

Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

No 1

May 2008

railfuture Yorkshire

Tram-Trains to be tested on the Penistone Line

The tram-train, already well established in Europe and the United States, is finally coming to Britain and is to be trialed on the Penistone line. Tram-trains are so named because they can run on both main rail networks and on tram systems.

After much consideration (which included the Harrogate line), the Department for Transport (DfT) and Network Rail chose the Penistone line. It meets the criteria for the trial because it carries freight trains as well as passenger services for part of its route. It also gives the possibility of through running onto the Sheffield tram system,

Network Rail is investing £16 million in track improvements and alterations to stations and the DfT is contributing £9 million to fund the operation of the trial. Northern Rail will be operating the tram-train service and will be running a competitive tender to obtain the five vehicles needed for the pilot. Chris Hyomes, Branch Chairman, said "This is excellent news both for the Penistone line and for the local rail network. We very much hope that the pilot scheme is successful and the concept is adopted on many other routes."



A Combino diesel/electric Tram-Train is seen at Ilfeld station on the HSB metre-gauge line prior to joining the Nordhausen tram system in Germany

(photo: Mike Hodgson)

Forthcoming Railfuture Yorkshire Events

Sat June 21 Hull Streetlife Museum (2pm) : Branch Meeting incl. Minsters Rail Campaign Presentation (see enclosed flyer)

Mon June 30: Evening Visit to Drax Power Station (advance booking needed - see page 4)

Sat September 20 Ilkley: Branch Meeting (speaker to be announced—see next issue for details)

September/October: Visit to York IECC & Siemens Depot

Sat November 15th Stockmoor — tribute to James Towler

Selby Rail Users fight to keep Over-60s and Disabled Rail Concession by Reg French, Selby & District Rail Users Group

Selby & District Rail Users Group (SADRUG) is hotly contesting the controversial decision taken by Selby District Council to withdraw funding for Concessionary Rail Fares for the Elderly and Disabled from the seven Stations within the District. This has resulted in angry letters to the local press, and fury from organisations representing both the Disabled and the Elderly. SADRUG members met the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to request that further consideration be given to this issue. As we go to press, a decision is awaited.

Bold New Plan for Pontefract Monkhill Station by Peter Cookson



The Pontefract Rail Action Group, along with Pontefract Civic Society, has proposed a plan for Monkhill Station and the surrounding area which, if implemented, would transform public transport in Pontefract and bring far-reaching benefits to the Town.

The simple expedient of extending Station Road by means of a new bridge

over Monkhill Lane, to emerge on Ferrybridge Road at the former goods yard, would solve many problems simultaneously.

It would:

- a) Get rid of the sometimes threatening sense of isolation caused by the station being at the end of a cul-de-sac.
- b) Create a through route to enable Ferrybridge Road bus services to pass

the station and hence link road and rail.

c) Improve traffic circulation on the north-eastern side of Pontefract, which is set to get worse with the creation of a new road to service the Prince of Wales development site.

The urgent problem is that a proposed housing development for the goods yard site, if granted, could undermine the whole scheme unless some minor adjustment is made to integrate the two proposals. The determination of the housing scheme is imminent. This simple plan would bring immense benefit to the Town and the planners should not lose this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to solve much of Pontefract's transport and traffic problems.

The current, rather barren, landscape at Pontefract Monkhill is shown above (photo: Peter Cookson).

Stop Press:

The Ferrybridge Road housing scheme has been deferred pending an assessment of the Monkhill station scheme. This gives the Group a short time to put their case which they believe is overwhelming

Future Branch Visits

Plans for future Branch visits include York Signalling and Control Centre (IECC) and Siemens Depot (September/October), Neville Hill Depot and Gascoigne Wood. Details will be announced in the next issue. Please contact Phil Watson (contact details on pages 3 and 4) if you have any suggestions for future visits—particularly if you know a suitable contact and /or are able to help with the arrangements!

From the Editor

This is the first issue of our new look newsletter. I am still getting the hang of MS Publisher, so I hope the format meets with your approval!

All comments and contributions will be gratefully received, as will offers of help from any members with experience of desktop publishing software.

I will be particularly pleased to receive news of your rail campaigning activities, whether through your rail user group or as an individual. Have YOU managed to get an improved connection, a clearer information display or even an extra train? If so, we want to hear about it!

Please email (preferred) or post any material for the next issue (to be published in late August) **by Friday 18th July** to:

Graham Collett

Railfuture Yorkshire

16 Wilstrop Farm Rd Copmanthorpe York YO23 3RY

Email:

graham@collettgh.plus.com

All Change at the top following Branch AGM

Major changes in officers were approved at the Branch AGM in Huddersfield on 8th March.

Chris Hyomes takes over as Chairman, while Chris's place as Secretary has been filled by Nina Smith, a keen rail lobbyist from Hebden Bridge.

Phil Watson from Wilberfoss replaces Graham Collett as Membership Secretary. Graham is continuing to edit the Branch Annual Review and also takes on editorship of the Newsletter and (in due course) the Branch pages on the National Railfuture website: www.Railfuture.org.uk

Peter Yates was appointed as Press Officer and also takes over Stuart McNair's

role as Parliamentary Liaison Officer. All other postholders (including Stuart as Vice-Chair) remain unchanged.

Key Contacts

Chairman: Chris Hyomes

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Secretary: Nina Smith

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Chairman's Column by Chris Hyomes

Dear Member

We have been considering how to make our meetings more interesting and effective for both existing members and prospective new members. Here are my proposals:

- I would like us to be known as **Railfuture Yorkshire** & our meetings to be the Winter Meeting (January) Summer meeting (June) and Autumn meeting (September) with hopefully a guest speaker for at least two of the meetings
- The current method for informing members about the next meeting (i.e. agenda & minutes) to be replaced with a poster style notice that we can also use to mail out to prospective members, other like-minded organisations and the local media.
- Apologies for absence, minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising to be dropped from the agenda
- The Chairman's, Secretary's and Treasurer's reports to be grouped under Railfuture Yorkshire Report (which will also include a short Membership Secretary's Report)

This will be followed by the National Report, followed by a round up of User Group Reports (most of which will be written reports given out at the meeting), then the Guest Speaker, with time allowed at the end for open discussion.

I am also proposing dropping the business part of the meeting, on the basis that this will be largely handled by the Committee, who will in future meet 3 to 4 times a year.

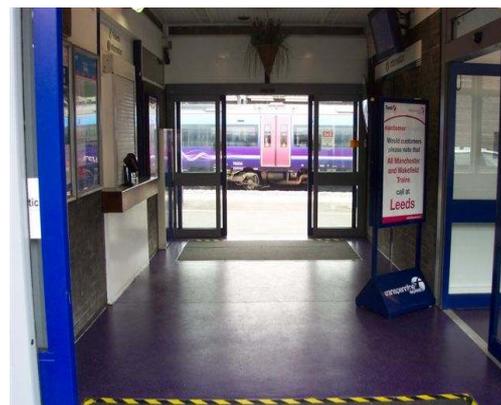
I intend to do a test run at our June 21st meeting and hope these proposals will be supported by the membership.

Other News from Selby and District Rail Users by Reg French

Train services have been generally reliable, although crowding is a big concern. The Secretary met the Managing Director of First TransPennine Express to put forward proposals to ease the position. £6750 has been promised from Councils towards a feasibility study into the possibility of a new station at Cliffe. A major refurbishment of Selby Station has been completed, including toilets with facilities

for the disabled. However, problems have not yet been resolved regarding access for the disabled at the entrance to the Station. Finally, we regret to report that Church Fenton Station has suffered major vandalism and as a result is now under continuing surveillance by BT Police.

View through the new Booking Hall at Selby Station (Photo: Reg French)



Branch Visit to Drax Power Station Monday 30th June 2008

Phil Watson, our enterprising new Membership Secretary, has arranged a special evening visit (1900 to 2100 approx) to Drax on Monday 30 June.

The party size is limited to 34 members, There is no charge for entry but you will need to bring photographic identification with you for security reasons. **Advance booking is essential** as we have to provide Drax with a full list of all those attending 2 weeks in advance of the visit.

For those travelling by rail, there will be a rare opportunity to ride one of the few scheduled passenger trains on the

Knottingley – Goole line to Snaith Station on the outward journey. The **only suitable train** leaves Leeds at 17:19 arriving Snaith at 18:12. We hope to organise lifts from Snaith to Drax and back to Knottingley after the visit. If you are coming by car, it will be appreciated if you are able to help with this.

A suitable return train leaves Knottingley at 21:18, arriving Leeds at 21:55.

These times are based on the summer (commencing 18 May) timetable. Please confirm times and return connections in case of last minute alterations.



Bookings by Monday 9th June please



Railfuture Yorkshire Visit to Drax 30 June

To: Phil Watson 8 Millfield Close, Wilberfoss, York YO41 5PP

Email: watson804@btinternet.com

I would like to book a place for this visit please.

I am happy to receive confirmation by email/ I enclose SAE for acknowledgement (please delete as appropriate).

I will be travelling by rail to Snaith and would like a lift/I will be driving to Drax and could offer a lift to _____ members (please delete/complete as appropriate).

I understand that I will need to bring photographic identification with me to gain admission.

Full Name:

Address:

Email:

Mobile Tel No (if available):

(in case of travel problems on the day)

(please either post this form to Phil or send the equivalent information to him by Email)