

Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

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railfuture *Yorkshire*

Selby Rail Users Celebrate Success – Discount on Senior and Disabled Railcards Agreed!

by Reg French and Graham Collett

Selby & District Rail Users Group are celebrating the successful conclusion to their uphill battle to win rail concessions for pensioners and disabled residents. Ever since free bus travel for the over-60s and the disabled was announced, the RUG's Officers have been pressing Selby District Council to offer some form of concession on rail travel. Finally on 6th April, their efforts paid off. Reg French, RUG Secretary said "I have reached agreement with Selby District Council on discounted Senior and Disabled Railcards. The Senior Railcard will be available at fourteen pounds and the Disabled Railcard at ten pounds, a saving of 40% on both."

There is more good news expected for Selby rail users. The RUG is party to an application to the Department for Transport for funding from the "Access for All" small stations scheme and this would mean additional parking for the disabled, improvements to access at the station entrance and a compliant ticket office window. Although the result of the application is not yet known, Reg French commented that "The outcome is looking promising. I am also negotiating with the Council re the Section 106 monies they have available." Once again it shows that persistence pays off!



The winning team (from left) Allan Davies (Chair of Selby & District RUG), Reg French (Secretary) and Gavin Harding (local rail user). photo Terry French

Also in this issue:

Branch Officers in Impromptu Meeting with Rail Minister (p2)

Good news for Wakefield Kirkgate and Pontefract Monkhill (p3)

Forthcoming Railfuture Yorkshire Events

Saturday 9th May 2009: **National AGM** at the Oxford Place Methodist Centre, Oxford Place Leeds from 11am (see Railwatch for full details)

Saturday 20th June 2009: Branch Meeting in Selby with Guest Speaker from TransPennine Express – see page 4 for details

Saturday 4th July 2009: **Summer Conference: 'The Role of the Independent Sector'** at County Hall Northallerton (see Railwatch for details) Bookings to Phil Watson (£20 incl lunch)

Saturday 19th September Branch Meeting in Harrogate

Press Date for August 2009 issue

Please email (preferred) or post material to: Graham Collett 16 Wilstrop Farm Rd Copmanthorpe York YO23 3RY graham@collettgh.plus.com by **Friday 26th June.**



**Electric-hauled DB semi-fast service in the Dresden area
September 2008 (photo Graham Collett)**

Midland Main Line Electrification – Why we need it NOW!

by Graham Lund

What would the benefits be?

The time worn reply includes quicker, quieter trains, which attract passengers away from their would-be status symbols. We now argue for reduced levels of particulates and a lower carbon footprint, all well and good.

Environment includes your immediate space, so can a stressful hold up in a traffic jam ever compete with working quietly on a laptop at over 100mph with a coffee at hand and trained staff available?

The route would extend from the present limit of electrification at Bedford through to Sheffield then on to Doncaster and Leeds giving better connections and journey opportunities between Midland and East Coast Main Lines. In times of disruption, electric trains could divert more readily to an alternative route.

There is such a large catchment area that this already successful line could attract substantial patronage given a good level of service. Fares should be competitive and tilting rolling stock would contribute to the Midland's renaissance. How many of the 3000+ road deaths per year could we prevent if we all had access to a fast, efficient rail service? Displaced rolling stock could be used to strengthen Cross-Country routes and develop new ones.

How to join the campaign? Write to Rt. Hon. Geoff Hoon MP Transport Secretary and send a copy to your own MP. In Yorkshire we have some influential MPs who can help us and themselves benefit from a modern rail service.

Branch Officers put the case for Electrification direct to the Transport Minister!

by Graham Collett

So there we were, the Chairman and I, standing on York Platform 3, when in came a train from Scotland and the Transport Minister stepped off and joined us for a chat on current rail issues! Well actually, it wasn't exactly like that but the meeting was definitely unscheduled. We spoke briefly with Lord Adonis, who indicated that the work on the case for the electrification of the Midland Main Line and Great Western routes was progressing and that he was hopeful that we would see both agreed. We were joined by a local group set up to campaign against the introduction of automatic barriers at York station and he listened and agreed to consider our joint concerns about access across the station and the need to protect the historic fabric (the station is a listed building). For more details see the Minister's Blog of his 5 day railover tour at

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/press/speechesstatements/speeches/railtourdiary> A similar gating plan for Sheffield station has provoked a strong local reaction and Lord Adonis indicated that he was aware of this.

PTAs becomes ITAs

by Chris Hyomes

South and West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authorities have become Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) and taken on new powers. The new organisations have broader responsibilities than the old PTAs and will be able to exert influence in areas which were previously beyond their remit, such as road safety and the environment. The changes have come about following the passing of the Local Transport Act. In South Yorkshire the name change is expected to make it easier to help bring about innovations in transport, such as the planned extension of concessionary bus fares in the Barnsley District.

Stop Press:

Haxby Station (York – Scarborough line) looks finally set to reopen in 2013 - after a 15 year battle!

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Chairman's Column by Chris Hyomes

Just over a month ago the Yorkshire Branch held its AGM and I was lucky enough (some may say unlucky) to be re-elected as Chairman for a second year.

However the Yorkshire Branch is not just the Chairman. It is the Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Treasurer and everyone else that contributes to the day to day running of the Branch, but above all, it is about YOU the members. So I would like to take this opportunity to invite all members, yes all 150 of you, to take a more active role in YOUR branch. We hold 3 meetings a year spread across Yorkshire, plus the AGM. We have now also started to produce a high quality newsletter which I hope you are enjoying. However, the newsletter is only as good as the contributions we receive. Both myself and our editor welcome contributions, suggestion and comments - good or bad.

Our Next Branch meeting is in Selby (see back page for details) with September's in Harrogate. Myself and all Branch officials look forward to seeing as many members as possible at our forthcoming meetings. In the meantime if any member has any comments, suggestions or questions on how the Branch is run please do not hesitate to contact me.

Encouraging News for Wakefield Kirkgate and Pontefract Monkhill by Graham Collett and Chris Hyomes

Chris Hyomes and our President Gerald Egan, attended a meeting with Wakefield and Normanton Councillors, Metro representatives and the Pontefract & District Rail Action Group on 20th March. Chris reports that "the good news for Wakefield Kirkgate is that any day now Metro will be unveiling their plans for station improvements. At Pontefract Monkhill we are to see an enlarged car park and there is hope that the current access road will be extended over Monkhill Lane and back out on to Knottingley Road, enabling buses to serve the station." These developments would seem to be linked to the new Grand Northern service from Bradford to Kings Cross which has recently been given the go-ahead. Many of our readers will say these are "not before time" in view of the poor reputation which Wakefield Kirkgate has developed. This followed a particularly nasty rape at the station, prompting the Wakefield Express to run a S.O.S. (Staff Our Station) campaign to make the station safe for passengers. Feelings were running high, with 3000 people signing the newspaper's petition by 20th March! <http://www.wakefieldexpress.co.uk>

Re-openings – Tell us the most deserving cases!

As there are indications that re-openings may at last be moving up the government's agenda, the Branch is compiling a list of routes and stations which would justify consideration for re-opening. If you have any suggestions (ideally supported by facts and figures on population growth and potential usage) please email or post them to Chris Hyomes as soon as possible.

Railfuture Yorkshire Summer Meeting: Community Centre, Scott Road, Selby Saturday 20th June 2009 starting at 2pm



Guest Speaker from TransPennine Express

Everyone welcome

To reach the Community Centre: Turn left out of the station and the road bends right, up to the main road. Bear right towards the Abbey which should be in full view. Turn left in front of the Abbey which takes you into Gowthorpe the main street through town. After about a quarter of a mile turn right at the junction into Scott Road. Straight on at the roundabout (Filderstadt Circle) and the Community Centre will soon appear on your right.

Visit to Corus Steelworks Scunthorpe Sat 6th June 2009



The Appleby Frodingham Railway Preservation Society (AFRPS)

<http://www.afrps.co.uk> run summer weekend rail tours from their excursion platform around the myriad of internal Lines at Corus Scunthorpe steelworks. They have unique access to the steelworks railway and we are booked on a standard tour which covers approximately 15 miles of internal Corus lines not normally open to the public and includes a visit to the loco shed. The visit will last approximately 2hr 30mins. There is no charge, but members are asked to make a donation to the AFPRS. The visit is open to members and friends and promises to be a very interesting.

The **meeting point** will be outside Scunthorpe Railway Station Main Entrance at 13.00hrs. If you are coming by car and have spare places we would be very grateful if you could meet us at the Station and offer a lift to members who are not so young and may find a 15 min walk hard going!

Advance bookings - on a strictly first come, first served basis – to Phil Watson by 28th May please.

Railfuture Yorkshire Tour of Corus Scunthorpe Steelworks Saturday 6th June 2009

To: Phil Watson 8 Millfield Close Wilberfoss York YO41 5PP Tel: 07718-758717 Email: watson804@btinternet.com

I would like to book ___ places for this tour please

NameContact Number

Email address

I am travelling by Car and can offer a lift to a member from Scunthorpe Station to Corus Steelworks Yes/No