

Railtalk Magazine

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Regional Railways - The best livery ever??

A Class 31 in Regional railways livery. Perhaps one of the best liveries of all time?. Seen here at the Peak Rail Diesel Gala in May working a demonstration freight train.

Richard Hargreaves



Submissions

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

entries@railtalk.net

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When is it published

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

More information can be found by visiting Railtalk forums.

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From The Editor

Welcome to issue 21 of Railtalk Magazine, and a new look. Within this issue you can find out all the latest news and pictures that have made this month another great month on the UK and International rail scene.

I would like to point out the new layout and say thanks you everyone at Railtalk Magazine, as it was not just a one man decision. Everyone has worked hard on all aspects making sure that it works and making the magazine a great place for you the reader. We have made this change in response to a query made by readers. But as we always say, its your magazine. So please contact us and tell us your thoughts on the magazine. This can be done by visiting our excellent online forums, registration will only take a few minute and then you can express your full thoughts on the new layout of the magazine. From what we have found out, the optimise way to read the magazine it to open it up in your PDF reader and then set to read the magazine in full screen.

Now I can start on the main purpose on the editorial section, my thoughts on this months events across our rail network. The first thing I want to talk about is how great it was to meet Les Ross, the owner of Class 86 259, one of only two mainline Class 86's. It's another great loco, back out on the main line, and I'm sure we will see a lot of it in charter scene this year.

Last month (well Friday and Saturday, as Sunday was the 1st of June) saw the Churnet Valley Diesel gala weekend. All great day was had by the Railtalk Magazine team and as you can see below we were out in force. Although the Deltic failed in the afternoon, with what I could make out being a electrical fault, the railway seem to keep going without much disruption. Also on the Saturday saw the naming of the industrial "Janus" 0-6-0 shunter, "Roger H. Bennett".

Recently we have seen a wide variation of traction change its livery, more recently being the first HST in East Midland Trains livery, of which we have some pictures inside, and was "the talking point", but Friday 31st May, saw the first of the Class 91's receiving a new look. The first Class 91 to come out of Doncaster Works (Wabtec) in the new National Express East Coast Livery was Class 91 111. We haven't heard of any coaching stock being treated yet, but i'm sure that it won't be long.

Once again many thanks this month to: Richard Hargreaves, Jon Jebb, Ian Furness, Carl Grocott, David Dawson, Jonathan McGurk, Dave Harris, Derek Elston, Peter Cheshire, David Mead, Liam, Mike Byrne, Jon Coleman, Brian Battersby, Steve Madden, Alistair Minton and Dave Mabbott

Andy Patten

PS. Please do let us know if you like the magazine in this format or not.... We have always said that this is your magazine and we don't want to change that....



We couldn't possibly say who took this picture of Railtalk Magazine's, David Dawson recently, and it's not true that the 5 arrow is pointing at Dave.

Thanks again to Pete Cheshire for another excellent shot, oops....

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Charter Scene

Welcome to this month's round up of the British Charter Scene, brought to you by the Railtalk Magazine team.

The month of May started well with an outing to Carlisle by Class 86 259, seen below on arrival at Carlisle. Who's that pictured on the right?, well it's Les Ross photographing Les Ross. Pictured bottom right on the rear of the train was green Class 47 773. All : **Andy**





Left: D1015 works the 1Z52 Tame Bridge Parkway - Edinburgh 'The Western Scot' seen near Hexham on the 3rd May.

Andy

Below Left: The Class 52 is seen at Edinburgh Waverley with the tour later on the same day.

Richard Hargreaves

Below Right: Class 47 802 Pride of Cumbria at Wilsons Crossing with the 5Z74 Willesden - Crewe Gresty Lane on the 20th May.

Derek Elston





Top Left: Class 47 832 with 47 712 on the rear, at Wimbledon West Junction with 1294 Victoria - Fareham 'The Wessex Lunch Circular' on the 22nd May.

Steve Madden

Bottom Left: 60019 Bittern working 1283 Stratford upon Avon - Victoria Cathedrals Express passing Great Bourton on the 14th May.

Derek Elston

Top Right: Deltic 55 022 with Class 37 248 at the rear is seen coming into Westerton station while working the North Berwick - Fort William charter on the 24th.

Jonathan McGurk

Bottom Right: Class 67 029 on the return leg of a Northern Belle tour to Oxenholme on the 7th May.

Dave Harris





Rail Tourer organised a trip to Scotland in May, and here are three pictures from various parts of the tour.

Left: On the outward journey, a gleaming Class 47 760 is seen at York on Friday 16th May.

Below: Class 33 025 worked a "feeder" service for the tour from Scarborough, and is seen on arrival at York.

Bottom Left: Class 47 760 is seen passing Colton Jct., the following monday, with the ECS on the return from Scarborough to Carnforth

All: *Class47*





Above: Class 67 009 and 67 011 working 5Z37 Crewe - Gobowen pass Chirk on the 2nd May.

Carl Grocott

Top Left: Class 40 145 works the 1Z57 Barrow - Aberystwyth on the 5th May.

Carl Grocott

Bottom Left: The Scarborough Spa Express has started another season with 34067 "Tangmere" working the first week of trips. **Andy**



Top Left: Class 37 401 leads 37 417 on 1Z92 " THE SETTLE & CARLISLE FLYER" through Doncaster on the 24th May.

Richard Hargreaves

Top Right: 1Z92 has been brought to Doncaster RMT from London Kings Cross by Class 92 011 seen here at Tallington.

Steve Madden

Bottom Left: The Tour returned through Doncaster with Class 37 417 leading, running as 1Z74 Carlisle - London Kings Cross.

Jon Jebb

Bottom Right: Uk Railtours ran a charter from London to York on the 24th May. Power for the trip was Class 67 020.

Richard Hargreaves





Top Left: 5029 "Nunney Castle" approaches Chesterfield with 1Z31 York - Tyseley working on the 24th May.

Derek Elston

Middle Left: Class 47 851 with 47 787 on the rear pass Tallington working Nenta Tours 1Z47 Norwich to York for the NRM's "1968 and all that" exhibition on the 24th May.

Steve Madden

Bottom Left: Class 47 787 is seen on the rear on Nenta's 1Z47 at Doncaster on the 24th May.

Andy

Top Right and Middle Right: In conjunction with a football game at Wembley, several charters were provided from Hull to Kings Cross. On Sat 24th May, Class 67 029 and 67 001 are seen at Doncaster.

Andy

Bottom Right: 67029 'Royal Diamond' Approaching Tallington with 1Z44 Hull - Kings Cross Football Special.

Steve Madden





Above: Compass Tours "North Wales Scotsman" seen here passing Vulcan Village with two Class 47's in charge on the 31st May.

Dave Harris

Left: Class 47 853 on the rear of 1Z31 1050 Paddington - Cardiff "rugby special" on May 24th.

Liam

Right: 37417 crosses Belwit Bridge at Penrhyndeudraeth with 1Z62 Pwllheli - Swindon, on the 26th May.

David Dawson



Pictures



Above: Sunshine at last, as the 4M74 Coatbridge- Crewe passes Redbank on the 14th May, with Class 90 047 at the helm.

Dave Harris

Left: Scotrail liveried Class 90 019 pauses between duties at Edinburgh Waverley on the 3rd May.

Richard Hargreaves

Right: This long-lens shot is a pair of Class 153's heading towards Taly-Y-Cafn station along the estuary of the river Conwy with 0759 to Blanaú Festiniog on the 3rd May.

Dave Harris





Above: Here is a shot that will soon be a distant memory. Class 66 079 Passing East Holmes Signal Box with an Immingham to Washwood Heath Coal train. East Holmes Signal Box will be no more after the resignalling of the Lincoln area is completed in August this year.

Steve Madden

Right: Triple Class 86's on the 4M74 Coatbridge - Crewe Freightliner seen here at Redbank, headed by Class 86 609 on May 7th 2008.

Dave Harris





*Left: The first HST in the new East Midlands Trains livery. This shot was taken on the 6th May 2008 and shows 43058 leading 43048 into Kettering, working wrong road due to an earlier fatality at Market Harborough.
John Coleman*



*Right: Cab shot of the new livery for East Midlands Trains as carried on 43058.
Richard Hargreaves*

*Bottom Left: Another new liveried Class 222 008 is seen at Leicester on the 27th May.
Richard Hargreaves*

Bottom Right: Class 222 013 is seen here at Kangaroo Spinney, near Wellingborough station on the 18th May.

This was only its second day in service in the new EMT livery.

*This was the second Meridian in EMT livery and the first one since 222 017 was unveiled at Derby in December 2007 when the EMT franchise was launched.
Steve Madden*





Above: Class 56 303 with the 4090 Doncaster - Thamesport (Grain) running through Carlton Station, Nottingham on the 6th May.

Dave Mabbott

Top Right: Veteran Class 31 459 pictured stabled at Selhurst in between night Serco test train duties on the Southern region on the 13th May. Class 171 802 is seen stabled in the background.

Steve Madden

Bottom Right: "Bubble Car" 55020 passes the site of Waddeson Satation, closed in 1936, whilst working the Quantonian Shuttle service on Monday 5th May.

Derek Elston





Top Left: A rare shot of a Western on the Bedford to Bletchley line at Kempston. It was running light from Old Oak to Butterley en route to the North Yorkshire Moors Diesel Gala weekend. It continued along the MML via Bedford. A Western has not been seen on the MML since the mid seventies when they worked Westbury to Leagrave stone trains. This shot was taken on 8th May.

Steve Madden

Top Right and Bottom Right: Two views of the loco convoy for the North Yorks Moors Gala. Seen at Colton Jct. are D1015 and Peak D182, which was from Butterley and Deltics D9009 and 55 019 from Barrow Hill.

Class47

Bottom Left: Another loco in transit in May, was E3035, from the AC loco Groups collection at Barrow Hill, bound for the NRM at York.

Class47





Top Left: Grand Central, continued in May, with it's fleet problems, recently returned from repair 43 065, speeds through Doncaster on the 24th May. Richard Hargreaves

Top Middle and Bottom Left: Seen at New Zealand Bridge, Sandy on Bank Holiday Monday, 5th May is 43 084 with "on hire" Arriva XC 43 166. Steve Madden

Top Right: Grand Central hired a pair of Class 37's and EWS stock as a replacement for one of it's HST sets, running between Sunderland and York. This is Class 37 401 on arrival at York. Class47

Bottom Right: The Class 37's were short lived, and were replaced by a pair of Riviera Class 47's. This is Class 47 805 leaving York on the 24th May. Richard Hargreaves





*Above: A couple more from Grand Central. This is Class 37 417, with one of the many loco hauled runs in May substituting for HST unavailability.
Class47*

Below: After the Class 37's, came the Class 47's for Grand Central. Running a shuttle service between York and Sunderland with EWS charter stock. Interestingly, the loco's and stock seem much more reliable than the current GC fleet.

Class47

Right: Power car 43 119 is seen leading a HST set approaching Prestonpans while working the 07.55 1E12 Inverness - London Kings Cross National Express East Coast service on the 9th May.

Jonathan McGurk





*Above: Class 325 015
Royal Mail postal unit
working a Sheldmuir -
Willesden PRDC service
at Redbank on the
14th May.
Dave Harris*



*Right: An unidentified
National Express HST
passes Colton Jct. on the
8th May.
Class47*



Left: Now in service, and branded Hull Trains, Class 180 111 makes a speedy departure from Doncaster. Will these units displace the current fleet of "Pioneers"?.

Andy

Bottom Left: It's still here!!, after the staged crash for "Top Gear" this Class 31 was supposed to have been scrapped, but as this shot shows, despite some superficial damage the veteran is in remarkable condition.

Seen here at the outside RVEL, Derby in late May.

Class47

Bottom Right: Class 56 311, until recently was preserved, now destined for the main line once again, it awaits completion of its overhaul at the workshops of RVEL in Derby.

Class47





Above: In May, the Appleby Frodingham Railway Society organised trips around the Corus complex at Scunthorpe. On hire to Corus is one of Harry Needle's Class 20's and is pictured at the entrance to the works. Well worth a visit.

Andy

Right: Also seen at Corus, Scunthorpe was this beast. If only we could get some of these on the main line.....

Class47

Far Right: Tucked away in a yard in Nottinghamshire is this Class 08 503.

Doesn't look like it's going anywhere fast.

Richard Hargreaves





Left:
 Northern's Class 156 469 made a visit to Glasgow Central High Level station on Monday 19th May 2008 filling in a First ScotRail Class 156 diagram, which has never happened before.

Class 156 469 is seen departing Glasgow Central High Level coupled to S.P.T. liveried Class 156 505 working the 12.03 1M88 Glasgow Central High Level - Carlisle service on the 19th May.
Jonathan McGurk



Top Right:
 66723 is seen working 4L22 Hams Hall - Felixtowe at Wilsons Crossing on Tuesday 20th May.
Derek Elston



Middle Right:
 Taken at Llanwrst, on the Conwy valley line, is the 0927 Blanaú Festiniog service to Llandudno Jct. The train is Class 150 280. In this shot near the signal box, the driver has just handed over the token, on May 3rd.
Dave Harris

Bottom Right:
 Class 56 303 with Fastline's 4M60 Isle of Grain - Trafford Park Intermodal seen passing through Manchester Piccadilly May 16th. It is nice to see a few boxes behind the loco for change instead of rows of flats!
Dave Harris





Above: Junipers 8014 and 8016 approaching Wimbledon en route to Wimbledon Park Depot for tyre turning, on the 22nd May.

Steve Madden

Top Right: The 1154 Manchester Airport - Windermere on May 25th is seen on the Windermere branch at the unmaned and ungated Burnside Level Crossing with Class 185 116.

Dave Harris

Middle Right: A shot of 60 025 at Bedford North Junction with a new stone working from Bardon Hill Quarry to Bow Olympic Terminal. Now that the construction of the Olympic stadium at Stratford has started there should be an increase of both stone trains and cement trains on the Midland Main Line in the future.

Steve Madden

Bottom Right: Class 60 074 'Teenage Spirit' Pulling away from a signal stop at Harrowden Junction on 23rd May. It was working 6E38 Colnbrook to Lindsey empty tanks.

Steve Madden





Left: Dwarfed by the cooling towers, Class 66 604 departs Ratcliffe Power Station on the 21st May. Ian Furness

Above: Another power station working, this time in Yorkshire as Class 66 538 works out of Eggborough. Andy

Below: Summer's here, Cross Country have commenced hire-in HST sets for the additional diagrams, Nat-Ex's 43056 is seen departing Paignton on the 24th May. Liam





*Above: A Class 320 working the 15.10 2H46 Helensburgh Central - Drumgelloch passes Bowling on the 5th May.
Jonathan McGurk*



*Top Right: In the shadows at York, HST's 43296 and 43095 pass on the 24th May.
Jon Jebb*



*Middle Right: Class 31 105 propells DVT 9714 at Wellingborough working 5Z47 Selhurst - Derby RTC on the 29th May.
Derek Elston*



*Bottom Right: Class 37 423 departs Wellingborough working back to Derby with 2Z04 passing the site of the old depot on 29th May.
Derek Elston*



With the tramway back in action after the winter of repairs and closures, here is a selection of Blackpool Trams and several in new liveries for the 2008 season.
All taken in May by: Eric Thorpe



Swanage Beer Festival 9th - 11th May



*This years gala consisted of:
Class 73 107 'Spitfire',
Class 66 724 'Drax Power Station',
Class 50 D444 'Exeter',
Class 37 275 and 37 906,
Class 20 096,
Class 07 007 shunter
SWT Vep 3417.*

Also the resident Class 33 and Class 47 from Swanage were in use.

On this and the next page are some of the shots from the gala.

Friday's timetable worked out well, with various workings, as seen in the photos. Unlike last year, Vep 3417 was actually used more between Swanage and Norden, as opposed to the shuttle service that it worked last year.

All Pictures © James Paice.



Swanage Beer Festival 9th - 11th May continued..



Saturday's timetable was slightly different to Friday's, as the Vep worked in Push - Pull mode, working from Norden to Swanage and return.

GBRF's Class 66 724 proved to be very popular with enthusiasts on all days.

All Pictures © James Paice.





The Nosh Report

Steve Roberts

Welcome to the another “Nosh Report”, remember that this is your chance to let everyone know where to go for something to eat or drink, (ie cafe, takeaway, sandwich shop) when out and about.

This month its a location decided by Railtalk reader, Bill Mahoney, and is Dorridge, West Midlands. He writes:

There’s a very nice ‘chippy’ at Station Approach, Dorridge (which is on the line from Birmingham to Leamington). They do “mini” fish and chips with mushy peas or curry sauce for £3 and lots of other things like kebabs, sausages etc., together with a well-stocked drinks cooler holding all the usual soft drinks and water.

Just down from there is a Chinese take-away, “The Dorridge Cantonese”. For those who like to sit down to a meal and a beer, there’s a Chinese restaurant called “Minh’s” in the corer of the little square almost next to the station bridge and a curry house called the “Saleem Bagh” on the edge of the same square. If all that is insufficient, there’s a Tesco Metro in the same little place where you can get the usual biscuits, snacks and drinks as well as newspapers, etc. If that wasn’t enough, there’s also an Italian restaurant in the little precinct behind the chippy, calle “Da Santino”.

So is it worth visiting Dorridge, for any traffic and suitable photo opportunities? Well, yes, with London Midland and Chiltern Birmingham Snow Hill Services as well as Cross Country trains and plenty of freight. For Steam buffs, there are steam-hauled excursions throughout the summer and to top it all, lots of colour with all the myriad of new colour light signals and point motors, etc. There’s a handy footbridge between the platforms and toilet facilities too. A waiting room is in the middle of the island platform making a suitable retreat if the weather turns a bit “iffy”.

Thanks to Bill for that and remember, keep those reports coming, we need more like Bill’s excellent suggestions to keep us fed and watered while we travel the length of Britain.

Until the next time.....Steve.

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

CROSSCOUNTRY'S FIRST REFRESHED TURBOSTAR ENTERS SERVICE

CrossCountry's first refreshed Class 170 Turbostar train has entered service to provide more seats and luggage space and new First Class accommodation on services between Cardiff and Nottingham and Birmingham New Street and Stansted Airport.

The three-coach train has a total of 200 seats and can accommodate cycles in a strapped position and in vestibule areas. Interior refreshment to provide bright, attractive and comfortable accommodation was carried out at Transys Projects' depot in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex. Seats have been re-upholstered, new carpets fitted and at-seat power points installed in the two-plus-one seating of the new First Class accommodation.

As well as receiving the interior makeover, all 13 two-coach and 16 three-coach trains are being repainted into CrossCountry's striking and distinctive new livery of warm black and red to make them easily recognisable to customers. Exterior repainting, due as part of scheduled overhaul, is being carried out by EWS subsidiary Axiom Rail at the EWS Toton Depot, near Nottingham and at Marcroft Depot, Stoke-on-Trent. Work on the entire fleet will be completed by early next year.

CrossCountry Managing Director Andy Cooper said: "We're delighted to be working with Transys Projects on this vital programme to increase capacity on our services. Our Class 170 trains, which serve some of our busiest routes through Birmingham, are being refreshed to a standard of the highest quality. They will make a significant contribution to our commitment to provide up to 35 percent more seating and additional luggage space on our trains.

"Also, introduction of First Class accommodation on every train will meet the demand for this service from a growing market on these routes." To avoid train shortages during the refreshment programme, the work is being phased to coincide with scheduled maintenance. Until the project is completed early next year, some coaches will, therefore, run with reworked exteriors or interiors only.

National Express supports Breast Cancer Care as Fashion Models take the train to the catwalk!

Train operator National Express East Anglia is supporting Breast Cancer Care by providing complimentary train travel for models attending the charity's annual fashion show and the rehearsals preceding it. The Breast Cancer Care Fashion Show, will be held on Wednesday 1st October 2008 at the Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London at 1.30pm.

The Show is a unique, inspiring and glamorous event. All of the models taking part, both female and male, have had breast cancer and the Show is the flagship fundraising event in the charity's calendar and kick starts Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. In 2007, the show brought together more than 2,000 guests including the likes of Geri Halliwell and Katherine Jenkins, in raising over half a million pounds (£520,000).

While a diagnosis of breast cancer is devastating news for those affected and their family and friends, the Breast Cancer Care Fashion Show demonstrates how people can look and feel great again. The spirit of the event is captured by the models as they radiate confidence and charisma on the catwalk.

The Show is attended by supporters of Breast Cancer Care; friends and families of the models; celebrity ambassadors and supporters and many corporate partners. In previous years the event has been hosted by David Walliams, Lisa Snowdon, Fiona Phillips, Jerry Hall, Natasha Kaplinsky and Carol Vorderman, and is regularly attended by the charities patrons, Cherie Booth Q.C. and Geri Halliwell.

As a fundraising event, the show enables Breast Cancer Care to continue to provide information and support to those who are affected by breast cancer. National Express East Anglia is pleased to support the charity.

David Lewis, Sales & Marketing Director, National Express East Anglia commented:

'Breast Cancer Care provides a caring and valuable service to those affected by the disease. The charity's annual fashion show is instrumental in raising awareness of Breast Cancer Care and in helping to raise the vital funds the charity needs to continue its excellent work. National Express East Anglia is delighted to support Breast Cancer Care.'



NATIONAL EXPRESS EAST ANGLIA INVESTS IN NEW CCTV AT SOUTHEND VICTORIA, WICKFORD AND RAYLEIGH

National Express East Anglia has installed new CCTV equipment at Southend Victoria station. New CCTV cameras have been introduced, covering the station entrance, station concourse and platforms with the aim of reducing crime and providing reassurance to passengers and station staff alike. The new CCTV equipment represents a total investment of just over £180,000 by the train operator.

As part of the same improvement initiative, CCTV equipment at two additional Essex stations; Wickford and Rayleigh has also been upgraded. The new and upgraded station CCTV equipment complements investment National Express East Anglia has already made in fitting their entire fleet of Class 321 trains, which operate between London Liverpool Street and Southend Victoria, with CCTV.

As part of the investment Southend Victoria, Wickford and Rayleigh Stations have become the latest benefactors of improved technology through a CCTV system specifically designed, developed and tested over several years at National Express operated stations. These modern CCTV systems utilise 92 of the very latest high resolution cameras which are then digitised and recorded locally at the stations using a number of MultiVision digital video recorders.

David Winder Business Director for the Southend and Metro Route commented: 'We are committed to providing a safe travelling and work environment for our customers and staff alike. This further investment in CCTV builds on the improvements we have made in recent months, including fitting our entire fleet of Class 321 trains which run from Southend Victoria to Liverpool Street with CCTV. The combination of this investment will help to reduce the instances of anti-social behaviour and reassure passengers.'

Request a stop on the Praxis Express

First GBRf is pleased to announce the commencement of a new contract for Praxis Engineering, which provides a unique 'request stop' service for train owners looking to transport wagons in and around Long Marston in Warwickshire. Working with Praxis and Motorail Logistics, First GBRf is providing two train services per week, to transport vehicles from Leeds to Praxis Engineering's workshop in Long Marston. Named 'The Praxis Express' the services will run on Tuesdays and Fridays for at least a three month period and will be open to other stock or locomotive owners who wish to move vehicles into and out of storage. With prior notification 'The Praxis Express' can be diverted off route to deliver or pick up vehicles, which need to be tested or stored before onward travel.

Paul Smith Contracts Manager Royal Mail & Rail Services First GBRf said: "We are delighted to be able to offer this service which gives regular in and out paths into Long Marston storage site. It is hoped that this service will become popular with vehicle owners wishing to transfer stock into and out of Long Marston. We look forward to a long partnership with Praxis Engineering and Motorail Logistics."

Paul Hagger at Praxis Engineering said: "In the first few weeks of this service First GBRf have performed excellently moving not only freight wagons but also overhauled electric locomotives destined for Bulgaria. Praxis Engineering looks forward to the Praxis Express moving more stock to and from Praxis Engineering's workshops."

'THANKYOU' TO STAFF FROM LONDON MIDLAND AS BLETCHLEY TRAIN DEPOT CLOSES

Bletchley train depot staff have been given a big 'thankyou' by London Midland managing director Steve Banaghan on the site's last day as a full maintenance site, on the 30th May.

From December, London Midland is phasing in a fleet of 37 state of the art 350/2 Desiro trains, which are maintained by Siemens at Northampton. These will eventually replace the 321s currently serviced at Bletchley.

Most of the Bletchley engineering staff will be seconded to the Siemens site, while the cleaning staff will move to London Midland's cleaning team. The depot land and buildings will revert to owner Network Rail when the lease ends later this year.

The depot was opened 42 years ago and is widely respected throughout the industry. Its staff won the HSBC Rail Awards Engineering Excellence title last year after making the 321s it maintained about six times more reliable than average for the unit.

London Midland managing director Steve Banaghan said: "The engineers at Bletchley are amongst the best in the industry and were vital to London Midland's excellent performance in the first six months of our franchise. It's good to know the new fleet will be in such good hands with them and Siemens in Northampton.

"I'd like to say a big thank you to both them and the cleaning staff and wish them all well for the future care of the London Midland fleet."

In December, London Midland is phasing in 37 four-car Class 350/2 Siemens Desiros to run mainly on West Coast Mainline routes, and phasing out its Class 321 trains.

Transport giant urges Britain to think green

FirstGroup, the world's leading transport company, is urging the Great British public to think green. As well as publishing a list of helpful hints designed to reduce every day energy use, First is emphasising the benefits of other forms of transport to the car. This year to help reduce carbon emissions, organisers are encouraging individuals to consider alternative modes of transport to the private car. To help celebrate World Environment Day, First is challenging people to leave their car at home on June 5th and instead consider public transport, cycling or walking. By trying other forms of transport First is hoping that more people will consider leaving their cars behind more often.

On a passenger kilometre basis, traveling by train or bus is less carbon intensive than traveling by car - the average petrol car emits 133 grammes of carbon dioxide while buses emit 89 grammes and passenger rail 60 grammes. (Source: Defra 2007)

Last year, First Capital Connect alone had 91.8 million passenger journeys, which has reduced UK CO2 emissions by 233.034 thousand tonnes - assuming all these journeys were made by car - that's enough to fill 233,000 hot air balloons!

First Capital Connect was also the first train operator to be awarded the prestigious ISO 14001 environmental accreditation for the entire company. Recognised as the cornerstone of the international standards on environmental management, ISO 14001 provides a control framework and is awarded to companies that implement an effective Environmental Management System (EMS) to improve environmental performance.

Chief Executive of FirstGroup, Moir Lockhead, stressed that everyone has a responsibility to leave the planet in as good a shape as is possible for future generations. "At FirstGroup we see ourselves as part of the solution to the climate change problem. By providing safe, reliable and cost effective alternatives to the car, we hope to encourage even more people to travel on our buses and trains. I hope that on June 5th people who normally drive will seriously contemplate leaving their car at home."

"At First we also recognise that we have a duty to reduce our carbon emissions. Last year we unveiled our Climate Change Strategy setting ambitious targets to reduce carbon emissions in our bus division by 25% and in our rail division by 20% both by 2020."

NETWORK RAIL ACCELERATES CABLE REPLACEMENT ON WEST COAST

Almost 14 miles of old signalling power cable is to be replaced in just the next ten weeks as an accelerated programme of renewal gets underway in the Milton Keynes and Bletchley areas on the West Coast Main Line.

As some of the cable is coming up to 40 years old, its renewal had always formed part of the project, but a number of recent signalling power failures in the Bletchley area have been traced to this cabling and an accelerated programme, focussing on the most susceptible cable, was devised.

In total almost £3m will be spent at six locations along the route on replacing 60 miles of this 650v cable, which supplies power to the signalling system and is essential for delivering a reliable train service. The scheme will be completed before the end of the year as part of the ongoing West Coast project.

Peter Strachan, Route Director, said: "We have acted speedily on our analysis of signalling power cable problems in this area and we are now implementing an accelerated programme to put in new and reliable replacements.

"In a very short period of time, passengers and freight users will reap the benefits of this investment through more reliable journeys across the route." Chris Gibb, Virgin Trains Chief Operating Officer, said: "Whilst this has caused our customers considerable inconvenience, we are pleased that Network Rail has grabbed hold of the issue quickly and look forward to a significant improvement in performance"

The £600k accelerated programme in the Bletchley / Milton Keynes area got underway over the bank holiday weekend with two miles of old cable being torn out and replaced with new.

All the cable will be clearly tagged to deter metal thieves. Network Rail has been working closely with the British Transport Police to target the thieves and prevent thefts. Measures include increased security patrols, improved fencing, high tech security measures and training Network Rail staff in forensic techniques to improve conviction rates.



NEWS IN BRIEF

● Gala Re-opening for Leamington Spa station

The £767,000 redevelopment and improvement of Leamington Spa station was officially unveiled on Friday 23rd May by Adrian Shooter, Chairman of Chiltern Railways, Sir William McAlpine, Chairman of the Rail Heritage Trust in the presence of Kailash Chander, Mayor of Royal Leamington Spa and Pete Waterman, Chairman of Friends of Leamington Spa station. The work sees the station restored to its 1930s Art Deco glory and includes the installation of new ticket gates to improve passenger security and safety.

● NETWORK RAIL SEEKS URGENT ANSWERS FROM TfL FOLLOWING LIVERPOOL STREET BRIDGE FIASCO

Network Rail's Chief Executive today wrote to Transport for London's Commissioner Peter Hendy to seek urgent answers about the severe disruption caused to tens of thousands of passengers as a result of the failure of TfL infrastructure outside Liverpool Street station on the evening of Wednesday 28th May. At about 1915, a concrete slab fell from a TfL bridge that had been erected over the May Day bank holiday as part of TfL's ongoing project to extend the East London line.

Services were stopped as a result of the incident and it wasn't until 0930 on Thursday that TfL gave the 'all clear' and services were allowed to re-start. Because of concerns over TfL's handling and management of both the project and its contractors, Network Rail has banned work on the bridge, effective immediately. This will remain in place until TfL has completed an investigation and reported back on the causes of the incident and what measures it will be putting in place to prevent a repetition. Commenting on the incident, Network Rail's Director of Operations and Customer Service, Robin Gisby, said: "Passengers rightly want an explanation, as do I. Passengers deserve an apology for the disruption they suffered last night and this morning and I want assurances that such an incident can't and won't happen again."

Teatime tradition takes to the tracks as National Express launches new catering selection

Enjoying afternoon tea, with a tasty array of sandwiches and tempting scones with jam and cream, is an enduring British tradition.

From Monday 19th May, train operator National Express East Coast is offering First Class travellers the chance to relax in style with this classic teatime treat – served at your seat for only £5.95.

The afternoon favourite is part of a brand new range of food and drink introduced this week on trains between London, the East Midlands, Yorkshire, North East England and Scotland.

Other changes include healthy breakfast options, a new Bistro-style lunch selection and a tempting new dinner menu.

The new on-board restaurant menu is based on advice from catering experts Eugene McCoy and Marcus Bennett.

Highlights include:

- Breakfast – new gourmet dishes introduced alongside existing favourites, including Eggs Benedict and Nova Scotia Pancakes with maple syrup or blueberry jam. Available on most weekday morning trains until around 11am
- Lunch – a ‘bistro-style’ menu including better value options, in many cases at reduced prices. New choices include: Premium Signature Aberdeen Angus Burger, freshly prepared pasta with a choice of bolognese, carbonara or arrabiata sauces; and for those seeking a lighter option, chicken Caesar salad, fish cakes and soups. Available on many weekday trains between 11am and 4pm
- Dinner – a selection of aperitifs, including Kir Royale, Vodka Martini or Gin and Tonic, introduced for the first time as part of a rotating menu over a four-week cycle.
- Main dinner courses include: Chicken Breast with Sweet Chilli Noodles; Pan-Fried Salmon Steak served on a rosti potato cake with a lemon butter sauce; Mascarpone and Red Pepper Tart; Sea Bream and Sun-Dried Tomato Risotto; and Vegetable Tagine.
- Delicious desserts to round off your meal include Chocolate and Amaretti Tart; Mixed Summer Berries Gratin; Orange Crème Caramel; or Chocolate Trifle with Grand Marnier Cream. Available on 22 weekday trains between 4pm and 8pm.

A selection of fine wines continues, with a new addition – Prosecco, a northern Italian sparkling wine. National Express East Coast continues its relationship with trusted North Yorkshire based wine supplier Playford Ros, whose expertise contributes to the excellent selection available.

At the buffet and from the at-seat trolley service throughout the train, a new hot food selection is available.

National Express East Coast customer service director Helen Thornton said: “With help from our customers and feedback from employees, we have created a range that reflects modern tastes and eating trends in the high street, with many items carrying ‘green light’ labelling to help customers make healthy eating choices.

“We’re very proud of the new catering offer and we look forward to serving our customers”.

East Midlands Trains joins the team at Network Rail’s control centre in Derby

Following the official opening of Network Rail’s East Midlands Control Centre (EMCC) in Derby last month, East Midlands Trains has moved a number of key staff to the brand new shared facility. Gavin Bell, Head of Train Service Delivery for East Midlands Trains, whose Control Team moved to the centre yesterday said: “This new joint control centre provides a fantastic opportunity for both East Midlands Trains and Network Rail to improve communication with its customers.”

Controllers from both companies will be sitting side by side, sharing information and being able to work quickly together to manage the day to day operation of the railway.

“An additional benefit will be that both performance management teams will also be based in the same location for the first time ever, providing the opportunity for an increased management focus.”

Gavin will be working closely with Chris Jackson, Current Operations Manager for Network Rail at the EMCC. Providing a senior management presence at the centre is part of East Midlands Trains strategy of providing management support for staff throughout the business, and not basing all managers at one head office function. Mr Jackson said: “In all the other parts of the country where Network Rail has introduced integrated control centres with the local train operators, the performance of trains has increased dramatically. Sitting alongside our train company colleagues means that when we need to make decisions affecting their services, it’s far quicker and easier than having to pick up the telephone. The end result is a much better train service for passengers, with delays and disruption kept to a minimum.”

The EMCC building is the first of its kind in the UK. It has been built to a modular design, enabling Network Rail to provide modern facilities at an efficient cost and is the first of a number of similar control centres planned around the country. It is Network Rail’s greenest ever building, incorporating solar water heating to reduce carbon emissions and rainwater harvesting to save a million litres of water every year.

CELEBRATING ENGINEERING SUCCESS OVER THE TYNE

After £40m worth of investment and seven years hard work, Iain Coucher, chief executive of Network Rail, on the 30th May, officially marked the end of the current engineering works on the High Level Bridge between Newcastle and Gateshead.

Mr Coucher was joined by David Sterry, chief executive at May Gurney, the main contractor on the project; John Shipley, leader of Newcastle City Council; and Mick Henry, leader of Gateshead Council to celebrate the end of the project. Speaking as a vintage bus became the first “official” vehicle over the bridge since 2005, Mr Coucher said: “The High Level Bridge is a unique structure. Made of cast iron it needed some serious care and attention so that it can continue to serve the communities of Newcastle and Gateshead for many years to come.

“Our engineers have had to develop new techniques to protect the bridge, whilst respecting its Grade 1 Listing and making sure it can still be used. Solutions have included supporting existing beams with new ones which take the load of the roadway and undertaking ground-breaking testing and research into the strength of the cast iron. I’d like to congratulate everyone on a job well done under trying circumstances - and for keeping the trains running throughout.” Councillor Mick Henry, Leader of Gateshead Council, said: “I am delighted to be able to welcome the re-opening of this important link between Gateshead and Newcastle. All of the bridges over the Tyne Gorge serve to tie Gateshead and Newcastle together as one dynamic conurbation, but the High Level is particularly special because of its central location.

“There were times during the last three years when I feared we might never see this day. When work began, it was soon apparent that the condition of the structure was much worse than anyone had expected. I’d therefore like to congratulate Network Rail and their design team and contractors on the completion of an impressive restoration project, in extremely difficult circumstances.”

David Sterry, May Gurney’s chief executive, said: “With eight years of complex repairs to the High Level Bridge (HLB) we have demonstrated that cutting-edge research can pay dividends – an extremely cost effective solution involving a very high profile site. This project validates our strategy of focussing on developing long-term relationships with our customers.”

John Wilkinson, May Gurney’s managing director project and rail engineering, says “The scheme has been highly complex due to logistical constraints and careful programme management using local expertise has been imperative to its success. It has been a fantastic project to work on and it’s a credit to our team who have been working on the refurbishment since 2001. At the peak of the project we employed upwards of 200 people, while working a 12-day fortnight with both day and night shifts. We are delighted to see it completed”.

Councillor John Shipley, leader of Newcastle City Council, said: “The High Level Bridge is an important part of our heritage. It is important to have it back in use to give priority to passenger transport and to improve journey times for bus passengers.” The official opening was followed by an open day for members of the public. During the afternoon there were information stands and members of the engineering teams at May Gurney and Network Rail available to explain the extent of the work.

SCOTTISH SPRINT CUP MAKES 'EXPRESS' TRANSFER TO YORK RACECOURSE

Former Miss England Georgia Horsley made an express delivery by train on the 27th May, when she delivered the National Express Scottish Sprint Cup trophy to its temporary new home at York Racecourse.

Traditionally held at Musselburgh Racecourse in Edinburgh, the £50,000 five-furlong sprint, sponsored by National Express East Coast, is making the move to York during 2008 and was run on 31 May as part of the racecourse's new May Spring Weekend festival.

James Brennan, Marketing and Sponsorship Manager at York Racecourse, received the coveted Sprint Cup trophy from Georgia and Rachel Dawson, Sales and Marketing Director, National Express East Coast, at the racecourse following its safe and swift transfer from Edinburgh by National Express East Coast train.

Stunning beauty Georgia modelled an eye-catching National Express East Coast dress which has been specially designed by Edinburgh-based designer, Susie McKenzie, to mark the train operator's Sprint Cup sponsorship.

Inspired by the summer racing season and 'ladies day' fashions, the unique full-length dress was made from white silk and features silver ribbons and red and blue rosettes. The dress was complemented by a bouquet of Yorkshire white roses.

This racing season National Express East Coast is also sponsoring meetings at Newcastle, Doncaster and Musselburgh and is offering great value-for-money rail deals to racecourses along the East Coast Main Line. For example, racing fans travelling from York to Edinburgh for the Musselburgh meeting can do so in style with First Class rail fares from Edinburgh starting at £52 return.

Over 20,000 racegoers attended the May Spring Weekend racing fixture at the Knavesmire on Friday 30 May and Saturday 31 May, which is the newest addition to York's racing calendar. The mid-term family weekend offered the chance to check the form of leading thoroughbreds ahead of their mid season targets and family entertainment at the funfair.



East Midlands Trains listens to SOS plea from passengers!

First Class passengers who regularly take breakfast with East Midlands Trains have been feeding back that they love the cooked breakfast and saying loud and clear - 'SOS, Save Our Sausages'. Since it started running trains last November, the company has been reviewing their First Class menu and preparing a brand new range of products which are launched today.

As part of the new range the company has pledged its commitment to continue offering First Class passengers the hugely popular full cooked British breakfast – therefore Saving Our Sausages! Tim Shoveller, Managing Director for the company said "We had looked at a number of options for our breakfast offer. But feedback from passengers told us that although many want to see lighter breakfast options available, a significant number do still love our cooked British breakfast. So we have listened to those customers and decided to keep the full breakfast on our First Class menu.

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

East Midlands Trains great British breakfast is £10 and is available to First Class passengers on selected trains and subject to availability.

Other breakfast options are available including a healthy breakfast option, salmon, kippers, beans on toast, croque monsieur and of course vegetarian alternatives.

Crewe gets green-fingered display

Work to transform part of Platform 5 at Crewe rail station into an oasis of calm has been finally completed. The impressive 48 metre square garden has been created as the result of a competition for Reaseheath Horticultural College developed by Visit Chester & Cheshire and delivered by Virgin Trains, Bridgemere Garden World, Crewe and Nantwich Council and Reaseheath Horticultural College. It is part of a Cheshire-wide campaign to promote the 'Cheshire's Year of Gardens 08' initiative, an extravaganza of events and activities centred on Cheshire's 29 'Gardens of Distinction'. On hand this week to complete the ambitious garden project by digging in the final floral exhibit was the Mayor of Crewe & Nantwich Cllr Brian Silvester, watched by Cheshire's Year of Gardens 08 Steering Group Chair, Felicity Goodey CBE, and the Reaseheath student who designed the garden, Debbie Dexter.

Debbie explains "As a garden design student at Reaseheath College this has given me an invaluable insight into how a project is managed from design and build, through to completion and shows what a difference a garden can make. Hopefully this display will encourage others to visit some of the many fantastic gardens in Cheshire this year." Virgin Trains Station Manager for Crewe Sam Dixon has been involved in the project from the start "There is a lot of unused space at Crewe and we wanted to do something to make best use of it. Debbie's creation is very eye-catching, but also blends in with the architecture of the station." He said "As the main gateway into Cheshire and England's North West, Crewe Station has a major role in communicating the Gardens of Distinction brand to tens of thousands of residents, visitors and business travellers," said Visit Chester & Cheshire Chief Executive, Chris Brown.

Felicity Goodey added: "This ambitious project is the result of great teamwork involving garden design students, local businesses and Visit Chester & Cheshire. It will help highlight the fantastic range of garden and cultural opportunities we have in our area, and encourage residents and visitor to take time out to enjoy them." Cheshire's Year of Gardens 08 is one of the biggest initiatives ever launched by local tourism board, Visit Chester & Cheshire, to boost Cheshire's visitor economy.

Kids Go Free seven days a week First ScotRail leads the way in the UK

First ScotRail is to become the first train operator in the UK to offer free travel for children aged 5-15, seven days a week.

From 18 May, the 'Kids Go Free' offer will be available every day.

The move will provide a welcome financial boost for parents especially during the summer holidays, as rising household costs eat into the family budget.

More than 200,000 children in the eligible age group travelled free last year. By extending the offer to seven days a week, First ScotRail expects to see a significant uplift in the number of children travelling on their trains.

Under the 'Kids Go Free' initiative, each travelling adult can take up to two children free of charge on First ScotRail services outwith peak travel periods. Parents can also save money via extra value fares. There is no need to book in advance - simply turn up, buy a ticket and go.

Peter Williams, First ScotRail's commercial director, said: "From 18 May, kids travel free every day of the week - it's really that simple. With hundreds of attractions throughout Scotland, we are playing our part in keeping the fun factor high and the cost factor low. We hope that many more families will get out and about by train this summer."

Passenger Focus welcomed the initiative. Robert Samson, passenger link manager, said: "The extension of the Kids Go Free offer to seven days a week will hopefully encourage more families to take advantage of rail travel and is an indication of First ScotRail's commitment to attracting more people to sample what the rail network can offer."

First station adoption project for North Staffordshire rail line

North Staffordshire Community Rail partnership is celebrating its first station 'adoption' project for the North Staffordshire Line, which serves stations from Crewe-Stoke to Derby. A group of local residents, lead by Forsbrook Parish Council, have adopted Blythe Bridge station. The group will work on different projects to help improve the station for passengers and the local community.

Their first job is to restore the garden bed on Platform 2, clearing weeds and replanting with easy maintenance shrubs and herbaceous plants.

Gill Burton, Chairman of Forsbrook Parish Council said: "Blythe Bridge is the only railway station in the Staffordshire Moorlands. We have always endeavoured to keep it looking its best to reflect the local pride we have in our parish. We already pick litter in the car park and tend the flower bed there. By officially adopting the station we will be able to extend the scope of the work we do and further improve the station."

As well as gardening projects, members of the adoption group will also regularly check the station and report faults such as graffiti back to train operator East Midlands Trains for action. Partnership Officer, Faye Lambert, said: "A major part of our work is involving the local community in station enhancements that will deliver improvements for passengers and create awareness of the Crewe-Stoke-Derby rail service. Station adoption is invaluable at unmanned stations because it enables regular feedback to the train operator and ourselves so any issues can be resolved quickly, which is much better for passengers."

The Partnership has also recruited volunteer station checkers at Alsager, Kidsgrove and Uttoxeter stations and recently worked with Maryhill High School, Kidsgrove, on an art project to improve the waiting room at Kidsgrove station.

In 2007, thanks to a successful bid to North Staffordshire Regeneration Zone, the Partnership was able to deliver much improved facilities at Longport and Longton stations in Stoke-on-Trent, including new shelters and a modern customer information system (CIS).

Faye Lambert concluded, "There's a further benefit to come for passengers using Blythe Bridge station. Our successful bid to the Department for Transport Access for All fund means CIS will also be installed here, as well as at Alsager, Kidsgrove and Tutbury and Hatton stations."

Funding for the gardening project has been provided by Forsbrook Parish Council and supported by a £250 grant from the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP).

East Midlands Trains' Stakeholder Development Manager John Hillman said, "East Midlands Trains is delighted to welcome the Blythe Bridge adoption group on board and we look forward to working with members to improve their local station."



THE RAILWAY IN WALES: THE NEXT DECADE'S STRATEGY

Extra platforms, new stations, longer trains and more tracks are among the list of options unveiled recently in a draft strategy to develop the passenger and freight railway in Wales. Drawn up by Network Rail along with industry partners, for consultation, the Wales Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) compiles the industry's aspirations and examines 24 options to cater to nearly 40 million passengers by 2018.

Passenger growth in Wales is predicted to rise by 25% in 10 years. The options will address such changing demands as well as aspirations to strengthen links between north and south Wales, by boosting capacity on the central corridor through Cardiff and improving journey times on the north - south routes.

Among the options reviewed are:

- Re-doubling single track between Wrexham and Chester and upgrade signalling at Abergavenny to improve frequency and journey time between North and South Wales.
- Additional infrastructure, including new platforms at Cardiff Central, Pontypridd and Caerphilly to facilitate the long-term vision of 16 trains per hour through South Wales Valley network.
- New stations at Llanwern and Energlyn, to support residential development in these areas.
- Reinstate double track layout between Llanelli and Carmarthen to improve performance and consequently, encourage more train usage at Gowerton.
- New freight terminal and connection at Blaenau Ffestiniog to improve trainload quantities of slate waste.

Dave Ward, Route Director, Network Rail says,

"The consultation document presents a set of realistic, cost-effective yet far-reaching measures to get the best out of the network. The Welsh rail network owes its current state of development to significant investment and strong industry partnership. The options will continue to build on these strengths as well as benefit from recent investment, including the £400m South Wales Resignalling scheme."

"Consultation is a key part of the route strategy process and we look forward to hearing the views of a wide range of interested parties, including local authorities and user groups. The final strategy document will present policy makers with a factual analysis, allowing them to make decisions on what projects to be funded and advanced."

Network Rail and its key transport partners in Wales, including the Welsh Assembly Government, Arriva Trains Wales, First Great Western, the Association of Train Operating Companies, and the freight operating companies, have been working for the past year to develop this draft route strategy.

Further rigorous analysis and appraisal will be done on the options to ensure that only those offering greatest benefit to passengers and best value for money are included in the final strategy. The consultation closes on 22 August 2008 and the final strategy will be published by end of this year.

RAIL DANGER WARNING TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Network Rail's rail safety campaign No Messin' has issued a reminder to young people not to risk their lives or the lives of others by trespassing or mucking about on the railway during school holidays.

Every year dozens of people are killed or seriously injured on the railway by taking shortcuts or even using the railway as a guide home. On lines from London Waterloo to stations in South West London, No Messin' has identified the area around Ewell West, Worcester Park and Tolworth as a hotspot, with dozens of incidents of trespass and vandalism recorded in 2007. The lines between New Malden and Surbiton also saw significant numbers of incidents take place. It is impossible to capture every incident, and the true number is estimated to be much higher.

Recorded incidents of trespass and vandalism in South West London include:

- Objects thrown at trains, including stones, bottles and bricks, which in some cases have led to train windows being smashed
- Playing on the railway, including a game of football taking place on the tracks
- Running alongside tracks or across lines
- Surfing trains
- Graffiti

Nationally, in the last five years one in four accidental fatalities was of someone aged eight to 18 with half of all near misses involved children. Those trespassing by taking short cuts or even crossing from one platform to the other are risking their lives.

Network Rail's rail safety campaign No Messin' has today urged young people in the Buckinghamshire area not to risk their lives or the lives of others by trespassing or mucking about on the railway during the half term school holidays.

Every year dozens of people are killed or seriously injured on the railway by taking shortcuts or even using the railway as a guide home. No Messin' has identified High Wycombe and Aylesbury as rail crime hotspots in the Buckinghamshire area, with dozens of incidents of trespass and vandalism recorded in 2007. With hundreds of miles of track it is impossible to capture every incident, and the true number is estimated to be much higher, running into the 1000s each year.

Recorded incidents of trespass and vandalism in the Bucks area include:

- Kids placing objects on the line to obstruct trains including stones, furniture and a wheelie bin
- Throwing objects at trains
- Starting fires
- Running alongside tracks or across lines

In the last five years one in four accidental fatalities was of someone aged eight to 18 with half of all near misses involved children. Those trespassing by taking short cuts or even crossing from one platform to the other are risking their lives.

Martin Gallagher, Network Rail's National Rail Crime Education Manager said: "During the summer and school holidays we always see an increase in rail crime with the light evenings and kids looking for something to fill their free time.

"The railway though is a dangerous place and those trespassing or taking short cuts across it are putting their lives at risk. It can take the length of 20 football pitches for a fast train to stop and if you get hit by a train, there is only one winner. Our campaign tries to make people think twice about what they're doing and hopefully save lives."



KING'S CROSS STATION - WESTERN CONCOURSE CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT

The massive redevelopment at King's Cross station has reached a key milestone as Network Rail announced its preferred bidder for the western concourse works contract is Taylor Woodrow. Taylor Woodrow will now begin 'Stage 1' works which includes setting target costs and undertaking initial works in advance of the full scale redevelopment of the western range. An announcement on the award of the full contract of the works will be made in the next few months. The western range package of works is the biggest of the redevelopment and will bring about tremendous improvements to one of London's busiest stations. The new semi-circular structure to the west of the station will house a spacious 8,000sq metre concourse - three times the size of the existing one and include the installation of voltaic roof panels which enable the building to be self heating and much brighter than the current station.

NATIONAL EXPRESS EAST ANGLIA, COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL AND EAST OF ENGLAND TOURISM LAUNCH NEW SIGNAGE AT COLCHESTER TOWN STATION

National Express East Anglia launched new signage at Colchester Town Station on Tuesday 13th May. The signage has been produced in partnership with Colchester Borough Council and East of England Tourism with the aim of encouraging more people to visit Colchester by rail. The stylish signage features iconic images from Colchester town centre, including the ancient Augustinian Priory and the striking new purpose built art gallery Firstsite, due to open in late 2008. The new signage highlights Colchester town centre's many attractions and bolsters its reputation as a centre of cultural and historical significance.

Keith Brown, Chief Executive of East of England Tourism commented:

"We are delighted that Colchester Borough Council is sponsoring Colchester Town Station. The commercial benefits of encouraging new visitors to help grow our regional economy in support of our local businesses by such activities are clearly defined. There is also an element of civic pride with such sponsorship that benefits those that live and work in the area and pass through the station everyday. Colchester has so much to offer now and in the future making the timing of this sponsorship ideal."

Claire Taylor of Colchester Borough Council added

'Our vision is for Colchester to develop as a prestigious regional centre and a significant national visitor destination. Key to that is encouraging visitors to come to Colchester by train. We are delighted to be working in partnership with National Express to extend a warm welcome to our visitors from the moment they step onto the platform at the Town Station and into the heart of Colchester.'

National Express East Anglia is working in partnership with East of England Tourism in order to promote places of interest around their network. The train operator is building on the success of the Colchester Zoo signage at Colchester North Station and the English Heritage signage at Audley End Station in organising the event at Colchester Town Station.

Andrew Goodrum National Express East Anglia Business Director for the Mainline route said:

"We are pleased to be working in partnership with Colchester Borough Council and East of England Tourism, to bring new visitors to the area to enjoy all that Colchester has to offer, whether it be the iconic heritage, the shopping or the lively arts scene."

Photo right, shows representatives of National Express East Anglia, East of England Tourism and Colchester Borough Council at Colchester Town station .



ALRESFORD STATION COMMUNITY DAY: EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSES

On Sunday 11th May, National Express East Anglia held a community day at Alresford station. Staff and local residents gave up their own time and worked together to undertake improvements at the station. Volunteers put on their gardening gloves and took up their trowels to plant hundreds of pounds worth of flowers donated by the train operator in the station flower beds. At the same time the station was given a thorough spring clean and spruce-up, including giving the ticket office a new coat of paint. All volunteers were then treated to lunch.

The initiative was the idea of National Express East Anglia Duty Station Manager Mark Tye who commented:

'I really wanted to interest the local community in the running of Alresford station and give them another opportunity to provide feedback on our service. I was delighted by how many people turned up on the day. The station looks a brighter, more welcoming place for all of our efforts. We really appreciate the fact that both staff and the local community gave up their spare time to help out.'

Over recent months Alresford station has been looking better than ever. National Express East Anglia took over the staffing of Alresford station from Network Rail in late 2007, since then ticket office clerk Karen Smith has shown much enthusiasm and dedication in undertaking jobs as diverse as tending the garden to undertaking minor repairs. Offering assistance has been station adopter Frank Belgrove, who is always at the ready with a smile and a helping hand.

Photo Right: © National Express East Anglia



National Express East Coast 'inflates' the carbon footprint debate

If you want an efficient, hassle-free method of travel that helps to reduce your carbon footprint and do your bit to save the planet, choose the train, says National Express East Coast. A new study, commissioned by the East Coast Main Line train operator, reveals that travelling by train between Edinburgh and London is the least environmentally damaging mode of transport, in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, compared to air or road travel.

Research shows that a single rail journey between Edinburgh and London generates an average 27kg of CO2 emissions per passenger, compared with a staggering 84kg CO2e per passenger by air and 76kg CO2e by car.

To illustrate just how 'low carbon' rail travel is, National Express East Coast on the 21st May displayed hundreds of green, black and grey balloons outside Edinburgh Waverley station, representing the CO2 emission figures for a train, 'plane and car journey between Edinburgh and London.

The train operator has also launched a new 'modal shift' marketing campaign to specifically target those who regularly fly or drive from Edinburgh to London by promoting the environmental and 'productivity' benefits of travelling by train over air or car.

David Franks, Managing Director at National Express East Coast, says: "People are increasingly concerned with the impact their actions and choices have on our environment and travel is one area where big changes can be made to reduce individuals' carbon footprint with little effort.

"Rail travel is substantially lower in harmful greenhouse gas emissions than car or air travel but it is also cheaper and more punctual making it the best choice all round.

"National Express East Coast hopes to encourage travellers to wave goodbye to long queues at airport check in and road-side breakdowns and instead sit back and relax on one of our trains - safe in the knowledge that they are doing their bit to protect the environment from the damaging effects of CO2."

Photos Left and Below: © National Express East Coast



Southeastern stations mark 150 years of service

Southeastern looks back at history as several of our stations celebrate their 150th anniversary. It is a reminder of just how long Kent has enjoyed rail links to London, and the dramatic improvement they have seen over the years.

In 1858 Sittingbourne, Chatham, Faversham, Rainham, Teynham, Shortlands, Bickley and Bromley South opened their doors for the first time.

In the same year Charles Darwin published his theory of evolution, Hyman Lipman patented a pencil with an attached eraser, and the first transatlantic telegram was sent.

The eight stations have since seen six British monarchs, 27 different British Prime Ministers, 29 US Presidents, 42 British military encounters, and heard 1,068 number one hit singles.

Today, Southeastern has 182 stations providing access to 480 miles of track, and all are currently being re-painted and re-signed to provide passengers with a brighter, more welcoming environment.

Many stations have been equipped with closed circuit television (CCTV), improving lighting and other amenities to make the experience of travelling by train safer and more comfortable.

From December 2009, Sittingbourne, Chatham, Faversham and Rainham will be served by high speed services to Central London, significantly reducing journey times.

Transport for London reveals increase in items handed in to its Lost Property Office

The number of items finding their way in to the Transport for London (TfL) Lost Property Office is on the rise, with almost 170,000 items handed in over the last financial year - an increase of over 10,000 from the previous year.

"We do our best to reunite people with their property" says Julie Haley, manager of TfL's Lost Property Office

The Lost Property Office handles items lost on the TfL network; including buses, Underground, London Overground, DLR, Licensed taxis or in Victoria Coach Station.

The figures for 2007/08 reveal that the most commonly forgotten objects last year were books (32,268), bags (27,946) and items of clothing (25,802).

This is followed by a large volume of mobile phones, value items (wallets, purses, laptops etc.) umbrellas, keys and gloves.

A stuffed puffer fish, human skulls, breast implants and a lawnmower are just some of the unusual items the Lost Property Office has received over the years.

In a nod to one famous fictional neighbour of the Baker Street offices, the Lost Property Office uses a computer programme called 'Sherlock' to log details of any items handed in and check for a match with enquiries received from customers who may have lost an item on the transport network.

Staff at the Lost Property Office will use their own detective skills to try to reunite property with its rightful owner - if any identification is found in the property, they will contact the owner directly.

Some have gone a step further, managing to track down the next of kin for two urns of ashes that had been in the Lost Property Office for years, even though there were just a few words written on the urns.

Julie Haley, manager of TfL's Lost Property Office, said: "The amount of lost property handed in is increasing year on year.

SPECIAL DELIVERY FOR NEW BITTERN AND WHERRY LINES GUIDES

With the commencement of the National Express East Anglia summer timetable from Sunday 18 May 2008, there were special deliveries of the newly-produced Line Guides for the Norwich to Sheringham Bittern Line and Norwich to Great Yarmouth / Lowestoft Wherry Lines.

The handy-sized line guides are produced by National Express in conjunction with Norfolk County Council. As well as train times and fares details, the line guides include useful information about the Bittern Line and Wherry Lines Community Rail Partnerships. Information about the additional summer services operating on the Bittern and Wherry Lines is also included.

The line guides are now widely available and are distributed across Norfolk and North Suffolk by Target Leisure with outlets including stations, shopping centres, visitor attractions and tourist information centres.

Below is the Wherry Lines picture, with Peter Lawrence Chairman Wherry Lines, Peter Meades National Express and Ian Dinmore Norfolk County Council taking delivery of the Wherry Lines Guides from Target Leisure's Phil Segon.

On the Right is the Bittern Line picture, with Councillor Bryan Hannah of Norfolk County Council and Bittern Line Chairman Ted Gadsden taking delivery of the Bittern Line Guides.

Photos: © National Express East Anglia



Southeastern and Southern save energy

Train operators Southeastern and Southern have become the first train operators in the country to introduce regenerative braking on the third rail direct current (DC) network. Southern and Southeastern are both operated by Govia, the partnership between the Go-Ahead Group and Keolis.

After almost two years of planning and testing, the first Class 375, 377 and 376 Electrostar trains are now returning electricity back into the rail system when braking, allowing other trains to draw on that energy for power. Until now, energy released by trains during braking has been wasted in heating the braking resistors on the train. Now any other train in close proximity will benefit from the electricity transferred back to the third rail. Southern's engineering director, Gerry McFadden said: "This represents the culmination of an intensive 18 month project delivered in a model cross-industry partnership between Southern, Southeastern, Network Rail, and train manufacturer Bombardier, with project management from Booz Allen." He added: "We also owe a debt of gratitude to the DfT and ATOC who have been instrumental in preparing the industry to take on the green agenda."

Keith Ludeman, chairman and chief executive of Govia said: "I am delighted that Govia is leading the way in the introduction of DC regenerative braking in UK rail. Southern and Southeastern's success in this area is an excellent example of the industry working together effectively to reduce rail's carbon footprint and deliver genuine innovation."



Pictures with a Different View



Left: A general view of Garscadden station which is one of few stations on the North Clyde Electric Line with an island platform. The station is also the station nearest Yoker Train Depot and also home to new houses which have recently been built, which has resulted in an increase in commuters.

Jonathan McGurk

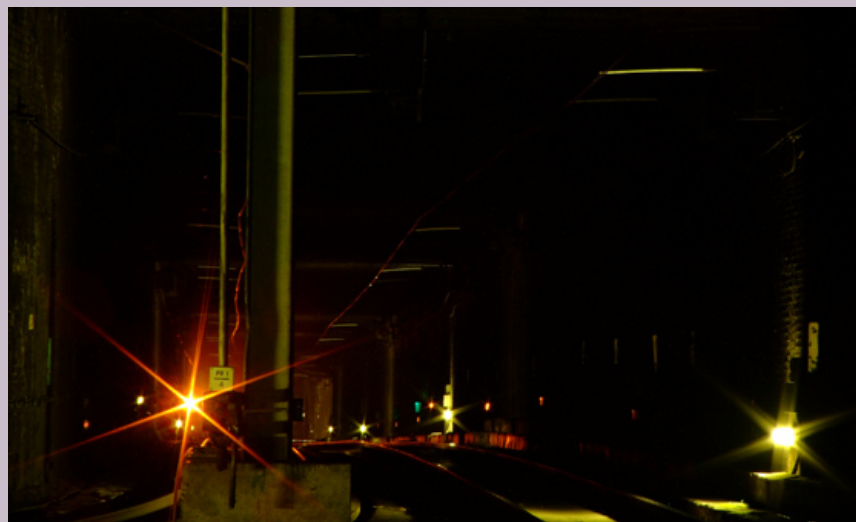
Above: Class 320 313 is seen departing Charing Cross station while working the 09.10 2H46 Helensburgh Central - Drumgelloch service on the 19th May.

Jonathan McGurk

Below: Class 153 327 in the tunnel is at Llanwrst North station with the 1350 to Blanau Festiniog on the 3rd May.

Dave Harris





*Above: "Death of a loco"
unmistakably, Kingsbury.
Ian Furness*

*Top Right: Unusual view of a Class 142
Class47*

*Far Right: These animals get about,
after the Battlefield Line last month, they
are seen here at the Peak Rail Diesel Gala.
Class47*

*Right: A view looking towards Anderston
from Glasgow Central Low Level station
on the 19th May.
Jonathan McGurk*

Preserved Railways



This month we start with a visit to the Llangollen DMU gala.

Left: With M79900 leading, this Black and White shot is of a service leaving Llangollen.

Bottom Left: Unit 56456 is Pictured at Carrog.

Bottom Right: A Class 109 is seen Passing the carriage sidings at Llangollen.

All: Brian Battersby





On the weekend of the 10th/11th May, Peak Rail held a diesel gala, which always makes a pleasant day out. The vast yard at Rowsley is home to quite a few gems and the Darley Dale Narrow Gauge Railway is nearby.

Top Left: Peak Class 44 D8 powers past Darley Dale signalbox with a service to Rowsley. *Jon Jebb* Top Right: Class 31 270 pauses at Darley Dale Station. *Jon Jebb*

Bottom Left: Class 37 188 awaits for some attention in the yard at Rowsley. *Jon Jebb* Bottom Centre: One of the locos from the Darley Dale Narrow Gauge collection at Rowsley. *Class47*

Bottom Right: Shunter power as Class 03 099 and D2953 move a "large tablecloth" (but it looks like another shunter to us!!). *Class47*





More from the Peak Rail Diesel Gala

*Left: "A bit of Deltic action" seen D9016 working through Darley Dale with a service to Matlock.
Jon Jebb*

*Right: Still wearing it's Inter-City livery is Class 37 152, complete with enthusiastic passengers, and animals.....
Jon Jebb*



cfps
class 40 preservation society

*Left: Class 40 145 is seen departing York works bound for Bury on the 9th May.
Class47*

*Below: Returning the RHTT stock to York on the 29th May, Class 40 145 is seen passing Colton Jct.
Andy*

40145 Works main line again!

Not content with last months trip out on the main line, the CFPS's Class 40 145 has had another couple of trips out this month.

Both trips have been in conjunction with running tests on RHTT stock at the East Lancashire Railway.

Class 40 145 has been used to collect the stock from York works to take to Bury and then return the stock a few weeks later.





The North Yorks Moors Diesel Gala, brought in many new visiting locos to the line, combined with the existing fleet a very varied amount of traction was available.

*Above: The lines resident Class 101 DMU stands at Grosmont waiting to work a local service to Goathland on the 11th May.
Ian Furness*

*Right: One of the visitors for the weekend was Peak Class 46 D182, pictured here looking great departing Grosmont with a service to Pickering.
Ian Furness*





A selection of shots from the Welshpool and Llanfairceareinion Railway, Festiniog, and Welsh Highland railway's galas held in May.

*Top Left:
Alice*

*Top Right:
Countess at Welshpool*

*Bottom Left:
Britomart*

*Bottom Right:
Irish Mail*

*All:
Peter Cheshire*





*Left: Class 52 D1013 leaves Bridgenorth with a service to Kidderminster on the 11th May. [Richard Hargreaves](#)
Above: Class 31 and Class 37 super power at the Battlefield Line.
[David Dawson](#)
Below: Visiting N7 69621 works upgrade toward Tenterden Town on Sunday 4th May [Derek Elston](#)*





Don't Forget The GWR's Summer Diesel Gala

Friday July 4th to Sunday July 6th 2008

**SUMMER
DIESEL
GALA!**

**Gloucestershire
Warwickshire
Railway**

Friday 4 to Sunday 6 July

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

All locos subject to availability!



Includes visiting Class 31, 5580



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

Timetable and loco roster available shortly from the GWR website.

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

The Railway Station • Toddington • Glos • GL54 5DT

**15 mins from
M5 Junction 9**

Tel 01242 621405

www.gwsr.com



*Left: Paignton &
Dartmouth Railways
5239 'Goliath' descends
Sugarloaf with the 1700
Kingswear - Paignton
service, overlooking
the great expanse of
Torbay on the English
Riviera coastline on
the 10th May.*

Liam



C58LG CLASS 58
LOCOMOTIVE
GROUP

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



For more information on the Class 58 Locomotive Group, please write to: C58LG, 107 Woolaston Avenue, Cardiff, CF23 6EW, e-mail c58la@c58la.co.uk or visit our website at www.c58la.co.uk where an online membership application form can be found.



Top Left: A Class 100 DMU awaits restoration at Swanwick, Midland Railway Centre.

Top Middle: Class 03 158 & a Class 101 DMU are seen at Wirksworth in May.

Top Right: Class 101 DMU makes a smoky departure from Wirksworth.

Bottom Left: DMU M55006 is seen at Wirksworth.

Bottom Right: D3420 at Swanwick, Midland Railway Centre.

All: Brian Battersby





GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

RAIL MINISTER TOM HARRIS (pictured right)
REDEDICATES RETURNING STEAM LEGEND

"Oliver Cromwell" Britain's last steam engine
returns to life after four decades.

A special rededication ceremony took place on Saturday 10th May at the Great Central Railway in Leicestershire. The award winning double track heritage line was host to Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, Tom Harris MP. The minister joined other invited VIPs to formally rededicate BR Standard 7, no. 70013 "Oliver Cromwell", as it returns to passenger service. The historic engine, which is part of the national collection based at York, triumphantly returned to steam at the Great Central following a four year rebuild costing hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Mr Harris unveiled the nameplates of the engine in the company of National Railway Museum staff, clearly delighted to see an important engine back in working order. Robert Crew, General Manager of the Great Central Railway said, "We're delighted to welcome Tom Harris to the railway. It sets the seal on a long hard job well done by our volunteers and staff. Since news of the re-steaming of *Oliver Cromwell* got out, we've had visitors from Canada and Costa Rica to our Loughborough base."

Oliver Cromwell is famous for its place in railway history. In 1968 it heralded the end of an era, hauling Britain's last steam train - "The 15 guinea special". Since then it has been on display at a museum in Norfolk. In a partnership deal it has been overhauled in time to make a special main line run in August, commemorating the last steam train, 4 decades on.



Above: Class 25 D5185 is seen at Loughborough in May with a freight train. [Class47](#)

Below Left: 30777 is seen arriving at Quorn on the 17th May. [Class47](#)

Below Right: Class 45/1 D123 hauls a local service at the Great Central on the 17th May. [Class47](#)



FORTY FEET HIGH!

MAMOTH NEW SIGNAL TOPS OFF SUCCESSFUL "SIGNAL AND TELEGRAPH" WEEK AT THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

Commissioning of Swithland box takes another step forward

Trains arriving at Rothley station on the Great Central Railway will be greeted by an impressive new sight – a lattice signal post, complete with semaphore arm which is forty feet high. It's another addition to the line's award winning signal scene, installed as part of the annual Signal and Telegraph work week. Three point machines have also been installed, another signal post erected, and concrete troughs (to carry cabling) laid out, as part of the nine day push towards commissioning the signal box at Swithland. When the box opens it will bring the total on the line to four, creating another block section adding yet another dimension to GCR gala events.

"Signal and Telegraph work week has to be a highlight of the GCR 'behind the scenes' calendar," said the lines General Manager Robert Crew. "The team are all volunteers taking annual leave to be at the railway and the things they achieve are incredible."

Following the late David Clarke's wishes the signals at Swithland will be lower quadrant, recreating the look of the Great Central and Great Western joint line. David was the line's president until his untimely death in 2002 and a fan of the Great Western. He funded the double track project. The forty foot post, now the tallest on the GCR is Rothley station's new up home signal. It originally stood at Uttoxeter. The elegant lattice is a product of the Railway Signal Company and thought to date from 1931. Track in Swithland yard (where the GCR briefly becomes a four line formation) has also been fettled by the permanent way gang during the work week. Point timbers and sole plates have been renewed.

With an eye to the future, a start has been made on renovating the signal post which will control access onto the 'Mountsorrel branch'. A section of the branch is being relayed in a separate project by Railway Vehicle Preservation Ltd, a resident Great Central group.

*"Oliver Cromwell" returned to steam during May. Looking smart, it is pictured passing Quorn and Woodhouse on a freight working.
Richard Hargreaves*





In May, the National Railway Museum held a "1968 and all that" gala, which brought together locos to commemerate the end on steam. Several Diesel and Electric locos were also present, and some have been already shown in this months magazine.

*Top Left: 61994 "The Great Marquis" in seen in the yard at the NRM on the 24th May.
Derek Elston*

*Bottom Left: Trangkil No.4 the last commercailly built steam loco by Hunslet giving rides
Derek Elston*

*Middle: Number 96, Normandy, is pictured arriving on a low loader, at the NRM just a few days ahead of the event.
Class47*

*Right: This shot was taken at the Churnet Valley's Gala on the 31st May, and shows the lines Ex- Connex liveried unit on arrival at Kingsley and Froghall.
Andy*





Several shots from the excellent Churnet Valley Diesel Gala held on the 31st May.
 Top Left: Visitor Class 73 138 working with the lines Southern unit approaches Consall.
 Above: Class 25 322 "Tamworth Castle" awaits repairs in Cheddleton Yard.
 Far Left: Visiting Deltic D9016 departs Consall.
 Left: Class 33 102 approaches Cheddleton.
 Below Class 37 075 at Kingsland and Froghall.
 All : Andy





Top Railtalk photographer, Jonathan McGurk, has been to Canada. For our International section this month we thought that we would show a selection of the pictures he has taken.

*The shots are all taken in and around Burlington, Ontario State, Canada.
The track takes you to and from Toronto Union Station.*

Jonathan McGurk







Above: On the 11th September 1971 A Class 25 D7657, in two-tone green, is seen at Exeter St Davids.

David Mead

Right: Class 86 312 is seen stabled with Class 86 208 and Class 87 011 at London Euston on the 18th January 1983.

Peter Cheshire





*Above: On the 2nd July 1975, Class 52 D1016
"Western Gladiator" approaches Par on a
Parcels Train.
David Mead*

*Right: An unidentified Class 81 approaches
Crawford on the 8th August 1981.
Peter Cheshire*





Above: A rare sight of ADB968002 in Toton yard on the 31st December 1983.

Peter Cheshire

Right: On the 5th December 1970, Warship D804 "Zambesi" departs Plymouth on the 08.15 Bristol TM - Penzance.

David Mead





Advenza Class 57 006 fs seen at Tredington on the 13th May 2008. It was working 6Z72 Stockton - Cardiff Tidal loaded scrap train. Alistair Minton