



September 2018

Welcome to the Rail User Express.

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Inevitably but regrettably, this month's issue is largely taken up by the impact of the May timetable change, exacerbated by ongoing industrial action. Passengers' habits are changing: many now use the car for some or all of their journey, which is bad news for the environment, but potentially fatal for further expansion of the railway. Winning them back will be a challenge for all of us.

Roger Smith

We continue with the usual roundup of news items from groups around the UK. Please keep your contributions coming: they are all gratefully received.

Friends of the Far North Line

The Far North Review Team, which was set up in 2016 to review every aspect of the Far North Line, met on 7 September to discuss progress so far, and future plans in respect of line capacity, higher speed limits, signalling, better trains and timetable structure. NR, ScotRail and Transport Scotland are working on a raft of improvements, some incremental and some radical. The fruits of the discussions cannot yet be shared, as announcements will be made in due course, but Mike Lunan and Ian Budd from FoFNL came away smiling broadly!

Rail Action Group, East of Scotland

Replacement of 6-car sets on the North Berwick line by 4-car sets due to the late rollout of the Hitachi Class 385 trains and a shortage of rolling stock led to serious overcrowding. However, from 10 September, passengers on the North Berwick and Dunbar route have enjoyed the new trains on as many as 15 weekday services, 12 on Saturdays, and more due later this year. Once central Scotland electrification is complete, a North Berwick - Edinburgh - Dunblane service will increase train set efficiency, reduce platform occupancy at Edinburgh, and open up more cross-city journeys.

In the 2018 Transport Focus National Rail Passenger Survey, customer satisfaction declined in almost all areas across all TOCs. ScotRail declined by 7% in 'Punctuality/Reliability' and 'Value for Money', and 6% in 'Overall Satisfaction'. Last year, both ScotRail and CrossCountry declined 15% in the category 'How well TOC deals with delays', whilst CrossCountry declined by 5% in 'Value for Money' and 'Crowding', and 3% in 'Punctuality/Reliability'. VTEC/LNER showed a decline of 8% in 'Punctuality/Reliability'.

The Scottish Government's new Local Rail Development Fund supports the appraisal of community-led proposals aimed at tackling local rail connectivity issues. East Lothian Council has been awarded funding for a fresh look at reinstating the Longniddry-Haddington branch. The study will form the Initial Appraisal stage of the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) process.

Cumbrian coast Rail Users' Group

Since 20 May, there has not been a weekend when every train ran. Weekdays have been a little better, but the situation deteriorated in July and August, mostly because of crew shortages. There were also some significant cancellations of last trains, particularly south of Whitehaven, where there is no other public transport and alternative rail replacement buses are hard to provide. Accordingly, many people have lost confidence in the reliability of the train service. People are driving part of their journey to be sure of getting home at the end of the day, while other commuters have given up trains completely. Even if a reliable service is restored, it will take a lot of publicity and persuasion to restore passengers' confidence. It is such a pity that, when at long last the line has got the Sunday service and improvements to weekday timetables, it all seems to have been thrown away.

South East Northumberland Rail User Group

SENRUG is dismayed by the DfT proposal that Cross Country trains should no longer call at smaller stations such as Morpeth, Alnmouth and Berwick – it contradicts NR's East Coast Main Line (ECML) Route Study! This said that long distance operators should make more such calls, as local services cannot cater for demand. So CC services at Alnmouth and Berwick should be retained at the same level, with a modest increase at Morpeth to give it a two hourly service. Also, CC and LNER services need to be co-ordinated: on Sundays, Morpeth enjoys two trains in 6 mins, but then nothing for 3 hrs. Chair Dennis Fancett notes that, in alternate hours, three trains leave Newcastle for Edinburgh within 20 mins of each other: "We accept that one of them should travel non-stop, but at least one train an hour should call at the region's key centres and Dunbar...[and also] at Cramlington...as it will soon be Northumberland's largest town, serving a population of 39,000." Moreover, cutting out Northumberland stations would not necessarily speed up CC trains, as additional local trains with less acceleration would hold them up.

Northumberland County Council (NCC) received the GRIP 2 Report on reopening the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne line in September 2016, but what has happened since? In October 2016, NCC announced it was proceeding with GRIP 3, but this did not mean it had signed the contract with NR, only that staff were authorised to negotiate terms and the cost. In May 2017, the Conservatives took control, and a month later confirmed that reopening the line was its number one priority. However, it balked at the costs both of the GRIP 3 Study, and of full re-opening. To see how they could be reduced, even if that meant a simpler scheme, it asked NR around November 2017 to undertake a further report, prior to GRIP 3. SENRUG understands that the results of this "GRIP 2B" report are disappointing, and do not offer the level of savings anticipated. In his blog, the Chief Economist to the Bank of England said his hunch was that the economic benefits of re-opening the line would be "whopper", so the challenge now is to turn his hunch into reality. SENRUG is hopeful the NCC will make a positive announcement soon.

Support The Oldham Rochdale Manchester lines

Oldham Council resolved to work with local groups to campaign for longer term improvements in rail services, and to pledge its support for campaigns, including that of the Manchester Evening News for greater investment and increased powers for Transport for the North to provide a rail service for Oldham and the North West that meets local needs, and is managed in the North. The Council will ask Transport for Greater Manchester to take every opportunity to push for a more stable and reliable timetable, improved access, and increased investment in rail services.

In a seminar organised by the Railway Division of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, Peter Dearman, Head of Network Electrification in 2011, claimed that 'We are sleep walking towards nailing down the coffin lid on rail electrification. Unless we actively and passionately address cost reduction, that will be the result'. His primary concern was the regulations applying to electrical clearances, in particular the ORR's interpretation of the relevant European Technical Specification for Interoperability. At the heart of the issue is the increase in the minimum distance between the platform and the live equipment from 2.75m to 3.5m. But in the 60 years during which the UK standard has been 2.75m, an estimated 15bn passengers have used the stations on the electrified network with no recorded incident involving electric shock. Together with other user groups and TravelWatch NorthWest, STORM wonders if it could put its weight behind an approach to NR, ORR and the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB)?

Which? magazine says that railways are plagued by delays, cancellations and overcrowding, but enough is enough. It wants help to create a new [Rail Passenger Charter](#), to highlight the issues most affecting them.

To be even marginally profitable, biomass trains have to run at 25 wagons with one engine. They appear to pass Castleton South Junction at 20-25 mph, which was acceptable when the service started. However, in the enhanced Northern timetable, these trains need to lose only a few minutes, and the passenger trains start backing up behind them. If the line is to operate successfully with higher densities, it needs to reduce the impact of late running trains by providing passing loops or more platforms at Rochdale.

Northern Weekly Salvo

Following the new May timetable, many 'community rail' routes seem to have suffered disproportionately. The suspension of Lakes Line services got major publicity, but other routes such as Preston – Ormskirk, Cumbrian Coast, South Fylde and East Lancashire continue to struggle; restoring services to normal will be a huge task. Meanwhile, many people have made alternative arrangements, and will need much persuasion to return. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the meltdown, the need for strong, well-resourced CRPs that can get out into the community to win back customers has never been stronger.

A Bolton University students' poster for the Bolton Station Community Development Partnership to promote the station gala has been short-listed in the 'small arts project' category in the annual Community Rail Awards in October.

Huddersfield Penistone Sheffield Rail Users Association

The May timetable debacle did not affect the Penistone Line to any great degree; on the contrary, changes sought by HPSRUA have brought new journey options, the return of hourly weekday stops at Elsecar, an hourly Sunday service throughout the day, and a later, more attractive last train from Huddersfield, although late running at Sheffield and Huddersfield can cause pathing issues, delaying local departures.

Manchester - Leeds electrification may be in stasis, but West Yorkshire Combined Authority is seeking more stations at Elland, White Rose and East Leeds. Plans for a two-platform station with large car park at Low Moor next to the Elland by-pass are at an advanced stage. White Rose would be on the main line near Leeds, and serve the adjacent shopping centre, but the sharp curve and the proximity of Cottingley station could prove difficult. East Leeds Parkway would take the pressure off trains terminating at Leeds station.

Andrew Oldfield argues that Woodhead tunnel was once the future and should be again: with its cramped formation and three Victorian tunnels, the Hope Valley line cannot meet the target for a 30-minute service between Sheffield and Manchester; in doing so, Woodhead would take much traffic from the M1, M62 and A628. The lack of a viable rail alternative has made the case for road improvements, but reinstating Woodhead could drive a modal shift from road to rail, of great benefit to the environment.

The regeneration of Huddersfield station and its imposing Victorian goods shed has taken a step closer. Phase one of the Gateway to Huddersfield project, taking around two years and costing over £10 million, will add new entrances to the east, create a taxi hub, and assemble nearby parcels of land. However, future plans for a new platform and the layout of existing platforms, tracks and signalling; a multi-storey and surface car park connected to the town centre; and a new western entrance to the subway still await funding. When delivered, the station will become one of West Yorkshire's key transport hubs.

Friends of the Barton Line

This year, 102 services were cancelled or curtailed out of 2,858, usually as a result of signalling issues, unit failures and lack of crew, but also a spell of heavy winds and snow, and two tragic suicides. Delays are frequent though, and any cancellation or missed connection of a two-hourly service can be very off-putting.

By now, Stagecoach, Arriva and Abellio should have submitted bids for the East Midlands franchise starting next August. Moving the Barton line from the Northern franchise could affect the way it is run. When the new Train Service Requirement comes into force in December 2021, the Lincoln – Grimsby service should increase from roughly two-hourly to hourly. The FBL Chairman and Secretary were actively involved in both this and the Easier Fares consultations, and other FBL members were encouraged to make their views known.

Redeployment of Northern's spare unit had two effects: Class 185 units were reintroduced for the first and last weekday services, but with calls at New Clee and Ulceby stations replaced by road transport; and the 0530 Doncaster - Cleethorpes service was withdrawn at short notice; it should be reinstated in the new franchise, but will come from Lincoln, not Doncaster.

Subject to tree felling to improve the sight line around the sharp bend in the road, the Bystable Lane level crossing is now normally open to vehicular traffic, relieving the gatekeeper of incessant footwork. It will still be manned at site, and controlled from Goxhill signal box. With NR approval, a volunteer repainted the gates and fences at Bystable Lane, Goxhill and Oxmarsh crossings.

English Regional Transport Association

ERTA is concerned that, unless East West Rail (EWR) Consultants [*actually NR - Ed*] publish a Bedford-Cambridge rail route soon, speculation on possible options will provoke nimbyism. [*My concern is that speculative development may be removing options even as they are being weighed – Ed.*]

As well as the Great Central line, the Cobbler line (Bedford-Northampton) and Peak rail (Buxton-Matlock), ERTA is now campaigning to reopen Northampton-Peterborough that closed in 1964. There would be a new station at Wellingborough, and parkway stations at Raunds, Thrapston, the A14 intersection and Oundle. A new pamphlet lists no fewer than 33 such projects.

Hitchin Rail User and Commuter Groups

HRUG and its sister Commuter Group (HRC) cooperated on joint response to the House of Commons Transport Select Committee inquiry into the May timetable debacle, and to offer constructive suggestions and priorities for improvement for their MP to put to GTR. The list of priorities is based on the 694 responses to a survey by the HRC, which sprang up on Facebook in April and now has 1,400 members! Many of the proposed changes involve additional calls that could be delivered with no extra resource.

Association of Public Transport Users (Bedford Branch of Thameslink)

APTU's response to the Transport Select Committee and to the Office of Rail & Road focused on the timetabling process rather than the outcome. It will also respond to the Rail Delivery Group's Easier Fares survey, noting that whilst the fare structure, the balance between peak and off-peak travel and the delivery technology are all in scope, the way that the burden is shared between the various taxpayers and customer is not [*Because that is a political decision outside its remit – Ed.*] APTU is pleased that the campaign to extend the compensation scheme to non-season ticket holders has paid off.

Sudbury Town Residents' Association

STRA has now officially "adopted" Sudbury Town station, and the campaign to improve its skeletal service - just four weekday services into London in the morning, and four back in the evening - was picked up by the Brent & Kilburn Times. Graham Larkbey said: "It's no use if you work part-time or flexible hours. You can only go up to London in the morning and back in the evening, which is plainly ludicrous for a London suburban station." Residents of the nearby Barham Village housing development are making more use of it, but during the day and at weekends it is a magnet for anti-social behaviour. STRA is in discussion with Chiltern Railways about possible improvements, but if they fail to act, will ask the DfT to specify a proper Train Service Requirement when the franchise is renewed in 2021.

Barking and Gospel Oak Rail User Group

On 29 August, two of the seven trains on the line broke down, and there are no spares. Cancellation of the 1750 and 1805 from Gospel Oak caused a 45 min gap in the service; hundreds of passengers were unable to board the trains, and had to find another way to get home. Cancellations persisted until the end of the day. BGORUG has requested an urgent meeting to explore ways in which the peak service could be made more reliable, perhaps by withdrawing some off-peak services, allowing more time to maintain the fleet of 2-carriage diesel trains. These are due to transfer to another operator at the end of November, but the eight new 4-carriage electric trains that should replace them are now 8 months overdue.

Subsequently, TfL claimed in a local newspaper that BGORUG's press release regarding the delays was untrue. Secretary Glenn Wallis replied: "TfL know our press release to be correct because it was sourced from data that originated from the Arriva London Rail control office via the Real Time Trains website. BGORUG has received no communication from TfL since 16 August; it last wrote to TfL on 23 August. The deputy editor of a large circulation rail industry magazine admitted to me recently that he was fed up with the continuing misleading statements being issued from the Mayor's office and TfL."

Cotswold Line Promotion Group

The Cotswold line has seen some of the worst disruption in 40 years of the CLPG's existence. Delays, destinations cut short, or complete cancellations have thwarted plans for anniversary events. Most disturbing has been the regular cancellation of the 0537 Paddington to Worcester service, leaving schoolchildren stranded at Honeybourne, Evesham and Pershore, with no alternative transport. And to compound the bad news, the timetable improvements planned for January will not now happen until at least next May.

The role of the Task Force chaired by Lord Faulkner is therefore to make the case for faster and more frequent services, and then to make them happen: what could the current infrastructure support, and what are the priorities and outcomes of incremental improvement? The ageing and fragile infrastructure around Worcester may not even support the improvements already planned. In the interim, Julian Palfrey proposes what he believes to be a workable solution: an hourly semi-fast London-Worcester service taking just 2 hrs, with alternate trains extended to Hereford, and an hourly commuter style service between Paddington and Moreton-in-the Marsh, which would serve as a Gloucestershire hub station.

A CLPG anniversary event that did happen also celebrated the extension of the Gloucestershire/Warwickshire Steam Railway from Toddington to a brand new station at Broadway. With ample free parking at Cheltenham Racecourse station, residents and tourists are taking advantage of the new link to visit Broadway by train. The line is now only 5.5mls short of its original terminus at Honeybourne, [*so could we eventually see a Cheltenham – Stratford-upon-Avon rail service? See next story – Ed.*]

Shakespeare Line Promotion Group

The SLPG seeks to reinstate the six-mile rail link between Stratford-upon-Avon and Long Marston, and to upgrade the freight branch from there to Honeybourne on the Cotswold line. Ove Arup & Partners "GRIP 3" [Business Case Study](#) found that reopening the link is feasible, and has a sound business case. However, Worcester County Council believes it is contingent on a half-hourly service on the North Cotswold line.

Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group

Street parking in Bedwyn is making life difficult for users of The Stores and the Post Office/Bakery. Users of The Stores' free parking are encouraged to patronise the shop in lieu of a parking fee. There will be a closure from 8-11 October for Newbury electrification, but the end is now in sight: Intercity Express Trains have started to operate in the Kennet Valley, and with work on the new sidings for Bedwyn having begun, GWR is making good progress on delivering new trains and additional capacity.

Pilning Station User Group

Sadly, the Group failed to persuade GWR to repeat last year's special summer Sunday morning stop to cater for the Pilning Music Festival at the nearby Plough Inn – even though it attracted more passengers than the total station usage figure for the preceding year! GWR have also turned down appeals to reinstate the 1334 Saturday service, so people could visit the station (and the pub) and catch the 1534 back. It is as if GWR did not want to encourage more people to use it. Even so, usage of the station's Saturday-only, eastbound-only service continues to rise. The campaign continues to improve services, restore platform lighting, and reinstate the footbridge to enable westbound trains to call once again. The Wave inland surfing facility under construction near the station would be a significant source of new traffic for a fully operational station with a proper service. Further details: www.pilningstation.uk

RAILFUTURE

Railfuture welcomes new members, both individual and groups: the more we are, the more effective our campaigns. Join Railfuture [here](#). From the "Membership Types" menu top right, select either the appropriate category of individual or, to affiliate, select "RUG or similar". Read the latest from Railfuture and its Campaigns by clicking on [News and views](#), [Press releases](#), [Railfuture in the news](#), and [Railfuture consultation responses](#).



Nominations for Railfuture's seventh RUG Awards are open until Saturday 1 September in nine categories:

- 1 & 2 - Best newsletter - Gold and Silver awards [not available to last year's winners]
- 3 & 4 - Best website - Gold and Silver awards [not available to last year's winners]
- 5 - Best social media promotion
- 6 - Best campaign
- 7 - Best individual RUG campaigner [for Railfuture members only]
- 8 - Best new group
- 9 - Judges' Special Award

Its [website](#) explains how to make a nomination/submission. RUGs and individuals can self-nominate, except in Category 7. A Railfuture Vice-President will visit to assess each nominee, offering a photo opportunity. An independent Judging Panel, including the Vice-Presidents, will make the awards on merit; the Judges' Special Award is at its sole discretion. The awards will be presented at the [annual conference](#) in Reading on Saturday, 10 November.

ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIPS

The East Hampshire CRP invites groups of up to 50 to take a one-off free return trip on its local line. Requests must come from a community group or organisation, but may be young or old, with or without disabilities, fit or unfit. The CRP will plan the day, and accompany the group to help it use the trains safely and confidently. All it asks in return is that the group displays some leaflets, or spends a couple of hours volunteering at one of its stations. Please call Lucy on 07988 043870 to discuss in more detail.

TRANSPORT FOCUS

Transport Focus is a member of the Scottish Government's Stakeholder Reference Group examining the potential pool of bidders for the next ScotRail franchise. It is pleased that this has been widened to allow public sector bidders, allowing scope for increased competition to the benefit of passengers.

...and now the rest of the news ...

DfT has updated its [list](#) of Rail vehicles built or refurbished to modern accessibility standards.

It has also updated its [response](#) to the consultation on the Great Western franchise. Rather than split it, the DfT is encouraging decentralisation. Respondents wanted Okehampton services reinstated, and the 'Metro West' scheme around Bristol, Bath and Gloucester completed. A Bristol – Oxford service was suggested, calling at reopened stations on the route, and eventually linking to EWR from Oxford to Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge. The routes most frequently cited for improved frequency were Paddington to Reading, Newbury, Didcot and Bedwyn; Cardiff – Portsmouth, and Bristol – Weymouth. Respondents also suggested more frequent services in the evening and on Sundays.

Roads Minister Jesse Norman has [announced](#) that the Oxford – Cambridge Expressway will be built within Corridor B. This is roughly triangular in shape: from M1 Jn13, east of Milton Keynes, then either directly to the A34 at Milton, passing east of Oxford, or west to Upper Heyford and then south.

“Building the new link close to [EWR] will also offer more options for the commercial development of up to 1 million new homes, in line with proposals by the National Infrastructure Commission, and encourage more people to travel by train rather than by cars.” [*So why build it at all? It would offer even more encouragement and benefit the environment to four-track Didcot-Oxford, and link new developments to P&R stations at Radley, Horspath for the Cowley line, Dorton on the Chiltern Main Line, and Quainton Road and Winslow on the EWR – Ed.*]

Even before the DfT announcement, Patricia Wright wondered why EWR won't serve Quainton Road. Removing Oxford's unique former LMS station to rural Buckinghamshire deprived the city of part of its civic heritage, and the only public transport to the museum is an hourly bus from Aylesbury. She also rejects the idea of guided buses on the proposed Cowley line.

The DfT has also published a Synthesis of Evidence of the impact of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). It supported 96 projects in local authorities between 2011 and 2015 and, at £540 million, was the largest-ever competitive funding programme for sustainable transport initiatives in England. Twelve 'Large Projects' received almost half (46%) of the total grant, and the 84 'Small Projects' grants of up to £5 million each. The programme achieved its two core policy objectives: to support local economies, and to reduce carbon emissions. *Per capita* traffic volumes in the Large Projects fell by 2.6%, against just 0.3% in a comparator group.

Transport for London has published a [Consultation Report](#) on its proposals for a new Thames crossing between Rotherhithe and Canary Wharf. Of the 6,094 responses to the consultation, 93% supported or strongly supported the proposal, and 85% supported the preferred option of a navigable bridge.

May 2019 should see Meridian Water station in North London replace Angel Road, just 500m away, which is difficult to access, and has only a Monday-Friday peak service and none at all at weekends. A third track along the Lea Valley from Stratford to Meridian Water will allow four-trains-an-hour to Ikea and Tesco, even at weekends. In 2013, Del Goddard, Enfield Council's cabinet member for business and regeneration, said: “This investment in rail infrastructure will transform the economic landscape in the upper Lea Valley. The scheme is the holy grail of rail upgrades.”

A Glasgow Crossrail would reinstate a 3km missing link. Transport Scotland said a Local Rail Development Fund decision may be made soon. The project has been professionally confirmed as having a good business case, satisfying all the requirements of the STAG2 assessment criteria. Campaigners want to see rail services developed as a sustainable alternative to commuting by car.

Upgrading Merseyrail platforms with “sliding step technology” for new Stadler trains will allow wheelchair users to board unaided. Merseyrail claims it will then be the most accessible rail network in Britain. Work will start in October and continue for 18 months. The new four-car trains will replace the 40-year-old three-car trains, and are expected to enter service in two years time. They will carry 50% more passengers, with wider aisles and more space for wheelchairs, bikes, prams and luggage, and have USB charging facilities for phones and laptops at every seat.

Rather than separate southern and western links to Heathrow, [Windsor Link Railway](#) suggests an integrated solution both to provide the local links, and to form the hub of a London Orbital Railway with links to HS1, HS2 and EWR. Meanwhile, [HS4Air](#) is proposing a new high-speed line between HS1 at Ashford and HS2 at Denham via Gatwick and Heathrow Airports, and with a link to the Great Western Main Line.

In its Stakeholders' Annual Report, South Western Railway (SWR) reflects on a challenging first year of its franchise, which began during the upheaval at Waterloo. Major incidents included a fire on the approach to Waterloo, severe weather, train failures in critical locations and the on-going industrial dispute. The recent spell of hot weather also took its toll, with heat-related speed restrictions and equipment failures. Next year, performance will be improved through more effective crew rostering, decision support software in the Control Centre to aid recovery from service disruption, enhanced support for the Class 444/450 fleets, and speeding up modifications to boost reliability. In the longer term, a new fleet of Class 701 trains will streamline the suburban network, as every train will have similar braking and acceleration characteristics.

[Impossible Timetables](#) is a damning submission into the May timetable disruption inquiry by Toby Hart, who was once a NR train planner based in Leeds. It backs up Railfuture's contention that NR's centralisation of the timetable planning function at Milton Keynes to reduce costs (at DfT's direction) contributed to the failure of the timetable through a loss of expertise, and insufficient time to resolve conflicts.

CONSULTATIONS

- Somerset County Council: [draft Passenger Transport Strategy 2018-26](#) - closes 23 September.
- House of Commons Transport Committee Inquiry: [the bus system in England outside London](#), closes 24 September.
- Wealden District Council: [Local Plan](#), closes 8 October.
- Southampton City Council: [Connected Southampton - Transport Strategy 2040](#), closes 16 October.
- TfGM: [The Future of Manchester City Centre Transport](#), closes 17 October.
- DfT: [Angel Road Station Closure](#), closes 21 November.

Please advise [Roger Blake](#) of any other consultation, eg that of a local Transport Authority.

EVENTS

Do please keep your events coming, both to me and to [Roger Blake \(Railfuture\)](#), who maintains the Railfuture [List of Events](#) to attend, and now a [List of Key Dates](#) for consultations, franchise changes, CP6 planning, service alterations for major rail projects etc. As a Calendar of Events embedded in a document may be discarded, and that is a problem if the venue changes from month to month, a stand-alone copy would be very helpful.

Blob colour indicates the various types of event:

- Railfuture events (rail user group representatives are cordially invited).
- National & regional rail events.
- Local Group events.

September

- Saturday 15. Cumbrian Coast Rail Users' Group, St Cuthbert's church, **Seascale**, 1350
- Wednesday 19. Rail Action Group, East of Scotland AGM, **Reston** Village Hall, 1900 for 1930.
- Wednesday 19. Friends of the Barton Line AGM, The Sloop, **Barton**, 2000 (also 21 November).
- Thursday 20. Magor Action Group On Rail, Golden Lion, **Magor**, 1930 (and the 3rd Thursday every month).
- Saturday 22. Railfuture East Midlands, first class lounge, **East Midlands Parkway** station, 1330.
- Tuesday 25. Levenmouth Rail Campaign, Fife College, Methilhaven Road, **Buckhaven**, KY8 1EA, 1830 (also last Tuesday of every month except December and July).
- Tuesday 25. BoltonStationCDP, Platform 5, **Bolton** station, 1930.
- Wednesday 26. Rugby Rail Users' Group AGM, Claremont Centre (Age UK), 43 Clifton Rd, **Rugby**, 1930.
- . Saturday 29. Railfuture East Anglia, Friends Meeting House, Upper Goat Street, Norwich NR2 1EW, 1800.

October

- Thursday 4. ACoRP Community Rail Awards, Doubletree by Hilton, Cambridge Street, **Glasgow**
- Saturday 6. Railfuture Branches and Groups Day, **Birmingham**, 1030.
- TravelWatch SouthWest October General Meeting, Somerset County Cricket Club, 7 Priory Avenue, **Taunton**, Somerset, TA1 1XX, 1100.
- Saturday 6. English Regional Transport Association Guildford Forum, Rodboro Buildings, 1-10 Bridge St, **Guildford**, GU1 4RY, 1400
- Saturday 13. Cumbrian Coast Rail Users' Group, Methodist Church hall, **Seascale**, 1305 – NB change of time
- Monday 15. Avocet Line Rail Users Group AGM, Globe Hotel, **Topsham**, 1900.
- Tuesday 16. Felixstowe Travel Watch, Salvation Army Church, **Felixstowe**, 1430.
- Saturday 20. Railfuture Herts and Beds, St Paul's Church, Blandford Road, **St Albans**, 1045.
- Tuesday 23. Chesham and District Transport Users' Group AGM, Town Hall, **Chesham**, 1930 (also 11 December.)
- Monday 29. English Regional Transport Association London Forum, The Metropolitan Bar, 7 Station Parade, Marylebone Road, **London** NW1 5LA

Further Ahead

- TBN November. TravelWatch SouthWest AGM. **Exeter**.
- 6 November. English Regional Transport Association Rugby Forum, Rupert Brooke, 8-10 Castle St, **Rugby**, CV21 2TP, 1400
- 10 November. Huddersfield Penistone Sheffield Rail Users Association. Details TBN.
- 12 November. Skipton East Lancs Rail Action Partnership, Herriots Hotel, **Skipton**; (Also 28 January 2019, Earby, and 11 March, AGM at The Lesser Municipal Hall, Albert Road, Colne).
- 24 November. English Regional Transport Association Aylesbury Forum, The Bell, 40 Market Square, **Aylesbury**, HP20 1TX, 1400.
- 27 November. Railfuture Surrey, Redhill.

- 23 February. English Regional Transport Association Rugby Forum, Rupert Brooke, 8-10 Castle St, **Rugby**, CV21 2TP, 1400
- 9 March. English Regional Transport Association Olney Forum, The Bull, 9 Market Place, **Olney**, MK46 4EA, 1400.
- 23 March. English Regional Transport Association Aylesbury Forum, The Bell, 40 Market Square, **Aylesbury**, HP20 1TX, 1400.

Disclaimer: unless otherwise indicated, views expressed in Rail User Express are those of the contributing organization, and not necessarily shared by Railfuture.

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