



November 2019

### Welcome to the Rail User Express.

RUX is published around the middle of each month. It may be forwarded, or items reproduced in another newsletter (quoting sources). Anyone may request RUX as an email attachment, or opt to be notified when it is posted on the [Railfuture \(Rf\) website](#). There is no charge for either service. Following GDPR, [Railfuture Membership](#) now maintains both lists. Please advise if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter or link, or if you know of anyone who would like to be added. For further details of any of the stories mentioned, please consult the relevant website, or ask [the editor](#) for the source material.

The DfT's [Autumn Update](#) of the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline (RNEP) on the progress of schemes funded in CP6 (2019-2024) makes salutary reading, and the message is clear: don't hold your breath! Even schemes buoyed by a visit from the S of S for Transport are still at an early stage, eg Skipton - Colne at Decision to Initiate, and Ashington - Blythe – Tyne at Decision to Develop. No scheme can proceed into delivery until it has a Decision to Deliver. So, taken at face value, even Phase 2 of the Western section of East West Rail (Bicester - Bedford) has yet to be confirmed.

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.*

### Friends of the Far North Line

As a member of the FNL Review Team, FoFNL is delighted that its Report confirms that infrastructure work essential to planned improvements to the FNL service pattern is to go through its final stages before financial approval. The Lentrán Loop between Beaulieu and Inverness may not be set in stone, but it has to happen after so much preparatory work has been done. Bill Reeve, Director of Rail for Transport Scotland: "The Group has been an exemplar of good practice, with the industry and local stakeholders each contributing expertise and knowledge to...maximise the potential of the FNL for passengers, communities and businesses. By building on the achievements to date, the FNL will yield economic benefits from improved services and infrastructure by encouraging more rail use by passengers and by freight operators."

### Friends of the West Highland Lines

The 30-year old Class 156 train sets used on the West Highland Lines are definitely past their "Use By" date! Although refurbished over the years, they still lack air conditioning and automatic closing doors, and are prone to many faults. The seats are uncomfortable for long-distance services. The 3-car Class 159 sets used by South West Trains would be far superior. But the line really needs new trains such as Northern's Class 195s or, even better, a scenic bi-mode that could run under the wires as far as Helensburgh (Upper).

However, lineside trees block many of the views. Transport Scotland and NR should allocate a major budget to clear them and cap their trunks. The sections of the line west of Tulloch, south of Crianlarich, and almost all of the Oban route west of Dalmally should be immediate targets.

## Levenmouth Rail Campaign

Following the Cabinet Secretary for Transport's decision to take the Leven project forward to the detailed design phase, LMRC awaits information on how the rail component (survey, design and delivery led by NR), and the Levenmouth Blueprint led by Fife Council to maximise the line's benefit, will be rolled out. Stakeholder engagement is a buzzword among statutory agencies, but they often struggle to put it into meaningful practice. LMRC hopes to be kept rather better informed than has been its experience to date. *[Regarding timescales, NR's [Delivery Plan for Scotland](#) in CP6 makes no mention of Leven, even in the section "pipeline programmes currently being explored" - Ed.]*

## Harrogate Line Supporters Group

As alluded to last month, from 15 December LNER is adding 5 more direct return services between London and Harrogate every day, mostly on its new Azuma trains, and calling at Stevenage, Grantham, Doncaster, Wakefield and Leeds. However, although LNER is sympathetic to the desire for an earlier direct service between Harrogate and London, critical constraints include NR access, LNER rolling stock availability and Hitachi maintenance schedules. In December 2021, though, a complete revamp of the timetable will incorporate the benefits of the new fleet and the ECML Upgrade, including King's Cross Remodelling.

Although Azumas have space for 4 cycles, the racks cannot easily accommodate off-road models with increased tyre widths and wheel rim depths. LNER is working with Hitachi to design new bike hooks for these models. Meanwhile, all bike spaces have to be reserved, and its [website](#) details which models will not fit normally, and the associated mitigations.

## Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership

On 21 October, SELRAP met with all of its local MPs or their representatives, along with two local Lords, four senior civil servants from DfT, Transport for the North, and various other supporters. TfN wants Skipton - Colne open by 2027, and the project is now in its Strategic Investment Plan for the North. As mentioned above, DfT's RNEP does now list the project, albeit on the lowest rung "Decision to Initiate".

## Support The Oldham Rochdale Manchester lines (STORM)

Work to replace the three lifts at Manchester Victoria Station is scheduled to last until January. The hourly Leeds service from Platforms 1 or 2 gives access to Rochdale, so passengers for Castleton and Moston can change there. However, Mills Hill is also not accessible whilst improvement work is ongoing. Calder Valley to Piccadilly trains call at Salford Crescent, where there is level access and a free bus service to Piccadilly.

Arriva Rail North has rejected STORM's proposal to address the ongoing problem of Sunday cancellations by replacing the calls at Mytholmroyd and Sowerby Bridge on the Leeds-Manchester service with calls at Castleton and Mills Hill: it is not possible to re-arrange calls on a weekly basis due to Industrial Relations agreements. Even if it were possible today, from December this Sunday service will no longer call at either Mytholmroyd or Sowerby Bridge. However, Northern has completed over 45% of driver training and over 75% of conductor training on its new trains and is hopeful that, as the programme progresses towards 100% completion, this will result in fewer scheduled Sunday cancellations.

Northern has apologised for a spate of problems on the Calder Valley line following the introduction of new Class 195 trains. Passengers have complained of doors either not opening or closing, brake issues resulting in trains "jerking up the platform", and issues with the electric lock operated toilets resulting in "locking down" affected trains.

On 7 November, flooding around Walsden closed the railway line between Littleborough and Todmorden. It's a perennial problem, but NR has never come up with a permanent solution or any sensible contingency plan. They abandon Smithy Bridge and Littleborough, and run Manchester trains only as far as Rochdale. The track and signalling is in place to allow a turn-back service as far as Littleborough, but it requires an operations supervisor to work a lever on the Summit West emergency ground frame. Why doesn't NR make this crossover capable of remote operation? The response in Yorkshire was even worse. Manchester bound trains were terminated at Hebden Bridge, even though some Burnley trains were running to within half a mile of Todmorden station before turning off. And no one needs to go on site to manage a turn-back there, as all the signalling is worked remotely from York. Even worse, the road between Hebden Bridge and Todmorden was flooded at Callis, so no buses were able to get through.

## **Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association**

Performance on the Mid Cheshire Line should have improved after NR spent over £800,000 removing the "Temporary" Speed Restrictions between Ashley and Hale that had existed since around 2005; the line speed is now back to 60mph. However, a combination of driver shortages and ongoing signalling problems around Delamere and Mouldsworth has conspired against any improvement. The Performance Moving Annual Average is thought to be at its lowest since before 1998.

Moreover, the promised "Two Trains an Hour" Service appears no nearer to being delivered. The line is still stuck with a far worse service than 1998, with Knutsford the only station in Great Britain with a footfall of over 500,000 but only an hourly daytime service, and two hourly on Sundays.

Consultants WSP have published their [report](#) on re-opening the freight line between Sandbach and Northwich to passenger services, with new stations at Middlewich and Gadbrook Park. They also looked in less detail at completing the three-mile long Manchester Airport Western Link from the Airport station to a junction near Mobberley on the Mid Cheshire Line. Although the work done so far is only an initial assessment, the outcome is sufficiently positive that work has already started on the next stage, developing the respective business cases for submission to the DfT.

## **English Regional Transport Association**

The Norfolk Orbital Railway (The Orbital), managed by the Melton Constable Trust (MCT), aims to bridge the 20 miles between the Mid-Norfolk Railway station at County School, North of Dereham, and the North Norfolk Railway station outside Holt. The MCT Track Bed Fund will enable its immediate aim to acquire the land needed to build the lines from the current termini into Fakenham and Holt town centre respectively.

## **Peterborough-Ely-Norwich Rail Users Group**

The Norwich to Cambridge service is again in crisis with 8 trains cancelled on 14 October alone. Random cancellations are also affecting both Peterborough - Ipswich trains, and connecting services from Norwich to the coast. However, Liverpool - Norwich is hopefully starting to recover from its reliability problems. The DfT seems incapable of understanding that "Delay Repay" and "new or newer trains" are no substitute for "trains that turn up."

Initial impressions of the new December timetable are mostly favourable with numerous journeys made easier or faster. The 1822 from Birmingham will reach Stansted Airport 13 minutes earlier, while many local trains between Norwich - Cambridge will continue to the Airport, with other local services retimed to fit the new pattern. The through trains will reduce journey times by 10 to 15 minutes, and offer additional connections between the airport and Nottingham. Most journeys between Nottingham and Cambridge via Ely will be 10 to 12 minutes faster in each direction, and it will usually be quicker to change there than at Leicester. Liverpool-Norwich services should cause fewer delays to other Norwich trains.

## **Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group**

The December timetable sees an end to through trains from Meldreth to Cambridge North. The RUG will continue to lobby hard to reinstate this service, as the timetable is always a work in progress. It is also lobbying for the return of a semi-fast London service from Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton at peak time.

## **Bedford Commuters Association**

On 9 August, the frequency of the overhead AC line supply on both the Midland and Great Northern lines dropped below 49Hz, causing the 4 Quadrant Controller on every Desiro City Class 700 and 717 unit to suffer a protective shutdown. A reset should take about 10 minutes, but only 27 of the affected units recovered; the remaining 30 or so required a technician with a laptop to attend each unit. 17 technicians were immediately available, and a further 24 were mobilized within an hour. However, the trains affected were widely spread, and some were not easily accessible, so this process took a considerable time, resulting in 23 train evacuations and severe disruption. GTR maintains over 100 contingency plans for such events, but these simply could not cope with a problem on such a scale.

BCA is dismayed that Flitwick has once again been overlooked for Access for All funding in CP6, as it has a footfall 64% greater than Cricklewood, and almost double the growth rate. Moreover, a new Brent Cross station with step free access (SFA) is planned just 1 mile north of Cricklewood.

The East Midlands timetable will change in December 2020. A half hourly London - Corby service will call at Luton Airport Parkway, Luton, Bedford, Wellingborough and Kettering. No direct Intercity services to Nottingham will call at Bedford as they do at present; passengers for stations north of Kettering will have to change. BCA totally opposes the removal of the direct Nottingham services. The Chairman has spoken to several senior EMR managers, and will continue to lobby for the reinstatement of this service.

### **Chesham & District Transport Users' Group**

TfL has confirmed that SFA projects at Harrow on the Hill and Amersham are both on schedule. It is still considering the need for a 5th lift at Harrow. SFA plans for Rickmansworth have not yet been finalised, as this scheme would not now be delivered until the end of Mayoral term in 2024. TfL will review the SFA proposals for Ickenham as, with no dropped kerbs near the station, wheelchair users arriving by car would need to travel over 500m to access the ticket hall, twice crossing a steep humpback bridge with pavements too narrow for wheelchairs and pushchairs to pass safely.

London Underground stated that passenger numbers did not warrant reinstating 4 tph to Amersham or fast off-peak Chesham and Amersham services.

### **Tonbridge Line Commuters**

After it had run for three years, DfT cancelled the bidding process for rail services in Kent, and awarded Govia an extension until April 2020. After that, the possibilities are for yet another - fifth! - extension, or running the franchise as a public sector enterprise, as from 2003 - 2006 following the demise of Connex. None of the improvements promised under the new franchise will happen. A new timetable would have included fast services between Tonbridge and London, more and faster trains between Tonbridge and Ashford, and a doubling of the Sunday service at Hildenborough. TLC expressed its concerns in an open letter to Transport Secretary Grant Shapps; the anodyne reply from an unnamed official is on its website.

Southeastern has finally introduced 'Delay Repay 15', in line with other operators, and streamlined its claims process, but TLC thinks it could go further: knowing which train a passenger with an Advanced (fixed train) ticket or a Key smartcard used, it could match that against delay data and issue compensation automatically.

TLC is getting feedback on the inconsistency of approach taken on declassifying first class on busy services. Clear, published guidelines would help guards, and make Southeastern more accountable to its paying passengers. The guidelines could apply when a train was:

- So busy that the guard cannot easily walk through it
- Short-formed, and more than a handful of people are standing
- Subject to disruption, eg previous train cancelled, that results in people standing.

However, this will not cover every situation, so guards should also retain some discretion.

Unfortunately, Southeastern's 2-car Class 466 Networker fleet is significantly non-compliant with new mobility regulations, effective 1 January. Although they can continue in service if attached to carriages that do comply, both the Bromley North and Sheerness-on-Sea branches use them on their own. The next smallest trains that Southeastern has are the 3-car Electrostars that are used to strengthen some peak TLC services. If these are redeployed, then TLC could experience persistent short formations on already overcrowded services – while fresh air is moved up and down minor branch lines!

### **Salisbury to Exeter Line Rail Users Group**

At the Yeovil Steam Centre in September, Rf Honorary President Christian Wolmar spoke on the current state of the railways and the lessons to be learnt from Crossrail, while SWR gave an update on its West of England Line service, which operates with 30-year-old rolling stock. SWR has not met its PPM target this year, although NR accounts for over 70% of the delays. SERUG is working with NR and the West of England Strategy Group on the line's long-term CMSP (Continuous Modular Strategic Planning). Delivery of the Devon Metro - also part of the CMSP process - still appears a good way off, as reinstating double track, possibly around Whimple, is necessary. Incidentally, the Steam Centre transfer shed – GWR Broad Gauge to standard gauge - is one of only two still standing.

## Pilning Station Group

Since its footbridge was controversially demolished in November 2016 to allow for electrification, Pilning station has had just two Saturday trains a week, both towards Bristol. To return, passengers have to change at Severn Tunnel Junction and head back towards Bristol, adding an hour to the 20 min journey. But despite this inconvenience, the station's official recorded usage has increased tenfold since 2015.

To the Group's dismay, from December the 1534 train will become the 1433, giving people only four hours in Bristol - even less if they go further afield. GWR claims that the retiming is necessary because the 1534 will be operated by one of its new 5-car Class 800 IETs, which it claims are unable to call at Pilning. However, Olga Taylor, Chair of the Group, said that this made no sense: "These new trains are fitted with Selective Door Operation for the precise purpose of allowing them to stop at stations like ours. We are hugely disappointed in GWR and NR for their lack of action in making their new Class 800 trains compatible for stopping at our station. It appears that Pilning was not added to the trains' onboard computer system, meaning that we lose a well-used service here."

## Tarka Rail Association

The December timetable will be by far the best that the Tarka Line has ever had. On weekdays, the 0627 from Barnstaple will connect with the Golden Hind, arriving in London at 0959, as against 1121 at present. The new hourly Sunday service starts slightly earlier, but TRA continues to lobby for a service arriving in Exeter by 0945, as there are no bus services north of Crediton on Sundays.

The gap in services from Exeter Central between 1523 and 1652 has been closed, and with services starting from there rather than from Exmouth, finding a seat should be much easier. An additional early evening train also bridges the gap between 1856 and 2053. TRA would like to see the late Friday train run on Saturdays too. Coupled with the enhanced rolling stock to replace the Class 143 Pacers, these changes will create a railway fit to serve the residents and visitors in Mid and North Devon. Track renewal between Barnstaple and Crediton should allow increased speeds; the redundant track will be relaid along Platform 2 at Barnstaple, eventually increasing operational flexibility, and creating the potential for charter trains.

## RAILFUTURE

*Rf welcomes new members, both individual and groups: the more we are, the more effective our campaigns. Join [here](#). From the "Membership Types" menu top right, select either the appropriate category of individual or, to affiliate, select "RUG or similar". Read the latest from Rf and its Campaigns by clicking on [News and views](#), [Press releases](#), [Railfuture in the news](#), and [Railfuture consultation responses](#).*



Inaugurated in 2012 but paused for 2019, the annual RUG Awards will return for 2020. The closing date for nominations is 1 March, with the presentations made at the National AGM in Birmingham on 27 June. The categories open for [nominations](#) are:

- 1 – Best website
- 2 – Best social media promotion
- 3 – Best newsletter
- 4 – Best new group - the Oliver Lovell Award
- 5 – Best campaign
- 6 – Best campaigner - the Clara Zilahi Award (for Rf members only).

The Judges' Special Award is made or not at their sole discretion.

## NAMED RAILWAY LINES

NR's current list of [Named Railway Lines](#) omits both the Bentham Line (Leeds – Morecambe) and the Abbey Line (Watford Junction – St Albans Abbey). RUGs and CRPs are invited to nominate their local line for inclusion in the NR format. Rf will put any suggestions to the Rail Delivery Group (RDG), and announce the outcome at its National AGM. To allow the RDG time to consider them, please submit any ideas to [ruglink@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:ruglink@railfuture.org.uk) by 31 May.

## PASSENGER GROUP

The Group's primary campaign focus is on helping to reduce the transport sector's contribution to climate change by extending electrification to as much of the rail network as is realistically achievable. This would cut diesel emissions, encourage a modal shift to rail, and increase energy security by reducing exposure to fluctuating oil prices, or the need to import oil from politically unstable regions.

Another campaign priority is the better integration of rail services, both on the national network, and between rail and other public transport, to provide easier and more reliable door-to-door journeys. Also, information on rail services should be made easily available by means of real time displays at stations, online and through traditional printed formats such as timetable booklets, leaflets and posters on stations. Information technology should supplement not replace printed information, so it is available to all, and as a back up when other sources are temporarily unavailable.

## TRANSPORT FOCUS

The findings of the Williams Rail Review will be incorporated in a Rail Reform White Paper. This is likely to lead to significant changes in the way the industry is run, but passengers will judge any reform simply by its ability to deliver a more reliable, better value for money railway.

The amount of delay repay compensation has gone down 2% from £80.7m to £78.9m, due almost entirely to decreases for South Western Railway and West Coast masking an increase for other train operating companies (TOCs), in particular Northern, which has almost tripled the amount paid out. Over 98% of claims were closed within 20 working days, but just 35% of eligible passengers made one. TF urges passengers to claim every time and Make Delay Pay, but also wants the industry to introduce more automated compensation, and ensure that every eligible passenger knows how to claim so that they get the refund to which they are entitled.

## ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIPS

Following its first place award in the 'Influencing Positive Change' category at the National Community Rail Awards 2019 in October for its 'Dementia and Community Rail' project, the Leeds-Morecambe CRP has now received DfT Accreditation: formal recognition that it operates to a high standard, and that HMG supports its objectives and activities.

The DfT Community Rail Development Fund for 2019-20, administered by ACoRP, is open for applications to English CRPs with designated routes and accredited CRPs. The maximum grant for projects in this funding period is £25,000. Small grant funding is also available from ACoRP, South Western Railway and Transport for Greater Manchester. See the [ACoRP funding page](#) for details.

At ACoRP's recent AGM, Daisy Chapman-Chamberlain (Community Rail Lancashire) and Neville Jephcote (Marston Vale CRP) were elected, bringing skills and knowledge in inclusion and diversity, and integrated sustainable transport. Richard Burningham and Tim Sparrow were re-elected, while Richard Watts and David Edwards stepped down. The board intends to co-opt someone, possibly a non-member, to bring in broader skills and perspectives. It has also initiated a brand review; the new brand should go live next April.

## CAMPAIGN FOR BETTER TRANSPORT

Bus cuts lead to isolation and social exclusion, and hamper efforts to tackle air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and road congestion. A new funding settlement is needed that supports and grows bus networks, and delivers social, economic and environmental benefits.

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

DfT is considering whether the North of England's largest rail commuter service should be taken into public hands. The Transport Secretary told a Select Committee that Northern's poor performance "cannot continue". The DfT confirmed that it was developing contingency plans to replace current franchise "with either a new short-term management contract with Northern, or the Operator of Last Resort (OLR)".

The Transport Secretary has granted a Development Consent Order for the [Northampton Gateway](#) Rail Freight Interchange, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). It will be located south west of M1 Junction 15, between the Northampton loop line and the A508.

5 October marked the 20th anniversary of the Ladbroke Grove railway accident. Two passenger trains collided head on resulting in 31 deaths and over 350 injuries. Following the tragedy, significant changes were made to the way Signals Passed at Danger (SPADs) are managed.

On 1 December 2018, a woman was struck and killed by a tree branch as she leaned out of the train door window of a GWR service travelling at about 75mph near Twerton, Bath. The Rail Accident Investigation Branch found that the Caution sign above the window was inadequate; they have since been changed to Danger signs. The RAIB also noted that trees along the route had not been inspected since 2009.

Railway byelaws enshrine seat reservations as part of the Transport Act 2000: "No person should remain in a seat reserved by someone else unless they have permission from an authorised person". The RDG says it's up to each TOC how to enforce this: "They can demand the reserved seats are vacated, or they can relocate those who reserved the seat to other seats on the train." In practice, however, when faced with people unwilling to move, TOCs often cannot enforce the rules. British Transport Police will deploy officers to a reservation row "appropriately and proportionally" only after a call from train staff.

Transport for London is consulting on extending the Bakerloo line from Elephant & Castle to Lewisham via the Old Kent Road and New Cross Gate, and in Phase 2, from Lewisham to Beckenham Junction and to Hayes by taking over the Catford Bridge line from NR.

Although Transport for the South East's [Draft Transport Strategy](#) espouses both public transport and electrification, and identifies the Brighton main line as requiring greater capacity, it makes no mention of the [Rf campaign](#) to electrify the Uckfield line and extend it to Lewes. The consultation closes on 10 January. As well as making a personal response (without mentioning Rf), you can also contribute to the [Rf response](#) by emailing [bridgethegap@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:bridgethegap@railfuture.org.uk)

East West Rail Co Ltd has published its 2018/19 [Annual Report and Accounts](#). The public enquiry into a TWAO for the Oxford to Bedford section generated over 400 letters of support. The Inspector is expected to deliver his report to the Transport Secretary "in the coming months". The public consultation on five possible routes between Bedford and Cambridge drew over 7,000 responses. EWR is now working with partners and the government to narrow down on its preferred option.

According to the RDG, in the four weeks from 18 August, passengers bought paper tickets for just 50% of journeys as against 63% during the same period last year. On nine in ten routes, passengers can pay for their travel online rather than at ticket offices or TVMs. Smart tickets can be kept securely on smartcards, or as barcode tickets on mobile phones. The growth in smart ticketing follows improvements in technology, the installation and upgrade of ticket barriers at stations, and promotion of the system to passengers.

GTR has worked with TfL and the DfT to extend contactless travel to St Albans, Harpenden and Luton Airport Parkway. But while this generally offers the cheapest single fares towards London, with customers simply touching their payment card or smartphone payment app on the yellow readers at the station, Thameslink's KeyGo may work out cheaper for regular users.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and NR have agreed to build a new station at Soham on the Ipswich to Peterborough line between Bury St Edmunds and Ely. The plan is for a single platform, with potential for a second if the line were dualled. Work on site is scheduled to start next year.

On 25 October, one of Greater Anglia's new Stadler Flirt electric trains made a successful test run from Liverpool Street to Cambridge via Stansted Airport, and back to London via Tottenham Hale. Ten of the Class 745 trains will be fitted out for the intercity route between Norwich and London, and the other ten for the Stansted Express service.

On 13 October, the new Caledonian Sleeper trains finally entered service on the Highland routes between London and Fort William, Inverness and Aberdeen. However, the Class 769 bi-mode trains due to have been delivered to Transport for Wales last spring to boost capacity on the Valley lines have been delayed "until early 2020". TfW will mitigate the problem with Class 153s, and by retaining some of its old Pacers and Class 37 loco-hauled trains.

Bombardier Class 710 trains belatedly started on the Gospel Oak – Barking line in May, but the full 15min service did not start until August. Watford Junction - Euston saw the new trains in September, but with 4 trains per hour (tph) only in the peak. However, from 17 November, the full service will operate throughout the day. On the lines out of Liverpool Street to Chingford, Cheshunt and Enfield Town, the trains need to be able to couple and run as an 8-car unit, for which Bombardier is still developing the software. If test runs go to plan, TfL hopes to introduce the new trains this winter.

*...and finally*

Bolton's last remaining tram, Tramcar 66, is currently operating on Blackpool's tramway system during the illuminations period, and is resplendent in its traditional Bolton livery.

In his Channel 5 series Around the World by Train, Tony Robinson stopped off on the branch line to Wakayama in Japan. It was threatened with closure until someone came up with an idea: to appoint a stray cat as its stationmaster. The idea went viral, the line is still open, and the late cat is now a Shinto deity.

## CONSULTATIONS

- TfL: [Bakerloo Line Extension](#), closes 22 December.
- Transport for the South East: [Draft Transport Strategy 2020](#), closes 10 January.

Please advise [Roger Blake](#) of any other consultation, eg that of a local transport authority.

## EVENTS

Do please keep your events coming, both to me and to [Roger Blake \(Railfuture\)](#), who maintains a [List of Events](#) and a [List of Key Dates](#) for consultations, franchise changes, CP6 planning, service alterations for major rail projects etc. As a Calendar of Events embedded in a document may be discarded, that is a problem if the details change from month to month, so a stand-alone copy in Word format would be very helpful.

Blob colour indicates the various types of event:

- Rf events (RUGs are cordially invited).
- National & regional rail events.
- Local Group events.

### November

- Saturday 16. Huddersfield Penistone Sheffield RUA, The Village Hall, **Stocks Moor**, 1100.
- Saturday 16. Rf Severnside, Stonehouse Community Centre, Laburnum Walk, **Stonehouse**, Gloucestershire, GL10 2NS, 1400.
- Saturday 16. Fen Line Users Association AGM, Heritage Centre, Priory Road, **Downham Market**, 1400.
- Monday 18. Campaign for Better Transport West and North Yorkshire Rail Group, Editor's Draft, 88 Wellington Street, **Leeds**, LS1 4LT, 1930.
- Wednesday 20. Friends of the Barton Line. The Sloop Inn, 81 Waterside Road, **Barton-upon-Humber**, DN18 5BA, 1800.
- Thursday 21. East Hampshire CRP, The Saxon Hall, Butser Ancient Farm, Chalton Lane, Chalton, **Waterlooville**, PO8 0BG, 1000.
- Thursday 21. Magor & Undy Walkway Station meeting, The Golden Lion, 23A The Square, Magor, **Caldicot**, Monmouthshire, NP26 3HY, 1930 (Also 19 December).
- Saturday 23. Rf Herts & Beds, St Paul's Church on Hatfield Road, **St Albans**, AL1 4JP, 1100.
- Monday 25. Watford Rail Users' Group, 'The Junction' adjacent to Watford Junction Station entrance, 1845.
- Tuesday 26. Levenmouth Rail Campaign, Levenmouth Academy, Methilhaven Rd, Buckhaven, **Leven** KY8 1EA, 1830 (and the last Tuesday of every month - but not Hogmanay!)
- Thursday 28. Campaign for Better Transport London, 75 Cowcross Street, Farringdon, **London**, EC1M 6EL. 1800.

### December

- Tuesday 3. Rf East Midlands, The Canal House, 48-52 Canal Street, **Nottingham**, NG1 7EH, 12.00.
- Tuesday 3. Ribble Valley Rail, New Inn, 20 Parson Lane, **Clitheroe**, Lancashire, BB7 2JN. 14.30.



- Saturday 7. Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Passengers' Association, Royal Naval Club, Market Street, **Aberystwyth**, 1145.
- Saturday 7. Rf East Anglia, Little St Mary's Church, Trumpington Street, **Cambridge**, CB2 1QG, 1400.
- Tuesday 10. Chesham & District Transport User Group, Town Hall, 14 High Street, **Chesham**, HP5 1EP, 1930 (and on 7 January 2020).
- Saturday 14. Cumbrian Coast Rail Users' Group, Methodist church hall, Gosforth Road, **Seascale**, Cumbria, CA20 1PU, 1305.

#### **Further Ahead**

- 8 January. Rf London & South East, Eastern Division, St. John's Church, Stratford Broadway, **London**, E15 1NG, 1830 (and every second Wednesday of alternate months.)
- 8 February. English Regional Transport Association, The Rupert Brooke, 8-10 Castle Street, **Rugby**, Warwickshire, CV21 2TP, 1500

Disclaimer: unless otherwise stated, views expressed are those of the contributing organization, and not necessarily shared by Rf.

Contact the editor by e-mail: [ruglink@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:ruglink@railfuture.org.uk), or phone: 01462 815992.

<https://twitter.com/Railfuture>

<https://www.facebook.com/Railfuture/>

<http://www.linkedin.com/pub/railfuture-in-great-britain/30/22a/b59>

*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 7N **(NB. for legal correspondence only)***

*All other correspondence to: 24 Chedworth Place, Tattlingstone, Suffolk, IP9 2ND*