

Rail North West



A Class 350 service sits in platform 3 at Oxenholme, perhaps saying how things could have been if the Windermere line had been electrified. Photo courtesy Lakes Line Rail Users Association/ Malcolm Conway

Timetable Chaos Caused by Electrification Delay and Cancellation

A week of cancellations and delays at the start of the new timetable on May 20th has led to calls by the Mayor of Manchester Andy Burnham and the Mayor of the Liverpool City Region, Steve Rotherham for Northern to be stripped of its franchise if improvements weren't made.

The disruption was caused primarily by delays to the Manchester – Preston electrification, and cancellation of Oxenholme to Windermere schemes,

meaning a large number of services needed re-planning to operate with available units, though insufficient drivers trained on units new to routes (e.g. electric trains to Blackpool North) has added to the issue.

The Lakes Line between Oxenholme and Windermere is feeling the effects of the failure to electrify that line. The replacement bi-mode trains aren't ready, but Northern has received some Class 158 diesels from Scotland. With a

top speed of 90mph, they are easier to timetable on the West Coast Main Line than the current Class 156 and 153 units. However, the new units will entail an extensive driver training programme, and their lack of availability is causing significant cancellations on this line in particular. Northern have apologised for the cancellations and said that the May timetable change should have seen an improvement, and that these should continue after that date.

Some of the proposed additional services that were in Northern's provisional timetable for May 2018 have not arrived either, notably the doubling of services from Greenbank and Macclesfield to Manchester, these are still hourly services rather than the twice per hour service promised. Some services that were operated by EMU's prior to the May timetable change, will be changing to diesel because of the incomplete Manchester to Preston electrification.

Following pressure from the two Mayors, Chris Grayling Secretary of State for Transport had a teleconference call with Northern leaders to see what could be done to improve services and said "...the level of disruption that passengers have experienced in the north is unacceptable.

"Improving the service for Northern customers is the number one performance priority for my department and we will work with the industry to keep disruption at a minimum."

"Northern's timetable recovery plan will tackle disruption to services following

the greatest timetable change for a generation as the government carries out the biggest modernisation of the rail network since Victorian times to improve services for passengers across the country."

Rail Minister Jo Johnson is leading discussions about the issue with Transport for the North (TfN) chief executive Barry White. Jo Johnson has also spoken to Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham.

Measures in the plan include:

- improving driver rostering to get more trains running now
- increasing driver training on new routes to get more services on line as quickly as possible
- additional contingency drivers and management presence at key locations in Manchester
- putting extra peak services in the timetable along the Bolton corridor, including between Buckshaw and Manchester Victoria, and Preston and Manchester Oxford Road

Meanwhile the Furness Line Action Group (FLAG) noted that from the May timetable change, their Barrow - Manchester trains miss the connection at Lancaster to the fast Virgin service to London by 7 minutes. The next London service goes via Birmingham 12 minutes later and takes an hour longer, so passengers could arrive in London earlier by waiting for the next fast train. FLAG suggests that the Manchester train could depart Barrow in time to make the connection, and then await its timetabled departure time at either Lancaster or Preston.

Northern Extends Penalty Fares

Northern introduced the Penalty Fare Scheme on some of routes within their Central Region from 14th May. This is a franchise commitment and follows trials of the scheme on the Airedale and Wharfedale lines in Yorkshire, and is now extended to four lines of route in the North West:

- Manchester Victoria – York via Hebden Bridge
- Manchester Stations – Liverpool via Newton-le-Willows AND Warrington Central
- Manchester – Wilmslow via Manchester Airport

Northern have put posters up at affected stations and had started making prior announcements on trains in mid-April.

Customers travelling without a ticket on a Northern train anywhere on any of the above routes could face a penalty fare of £20 or twice the single fare (whichever is the greater).

WARNING
Have you paid?

Please buy your ticket before you travel, otherwise you may have to pay a Penalty Fare (at least £20).

If you cannot produce a valid ticket for your entire journey or a Promise to Pay notice when asked to do so, you may be charged a **Penalty Fare of £20 or twice the full single fare** (whichever is the greater amount) to the next station at which your train stops. Also, you may be charged the full single fare to your destination station if you continue your journey on the same train.

Buying your ticket

Please buy your ticket from the ticket office or Ticket Vending Machine (where available).

If you are wishing to pay by cash at a card only Ticket Vending Machine you must obtain a Promise to Pay notice from the Ticket Vending Machine. A Promise to Pay notice must be exchanged for a ticket as soon as possible.

Tickets can be purchased from the Northern website at northernrailway.co.uk or via the Northern app

Examples of when a Penalty Fare may be charged

If you:

- travel without a valid ticket
- are unable to produce an appropriate Railcard for a discount ticket
- are aged 16 or over, travelling on a child rate ticket
- travel beyond the destination on your ticket.

For further information please pick up a Penalty Fares leaflet from your nearest staffed station or visit our website at northernrailway.co.uk/penalty-fares

National Rail
Britain's train companies working together

northern

Ticket Vending Machines that may not issue the particular ticket passengers want, will have a "promise to pay" ticket available, (see photo of TVM screen below) which will have the starting station printed on it and this will get around the common trick of "fare dodgers" saying they got on at stations closer to their destination station than they actually did, to pay the lowest fare they could get away with.



Rail minister Jo Johnson has announced that, while fare dodgers will continue to receive penalties, those with a genuine reason for not having a valid ticket will now be able to challenge a penalty with an independent committee.

Once an appeal is received, the clock will stop on the 21-day deadline for the payment of a penalty fare, until the outcome is resolved. The process will also give greater consideration to circumstances of how and why the penalty was issued to ensure people are not unfairly penalised.

There are questions as to what those with concessionary passes do when the wish to travel beyond the boundary, if the TVM at their starting station does not issue tickets from a different starting point, would buying the extension on the train fall foul of the penalty fare regime? It's thought not if bought within the boundary.

RUG predicts Over – Crowding in Bolton

The Bolton Rail User Group is very concerned that timetable changes in May and December will cause local services to become significantly over-crowded. Recent train loading surveys showed significant over-crowding on all services not operated by class 185's (mostly run in pairs to make a 6-car service) and the group noted that with the reducing number of those being

used on local services, more over-crowding was inevitable. With the prospect of electric services being operated by 4-car class 319's, (which can't be coupled as 8-car units because of platform limits at some intermediate stations), it is calling on Northern to address the issue by ensuring an adequate number of 6-car services

STORM's Simple Response to TfN consultation

Increasingly the large cities are becoming more and more where the employment opportunities are so in the view of Rail User Group STORM the emphasis for rail transport must be more focussed on commuting into the cities with a service that is frequent, modern, fast and affordable. It's all very well looking at linking the major centres but many more people want to

travel from Littleborough or Greenfield to Manchester than want to travel from Bradford to Manchester, still more so than, say, Bradford to Chester or Liverpool. Whilst on the subject of Bradford, linking Interchange and Forster Square stations must be a top priority.

The rail lines serving commuters south of Manchester have (with one exception) been electrified for years. On the north side, the Bolton line electrification should be finished soon; Liverpool via Chat Moss is already electrified but is not a major commuter route. The case for electrifying the Calder Valley route, Manchester Victoria to Rochdale, Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Halifax, Bradford, New Pudsey and Leeds is overwhelming and should be undertaken in priority to any other route. One reason for this is that the line is heavily used by commuters at each end (Manchester and Leeds) and also intermediately (Halifax and Bradford). By comparison the Leeds to

Harrogate line, whilst very heavily used by commuters only serves one major commuter flow. A rolling programme of lengthening of platforms is needed so that six-car trains can be accommodated.

Additional platforms to enable faster trains to overtake slower ones, for example where stations have previously had more platforms with some having been abandoned, or stations with room to expand, must be high on the agenda. Places like Rochdale, Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Sowerby Bridge and Halifax spring to mind.

Richard S Greenwood, Chair STORM”.

Skipton East Lancs Rail Action Partnership

The announcement by the Transport Secretary Chris Grayling in February this year that the Government would fund a major feasibility study into the re-opening of the line from Colne to Skipton came as very welcome news and follows over a year of excellent progress on the project.

A Project Development Team, consisting of representatives of DfT, Transport for the North Arriva Rail North, Network Rail, Arup, Skipton Building Society, Drax, Peel Port and GB Railfreight, the Rail Freight Group and a Private Finance Company, chaired by SELRAP and holding meetings approximately every two

months, had already been exploring how best to extend the thriving Airedale Line into depressed East Lancashire, to provide a Northern passenger service linking Leeds and Bradford to Pendle and Burnley in under an hour, as well as a new trans-Pennine route for freight.

The feasibility study is being co-commissioned by the Department for Transport and Transport for the North and is due to be completed later this year.

It's hoped that this could see the return of trains on the disused route by 2022.

Cumbrian Businesses Want Keswick to Penrith Railway

CKP Railways, the group campaigning to re-open the line from Penrith to Keswick reported on a survey undertaken by the Cumbria Chamber

of Commerce in their latest newsletter. The survey noted that a large number of respondents were in favour of re-opening the line and following on from

this, they have asked Transport for the North to investigate re-opening.

Julian Whittle, the Chamber's Business Engagement Manager, explains more, "An important part of the Chamber's role is to represent Cumbrian businesses and lobby government on their behalf.

So, when Transport for the North – the new statutory regional body for transport – launched a consultation on its draft Strategic Transport Plan, we were keen to get involved.

This is a hugely important document that will shape transport priorities across the Northern Powerhouse for the next 30 years.

We agreed with the draft plan's central argument that better transport links promote economic growth but found it sparse on detail. It lacked specific schemes to deliver its objectives.

We decided, therefore, to ask Cumbrian businesses about the transport issues they faced and what were their priorities for improvement, then feed the findings back to Transport for the North as our response to the consultation.

A total of 141 businesses completed our online questionnaire.

By and large they told us what we expected to hear. They identified the main congestion blackspots as the A595 and A591. There was backing for the proposed Whitehaven Relief Road, Kendal Northern Access Route, Carlisle Southern Relief Road and an Ulverston bypass.

There was outrage at the idea that HS2 trains to Scotland might pass through Cumbria without stopping, and a

plethora of complaints about the inadequate rail service between Lancaster and Carlisle via Barrow.

What we hadn't anticipated was the degree of support for re-opening the railway between Penrith and Keswick. Nineteen businesses completing the survey mentioned this, unprompted by us.

Seven advocated reinstating the tracks beyond Keswick to Workington.

They told us that the railway would stimulate tourism and ease congestion in Keswick – one suggested a park-and-ride scheme from Threlkeld.

We are aware of postings on the Keswick Railway Facebook group urging businesses to complete the survey, but don't believe they were responsible for more than eight of the 19 responses.

What's really behind this flurry of interest, we suspect, is a greater realisation of the economic benefits that railways bring, prompted by the success of the re-opened Borders Railway in Scotland.

Not only have passenger numbers on the line from Edinburgh to Tweedbank exceeded expectations, bringing an influx of tourists, the line has widened economic opportunities in ways no-one had predicted. For example, applications to study at Borders College in Galashiels from students in mid and east Lothian have soared by 74%.

Perhaps the railway could do the same for Keswick? We certainly think Transport for the North should give it serious consideration."

Railfuture Summer Conference 23rd June 2108

The North West's Crucial Role in National Rail Connectivity

Railfuture invites all members and affiliated Rail User Groups to its Summer Conference in Carlisle. One of the key aims of the conference will be to share best practice amongst RUG's. The event will be FREE but please register in advance (see below).

We will have speakers in the morning and a workshop for attendees in the afternoon, led by Railfuture director Stewart Palmer (former South West Trains Managing Director) focusing on how campaigners should engage with TOCs to be successful (such as timetables that passengers want). Each workshop group will present its conclusions to others through a 'market stall'. Morning and afternoon tea/coffee will be provided.

The event begins at 10:45, registration from 10:00, finishes by 17:00.

Speakers:

- Representative from Story Contracting (talking about: reopening the line after the landslip at Eden Brows on the Settle & Carlisle line)
- Mark Rand, Past Chairman, Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line
- Simon Walton, Chair, Campaign for Borders Rail

Venue: Hallmark Hotel, Court Square, Carlisle, Postcode: CA1 1QY, Phone: 0330 028 3401. The Hallmark Hotel is next to Carlisle railway station. It is fully accessible

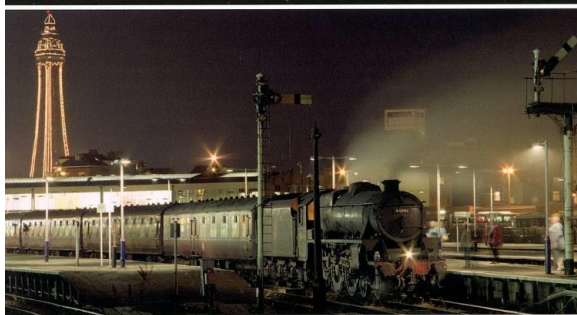
To register for this free event, please email carlisle2018@railfuture.org.uk.

Places are still free to book - but bookings for this conference will close on 21/06/2018. Suggested places for lunch: Lunch can be bought at the hotel, (there are Lounge and Restaurant menu's on the hotel website <https://www.hallmarkhotels.co.uk/hotels/hallmark-hotel-carlisle/eat-drink/>) at Carlisle station or at various places close by."

Future branch meetings.

The next two committee meetings, open to members, will be on 8th September 2018 in Friends Meeting House, Meeting House Lane, Lancaster LA1 1TX, and on November 3rd 2018 in Blackburn Cathedral Court conference rooms. As with all arrangements, these are subject to confirmation, so do please check with Chairman/Secretary details on the back page.

Both meetings will start around 1300, but for those that want lunch, we will normally be there from 1200, though its likely that we will be meeting in nearby catering facilities, not in the venue

Northern Lines**PRESTON TO
BLACKPOOL**
including Fleetwood**John Matthews and Peter Fitton***Series Editor Vic Mitchell***MP Middleton Press**
EVOLVING THE ULTIMATE RAIL ENCYCLOPEDIA

In the Summer 2017 Rail North West newsletter, we featured a photograph of a DMU on the Ormskirk – Preston line from John Matthews' collection and a new book (which he co-authored) takes an in depth look at the railways of the Fylde from the early days right up to eve of electrification. Containing over 120 photos and maps it features many of the long-lost signal boxes, stations and also the line to Fleetwood, It's now out and can be obtained from Middleton Press at; <https://bit.ly/2IOHDte> or from bookshops

E-Mail of the bulletin

You can opt to receive this bulletin by e-mail, which has the advantage of full colour photos and receipt before the main publication date. If you'd like to receive the bulletin by e-mail, let us know your name and membership number. We have already sent editions of the bulletin to members this way. Contact Arthur Thomson, e-mail address on the back of this newsletter or by post via the Chairman. **Please note** that this will mean you will **NOT** receive a printed copy, if you still wish to receive that, please let us know when you get in touch

Rail User Groups within the North West area Affiliated to Railfuture

(for those viewing in pdf format, there are
embedded links to most groups websites)

- [Blackpool and Fylde Rail Users' Association](#)
 - [Bolton Rail Users Group](#)
 - [Chinley & Buxworth Transport Group](#)
 - [Cumbrian coast Rail Users' Group \(CRUG\)](#)
 - [Friends of Denton Station](#)
 - [Friends of Littleborough Stations \(Lancashire\)](#)
 - [Friends of Reddish South Station](#)
 - [Friends of Rose Hill Station](#)
 - Friends of St Annes Stations email tonyford19@gmail.com
 - [Friends of Settle Carlisle Line](#)
 - [Furness Line Action Group \(FLAG\)](#)
 - [Goyt Valley Rail Users' Association \(Stockport\)](#)
 - [Lakes Line Rail User Group \(LLRUG\)](#)
 - [Lancaster and Skipton Rail Users' Group \(LASRUG\)](#)
 - [Mid Cheshire Rail Users' Association \(MCRUA\)](#)
 - [North Cheshire Rail Users' Group \(NCRUG\)](#)
 - [Ormskirk, Preston and Southport Travellers Association \(OPSTA\)](#)
 - [Ribble Valley Rail](#)
 - [Skipton-East Lancashire Railway Action Partnership \(SELRAP\)](#) (reopening campaign)
 - [Support the Oldham Rochdale Manchester line \(STORM\)](#)
 - Stalybridge to Huddersfield Rail User Group
 - [Wirral Transport Users' Association \(WTUA\)](#)
 - [Wrexham-Bidston Rail Users Association \(WBRUA\)](#)
-

Blackpool and Fylde Rail Users Association (Incorporating South Fylde Line Users Association)

Chairman: Paul Nettleton
8, Balham Avenue,
Blackpool,
FY4 3QP

Vice-Chairman: Malcolm Richardson
135, Branstree Road,
Blackpool,
FY4 4SR,



Join us; it's only £1/year, £1.50 for family membership.

**Contact Membership Secretary,
"Hamlet" 2B, Meadow Park, Wesham Preston PR4 3DN.**

**Download our online form from:
<http://www.bafrua.org.uk/> click on "Join Our User Group."**

LASRUG

Lancaster and Skipton Rail User Group
www.llmr.co.uk www.lasrug.btck.co.uk

The group was formed in 1989 to support and improve the Lancaster to Skipton railway. This links the towns and cities of West Yorkshire with the city of Lancaster and the seaside resort of Morecambe. It also gives access to the Yorkshire Dales, Forest of Bowland and Furness.

If you would like to help us promote the 'Little North Western' line, please contact our Membership Secretary, Lakeber House, Robin Lane, High Bentham, Lancaster. LA2 7AF.

Membership costs £7-00 annually. You will receive a Newsletter quarterly and we invite a speaker from the Rail Industry to the AGM each September.

Cumbrian coast Rail Users' Group



If you'd like to join a group representing rail users in West Cumbria, and particularly on the Cumbrian Coast line from Carlisle to Barrow, the **Cumbrian coast Rail Users' Group** would welcome your membership.

See www.crug.org.uk where you will find all the details about us and how to join. It costs £5 for individuals or £10 for organisations.

We can make a difference, and with your help, our voice will be stronger.



WIRRAL TRANSPORT USERS ASSOCIATION

We believe in modern, public transport systems for the Wirral and Merseyside and keep our members up to date with public transport developments

We support the campaign for electrification of the Wrexham Central–Birkenhead–Bidston Line

We support new railway stations at Ledsham, Town Meadow, Beechwood Estate, Prenton/Woodchurch road interchange, Well Lane, Little Neston or Ness Botanic Gardens and Deeside industrial Estate

We wish to see more bus/rail and car/rail interchange for the benefit of passengers

We are affiliated to Railfuture, Passenger Focus, Travelwatch North West, Bus users UK & represent Campaign for Better Transport in the area.

We publish a newsletter twice a year and run coach excursions

Why not join us? Join today

**Annual individual subscription £6.00; Family £8;
Corporate Bodies £25.00, representative bodies £12.50**

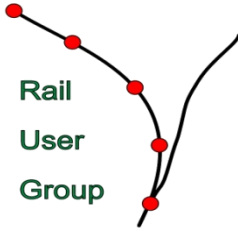
*Send your subscription to our Membership Secretary today
and receive a copy of our latest newsletter*

Brian Grey, 56, Coombe Road, Irby, Wirral, CH61 4US.

THE LAKES LINE RAIL USER GROUP

Formed in 1984 to promote and support Cumbria's only branch line for locals and tourists alike. Travel the lakes line into scenic Lakeland.

Lakes Line



Join Today!

Contact: Mr. P Bell 9, Vicars Hill,
Kendal,
Cumbria

Membership: £5.00 Individuals,

£7.00 Family, £13.00 Corporate

LA9 5DA

Please note the email addresses below wont correctly copy from the pdf edition, this is to prevent spam.

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Rail North West is the newsletter of the North West branch of Railfuture. Contributions in the form of articles and letters are welcomed. Please send them to Arthur Thomson at arthur.thomson@railfuture.org.uk or by post via the chairman as above. Text files e-mailed are particularly welcome. The opinions expressed in *Rail North West* are those of any individual contributors and not necessarily those of Railfuture.

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