

Railtalk **Magazine**

Issue 31
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Double Duff - Colas style

Welcome



West Midlands Chopper action as 6Z37, headed by Class 20 901 and 20 905, hauls Class 37's 412, 672 and 029 from Barrow Hill to Long Marston on 20th March. [Pete Cheshire](#)

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Front Cover

Colas liveried Class 47 739 and 47 727 work 6Z48 Burton - Dollands Moor passed Elford on 19th March. [Carl Grocott](#)

Submissions

If you have ever wanted to submit pictures to a magazine, here is your chance.
Send us your news and pictures to email:

entries@railtalk.net

When do we publish ?

Railtalk Magazine is published on weekend closest to the end of each month.

More information can be found by visiting Railtalk forums.
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From The Editor

Welcome to issue 31 of Railtalk Magazine, to start with I would like to thank everyone that has contributed in any way to this issue, and for their support.

This is the first time that I've started an editorial, with a subject that has occurred at the end of the month. The excellent Mid Norfolk Railway gala, unfortunately I was unable to attend the event, but the feedback that I have received was outstanding. The event was a great success, surpassing all expectations, and with some excellent visiting locos from DB Schenker the attendance at the event was massive!

Hopefully the rumours are true about 37 425 and that it will return to work on the mainline. Hopefully it will as is the only Class 37 to be worth any effort, apart from 37 429 of course (in my opinion).

Also this month I've seen excellent picture from the Great Central Railway, from their excellent and well attended again, 1960's gala. Both galas have looked excellent and its just a shame that this month I've not be able to appreciate them due to been virtually bed bound with Tonsillitis.

Hopefully next month I can get out and about again, and with the excellent weather that we have been having over the past few weeks, some great pictures can be taken.

Now to something that bugs me... Mainstream media that get things so wrong. It always bugs me when you read in the local paper, and read articles from their so called "Railway Reporters". They seem to get things totally wrong, and this month is no exception with National Express taking the blame for something that was nothing to do with them, and actually a First Capital Connect problem/issue. I know that we are all human, but do the outside media really just look for a story and just think of the nearest train operator they can find.

If your not sure what i mean look at the article on page 40 of the magazine.

Thats all from me for now, back to bed and rest, I hope that you all enjoy the magazine this month, and I look forward to getting out and seeing you all soon.

Andy Patten

This issue wouldn't be possible without:

Richard Hargreaves, Ian Furness, Carl Grocott, Dave Dawson, Jonathan McGurk, Dave Harris, Mike Byrne, Derek Elston, Pete Cheshire, David Mead, Brian Battersby, Steve Madden, Andrew Flusk, Steve Andrews, Gary S. Smith, John Coleman, David Hollowood, Yorkie, Julian Churchill, Jonathan Gill, Julian G, Craig Stretten, James Stoker, Steve Thompson, Sean Quinn, Richard Jones, Daniel Stanbridge, Michael J Alderdice, George McFarlane, Phil Cherry, Alan Usher, Petr Lux, Dvorak Jan, Pavel Martoch, Zdeněk, Scott Turner, Mike Sheridan and a big thanks to the Rail UK team for assisting in proof reading.

Charter Scene

charter.scene@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

This months round up of the British charter scene

The aim of Charter Scene is to detail the monthly British charter scene, whether it be in the medium of pictures, reviews of railtours or of future notice of tours that are scheduled to take place. To contact us, please use the usual address to submit your railtour reviews, pictures and information of future tours. When submitting photos it would be appreciated if you could provide the location of the photos, the working and any relevant information regarding the charter in question.

charter.scene@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

March has been a month of steam tours, at least it seems to be that way, with the amount of steam photos that we've received. Tornado continues to grab the headlines wherever it goes, but we start this months choice with "Sir Nigel Gresley" arriving at Lincoln.

We hope that you will like our selection of shots this month.



60007 'Sir Nigel Gresley' arrives at Lincoln Central on 14th March, with the 'Seven Valley Limited' railtour, It was running 84 minutes late at this point. [Steve Madden](#)



60007, "the kettle version" passes Lea Marston pond working 1Z67 "Severn Valley Limited" Bridgnorth to Lincoln on 14th March. [Carl Grocott](#)



Above: 60007 "Sir Nigel Gresley" also worked a charter on the 28th February, this time for Vintage Trains, from York to Birmingham. Under a very dark sky the loco is seen at York prior to departure.

Sean Quinn

Top Left: 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" climbs the steeply graded Folkestone Harbour Branch with what is likely to be the last steam hauled train to visit the line, 14th March.

Craig Stretten



Bottom Left: Unrebuilt Battle of Britain Class No 34067 Tangmere passes Wandsworth Town working The Railway Touring Company's "The South Western Express" railtour from Portsmouth Harbour to London Waterloo on 21st February.

Craig Stretten



Rebuilt Merchant Navy class No 35028 Clan Line passes Selhurst with a VSOE for London Victoria on 21st February. [Craig Stretten](#)



Top Left: Tornado is seen at York on the 7th March after arriving from Edinburgh with “The North Briton”.

Andy

Above: Prior to working “The North Briton”, train from Edinburgh, Tornado is seen passing through Cowdenbeath.

Richard Jones

Left: Unrebuilt Battle of Britain Class 34067 ‘Tangmere’ is seen at Stafford on 5th March, whilst working 5Z27 Southall - Carnforth empty stock move.

Carl Grocott



Left: Class 37 706 thunders south on the 5247 Carnforth to Southall empty coaching stock turn. [Pete Cheshire](#)

Above: Class 37 676 and 37 706 pause at York with the return of Spitfire's Celtic Growler railtour, 7th March. [Andy](#)

Below: Class 47 760 and 37 676 are seen working 5283 Barnetby - Carnforth, through Scunthorpe on Sunday 1st March. [Steve Thompson](#)





Left: Preserved Hastings Unit No. 1001 stands at Salisbury prior to working the return working of The Wiltshire Warrior Railtour from Salisbury to Hastings via Havant, Guildford, Redhill and Tonbridge on 21st March.

Daniel Stanbridge

Below: 34067 "Tangmere" stands at London Paddington shortly after arriving with The Somerset Explorer Railtour from Yeovil Junction on 14th February.

Daniel Stanbridge

Bottom Right: Class 67 001 powers around the bend at Long Gardens, Dorrinton, with the return 1268 Shrewsbury - Swansea Northern Belle, 1st March.

Dave Dawson





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Above: Class 67 008 rounds the curve at Earlestown working the Northern Belle's Mothers Day Special, 22nd March, from Crewe to Liverpool.
Class 67 021 was on the rear.

Dave Harris



Retro Rail ad designed by the Rail Express team.



Above: 70013 "OLIVER CROMWELL" is seen storming Gamston Bank, having stopped for water at Retford, working 1278 Cleethorpes - Kings Cross.

Steve Thompson

Below: A royal return for Class 47 798, the NRM loco has returned to traffic with West Coast Railways and one of its first outings was on 1247 Preston - Whitby, seen here passing through Thornaby, 7th March. *James Stoker*



Above: 70013 "OLIVER CROMWELL" is seen waiting to leave Scunthorpe, on 1278 Cleethorpes - Kings Cross, the first "Britannia" to work here for over 45 years.

Steve Thompson

Below: Class 47 787 is seen on the rear of the 1247 Preston - Whitby charter with the roof just visible of 47 798 leading. *James Stoker*



NXEC 10% off is back

I reported back in February that National Express East Coast (NXEC) abolished their 10% discount for tickets bought through their website. Well good news – it's back! But there is a catch – first class fares and travel at certain times is excluded.

Despite sending emails out to customers advertising Leeds to London at £37.50 first class including 10% discount, when a customer tried to book the price was £42.00 and no discount was available. This was reported to National Express but, at the time of writing there was no response.

FCC evening peak restrictions

A passenger who frequently requires a single from London to Luton on First Capital Connect (FCC) during the evening peak informed us that she was told by some ticket clerks that Off Peak single tickets are "not valid" for travel at this time and she should "purchase an Anytime single".

In fact, it is only the return portion of Off Peak Day returns that are not valid out of London in the evening peak. Outward portions of Off Peak Day returns, and Off Peak singles are valid departing London throughout the evening peak.

Instead of looking up the restrictions, some ticket clerks are making (incorrect) assumptions that singles and outward

portions of returns have the same validity of the more familiar return portions. It is likely that many people have been charged incorrectly, and many of those people won't have questioned it.

It is worth pointing out that NXEC, who do not allow the outward portion of Off Peak Day, or Off Peak single tickets to be used in the evening peak out of London on the flows that they set, have to accept such tickets on their 18:20 service from London to Stevenage as these fares are set by FCC, not NXEC.

Meanwhile, unlike FCC, NXEC do allow return portions of Off Peak returns to be used in the evening peak. Confused?

Here's a table that lists validity on the 18:20 NXEC service from King's Cross:

| Destination | Ticket type (portion) | Validity |
|--------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Stevenage | Off Peak Day (Out/Sgl) | Valid |
| Peterborough | Off Peak Day (Out/Sgl) | Not Valid |
| Stevenage | Off Peak Day (Rtn) | Not Valid |
| Peterborough | Off Peak Day (Rtn) | Not Valid |
| Stevenage | Off Peak (Rtn) | Not Valid |
| Peterborough | Off Peak (Rtn) | Valid |
| Stevenage | Off Peak (Out/Sgl) | Not Valid |
| Peterborough | Off Peak (Out/Sgl) | Not Valid |

In summary, all Off Peak tickets are barred on this service except Off Peak Day (single or outward portions) to Stevenage (but not other destinations), and Off Peak (return portions) to Peterborough and beyond (but not Stevenage).

Do the conductors actually know all these restrictions? I doubt it. But I'm pretty sure that, with a well loaded train and such

complicated restrictions to check in 19 minutes (including time to make the announcements), they won't have time to issue many excess fares anyway.

Breaking Off Peak outward journeys

Before "simplification" an absurd condition of Saver tickets prevented passengers breaking their journey on the outward portion. We were initially promised that simplification would do away with this rule and we would be able to break our journey on either portion, however this was broken as it became a case of "Break of journey is permitted on both outward and return portions of Off-Peak tickets unless otherwise indicated by a restriction shown against the ticket's validity code." Simple, eh?

Initially NXEC were the only company to impose this pointlessly draconian – and virtually impossible to enforce anyway – rule, however since the most recent fares change last December, Virgin have also decided to restrict break of journey.

This means that tickets such as London to Carlisle were valid for break of journey on the outward portion for just a few months.

It is worth noting that break of journey is only prohibited on tickets where Virgin and NXEC set the flow (I'm not aware of any other operator imposing such a restriction), however it appears that some flows have been omitted, for example an East Croydon to Gretna Green ticket allows break of journey (except from King's Cross).

At £90.20, this is cheaper than a London

to Carlisle ticket (£92.30) which does not allow a break of journey! The East Croydon to Gretna ticket gives the added bonus of a cross-London transfer in each direction!

It's also well worth remembering that using station facilities does not constitute a break of journey, so barrier staff are not within their rights to refuse you through the barrier to use station facilities, including shops, toilets, the ticket office, and any other facility.

You only break your journey when you leave station premises (except to walk between stations such as Moor Street to New Street in Birmingham). So unless the barrier staff stalk you, they really can't tell if you are breaking your journey or not.

Ticket advice for all

Advice on rail ticketing is available on railforums.co.uk in the 'Fares, Tickets & Routeing' section. We believe this to be the best source of UK rail fares advice available anywhere, as we have a team of people who are familiar with the complex rail fares system who can help you.

Never pay over the odds again, and ask us if you need help! See you there.

If anyone would like to ask fares advice, Yorkie and the team can be found at:

www.railforums.co.uk

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I have just one thought for the readers to ponder.
Why can't we have bins for litter on ALL stations.

It can't be for security anymore, as the terror suspects are now ourselves.
It can't be on a security reason, otherwise, airports and main railway stations in London would also ban them.

I took a picture of a litter bin when I was in London. What possible harm can this do, and it would smarted up some of the dirty stations that are on my line. (Possibly!)



I think that the main reason for not having them anymore is a lack of care and pride in the station where they work, otherwise station staff would want to keep their station tidy.

I do hope that someone will take note and bring back the bins and

CLEAN OUR STATIONS UP.

Regards
Len Reed

Have YOU got something to say
or discuss?

If so email the editor or any of the
contacts on page 2 of this magazine.

Alternatively post your comments on our
forum

<http://www.railtalk.net/forums>

The Wessexman - Saturday 23rd May 2009 Crewe to Eastleigh, Bournemouth and Weymouth With 2 x DRS class 37 locomotives

Also picking up at Stafford, Wolverhampton, Birmingham New Street, Leamington Spa and Banbury



Fares - Standard Class £55 (adult) £27.50 (child) 1st Class £75 (adult) £49 (child)
Fares booked a minimum of 4 weeks in advance - Standard Class £49 (adult) £25 (child) 1st Class £69.50 (adult) £45 (child)
Fares including Eastleigh 100 Works entry - Standard Class £55 (adult) £30 (child) 1st Class £75 (adult) £50 (child)
Regretably we cannot accept bookings to include the Eastleigh 100 works entry after 24th April 2009
All profits from this tour will be donated to the Eastleigh 100 works chosen charities



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Gourock Station



A view of the waiting area looking out onto the platforms at Gourock station. The station is going to be refurbished with work starting in March next year (2010).



A view of the waiting area at Gourock station.

Partick Station



A photograph looking over to platform 1 at Partick station of one of the two workers at Partick station putting the new Transport Scotland blue and white Saltire station signs on the lampposts and throughout the rest of the station. The station. From today, 17th March, the station is now in full Transport Scotland blue and white Saltire branding.



A photograph of inside Partick station showing the station concourse and the station cafeteria being worked on which will be open in time for the station's official opening which is meant to be on Tuesday 31st March 2009.



A view of the ticket office for the both First ScotRail and the Glasgow Subway and a view of the station concourse and the modern and smart staircase that takes you up and down to and from platform 1 and the waiting area for the platform.



On 17th March, Class 37 069 and 612 are seen at Platform 8, Glasgow Central High Level station getting prepared to work the 13.44 1Q19 Glasgow Central High Level - Mossend via Newton, Queens Park, Glasgow Central High Level, Corkerhill, Hamilton and Motherwell Network Rail Mentor Test Train.



Class 320 307 is seen sitting outside in the yard at Shields T.M.D. having just come out from Glasgow Works, Springburn after going through a C4 overhaul. The unit had just been brought back from Glasgow Works some 3 hours later than planned running as 5D02 by Class 57 307 which is seen sitting next to the unit.



Class 170 402 is seen passing Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh while working the 11.15 1R42 Glasgow Queen Street High Level - Edinburgh Waverley service, 6th March.

Telford Railfreight Terminal

DB Schenker, operated on Monday 23 March 2009 the first freight train to Donnington (Telford) for the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in nearly 20 years.

The train formed part of the rail freight service provision contract the MoD has with DB Schenker. The train transported containers from Marchwood Military Port and Bicester to the newly re-opened rail freight terminal at Donnington, removing lorries from the road network and re-establishing a permanent link to the rest of the rail network. DB Schenker supplies locomotives to pull the MoD's own fleet of railway wagons, as well as providing specialist services utilising the DB Schenker wagon fleet as required. In an average year the MoD utilises around 8,000 wagon movements on Britain's rail network.

Below: Class 60 040 is seen at the Donnington RFT with an Army Gazelle helicopter hovering overhead. [Carl Grocott](#)



Below: Class 60 040 is seen passing through Wellington with the working to the terminal. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Below: Ready to depart, the loaded train passes Trench with the return working. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Below: The loco and train are seen passing Atcham with the return loaded working. [Jon Jebb](#)



Pictures



Hanson Class 56 312 works the 6Z57 Boston - Washwood Heath passed Wychnor Jct. on 19th March.

A tester here, can anyone spot the other loco in the picture?? [Carl Grocott](#)



Top: Class 60 044 has left the goods loop near Elford and now approaches Portway, north of Tamworth with the 6M57 Lindsey - Kingsbury on 21st February.
Gary S. Smith

Right: A rather white Class 60 018 is pictured working 6H72 Bletchley to Peak Forest passing through Bedford Yard on 19th March.
Steve Madden





DRS Triple Bill

Top Left: Class 66 414 is seen paused at Carlisle Citadel Station around 0200 hrs on 20th March. chael J Alderdice
Michael J. Alderdice

Top Right: Malcolm liveried Class 66 412 passes through Stafford on 20th March with a Northbound working. *Richard Hargreaves*

Right: Another shot of Eddies brother, as DRS Class 66 414 "James the Engine" heads through Winwick Jct. with the 4S44 Intermodel service to Coatbridge on 18th March. *Dave Harris*





Above: Class 66 157 working 6M86 Immingham to Bescot, snakes through the point work at Pelham Street Junction, Lincoln on 10th March.

Steve Madden

Top Right: Class 66 177 works 6K05 Carlisle to Crewe through Hoghton on 23rd March. As a trial, this loco has had the cab roofs painted silver to reflect the sun. *David Hollowood*

Bottom Right: Class 92 007 is seen hauling coach Mk2 coach M6046 on a Wembley - Crewe Electric Depot move, 21st March. *Class47*





Above: Class 31 601 is seen at Glasgow Queen Street High Level station while working the 18.52 1Q06 Millerhill - Mossend Yard via Edinburgh Waverley, Carstairs and Glasgow Queen Street High Level Network Rail Structure Gauging train, 9th March.

Jonathan McGurk

Right: Class 37 069 is seen at Gourock station while working the 08.45 1Q18 Mossend - Mossend via Newton, Glasgow Central High Level twice, Gourock, Wemyss Bay and Lanark Network Rail Mentor Test Train. Class 334 036 was also seen at the station getting prepared to work the 11.36 2G36 Gourock - Glasgow Central High Level service, 18th March.

Jonathan McGurk



Left: Network Rail's Class 97 303 and 97 301 are seen passing through Cosford on 23rd March.

Jon Jebb

Bottom Left: On a dark morning of 18th February, Class 31 285 propels a 1Z12 Machynlleth - Machynlleth test train away from All Stretton back towards Shrewsbury.

Gary S. Smith

Below: A side view of Class 31 602 which is seen at Glasgow Queen Street High Level waiting to head to Mossend where the train will stable for the night.

Jonathan McGurk







Above: Class 66 067 (the loco in the recent Scottish tanks fire) works 6K05 Carlisle to Crewe Basford Hall with load 25, seen climbing the bank to Hoghton on 11th March. [David Hollowood](#)

Top Right: Winter must be over, as Class 37 603 hauls Network Rail's Class 86 901 and 902 back from East Coast Ice Breaker duties, on an 0Z86 York to Crewe working. [Pete Cheshire](#)

Bottom Right: On 6th March, Class 73 136 is seen near Horsted Keynes working spoil removal trains from the in-filled cutting at Imberhorne Lane, which is currently blocking the way of the Bluebell Railway's northerly extension to East Grinstead. [Craig Stretten](#)



Above: Still carrying a Mainline transfer on one side, Class 60 011 passes through Severn Tunnel Jct. station with a late running 6B35 Hayes to Moreton on Lugg empty hopper train on 2nd March. [Gary S. Smith](#)

Below: First Great Western Class 142 001 is seen coming into stop just outside Springburn station in order to turn around and head into Glasgow Works. The unit was working the 07.35 5Z56 Crewe Basford Hall - Glasgow Works, 12th March.

[Jonathan McGurk](#)



Above: 2nd March saw a 2Q09 Doncaster - Scunthorpe - Doncaster working, featuring QXA DB 999508 being top & tailed by Class 37 609 & 37 605.

This is 37 609 leading at Keadby Canal Jcn. [Steve Thompson](#)

Below: Taken in a rain shower on 10th March, Class 66 730 hauls Class 377 501 to Derby Litchurch Lane, seen here passing through Bedford Station. [Steve Madden](#)





Left: Pendolino 390 051 is seen working 1M11 Glasgow Central to Lockerbie service approaching Camps Viaduct after being diverted via the Hamilton Circle after an emergency engineering possession at Uddingston. [George McFarlane](#)

Bottom Left: Class 318 257 is seen departing Paisley Gilmour Street station while working the 16.06 2G62 Gourock - Glasgow Central High Level service on 19th March.

[Jonathan McGurk](#)

Below: Class 158 869 still in Alphaline livery with First ScotRail vinyls applied to the bodyside is seen emerging from the tunnel coming into Edinburgh Waverley station while working the 15.07 2G33 Newcraighall - Cowdenbeath service on 6th March. [Jonathan McGurk](#)





Top Left: Class 47 501 is seen outside Ashford, Kent, working 6Z01 Romford - Ashford CS Stoneblower drag, 20th March.

Craig Stretten

Above: Class 37 607 leads 37 688 past Swamp Crossing, near Lydd in Kent, working 6M95 Dungeness - Willeden Brent flasks, 18th March.

Craig Stretten

Left: Looking like a model train set, if only all the loco's in this picture were still in service. At the beginning of March a solitary Class 66 100 rests between duties at Healey Mills.

David Hollowood



Above: Class 73 208, 73 141, 732 06, 73 207 (behind 73 206), 73 205, 73 209 and Class 66 706 are all seen stabled outside St Leonards Depot, near Hastings on 16th March.

Daniel Stanbridge

Top Right: Troublesome unit Class 377 501 is seen at Blackfriars on 9th March. The unit was en-route to Selhurst depot to be prepared for a return to Derby for checks and repairs. *John Coleman*

Bottom Right: Class 456 006 in advertising livery is seen departing London Bridge station on 3rd March. *Richard Hargreaves*



With the withdrawal of the Fastline Intermodal service, heres a last look at Class 56 303 passing Water Orton on Friday 6th March. It was working a lightly loaded 4M60 Grain to Doncaster. The future of the Class 56's is currently uncertain. [Julian Churchill](#)



Above: Merseyrail Class 508 123 passes Hooton in the spring sunshine working a Liverpool - Chester service on 15th March. *Brian Battersby*

Top Right: On 9th March, Class 59 002 passes through Kensington Olympia working 6Y60 Hither Green to Whatley empty stone train. *John Coleman*

Right: These units do look nice, Javelin Class 395 005 passes Sevington, near Ashford in Kent, working a Folkestone East Sidings - St Pancras International test run on 20th March. *Craig Stretten*



Above: Thameslink liveried Class 319 382 is seen departing London Bridge station on 3rd March with a service from Bedford.

Richard Hargreaves

Top Right and Right: Not very often we get to see the South West Trains liveried Bubble Car out and about.

Here are two pics of the unit at Wareham station and Creech Bottom on the Swanage branch line working 5Z60 Bournemouth Depot - Swanage on 21st March.

Julian Churchill





Above: At West Brompton we see a hire-in London Midland Desiro Class 350 118 with a Southern service to Milton Keynes Central. On the right we see Southern Electrostar Class 377 133 with a Shepherd's Bush-Clapham Junction shuttle. [JulianG](#)



Left: This shot was taken at Finedon, (between Kettering and Wellingborough) on 21st March. 43083 is leading a Nottingham to St Pancras International service. [Steve Madden](#)



Right: Fastline Class 66 305 working 6236 Immingham - Ratcliffe Power Station at New Barnetby on 17th March. [Steve Madden](#)



Above: Kensington Olympia on 9th March as Class 59 204 Pilots Class 60's, 60 049 and 60 011 as OV61 Hither Green to Acton Yard.

John Coleman



Top Right: Refurbished Class 158 733 is seen at Edinburgh Waverley station waiting to work the 16.04 2P33 Edinburgh Waverley - Dunblane service. Notice the new headlights which was part of the refurbishment programme that most of the First SctoRail Class 158 DMU fleet have had.

Jonathan McGurk

Right: Grand Central's 43123 with 43067 on 1N25 08:04 Kings Cross – Sunderland pass through Stockton upon Tees on 10th March.

Michael J. Alderdice





Above: DRS Class 66 429 passes through sunny Stafford on 20th March with the southbound Malcolm service.

Richard Hargreaves

Top Left: Class 56 311 passes Lower Basildon on the Great Western Main Line with 6Z56, a Rugby to West Ealing move on 2nd March.

Nick Townsend

Bottom Left: GBRf Class 66 717 is seen working 6Z51 Butterwell – Daw Mill loaded coal train, approaching Hartlepool on the Durham Coastal Route, 23rd March.

Michael J. Alderdice

Right: Stabled at Gloucester for much of March has been Class 47 145, the former Tinsley and Fraggon machine has been passed around lately, but still there appears to be no takers for the celebrity. Looking in a rundown state, could preservation beckon?

Phil Cherry



Right: National Express liveried HST is seen passing Dunkeld working an Inverness - London Kings Cross service on 10th March. Power Car 43320 is leading, 43239 is on the rear.

Richard Jones





Above: West Coast Railways Company liveried Class 37 676 + Saloon coach are seen at Dumbarton Central station stabled before departing for Oban while working the 09.27 2218 Carlisle - Oban via Kilmarnock, Glasgow Central Low Level, Westerton and Dumbarton Central train on 24th March.

Jonathan McGurk

Top Right: On 20th March, Class 90 048 is seen approaching Coatbridge Central station while working the 13.52 4M74 Coatbridge FLT - Crewe Basford Hall, Freightliner Intermodal train in lovely sunny weather conditions. *Jonathan McGurk*

Right: Class 66 152 is seen looking smart in the new DB Schenker livery passing through Coatbridge Sunnyside Curve while working the 11.57 6D31 Deanside - Mossend working. This location only sees the Mossend - Deanside and the return trip working through this section of line.

Jonathan McGurk



The Nosh Report with Steve Roberts

Welcome to another “Nosh Report”, remember that this is your chance to let everyone know where to go for something to eat or drink, (ie cafe, takeaway, sandwich shop) when out and about. It can also be about whilst you are on a railtour or sampling the delights of on train catering.

This month I have visited Carlisle and whilst there took the opportunity to visit my favourite fish and chip shop in the area.

Home and Away
The Crescent
Carlisle

From the outside of the main entrance to the railway station carry straight on ahead. Cross the very busy main road via the crossing and its on the right. Serving a variety of Fish, Chips, Sausages, Burger and Pies along with some specialities.

They seem to be open all day, but beware some food is cooked to order, so you might have to wait a few mins.



Price, Quality, and Portion size are all excellent. Obviously not one for the health concious, but well worth the calorie overload.

Railtalk regular Dave Harris has asked me to remind everyone that it is still possible to get a 20% discount from most station retail food outlets i.e Upper Crust, Pumkin, Burger King, Cafffe-Ritazza, The Pasty Shop, Millies Cookies and many more. All you need to do is send off for a Bitecard at www.bitecard.co.uk it's free!

Also, Millies Cookies have some excellent offer vouchers, available to print out from their website. I hope that you all have a great month, and I look forward to hearing from some more of you soon.

Remember you can email me at:

steve.roberts@railtalkmagazine.co.uk
Stephen W Roberts

View from the Outside by Megan Thomason

“Model Railway”, is a phrase that I often hear.

I do not understand, however, the thrill that comes from having one. I mean, I know that different people enjoy different things, but surely “playing pretend trains” doesn’t have the same fulfilment as a dolls house in which you can decorate the rooms and make the miniature dolls do different things.

Trains can’t entertain you for long, surely? Not like dolls can. They can’t do much, just go up and down the railway track. Or am I just saying that because I’m a girl and I am therefore expected to like dolls more than trains?

Then again, perhaps collecting all of the different trains and tiny bins and trees is what’s so thrilling. I can understand that. Andy’s eyes practically sparkle when we walk into the model railway shop in town.

Andy has his model railway upstairs though, where he can’t show it off to people, which I suppose is why he keeps asking me if he can buy my living room off me and asking if it’s ten foot wide, so that he can have a big one for the whole world to see.

Fine by me Andy, does £100 a day sound reasonable for rent? Although with mates rates I’ll give you it for £95 a day.

When Andy and I think about when we are older and married, I keep going on about children, whereas he talks about having one room filled with a model railway. I say realistically, no, we won’t be that rich, where will the baby sleep? He says in the middle of the model railway. Nice.

In all honesty though, I’d rather be in love with a train fanatic rather than some chav who goes out getting drunk every day. At least when Andy’s out on one of his long train days for over 14 hours, I know he won’t be getting taken in by the police, unless of course the police arrest him for taking pictures of trains because it is apparently a “security risk”.

(You’ll know what I mean if you have heard the news recently), and if not then shame on you. You should keep up to date with your fellow train fanatics who get told to leave a station because they’re a security risk.

Anyway, I am taking this opportunity to tell Andy the train obsessive (I’m not sure who he prefers, trains or me) that I love him and that although I may not understand the thrill of “train bashing” or miniature trains, you can have a model railway when we are married. We had best wait a few years though as I’m sure your parents wouldn’t be too happy about it considering we have no money and everything.

Back to the mystery of the thrill of model railways, feel free to email me and let me in to the big secret at:

megan.thomason@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Train operators say Rail enthusiasts are welcome on stations

After a month of bad publicity for the Rail Enthusiast vs Terrorist debate, in which the media has suddenly devoted a large amount of fact, fiction and general myth to its pages, we are probably as confused as ever as to if we are actually welcome on the UK rail stations.

National Express, whose name got dragged into this debate by an incident at Stevenage station have said:

Stevenage station is managed by First Capital Connect, not National Express. The station has been gated for sometime and is not subject to a ban either.

Our statement is as follows: "This is nonsense and is more mischief making by others. Platform passes will be issued to people wishing to go onto the platforms but who aren't travelling. Train spotters will continue to be welcomed."

and on the subject of ticket barriers: *"Gating is a franchise commitment agreed with Government, Gating is becoming increasingly common throughout the world and the Government's support for ticketing gate scheme was indicated further in February 2009 when it brought forward a scheme to gate 14 stations in South London at a cost of £5.5 million." "Gating will prevent fraudulent ticketless travel and protect revenue. This substantial lost revenue will be channelled back into the rail industry, including through investment in enhanced facilities. This will help us, other operators and the British taxpayer to build a better railway."*

Network Rail have also said that enthusiasts are welcome at all their stations. Many Network Rail stations have the facilities for enthusiasts to "Sign in" and will issue a visitors badge. All stations are subject to various health and safety regulations and these should be adhered to at all times.

Virgin Trains's Chris Gibb has echoed these comments saying: *"Our staff welcome and challenge rail enthusiasts regularly every day at many stations, and almost all respond politely and without aggression, explaining their activities and accepting any requests our staff have. It is, after all, our property, and we have numerous responsibilities in this respect."*

So there you have it, we are welcome, provided we behave ourselves, so in reality, is that too much to ask ?

However a nail in the coffin for European rail enthusiasts could be that Austria has now banned taking pictures on any of its stations, without a permit, for "Security Reasons"

c2c achieves its best-ever train service punctuality

Essex train operator c2c - part of the transport group National Express - is celebrating the achievement of its highest-ever annual average figure for train service punctuality in official figures which monitor the performance of train services over an average 12 month period.

In the year up to 28 February 2009, trains operated by c2c achieved an average punctuality level of 95% making c2c one of the top performing train operators in the country.

c2c has consistently delivered good levels of train service performance, and these latest figures show that its customers are benefiting from the best-ever punctuality on the c2c routes from London Fenchurch Street serving East London and Essex, including Tilbury, Basildon, Southend Central and Shoeburyness.

The delivery of these excellent performance results has been supported through similarly good reliability figures for c2c's fleet of Class 357 electric trains which have performed to the highest level of reliability of any fleet of trains in the country.

Speaking about the latest punctuality figures, Julian Drury, Managing Director for c2c said:

"I am delighted that our customers are travelling on train services which are now performing at the best-ever level of punctuality on the c2c routes.

"These figures reveal that the attention to detail and teamwork that our staff deliver day-in and day-out in focusing on the provision of a reliable train fleet, and a dedicated approach to all the customer service and operational discipline required in running a punctual train service is really paying off.

"We will continue to focus all our efforts in maintaining these high standards and in working with our partners to deliver further improvement."

FOCUS ON RELIABILITY IMPROVES PERFORMANCE OF CLASS 315 TRAINS

National Express East Anglia (NXEA) has seen significant improvements in the reliability of their Class 315 train fleet over the last 12 months. This has been achieved through a combination of fleet modifications, plus more robust monitoring and reporting of train faults. A number of modifications have been made to the Class 315 fleet which have contributed to the reliability improvements. The most effective modifications include work to improve the High Intensity Discharge (HID) Headlights, Door Control Units and an upgrade of the PA systems.

Changes have also been made to the main compressors of the trains improving reliability of the associated equipment, and to electrical relays as part of the upgrade programme. And identification of further modifications which could be made to improve the fleet's performance is continuing.

The management of train defects is also an area in which the NXEA fleet engineering team has been able to bring about improvements. Better communication and more robust reporting procedures for train defects has meant that problems are identified earlier and more accurately, meaning they can be resolved more quickly.

To support these improvements National Express East Anglia has also reviewed and improved the management of their Ilford Depot stores to ensure components are readily available to effect speedy repairs.

New contracts, cost control & continued investment carry First GBRf through the recession

New long-term deals and successful cost management secures First GBRf's future long term. On 10th March First GBRf announced that effective cost reduction exercises and the assurance of a number of new long-term contracts will ensure the company will be well positioned when the financial crisis comes to an end

Speaking to an audience of customers and media at Stamford Bridge, the home of Chelsea Football Club in London, First GBRf's Managing Director John Smith explained the measures the company had put in place to safeguard it through the worst of the recession, before detailing new deals that will ensure First GBRf continues to trade well into the future.

With costs under control, growth in the business is continuing and the company announced a number of new long term deals were due to be signed with aggregate and coal companies, building on First GBRf's previous success within these fields.

First GBRf's optimism for the future has been backed up by the latest financial results for the year 2008, with figures exceeding prior predictions.

With the company continuing to grow, First GBRf also announced plans showing it is not just limiting itself to existing markets but continuing to explore opportunities in new areas with the admission that an application had been made to the Office of Rail Regulation for a passenger licence.

John Smith said: "We, like virtually every other company in Britain have felt the effects of the financial crisis on our business. However through good cost management First GBRf is continuing to profit and with new deals in place for multi year contracts we are confident that we can survive and even continue to grow in the current economic climate."

To support its new flows First GBRf has continued to invest in new stock and at the end of April it will start to take delivery of 89 new HYA coal hoppers.

East Midlands Trains names a train Tornado and announces plans to increase frequency of London services



East Midlands Trains has named one of its Class 222 Meridian trains (222 003) after Tornado, the first new main line steam locomotive to be built in Britain for almost 50 years.

The dedication ceremony took place at Sheffield station this morning and was carried out by Tim Shoveller, Managing Director of East Midlands Trains and Andrew Cook, Chairman of William Cook Cast Products.

East Midlands Trains named Meridian vehicle number 60163 (which is part of Meridian set number 222 003). This vehicle happens to share the number 60163 with the A1 steam locomotive Tornado, which was alongside to mark the occasion.

Tim Shoveller said: "When we found out that one of our Meridian trains shared a number with the first steam locomotive to be built for over 50 years, of course we

wanted to mark that and naming this driving vehicle Tornado as well seemed appropriate. We're even more delighted to be able to do that in Sheffield. Sheffield is the home of the steel industry and many of the components of both our Meridian train Tornado and the steam engine Tornado were made by William Cook Cast Products.

"While our Meridians don't have the great romance and majesty of the steam locomotive, what we do have now are trains to London that are faster than ever. And we hope to increase the frequency of those London trains in December this year, to provide a half hourly service. This will provide a boost for business in the region, as good links with the capital are a key factor in attracting new business to the area."

Andrew Cook said: "William Cook is the largest corporate sponsor of the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, the group responsible for the Tornado steam locomotive project. William Cook has provided the driving wheels and all the other cast steel parts for this unique project. The Company has also provided the substantial financial backing necessary to allow manufacture of the boiler and tender to take place."



A NEW ERA FOR FOLKESTONE HARBOUR

The completion of £1.4 million upgrade to Folkestone West station signals the end of an era for the branch line between Folkestone East and Folkestone Harbour.

The branch line has not been available for normal domestic train services for a number of years,

is now only used by around 30 Orient Express services between London Victoria and Folkestone Harbour and a small number of other rail-tour special services each year. Over the years, the condition of the railway has deteriorated, and although Network Rail has maintained it in a safe condition, the line is now in need of a major upgrade to bring it up to modern standards.

After considering various options for the future of the line and following consultation and agreement with the Department for Transport, the train operators and other local stakeholders, Network Rail will begin the formal process to close the line. The closure will not affect any normal domestic rail services.

Andrew Munden, Network Rail's route director for Kent said: "We understand the history of this route and the proposed closure is not something we have taken lightly. The main factor behind our decision is the disproportionate cost of keeping this railway line running safely for such a small number of trains. It just wouldn't be a sensible use of the limited funds we have to manage the rail network nationally, let alone in Kent where 2,150 trains run per day.

"With the agreement of the owners of the Orient Express service, we have significantly upgraded the facilities at Folkestone West station so this unique train can continue to operate."

The new facilities at Folkestone West include high-quality waiting facilities and toilets for Orient Express passengers. These are all fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act, making the service much more accessible to those with reduced mobility.

The closure of Folkestone Harbour station and the branch line would also bring benefits for the community. A number of proposals exist to redevelop the area around Folkestone Harbour station.

However, many of these could only realise their full potential once the land currently occupied by the railway is made available. At the moment, it is occupied by a station which brings no benefits for local people as it does not receive a domestic train service.



Money saving tips from Virgin Trains...

New cheaper train fares for local journeys.....

- * Birmingham International to Rugby
- * Birmingham New Street-Rugby
- * Coventry to Rugby
- * Crewe to Manchester Piccadilly
- * London Euston to Milton Keynes
- * Macclesfield to Manchester Piccadilly
- * Manchester Piccadilly to Crewe, Macclesfield, Stoke-on-Trent, Wilmslow or Stockport
- * Milton Keynes to London Euston
- * Rugby to Coventry, Birmingham International or Birmingham New Street
- * Stoke-on-Trent to Manchester Piccadilly
- * Wilmslow to Manchester Piccadilly

Virgin Trains is slashing the cost of rail travel for several short distance journeys. The price reduction is part of a package to offer cheaper 'walk-up' rail travel.

From 30 March, the cost of a peak time Day Return from Birmingham New Street to Rugby, for example will fall from £8.60 to £6.50. The new lower priced tickets will be valid for travel on Virgin Trains services only, but will offer a substantial saving over the current tickets which can be used on all operators' services on the route. Seven day Virgin Trains only season tickets are also available for most journeys, offering similar savings.

Virgin Trains Commercial Director Graham Leech said: "We know that in the current economic climate everyone is looking to make savings. This is our contribution for travellers making short to medium distance journeys on some of our routes.

"The introduction of our new high frequency timetable at the end of last year has increased the number of seats we offer across our network by 13 million a year. That means we can offer these cheaper fares to encourage travel with Virgin Trains."

The new Virgin Trains only tickets can be bought in advance, or on day of travel. They are valid for travel on Virgin Trains services only and will not be accepted on services over the same routes which are operated by other train operators.

A CHANGE, BUT NO CHANGE ON THE WEST LONDON LINE

From Monday 16 March and for a limited time, Southern's East Croydon to Milton Keynes service will use some of London Midland's trains.

The change comes about because train manufacturer, Bombardier has been unable to deliver new trains to First Capital Connect (FCC) in time for the start of the new Thameslink programme timetable which begins on 23 March. As Southern is procuring the new trains for FCC, it has had to release most of its dual voltage trains (which currently provides the Milton Keynes service) to FCC until all the new trains have been delivered. To plug the gap, London Midland will be providing a number of its own trains for Southern to run the Milton Keynes service.

Although the trains that will be providing the Southern service on the West London Line will be London Midland trains, there are no changes to train times or calling patterns.

It is anticipated that the last new train will be delivered to FCC by mid-June, at which time East Croydon to Milton Keynes services will once again be provided by Southern trains.

Spring Clean for Virgin Trains Best of British First Class menu

Virgin Trains is introducing seasonal fresh ingredients to its First Class menu. The Spring menu starts on 1 April and continues the commitment ensuring that only produce from entirely British sources is used, which can be traced from farm to plate. The catering offer is provided on a complimentary basis to passengers travelling First Class.

The new menu continues to offer our passengers only the finest British products. Virgin Trains researched the ideal menu and have ensured that everything we use can be traced and authenticated through the entire food chain.

New this Spring for the Light Bites menu is a Honey-glazed Scottish ham sandwich, which comes from Highland Country Foods in the heart of the Scottish Highlands. Their superb Heather Honey Roast Ham is produced from outdoor bred pigs and is liberally coated with Highland Heather Honey and roasted to perfection.

Also on the Light Bites menu is a Salmon and cream cheese sandwich, made in the North Warwickshire town of Atherstone, which Virgin's train services to Manchester, Liverpool, North Wales and Scotland speed through at up to 125mph. The poached salmon is Scottish farmed, caught and smoked in Fort William, close to the foot of Ben Nevis.

A new addition to the Evening Meal menu is British beef cannelloni, which comprises hot oven-baked cannelloni pasta filled with Somerset Select free range beef with chunky vegetables in a creamy cheddar cheese sauce. The beef comes from a herd made up of Limousin, Charolais, Aberdeen Angus and Hereford breeds which are reared at the foot of Glastonbury Tor. On our North Wales route the beef for the Cannelloni comes from Headland Foods, who source the beef from herds reared in the rolling fields of Haverfordwest, Dyfed in the south of the Country.

For the Evening Meal menu a range of deserts includes Summer mango and raspberry pudding, coffee and mascarpone trifle or chocolate millionaire desert. The selection of cheeses offered on a rotation basis will include Somerset Camembert, Coastal Cheddar, Blue Wensleydale and Smoked Cheddar.

Nic Cuthbertson Virgin Trains Product Development and Purchasing Manager said: "We have spent many months finding the highest quality ingredients from the highest quality producers, and this concept has been further developed for our Spring menus. We have also worked closely with our staff to develop a range of menus that can be prepared and served in the limited confines of a train."

The popular Great British Breakfast remains available using the highest quality pork sausages, from outdoor reared pigs, made

with fresh herbs and natural casings, and served on all Pendolino trains to and from London Euston until 09:59 on weekdays. The sausages will be served alongside outdoor reared sweet cure Suffolk Crown bacon with free range Yorkshire Farm eggs on a potato rösti.

The meat for the sausages comes from outdoor reared Hampshire Cross Bred pigs, sourced from a number of farms in Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and East Anglia. The bacon is also from outdoor reared pigs and is processed by Suffolk Crown in Bury St Edmunds. The free range eggs come from Yorkshire Farmhouse Eggs, based in the Vale of York at Thirsk.

Improvements have also been made to enhance the First Class experience. WiFi is now will is available in all our First Class Lounges at stations and will be introduced soon onto our Pendolino trains. Enhanced mobile phone reception is also now available on all Pendolino trains.

It does not cost a fortune to travel in First Class luxury. Virgin Trains has a range of Advance single fares available from just £26.50 London to Birmingham; from £34 to Manchester or Liverpool; from £52 to Glasgow and from £34 to Chester. And the final word on our First Class food goes to respected 'Caterer and Hotelkeeper' magazine who said: "Virgin Trains is head and shoulders above the rest [train operators] in first-class accommodation." The magazine goes on to say: "...all [menu items] are excellently sourced, and makes the extra money for first class almost pay for itself."

Class 321 arrives at Hornsey to boost capacity on First Capital Connect services

The first of five Class 321 trains has arrived at First Capital Connect's Hornsey Depot ahead of introduction in the May 17th timetable.

The trains are being cascaded from London Midland and combined with a revised timetable, help add over 3000 peak hour seats for First Capital Connect customers. The Class 321 will predominantly be used on services to and from Peterborough and enable Class 365 trains to operate in 12-carriage formations during peak hours.

Andy Cope, Engineering Director at First Capital Connect said: "The Class 321 is a very reliable, well built train and will add vital capacity to some of our most overcrowded routes. Maintenance and driver training are now underway and we are looking forward to introducing them in May."

The May timetable change on the Great Northern is the most significant for some 15 years and sees additional services and longer trains to address overcrowding. For further information visit: www.firstcapitalconnect.co.uk/seatsforyou

CrossCountry runs a 'Red Nose Special' to advertise the BBC's 2009 Comic Relief appeal.

The High Speed Train (HST), which is a normal passenger service travelling almost 1000 miles from York to Plymouth and back to Edinburgh, featured a giant red nose together with the Comic Relief website address, rednoseday.com to encourage people to go online and make a donation. CrossCountry staff also be traveled onboard

throughout the day collecting donations from passengers. David Watkin, CrossCountry's Commercial Director said; "Following a suggestion from one of our employees, we wanted to contribute and show our support for Comic Relief this year. We therefore hope our Red Nose Special will help create more awareness and bring further donations for the appeal. As ever, our employees have been excellent and are also taking part in helping to collect donations on the train."

David added: "Red Nose Day is all about doing something funny to raise money for people all over the UK and other countries. As our trains run from one end of Britain to the other, we thought it a bit of fun and a great advert for this important event to stick a red nose on our train."



NATIONAL EXPRESS EAST COAST LAUNCHES ITS FINAL REFURBISHED AND UPGRADED HST POWER CARS BACK INTO SERVICE

Train operator National Express East Coast, has launched its final two HST power cars back into service after they were refurbished, upgraded and fitted with new high performing engines, installed as part of a £27 million investment.

The final two HST power cars to rejoin the National Express East Coast fleet bring the total number of refurbished HST power cars in service to 30. The refurbishment work was carried out by Brush Traction in Loughborough. 23 of the 30-strong National Express HST power car fleet is leased from Angel Trains and seven from Porterbrook.

The project, which began in October 2006, has been jointly financed by National Express and Angel Trains, who invested £7.2m. It includes the installation of new MTU engines by Brush Traction, in conjunction with Porterbrook. The new MTU 16V4000R41 engines significantly improve performance of the HST fleet, with the repowered vehicles delivering a 15 per cent improvement in fuel consumption. They are also quieter than the previous Valenta engines and have a longer service life. In addition, the newly installed engines have a 99.4 per cent reliability rate, with technical delays to services virtually eliminated. The new engines produce lower exhaust emissions that comply with new European legislation - reinforcing the train's position as the most environmentally friendly, carbon efficient and sustainable form of transport.

National Express East Coast Managing Director Susan Goldsmith said: "This Continued Service Operation project on the popular HSTs has proved very successful, and the significant investment in these trains provides an improved service to our passengers on the East Coast Main Line, thanks to the HSTs' improved performance and reliability. "It has been a privilege to work with Brush Traction and MTU and the work carried out by them has been fantastic. By extending the life of the HSTs and keeping them fit for purpose, they maintain their iconic status on the UK railway while looking and performing like new trains."

John Bidewell, Brush Traction's Managing Director, said: "Brush Traction is proud to be associated with this project to improve and extend the life of the NEXC HST fleet, bringing tangible benefits to the travelling public, the operator and the environment."

Mike Ferris, MTU-UK's Managing Director, said: "This has been a tremendously successful project for all concerned. The collaboration between the various parties involved has created a much broader partnership than ever envisaged. This has further contributed to the delivery of significant improvements for the industry, operator and passenger. MTU is very proud to have been part of this team."

The project to extend the life of the diesel HST fleet with the introduction of more efficient MTU engines has been accompanied by a separate project to completely refurbish the interior of the train carriages, creating a more comfortable and contemporary interior. This refurbishment is being carried out by Wabtec Rail in Doncaster.



Long Marston Open Weekend

Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th June 2009

www.longmarstonopenday.co.uk



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* Locomotives and Vintage Vehicles Subject To Availability

Rail industry unites to beat delivery failures at train manufacturer

A cascade of carriages from train operators across the South East has overcome delivery failures at Derby-based train manufacturer Bombardier Transportation, allowing key work on the Thameslink Programme to begin on 22 March and keeping the programme on schedule.

First Capital Connect (FCC) was due to receive 23 new four-carriage Electrostar trains (92 carriages) to help operate a new timetable from 22 March. The timetable will close the Thameslink route Moorgate branch, allowing Network Rail to close three platforms at Blackfriars and start rebuilding the station to take 50% longer, 12-carriage trains.

This is a key part of the £5.5 billion Programme to reduce overcrowding on the Thameslink route from Bedford to Brighton.

But the first train was only delivered to Thameslink route operator First Capital Connect on Friday, 27 February – three and a half months late – and only two more are due for delivery in time for 22 March.

The remainder are promised to arrive by summer.

FCC MD Elaine Holt said: “Bombardier management’s failure to deliver on time new Electrostars for the Thameslink route is a massive blow for our customers.

“As well as making the Thameslink Programme timetable work, the new trains would have added brand new air-conditioned carriages to an ageing fleet.

“Our customers will now have to wait until the summer to see the full benefits of this new fleet of trains including the full capacity improvements.”

In response, the Department for Transport has triggered a cascade of train carriages involving other train operators including Southern and Southeastern to ensure there is enough replacement rolling stock to operate the 22 March timetable.

FCC said there was an increase in the risk of potential disruption because there will be fewer spare trains than were originally planned to cover train failures and the loaned trains would be operating on unfamiliar infrastructure.

Farringdon station will already have many more passengers interchanging with the Tube following the closure of the FCC Thameslink route branch line to Barbican and Moorgate as part of the new timetable.

Train failures could create more rush-hour congestion there.

To avoid the crowds, FCC customers are advised to use City Thameslink if possible. More information on alternative travel routes is available at www.thameslinkprogramme.co.uk.

First Capital Connect is pulling in additional staff to work at stations and control rooms and has sound plans in place to deal with any problems. An extra rush-hour ‘crowd-buster’ service will be introduced to pick up passengers at Farringdon every night, departing at 18.16 for stations to Bedford.

FCC MD Elaine Holt added: “We’ll be pulling out all the stops to do our absolute best to run a good service but the risk of potential disruption is greater because of the situation caused by this delay at Bombardier.”

ELSENHAM STATION GARDEN REJUVENATED

National Express East Anglia’s Elsenham station has received some extra care recently after a visit from the train operator’s new Area Station Manager for Ely, Alan Neville, whose area includes Elsenham.

Whilst out visiting his new patch, Alan Neville, a keen gardener, saw the potential of the station garden and recognised the benefits a little extra attention would bring. Alan was encouraged by evidence of previous work which had been undertaken by the resident National Express East Anglia member of staff and the Network Rail crossing keeper. Indeed, in previous years the station had won awards for its garden and horticultural excellence.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: MERSEYSIDE RAIL STRATEGY LAUNCHED

Longer trains and extra services are signalled in a far reaching strategy published today to improve rail services in Merseyside.

The Merseyside route utilisation strategy (RUS) recommends ways to increase capacity on the Merseyside rail network to meet the continuing boom in passenger numbers - predicted to rise by 40% by 2020 - and sets out the rail industry’s preferred plan to meet this demand.

The strategy was drawn up by Network Rail in close cooperation with stakeholders including Merseyrail and other passenger and freight operators, Merseytravel, the Department for Transport and Passenger Focus, and its publication followed a three month public consultation.

Principal recommendations centre on longer trains to provide more seats for passengers, and improving links on key routes into Liverpool from Chester, North Wales, Southport, Ormskirk, Preston and Wigan.

At Liverpool Central, the RUS recommends that an immediate package of work should be carried out to improve the flow of passengers through the station, increasing overall capacity by up to a third.

If passenger numbers continue to increase as predicted, capacity will again become constrained by around 2020 and the RUS recommends that the rail industry should continue to work together with the government to develop further expansion options.

These could include a new additional underground platform, or the construction of a new, bigger station.

Network Rail route director, Jo Kaye said: “The railway in Merseyside is the best performing on the network with high levels of punctuality and reliability, and the challenge is to find ways to accommodate passenger growth without compromising on performance.

“Since our draft strategy was published last November, we have listened to what stakeholders told us, and we thank them for their contributions to help develop our plans. I am confident we have something the whole rail industry, and everyone involved in it, can work towards over the next 10 years.”

Councillor Mark Dowd, Chair of Merseytravel, said: “We welcome this commitment to our region’s railways. It’s important that investment is made so that we can build upon the overwhelming success of our rail network; particularly at major stations such as Liverpool Central where we are seeing passenger numbers rising spectacularly.

“We are pleased with the support we have had to get to this stage, particularly from Louise Ellman MP, and this is an important step in helping us all deliver the best possible rail services for the people of Merseyside. Now the hard work starts.”



TYNESIDE RAIL BRIDGE REPLACEMENT IS NETWORK FIRST

Network Rail has replaced a bridge in Gateshead - without a single train being affected or the need for any rail-replacement buses. The project was an important first as Network Rail looks to reduce the time taken over infrastructure improvements and so reducing disruption for passengers. The single span bridge carries the railway at the busy King Edward South junction in Gateshead and was replaced overnight from Saturday into Sunday (21-22 March) during hours when rail services do not run.

The line carries regular passenger services into Newcastle, including intercity services, as well as regular freight trains from Tyne Yard to the Durham coast line and the local docks. Richard Lungmuss, route director for Network Rail, said: "Balancing the needs of keeping the railway running safely and smoothly with growing passenger demand for rail services around the clock has always been a challenge for Network Rail. We are constantly looking for ways to reduce the disruption that our essential engineering improvements cause to passengers and this scheme is a great example of theory becoming reality."

Two other bridges have been replaced in eight hours elsewhere in the network, but this is the first time it has been done underneath overhead electrical wires and the first using Network Rail's maintenance staff to undertake the rail infrastructure work.

The replacement was able to be completed so quickly as the innovative design enabled the new

structure to be built underneath the old bridge. The old bridge was then removed and the new one fully completed with a new track system and reopening to trains at linespeed all in a single 10hr shift. The new bridge will also be cheaper and easier to maintain than the old waybeam bridge.

The £610,000 project was managed by Network Rail and delivered by main contractor May Gurney and designer Faber Maunsell.



DRS wins "Asda Rail Carrier of the Year Award"

Direct Rail Services Limited (DRS) have beaten off stiff competition to win the 'Asda Rail Carrier of the Year' Award at a prestigious gala awards ceremony in Leeds recently. This award is for the provision of intermodal rail freight services for six days a week between Aberdeen and Grangemouth. The service has been running successfully since June 2008 and the main customer for this train is Asda and the improved efficiency for the service is further enhanced by ARR Craib and W H Malcolm joining forces with Asda by adding additional containers onto the service.

In running this service, DRS has contributed to a savings of almost 3000 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year and this equates to removing 7200 lorry journeys off the congested roads.

The award has been given to DRS based on Asda's six performance monitoring criteria. These are for overall excellence in staff development, service deliveries, compliance with industry standards, maintaining loading efficiencies, utilisation of our Class 66 'environmentally friendly' locomotive and improve fuel efficiency through driver driving technique.

Direct Rail Services Managing Director Neil McNicholas said "We are delighted to win this award and a successful rail business is about building strong relationship with our industry partners as well as delivering premium services that meets the needs of the customers. This means providing high quality and reliable services to fulfil the expectations that the industry demands."

Stourbridge railcar receives its passenger licence

A pioneering lightweight, hybrid-power rail vehicle moved another step closer to its launch date after receiving its passenger licence today (March 26). The first Class 139 Lightweight Railcar from Parry People Movers Ltd (PPML), the first of its kind in the UK, received its passenger certification from Network Rail. Further crew training will now take place as the Class 139 is phased into service on the Stourbridge Junction to Stourbridge Town branch line.

The railcar will enter service on Saturdays and Sundays in April, operated under subcontract by Pre Metro Operations Ltd, with a view to full service introduction when the new rail timetable begins in May. London Midland managing director Stephen Banaghan said he was keen to see the railcar enter service in Stourbridge.

"This will be an exciting development - the first of its kind in the UK - and we look forward to the advent of this new service at the heart of our network," he said.

"We have been working closely with Parry People Movers since November 2007 during the design, manufacture and commissioning of the new railcars and keenly anticipate their introduction."

PPML's chairman John Parry said that the Class 139 represented a new approach to local transport.

"London Midland are to be congratulated on looking for innovative solutions to branch line operation," said Mr Parry.

"Our flywheel-hybrid drive makes this type of railcar one of the most environmentally-friendly ways to travel, and the system can be applied to street tramways as well as short railway lines."

London Midland is currently running a diesel train on the Stourbridge Junction to Stourbridge Town line.

Pictures with a different view





Above: DBSO 9714 and Class 31 105 are seen departing platform 1 at Glasgow Central High Level station while working the 4Q76 Polmadie - Carlisle via Glasgow Central Network Rail Ultrasonic Test Train. [Jonathan McGurk](#)
Below: Off the track, literally, for this wagon at the Nene Valley. [Class47](#)
Right: As the light fades, a semaphore signal stands alone at the Nene Valley's Peterborough station. [JulianG](#)





Railtalk Magazine

GLASGOW QUEEN STREET, now in Scottish as well. The new Scotrail signs are dual language as Class 170 401, 170 426 and 170 471 are seen inside Glasgow Queen Street High Level station working their last First ScotRail train services for the day. [Jonathan McGurk](#)

Preserved Railways



There have been so many great gala's in March, and we start with some shots from the Nene Valley Railway.

Top Left: Pausing in the Spring sunshine at Wansford on 7th March is Class 27 D5401.

Jon Jebb

Top Right: Looking great after it's recent repaint is Class 37 518, seen here with visiting DRS loco Class 37 667.

Class47

Left: DRS traction on a preserved railway in the shape of Class 37 667, seen here passing Sutton working 1E46 Wansford - Peterborough on 7th March.

Carl Grocott



Three more from the Nene Valley Gala on 7th/8th March.

Top Left: Another visiting loco was GBRf Class 66 732 seen here working 12:15 Wansford - Peterborough at Ailsworth. [John Coleman](#)

Bottom Left: Preserved?, well it's still at the Nene Valley, so Class 56 128 is included here, seen in the shed at Wansford. [John Coleman](#)

Above: Former Freightliner machine Class 47 270 "SWIFT" still shows that its alive and doing well. [JulianG](#)



Final three from the Nene Valley gala.

Above: Class 40 D306 'Atlantic Conveyor' works the 09:35 Wansford - Peterborough approaching Lynch's Bridge. [Steve Madden](#)

Below: Class 14 D9504 is seen at Wansford. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Right: Class 31 271 is seen working the 10:10 from Wansford to Peterborough at Mill Lane, Castor. [John Coleman](#)



Right: It is a shame that Class 47 540 has never seen any action since being bought. Despite the grime, it does look externally in remarkably good condition, seen at Sinderby on the 27th February.

Alan Usher

Bottom Left: At the Great Central North, Class 20 007 was on use on the first train of Sunday, 22nd February of the Half-Term Specials, as Corby “Ugly” No.56 had not got enough steam to efficiently power the train.

Brandon Jon Morley

Bottom Right: Class 33 052 approaches Rolvenden, on the Kent & East Sussex Railway, with a late running 15:30 Tenterden-Bodiam service, caused by the failure of A1X Terrier Class No. 3 “Bodiam” on 21st March.

Craig Stretten





Above: On the East Lancs Railway on 28th February, D3232 is seen removing 45231 from the rear of a service to Rawtenstall. The steam loco had failed at Heywood with leaking boiler tubes, and rescue came in the shape of Class 24 D5054.

Below: Another problem loco on that day was Class 47 402, seen here at Bury waiting to depart to Heywood. *Both: Alan Usher*



Above: Farewell to 45231 as it gets dragged off the shed at Bury.

Below: Not expecting to be used on the day, but Class 24 D5054, took over 45231's duties for the remainder of the day, seen here with Hymek Class 35 D7076 in the station at Bury. *Both: Alan Usher*





Above: No 12, "John Southland", passes through Lydd, Kent, working the 15:30 Hythe-Dungeness service on the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway.

Craig Stretten

Below: West Somerset Railway's steam gala on 21st March saw A4 60019 climbing away from Bishops Lydeard working the 09:35 to Minehead.

Steve Andrews



C58LG

**CLASS 58
LOCOMOTIVE
GROUP**

The Class 58 Locomotive Group was formed in 2001 with the aim of one day preserving a Class 58 locomotive and we invite you to join us!

For more information on the C58LG, please see our website www.c58lg.co.uk, e-mail info@c58lg.co.uk or you can write via 'snail mail' to: C58LG, 107 Woolaston Avenue, Cardiff, CF23 6EW.



See our website for information on our new fund raising initiative: "£58 for a 58" – sponsor a part of a 58!



The Severn Valley Steam Gala produced an excellent line up of locos. Above: 71000 "Duke of Gloucester" is seen climbing Eardinton Bank on 6th March with a service for Bridgnorth. [Carl Grocott](#)



Above: "Sir Nigel" passes over Victoria Bridge on 6th March, working a service from Kidderminster. [Carl Grocott](#)

Below: Seen at Bridgnorth in the Spring sunshine on 8th March, LNER's 60007 "Sir Nigel Gresley" runs through the station. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Below: On 7th March, Great Western 2-6-2T 5164 is seen at Foley Park on a Bewdley-Kidderminster "local" service. [Steve Thompson](#)





Some more shots from the Severn Valley Steam Gala held on 6th/7th/8th March.

Top Left: "Sir Nigel Gresley" 60007 is seen heading south at Eardington on 7th March.

Steve Thompson

Top Right: 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" storms through Haye Bridge on 6th March with a Kidderminster - Bridgnorth service.

Carl Grocott

Right: Great Western 5029 "Nunney Castle" pauses at Brigenorth on the Sunday afternoon.

Richard Hargreaves





Back to the East Lancs now for it's Diesel Gala and Nightrider event on the 14th/15th March.

Above: Class 55 022 looked and sounded magnificent for the gala. the loco was immaculate inside and out and was a credit to all concerned.

Richard Hargreaves

Top Right: Class 50 015 pauses at Bury whilst working on the rear of a service from Heywood to Rawtenstall.

Jon Jebb

Right: Class 37 901, deputising for 37 418, is seen on 2J87, the 15.45 departure from Heywood, bound for Rawtenstall, and seen here leaving Irwell Vale on 14th March.

Pete Cheshire





Above: Class 24 D5054 "Phil Southern" and Class 50 No 50 015 await their next duties at Bury Bolton St. [Dave Harris](#)
Below: With Class 40 145 away at Barrow Hill for repairs the only "Whistler" at the gala was D335, seen here approaching Ramsbottom. [Class47](#)

Above: Thumper 1305 passes through Burrs working 2F68 Ramsbottom to Bury service on the 14th March. [Pete Cheshire](#)
Below: Class 33 D6525 is seen at Irwell Vale station, departing with the 16:23 2J84 Rawtenstall to Heywood service. [Pete Cheshire](#)





The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust New Steam for the Main Line

Historic Departure from London Kings Cross for Tornado

Tornado, the first new main line steam locomotive to be built in Britain for almost 50 years, will haul her historic first train from London's King's Cross station on Saturday 18th April 2009. This train, the Yorkshire Pullman, will run to York and will be the first time a once-familiar Peppercorn class A1 has departed from London's King's Cross Station for over 40 years.

The Yorkshire Pullman name was first used on Monday 30th September 1935, and apart from the hiatus due to the Second World War, survived for some years after steam locomotives ceased to haul it. Although the original prestigious train started at Harrogate and was regularly hauled by Tornado's now extinct class members south of Doncaster, the 2009 Yorkshire Pullman will run from London's King's Cross station to York and return with Tornado hauling the luxurious VSOE British Pullman train. The 2009 train will consist of 13 carriages, equating to about 550 tons, and will run at up to 75mph.

The new £3 million Peppercorn class A1 60163 Tornado will be wearing her glorious apple green livery with 'British Railways' on the tender as carried by the first 30 of the original 49 Peppercorn class A1s when built and the train will be resplendent in its traditional umber and cream livery.

Only Pullman class is available at £449 per person. The booking agent for the Trust is Steam Dreams on 01483 209886 and some seats on this once-in-a-lifetime train are still available.

Speaking about Tornado's first passenger train from London's King's Cross station, Mark Allatt, chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust said:

"Tornado's first train from London's Kings Cross station is the opening of a new chapter in the story of a project that many said could never be completed. In 1990 a group was formed with a vision and the determination to make it succeed – to build and operate a Peppercorn class A1 Pacific steam locomotive for main line and preserved railway use. 19 years later, and thanks to that shared vision and determination, Tornado will haul her first passenger train north from King's Cross to York on East Coast Main Line, the route on which the Peppercorn class A1s became such a familiar sight throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. It is thanks to our more than 2,500 regular monthly and other donors, our sponsors led by William Cook Cast Products Limited and the hard work of our volunteers and contractors that the project has achieved so much.

The Trust is now looking to the great British public to help us keep Tornado on the main line by making a donation, sponsoring a component, taking part in our covenant scheme and/or our £500,000 bond issue to help repay the £832,000 borrowed to complete her construction."

On Saturday 18th April 2009, Tornado will follow the timings below from London's King's Cross station to York and return:

Departs London King's Cross 09:18hrs
Arrives York 14:08hrs
Departs York – 17:06hrs
Arrives London King's Cross – 21:09hrs

Other operations confirmed for Tornado are:

4th – 5th April – Tornado at the Barrow Hill Gala

1st – 10th May – Tornado at the North York Moors Spring Gala

Monday 18th May – The Coronation arranged by Steam Dreams, with the York to Kings Cross leg hauled by Tornado

Saturday 23rd May – Steam Dreams trip Kings Cross to York and return with Tornado and Sir Nigel Gresley

Sunday 31st May – Sunday 14th June – Tornado at the West Somerset Railway

Thursday 18th June – Steam Trips trip from London to Wells and Minehead and return with Tornado hauling the return leg

Sunday 21st June – Steam Dreams Fathers Day Hampshire and Kent Circulares hauled by Tornado

Sunday 5th July – Tornado hauls the Torbay Express from Bristol to Paignton and Kingswear (Paignton & Dartmouth Steam Railway) and return

Saturday 11th July – Tornado hauls the Torbay Express from Bristol to Plymouth and return – the South Devon Banks

Sunday 12th July – Tornado hauls the Torbay Express from Bristol to Paignton and Kingswear (Paignton & Dartmouth Steam Railway) and return

Please refer to our website – www.a1steam.com – for further information and updates on trips as they are confirmed.

The Trust respectfully requests that anyone wanting to see Tornado's first main line passenger trains follows the rules of the railway and only goes where permitted.



The Class Forty Preservation Society is pleased to announce its next mainline outing:

The East Lancs Crusader Saturday June 13th

from Rawtenstall, Ramsbottom, Bury Bolton Street, Heywood, Manchester Victoria, Warrington Bank Quay, Crewe & Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth.

Full details (fares & projected times) will be available at www.cfps.co.uk shortly, and there will be an early booking discount.



The Great Central had a 1960's gala on the 21st/22nd March.
Above: Class 31 D5830 arrives at Rothley on a local service. *Ian Furness*

Below: 63395 passes Woodthorpe on 22nd March. *Mike Sheridan*



Above: Class 27 D5401 passes Woodthorpe on a freight turn. *Mike Sheridan*

Below: Peak D123 passes 48305 at Quorn on 22 March. *Mike Sheridan*







The Mid Norfolk Diesel Gala at the end of March was a spectacular affair, with an abundance of visiting locos combined with the return to traffic of Class 56 040.

Left: LoadHaul liveried Cladd 60 059 is seen at the main station on the line, Dereham. [Jon Jebb](#)

Bottom Left: Another loco returned from store for the gala, was Class 37 425. Looking excellent in the afternoon sun, the loco waits to depart from Dereham. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Below: Star of the weekend, perhaps, Class 56 040 "Oystermouth" stands in the loop at Wymondham Abbey on 28th March. [Jon Jebb](#)





Bombardier's First MOVIA Car for Delhi Metro Touches down in India

The first vehicle in the new high-technology fleet of BOMBARDIER MOVIA metro cars, ordered by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) for its Phase II expansion, has arrived in the capital of India. In order to meet the challenging project deadlines, the first vehicle was built in an extremely short 18-month period. It was transported directly from Germany to India in an Antonov aircraft, where it was received by DMRC, Bombardier Transportation representatives and the media at Delhi International Airport.

The first MOVIA train-set will commence track tests in March while the service introduction is scheduled for the second week in June. The first 36 vehicles for DMRC will be built in Goerlitz, Germany and the following 388 cars in Savli, India, where Bombardier has recently inaugurated a modern railway vehicle manufacturing facility. With an investment valued at 33 million euros, this greenfield facility will directly employ 750 people and indirectly generate approximately 3,000 jobs in the region.

To counter the dramatic rise of Delhi's population from 0.6 million to 14 million people over the last years, the first line of New Delhi's Metro network opened in December 2002. Phase I consisted of 3 lines totaling 65 km with Phase II, now under construction, representing an additional 125 km. In phase II of the expansion of Delhi Metro, the modern MOVIA high-capacity vehicles will transport an impressive 4 million passengers every day.

The high capacity MOVIA vehicles will form an integral element of these expansion plans to meet the anticipated increase in passengers and are designed to comfortably accommodate some 1,480 passengers per four car train unit. Air conditioning is included for the comfort of the passengers and driver. CCTV and open gangways ensure security and visibility throughout the train. In addition, emergency speaker units, installed on the vehicles, will provide passengers with the opportunity to communicate directly with the driver. The safety egress door via the driver's cab also allows for easy passenger evacuation in the event of an emergency.

The vehicles incorporate BOMBARDIER MITRAC Propulsion and Control system, featuring IP technology, a sophisticated passenger information system that includes predefined messages and notification of upcoming stations as well as a digital route map highlighting journey progress. A vital differentiator is the fact that the vehicles are designed and constructed for optimum environmental operation, entailing solutions that are part of the innovative BOMBARDIER ECO4 portfolio of technologies launched by the global rail leader last year. Such outcomes are lower energy consumption, minimal noise emissions and recyclability levels of up to 90%. Overall, the new ECO4

portfolio offers energy and cost-efficient solutions for total train performance with the possibility of saving up to 50 percent energy.



Photo: © Bombardier

Bombardier Awarded Contract for a Further 60 EMU Cars for Queensland Rail in Australia

Bombardier Transportation and joint venture partner, Downer EDI Rail, have been awarded an order by the Queensland Government in Australia to build 20 three car electric commuter trains. The contract is valued at approximately 104 million euros (\$131 million US, \$205 million AU). Bombardier's share of the contract will be about 48 million euros (\$60 million US, \$93 million AU). Deliveries are scheduled to start in August 2010 and continue until December 2011.

This order is a follow on from an order for the SMU260 vehicles currently entering service with QR (Queensland Rail) Passenger and will provide increased capacity across the QR network.



"The new SMU260 trains have proved very popular with our customers," said Paul Scurrah, Executive General Manager of QR Passenger. "We are very pleased that the addition of these 20 trains to the fleet will provide some much-needed capacity to the network."

"This order reflects QR Passenger's confidence in this vehicle that has been proven in service and builds on over 30 years experience in this operating environment," stated Dan Osborne, Managing Director of Bombardier Transportation Australia. "The delivery of these new trains will see about 650 carriages from the joint venture in service with QR."

Bombardier's scope in the project is the overall design of the vehicle, integration of the vehicle systems, bogie design and the supply of propulsion, electrical and communication systems. The trains are stainless steel construction with narrow gauge, 25kV propulsion, utilising a number of mature systems service proven in Queensland Rail's operating environment, such as the highly reliable BOMBARDIER MITRAC propulsion system. They will operate at up to 130 kph.

Assembly of the new trains will be carried out at Bombardier's facility and EDI Rail's facility in Maryborough, Queensland. Propulsion and traction equipment will be manufactured at Bombardier's plants in Västerås, Sweden and Pittsburgh, USA. Testing and commissioning will be carried out jointly. This order builds on over 600 narrow gauge carriages already in service in Brisbane and Perth.

Photo: EMU Cars for Queensland Rail in Australia. © Bombardier



Above: Demic Goggles 750.282-6 is seen on the scrap line at Nymburk hlavní nádraží (Depo) on 11th March. [Pavel Martoch](#)

Right: A superb steam shot as 556.0506 storms passed Nemilkov with a goods train on 14th February. [Dvorak Jan](#)







Right: When I took this scene at Darlington Bank Top station on 29th July 1968, the "Deltic" diesels were less than seven years old but the sight and sound of these machines certainly was exciting to the enthusiast and the roar of the two Napier engines can almost still be heard as D9004 Queens Own Highlander re-starts the 08.00 London Kings Cross to Edinburgh.

The introduction of these locomotives to the East Coast Main Line made the route the "shop window" of British Railways and soon became the prime Inter-City route, which it remained for 40 years, in spite of government "think-tank" in 1963 (Beeching era) that the line between Newcastle and Edinburgh should be closed!

David Mead

Below: The humble Class 08, seen all over the UK rail network for many years, shows no sign of being replaced.

Its numbers are dwindling, but that seems to be due to a lack of work rather than major failure.

Class 08 827 stands at Adrossan on 12th August 1983. *Pete Cheshire*





Left: An interesting “oddity” of British Railways was the direct line from Tunbridge Wells to Hastings. Due to financial economies by Victorian builders, some tunnels on the line were built “narrow” which subsequently caused problems in as much that the standard loading gauge was less than the rest of the railways. In 1957, a special built of units were constructed for the ever increasing commuter based traffic between Hastings and London via Battle. The line was not electrified until 1986 being worked by these diesel units. It was not until 1986 when the line was electrified to the 3rd rail system and resignalling allowed the tunnels to have a single track. In this photo, taken by me on 11th February 1984, the 13.45 Hastings to London Charing Cross can be seen at Robertsbridge in the capable hands of Unit 1035. For a period of time in recent years, the direct route was branded as the “1066” line, after the Battle of Hastings”, which took place near to Battle on which the line serves. Robertsbridge was also the former junction for the “Kent and East Sussex Railway” to Headcorn via Tenterden. It is possible that the current preserved part of the line may be extended to reach Robertsbridge. *David Mead*

Right: It was with a fond memory when I read on a recent posting on the Railtalk Forum that Neville Hill is going to stage an Open Day in 2009. My last visit to Neville Hill - 55H - was on 31st July 1968, when among the locomotives inside the shed was N7 - 69621, which had been privately purchased.

I am pleased to report that it has been in regular service on the North Norfolk Railway, as well as visits to various heritage railways including Swanage. 69621 had been designed at Doncaster, in 1940 to a pre-grouping Great Eastern design. This version was one of four varieties. 69621 had been rebuilt with a round-topped firebox and weighed in slightly less than its counterparts - 61 tons 16 cwt as compared to 64 tons. Alongside you can see part of the Darlington 1937 build K4 - 3442 The Great Marquess, which also entered into preservation and has performed on steam specials and visited various heritage lines since. *David Mead*



