectivity and integration between different modes of transport. Plus metro/tram systems in all conurbations, starting with Leeds/West Yorkshire.

This mass electrification programme needs to start now, and to be ongoing so as to keep skilled and experienced teams together. The top priorities affecting Yorkshire are to complete the electrification of the midland Main Line to Sheffield and onward to South Kirby Junction (for Leeds), and the full electrification of the main trans Pennine route via Huddersfield. These must be immediately followed by the implementation of the Electrification Task Force report (2015), which in our region should start with the full electrification of all the Calder Valley routes centred on Hebden Bridge, and the Harrogate Line.

### **TRANS PENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE.**

Regarding the Huddersfield line, in late July the Secretary of State announced £589million to start the Trans Pennine Route Upgrade (TPRU), but this is only some 20% of the estimated cost of the full project and he didn't specify how the money is to be spent. Listening to interviews with Grant Shapps, and reading his Yorkshire Post article, I do believe he is committed to the full project but has yet to convince the Treasury to release the full cost. As I said on my interviews with ITV Calendar and BBC Radio York, "Come on Rishi, release the rest of the funding" (<https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Railfuture+in+the+news>) This upgrade is vital, to reduce carbon emissions and to enable a better service for local stations, as well as speeding up Leeds- Manchester times. This Victorian railway must be made fit for the second quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **WILLIAMS AND THE NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE COMMISSION**

The most significant short term event in the next few months will be what happens after the current period of 2% management contracts ends in October. Rumours suggest the current situation will continue, but with a lower management fee. In the longer term, we await the long delayed publication of the Williams Review, which is likely to recommend replacing franchises with contracts, in other words not dissimilar to the current Covid era situation. The other major report due this year, in December, is the report of the National Infrastructure Commission into the rail infrastructure needs of the Midlands and the North. This is high level and concentrating on major routes and connectivity,

rather than more local issues such as stations. STOP PRESS: a very worrying news report and an opinion piece by Wolmar in RAIL 911 (12 August 2020) suggests that the Treasury wants to reduce operational funding for the railway if there is a second lockdown or if passengers do not return in sufficient numbers, with plans to mothball some branch lines (none in Yorkshire mentioned) and reduce some service levels. It is important that local government, Local Enterprise Partnerships, rail and environmental campaigners pressure government and MPs to try to stop such a short-sighted scenario. The pandemic will not last for ever and, I repeat, shifting people and freight from roads to railways is critical if we are to halt global warming and keep our planet habitable and free from possible environmentally induced insurrections and conflicts.

#### **FREIGHT TRANSPORT.**

Getting more freight off the roads and out of the air, and onto trains (and barges and coastal shipping) is vital not only to reduce the carbon footprint of freight, but also to make our motorways less congested and safer. The value of rail freight was shown during the lockdown period, when trains were delivering some essential supplies quicker and more efficiently than road transport. The core rail freight network must be electrified and expanded, not least with a dedicated new W12 Gauge freight route across the Pennines (Woodhead?), and with many more sub regional container transfer depot depots established. All new distribution hubs should be rail served, and rail connections should be made to existing distribution hubs that are located alongside railways but are connected to them.



YRC reaches 50 – A Look Back to No 1 (May 2008)  
By Graham Collett Vice-Chair

Prior to starting the Yorkshire Rail Campaigner, all we had was a basic photocopied page or two to inform members of our campaigning and Branch events, and I was determined that the Branch should do better. So, at the Branch Annual General Meeting in March 2008, I offered to become newsletter editor, and managed to persuade Phil Watson to replace me as Membership Secretary. The Annual General Meeting had produced a lot of other changes to officers, including the appointment of Chris Hyomes as Chair (our former Secretary), with his place as Secretary filled by Nina Smith.

What should we call the newsletter? I soon decided that the key word was campaigning and the name followed from this. The next task was to design a masthead and I am so grateful to Paul Colbeck (who later became our Membership Secretary and printer) for his help with this. It was a steep learning curve and I had major problems in aligning the text with the pictures! Fortunately, with my wife's expertise, it saved burning too much midnight oil.

The two biggest challenges were getting contributions on current rail campaigning issues and obtaining suitable illustrations to accompany the articles. Despite my best efforts at cajoling contributions, I still ended up writing a lot of the articles and sourcing most of the pictures, although a few members or Rail User Groups could be relied on for regular reports. One trick I learned early on from Ray King (Railwatch Editor) was to search for suitable photos from Creative Commons, which can be used for non-commercial purposes subject to acknowledging the source.

Forward to March 2013, we had reached issue No 20, and I felt it was time to take a break, given all my other voluntary commitments. Fortunately, Mark Parry was willing to step into the breach and he took over from issue 21, following the Annual General Meeting. He has done a great job since and it is a tribute to him that he has continued to edit the Yorkshire Rail Campaigner, despite his appointment as Chair of Action for Yorkshire Transport (successor to the Campaign for Better Transport West and North Yorkshire). Particular thanks are also due to Paul Colbeck and Andrew Dyson, for their efforts in producing such a high quality newsletter at a very attractive cost.

Now for the next 50 issues!

**Railfuture subscriptions start from £14 a year.** See: <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/join/> or contact our membership secretary Andrew Dyson, : [andrew.dyson@platform5.com](mailto:andrew.dyson@platform5.com). Let him know if you join online.

# We invited our affiliated Rail User Groups to summarise their achievements since the Yorkshire Rail Campaigner began in 2008.

**50<sup>th</sup>  
Edition**

**HADRAG – Halifax and District Rail Action Group**

Every railway should be a community railway. Stephen Waring, Chair of HADRAG and branch secretary, reflects on a stop-go past, the present crisis, and future hopes. (Stephen's photo is on the front page).

What should future railways do? How can our line serve its community? Even if we all get vaccinated against Covid, do we really want to go back to sardine-can commuting that made city-workers hate trains? Still campaigning in this unnerving time, the Halifax and District Rail Action Group looks out from the triangle of Brighouse, Halifax and Sowerby Bridge along a network of local and strategic routes.

In early 2008, as the first issue of Yorkshire Rail Campaigner took shape, our line was in crisis. It was the weather. A new hourly service Leeds-Brighouse-Hebden Bridge came to a halt after a mound of hillside slid onto the track. Repairs took weeks, but the trains resumed and were extended to Manchester later that year, a transformative addition to the Huddersfield-Bradford-Leeds service we'd celebrated in 2000. Brighouse's annual footfall (Office of Rail and Road figures) leapt 64% to 146,700 in one year, and approached 428,000 in 2016-17, up 392% over ten years. Sowerby Bridge and Mytholmroyd gained the 2008 new service but lost stops by Bradford trains. In May 2018 the two calls were added to York-Blackpool trains – but withdrawn 18 months later. Sowerby Bridge, like Brighouse, serves a catchment population of 20,000+ and holds second place on the Calder Valley line for percentage growth over ten years – behind Brighouse. HADRAG says all trains should stop at Sowerby Bridge.

Despite its share of landslips and flooding, our line is a godsend when there's trouble on the A646 valley road below. Climate crisis means future transport must be zero carbon. The March 2015 Northern Sparks report recommended an initial five-year electrification plan, 12 routes with our Calder Valley line top-ranked, ignored by government. Four Calder Valley Line user groups, and two Railfuture branches, launched the Electric Railway Charter campaign. We see the tide turning with the rail industry arguing for a rolling programme. Fast and frequent trains serving lots of stations require full electrification. Beware false promises: alternatives such as hydrogen might do for branch lines, but literally waste energy. In its submission to the National Infrastructure Commission, West Yorkshire Combined Authority calls for rolling electrification (beyond planned schemes) "starting with the Calder Valley Line". They also demand early delivery of the Bradford-Leeds section of Northern Powerhouse Rail. A central Bradford station could be shared by NPR (Northern Powerhouse Rail) and Calder Valley services, removing the need for trains to reverse. HADRAG says a link to NPR in Bradford could cut at least 15 minutes off Calderdale-Leeds journeys. We also say (in our own National Infrastructure Commission submission) that if the new line is to go through Calderdale, Calderdale should have a station.

Less city-working will surely be a permanent legacy of Covid. People will go to the office again, but less often. We shall not mourn the mad rush-hour. But cities are attractive for education, health services, arts, music, nightlife, retail therapy, and more. So too are our beautiful valleys, towns and villages. Travel itself, travelling together, is a civilised and social impulse. Let's reinvent public transport as sociable transport. We must move cautiously, but we cannot forever live by Zoom.

So, we need the promises that the doomed Northern franchise failed to deliver. Our line had the first trains round the Ordsall chord in December 2017. This "stepping-stone to an Airport service" lasted just six months. But this is not, mainly, about the Airport. We shall, again, want to access work, education and leisure on the south side of the city.

Grant Shapps's £589M for the TransPennine route upgrade is welcome. Capacity benefits from 4-tracking Huddersfield-Dewsbury will help the Elland and Brighouse line. Proposed Elland station is approaching full business case and should open by the end of 2022 with an impressive package of local active-travel links. More trains will be needed on the line. Lack of clear decision limits optimism. £10M for further development on Manchester's Castlefield corridor means considering options. There was an option ready to go five years ago. We hope that Mr Shapps's Northern Transport Acceleration Council really will add kinetic energy to all this.

Railways are supported by the whole community through the tax system. Railways should serve the whole community. Does every train need to go to the big city? With our Calder Valley trains we can avoid the polluted and congested A646. And we like ideas such as a service from Calderdale and Kirklees to York via Wakefield and Castleford using existing lines, with benefits across Yorkshire. After Covid, we want sociable, zero-carbon, efficient transport that supports the widest human wellbeing. Perhaps every railway should be a community railway.

**50<sup>th</sup>  
Edition**

## Harrogate Line Supporters' Group



*Brian Dunsby welcomes the first AZUMA Train into Harrogate with David Horne, LNER Managing Director, on his right. Photo by Perlex Associates.*

Brian Dunsby OBE, has provided the following extract from the Group's nomination for the Railfuture Best Campaign and Best Campaigner Award. This competition has sadly been delayed by a year because of the Covid 19 virus.

Harrogate Line Supporters Group (HLSG) has campaigned tirelessly for improvements to the rail services from Harrogate. This has covered both the long distance services to London and the local Northern Rail services between Leeds and York via Harrogate.

As a town reliant on the tourist trade, strong links to the rest of the country are vital. Major event organisers have been preferring venues with better connectivity such as Birmingham and Manchester.

Local residents and business people have had to travel to Leeds or York in order to catch a direct service to London. But interrupting the journey is time wasting and off-putting for potential visitors to Harrogate.

HLSG has had three key purposes:

1. To increase the frequency of **direct services between London and Harrogate**, ultimately achieving a two-hourly service in each direction, seven days a week.
2. To improve services on the **Leeds-York-Harrogate line**, increasing frequency, removing the dated Pacer trains and introducing more modern trains.
3. To introduce new stations on the Harrogate Line near Leeds-Bradford Airport and Flaxby.

In the last year, there have been major developments in all three campaigns.

1. LNER began six trains a day each way between Harrogate and London Kings Cross as part of their East Coast Mainline franchise. This created a two-hourly service!
2. Northern Railways has introduced a third train each hour each way between Harrogate and Leeds, running express with only two stops.

3. Northern Railways has acquired Class 170 Turbostar trains from Scotrail, refurbished them and put them into service between Leeds, Harrogate and York, phasing out the old Class 142 Pacers.
4. North Yorkshire County Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership have agreed to fund a scheme to double the frequency of trains between Harrogate and York from once an hour up to twice an hour every day.
5. Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Combined Authority have proposed to build a new station on the Harrogate-Leeds line alongside Leeds Bradford Airport to be called LBA Parkway.

The benefit of these achievements to Harrogate is hard to over-state. A determined team of volunteers has been able to persuade rail operators to upgrade the accessibility of our conference and tourist town, helping it to thrive rather than decline.



HPSRUA Huddersfield, Penistone,  
Sheffield Rail Users' Association

The Chair, Ian Stewart, has provided this summary.

Our achievements since 2008 are:

1. The introduction of a clock face timetable;
2. A later last train which increased passenger numbers;
3. An all-day Sunday daytime service;
4. The provision of better waiting facilities on platform 2 at Huddersfield;
5. Improved acceptance from Train Operators and Passenger Transport Executives.

For the future we would like to see:

1. An earlier first train into Sheffield;
2. The return of the 22:15 departure from Huddersfield, which would fill the gap between the last two trains;
3. New and more robust infrastructure to improve timekeeping and allow for the introduction of a half-hourly service at peak time at first then throughout the day;
4. The opening of the direct route from Penistone to Sheffield to re-introduce rail services to the Upper Don Valley;
5. Three or four car trains to meet the passenger demand;
6. The electrification of the line or battery operation.



LASRUG Lancaster and Skipton Rail  
Users' Group

Hugh Turner sent us this update.

Over the years since 2008 LASRUG has welcomed various improvements to the Leeds-Lancaster-Morecambe train service. These have come about after nearly 30 years' struggle and largely through the efforts of the Community Rail Partnership, in which LASRUG is a very active participant. The number of trains has increased greatly in both the weekday and Sunday timetables and class 158 train units have replaced the Pacers and 150s. Connections at Carnforth with the Furness Line have improved greatly. Passenger numbers have steadily grown in response. Jointly with the Community Rail Partnership, LASRUG has produced much publicity material, including a series of guides to walks linking all the stations, and distributed it around the North of England; The Friends of Bentham Station have led the way in enhancing the station, which houses the Community Rail Partnership offices.



*Class 158 No.906 at Capernwray, between Wennington and Carnforth on the Bentham Line. Photo by Charlie Rouse.*

One of LASRUG’s longest standing objectives was achieved with the installation of a waiting shelter on the exposed down platform at Giggleswick. From our foundation we have sought and enjoyed a close working relationship with the successive train operators, from British Rail and the various private companies to the present state-owned “Operator of Last Resort”. We have also kept in touch with our neighbouring Rail User Groups.

Looking past the current Covid-19 crisis, our principal short term aspiration is for the arrival of a westbound train at Lancaster before 09:00 to complement the recent introduction of an eastbound service leaving Lancaster after 17:00.

We would also like to see an increase in the number of through services to and from Morecambe, particularly on Sundays, and upgraded provision for

train connections to the Isle of Man ferry at Heysham. In the longer term, aspirations for an increase in the frequency of the service will need to be justified by increases in patronage, and it may be that the projected Eden Project at Morecambe will be the trigger, for example, for additional services which are “limited stop”.



Pontefract Civic Society Rail Group

Dave Hogg has provided us with this update.

In 2010, after great effort and persistence from our then Chairman Peter Cookson, the Grand Central service from Bradford to Kings Cross, calling at Monkhill was introduced. Our next major improvement was the introduction of the Monkhill to Leeds service, via Tanshelf and Wakefield. This gave us two trains an hour to and from Leeds. Our next target was then achieved when Northern finally timetabled a late afternoon return service from York to Baghill. This made a daytrip to York a viable proposition, though the timetable has recently been meddled with, with the first train timed too early for leisure customers.

Earlier this year it was announced that Monkhill would be receiving the long overdue full disabled access scheme, full details are yet to be released.

Our short term aims, are for a useable Sunday service on the Baghill Line, and more of the Leeds to Monkhill trains to carry on through to Goole. We also aim to grow involvement and participation in the Station Friends Group we have recently started in partnership with Northern Rail. Also, we feel that the Huddersfield to Castleford service should run through to Pontefract, and then ultimately Doncaster via Askern, which is one of our long term aims. We have established close ties with the Askern Station Reopening Group.

Land is currently available adjacent to Monkhill, which would make an ideal site for a badly needed carpark extension. We are applying as much pressure as possible to make this happen.

Our other long term aim, is for an hourly service each way on the Baghill Line. We are sure that if this service was stabilised and promoted, it would be well used.

***Railfuture: Campaigning for better services over a bigger rail network.***



SADRUG – Selby and District Rail Users' Group

Terry French has provided us with this update.

**ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2008**

The Group has campaigned successfully for significant improvements to services for those using Selby, South Milford, Sherburn-in-Elmet, Church Fenton and Ulleskelf stations. In general, there is a much better timetable with more peak time, evening and weekend services. However, the Goole-Leeds line which calls at Hensall and Whitley Bridge has never been developed into a meaningful service, and the Sheffield-York route has only improved very slightly.

In 2012 a decision was made for TransPennine electrification from Manchester to Leeds to be extended to Selby. This followed a report from the Group's Secretary Reg French, when he and other representatives of the Group were invited to discuss the report with the local MP and the Transport Secretary.

The Group has called for better facilities at stations in the Selby District and some investment has been made but more is needed. Not all the work in Northern's Stations Improvement Plan has been delivered and the lack of parking is a problematic issue at stations. SADRUG has made contributions to Trans Pennine Express's annual Selby Station Travel Plan and has been consulted on the Selby Station Masterplan. We were pleased that our suggestion to encourage environmentally friendly access and integration of transport services was taken up and included in the Selby Station Gateway scheme. A major success for the Group was the decision to install lifts at Selby Station with money from the Access for All scheme and we are hopeful Network Rail will commence work soon. The Group had campaigned long and hard for over 10 years putting the case at many meetings with train operating companies, Network Rail, Councils and politicians all lobbied.

**ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

1. The completion of lifts at Selby Station;
2. Improved facilities at stations;
3. A second fast Hull-Manchester service every hour;
4. A regular service for Ulleskelf commuters to York and Leeds;
5. More services between Goole and Leeds;
6. Increased services between Sheffield and York via Pontefract;
7. Electrification from Manchester through to Hull and from Temple Hirst Junction to Selby;
8. Four tracking from Marsh Lane to Garforth, and we propose the 2 stations at Garforth are replaced by a new Garforth Station in between.



SELRAP – Skipton - East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership

Peter Bryson, Chair of SELRAP, provided us with this update.

After twenty years of vigorous campaigning, SELRAP is very pleased to announce that the government has recently confirmed that the 12 mile long new-build project for the Skipton to Colne line - the "Missing Link" - is now formally into the next "Develop Phase" of the Department for Transport's Rail Network Enhancement Process.



*Photo: Skipton Station by David Walsh.*

The scheme to be developed by the government will be for an extended passenger service from Yorkshire into Lancashire. The passenger services which currently terminate at Skipton will - and we must now add the words "hopefully in the very near future" - continue the 12 miles onto Colne, via one new station at Earby. This new route will give an all-new and quite-transformational 50 minute passenger service from Colne straight into the heart of West Yorkshire. In particular it will link the heart of East Lancashire directly to the key regional city station in central Leeds. This 50 minute journey time from Colne to Leeds will be a dramatic improvement over the current journey time, which today takes approximately two and a half hours - including the mile long walk across Burnley - to cover just 35 miles from Colne to Leeds. Furthermore, there is cross-party support for bringing these transformational passenger services into operation quickly. SELRAP believes that, given both the right technical support from the government and the necessary political willpower, that the new Skipton to Colne line could be operational by 2025/26

The other good news is that the Department for Transport have also recently confirmed that new-build section of Skipton to Colne will be "future-proofed" for more rail traffic. This means full double track throughout; passive provision for electrification and full gauging for future tall W12 freight trains. Both the government and Network Rail appear to have learnt from the mistakes of the recent past.

However, no decisions have yet been taken about any upgrades or much-needed modernisation to the dilapidated East Lancashire line running through Colne to Burnley Rose Grove and Accrington. The East Lancashire line now officially has the worst quality and most unreliable rail passenger services in the UK. It is such a notoriously appalling service that Pendle's local MP, who is also the rail minister, Andrew Stephenson, actually refuses to use the train service from his own local station!

The East Lancashire conurbation, comprising of the constituencies of Accrington, Burnley and Pendle, make up a very densely built conurbation of over a quarter of a million people. Therefore, as SELRAP pointed out to many MP's at a big meeting in Westminster held late last year, this makes it the same size as Milton Keynes. One has to ask if the residents of Milton Keynes would tolerate travelling their 35 miles to London on rattling old Pacers taking over two and a half hours! Accordingly, SELRAP is still working closely with the MP's from both political parties, to campaign to bring better rail services to all of East Lancashire. All the local MP's in these highly-deprived and very-marginalised constituencies have all been strongly supporting SELRAP's campaign to extend the new passenger service all the way through Brierfield, Nelson, central Burnley and onto Accrington.

Furthermore, the Department for Transport and Network Rail are still studying the key issue of routing trans-Pennine strategic freight: with the clear choice now being either via Skipton to Colne, or modernising one of the three existing, and already very congested, trans-Pennine rail routes. SELRAP continues to receive very strong support from Drax, Peel Ports and Associated British Ports, all of whom have made their views clear to the Department for Transport. SELRAP believes that the key issue to determine the freight routing will be that the well-publicised problems with congestion throughout central Manchester are now affecting the punctuality and reliability of rail services across the North. However, despite these well-published issues, elements within the traditional rail industry are actually still proposing to route more and longer freight trains through central Manchester! Both SELRAP and our supporters believe

that the obvious solution is to take freight trains out of central Manchester altogether, thus providing more paths for all of the existing passenger services into central Manchester to become both faster and more frequent.

To conclude, SELRAP is delighted that the government has decided to develop the Skipton to Colne proposal. We believe that it should form an important part of the government's levelling-up agenda and that therefore this project now needs to be mobilised quickly.

More details of this campaign are on SELRAP's new website [www.selrap.org](http://www.selrap.org). The prospectus gives details of the proposals. Also, our July 2020 At a Glance Newsletter is now available. We would ask all Railfuture's members to please "like" our Facebook campaign page.

## Dual Fuel Trial on Grand Central class 180

by Graham Collett

Grand Central (train operating company) are taking part in an 'in-service' demonstration of dual fuel operation – diesel plus Liquid Natural Gas (LNG). The project is being run by Grand Central and "G-volution" (who specialise in fuel savings), in conjunction with the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB). Richard McClean, Grand Central's Managing Director, described the project at a video meeting of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (North East Branch) in May. The Grand Central trial forms the second stage of a RSSB investigation into dual fuel operation. The first stage used a 2 car class 156 diesel unit, where 70% of the diesel was substituted by LNG, leading to 30% net fuel savings and carbon reduction of between 28 and 44%. Grand Central have fitted one vehicle in a 5 car Class 180 unit with two LNG (methane) tanks surrounding a diesel tank. Virtually no modifications to the engine were involved, only to the tank intake and fuel controller.

The actual trial will start once the current restrictions are lifted. Test results so far have shown fuel cost savings of around 20%, Carbon Dioxide savings of between 25 and 40% and particulate reductions of 50% plus. Engines also run cooler and the oil supply requires less attention, with the expectation of increased reliability and longer life. A dual fuel engine is also quieter. The projected payback period is less than five years. Biogas could be used rather than methane if required. There is an absence of rail standards for this type of operation, so a Common Safety Method has been used. This is complex and time consuming and involves a whole new concept for rail staff, who are naturally concerned about the crash worthiness of the vehicles and possible gas leaks. This is despite LNG already being used in road vehicles. The risk on rail vehicles is no higher, but different. The LNG is fed from a modular refuelling rig, delivered on a lorry. Integration of LNG fuelling facilities into depots and arranging the refuelling will be challenging. Crofton Depot will be used for the trial and Grand Central recognise that there is a constant need to engage all stakeholders.

The project fits with the UK Rail De-Carbonisation Challenge (the four Rs – Reduce, Reuse, Replace, Recycle). Grand Central plan to retain their Class 180s for a further 10 to 15 years and hope – subject to demonstrating the business case – to move all their units onto dual fuel. Whilst this does not offer any improvement in acceleration rates, journey times will reduce when the new East Coast Main Line timetable is introduced (expected December 2021). Their long-term preference is for a replacement electric train with dual fuel plus battery, that is tri-mode on an electric train. They see battery power as being acceptable for "last mile" operation for use at enclosed stations. A 125 mph tri-mode multiple unit is not yet available, but it may appear as part of the new trains for the East Midlands franchise.

There is ongoing research into other "future" low carbon fuels. A parallel project involves the modification of a Network Rail Class 73/9 electro-diesel locomotive to use Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and diesel. This showed less improvement than with LNG, but could be viable for the freight sector. The use of LNG or LPG has the advantage of moving the engines closer to the Euro6 emission standard. The eradication of 'methane slip' into the exhaust will help. The price of natural gas and LNG/LPG is set to fall, which will encourage consideration of these fuel types. But there are challenges. LNG has a lower energy density and could reduce the range that trains could cover between refuelling by 25% unless more tanks are fitted. This is balanced by the current solution minimising the time for vehicle changes. Hydrogen is also a possibility for non-mainlines, if electrification can't currently be justified, but will require considerable development; see 'Hydrogen – is it the fuel of the future for railways?' by Railfuture Vice President Paul Abell in the July issue of Rail Action <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display2357>

**Diary** Contact Mark Parry if you would like your meeting advertised here.

26 Sep 2020 13:00	Railfuture Yorkshire Branch Webinar – Speaker: Peter Kennan – see front page.
12 Oct 2020 19:30 – 21:30 16 Nov 2020 19:30 – 21:30	Action for Yorkshire Transport Rail Group online meetings – Contact Mark Parry for further details.
30 Oct 2020 10:45 – 12:30	Railfuture National Webinar – "Attracting Passengers Back to Rail". <a href="https://www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences/?show=orgs">https://www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences/?show=orgs</a>

Our next issue (**Yorkshire Rail Campaigner 51**) will be out in January 2021. Please email photos, news and feedback to: [Mark.Parry294@gmail.com](mailto:Mark.Parry294@gmail.com) to arrive by **Saturday 12 December 2020**. Alternatively, text or call 07941 642349. **Having your Yorkshire Rail Campaigner sent by email saves us time and money. Contact Andrew Dyson to request this.**

### Rail User Groups affiliated to Railfuture within the Yorkshire Branch

Aire Valley Rail Users' Group	<a href="http://www.avrug.org.uk">www.avrug.org.uk</a>
Askern Station, Friends of	Contact Graham Moss on <a href="mailto:graz.moss@sky.com">graz.moss@sky.com</a> or 07510 555722
Bradford Rail Users' Group	<a href="http://www.bradfordrail.com">www.bradfordrail.com</a>
Esk Valley	<a href="http://www.eskvalleyrailway.co.uk/evrdc.html">http://www.eskvalleyrailway.co.uk/evrdc.html</a>
Halifax and District Rail Action Group	<a href="http://www.hadrag.com">www.hadrag.com</a>
Harrogate Line Rail Users' Group	Email: <a href="mailto:hlrug@live.co.uk">hlrug@live.co.uk</a>
Harrogate Line Supporters' Group	<a href="http://www.harrogateline.org">www.harrogateline.org</a>
Hope Valley Rail Users' Group	<a href="http://www.hopevalleyrailway.org.uk">www.hopevalleyrailway.org.uk</a>
Huddersfield, Penistone and Sheffield Rail Users' Association	Email: <a href="mailto:hpsrua@btinternet.com">hpsrua@btinternet.com</a>
Hull and East Riding Rail Users' Association	
Lancaster and Skipton Rail Users' Group	<a href="http://www.lasrug.btck.co.uk">www.lasrug.btck.co.uk</a>
Minster Rail Campaign	<a href="http://www.minstersrail.com/">http://www.minstersrail.com/</a>
Pontefract Civic Society Rail Group	<a href="https://en-gb.facebook.com/PontefractRail/">https://en-gb.facebook.com/PontefractRail/</a>
Selby and District Rail Users' Group	<a href="http://www.selbytowncouncil.gov.uk/useful-links/selby-district-rail-users-group/">http://www.selbytowncouncil.gov.uk/useful-links/selby-district-rail-users-group/</a>
Settle-Carlisle Line, Friends of the	<a href="http://www.foscl.org.uk">www.foscl.org.uk</a>
Skipton-East Lancashire Railway Action Partnership	<a href="http://www.selrap.org.uk">www.selrap.org.uk</a>
Stalybridge to Huddersfield	Email: <a href="mailto:markashmore@yahoo.com">markashmore@yahoo.com</a>
Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Sustainable Transport Group	Email: <a href="mailto:Nina.Smith@railfuture.org.uk">Nina.Smith@railfuture.org.uk</a>
Yorkshire Coast Community Rail Partnership (Yorkshire Coast Wolds Coast Line)	<a href="http://www.yccrp.co.uk">www.yccrp.co.uk</a>

### Branch Committee and the small print

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