

### **Welcome to this edition of Rail User Express.**

This mini-edition contains a number of topical items and gives notice of some events coming up in the very near future – check out the Events list at the end of this bulletin!

*Please support Britain's number one advocate for the railways and rail users!*

The next edition will carry the usual round-up of news from rail user groups around Britain.

### **“ENOUGH IS ENOUGH” SAYS RAILFUTURE**

In a press release to coincide with the increase in rail fares on 2 Jan 2013 (the tenth above-inflation increase in a row) Railfuture made the point that “Over the last ten years fares have increased by more than 50%, much more than people's incomes. Annual increases should be limited to no more than the rate of inflation, and that should be CPI not RPI, because that's the lower figure and pensions benefits and salaries are all linked to CPI. ... Meanwhile, petrol tax is frozen and overall the cost of driving remains static.” The full text of the press release is [here](#).

*The Campaign for Better Transport has initiated an online petition calling on the Government to “name a date to end the above inflation formula and commit to reducing fares relative to inflation”.* See [here](#).

### **RAILFUTURE RESPONDING TO VARIOUS CONSULTATIONS**

Railfuture's specialist groups are busy preparing responses to a number of important transport consultations. Rail user groups may also wish to submit their own responses; alternatively groups and individuals can submit their comments to me at [ruglink@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:ruglink@railfuture.org.uk) and I will make sure they get to the right person.

#### **Three consultations with imminent deadlines**

1. Department for Transport's proposed amendments to their definitions for nationally significant highways and rail schemes as set out in the Planning Act 2008 (details [here](#)). Deadline 22 Jan 2013.
2. Department for Transport's proposed framework for airport economic regulation in the Civil Aviation Bill (details [here](#)). Deadline 25 Jan 2013.
3. The Office of Rail Regulation's proposed amendments to the possessions and performance regimes (details [here](#)). Deadline 28 Jan 2013.

#### **Office of Rail Regulation's assessment of Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan**

Railfuture's Policy Group is working towards meeting the 19 Feb 2013 deadline for sending comments to the ORR as part of its consultation on NR's Strategic Business Plan for Control Period 5 (2014 to 2019). See [here](#).

#### **Dft's consultation on Integrated Transport Block Funding**

Railfuture will be submitting a response on this document by the due date, 6 Mar 2013 (details [here](#)).

- A consultation on the Government's Strategic Roads Policy is expected shortly.

### **RAILFUTURE AGM**

Please note that the 2013 AGM of the Railway Development Society (Railfuture) will be held on Sat 11 May at the Town Hall in the centre of Durham, and not at the County Hall as previously advised. Thanks to Peter Walker for spotting this error.

## **PASSENGER FOCUS RESEARCH & COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOPS** – *note these dates!*

Matthew Andrews, Passenger Team Executive with Passenger Focus, invites representatives of rail user groups to their next round of workshops. The topics selected have been chosen as a result of the feedback from the last time PF met with RUGs. Here is an overview of the day PF has planned:

- Update from PF on current work in progress
- Research training (survey methodology / passenger counts)
- Communications training (press releases / handling media contacts)
- Question & Answer session

Matthew says: “If you would like to let us know about any activity you have planned or have any particular questions on these subjects that you would like to be answered, please feel free to let us know. Where possible, we will try and address these on the day.”

The venues are as follows and the events are scheduled for 11am - 3pm with lunch provided:

### **London - 25 January 2013**

Fleetbank House  
2-6 Salisbury Square, London, EC4Y 8JX

### **Bristol - 07 February 2013**

Brunel's Old Station  
Clock Tower Yard, Temple Meads, Bristol, BS1 6QH

### **Manchester - 21 February 2013**

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

### **Newcastle - 12 March 2013**

Royal Station Hotel  
Neville Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5DH

### **Perth - 21 March 2013**

Best Western Queens Hotel  
Leonard Street, Perth, PH2 8HB

Please **RSVP** to the usual email address: [usergroups@passengerfocus.org.uk](mailto:usergroups@passengerfocus.org.uk)

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORT CAMPAIGNING** – *free training sessions*

Are you worried about public transport in your area? Would you like to help make it better, but don't know where to start? Fear not, Campaign for Better Transport are working with Together for Transport to offer free training sessions. These will help you identify threats to public transport, influence decision makers, build community networks, run campaigns and oppose fares rises and staff cuts. The sessions will be on Saturday 2 February (London) and Saturday 2 March (York). To find out more and to register contact [info@togetherfortransport.org](mailto:info@togetherfortransport.org) or [www.togetherfortransport.org](http://www.togetherfortransport.org).

*See EVENTS list below for more details.*

## **PUBLICATIONS** - *just out and due out*

1. Richard Brown's review of the rail franchising programme was published on 10 Jan 2013 - read the document online [here](#). The review recommends that by February the government should publish its plans for the Essex Thameside; Great Western; and the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise competitions which were put on hold last October. Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin says: “The government is planning to set out a programme for future franchise competitions in the spring...”

2. West Yorkshire Metro has published the results of its consultation exercise on its Rail Plan 7. These are available on its website [here](#).
3. Passenger Focus expects to publish its annual National Passenger Survey on 29 Jan 2013.
4. Passenger Focus has embarked on a smart ticketing research programme. The results of the first project, which looks at passenger views and needs around smart tickets in the South East, should be published on the PF website in January. The next stage is to evaluate some existing local smart ticketing schemes around the country; fieldwork will be started on these early in the New Year.

## **MALTON TO PICKERING CAMPAIGN**

A campaign to re-open the Malton to Pickering line has been started by Councillor Philip Trumper of Whitby Town Council who has set up an online petition: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/40539>

More details [here](#). – *Yorkshire Rail Campaigner*

## **YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!**

A number of people have written asking for our help and advice in recent weeks – see below.

**If you have any helpful suggestions please reply to the person concerned, or alternatively reply to me at [ruglink@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:ruglink@railfuture.org.uk) and I will pass on your response – *thanks!***

### **1) MEMBERSHIP DATABASE SOFTWARE**

The [Membership Secretary](#) of the Cotswold Line Promotion Group wants to transfer the CLPG database of just under 2000 members to a new system. The original programme was written in the early 1990s using Microsoft QuickBasic. It's clearly time for a change, so can anyone out in RUGland recommend suitable software?

### **2) ALTERNATIVES TO FRANCHISING**

The [Convenor](#) of the Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways would like to link up with other like-minded groups keen to campaign for a radical alternative to the current system of franchising passenger rail services, possibly along the lines of the not-for-profit model being proposed for Wales. Information and messages of support would be appreciated.

### **3) RAIL AGENTS**

Railfuture's [Trevor Garrod](#) writes:

"There used to be many agents who sold rail tickets. Now there are fewer. The growth of internet booking is one reason for their decline, but only one. There are other reasons, such as the negative attitudes of some people in the railway industry and the progressive cut in the commission paid to agents. Railfuture policy is to recognise the value of human contact in ticket distribution; therefore we ought to work with people who are providing this front-line service.

"Wearing my European Passenger Federation hat, I already have good liaison with the Association of European Rail Agents, whose members can sell you train tickets to and on the Continent and often beyond. They would welcome more contact with agencies selling domestic tickets and I have promised to help them in this respect. I already know of the existence of three such agencies (at Ledbury, Gobowen and Chester-le-Street). There are more. I am also aware that certain Tourist Information Centres sell train tickets - but these may be a limited range and they may charge commission.

"If you know of other agencies selling rail tickets, could you please send me brief details (i.e. at least name and location of agency) by January 31st? I shall share the information at this stage with AERA and Railfuture's Passenger Committee - but we may also want to make it more widely available."

## THE GREAT RUG-LINK CHRISTMAS QUIZ - answers

In the December edition, I asked you to match 15 railway stations to the names of the 15 RUGs that look after them. Your answer sheet should look like this...

1 Avocet Line Rail Users' Group	Polsloe Bridge
2 Bedford Commuters' Association	Flitwick
3 Cotswold Line Promotion Group	Finstock
4 Friends of the Barton Line	Thornton Abbey
5 Friends of the Far North Line	Helmsdale
6 Furness Line Action Group	Roose
7 Huddersfield, Penistone and Sheffield Rail Users' Association	Honley
8 Mid Cheshire Rail Users' Association	Plumley
9 STORM (Support the Oldham-Rochdale-Manchester line)	Derker
10 Ormskirk, Preston & Southport Travellers' Association	Rufford
11 Rail Action Group East of Scotland	Drem
12 Ribble Valley Rail	Whalley
13 Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Passengers' Association	Newtown
14 Stranraer to Ayr Line Support Association	Maybole
15 Windsor Lines Passengers' Association	Sunnymeads

*If you scored under 10, you really should stay in more ... and read Rail User Express.*

## EVENTS

National & regional rail events are highlighted in **yellow**. Community & environmental events are in **green**.

**Sat 12 Jan** [SARPA](#) meet at the Royal Oak, Welshpool from 11:30.

**Mon 14 Jan** [SELRAP](#) open meeting, Herriots Hotel, Skipton from 19:00.

**Mon 14 Jan** [Bexhill Rail Action Gp](#) meet at Sackville Hotel on Bexhill sea front from 19:00.

**Thu 17 Jan** Railfuture London & SE ([Sx & Coastway Division](#)) meet in Edenbridge from 18:00.

**Thu 17 Jan** [Don Valley Rlwy](#) AGM at Stocksbridge Rugby Union Club from 20:00.

**Sat 19 Jan** [Railfuture Yorkshire](#) winter meeting at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate from 14:00.

**Fri 25 Jan** [Passenger Focus](#) "Research & Communication Guidance" workshop at Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London from 11:00.

**Sat 26 Jan** [FoSBR](#) AGM at The Halo, 141 Gloucester Rd, Bishopston, Bristol from 18:30. Guest speaker from First TransPennine

**Sat 2 Feb** Railfuture [North West Branch](#) AGM, Savoy Hotel, Blackpool from 11:00; lunch at 13:00.

**Sat 2 Feb** [Railfuture London & SE](#) members' meeting at Friends Meeting Ho, Chelmsford from 10:30.

**Sat 2 Feb** Railfuture [East Mids](#) members' meeting at Loughborough library, Granby St. from 13:00.

**Sat 2 Feb** Free training session on Public Transport Campaigning from [Together for Transport](#) at Walkden House, 10 Melton St, London from 11:00.

**Tue 5 Feb** [SARPA](#) meet at the The Sportsman, Newtown from 18:30.

**Wed 6 Feb** [Friends of Crewkerne Station](#) planning meeting at the Old Stage Coach Inn from 19:30.

**Thu 7 Feb** [Passenger Focus](#) “Research & Communication Guidance” workshop at Brunel’s Old Station, Clock Tower Yard, Temple Meads, Bristol from 11:00.

**Thu 7 Feb** [TravelWatch North West](#) conference at TfGM office, 2 Piccadilly Place, Manchester from 10:15. Speakers from TfGM & Metrolink. After lunch: a visit to the Metrolink depot at Old Trafford.

**Fri 8 Feb** Conon Bridge Station opening ceremony, Far North Line.

**Mon 11 Feb** [Bexhill Rail Action Gp](#) meet at Sackville Hotel on Bexhill sea front from 19:00.

**Sat 16 Feb** Railfuture London & SE ([Kent Division](#)) meet at The Elephant, Faversham from 14:00.

**Tue 19 Feb** Chesham Transport User’s Group meet at Chesham Town Hall from 19:30.

**Wed 20 Feb** Meeting of the [Haxby Station Reopening Campaign](#) at Wigginton Hall, Haxby.

**Thu 21 Feb** [Passenger Focus](#) “Research & Communication Guidance” workshop at Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester from 11:00.

**Sat 23 Feb** [Railfuture East Anglia](#) AGM at Friends Meeting Ho, Bury St Edmunds.

**Sat 23 Feb** [ESTA](#) spring meeting at St Johns Church Hall, Saxmundham from 14:15

**Mon 25 Feb** [ALRUG](#) meet at the Globe, Topsham from 19:00.

**Sat 2 Feb** Free training session on Public Transport Campaigning from [Together for Transport](#) at 51-53 Nunnery Lane, York from 11:00.

**Thu 7 Mar** London & SE ([Sx & Coastway Division](#)) meet at The Station, Uckfield from 18:00.

**Fri 8 Mar** [Ashchurch, Tewkesbury & District Rail Promotion Group](#) meet in Tewkesbury Library, High Street from 19:30. Guest speaker is Railfuture’s president Christian Wolmar.

**Sat 9 Mar** [SARPA](#) meet at the White Lion, Machynlleth from 11:00.

**Mon 11 Mar** [Bexhill Rail Action Gp](#) meet at Sackville Hotel, Bexhill from 19:00.

**Tue 12 Mar** [Passenger Focus](#) “Research & Communication Guidance” workshop at Royal Station Hotel, Neville Street, Newcastle-u-Tyne from 11:00.

**Wed 13 Mar** [Meldreth, Shepreth & Foxtton RUG](#) AGM at Meldreth Manor School from 19:30.

**Mar 14-15** [ACoRP](#) Seminar about Designated Community Rail Lines. Details to be announced.

**Sat 16 Mar** Railfuture Lincolnshire AGM at Cleethorpes Town Hall.

**Thu 21 Mar** [Passenger Focus](#) “Research & Communication Guidance” workshop at Best Western Queen’s Hotel, Leonard Street, Perth from 11:00.

**Sat 23 Mar** [Yorkshire Branch](#) AGM at the Herriot’s Hotel, Skipton.

**Wed 27 Mar** 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the publication of the Beeching Report. Mark the event with your own “reshaping” report!

**Sat 13 Apr** [SARPA](#) meet at The Cambria, Aberystwyth from 11:00.

**Mon 15 Apr** [ALRUG](#) meet at the Manor Hotel, Exmouth from 19:00.

**Sat 20 Apr** Railfuture [North West Branch](#) meet at the Golden Pheasant, Plumley from 13:00.

**Sat 20 Apr** Railfuture [East Mids](#) AGM at Great Central Rlwy’s Lovatt House, Loughborough from 13:00. Spkr: Nicky Morgan MP on the Westminster campaign to electrify the Midland Main Line.

**Sat 20 Apr** [Railfuture London & SE Branch](#) AGM.

**Sat 27 Apr** [Bus Users UK](#) AGM in Oxford

**Sat 4 May** [ESTA](#) AGM. Venue to be decided.

**Tue 7 May** [SARPA](#) meet at Railway Station, Shrewsbury from 17:45.

**Sat 11 May** [Railfuture](#) AGM at the Town Hall, Durham city centre.

**Sun 19 May** National rail timetable change

**Sat 18 May** [Cotswold Line Promotion Group](#) AGM at the WI Hall, Moreton-in-Marsh from 10:30.

**Thu 23 May** [Edenbridge & District Rail Travellers' Association](#) open AGM at the WI Hall, Edenbridge from 19:00.

**Mon 3 Jun** [Friends of the Far North Line](#) AGM and conference, Pentland Hotel, Thurso from 11:30.

**Sat 22 Jun** [Railfuture](#) summer conference at the Albemarle Centre, Taunton

**Fri 27 Sep** [ACoRP](#) Community Rail Awards 2012, Llandudno

**Tue 1 Oct** Railway Development Society (aka Railfuture) 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**Sat 2 Nov** [Railfuture](#) conference, Oxford.

**Sun 8 Dec** National rail timetable change

**More events on the Railfuture and ACoRP websites.**

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*

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