



September 2016

### Welcome to your new, improved Rail User Express.

Feel free to forward RUEX to a colleague, or to reproduce items in your own newsletter (quoting sources). If you want further details of any of the stories mentioned, consult the relevant website or, failing that, get back to me, and I will forward the source material.

*For details of group affiliation to Railfuture, see website [here](#) (from the "Membership Type" menu, select "RUG or similar").*

Although a local planning application to reopen the Cotswold line from Honeybourne to Stratford was indeed approved, Appendix H of the Stakeholder Briefing Document on the Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the new West Midlands franchise (link below) is less optimistic. No local transport authority has taken up the project, and the track bed has been reused as a road in Stratford, and a cycleway in from Long Marston.

The 8-stage Governance for Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) process, to confirm that the desired outcome aligns to rail network strategy and can be economically delivered, does not work very well. The necessary feasibility studies demand substantial sums up front, but woefully under-estimate the benefit, a shortcoming that was aired at the Railfuture AGM in July following a presentation on the Borders Rail reopening: though a spectacular success, its benefit/cost ratio (BCR) had been assessed at barely 2, which is the lower limit of viability. North of the border, projects must also satisfy STAG, the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance, yet more bureaucracy, and seemingly independent of GRIP. One wonders if schemes to reopen an existing line, where it is clear what would be required, the economic benefit is self-evident, and it has local authority support, might not benefit from a simpler process.

*Roger Smith*

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

### Levenmouth Rail Campaign – a dram and a dream

As well as Leven itself, LMRC is also promoting the reopening of Cameron Bridge station, whilst putting freight from the major distillery operated by Diageo and from a nearby bottling plant onto rail would take heavy goods traffic off the local roads. A Visitor Centre at the distillery has also been mooted. However, although Diageo supports the campaign and wishes it well, neither idea is currently under consideration.

In the 2016 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, areas of Levenmouth are ranked within the 20% most deprived in Scotland, whereas prospects in Cowdenbeath-Lochgelly, another former mining community with similar problems but which has a direct rail connection to Edinburgh, have greatly improved. LMRC is seeking a share of the extra £100 million announced by Nicola Sturgeon to boost Scotland's infrastructure.

### Rail Action Group for the East of Scotland – funding for new stations

East Lothian and Scottish Borders Councils and SEStran have invited the Scottish Government to assume responsibility for the construction of East Linton and Reston stations, including the risk element in the Network Rail (NR) budget. To that end, they have agreed to raise their contributions to £3.44m and £2.84m respectively, which would cover the total sum less the Government's offer of 50% and the risk elements.

### **Campaign for Borders Rail – *time to build on success***

The first anniversary of the Borders Railway reopening by HM the Queen is an occasion to look forward. With demand far exceeding expectation, there is a now strong case to enhance and extend the line, and make the existing service more reliable: since last October, the figure for right-time arrivals has never exceeded 70% in any one week, and has recently dipped below 30%. However, such problems must inform, not hinder future plans. More double track would improve capacity, strengthen reliability, and allow more flexible operations, whilst infrastructure work on the East Coast Main Line (ECML) will also benefit local services. Author David Spaven responded to an announcement by the Scottish government as follows:

“It is encouraging that the Transport Minister has now acknowledged the scale of the reliability problem on the Borders Railway, and hopefully the ScotRail Alliance improvement plan will be able to deliver some worthwhile enhancement of performance...We now need a short but incisive Inquiry which will identify exactly why we ended up with such a sub-optimal railway specification, based on hopelessly inadequate patronage forecasts. The people of Midlothian and the Borders – and other parts of Scotland, like Levenmouth in Fife, which are campaigning for rail reinstatement – deserve no less.”

### **South East Northumberland Rail User Group – *building on two fronts***

Following SENRUG representations to Virgin Trains East Coast (VTEC), Morpeth is set to enjoy a real boost from December, when the 0930 and at 1330 weekday services from London – Edinburgh call at 1257 and 1657. Edinburgh departures at 1400 and 1830 services will call at 1515 and 1956. Additional services on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays are also planned. VTEC General Manager, Emma Vincent, said it was committed to working with customers and communities, and in just over eighteen months would launch its new Virgin Azuma trains, which will significantly improve the speed, comfort and frequency of services.

Meanwhile, in a joint campaign, SENRUG and RAGES want to extend the Metrocentre to Morpeth rail link to Berwick and on to Edinburgh. Largely following the Northumberland and Scottish coast paths, the “North Sea Coast” route would connect with several established walking routes; its glorious coastal views would be a major boost to tourism in Northumberland and South-east Scotland. At present, communities were isolated, but with 100mph trains, only a few more passing loops would be needed to accommodate a local service within non-stop and limited stop services. SENRUG is pressing Northumberland County Council to commission a study to confirm the feasibility of the scheme. Then, once the service was established, it would seek to form a Community Rail Partnership to promote the route.

### **Copeland Rail Users’ Group – *credibility at a cost***

Responding to CRUG’s submission on the Moorside nuclear power station, Cumbria County Council (CCC) has stated that the current proposals would not ensure that the Cumbrian Coast Railway could support both the project and other major developments at the same time. These include rail upgrades the Port of Workington, a bid from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and a forthcoming bid by CCC and the National Park for Department for Transport (DfT) Access funding to support the West Cumbria Corridor. The Council also wants improvements to stations, to encourage greater passenger use of the railway as an alternative to the car. To guard against any risk of interruption to Moorside construction, line capacity will need to be increased in a single, early improvement. Thus, to be credible, the transport strategy must include a firm commitment from NuGen to a substantial contribution to the cost.

### **Support the Oldham Rochdale Manchester Lines (STORM) – *fares less than fair***

With effect from 4 September, cheap day return fares in the Greater Manchester area increased by up to 50p as part of Northern Rail’s franchise commitment to remove inconsistency across its network, and remove various ticketing anomalies. But whereas some fares are reduced, eg Halifax-Manchester Victoria down from £11.40 to £9.90, Rochdale passengers still get a raw deal. Their off peak fare to Victoria rises over 10% from £4.40 to £4.90, compared to £4.60 from Bolton, which is further away, and the same as from Wigan, which is almost twice as far.

### **Chinley and Buxworth Transport Group – *building the case for improvement***

The Group campaigns for a better deal for rail travellers from Chinley station, which is half way between Manchester and Sheffield. Having secured a shelter for passengers, and improvements to the drainage of the footbridge, it now seeks to address the very poor access to the platforms. It has therefore launched a survey (link below) that takes only a few minutes to complete. Responses will be completely anonymous. It would especially like to hear from anyone who would use the station more, but for whatever reason finds it inconvenient or impossible to do so. <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NFFDKYX>

### **Friends of the Barton Line – *staying involved and working together***

At its AGM in July, the FoBL Vice-Chairman wished those staff who have been displaced by the new signalling system all the best for the future. He noted the new franchisees, TransPennine Express and Arriva Rail North, as well as Carillion, who have taken over station maintenance, and stressed the importance of contributing to the consultation on the new East Midlands franchise. Unfortunately, performance has been badly affected by industrial strife, but has shown signs of improvement – long may it last. The Secretary reported on a list of suggestions made to Barton Town Council to on improving the transport interchange.

### **Chesham & District Transport Users' Association – *new ticket machines, old signal box***

The Group notes the welcome that TSSA gave to a London TravelWatch review of the impact of ticket office closures, particularly on the disabled. Meanwhile, it has negotiated an upgrade of ticket machines at local stations, to enable travellers to purchase a wider range of tickets than was previously possible. Still in use as it was when installed in the mid-20s, the Edgware Road signal box has been designated as an item of national historic interest. It will open to the public when signalling work on the Circle and Hammersmith & City lines is complete.

### **Rail & Bus for Herefordshire – *a neglected corner of England?***

Like many other local authorities, Herefordshire County Council is proposing to save money by ending subsidies to bus services. Why should this concern a rail magazine? Because many people, particularly the old and the young, either cannot drive or do not own a car, and for whom taxis are prohibitively expensive. In short, the expansion of rail services will be stopped in its tracks if would be users cannot get to and from the station as and when they need to, and this cannot be in either the local or the national interest. *[And even where routes are retained, early and late services that commuters need are being cut. It would actually be in their own interest if train operating companies were to contribute to maintaining these – Ed.]*

The question of whether the Marches Line should remain in the Wales and Borders franchise when this is devolved to the Welsh Assembly appears to have been resolved: it is not in the ITT for the West Midlands franchise. The West Midlands & Chiltern Route Development report makes little mention of Herefordshire, and none at all of any upgrade beyond Worcester, whereas the Marches LEP believes that doubling part of the line between Malvern Wells and Shelwick Junction is a priority.

London Midland joins the growing list of TOCs that cannot respond to a substantial growth in demand during the period of its franchise because of a shortage of diesel units. Its parent company is SNCF, so RBfH wonders if they could borrow some from the French. *[Alternatively, are there any more diesel locos and old carriages to be had? – West Coast? (see And Finally below) - Ed.]*

### **Cotswold Line Promotion Group – *lean times in the west***

The National Passenger Survey is encouraging, but Cotswold Line figures are hidden within the overall results for the GWR franchise, so CLPG is pressing for a greater level of detail. Its autumn magazine also scrutinizes the high level of fares on the line. Better services and connections at the Worcester end of the line are needed, in particular to meet the increased demand for onward travel to Bristol and Birmingham. Currently, passenger numbers thin out as trains meander westward – leading to a "branch line" mentality. Construction of Worcester Parkway station will not now start until 2018, with a predicted increase in cost. CLPG has doubts about its value for money: £22m could do much to improve Shrub Hill!

Meanwhile, Malvern Friends are leading a bid to restore the Great Malvern station clock tower by creating a copy of the original, which was taken down in the 1950s. The CLPG is continuing to press for renovation of both the Malvern stations.

### **Pembroke Rail Travellers' Association – *getting round the Severn closure***

The Saturday service on the Pembroke Dock line has reverted to its winter timetable. The Severn tunnel is now closed until 21 October. Services as far as Cardiff, and up to Manchester are little changed. However, trains to London are diverted via Gloucester, and take 34 minutes longer to reach Swindon and stations to the east, whilst buses replace trains to Bristol, the South and Southwest of England between Newport and Bristol Parkway. So there is no truth in the suggestion by National Express buses that there is "rail chaos"; Wales remains open for business, and rail services to and from London are running.

### **Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group – *pain before gain (for someone else!)***

On Monday – Thursday evenings until 21 October, trains between Reading and Bedwyn are replaced by buses taking twice as long. Down services affected are those after 2102 from Reading, and 2033 from Newbury; up services after 2101 from Bedwyn, and 2123 (stopping) and 2143 (fast) from Newbury. Ironically, the closure is for electrification that will come only as far as Newbury!

### **Salisbury to Exeter Line Rail User Group – *boosting services and stations***

SERUG is calling for 2 trains per hour from Yeovil Junction to Waterloo, which would require doubling the track from Tisbury to Wilton Junction. It also wants the south platform at Tisbury recovered, permissive working at Yeovil Junction, a later departure from Waterloo, and the 25 year old rolling stock replaced. Over the last 10 years, the footfall at its stations has increased by an average of 29%, and demographic change will further strain capacity, even without the 8,000 homes in the pipeline. The loading from Andover in the morning crush hour has resulted in a new multi-deck car park.

The Blackmore Vale Line CRP, which covers the same stations as SERUG but concentrates on the stations and their communities, is off to a flying start. It has a new Board, and a draft Line Plan with six priorities: a Line Guide, website, planting schemes for Tisbury and Yeovil Junction, a litter picking seminar, and bus timetables at every station. Its first promotional tour was a 'Cream Tea Special' at Haselbury Mill, a beautiful and scenic venue in Crewkerne, at an all-in price of only £10.00 from any of its stations.

### **West Sussex Rail Users Association – *Southern woes continue***

WSRUA has discussed the conductors' dispute with Southern several times, but failed to engage with the RMT. They put it to Nick Herbert MP that the dispute seemed to be between the RMT and the government. He copied their letter to the other West Sussex MPs, and several have concurred with that view. WSRUA is now waiting on a response from Secretary of State, Chris Grayling, to its request for the DfT, who control the Management Contract that is the GTR Franchise, to help settle this dispute.

### **South Hampshire Rail Users Group – *is there a lack of ambition?***

By short-listing only two companies for the new South Western franchise, the DfT was in breach of its own guidelines that require at least three full bids. The Public Accounts Committee too is concerned about the declining competition, and believes that the DfT still lacks a coherent strategy for rail, so short-term decisions may prove costly in the future. "It is vital more work is done to ensure the franchise system delivers promised service improvements to passengers, and value for money to taxpayers."

Since the last oil train from Fawley refinery ran on 1 September, the only traffic south of Marchwood military port on the branch from Totton would be DB Cargo wagons stored at Fawley. After Gosport, Hythe is the second largest Hampshire town without a rail service, so the case to restore a passenger service is as strong as ever, just as First Group has reinvigorated the Severn Beach and West of England branch lines. Conversely, if the line were allowed to deteriorate, the cost of any such restoration would only increase.

## RAILFUTURE

Railfuture's Autumn Conference is on Saturday 12 November at the Priory Rooms Quaker Meeting House, only five minutes' walk from Birmingham New Street and Snow Hill stations; the Metro from New Street stops right outside the venue. The Lord Mayor of Birmingham, who once worked for British Rail, has agreed to open the Conference, which will be chaired by Christian Wolmar, our Honorary President. Speakers include Stephen Joseph, Director of the Campaign for Better Transport, and Alice Gillman from Vivarail, whose innovative D-Train will soon enter service on the Coventry - Nuneaton line. The cost is £25 for members and £30 for non-members, but just £15 for holders of a 16-25 Railcard. It includes a buffet lunch, tea and coffee throughout the day, and excellent conference facilities. Bookings can be made online at [www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences), which has a full list of the speakers.

The 2015 Railfuture leaflet, Going Abroad, is packed with information useful to anyone planning to travel abroad by train, although the Voyages-SNCF Piccadilly office has closed down. It would particularly benefit students, and could serve as an introduction to Railfuture. Copies are available either from Trevor Jones ([htjones@raildev.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:htjones@raildev.fsnet.co.uk)) or from Trevor Garrod ([trevor.garrod@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:trevor.garrod@railfuture.org.uk)).

There is an interesting and copiously illustrated critique of the latest Eurostar train by Jerry Alderson on the Railfuture web site: <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/article1712-Eurostar%EF%BF%BDs-New-Trains>. One oddity is the high step in every doorway, even those marked with the wheelchair sign, so any person of reduced mobility (PRM), not just wheelchair users, would require assistance to board and alight. As all UK trains must be accessible from January 2020 (a tighter deadline than in other European countries) it's hard to imagine this on any new British train. The new design is to the wider loading gauge of HS1, rather than the standard UK gauge. *[So not for HS2, then, if that reaches Sheffield via the Midland Main Line? – Ed.]*

## YORKSHIRE BRANCH

The Branch is mourning the passing of its President, Gerald Egan, who was stationmaster at Leeds City when Class 141 Pacers were forced on the Harrogate Line, with closure as the only alternative. Whenever one of these crossed a viaduct, passengers had to lean on the folding doors to stop them opening in the wind! Although its unreliable power transmission was eventually replaced, by then passengers had deserted the service in droves.

December 2017 will see changes in the Transpennine Express (TPE) timetable. From Leeds, there will be 4 fast trains into its new hub at Manchester Victoria, including a half-hourly service to Liverpool, and 2 semi-fast services into Piccadilly. 3 trains a day will serve Liverpool to Glasgow, and the South Pennine route will receive refurbished Class 185s running with 6 carriages. Finally, the 13 sets of a Class 68 locomotive and 5 carriages promise both early delivery and enhanced flexibility.

Selby and District RUG reports an unusual failure: expansion of the rails in the heat prevented the swing bridge across the Selby River from closing. NR has responded by painting the rails white.

## EAST ANGLIA BRANCH

The Branch hails the new trains in the 9-year Abellio franchise, and hopes for a corresponding step change in the region's rail infrastructure: a second track at Trowse Swing Bridge, remodelling of Ely North Junction, passing loops on the Felixstowe branch, and much greater robustness around London. However, plans to replace manual signalling between Yarmouth and Lowestoft with in-cab signalling have been shelved. The Branch is seeking volunteers to conduct a station facilities audit and footfall count at Whittlesford to inform its development, and to form a new rail user group. Abellio is also looking for a station adopter.

On the East Coast Main Line, 6.25 miles of the southbound slow line between Woodwalton and Huntingdon are being restored and cleared for 100mph running – the first such stretch anywhere along the East Coast route. The two-year programme is due to start in Summer 2018, and will allow an additional main line service every hour, whilst giving impetus to a new station at Alconbury Weald, north of Huntingdon.

## WESSEX BRANCH

Like the South Hants RUG above, the Branch wonders if just two preferred bidders for the new South Western franchise will provide sufficient competition to meet the challenge for a new and invigorated service. The franchisee will require a great deal of operating knowledge to ensure efficient levels of service and passenger care. For the Branch to be able to speak with authority, its campaign for improvements demands a full understanding of every line and service, so it would welcome whatever help is available.

Waterloo to Windsor and Eton Riverside should start to see new 5-car Class 707s, but not the full service until late 2017. The Class 458 units they replace will strengthen the Reading – Waterloo trains to 10 cars. And once its new fleet has been delivered in 2018, Caledonian Sleepers is considering reusing the old stock for a sleeper service between Southampton and Scotland!

Line improvements required include doubling of the Exeter line in stages between Wilton and Tisbury, and upgrading the Weymouth line around Moreton, east of Dorchester, as well as reopening the Andover-Ludgersgate branch to passengers to serve a new housing development at Weyhill. SWT services have recently suffered too many signalling problems. One at Basingstoke on 23 July lasted 48 hours.

## ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIPS

The Community Rail Awards dinner in Southport on 29 September is sold out!

In the September issue of Train on Line, Brian Barnsley hails Deutsche Bahn's "Station Green" principles, that Arriva Rail North has said it will apply to 46 of its stations. It is a modular, carbon neutral design that can be adapted to fit in with the local vernacular. The first such station at Horrem, a busy commuter station outside Cologne, includes an interactive ticket and information kiosk linked through to a central call centre, as Northern's new generation of smart ticket vending machines (TVM) will be.

## CAMPAIGN FOR BETTER TRANSPORT

On the rail front, the Campaign is celebrating a couple of victories for common sense by the government: a further £20 million to fund new rail stations or reopen old ones, and a Rail Freight Strategy that recognises the key role played by long-haul services to urban consolidation centres for transfer to low emissions road vehicles for the final mile delivery, and the value of upgrading key sections of the rail network – currently every path out of the port of Felixstowe which becomes free is immediately filled.

### *...and now the rest of the news ...*

The Government has published its response to a consultation on exempting aviation, maritime and rail operators from two provisions of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA), related to their liability for delays and cancellations. Unsurprisingly, the rail operators supported the exemption, citing an additional cost of £3.5 billion/year, whereas consumer organisations were strongly opposed. In particular, Which? drew attention to the discrepancy between Delay Repay and the National Conditions of Carriage. However, neither scheme compensated regular travellers for frequent short delays, or paid compensation in cash by default, as the CRA did. After due consideration, the Government decided not to exempt operators from these service provisions, and that the CRA should apply in full to all transport services, including mainline and London Overground services, from 1 October 2017, as it does already in respect of local and suburban services, including London Underground, and heritage/tourist rail passenger services.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/rail-aviation-and-maritime-applying-the-consumer-rights-act>

The ITT for the South Western franchise that DfT expects to award next February to start in June has been updated, although it is unclear what the changes are. The Stakeholder Briefing Document is still dated February 2016, with a Foreword from the former Under Secretary of State for Transport, Claire Perry.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/south-western-franchise-2016-invitation-to-tender>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/south-western-rail-franchise>

The ITT for the new West Midlands franchise embraces the West Coast Main Line from London to Liverpool, and branches lines such as the Abbey Line from Watford to St Albans, and the Marston Vale Line between Bletchley and Bedford. The Section on Rail Infrastructure Schemes at Annex H of the Consultation Outcome and Stakeholder Briefing Document (the second link) is of particular interest to Railfuture.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/west-midlands-franchise-competition-invitation-to-tender>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/west-midlands-rail-franchise>

The DfT has announced another round of funding for new stations, or to reopen previously closed stations, with the aim of improving access to the rail network and creating new travel, employment and housing opportunities. The £20 million pound pot will provide up to 70% of the cost. Organisations such as local authorities and train operating companies are encouraged to submit their bids by 18 November 2016.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-20-million-fund-for-new-railway-stations>

The DfT has announced a package of measures to improve services on the Southern network, and restore passenger confidence. Chris Gibb will head a new project board, which will include a passenger representative, and work with the train operator, the DfT and NR, to improve the service. An extra £20 million will fund more rapid response teams on the line, accelerating the replacement of worn track, and more staff at key stations, including East Croydon and Gatwick, to help trains depart on time. The board will present its plan in the autumn, and actions will be implemented as soon as possible.

Strategic investment in the South East Midlands economy could propel the area onto the world stage, and provide much needed resilience for the UK economy as a whole. That's the message from the Heartland Strategic Alliance in its response to the National Infrastructure Commission's consultation on developing the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford growth corridor. It sees East West rail as a transformational piece of infrastructure, and is looking to the Government for an early commitment to fund its full delivery from Oxford to Cambridge.

*...and finally...*

The Cotswold Line Promotion Group magazine includes the following quote in respect of the growth in demand on the North Cotswold line: "Projections [of patronage] from Civil Servants were so widely out that they made astrology look respectable!"

Graham Worsnop, a Copeland RUG member, took an excursion from Whitehaven to Dundee hauled by two Class 57 locos. The operator, West Coast Railways, drew attention to their vintage locomotives and Mk2 air-conditioned carriages. Graham wonders if Northern Rail aren't missing a trick by not marketing the fact that such vintage trains provide a large proportion of the scheduled services on the Cumbria Coast line!

Primary school pupils from Keyham and Calstock have written and recorded a song extolling the virtues of the Tamar Valley Line between Plymouth and Gunnislake. The project aimed to introduce the children to a world outside that can be explored by train, and inspire others to travel on the line:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=887IJO60lh>

**EVENTS** (See also the [Events listing on the Railfuture website](#))

Blob colour indicates the various types of event:

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

## September

- 20 Tuesday. Thames Valley Branch, The Chamber, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, OX26 6PS, 1800 for 1830.
- 20 Tuesday. Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton RUG, Melbourn Village College, 1930.
- 20 Tuesday. Chesham & District Transport Users' Association Meeting and AGM, **Chesham** Town Hall, 1930.
- 21 Wednesday. Friends of the Barton line, No 1 Inn, **Cleethorpes** Station, 1900. Also 16 Nov, Sloop, **Barton**, 2000).
- 23 Friday. Levenmouth Rail Campaign Mini-Conference. Fife Renewables Innovation Centre, Methil Docks, 14.00-15.30 (light buffet lunch from 13.30). Please register to attend.  
(Also Ctte Meetings 28 Sep, 26 Oct and 30 Nov; Public Talks 12 Oct and 16 Nov, all at 1830).
- 24 Saturday. Passenger Group Meeting, **Birmingham**, 13:00. Also 10 December (London).
- 24 Saturday. East Anglia Branch meeting, Friends Meeting House, Norwich, NR2 1EW, 1400.
- 28 Wednesday. Levenmouth Rail Campaign Action meeting, Fife Renewables Innovation Centre, Methil Docks, 1830
- 29 Thursday. ACoRP Community Rail Awards 2016, Floral Hall, **Southport** – **SOLD OUT!**

## October

- 3 Monday. Ribble Valley Rail, New Inn, Clitheroe, 1930. (Also 7 Nov, 5 Dec).
- 5 Wednesday. Melksham Rail User Group, Well House Manor, Spa Road, **Melksham**, 18:30.
- 6 Thursday. Capital Rail Action Group, Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, **Edinburgh**, EH1 2JL, 1930.  
(Also 3 Nov, and a special meeting on 24 November with Christian Wolmar and Nigel Harris).
- 6 Thursday. English Regional Transport Association National Reopenings Forum, The Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Road, **London**, WC1X 8JR, 1930.
- 8 Saturday. Yorkshire Branch, Clements Hall, Nunthorpe Road, **York**, 1300.
- 8 Saturday. TravelWatch SouthWest General Meeting, Albemarle Centre, **Taunton** (NB change of venue from previous meeting). [secretary@travelwatchsouthwest.org](mailto:secretary@travelwatchsouthwest.org)
- 8 Saturday. Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth Rail Passengers' Association, **Machynlleth**, 1100 (AGM) (Also 1 November, **Newtown**; 10 December, **Aberystwyth**, 1145.)
- 8 Saturday. Copeland Rail Users' Group, Methodist Church, Seascale, 1345 (Also 12 November, 3 December).
- 12 Wednesday. TravelWatch NorthWest Conference, County Hall, Fishergate, **Preston**, PR1 8XB, 1030 for 1100.
- 12 Wednesday. Levenmouth Rail Campaign Public Talk, Fife Renewables Innovation Centre, **Methil Docks**, 1830.  
(Also 16 Nov)
- 15 Saturday. East Suffolk Transport Association Autumn Meeting, St Johns Church Hall, **Woodbridge**, 14:00.
- 17 Monday. Avocet Line, AGM - **Topsham**).
- 29 Saturday. Railfuture Branches and Groups Day, Quaker Meeting House, 40 Bull Street, **Birmingham**, 1000.
- 29 Saturday. West Sussex Rail Users, Association AGM. Capitol Theatre, North Road, **Horsham**, RH12 1RG, 1000.

## Further Ahead

- 12 November. Saturday. Rail User Conference, Quaker Meeting House, 40 Bull Street, **Birmingham**, B4 6AF, 1000 for 1045. <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences/>
- 19 November. Huddersfield Penistone Sheffield Rail Users Association, Methodist Church Hall, Ben Bank Road, **Silkstone Common**, 1100.
- 19 November. Severnside Branch, Pulteney Room, Manvers Street Baptist Church, **Bath**, BA1 1JW, 1400.
- 19 November. North West Branch, (Venue TBC).
- 29 November. Campaign for Better Transport, Grove Inn, next to Bridgewater Place Tower, **Leeds**, 1930.
- 3 December. East Anglia Branch meeting, Friends Meeting House, Cambridge, CB5 8BA
- 25 February 2017. East Anglia Branch AGM, Bury St Edmunds

Please say if you no longer want to receive Rail User Express, or if someone else in your organisation wishes to be included on the circulation list.

*This bulletin has been sent by...*

Roger Smith, Railfuture Rail User Group Liaison Officer  
e-mail: [ruglink@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:ruglink@railfuture.org.uk) phone: 01462 815992

*Follow us on Twitter @Railfuture*

**The Railway Development Society Limited is a (not for profit) Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No. 5011634. Registered Office: 24 Chedworth Place, Tattingstone, Suffolk, IP9 2ND.**