

Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

No 13 June 2011

railfuture Yorkshire

President: Gerald Egan Vice-President: Alan Whitehouse

More Trains from December

by Graham Collett

Below: One of Scotrail's Class 322 electric units, on a North Berwick-Edinburgh Waverley service (photo Wikimedia Commons)

Leeds commuters are finally getting some new trains in the December timetable. Five 4-car Class 322 electric units are being transferred (with the blessing of the Transport Secretary) from Scotrail to Northern in order to provide much needed capacity in the Leeds area. J Stephen Waring, Chair of Halifax & District Rail Action Group (HADRAG) said " We gather there'll be swapping of (electric) units



between Aire/Wharfe routes and the Wakefield Line, with the latter to be worked by Class 333s that have more seats. The 333s were introduced ten years ago on Aire/Wharfedale, where more trains in future (albeit older ones) should mean significant peak-hour relief. **A remaining diesel diagram will end, releasing a unit to provide some relief for overcrowding at peak times on our line, along with (it is rumoured) a further seven Pacers cascaded from First Great Western.** HADRAG is seeking clarification of exactly how significant any extra Caldervale train capacity will be. We hope it's going to

be more than crumbs of comfort." Chris Hyomes, Branch Chair said "At last there are signs that the Department for Transport is beginning to understand the urgent need for more rail capacity in the North."

New Funding for South Yorkshire Tram-Train Pilot by Graham Collett

The proposed Sheffield-Rotherham tram-train has received a £150,000 Government grant to further develop the project. If the business and project case stacks up, this could lead to tram-trains being introduced on this route in 2014. Readers will recall that plans for a South Yorkshire pilot scheme were first announced in 2009 - originally based on the Penistone line and due to start in 2011. Given that tram-train technology has been in use successfully in Europe, it seems incredible that in Britain it is going to take 5 years just to (continued on page 4)

Railfuture Branch and National Events Diary

Thursday 26th May: **Rail Campaigners' Summit Guide Bridge Theatre, Guide Bridge (7 to 9.30pm)** - organised by the **Reopen the Woodhead Line Campaign Group** – details at <http://savethewoodheadtunnel.blogspot.com/> or call Jonathan Atkinson on 0782 861 7933

Saturday 18th June: **Branch Meeting Wilberforce House Learning Centre, Hull** – see page 4 for details

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** (details in next YRC)

Saturday 5th November: **Rail User Groups Conference, Mechanics Institute, Manchester** - details at

<http://www.railfuture.org.uk> or see Railwatch



Staff at Selby Station organised a charity event to raise money for the "Save the Children" week – they are seen here in appropriate costume for Easter Tide (Courtesy of the Selby Times <http://www.selbytimes.co.uk/>)

Penistone Line Progress

Encouraging signs of progress on some of the stations along the line are beginning to emerge. Kirklees Council continues its plans to invest £170,000 with its partners in the line. Honley station has had its much-needed and long awaited make-over with new steps and brighter lighting in the lobby and stair well. A repaint of the walls has added to the feeling of greater security. There are several improvements for other stations at various stages of preparation.

Northern are preparing a publicity campaign for the line. Signage of walking routes to all rail stations and road vehicle signage are being prepared by Kirklees Council along with banners near Denby Dale and Shepley stations advertising rail services. In addition, notice boards actually in the heart of villages within Kirklees are being considered to promote trains serving each community.

Although there is no time scale for the following, there will be a full renewal of the public address system and RTI boards at the stations.

Performance of the train service has returned to its pre-winter level. The industry measurement of PPMs has improved over last January - March with 92.39% of trains arriving within five minutes of booked time. (our thanks to the **Huddersfield, Penistone and Sheffield Rail Users Association** for this report)

Grand Central Pontefract to London Services

We understand that Grand Central's (GC's) application to divert their services away from Pontefract, and to substitute a call at Mirfield, has been deferred to at least December 2011 by the Rail Regulator. GC's application for Sunderland services to call at Doncaster has been similarly deferred.

Campaigning Pays Off! by Reg and Terry French, Selby and District Rail Users (SADRUG)

Hull-York Services

Whilst the number of through Hull-York trains was increased in the new timetable, for Selby passengers there is a loss of services. There is now no train to York between 07.48 and 09.38 from either Hull or Selby. **This will affect commuters travelling to work and those wishing to make connections for Newcastle or Edinburgh will arrive one hour later.** We will have three services from Selby to Hull within 22minutes, which is a nonsense and have lost a key service to York. SADRUG will continue to campaign for the restoration of the services lost i.e. 09.15 Selby to York Mondays to Saturdays, and Saturdays only 19.23 York to Selby and 22.30 Selby to York.

We have taken these matters up with Northern Rail, Passenger Focus, the local MP, the ORR and the DfT and got nowhere.

However, after extensive analysis and negotiations, Northern Rail has agreed to stop 3 services at Sherburn-in-Elmet from the December 11 timetable. They are the 8.43 York to Hull, 20.21 York to Selby and 11.40 Selby to York. We have also persuaded Northern to re-route the 17.19 from York to Hull so that it can stop at both Church Fenton and Sherburn-in-Elmet for commuters. Other services have also been identified for possible stops at Sherburn.

Hull Trains Customer Services

Discussions have taken place with Hull Trains Managers after SADRUG received recent complaints from passengers over Customer Service issues. Hull trains have noted that some customers have had less than satisfactory experiences.

Wensleydale Railway by Ruth Annison

Events, guided walks and excursions give passengers additional reasons to travel.

This year's programme is at

www.wensleydalerrailway.com.

In addition to a regular series of themed walks, there are themed rail/coach excursions. These include:
Fri May 27 - **In the Artist's Footsteps (JMW Turner's visit to Wensleydale in 1816)**;
Sun June 5 - **Swaledale Haymeadows**;
Sun June 12 - **Leadmining and Smelting**.

Booking is essential for some events - tel 08454 50 54 74. The **Leyburn and Redmire 1940s Weekend** will be on July 30/31.

Branch Key Contacts

Chairman: Chris Hyomes

12 Monument Lane
Pontefract WF8 2BE
Email:

chrishyomes@supanet.com

Press Officer/ Parliamentary Liaison Officer: Peter Yates

26 All Saints View Woodlesford
Leeds LS26 8NG

Treasurer: Andrew Oldfield

14 Long Lane, Worrall, Sheffield
S35 0AF

Secretary: Nina Smith

14 Bank Terrace Hebden Bridge
HX7 6BU

Email: nhrawsons@gmail.com

Membership Secretary and YRC

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

Email: watson804@btinternet.com

Newsletter Editor & Information Officer: Graham Collett

16 Wilstrop Farm Rd Copmanthorpe
York YO23 3RY

Email: collettgh@talktalk.net

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Chairman's Column by Chris Hyomes

You may recall I was concerned that rail would suffer badly once the spending review was published in the autumn.

As it happened, rail nationally escaped relatively unscathed - the continued development of HS2, electrification of the Great Western main line and Lancashire "triangle", no cut backs to London Cross Rail as many feared, and the go ahead for the HST replacement. However, all is not what it seems.

On the same day as Philip Hammond published plans to spend £35 billion on HS2 with the launch of the consultation, Theresa Villiers announced that while the government still intends to fund new or enhanced local services promoted by authorities with rail industry support, no such funding will be forthcoming before 2015 due to the financial situation. **So in the current spending review period we are to spend close to £1 billion planning HS2, but have no money for local rail projects.**

So I find it rather curious that a government that on coming to power a year ago said it wanted to be the greenest government ever, has no money for local rail projects but has given the go ahead to a number of new roads across the country. This includes a new road in our region linking the M18 to Robin Hood Airport at the cost of £18 million - not bad for an airport that last year had 875,000 passengers. **Yet the 1.2 million passengers that used Ilkley railway station last year are getting a fleet of 21 year old trains and sharing them with the Doncaster line (see also page 1).**

Finally, I hope to see as many of you as possible in Hull on Saturday June 18th.

Manchester Ordsall Curve approved by Graham Collett

On 23rd March, the Chancellor announced that funding of £85 million has been brought forward for work to develop the Ordsall Chord, a crucial part of the Northern Hub programme (costed at £530 million).

The Chord will provide a new line connecting Piccadilly and Victoria stations and could lead to all fast trans Pennine services going via Manchester Victoria station – a much quicker route – as soon as 2016. **It would also mean more fast trains could run – as many as six trains per hour between Leeds and Manchester.**

Graham Botham, Network Rail's Programme Sponsor, said: "We are delighted with the funding announcement from the Chancellor today, which will allow Network Rail to bring forward a stage of development of the Northern Hub plans." Chris Hyomes, Branch Chair, said "We welcome the go-ahead for this vital link, which will benefit rail users across the North of England, and call on the Government to approve the full Northern Hub scheme as soon as possible." More details of the Northern Hub at: <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/osp/6472.aspx>

Press Date for September 2011 issue

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

Graham Collett (YRC 14) 16 Wilstrop Farm Rd Copmanthorpe York YO23 3RY [Email: collettgh@talktalk.net](mailto:collettgh@talktalk.net) to reach him by Saturday 30th July 2011.

Railfuture Yorkshire Summer Meeting Saturday 18th June at 2pm Wilberforce House Learning Centre (adjacent to the Street Life Centre), 23-25 High Street Hull HU1 1NQ 201

Everyone welcome

**Guest Speaker: David Leighton
Government Affairs Manager
Associated British Ports**

Directions from Hull Paragon Station:

Turn left at the exit from the platforms towards the Travel Centre (bus and train). Turn right and leave the Interchange by the main entrance past the taxi rank onto Ferensway. Cross Ferensway towards the House of Fraser store by the traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing. Go past House of Fraser (on your left) down the pedestrianised Jameson Street. Past McDonalds, bear right down King Edward Street (also pedestrianised) to Queen Victoria Square. Cross Carr Lane towards Princes Quay Shopping Centre by the traffic light controlled crossing. Then bear left past the bus stops on to Alfred Gelder Street, with the Guildhall in the distance on the left. Past the Guildhall, cross Lowgate (traffic lights) and continue along Alfred Gelder Street past the Combined Courts (on your right). Immediately past the Courts, turn right onto a short link to High Street and Wilberforce House is facing you. About 15/20 minutes walk.

<http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=510171&y=428735&z=0&sv=HU1%201NQ&st=PostCode&lu=N&tl=Wilberforce%20House&ar=y&bi=~&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf>

Stagecoach Hull Service 54 (to Bilton Grange) runs from Stand 28 at the Transport Interchange past High Street about every 15 minutes. Alight at the High Street stop (last stop before the Drypool Bridge over the River Hull). Cross Alfred Gelder Street into High Street.



Hesse Road Junction, after re-instatement of double track as part of Hull Docks Branch upgrading (Photo: Zozzie 9t9 at en.wikipedia)

Aire Valley Line Developments

The 'Saltire Sentinel' has carried correspondence about the amount of litter on **Saltire** station. Ray Wilkes, the station adopter, explained that the station is cleaned twice a week and that litter bags are normally emptied at the same time. Keith Preston (our committee member) has been pressing for action to reduce the large gap between the platform and trains on the Leeds /Bradford platform. He has received a promise that work to reduce the gap will be done this May.

At **Keighley** the new station car park has opened (on the site of the College campus). The 'old' car park is currently closed for refurbishment. The Worth Valley are looking into the financial and practical issues of running a daily commuter service between Oxenhope and Keighley in order to connect with our services onwards to Leeds and Bradford.

CCTV cameras are now fitted to all our class '333' electric units. This should help to reduce instances of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. (our thanks to the **Aire Valley Rail Users Group** for this report)

Skipton East Lancs Railway Action Partnership (SELRAP) 10th Anniversary Celebrations

On Friday 8th April, a very well attended conference with high profile speakers was held at Herriot's Hotel in Skipton. The conference included the launch of SELRAP's 'Funding Development Plan – Executive Summary', which outlines the vision the campaigning group has for the re-opening of the Skipton to Colne Railway. The following day two very successful walks were held along the trackbed to Cafe Cargo at Foulridge Wharf, one from Thornton-in-Craven and one from Colne Station with 50 people in all participating (our thanks to SELRAP for this report – for more information see <http://www.selrap.org.uk>)

New Funding for South Yorkshire Tram-Train Pilot (continued from Page 1)

establish that the concept is workable! At least the current proposal is for electric tram-trains, rather than the diesel version originally proposed for the Penistone line, so that should remove some of the potential "difficulties". Other authorities have shown interest, including West Yorkshire Metro, where the Harrogate-Leeds-York line has been highlighted as the route for initial conversion to tram-train, including a new link to Leeds Bradford airport and on-street running in Leeds and York city centres.