

Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

No 12 March 2011

railfuture Yorkshire

President: Gerald Egan Vice-President: Alan Whitehouse

It's Official – our Trains are some of the Oldest on the Network

by Graham Collett



Two of Northern Rail's older diesel units (Class 144) pass at (much in need of TLC) Wakefield Kirkgate station (photo Paul Colbeck)

The latest figures from the Office of Rail Regulation underline our continuing concern over the age of the rolling stock used to run many of the trains across our Region. East Coast's stock averages nearly 25 years (with the HSTs soldiering on), while Northern's trains are almost 22 years old, with East Midlands not too far behind. Yet most of our fellow travellers on the former Southern Region routes benefit from nothing older than 14 years, while London Overground basks in just over 2 year old trains!

Northern and the other operators do a fantastic job of keeping their trains running, while improving their availability for service and their reliability, but they can't keep them going forever! Chris Hyomes, Branch Chair said "The government needs to be placing orders **now** for new trains for our Region, not just for London and the South East. It's time that the North had its fair share of the transport cake!"

| Train operating company | Average(Yrs) |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Arriva Trains Wales | 19.93 |
| c2c | 9.53 |
| Chiltern Railways | 15.38 |
| Cross Country | 12.10 |
| East Coast (1) | 24.47 |
| East Midlands Trains | 18.72 |
| First Capital Connect | 23.71 |
| First Great Western | 28.25 |
| First Scotrail | 18.50 |
| Gatwick Express | - |
| Island Line | 72.75 |
| London Midland | 10.60 |
| London Overground | 2.24 |
| Merseyrail | 31.75 |
| National Express East Anglia | 25.45 |
| Northern | 21.53 |
| Southeastern | 11.43 |
| Southern (2) | 11.55 |
| South West Trains | 13.81 |
| TransPennine Express | 4.75 |
| Virgin Trains | 7.80 |
| Total | 16.82 |

Notes:

1. was National Express East Coast & GNER

2. incl Gatwick Express from June 2008

Source: ORR Dec 2010
(2010-11 Q2 data)

Railfuture Branch and National Events Diary

Saturday 19th March: **Branch AGM and Lunch, Knottingley** with guest speaker Chris Hanks (Alliance Rail Holdings) – see supplement inside – **bookings deadline 14th March**

Saturday 7th May: **National AGM, at the Brighthelm Centre, Brighton** – details at <http://www.railfuture.org.uk> or see Railwatch

Saturday 18th June: **Branch Meeting at the Street Life Centre, Hull** – details in next newsletter

Saturday 9th July: **High Speed Rail Conference, Bletchley Park** - details at <http://www.railfuture.org.uk> or see Railwatch

Saturday 17th September: **Branch Meeting, Priory Place Methodist Church, Doncaster**



The Bradford Cross Rail Scheme, showing how the new link between the Interchange and Forster Square station could be fitted in between existing and planned developments in the city centre (with thanks to the Bradford Telegraph & Argus

www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk)

All Railfuture national press releases are now available on a new page on the Railfuture website at: <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=press+releases>

Campaign moves into top gear for Bradford Cross Rail by Graham Collett

Bradford Councillor John Pennington is pulling all the stops out to get support for the cross-Bradford link (featured in YRC 9) which would make the obvious and much needed connection between Forster Square and Interchange stations.

John gave us an informative and lively presentation on the scheme at our January meeting. He said that he had been talking to central government about this scheme and “they were not saying no”, because of its potential contribution to regional development.

He explained that 80% of the land needed was in public ownership and a new central station could be incorporated as part of the Westfield development. Only a mile of new track would be needed and the total cost of the scheme (estimated at around £120 to £140 million) was low compared with the economic and tourism benefits it would deliver.

James Vasey, Chairman of Bradford Rail Users Group <http://www.brug.org.uk>, pointed out how the scheme could help remove the pressure on Leeds, with its ever growing commuter demand and added “You get far more for your money by building new railways”.

Bradford Council’s Scrutiny Committee has agreed to form a task force to investigate the possibility of protecting the route between the Interchange and Forster Square following a packed meeting on Thursday 3rd February. **Well done John and James!**

New East Coast Timetable brings more frequent services and more Harrogate and Skipton through trains by Graham Collett

East Coast announced their new **Eureka** timetable on 13 February. It involves the biggest change on the East Coast route for 20 years with “more seats, more services, improved frequency and faster journeys” from 22nd May.

The key features for Yorkshire are:

- A train every 30 minutes between Leeds and London King’s Cross, with 65 services per weekday between West Yorkshire and the capital;
- 11 new non-stop services per day between York and London;
- A northbound through service from London to Harrogate (depart Kings Cross 1733/1735) on Mondays to Saturdays for the first time in 20 years
- A new through London service to and from Harrogate on Sunday evenings (1705 Kings Cross/1805 Harrogate)
- A new through London service to Skipton on Sunday evenings (1835 Kings Cross)

No more Grand Central trains from Pontefract?

Grand Central have applied to the Office of Rail Regulation to divert their Bradford services away from Pontefract Monkhill and substitute a call at Mirfield, saving 16 minutes on journey times. This is a blow to existing and potential rail users in the Pontefract and Knottingley area wishing to travel to London or Doncaster. If approved (the consultation closes on 28 February), the change would be introduced from the May 2011 timetable. Details at: http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/s22a_gc_2sa_executive_summary.pdf

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Chairman's Column by Chris Hyomes

Nine local transport schemes were given the go-ahead by Transport Secretary Philip Hammond on 4th February, after £45.5m (14%) of savings had been identified.

Once you have read through the announcement, you actually find that here in Yorkshire only one scheme has been given approval - Leeds Station Southern Access. Now correct me if I am wrong, but is improving access to a station where your train is likely to be late and certainly overcrowded a transport improvement? I don't think so.

Despite the tough economic climate over the past two years, rail patronage in Yorkshire continues to grow. And still there is no sign of relief for passengers in terms of extra rolling stock to ease overcrowding. While we continue to press for more carriages, we must not forget that **in a few years our current units will be older those they replaced in the early 80's!**

Railfuture Yorkshire coordinated the national response to Network Rail's Northern Route Utilisation Strategy. **We stated that we needed a radical, expansionist vision for the "normal" railway - that is a statement I am proud of because I believe it is what Railfuture stands for.** And it is why I am happy to support the campaign for a cross-Bradford rail link (see page 2) and I am working hard to revitalise the campaigns to reopen the Spenn Valley line and the Harrogate to Ripon route.

Finally I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at this year's AGM. I am pleased to announce that the cost of the lunch remains the same as last year, and in keeping with our expansionist vision our guest speaker will be Chris Hanks, Head of Development at Alliance Rail Holdings.

Station Adoption and Volunteer Scheme on the Penistone Line

Volunteer work on the Penistone Line (Huddersfield to Sheffield) has been given a boost by **East Peak Innovation Partnership (EPIP)**, who have provided £3500 for a part time volunteer coordinator to encourage station adoption and volunteer involvement between September 2010 and June 2011.

EPIP delivers a community-led social and economic rural development programme across rural communities in North Sheffield, West Barnsley, Denby Dale and Kirkburton and attracts funding from the European Union and UK Government.

Based on information and feedback from existing volunteers, the co-coordinator will be working on a pack of easy to use check sheets, information and contacts for volunteers and groups about how to plan and organise activity at stations while keeping themselves and station users safe. There will also be to guidance on how to deal with the local press.

More information from **Rowena Chantler, Community Rail Partnership Officer, South Pennines Rail Partnership** at: southpenninesrail@googlemail.com Tel: 07912-753817
<http://www.penline.co.uk>



Seamer Station: proposed for re-siting under “aspirational” proposals by Scarborough Council as part of the A64 Connectivity Study (photo Keith D, courtesy Wikimedia Commons)

Rail Boosts the East Riding Economy by David Walford

Despite the depressed economic situation, the Hull to Scarborough route attracted over 5% more passengers in all but one month through 2010.

Railways have always been the safest form of transport, while moving large numbers of people, at speed from town centre to city centre, (with a Beverley to Hull journey taking less than 15 minutes). With trains every 30 minutes, this essential rail route has continued to bring prosperity to our region, including many visitors to our shops, museums and coastal resorts. The positive impact rail travel has brought to our region’s economic well-being cannot be over stated. Thousands of tourists arrive from South and West Yorkshire to visit the coast and historic sites in Beverley and Hull. There are also many weekend visitors from the south, encouraged by attractive deals from Hull Trains, and all helping to fill hotel rooms and the many shopping facilities.

The expansion of **Hull Trains** has taken thousands of cars off the A1 and M1 everyday; **Transpennine Express** can significantly reduce congestion on the A63/M62 corridors; while all of **Northern Rail’s** routes assist local people to attend work, education and leisure activities, while again carrying the all important tourist to this region.

Seamer Station to be Re-sited?

Seamer Station could be relocated under proposals approved by Scarborough Council as part of the A64 Connectivity Study.

The study covers a number of recommendations, over the next 10 years – and beyond – and a copy of the final report will be sent to the Secretary of State for Transport, Philip Hammond MP, as well as MPs representing constituencies affected by the route.

Other changes proposed in the draft report include a new park and ride site to the north of the town, improved parking facilities at both Scarborough and Seamer railway stations, and improved public transport links from Scarborough town centre and major employment sites.

Both the relocation of Seamer Station and the proposed park and ride to the north were described by John Riby, the council’s head of technical services, as “aspirational” ideas which would rely on Network Rail and railway companies “to take that positive step”.

The report was initially approved by the council’s projects and partnerships scrutiny committee, before being presented to cabinet, and it is due to go to North Yorkshire and York Transport Members Board next month.

(Our thanks to the Scarborough Evening News <http://www.scarborougheveningnews.co.uk/>)

New MD for First Hull Trains

Railfuture welcomes Cath Bellamy (nee Proctor), who joined First Hull Trains as Managing Director on 2nd February. Cath has an excellent pedigree, having been MD of the highly successful Chiltern Trains until August 2007.

East Riding to East Anglia Special on 30th April

Railtourer are running a charter train to Norwich and Great Yarmouth from Bridlington with pick-ups through to Doncaster. For more information please contact **Railtourer** on 01482 659082 or see www.railtourer.co.uk

More Passengers using Coastal Rail Stations

The latest figures from the Office of Rail Regulation show increases of 3% at both Bridlington and Scarborough and a whopping 7% at Filey in 2009-10 – proof that the efforts of campaigners and train operators to promote services have paid off. Well done everyone!

Press Date for June 2011 issue

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

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