

Railtalk Magazine

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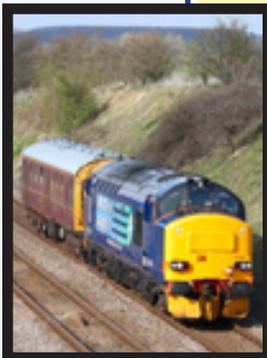
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37423 - on tour.

Front cover

Class 37 423 working the 2Z03 Sheffield to Mill Hill passes Radwell on 1st April. After the Officers alighted at Mill Hill the train ran ECS to Cricklewood to run round before returning ECS to Derby RTC.



Steve Madden

Contents

- Pg 2 - Welcome
- Pg 3 - Charter Scene
- Pg 10 - Pictures
- Pg 26 - Rob's Rail Review
- Pg 27 - On Location
- Pg 28 - The Nosh Report
- Pg 29 - Rail Operator News
- Pg 37 - Pictures with a Different View
- Pg 39 - Preserved Railways
- Pg 51 - International
- Pg 53 - From the Archives

Submissions

Please give a brief description, your name and the date. Pictures and news can be entered through the forum, or by email us

entries@railtalk.net

When is it published

Railtalk Magazine is published on the last Sunday of each month.

More information can be found by visiting Railtalk forums.

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Welcome to issue 20 of Railtalk Magazine, within this issue you can find out all the latest news and pictures that have made this month another great month on the UK and International rail scene. We always work hard to show the best and pictures from the most talented photographers, but we still need more! If you have any pictures that you might think we would be interested in, from anywhere across the world, please email us with them (contact details can be found on this page). However, once again I have to apologise because of the sheer size of the magazine this months magazine. This is a problem that we are addressing at the moment and if you have any ideas please contact me. The obvious ones being to either go fortnightly, or to simply cut down on the number of pages produced, which in turn would mean that there would be fewer pictures.

Once again Steve Roberts has brought us his nosh report, with another insight into a topic that I'm sure we all like. The "nosh report" is new to Railtalk Magazine and we hope to keep it as a regular feature, so if you have any great places to eat within walking distance of a station please send them into Steve.

The biggest news this month (if you live up un Scotland that is) was the re-opening of the Alloa line, which brought big interest into the area, and our very own Scottish correspondant Jonathan McGurk, spent a few days, of the opening week on the line.

This month saw the first of probably many class 87 movements, class 66 723 hauled the first three Class 87's 87 026, 008, 007. These were the first three to move from Long Marston to Crewe for electric testing. Of the first three only 87026 was in the full Bulgarian livery, and while we are talking about loco's moving overseas, later this year sees the return of the Class 58's, could this means that the Class 58 Loco Group may finally be able to get their hand on one.?

The Class 58 group, has been established for many years, and are a great group of people, but as with all groups they need your support. Please support in any way that you can, and if you join please remember to quote me or Railtalk Magazine if asked where you found information about the group.

Will the trouble ever end for Grand Central, with all the problems with power cars and their train sets. They seem to be struggling to run for solid week without something going wrong. After a many weeks of trouble with their own rolling stock the decision was made to hire in Class 67's and stock from EWS and Riviera Trains. You may think that this would then sort their problem, but on the first working Sunday of the Class 67's, disaster struck as one of the Class 67's failed at York on its way south. The train carried on around a hour later with only one loco on its way to London Kings Cross, but finally terminating at Peterborough so the one remaining loco could run round the train. Since then they have gone back to a full HST operation, and we hope that things settle down for them.

April saw another great month in the preservation view with the Battlefield line, Gloucester and Warwickshire, Great Central, South Devon, Severn Valley Railway, North Yorkshire Moors Railway, Paignton and Dartmouth, Llangollen and also Locomotion (NRM) at Shildon, to name but a few. Try saying that in one breath, these have all been great gala's this month, congratulations to everyone concerned, and I'm sure you can see by the pictures in our Preserved section it looks like you enjoyed them .

Once again many thanks this month to:

Richard Hargreaves, Jon Jebb, Ian Furness, Carl Grocott, David Dawson, Jonathan McGurk, Dave Harris, Derek Elston, Jim, Peter Cheshire, David Mead, Liam, Mike Byrne, Jon Coleman, Brian Battersby, Steve Madden, and Nigel Chalk.

Andy Patten



After last months FCC bubble cars, Peter Cheshire, one of the masters of creative photography, has done it again.

This is a "Short Rat", simple design only one bogie and can go anywhere, originally named "Celtic", we don't know quite why, but the plates have been removed!

Peter Cheshire

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Charter Scene

This months round up of the British Charter scene

Welcome to the May edition of Charter Scene, from Railtalk Magazine.

Once again, thanks to everyone for sending in those pics, and keep them coming and, as always, we'll try to keep you as up to date as we can.



Above: Pathfinder's 'The Grays Church Elogy' tour with Class 37 401 preparing to lead 37 417 away from Crewe, on the 26th April. **Mike Byrne**

Below: Earlier in the day, Class 37 417 'Richard Trevithick' and 37 401 approach North Staffs. Junction with Pathfinders 'The Grays Church Elogy' tour. **Steve Madden**





Left: Class 67 021 pauses at York for a driver change whilst working the 1277 Northern Belle from Liverpool to Edinburgh on the 12th April.

Andy

Below: Class 47 760 and Class 57 601 work the 1205 Lincoln - Crewe seen here passing Stenson Jct. on the 26th April.

Carl Grcott





Left: The delayed Truro - Taunton VSOE thunders through a very wet Totnes on the 12th April. **Liam**

Below: Class 67 029 works the 5Z60 Cardiff - Crewe passed Condover.
Carl Grocott





Above: Class 20 310 "Gresty Bridge" and 20 307 on 1Z30 Spitfire Railtours "Wey-Farer" from Crewe - Weymouth past Shrivensham in appalling weather on Saturday 19th April.
Derek Elston



Left: Class 67 003 on the rear of the Severn Valley Phoenix heads past Mintey heading for Kemble, also on Saturday 19th April.
Derek Elston

Below: Here is a shot of Class 40 145 taken at Turves (near March) of the late running 'The East Anglian' Railtour on 12th April 2008. The Sun was out for about an hour before it arrived and if it was on time (17:30) I would have got it in full sun. As it was the sun did a disappearing act about a minute before it arrived.
Steve Madden





Above: Class 47 767 on the rear of the 1222 Sheffield - Canterbury, Canterbury Tales Railtour, 47 804 was leading, passes Harrowden Jct on the 5th April. **Derek Elston**

Below: Class 67 024 approaches Harrowden Junction with Kingfisher Railtours, Derby - Folkestone "Golden Arrow" as far as Willesden where it will hand over to 34067 Tangmere. **Derek Elston**





Left:
Class 67 024 leads
1Z67 0951
Victoria - Truro
VSOE past Starcross
on the 11th April.
Liam

Right and Below:
Two shots of Class 47 760 and Class 47 787
passing through North Queensferry station
while heading towards Dundee working the
05.27 1Z48 Skipton - Dundee 'The Green
Express' charter train on the 19th April.
Jonathan McGurk





Left: 71000 "Duke of Gloucester" working the North Briton tour is seen at York on 12th April. **Andy**

Bottom: I know, before you all start, that this tour was last month, but this shot was too good not to include. Deltic action on the main line with Class 55 022 working 1Z47 Cardiff - Llandridod Wells passes Vigo. **Carl Grocott**





Above: Was this the biggest news of the month??. Class 66 723 hauls Class 87's 87 026 87 008 and 87 007 from Long Marston to Crewe for electrical testing prior to dispatch to Bulgaria. This is the convoy on the West Coast Mail Line on the 22nd April. Note only 87 026 carries the full livery. Richard Hargreaves

Below: Class 87 026 later in the day is seen at Crewe, where the Class 66 ran round the train. Ian Furness





Above: A pair of Class 31s pass Harrowden Junction on the 22nd April 2008. 31190 in BR green T&T with 31459 in Black working a Serco Test train, running as 4Q10 Derby RTC to Selhurst. John Coleman

Below: This shot is taken at North Staffs. Junction on 26th April. New liveried Voyager 220 003 passes old liveried Super Voyager 221 129. 220 003 was working a York to Paignton service and 221 129 a Birmingham New St. to Newcastle service. Steve Madden





Above: Class 47 815 "Great Western" on the late running Sheldmuir-Wembley postal. Running approx 45 late, it is seen hauling the Class 325 units through Winwick Jct. on April 8th. Dave Harris

Below: Class 37 405 works the 6F15 Holyhead - Sandycroft on the 12th April. Carl Grocott





Above: Class 66 615 works the 8Z50 Sutton Bridge - Shrewsbury Coal Yard special working on the 13th April. This shot is of the train leaving Sutton Bridge, just as the sun starts to appear from a very dark and threatening sky. Carl Grocott

Below: This is Headlands Bridge, Kettering on the 4th April, and Class 66 427 on loan to Freightliner, works 6M91 Theale - Earles empties. John Coleman.





Left: Seen at Manchester Piccadilly on April 2nd, this Class 150 is one of three units with special decals to promote Liverpool's Capital of Culture. This one is 150 147 with the Art & Sculpture theme of an "Ever Changing Canvas". Dave Harris

Middle: Class 60 097 is pictured at Vigo whilst working the 6M88 Llanwern - Dee Marsh on the 29th March. Carl Grocott

Bottom: The stylish London Midland livery is now being rolled out across the fleet and it looks great on the Class 323's. Here are two shots from Five Ways station on the 3rd April, showing both old and new liveries. Richard Hargreaves





Above: Still plodding on, mainly with trip workings around the North West and occasional Railtour duties, Class 37 401 is seen at Crewe working the 6K16 Warrington Arpley to Crewe Electric on the 14th April. Richard Hargreaves

Below: With the commencement of services from Wrexham to London Marylebone, these silver Class 67's are set to become a regular feature along the route. This is a shot of a training run, shortly before commencement of a full service at the end of April. Richard Hargreaves



Left: The new National Express East Coast livery continues to spread, although at the moment only the HST sets are being done. This is Class 43 238 and 43 306 seen passing through North Queensferry while working the 07.10 1S03 Leeds - Aberdeen East Coast service on the 19th April. Jonathan McGurk



Below: Another new livery is that of East Midlands Trains, who's parent company of Stagecoach is very much evident in their colour scheme. This is Class 156 413 in new the new EMT livery at Loughborough Station. Working the 09:52 from Leicester to Lincoln Central, note that it is on the Down Main line because the Slow line was closed for engineering work. John Coleman





Above: A side view of Class 170 474, taken from the footbridge at Stirling station. The train worked the 12.19 2N69 Glasgow Queen Street High Level - Stirling service. The new flats in the background are slowly being built which will mean more commuters for the station and business for SPT and First ScotRail. This photograph was taken on Wednesday 2nd April.
Jonathan McGurk

Bottom Left: Network Rail's track unit 950 001 is seen at Gobowen on the 22nd April.
Brian Battersby

Bottom Right: With the imminent reintroduction of HST services by Arriva Cross Country, the power cars are currently getting a "shake down" after being stored for various periods of time. They will eventually go to Brush for MTU fitment but for the time being will work with their original power units. This is Class 43 007 and 43 178 working between Cragentinny and Neville Hill. Class47





Above: Class 47 828 "Joe Strummer" running as 0P01 Gloucester - Norwich is seen approaching Minety Crossing on Sat 19th April. Derek Elston



Left: Class 156 433 is named 'The Kilmarnock Edition' and carries a slightly different livery, seen here departing Glasgow Central High Level station working the 10.37 2D19 Glasgow Central High Level - Paisley Canal service on the 15th April. Jonathan McGurk

Below: Class 156 432 is seen departing Glasgow Central High Level station working the 17.37 2A96 Glasgow Central High Level - Barrhead service on the same day. Jonathan McGurk





Above: Class 66 719 "Metro-land" leads 66 710 across the road at Three Horseshoes with a Peterborough - March light engine move. Derek Elston

Below: Trials continue with the Class 31's and modified DBSO's, with a view to eliminating top and tail.. This is Class 31 601 at Shrewsbury. David Dawson





Left: We have been told that this could be the last daylight running of a Serco Test Train in t&T mode as it is expected that the DBSO units are to enter service soon. 37069 brings up the rear of 4Q08 Kettering to Derby with 37609 leading at Glendon Junction on Monday 28th April. Derek Elston

Middle: Not a good month for Grand Central, with most of their fleet out of traffic, a decision was made to hire in Class 67's Top 'n Tail Mk 2 stock. Two different rakes are believed to have been used, one was ex Virgin and the other was EWS charter. Both: Class47

Bottom: Class 66 083 made history on the 4th April, as it was the first freight train to pass over the new section of track between Stirling and Alloa for EWS driver training purposes for when the line opens up on the 16th May. Jonathan McGurk





Above: Class 37 609 and with 37 069 at the rear, are seen standing at Dalmuir station about to head back to Polmadie to be stabled for the night having worked an Ultrasonic Test Train from Polmadie - Polmadie via Helensburgh, Milngavie and Drumgelloch on the 9th April. Jonathan McGurk

Below: Always looking smart are the Class 59's. This is "Yeoman Endeavour" shunting at Westbury on the 13th April. Jim





Above: We've had plenty of pics in this month from these "new kids on the block". Wrexham and Shropshire have started running a full service in April, using Class 67's and hired-in stock until their's is ready. This is Class 67 014 and 67 012 working 1P13 Wrexham - Marylebone. Carl Grocott

Below: Class 170 474 is seen sitting inside platform 10 of Stirling station having just come in with the 12.19 2N69 Glasgow Queen Street High Level - Stirling working on the 2nd April. Jonathan McGurk





Top: Class 66 534 passes the delightful setting of Baldwins Gate on the 22nd April. Brian Battersby

Middle: The London Midland livery is certainly an attractive one. Class 350 114 passes Stableford on a sunny April afternoon. Ian Furness

Bottom: Arriva liveried Class 175 010 is seen at Condoover on the 22nd April. Brian Battersby





Above: Blue liveried Class 66 623 works the 6Z82 Portbury-Rugeley passed Cosford on the 19th. Carl Grocott

Below: Seen passing Marholm on the 12th April, Class 66 719 'Metro-Land' leads 66 710, 66 708 and 66 723 with 0H78 Selby to Peterborough Yards. 66 719 and 66 710 then ran light to Whitemoor Yard later in the day. Steve Madden





Above: Another DRS Class 66 on loan to Freightliner during April was 66 425 seen here at Kettering South working 6A10 Stud Farm to Forders stone train on the 10th April. Steve Madden

Below: Class 158 870 in Wessex livery has moved upto Scotland for good. This set was one of 5 which came up at the start of the year from Neville Hill Depot which were stored at Slateford Carriage Sidings for 6 weeks until they came out in service a few weeks ago. Class 158 870 is seen departing Stirling while working the 12.03 2P37 Edinburgh Waverley - Dunblane service on the 2nd April. Jonathan McGurk



St Albans Abbey Branch 150 Years!



And to think there was talk of it shutting down!?

Well, I have never felt quite so much at home. The amount of photographers and people videoing a class 321 was something not to be missed!

The line celebrated Monday 5th May 2008—150 years of age! What a great little line it has turned out to be.

Catch the class 321 whilst you can though! London Midland have suggested the a class 350 will take over soon enough.

London Midland, interior design experts?

Having originally suggested the somewhat different exterior livery, London Midland now seem intent on using a very psychotic interior. If you have seen the class 323 and 170 new interior, you will understand what I am referring to. The 'better' news, is that this pattern will also be applied to the new class 350s (currently on order). This should liven up what would otherwise be a boring journey?

The interesting thing is that they did originally plan a maroon seat covering which perhaps would have been more friendly on the eyes? The new pattern is darker green and light green patterns down it.

With regards to the new class 350s, having been in contact with LondonMidland, I have been informed that: The C.I.S voice on the units they are not sure as to whether it will be changed. The exterior will be as normal.

The interior will be as the 170s / 323s that are "refurbished", and they will literally replace the class 321/4 units on a like-for-like basis.



Testing photo locations around Southampton



Left: A Cross Country liveried Voyager passing a footbridge 5 mins walk, South of Southampton Central Station.

Below: Class 444 002 leads another classmate past Millbrook into Southampton Central. Both © James Paice.



Clapham Junction Engineers

On the 5th April 2008 First GBRf provided Engineers trains for the Clapham Junction track renewal. When I arrived all the track from Platform 9 had been taken up, and Class 73's 73 208 and 206 (Below) were collecting the spent Ballast.



Also on site were Class 66 726 (above) and 66 727 which top and tailed on the first train on site. Due to a signal fire at Waterloo they remained on site until it was safe to enter Waterloo.

Each train would move down on set, meaning upon arrival at Waterloo the ED's would leave their train for 66 727. also on site were 73 209 73 205 with some new Ballast.

Despite the fire at Waterloo the job did not end too late and normal service was able to resume Monday morning.

Left: 73 208 and 73 206 Create a cloud of clag as they move backwards whilst being loaded with ballast.



The Nosh Report

Steve Roberts

Welcome to the second "Nosh Report", this is your chance to let everyone know where to go for something to eat when out and about. We are not looking at pubs or high class restaurants, just something local to the railway where you can get a drink or snack.

My choice this month is Gays Creamery DAWLISH:

Gays Creamery
20 Brunswick Place
Dawlish
Devon
EX7 9PD

Telephone: 01626 863341
Fax: 01626 863341



This wonderful little establishment is a short five minute walk from Dawlish Train Station, go left out the station over the river and then right, and is situated up the left hand-side of the street next to the local Funeral Directors. The business offers Breakfasts of Sausage, Bacon and Egg cooked to order. It also offers a huge range of homemade Pasties and Sausage Rolls and i recommend the "Steak with Melted Stilton".....but the shop is known for its outstanding Devon clotted ice-cream that is sourced nearby. This being Devon a huge range of Confectionery and locally made Cripple Cocked cider is also available.The staff are very friendly and take immense pride in there service to the many hundreds of summer visitors and locals in Dawlish. Only minor downside is, maybe due to lack of space there is no cafe here. If you are visiting the area this summer pop up to the creamery and treat yourself to a clotted ice-cream, sit on the sea wall and enjoy the trains.

I travel the length of Britain, sampling food and drink, all in the name of research, well that's my excuse anyway. Many thanks to all of you who have replied this month, don't worry if your report is not here, we'll file it and get it published another month. But do keep sending me these reports, i'm always looking for somewhere new.

Email me at : steve.roberts@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Until the next time.....Steve.

DEAL SIGNED TO REFURBISH HIGH SPEED TRAIN CARRIAGES

The multi-million pound contract to refurbish 40 High Speed Train (HST) carriages for use on CrossCountry services has been awarded to Wabtec Rail, which will carry out the work at its workshops in Doncaster. The carriages will receive a complete overhaul to allow them to give additional years of high quality service. The trains will feature power sockets in every carriage, WiFi and a catering home base from which an at-seat service of food and drink will be offered. They will be used on the Edinburgh to Plymouth route to provide much needed extra capacity along the busy corridor through Leeds.

All the carriages will be repainted into CrossCountry's distinctive livery before being introduced to service, with the work scheduled to be completed in time for the December 2008 timetable change. Each of the five HSTs will provide some 550 seats – more than most 747 jumbo jets. CrossCountry Managing Director Andrew Cooper said: "We're really excited that work is underway on the makeover of these trains which will have them ready for service in December. This is a major step forward to meeting our promise to provide up to 35 percent extra seats and also increase the amount of luggage space on CrossCountry trains."

Wabtec's President and Chief Executive Officer Albert J Neupaver said: "This contract represents an important milestone in the growth of our vehicle refurbishment capabilities at Wabtec Rail." In service each train will run with two power cars and eight carriages.

STARS SHINE AT NATIONAL EXPRESS TRAINS AWARDS

National Express train companies enjoyed success at the annual Trains Excellence Awards where their achievements were honoured on the 27th March 2008.

National Express East Anglia, Gatwick Express, c2c and National Express East Coast were all successful in the awards which recognise achievements by people in areas such as customer service, safety, innovation and the environment. There were also special awards on the night in categories including station of the year, team of the year and outstanding personal contribution.

The awards were hosted by Trains Director David Franks with Group Chief Executive Richard Bowker and Ray O'Toole, Chief Executive UK both in attendance.

Successes for National Express East Anglia included Peter Tyler, Head of Train Presentation winning the Industry Excellence Award for his work to improve train cleaning. National Express East Anglia was also named as Team of the Year for their "Challenge 90" achievements in improving punctuality, and scooped the Environmental Excellence award for their strategy to save energy, with actions such as regenerative braking and driver training in energy efficient driving.

Ray Stone from National Express East Anglia's Lowestoft station was named as winner of the Outstanding Personal Contribution award for his tireless work for customers and the community, with Darren Fennah, National Express East Anglia Business Manager for catering and Linda Jury of c2c Revenue Protection both receiving Highly Commended awards.

National Express East Coast were named as winners of the Innovation award for their online booking service and saw Phil Crow and Fiona Neil of Newcastle Station receive a highly commended award in the Industry Excellence category.

Gatwick Express scooped the Customer Service Award for their overall customer service strategy and the Safety Excellence Award for their safety strategy, while c2c's Tony Smith was named as the winner of the Leadership/Engagement award. c2c also scored success with Fenchurch Street being named as Station of the Year.

MURAL PAINTS A PRETTY PICTURE AT PENGAM

Eight youngsters from the Rhymney Valley have unveiled an eye catching mural at Pengam railway station.

The youngsters from 'Caerphilly Fast Forward' unveiled the 40ft mural at a special presentation held on the platform in the presence of local dignitaries, supervisors and Arriva Trains Wales staff who supported the project.

The colourful mural welcomes visitors to Pengam and is based on the theme of linking the Rhymney valley to Cardiff with the Caerphilly railway tunnel at its centre.

Based at the old Blackwood Junior School building, 'Fast Forward' gives youngsters who require educational support the opportunity to gain qualifications, training and employment opportunities.



Gavin Thomas, team leader for Caerphilly Fast Forward, said: "Our work is about changing attitudes, behaviour and helping the youngsters think positively about the future."

He continued: "In addition to creating the mural with local artist Bryce Davies, they have all tried new experiences and made a positive contribution in the community."

We are very proud of their achievements and especially their contribution at the railway station.

They are different people now to when they started with us and everything they have achieved is down to them."

Jez Williams, station manager for Arriva Trains Wales, said: "The mural is a fantastic achievement and has certainly made an impact at the station."

"We have been impressed with their commitment and their participation in this project will stand them in good stead when seeking training and employment."

The young people at Fast Forward adopted Pengam Station in 2007 along with Hengoed and Gilfach Fargoed as part of the Arriva Trains Wales Station Adoption scheme. Previous work completed by the group includes cutting back vegetation, painting and planting shrubs.



ScottishPower awards new contract to EWS Energy

ScottishPower has awarded EWS Energy a new contract for the delivery of coal by rail to two major power stations in Scotland.

The new contract will see EWS Energy deliver thousands of coal trains throughout the duration of the contract to Longannet Power Station, the UK's second largest coal-fired power station situated at Kincardine-on-Forth, and Cockenzie Power Station, situated at Prestonpans in East Lothian on the south side of the Forth Estuary.

Paul Bates, EWS Energy Managing Director, said: "EWS Energy and ScottishPower have a strong relationship at all levels built on an understanding of the customer's needs. I am delighted that our combination of reliability and flexibility has led to this new contract. We look forward to building our relationship and enhancing our service provision."

First GBRf names new Class 66 locomotive 'Institution of Railway Operators'



The naming ceremony, which took place on Friday 18 April at First GBRf's maintenance depot in March, Cambridgeshire, celebrates the arrival of the first of five new class 66s locomotives and marks First GBRf's appreciation of the work of the Institution of Railway Operators (IRO).

The locomotive naming coincides with the formal opening of First GBRf's March depot, which was conducted by Iain Coucher, Chief Executive of Network Rail.

First GBRf in partnership with Network Rail, has returned a considerable amount of rail employment back to the March area following many years of decline and the maintenance depot, which First GBRf started operating in conjunction with Electro-Motive Services International Ltd (EMSI) in December 2007, has created further new jobs in the Cambridgeshire town.

Unveiling the name plaque, on locomotive 66728, Iain Coucher said: "It's a great privilege to name this train in honour of the great work of the IRO. The Institution shows our industry at its best – working together in the interests of furthering skills and best practice for the railway. Network Rail is proud to be a corporate member of the IRO and continues to support its endeavours."

John Smith, Managing Director at First GBRf said: "The IRO is doing much valuable work to increase the level of professionalism across the rail industry. At First GBRf we have enjoyed record growth within the coal market and the five new Class 66s locomotives will be used to support the commencement of new contracts with Drax Power, Alcan and British Energy. The training and education services that the IRO provide will ensure that our staff's knowledge and professionalism continues to develop in line with our expanding business and we are delighted to be naming a locomotive in their honour."

Chris Daughton, IRO Chief Executive added: "The IRO was established to promote understanding and learning amongst railway professionals of key areas of sound railway management. First GBRf remains committed to encouraging and furthering staff development and we are pleased to be fostering an ongoing working relationship with them."

Locomotive 66628 forms part of First GBRf's multi million pound order of five new class 66s, which are being leased from Porterbrook to support First GBRf's rapidly expanding stake of the UK coal market.

DRS FLEET NEWS UPDATE

DRS have announced that with the arrival of its new low emission Class 66 locomotives, the company will be relinquishing 10 Class 66 from its fleet following the expiry of contractual agreement with the leasing company. This has always been DRS' strategy in order to ensure the fleet of Class 66 within the company's possession remained the most efficient and up to date.

DRS has also invested in Class 57s to complement its fleet and has 6 of these locomotives programmed within its work schedule enabling the company to maintain fleet capability.

The company's expanding business portfolio has meant the ever increasing need to ensure there is locomotives availability for all its service offerings as well as a fleet of locomotives available to facilitate the seasonal work such as Rail Head Treatment Train.

As with all freight operating company, DRS is constantly reviewing its fleet requirement to meet its current and potential business portfolio.

NEWS IN BRIEF

● Death of Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody MP

EWS, part of the DB Schenker organisation and Britain's largest rail freight operator, is deeply saddened by the death of Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody MP.

Keith Heller, EWS Chief Executive, said: "Mrs Dunwoody was an outstanding Member of Parliament. As Chair of the Transport Select Committee she made a major contribution to the development of this sector. Her questioning of those accountable helped to improve every mode of transport, particularly rail. Her talent was to ask the questions to which the public wanted answers. This made her a leading Parliamentarian. She was a friend of the railway industry, a great supporter of rail freight and everybody respected her. She will be sadly missed and I pass my sincere condolences to Mrs Dunwoody's family and friends."

● The Royal Scot rides again

Virgin Trains has reached an agreement with the UK's largest charter train provider Riviera Trains for the use of The Royal Scot train name. The historic train name, will be used by Riviera Trains on its programme of premier steam-hauled excursions.

Virgin Trains Chief Operating Officer Chris Gibb said: "Whilst Virgin Trains is a forward thinking business, we also acknowledge the rich heritage and history of the railways. We are pleased to support Riviera Trains by allowing it to use the historic 'The Royal Scot' train name, for its prestigious steam-operated services" Chris Gibb symbolically flagged the train away, before joining other special guests onboard on The Royal Scot's inaugural run from London's Euston station.

● National Community Rail Weekend 2008

It's National Community Rail Weekend again and all around the network Community Rail Partnerships, Station Friends and supporters of rural and local rail are getting out and about promoting their local railway.

This year's events start on Friday 16th May with guided walks from many stations including those on the East Lancashire Line and the Penistone Line, station galas at Bridlington, Glossop, Blackburn and Hellifield, and music trains on the Penistone Line to support the Shepley Spring Festival which is also taking place over the weekend.

A list of full nationwide events can be found on the ACoRP website www.acorp.uk.com under news/community rail diary.

GBRf takes delivery of 5 new locomotives

On the 18th April, GBRf took delivery of 5 brand new Class 66 locomotives. These photographs are all from the quayside at Newport where the locos were unloaded. These pictures are all ©GBRf.



New timetable means more services to Liverpool

London Midland introduces more trains between Birmingham and Liverpool with its first new timetable on May 18 - the latest in a series of improvements for passengers since its franchise started six months ago.

Other improvements include:

- achieving 88.9 per cent punctuality for March, ahead of the first target set for the franchise to achieve which was 84.6 per cent
- signing a deal to introduce 37 new state of the art trains
- £5.7 million investment in station car park ticketing, security and environmental measures started with changes to car parking starting from 5 May
- safer car parks, with police approved accreditation for 16 car parks, six more than its franchise promise, and more on the way
- easier to read, more informative timetables responding to passengers' requests
- Oyster pay as you go cards for passengers between Watford and London Euston in the first week
- new ticket machines
- rebranding our trains
- Investors in People accreditation, two years ahead of schedule, to help staff training
- fortnightly 'Meet the Manager' sessions, where company directors talk to passengers at stations
- £170,000 renovation of St Albans Abbey station underway, the first of a series of station projects in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council
- easier rail travel to Europe from three of its stations - Northampton, Milton Keynes and Watford Junction - with the launch of 'through tickets' for Eurostar

The new services will start along with other timetable changes across the industry on May 18, and coincides with Liverpool's European Capital of Culture Status. From Monday to Friday the 1851 from Birmingham to Crewe will be extended to Liverpool and there will be an additional 2240 train from Liverpool to Crewe.

London Midland's investments and improvements will continue with £243 million worth of new trains, as part of London Midland's £300 million revitalisation of the railway.

Steve Banaghan, Managing Director of London Midland, said: "London Midland has got off to a great start, delivering on our commitments and in some cases exceeding our franchise commitments.

"However, there's still a great deal more work to do in providing a revitalised railway through the heart of England, and the next major step will be the introducing our new fleets of trains, which will start before the end of this year.

NORTH EAST RAIL SERVICES DEFY THE CABLE THIEVES

Figures released by Network Rail show that the delay to travellers caused by thieves stealing the cable used in signalling systems has fallen slightly in Yorkshire and the North East.

Delays on the London North-Eastern Route, which covers the east coast from London to Scotland, fell from 205,000 minutes in 2006/07 to 151,000 in 07/08. Dyan Crowther, Route Director for Network Rail, said: "This is fantastic news and reflects the massive effort which is being put in by Network Rail and the industry to stop thieves ruining rail services.

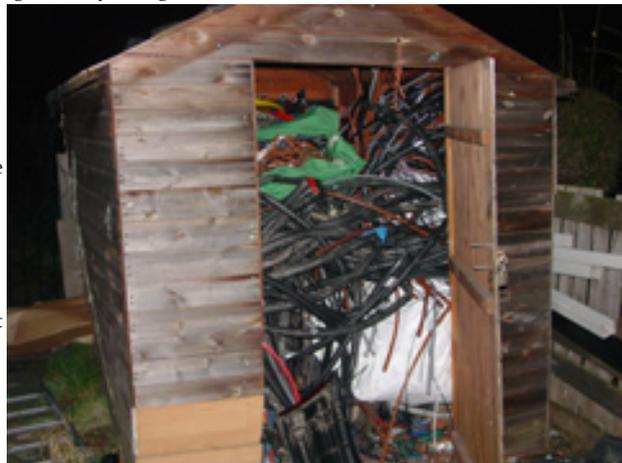
"The theft of metal - including lead from roofs and electrical supply cable - is a global issue being faced by a large number of industries. The fact that the investments we are making in both our people and technical devices is reducing the disturbance to passengers and the number of incidents of cable theft shows that it is money well spent.

"I would like to thank passengers and the train operators for their patience and support as we continue to do all we can to fight this crime. It remains a serious problem for us and still causes significant delay to train services - especially in Yorkshire and the North East. If anyone sees anything suspicious around a railway line please contact the British Transport Police (BTP) on 0800 40 50 40."

Tricia Riley, Area Director North for Northern Rail, said: "Cable theft has been one of the single biggest causes of delay to our services and disruption to our customers over the past year so it is encouraging that the actions taken by Network Rail, BTP and the industry have helped to reduce its impact. We will continue to work with all our industry partners to combat the actions of cable thieves."

Detective Chief Inspector Danny Snee from BTP added: "For British Transport Police, combating cable theft across Britain's rail system remains second only to terrorism. We are using every method at our disposal to tackle this type of crime.

"Our message is clear: those involved in metal theft will be caught and brought to justice. Communities can help," added DCI Snee. "We need information on who is committing these crimes or dealing in stolen metal."



FirstGroup Plc statement: Extension of First ScotRail Franchise

FirstGroup plc, the UK's leading transport company, has welcomed the announcement by the Scottish Government that the First ScotRail franchise will be extended for three years to November 2014.

Commenting on the franchise extension, Moir Lockhead, Group Chief Executive said: "We are delighted that the Scottish Government has taken the decision to extend the First ScotRail franchise for three years.

"Since the start of the franchise in October 2004 we have invested more than £25m in Scotland's railway. More and more people are choosing rail as their preferred means of travel. The number of passengers using First ScotRail services has grown by 19% and performance has improved significantly with delays caused by First ScotRail reduced by 50%.

"Our First ScotRail staff, led by Mary Dickson and her team, work hard to deliver excellent customer service. First ScotRail's commitment to deliver the best service for Scotland every day has driven a programme of continuous improvement and led to this franchise extension."

The agreement creates an investment fund of more than £70m, for control by Transport Scotland, to further improve Scotland's railway. This has been achieved by converting future estimated revenue share payments into an investment fund, in return for a change in First ScotRail's revenue share and support arrangements.

The revenue share and support arrangements have been amended to further incentivise First ScotRail to continue to grow passenger revenue. The fund can be used for additional train services, to improve journey times, connections and quality of services which will bring direct passenger benefits.

Moir Lockhead continued: "This is an exciting time for rail passengers in Scotland with a number of major projects underway including Airdrie-Bathgate services and the Glasgow Airport Rail Link.

"The franchise extension also means that First ScotRail will be operating Scotland's railway during the Commonwealth Games in 2014."

A man is a dog's best friend

When Jazz the dog's morning walk took an unexpected turn, he stumbled across a surprise hero in the form of one of our train drivers.

On the morning of 3 April, Jazz was out for a walk with his owner when he spotted a deer and gave chase. The chase ended with Jazz stranded on the railway line between New Milton and Hinton Admiral, which carries trains travelling at speeds of up to 100 mph.

Driver Martin Crane was driving the 06:30 London Waterloo to Bournemouth service when he had to 'paws' to pick up his new pedigree chum, the wide-eyed labradoodle.

Martin explained:

"A driver going in the opposite direction flashed his lights to alert me to a problem, then the signalman contacted me and explained everything so I slowed down and caught sight of the dog. I stopped and coaxed the dog towards me. I got him back into the train and passed him over to the guard to look after until the next stop. I received a round of applause from the passengers which was nice! They didn't seem too upset about the train being slightly delayed and we dropped Jazz off at Hinton Admiral where Carol Parkhurst in the ticket office contacted his grateful owners."

Sandra Firth, Jazz's owner said:

"It was half term week so I was at home with our kids Daniel and Georgia. My husband called and said Jazz had run off and he had been looking for him for around 35 minutes. We were just about to leave the house to go and help with the search when the phone rang and it was Carol at Hinton Admiral station saying she had Jazz with her. When we got there he was sitting with his paws on the counter! We are all so grateful for Carol and Martin's help."

Old trains made new

London Underground's District line fleet, which has undergone a multi-million pound refurbishment, is now complete and all trains are now back in service for passengers, 11 months early and under budget.

This is the first time a full train fleet has been renewed as part of Transport for London's (TfL's) Investment Programme. The District line carries more than 600,000 customers every weekday and the refurbishment programme, which began in 2003, has been an important step towards improving and expanding the Tube as part of the programme. All of the 75 District line trains have been fitted with completely renewed interiors, CCTV cameras inside the cars, fire retardant seats and flooring; and accessibility measures, including tip-up seats to accommodate wheelchairs, buggies and luggage. The renewal of the District line fleet was part of a refurbishment programme carried out by Metronet Rail. Bob Thorogood, District line General Manager, said: "These District line trains have served Londoners since 1980 and proved a reliable part of the transport network. "The refurbishment of the fleet has brought a higher standard of accessibility with improved announcement systems, extra space for wheelchairs, prams and luggage, as well as additional security measures such as in car CCTV. 'The refurbished trains are popular with our customers, some of whom think they are brand new trains.'

Metronet's Chief Executive, Andie Harper, said: "I am very proud of the Metronet team that has delivered this well under budget and 11 months early - that has to be good news for the half a million people using the District line every day. 'These 30 year old trains presented us with many technical challenges but their transformation speaks volumes and is a credit to the refurbishment team at Bombardier in Derby. Each District line train has travelled an estimated three million kilometres since entering service from 1980.

TRANSPORT POLICE TARGET SCRAP METAL THIEVES

British Transport Police have targeted seven scrap metal dealers in South Wales as part of a European day of action against metal thieves.

On Tuesday 22 April, officers visited the scrap metal dealers in Pontypridd, Merthyr and Rymney areas alongside the Environment Agency Wales. At one of the sites in Pontypridd, BTP recovered some railway cable, while no arrests were made, an investigation has been launched.

Acting Detective Inspector Mark Cleland from BTP, said: "Proactive visits like these and working with scrap metal dealers helps reduce the marketplace for stolen metal, acts as a deterrent and can be a valuable source of intelligence."

The Environment Agency Wales said the operation was a success as they uncovered several problems in the area, in particular one waste management site which was storing asbestos and several vehicles which were carrying waste without the proper licenses.

Bob James, Senior Environmental Crime Officer with Environment Agency Wales:

"The success of this operation really underlines the benefits of organisations collaborating to tackle crime, and I look forward to continuing to work with British Transport Police in the future. It was good to know that our efforts were protecting the railways as well as the environment."

BTP was joined by law enforcement partners from across Britain in action designed to prevent, detect and deter the theft and disposal of metals. As part of the nationally coordinated operation BTP made 13 arrests, visited 57 scrap metal dealers and conducted 13 crime reduction visits. Helicopter patrols in the North East of England also took place.

Eleven European police forces took part in the Day of Action, which was co-ordinated through Railpol, the European railway policing organisation.

BTP Chief Constable Ian Johnston, who also leads for the Association of Chief Police Officers in their Crime Business Area, said: "Because of ever rising commodity prices, metal theft is now major economic crime across Europe, not least in the rail industry."

"For BTP, combating cable theft across Britain's rail system remains one of our biggest challenges and this concerted action across Europe is just one element in a continuing police effort to thwart the thieves."

Detective Superintendent Ashley Croft from BTP said: "Our message is clear: those involved in metal theft will be caught and brought to justice."

"Cable theft on the rail system involves not only great financial loss, but causes hours of delays to millions of passengers. It is also hazardous for those involved who put themselves at risk by trespassing on lines and for others, including children, who may use trespass routes opened up by thieves. This is certainly not a victimless crime."

The Railpol day of action comes a month after ACPO held its first ever metal theft conference in London. That brought together law enforcement agencies, representatives of the metal recycling industry, utilities and government to look at co-operative ways of tackling the problem.

The UK metal recycling sector has a turnover of £3.5 billion annually and is itself one of the main victims of metal thieves. The estimated cost of metal theft to UK industry is £360 million a year.

Robin Gisby, Director of Operations and Customer Services at Network Rail said: "We are working closely with BTP to prevent thefts and catch culprits and I urge anyone who sees people acting suspiciously around the railway to report it immediately to the police. Our failsafe system means any cut cable turns all signals in the area to red bringing all nearby trains to a halt. Passengers are therefore not at risk but they are massively inconvenienced by the delays that are caused. The only people at risk are the thieves themselves who put their own lives on the line when trespassing on the railway."

"Communities can help," said Detective Superintendent Croft. "We need information on who is committing these crimes or dealing in stolen metal."

NEW TILTING WAGONS POINT TO REDUCTIONS IN LENGTHY LINE CLOSURES

A pioneering project to reduce line closures for engineering upgrades by slashing the time it takes to renew a set of points took a significant step forward as Network Rail ordered 26 specialised 'tilting' wagons.

The £10m order with Kirow, a German plant manufacturer, forms part of Network Rail's modular switches and crossings programme which will help engineers renew a set of points in overnight eight-hour possessions, reducing disruption caused to passengers.

Currently, it takes around 54 hours to carry out this work, often requiring weekend line closures.

Doing as much preparatory and construction work away from the railway and keeping line closure times to a minimum lies at the heart of the programme. Points will be fully constructed and tested in factories before being taken to site in modular panels which can be installed quickly. Being factory built will also improve their reliability and durability.

The wagons' ability to tilt their loads means that these panels - normally too wide to fit within the confines of the railway - can be safely transported directly to site. When the wagons arrive, the decks are moved back to a horizontal position for the panels to be unloaded and slotted into place. Network Rail's chief engineer Andrew McNaughton said: "The modular programme is set to deliver big benefits in the way we upgrade the railway, enabling us to do it quicker and more efficiently while improving quality and reliability. Being able to deliver fully-constructed switch-panels directly to site will be a significant step forward towards the seven-day railway for passengers and freight users."

Network Rail expects the first wagons to be fully tested and ready for use by autumn 2009, with the full fleet of 26 vehicles in operation in 2010.



NEWS IN BRIEF

● EWS response to ORR announcement on West Coast Main Line upgrade plan

EWS, Britain's largest rail freight operator and part of the DB Schenker organisation, is disappointed by the decision of the Office of Rail Regulation to approve Network Rail's plans to complete modernisation of the West Coast Main Line by December 2008, rather than May 2009.

EWS will meet the Office of Rail Regulation to gain a full understanding over why this decision made, to ask what will be done to mitigate the impact these closures will have on freight customers and to find out how the ORR will ensure that the outputs from the enhancements meet the future needs of rail freight.

Graham Smith, EWS Planning Director, said: "The West Coast Main Line is crucial for freight customers with 43% of all freight trains operated each day using the route, all integrated into the supply chain of British industry. Whilst the Office of Rail Regulation is conscious of the adverse impact on rail freight their decision will have we need to understand how the ORR will protect freight during the enhancement works. You can't put freight on rail replacement buses."

● FREE SUMMER EVENTS TO KEEP KIDS OFF THE TRACKS

A series of free activity-filled summer events designed to engage young people in new and exciting activities and steer them away from the dangers of the railway, have been announced by Network Rail's No Messin'! Campaign. Thousands of young people in Leeds, Alloa, Southampton, Coventry, Manchester and Weston-super-mare will be able to participate in a wealth of sports, dance and music activities including rock climbing, DJ-ing, professional football coaching, kick boxing, motor biking, a surfing simulator and wrestling. Last year more than 14,000 young people took part in activities across the country.

Dozens of people are killed or seriously injured on the railway every year by mucking about on the tracks. The locations for the 'No Messin' Live! events' have been chosen as they are all hotspots for railway crime

● CHILDREN'S CHARITY GETS THE NETWORK RAIL VOTE

Network Rail has voted in the NSPCC and sister charity in Scotland CHILDREN 1st as its employees' charity of choice for 2008-10. Every two years, the 34,000 employees of the rail infrastructure operator are asked to take part in a phone vote to choose the charity with which they want the company to partner. Network Rail's involvement comprises promoting NSPCC fund raising activities; encouraging its employees to 'get on their bikes' for the 'Big Bike Ride' campaign; raising money through regular local activities organised by around 50 'charity champions' across the UK; office 'dress down' days, and a lump sum donation.

Free rail travel offer from National Express targets air passengers

Air passengers between London and Scotland's two major cities are being targeted in a bold new offer from train operator

National Express East Coast – giving them the chance to try the train instead, for free.

The offer is aimed at any air passenger who flew either way between either Edinburgh or Glasgow and the London airports from 24 March, as well as those who choose to fly on the same routes until 31 May.

In exchange for a valid flight boarding card or airline e-Ticket with the correct travel dates and journey details, National Express East Coast will supply a free First Class return travel voucher, valid for travel until 30 July 2008.

Rachel Dawson, sales and marketing director at National Express East Coast, said: "The recent chaos at Heathrow Airport's

controversial Terminal Five led to dozens of cancelled flights between both Edinburgh and Glasgow airports and London, while awareness of the environmental damage caused by short-haul flights continues to grow.

"In contrast, our train passengers enjoy city centre-to-centre travel in comfort with free wireless internet access throughout, a full restaurant service on many weekday trains, and of course great views along the way, including the Northumberland Coast, Angel of the North and the cathedral cities of Durham and York.

"National Express is taking this positive opportunity to attract more passengers to try our high speed rail services on the East Coast Main Line. We're sure that once air travellers see how much easier, more comfortable and convenient the train is, even more of them will make the switch from the plane to the train".

News of the offer to air passengers is being welcomed as a positive step to reduce the damage to the environment caused by short-haul flights. Paul Tetlaw, Chair of sustainable transport campaign group Transform Scotland, said: "Air travel is the fastest growing source of climate emissions. There are around 100

short-haul flights a day from central Scotland airports to London, and these generate unacceptable levels of pollution.

"If Scotland is to take genuine steps to tackle climate change, then it is imperative that people choose rail over air for trips between central Scotland and London".

Ten thousand free tickets are being made available by National Express East Coast for this offer. To take advantage, passengers travelling between Edinburgh or Glasgow airports and London Heathrow, London Gatwick, London Stansted, London Luton and London City should complete these simple steps:

- Visit a special page on the National Express website at www.nationalexpress.com/whyfly and complete basic details about their journey.
- Print a page from the website as directed and submit it with a valid boarding card/e-Ticket to the address shown
- A free return First Class travel voucher, valid on nominated train services, will be supplied in response to valid applications within fourteen days. Seat reservations are compulsory with this offer and can be made via our Tel-sales line on 0845 46 46 37. Both the travel voucher and seat reservation coupon must be shown together on board trains to form a valid ticket.
- Terms and conditions applying to the offer are displayed on the special page at www.nationalexpress.com/whyfly

Daisy the dog hitches a ride with East Midlands Trains

A little lost dog that had wandered onto East Midlands Trains' mainline route to London had a narrow escape on Monday 14 April.



When East Midlands Trains 18.34 Derby to St. Pancras service arrived at Long Eaton station the driver noticed a small West Highland Terrier was near the line. The dog (later identified as Daisy from Long Eaton) then moved underneath the train. The driver, assisted by train manager James Harvey, managed to coax out and catch the dog. As they did not know where the dog had come from James decided to keep her safe and take her on board the train, bound for London, next stop Loughborough.

At Loughborough, the dog was then passed into the safe care of the station team. They called the police who managed to locate the dog's owners who eventually went to Loughborough to collect their wayward pet. It seems she had escaped unnoticed from their back garden near the train station in Long Eaton.

James Harvey, train manager on the train involved said "As a train company we are always asking people not to trespass onto the line because it's a dangerous place to be, this little dog had a very narrow escape. It's a relief that we managed to catch her safely and I think she enjoyed her trip on a train with us."

Richard Pearson, who is one of the team at Loughborough that looked after Daisy until the arrival of her owners said "She was a very cute and friendly dog, I'm just glad we were able to track down the owners and that she didn't get hurt. She ate a whole tin of dog food that we bought for her and my colleague's dinner of pork chops while she was waiting for her owners, so she didn't seem too distressed by his adventure!"

Pictured above are the team at Loughborough, left to right; Tracey Ingram, Richard Pearson and Julian Patty along with Daisy the dog.

Travel with Wrexham & Shropshire from £22

Wrexham and Shropshire have announced that tickets for its new direct rail service – running from Wrexham, through Shropshire and on to London Marylebone – are now on sale.

Fares start at just £22, providing passengers with great value for money.

Business and leisure travellers can now buy tickets for services starting on Monday 28 April by calling 0845 260 5900.

Whether passengers have a business meeting in London or are off to explore the South Shropshire Hills, there will be a ticket to suit. Both standard and first class seats are available, with advance, off-peak saver and completely flexible options available.

Those wishing to find out more information about Wrexham & Shropshire's services - from fares and timetable information, to attractions along the route and where to get a bite to eat onboard – can now consult the company's re-launched website: www.wrexhamandshropshire.co.uk.

Richard Harper, Commercial Manager at Wrexham & Shropshire said: "We have a wide range of fares to suit all pockets and are confident that we are providing real choice and value for money for passengers. Our re-launched website is easy to navigate and has a wealth of useful information that will give passengers a real flavour of the high quality service that we will be offering them."

From early May, passengers will also be able to use the website to purchase tickets online.

From day one, travellers can take advantage of an innovative 'tckts2txt' buying option. Tickets purchased online via Wrexham & Shropshire's website can be sent direct to a mobile phone by SMS text message. Tickets will also be on sale at stations or on trains.

Wrexham & Shropshire started running five trains a day in each direction between stations from Wrexham, through Shropshire and on to London Marylebone from Monday 28 April.



East Midlands Trains saves the great British breakfast

Train operator East Midlands Trains has pledged its commitment to continue offering First Class passengers using its London service with the hugely popular full cooked British breakfast.

Since it started running trains last November, the company has been preparing a brand new First Class menu and on board catering offer which will be launched next month.

But the first news is that the company is definitely going to continue to offer the great British breakfast. There has been much speculation that East Midlands Trains will no longer be offering breakfast on its services when it launches its new menu.

Jake Kelly, Customer Service Director for the company said "We had looked at a number of options for our breakfast offer. But feedback from passengers told us that although many want to see lighter breakfast options available, a significant number do still love our cooked British breakfast. So we have listened to those customers and decided to keep the full breakfast on our First Class menu.

"The breakfast is cooked fresh, on board by a chef and to enable us to continue to do this we will also be retaining the buffet cars on our high speed train fleet. We are now going to give those buffet cars a bit of a 'makeover' in preparation for the new menu next month. Of course they will be fully refurbished along with the rest of our fleet later in our franchise.

"I believe this shows that we are a train company who are not only committed to providing a fantastic service, we also listen to what customers want and then deliver it. We are launching a completely new First Class menu next month which will offer passengers on our London services a fantastic range of products throughout the day."

The new First Class catering offer will coincide with the May timetable change on 18 May and will be launched at an event early next month, further details will follow.

East Midlands Trains great British breakfast is £15 and is available to First Class passengers on selected trains and subject to availability.

British Transport Police Appeal following damage to Virgin Train at Lancaster

The following Press Release has been issued by British Transport Police:

Issued 11/04/2008 16:00 BTP APPEAL AFTER SEVERAL INCIDENTS ON THE RAILWAY IN LANCASTER

Detectives from British Transport Police (BTP) are appealing for information and warning youths following a number of incidents on the railway in the Lancaster area, including a concrete slab being dropped onto a moving Virgin train.

The incidents have all been reported in the area of Ashton Road in Lancaster during the last eight days.

The first incident occurred at approximately 19.50hrs on Thursday 3 April when the 17.15 Virgin Trains London Euston service to Glasgow was travelling north in the Aston Road area of Lancaster. A reinforced concrete slab was thrown from a footbridge colliding with the top of the train that was travelling at approximately 125 mph.

The object caused extensive damage, which could render the carriage out of service for up to five months, with costs exceeding £100,000.

The next evening, Friday 4 April, the same train was once again targeted when youths dropped another object onto the roof from a footbridge in Ashton Road. Considerable damage was once again caused to the top of the carriage.

On Saturday 5 April officers were again called to the Ashton Road area after corrugated metal sheeting had been thrown on the tracks from the same bridge. Fortunately on this occasion the object was removed from the track before it came into contact with any trains.

There were further reports of youths throwing stones at passing trains on the evenings of Monday 7 April and Tuesday 8 April, 2008.

Detective Inspector Steve Martin of BTP, investigating the incidents, said: "I am appealing to the local community in the Ashton Road area to come forward with information on who is responsible for these serious incidents. Throwing large objects at trains is not only stupid but extremely dangerous. An object this size has the potential to derail a train and these youths are putting everyone on board at risk."

Chris Gibb, Chief Operating Officer for Virgin Trains said: "This was one of the most serious incidents we have had at Virgin Trains and it could have ended in serious injury or even fatality. This was not a prank, but criminal behaviour and we will take tough action against anyone caught."

PHOENIX RISES

National Express East Anglia has named a Class 321 train 'Phoenix' in a special event at the company's Ilford maintenance depot near Seven Kings, Essex. The train was vandalised last July on a journey between Southend Victoria and London Liverpool Street and received considerable fire damage. Now 'Phoenix' is rising from the flames to return to service. The train naming is in recognition of the dedication and skill of the engineering team who have restored the train so it can ride the rails again. In order to return the train to service as soon as possible National Express East Anglia decided to utilise their in-house expertise and re-furbish the train themselves. The fire was so intense that it had melted the aluminium luggage racks and window frames. All of the interior timber and laminate wall panels, bulkheads, ceilings, doors and floors also needed replacing. A small team of four, headed by Bob Buckley - who has over 30 years experience of the railway industry - began the painstaking task of restoring the coach so that it could return to passenger service. In addition the team was aided by contractors Transys Limited who undertook the specialist re-wiring work. In recognition of the team's skill the train is being named 'Phoenix' in a special ceremony at Ilford Depot. John Ratcliffe Engineering Director for National Express East Anglia commented: 'That Phoenix has risen from the flames to ride the rails again is testament to the skill and dedication of our team of engineers and technicians at National Express East Anglia. To return Phoenix to passenger service after the comprehensive damage she sustained at the hands of vandals is indicative of my colleagues' great expertise. To restore Phoenix has been a work of loyalty and devotion.' The National Express East Anglia team have done a superb job. See the refurbished 'Phoenix' back in service between Southend Victoria and London Liverpool Street.

NATIONAL EXPRESS EAST ANGLIA LAUNCHES SAFER TRAVEL SCHEME

National Express East Anglia has introduced a 'Safer Travel' scheme for customers travelling between Colchester, Clacton-on-Sea and Walton-on-the-Naze. The train operator has employed new 'safer travel' officers who will patrol trains between these destinations.

The new team will focus on the enforcement of Railway Byelaws with a view to curbing anti-social behaviour, fare evasion and vandalism, thereby making travelling on the route more pleasant for everyone. The new officers will wear head cams which they can operate when they need to collect evidence, providing footage rather like CCTV coverage. This can then be passed to the National Express East Anglia's prosecution department. The aim of the scheme is to make customers feel more confident and comfortable about travelling on these services, whatever time they travel.

Andrew Goodrum, National Express East Anglia's Mainline Business Director commented

'National Express East Anglia's new 'Safer Travel' team will be a reassuring presence for our customers who travel between Colchester, Clacton-on-Sea and Walton-on-the-Naze. The 'safer travel' scheme demonstrates we have listened to customers' concerns and we're working in partnership to deliver improvements to our train services for the communities we serve.'

The new 'Safer Travel' team will work in partnership with National Express East Anglia's existing Revenue Protection Inspectors and also a new British Transport Police Officer - employed solely for this purpose. Working together this partnership will be able to focus even more closely on safer travel priorities. British Transport Police London North Area Commander, Chief Superintendent Mark Newton, said:

"To the minority of individuals who seek to cause trouble on this section of the railway, the message is quite simple - antisocial behaviour, vandalism, and the abuse of staff or of passengers will not be tolerated."

"We want to help to ensure that passengers travelling on the railway are able to do so in a safe and pleasant way," Chief Supt Newton added. "The Making Travel Safer team has been conceived with precisely this aim in mind."

East Midlands Trains unveils first reliveried HST and names a powercar 'Terry Miller MBE'

Train operator East Midlands held a celebration event in Leeds on the 1st May. At the event the company honoured 'Terry Miller MBE' (see note 1) by naming their first reliveried East Midlands Trains powercar (43048) after him.

Tim Shoveller, Managing Director of East Midlands Trains, hosting the event said "It is with great pride that we honour Terry by naming one of our powercars after him. He is a true giant in the history of the railway and his design has stood the test of time. It quite impressive that we are still talking about him and his work over 30 years later. To get an idea of just what an incredible design Terry gave us, you only have to look at our HST fleet's current performance – operating at a peak of 18,000 miles per five minutes delay. We believe this is the best performance ever for an HST fleet and is comparable with the performance of many more recently designed engines."

The nameplate was unveiled by John Miller, Terry Miller's son. John said "I am so pleased to be here on behalf of my father who would have been very proud today. He toiled very hard over this project and it's great for him to be honoured in this way."

Roger Ford, railway commentator and expert who has long campaigned for Terry to be honoured in this way said "As British Rail's Chief Engineer for Traction & Rolling Stock, Terry led the design team at Derby Railway Technical Centre which produced the High Speed Train, the mainstay of long distance rail travel in the UK for 30 years and destined to stay in front line service for another decade. The HST remains the standard by which other trains are judged and, as East Midlands Trains chart topping reliability figures show, is still getting better. I have long been of the opinion that like the great engineers of steam, Terry Miller should have his name on one of his creations. "His unique train is a combination of vision and caution, Terry under promised and over achieved with this design."

Note:

1) Terry Miller MBE was born in 1909. He served as a premium apprentice under Sir Nigel Gresley at Doncaster with London & North Eastern Railway. He held a number of appointments throughout the country with LNER and British Rail (Eastern Region) which culminated in him being appointed as Chief Engineer (Traction & Rolling Stock) for British Railways Board in 1968 being based in Derby. It was then that he provided the influence and enthusiasm behind the development of the High Speed Train or "Inter-City 125" which revolutionised train travel within the UK in the seventies. This train was developed using existing technology in approximately 18 months and become the mainstay and benchmark for InterCity travel over the next 30 years. The HST is still in frontline service today and is loved by staff and passengers alike. It remains to this day the fastest diesel train in the world and was exported to Australia. Its performance remains comparable to more modern trains. Terry Miller MBE retired in 1973 before his creation entered service and died in 1989.



Photographs all © EMT

Virgin Trains celebrates St George's Day

Virgin Trains has supported Enjoy England's campaign to celebrate St George's Day by inviting customers traveling First Class on the 16:17 service to enjoy a typical English Afternoon Tea with cake and cream-filled scones.

Joining passengers onboard the train and taking Afternoon Tea was Miss England, Georgia Horsley, who earlier in the day had attended a reception at the House of Commons. Hosted by Andrew Rosindell MP for Romford and Chairman of The St George's Day All-Party Parliamentary Group, the event was attended by Miss England along with members of the House of Lords and MPs, to drink from the Loving Cup of England as a sign of peace, friendship and unity in common celebration of all that is good about living in England. The serving of Afternoon Tea by Virgin Trains, on the journey to the immensely proud City of Liverpool, 'European Capital of Culture 2008', represented just one of the traditional activities of England being encouraged as part of the Enjoy England Celebrate St George's Day campaign 2008.

Virgin Trains normally offers afternoon tea in First Class on some of its mid-afternoon trains from London Euston. To celebrate St George's Day, Afternoon Tea was also served on the 16:17 train from London Euston to Liverpool Lime Street.

Virgin Train's Chief Operating Officer, Chris Gibb said, "We are especially proud to be part of the celebrations on St George's Day and are pleased that Miss England has chosen the environmentally friendly way to travel from London to Liverpool.

Miss England met members of the Virgin Trains stations and onboard team at both London Euston and Liverpool Lime Street during her trip, and will travel in the cab of the state-of-the-art lighting Pendolino train on its journey into Liverpool Lime Street station.

Great deals at 100 capital hotspots with London Midland

New train operating company London Midland has struck a deal with some of the capital's top visitor attractions to offer some great value days out for Milton Keynes passengers this Spring. Madame Tussards, ZSL London Zoo, the London Dungeon, London Aquarium and The Tower of London are among the must-see locations that have signed an agreement with London Midland offering two-for-one admission. Also signed up are theatres, museums, restaurants, exhibitions and art galleries.

By combining lower train fares such as the Off Peak Day Travel Card (which includes unlimited tube and bus travel) or a GroupSave discount with some of these two-for-one offers, customers will be able to get excellent value for money throughout their day out in the capital.

Some suggestions for a great trip:

Get closer than ever to the amazing Gorillas and feel the heat of the rainforest at ZSL London Zoo this year for just £17 for two adults.

- Scare the kids while teaching them some fascinating history at the London Dungeon for just £19.95 for two adults.
- Enter the wonderful world of underwater discovery at the London Aquarium for £13.25 for two adults
- Visit the world famous Tower of London, famous as a place of torture for a painfree £16.50 per couple.
- Other venues with huge savings include the Thames Barrier, Tate Modern, various West End shows, the Ideal Home Show and Hampton Court palace.

Alex Hynes, Commercial Director for London Midland, said:

"I'm delighted to be able to offer these great two-for-one discounts to London Midland customers in Milton Keynes. We run regular trains between Milton Keynes station and London and there are some really great value fares for leisure travellers starting at £13.70 for a Cheap Day Return.

"The train journey is comfortable with no traffic jams or parking to worry about and takes just minutes to reach the heart of the city."



Above: Just after the snow at Swindon on 6th April, these hardy lads were fixing a point problem. *Nigel Chalk*

Below: "Look, do we go left or right here" A view of two National Express East Coast train drivers through the window of Class 43 318 HST at Stirling while stopped at the station working the 07.55 1E12 Inverness - London Kings Cross service. *Jonathan McGurk*





Above: "Through the square window." It's early morning, as Class 170 478 is seen reflecting off of the station windows at Stirling station.

Below: A view of commuters at platform 3 of Stirling station about to board Class 170 460 which has just arrived into the station on the 1st April.
Both: Jonathan McGurk





We begin the preserved section this month with a visit to the North Yorks Moors Railway, whose Steam Gala was held over a period of two weekends. The main feature was the retirement of 4771 "Green Arrow" and the coming together of 3 A4's. The weather was, wonderful and sunny on the first weekend and snow showers on the second weekend.

Above: Looking good, and about to enter retirement again, 4771 Green Arrow approaches Goathland. [Class47](#)

Middle: The North Yorks Moors has some fantastic scenery and locations for photographers, our personal favourite is this location not far from Goathland. Here 60019 departs with a service from Grosmont to Pickering. [Andy](#)

Below: Just a bit further up the line, towards Pickering sees 60009, working a service for Grosmont. [Andy](#)





Above: With the station at Goathland in the background, "Sir Nigel Gresley" waits to depart towards Pickering on the North Yorks Moors Railway. As we said, their gala was held over two weekends and compare this shot, taken on the first weekend, with that of the one below. *Andy*

Below: Almost the same shot, but what a difference a week made. Just as the snow starts to fall "Union of South Africa" departs Goathland. *Andy*





The NRM at Shildon had a bit of a gala in April.

Above: There can't be many times a line up like this will happen, Deltic, Pioneer Class 20 D8000, Western D1023, Class 37 003 along with mainline Class 37 038 and Class 60 074.

Middle: NS liveried shunter along with Class 03 090 gave brake van rides.

Bottom: If only we could get this beast back on the main line, Looking good in the sunshine is the Deltic (would that be 55 000 or 55 023???)

All: Andy





Above: On the weekend of the 20th April, the Paignton & Dartmouth Railway held a heritage weekend. This is Lydham Manor descending down towards Paignton over IK Brunel's Hook Hills Viaduct. Liam

Railtour Report: The East Anglian Railtour.



A railtour run by Pathfinder to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the class 40s featuring the Class Forty Preservation Society's 40145.

The tour started out on time from Birmingham New Street, with 40145 heading a rake of ten vehicles, via Camp Hill to join the main line to Bristol, this was followed to Standish Junction where the train turned off to follow the "Golden Valley" through Kemble to Swindon. Here we joined the GWML for a blast up to Reading, at Reading the goods line was taken round the back of the station before another blast to Acton where the tour joined the North London line to get to Stratford. Here 40145 joined the GE mainline to follow the route taken by D200 on her maiden voyage back in 1958. At Ipswich we took the East Suffolk line through Beccles to reach the tours' destination of Lowestoft.



The return route was via Reedham and the "Wensum curve" at Norwich before heading to Ely and Peterborough then via Melton Mowbray and Loughborough before heading to Burton-on-Trent and Whitacre Junction and on to Birmingham New Street. The original plan was for 40145 to come off the train here but Network Rail have now decided that locomotive changes cannot take place at New Street any more so 40145 worked forward to Worcester Shrub Hill where it was replaced by a class 66 and ran light back to Bescot. No problems were encountered during the day and everyone on board appeared to have a good time.

40145 Works main line freight!

On Tuesday 15th April 40145 was running as OZ40 from Bescot to Fletton for the Nene Valley Railway's Class 40 event when it was called on to assist 6M61 0336 Humber to Bedsworth tanks which had been routed the wrong way at Nuneaton, 40145 was called on to drag the train back to Abbey Junction, as distance of about one and a quarter miles up a rising gradient with 1673t in tow. After the drag back 40145 was detached and continued to Fletton.

40145 is seen near Manton Junction, on April 22nd.
40145 'East Lancashire Railway' was running light engine, as OZ40 back to the East Lancs. Railway after appearing at the Nene Valley Railways Class 40 Gala over the weekend.

Steve Madden



Above: Also in action on the Paignton and Dartmouth weekend was D7535, seen here tackling the steeply graded Goodrington bank with the 1245 to Kingswear. [Liam](#)

Below: One week later and on the 26th April the South Devon Railway had it's Diesel Gala. Advenza's Class 33 202 powers up near Hood Bridge with a delayed service for Buckfastleigh. [Liam](#)





Above: Also in action at the South Devon Railway's Diesel Gala in April was their Bubble Car seen here at Dock Siding, Staverton. Liam

Below: The Llangollen Diesel Gala saw use of Class 20 D8142, Class 25 313 and Class 37's 240 and 901, all pictured in and around Carrog. All: Dave Harris



C58LG

CLASS 58
LOCOMOTIVE
GROUP

The Class 58 Locomotive Group was formed in 2001 with the aim of one day preserving at least one of these fine machines. As this day draws ever nearer, we invite YOU to join us. Membership costs just £10 per year and in return, you will receive quarterly copies of our in-house magazine *Red Diamond* as well as invitations to Group activities. Thank you for your support!



For more information on the Class 58 Locomotive Group, please write to: C58LG, 107 Woolaston Avenue, Cardiff, CF23 6EW, e-mail c58lg@c58lg.co.uk or visit our website at www.c58lg.co.uk where an online membership application form can be found.



Left: The Battlefield Line has a new resident this year. Slug 5 once destined for the chop, has been saved and is now based here.

Unfortunately, the Class 37 had a few problems on the first working of the day, but did put in a super performance once they had been sorted out.

This picture was taken at the gala on the 19th April, just after the Slug had expired and the dog is clearly not happy at being deprived of thrash. Andy



The GWR's very own Paul Fuller took the four pictures below, all from the recent Diesel Gala over the weekend 4th to 6th April. The weather was very mixed, but the with the addition of snow on the Sunday!

We are grateful for Paul allowing us to use these pictures and we hope that you will all support their gala in July.

All: Paul Fuller



The GWR's Summer Diesel Gala

Friday July 4th to Sunday July 6th 2008

After a very successful start to the season with the Spring diesel gala which was held over the weekend of April 4th to 6th, the GWR are preparing for their "summer spectacular"!

The three-day event runs from Friday 4th to Sunday 6th July and will see the usual intensive service of passenger trains between Toddington and Cheltenham Racecourse stations as well as a 'local' shuttle to Winchcombe resulting in quite literally hundreds of miles of haulage to 'be had' at the friendly line in the Cotswolds! In addition, a demonstration freight train will run between Toddington and Winchcombe and may make the occasional foray to Cheltenham as well!

The line-up of locomotives that will work will hopefully see almost the railway's entire mainline diesel fleet in service, comprised of: Class 20 D8137, Class 24 24081, two Class 37s: 37215 and 37324, Class 47 47105 and Network SouthEast liveried electro-diesel 73129 which is normally reserved for permanent way department duties. It is unfortunate that the Brush Type Four Fund's other Class 47, 47376, is unavailable for traffic at this gala, and indeed for the remainder of 2008.

This is because the owning group are taking the wise precaution to change the remaining cylinder liners on the Sulzer 12LDA engine before allowing the locomotive to run again.

In addition, the GWR are pleased to announce that the visiting loco for the Summer Gala is Class 31, 5580 (31162 under the TOPS renumbering scheme). It has been a number of years since a '31' appeared on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway and the visitor is eagerly awaited!

On the Sunday of the event, a bus rally will be incorporated into the gala where it is hoped Toddington will play host to a variety of heritage (and not so heritage) buses and coaches. It is anticipated that there will be FREE bus rides from Toddington northwards towards Broadway and from Cheltenham Racecourse to Cheltenham Spa stations

A working timetable and locomotive roster for the gala will be available shortly from the GWR's website which can be found at www.gwsr.com and a copy will also be available on the day.

Further information on the bus rally will also be available from the website shortly.

**SUMMER
DIESEL
GALA!**

Friday 4 to Sunday 6 July

**Gloucestershire
Warwickshire
Railway**

Featuring D8137, 24081,
37215, 37324, 47105,
73129 and VISITING
Class 31, 5580!

All locos subject to availability!



**High mileage available with trips to Cheltenham
as well as shuttles to Winchcombe!**

Timetable and loco roster available shortly from the GWR website.

Includes a bus rally on the Sunday! Many vehicles on display and FREE trips from Cheltenham Racecourse and Toddington stations!

The Railway Station • Toddington • Glos • GL54 5DT

**15 mins from
M5 Junction 9**

**Tel 01242 621405
www.gwsr.com**





*Above: Working a short freight through along the Gloucester and Warwickshire Railway is Class 24 081. Photographed at Winchcombe.
Jon Jebb*



*Middle: Triple power for the Battlefield Line Gala in the shape of Class 73 114, 04 110 and 03 170. The shunters were worked hard during the day.
Andy*

*Below: Clag, clag, and more Clag, from this pair of Class 31's at the Battlefield Line in April. (Well they were pulling a dead Slug as well as a fully loaded train!)
Peter Cheshire*





Above: Under a very dark sky Class 37 314 runs round its train at Leicester North, during the Great Central's Diesel Gala held in April. *Richard Hargreaves*
 Left: Arriving at the line during April, after the Gala, was Class 37 198, for storage. *David Dawson*



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

DRS Visits the GCR

On the weekend of 26th/27th April, DRS's Class 37610 was in action at 12.15 and 2.15 departing from Loughborough. (The loco was be paired with green liveried class 25 to act as a translator for the brakes.) On Saturday only there was a special 5.15 train hauled by the 37.

The engine is on a very short visit having taken part in a remembrance charter. We understand passenger mileage in its current livery / ownership is quite rare.

Latest News on Oliver Cromwell

I'm delighted to advise that Oliver Cromwell will make a debut on GCR passenger services in early May. Full details and times/fares will be added to the GCR website as soon as we can confirm the exact date.

This information is provided in good faith - in the event of any last minute hitches, we will of course update the website, and let you know. Do check with us before setting out to visit...

However a formal launch for the loco has been penciled in for Saturday 10th of May. After steaming at Loughborough, Oliver Cromwell will be heading to the National Railway Museum to appear at a special '1968' show, featuring other steam survivors, before returning to Loughborough in June. In mid August, exactly 40 years after the end of steam on the national network it will haul a recreation of the 15 guinea special. More details soon.....

Right: DRS's Class 37 610 at the GCR. *John Coleman*





A selection of shots from the Great Central's Diesel Gala, held in April. Many thanks to all who have sent in Photos from this and all the Gala's this month. These pics are all from Jon Jebb except Above: Richard Hargreaves





The Severn Valley Railway held it's Deisel Gala in April this year, previously this was held in the Autumn. The railway is now running a full service once again, following the disasterous floods last year, that did so much damage.

Left: One of the stars of the weekend was D444 in unique two-tone green livery.

Above: The other star of the weekend had to be visiting loco, Class 37 901.

Below Left: One of the two Class 73's based at the SVR, approaches Bewdley.

Below Right: Working a train into Bridgenorth is "Western" D1013.

Bottom: Class 50 action as 50035 and D444 pass. All: [Richard Hargreaves](#)





Above: In the beautiful town of Schwarzach-St. Viet, in Austria, stands this steam loco. Well kept and looking great, one wonders what would happen if we put a loco in such an exposed position in any UK town. Andy

Below: Zell am See sees both mainline rail services and also has a narrow gauge railway. This is OBB 5090 Class, seen at the small depot a short walk from the main station and well worth a visit. Andy





Left: The Class 151's of the German DB railways are well travelled in their life. Personally, they look awful and never seem to be in good exterior condition. However they do seem to keep going, and as this example shows, with its faded Railion branding, they are still trusted to front line freight service and regularly cross into neighbouring countries. Class47

Below: After last months shot from the top of a mountain, in Spain, this month we go up the hills of Salzburg in Austria for a view of a Class 4024 unit crossing the river. Salzburg Hauptbahnhof is just out of sight on the right. These units are built by Siemens and have been introduced over the last few years on a wide range of services. Class47





Above: Eastern Region Suburban 2 car d.m.u.'s operated the Metropolitan Avoiding Lines when steam traction was abolished on services to and from Moorgate. On 8th November 1969, two units are seen here at Barbican on a Hertford North service. Today the line is overhead and served by First Capital Connect services. David Mead

Below: On 30th June 1984, Class 45 033 heads the 15.04 Paignton - Nottingham service through Dawlish Warren with at least one passenger letting us know he was enjoying the experience! !. David Mead





Above: Class 76 021 and 76 013 at Manchester Piccadilly. This was quite an occasion, as the through passenger trains had been withdrawn as long ago as 1970 but 25kv trains remained on the line as freights but of course rarely did the EMI's come into Manchester Piccadilly station after 1970 . This photo was taken on Saturday 16th September 1978, nearly 30 years ago. David Mead

Below: In 1978 there were no Class 323's, this is Hadfield Electric - M59407M arriving at Manchester Piccadilly. One of the 3-car Open Sets operated on 1500 Volts D.C. ! . David Mead





Above: In 1984, electrification of the East Coast Main Line from London Kings Cross to Edinburgh had been announced and by 1991, the whole route had been electrified with overhead making looking down photography very difficult through the catenaries and poles etc. However, on 28th July 1984, Doncaster was a wire free area and here I took an uninterrupted view of a southbound H.S.T. departing Doncaster. David Mead

Below: Class 56 052 is pictured at a wet and soggy Margam during a visit in 1986. Peter Cheshire





Above: . Recently it has been announced that in order to accommodate larger container trains, various bridges and tunnels will have to be widened. In 1984, Southampton Tunnel was re-lined and the damp-course removed which caused approx. 6 weeks of disruption. The current plans for the infrastructure work on the bridges and tunnels from Southampton Container Port to the Midlands could take years! Here an archive shot of the western portal of Southampton Tunnel on 8th September 1984 during the engineering work. The track bed will have to be lowered through the tunnel in order to accommodate the new size containers which will obviously require several days of closure!. *David Mead*

Below: Class 45, D22 on 09.40 (SO) Glasgow Central - Leeds City passing Kirkby Stephen West on 4 Aug 1973. *David Mead*



Class 158 721 was the unit that made history on the 2nd April, being the first ever unit to travel on the Stirling to Alloa line for driver route learning purposes. The train was running late from Stirling because of briefing but eventually the train ran. This service in the picture was the 10.40 2Z01 Stirling - Alloa train and it is seen crossing the points coming into Alloa Station as viewed from the footbridge. Jonathan McGurk

