

Midland main line speed-up



New 125 speed limit signs being installed at Bromham Road bridge, Bedford. From left, are Richard Walker, the route delivery director (East Midlands) for Network Rail, Dave Diskin, the framework manager from contractor Carillion and David Horne, managing director for East Midlands Trains
Picture: East Midlands Trains

For the first time, trains are now able to operate at speeds of up to 125 mph on certain parts of the Midland main line, after a £70 million line improvement scheme delivered by Network Rail in partnership with East Midlands Trains.

The faster timetable was good news for passengers travelling between London and Sheffield, Chesterfield, Derby, Nottingham, East Midlands Parkway, Leicester and Loughborough.

A total of 159 miles of track was upgraded, some level crossings were replaced by bridges, and signalling modified. It allowed EMT to reduce the average weekday journey time between Sheffield and London by seven minutes, between Nottingham and London by five minutes and between Derby and London by four minutes. Further improvements to journey times will be introduced during 2014.

"The route provides a vital artery for South Yorkshire, the East Midlands and Northamptonshire," said David Horne, EMT managing director. "Faster journeys are vital for economic growth and this major investment in track and signalling will help us to provide faster and more reliable journeys."

www.eastmidlandstrains.co.uk

Network Rail's maintenance underspend causes delays

The Office of Rail Regulation believes over half of the delays on the network arise from failures by Network Rail and of these, about half are the result of infrastructure failures. In its latest analysis published on 28 November 2013, the ORR found that

railaction

railaction is edited by
John Stanford
82 Colvestone Crescent
London E8 2LJ

john.stanford@railwatch.org.uk

020 7254 3885

twitter: @railfuture

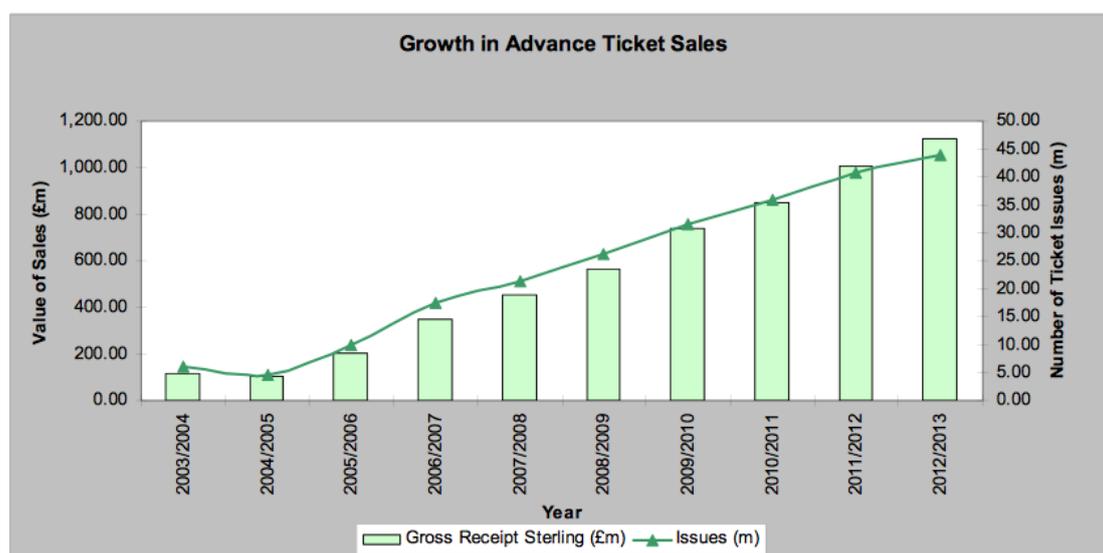
twitter: @railwatch

track faults, telecoms failures and cable faults are increasing, although there has been a reduction in delays associated with civil engineering assets, such as bridges. Some of this was associated with Network Rail's deferral of works on some parts of the system and underspend of all the resources available. In monitoring Network Rail's performance over the forthcoming control period, ORR will be emphasising the need for the right asset data and other tools to support maintenance and renewal work.

www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.11299

Year-long trials may lead to minor changes in ticketing and fares

Advance ticket sales now account for more than £1 billion a year, according to a graph in the Government's *Rail fares and ticketing: the next steps*. The lengthy review has resulted in a range of useful proposals rather than radical action. The accompanying policy announcement on 9 October 2013 that garnered the most headlines was that the "flex" available to train operators for averaging regulated fares would be reduced from 5% to 2%. During the next financial year, there will be



trials of regulating long distance off-peak fares on a single leg basis and also for a flexible system for commuters travelling fewer than five days a week or out of peak hours. A code of practice on ticketing information will be drawn up and the system of approving changes to the management of ticket offices will be revised while ensuring that passengers will continue to be able to get help from staff. Customer service standards will be included in franchises and the Office of Rail Regulation will carry out a market study of the current methods of selling tickets. It is also proposed that there will be annual "mystery shopper" surveys of ticket sales. The review gives considerable attention to the development of smart ticketing, first within the South East flexible ticketing area with an expansion to other centres in 2015-16. An expansion to the rest of the network would follow with the report suggesting that it would be possible to withdraw magnetic stripe tickets within 10 to 15 years.

www.gov.uk/government/speeches/fares-and-ticketing-review

96% public backing for building Crossrail 2

The initial public consultation on proposals for Crossrail 2 running between Hertfordshire and north east London through to south west London and Surrey is assessed in a new report. There were 13,767 responses from members of the public and 166 from stakeholders, including Railfuture London and South East. At 96%, support for the principle of the scheme was overwhelming, with support for the more extensive regional option being greater than that for the metro option that would not link into the main rail network. The next stages will involve safeguarding

Railfuture press releases

Press releases issued by Railfuture over recent months have included:

Freeze rail fares too
30 September

Almond chord
3 October

Oxford to host national rail conference
24 October

No 'do nothing' option for high speed rail
31 October

RUG Award winners
2 November

Rail fares to go up by twice rate of inflation
12 November

Campaigning pays off in Autumn Statement
5 December

More good news on Uckfield-Lewes
6 December

Rail campaigners welcome Transport Select Committee findings on HS2
13 December

More good news on electrification
13 December

All these can be read at:
Railfuture.org.uk

the preferred routes and undertaking further planning. The current timescale would see Crossrail 2 open in the early 2030s.

www.tfl.gov.uk/assets/downloads/corporate/crossrail_2_consultation_report.pdf

Local bottlenecks hinder rail access to ports

The House of Commons Transport Committee published the report of its study into access to ports on 26 November 2013, a subject of concern to rail activists given the significant amount of rail freight carried to and from ports and the potential for further growth. In launching the report, MP Louise Ellman said that transport links to ports, both rail and road, are crucial to economic prosperity but that changes to the role of local government in transport planning have made it harder for ports to ensure that projects of strategic importance are given adequate priority. Local bottlenecks remain a concern for many ports.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmtran/266/26602.htm

Train operators' performance revealed by Passenger Focus

Passenger Focus is transferring historic information to an open access format for public use. Initially this covers overall satisfaction with rail operators and routes from the twice-yearly National Passenger Survey and complaint appeals from 2008 to 2013. This could be useful to rail campaigners needing to see how their own operators have performed in relation to others.

<http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/our-open-data>

Autumn financial statement and infrastructure plan

The autumn statement of Chancellor George Osborne (pictured below left) was linked with a statement on the National Infrastructure Plan made by the Chief Secretary of the Treasury Danny Alexander (pictured below right). Together they included a number of matters directly affecting railways. £50 million was



made available for the full redevelopment of Gatwick Airport station allied with measures to improve capacity on the Brighton main line, which included a welcome reference to reopening the link between Uckfield and Lewes. Funding was also announced for the London Underground Northern line extension to Battersea. However,

the sale of assets to generate resources for investment between 2014 and 2021 included the sale of the Government's holding in Eurostar. Railfuture welcomed the more immediate announcement that the 2014 rise in regulated fares would have no enhancement on the Retail Price Index. Both the autumn statement and the Infrastructure Plan can be found from the following link.

www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/autumn-statement-2013

Electrification in the North of England

The line between Bolton and Wigan North Western will be electrified by 2017, the Department for Transport announced on 13 December 2013, the same day it announced 25 road schemes to ease local pinch points. A task force of representatives from local authorities in the north of England and other

Network Rail's long-term plans

Network Rail published market studies on 21 November 2013 in preparation for developing plans for the 2019-2024 period (Control Period 6) and also looking to possible developments over the next 30 years. There are four separate studies which were finalised after wide consultations – for long distance travel, regional urban services, the London and south east area and freight. The next stage in this process will be the development of route studies and cross-border analyses of services on multiple routes. Railfuture responded to the consultations on the draft market studies during the summer.

<http://tinyurl.com/pgsz9zq>
[Railfuture press releases](#)

regionally based bodies will prioritise other electrification projects from a list that includes Leeds-Harrogate-York, Selby-Hull, Sheffield-Leeds, Sheffield-Doncaster, East Coast main line to Middlesbrough, Sheffield-Manchester, Warrington-Chester and Crewe-Chester.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/road-and-rail-projects-to-boost-local-and-regional-transport--2>

East Anglian cities may benefit from report on links to stations



Fixing the Link
Making good the walking route
from station to town centre

Town centres and high streets can benefit economically from attractive and welcoming pedestrian routes from their railway station. A report by the Campaign for Better Transport, supported by Abellio, was based on *Fixing the Link* research and methodology, developed by Nederlandse Spoorwegen in the Netherlands. It was used to explore the potential for improvements at Colchester, Ely and Ipswich. While small things such as signs can make a significant difference, the report makes more far-reaching recommendations such as less car-centric developments on the route between the station and town centre with action by local

authorities, the Government, local enterprise partnerships and rail operators.

www.bettertransport.org/files/13.11.04.fixing-the-link.pdf

ORR's final determination for 2014-2019

The Office of Rail Regulation issued its final findings on 31 October 2013 on the funding available to Network Rail for the period from April 2014 to March 2019. This includes £21 billion for the day-to-day running of the network, which includes a requirement to make savings of 20% through improved efficiency over the five years. Funding for safety improvements has been approved including £109 million for level crossings and £250 million to improve the safety of track workers. Targets, described as stretching but deliverable, have been increased for the punctuality and reliability of rail services. Approval has been given for £12 billion to enhance the network, although of this, £7 billion relates to projects for which Network Rail has to work up detailed and efficient plans by 2015 before final approval. The ORR final orders were issued at the end of December. Network Rail will publish its delivery plan before 1 April 2014 when the new control period starts. The following links are to the detail of the determination and Railfuture's response.

www.rail-reg.gov.uk/pr13/publications/final-determination.php

www.railfuture.org.uk/submissions

MPs cast doubt on Thameslink project after franchise delay

A report on progress in delivering the Thameslink programme was published on 21 October 2013 by the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons. The fact that the first phase of the infrastructure project was completed on time and under budget was welcomed but there were concerns in a number of areas. It considered that the department's project team of six people was under-resourced for such a complex programme, especially as it was intended that the senior officer was to be transferred to HS2. Letting the new franchise had been delayed and would involve procedures that the department had not used before. The head of franchising was an interim post for which there was inadequate succession planning. Also the placing of the orders for new trains has been delayed by three years. Despite the confidence

Cambridgeshire community rail

A community rail partnership agreement has been signed between Network Rail, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, First Capital Connect and Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail Users Group (which is affiliated to Railfuture). The CRP was launched at Meldreth station on 25 October 2013. The rail user group, a multiple winner in Railfuture's 2012 Rail User Group Awards, sees the agreement as an important way of ensuring that their small stations do not get overlooked when the new, much larger Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise is in operation.

<http://tinyurl.com/q9fy5vl>

expressed by the department, it had not been able to give the committee any past examples of manufacturers delivering a fleet of new trains early.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmpublic/296/29602.htm

30-year vision for integrated transport in West Midlands

A strategy to create a world-class integrated transport network for the West Midlands and its wider travel-to-work area over the next 30 years has been published by Centro, also known as the West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive. The strategy gives considerable attention to rail, both local and long distance, and High Speed Two.

www.centro.org.uk/about-us/corporate-publications/prospectus.aspx

Go ahead for Kenilworth station

Final approval was given on 12 December 2013 for expenditure from the New Stations Fund for the building of Kenilworth station. This will be part of a Coventry-Kenilworth-Leamington service to start in December 2016.

www.gov.uk/government/news/green-light-for-kenilworth-station

Call for better links to airports

Priority should be given to improving surface links to airports in order to alleviate the capacity issues that will exist before any major airport developments are carried out, Sir Howard Davies, chairman of the Airports Commission, has decided. In a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer ahead of the autumn statement and of his own interim report, Sir Howard acknowledged a number of rail projects planned or under construction, such as Crossrail and the western rail access to Heathrow, Thameslink and platform enhancements at Gatwick, the Northern Hub and Birmingham Gateway. He recommended a package of additional measures for each of the major airports in south east England. For Gatwick these included a significant remodelling of the entire station.



He recommended four-tracking the line from Stansted to Broxbourne Junction and providing links to London destinations in addition to Liverpool Street, specifically Stratford. For Heathrow there was an urgent need to consider rail access from the south. There were also recommendations on the suitability of rolling stock and ticketing issues.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/surface-access-letter

Transport hub for the Commonwealth Games completed

Transport Scotland announced that the rebuilding of Dalmarnock station was completed on 6 December 2013. Dalmarnock, in the east end of Glasgow, will be an important transport hub for major venues during the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

www.transportscotland.gov.uk/news/Gold-for-Gateway-to-the-Games

Access for disabled people to transport still unacceptably poor

A study into the access to transport for disabled people was published on 17 September 2013 by the House of Commons Transport Select Committee. The committee found there had been real improvements in the build-up to the 2012 Paralympic Games but there was a risk the momentum would be lost because further improvements planned by the Department for Transport

East Sussex rail strategy

A rail strategy and action plan for East Sussex has taken a major step forward when it was approved by the county council's lead members meeting on 12 November 2013. This includes support for the electrification and redoubling of both the Marshlink line from Ore to Ashford and the Uckfield line. The latter would be in advance of reopening the Uckfield-Lewes link which is also supported. The significance of Railfuture's Uckfield-Lewes campaign in advancing this proposal was recognised by officers and members. The campaign was covered in a lengthy article in the December issue of *Modern Railways*.

<http://news.uckfieldfm.co.uk/2013/rail-line-improvements-are-top-priority-says-council/>

Railfuture Uckfield-Lewes

had been abandoned or watered down. Specifically in relation to rail, the committee recommended that the requirement for advance notice for assistance should be phased out and also highlighted the fact that measures to improve the physical accessibility of stations does not take away from the importance of having staffed stations to assist all passengers.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmtran/116/116.pdf

Funding package agreed for a Crossrail station at Woolwich

The original plans for Crossrail did not include a station in Woolwich. However, a station box was constructed, paid for by Berkeley Homes which is carrying out a major development in the area (see picture below). The box was completed ahead of schedule in March. Now a funding package has



been put together so that the Department for Transport and Transport for London, as sponsors of Crossrail, have given the go-ahead for a station to be fitted out. This means that there will be services from the new station when Crossrail services start on the central part of the Crossrail route in 2018.

www.gov.uk/government/news/green-light-for-crossrail-station-at-woolwich

26 signal boxes listed after action by English Heritage and NR

A joint project between English Heritage and Network Rail has resulted in 26 signal boxes being given Grade II listing by the Department for Culture Media and Sport. They have been selected as a representative sample from around England of the 10,000 signal boxes that were in use in the 1940s of which fewer than 500 are still in use, a number which steadily declines with the expansion of regional centres. By their very nature, signal boxes were often prominent structures and have often become much-loved local landmarks. While listing should preserve this element of railway heritage, it does not necessarily prevent new uses being found for the buildings. For example those selected include the box at Totnes that is now used as a cafe.

www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/showcase/signal-box-project/

MPs investigate local decision-making on transport funding

The House of Commons transport select committee is to investigate the complex web of organisations involved in local transport decisions and how they work together. They will also consider the different funding streams available and the extent to which they meet local needs.

<http://tinyurl.com/k2zfvex>

Norwich in Ninety task force set up

Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne has announced the establishment of a task force of Department for Transport and Network Rail officials to meet with local MPs to examine ways of improving services for passengers along the East Anglian main line and measures to reduce travel times with the aim of a 90-minute journey between London and Norwich. He made his announcement in a speech to Norwich Chamber of Commerce on 7 November 2013. Rail campaigners in the area now have another reason for being in contact with their MPs.

<http://tinyurl.com/ns6jmq8>

Hope Valley improvements but Woodhead fight goes on

Network Rail has been consulting locally on plans to build two new stretches of track on the Hope Valley line at Grindleford and Dore. These will enable passenger services to pass slower freight trains. It is envisaged that, subject to the results of the consultation, an application for a Transport and Works Act order will be made in spring 2014 and the work completed by the end of 2018.

www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news-releases/Network-Rail-launches-public-consultation-on-plans-to-increase-rail-capacity-on-the-hope-valley-line-1eed.aspx

Meanwhile as the National Grid nears completion of its project to run electricity cables through Woodhead Tunnel, the Department for Transport has decided not to take up the option of buying the single bore Victorian tunnels so that they could be returned to the National Grid if the old line was reopened for rail services. The cost of maintaining the old tunnels, which will now be sealed, and the scope for the Hope Valley line to carry more traffic between Manchester and Sheffield, were cited.

www.gov.uk/government/speeches/woodhead-tunnels

Steering group backs improvements to Temple Meads station



Network Rail has entered into a formal understanding with Bristol City Council, West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, the Homes & Communities Agency and English Heritage over the development of Temple Meads station and its surroundings. A steering group from the organisations will develop a transformation strategy for the next 25 years and identify funding sources.

Over a shorter timescale, is the need to establish a wider transport hub by the time that the plans for enhanced rail services come into effect by the end of the decade.

www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news-releases/pact-to-drive-bristol-temple-meads-redevelopment-signed-1eb7.aspx

Rail supply chain forum established

A forum to strengthen the rail industry both at home and overseas is being created. The announcement was made during a joint visit to the new Hitachi train factory in Newton Aycliffe by the Secretaries of State for Business, Innovation and Skills and Transport. The forum, to be chaired by Terence Watson, president of Alstom UK, will be drawn from the two departments and from the railway supply industry.

www.gov.uk/government/news/strengthening-britains-train-building-industry

Folkestone Harbour station

The Department for Transport launched a consultation on 20 November for the formal closure of Folkestone Harbour station and the branch line to it from Folkestone East junction. Regular services on the line ceased in 2001, although charter trains continued until 2009. Responses to the consultation are required by 29 February 2014.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/folkestone-harbour-closure-of-branch-line-and-station>

Local value for money assessments

As local organisations such as local transport bodies become more involved in deciding priorities for transport investment projects in their areas, new forms of procedures and terminology are developing. Rail campaigners may find it useful to look at the advice for local decision makers on value for money assessments that was issued by the Department for Transport on 19 December 2013.

<http://tinyurl.com/mfrql7u>

Rail franchising

Crossrail dates fixed and bidders for concession shortlisted

Transport for London has announced that an invitation to tender to operate Crossrail services will be issued to Arriva, Keolis/Go Ahead, MTR and National Express. The Crossrail operation will be a concession, similar to that for London Overground, and will last for seven years. Initially the service will operate stopping trains between Liverpool Street and Shenfield from May 2015, to be followed by services through the central core in 2018 with the full route coming into operation in 2019.

www.crossrail.co.uk/news/articles/tfl-announces-shortlist-of-bidders-to-run-crossrail-services

Essex Thameside franchising relaunched

The Essex Thameside franchise competition, for the services between Southend and London Fenchurch Street, was under way and then paused in October 2012 following the West Coast main line franchise disruption with an extension being agreed for the continuance of the C2C service operated by National Express. The companies involved before then were Abellio, First Group, MTR and National Express. On 26 September 2013, the Government restarted the process by issuing a new invitation to tender for the service. It is expected that the successful bidder will be announced in May 2014 with the new franchise coming into operation in September 2014 and running for 15 years. As part of the documentation, the Department for Transport published its responses to the consultation on the franchise carried out in 2012 to which Railfuture contributed.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/essex-thameside-franchise-2013-invitation-to-tender

www.railfuture.org.uk/submissions

Thameslink Southern and Great Northern franchise bidding

The TSGN franchising process was also paused in October 2012 with the bidders at that time being Abellio, First Group, Govia, MTR and Stagecoach. A new invitation to tender was launched, also on 26 September 2013, with the successful bid to be announced in May 2014. The Thameslink and Great Northern elements of the franchise, together with some current Southeastern services, will start in September 2014, while the Southern services will be included in July 2014. The franchise will be for seven years and, unlike others, will operate on a management basis because of the revenue uncertainty during the completion of the Thameslink enhancement project. When fully operating, TSGN will be the largest franchise in terms of trains and passengers carried. Railfuture's response to the consultation when the franchise was being developed can be seen on the submissions pages of our website.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/thameslink-southern-and-great-northern-2013-invitation-to-tender

www.railfuture.org.uk/submissions

East Coast franchise prospectus

The prospectus for the inter-city East Coast service was published on 26 October 2013. Among the issues to be considered by prospective bidders are developing innovative timetables based on the core timetable to be

Winter resilience inquiry

Well before the storms over the Christmas period, the transport select committee of MPs launched an inquiry into the resilience of transport systems to bad winter weather. The inquiry includes the lessons learned by transport providers since the 2009-10 winter, the extent to which Government, local authorities and transport providers are prepared for adverse weather, and whether there is adequate coordination. The committee started hearing verbal evidence on 28 October 2013 when there was wide-scale transport disruption in southern England because of the St Jude's Day storm. The initial hearing had to start late. The final report *Ready and Waiting* was published on 3 January 2014, a day when there was also weather-related disruption in parts of the country.

<http://tinyurl.com/obv6c3y>

established by the Department for Transport, investment in improving consumer service on trains and in stations, identifying opportunities for investment at stations and elsewhere along the line, making the line more sensitive to the environment, involving communities along the route in local decisions and showing how economic growth will be developed along the route. The shortlisted bidders will be announced in January 2014 with the formal invitation to tender to be issued in February. The new franchise is expected to start in February 2015.

www.gov.uk/government/news/transforming-rail-travel-on-the-east-coast

High speed services to Sandwich and Deal

Southeastern has agreed to continue operating the peak-hour services to Sandwich and Deal using High Speed One, currently supported by Kent County Council, during the six-month franchise extension period, and discussions are ongoing over the content of the direct award that will be in place from October 2014 to June 2018. In making the announcement on 13 November, Rail Minister Stephen Hammond specifically referred to the views of local rail passengers. Trains 4 Deal, which had made representations on the subject, welcomed the announcement with the rider that it would be continuing to press for services to be extended to off-peak weekdays and weekends.

www.gov.uk/government/news/boost-for-high-speed-rail-services-to-sandwich-and-deal

www.trains4deal.com

Bidders announced for ScotRail franchise

The invitation to tender for the ScotRail franchise was issued on 19 November 2013 to five companies. The franchise will be the largest contract entered into by the Scottish Government. Abellio, Arriva, First Group, MTR and National Express have until the spring to submit their proposals, with the winning bid being announced in autumn 2014 and the new franchise starting in 2015. In making the announcement, transport minister Keith Brown said that in this round there would be a lesser emphasis on price than previously, with 36% of the weighting being for service improvements. The Caledonian Sleeper service is being separated from the main ScotRail franchise and bids from Arriva, First Group and Serco are currently being considered.

www.transportscotland.gov.uk/news/Rail-franchise-plans-unveiled

Great Western franchise extended to 2015

The Department for Transport announced on 3 October 2013 that First Great Western had agreed a direct contract to continue operating services until September 2015. Direct contracts cannot exceed two years so a further short-term contract will be required before a full new franchise comes into effect. The extension includes continuing a number of services that have been sponsored by local authorities and the introduction of two new coaches to enhance the sleeper services.

www.gov.uk/government/news/franchising-deal-to-boost-services-on-great-western-main-line

Views wanted on East Coast trains and stations

Passenger Focus is seeking passengers' views on the services on East Coast trains and stations to inform their response to the franchise consultation for the line. The questionnaire is available at:

<http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/press/have-your-say-on-east-coast-rail-services>

Network Rail to be officially in the public sector

The debt of Network Rail will be reclassified as being public debt from September 2014, following a decision by the Office for National Statistics. Beyond the fact that this will mean that Network Rail will have to report annually to Parliament, both NR and the Department for Transport say that this will make no other difference in the near future.

<http://tinyurl.com/kho43ks>

A guide to Transport and Works Act orders

Obtaining a Transport and Works Act order is an essential stage in almost all railway developments, including enhancements and reopenings, as well as trams, trolley buses and a range of other transport projects.

To many people, TWA or TWAO come over as jargon and therefore anyone new to, or on the fringes of rail campaigning may find useful a new Department for Transport publication, *Transport and Works Act orders – a brief guide*.

<http://tinyurl.com/b56j36r>

High Speed Two

Capacity important in new strategic case presented for HS2

A revised strategic and business case for the High Speed Two project was published on 29 October 2013. This emphasises the need for more capacity in the rail network and points out that carrying out significant enhancements to the West Coast, East Coast and Midland main lines would involve weekend closures over 14 years and achieve only a fraction of the planned capacity of HS2. It also looks to the ability to use the current lines for additional trains for commuters into the major cities, direct inter-regional services that do not at present exist and the freeing up of additional paths for freight. The benefit to cost ratio has been revised to 2.3, meaning a benefit of just over £2 for every £1 spent, which is comparable to Crossrail. It is suggested that if passenger numbers continue to rise to the middle of the century, the BCR would rise to 4.5. The Government will carry out a study to see how towns not directly served by HS2 can have a comparable or better service than they do at present.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-strategic-case-for-hs2

Network Rail boss Higgins to become head of HS2 Ltd

Sir David Higgins became chair of HS2 Ltd in January 2014, taking over from Sir Doug Oakervee. Sir David, who has been chief executive officer of Network Rail and before that of the Olympic Delivery Agency, has been tasked with reporting to the Secretary of State on ways in which, through better planning and contact with the industry, HS2 can be completed earlier and at lower cost. In announcing the appointment, Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin also announced that revised governance and sponsorship arrangements between the Government and HS2 Ltd had been published on the HS2 website.

www.gov.uk/government/news/sir-david-higgins-to-drive-down-cost-of-hs2

www.hs2.org.uk/about-hs2-ltd/annual-accounts-corporate-plan

Calculating how to increase the benefits of HS2 for Scotland

Following discussions with Transport Scotland, on 1 November 2013 the UK Government Transport Minister Baroness Kramer announced that HS2 was to consider ways to make further rail capacity and journey time improvements for both passengers and freight between northern England and Scotland. The long-term aim is to reduce the journey time between London and both Edinburgh and Glasgow to three hours or less. Scottish Transport Minister Keith Brown said that high speed rail has the potential to bring great benefits to Scotland and its inclusion added weight to the economic case across Britain. The report is to be sent to ministers during 2014.

www.gov.uk/government/news/next-phase-of-work-for-high-speed-2-and-scotland

Royal assent for one Bill as new hybrid Bill goes to Parliament

The High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013 received royal assent on 21 November 2013. This authorises further Government expenditure on HS2. The next legislative stage is detailed and comprehensive legislation. The High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Bill for the construction of the first stage of the project was introduced on 25 November 2013. This is in the form of a hybrid Bill, so-called because it includes elements of both private and public legislation and has a procedure for individuals and organisations to petition

Railfuture responses

Over recent months Railfuture has responded to official consultations including:

July 2013 Network Rail - Long Distance Market Study, Network Rail - Freight Market Study, Network Rail - London and South East Market Study, Network Rail - Regional Urban Market Study, Aviation Commission - Long Term Capacity Issues, HS2 - Phase 1 Environmental Statement, ORR - Proposed duty to cooperate

August 2013 ORR - Consultation on change in Direct Access

September 2013 ORR - Implementation of Periodic Review 2013, ORR - Draft determination of NR's outputs and funding for 2014-2019

October 2013 Rail North - Long term strategy for the North of England
November 2013 ORR - Contractual provisions to implement options for the capacity charge in CP5

January 2014 HS2 - Consultation on the route from West Midlands to Manchester, Leeds and beyond, Network Rail - Draft CP5 enhancements delivery plan

[Railfuture submissions](#)

the select committees of each House after the second reading, which is likely to take place in March 2014. This procedure, which in many respects is also the equivalent of a planning inquiry and has resulted in the longest-ever Bill to be presented to Parliament, was used for both Crossrail and the Channel Tunnel.

www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/hs2-leaflet.pdf

Environmental consultation published for HS2 Phase One

Alongside the HS2 hybrid bill, an environmental statement for the first phase of the line was published on 25 November 2013. This will be open for consultation until 24 January 2014 when the responses will be collated by an assessor appointed by Parliament. The multi-volume statement draws on responses to a draft environmental statement received from May to July 2013.

<http://tinyurl.com/l54gjwj>

Transport Committee backs HS2

The House of Commons transport select committee published a report in December 2013 which backed High Speed Two to provide the required long-term increase in capacity to the rail network but stated that serious consideration should be given to building concurrently from the north as well as from London. It was recommended that the Department for Transport should review the extent to which their standard appraisal system is appropriate for such major projects and that the Government should publish a strategy for ensuring that UK firms and workers gain the maximum benefit from HS2.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmtran/851/85102.htm

And finally ... the rest of the world goes fast forward



Left: Japan's E5 series Shinkansen Hayabusa trains run at 200mph. They were made by Kawasaki and Hitachi



Right: China's Harmony CRH 380A has a maximum operating speed of 235 mph but one train set a record in 2010. They were made by Qingdao Sifang

railaction February 2014

Published by Railfuture, the campaigning name of the Railway Development Society Ltd, a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No 5011634. Registered office: 24 Chedworth Place, Tattingstone, Suffolk IP9 2ND

What's on

A few of the events that can be found on the Railfuture website:

1 February 2014

Saturday. Railfuture North West AGM at Savoy Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool FY2 9SJ. 10.30 for 11.00 start. Lunch must be booked in advance.

1 February 2014

Saturday. Railfuture freight group meeting at Friends Meeting House Room F14, 6 Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS. 13.00. Contact: freight@railfuture.org.uk

3 February 2014

Monday. Ribble Valley Rail meeting at the New Inn, Parson Lane, Clitheroe BB7 2JN. 19.30.

5 February 2014

Wednesday. Association of Community Rail Partnerships Community Rail Workshop & Seminar, Terraces Hotel, 4 Melville Terrace, Stirling FK8 2ND.

6 February 2014

Thursday. London and South East regional branch, Sussex and Coastway division meeting. 18.00.

For more information, go to:

[Railfuture events](http://Railfuture.org.uk)