

Olympian task as Crossrail surfaces



Picture: CROSSRAIL

This is the point just west of Stratford station in east London where Crossrail emerges from the depths of the new tunnels being bored under central London. In the background is the Olympic stadium and running diagonally across the picture (from bottom left) is the main line from London Liverpool Street. The Crossrail trench can be seen lower left, near the red Docklands Light Railway train. In a major piece of engineering, the existing Pudding Mill Lane station, together with the DLR line, is being shifted south to make way for Crossrail. Parts of the new DLR viaduct can be seen near the red crane. The River Lee can be seen snaking along the left of the picture

Franchising restarts as the Government publishes its new timetable

A detailed timetable for all rail franchises in England and Wales over the next eight years was announced on 26 March 2013 by Secretary of State Patrick McLoughlin. This includes the East Coast franchise which some had hoped would continue to be run by Directly Operated Railways in the public sector, if only to act as a benchmark for private operators. The programme will be overseen by a Franchise Advisory Panel, headed by Richard Brown, to support the department's work and provide independent advice. Staggering the franchise start dates will

involve a mixture of extensions to existing franchises, direct award contracts and, if required, the use of Directly Operated Railways. The new programme is as follows:

	Publish OJEU	Issue ITT	Contract award	Franchise start
Essex Thameside	Resumed	July 2013	April 2014	September 2014
Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern	Resumed	September 2013	May 2014	September 2014
East Coast	October 2013	February 2014	October 2014	February 2015
Northern	July 2014	December 2014	October 2015	February 2016
TransPennine	July 2014	December 2014	October 2015	February 2016
Great Western	October 2014	March 2015	March 2016	July 2016
Greater Anglia	March 2015	August 2015	June 2016	October 2016
West Coast	August 2015	January 2016	November 2016	April 2017
London Midland	November 2015	April 2016	February 2017	June 2017
East Midlands	March 2016	August 2016	June 2017	October 2017
South Eastern	November 2016	April 2017	February 2018	June 2018
Wales and Borders	March 2017	August 2017	June 2018	October 2018
South West	September 2017	February 2018	December 2018	April 2019
Cross Country	April 2018	September 2018	July 2019	November 2019
Chiltern	May 2020	October 2020	August 2021	December 2021

Publish OJEU = Publish in the *Official Journal of the European Union*

Issue ITT = DfT to issue an official invitation to tender

We can only speculate that the Government-after-next will start the whole franchising process over again with High Speed Two added to the mix.

www.gov.uk/government/news/fresh-start-for-franchising

Government reveals High Speed Two northern routes, followed by High Court decision

The Government published its proposed and preferred route for the northern sections of High Speed Two on 28 January 2013. From the Birmingham area this will have two branches, one to Manchester with an intermediate station at Manchester Airport and the other to Leeds with stations at Toton (between Derby and Nottingham) and Meadowhall (between Sheffield and Rotherham). There would also be connecting lines to the East Coast main line at York and the West Coast main line at Wigan providing through services further north. It would also be possible to run "classic compatible" services to Liverpool, Warrington and Stafford.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-speed-rail-investing-in-britains-future-phase-two-the-route-to-leeds-manchester-and-beyond-summary>

Meanwhile on 15 March 2013, the High Court rejected nine out of the 10 legal challenges against the Government in relation to the first phase of HS2 between London and Birmingham.



The one challenge that was upheld concerned the consultation on property compensation which the Government is now going to re-run in accordance with the Court's findings.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/high-court-rejects-legal-challenges-to-hs2-in-landmark-victory-for-the-government>

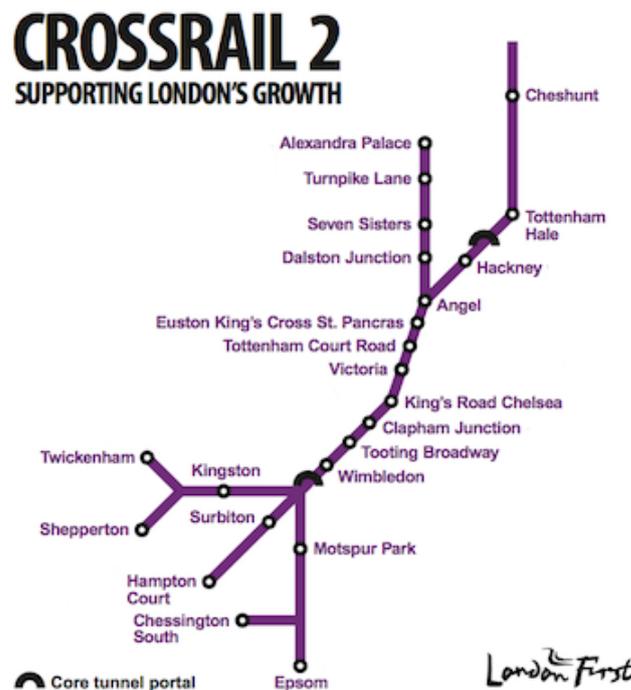
Funding for electric car charging points at stations

The Department for Transport has announced a funding package, worth £37 million in total, towards the cost of installing charging points for plug-in electric cars and other vehicles. Of this, up to £9 million will be available to train operating companies to fund 75% of the cost of their installation at railway stations. This will be subject to a cap of £7,500 for each individual installation. Guidance was published by the Office for Low Emission Vehicles, a unit of the DfT, in February 2013.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grant-fund-for-the-installation-of-plug-in-vehicle-charging-infrastructure-at-train-stations>

London First's Crossrail 2 plan launched

London First, an organisation representing businesses in London, launched plans for Crossrail 2 in February 2013. The plans were drawn up by a task force chaired by Lord Adonis, a Railfuture vice president. The proposals substantially build on plans for a new underground line between north east and south west London, usually called the Chelsea-Hackney line which have been around in various forms at least since the Abercrombie Report of the 1940s. The new scheme would take suburban services from Surrey and Hertfordshire through a new tunnel between Wimbledon in the south west and Tottenham and Alexandra Palace in the north east. In central London there would be a new station at King's Road Chelsea and interchanges at Clapham Junction, Victoria, Tottenham Court Road (connecting with Crossrail 1) and a station serving not only King's Cross and St Pancras but also Euston. The timeline for the proposals would see Crossrail 2 being completed at the same time as the proposed completion of HS2 to Manchester and Leeds. The task force considered projections of population and employment growth and the demand for transport and feasibility issues. The report, welcomed by the media, is now being considered by DfT, TfL and Network Rail.



http://londonfirst.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/LF_CROSSRAIL2_REPORT_AW_Single_Pages.pdf

Railfuture report on Devon flooding

Railfuture Devon and Cornwall has drawn together local knowledge of both the railway and rivers to produce *The November 2012 Railway Flooding in Devon: observations and recommendations*. The report makes a number of suggestions, including making greater use of river level warnings, the location of new and improved culverts, and improvements to the diversionary route via Yeovil. The report was sent to Network Rail, local MPs and councils. It has been reported in local news media, including radio and TV and some of the trade magazines.

<http://tinyurl.com/bt5r9ge>

Funding for station improvements

For the 2014-2019 period, £200million will be available to upgrade stations through the National Station Improvement Programme and Access for All funding. In future, emphasis will be placed on the availability of funding from other sources. In 2014 NSIP will include the Darwin project which will bring together train running information systems, both online and at stations.

<http://tinyurl.com/d2osl4j>



Picture: CROSSRAIL

Crossrail trains to be publicly funded

Transport Minister Stephen Hammond announced on 1 March 2013 that the Government had agreed that the trains for Crossrail and their maintenance facilities would be fully publicly funded to ensure that they will be available for the service to start in 2018. This followed representations made by the Mayor of London and Transport for London and delays in completing the private funding of the new train fleet for Thameslink.

www.gov.uk/government/speeches/crossrail

Better Bus Areas is Government initiative to boost use

Transport Minister Norman Baker launched the bidding process for the designation of Better Bus Areas on 26 February 2013. In Better Bus Areas, the Bus Service Operators Grant (cut by 20% in 2012) will be devolved to local authorities over a period of years. The Government's aim is to help local authorities in England, outside London, to expand their local bus markets and, by improving services for passengers, to promote economic growth and reduce carbon emissions. There is nothing in the guidance issued on the scheme that specifically mentions improving public transport interconnectivity, but rail campaigners will know how improved bus services and facilities at railway stations will meet these aims. Applications by local transport authorities, supported by the commercial bus operators in their areas, have to be made to the DfT by 21 June 2013 and decisions should be made by 1 October 2013.

www.gov.uk/government/speeches/better-bus-areas

MPs give two verdicts on the InterCity West Coast franchise

Two House of Commons committees have issued reports on the InterCity West Coast franchise fiasco. The transport committee reported on 31 January 2013, concluding that "the episode has revealed problems of governance, assurance and policy and resources. Embarking on an ambitious, perhaps unachievable, reform of franchising, in haste, on the UK's most complex piece of railway was irresponsible". The committee is carrying out a separate review of the whole franchising system but asked that the DfT should explain why ministers and senior officials were misled on the calculation of subordinated loan facilities. It wants a full investigation of emails to clear up the ongoing concern that there may have been bias in favour of First Group. The committee also wants a breakdown of all the costs incurred, and for lessons to be learned by ministers

New stations fund

Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin announced on 24 January 2013 that a fund of £20 million would be allocated to "shovel ready" projects for new stations that were not only well advanced but for which some other funding was available. Applications for this short-term programme, to be considered by a specially convened panel, had to be made by the end of February 2013. Fourteen bids were made and although a final announcement is to be made in May 2013, it was said, in Mr McLoughlin's statement on the future of franchising on 26 March 2013, that bids for stations at Ilkeston in Derbyshire, Pye Corner near Newport, and Lea Bridge in east London, had been successful. Railfuture played an essential role in ensuring that the plans for Lea Bridge were ready for action by giving a grant to the local Chingford Line rail user group for a consultant's report and supporting the group's campaigning and lobbying activities.

<http://tinyurl.com/ckbaje9>

in more realistically matching policy ambitions with departmental resources and capacity.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmtran/537/53703.htm

A report by the public accounts committee, published on 4 February 2013, found that the cost of cancelling the franchise process already amounted to £55 million plus an unknown future opportunity cost resulting from franchise delays. The DfT did not apply basic processes properly or learn from previous errors, senior managers failed to apply common sense and missed clear warning signs, and the DfT's protection against risky bids failed. The misjudged attempt to make cost savings by cutting corners on the competition, particularly by failing to bring in financial expertise, resulted in significant costs to the taxpayer. The blinkered and rushed approach meant that the competition was not run properly. It was a mistake not to have a single person responsible for the project from beginning to end.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmpublicacc/813/81302.htm

More franchise compensation?

Arriva, First Group, National Express and Stagecoach, which were involved in the aborted Great Western franchise competition, have taken the first steps in legal action to recover their bidding costs. Negotiations between them and the Government are ongoing but the compensation alone could amount to £40 million, plus legal costs if it goes to court. There are also two other franchises, Essex Thameside and Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern in a similar situation.

www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-21704682

Continuing record passenger numbers

Rail usage statistics for October-December 2012 were published by the Office of Rail Regulation in March 2013. Over 385 million passenger journeys were recorded, 14 million more than in the same period in 2011 and the highest number in that quarter since records began. Revenue was also at a record level, up by 8.5% to £1.96 billion for franchised passenger services and by 16.1% to £12.7 billion on non-franchised services compared with the previous year.

www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.11128

International comparison of rail fares and ticketing

Passenger Focus, in conjunction with the Association of Train Operating Companies, has published a study of rail fares and ticketing in 10 countries. The countries covered were France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Japan, north east USA and south east Canada. The ticketing systems and fare-setting systems were considered both in cities and on regional and national networks in the study carried out by MVA Consulting.

www.passengerfocus.org.uk/research/publications/comparison-of-international-rail-fares-and-ticketing-report-for-atoc-and-passenger-focus-february-2013

Improving transport integration for car alternatives

A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration was published by the Department for Transport on 14 March 2013. The aim is to make it, whenever possible, as straightforward to make a door-to-door journey by public transport,

Railfuture submissions

Railfuture responds to a wide range of proposals and consultations from official bodies and these responses are all listed on the Railfuture website. Those made in the first three months of this year include:

- ❑ Major infrastructure planning reform to DfT, January 2013
 - Schedule 4 & 8 possessions and performance requirements to ORR, January 2013
 - ❑ Network Rail's strategic business plan to ORR, February 2013
 - Secretary of State's powers under S26(1) of Railways Act 1993 to DfT, March 2013
 - ❑ Integrated transport block funding to DfT, March 2013
 - ❑ Strategic roads network to DfT, March 2013
 - ❑ Freight specific charge for biomass to ORR, March 2013
 - ❑ 2014 HS1 Periodic Review to ORR, April 2013
- <http://tinyurl.com/csfzwwf>

bike, on foot or by combining these methods as it is by private transport. The Door to Door strategy aims to ensure there is accurate, accessible and reliable information about the different transport options for a journey, convenient and affordable tickets for an entire journey, regular and straightforward connections at all stages of the journey as well as safe and comfortable transport facilities.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/door-to-door-strategy

Railfuture Wales backs Welsh Affairs Committee of MPs

The House of Commons Welsh Affairs Committee has reported on the state of the railways in Wales. Its findings were welcomed by Railfuture Wales which emphasised the need for improved cross-border rail services, especially between South Wales and Bristol. To offset the fact that High Speed Two will not directly benefit Wales, an extra "Barnett" payment would enable the North Wales main line to be electrified and enhanced links to be made between mid and south west Wales with the English Midlands and North. Railfuture Wales had already called for more direct rail links to airports and also welcomed the proposal for greater devolution of transport powers to the Welsh government.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmwelaf/95/9502.htm

www.railfuture.org.uk/press+releases

Analysis of rail finances

The Office of Rail Regulation published *GB rail industry financial information 2011-2012*, a detailed analysis of the latest financial figures available from train operators, Network Rail and governments on 18 April 2013. The total expenditure on running the railways for the year was £11.61 billion, up by 2.9% on the previous year, but down by 2.1% once inflation is taken into account. The share of this that comes from passenger fares has risen to 57.6%, while Government funding has dropped by 1.8% to 32.1%. One of the statistics that attracted particular attention was that the effective net subsidy, once infrastructure costs are included, for East Coast was only 1% of the line's income compared with an average of 32% for the privately operated franchises. ORR will be using the analysis in considering Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan on which it will be issuing a draft determination on 12 June 2013.

www.rail-reg.gov.uk/gb-financials-2012



A rail strategy for Surrey

Surrey County Council has published a consultative draft rail strategy with supporting documents. Comments are required by 28 June 2013. The Surrey division of Railfuture London & South East will be holding a meeting on 1 June 2013 in Staines at which the draft strategy will be considered.

<http://tinyurl.com/ct9b3mp>

www.railfuture.org.uk/events

Railfuture press releases

Since the last issue of Rail Action, press releases on the following subjects from Railfuture have included:

- ❑ Flawed thinking on HS2 - 29 January
- ❑ More passengers die on roads in six hours than have died on Britain's railways in the last six years - 22 February
- ❑ Missing Uckfield-Lewes rail link moves a step nearer - March
- ❑ Fifty years of rail success - 16 March

<http://tinyurl.com/bt4nqtl>

What's on

2 May 2013 Thursday

Local government elections. More info:

<http://tinyurl.com/byqs7rn>

9 May 2013 Thursday

Realising the Potential of Small Stations conference. Birmingham.

<http://www.acorp.uk.com/>

11 May 2013 Saturday

Railfuture national AGM. Town Hall, Market Place, Durham DH1 3NE. 11.00.

<http://tinyurl.com/dyrygot>

Advance planning by Network Rail

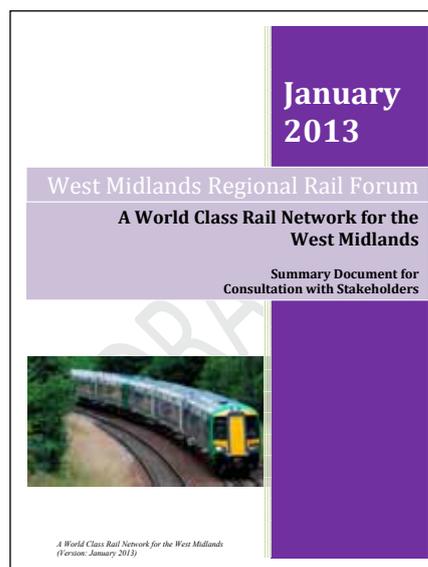
Network Rail has started a long-term planning process that will seek to develop strategic goals for the rail network over the next 30 years, and more specifically to feed into decisions for the 2019-2024 expenditure (control period 6). A series of market studies for the main sectors of the industry (long distance, London and South East, urban areas, regional services and freight) will be issued as will local studies, network studies and route and network specifications. These will be published for consultation before being submitted to the Office of Rail Regulation for approval. The first market study, for long distance travel, is available and is being considered by Railfuture's passenger group.

www.networkrail.co.uk/long-term-planning-process

West Midlands rail strategy

The West Midlands Rail Forum, which includes authorities in the Centro area and the county and unitary authorities in the surrounding region as well as rail industry and business interests, has launched a draft strategy *A World Class Rail Network for the West Midlands*. The document was issued in January 2013 and many of the issues it contains were presaged at Railfuture's conference in Birmingham in the autumn of 2012. These include improving capacity, using rail investment to spur economic activity and maximising the potential of High Speed Two. Initial responses were requested by 30 April 2013 but it is intended that the document will be regularly revised.

www.centro.org.uk/consultation/rail_vision.aspx



And finally . . .

improved passenger satisfaction at improved stations

When the National Station Improvement Programme was launched in 2007, Network Rail commissioned Passenger Focus to assess how passengers wanted stations to be improved and whether NSIP altered passengers' satisfaction at individual stations. The second phase of this research has now been published following interviews at seven improved stations that had been included in the earlier study - Balham, Finsbury Park, Gypsy Hill, Halifax, Smitham, Streatham Hill and Uckfield. This shows that overall station satisfaction has increased by 30%. Dissatisfaction was still expressed on the availability or condition of toilets, the provision of CCTV and the presence of staff after dark, the latter not being something covered by the NSIP.

www.passengerfocus.org.uk/research/publications/national-station-improvement-programme-phase-two-report

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18 May 2013

Saturday

The first through train to Hoe, two miles beyond Dereham, on the Mid Norfolk Railway. The Silver Lining runs from London St Pancras at 07.40. More information:

<http://tinyurl.com/cjtwrc>

19 May 2013

Sunday

National rail timetable change.

21 May 2013

Tuesday

Felixstowe Travel Watch AGM.

<http://tinyurl.com/c4ylznw>

22 June 2013

Saturday

Railfuture summer conference. Vision and Reality: How we can have both. Speakers from Network Rail, Tarka Rail Association, Kilbride Community Rail, Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways, Portishead Railway Group and New Somerset and Dorset Railway. Albermarle Centre, Albermarle Road, Taunton TA1 1BA. 11.00 to 16.30. More info:

<http://tinyurl.com/buguz42>

This is just a selection of the events listed on the Railfuture website at:

www.railfuture.org.uk/events