Railtalk Magazine

Issue 54
March 2011
ISSN 1756 - 5030



Colourful Colas Rail

Welcome to Issue 54 of Railtalk Magazine. Each month we bring you a jam packed round up of the best pictures, news and reports.

As were speed into the third month of 2011, there are only three question to ask? number one is... Have I slept though February, as January seems only like yesterday, number two being, will I have any money to go anywhere as my car insurance is due? and the third and most important one being.... will the sun make an appearance this month.

On a more serious note, this month marked the 10th anniversary of the Great Heck Rail Disaster where 10 people tragically lost their lives. Since then we have only have 1 major train accident (Grayrigg Disaster), does this mean our railways are much safer, or are we just lucky?

As always I hope everyone has a great month, and if you haven't submitted pictures before, please drop us an email with a few attached.
Thanks

Andy Patten

This issue wouldn't be possible without: Richard Hargreaves, Carl Grocott, Dave Dawson, Jonathan McGurk, Dave Harris, Jon Jebb, Derek Elston, Pete Cheshire, David Mead, Brian Battersby, Steve Andrews, David Hollowood, James Stoker, Steve Thompson, Richard Jones, Gary S. Smith, Craig Stretten, Jonathan Gill, Alex Roberts, Julian Churchill, Colin Irwin, Steve Madden, Ian Furness, Robert Beardwell, Stephen Beardwell, Phil Martin, Alan Usher, CJ Sutcliffe, James Paice, Chris Morrison, Yorkie, Danny Sladdin, Derek Hopkins, Charlie Robbins, Mike Williams, Daniel Stanbridge, John Coleman, John Martin, Wayne Radford, Barry Beeston, Robert Barton, Ben Bucki, Darrel Hendrie, Geoff Barton, John Alsop, Alan Naylor, Chris Stanley, Lewis Mitchell, Richard Holmes, John Edkins, James Bartlett, Cameron Burgess, Mark Walker and the guys at RailUK.

Welcome

Contents

Pg 2 - Welcome
Pg 4 - Charter Scene
Pg 26 - Pictures
Pg 88 - News and Features
Pg 88 - Scot-Rail
Pg 94 - Fares Advice
Pg 108 - View from the Outside
Pg 110 - The Nosh Report
Pg 112 - Different View
Pg 118 - Preserved Railways
Pg 166 - From the Archives

Contact Us

Editor: Andy Patten
editor@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Co Editor: David
david@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Charter Scene
charter.scene@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Steve Roberts (The Nosh Report)
steve.roberts@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

View from the Outside
megan.thomason@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Submissions

Pictures, articles and news can be entered through the forum, or by email to us at:

entries@railtalk.net

Please include a detailed description and credits.

Railtalk Magazine

Railtalk Magazine is published, at the beginning of each month.
Published by Railtalk Group. © Railtalk

Front Cover: On January 19th Class 47 727 "Rebecca" thrashes hard away from Sleaford working 6Z57 Boston Docks - Washwood Heath. *Daniel Stanbridge*
This Page: Class 97 302 and 97 303 are seen crossing Barmouth Bridge with 6Z97 Shrewsbury - Porthmadog on February 12th. *Carl Grocott*

Charter Scene





Spitfire Railtours - The Cumbrian Crusader IV

Left: On February 19th, Class 20 309 and 37 409 pass through snowy Bingley whist heading towards Carlisle. ***Ben Bucki***

Above: On the rear of the train, seen leaving Sheffield, was DRS Class 57 004 and West Coast's Class 57 601 providing much needed heat. ***Steve Thompson***

Below: Class 20 309 and 37 409 stand at Sheffield on February 19th during a snow shower. ***Steve Thompson***





Vintage Trains - The St. Valentines Express

Great Western Hall Class No. 4965 “Rood Ashton Hall” gathers pace as it storms south past Willington with the final leg of “The St. Valentines Express” to Tyseley on February 12th. ***Mark Walker***

Great Western Hall Class No. 4965 “Rood Ashton Hall” passes Meadow Lane whilst working 1Z44 Leicester - Tyseley “The St. Valentines Express” on February 12th. *Wayne Radford*

The Railway Touring Company - The Buxton Spa Express

The Buxton Spa Express on February 26th started out at Lancaster and ran through to Manchester and out towards Buxton, before heading via the Peak Forest and the Hope Valley to Sheffield and through Wakefield back to Manchester and returning to Lancaster once again. Featuring LMS Jubilee No. 5690 “Leander” and LMS Black 5 No. 44871, the pair are seen here running through Edale. ***CJ Sutcliffe***

The pair are seen again with LMS Black Five 4-6-0 No. 44871 leading, this time storming along between Stockport and Buxton. *Colin Irwin*



The plan was for the tour to arrive at Manchester, and for LMS Black Five 4-6-0 No. 44871 to be attached for the outward and return journeys between Manchester and Buxton. However due to some late running, 44871 instead waited at Eccles and was attached there, before leading the tour into Manchester Victoria, and is seen shortly afterwards climbing Miles Platting Incline. Class 143 021 is seen awaiting the proceed aspect working a service to Manchester from Leeds. *CJ Sutcliffe*



railnuts

Real nuts blog at **Railnuts.com**



RAIL NUTS is the answer to all your dreams! You can blog away to like-minded people all day long. RAIL NUTS is dedicated to people worldwide who are passionate about railways. Not just engines, but the whole railway scene. The railways changed and enhanced our world now RAIL NUTS can increase the clarity of your interest. Join a community of passionate, like-minded people who wish to get the facts right. The latest technology will be employed to give you absolutely top quality photographs and yes, more importantly, videos, enabling all of us to see in real time any special events or, indeed, sometimes mundane events, happening on railways throughout the world.



Battle Of Britain Class 4-6-2 No. 34067 “Tangmere” - Loaded test run

On February 8th, Southern Railway Bullied Light Pacific Battle Of Britain Class 4-6-2 No. 34067 “Tangmere” passes Clitheroe on a loaded test run from Carnforth via Hellifield and Blackburn and back to Carnforth. ***CJ Sutcliffe***



SR Light Pacific 4-6-2 No 34067 “Tangmere” (minus nameplates), is seen working 5Z70, its test train, through Eldroth on the Wennington line, February 8th. *David Hollowood*



Southern Light Pacific 4-6-2 No 34067 “Tangmere” is seen in the late afternoon light at Blackburn on February 8th. Her test run wasn’t entirely successful, as there were problems with leaking cylinders and a faulty air pump. ***Colin Irwin***

HASTINGS DIESELS LIMITED - The Winter Enigma

DEMU Thumper No. 1001 visited the Bedford to Bletchley branch for the first time on February 19th when it worked "The Winter Enigma" railtour from Hastings. It was an aptly named charter on a very cold and damp winters day. Here the unit is seen stabled in Bedford Carriage Sidings whilst the Train Crew had their break. ***Steve Madden***

VSOE - British Pullman

Class 67 029 “Royal Diamond” heads the 1Z82 London Victoria - Shalford “British Pullman” through Dyers Lane on February 4th. ***Wayne Radford***

RETRO RAILTOURS LTD

Southend Daytripper - www.retrorailtours.co.uk

The tour will run on Saturday 28th May 2011 picking up at:
Leeds - Dewsbury - Huddersfield - Stalybridge - Reddish South - Stockport

We have a requested a pair of BAR Class 31s to haul the train.

To book, you can visit our website www.retrorailtours.co.uk
Alternatively postal booking can be sent to: 2 Brookfield Grove, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 6TL.
Enquiries Tel: 0161 330 9055



Deduct £5 from price below if booked before 1st May

Standard Class - £59
First Class - £94
Premier Dining - £165

Class 20 305, 20 308, 20 301 and 20 302 are seen working 8X23 Derby Litchurch Lane - Old Dalby through Leicester Road on February 9th. *Wayne Radford*



Above: Class 08 669 "Bob Machin" is seen shunting at Doncaster on February 26th. *Paul Godding*
Below: Class 60 084 is seen at Crossfields, Warrington, with 6F84 Liverpool Bulk Terminal to Fiddlers Ferry Power Station on February 19th. *Pete Cheshire*





Above: On February 12th Class 333 007 arrives into Leeds with the 2V29 from Ilkley. *Steve Thompson*
Below: On the afternoon of February 9th, Class 67 022 heads north through Church Brampton on the Northampton loop with three RMC wagons. *Geoff Barton*





East Midlands Trains continues to hire a HST set to East Coast to cover for shortages.
Here the set is seen arriving into Doncaster under an extremely dark sky with a Leeds - London Kings Cross service on February 26th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 31 465 idles through Sleaford working 2Q88 Derby RTC - Derby RTC via Grantham and Skegness test train with DBSO 9701 was on the rear, January 19th. *Daniel Stanbridge*

The last two Class 508s for store at Telford railfreight terminal arrived in February. This is Class 66 843 with the pair running as 6Z51 Rugby - Donnington RFT paused at Wellington on February 16th. *Carl Grocott*

On January 19th, Class 47 727 “Rebecca” passes Sleaford with the steel hoods brought up from Eastleigh by 66 845 a few weeks earlier, working 6Z56 Washwood Heath - Boston Docks empties.
Daniel Stanbridge

On Your Marks, Get Set, or so it seems as Class 60 011, 66 077 and 66 232 line up for the next task at Peak Forest on February 3rd.
David Hollowood



Above: Class 60 096 descends Stormy Bank on February 12th working 6B04 Llanwern - Margam. *Lewis Mitchell*
Below: Freightliner's Class 86 637 and 86 610 head through Church Brampton on the Northampton loop on the afternoon of February 9th heading for Crewe Basford Hall. *Geoff Barton*





Above: On January 29th DRS/GBRf Class 20 302, 20 305, 20 304 and 20 301 pass through Hastings whist working 0Y22 Tonbridge - St Leonards Depot to collect 73 209 for its move to Cardiff. *Daniel Stanbridge*
Below: Later the same day the convoy are seen heading through Tonbridge for Cardiff the locos having collected the Class 73 and having had a bit of a shuffle round, with Class 20 304 now leading 20 301, 73 209, 20 302 and 20 305. *Daniel Stanbridge*



After reaching the Ironbridge power station, Telford, Class 97 302, the former 37 170, leads the 1Q09 Derby RTC - Machynlleth carriage sidings test train back across the Albert Edward Bridge over the River Severn on January 10th. Sister locomotive 97 304 is about to come into view as it tails the train. *Gary S. Smith*



Above: Arriva Class 57 315 departs Newport with 1V31 Holyhead - Cardiff Central on February 18th. *Lewis Mitchell*
Below: Class 90 011 "Lets Go East of England" approaches Colchester with a Norwich to London Liverpool Street service on February 12th. *Derek Elston*





Above: Freightliner's Class 66 597 passes through Pleasington station on February 22nd with the 6M11 Killoch - Fiddlers Ferry loaded coal working. *Chris Stanley*
Below: Class 66 731 makes an appearance in Hastings on February 16th sporting the new Europort/GBRf livery with Ex DRS 66 402 working 0Y22 Tonbridge - St. Leonards depot light engine move. *Daniel Stanbridge*





Above: Freightliner's Class 90 049 heads north through Northampton with a Felixtowe to Ditton working on February 11th. *Derek Elston*



Above: GBRf Class 66 707 "Sir Sam Fay" passes Blackburn with the Fiddlers Ferry - Newbiggin Gypsum flow on February 8th. *CJ Sutcliffe*



This would have been a smart livery for the Class 37s (If only DB had picked ones that worked for longer, or at all!). Class 37 419 sits at Toton on February 12th, its future unknown. *Richard Hargreaves*

Heading DVT first southbound, the Virgin Trains “Pretendolino” approaches Crewe with an empty stock movement back to Wembley on February 8th after working a special charter service. Once back at Wembley it would receive a fitness to run inspection, and returned to regular service. Freightliner Class 90s have recently been allocated to these services, and in this case Freightliner’s Class 90 041 was propelling the set from the rear.. *CJ Sutcliffe*



Following delivery from Alstom's Savigliano plant in Italy, the newest addition to the West Coast Class 390 fleet, 390 054, dubbed "The Extendolino" due to it's 11 carriage length compared to the rest of the classes 9 car length, is seen passing through Crewe northbound on an empty coaching stock working to Edge Hill depot in Liverpool, February 8th. ***CJ Sutcliffe***





Above: Arriva Trains Wales Class 158 830 stands at Wrexham on January 28th with a service to Manchester Piccadilly. ***Brian Battersby***
Left: Network Rail Class 97 301 is seen on the rear of a test train as it passes through Headlands Bridge, Kettering on February 6th. ***John Coleman***
Below: On February 12th, in a bid to save paths south of Doncaster owing to engineering work, Hull Trains Class 180 111 working 1A92 Hull - KX couples to Grand Central's Class 180 105, which was working 1A60 Sunderland - Doncaster. The two units were coupled, as can be seen in this photo. The pair then departed as a combined service to Kings Cross, how terribly sensible. ***Steve Thompson***



Class 73 107 is seen on the rear of a Network Rail test train as it passes through Clapham Junction on February 7th, heading for London Waterloo. Class 73 138 was at the head of the train. *John Coleman*



Above: Class 59 101 is seen passing through Swindon on a wet and miserable February 15th. *Derek Elston*
Below: DB Schenker liveried Class 60 011 winds its way through Manchester on February 16th. *Colin Irwin*





Above: On February 18th, Class 60 096 passes through Newport with 6B13 Robeston - Westerleigh Murco tanks. *Lewis Mitchell*
Below: With extra investment in the WAG Express service operated by Arriva Trains Wales, sights like this are set to become historical. Arriva Trains Wales Class 57 315 passes through Crewe into the sun heading for Shrewsbury and Cardiff. The early morning working was cancelled due to a fatality on the route, and is seen forming 5V31 Holyhead - Cardiff empty coaching stock for the evening service back to Holyhead, February 8th. *CJ Sutcliffe*





Above: Seen passing through Coaley on February 21st, Class 60 096 is working 6B13 Robeston - Westerleigh. *Lewis Mitchell*
Below: Going in the opposite direction at Coaley also on February 21st, Class 60 015 "Bow Fell" works the 6E41 Westerleigh - Lindsey. *Lewis Mitchell*





Above: Class 60 003 and 60 017 are seen in the sun at Toton on February 12th. *Richard Hargreaves*
Below: EuroShed Class 66 191 speeds through Doncaster on February 26th with the northbound Plasmor working. *Paul Godding*







Above: Class 321s have returned to normal duties working the Doncaster - Leeds local trains after problems with these units over the winter period. *Paul Godding*
Right: Resplendent in London Midland livery, Class 321 413 emerges from the works at Doncaster on February 26th. *Richard Hargreaves*
Bottom Left: Class 92 001 heads through Warrington Bank Quay with the northbound China Clay working on February 16th. *Colin Irwin*
Bottom Right: National Express liveried Class 317 504 stands at Tottenham Hale station with a London Liverpool Street - Hartford service on February 21st. *John Coleman*





Looking like it needs a bit of a wash! Class 66 077 sits at Peak Forest awaiting its next duty on February 3rd. *David Hollowood*

DRS Class 37 668 and 37 510 pass through Great Bowden, near Market Harborough with the 6Z51 Stockton to Sheerness scrap train on February 2nd. *John Coleman*





Above: Class 180s are getting rarer on the East Coast main line route in their original livery. However on January 27th, Class 180 102 was employed on Hull Trains duties seen here at Doncaster. ***John Martin***

Right: Looking very smart in its new London Midland livery, Class 321 414 approaches Garston station on the St. Albans Abbey branch, February 13th. ***Derek Elston***

Bottom Left: DB Schenker liveried Class 60 011 hauls a Tunstead to Oakleigh stone train past Peak Dale on February 26th. ***John Edkins***

Bottom Right: Class 73 138 leads 1Q83 Hither Green - Selhurst with 73 107 on the rear, seen here passing through Waterloo East on February 24th. ***Wayne Radford***









Above: The East Coast Class 91 fleet is slowly getting repainted into silver livery, however we doubt that at the current rate if they will all get done before the franchise is re-let. *John Martin*
Left: DRS Class 47 712 "Pride of Carlisle" & 57 009 are seen working 6Z50 Crewe - Devonport through Coaley on February 21st. *Lewis Mitchell*
Bottom Left: DRS Class 66 420 speeds past Headlands Bridge, Kettering on February 10th with the 6F93 Castle Cement train, this train until now had been a DB working. *John Coleman*
Bottom Right: Freightliner Class 90 045 passes through Church Brampton on a dull February 4th with a northbound liner. *Geoff Barton*











Top Left: On February 8th, Class 73 107 "Redhill 1894 – 1994" and Network Rail liveried Class 73 138 pass through Clapham Jct. with a Serco test train, 1Q84 Selhurst to Woking Yard.
Steve Madden
Top Right: Class 180 105 passes Halfpenny Lane, Featherstone with the 10:22 Bradford Interchange - London Kings Cross on February 4th. Grand Central have declared that they want to stop running these services via Pontefract and go via Hare Park to Mirfield instead, this was reported in the Pontefract and Castleford Express of February 3rd. Grand Central are already recieving opposition from local MP's on the matter.
Mark Walker
Left: Class 66 080 powers round the curve at Hambleton Jct. and onto the ECML under green signals with 6D42 Eggborough to Lindsey bogie tanks on 1st February. ***Mark Walker***

Electric Traction Limited's Class 86 701 is seen here at Manchester Oxford Rd with a GBRF route learner between Stafford and Manchester on February 8th. *Dave Harris*



Above: A rare visitor to Hastings on January 21st as Class 66 844 passes through working 0Z54 13.55 St Leonards Depot - Ashford Newtown Road sidings running 120 minutes early. *Daniel Stanbridge*
Below: On February 14th Freightliner's Class 90 044 pauses at Birmingham International station whilst working a London Euston service with the "Pretendalino" stock. *Richard Hargreaves*





Above: Colas Rail Class 66 843 works 5Z51 Gillingham - Rugby conveying Class 508 207 and 508 212 for storage at Telford Railfreight Terminal, seen passing through Larkhall Rise on February 15th. *Wayne Radford*
Below: GBRf Class 66 707 seen here at Winwick Jct. with 4C77 Fiddlers Ferry - Kirby Thore Gypsum service on February 9th. *Dave Harris*





Above: On February 8th, Class 66 065 drags 92 003 “Beethoven” on the approach to Redhill with the late running 4O57 Wembley Yard to Dollands Moor. *Steve Madden*
Below: With engineering works severing the line between Banbury & Oxford, Class 165 105 leaves the holding sidings at Oxford, whilst Cross Country Class 221 123 waits time with a Bournemouth service, February 26th. *Derek Elston*





Above: Freightliner’s Class 70 011 rounds the curve at Warrington Arpley with a Fiddlers Ferry bound coal train on February 19th. *Richard Hargreaves*
Below: South Eastern Class 465 034 stands at Cannon Street station with a Gillingham service on February 13th. *John Coleman*





DRS London on a Mission with Class 37 059 and 37 610 thrashing though Rainham with the 6Z61 Sheerness - Hitchin scrap train on January 31st. *James Bartlett*



Above: Class 37 059 and 37 610 are seen working 6Z51 Sheerness - Stockton at Irchester on February 1st. *Steve Madden*
Below: Having arrived a few hours earlier, Class 508 207 and 508 212 are seen inside Telford Railfreight Terminal where they join several other members of the Class 508/2 fleet for storage. *Richard Hargreaves*





Above: Class 37 059 stands at Newport with 1Q20 Crewe - Derby on February 18th. *Lewis Mitchell*
Below: A FCC Class 377 is in a rather unusual location on February 19th as Class 377 521 is waiting to depart St. Pancras International High Level with the 16:32 to Bedford. All FCC services were diverted in St. Pancras High Level because of the on-going Thameslink project work at Blackfriars and Farringdon. *Steve Madden*



On February 8th and in low wintry sunlight, Freightliner's Class 66 525 arrives into Blackburn. *Colin Irwin*



Get them while you can! Class 460 007 speeds through Clapham Junction heading for London Victoria on February 7th. With just a few of these units still in service, the current plan is for them to be withdrawn by the end of the year. ***John Coleman***



Class 60 015 “Bow Fell” passes slowly through Pontefract Monkhill on February 9th with 6D49 13:55 Ferrybridge - Lindsey empty fuel oil tanks. This service had just left Ferrybridge, travelling via Pontefract East Jct. and would take the Castleford line at Pontefract Monkhill. After heading through Milford and Gascoigne Wood it joined the ECML at Hambleton before turning off at Joan Croft Jc and heading east to Lindsey. A rather roundabout route, that will certainly be aided once the Shaftholme flyover is constructed, as it will remove a large amount of time from the current journey.

Mark Walker



Above: On February 1st, Class 37 059 and 37 610 are seen working 6Z51 Sheerness - Stockton just outside Rainham station. *James Bartlett*
Below: Class 86 604 heads north through Church Brampton on a very overcast February 4th. *Geoff Barton*



Northern Class 150 222 arrives into Blackburn on February 8th with a service for Manchester Victoria. *Colin Irwin*



Scot-Rail - with Jonathan McGurk



Above: Class 380 001 is seen at Prestwick Airport station with an Ayr to Glasgow Central service on February 23rd. *John Coleman*
Below: On February 10th, Class 170 415 is seen whizzing past on the approach to Haymarket station while working an ECS from Haymarket Depot - Edinburgh Waverley. *Jonathan McGurk*





Above: RAIL vs ROAD: Class 320 319 is seen from the busy A814 Clydeside Expressway en - route to Partick while working the 15.42 2H13 Airdrie - Helensburgh Central service, February 24th. *Jonathan McGurk*
Below: Class 380 103 and 380 004 are seen basking through the sun on the approach to Glasgow Central High Level station to terminate the 13.58 5K33 ECS working from Ayr Townhead C.S on February 24th. *Jonathan McGurk*



Scot-Rail - with Jonathan McGurk



Above: On February 24th Class 334 006 is seen at Haymarket station on a Helensbrough Central to Edingburgh Waverley service, with terrible grafitti covering the bodyside. This set is one of two sets out of the forty three - car fleet to receive the new Saltire livery and its a pity to see the new paintwork having to get ruined. *John Coleman*
Below: Class 314 216 and another sister unit are seen standing inside platform 8 at Glasgow Central High Level station prior to working the 15.15 2I12 Cathcart Circle service on February 28th. *Jonathan McGurk*





Above: Class 158 730 is seen approaching platform 3 at Haymarket station en - route to Edinburgh Waverley on February 10th. *Jonathan McGurk*
Below: Class 156 504 in the new Transport Scotland 'ScotRail - Scotland's Railway' blue and white Saltire livery is seen going through into Glasgow Central High Level station to terminate, February 24th. *Jonathan McGurk*



Scot-Rail - with Jonathan McGurk



Above: REFLECTIONS: The identification plate for controlled signal 'EH 905' at platform 2 at Haymarket station is seen reflecting on a little pool of water. *Jonathan McGurk*
Below: Class 66 434 passes through Haymarket station running light engine on February 24th. *John Coleman*





Above: In new Scotrail livery, Class 334 012 stands at Dalmuir station on February 24th. *John Coleman*
Below: Class 67 004 stands at Inverkeithing station with an Edinburgh Waverley "Fife Circle" service on February 24th. *John Coleman*



Fares Advice with RailUK

This month more questions and answers on the complex ticketing system of Britain's Railways.

Ticket Machines

Q: Is there any good reason why the majority of ticket machines will not sell an off peak ticket until the exact end of the peak? In some cases the first off peak train leaves about one minute after the end of the peak and that's not enough time to get a ticket. Before anyone says that people would use off peak tickets on peak trains, you can get an off peak ticket from the ticket office at any time and anyone that tried using an off peak ticket on a peak train would be made to pay the full fare.
The ticket machine could also display a warning if you selected an off peak ticket before the end of the peak that the tiket was not valid until the peak ends.

A: Well I'm sure it is to try and stop people using off-peak tickets on peak trains. I agree that the machine should alert you to restrictions and make you accept the notice, then print a note saying restrictions accepted along the bottom of the ticket. If you go to the ticket office the clerk will make sure that you are aware of the restrictions. In some cases even they won't sell same day off-peak until the last peak train has departed. In my youth that was a real pain as the first off-peak train to London departed at 0930, so you had to go to the ticket office.

A few years ago there was an easement at Crayford which allowed off-peak tickets on the 0928 as it started at Crayford and was therefore off-peak for the rest of it's journey. I'm pretty sure that the machine wasn't adjusted for that either.

Euston to B'ham with 16-25 RailCard

Q: The Nationalrail web site shows the cost of a single on the 8:43 weekday as £75.50 (anytime). When I add my 16-25 railcard this drops to £28.60 (off-peak). This is considerably more that the 33% discount I was expecting. Is the Nationalrail web site correct? If so it seems to imply that there are different offpeak time restrictions for railcards. But I cannot see this documented on any of the Virgin or National rail sites.
Can anybody throw any light on this?

A: Virgin Off-Peak tickets bought with a railcard are valid at anytime, and as such this negates the need for an Anytime ticket during the Peak hours

Virgin E-Tickets Help Needed

Q: I bought 2 tickets to London Euston for travel from Liverpool Lime Street, I put my girlfriends name on the online form as being the second passenger. I paid for the tickets and got my confirmation email but my girlfriend was not listed in the confirmation email and I expected that she would be listed on one of the e-tickets that were delivered to my email address about 2 hours after purchase.

However, she isn't listed on any of the tickets. All of the tickets have myself listed as the passenger, will she still be able to travel on one of the tickets? I have read the somewhat sketchy advice available on the virgin website that states on some tickets the person who bought the tickets will be named as the passenger. This doesn't really clarify the situation for me.

A: Don't worry, these e-tickets only list the person who paid for them, it's normal.
However just make sure you have the card used to make the booking with you and you'll be absolutely fine. There'll be two separate tickets with different numbers on them, just in your name - that's not a problem at all.

Northern £10 Rail Day Ranger

Following on from the offer in the Lancashire press (http://www.northernrail.org/march10). Northern Rail have said that they will be doing the same deal for those of us who live East of the Pennines.
They have not yet fixed the date of the promo as they are negotiating the final details, but I understand it will be well publicised at launch.
Keep an eye on thier website but we're guessing the promo could be with the same publisher, Johnson Press, so it's worth looking out for details in their papers.
The papers which Johnson Press publish in the Yorkshire are: - Yorkshire Post (which would be the obvious one for NR to go for), along with a whole host of weekly publications which are part of the Yorkshire Weekly Newspaper Group and Yorkshire Regional Newspapers.

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.

GREEN LIGHT FOR NEW PLATFORMS AND FOOTBRIDGE AT CAMBRIDGE STATION

Plans to transform train services between Cambridge and London Liverpool Street have cleared the final hurdle after Cambridge City Council granted permission for Network Rail's £16.7m scheme to build a new island platform, complete with footbridge and lifts, at Cambridge station. The decision means work on the scheme can start in April with a scheduled completion in time for the December 2011 timetable change, which will see the introduction of 50% longer National Express East Anglia trains on key commuter services between Cambridge and London Liverpool Street.

Andrew Munden, Network Rail route director, said: "This is excellent news for Cambridge and the surrounding area. Britain relies on rail to get more than 3m people to and from work every day and as passenger numbers continue to grow it is essential that we maintain investment in our rail network. "The new platforms will make a real difference to passengers, boosting capacity on this busy line, improving punctuality and reducing overcrowding further still. Our improvements at Cambridge are part of an investment programme which will see the station and surrounding area transformed over the coming years."

The new platforms are crucial to train operator National Express East Anglia's plans to improve train services and provide more seats for passengers on the West Anglia route in 2011, with the introduction of new, longer trains now under construction. Today, services between Cambridge and the capital are very busy and the existing track layout in and around the station is constrained, especially at peak times. Adding two new 270m bi-directional platforms – numbered 7 and 8 – means trains can arrive and depart in either direction, freeing up vital capacity on the existing platforms and making sure Cambridge can cater for additional rail services in the future. A new covered footbridge and lifts will connect the new platforms to the rest of the station, making life easier for those who find the stairs a struggle. After consultation with local cycling groups, the staircases will include cycle guttering to help cycle users move around the station.

Andrew Chivers, managing director of National Express East Anglia, said: "We're very pleased that work is to commence on the additional platform capacity at Cambridge. Later this year we will be introducing a fleet of 30 brand new trains on our Stansted Express and West Anglia route which will include running longer trains at peak-times on our busy Cambridge to Liverpool Street service. The island platform will also help to improve train service performance at Cambridge."



LONDON OVERGROUND RAIL SERVICES RESUME AFTER SUCCESSFUL UPGRADE

The multi-million pound upgrade of the London Overground network is close to completion following the successful commissioning of new signalling equipment, which will allow more trains to run on the line connecting Richmond and Clapham Junction with Stratford.



Once complete in May, passengers using London Overground services will benefit from up to eight trains an hour during peak times on parts of the network, double the current number and with a more reliable timetable. New and longer platforms at some stations will also allow four carriages per train, increasing capacity.

Andrew Munden, Network Rail route director, said: "London relies on rail to get more than a million people to and from work every day, which is why investment in projects like the London Overground upgrade is so important to the capital's economy.

"I'm delighted to report that last week's work went to plan and that we're now only a couple of months away from completion. This project will provide vital additional capacity in time for the Olympic Games and help meet growing demand on this busy commuter line, supporting economic growth across vast swathes of London."

"Time to think big", says Virgin

Virgin Rail Group (VRG) has submitted its application to bid for the West Coast Mainline franchise, which is scheduled to start in April 2012. A bid team has been created under Paul Furze-Waddock, Business Development Director, as VRG aims to continue the massive success of recent years, which has seen the West Coast franchise operate the fastest-growing route in Britain.

Under Virgin Rail Group, the West Coast franchise has doubled customer numbers to 28 million in the last six years and now has the highest satisfaction rating of any long-distance franchise, at 90 per cent, as measured by independent watchdog Passenger Focus.
"There has been great progress in recent years and we are all committed to trying to continue that momentum," said Tony Collins, CEO, "and we plan to submit an exciting and deliverable bid if we are given the opportunity.
"Despite the huge improvements, we certainly don't think the work has finished and the bid team is brimming with exciting ideas to take this franchise to an even higher level.
"We have been encouraged by the public commitment by the Prime Minister and Transport Secretary, to continue investing in key infrastructure projects to drive forward the economic recovery and reduce the North-South economic divide. The vision shown in 1997 by the then Government and shareholders when we started this franchise is now delivering the results we all hoped for.

"Investment, innovation and pioneering thinking will take this franchise forward, paying money to the taxpayer and improving customer service even further. The Government's plans for high speed rail have shown there is political vision, and growth on the West Coast franchise will be crucial in delivering that vision. It is a chance to think big."
VRG's application consists of a complex Pre-Qualification Questionnaire, which all potential bidders must complete, before a shortlist is drawn up and a full invitation to tender is published.

NETWORK RAIL SEEKS BRIGHT IDEAS WITH MATCHMAKING WEBSITE

Network Rail is on a quest for bright ideas to help make the railway more efficient with the launch of a new matchmaking website for suppliers to submit solutions to a range of business challenges.
The new website sets out a series of priorities and challenges Network Rail aims to overcome to deliver a better value railway and invites suppliers from the rail industry and beyond to submit their ideas on how they can help overcome them.
Network Rail is asking Britain's boffins: How would you make us save more energy? How would you show us how to lay track more quickly? How would you monitor our infrastructure more smartly?
Ian Sexton, Network Rail's director; contracts and procurement said: "Innovations such as high-output machinery and our modular switches and crossings programme have shown that we can make significant improvements to the way we manage our infrastructure, speeding up processes and reducing costs.

"Our new innovation website provides the industry with more clarity of our innovation priorities, helping suppliers to focus their efforts on developing solutions and more efficient ways of working that meet the demands of a modern, better value railway." The website is part of a new streamlined process to make it quicker and easier for proposals to be assessed and developed. The website provides clearer guidance on Network Rail's priorities and requirements, helping suppliers to focus their ideas and reduce the costs and risks associated with supplier-led research and development.
The company is also keen on attracting new entrants from other industries, as well as small businesses, universities and research institutes.

Steve Yianni, Network Rail's director of engineering added: "We have developed a new innovation process based on extensive benchmarking from rail and other industries, which we successfully trialled last year. Our aims are to focus our efforts on clear business needs, improved engagement with our supply base, and step up the pace in developing new, and better quality, technology to the railway."
Proposals must meet a strict set of requirements before they can be considered. They must be fundamentally new and different, solve a particular problem and have a strong business case. Each proposal will be assessed by a specially assigned innovation supply chain manager to see whether the idea should be taken forward and developed further.

The website can be found by clicking on the following link: www.networkrail.co.uk/brightideas

DRS solves gauge constraints

Direct Rail Services (DRS), the UK's leading rail freight operator is delighted to announce the acquisition of a fleet of new IDA Lowliner vehicles to complement the company's existing extensive fleet. These state of the art pieces of rolling stock will further expand DRS' capabilities and unlock new routes for customers without the need for costly gauge enhancements.

In addition, these new vehicles have an optimised platform length which will allow up to 20% more volume to be transported within existing train lengths making DRS' services the most efficient in the market. It will also open up large parts of the rail network to hi-cube container traffic.
Mr Ian Whelpton from WH Davis, the manufacturer of the wagons said, "It has taken a considerable time to bring this radical wagon design to market and we are delighted to receive the first production order from DRS, as it demonstrates confidence in the wagon's operational abilities following lengthy trial running of the prototype".

DRS' continuing drive and campaign for more freight to be moved by rail and to contribute positively to the reduction of carbon emissions will receive a massive boost with this innovative move.
Neil McNicholas, Managing Director from DRS added, "We are delighted to be leading the industry in introducing these new vehicles to the rail freight market place. We are offering a solution that will unlock significant potential in the rail freight sector by offering flexibility and efficiency. We look forward to welcoming everyone to Multimodal 2011 where DRS will officially launch the new wagon."

Big Boxes for Southampton Port

Freightliner runs the very first service to the port of Southampton conveying 9'6" containers on standard wagons.

In the early hours of Wednesday 23rd February 2011, Freightliner ran the very first service to the port of Southampton conveying 9'6" containers on standard wagons. The 0120 departure from Trafford Park (Manchester) conveyed several laden high cube containers on standard wagons on the recently cleared W10 route to Southampton. Previously 'high cube' containers would need to be loaded onto specialist wagons.

Adam Cunliffe, Managing Director, Freightliner Ltd commented; "I am delighted that Freightliner are now able to offer our customers real flexibility in our service offering from Southampton. "Our range of destinations served remained constant throughout the recession and offered a consistent service to our customers providing the basis for further growth. Post gauge clearance this offering will be improved through the launch of two additional daily trains."

Freightliner's facility at Trafford Park in Manchester is the largest inland terminal in the UK. Moving circa 150,000 containers annually.

EAST COAST ON THE RIGHT WAVELENGTH FOR A SAFER RAILWAY

East Coast has become the first train operator in Britain to begin using a new digital radio system which engineers say will deliver enhanced train performance, improved passenger information and a safer railway.
The new GSM-R digital radio system was switched on recently for the first time in full passenger service. It was initially switched on across over 100 miles of railway on the East Coast route between London King's Cross and Stoke Summit, near Grantham. The system, which provides seamless digital clarity radio links between train drivers and signalling and control staff – even through the line's 18 tunnels - will be phased in across the entire British railway network by the end of 2014.
The system incorporates immediate notification of all drivers in the area of an incident – a feature which has already averted more serious delays on two separate occasions on the West Coast route.
East Coast Property and Projects Director Tim Hedley-Jones said: "East Coast have achieved a significant milestone in being the first train operator to begin using the GSM-R system over the busiest section of our route.
"GSM-R will deliver clear safety and performance benefits, initially on the East Coast route between London King's Cross and Stoke Summit, to the south of Grantham."
The introduction of the new radio system has proved a major logistical challenge for East Coast and infrastructure provider Network Rail. Across the first section of route to begin using the system, 40 GSM-R communications masts and 91 equipment cabinets have been installed at the trackside – while more than 75 East Coast drivers and 56 Network Rail signallers have been trained to use the new technology.

The new cab radios have also been installed into 24 East Coast Class 43 diesel High Speed Train driving cabs. A programme to fit the digital system into the remaining six HST and 60 Class 91 electric driving cabs has begun.
Meanwhile, Network Rail and other train operators will now press ahead to roll out the new radio system to all routes south of a line between the Wash and the Severn Estuary by December 2012, when licenses covering frequencies used by existing analogue train cab radios are due to expire.

Further expansion will see the system cover all rail lines across Britain by the end of 2014, fully replacing existing life-expired analogue radios which have become increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain.
The introduction of the new GSM-R system on the East Coast route south of Stoke Summit, near Grantham, follows successful extended trials conducted since 2009 by First Scotrail in the Strathclyde area, and by Virgin Trains on the West Coast route.

DRS wins luxury boat train contract

Direct Rail Services, the UK's leading rail freight operator, continues to expand its portfolio of rail activities with the addition of First Class passenger services to the port of Southampton in partnership with Cruise Saver Travel of Poole, Dorset. Following the inaugural DRS operated service in 2008; the 2011/12 programme will see trains depart from Glasgow Central and Edinburgh Waverley stations, transporting passengers to meet luxury Cunard, P&O and Princess Cruises liners.
Arriving directly into the Port of Southampton, adjacent to the waiting cruise ship, passengers will enjoy a full dining service in first class coaching stock, with luggage taken on arrival at the railway station and seamlessly transferred to the vessel at Southampton. The first class journey from Scotland to Southampton transports passengers away from the hassles and stress of air travel or motorway traffic and provides a perfect start and end to these special holidays.
The first train of the 2011 season will depart from Edinburgh Waverley on the 19th April 2011 calling at Newcastle, Leeds and Solihull. Glasgow services will call at Preston and Manchester (Stockport).
Steve Finn, DRS' Business Development Manager commented – "DRS are renowned in the rail industry for our reliability and excellence in service performance, and we are delighted to provide these services with Cruise Saver Travel. Aside from the relaxed environment, the train reduces carbon emissions and road congestion associated with passengers travelling to Southampton." John Capel – Manager of Cruise Saver said "We want our passengers holiday to commence the moment that they board our train at the station. They are embarking on a luxury cruise, so our train and staff has to be able to provide the first-class service that they will receive once they have boarded their ship. It is all about enhancing our passengers 'cruise experience' and we are committed, along with our friends at DRS, in providing an unrivalled mode of transport to the port of Southampton."

The iPhone revolution reaches rail in an end to ticket office queues

The iPhone revolution has finally reached rail travel with the announcement of a pioneering new approach to ticketing from the country's most innovative train operator.

Chiltern Railways has announced details of an integrated mobile ticketing system that will finally solve the age-old problem of ticket office queues.

A free iPhone application will provide passengers with details of the cheapest prices and train times, and then deliver the ticket as a 2D barcode within the application. Special scanners on gates at stations will read the iPhone screen to enable passengers to "touch in" and "touch out" of stations. The iPhone application will include information on delays and disruption, so that passengers will be able to travel confident of getting the latest information.

For the first time, passengers arriving at a station without a ticket will be able to get through the barrier within seconds, without needing to queue at ticket offices, call contact centres or negotiate ticket machines. The iPhone application will remember favourite journeys and debit card details, so that travel can be made with just a few touches of the screen.

This innovation marks the first time that any rail passengers have been able to use smartphones to buy and receive rail tickets through one transaction. Unlike most commercial booking services, the Chiltern Railways iPhone application will not charge a booking fee, and the application will be free to download.

The iPhone app will launch in Spring, followed shortly by apps for BlackBerry, Android, Nokia, Samsung and Sony Ericsson.

This innovation in ticketing is a first within the rail industry and comes at a time when Chiltern Railways is investing £250 million along their entire route to transform rail travel to and from London through creation of the Chiltern Mainline.

Thomas Ableman, Marketing Director of Chiltern Railways said: "We are delighted to move rail ticketing into the twenty first century. We are already spending £250m to speed up our passengers' journeys through faster tracks – we are now speeding up their journeys by ending forever the need to queue at ticket offices or phone call centres.
This announcement leapfrogs rail travel into forefront of travel technology."

The application has been developed with partners ATOS Origin and Masabi.

Graham Bodman, Head of Transport Products for Atos Origin said: "We are delighted to deliver an early roll-out of a mobile ticket purchase application direct for a train operator. The i-app solution is connected to our AVANTIX WebTIS retail engine, which Chiltern already use to sell tickets on-line, and also to our AVANTIX Mobile solution, which verifies the mobile barcode. This latest innovation from Chiltern offers customers a quicker and more convenient way to buy and collect tickets directly via their mobile device with no additional transaction fees."

"The era of queuing at train stations to buy tickets is coming to an end. Mobile handsets can provide an enormously convenient and user friendly means of searching for train times and then buying and displaying tickets. While this is coming first to the iPhone, we've designed it so the application can be rolled out on almost all phones in the near future," said Ben Whitaker, CEO of Masabi.

Chiltern Railways will continue to work with partners ATOS Origin and Masabi to develop pioneering technology to meet the growing needs of their passengers.

Freightliner names PowerHaul 70004

The official unveiling ceremony took place at The National Railway Museum in York to celebrate The Coal Industry Society's 500th meeting. Locomotive PowerHaul 70004 was named by ex-Secretary of State for Energy Tony Benn.

The PowerHaul locomotives have increased tractive effort, haulage and acceleration capabilities whilst lowering carbon emissions, enabling Freightliner to haul longer heavier trains. Martin Wilks, Director of Coal, Freightliner Heavy Haul Limited commented: " Freightliner is delighted that one of our PowerHaul locomotives has been named in honour of the Coal Industry Society. The introduction of the PowerHaul locomotives shows Freightliner's commitment to investment to continue to provide our customers with the best possible service."

In July 2010 Freightliner celebrated moving 100 Millionth tonne of coal and operates to all the UK rail connected power stations. The 100 millionth tonne landmark is testimony to the position that Freightliner Heavy Haul has achieved in the industry working closely with its customers and supply chain partners.

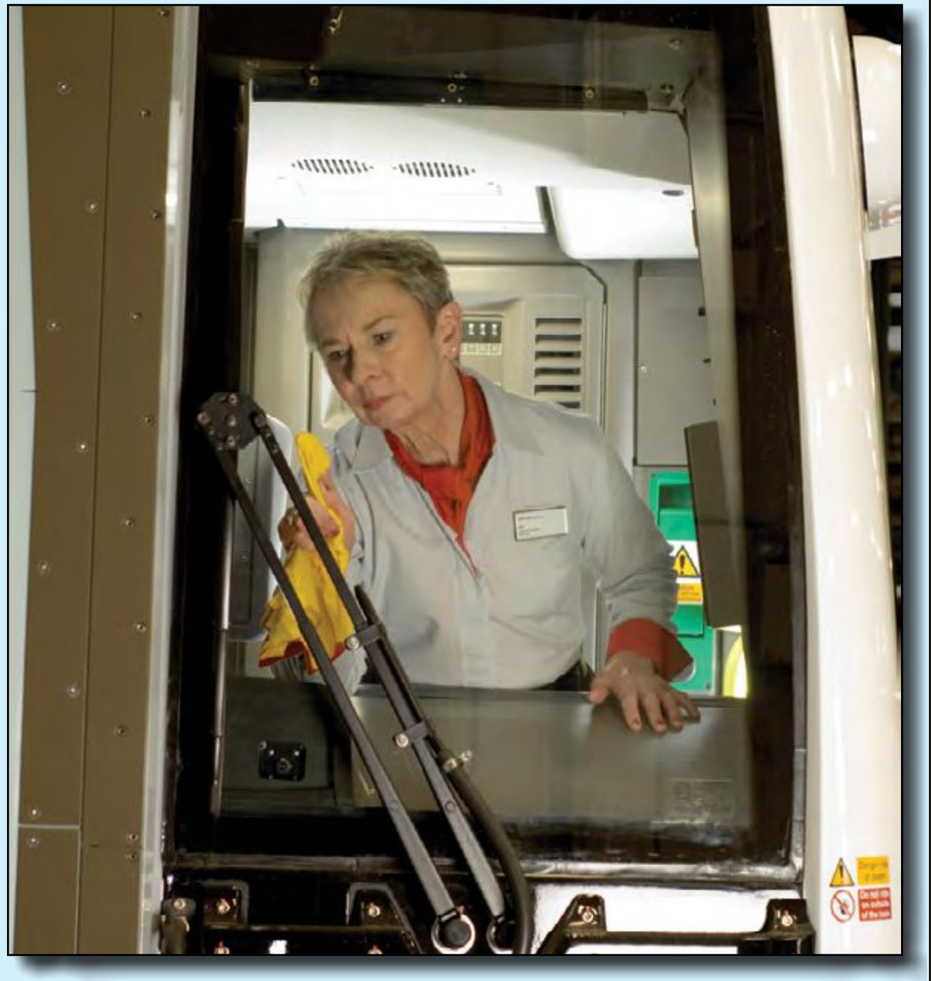
John Fitzgerald, Port Director Associated British Ports Grimsby & Immingham and Chairman of The Coal Industry Society said, "Given the historical intrinsic link between coal supply, railways and ports it was wholly appropriate we staged the 500th meeting of the Coal Industry Society at the National Railway Museum in York. The committee were very appreciative that Freightliner chose to honour the occasion by naming one of its new PowerHaul locomotives after the Society. We were indeed fortunate that Tony Benn, whose political life often centred around energy supply issues, was there to perform the naming."



NATIONAL EXPRESS STAFF STAR IN 'POLISHED TO PERFECTION' MEDIA CAMPAIGN FOR NEW TRAINS

National Express East Anglia (NXEA) staff are featuring in a media campaign to promote the introduction of new trains on the company's Stansted Express service this Spring. Titled 'Polished to Perfection' the campaign features chosen members of NXEA's customer service team as they help apply the finishing touches to the brand new Class 379 Electrostar trains. The campaign highlights the attention to detail and care undertaken in delivering brand new trains into service, showing the various members of staff taking great pride, beyond the call of duty, in the appearance of the eagerly awaited brand new trains. Photographed at the Bombardier factory in Derby where the 30 new four-carriage trains are being built, the media campaign – to be launched in March – will be prominent in various formats throughout the London Underground network and at North London rail stations. The adverts will raise awareness of the new trains ahead of their introduction into service.

Adrian Warren, Marketing Manager at Stansted Express said: "We wanted to communicate the care and attention we've all undertaken in preparing the new trains for service and what better way to achieve this than for the campaign to feature our staff who work on the Stansted Express day-in, day-out. Amy, Mark and Gill adapted so quickly to the demands of being part-time media stars and will be featured across the London Underground and at various North London stations as the 'Polished to Perfection' campaign takes-off."



The staff who are featuring in the campaign are; Amy Street, Customer Service Advisor, London Liverpool Street, Mark Puddefoot, Cabin Crew Stansted Express and Gill Blakes, Cabin Crew Stansted Express. The campaign was developed with communications agency JacobBailey and it will be supported by the Regional Press, below-the-line promotions and on station activity.

Photo: Gill Blakes polishing a new class 379 train. ©NXEA

Chiltern Mainline Announcement

Chiltern Railways has announced that, to reduce the risk of unplanned disruption to passengers, it will defer the launch of the Chiltern Mainline to late summer. This decision has been taken following a thorough review of its Evergreen 3 project which highlighted a risk of overrunning engineering works in May if the works proceeded as planned.

Rather than risk unplanned disruption or late notice timetable changes, the company will move a section of works to utilise the quieter month of August, thereby ensuring passengers are not affected by unexpected disruption that may impact on their work or home life in the busy month of May.

The project to create the Chiltern Mainline commenced in January 2010, and has so far delivered a series of improvements along the route to enable trains to run faster. These include upgrades to track, a new platform at Bicester North, additional fast track at Princes Risborough, new cross-overs (places where trains can switch lines) at three locations and a new two-track bridge in South Ruislip.

As a result of the changes being made, the closure in April/May and weekend works until May will now be significantly reduced in scope, meaning that fewer days are required in May, and that the works will be less disruptive. It also means that some weekend closures of the route that would have resulted in no trains to Marylebone will now be scaled back. There will be a normal service for most weekends during the summer months, with the critical works completed in August, when many commuters are on holiday and passenger numbers are at their lowest. This will be done through a partial closure in late August for commissioning, when the new infrastructure is made ready for use. This needs to take place shortly before the new timetable starts operating in late summer.

Chiltern Railways Chairman Adrian Shooter CBE said, "We are obviously disappointed to be postponing the launch of the Chiltern Mainline but do believe it is the right decision for our passengers. We are undertaking this project to offer a better service to passengers and are keen for customers to see the benefits of our investment as soon as possible. However, we are not comfortable with a risk of our passengers experiencing unplanned disruption and would rather spread the work over a slightly longer period and enable our passengers to plan their journeys with confidence. We are sorry that we are not able to offer the improved service from May as planned, but it will be ready when commuters get back from their summer break."

Last week, Chiltern Railways announced details of the Mainline timetable expected to be launched in May, and which will now launch in late summer. This included details of 90 minute trains from Birmingham to London, earlier arrivals in London for commuters and reductions in journey time across the route. These details are still available at www.chilternrailways.co.uk, and the company is actively seeking comments on this timetable.

Royal Wedding Fever Grips Europe

Eurostar, the high-speed passenger service that 'marries' Britain and the continent has reported a 28% surge in inbound bookings for the royal wedding on Friday 29 April, compared to the same weekend last year.
Thousands of people from across Europe are expected to travel to London with Eurostar to see Prince William and Kate Middleton tie the knot, as royal wedding fever sweeps across the continent.
Lionel Benbassat, Head of Sales and Marketing in France for Eurostar said:
"Not since Charles and Diana married in 1981 have we seen such huge interest across the continent in the British royal family. People are truly fascinated by this wedding and they want to experience the excitement of the big day and the party atmosphere first hand. "This fascination isn't just limited to countries that have a monarchy themselves. We've seen a surge in bookings from republican Germany and France as well as from Belgium and the Netherlands, which have their own monarchies. After three years of financial austerity, it looks like Europe is gearing up for party."

According to Visit London around 1.1 million people are expected to visit London when Prince William and Kate Middleton get married on April 29.
With convenient connections and fast journey times, it's easy to travel between London and the continent with Eurostar. Journey times between London and Amsterdam and London and Cologne are just over four hours and between London and Marseille just over six hours.

SSHH ... IT'S THE NEW FIRST CLASS QUIET COACH!

East Coast is promising a more relaxing journey by creating a new Quiet Coach in First Class. The train operator will introduce the Quiet Coach in May alongside a new complimentary meal and drinks service for customers travelling in First Class

Both initiatives are part of a number of major improvements which East Coast is making to respond to customer demand and to increase its share of the travel market between London, the East Midlands, Yorkshire, North East England and Scotland.
The new First Class Quiet Coach will be available on all of East Coast's services, providing more than four thousand 'silent seats' per weekday. From 22 May, East Coast passengers travelling in coach K on electric-hauled trains, or coach J on diesel powered services, will be asked to:

- switch off their mobile phones or turn them to silent mode;
- make and receive mobile phone calls in the vestibule between the carriages to avoid disturbing others;
- refrain from using personal audio devices, gaming consoles or other electrical equipment, except in silent mode;
- speak quietly.

East Coast Commercial Director Peter Williams said: "The majority of First Class customers who we surveyed recently supported the idea of introducing a Quiet Coach on East Coast trains.
"Around four in five people surveyed said they would not mind fellow passengers having conversations quietly while travelling in a Quiet Coach. However, they would prefer that mobile phones and other electronic devices, including lap top computers and games consoles, were either switched off or switched to the silent mode.
"They said this would improve the atmosphere and ambience on-board, and help them to have a more relaxing and enjoyable journey. "We already have a Quiet Coach in Standard Class, and are delighted to now introduce a Quiet Coach option to customers travelling First Class from 22 May.
"Customers travelling in First Class will also have the added benefit of being able to enjoy our recently upgraded Wi-fi and a new at-seat complimentary food and drink service all as part of the same ticket price.
"All of our customers will also benefit from a new and improved timetable which will provide more services, more seats and many faster journeys for customers across our 920-mile long route." Advance reservations for seats in the new First Class Quiet Coach will be available from this Friday, 25 February, for travel from Sunday 22 May.

East Midlands Trains starts work on Meridian train makeover

East Midlands Trains has recently embarked on the final phase of a £30 million programme to totally refurbish its entire fleet of trains. The final stage of the programme will see all of East Midlands Trains' 27 Meridian trains (Class 222s) completely refurbished.
The improvement programme, which will be carried out at the company's Derby Etches Park Depot, will deliver a totally new interior look for passengers. New leather seats will enhance the First Class area of the train, and new seat covers and carpeting will deliver improvements throughout the Standard Class coaches. As part of the refurbishment, there will also be changes to increase the available luggage space.
Tim Shoveller, Managing Director for East Midlands Trains, said: "We're really excited to be starting work on the final stage of our £30 million train refurbishment programme. Whilst the Meridians are the newest trains within our fleet, we still want to make sure they given their fair share of care and attention as part of our refurbishment programme.
"We're sure that our passengers will be delighted with the extra touches, including the additional luggage space and the new luxury leather seats which will help to give an extra special feel to our First Class coaches."
The £6 million refurbishment is due to be completed by early 2012. The Meridian trains are used to operate services on the East Midlands Trains main line route to London, which includes services from Sheffield, Derby, Nottingham and Leicester to London St Pancras and the daily service from Lincoln to London. The trains operate in 4, 5 and 7 car formations, and a total of 143 vehicles will be refurbished through this programme. All the Meridian fleet is now fitted with on board WiFi offering passengers easy access to the internet, email and other online applications, whether for work or leisure purposes. First Class passengers can benefit from complimentary access to the service, whilst other passengers pay a small charge using a debit or credit card through the online secure payment page.

South West Trains provides even greener trains with launch of new energy meter

South West Trains, the UK's biggest commuter rail franchise, has recently, announced the start of a brand new initiative which is designed to cut energy consumption on its trains by up to 10% a year. The new Train Energy Management System (TEMS), which is being piloted on 20 of the company's Class 444, 450, 455 and 458 trains, will allow improved environmental performance through the development of new eco-friendly driving techniques.

The first five trains to be equipped with the TEMS, also known as the railway energy meter, has now been completed and is back into service on the London Waterloo to Reading line. A total of 20 trains are scheduled to be equipped with the technology by May 2011.

The energy meter allows the South West Trains engineering team to accurately determine the energy used by trains on a specific route. One of the biggest impacts will be the ability to improve the environmental performance of each and every South West Trains service, through developing new eco-friendly driving techniques which reduce electricity consumption.

Christian Roth, Engineering Director for South West Trains, said: "Rail is already one of the most environmentally friendly modes of public transport and we are committed to making it even greener. Our latest initiative to reduce energy consumption builds on the work we have already done and demonstrates our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint even further.
"We are optimistic that this pilot project will help us deliver a further 10% reduction in energy from the development of eco-friendly driving techniques.

"Currently our electric trains account for almost 90% of the total South West Trains fleet and these trains run around 33 million miles every year. This means there's clearly huge potential to make a real difference in terms of energy reduction."
The scheme will generate valuable data which will be assessed by train engineers and driver managers. It will provide advice to drivers of all trains on the techniques most appropriate to the individual route to maximise the use of the electricity. On-board passenger amenities, journey times and reliability will not be affected by the results of the trial and will remain at the same levels as currently.

As part of Stagecoach Group's five year carbon reduction plan, South West Trains' fleet has also been equipped with regenerative braking technology to harness the energy from braking and return it as electricity to the rail system. Other initiatives include an upgrade to station lighting to new energy efficient systems which use 60 per cent less electricity.

Sunday Trips to Oban Extended

ScotRail is to extend Sunday train services for day trippers to Oban following successful trial runs last summer.
Launched over six weeks in 2010, the Edinburgh-Oban trains will run on 10 Sundays from 26 June to 28 August inclusive. They will also call in both directions at Falkirk High and Dalmuir - and at stations Helensburgh Upper-Connel Ferry inclusive, with Falls of Cruachan by request. The service – welcomed by VisitScotland – is timed to give passengers five hours in the West Highland town. Graeme Macfarlan, ScotRail's marketing manager, said: "The trial proved its worth in 2010 and we are delighted it is not only being repeated but extended to 10 weekends." He added: "The trains are also included in the public timetable, so we can promote greater awareness – and offer products such as Kids Go Free.

"The calls at Falkirk High and Dalmuir will further extend its appeal, and the services should boost tourism as they fit very well into the day trip market."
David Adams McGilp, VisitScotland's Regional Director in Argyll and Bute said: "We are delighted that there will be even more Sunday trains to and from Oban this year from Edinburgh. There are lots of things to see and do in the Seafood Capital of Scotland, and this extended service will really help put the town and its surroundings on the map."

ROUND-THE-CLOCK WORK REOPENS RAIL LINE FOR MORNING RUSH HOUR

Engineers from Network Rail and its contractors worked round-the-clock on the weekend of February 5th/6th so commuters would be inconvenienced as little as possible on by a landslip that had blocked the main Manchester to Sheffield line.

Shortly before midnight on Saturday 5th February, Network Rail was contacted by Derbyshire police to say that a landslip from the railway had partially blocked the B6062 at Buxworth, near Chinley.

Staff sent to investigate discovered part of the embankment had slipped and was blocking one lane of the road. The slip was next to the Manchester bound railway line but as a safety precaution, both railway lines were closed.

Network Rail called out its contractors who brought tower lighting and excavators to the site.
Closer inspection revealed it was sandy soil that had been washed away, rather than the embankment itself, and that the railway track appeared to be unaffected.

This meant that first thing Sunday, the Sheffield bound line could be reopened with a 5mph speed restriction to allow the train companies to operate an amended timetable using the one line.
During the course of Sunday, approximately 400 tonnes of stone were brought to site and put into position using a long-reach excavator.

Work to rebuild the embankment was finished by 11 pm yesterday (Sunday 6th Feb) and an inspection of the track took place in the early hours of the morning, resulting in both lines being reopened with a 20 mph speed restriction.

Commenting on the efforts, Network Rail route director Jo Kaye said: "This is a perfect example of teamwork within the rail industry. We had the contacts and contracts in place to be able to mobilise people at short notice. We liaised with the passenger and freight train operators so they could offer customers a service on the Sunday, and we got the work completed to get both lines open in time for the Monday morning rush hour. I congratulate everyone involved on a job well done."



View from the Outside

This month was Andy's nineteenth birthday (I know many of you may not have known, but now you do you could go out and get him a late present! No, don't worry you don't have to!).
Anyway, we went to Great Central Railway for his birthday and there was a mighty crash at Rothley station, one of the highlights of the day, when an American train came off the rails! It was however, on the model railway.

On a more serious note though I saw on the news this month about the ten year anniversary of The Great Heck rail crash. I was shocked at what happened that day and although I don't remember it happening I was glad to be told about it on the news, as it's important to remember that although this magazine supports trains as a great hobby for many people, sometimes bad things happen, and it's important to take great care.
For example I always get a little nervous when Andy hangs his head out of the window on the trains.... I know that some people have had serious injuries from hanging out of train windows.
But it is good we all remember the people that lost their lives that day, and we must learn from these accidents to make sure that it doesn't happen again.

Back to Andy's birthday when I was worried he might lose his head on his birthday... we had cake that I brought in a lovely old guards van as we travelled along the line. Andy brought his presents in the car that I had bought and Andy spent some of his birthday money buying me an all day rover, so thank you Andy.
It was a sunny day and I had forgotten my sunglasses because when we set off in the morning it didn't seem as though it would be sunny at all, I enjoyed being in the old fashioned carriages and Andy had a lovely day (even though I didn't want to set off early but I ended up waking up early anyway which Andy was pleased about you may remember the topic from my last article!).

Now Andy also went to Austria this month and I really enjoyed having the week to myself but I did miss him, he took a lot of photos of trains there so watch out for them in future issues. He tell me that it was snowing in Austria so there may be some nice picturesque ones too.
I hope you all have a great month of March!
If you have any comments, about my articles or any ideas about what I could write about please drop me an email, I always love the fan mail.

megan.thomason@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

LOST YOUR GLASSES? NOW THE LESS FORTUNATE CAN SEE MORE CLEARLY

National Express East Anglia's Norwich-based lost property team are helping people in the developing world see more clearly after donating all of the un-claimed spectacles they have collected over the last 2½ years to charity.
During the course of the year many hundreds of pairs of glasses are handed into the lost property office at Norwich station and many are never re-claimed. National Express East Anglia was searching for a suitable recipient for the spectacles, when in stepped the local Lions club to help.
David Bowden the President of the Norwich North Alpha Lions Club explains: "The glasses we collect go to help people across Africa, India and South America, we're over the moon with the donation of over 750 pairs from National Express East Anglia. Before long these glasses which were left on trains in East Anglia will be helping to improve the sight of people in developing countries and in so doing help them to regain their independence."

First the spectacles will be graded, sorted, cleaned and polished, before being distributed across India and Africa and South America to help children and adults with visual impairments. Each pair will be adjusted to meet the specific needs of the recipient.
The Lions Club are often known as the 'knights of the blind', as well as distributing spectacles to the visually impaired, they also carry out extensive work to prevent River Blindness, including digging fresh water wells; and set up eye clinics in remote areas where doctors carry out cataract operations and treat other operable eye conditions. It is not unusual for the doctors to treat over 100 patients in a day. Moreover, they also train local medical staff, so the eye clinics can become a permanent fixture long after the Lions Club has left.

Anita Miles, National Express East Anglia's Norwich Station Manager said: "We're really pleased to have been able to help the Norwich North Alpha Lions Club in the charitable work they do. I'm glad to know that these unclaimed spectacles can be re-used and may go some way to help make someone's life a little easier."

ACCESS PLANS FOR WREXHAM RAILWAY STATION UNVEILED

Passengers from Wrexham station will soon benefit from a new footbridge, complete with a lift, making access between the station entrance, ticket office and platforms much easier for everyone, particularly people with reduced mobility.

The plan has been unveiled by Network Rail at a public exhibition to generate support for the improvements to be made. The £1.6m improvement plan is part of the national 'Access for All' scheme, backed by the Department for Transport, that aims to provide step-free access to around 145 stations in England, Wales and Scotland.

The new footbridge and lift at Platform 4 are also designed to provide passengers with a safe and secure environment, where they are well-lit and equipped with close-circuit televisions and telephones. The station platforms will also be refurbished with tactile paving.

Mark Langman, route director, Network Rail, said: "Wales relies on rail so it's vital that we provide facilities which make the railway easier to use, safer and more accessible for everyone. Whether you're lugging heavy bags, have small children in tow or simply find the stairs a bit of a struggle, the improvements being to be made at Wrexham General will make a real difference to passengers. We know modern stations with easy access are important to passengers in Wales and we will continue work hard to achieve even more successes for them."

Mike Bagshaw, Commercial Director for Arriva Trains Wales said: "The new footbridge and lift at Wrexham station will offer passengers step free access and will provide a step forward in meeting the needs of passengers with impaired mobility as well as those traveling to and from Wrexham with heavy luggage and small children. The creation of step free access is part of our wider plan to improve access to our trains and stations. As an organisation we will continue to work with our industry partners to improve the journey experience even further."

Wrexham station was opened in 1846 and today, it serves more than half a million passengers on average each year. As the existing footbridge does not have step-free access, passengers with reduced mobility will have to get to and fro Platform 4 via a road bridge over the station, which this transfer takes around 10mins.



The Nosh Report

Welcome to another "Nosh Report", remember that this is your chance to let everyone know where to go for something to eat or drink, (eg: 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.

Not too far for me this month, but a trip to Tamworth to sample an Italian restaurant recommended by a friend of mine.

It is called "Portobelo Ristorante" and is located at 12 Silver Street, Tamworth, Staffs, B79 7NH
Telephone: 01827 54474
Sunday to Friday you can choose dishes from the set menu from just £12.95 and there are various promotions including 20% off normal menu prices on all Take Away orders.

But if you have a couple of hours spare it's highly recommended.

They are located not far from Tamworth Castle, so if you have plenty of time then check out this place at the same time.

Just a brief bit about the place itself:

Tamworths premiere Italian restaurant is ticking all the right boxes when it comes to providing first class Italian cuisine at prices that everybody can afford. Having held the peoples choice award for the best restaurant since 2005 Portobello is passionate about providing diners with the finest quality of food and service in the area.



Or enjoy their fantastic value Sunday promotion opening at 12:00 midday through to 8:00pm where you can have a choice of any Pizza or Pasta dish from their a l'a carte menu priced at just £5.00!
(the full menu is also available at standard prices).

Obviously an evening location this as the only days that they open before 18.00 is on Sundays and Fridays.

However I did find the meal good value for money and there was certainly plenty of choice.
As soon as I saw the menu I know that it would be the steak for me, and it was delicious. Again this is one meal not to be rushed, so don't pop in for a quick bite.

As I always say, if you know of anywhere that is worth a mention then please let me know, I always enjoy visiting new places and discovering new locations.

Until next month,

steve.roberts@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

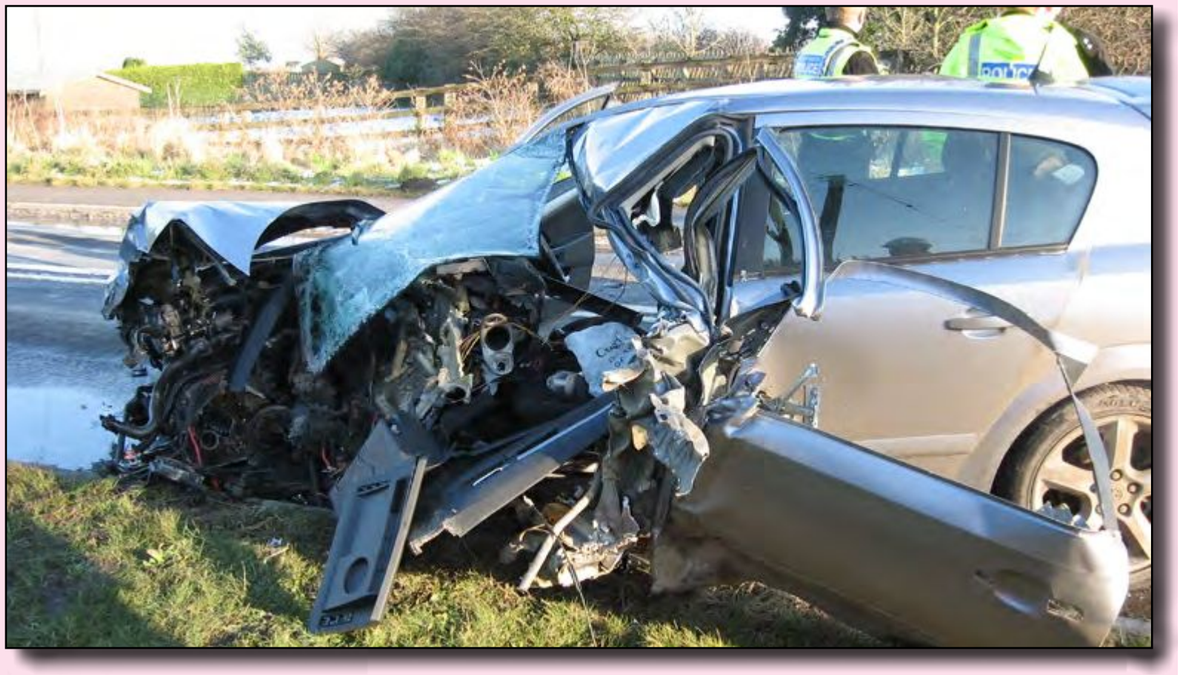
Stephen W Roberts

MOTORING MADNESS AT LEVEL CROSSINGS CONTINUES

New CCTV highlights crazy driving and people risking lives at level crossings across Britain

The number of motorists involved in near misses with trains at level crossings increased by 15% in 2010, according to Network Rail. This worrying trend is revealed as it publishes the latest figures on level crossing misuse. It wants people to change their behaviour at level crossings where motorists and pedestrians break the law daily, many causing disruption and damage to rail and road services, with the unfortunate suffering the fatal consequences.

There were 3,446 recorded incidents of misuse at level crossings across Britain last year, although it is thought the true figure is much higher. Whilst the number of near misses is up, collisions with trains has halved from 14 in 2009 to seven. Fatalities too were down from 13 to four. across Britain



Network Rail's director of operations and customer service Robin Gisby said: "Too many motorists continue to break the law by jumping the lights or swerving around barriers at level crossings. Hundreds of pedestrians are also risking their lives just trying to save a few seconds – it's just not worth it. Whilst deaths and injuries are thankfully few, these actions by those who are either impatient or ignorant of the law cause great cost, delay and disruption to both rail and road passengers across Britain."

In a new initiative to reduce disruption at level crossings, cutting-edge camera technology has been introduced as part of a region-wide pilot by Network Rail and the British Transport Police across Wessex, Sussex and Kent.

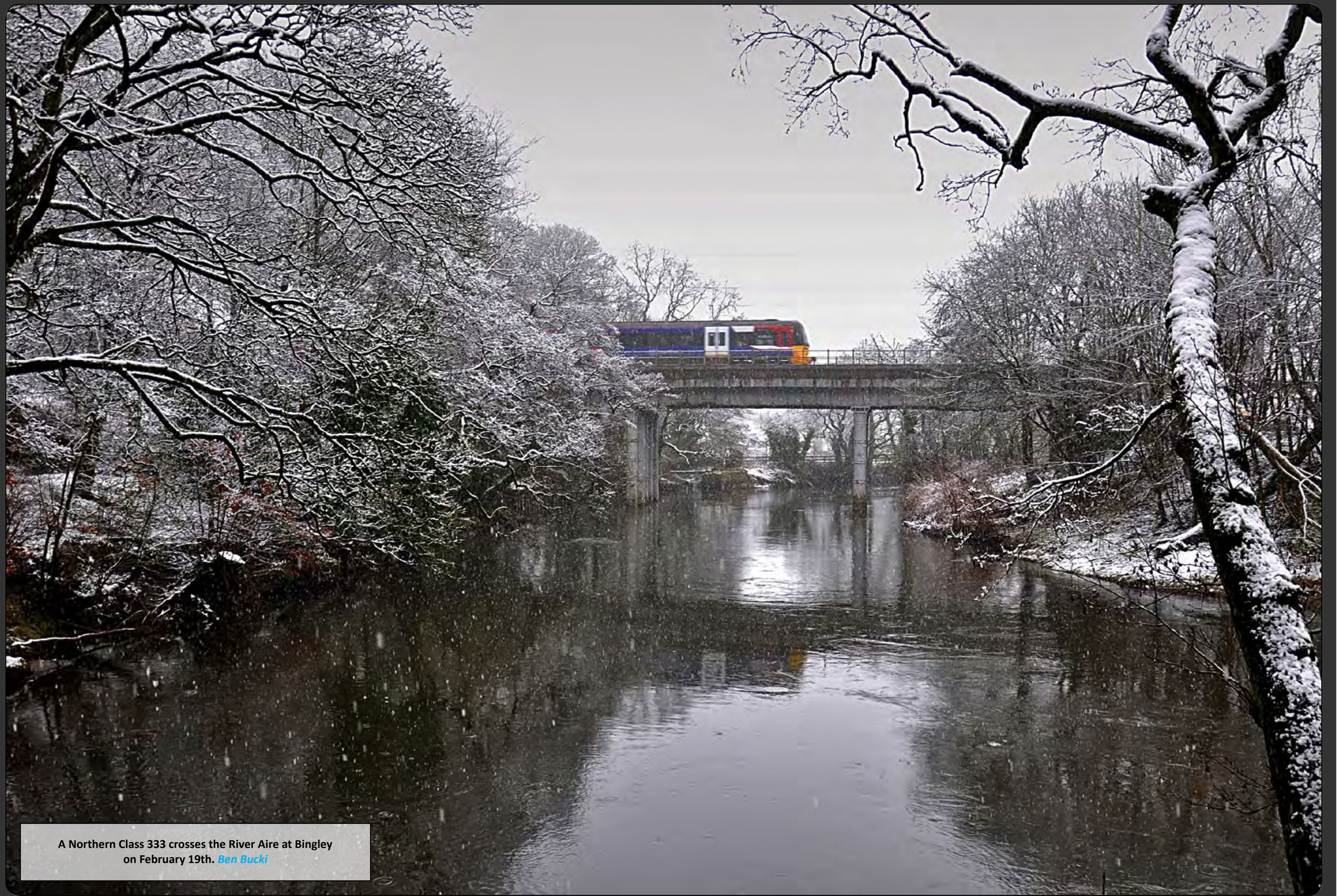
Network Rail has funded a purpose-built marked police van to be fitted with nine cameras, each of which can use number plate recognition technology to help deter motorists from breaking the law. One of the cameras is attached to a pole which extends up to ten metres into the air, enabling the van to operate without being right next to the level crossing. The van, which is operated by British Transport Police officers, also has access to all the systems required to process prosecutions instantly. The new mobile camera technology has been introduced to try and change motorist behaviour and deter them from jumping lights and swerving around barriers and gates.

Photo: Motorist crashes into Transpennine Express train and LX barrier at Knaption in North Yorks causing £150,000 of damage. © Network Rail

A Different View

Signals at Bury Bolton St. on the East Lancs Railway are seen in the late afternoon light, made even more striking by the appearance of a crescent moon. *Paul Godding*

Sometimes it's the smallest things that make a picture.
On the face of it this photo is just a DRS Class 66, but have a look at the number plate on the car! ***Geoff Barton***



A Northern Class 333 crosses the River Aire at Bingley on February 19th. *Ben Bucki*

Great Central Railway

Great Central Winter Diesel Gala

The star attraction at this years diesel gala had to be the use of Wolverton Works Class 08 shunter No. 08 629. In a striking livery, the little gem is seen at Loughborough Central on February 12th. ***Richard Hargreaves***

Despite having been at the Great Central for quite a few years now, this event was a rare outing for Class 37 255, and proving that looks are deceptive - the loco performed superbly. *Andy*

Another shot of the Railcare Wolverton Works shunter Class 08 629 seen here at Quorn and Woodhouse.
Richard Hargreaves



Network Rail owned Class 37 198 has moved from Rothley to Loughborough - are we any closer to seeing this loco operate?

Richard Hargreaves

Recently returned to traffic Class 45 No. D123 passes through Rothley on February 12th having a test run. *Andy*

Keighley & Worth Valley

Winter Steam Gala
LMS 4-6-0 Black 5 No. 44871 pauses at Keighley having just taken on water on February 13th. ***Class47***

Resident ‘Jinty’ No. 47279 passes under Ebor Lane Bridge towards Haworth station, on the Sunday of the Steam Gala, February 13th. *Ben Bucki*





Above: Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T No. 1704 “Nunlow” waits with the local train to Ingrow West on February 13th. *Class47*
Below: Black 5 No. 44871 is seen with the early morning freight approaching Oakworth on February 12th. *Chris Stanley*



Class 5MT No. 44871 departs Damens with 11.25 for Oxenhope on February 12th. *Alan Naylor*

LMS 3F 0-6-0T No. 47279 is seen departing Damens loop with the 10.25 for Oxenhope on February 12th. *Alan Naylor*



Above: Awaiting her next turn of duty, BR Standard 4 2-6-4T No. 80002 stands in the sidings at Keighley. *CJ Sutcliffe*
Below: LMS Black Five 4-6-0 No. 44871, leads her sister No. 44767 "George Stephenson" out of Mytholmes tunnel on a service from Keighley to Oxenhope. The headboard is in memory of fireman Richard Walker, a former volunteer of the KWVR who tragically passed away last year. *CJ Sutcliffe*



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

The Gr8 Escape!

9TH – 10TH APRIL

GCR PUTS ON SPECTACULAR DISPLAY OF 2-8-0 LOCOMOTIVES TO AID GWSR APPEAL

The Great Central Railway is staging a spectacular two-day event on 9th and 10th April, in support of another heritage railway that has suffered catastrophic damage. Two serious embankment collapses have occurred, costing around £1 million to repair.

The Appeal

The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway (GWSR), suffered a serious embankment collapse in January, splitting the line in two near its Winchcombe station. This was the railway's second major earthworks failure in less than a year. Last April, the GWSR launched a £1 million Emergency Appeal to repair its first disastrous embankment failure, closing its southern terminus at Cheltenham Racecourse. Both failures occurred following two successive severe winters.
On top of that, the railway lost over £70,000 of income from its important 'Santa Special' season because of heavy snow. These events have combined to present the railway with what GWSR Plc chairman, Malcolm Temple, describes as its 'gravest challenge ever'.
He says: "The support shown by the Great Central Railway is overwhelming and on behalf of every member of our entirely volunteer staff, I can say that we are deeply grateful for this exceptional gesture.
"Without doubt, this is the gravest challenge our railway has ever faced and its future depends on success of our £ million appeal – every penny of which we desperately need. This is a really imaginative event and a great encouragement to the railway's staff as well as being a fantastic boost to our fundraising effort. I can promise that this is something we will never forget."
The cost of the Gotherington embankment repair, which is now approaching completion, is just under £1 million of which £500,000 has been met by insurance. The most recent failure of the so-called 'Chicken Curve' embankment will cost a further estimated £500,000 for which no insurance funding is available. This means that public support is vital to secure the future operation and development of this major heritage steam railway, which is operated entirely by unpaid volunteers over the last 30 years.
Richard Patching, GCR's Commercial Manager said: "This is wonderful opportunity for supporters of both GWSR and GCR to help raise valuable funds and enjoy a unique event. We hope this one-off will attract visitors from afar who wish to demonstrate their support and help GWSR's survival"

The Event

Called the 'Gr8 Escape' (because it uniquely focuses on eight-coupled locomotives) the event is being run to raise funds for the Emergency Appeal and a generous donation from the sale of each ticket will be given to GWSR. LMS 8F 45160 (in Turkish livery) is topping the bill, lent to us by the GWSR. This is the locomotive's first visit to another preserved railway since overhaul and return to steam in 2010. Repatriated from Turkey in 1989, it has an interesting story to tell.
The gala line up will be strictly a one off and is also expected to feature 2-8-0s LMS 8F 48305, LMS 8F 48624, GWR 3850 (the owning group of 3850 have agreed to stay for a longer period to cover the event and donate their steaming fee to the appeal, as have several others) and another star guest locomotive yet to be announced.

The gala will feature a mixture of passenger, 'Windcutter' freight and Mail trains.
Other attractions include: GCR 04 63601 - On static display at Loughborough Shed, LMS 3F 47406 - On 'drive for a 'tenner' around Loughborough Station, 45160 on a TPO, a first in preservation, 4 x 2-8-0s running together, 48305, 48624, 45160, 3850 ,3850 running on an extended stay for the occasion. Photo opportunities at shed including GCR 04 63601

There will be a raffle on both days to raise money for the appeal. The lucky winner will ride on the footplate of two 8Fs, which will be top and tailing on the final trip of the day.

LMS 3F “Jinty” 0-6-0 No. 47279 leads BR Standard 4 2-6-4T No. 80002 towards the terminus at Oxenhope. *CJ Sutcliffe*

The Best Of Northern Steam: On the left, Black 5 No. 44767, and on the right L&Y Class 25 "Ironclad" No. 957 are seen in Haworth shed. *CJ Sutcliffe*



Double Black 5 action as Class 5MT Nos. 44767 and 44871 are seen after leaving Oakworth with the 13.10 for Oxenhope on February 12th. *Alan Naylor*

Visiting Black 5 No. 44767 rounds the curve out of Mytholmes Tunnel with the demonstration goods train, on February 13th. *Ben Bucki*

Great Central Railway



GCR Winter Steam Gala

On January 29th, customers are seen boarding the evening dining service at Loughborough, with the steam and lighting providing an atmospheric setting.

CJ Sutcliffe



LMS 8F 2-8-0 No. 48305 faces off against BR Britannia 4-6-2 No. 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" in Loughborough TMD. *CJ Sutcliffe*

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

STANDBY TO SWING, DOUBLE EIGHT TIME! GCR 1960S GALA 25TH, 26TH & 27TH MARCH

Great Central Railway unveils motive power mix for 'changeover years' 1960s - event featuring two 8Fs

The GCR swings back to the 1960s on the 25th, 26th and 27th of March 2011 for a mixed traction gala with visiting engines. Two visiting 8F's lead the way in a line up which should see five steam locomotives and two diesels in action. First of the visitors is 8F no. 45160 repatriated from Turkey. It will partner classmate no. 48264 currently running in a red livery. Neither engine has visited Leicestershire metals before. Another 2-8-0 makes a stand, though this time for a different region - GWR no. 3850, which has already proved itself a popular engine at the recent Winter Gala. Another western engine, no. 1450 will be appearing with an autocoach, the last time this pairing will be scene for now on the GCR. LMS Black 5 no. 45305 rounds off the steam line up, and Class 20 D8098 and Class 45 (D123) make the running for the diesels.

'To compliment the 1960s feel the locomotives bring to this event' said Marketing Manager, Kate Tilley, 'we are also bringing 1960s bands to play some music from the swinging decade, re-enactors and Hi-De-Hi holiday camp staff, you will find me in the real ale tent!' On the Friday of the event, three locomotives will be in action and there will be the chance to take the regulator of a guest loco for a tenner. Over the weekend, besides 60s re-enactors and themed music there will be mail drop demonstrations.



GWR Small Prarie 2-6-2T No. 5526 works a local service towards Rothley past Kinchley Lane *CJ Sutcliffe*

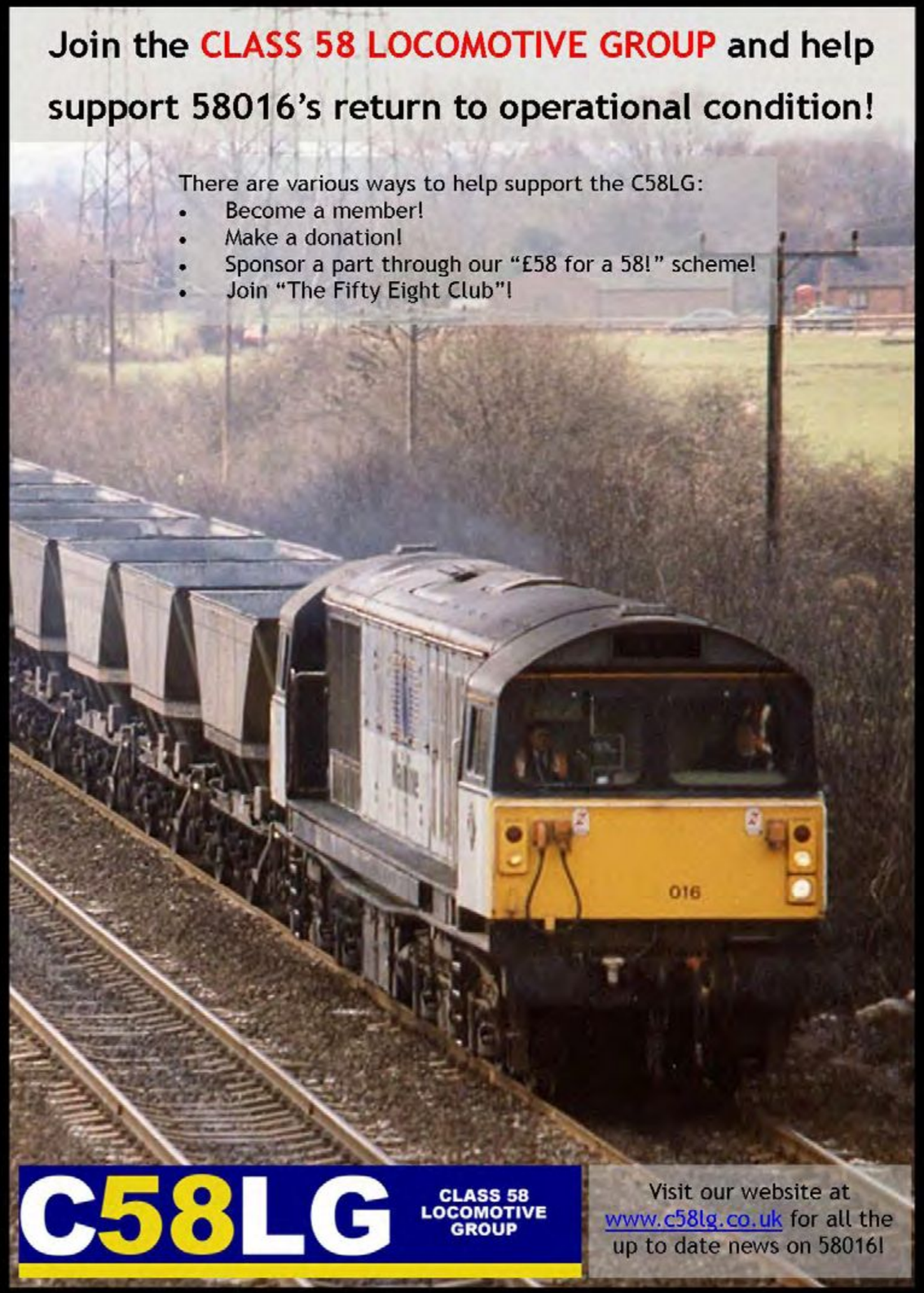


LMS Stanier Class 5MT 4-6-0 No. 45305 “Alderman A. Draper” provides the motive power on the evening diner from Loughborough back to Leicester, which was the final service of the day. *CJ Sutcliffe*

Join the CLASS 58 LOCOMOTIVE GROUP and help support 58016’s return to operational condition!

There are various ways to help support the C58LG:

- Become a member!
- Make a donation!
- Sponsor a part through our “£58 for a 58!” scheme!
- Join “The Fifty Eight Club”!



C58LG CLASS 58 LOCOMOTIVE GROUP

Visit our website at www.c58lg.co.uk for all the up to date news on 58016!

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT CO. SUBMITS £2.5m REGIONAL GROWTH FUND BID

Money would kick start reunification of two separate railways by 'bridging the gap' at Loughborough

A bid for a £2.5m from the new Government Regional Growth Fund has been made by the Great Central Railway Development Company. If successful it would enable construction work to start to reunify the two operational sections of the Great Central Railway main line. As well stimulating growth in regional rail freight and passenger traffic, the reunified 18-mile main line will enable GCR to expand existing tourist, rail freight and rail industry trials/testing business, creating almost 200 new jobs and attracting up to 60,000 new visitors every year. The completed route would also be connected to the national railway network.

Reinstating 500 metres of missing railway at Loughborough will create an unbroken 18-mile independent main line for the East Midlands. The 8 mile long Loughborough Central to Leicester North section would be connected to the 9-miles Loughborough Junction - Ruddington section. With a diverse partnership of public and private sector bodies and substantial input from a small army of volunteers the project chimes perfectly with the Government's 'big society' vision.

GCR Development Chairman Nigel Harris said: "The bid will allow us to make a physical start on work and employ key members of the project team. Crucially it will also lever in £12.5million pounds of private investment to complete the project. We've spent a long time putting together the bid with local authorities and stakeholders and now we have a concrete proposal which will bring benefits right across the local economy. GCRD is in discussion with a number of private sector companies which have pledged significant financial and other support for GCR reunification"

The development company was formed last September by the two separate GCR railways, specifically to reconnect them.

"This is an exciting, innovative and ingenious RGF bid, intended to kick-start the re-connection of these two existing operational private railways, which will deliver a fantastic economic boost for Loughborough and the East Midlands region," said Loughborough MP Nicky Morgan. "The reunified railway will be much more than the sum of its parts and it will create jobs and attract major new business into the region."

In 2009 the GCR reunification plan has been properly validated by a £235,000 feasibility study, carried out by international consultants Atkins, jointly funded by East Midlands Development Agency and the Great Central Railway. It established the project has a benefit to cost ratio of 2.8. Competitive tendering to reduce construction costs could push the ratio even higher.

The £1.4bn Regional Growth Fund was launched by Government in December 2010 to create new jobs, attract business and boost private sector investment in areas where the local economy has declined. In the East Midlands, in addition to public sector cutbacks, the loss of private sector companies such as Astra Zeneca, Loughborough is in urgent need of new investment and reunification plans will deliver major economic and social benefits.

GWR "City" Class 4-4-0 No. 3717 "City Of Truro" is seen pulling forward into Loughborough station before working a service to Leicester following watering and coaling on January 29th. ***CJ Sutcliffe***

GWR 1400 Class 0-6-0T No. 1450 works a pickup freight towards Rothley and Leicester past Kinchley Lane on January 29th. *CJ Sutcliffe*





Great Central Railway Class 8K 2-8-0 No. 63601 is seen at rest in Loughborough TMD. *CJ Sutcliffe*

GWR “City” Class 4-4-0 No. 3717 “City Of Truro” speeds along the Great Central with the mail train at the winter steam gala. *John Edkins*

East Lancashire Railway

Diesel Theme Day
A young enthusiast obviously appreciates quality at Rawtenstall on January 8th. ***Paul Godding***



Above: Class 37 901 “Mirlees Pioneer” is seen at Rawtenstall on January 8th. *Paul Godding*
Below: Class 47 No. D1501 is seen at Bury in late afternoon light having arrived from Ramsbottom on January 8th. *Paul Godding*





The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust
New Steam for the Main Line

Tornado Winter Maintenance Update

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, the builders and operators of Tornado, have announced that the programme of rectification work to Tornado’s firebox continues at DB Meiningen as planned and on schedule.
The work is concentrating on the replacement of platework (new sections of plate are being fitted to both sides of the firebox for preventative maintenance reasons), renewal of stays (some 1,100 to be replaced, 650 as a consequence of the plate replacement) and work on the foundation ring (four new corners to be fitted). This work will return the boiler and firebox to ‘as new’ condition and provide for further reliable operations. At present almost all the old stays have been removed and preparation and fitment of new stays will commence shortly.

Tornado has been in intensive use for some two and a half years as the locomotive has operated across the UK on main line charters and heritage railways. The boiler and firebox usage is similar to that which would be expected between heavy general overhauls in the 1950s on British Railways with regards to hot-cold-hot boiler cycles.

The nature of the repairs required are in line with those effected to boilers of similar type and are a consequence of the use of the engine on around 300 days (with another 100 ancillary days) since she entered traffic. The comprehensive nature of the facilities at DB Meiningen mean that the repairs are already well in-hand and are expected to cost no more than £50,000.

It is now planned that Tornado’s boiler will return to the UK at the end of March following an hydraulic test in Germany. This will then be rapidly followed by an in-the-frames steam test and the rapid re-assembly of the locomotive, all of the other scheduled winter maintenance work having been completed in the workshop at the National Railway Museum, York, prior to the boiler’s return.

Tornado will then conduct both light engine and loaded test runs in early May before being made available for traffic. It is now planned that Tornado’s return to service, and first main line passenger train in her new Brunswick Green livery (now to also remain for the 2012 operating season) will be on Thursday 26th May with ‘The Cathedrals Express’ for Steam Dreams from London to Bath & Bristol. The Trust has therefore decided to cancel ‘The White Rose’ (originally planned to be Tornado’s first train in Brunswick Green on 26th February 2011) and passengers have been offered the opportunity to transfer their bookings to ‘The Cathedrals Express’ on Saturday 4th June from London King’s Cross to York and return at no extra cost. Tornado will then take up a comprehensive programme of tours and heritage line visits in diverse locations from Edinburgh to Plymouth and Carlisle to Canterbury.
The Trust has apologised to its customers over Tornado’s lack of availability before this date and is sorry to have disappointed so many of Tornado’s passengers.

The Trust would like to take this opportunity to thanks the National Railway Museum for making their facilities available, DB Meiningen for its rapid response to the firebox issues and all of Tornado’s supporters for their patience, generosity and understanding.

Mark Allatt, chairman, The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, commented:
“Although these problems with Tornado’s firebox are part of learning about the locomotive in today’s operational environment, they are a source of great disappointment to all of Tornado’s supporters and customers and our customers’ passengers. We are working as hard as we can to bring Tornado back to full health and onto the main line in May as planned.”

Crewe Heritage Centre



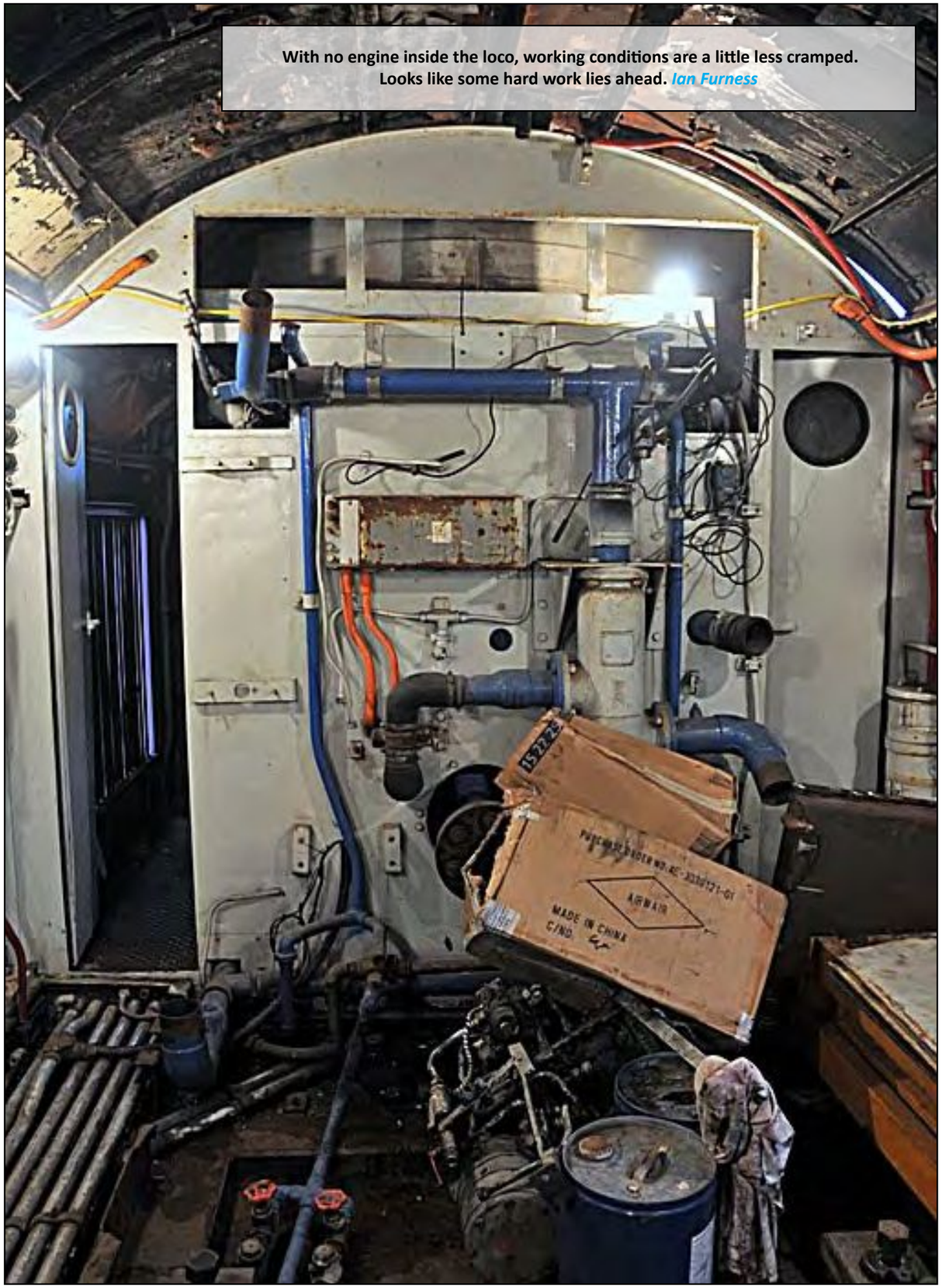
A visit to see the restoration of Class 37 108

Above: Class 37 108 stands outside the heritage center undergoing restoration on January 15th. ***Ian Furness***

Below: The bodywork on this side looks in fairly good condition. ***Ian Furness***



With no engine inside the loco, working conditions are a little less cramped. Looks like some hard work lies ahead. ***Ian Furness***





Class 55 022 has had a bit of a makeover recently in order to celebrate her 50th birthday. Seen here at Bury on February 28th. *© Ken Carr*

A superb shot of Class 50 010 arriving into Birmingham New St. station in April 1979 with the 0627 Plymouth - Liverpool service. *Chris Morrison*



Above: Newly named Class 37 426 “Y Lein Fach / Vale of Rheidol” and 37 427 “Bont Y Bermo” are seen at Shrewsbury stabling point in May 1986. *Chris Morrison*
Below: Class 45 066 arrives at Shirley on a wet morning in May 1979 with an excursion from Stratford - upon - Avon to Llandudno. *Chris Morrison*





Above: Class 67 013 heads a mail train along the South West coastline on August 4th 2003. *Richard Hargreaves*
Below: Class 20 118 is seen at Crewe Basford Hall during an open day in August 1985. *Brian Battersby*





Above: After a successful stint as a preserved loco, Class 56 040 is now destined for the scrapman. In happier times Class 56 040 is seen heading through Cardiff on April 16th 1999. *Richard Hargreaves*
Below: Diesel Parcels Unit No. 55994 in Royal Mail livery is seen at Bedford on May 28th 1988. *Derek Elston*



Above: Class 55 009 "Alycidon" is seen at Hull waiting for departure time with "The Deltic Executive" on December 29th 1981. *Derek Elston*
Below: HST power car 43169 in primer in the paint shop at Crewe Works on June 6th 1981. *Derek Elston*







Above: Class 45 107 is seen stabled at Bedford on May 28th 1988. *Derek Elston*
Below: Brand new Class 60s Nos. 60 011, 60 069, 60 075 plus one other are seen at Brush Loughborough in early 1990s. *Derek Elston*





Above: Class 37 133, 37 044 and two Class 50s are seen in Doncaster Works, July 1984. *Derek Elston*
Below: Class 47 715 in lovely Scotrail livery, is seen at Glasgow Queen St. on May 27th 1987. *Derek Hopkins*





Above: Large Logo Class 47 595 is seen stabled at Eastfield Depot on May 30th 1987. *Derek Hopkins*
Below: Class 90 005 "Financial Times" approaches Hunsbury tunnel returning to London Euston on the day of it's naming, March 30th 1988. *Derek Elston*





Above: Class 25 198 heads a rake of wagons through Llandudno Jct. on October 13th 1985. *Pete Cheshire*
Below: Doncaster Works in July 1984 and Class 58 016, 58 017 and 58 018 are just being built. *Derek Elston*



The Back Page

Thanks for reading this issue, see you again next month.



East Midlands Trains Class 153 302, passes through Longport, Stoke-on-Trent with local service for Crewe.
Cameron Burgess