

Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

Number 74: Autumn 2026

Thanks to Andrew Whitworth for this great shot, July this year, of Middlesbrough-Whitby train at Grosmont. It's roundly 40 years since "Class 156" trains first appeared so due for replacement soonish, but not bad for old stock! Only two cars: more trains with more coaches would be grand. Understandably, Northern's fleet replacement plans include a lot of tri-modes, diesel still in mix. (Dare we mention energy efficiency? Probably not.) TransPennine Express have just ordered 29 electric + battery trains for services to Yorkshire outposts.

A stone's throw out of shot is the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. The Warings took a September break in Whitby – out on the Coastliner bus from York. Lots of folks queued at Whitby's NYMR-run ticket office. If you're just going to Grosmont, or further up the scenic Esk Valley, it's a lot cheaper on the Northern train. Shockingly on past experience, the heritage railway was temporarily unable to sell national rail tickets, some discussion with the big railway awaiting resolution, hopefully soon. I hate ticket vending machines and phone tickets. What price transport integration?! Lots of heritage diesel on NYMR Whitby-Pickering (moorland fire risk with steam, I suspect). Great atmosphere included that wonderful oily old-diesel odour, Grosmont thick with it by end of day.

Roll on decarbonisation! – JSW, 20 Sep'26

As always, all opinions in YRC belong to the named or signed authors and are not necessarily those of Railfuture or its Yorkshire Branch. Enjoy! – JSW

Railfuture Yorkshire branch

President: Alan Whitehouse

Vice-presidents: Mike Crowhurst, Alan Williams

railfuture

More investment needed for Penistone line upgrade...

by **Ian Joustra**, vice-chair, HPSRUA

£48 million was, as readers will recall, allocated for some initial improvements to the route between Barnsley and Huddersfield several years ago but was then put on hold. Then £1.5 million was released last year to prepare a business case. HPSRUA, the Huddersfield-Penistone-Sheffield Rail Users Association, met with the consultants to discuss our thoughts and had some useful discussions with them. The business case has now been completed, but is – inevitably – awaiting sign-off by the Department for Transport and the Treasury. Whatever the outcome, more will be needed to enable a reliable half hourly service, as the £48m will be nowhere near enough to complete the job, but will allow some

initial enabling works, as well as line speed improvements.

It is worth noting that without significant improvements to the signalling south of Barnsley, and to the track layout at the north end of Sheffield station, it is envisaged that the second service will turn back at Barnsley.

MP support

As with other projects at present, the government say they are going to go ahead and then say it will be after 2030. A recent announcement of £45 billion for the railways in the North was followed by news that just over £1 billion would be made available for business cases to be prepared. That should take us to 2029 and leave it for the next Parliament to potentially cancel. But let's not be cynical.

The MP for Penistone and Stocksbridge, Marie Tidball is very supportive of improvements to the service on the Penistone line, and has stated that she would like to see a half hourly service. Tidball is pushing for improvements to the infrastructure to allow this to happen, and is also keen to see the proposal for a park and ride facility at Penistone go ahead. This would include a station footbridge with lifts. A business case has been produced for this and public consultation events have taken place. The plan is for 100 parking spaces, including electric car charging, on the east side of the line, with access from Laird Way. The new bridge would be located at the north end of the platforms, so that it can also serve the car parks on both sides. While some people might be unhappy at the closing of the level crossing, it has been deemed to present too great a risk for when services increase, and the camber of the track is such that it doesn't comply with disability regulations anyway.

Funding for this scheme is not from the £48 million and it is hoped that work can start later this year.

On the subject of stations, it is intended that the upgrade will address various issues along the line, notably the lack of non-step access to the platforms at Shepley (southbound direction) and Honley. →



Sheffield to Huddersfield train retreats over Penistone viaduct. New footbridge to access enlarged car park, safer than present uneven boarded crossing, will be at far (north) end of platforms. Sounds like this could happen soon delivering benefits for all. Later, we hope new loops will enable more trains at least Huddersfield-Barnsley, but more capacity is needed on to Sheffield. Photo by Ian Joustra.



These ancient 150s, standard on the Penistone line, are due to be replaced soon – as “soon” goes on our railway – and their replacements can't come soon enough (see also our piece later in this YRC). This is Barnsley, not a bad station, with bus interchange just over the bridge. Photo Ian J

→ Passengers at the Huddersfield end of the line are having a difficult time at present. The ongoing work for the TransPennine upgrade is causing a lot of cancellations, diversions and bus replacement to our services as well as the route between Manchester and Leeds. The railway we will end up with will be fantastic, but we hope it will be worth all the disruptions over such a long period of time, and that it may present more connecting journey opportunities.

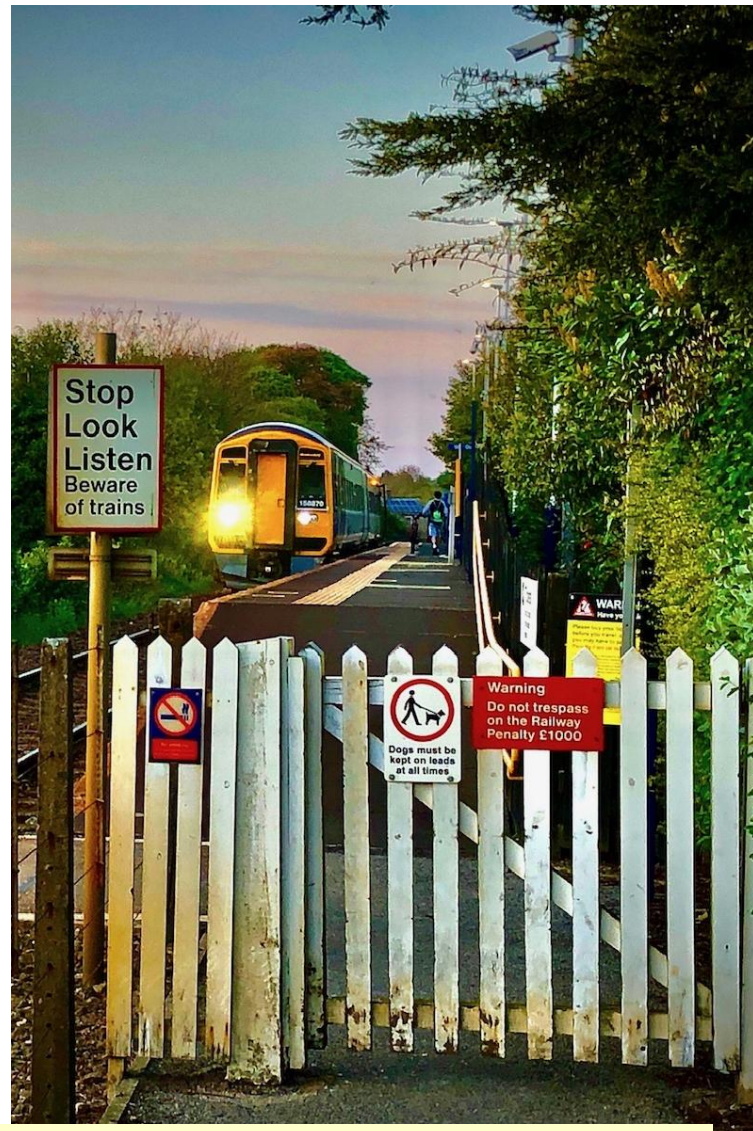
TRU has benefits too!

The upgrade has at least enabled the lengthening of the Penistone Line platform at Huddersfield (although replacing the canopy and shelter has not yet happened), and work has finally started to remove the old coaches and generally tidy up the area behind the platform.

Present services on the Penistone Line suffer cancellations and disruptions like many services on the national network. While we have a commitment from Northern to allocate 3-car sets on every service, the reality seems to be that this is not always achieved. We require three units to operate the services. If one is only a two cars it just feels likely that one will fall on a peak-time service.

Matters aren't helped by the fact that the Class 150 units used on the line are the oldest on the network – many now over 40 years old. Northern have indicated that the newer Class 195s may appear on the line when they are displaced from other services by new trains that haven't yet been ordered!

Even if this does come to fruition, it will create another set of problems in that the platform lengthening done at some stations along the line a few years ago was only the bare minimum to fit a 3-car 150. Newer 3 car trains have longer coaches so the platforms will be too short for them by about 6m (20ft). Selective door opening may be a possibility.



Beware of trains! Here at least is a better one, Sheffield to Huddersfield by class 158 "express" unit, heading west at Silkstone Common. Photo by Ian Joustra.

... and bring back Barrow Hill!

Chesterfield-Waverley-Sheffield-Dronfield-Chesterfield service could work, writes Andrew Oldfield

The Barrow Hill innovation centre DRIIVe¹ mentioned in YRC73 needs to be accompanied by innovative action so that this operational rail line can realise its full potential. Currently this is a freight route but sees daily scheduled passenger diversions. Reopening of this former main line² to regular passenger trains would tackle some long-standing issues at Sheffield to deliver a much better rail offer across the wider region.

The solution? Copy the Camp Hill line reopening (Birmingham to King's Norton) by launching a new loop link. After the massively successful reopenings Newcastle-Ashington and Exeter-Okehampton³, we must grasp the opportunity and secure the same. With some planning already done as part of the shelved Restoring Your Railway scheme, the scope for creating a range of new journey opportunities must not be wasted. Setting off from Chesterfield, first stop would be Barrow Hill itself, serving the new centre located next to the former shed roundhouse. There could be other stations before the line takes the chord to join the Lincoln-Sheffield route in South Yorkshire. New station proposed at Waverley would be served located next to a major development site between Woodhouse and Darnall. →

¹ Derbyshire Rail Industry Innovation Vehicle (DRIIVe): see also [New Rail Innovation Centre opens its doors](#) and [Derbyshire Rail Industry Innovation Vehicle \(DRIIVe\) - Destination Chesterfield | Destination Chesterfield](#)

² Part of Midland Railway direct line Chesterfield-Rotherham.

³ And Bristol-Portishead now being built and expected to open later next year or early 2029 – JSW.

→ Sheffield's main station is a timeless scene, reflecting decades of investment starvation, a sorry plight that has left the city an undisputed rail pauper. In part this has been self-inflicted, with negative mentality and apathy towards rail, failure over decades to appreciate the value of Midland as a transport hub, despite modernisation of its front. The last new station in South Yorkshire was Adwick-le-Street in 1993; then development derailed for three decades.

Going back to our Barrow Hill and Waverley proposal, what's to be done about lack of turnround platform space in Sheffield station? How about running the trains hourly through Sheffield and back to Chesterfield via Dronfield – another town that desperately needs enhanced rail provision. (At present most of the day one per hour calls.) A second unit could provide a service in the opposite direction – so just two units needed. Future development could reinstate main line platforms at Dore & Totley also enabling much needed increase in service. Using the through platforms at Sheffield would improve regulation compared with going in and out of the north end bays.

South Yorkshire feels like the UK's rail development exception. Will we ever come in from the cold and get “on the right track”? Will it ever happen? History suggests that there might be more chance of a snowflake in hell...

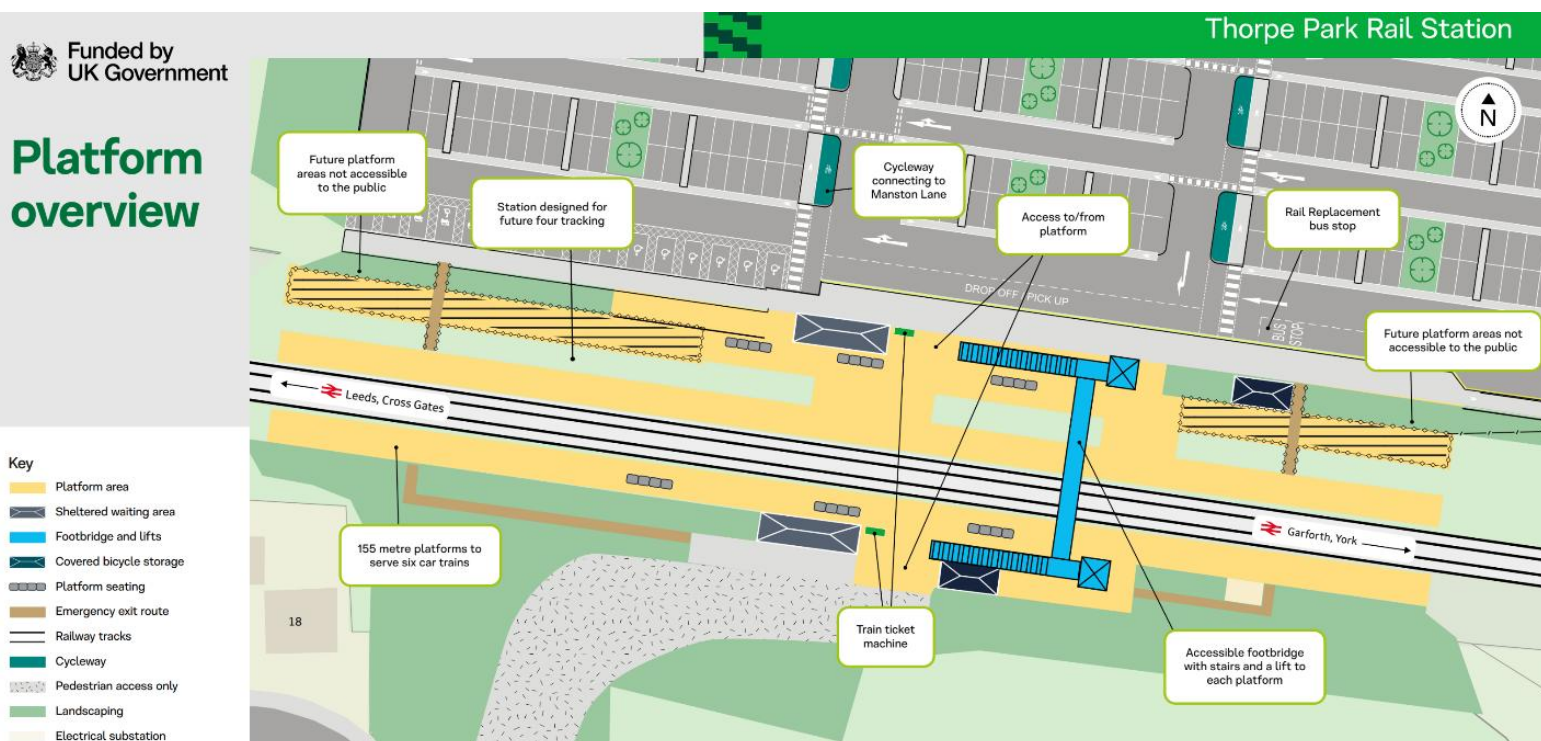
... but let's keep on campaigning!

New station plans take shape

by **Graham Collett**, vice chair, Railfuture Yorkshire

 Funded by
UK Government

Platform overview



Pictorial plan of proposed Thorpe Park station from West Yorks Combined Authority website, with thanks to UK Government, WYCA and Network Rail. Footbridge spans width of future four tracks. This is an early impression of what the station might look like but was used in the consultation.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) is developing plans to build Thorpe Park station on the Leeds to York line, between Cross Gates and Garforth. The new station would serve the wider development of mixed-use office, commercial and residential areas.

WYCA's last engagement on Thorpe Park was in 2018 when most respondents said they supported the proposals. The scheme received outline business case approval in 2021. Network Rail has now completed on-site surveys and ground investigation works to develop detailed station designs.

Previous plans had car and taxi drop-off to the south of the station site. Now this is to be directly outside the station entrance within the car park, on north of the station. The pedestrian access from the south of the station connecting to The Springs “vibrant retail and leisure destination” [Home - The Springs Leeds](#) has been retained.

The station design has been updated so it can support future development including electrification – coming soon with TransPennine route upgrade. Thinking ahead, space is included for additional tracks to the north of the station. All this could help provide more frequent trains, reduced journey times and improved reliability for passengers.

Thorpe Park will be a two-platform accessible station, with a 300-space car park, with electric vehicle charging points as well as already mentioned drop off and pick up point, plus cycle storage and provision for rail →

→ replacement buses. The station will be served by a minimum of two trains per hour in each direction on opening, subject to the production of a final agreed rail timetable by Network Rail and the train operating companies.

- For more details see <https://www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/thorpepark>. Our chair, Nina Smith, submitted our branch's comments on 14 September. Deadline was 15 Sep but info on website is still there.
- Subject to planning approval by Leeds City Council, the full business case will be submitted to WYCA for approval, currently expected in Spring 2027. Construction would then begin, with the station anticipated to open in 2028.

Platform 17 coming soon!

by **Graham Collett**, vice chair, Railfuture Yorkshire
comments on schemes in Leeds and across Yorkshire

Leeds platform 17 upgrade awaits government approval but looks likely to go ahead. Platform 16 was originally part of this project. Other platforms to the north of platform 0 might follow, but are not on the agenda just yet. The P17 job seems to have got very complex for such a small increase in capacity; cramped location is a complicating factor.

Access to Leeds platforms 16 and 17 from the footbridge is by either a long staircase (escalator for going up) or by more direct lift to/from the footbridge. Platform 17 is at the extreme south-west corner of the station quite remote from station entrance and can only take 4 coaches – so a pair of 2-car trains. It is also quite narrow and becomes very crowded at busy times. Passengers wait here for semi-fast trains to Wakefield Kirkgate, Barnsley, Sheffield, Nottingham and Lincoln, and also stoppers via Castleford to Knottingley and Sheffield. These trains use P17 because it “points” directly at the Midland route via Holbeck. Passengers for these services have increased significantly. Railfuture Yorkshire were concerned about capacity and safety, especially for passengers requiring assistance.

Initial plans aimed to extend P17 to accommodate two 3-car units and included improvements to the escalator and lift access to both platforms 16 and 17. Following a public consultation held by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) I initiated discussions with Network Rail (NR) – the project managers. Kevin Swift (our Railfuture national board member) and I have since held two very helpful meetings with NR, the latest on 14 August.

The original scheme was changed – at the request of the train operating companies (TOCs) – to widen the extended platform to 2.8 metres. The increased width would result in a significantly higher cost, including completely reconstructing the platform. It would also have meant moving fencing, telecoms, track, signals and overhead line equipment, also impacting on the related work on platform 16. As a result, the platform 16 element – a major part of the cost – was removed. Other cost savings were needed to make the scheme have a chance of getting approval, so the canopy will not be extended to cover the lengthened platform as planned. Shelters will be provided beyond the current length.

Following the reduction in costs to £36m, approval was obtained from the Department for Transport (DfT), WYCA and the TOCs. The final (engineering) design stage has now been reached and funding from the rail network expenditure (RNE) pipeline has been agreed. At the time of our meeting, ministerial sign-off was imminent. Subject to this, it is hoped that construction will be completed by the middle of 2028, with the new platform coming into service in May 2029. The work will be phased to come in after the planned 12 week Neville Hill depot blockade, which is part of the TransPennine Route Upgrade. NR is currently working with the TOCs to minimise disruption to passengers while the work takes place. A public consultation on the revised scheme will be organised by WYCA.

Leeds existing station project

Major changes are planned under the Leeds existing station project (LESP). Railfuture's Yorkshire branch and rail user group officers were given a tour of the station in June (as discussed in previous issue of YRC). This work will eventually provide **seven entrances** instead of the present four – including an entrance through the dark arches, below the existing main concourse, from a planned light rail stop.

The majority of passengers are expected to continue entering from the north; this will give Network Rail (or GBR) an opportunity to work with developers and retailers to provide improved facilities for passengers.⁴

Passengers using the station are forecast to rise from the current 36 million to at least 50 million by the 2040s. A new footbridge across the station is planned, hopefully by 2028. →

⁴ There are mixed feeling about this! See YRC summer issue and Nina's comments in next piece here – JSW

→ Scarborough, York and North Yorkshire

Scarborough's station gateway project has recently been deferred "due to serious concerns about public safety and the adequacy of drop-off facilities". Councillors felt that the revised plans did not provide meaningful improvements and raised issues regarding pedestrian access and vehicle interactions.

In March 2025, the North Yorkshire Combined Authority (CA) approved the strategic transport framework, which sets out the ambitions and principles that will guide the local transport plan. Since then, the CA has been working with City of York Council, North Yorkshire Council and other stakeholders across the region to develop a draft mayor's local transport plan. The new plan will build on the existing transport strategies and other plans already in place across York and North Yorkshire, including the local growth plan and draft strategy for a sustainable future.

A 12-week public consultation on the draft Mayor's Local Transport Plan was due to begin in August 2026. Expect a contribution from Railfuture Yorkshire branch.



Train-free shot of gorgeous station architecture, Skipton (above). Already well used, this station could be massive with trains to Colne (top), and on to Blackburn and Preston. Skipton students wait for the M6 Colne and Burnley bus: could their successors be going for the train? Pictures by JSW from YRC archive!

Skipton-Colne

SELRAP (Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership) report that Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) has recently agreed to prioritise the reopening of this 12-mile line between Skipton in North Yorkshire and Colne in Lancashire. Railfuture Yorkshire has long had this line at the top of its list for reopenings.

We congratulate SELRAP on their consistent campaigning which has achieved this important policy decision. Welcoming Lancashire's decision, SELRAP says the new link will must be developed to provide accessible, integrated and interconnected public rail and bus service, in urban and rural east Lancashire and beyond. **Another step on the way!**

Hull and Halifax... and points between

Rachel Reeves MP (Leeds West and Pudsey) has written to rail bosses as commuters in Pudsey and Bramley will face a gap in connectivity if the Hull-Halifax service is split at Leeds. Northern says the trains from Hull are often heavily delayed, meaning they are regularly terminated at Bradford or Leeds. To tackle the issue the train company propose that Hull trains will now stop at Leeds and no longer continue to Bradford and Halifax. Through passengers will have to change at Leeds. To maintain frequency Leeds-Bradford-Halifax, the local service Huddersfield-Bradford will extend to Leeds. Local users in Hadrug, the Halifax & District Rail Action Group, say this could be reasonable if the timings work and there is a genuine improvement in timekeeping and reliability. "Timings work" means four trains an hour sensibly spaced Halifax-Leeds in both directions, which will mean retiming Huddersfield-Halifax. Hadrug has asked Northern about that. Reply awaited.

Loss of connectivity between cultural hubs at Halifax (think The Piece Hall), Bradford and Hull is regrettable for reasons of tourism, business, employment and even international travel via Hull Port. **GC and JSW**



Halifax train about to leave Hull, Arrived late, late setting off back. Wonder if it reached its planned destination? JSW

Points of view

Rail safety, power failures, new trains, new prime minister, and need for more buses!

by **Nina Smith**, Railfuture Yorkshire branch chair

The past three months have been very eventful. We have a new prime minister. There has been a fatal train collision, two derailments, and at least one signal passed at danger. Very hot weather has disrupted train services, and East Midland Railway passengers have suffered badly from a lack of serviceable trains on some routes, including EMR's premier Midland main line.

Safety

Our railways are an innately safe form of travel. So far this year, no passengers have been killed, although, tragically Driver Shaun Burton died when two East Midlands Railways trains collided near Bedford. However, 42 passengers were seriously injured in this crash.⁵

Two further passengers were seriously injured when a Southern electric train derailed north of Lewes.

An initial examination into the Bedford crash has found that an automatic warning system fault had caused the front train to brake, and come to a stop. This first train was then hit from behind by the second train that had passed a red stop signal protecting the stationary train in front. The Sussex derailment and one in Essex were most likely climate related, due to either the drying out of the clay embankment near Lewes, or buckling caused by heat. Thankfully the design of modern carriages undoubtedly stopped the casualty rate being much higher.

45 people killed or seriously injured on our railway so far this year is 45 too many. This figure contrasts starkly, however, with the toll of people killed and seriously injured on UK roads – around 80 a day or almost 30,000 people in 2025.

Whilst trains are inherently safe, we cannot be complacent. Both human error and infrastructure failures happen. A potentially catastrophic accident was narrowly averted in 2015 when a West Coast Railway charter train hauled by a steam locomotive went past a red signal near Wootton Bassett, ending up across the main line a mere 44 seconds after a GWR high speed express had passed the junction. If it had happened that bit earlier, there would have been carnage. The steam train driver received a suspended prison sentence.

Locally (and more recently) there was an incident of a late evening Northern train from Blackburn passing a red signal coming round the curve from the Copy Pit line towards Todmorden Viaduct Junction on 7th May. The train came to a stop just before the main line shortly before a Manchester-Leeds service passed the junction giving rise to another current investigation.

Much railway infrastructure dates from the 19th century, a century when man-made climate change was beginning but unrecognised⁶. This summer's tragic events in England, but particularly in southern Europe, have demonstrated how climate change is now having catastrophic effects, particularly wildfires and flooding. Clay soils in particular are drying, causing subsidence to earthworks and damage to bridges. Excessive and prolonged heat is buckling rails. Many train operators have had to reduce timetables this summer due to necessary speed restrictions. It is vital that the government ensures that Network Rail has the funds it needs to ensure the railway is safe and resilient.

It is probable that it currently does not.

Passenger safety is also vital on trains and stations. The fact that many stations are unstaffed, especially in the evening, deters some women and members of visible minorities from travelling by train. An interchange station like Shipley, which has open land between platforms, is especially vulnerable, yet the station is only staffed for limited →

⁵ Eleven people sustained very serious injuries, 32 were seriously injured, and 57 received minor injuries, some of whom were treated at the scene. By 22 June, a total of 53 people remained in hospital, with eight in a critical condition. By 26 June, 36 people remained in hospital, with three of them in a critical condition. By 7 July, no patients were in a critical condition. From Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2026_Bedford_train_collision – JSW

⁶ Though all of the above examples were in areas of modern signalling.

→ hours. Such a station should be staffed whilst trains are running, with late evening staffing by visible train company security staff.

System and operator failures and GBR's role

Another big railway news story has been the power outages that have severely disrupted train travel. One has to ask whether the back-up systems are fit for purpose. It seems they are not. It is just not acceptable for tens of thousands of passengers to be so seriously inconvenienced. A Manchester outage affected the rail operations centre, one of those megacentres that have replaced so many signal boxes and control rooms. Its back-up system does not seem to have been adequate, and this must be addressed promptly.

According to *RAIL* magazine (*online 26 Aug'2026*), Arriva-owned CrossCountry Trains has only one working control room, in Birmingham, for the whole country, and it was without power for almost 36 hours. Sources have told *RAIL* that CrossCountry has neither a ready back-up location nor working back up power at its headquarters. If true, this really is unforgivable and should mean the franchise being taken in by DfT immediately.

One Great British Railways priority must be to ensure that all control systems have built-in resilience. This has to be part of creating one railway. There are other obvious quick changes needed too:

- Given that most operators are now part of GBR and the remainder of franchised companies will be next year, surely **first-class lounges** must be available to anyone with a first-class ticket, and not just those of one operator.
- GBR must ensure the passenger, rather than commercial opportunities, is put first. At Network Rail managed Leeds station, it is proposed to move the concourse toilets, Boots and WH Smith's downstairs into a new retail area, leaving only Marks and Spencer's and the coffee kiosk on the main concourse. People arriving at a station, whether catching or leaving a train, perhaps with luggage, want the most used facilities to be convenient. Toilets and quick purchases such as medicines, toiletries, magazines, and sandwiches surely come into this category.

Time is precious for many travellers, and stations should facilitate making services as convenient as possible. A railway station is a station first and foremost, GBR should not prioritise stations being shopping malls, as has happened at London St Pancras where the domestic platforms are too short and the international area inadequate.

Station toilets

Many more stations need toilets that the public can use, not least when we have trains where the toilet does not always work. Indeed, all staffed stations at least, should have them. Take the Calder Valley line. **Halifax** station, with an annual passenger footfall approaching two million, has one accessible loo and no others. Why has there been no to action to improve this?⁷ At **Todmorden**, the original station buildings survive on platform one, but most are an art gallery. I have suggested to Northern that the gallery space should be reduced, and toilets provided in part of the building, but my request fell on deaf ears. **Hebden Bridge** has a small toilet unit but it is inadequate for the station's footfall which is approaching a million annually, many passengers being people who come to the town to drink in the pubs. Yet the loos are shut just after 8pm. Recently a vacated room provided the opportunity to increase the number of toilets and include a changing places toilet, but the commercial people at Northern have considered that a micro pub is a better use of the space, rental income being prioritised over passenger needs.⁸ **Brighouse** has gained a new single-unit accessible toilet, to help during Pennine route upgrade diversions. We understand this will be permanent.

(Back at **Leeds** the queue for toilets in the concourse is no joy to behold!)

Northern's rolling stock

Northern has insufficient rolling stock for the services it currently runs, let alone for the services it should also be running. This situation has been made worse by faults with the CAF class 195 trains causing too many to be out of service, whilst the rest of the diesel fleet is aging. Northern desperately needs more trains **now**, before its new ones are ordered, built, tested, and enter service. One obvious source might have been for Northern to have some of the 22 class 158s being released by Transport for Wales next year, but it seems they are all destined for GWR (though with 4 units sub-leased short term to Northern). Why does GWR get them all? Does it need them? Yes, it certainly needs some because the excellent Mid Cornwall Metro initiative is improving frequencies, and creating a new through coast to coast service. But does it need all 22 for this when GWR has already received all the class 175s released by Transport for Wales? **The North's MPs need to be asking question of transport secretary Heidi Alexander. A big noise needs to be made about this unfairness.**

TfW's passengers may not be too pleased with their CAF 197s. These are similar to Northern's 195s, but they have train end corridor connections. RAIL's mystery shopper used one recently and was not impressed, describing →

⁷ Could not a new toilet block be built on the platform? Or as Halifax and District Rail Action Group has suggested, a new accessible unit at the station entrance? NS/JSW

⁸ Interestingly, Hebden Bridge station toilets are from time to time pressed into use when on-train toilets are out of order. No need to explain the effect on train service performance! – JSW

→ the ride as being quite rough, with the only tables being over the bogies. The seats were “those predictably hard and uncomfortable sort” (*RAIL on-line 18 Aug’2026*).

Andrew Whitworth has written about Northern’s forthcoming new trains elsewhere in this newsletter. The order really must be sufficient to enable timetable enhancement and new services. Secondly, there need to be two different internal specifications. One designed for short journeys say 45 minutes to an hour, and the other for the longer inter-regional services. The latter need more comfortable seating, more space for luggage, buggies and bicycles, and provision for a catering trolley. Being mechanically identical, trains could be substituted in emergencies, but as a general rule trains on 2-hour or 3-hour journeys need to be of “express” standard.

After all, ***a Northern train takes longer to get from York to Blackpool than an LNER train takes to get to London!***

A new prime minister

Andy Burnham became prime minister on 20th July. His cabinet is very different from Keir Starmer’s, but Heidi Alexander has kept her job as transport secretary and Lord Hendy his as rail minister. But what will Burnham in 10 Downing Street, with John Healey as chancellor of the exchequer in number 11, mean for Britain’s railways? Only time will tell, but they must both realise that rail is an essential public service, ever more important at a time of climate chaos, and they need to find funding to enhance the north’s railways, between cities, on commuter and leisure routes, and for freight.

Burnham has said that mayors could be able to keep a share of income tax for their regions. ***Will this be enough to enable them to invest in local bus, tram and train networks?***

Heidi Alexander has just announced one initiative which will please tens if not hundreds of thousands of passengers. DfT has authorised new, deeper cushions and backrests for all 115 Govia Thameslink class 700 trains to replace the thin, hard, uncomfortable and much criticised “ironing board” seats that were approved by DfT when the trains were ordered in 2013. ***Well done!***

Once there were trains, but never again, but...

We all know that train services in many parts of the country were decimated in the 1960s (and before) with many lines and stations closed. Some were little used branch lines whose closure was inevitable with the rise of motor traffic. But some other closures were of strategic routes that would be of enormous benefit today. For example, there is no railway route across the Pennines between the Leeds to Lancaster/Carlisle lines and the Tyne Valley (Newcastle-Carlisle), a gap of some 60 miles. So if you want to travel between towns east or west of the Pennines in this gap, your only option is by road, some 60 miles, and that means by car if you have one as bus services are sparse.

One key route lost is Darlington-Barnard Castle-Appleby-Penrith. To make the journey now you have to use the A66, a notoriously dangerous road on its single-carriageway sections and a road that has been known to become snowbound in winter. It is government policy to dual the whole section from Scotch Corner to Penrith although funding has not yet been confirmed. This is one road scheme I support, and, given the lack of a railway, there needs to be a limited stop bus or coach service running throughout every day, at least hourly, connecting major stations on the East and West Coast main lines⁹. ***In my view, serious consideration should be given to GBR commissioning and subsidising such a service,*** and for it to be in train timetables and for the principal stops (say Barnard Castle, Brough and Appleby) to be bookable as destinations on train tickets. Barnard Castle in particular is a thriving town that should never have lost its train services.

Other examples where similar services are needed include **Malton-Pickering-Whitby** (the Leeds-York Coastliner 840 bus) which featured in earlier issues of YRC. This service has its origins in replacement of the rail line that closed in 1965; Pickering to Grosmont is now part of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Nina Smith: 27 August 2026

Good news on ticket acceptance when your train fails to run

As this YRC went to press, news came in on acceptance of train-specific tickets by other train companies in the event of service cancellations. Previously this only applied between companies already in government ownership but operators in line for renationalisation under GBR will have to comply – with one exception – from Sunday 20 September. The exception (among the former franchised operators) east troubled operator East Midlands trains, which will review its position in the new year.

We think the other exception will be open-access train companies of which there are three operating through Yorkshire on the East Coast Main Line. So if your Hull Trains, Lumo or Grand Central train is cancelled you may still have to buy a new ticket. (We shall see.) These operators will remain private and not join GBR.

But overall this is a nice piece of good news in advance of the coming of GBR.

Rail minister Lord Hendy said: “This is a simple, common-sense change that puts passengers first. No one should be left stranded because of a fragmented railway when their journey is disrupted.

“We’re fixing the railway from the ground up, making it simpler, fairer and easier to use, as we move towards Great British Railways and put public service back at the heart of our railways.” JSW

⁹ Existing bus services on this road are very limited.

New trains for Northern

by Andrew Whitworth

Deep in Whitehall, cogs are grinding away, evaluating a decision which will be of enormous consequence for the North's railways for decades to come. The final tenders were returned for Northern's new fleet from the five shortlisted suppliers¹⁰ in March 2026, and an order is to be made in 2027 for deliveries starting three years later.

As part of this review process, it was announced in July that Northern will receive 37 Siemens class 350/2 4-car units which had been in store, and these will replace all 34 class 323 3-car units which currently operate in the North West. This has reduced the new fleet requirements, as the cascaded units only date from 2008.

Many details of the new trains have been revealed¹¹. They will have level boarding for standard 915mm height platforms, and selective door opening. They will be either three or four cars in length, carrying 191 and 265 seats respectively, with full cabs without gangways and two toilets in each unit (one being accessible). Their arrival will trigger a cascade of the CAF stock, especially so that the two-car 195 units can be used most appropriately.

There will be three types of power. Most will be trimode diesel/electric/battery, designated class 780. There will also be straight electric of course (class 381), and most intriguingly there will be a number of class 781 BEMUs. It will be possible to reconfigure the power systems in the future. Figures seem firm for Phase 1 of the deliveries¹²:

Existing trains			New trains (phase 1)		Units	Notes
Class 150	2 car	66	Class 381 electric	3 car	12	EMUs for Leeds-Hud/York, from 2030 . To shake down issues on simplest units. Released 195s cascaded.
Class 150	3 car	8	CI 781 battery-electric	4 car	8	To replace 8 class 769 units, from 2031 .
Class 155	2 car	7	CI 780 trimode	3 car	48	To replace classes 150, 155 & 156 from 2032 .
Class 156	2 car	67	CI 780 trimode	4 car	63	Initial proving on Buxton line.
Class 769	4 car	8		464 cars	131 units	38% more carriages.
	336 cars	156 units				

It's the carriages ("cars") that count – **a 38% uplift**. Compare numbers of units: fewer suffice as many existing two-car trains are doubled up. New trains should also be more reliable.

There are similar provisional figures for Phase 2, which sees replacement of class 158 and 333 trains. The class 333 numbers are like-for-like, but 114 class 158 cars grow into 170 trimode and 96 battery-electric cars, with 53 units replaced by 74. (Where will BEMUs be used? Windermere, Barrow, Clitheroe?)

A final Phase 3 sees class 170s replaced, possibly as late as 2038.

Ambitious – but part of "30 by 30" plan

So Northern's proposals are ambitious – increased fleet size to allow for a growing railway. Passenger journey numbers grew by 9 million to 99 million in 2025. And the company's "30 by 30" plan aims to increase this by 30 million to 129 million by 2030, as the new fleet starts to arrive.

The 30 million planned increase is broken down into three drivers of growth.

- Easier fares (such as PAYG)
- More reliable service
- Lastly organic growth.

Last year's 9 million jump shows the possibilities here. Rail's relatively low market share in our region makes 30 million a realistic target. The new fleet size needs to allow for a further 30-plus years of growth beyond 2030.

That's got to be the right approach. The railway's fixed costs are huge, **so growing passengers will reduce the subsidy for the DfT while also reducing congestion, carbon emissions and pollution**.

And crucially, running longer trains rather than more trains gives growth which can be absorbed quite easily at the many pinch points where our Northern network suffers from underinvestment in infrastructure. I say *quite* easily – selective door opening helps greatly with short platforms, but there may be issues with platform capacity at terminals, and with depot capacity. (The latter was initially overlooked when a similar step change improvement took place after 2016's new franchise.) Though the unit numbers don't leave much scope for running additional services at this stage¹³, the contracts allow for further trains to be added to the order and cascades may become possible from electrification.

It's a great plan. But the fleet replacement as projected by Northern can't be regarded as a slam-dunk or →

¹⁰ Alstom, CAF, Hitachi, Siemens, Stadler

¹¹ <https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/about-us/newtrains>

¹² Modern Railways October 2025

¹³ In many cases, congested infrastructure will also need to be sorted for this.

→ easy win. **Can we be sure that DfT sees growth as the route to reducing subsidy, which seems to be a particular priority for them in our troubled economic times?** There are mixed messages, with Heidi Alexander saying on several occasions that service levels may have to be cut where they cannot be justified – it's a threat that's been put into action on Avanti's West Coast route. Investment is also being challenged everywhere – with the mismanaged HS2 fiasco soaking up an absurd share of resources while also destroying confidence in the railway generally.



Seen here at York and awaiting the off to Hull and Bridlington, this Class 155 unit may not be far now from the scrap yard. Seven units were kept at behest West Yorks PTE's behest when most were split into Class 153 single units. Pic by Andrew Whitworth.

The DfT have never been well disposed towards our local services. Back in 1991 a reluctance to buy enough pacers and sprinters led to savage cuts on the Esk Valley, Goole and Moorthorpe routes. With the last franchise renewal in 2015, the head civil servant at DfT published a side letter disagreeing with the decision to buy the new CAF fleet – he clearly thought it made sense to inflict the hated pacers on Northern travellers for another decade or more. Madness! Three cheers to Patrick McLoughlin for having had the courage to overrule him.

It should be clear to all that the Class 15x units at Northern need urgent replacement – dating from 1984 to 1989 they are evidently life expired. Their diesel engines are inefficient and polluting, they generally lack modern amenities like air conditioning and selective door opening. Class 150s in particular have a poor ambience for passengers. Serious corrosion problems on some mean incurring a huge expense just to survive until the early 2030s, and this work takes trains out of action. And most importantly, they are becoming disruptively unreliable. With improved performance being one of the pillars of the “30 by 30” growth plan, and also a stated aim of DfT in itself, that should weigh heavily in the assessment of the fleet replacement.

Serious problem surviving next few years

Surviving the next few years with these ageing trains is a very serious problem for existing service levels, quite apart from any aspirations to expand the offer.

Short formations are running at 12%, and cancellations at 3%. Climate breakdown has caused severe issues for Northern's fleet this summer, and other faults will only get worse while 150s, 155s and 156s continue to age. It's reported some spares are no longer available, in which case some discarded units need to be bought just for cannibalisation. Transport for Wales's 24 class 158s are due to become free this winter, but these are being reallocated to GWR even though they have recently taken the class 175 fleet. It's unclear if they'll displace their class 150s or, less likely, the newer class 165 Networker trains. The 150s are the oldest and most basic of these retiring units, and GWR will be the only other major operator when the Welsh Valley Lines project completes imminently. Some GWR 150 units, which are going through a major overhaul programme, may be superior to Northern's¹⁴ and may be useful if GWR can release these early. I believe both operators' class 150/2 fleets are owned by Porterbrook.

There's a dangerous conundrum here. Northern need to spend more on maintenance and leasing backup units to survive the next several years with the 156 and other older stock, while keeping service levels intact and performance acceptable. These increased short-term costs should actually help to justify the investment in the replacement fleet with its lower operating costs. **But if DfT summon the spirits of Beeching and Serpell and try to constrict Northern at this point, we may end up with an undersized fleet that will constrain our railways for decades.**

A growing railway needs to be actively planned for, and the appropriate resources provided with confidence. We're at a crucial point. It's clear that the new fleet decision is of enormous importance to our railways in Yorkshire, **and it's essential that DfT approach it with a sympathetic and forward-looking mindset to ensure our network has a prosperous future.**

[New trains have been ordered recently by TransPennine Express. See page 14.]

¹⁴ I recall, some years ago now, travelling on GWR (or maybe the old Wales and West franchise) 150s that had been refurbished and even had a few tables. It was rather like travelling on a modern train – Ed.

Gone but not forgotten

Bradford-Huddersfield connections

by **Andrew Whitworth**, continuing his series

As mentioned in YRC 73, Bradford still had direct services south to Wakefield and to Huddersfield in 1963, both of them running over multiple routes, and all of which were doomed by Beeching's reshaping report (March that year).

The twin services diverged after Low Moor station, situated north of the 2017 rebuild and served by trains on both routes. The Spen Valley option then called at Cleckheaton, Liversedge, Heckmondwike and Northorpe before joining the

main line at Mirfield - this route was 25 km and all-stations trains took 35 minutes with six stops. Trains via Halifax called at Lightcliffe, Halifax and Brighouse and their 30 km journey with 4 stops took 37 minutes. (Elland station had closed in September 1962). These are fast journey times compared to a trip today by car or bus.

However neither route is particularly direct, though both served important intermediate towns. As the crow flies, the distance is just 16 km and the X63 bus taking a more direct route (through Brighouse) does

the journey today in 50-60 minutes. The reinstated train service via Halifax, (currently suspended due to TRU works) takes 36 minutes.

The Pickle Bridge line

The circuitous paths of both alternative routes led the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway to construct a third, more direct railway between Bradford and Huddersfield. This cut the distance to 20km. Named after the junction near Wyke where it deviated from the Halifax line, it was a rather ill-starred railway. Authorised by parliament in 1846, it didn't actually open until 1881 and by 1931 its two intermediate stations – Bailiff Bridge and Clifton Rd near Brighouse – were both closed. The line was sharply curved, had a ruling gradient of 1 in 70 and was troubled by subsidence which restricted speeds. The line carried only four trains a day when it closed in 1946. Wyke viaduct was dangerously distorted before it was partly demolished in 1987 – a portion had to remain as it was, astonishingly, a listed structure.

There was talk of this line being repurposed for the proposed Northern Powerhouse direct link from Bradford to Huddersfield. We are not party to what other options are under consideration.

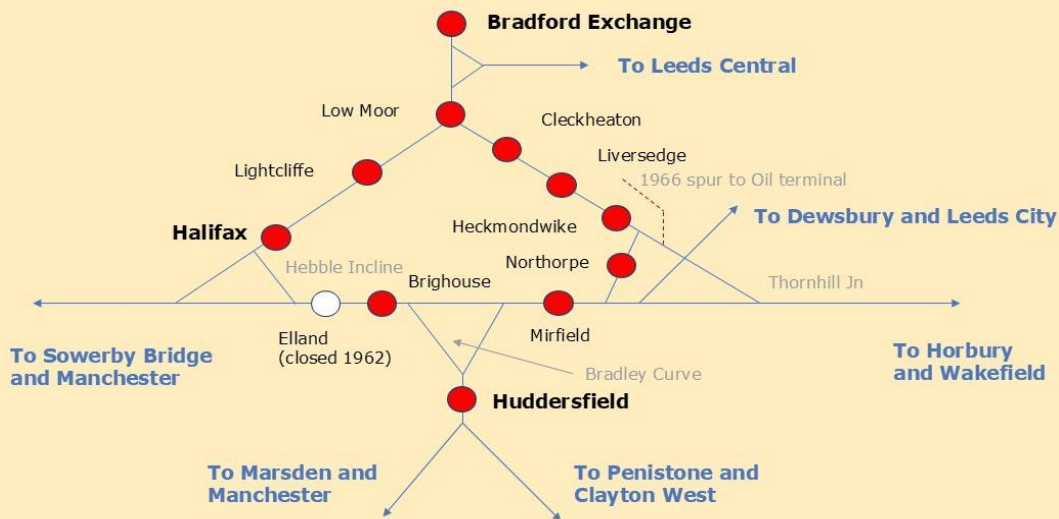
Service pattern and closure

Back on the two routes that survived to 1964, the timetable showed a service between Bradford and Huddersfield that was rather impressive by the standard of the day. Operated by diesel multiple units, there were 22 daily trains on weekdays, 10 via Halifax and 12 via Cleckheaton. 14 continued towards either Penistone or Clayton West. Saturdays saw a few more services, particularly in the late evening, but Sundays were different with four daily trains only, all via Halifax.

All Sunday trains extended to Penistone running non-stop from Huddersfield in a sprightly 21 minutes.

British Rail published closure proposals for both routes on the same day, 13 March 1964, and following a joint Tucc hearing on 10 September that year the new Labour transport minister, Tom Fraser, approved closure of both services on 29 January 1965, noting that the Tucc had concluded that there would be no hardship. The only condition was the provision of some additional bus services (which were usually subsidised at British Rail's expense). The closure took effect from the start of the summer timetable on 14 June 1965. →

Bradford to Huddersfield Rail Connections – May 1965



Note: The LNW's Leeds 'New Line' was open until August 1965 but only had one daily non-stop passenger train at this stage and is not shown on the map

→ Several passenger services continued via Halifax: Leeds/Bradford to Manchester (mainly hourly) trains obviously, but also some daily Halifax and Huddersfield to King's Cross portions, irregular Blackpools, and other seasonal trains. An unusual set of trains ran daily down the Calder Valley from Sowerby Bridge towards York via Castleford ending in 1970. Two other daily services ran each way connected Bradford, Halifax and Huddersfield to Stockport but had ceased by 1967.



Friendly face greets active travellers on the Spen Valley greenway at Heckmondwike. Photo by Andrew Whitworth, Nov'2021

So these lines remained

very much open, including for the time being Brighouse station, though Low Moor and Lightcliffe stations did both close in June 1965. Low Moor subsequently reopened in 2017, and Lightcliffe has frequently featured on potential station lists. Brighouse did close in 1970, Elland and Greetland having shut in 1962. The fact that the new service between Bradford and Huddersfield was restarted in 2000 – and Brighouse reopened – proves that this closure was a mistake.

The three Spen Valley stations closed, with Mirfield remaining open for other services, and the chord from Mirfield to Heckmondwike closed in full. Freight traffic continued to use the line to Low Moor using the eastbound connection to Thornhill Jn.

Spen Valley: new lease of life as active travel route – future could bring trams

Local freight depots on the line closed in 1969, but there were still freight trains to Stanningley, Laisterdyke and Dudley Hill routed on this line. Excursions occasionally ran, such as a trip from Heckmondwike to Bridlington in June 1980¹⁵. However, traffic declined and closure as a through route became inevitable in 1981 during a period where many such rationalisations were being sought where alternative routes were available. Trains did continue on a spur to an oil depot at Liversedge until 1986 – see separate box about the Leeds New Line.

There was a brief possibility of part reopening as a heritage line linked to the Transperience museum in 1995, but Transperience only lasted 2 years. Now the line enjoys a new lease of life as a greenway for walkers and cyclists opened in stages since 1998. ***It's a very popular path, and a fascinating walk.***

Campaign for Better Transport have it as a priority opening for heavy rail, but more realistically WYCA have expressed an interest in adapting it for mass transit in some future phase, and as such it could be adapted to link to

Dewsbury as well as towards Mirfield and Huddersfield. Could the near-parallel course of the Leeds New Line for some of the length provide an opportunity for a replacement greenway if rail or light-rail reopening takes place?¹⁶

Brighouse reborn

As explained, there were various passenger services remaining on the lines between Halifax, Brighouse and Huddersfield after the Bradford-Huddersfield service closed in 1965, though these dwindled away over time. I already mentioned the Sowerby Bridge to York trains, which ended in January 1970 leading to the closure of Brighouse station. The →

The Leeds “New Line”

Brief mention should be made of the Leeds New Line which opened in 1900 as a heavily-engineered second route between Huddersfield and Leeds. This diverged at the fly-under at Heaton Lodge Jn then headed up the eastern side of the Spen Valley towns before diving into the long Gildersome tunnel and rejoining the main line at Farsley. This actually closed to passengers later than the L&Y's Spen Valley line – in August 1965 – though by this time it carried only one train daily, in one direction only, running non-stop as intermediate halts had closed back in 1953. The journey time was a couple of minutes longer. The route had not actually been condemned in Beeching's Reshaping report – presumably an oversight. The fly-under at Heaton Lodge was repurposed to improve the junction there between Huddersfield and Calder Valley lines. ***Travel through there now and you will see new fast lines being built for the TransPennine route upgrade.***

A section of line in the Spen Valley line remained open until 1986 to serve an oil terminal at Liversedge. A new link to the L&Y's Spen Valley line at Heckmondwike had been built in 1966.

¹⁵ <https://www.flickr.com/photos/41294071@N02/8628356985>

¹⁶ Another possibility might be shared use of the formation with sections of single track – JSW

→ King's Cross portions ended in 1978 in readiness for Inter City 125 fixed train formations. Then in 1986 the various summer Saturday services had their final season, closing these lines to passenger traffic under the "Five Curves" proposal. The former L&Y main line direct from Sowerby Bridge to Mirfield remained busy with freight, but in May 1988

the Hebble Incline between Greetland Jn and Halifax, and the Bradley curve, were closed to freight and mothballed.

Mothballing is key. Plans were already under consideration to reopen the lines for a new Leeds/Bradford to Huddersfield service via Halifax and Brighouse. The latter was the largest town in West Yorkshire with no rail service, and the importance of better connecting Huddersfield with Halifax and Bradford was apparent. That reconnection took place in May 2000, and Brighouse reopened. This initial service has been further expanded and enhanced since¹⁷. Still waiting for Elland.

I'm not writing any more about this here – but your editor is doing a piece to tell the story of this successful reopening and looking towards further developments, *hopefully for next issue of YRC*¹⁸.



Class 150 train (and its reflection) descend the Hebble Incline reopened in 2000, over Calder & Hebble locks heading for (Elland and) Brighouse. AMW, Aug'2013

TransPennine sets model for future green, accessible trains – made in Derby!

by Stephen Waring (based on TPE news release and *RAIL* magazine coverage online)

New battery-electric trains just ordered by TransPennine Express will support cleaner rail travel, with trains drawing energy from both the overhead wires and remote charging stations. As we understand it, on non-electrified lines batteries charged "under the wires" will be topped up using charging facilities currently envisaged at non-electrified Hull, Scarborough and Saltburn termini. Charging will take place both whilst running and at remote termini. So operation will be emission-free¹⁹ even where overhead electrification is not yet available at the remoter Yorkshire ends of the route from Liverpool. (Interestingly, Saltburn currently has only occasional TPE services.)

TPE also proudly boasts that the new Alstom *Adessia Stream* trains will be built in Britain, historic Derby works, supporting 350 skilled manufacturing jobs. Cost of the deal is more than £1 billion, financed by Rock Rail, and includes maintenance. Sounds like delivery will be early to mid-2030s.

The 29 trains ordered will be 5-car units. Each unit will have level boarding and four toilets of which two accessible, plus more seats for increased capacity, spacious interiors for improved comfort, full Wi-Fi, power sockets and USB charging at every seat. There will be dedicated cycle storage and extra luggage space. Boarding will be level at every doorway "on the vast majority of stations we serve", plus three dedicated wheelchair spaces on every train, family-friendly areas, dedicated buggy storage, all making "boarding and travelling easier for customers across our network".

End coaches look to have only one passenger door each side.

Maximum speed in service will be 110 mile/hr, reduced to 100 mile/hr on battery power. TPE's coverage felt slightly defensive about not having a higher maximum speed. But even on the 125 mile/hr

section north of York effective running speed would be limited by the need to stop at Thirsk and Darlington with a weave between fast and slow lines for Thirsk. *I think we'd want those stops to continue!*



Level boarding at all doors by sound of it! Photo from Network Rail website [£1 billion fleet of new trains to offer more services and more seats for passengers across Transpennine route](#)

¹⁷ In 2008 this success was built on with hourly services from Manchester to Brighouse and on to Leeds via Dewsbury, and developed yet further when Grand Central London services started in 2010. Within a couple of years, Brighouse should be joined by a reopened station at Elland.

¹⁸ Any memories of related to the "Five Curves" closure hearing held at the White Swan in Halifax would be gratefully received.

¹⁹ There is, of course an implied assumption here about how the electricity for the overhead wires and battery charging is generated.

Selby gateway scheme

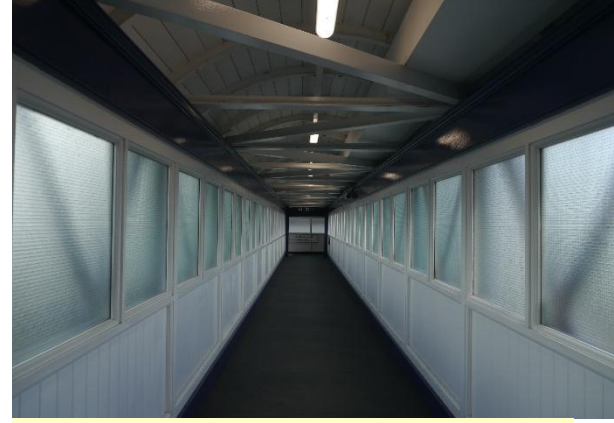
Update by **Terry French**,

Selby & District Rail Users Group

The group is pleased that work on our main station's gateway scheme is now underway. Demolition of the former Railway Club is complete, asbestos is being removed from the units of the business centre, and work has started on clearing the Cowie Drive site where the new car park will be. Cowie Drive is on the south-east side of the station and will have a fully accessible entrance/exit direct to Platforms 2 and 3. Platform 1 will be accessed via the new lifts and refurbished foot bridge. Existing access to the ticket hall (or side gate when ticket office closed) will remain, giving access to bus stops and the town centre.

Reduced parking available following closure of the former business centre car park opposite the station entrance, has frustrated rail users. We have lobbied North Yorkshire Council to re-open the business centre car park as its future use is currently undecided. The group is also campaigning for a reduction in car park charges to a more practical level for rail users. Aim of the development is to improve and encourage accessibility to the station. A plaza will link the station to the nearby park, and there will be some remodelling to improve the bus station. Improved access for pedestrians and cycle routes and disabled travellers will include the new access via Cowie Drive.

Along the line at Church Fenton, as part of the TransPennine route upgrade scheme, work has begun on replacing the life expired road bridge over the station. This will allow overhead line equipment to be accommodated. This work will not be completed until June 2027, and meanwhile the road is closed to vehicles. Railway services will continue but at times bus substitution will be needed.



Immaculate! Selby footbridge sparkles with newness and gives good access not only across tracks but in future to second station entrance on SE side. (JSW)

South Humber new user group

Update by **Ann Hindley**, secretary, Yorkshire Railfuture

As mentioned in our summer issue, our local new rail user group was duly launched, straddling the boundaries between South Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire, and covering the stations between Doncaster and Scunthorpe. The cut in service post-COVID had a severe impact on people's ability to travel to work, college, schools, health appointments and for leisure. Although some minor tweaks have been made to the timetable, the real aim is to have the hourly service restored. Two North Lincolnshire settlements are well represented by residents and parish councillors. **Residents and stations-users in Thorne, Hatfield and Kirk Sandal would be most welcome to join us.** Contact Ann Hindley at ann@hindley.gn.apc.org or 01724 710819 to find out more.

E-bike worries

by **Simon Geller**, chair, Cycle-Rail Forum for the North.

Cycle-Rail campaigners are worried about Merseyrail's proposed ban on e-bikes from 1st January and fear restrictions could spread elsewhere. Many people including **disabled users** now rely on a combination of e-bike and train to get about. It seems there is concern about people taking illegal electric motorbikes on the trains, but this is already covered by national legislation and Merseyrail byelaws. Legal e-bikes (EAPCs – see below) defined as having a maximum powered speed in UK 15.5 mile/hr and a maximum 250W motor, with batteries built to international standards, are very safe to transport. Strangely, electric folding bikes are still going to be allowed although there is no evidence that these are more safe or indeed more dangerous than conventional e-bikes. Our concern is this will disadvantage users and may spread to other operators such as Northern. We hear rumours that the entire rail industry is indeed considering a total ban. This would certainly affect rail users in Yorkshire – there seems to be a possibility that Leeds would have a brand new cycle parking facility with e-bike charging points but from which these legal bikes are banned.

What do you think?

About this or other contributions in YRC? We want your feedback! Send short comments or long articles to the editor. This issue nearly grew to 18 pages and could have used more pics. Do send some. All thoughts welcome! **Turn over** for info on upcoming branch meetings and webinars, and contacts list.

- You can raise a complaint with Merseyrail at <https://help.merseyrail.org/hc/en-gb/requests/new>.
- Cycling UK has mounted a campaign <https://www.cyclinguk.org/news/cycling-uk-challenge-merseyrail-e-bike-ban>. See also see <https://www.cyclingelectric.com/news/rail-electric-bike-ban>.
- **Electrically assisted pedal cycle** explained at [EAPC standards and legal requirements - GOV.UK](https://gov.uk/eapc-standards-and-legal-requirements)

Upcoming Railfuture Yorkshire branch meetings (speakers may still be subject to confirmation)

Sheffield Sat 10 October joint with Rf East Midlands and Lincolnshire branches. On our patch at Hallam View Meeting Room, Sheffield Hallam University, City Campus, Sheffield, S1 1WB (5 mins from stn). Starts 13.00. Speakers invited Kevin Towle, SYMCA rail development manager: improving capacity at Sheffield station; Anne Robinson, Hope Valley Climate Action on Mini-Switzerland. Ends 16.00. Confirmed details to follow by email or post.

Manchester Sat 7 November joint with Rf North West. Friends Meeting House, Mount St, Manchester M2 5NS. Starts 13.00. Speaker or speakers invited from Network Rail and/or TfGM. Ends 16.00. Again, watch out for confirmed details and directions to venue by email or post.

Leeds Sat 13 March our branch AGM, Leeds, speaker Mike Southgate, Rf national chair. Time, venue etc to follow.

And watch your email inbox for our on-line webinars. An interesting one is coming up **Tue 27 October on Social Value**, “the sum total of all positive effects deriving from an activity, project or intervention. This goes beyond direct economic impact of a service and factors-in indirect economic benefits, environmental benefits, wellbeing benefits and social benefits.” We hope to find out from Sean Inglis, who works on the Social Value Engine **how this can be applied to rail travel**. Further details to follow!

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Please send articles and pictures for Winter 2026 issue: by **23 November 2026 at latest**. *Earlier would be good!!*

Digital copy preferred. 750 words will fill page; longer or shorter pieces welcome. Please be concise. Copy may be edited for style, grammar, conciseness. Illustrations (not just pictures of trains!) also very much encouraged if we can reproduce them freely (so give source or photographer etc). Any **paper articles** should be **no more than one side of A4**.

User groups affiliated to Railfuture in Yorkshire

Askern Station, Friends of	Contact Graham Moss on graz.moss@sky.com or 07510 555722
Aire Valley Rail Users Group (AVRUG)	www.avrug.org email chair@avrug.org.uk
Esk Valley Railway	http://www.eskvalleyrailway.co.uk/evrdc.html
Halifax and District Rail Action Group and Electric Railway Charter	www.hadrag.com and www.electriccharter.wordpress.com email js.waring@hotmail.co.uk
Harrogate Line Rail Users' Group	Care of billymms@btinternet.com
Harrogate Line Supporters' Group	www.harrogateline.org
Hope Valley Rail Users' Group	www.hopevalleyrailway.org.uk
Huddersfield, Penistone and Sheffield Rail Users' Association	Email: hpsrua@gmail.com
Hull and East Riding Rail Users' Association	davidpennierail21@gmail.com
Hunmanby Railway Station, Friends of	https://e-voice.org.uk/friendsofhunmanbyrailwaystation/
Lancaster and Skipton Rail Users' Group	
Minsters Rail Campaign (Beverley-York)	http://www.minstersrail.com/
Pontefract Civic Society Rail Group	railadministrator@pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk
Selby and District Rail Users' Group	http://www.selbytowncouncil.gov.uk/useful-links/selby-district-rail-users-group/
Settle-Carlisle Line, Friends of the	www.foscl.org.uk
Skipton-East Lancashire Railway Action Partnership	www.selrap.org.uk
Stalybridge to Huddersfield (SHRUG)	Email: markashmore@yahoo.com
Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Sustainable Transport Group	Email: nina.smith@railfuture.org.uk
Upper Wensleydale Railway	https://upperwensleydalerrailway.org.uk/
Yorkshire Coast Community Rail Partnership (Yorkshire Coast Wolds Coast Line)	www.yccrp.co.uk

Yorkshire branch (RfY) committee and the small print

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Vice chair (NY lead and accessibility adviser): Graham Collett, graham.collett@railfuture.org.uk

Vice chair (SY lead) and Membership & distribution officer : Andrew Dyson andrew.dyson@railfuture.org.uk

Branch secretary and minutes secretary Ann Hindley ann@hindley.gn.apc.org

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Freight Officer: Kevin Swift

Treasurer: ianfwood@hotmail.co.uk

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Social media coordinator: Mark Ashmore markashmore@yahoo.com

Committee members without portfolio: David Pennie davidpennierail21@gmail.com (Hull & EYorks lead);

David Hagerty; Pete Myers; Ian Joustra

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Websites: www.railfuture.org.uk <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Yorkshire+Branch>

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