

Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

No 26 September 2014

railfuture *Yorkshire*

President: Gerald Egan Vice-President: Alan Whitehouse

High-Speed across T'Pennines?

By Paul Salveson



Photo by Paul Colbeck: Could the Woodhead Line be re-opened?

Osborne lets the cat out of the bag

The Chancellor of the Exchequer made a remarkable speech in Manchester on Monday June 23rd. He set out a vision for a 'Northern Powerhouse' which could include a new high-speed route across the Pennines – quickly dubbed 'HS3'. The day after his Manchester speech he wrote in *The Yorkshire Post*: "We've done a lot – but we must do much more to connect our Northern cities. We need an ambitious plan to make the cities and towns here in this northern belt radically more connected from east to west – to create the

equivalent of travelling around a single global city. As well as fixing the roads, that means considering a new high speed rail link....I want us to start thinking about whether to build a new high speed rail connection east-west from Manchester to Leeds. Based on the existing rail route, but speeded up with new tunnels and infrastructure".

Reactions to the speech varied, with some seeing it as a pre-election gimmick which might also defuse some of the anger over proposed cuts in the new Northern franchise suggested in the recently-published prospectus. Whatever the case may be, the cat was well and truly out of the bag and only a few weeks later a group of Northern local authorities published their 'One North' vision which builds on the chancellor's statement but takes it much further. And – I would argue – in the right direction. Let's have a look at some of the background and what it might mean for the future of our railways in the North.

The HS2 conundrum

Reactions to the Government's proposals on HS2 have been mixed. In the North, the local authority leaders who have unequivocally welcomed the idea stand to gain some localised benefits. Manchester would get the Ancoats area regenerated; Leeds would see Holbeck getting huge investment. It isn't about a strategic approach to the national rail network, regenerating the North or improved connectivity. *Continued overleaf*

Next Branch Meeting

(see flyer enclosed with this newsletter for more details)

Sheffield Friends' Meeting House, 14:00 hours 20 September 2014

Speaker: Pete Myers, Northern Stakeholder Manager

It's old-fashioned parish-pump stuff. Those local authorities which would miss out on HS2, such as Bradford and Wakefield, have been much more critical. Many people with a serious involvement in rail, either as campaigners or as transport professionals, have looked askance at the 'dead-end' configuration proposed for HS2 stations at both Leeds and Manchester. Whatever happened to 'connecting up the North'? It's all about connecting the major cities with London, offering more peripheral cities and towns' poor links to HS2, particularly in Leeds. Some business groups, such as the Mid-Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (which covers Kirklees and Wakefield) have been similarly critical of HS2 as currently configured.

We're in a new situation

The chancellor's speech followed by publication of 'One North' changes things completely. The idea of a fast east-west link across the Pennines has been received with much greater acceptance than the proposals for HS2. If we are serious about a high-speed link across the Pennines the idea of having it disconnected from HS2 is ludicrous. The implications of HS3 are that HS2 – at least beyond the Midlands – has to be re-thought with a major alteration to the plans for accessing Leeds and Manchester. In essence, HS2 has to be fully linked in to a future HS3 with through-running across Leeds and Manchester. This would mean substantial works at both locations to ensure there is capacity to accommodate through high-speed services, but it would be money well spent, bringing much greater regional benefit by permitting through running of high-speed services to major centres such as Bradford and connecting all the major Northern cities.

The One North proposition

The politics of the chancellor's speech and the 'One North' proposition are interesting. Clearly the 'One North' vision has been under preparation for some time and couldn't have been cobbled together in response to Osborne's speech at the back end of June. So you have primarily Labour-controlled local authorities and a Tory-led coalition seemingly working in tandem, or at least with some degree of mutual understanding. However, there are differences. Following Osborne's June speech we were told that the Department for Transport (DfT) was looking at an upgrade of the existing Diggle route between Manchester and Leeds, via Huddersfield. I argued back in early July that this didn't make sense and there was little room left for major enhancements of a route already at capacity. Electrification will help in terms of existing services but it won't give you the step change in speed – and capacity – that the North needs. It would make more sense to look at a new alignment through the Pennines.

The One North proposals have a new Trans-Pennine crossing at the core of their vision. It isn't specific about where this should be but it would be foolish to talk of an entirely new tunnel whilst a pretty good one – Woodhead – is sat there waiting for business. Using Woodhead, with a 'delta junction' east of Dunford Bridge heading north to Leeds and south to Sheffield – with an 'east-facing' curve allowing direct high-speed running from Sheffield to Leeds and beyond – makes huge sense and avoids the cost and wider environmental challenges of an entirely new tunnel. This is the preferred option of HSUK (High Speed UK) which has set out a comprehensive alternative to HS2. That said all options need to be considered at this stage of the game.

Other Trans-Pennine routes and some risks

If the argument for a new Trans-Pennine crossing has been won, that doesn't mean that existing routes should be left as they are. The Diggle Route is being developed for electrification and it looks like the case for wiring the Calder Valley Route is also winning support. However, things can change and the pressure needs to be kept on for major investment in both the Diggle and Calder Valley routes, as well as the congested Hope Valley line. There is a worry that civil servants could use the long-term promise of HS3 to de-spec an already much de-spec'd Northern Hub. The positive momentum of investment in the rail network must continue and expand. New rolling stock is desperately needed and it is vital that the new Northern franchise specification includes new build. And at the risk of seeming greedy, the former Peak Main Line from Millers Dale to Matlock must be kept on the agenda as a major strategic re-opening which would – these things being relative – not cost a fortune. It offers different things than a re-opened Woodhead Tunnel, providing a faster and more direct route from the North-West to the East Midlands – and beyond.

A question of ownership

There is one big elephant in the room: who should drive forward this 'HS3'? Could we trust the DfT to do it? I don't think so. The suspicion that it's all an attempt to woo Northern voters to vote Tory next May is hard to resist. Will it all be quietly forgotten after next May, assuming David Cameron is still at No. 10? And would a future Labour Government, anxious to win support in the south, give it priority? A huge issue which HS3 throws up is the lack of a strong political voice for the North. Having it championed by the leaders of five local authorities, however big they may be, isn't enough. The project is a perfect example of why the North needs a 'One North' government which can unite the three regions (North-east, North-West, Yorkshire and the Humber). Yes, we are some way from

achieving that, but the next ten years could see some quite sudden changes, possibly triggered by events in Scotland.

Ways forward

We are certainly living in interesting times. For the short-term, let's hope that the 'One North' proposals are fully embraced and we achieve a consensus not only across the North but also amongst the politicians nationally. A re-configured HS2 which really does join up the Northern cities with the HS3 east-west spine would remove many of the objections to the flawed original HS2 proposals. I would argue that HS3 would be of far greater economic benefit to the North than even a revised HS2, but taken together the impact will be huge. And it isn't just about the core high-speed routes. There would be a major release of capacity for freight as well as for 'conventional' passenger services which provide good connections into the high-speed network at Leeds, Manchester and a (small) number of other centres. That means a visionary plan for the new Northern and TransPennine franchises, not the depressing scenario of 'trade-offs' and disinvestment we're hearing from some quarters in DfT. We need to avoid the debate on high-speed degenerating into a parochial set of demands for it to serve 'my' town or city. Keep high-speed as just that, with a small number of hubs in the North fed by good quality regional and local services. And let's get on with it so that the North feels the benefit far more quickly than the original HS2 plans envisaged. As one Yorkshire rail campaigner commented "Thankfully One North seems to see the importance of acting in advance of high speed rail to improve existing routes. The need for network development is immediate and cannot wait for HS3 in 2030".

Paul Salvesson is a visiting professor of the University of Huddersfield.

New Service - Calder Valley to Huddersfield?

An extract of a press release issued by The Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Sustainable Transport Group.

Residents of Hebden Bridge and its surrounding area want a direct train service to Huddersfield, a recent survey of rail passengers has revealed.

This is one of the key findings from research carried out in July by the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Sustainable Transport Group in conjunction with the Friends of Hebden Bridge Station. It is amongst the recommendations in the group's response to the Government's current consultation* on the future specification for the Northern Rail and TransPennine Rail networks.

Nina Smith, the Group's Rail Issues Lead said: "74% of respondents to the survey said that they would like a direct train to Huddersfield; it's also almost certain that many people who currently drive from the Calder Valley to Huddersfield would welcome the chance to have a quick and painless journey by train. Many commuters work or study at Huddersfield University; others work for different employers. Currently, the only alternative to using a car for the commute are a train journey involving a change at Brighouse, Mirfield or Halifax, or a slow and uncomfortable bus ride. Ms Smith said that another benefit of a through train service is that it should ease congestion on the A629 and A646 and the other routes from Calderdale to Huddersfield, thus making the journey easier for those who have no option but to drive."

Settle to Carlisle Anniversary

by Mark Parry

At our last branch meeting in Settle, Richard Morris the Chair of the Friends of the Settle- Carlisle Line gave us a presentation. 2014 is the 25th anniversary of the saving of the Settle to Carlisle Line and a chartered train trip was run carrying some of the saviours of the line and some of those who currently influence the line's direction. This event attracted good publicity. The Friends have two objectives, Preserving the Heritage and Improving Services.

They are fortunate in having much of the original railway heritage in and around their stations. The Friends play a key part in maintaining this heritage including finding ways of funding some of it. Recently they received credit for restoring the Ribbleshead Station Master's House. As with Kirkby Stephen, this is being used for self-catering holiday lets; Kirkby Stephen is already providing a surplus.

In 2012/2013 there was a decline in station footfalls, the first for several years; it is felt that a poor summer and the distraction of the Olympics contributed to this decline. The Friends conduct their own surveys which have revealed that the nature of travel has changed. In the 1990's 80% of passengers were day tourists enjoying the journey, now this is only 20%. But this drop is more than made up for by people travelling longer distance to visit friends and family, or for other leisure pursuits and business trips. In a spot survey in January, 20% of passengers on a train

were going to Scotland. Northern Rail are aware of the need for better connections with Scotland trains at Carlisle. The Friends calculate that most journeys are profitable, owing to the average fare paid for journeys north of Skipton being far in excess of Northern's average fare. Richard said that there is great potential to develop further tourist business, but better trains are needed. Estimated passenger numbers are 1.25 million north of Skipton. Sunday travel is growing – and trains are now diagrammed as 3 carriages. An extra Sunday service has been introduced thanks to the lobbying of Drew Haley by the Friends. For the next franchise they hope to have the 16:15 departure from Leeds re-instated, and that there will be an extra Saturday evening service between Carlisle and Kirkby Stephen. The Friends say that demand does not currently justify an hourly service between Leeds and Carlisle, but their research shows that there is significant demand from Appleby southwards for a direct link to Manchester involving 4 trains a day. A current major issue is not knowing how long a train will be, making it difficult to predict the number of seats that will be available for coach groups.

New Franchises for Northern and TransPennine

by Mark Parry

The Department for Transport (DfT) held a Consultation on the Trans-Pennine & Northern Franchise Renewals on the 9 July. Several of the Branch Committee attended this consultation at York, chaired by David Hogarth of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and led by the Department for Transport. The timetable for the renewal of these two franchises is:

18 Aug 2014: Consultation closing date;

14 Sep 2014: A short list of bidders has now been announced early: For Northern: Arriva, Govia, Abellio. For Trans-Pennine: First Group, Keolis, Stagecoach.

15 Apr 2015: Deadline for the submission of bids;

15 Oct 2015: The Winners of the franchises will be announced;

16 Feb 2016: The new franchises will start.

There is confusion over who does what between the DfT and Rail North. The two are working in partnership, with DfT leading the procurement and Rail North managing the franchises. Rail North is a partnership of 30 local transport authorities including the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. Rail North wants the following 4 "Cs":

- Connectivity improved;
- Capacity increased;
- Coherent network and ticketing created;
- Cost effectiveness achieved.

Robert Sampson from Passenger Focus also addressed the meeting with some "satisfaction statistics" about the two franchises. Trans-Pennine Express has the lowest satisfaction ratings in the UK on capacity. Northern rates poorly when dealing with delays and disruption.

Andrew Nock from the DfT highlighted some of the challenges and opportunities. The key issues were:

- The creation of the Northern hub;
- Electrification;
- Limited availability of diesel rolling stock;
- Significant changes in demand patterns in recent years;
- Community rail – Northern has the largest number of these offering opportunities.

Julie Mills from the DfT gave an overview of the Trans-Pennine franchise specification. The DfT are trying to leave most decisions to the new operators wherever possible, using local knowledge and allowing more influence from local transport authorities. Some services may be transferred to Northern for efficiency of operation, these are Manchester to Blackpool; Manchester to Windermere and the service to Cleethorpes may end at Doncaster with Northern continuing to Cleethorpes. They are suggesting introducing a new service Liverpool – Preston – Scotland. All this is subject to the results from this consultation. They do intend to specify the times of the first and last trains as well as the number of trains per hour calling at each station. They expect the new operator to enhance capacity and that the rolling stock should cope with all types of passengers.

Andrew Nock discussed the Northern specification. Northern is the largest operator and has seen growth of 47%. Some potential changes are:

- Changing frequencies to meet demand;
- Reduce some station calls to speed up journeys;

- Increasing the length of the operating day;
- Introducing a different pattern of services for the weekends;
- Introducing seasonal services.

They are looking to specify the length of the day, minimum frequencies; minimum station calls and the use of electric units. They are asking if they should specify maximum journey times, critical timings and through journeys. They will only ask for improved rolling stock and the replacement of the Pacers. The key message is “business as usual is not good enough.”

A question and answer session highlight some interesting concerns. Our Chair, Nina Smith, noted that for Trans-Pennine an increase in modal share was being sought, but not highlighted for Northern. Another delegate took offence at the use of the phrase “fare evasion” when in on many occasions this was down to “no opportunity to pay”. Our own Mike Crowhurst said why, if we are in a period of expansion, are we being asked for “trade offs” such as higher fares for better trains?

This consultation has now ended so we wait and see if many of our aspirations will be met.

ARRIVA to run trains in the North?

by Mark Parry

Nina Smith, Graham Collett and Mark Parry, amongst others, met with David Jones from ARRIVA, on 9 July, as ARRIVA are interested in bidding for both the Trans-Pennine and Northern franchises. They currently run many rail franchises in the UK as well as 14 operations across Europe and are owned by Deutsche Bahn. We pointed out that their previous operation in the North casts a shadow over their ambitions, even though they had taken over from a failing franchise. We said we want more and better trains with refurbished trains and the demise of the Pacers.

As ARRIVA also operate buses we highlighted the possibilities of them providing integrated bus links to such places as Ripon and Pickering. We also had some suggestions for new links and changes to services. Early, late and Sunday services were discussed noting that these have historically been governed by pay and conditions and there is a need for some flexibility here. We asked if ARRIVA would support electrification of the Calder Valley line.

Other issues we discussed were: a lack of credible passenger journey data; the need to work with other operators for special events; the lack of the opportunity to pay a fare on Northern services and problems with the current seat reservation system.

Selby & District Rail User Group

by Reg & Terry French

Selby Station The next six weeks will be challenging for both Staff and services. With the river bridge closure all services with the exception of trains going to London, will start and terminate at the Station with replacement bus substitution to and from Hull. The Hull Trains London services will be diverted via Goole with buses from Selby and Howden to Goole. The one return East Coast service will have a bus replacement service to Doncaster.

An agreement has now been reached as to how the Section 106 monies received from Housing Developers is to be spent. A modern Waiting Shelter with covered cycle parking is to be installed on Platform 3 to ensure those waiting for London services have protection in inclement weather. Planning permission is now being sought.

South Milford Station The major works to both the vehicular and footpath access to Platform 1 has been completed with lighting for the first time since the Station opened. Lighting has also been installed on the footpath access to Platform 2. Agreement has been reached with Northern Rail for a help point on Platform 1 and negotiations with Northern and Selby District Council are at an advanced stage to provide whole Station cover CCTV cameras. Northern are also to provide real time information in the autumn.

Sherburn-in-Elmet has the fastest growing footfall in the District since our group's successful attempts to provide additional services and has for the first time a Sunday service which will allow leisure time to be spent at York on Sundays. The next immediate objective is to secure ample car parking to meet increased demand. The Parish Council have made a donation of £300 as appreciation to the Group for progress made at South Milford and Sherburn-in-Elmet.

Church Fenton Station is to have real time information in the next few months. Negotiations are on going to provide commuters with more balanced services.

Train Performance has suffered from the speed restriction over the river bridge at Selby and also there have been some delays arising from crossing failures in the Selby area. Other problems include a shortage of train crew and

issues arising from the 5th TransPennine path from Manchester to Leeds. On the positive side it is now possible to get from Selby to Liverpool in two hours by changing at Leeds or Huddersfield.

Franchises A Working Party is giving detailed consideration to our group's response to the Department for Transport's Consultation Document on the TransPennine and Northern franchises. A first draft is almost completed. The final response will be vigorous and comprehensive.

Hull Trains Meeting Representatives of Selby and District Rail Users' Group recently met with Will Dunnett, Managing Director, of Hull Trains to discuss electrification and general issues. The meeting was very upbeat and they were impressed with Will's vision for the future. The plan for electrification between Templehirst and Selby is an ambitious one but the signs are very encouraging and it is hoped the scheme will pass Network Rail's "GRIP" process soon.

Hope Valley Railway Users Group

by Mike Pedler

This group is considering affiliating to our branch.

The Hope Valley Rail Users Group (HVRUG) exists to press for improvements in the train service through the Hope Valley. It has been doing this since 1990 and currently has over 100 members. The Hope Valley rail line connects the two major cities of Sheffield and Manchester and brings passengers to a popular part of the Peak District. Despite this, and a growth in passenger numbers of over 60% in the last ten years, the stopping service is one of the least frequent in the country. It is hourly at best and for a substantial part of the day and evening trains run only every two hours.

The first improvement in 20 years came in December 2011, when a train was added which now provides an hourly service during the evening rush hours in both directions. This involved negotiations with the local cement company which helpfully gave up the time slot which they owned but no longer used. We celebrated on various platforms with music, punch and mince pies. In 2012, supported by the Community Rail Partnership and Derbyshire County Council, HVRUG undertook a survey of Hope Valley Line passenger usage *Improving the Rail Service in the Hope Valley* (<http://hopevalleyrailway.org.uk/>). We had an unusually high 37% return of our postal questionnaire, clearly demonstrating the importance of the line to the residents of the Hope Valley.

Network rail is about to start a programme of work to increase capacity on this over-crowded line. This and the refranchising of the service for 2016 make this a critical time for the us. We are currently working on our response to the DfT consultation. HVRUG wants five principal improvements for the new franchise, with the first and foremost being: *An hourly stopping train service to all stations, all day, every day, including Saturdays and Sunday.* We are also seeking an additional hourly service that stops at Chinley, Hope and Dore; more robust fare collection with ticket machines at all stations and replacement of the Pacers as soon as this can be achieved without reducing the service. We welcome all support to bring about these aims.

Railfuture Reinvigorates Minsters Rail Campaign

by Graham Collett

Nina Smith (Branch Chair), Chris Hyomes (Vice-Chair and National Board Member) and I had a very useful meeting with James Alexander, the Leader of York City Council on 1st August. James was not fully aware of the Minsters Rail Campaign and the background on the reopening scheme and was **really interested** in it - he asked if he could keep the report when I handed it to him!

Nina asked if the City of York Council could include in their response to the Northern Franchise consultation, a requirement for the bidders to fund a Network Rail "GRIP" study into the Minsters line. James was receptive to this and asked the officers to look into it. The officers present did mention that the impact of the Selby-Hull electrification on the Ministers route services would need to be explored.

We also covered some other issues. James was very supportive of having new stations at Haxby and Strensall and our idea of having two trains an hour on the Scarborough line. The East Coast mainline authorities Consortium, which includes York City Council, has commissioned research into the economic benefits of investment in the line. The Department for Transport and Network Rail both see the Consortium as an ally in getting schemes approved and "standing up" to the Treasury when seeking cash! On High Speed James feels that York Council has to support the current HS2 scheme, otherwise it risks the Yorkshire "leg" being dropped because of the level of opposition by some of the other Yorkshire authorities. James noted our suggestion of considering the Woodhead route for HS3, due to capacity limitations on the Diggle route.

Rail User Groups affiliated to Railfuture within the Yorkshire Branch

Aire Valley Rail Users' Group	www.avrug.org.uk
Bradford Rail Users' Group	www.brug.org.uk
Halifax and District Rail Action Group	
Harrogate Line Rail Users' Group	Email: hlrug@live.co.uk
Harrogate Line Supporters' Group	www.harrogatechamber.org/harrogateline.htm
Huddersfield, Penistone and Sheffield Rail Users' Association	Email: hpsrua@btinternet.com
Hull and East Riding Rail Users' Association	www.hullrailusers.co.uk
Lancaster and Skipton Rail Users' Group	www.lasrug.btck.co.uk
Selby and District Rail Users' Group	www.selbytowncouncil.gov.uk/ghost-page/selby-district-rail-users-group/
Settle-Carlisle Line, Friends of the	www.foscl.org.uk
Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Sustainable Transport Group	Email: nhrawsons@googlemail.com

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Chair's Jottings

by Nina Smith

The Northern Rail and Trans-Pennine Franchises Consultation: The last few weeks have been incredibly busy as a result of the franchise consultation. I know that the same will be true for many readers. I have seen a number of user group responses and these have ranged from good to outstanding. The amount of volunteer time devoted to trying to ensure that we have really positive and expansionist next franchises must run into many hundreds, if not thousands of hours. I was involved in submitting proposed copy for the National response, with significant input from the chairs of the North East, North West and Lincolnshire branches, and from the other Yorkshire Branch officers. I have also written a response for my local affiliated group, the Upper Calder Valley Sustainable Transport Group. Department of Transport ministers and officials have been keen to stress that this is a genuine consultation, so let's hope that the final franchise specifications are much more growth-oriented than the consultation document.

HS3: Suddenly the prospect of really good rail connectivity between the core Northern cities – or at least Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield, has become part of the political agenda. I have been too busy to read all that has been written in the past couple of weeks, but common sense says that the Woodhead route must once again be used for what it was designed for: train services. They'll be fast – at least 125 mph and probably more. A reopened Woodhead, with a new spur to Leeds, will not only mean fast train journeys between these core cities. It will also speed up journey times to Liverpool, Hull and Newcastle if at least some of these very fast Manchester-Leeds services start at Liverpool (or Chester) and end at Hull, Middlesbrough or Newcastle. It is to be hoped that the Sheffield services will link up with HS2 to the south, provided a sensible route and station sites are agreed for it.

Quiet Coaches: Many of us have been shocked and horrified at the decisions by Arriva Cross Country and First Great Western to dispense with quiet coaches. I always use them and they usually enable me to have a journey in peace and quiet without having to put up with people shouting into their phones, or listening to intrusive bass or heavy metal music on leaking headphones. Quiet coaches also enable *de facto* segregation with the type of groups who shout and drink tending to avoid the quiet coach. Occasionally someone in the quiet coach breaks the rules, but a quiet word is usually enough to make them behave considerately. One of the reasons given for the abolition of quiet coaches is that they cause aggro. Well, isn't it the job of train staff to enforce the rules? If offenders get unpleasant, there is always the threat of the British Transport Police waiting for them at their destination. Britain used to be a polite country. The cut and thrust of the more aggressive world that has developed these last thirty years has led to a decline in public behaviour. Littering is more common, as is aggressive driving and swearing in public. The Quiet Coach is one of the last bastions of civilised public realm. Long may it continue on those operators who still have them, and let's hope sanity prevails and they return on Cross Country and First Great Western trains. Future franchise specifications for inter-city routes should specify that a quiet coach will be provided and policed. Otherwise the barbarians really will have won.

Nina Smith, Chair, Railfuture Yorkshire Branch

Membership News:

Paul Colbeck – Membership Secretary

Welcome to new members: Dr Michael Troke of Hebden Bridge and Mr Richard Painter of Cleckheaton.

Our next issue (**Yorkshire Rail Campaigner 27**) will be out in December 2014.

Please email material, news and feedback to: Mark.Parry61@Virginmedia.com to arrive by: **Saturday 8 November 2014**. Alternatively call or text 07981 339558.

A developed country is not a place where the poor have cars; it's where the rich use public transportation. – Enrique Penalosa, Former Mayor of Bogota,

According to the Department for Transport the Northern subsidy is 53 pence per passenger mile. But the Campaign for Better Transport has recalculated this to be just 15.4p! For more details see: <http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/new-report-government-must-accept-case-northern-rail-investment>

Diary

- **17 September 2014**, Wednesday, Railfuture North East meets at the Brunswick Methodist Church, Brunswick Place, Newcastle from 19:00. Talk about French light rail systems in the 21st century.
- **20 September 2014**, Saturday @ 14:00, Yorkshire Branch meeting at Sheffield Friends' Meeting House. Pete Myers will be giving a talk. Please see the attached flyer for more details.
- **29 September 2014** The Campaign for Better Transport Rail Group meets in the Grove Pub next to the big tower, Bridgewater Place, in Leeds @ 19:15 hours. Contact the editor for more details.
- **1 November 2014**, Saturday, Railfuture Autumn conference, Rail Users' & Rail User Group awards @ the University of Westminster, London.
- **15 November 2014**, Saturday, Railfuture North West meets at the Waldorf pub, Manchester, from 1300 (lunch from 12 noon)
- **24 November 2014** The Campaign for Better Transport Rail Group meets in the Grove Pub next to the big tower, Bridgewater Place, in Leeds @ 19:15 hours. Contact the editor for more details.
- **31 January 2015** Railfuture Yorkshire Branch Annual General Meeting in York 14:00 to 16:00 hours.
- **16 May 2015** Railfuture National Annual General Meeting in Blackpool