

Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

No 17 June 2012

railfuture *Yorkshire*

President: Gerald Egan Vice-President: Alan Whitehouse

The Next Northern/TransPennine Franchise – an Unmissable Opportunity!

by Graham Collett



Yorkshire needs new Class 172 units like these - already operating in the West Midlands (Photo: Hammersfan via Creative Commons Licence)

The next Northern/TransPennine franchise could be your only chance to make major changes for another 15 years.

It's time for Local Authorities, Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs), Local Economic Partnerships and, above all, Rail Users, to start thinking about what they want to see in the next franchise.

The DfT have just (Transport Extra 11th May 2012) approved an extension of the current Northern franchise to April 2014, making a combined franchise

starting from this date look much more likely. Transport Extra also confirms our thoughts on the timetable, with a prequalification notice likely to be issued to franchise bidders in December, followed by a formal invitation to tender next May. Franchise(s) award is/are expected in December 2013. This underlines the need for ideas to be submitted by this autumn.

DfT are currently consulting on devolving decision making on passenger rail services, with a range of options from the status quo to full devolution to Local Authorities and PTEs <http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-10/>, with a reply deadline of 28th June. On 23rd March, a 'Reforming the Railways' conference - devoted to looking at some of the longer term options for the management and ownership of Britain's railways - was held at the University of Huddersfield. The conference, at which Railfuture were represented by Nina Smith (Branch Vice-Chair) and your Editor, included a session on 'Devolving Rail to the Regions' * and some interesting new ideas drawing on approaches adopted in other countries. A brief report appears in the May edition of *Today's Railways* magazine (one of the conference sponsors). For more information, please contact Professor Paul Salveson paul.salveson@btinternet.com.

It looks very likely that some form of devolved organisation will take over, but irrespective of what this is, what do we want to see included in the new franchise?

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*A separate conference devoted to this topic was due to be held in Manchester on 17th May, attended by Railfuture National Officers.

TransPennine Express Proposed New 2014 Timetable

by Tony Ross and Terry French

The proposed new TransPennine (TPE) 2014 timetable is based on the availability of a number of Class 185 diesel units which will be released by the switch to electric operation of the Manchester to Scotland TPE services, using new electric trains which have only recently been ordered. These are expected to gradually replace the Class 185 units from the autumn of 2013, when this part of the NW Electrification Scheme is completed.

TPE's proposals (which have been on a very limited and time constrained circulation) involve introduction of the long-awaited 5th train per hour between Leeds and Manchester. However, this is proposed to operate from York, adding to the existing 3 TPE, 1 Cross-Country and 1 Northern train per hour between York and Leeds. Rail users in the Selby, Hull and East Riding areas feel that the extra TPE service should operate to and from Hull, rather than York, given the importance of the rail link to Leeds and Manchester for economic development of the area. A resolution to this effect was passed unanimously at the Branch AGM in March.

Representations have since been made to TPE, including by SADRUG, who were one of the consultees. In his response, Reg French, Secretary of SADRUG, said "...It is hoped further consideration can be given to the additional service from Manchester to York. Network Rail in its document *Serving Local Communities* had as a priority, this service to call at South Milford and Selby and possibly Hull.... Selby is forecast to be the fastest growing development area in Yorkshire and the Humber and South Milford is rapidly growing as a commuter belt for Leeds."

The next Northern/TransPennine Franchise (continued from Page 1)

Top of the list must be urgent replacement of the railbus type (aka Pacer) diesel units – now outdated and life expired. We also need some new units (not secondhand) to make a start on replacing the 1980s Class 150 diesel units. In both cases, something similar to the new Class 172 units which have been supplied to the West Midlands would do nicely!

The other priority must be upgrading of stations – especially those on suburban routes – to London Overground/Merseyrail standards, with heated waiting rooms, good lighting, clear signage, prominent timetable displays on all platforms and modern electronic departure indicators. Oh and at the larger stations how about clean toilets and a buffet that doesn't close at 4pm!



The modern London Overground station at Shepherds Bush

(Photo: Paul Colbeck)

The Branch has sent in its own views on these and the many other issues to be tackled, following consultation with members. The *Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Sustainable Transport Group* has also made a submission to DfT, outlining the key issues for rail users in the area from Walsden and Portsmouth through Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd, and Luddenden Foot to Sowerby Bridge and Copley (copies of both submissions are available from Nina Smith). Chris Hyomes, Branch Chairman, said "Everyone concerned needs to start thinking now about their aspirations for the next franchise. Don't miss the train!"

Transport Vision for York

Julian Sturdy (MP for York Outer) is planning a round-table event called *Transport Vision for York*. Whilst we understand that the focus of the session will be on road transport, we are hopeful that the role of rail will also be considered. Dave Wells, York representative for Minsters' Rail Campaign, has secured a place at the event, where he will also represent Railfuture. We hope to carry a report on this important event in the next issue.

Transport projects in York are to receive a share of a £28.5m five-year economic infrastructure fund being set up by the City Council. In addition to work on the park and ride services, bus priorities and smart ticketing, the fund is likely to pay for feasibility studies of a new interchange at the city's rail station and a new rail station at the former British Sugar factory site on the Harrogate line.

Wanted Urgently - A Deputy Editor for Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

With the expansion of the newsletter to 6 pages (and possibly 8 pages in future), help is urgently needed to collect material and edit it. Journalism and (ideally) desktop publishing experience is desirable, but not essential. Applications to the editor with brief details of previous experience and skills please.

Branch Key Contacts

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Branch Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/RailfutureYorkshire>

(NB you don't need to be a Facebook member to access this site)

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Chairman's Column by Chris Hyomes

When I joined Railfuture back in 1983, it was then known as the Railway Development Society (RDS) and although we may have changed names, for I believe the better, our basic aim is still that of the development of our rail network. For me, this means anything from the opening of a new station, to an electrification scheme.

So although not part of our national network, I was pleased to learn earlier this year that the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway www.embsayboltonabbeyrailway.org.uk are hoping to be running trains into Skipton within the next five years.

Heritage Railways if marketed properly (how many visitors to the Bronte Parsonage travel directly by train using the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway?) have a major role to play in helping to reducing our dependency on the car and helping local economies to grow.

Establishing the link from Skipton along the quarry line to Embsay had already been the subject of a feasibility study which had calculated it could cost between £1 million and £2 million and would generate economic benefits to Skipton and the area of almost £12 million over a ten-year period.

It is a pity that a study has not taken place into the combined benefits to Skipton and the surrounding area of re-opening the Skipton to Colne www.selrap.org.uk and Skipton to Bolton Abbey lines.

Skipton's local paper - the Craven Herald - claims it will open up the tourist hot spot of Bolton Abbey to the people of Leeds & Bradford, when in fact it will open it up to Yorkshire and beyond and with a re-opened

Skipton – Colne line, the benefits would be even greater.

While I have concentrated on a Heritage Railway, I would like to make our members aware of two more very active re-opening campaigns in the Yorkshire area. The *Minsters' Rail Campaign* <http://www.minstersrail.org.uk> and the *Don Valley Railway* <http://www.donvalleyrailway.org> Members of both groups are working extremely hard to achieve their aims.

Membership Matters by Paul Colbeck

We would like to offer a warm welcome to our latest members:

Mr John Fancourt of Halifax and the Minsters' Rail Campaign. Thank you for supporting us!

Also thank you to the eight members who have agreed to receive Railwatch via e-mail. The savings in postage will be re-invested into projects which will hopefully increase membership. Following agreement from National Office, we purchased enough stamps to cover all our mailings for the next year to beat the Post Office price increase, thus providing a further saving.

Railfuture Branch and National Events Diary

Saturday 16th June 2012: **Branch Meeting, Doncaster** – see page 4 for details

also **Railfuture Summer Conference, Golden Lion Hotel, Stirling** - details at:

<http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=Stirling+2012+Conference> or see Railwatch

Saturday 22nd September 2012: **Branch Meeting, Hebden Bridge Town Hall** – see YRC No 18 for details

Saturday 3rd November 2012: **Rail Users' Conference, Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham** – details at: <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences/> or see Railwatch

Railfuture Yorkshire Summer Meeting Saturday 16th June at 2pm with Guest Speaker Dr David Berman National Chairman Priory Place Methodist Church, Printing Office Street, Doncaster, DN1 1TR.

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?near=Priory+Pl,+Doncaster+DN1,+UK&f=1&layer=&ie=UTF8&om=1&msa=0&msid=105038020380085121844.00000112349e1edcb944d&hl=en&z=17>

Directions from Doncaster Station (with thanks to Geoff Wood):

"On leaving the station bear right and cross the car park between the yellow posts using the zebra crossing. Cross the dual carriageway using the pedestrian crossing lights. Walk to the end of the short street ahead of you passing the tattooist' (right) and the "Tut and Shive" pub (left). Cross the road ahead of you into the street opposite with the stone benches between Herbert Brown jeweller's and T.J.Hughes (former) store. Priory Place Methodist Church is a short distance along on the right hand side."

Beeching Centenary 27th March 2013

On the 27th March 1963, a report which struck fear into the hearts of rail users up and down the country was published. This report, by Dr Richard Beeching, proposed closure of much of the rail network and the withdrawal of passenger services from a very large number of stations.

On the 27th March next year, plans are being drawn up to commemorate the publication of the Beeching Report and to celebrate the lines which rail lobbyists managed to persuade the government to keep open and develop or to re-open.

We intend to produce a special YRC supplement with examples of lines in our Branch area which escaped the Beeching axe (despite being listed for closure) and of those which did close, but have since re-opened. Suggestions (preferably with the offer of a case study) would be very welcome.



(Photo: Paul Colbeck)

Minsters' Rail Campaign (MRC)

<http://www.minstersrail.org.uk>, with Railfuture support, took a stall at the annual Easter York Model Railway Exhibition. In addition to the large amount of interest our stall created, 23 new MRC members were recruited on the spot, many leaflets were given out and several Railfuture books were sold. Well done everyone concerned!

Press Date for September 2012 issue

Please email (preferred) or post material, news, feedback etc to:

Graham Collett (YRC 18), 16 Wilstrop Farm Rd Copmanthorpe York YO23 3RY collettg1@railfuture.org.uk to arrive by Saturday 28th July 2012.

Northern Hub – More pieces of the jigsaw

by Graham Collett

In his Budget Speech on 20 March, the Chancellor made the surprising announcement of £130 million of further investment in the initial stages of the Northern Hub scheme. This funding will be used to increase capacity on the Sheffield-Manchester line and increase line speeds on this line and the Manchester-Bradford via Rochdale and Halifax and Manchester-Preston via Bolton lines.

This means that Network Rail now has two-fifths of the £560m it needs for the project, with a decision on the rest of the funding due to be made by the government by July.

Our thanks to the Manchester Evening News

http://menmedia.co.uk/manchestereveningnews/news/business/s/1489084_chancellor-commits-130m-to-northern-hub-rail-network

Stop Press: Christian Wolmar, the well-known writer on rail issues, was appointed as our new President at the National AGM on 12th May. New Vice-Presidents are: Lord Andrew Adonis, Adrian Shooter CBE, Chris Green, Roger Ford, and Barry Doe. Congratulations to them all!

Transport Minister Plays Down Midland Main Line Electrification Scheme

Despite a recent report* commissioned by East Midlands Councils and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive showing that there is a very positive case for upgrading and electrifying the Midland Main Line (MML), the Rail Minister, Theresa Villiers described the scheme as “complex, challenging and expensive” in an adjournment debate in the House of Commons on 16th April. The debate was initiated by Nicky Morgan, MP for Loughborough and supported by 20 other MPs from the East Midlands and South Yorkshire. It called on the Government to give Network Rail the go-ahead to modernise and electrify the MML.

In addition to pressing for electrification of the route, campaigners and businesses are concerned about the lack of investment and its adverse effect on the economy of the Region. Simon Carr, of the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership, said “more money has been spent on improving car parks on the West Coast Main Line in the past five years than on the whole of the Midland.”

**The Case for Upgrading and Electrifying the Midland Main Line* - Arup November 2011
<http://www.emcouncils.gov.uk/write/Case-for-Upgrading-Electrifying-Midland-Main-Line251111.pdf>

Improving Capacity on the Penistone Line

by Peter Marshall

Huddersfield Penistone & Sheffield Rail Users Association (HPSRUA) has been assisting with a study by Kirklees and Barnsley Councils into the feasibility of improving capacity on the Penistone Line, following the collapse of the Tram-Train trial for the line. The study, published in March, considered the usage and present capacity constraints of the line. It proposed seven options to provide a half hourly service instead of the current hourly timetable.

Four were given serious analysis:

- (1) Divert the Sheffield to Leeds via Barnsley stopper to Huddersfield, stop the Sheffield-Leeds fast train at Darton, and run a new shuttle between Wakefield Kirkgate – Castleford – Leeds;
- 2) Run trains between Barnsley and Leeds, and Barnsley and Huddersfield which are Split/joined at Barnsley for the Barnsley-Sheffield section;
- (3) Insert an additional hourly train between Barnsley and Huddersfield;
- (4) Insert an additional hourly train between Sheffield and Huddersfield.

Only option 1 came close to the Department for Transport’s (DfT’s) requirement for Benefit/Cost returns of 2:1. The conclusion was that the line needs to continue to build traffic, currently at 1.3million passengers per annum and increasing at around 5per cent. This should be done with longer trains as recommended in the recent Northern RUS. Capital work to achieve this includes longer platforms at the West Yorkshire Metro end of the route including platform two at Huddersfield (itself costed at £1m). If growth continues, then the Benefit/Cost Return will be achieved in less than five years. HPSRUA will press for initial capacity improvements in the forthcoming franchise round especially longer trains and longer platforms.

Sherburn-in-Elmet Sunday Services

by Terry French

Following on from its success at increasing Monday to Saturday stops, Selby & District Rail Users (SADRUG) is hoping to persuade Northern Rail to provide Sherburn-in-Elmet with a Sunday service on the Hull-Selby-York line. Currently only two trains on the Sheffield-York service call here, and SADRUG has worked out several paths which would greatly enhance travelling opportunities for the people of this growing community. SADRUG is submitting its proposals to Northern Rail for their consideration.

Help shape transport in West Yorkshire

In April 2011, Metro published MyJourney West Yorkshire, a new 15-year Local Transport Plan, setting out its transport needs and ambitions to 2026. They are currently carrying out public consultation on five plans from 8 May – 2 July 2012, including RailPlan 7 – Metro’s plans for rail improvements over the next 15 years. For more information see www.wylytp.com/consultation.

The Important Role of our Rail User Groups

Rail User Groups are the eyes and ears of the rail user across the rail network. We are lucky to enjoy a particularly strong coverage of the rail lines in our Branch area, with more than 20 groups keeping a watch over the services and station facilities provided by the train operators and Network Rail and suggesting improvements to these where needed. Over half of these groups are affiliated to Railfuture Yorkshire, and we are very grateful to them for keeping us in touch with local developments.

On page 6, we have listed all the groups we are aware of, with websites and contact details if known (A = affiliated, L = lapsed). Please let us know of any groups we have omitted and of any corrections or updates to the details shown. We will publish an updated version in a later edition of YRC.

Directory of Rail User Groups in the Yorkshire Branch Area

Group Name	Website	Email Contact	
Aire Valley Rail Users' Group (AVRUG)	www.avrug.org.uk	chair@avrug.org.uk	A
Bradford Rail Users' Group (BRUG)	http://bradfordrail.com/	jamesvasey@hotmail.com	A
Bridlington-Filey-Scarborough Railway Line, Friends of the	?	?	L
Don Valley Railway	http://donvalleyrailway.org/	donvalleyrailway@hotmail.com	
Doncaster Rail Users' Group	?	?	
Halifax & District Rail Action Group (HADRAG)	?	js.waring@hotmail.co.uk	A
Harrogate Line Rail Users' Group (HLRUG)	?	hlrug@live.co.uk	A
Hope Valley Railway Users' Group	www.hopevalleyrail.org.uk		
Huddersfield, Penistone and Sheffield Rail Users' Association (HPSRUA)	?	hpsrua@btinternet.com	A
Hull and East Riding Rail Users' Association	www.hullrailusers.co.uk	info@hullrailusers.co.uk	A
Lancaster and Skipton Rail Users' Group	c/o http://www.leedslancastermorecambecrp.co.uk	?	A
Minsters' Rail Campaign	www.minstersrail.net	minstersrail@btinternet.com	A
Mytholmroyd Station Partnership	http://mytholmroydstation.wordpress.com/	myt.station@btinternet.com	
Penistone Line Partnership	www.southpenninesrail.co.uk		
Pontefract and District Rail Action Group	?	p.cookson@talktalk.net	
Selby and District Rail Users' Group	http://www.selbytowncouncil.gov.uk/ghost-page/selby-district-rail-users-group/	selbyrailusers@btinternet	A
Settle-Carlisle Line, Friends of the	http://www.foscl.org.uk/	contact via website	
Skipton-East Lancashire Railway Action Partnership (SELRAP)	www.selrap.org.uk	ashacks@btinternet.com	A
Slaithwaite & Marsden Action on Rail Transport (SMART)	http://www.smart-rail.co.uk/	info@smart-rail.co.uk	
Stalybridge to Huddersfield Rail Users' Group (SHRUG)	?	royce.franklin1@btinternet.com	
Wensleydale Railway Association	www.wensleydalerrailwayassociation.com	ruth.annison@gmail.com	
Wharfedale Rail Users' Group (WRUG)	www.wrug.ilkley.org	wrug@pandrmjohnson.plus.com	A
Woodhead Line Campaign, Reopen the	www.savethewoodheadtunnel.blogspot.com	reopenthewoodheadline@gmail.com	
Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Users' Group (YDPTUG)	www.dalesbus.org/ydptug.html	dalesbususers@btinternet.com	