

Yorkshire Rail Campaigner

Number 54 – September 2021

Yorkshire **railfuture**

President: Alan Whitehouse: Vice-Presidents: Mike Crowhurst, Alan Williams & Chris Hyomes

East Coast Timetable Consternation

By Andrew Dyson



Azuma on the improved East Cost Main Line

Picture by Ian Beardsley.

The six train operators (LNER, Transpennine Express, Great Northern, Thameslink, CrossCountry and Northern) have each undertaken separate consultation procedures to engage with stakeholders and the public. Railfuture believes the issues should not be taken in isolation and has therefore produced a single response covering strategic and operator-specific issues that has been submitted to all six consultations. This article is an edited summary of the submission.

A balance needs to be struck between local/regional connectivity and end to end journey times. The former is more socially inclusive, but the latter more commercially attractive. Railfuture believes the proposed timetable has been too strongly influenced by long-distance journey time and that best use has not been made of new line capacity. Key features of the proposed timetable are overleaf:

A collaborative rail industry process has been taking place involving Network Rail and the six key train operators that provide services on the East Coast Main Line (ECML), to produce a new, robust timetable, for implementation from May 2022.

The ECML is used by a mixture of long-distance, regional and local passenger services, as well as the freight sector, and suffers congestion for most of its length. Many of its trains operate at different speeds and feature varying stopping patterns. Recent investment in infrastructure and rolling stock, has delivered additional line capacity and afforded the opportunity for a step-change improvement in services.

Railfuture Yorkshire Branch Meeting

Saturday, 25 September @ 14:00 Online

- LNER's five trains per hour into and out of London King's Cross will increase to six. The existing two trains per hour between London and Edinburgh will be around 15 minutes faster. These will be supplemented by a new hourly London-Newcastle service. London-Newcastle journeys will be around 10 minutes faster.
- LNER will continue to serve Leeds with 2 trains per hour, with some services extended to Harrogate (every other hour) and Bradford (1 train per day). The final hourly slot at London King's Cross will be shared by services to/from York and Lincoln, providing a two-hourly service to/from each. One York train pair per day will be extended to Middlesbrough, and one Lincoln train pair to Cleethorpes, subject to delivery of infrastructure improvements.
- Transpennine Express's hourly Edinburgh–Liverpool service will be truncated to operate only between Newcastle and Liverpool. The hourly Newcastle–Manchester Airport service will be truncated to operate only between York and Manchester Victoria. Transpennine Express's Manchester Airport–Redcar service is planned to be extended to Saltburn, subject to delivery of infrastructure improvements.
- Cross Country's hourly Edinburgh-Plymouth via Leeds and Newcastle-Reading via Doncaster services will continue to operate with minor timing alterations.
- Northern's Leeds-York via Harrogate service will increase from hourly to two trains per hour.

Railfuture believes the time saving of 15 minutes between London and Edinburgh and 10 minutes between London and Newcastle is insufficient justification for inadequate service provision elsewhere. Modal shift from air to rail is a legitimate aspiration but there are many areas in which rail can demonstrate a fundamental advantage over air – eg environmental credentials, comfort, catering, internet connectivity and better ability to work on the move – a 15-minute saving on a 4-hour journey will be of limited value in the drive to encourage substantial modal shift. The draft timetable may even have the reverse effect of driving some existing rail passengers back to air or road, from those medium size towns which will see a reduction in overall service levels or connectivity.

Between Doncaster and Peterborough, connectivity between some adjacent and nearby stations is lost; virtually all Retford-Newark trains are withdrawn, and Grantham-Newark operates 2-hourly. Passengers are advised to extend their journeys by 'doubling-back' via a distant station, to reach their destination; ie. Retford to Newark via Doncaster. It is difficult to understand why this worsening of service is necessary at a time when overall line capacity is increasing. Railfuture believes an hourly all-stations service is essential on this section.

The through service between London and Bradford has resulted in poor utilisation of the Azuma fleet, hence the service has returned to 1 train per day. Railfuture understands this decision but urges priority is given to finding a workable solution to provide Bradford with the frequent London connections that a city of its size demands.

The significant reduction in North East–Manchester direct services would be a particular hardship for Manchester Airport passengers who may need to change more than once. Railfuture opposes truncation of the Newcastle-Manchester Airport service between York and Newcastle and would like to see retention of the second hourly Newcastle-Manchester service. An option would be to divert one train per hour to run via the Durham Coast, which would maintain the direct service and open up new journey opportunities for Eaglescliffe, Stockton, Hartlepool and Sunderland which are currently poorly served. At the Manchester end we would like to see the Transpennine Express train run directly from Stalybridge into Manchester Piccadilly, rather than Victoria as this would be of considerable benefit for Manchester Airport passengers and those seeking connections on the south side of Manchester.

The operating rights of open-access operators are beyond the scope of this review. Historically, open-access operators on the ECML have provided complementary services to the incumbent franchised operator, by serving destinations that were previously poorly-served. Their operations have driven passenger growth on specific routes and for the railway as a whole. In contrast, the new East Coast Trains operation serves stations that are, in the main, already well-served. East Coast Trains also plans to use short-formation trains in valuable paths, which represents poor allocation of resources and makes the introduction of an integrated overall timetable considerably more difficult. In the aftermath of Covid-19 and with the advent of Great British Railways, Railfuture suggests that a repurposing of the East Coast Trains operation should be visited to investigate a mutually beneficial outcome.

Railfuture understands the need to maximise capacity and is, in principle, supportive of giving priority to longer trains such as LNER's 9-car trains over Transpennine Express's, Cross Country's and East Coast Train's 5-car trains, but the priorities of LNER, as the main operator of long-distance services to and from London, should not automatically take precedence over the interests of regional passengers who wish to travel to destinations other than London.

It is essential that effective and coordinated connectional opportunities between trains and operators are available and maintained. Faster journeys are of little benefit if the time saved is subsequently lost in longer waits for onward

connections. For example, average connection times between Scarborough services and London services at York have increased from 9 to 26 minutes.

The consultations examine only passenger services. The potential to accommodate an increase in freight traffic should be usefully investigated.

Additional daytime calls at Horsforth in Harrogate-London services are welcomed, but Railfuture questions why these services need to pick-up/set-down only and similarly why pick-up/set-down only restrictions are applied at Shipley and Keighley in Bradford/Skipton services.

The bringing forward by an hour of an early Harrogate-London service will bring a welcome earlier arrival in London, but in its current timings the train attracts commuter traffic into Leeds, and we are concerned that the retiming will lead to overcrowding into Leeds in the morning peak.

We regret the loss of through services between Leeds and Aberdeen and consider the lack of a direct King's Cross-Harrogate service after 16:39 to be unsatisfactory. Similarly, the last LNER services from London leave earlier for a number of destinations on Saturday evenings: Newcastle 20:03, currently 21:00; Leeds 21:40, currently 22:00 and Retford 18:45, currently 22:00.

We are concerned about the reduction in calls at Northallerton and the imbalance of service this will cause. We welcome additional calls in CrossCountry services that will retain connectivity with Leeds, York and ECML stations to the north and introduce through journey opportunities to Sheffield, Derby, Birmingham and the South West. However, the revised stopping patterns proposed for the Manchester Airport-Saltburn service give hourly northbound and two-hourly southbound frequencies, which are inadequate and confusing for passengers.

We welcome the retention of two CrossCountry trains per hour on the Newcastle-Birmingham axis and the diversion of a few key services to give a consistent hourly service via both Leeds and Doncaster. We do, however, have concerns about a reduction in evening peak capacity between Leeds and Sheffield (where CrossCountry provides the single fast hourly service), due to a peak-hour train being re-routed via Doncaster. We also welcome the creation of a second fast train path between Sheffield and Leeds via Wakefield Westgate for a future Northern service.

We welcome the improved connection times available at Seamer between Transpennine Express Scarborough services and Northern Hull services, but we note the hourly shuttle service proposed for York-Scarborough is absent from the Northern consultation document and seek assurance that this service is still to be introduced.

In summary, Railfuture believes the allocation of new resources arising from substantial government investment is seriously flawed and will deliver poorer services for many users. We urge that introduction of the proposed timetable be suspended pending a re-examination of objectives and reassessment of the outputs that can be delivered. Our optimum interim solution would see the existing base timetable retained, with the addition of achievable minor enhancements. The full Railfuture response can be found at: <https://railfuture.org.uk/display2742>

Rail Link to Stocksbridge

by Mike Rose

The following letter appeared in the Yorkshire Post on Monday, 7th June 2021.

THE potential closure of the Stocksbridge steelworks is a massive threat to the local community. Hopefully, the plant can remain open but, sadly, many local residents may need to look for jobs elsewhere. To do so, good transport options are essential. Fortunately, Stocksbridge is served by a railway line, albeit one that is currently freight only. The opportunity must be grasped to return this railway to passenger use. This could either be a conventional rail service serving a reopened Sheffield Victoria station and maybe continuing to Chesterfield via Barrow Hill, or to Retford for east Coast Main Line connections. Alternatively, it could be a tram train starting in the centre of Stocksbridge and joining the Supertram network in central Sheffield. In the future, the line from Stocksbridge to Penistone could be re-opened, not only connecting Stocksbridge to Penistone, but giving a faster direct service between Sheffield, Penistone and Huddersfield. If the Government is serious about levelling up, this should be one of its priorities. Public transport between Sheffield and Stocksbridge is poor, and communities along the way such as Oughtibridge and Deepcar would also benefit from a passenger service along the line.

“The laws of nature make electrification a future-proofed technology that is a good investment, offering large passenger, freight and operational benefits,” said the Railway Industry Association in a paper published earlier this year. Rail “cannot achieve net-zero carbon emissions without a large scale electrification programme.”¹ Rail must decarbonise. Must electrify. Must start now.

As I write this (9 August) wildfires rage through Greek island Evia, part of the country’s worst heatwave in three decades with temperatures hitting 45C. Meanwhile California had the second largest fire in state history: “We need to acknowledge straight up these are climate-induced wildfires,” said state governor Gavin Newsom.

November’s COP26 gives our country the opportunity to lead. Decarbonising Transport (published by the Department for Transport in July) covers all modes. The section on rail seems small. Perhaps it only needs to be small because even though a relatively small fraction of our network is already electric – compared with, say Germany’s – the way ahead is clear. Most non-electrified lines need to be electrified. This will be programme up to the year 2050. At the same time hydrogen trains and battery trains need to be developed quickly so decarbonisation can start, and diesels can be phased out.

The Department for Transport paper acknowledges TDNS, Network Rail’s traction decarbonisation network strategy. It is weaker on setting out a plan, and on the need for modal transfer – passenger and freight – from road to rail.

Studies have shown that electrification of about 10% of that recommended by TDNS would enable about 70% of rail freight to be electrically hauled. A battery freight locomotive equivalent in range and performance to diesel would need 350 tonnes of batteries, whilst storing hydrogen would need more space than the locomotive itself. Currently UK freight rail freight is 4% electric compared with 56% in continental Europe.² Clearly both need to be transformed. Battery capacity (by mass or volume) could be near doubled over the next 15 years – making batteries a potential alternative to hydrogen—but this will not significantly change the TDNS recommendation of the need for electrification.

The Rail Industry Association paper quotes efficiencies for different traction systems, along with track km of the present unelectrified network recommended for each system. Efficiency means percentage of energy not wasted in transfer processes.

	Electric	Battery	Hydrogen	Diesel
Energy efficiency (% not wasted from source to wheel)	80%	65%	25% to 34%	25%
TDNS recommendation (% track miles of unelectrified routes)	86%	5%	9%	0

Clear enough? Nothing can ever be 100% efficient and any process of transferring energy wastes useful work as heat – it’s the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Both batteries and hydrogen involve multiple processes of storing energy and then getting it back. The hydrogen is compressed to 350 times atmospheric pressure to store in tanks on the train; this alone wastes 9% of energy. Electrolysis to make the hydrogen wastes 30%, the fuel cell to convert the energy back to electricity wastes 40%, and the final drive 11%. Even if these figures improve, hydrogen will never rival the efficiency of directly supplied electric trains. It might however be a useful means of storing energy.

Bear in mind also that that decarbonisation requires zero-carbon electricity. Currently much hydrogen is made reforming of hydrocarbon fuel such as methane (natural gas). Methane will also be used for generating electricity at peak times or when there isn’t enough wind for the turbines. In both cases greenhouse gas CO₂ is the by-product. The proposal is to bury it – CCS or carbon capture and storage.

¹ Railway Industry Association “Why rail electrification?”, April 2021 ([Why Rail Electrification? Report - New Tab \(riagb.org.uk\)](https://www.riagb.org.uk/why-rail-electrification-report))

² Ibid (all statistics unless otherwise stated)

The Rail Industry Association paper estimates that embedded carbon – CO₂ emissions from electrification work – are paid back through savings within two years.

We trust Network Rail is working on a plan based on TDNS. It more than six years since the task force recommended a stage one package including Yorkshire's Calder Valley, Harrogate and Leeds-Sheffield routes. We are still waiting for commitments on Midland and Trans-Pennine lines. In May the Williams-Shapps white paper backed electrification as main mechanism of rail decarbonisation. The sparks effect is mentioned – attracting new passengers and freight that would otherwise have gone by road. Battery and hydrogen trains will be trialled where for passenger routes where electrification is an “uneconomic solution”. Great British Railways, guiding mind, will “bring forward costed options to decarbonise the whole network.”³ Which could be another two years' delay.

A new Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change report appeared in August. Boris Johnson, UK Prime Minister, said: “Today's report makes for sobering reading, and it is clear that the next decade is going to be pivotal to securing the future of our planet ... I hope today's report will be a wake-up call for the world to take action now...”⁴

Dare we be heartened? In preparation for COP26, will the Government, by the time you read this, have come up with plans that set an example to the world?

To B+ or Not To B+

by Stephen Waring

Earlier this year Railfuture's branches in the North jointly responded to the Manchester Rail Recovery Task Force report. So did lots of rail user groups and other bodies. In July a recommendation from the task force came to Transport for the North's Rail North Committee. A proposed “Option B+” reduces the number of trains along the Castlefield corridor by 15%, but adds in an all-day service from Southport to Oxford Road giving a cross-city link. The present Calder Valley-Chester service, proposed to be cut back to Victoria in the original Option B is also shown as continuing – though nothing is guaranteed until the timetable is finalised.

Negative changes remain:

- Newcastle-Airport service cut back to Victoria leaving just one train per hour round the Castlefield curve. It looks like Bradford and the Calder Valley will have to wait some years for the franchise promise (remember those?!) of a Manchester south side and airport service. And no take-up for Railfuture's suggested service-swap on the Huddersfield line with the stopper reverting to Victoria;
- Diversion of South Yorkshire Hope Valley to Liverpool instead of Manchester Airport.

After the July rail committee meeting Transport for the North wrote to the Department of Transport. The committee had been unanimous that this was a key example of an urgent requirement for infrastructure holding back the region's railways. They did not want to delay development of the December 2022 timetable but as a condition of acceptance called for:

- Immediate publication of the Integrated Rail Plan detailing projects in the North – funding and delivery. (We are still waiting.)
- An accelerated timetable for infrastructure schemes in Manchester.
- Enablement of “long-held commitments for new connections, including services from Bradford and the Calder Valley” to Manchester Piccadilly and Airport.
- Commitment, with timescales, to reinstate through services between South Yorkshire and the Airport (if these are removed in December 2022).
- Satisfactory resolution of detailed Cheshire and cross-Warrington service pattern during next phase.

³ Great British Railways (Williams-Shapps) white paper, p88

⁴ International Panel on Climate Change. See for example <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2021/aug/09/humans-have-caused-unprecedented-and-irreversible-change-to-climate-scientists-warn>

Dan Jarvis, Mayor of Sheffield City Region described removal of airport trains would leave Sheffield one of the few cities in the world without a direct link to a major international airport. Removing the link would “force more people to make the journey by car.” Jarvis added: “Being asked to approve a timetable change with no context, no plan and no information about when it will be reinstated is unacceptable.”

For West Yorkshire, Mayor Tracy Brabin said: “A much more transparent and accountable process is needed for how rail network improvement is planned and prioritised, which must be achieved as part of Williams-Shapps reforms.” Brabin had commented at the meeting on the “unrealised commitment for a through service from Bradford and the Calder Valley” to the airport.

If Option B+ were not to be accepted the present Covid timetable would continue. At time of writing (early August) we are not aware of any response from the Department for Transport.

Railfuture subscriptions start from £14 a year. See: <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/join/> or contact our membership secretary Andrew Dyson: andrew.dyson@platform5.com. Please let him know if you join online.

Doncaster Rail Network

by Mike Crowhurst

Network Rail's Strategic Outline Business Case went public in the spring and was summarised in the periodicals in June. (Modern Railways, June, Page 17, RAIL 931 pages 30-31). Errors inevitably creep into media summaries, in this case some confusion over junction names around Doncaster (there are a lot of them) and even between Hare Park and South Kirkby. So read with care. But in essence the main proposals include: a new island platform on the west side of the station (similar to that proposed at Crewe) along with additional track in the station area from Marshgate Junction in the north to the South Yorkshire junction in the south. These would feed into the new platforms and also connect into the present freight overpass to the north. All these proposals are designed to reduce conflicts in the station area, and deserve our support as a package rather than as separate projects. (Most are not new).

Further afield there are more ideas, aimed at helping both passenger and freight traffic. A new curve connecting both the East Coast Main Line south and the Lincolnshire joint line directly into the South Yorkshire joint line towards Maltby, looks an easy win to ease freight access to the i-port freight terminal. Another proposal is extra tracks on the Leeds main line between Hare Park and South Kirkby for freight, along with grade separation at South Kirkby for southbound trains (freight and Cross Country etc.) towards Moorthorpe. So far all eminently sensible.

In addition, there is a plan for a new curve at Stainforth. This is apparently intended mainly for freight, which would then have a route between both the East Coast Main Line north and the Askern Line to/from the i-port via the South Yorkshire joint line, in effect an eastern freight bypass route. However, the media coverage suggests that it might also be used for a passenger service over the Askern line, to reach platform 0 at Doncaster via Kirk Sandall, thus keeping clear of the East Coast Main Line. But it is quite a detour, and platform 0 is not the most convenient for users.

I suggest a different solution, which needs different curve at Shaftholme, connecting the Askern line west towards Carcroft. This would give the passenger service a shorter route into Doncaster to the new island platform rather than platform 0. Indeed, given the local service from Sheffield to Adwick via Doncaster, which reverses on the curve at Carcroft, why not combine the two services, save some units, and open up some new trip opportunities without needing any new paths through the Doncaster area? The full route is then Leeds-Castleford-Pontefract-Askern-Adwick-Doncaster-Rotherham-Sheffield.

To complete the picture, the electric Leeds-Doncaster service and the alternate Sheffield-Doncaster service (by a reversal) could both be extended to Finningley (for the Airport) via the new Island Platform and track and the existing overpass, without any conflict with the East Coast Main Line. None of these curves are physically difficult. One more curve and everybody wins!

A lot has happened since the last Yorkshire Rail Campaigner. All legal Covid restrictions (other than those relating to foreign travel) have been lifted, and there have been a profusion of documents published. The climate emergency has finally moved centre stage, forty plus years after the first warnings from scientists. As it needs firm actions from across the globe to really make a difference, it is good that the Department for Transport has finally published its **Transport Decarbonisation Strategy**. Prior to this being published, **Transport for the North issued its Decarbonisation Consultation**, which closes at the end of the month (I am writing on 6th August). Railfuture will be responding, with our Yorkshire Secretary Stephen Waring leading the pan Northern response.

The main component of railway electrification must be overhead wire electrification. Whilst other technologies such as hydrogen and battery will have a role on some branch lines (e.g Whitby), the proven technology of electrification must be the core component of a decarbonised railway. There has been a raft of reports saying this. The **Northern Sparks Report** of the north of England electrification Task Force was published in 2015. Subsequently, and most importantly, **Network Rail's Traction Decarbonisation Network Strategy** was published in 2020. In April 2021, following the publication of the **Rail Industry Association report "Why Rail Electrification"**, fifteen railway businesses and industry and campaign groups signed an open letter to the Secretary of State calling for a programme of railway electrification to begin as soon as possible so as to meet the government's legally binding net zero targets. On 1st July, the **Public Accounts Committee** published their Tenth Report *Overview of the English Rail System* which expressed their disappointment "at the lack of progress in agreeing a specific and funded plan for the electrification required to achieve the government's own net zero targets. Electrification of the network is a key mechanism for delivering rail electrification". In late July, **the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee** published a report which stated that "the Government must ensure that the railway electrification programme is accelerated". All these bodies are clear that we need a rolling programme of electrification which needs to start immediately. **Andrew Haines, CEO of Network Rail** has called for a rolling programme of electrify-500 track km a year, and this is surely the minimum required. Clearly there is a constraint in terms of the size of the skilled workforce able to carry this out, and early investment in staff training and plant is required.

The **Transport Decarbonisation Strategy** states that "electrification is likely to be the main way of decarbonising the majority of the network", and that "relatively short stretches of new infill electrification could allow a significant rise in the electric haulage of freight". It also states that the Government "wants to increase" the percentage of miles travelled by rail. On the surface this is positive, but why the tentative language? - "likely to be", "could allow" and "wants to increase". But turn the page and we have a commitment "We will deliver an ambitious, sustainable, and cost-effective programme of electrification guided by Network Rail's TDMS". So come on Grant Shapps, what are you waiting for? Stop being tentative and announce a rolling electrification programme as soon as Parliament returns from the Summer Recess.

We are still awaiting the report of the **National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) on the Rail Needs Assessment for the Midlands and the North**, and it seems the long awaited (since 2010) and much need **Trans Pennine Route Upgrade** will not be announced before then. If the NIC does not recommend this, then the Government must go ahead anyway. The problems of the Huddersfield route are legion. One hour to travel from Leeds to Manchester. Around three hours from Hull to Liverpool, necessitating a change of trains. Inadequate stopping services. No station to serve Golcar/Milnsbridge. Only one train an hour from Leeds to Manchester via Brighouse. No direct service between the Calder Valley and Huddersfield, or between Bradford and Stalybridge. A lack of freight paths. And it has not yet been electrified.

The NIC will make its recommendations on a new **Northern Powerhouse** line between Leeds, Bradford and Manchester. Rumour has it that this may be scrapped or reduced in scope for cost reasons, possibly using part of the Huddersfield/Diggle line. This would not be acceptable as the Diggle line needs the extra upgrade capacity to provide good connectivity for the intermediate stations. HS2 East is in the balance, and whilst there is a respectable case that it is not needed for Yorkshire to London services, it is vital in terms of fast connectivity between Yorkshire/North East England, and the East and West Midlands, as well as providing a high speed Leeds- Sheffield link, and releasing capacity for the vital increases in rail freight traffic that decarbonisation (and road safety) require.

The long awaited report of the Williams review finally saw the light of day as a White Paper, the **Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail**, reflecting the input and ownership by the Secretary of State. It outlines what the government plans to do, in macro terms, and requires legislation. It has six key principles:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customers at the heart 2. Clear accountability 3. Delivering value for money 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Delivering economic growth 5. Strengthening communities 6. Inspiring our people.
---	---

Note what is missing – tackling the climate emergency! This suggests that this government’s policy towards the railway will depend more on economics and on political considerations than on enhancing rail’s vital role in reducing the carbon emissions of the transport sector. That is a serious oversight given that there is nothing more important for our future than tackling the climate emergency.

A good, and quite lengthy **summary of the White Paper by Ian Brown CBE, Railfuture’s Policy Director**, is on the front page of the Railfuture website www.railfuture.org.uk/article1882 I can provide print copies on request for any Yorkshire branch member who does not have web access.

ECML TIMETABLE MAY 2022: Railfuture has responded to the various Train Operating Company consultations on the May 2022 timetable for the East Coast Main Line. The proposed changes, which many think are a *fait accompli*, are generally not welcome in Yorkshire, as they prioritise travel to London over intermediate connectivity. This is not good for modal shift, nor for connectivity to, from and between the smaller stations (such as Thirsk and Northallerton) on the line that serve considerable catchment populations and would have much higher footfalls if they had better train services. Part of the solution is capacity improvements to the East Coast Main Line including the reopening of the Leaming route north of Darlington.

RAIL FREIGHT: The importance of rail freight was highlighted during the peak of the pandemic, and there is surely general agreement that there needs to be a significant modal shift of freight from Heavy Goods Vehicles to trains. But for this to happen, several things are needed, including much enhanced freight capacity in the north of England, especially trans Pennine; infill electrification; and changes to planning law which both make the development of rail freight depots easier, and insist that major developments such as mega warehousing and logistics sites must be rail served. The Yorkshire Post (6th August) published a letter from me making these points.

YORKSHIRE RAIL CAMPAIGNER EDITOR: There will only be one more issue of this Yorkshire Rail Campaigner edited by Mark Parry. Mark has done a splendid job since taking over from Graham Collett, but he will in future be concentrating on his role as Chair of Action for Yorkshire Transport. So, we need a new Editor or editorial team. If you are interested in being involved, please contact me and/or Mark. In the meantime, please think about writing an article and sending it to Mark in time for his final issue, which will likely have a copy date around the end of November.

YORKSHIRE BRANCH MEETINGS: The meeting on September 25th, which would normally be our South Yorkshire focussed meeting in Sheffield, will be on-line instead, as there is still too much uncertainty over the wisdom of indoor meetings. We are very much hoping that we can hold an in-person Annual General Meeting in January or February. We have not held any webinars over the summer, because there have been so many free webinars held by a variety of industry bodies and conference organisers, and there are only so many webinars we all want to attend!

POST LOCKDOWN TRAVEL AND “RESTORING YOUR RAILWAY”: We welcome the marketing campaigns by different train operating companies to attract passengers back to rail, and also the campaign promoting secondary routes being run by the Community Rail Network (the former ACORP which has become much higher profile since the excellent Jools Townsend took over a Chief Executive). Passenger numbers are definitely picking up again, certainly for leisure travel. As an example, when I visited Hebden Bridge station was decidedly busy around midday on a Friday in early August. It remains to be seen how many commuters will return to trains, and how many of them will on a daily basis. Will the decline in commuting be such that a reduction in the rush-hour timetable is justified? Or will it be that commuter trains will in future be loaded to a comfortable level, instead of the sardine pack levels experienced on many lines into Leeds and Manchester pre pandemic? With the increase in leisure travel, what we hope to see are full timetables on Sundays, and an improved timetable on those routes that currently have only an hourly service or worse. That leads neatly on to re-openings. We are still awaiting the outcome of the Third Round bids, and it is to be hoped that the Minsters Line will receive development funding. Reopening the line between Beverley and York would have several benefits. It would provide resilience in the form of an alternative route from York to Hull. It would relieve road congestion in and towards both York and Beverley. It would lend itself to promotion for tourists visiting Beverley Minster after York. It would be a welcome economic boost to towns such as Market Weighton and Stamford Bridge. A second high priority, and much easier to achieve, is to resume passenger services on the currently freight only line to Stocksbridge. With the steel plant under threat, passenger services by tram trains, extending into the centre of Stocksbridge, will be vital if the plant does close.

TRAMS, LIGHT RAIL AND VERY LIGHT RAIL: Whilst Railfuture tends to concentrate on heavy rail, it is important for us to be advocating other rail based public transport. Top of the queue in Yorkshire has to be approval being given for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to develop a comprehensive mass transit network across West Yorkshire - and mass transit should mean trams; and an expansion of the Sheffield Supertram network. But it is necessary to look at other cities and the Very Light Rail system being developed in Coventry points the way for systems in such as York and Hull/Holderness. These can be vital in seriously reducing car traffic, thus reducing congestion and air pollution, and reducing the carbon footprint.

WE NEED A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF FUTURE WELLBEING: The UK Climate Change Minister Alok Sharma told the Observer on August 8th, “This (forthcoming Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change Report) is going to be the starkest warning yet that human behaviour is alarmingly accelerating global warming and this is why Cop26 has to be the moment we get this right. We can’t afford to wait two years, five years, 10 years – this is the moment,” Sharma warned. In 2015, the National Assembly of Wales enacted the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, and has a Commissioner to advise and assist public bodies in doing things in accordance with this Act. This is forward thinking and has set an excellent precedent. I believe the UK Government needs to pass a similar Act, but to go much further. The UK needs a Government Department of Future Well-being. It must be well-funded, and its Secretary of State must be seen as one of the three main Departments of State, replacing the Home Office in a triumvirate also including HM Treasury and the Foreign and Commonwealth and Development Office. The new Department would have a veto over the decisions of all government departments if it concluded that they were contrary to the interests of future generations. The key elements of the new Department’s brief would be tackling the climate and species emergencies to ensure that Planet Earth is at least as habitable in the future as it is today; to reduce the level of both national and global inequality which seriously threatens social cohesion; to reduce health inequalities; to preserve, maintain and enhance the cultural heritage; and to protect the country from terrorism and organised crime. Included in its first priority would be the achievement of zero carbon by, and preferably before 2050. A key component of this must be the decarbonisation of transport with an expanded and mostly electrified railway system, and modal shift from road and air to rail. Such a policy would require an immediate halt to airport expansion, and of road schemes whose outcome would be an increase in traffic.

Diary email Mark.Parry294@gmail.com if you would like your meeting advertised here.

20 September 2021 19:30	Action for Yorkshire Transport Rail Group could be online or in Leeds – email ActionforYorkshireTransport@gmail.com for further details.
25 September 2021 14:00	Railfuture Yorkshire Branch meeting either online from 14:00.

Our next issue (**Yorkshire Rail Campaigner 55**) will be out in January 2022. Please email photos, news and feedback to: Mark.Parry294@gmail.com to arrive by **Saturday 4 December 2021**. **Having your Yorkshire Rail Campaigner sent by email saves us time and money. Please contact Andrew Dyson to request this.**

New Editor Wanted

Mark Parry has edited this Yorkshire Rail Campaigner newsletter for coming up to 9 years and is resigning as he is busy elsewhere on transport issues. We are looking for someone to volunteer to take over this job. The distribution and printing are not part of this job. Word processing skills and confidence in computing would be beneficial. Support can be provided. If you are interested then please contact Mark by email: Mark.Parry294@gmail.com

Rail User Groups affiliated to Railfuture within the Yorkshire Branch

Aire Valley Rail Users' Group	www.avrug.org.uk
Askern Station, Friends of	Contact Graham Moss on graz.moss@sky.com or 07510 555722
Bradford Rail Users' Group	www.bradfordrail.com
Esk Valley Railway	http://www.eskvalleyrailway.co.uk/evrdc.html
Halifax and District Rail Action Group	www.hadrag.com
Harrogate Line Rail Users' Group	Care of billtymms@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@btinternet.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	
Minster Rail Campaign	http://www.minstersrail.com/
Pontefract Civic Society Rail Group	https://en-gb.facebook.com/PontefractRail/
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	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

Branch Committee and the small print

Chair: Nina Smith, 07984 670331 Nina.Smith@Railfuture.org.uk
Vice Chair (South Yorkshire): Mike Rose 07986 458517 mikewrose@gmail.com
Vice Chair and Parliamentary Liaison Officer: Graham Collett, graham.collett@railfuture.org.uk
Secretary: Stephen Waring, js.waring@hotmail.co.uk
Freight Officer: Mike Rose 07986 458517 mikewrose@gmail.com
Treasurer: Ian Wood, 11 Langsale Drive, Ackworth, Pontefract, WF7 7PX. ianfWood@hotmail.co.uk
Membership & Distribution: Andrew Dyson: andrew.dyson@platform5.com
Assistant Treasurer: Geoff Wood, esperanto11@hotmail.co.uk
Newsletter Editor: Mark Parry Mark.Parry294@gmail.com
Without Port Folio: Dr. Mike Troke, Michael.Yorkshire@talktalk.net , 07947 062632
Without Port Folio: Mark Ashmore markashmore@yahoo.com
Without Port Folio: David Pennie davidpennierail21@gmail.com
Branch Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/groups/3116771821782626
Railfuture web-sites: www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk www.railwatch.org.uk http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Yorkshire+Branch
Twitter Accounts: @RailfutureYorks @Railfuture
The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Railfuture.
Railfuture Ltd is a (not for profit) Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No. 05011634. Registered Office: Edinburgh House, 1-5 Bellevue Road, Clevedon, North Somerset, BS21 7NP (for legal correspondence only) All other correspondence to 24 Chedworth Place, Tatingstone, Suffolk IP9 2 ND

Railfuture: Campaigning for better services over a bigger rail network.

Pass this newsletter to a friend when you've finished and help advertise Railfuture.