

Welcome to this mini-edition of Rail User Express.

There are some date-sensitive news items to bring to your attention, hence this rather brief edition.

As always, feel free to forward RUEX to a colleague, or to reproduce items in your own newsletter (quoting sources). If you want further details of any of the stories mentioned, look on the relevant website or, failing that, get back to me so I can send you the full text.

YES TO HIGH SPEED RAIL!

The newly-formed [Campaign for High Speed Rail](#) sets off in its distinctive open-top battle bus this coming week with a series of high-profile roadshows at these venues:

- **Manchester**, Piccadilly Gardens on **Monday 20 June** from 11:30 to 12:30
- **Birmingham**, Victoria Square on **Tuesday 21 June** from 11:30 to 12:30
- **London**, Houses of Parliament on **Wednesday 22 June** from 10:30 to 14:00 (with the main media action at 11:00)

The invitation received by Railfuture's HS2 activists states: "We'd love you to join us at one of our three stops. Do tell us that you're coming by emailing the [campaign organiser](#)! Obviously you can drop in at any time, but it would be great if you could join us as early as possible so that we get some good numbers for our media and publicity effort. Please do bring, colleagues, friends, family and kids! We'll have t-shirts, balloons and placards to hand out. This is your chance to make your mark and help High Speed Rail create jobs for your region. If you have any questions or queries, do get in touch by [email](#) or on 07758 019 351."

...next, news from Railfuture...

RAILFUTURE RAIL USERS' CONFERENCE – a chance to publicise your achievements!

At this year's Rail Users' Conference in Manchester, the organisers are setting aside 10-minute slots for Rail User Groups to trumpet their recent achievements and possibly explain some of the challenges they've faced along the way.

If you or a colleague would like to take advantage of one of these slots, please contact the Chairman of Railfuture's North West branch, [Trevor Bishop](#)

A reminder that Railfuture's Rail Users' Conference is to be held at the prestigious Mechanics Institute, Princess Street, Manchester on Sat 5 Nov. Guest speakers include the inspirational Neil Scales of Merseytravel, Steve Butcher from Network Rail, Richard Watts from Lancashire County Council and Maria Eagle MP, the Shadow Secretary of State for Transport.

RAILFUTURE HIGH SPEED RAIL CONFERENCE – last call for bookings

All sides of the high-speed rail debate will be meeting at Railfuture's High Speed Rail Conference in July at Bletchley Park. Professor Andrew McNaughton, chief engineer of HS2 Ltd, and Lizzy Williams (leading campaigner against HS2 and founder of STOPHS2) are amongst the guest speakers at *High Speed Rail - How the vision can best be achieved*. The conference will be chaired by the leading writer and broadcaster on transport issues, Christian Wolmar.

Event organiser Ian McDonald said *"High speed rail is this year's hot topic, and there's a lot to talk about: Britain's railways are straining with increasing demand, so how can the existing network cope in the future? What's the case for a high-speed railway to the north? Is the government's HS2 proposal the right one? What are the alternatives? We're hoping to find a meeting of minds rather than the same old pro and anti arguments which we all know about. This the first time that the chief engineer of HS2 Ltd and Lizzy Williams of STOPHS2 will be on the same platform. It should be interesting"*

The full list of speakers is:

- Professor Andrew McNaughton - Chief Engineer of HS2 Ltd.

- Graham Nalty - Railfuture, Network Development Committee
- Lizzy Williams - leading campaigner against HS2/Founder of STOPHS2
- Stephen Joseph or Richard Hebditch - Campaign for Better Transport
- Jonathan Tyler - Passenger Transport Networks

Railfuture expects to publish its own final submission on the HS2 consultation at this conference, and a spokesman will present its case and explain it fully. The event will be held at Bletchley Park on Saturday 9 July 2011 from 11.00 to 16.30. Doors open 10.00. The cost of attendance, which includes refreshments on arrival, a buffet lunch and a conference report, is £30.

...and now other news...

ONWARD TRAVEL POSTERS – carry on checking!

After my item last month about these posters at rail stations across England, the committee of Railfuture's Lincolnshire Branch urged its members to check details in their area. One of their number visited York station and, finding a couple of mistakes on that poster, set out on a journey of discovery, only to find more errors at Cleethorpes, Grimsby, Barnetby, Scunthorpe, Hull, Brough, Seamer and Scarborough.

I hope that others are similarly checking out posters in their local area and that, between us, we've got the nation covered. Email your comments to the contact address given at the foot of the poster (comments@onwardtravelposters.com). Please let me know how you get on!

Get involved with FAIRS FARE NOW month – 15 Jul to 15 Aug 2011

The [Campaign for Better Transport](#) invites rail users to take part in a series of Outreach Events at railway stations in the **South East of England** this summer. *Their appeal for help reads thus...*

"We're looking for people who can commit to at least a few hours a week over the course of the month from **15 July to 15 August**, or to act as a local coordinator for your area. You'll be letting commuters know about the campaign, collecting petition signatures and hopefully meeting your local MP. Information, materials, costs and support will be provided by Campaign for Better Transport."

If you can help out with this important activity, please sign up [here](#).

CHANGES AT PASSENGER FOCUS – from PF's letter to stakeholders

[Passenger Focus](#) has had to undergo a substantial restructuring following a 50% budget cut (excl. cost of the National Passenger Survey). The passenger link teams have been disbanded and there has been a loss of 20 staff members.

Core tasks that have survived the cuts are:

- Publishing the rail National Passenger Survey (NPS) and some Bus Passenger Surveys (BPS) – and using the results to drive change for passengers.
- Handling passenger enquiries and complaints.
- Publishing research on a small number of bus and rail passenger issues, incl passenger priorities on rail re-franchising.
- Ensuring the passenger voice is heard in long-term rail planning and reform.
- Pursuing a limited number of instances where passengers experience poor service.
- Securing improvements on a limited number of national issues such as fares and ticketing.

PF will have to stop doing certain things...

- Beyond NPS and BPS de-briefs, little proactive work with good performing companies and areas.
- Considerably less work on local and regional issues.
- Instead of "mediating, counselling and advising" for user groups, PF will merely help groups approach operators and government directly.
- Rail complaint reviews: one or two a year where there is a specific issue rather than comprehensively to all rail companies.
- Fewer inputs to government and industry processes and consultations.

The above is for information only; PF's full work plan for 2011-12 will be published shortly.

RAIL PASSENGERS TO BENEFIT FROM 1,200 NEW CARRIAGES

On 16 June, Rail Minister Theresa Villiers announced the next stage in a plan to build around 1,200 new rail carriages for Thameslink. The trains will be lighter, more reliable and more energy efficient. The new Thameslink trains will start to operate early in 2015 alongside the existing rolling stock, with the full fleet in use from the end of 2018. New depots are proposed to be located at Hornsey in the London Borough of Haringey and Three Bridges near Crawley, and are currently subject to planning application processes.

Siemens Plc and XL Trains have been appointed preferred bidder to build, own, finance and maintain the new trains. Siemens is already one of the leading suppliers of trains on British railways and employs around 16,000 people in the UK. The contract will create up to 2,000 new UK jobs.

The new trains are a major part of the Government's commitment to introduce an additional 2,100 carriages on to the rail network by 2019. Once the new trains are delivered, current Thameslink rolling stock becomes available to improve rail services in the North West of England, the Thames Valley and other areas yet to be confirmed. – from DfT press release

EVENTS

Sat 18 Jun [FoFNL](#) AGM at Mackay's Hotel, Wick from 11:45.

Sat 18 Jun Railfuture Yorkshire Branch summer meeting, Hull from 14:00.

Wed 22 Jun [Meldreth Shepreth & Foxton RUG](#) meet at Meldreth Manor School from 19:30.

Fri 24 Jun [ACoRP](#) Community Rail Awards 2011: closing date for entries.

Sat 25 Jun Railfuture East Anglia Branch meeting, Ipswich.

Sat 9 Jul [Railfuture](#) Conference "High Speed Rail", at Bletchley Park from 11:00.

Sat 16 Jul [Woodhead Line](#) (30th anniv of closure) events, Manchester, Sheffield & along the route.

Thu 21 Jul [ACoRP](#) National Station Adoption seminar, Liverpool

Thu 21 Jul Mid Cheshire Rail Users' Assn. AGM at the Golden Pheasant, Plumley from 19:15.

Sat 23 Jul Railfuture London & SE (Kent Division) Branch meeting, Tonbridge Wells.

Thu 18 Aug [Reopen the Woodhead Line](#) open campaign meeting, Glossop Labour Club from 19:30.

Sat 10 Sep Railfuture North West Branch meeting, Kendal.

16-22 Sep [European Mobility Week](#) - an awareness raising campaign encouraging the use of public transport, cycling and walking.

Thu 22 Sep [World Car Free Day](#) – proclaim the alternative to cars!

Sat 24 Sep [ACoRP](#) Community Rail Festival, incl Gala Dinner & Awards Presentation, Sheffield

Sat 29 Oct CSV [Make a Difference Day](#) – celebrate the achievements of volunteers!

Tue 1 Nov "One Day" (1/1/11) with the theme "Think about and do something sustainable today" (a Start initiative inspired by the Prince of Wales to encourage more sustainable lives).

Sat 5 Nov [Railfuture](#) Rail Users' Conference, Mechanics' Institute, Manchester.

More events on the [Railfuture](#) and [ACoRP](#) websites.

This bulletin has been sent by

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Our websites:

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