

Railtalk

Magazine

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Class 60 - a bit of an overkill for a shunter?

Welcome

Welcome to Issue 42 of Railtalk Magazine. Each month we bring you a jam packed round up of the best pictures, news and reports.

Like the first month of the year, February has been a fairly quiet month with no big changes to the UK Rail network. Unfortunately once again we see a slow decline in the DB Class 60 fleet, with a number of those still in service doing rather mundane duties. We would like to think that this year will see better fortunes for the class, but we doubt it.

One of the highlights of this month apart from my trip to Austria (some photos in Issue 42xtra), was the excellent Spitfire Railtours trip to Stanhope. Being only the second train to use the track between Bishop Auckland and the Weardale Railway, it certainly brought out the locals. This is something that I do find unusual, that a whole load of ordinary people come out from their houses or pause doing the shopping to watch a pair of Class 37s working a service to their village. Would it happen anywhere else?

Thanks again, as always, and if you have anything to say, or if you wish to contribute, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Andy Patten

This issue wouldn't be possible without: Richard Hargreaves, Carl Grocott, Dave Dawson, Jonathan McGurk, Dave Harris, Jon Jebb, Derek Elston, Pete Cheshire, David Mead, Brian Battersby, Steve Andrews, David Hollowood, James Stoker, Steve Thompson, Liam, Richard Jones, Gary S. Smith, Craig Stretten, Jonathan Gill, Josh Watkins, JulianG, Colin Irwin, Class25, Robert Beardwell, Stephen Beardwell, Phil Martin, Alan Usher, Christopher Sutcliffe, TeesideAnth, Yorkie, Stephen Marsh, Danny Sladdin, Derek Hopkins, Charlie Robbins, Mike Williams, Daniel Stanbridge, John Coleman and as always a big thanks to the RailUK team for assisting in proof reading.

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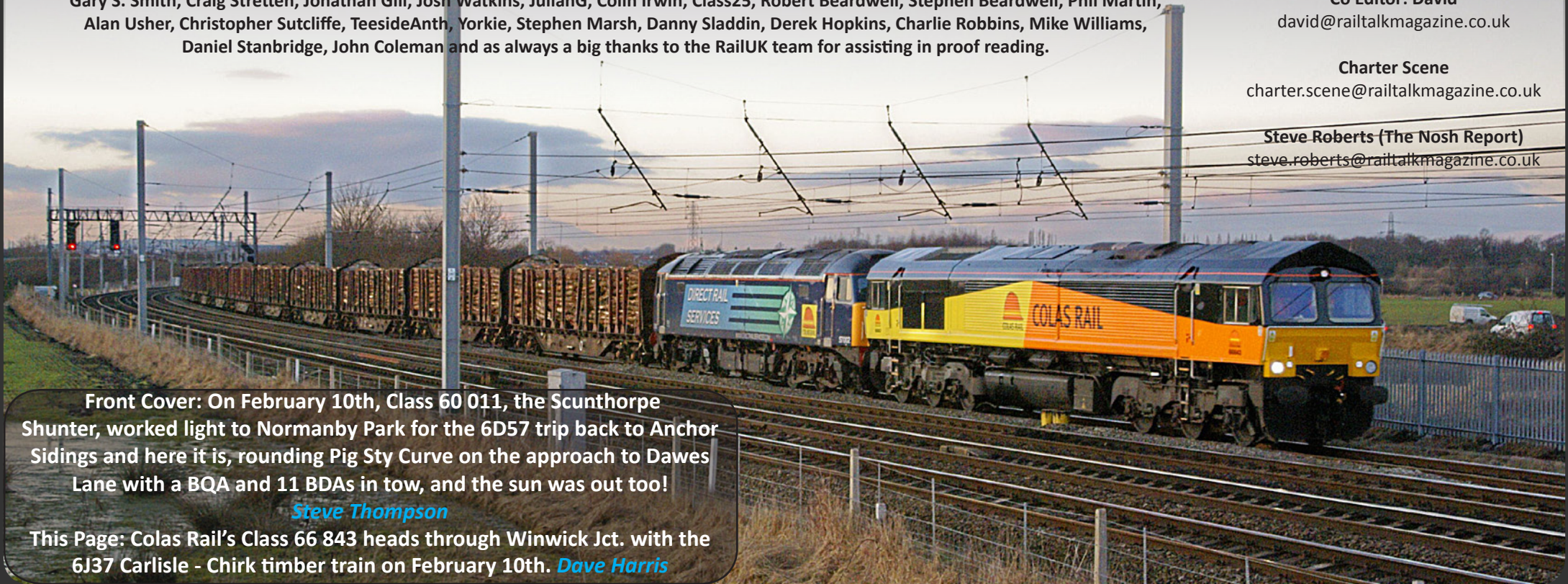
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Front Cover: On February 10th, Class 60 011, the Scunthorpe Shunter, worked light to Normanby Park for the 6D57 trip back to Anchor Sidings and here it is, rounding Pig Sty Curve on the approach to Dawes Lane with a BQA and 11 BDAs in tow, and the sun was out too!

Steve Thompson

This Page: Colas Rail's Class 66 843 heads through Winwick Jct. with the 6J37 Carlisle - Chirk timber train on February 10th. *Dave Harris*



West Coast's Class 47 804 is pictured leading Railtour's charter "Bath Spa" passed Rushton on February 13th. Class 47 786 "Roy Castle OBE" was bringing up the rear. [Class25](#)



Top Left: In conjunction with HRH Prince Charles visit to Manchester. Tornado takes the Royal Train through the rarely used freight only line at Parkside Curve on February 4th.

Dave Harris



Bottom Left: Royal liveried DBS Class 67 005 suitably adorned at the rear of the Royal Train seen passing through Parkside Curve on February 4th.

Dave Harris



"Tornado" is seen at Preston on February 4th prior to returning to Manchester via Crewe with the Royal Train. [Colin Irwin](#)



A1 No. 60163 "Tornado" is seen climbing away from Westbury passing Ditton Marsh whilst working the "Valentine's Day Cathedrals Express" on February 14th. [Steve Andrews](#)



The Railway Touring Company's "Cotton Mill Express" with LMS "Royal Scot" Class No. 46115 "Scots Guardsman" in charge, is seen on the West Coast Main Line just after Euxton Jct. on February 13th, just prior to it failing with bearing problems. [Robert Beardwell](#)



Left: On February 13th 46115 “Scots Guardman” failed again on the Cotton Mill Express at Eccles with bearing problems. Seen here, as engineers and crew discuss the severity of the situation.

Below: Eventually the loco managed to limp into Manchester Victoria. Running four hours late and still fully loaded with passengers.

Both: Colin Irwin





The Railway Touring Company's "Cotton Mill Express" with LMS "Royal Scot" Class No. 46115 "Scots Guardsman" in charge, is seen at Preston on January 30th, awaiting a tow back to Carnforth. This was the locos first attempt at running the train which failed. [Colin Irwin](#)



Top Left: On February 22nd, following the gala at the ELR, BR Standard Britannia Class 4-6-2 No. 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" and Southern Railway "King Arthur" Class No. 30777 "Sir Lamiel" moved by rail back to Southall and Tyseley respectively. They left Buckley Wells at Bury and travelled via Manchester Victoria, Earlestown and Warrington to Crewe, where both locos stopped for 30777 to receive water. [Christopher Sutcliffe](#)



Spitfire Railtours "The White Rose" from 1237 Crewe to Weardale is seen at Bishop Auckland on February 27th with Class 37 038 and 37 607. [James Stoker](#)



Above: Class 47 826 still wearing the Scarborough Spa Express advertising livery from two years ago is seen at York. [Andy](#)

Top Right: On the rear of 1237 was Class 47 826, which also returned the train to York. [James Stoker](#)

Bottom Right: Seen upon arrival at Stanhope the pair of Class 37s await a drag back to York by Class 47 826. [Andy](#)



On 13th February Class 67 018 with 67 029 ran 1267 York - Retford via Harrogate & Leeds "Valentine Northern Belle" however 67 018 got into trouble at Micklefield with coolant problems which delayed the train by 25 minutes and limped into Gascoigne Wood from where 67 029 had to haul the train to Doncaster via Knottingley. Before all that though, Class 67 018 is seen passing Knaresborough on the outward journey. [Danny Sladdin](#)

Charter Scene

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Left: Having failed whilst working 1267 on February 13th Class 67 018 was hauled to Doncaster by 67 029 where the train was routed into the yard at the rear of the station.

Andy

Below: Having run round, Class 67 029 is seen having final checks before departing Doncaster for Leeds and York via Harrogate. *Class47*





THE GREAT WESTERN INCURSION featured Great Western 4-6-0 "Hall" Class No. 4965 "Rood Ashton Hall" and Great Western "Castle" Class No. 5043 "Earl of Mount Edgcombe" from Birmingham Snow Hill to Didcot on February 20th. [Phil Martin](#)



THE GREAT WESTERN INCURSION featured Great Western 4-6-0 "Hall" Class No. 4965 "Rood Ashton Hall" and Great Western "Castle" Class No. 5043 "Earl of Mount Edgcumbe" from Birmingham Snow Hill to Didcot on February 20th. Here 5043 is seen being watered at Didcot. [Phil Martin](#)

Scot-Rail with Jonathan McGurk



Class 31 233 in Network Rail yellow livery with Class 31 106 in British Rail Blue livery at the rear (Inset) are seen sitting inside and toxicating Edinburgh Waverley station with diesel fumes while working the 1Q18 Millerhill Yard - Millerhill Yard via Edinburgh Waverley, Bathgate, Craightinny & Slateford Network Rail Radio Survey Test Train. The consist is seen prior to working out of the station en - route to Bathgate on January 12th. [Jonathan McGurk](#)

Scot-Rail with Jonathan McGurk



Top Right: I was able to capture the rarity of seeing an East Coast HST working in the daylight at Glasgow Central High Level. The HSTs were replacing the usual DVT and Class 91 on the 11.50 service to Kings Cross due to overhead wire problems at Northallerton on its way northbound towards Glasgow so it was a bit of surprise that East Coast sent out the rarity. Here we see Class 43 251 leading (314 at the rear) just before the 11.50 departure to Kings Cross on January 20th.

Bottom Right: Class 334 012 is seen in the heavy mist calling at Platform 2 at Paisley Gilmour Street station while working the 11.05 2G69 Glasgow Central High Level - Gourock service on January 8th.

Below: Class 320 319 is seen passing through Platform 1 at Yoker station during a spell of early morning fog while working the 08.40 2H44 Helensburgh Central - Drumgelloch service on January 8th.

All: Jonathan McGurk





GLASGOW CENTRAL HIGH LEVEL STATION'S FORMER PLATFORM 12 IS NOW NO MORE

Major progress has been made on the demolition of platform 12 at Glasgow Central High Level station. Balfour Beatty have removed the track and overhead wiring and realted equipment from the platform and have nearly finished all the demolition work needed to then construct a brand new platform 12 and 13 at the station. The buffers from the now former platform 12 (previously known as platform 11a) are seen still standing intact, though will soon be removed. The platform extension part of the Glasgow Central High Level - Paisley Improvements Project is scheduled for completion in May 2010.

Around three - quarters of platform 11 remains open in order for the top end of the platform to be rebuilt to make way for the new platforms 12 and 13 to be constructed. The top end of the platform closed on Monday 25th January and is expected to remain closed up until the necessary construction works by Balfour Beatty are complete.

Both: Jonathan McGurk



Scot-Rail with Jonathan McGurk



Right: DB Schenker Class 90 019 in First ScotRail “Barbie” livery and DB Schenker Class 67 006 in DB Schenker’s Royal Train livery are both seen sitting stabled inside the Edinburgh Waverley Motorail Bay Sidings on January 16th.



Below: Class 158 782 in plain blue livery with white doors is seen sitting inside platform 4 at Glasgow Central High Level station waiting to work the 09.14 2Y48 Glasgow Central High Level - Edinburgh Waverley service on January 16th.

Both: Jonathan McGurk



RETRO RAILTOURS LTD

WWW.RETRORAILTOURS.CO.UK

Deltic Retro Scot 2

The tour will run on **Monday 31st May 2010** picking up at:

Stockport, Stalybridge, Huddersfield, Mirfield and Wakefield Westgate.

We will take a circular route over the famous Settle & Carlisle railway, returning on the traditional route of Deltics, the East Coast Main Line.

Fares boarding at all stations:

Standard Adult: £54.50

First Adult: £84.50

Premier Dining: £139.50



We have made a request for Class 55 'Deltic' 55022 'Royal Scots Grey' which is expected to be back on both engines for this tour.

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

If you book before the 1st May, Deduct £5 from fares above!

Designed by Railtalk Grp. Photo: Carl Grocott



The great OEP fiasco

I'm sure you've all heard that Oyster Pay As You Go (PAYG) is now available throughout the London Zones on National Rail. But did you know that someone holding a Travelcard on Oyster who wishes to use PAYG to extend their journey beyond their Travelcard zones (on National Rail) cannot use this PAYG facility in the way that PAYG works on the Tube (or, for that matter, in any other industry...)

No, the railways have to be complicated, as usual. In fact, this issue is so complicated that the people who invented it don't appear to fully understand the implications.

Any holder of a Travelcard season on Oyster who wishes to travel beyond their Travelcard Zones but still within the London Zonal area is supposed to load an Oyster Extension Permit (OEP) onto their Oyster card before travel. They then touch in, as normal, within their valid Zones, and then when they touch out the OEP expires, and they are charged the PAYG price from the boundary of their valid Travelcard Zones to their destination. Why the need for an OEP? Well, if you do not load one,

you'll still be charged the correct amount, just as if you were extending your journey on the Tube - but the reason for loading an OEP is simply in case your Oyster card is inspected when you are out of your Travelcard's valid zones. The OEP signals your intention to leave your valid Zones. In order to achieve this, it deducts the maximum cash fare next time you touch in within your valid zones, in other words it activates PAYG even though you are within your Travelcard area, but you are refunded for the zones your Travelcard is valid for when you touch out at the other end. An OEP is not needed on your return journey when you start outside your valid Travelcard Zones and finish inside. Failure to load an OEP can result in a Penalty Fare being issued.

At a recent London Travelwatch meeting, Transport for London (TfL) reported that only 3% of people who should be loading OEPs onto their Oyster cards are actually doing so. TfL also claim that Penalty Fares (PFs) are not being issued, in order to give people time to adjust. However a member of South West Trains (SWT) staff on Railforums.co.uk reported that SWT are openly flouting this instruction, and are charging PFs. Given that 97% of people are not

bothering with this incredibly complex OEP system - indeed, it is likely they do not know about it, or do not understand it as they do not possess a masters degree in Fares and Ticketing - it is quite sickening that SWT are acting in this way. But then it is only to be expected by a company owned ultimately by Brian Souter, who is infamous in the transport industry for controversial practices.

A member of the public found a major flaw with OEPs that goes against the PAYG model of not having to plan in advance. If I wish to make a London journey out of my valid Travelcard Zones tomorrow, then I can load an OEP today. But what if I then decide, at the last minute, to make a journey to a destination outside the London zones this evening? I purchase a ticket from the Boundary, and touch in using my Travelcard. Normally this would be fine, however I am charged the maximum cash fare when I touch in, and I then cannot touch out at my destination as they are outside the London zones. The solution would be for me to get a slow train that calls at the boundary and touch out and back in (probably having to then wait for the next one). Not ideal, and will a regular passenger really be

expected to know that?

Surely all of this is totally against the PAYG ethos, overly complicated, and totally against the rights and interests of passengers? The people who thought of the idea must be trying to put people off rail travel by making it overly complicated and threatening honest passengers with Penalty Fares. These people are an enemy of rail travel. Sadly there are many such people in a position of power, and while they continue to make such ridiculous rules, the general public will continue to be confused, overcharged and put off rail travel.

Ticket advice for all

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

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



Freightliner's Class 70 002 leads sister locomotive 70 003 onto the Walsall branch at Rugeley Trent Valley station, Staffordshire with a late running 6M07 Avonmouth - Rugeley Power Station (via Crewe) laden coal train on February 12th. As problems continued with the new locomotives, Freightliner has opted to use a brace of them on this train recently. [Gary S. Smith](#)



After waiting for permission to enter the Hednesford - Bloxwich signallingblock, Freightliner's Class 70 003 takes the 4270 Rugeley power station - Stoke Gifford empty hoppers train past the remaining signal box at Hednesford,Staffordshire on the morning of February 19th. The resignalling of the Walsall - Rugeley branch will soon commence, taking away this signalbox and also the Bloxwich and Brereton Sidings boxes. [Gary S. Smith](#)



Above: DRS Class 57 002 is seen passing Euxton on the West Coast Main Line hauling the Carlisle - Chirk log train on February 8th.

These locos now seem to have the Colas logo attached when operating this train.

Robert Beardwell

Left: A welcome return to York in February has been the DRS Class 37 fleet. Over the winter months, Class 66's have been the norm, but on February 22nd Class 37 087 appeared in the parcels siding.

Andy



Back to main line duties for the East Lancashire Railway based Class 37 fleet recently as Class 37 901 “Mirrlees Pioneer” along with 37 418 and 37 109 were used to haul spoil and ballast trains on Manchester’s Metrolink to allow a major track renewal programme to take place between Radcliffe and Whitefield stations. [Colin Irwin](#)



Above: Class 66 305 passes through Bedford Station en route from Doncaster to Thorney Mill on February 9th, on what we believe to be only the second Fastline Freight Class 66 working south of Wigston on the MML. [Class25](#)



Top Right: Colas Class 66 843 is seen working 6J37 Carlisle Yard - Chirk timber train through Carlisle station on February 23rd. [Colin Irwin](#)



Bottom Right: In conjunction with Rugby Internationals at Cardiff, Arriva organised a strengthened WAG set to operate on most match dates. Class 57 314 works past Kemp's Eye, Shrewsbury heading for Cardiff on February 13th. [Phil Martin](#)



Above: London Underground battery loco L49 is seen stabled at London Paddington's Hammersmith & City line platforms during an engineering possession, on February 20th.

Derek Elston

Right: Battery Loco L53 sits in the tunnel between London Paddington & Edgware Road during an engineers possession on February 20th.

Derek Elston





Above: On February 21st, Class 67 024 and 66 155 sit at Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury with the 6W15 from Basford Hall. The pointwork behind the tamper was being replaced and ballasted.

Dave Dawson



Left: Class 66 527 works a loaded coal train through Helwith Bridge, over the S&C on February 10th.

David Hollowood



Top Left: Freightliner Class 66 623 "Bill Bolsover" in Bardon livery passes Arpley with the 6F01 Ellesmere Port - Fiddlers Ferry MGR duty February 1st. [Dave Harris](#)

Top Right: Currently on hire to Northern is South West Trains Class 158 888, which originally was a Transpennine Express unit (158 802). Seen making a colourful change at York on February 27th. [Class47](#)

Left: Class 222 016 with a full yellow cabs looks very odd as it works the 1456 London St Pancras To Corby service past Headlands, Kettering February 26th. [John Coleman](#)



Network Rail's Class 97 303 with 97 304 on the rear are seen working 1Z12 Shrewsbury - Machynlleth through Welshpool on January 23rd. [Carl Grocott](#)



On February 9th, GBRf Class 66 710 passes Euxton heading north on the West Coast Main Line working 4C77 Fiddlers Ferry to Newbiggin. This was a brand new freight flow for GBRf, and has brought their locos to the area for the first time on regular workings. [Robert Beardwell](#)



Arriva Class 150 262, working a service to Manchester, hurtles through the snowy north Shropshire landscape, away from Prees station and passing Steel Heath on February 21st. [Gary S. Smith](#)



WSMR Diverts

Above: Over several weekends in February WSMR services were diverted via Crewe due to engineering work at Shrewsbury and some were also diverted into London Paddington. This is Class 67 010 leaving Crewe heading for London on February 20th.

Richard Hargreaves

Top Right: Class 67 013 waits at Crewe with the evening departure to London on February 27th.

Richard Hargreaves

Bottom Right: Chiltern liveried DVT 82302 arrives at Crewe on February 20th from London Marylebone.

Richard Hargreaves





Class 60 039 is seen working 6F05 Tunstead - Oakleigh through Ashley on January 17th. [Carl Grocott](#)



Above: Class 66 522 works a south bound loaded coal train through Long Preston on February 10th.

David Hollowood

Top Left: Class 66 133 passes St Leonards depot, near Hastings, working 6N36 Hoo Junction - Bexhill engineers train on January 17th.

Craig Stretten

Bottom Left: FCC Class 319 007 is seen at Bedford station on January 15th, after a recent graffiti attack. *John Coleman*



With light snow in the air, Class 66 186 works the S&C through Horton in Ribblesdale with a southbound gypsum train on February 10th. *David Hollowood*



On January 6th, Class 67 017 catches very weak wintry sunshine as it leads FGW's 1247 Paignton to Cardiff through a very snowy Norton Fitzwarren. Class 67 016 was on the rear. [Jonathan Gill](#)



Above: Class 66 404 with two barrier vehicles is seen at Headlands Bridge Kettering on February 25th, en route to Derby to collect a unit.

John Coleman

Right: First Capital Connect Class 319 008, still in Southern livery, stands outside the shed at Cauldwell Depot, Bedford during a heavy snow shower. This shot was taken through the shed doors. *Class25*



Top Right: DRS/Colas 57002 is pictured at Warrington whilst working 6J35 Carlisle - Chirk log train on December 21st.

Mike Williams

Bottom Right: Class 66 504 drags 86 501 and 4M88 Felixstowe - Crewe Freightliner through Gospel Oak, North London, on January 21st.

Craig Stretten

Below: Class 73 213 Leads 73 206, 66 723, 66 732 and Ex DRS 66 403 into Hastings working as 0Y22, 09.38 Hoo Junction - St Leonards Depoton February 2nd.

Daniel Stanbridge



Top Right: On February 23rd, Class 60 039 is seen passing the flotsam and jetsam associated with the engineering work currently being undertaken at Scunthorpe, working 6D42 from Eggborough to Lindsey Oil Refinery. The uninspiring bulk of the offices of HM Inspector of Taxes dominates the background.

Steve Thompson

Bottom Right: On February 11th, Scunthorpe super shunter obviously got lost and ended up running through Doncaster. Not to worry though as it turned up back at Scunthorpe by the following day. *Steve Thompson*

Below: Class 66 157 works steel empties from Dee Marsh to South Wales past Kemps Eye on February 13th. *Phil Martin*





An unusual working on February 20th was that of GBRf Class 66 712 hauling Royal Mail Class 325 011 down the West Coast Main Line to Crewe where it is pictured pausing in the brief winter sunshine. [Class47](#)



The changing scene at Warrington as both DBs and Freightliner operate new locos on the coal trains to/from Fiddlers Ferry Power Station and Liverpool Docks.

Top Left: One of the “new” locos in the area had been Class 59 206, brought in to haul the heavy coal trains instead of the Class 60s that have been associated with the area for a number of years. [Class47](#)

Top Right: Another Class 59, this time 59 201 has also migrated into the area, the loco is pictured here returning empty to Liverpool Docks on February 27th. [Class47](#)

Left: Freightliner have invested in brand new locos, so that they too can haul longer and heavier coal trains in the future. Class 70 004 heads to Fiddlers Ferry with a loaded train on February 27th. [Class47](#)

Right: A South West Trains Class 455 EMU is pictured crossing the River Thames at Kingston with a service for Strawberry Hill on January 31st.

Dave Harris

Bottom: Class 66 719 drags 66 404, 66 405 and 66 403 into St Leonards Depot, forming a light engine movement from Tonbridge on January 26th. The ex-DRS 66s had come down to St Leonards for removal of DRS/Malcolm branding prior to use with First GBRf.

Craig Stretten





On February 1st, Freightliner Class 70 001 passes through Ipswich hauling a Felixtowe - Lawley Street service, a regular duty for the class. [Charlie Robbins](#)



Fastline Class 66 305 works 6Z31 Thorney Mill to Hexthorpe Road passes Irthlingborough Road, Wellingborough on February 10th. [Derek Elston](#)

Right: Seen passing New Barnetby on February 22nd is Class 60 040 hauling 30 TEAs towards the Conoco plant at Killingholme, Humber Oil Refinery, with the 6E54 service from Kingsbury.

Steve Thompson

Below: South Eastern Class 375 801 is seen departing London Bridge on February 17th.

Class25



The Nosh Report with Steve Roberts



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

This months recommendation is

Spartacus Sandwich Shop
36 Northgate & 4 Terrace Road
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
01970 625 885

Situated opposite Aberystwyth train station Spartacus sandwich started business 16 years ago. Spartacus offers a huge variety of baguettes, sandwiches, rolls, boccattas and paninis as well as crisps, drinks, chocolate and other snacks.

At this location you will find a very busy sandwich bar that is unlike many other sandwich bars, with some hand painted murals of ancient Greek fightings, a mahogany serve over counter that is hand made with Roman Corinthian pillars and all the staff all wearing overalls claiming I’M SPARTACUS.



A spokesperson said, “ The décor and surroundings are unique, but its the food that we sell that we feel sets us apart from the ordinary shop. We serve genuine French baguettes made with real French flour. They are baked throughout the day, which ensures they are always fresh (usually warm too).”

Some examples below and highly recommended is the Gladiator baguette that is a Chicken and Bacon in mayo, but have a peek at the other the mouth watering choices Coronation chicken Chicken in a curried mayonnaise/ Cleopatra Lemon and Coriander/ Tuna mayonnaise/ B.E.L.T. (Bacon,egg,lettuce & tomato)/ Cheddar Cheese/ Chicken Tikka/ Free Range Egg/ North Atlantic prawns/ Prime cooked

ham from Ceredigion/ Turkey breast (100%)/ Chicken Piri Piri (i warn you its hot!!) / Bavarian smoked cheese/ French Brie..

Sandwiches, Small rolls and Boccatta are also available and another recomended sandwich has got to be THE WELSH ONE which is made with Snowdonia cheese, Ceredigion ham and their own amazing homemade coleslaw.

A range of hot and cold drinks are available including creamy cappuccinos, milky lattes and you can also enjoy a very healthy smoothie made with pure fruit and blended with pure orange juice freshly squeezed by us on the premises, and usually right in front of you.

So if you are visting this part of the rail network on a railtour, photographing the wonderful scenery please give this unique place a visit and try something new (an alternative to the usual Kentucky Chicken that the editor frequently visits) and as a bonus you can always phone your order.

Until next month,

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

View from the Outside by Megan Thomason



This month it`s sunny outside, yeaahh!

I really love going to Colton Jct. and Bolton Percy in the York area to take photos of trains (and each other) with Andy at the weekend when it is lovely weather. The sun is shining, photos look great, you would almost think it`s summer.... except I had to use a blanket that Andy had in his car boot because it was so cold. And then there`s the fact that there are no toilets up at Colton Jct. or Bolton Percy so if you need the loo it can cause hassle...so I wouldn`t recommend this outing to anyone with small children...or a weak bladder!

Although saying that I am not a small child and I still need to empty the system more than most when Andy buys me a medium diet coke...don`t expect to stay taking photos for longer than half an hour with me around.

Good sunny weather really does get you in the mood for photography though, especially in the countryside, so all I will say for this month is I can`t wait until the sun coincides with the temperature...until then...I doubt I will be out and about too much standing around waiting for trains in the freezing cold. But all of you dedicated photographers, I am

sure won`t fail to be out there if it`s cold or warm. I really must congratulate such dedication... as Andy said yesterday....”I`m freezing my...” Sorry, what were you going to say Andy? Freezing your what? Hmmm.

If you have any comments, about my articles or any ideas about what I could write about please drop me an email, I always love the fan mail.

megan.thomason@railtalkmagazine.co.uk



£35M RAIL UPGRADE WILL EASE TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN IPSWICH

Plans for a £35 million investment in the rail infrastructure in Ipswich, which will ultimately take around 750,000 lorry journeys off the road every year, has moved a step closer as Network Rail announced its design partner for the works.

As part of its plan to build a bigger and better railway, Network Rail is upgrading the route from Felixstowe to Nuneaton in the West Midlands via Ely, Peterborough and Leicester. Jacobs Engineering will work with Network Rail to design the two major elements needed to increase capacity between Ipswich and Peterborough:

- A new 1km stretch of track, or 'chord', north of Ipswich goods yard, linking the East Suffolk and Great Eastern lines (£35m)
- Two 775m loops east of Ely station to facilitate better regulation of trains through the junctions at Ely (£18m)

Today, Anglia's freight trains have to travel down the busy Great Eastern main line, through London and up the West Coast main line to reach the Midlands, North West and Scotland. Once complete in 2014, these infrastructure improvements will provide more direct journeys for freight trains travelling from the Port of Felixstowe to the Midlands, North West, and Scotland, and the potential for faster journeys to Yorkshire.

With container traffic in the UK expected to more than quadruple by 2030, Network Rail's plans will see an increasing share of freight traffic handled by the railways, reducing pressure on congested roads such as the A14. It is estimated congestion on the A14 alone costs the region £80m each year.

Andrew Munden, route director for Network Rail, said: "Rail can provide a cheaper, greener and more practical way of transporting freight compared with road. The investment we are planning in the east of England will ultimately take more than 2,000 lorry journeys off the road every day - that's around 750,000 a year by 2030, reducing traffic congestion, improving road safety and reducing CO2 emissions by around three-quarters."

Cllr Derrick Ashley, chairman of the East of England Regional Assembly Regional Planning Panel, commented: "This is great news for the region, which has been lobbying hard for this improvement. Moving more freight by rail is vital if we are to boost the economy whilst reducing impacts on our roads and the environment."

Network Rail and Jacobs will now work on the design of the scheme and seek the local community's views during 2010 before any work goes ahead. Work on the scheme is due to start in 2012 and be completed by 2014.

Photo: © Network Rail

Fifty per cent capacity boost as DLR rolls out three-carriage trains

Passengers on the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) are set for a significant expansion in service as the first of a fleet of new three-carriage trains has gone into public service

The DLR will play a key role in plans for a Public Transport Games, helping move thousands of spectators in 2012

An extra carriage is being added to trains on the railway's busiest route, Bank - Lewisham, to provide 50 per cent more space for passengers, which will allow Docklands Light Railway (DLR) to meet increasing demand and cater for passengers for the London 2012 Games.

A £325m two-and-half-year upgrade programme has taken place across the DLR network to allow the longer trains to run, which has included extending platforms, upgrading junctions and track, remodelling Tower Gateway station and building a new South Quay station.

The £325m programme includes:

- Lengthened platforms
- A new £22m South Quay station
- Upgraded track and infrastructure, including innovative junctions that allow two trains to pass simultaneously
- A £13m upgrade to Tower Gateway station, including new canopies and energy efficient escalators

Fifty-five new carriages, bought for £100m to supplement the existing fleet and enable the three-car trains to run, have improved interior layout to give more room and easier exit and entrance.

Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, said: 'As the Olympics approaches, the DLR has struck gold with a huge 50 per cent increase in capacity - the perfect example of the Olympic legacy already delivering real improvements for Londoners.

'This £325m boost is not only integral to preparations for ferrying spectators to the 2012 games, but it will also benefit the many thousands of people who use this popular and handy railway.'

95% of passengers give Grand Central the thumbs up!

Figures released by Passenger Focus have revealed that 95% of Grand Central passengers were satisfied, or very satisfied, with the company's services. The results are contained in the independent passenger watchdog's Autumn 2009 National Passenger Survey, and rates Grand Central as the country's second top performing rail company based on overall passenger satisfaction. They also reveal a one percent improvement in passenger satisfaction since the last Passenger Focus survey in Spring 2009.

The Passenger Focus survey also shows how much passengers appreciate the design of Grand Central's trains; with 94% giving a positive rating to the comfort of the seating area (up 2% on Spring 2009), and 95% satisfied with the amount of room provided for passengers (up 4% from Spring 2009).

Grand Central Managing Director, Tom Clift, welcomed the results: "We are delighted by this vote of confidence from our customers and we would like to thank them for rating us so highly. The fact that passengers consistently rate Open Access above Franchised operators should send a clear message that Open Access has an important role to play in rejuvenating and growing Britain's railways! More importantly I am particularly proud of Grand Central's on-board staff who received a satisfaction rating of 94% (a 2% improvement on Spring 2009) - showing how a small and highly dedicated team can deliver excellent customer service on the railway."

"However, whilst delighted with the overall results we are not complacent and recognise that there is further work to do. Compared to the Spring survey our passengers marked us down on the way in which we handle delays and the information that we provide at stations. Clearly we need to look at this again and improve our performance."

Grand Central is already working with industry partners and local authorities to help improve the standard of information provided to our passengers at those stations where it is currently inadequate. Grand Central also confirmed that it was looking to introduce Local Ambassadors at unmanned stations along its route to improve the quality of passenger information as well as introduce improved staff training on how to handle service disruption.

The key findings of the report are listed below:

	GC Autumn 2009	Change on Spring 2009	Long Distance Operator Average
Overall satisfaction	95%	+1%	80%
Train: Punctuality and Reliability	96%	+1%	87%
Train: How well dealt with delays	67%	-12%	46%
Stations: Provision of information	74%	-8%	85%
Stations: Connections with other transport	73%	+2%	74%
Train: Frequency of services	78%	+11%	82%
Train: Value for money	77%	+3%	57%
Train: Sufficient room for passengers to sit/stand	95%	+4%	71%

23 MILES OF TRACK TO BE REPLACED “OVERNIGHT”

Network Rail is to replace 23 miles of track this year on the famous Settle – Carlisle line with virtually no disruption to passenger train services. Work will start in April and be carried out overnight on weekdays, demonstrating the railway owner’s commitment to providing a seven day railway. It also means no complete line closures for weeks at a time, as there have been in previous years.

The £12m project will see the culmination of a five-year plan to replace the majority of the old, jointed railway track on the 72 mile-long line with modern, continuously welded rails. The welded track will give passengers a smoother, quieter ride, reduce wear and tear on train wheels and need less maintenance. Jo Kaye, Network Rail’s route director, said: “With all the track renewal, signalling improvements and work on bridges and viaducts along the route, we will have invested around £100m in the line over the last five years. This is an incredible amount of money when you consider that British Rail wanted to close it completely not so many years ago.

“Since those dark days, the line has gone from strength to strength. Passenger numbers have rocketed thanks to the efforts of train operator Northern and the various voluntary organisations that promote the line. It is a vital link for coal trains between Scotland and power stations in Yorkshire and the Midlands, and it provides a much needed diversionary route from the west coast main line when improvement work is taking place.”

Most of the work, which will be carried out at 22 different sites, will be on the northbound line, north of Appleby and will take place overnight using the New Track Construction train. Operated by Balfour Beatty Rail Ltd on behalf of Network Rail, the train virtually re-lays the rail track in front of itself, and can cover up to 600 yards of track per night.

South of Appleby, there are seven individual worksites, all on the southbound line.

The work will be carried out in a rolling programme, starting at the northern end of the line and as well as causing minimal disruption to passenger trains, anyone living alongside the railway will also benefit. This is because the construction train can cover between 300 and 600 yards a night so will be in any one location for only a short period of time.

Work is expected to be completed in September.



If anyone can First GBRf Alcan!

First GBRf, the UK’s most reliable freight haulier, has agreed a new £2 million, three-year contract with global aluminium business Rio Tinto Alcan for the carriage of coal and alumina. Although well established in the British coal market, the contract gives First GBRf the opportunity to move alumina for the first time.

The contract was awarded to the rail freight haulier after a thorough process of tender activity with numerous rail service providers.

Steve White, senior buyer, Rio Tinto Alcan, Lynemouth, commented: “Coal and alumina are essential raw materials in our manufacturing process and the focus of the agreement is to develop and maintain a business relationship which delivers cost efficiency and sustainability for both businesses.”

The contract is scheduled to start on 22 February. First GBRf will be running five trains per day from Blyth ship unloading facility, Port of Tyne and Steadsburn to Lynemouth and Lochaber (Fort William) transporting coal, alumina and other materials used in the aluminium manufacturing process.

As part of the agreement First GBRf will be developing a solution to transport finished products from Lochaber (Fort William) to Lynemouth and Port of Blyth. This will be a new route for the freight haulier, which will increase its already strong presence in the North East and further solidify its operations in Scotland.

This latest contract success for First GBRf, in addition to winning another new commodity, will bring new business to rail, away from road.

John Smith, managing director, First GBRf, said: “Rio Tinto Alcan is a very exciting contract for First GBRf and presents us with a new commodity to work with. As part of the contract we will be introducing new methods of working in order to convey more product - from road to rail - for our client as well as changing the delivery pattern to Fort William to improve their supply chain.”

White added: “The realisation of this agreement underlines the desire by Rio Tinto Alcan and its partners to reduce the impact on the environment. We can do this by reducing vehicle movements through the Scottish Highlands to our sister site at Lochaber, Fort William and maximising transportation of raw materials and finished goods by rail. This in turn increases the volume transported on the West Highland rail network and enables Rio Tinto Alcan to reduce its transport emissions by up to 80 per cent.”

National Express to Provide Wi-Fi on Norwich – London Intercity Service

National Express East Anglia (NXEA) is to introduce Wi-Fi facilities for all passengers on its Norwich – Ipswich – Colchester - London intercity services before the end of this year after securing a grant of £346,000 from the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) and Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils towards installation of the equipment involved. The agreement was formally announced at Norwich station on Tuesday 9 February by NXEA Managing Director Andrew Chivers, EEDA Chairman Richard Ellis and representatives of the county councils.

National Express has worked with its partners over the past 18 months to put together a compelling business case to secure funding for the installation costs of the scheme and to bring forward the upgrade within NXEA's current franchise. Business organisations in the region have also been supportive of the initiative with the economic case for installation very strong. According to the business case, the total capital investment of £346k provided by EEDA and Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils will more than pay for itself in year one through the increased value of travel time in the region, followed by further significant benefits in subsequent years.

As well as being great news for customers, the scheme represents a tremendous example of EEDA, local authorities and National Express working in partnership to achieve an outcome which provides widespread benefits for people and businesses across East Anglia. Moreover, this investment will enhance perceptions of the Norwich to London mainline service, by offering commuters, business travellers and leisure users access to Wi-Fi which is now increasingly seen as a key component of an intercity-style rail service.

NXEA has proactively pursued a collaborative approach to this customer-focused programme which involves operating costs for the company of over £200k a year.

Without this commitment and the funding support of EEDA and the county councils the installation of Wi-Fi at such an early date would not have been possible.

Commenting on the go-ahead for the project Andrew Chivers, Managing Director, NXEA said: "I am delighted to announce the introduction of Wi-Fi on our intercity trains on the Norwich to London mainline later this year and I would particularly like to thank EEDA and Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils for their funding support towards the upgrade. I am also grateful to Shaping Norfolk's Future and both the Norfolk and Suffolk Chambers of Commerce who have spoken in support of this exciting initiative. It illustrates our ongoing commitment to continue to invest in improving train services for our customers in the region following the recent launch of our Service Improvement Plan which is centred on providing extra seats on services into London over the next two years. The first stage of that programme began last December and with further benefits to follow in December 2010 and next year."

Richard Ellis, chair of EEDA said: "The business case for investment in Wi-Fi on the London to Norwich line is compelling. EEDA is taking a leading role in bringing together local partners to identify and deliver projects like this that have a real impact on business productivity. "The project would not have gone ahead without the combined funding from EEDA, and Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils. It is a great example of how by working together we can secure economic benefits for those living and working in the East of England."

Adrian Gunson, Cabinet member for Planning and Transportation on Norfolk County Council said: "This is particularly good news for business travellers. The big advantage of inter-city rail travel for business is that the time spent on the move can be put to good use. Wi-Fi on the train means that it can be used even more productively."

Councillor Guy McGregor, portfolio holder for roads, transport and planning at Suffolk County Council said: "Railway services from London into Ipswich and Norwich ought to be regarded as an important inter-city route and this support for the business traveller, as well as the more general computer user, will give credibility to this claim."

Photo left to right: Richard Ellis, Chair, East of England Development Agency; Andrew Chivers National Express East Anglia's Managing Director; Derrick Murphy, Deputy Leader, Norfolk County Council; Caroline Neville, Norwich & Norfolk Chamber of Commerce.



TRANSFORMATION OF SWANSEA STATION UNVEILED

Plans to revamp Swansea railway station into a bright, accessible, clean and secure station fit for the 21st century have been unveiled. More than 1.6m passengers who travel through the Swansea station every year are set to benefit from better journey experiences from the revamp. The upgrade will also help boost Swansea's public transport network as the scheme sits alongside ongoing works to refurbish the city's Quadrant bus station.

An exhibition is now on show at the city's high-street station that includes images of how the station will look upon the completion of the planned upgrade as well as information on what new features will be introduced. The scheme, which is part of the Department for Transport's national station improvement programme, is jointly led by Arriva Trains Wales, Network Rail and the Welsh Assembly Government.

It also has firm support from Swansea Council, which sees the planned improvements to the station as a further boost to the city's regeneration plans.

The scheme will see a larger concourse area with better and more accessible passenger facilities, as well as new waiting shelters, new booking office with extra ticket vending machines, toilets, digital information boards, shops and CCTV cameras.

The station environment will also be significantly improved with refurbished canopies and modernised fittings that will blend in with existing architecture.

Contracts to carry out the railway station revamp are currently being tendered for and work on site is expected to begin once the process is completed.

The Deputy First Minister and Minister for Economy and Transport said: "I am extremely pleased to be part of this partnership project which meets yet another of our commitments in our National Transport Plan. I am sure

I speak for all our partners, Network Rail, Arriva Trains Wales, and the City and County of Swansea, when I say that we are thoroughly looking forward to seeing the much needed work begin.

"This is certainly an exciting time for Swansea - I am sure passengers will be very proud of their new brighter, safer station for years to come."

Chris Rayner, route director for Network Rail, said: "Stations are the railways' shop-front and they have been ignored for too long. Over the next five years, stations are among Network Rail's top priorities and, together with our partners, we will be investing around £85m into improving stations in Wales by 2014.

"Swansea is among the many stations to benefit from this wider investment. The transformed station will serve as a catalyst for further growth in rail usage in Swansea, while helping to provide a much better environment for the city. We have also listened to passengers and this plan will respond to their needs by improving their travel experience so that their rail journey will always be comfortable, convenient and safe."

Ian Bullock, customer services director at Arriva Trains Wales said: "We are pleased to be delivering the project alongside our partners to provide a much improved and brighter passenger experience at Swansea Station. The improvement work has been designed specifically to update and in some cases install new facilities including a greater provision of service information, vending facilities, CCTV and an improvement of access all of which contribute to a station fit for the 21st century and we hope will encourage more people to try the train"

The improvement work at Swansea railway station will be carried out in two key phases to bring incremental benefits to passengers. Passengers will benefit from an improved concourse area by 2011 before further work on the platform area begins in the second phase.

Commuters have a 1 in 5 chance of meeting the love of their life on a Chiltern Railways train

Chiltern Railways has been finding out how romantic travelling by train is and what commuters rate as the most romantic stations along the line by running a survey on the romance of train travel.

When asked if they had met the love of their life on a Chiltern Railways train, nearly 20% (19.4%) of people who filled in the survey said that they had.

Surprisingly, travelling on a train itself was the most romantic thing ever for 4% of people. It was very romantic for 23%, fairly romantic for 33%, not romantic for 39% and 6% left their own comments. One of the 6% said that travelling by train was "better than any date" and someone also said that "travelling together, holding hands, seeing the world go by, knowing you will be cuddling up together later is just wonderful."

Therefore, you just need to take the train somewhere; perhaps to London Marylebone which was voted the most romantic station, followed by Leamington Spa and Birmingham Moor Street.

And if you are wondering what chat up line to use on the train, then why not try the following given by some of our respondents:

- "Do you travel this way often?"
- "Is this seat taken?"
- "I see you on this train every day."
- "I think I am on the wrong train, but now I have seen you I think I'll stay."
- "I hope you don't mind but I couldn't take my eyes off you, here's my number, please call me."

Thomas Ableman, Marketing Director at Chiltern Railways said the survey highlighted that there is still romance in train travel: "We were not surprised by how many of our passengers find train travel romantic and how many have met someone special through their commute. It just proves when you travel by Chiltern Railways; you may get more than just a train journey."

Historic Carlisle station transformed in a makeover that is an inspiration for the future

The historic Carlisle Citadel station has a new look as part of a campaign from national DIY retailer Homebase to transform spaces across the UK.

The station, designed in gothic style by Sir William Tite to complement the nearby stone towers of the Citadel in the heart of Carlisle, was opened in 1847 for the Lancaster & Carlisle Railway and the Caledonian Railway. Every year around 1.7 million passengers board or leave trains at the station.

It was identified last year by Sir Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group, as one of three stations most in need of improvement on the West Coast Main Line, the others being Preston and Crewe. He called for train operators to be given more freedom to invest in stations.

Virgin Trains, the company that manages these stations, would like to introduce permanent improvements and believes the next franchise for West Coast, due to start in 2012, should offer opportunities for positive investment. The Homebase project has confirmed Virgin's belief that Carlisle Citadel station has the potential to be a truly attractive and welcoming gateway to the great Border City of Carlisle.

Ann Turner, Station Manager at Carlisle for Virgin Trains, said: "We're very proud of our station, which looks amazing. The station is full of history and we love it. What has happened has really transformed it and shows what can be done."

She added: "Response from the local community has been great. We've noticed passengers arriving a little bit earlier to allow extra time to enjoy the station and take it all in."

This week's impressive transformation, including turning the waiting room into a lounge, creating a garden on one platform, painting the connecting bridge and even installing a kitchen among other developments, has been warmly welcomed by local people.

The process will be filmed for a national advertising campaign for Homebase to appear in the spring and summer starring local Carlisle people as extras. The aim of the Homebase activity is to inspire and encourage people to transform their own homes and gardens. Upon completion passengers will be able to experience the new-look station for themselves, taking a seat on a sofa, picnicking on garden furniture or stopping to admire the foliage.



EAST COAST'S MINIATURE PRICES JUST GOT SMALLER!

Train operator East Coast is launching a new range of super-low miniature price tickets – cutting its previous cheapest fares by up to 23 per cent.

The price cuts on standard advance one-way travel for popular journeys go on sale from Friday 26 February 2010 – with the lowest prices available at East Coast's website, www.eastcoast.co.uk.

Examples of the new standard one-way fares from London, booked via the East Coast website, include:

- London to Leeds or York – current lowest price £13, new lowest price £10 – saving 23 per cent;
- York to Edinburgh – current lowest price £13, new lowest price £10 – saving 23 per cent;
- London to Newcastle – current lowest price £15, new lowest price £12 – saving 20 per cent;
- London to Edinburgh or Glasgow – current lowest price £16.50, new lowest price £13 – saving 21 per cent;
- Newcastle to Edinburgh – current lowest price £8.50, new lowest price £7.50 – saving 12 per cent.

The new super low fares are also much cheaper than a generation ago in 1979, when Pink Floyd topped the singles chart with Another Brick In The Wall and the first Sony Walkman made its debut. Here's how the new super-low East Coast advance fares for journeys to and from London compare with the cheapest available single tickets for the same trip in 1979, more than 30 years ago:

- London to Leeds or York – 1979 cheapest price £12, new lowest price £10 = 17 per cent cheaper;
- London to Newcastle – 1979 cheapest price £17.70, new lowest price £12 = 32 per cent cheaper;
- London to Edinburgh – 1979 cheapest price £21.20, new lowest price £13 = 39 per cent cheaper.

East Coast managing director Karen Boswell said: "We're proud of our miniature prices, which offer great value for money and encourage people who've not travelled with us before to give the train a try.

"These new fares offer even more amazing value with all the benefits of travelling by East Coast trains. Our customers enjoy a city centre to city centre journey, free wireless internet access and our café-bar serving tasty food and drink along the way.

"We're expecting high demand for these new super low fares, so our advice is to book early to secure the best bargains".

The advertisements feature miniature character models travelling to favourite East Coast destinations, highlighting bargain low fares to exciting visitor destinations.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: NETWORK RAIL UNVEILS STRATEGY FOR EAST MIDLANDS

A plan to unlock capacity and reduce journey times on the main line from London to Sheffield has been unveiled as Network Rail published the East Midlands Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS).

The strategy sets out a range of proposals to improve rail services between London St Pancras International and Leicester, Nottingham, Derby and Sheffield, as well as services between Norwich and Liverpool, and Stansted Airport and Birmingham. Measures to provide more seats on longer trains, and improvements to reduce journey times are all included in the strategy. Major capacity and reliability enhancement schemes at Leicester, Nottingham and Derby are also set out, along with schemes to provide better links for freight.

Some schemes to improve rail services throughout the RUS area are already underway, such as the congestion busting £5.5bn Thameslink upgrade and improvements to reduce journey times for long-distance trains.

The RUS also supports the case for electrifying the Midland Main Line to Sheffield. In October last year, Network Rail published an extremely attractive business case for electrifying the Midland Main Line which could, over the course of 60 years, pay for itself with the savings made from cheaper running costs and maintenance outweighing the initial investment to electrify the route.

Despite the recent recession, passenger numbers have been relatively resilient. The RUS predicts that demand for rail over the next 10 years will increase by 28% on the main line to London, while passenger journeys are predicted to increase by 40% on routes between the East Midlands and Birmingham. Freight is also expected to increase particularly on routes used by intermodal services.

Dyan Crowther, route director for Network Rail said: "Demand for rail has risen significantly over recent years, and this strategy provides us with a comprehensive plan to accommodate more passengers and increase the use of rail for freight while providing a better, more reliable service."

"Unblocking bottlenecks at the key rail hubs of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby is our immediate priority, but electrifying the Midland main line will deliver greater capacity and faster journey times in the longer term."

Today's publication follows a three month consultation with stakeholders including passenger and freight operators, passenger groups, Office of Rail Regulation, Department for Transport, Association of Train Operating Companies, local authorities and regional development agencies.

Options recommended in the RUS to increase capacity and create better rail journeys throughout the region include:

Schemes to provide more seats:

- Commuter services into London St Pancras International and Blackfriars: introduction of 12-car trains as part of the Thameslink Programme to provide a high frequency timetable
- Long distance services: trains in the peak should be lengthened up to a maximum of 11 carriages as soon as rolling stock becomes available
- Leicester and Nottingham: further train lengthening on long distance and some local services to provide extra capacity

Journeys to receive more frequent services to improve regional connectivity:

- Kettering to Leicester, Derby and Sheffield
- Peterborough to Lincoln
- Between Nottingham and Lincoln if the Newark fly-over is built
- Nottingham to Norwich
- Direct service between Nottingham and Stoke-on-Trent
- Birmingham to Cambridge/ Stansted Airport

Schemes to improve freight services:

- Loop south of Bedford
- Loop between Leicester and Kettering near Market Harborough
- Enhanced infrastructure in the Burton-on-Trent area

PIONEERING RAIL TECHNOLOGY GETS TESTED IN WALES

A major Network Rail scheme to improve the Cambrian line with one of the world's most advanced signalling technologies moves a step closer to completion. For the first time, the new European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) was fully tested on a live railway between Pwllheli and Harlech on 13 – 17 February using Arriva Trains Wales' ERTMS-fitted class 158 passenger train fleet.

The Cambrian line in mid-Wales is the testbed for ERTMS in Britain and once the scheme is completed; it will become the first railway in the country to benefit from this new technology.

The test run is vital to determine the readiness of this new system before it is introduced in phases on the Cambrian line and subsequently across Britain to bring a more reliable railway, as well as the prospect of more trains to passengers. In addition, the success of the exercise will see seven Arriva Trains Wales drivers become the first in the country qualified to operate ERTMS-equipped passenger trains.

Three signallers from Network Rail with their new skills in ERTMS will also be pioneering the use of the new system to manage train movements from the new signalling centre at Machynlleth.

Rob Carr, senior programme manager, Network Rail said: "ERTMS is the next frontier for Britain's railway; it will significantly improve reliability and capacity on the network. We have carried out a series of tests on the separate elements of the system but this exercise is the 'full-dress rehearsal' and a vital milestone for this programme. The test-drive will give this system a thorough and stringent health-check before we launch it in stages on the Cambrian line and we hope to commission the first phase on Pwllheli – Harlech by Spring this year."

Peter Leppard, director of operations and safety, Arriva Trains Wales said "This is a ground breaking project and we are proud to be delivering the first trial section of ERTMS on the British rail network."



Key facts -

- 16 out of a total of 24 passenger trains have been fitted with ERTMS
- 3 special Network Rail locomotives have been fitted with ERTMS
- 215km of track is now fitted with ERTMS equipment including
 - * 96 axle counters (a device that detects the passing of trains)
 - * 346 eurobalise (an electronic transmitter)
- 1 brand new signalling control centre built at Machynlleth, with two brand new digitised signalling panels equipped with ERTMS

With ERTMS, the speed of train movement is continuously supervised and if the actual train speed exceeds the permitted speed, brakes will be applied automatically to stop trains before the danger point.

In addition, ERTMS also enables train drivers to exchange real-time information, via robust radio frequency, with signallers, so that communication of train movements is continuous.

ERTMS is a proven and tested signalling standard that has been adopted by countries including France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany and Italy and is also rapidly being adopted by other countries around the world. In Europe, it is designed to replace the existing systems to create an interoperable cross-border railway, encouraging more opportunities for international freight and passenger travel by rail. Trains between Pwllheli – Barmouth were replaced with alternative services on 13 – 17 February for this exercise. Passengers are advised to check the changes before they embark on their journey by contacting Arriva Trains Wales or the National Rail Enquiries. Ansaldo STS UK Ltd is the main contractor for this scheme.

IT'S TURKISH DELIGHT FOR CAMBRIDGE STUDENTS WITH STANSTED EXPRESS

National Express East Anglia's Stansted Express team had a big surprise for enterprising Cambridge students Rebecca Trevalyan and Catherine Pulman when they found themselves Istanbul-bound on a charity 'jail-break' organised by Clare College, Cambridge recently. The surprised duo had made it as far as Stansted Airport on the 'jail-break' and approached the Stansted Express customer service team in the hope they might donate the students rail tickets to London. It was at this point their luck really changed as Adrian Warren, Marketing Manager at Stansted Express stepped in with some Turkish Delight! Instead of organising tickets to London, Adrian went the extra mile and organised complimentary flights to Istanbul for the pair with a little help from his friends at Pegasus Airlines.

Adrian Warren Marketing Manager for Stansted Express said: "The team at Stansted Express are always happy to help a worthy cause. Rebecca and Catherine have shown a great deal of enterprise and their fundraising activities have raised much needed income for a number of worthwhile charities, including the Haiti Disaster Fund, WaterAid and Cancer Research, amongst others. I'd like to thank our friends at Pegasus Airlines for helping to make this an especially memorable fundraising event."

Speaking of their adventure Rebecca said: "We never thought that when we set off on this charity fundraising jail break that we would end up travelling all the way to Istanbul and back. We hoped we might make it to London or perhaps a little further – but never in our wildest dreams did we anticipate an overnight stay in Istanbul. I'd like to thank Stansted Express and Pegasus Airlines for making this event a truly memorable experience and helping us to raise even more money for charity,"

Photo: Shows Catherine Pulman (left) and Rebecca Trevalyan (right).



Real nuts blog at....
Railnuts



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Pictures with a different view



After last months interior shot of the Wrexham and Shropshire stock, this month we show you that they look just as good on the outside. The high quality of finish to the paintwork cannot be seen to its full effect on this photo. We hope that the high standards continue. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Above: Class 221 143 is seen through a video camera departing platform 11 at Edinburgh Waverley station while working the 12.52 1M56 Edinburgh Waverley - Birmingham New Street Virgin West Coast service.

Jonathan McGurk

Top Left: East Coast 43238 leads 43319 at Darlington on route to Doncaster West Yard, February 18th.

Teeside Anth

Bottom Left: Class 37 109 ventured out on to the Manchester Metrolink in February. The loco was one of several hired from the ELR for engineering work near Bury.

Pete Cheshire





A busy scene at Glasgow Central High Level station as passengers are seen rushing for the 14.45 service to Largs. This photograph was taken from platform 10 beside the small train times departure board. [Jonathan McGurk](#)

Preserved Railways



Standard Class 4, No. 75069 is seen part dismantled at the Severn Valley Railway on February 21st. This loco has recently had its overhaul deferred. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



On February 13th at the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway's Steam Gala, GNR Class N2 0-6-2 tank No. 1744 and BR Ivatt Tank No. 41241 power up the hill from Oakworth to Haworth station as it approaches Mytholmes Tunnel. [Robert Beardwell](#)



A bit of a polish boys! On February 13th at the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway's Steam Gala, BR Standard 4 No. 80002 sits next to Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway No. 957 at Haworth Shed being prepared for a days work. [Robert Beardwell](#)



Keighley and Worth Valley Railway on February 13th and War Department 2-8-0 locomotive No. 90733 is approaching Keighley. [Stephen Beardwell](#)



L&YR Class 25 Ironclad 0-6-0 No. 957 and BR Standard 4 2-6-4 T No. 80002, having just departed from Haworth head for Oxenhope. *Robert Beardwell*



The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust New Steam for the Main Line

Tornado to tackle Shap with “The Border Raider”

Tornado, the first new main line steam locomotive to be built in Britain for almost 50 years, will be travelling to Carlisle over the fearsome Shap Bank and taking in the fabulous scenery of the Cumbrian Fells and the Settle to Carlisle railway with “The Border Raider” on Wednesday 21st April 2010.

In 2009 Tornado hauled three sell-out tours over the world famous Settle to Carlisle railway, and to satisfy demand, The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust is once again taking the locomotive over this route on Wednesday April 21st 2010. In addition the locomotive will also work for the first time from Crewe to Carlisle via the West Coast Main Line, having to compete with the long arduous climb over Shap Bank before descending down into the border city of Carlisle.

“The Border Raider” will depart behind a modern electric locomotive from London Euston and pick up passengers at Watford Junction, Milton Keynes and Tamworth to enable as many people as possible to join the tour. Tornado will take over ‘The Border Raider’ at Crewe and will haul the train along the West Coast Main Line direct to Carlisle. With around two and a half hours in Carlisle to visit the castle or museum, or just have a relaxing lunch in one of the local restaurants, the return tour will depart from Carlisle and head over the famous Settle and Carlisle railway with its many tunnels, lofty viaducts and magnificent views. At Hellifield Tornado will be detached and then head to York for her next duty, whilst “The Border Raider” returns to London via Crewe and all outward stations behind a (less!) modern locomotive.

The approximate timing for ‘The Border Raider’ on Wednesday 21st April are:

London Euston: out 07:30hrs; back 22:30hrs

Watford Junction: out 07:50hrs; back 22:05hrs

Milton Keynes: out 08:15hrs; back 21:35hrs

Tamworth: out 09:05hrs; back 20:45hrs

Crewe: out 10:20hrs; back 19:00hrs

Carlisle: arrive 13:00hrs; depart 15:45hrs



Both of these routes were haunts of the A1 class in the 1950s when working to and from Scotland, so once again Tornado will be providing a spectacular day out and recreating history, all in the same day.

Mark Allatt, Chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, said: “Shap Bank is seen by many railway enthusiasts as one of the toughest challenges in the UK for a steam locomotive. The Trust is therefore delighted to be taking Tornado from Crewe to Carlisle for the first time with ‘The Border Raider’ and hope that as many people as possible will join us for this historic day – all profits going to keep Tornado on the main line.”

Prices for “The Border Raider” are: Standard Class £89.00, First Class (non-dining) £129.00 and Premier Dining £189.00. Discount for Children 10%, 2% additional charge for credit cards, 1% additional charge for debit cards. Bookings for “The Border Raider” are via the Trust’s agent, Steam Dreams on 01483 209888 or email info@steamdreams.co.uk.

Photo: Tornado, crosses the famous Ribbleshead Viaduct on one of her previous trips to Carlisle. © A1SLT

C58LG

CLASS 58
LOCOMOTIVE
GROUP

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

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



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



MASSIVE FOUR DAY MARCH 1960s GALA STARRING TORNADO. 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th MARCH 2010

The Great Central Railway notches its 2010 gala action up a gear in March. The popular mixed traction 1960s gala returns bigger than ever with celebrity new build Peppercorn A1 Pacific right at the top of the guest list. It's a 'Magnificent Seven' motive power line up. A1 60163 'Tornado' is joined by visiting BR standard four number 80072 (which has only recently returned to steam), visiting Jubilee number 5690 "Leander", visiting Black 5 number 44767 "George Stephenson" and newly restored Jinty number 47406. In addition two diesel locomotives will join the fleet each day.

Great Central Railway event co-ordinator Steven Chapple said "We're very honoured to have Tornado topping the bill at our 1960s gala. The locomotive roster will change over each day giving visitors the chance to see a different show on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. We'll have a very busy and interesting timetable at the weekend with the popular pick up goods making a return." The lines Met Camm DMU is also expected to feature in the event giving passengers a front seat view of passing trains on the double track. Thursday 25th March will feature an hourly departure schedule from Loughborough Central station and locomotives 5690 and 80072. Visitors will be able to get their hands on the regulator of 3F 47406 for just a fiver, for a short drive in Loughborough station limits.

Friday 26th March will see the action step up to a forty five minute passenger timetable with three engines, 5690, Tornado and 80072. Plans are in hand to offer short trip diesel driver experiences.

Saturday 27th March will see a full intensive timetable with passenger and freight trains. Locomotives are expected to be Tornado, 5690, 80072, 44767, 47406, Class 20 D8098 and Class 25 D5185 plus the DMU. Trains will run into the evening on Saturday.

Sunday 28th March will see a change of Black 5's. Motive power should include Tornado, 5690, 80072, 45231, 47406, Class 27 D5401 and Class 45 D123 plus the DMU.

The GCR plans other additional attractions around the gala including a beer tent at Quorn. More details will be released before the event at the railways website www.gcrailway.co.uk A full gala programme will be included free of charge with all full price runabout tickets.



No. 61994 "The Great Marquess" on her final run of the day storms through Burrs Park, during the East Lancashire Railway's BR Gala on January 23rd. [Colin Irwin](#)



On the weekend of February 20th and 21st, the East Lancashire Railway held what it described as a “Steam Spectacular”, with two visiting locomotives and a home fleet running steam services along the line all day. This is LMS 4-6-0 Black 5 No. 44871 working a service to Heywood, where she is seen crossing the 7 Arches viaduct just outside Bury. [Colin Irwin](#)



BR Standard Britannia Class 4-6-2 No. 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" and BR 8P No. 71000 "Duke Of Gloucester" double head the first passenger train of the day towards Heywood on February 20th. [Colin Irwin](#)



At the East Lancashire Railway's "Steam Spectacular" on February 20th, Southern Railway "King Arthur" Class No. 30777 "Sir Lamiel" pulls across the 7 Arches viaduct, just outside Bury, with a train from Rawtenstall to Bury. [Christopher Sutcliffe](#)



LMS 4-6-0 Black 5 No. 44871 and BR Standard Britannia Class 4-6-2 No. 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" depart Bury heading for Heywood recreating the "15 Guinee Special" on February 20th.

Colin Irwin

Southern Locomotives Ltd announces a Fine Print offer featuring Battle of Britain class locomotive No. 34072 "257 Squadron"

Following its successful offer of prints featuring No. 34053 "Sir Keith Park", Southern Locomotives Ltd (SLL) has announced a new Fine Art print featuring sister locomotive No. 34072 "257 Squadron". A copy of the new print will be given next 50 purchasers of shares in the company.

Our policy is to allow a buyer to specify which locomotive the funds should be applied to, for example to complete the restoration of "Sir Keith Park" during 2010, or the overhaul of "257 Squadron" which will follow in 2011.

"257 Squadron" was originally restored in 1990 and ran until 2002 when it was withdrawn for overhaul, including major boiler repairs. The loco is currently stored at SLL's workshop at Herston on the outskirts of Swanage.

The restoration cost is expected to be around £150,000.

The prints are the work of Richard Green, who is well-known for his Locos-in-Profile series. One copy of the print will be sent to the next 50 subscribers for SLL shares, costing £250 each. Full details of the offer can be found on www.southern-locomotives.co.uk





LMS Class 3F "Jinty" 0-6-0T No. 47324 returns to Ramsbottom with the ECS from the Shuttle service to Bury Bolton Street, East Lancs Railway on February 20th. [Robert Beardwell](#)



BR 8P No. 71000 "Duke Of Gloucester" powers through Burrs Country Park with a service from Rawtenstall to Heywood. The 8P is notorious for unreliability as it was originally an experimentally high powered locomotive produced by BR in the 1950s for express passenger trains, but the design failed to take off, and the Duke remained unique since the day she was built. On that weekend she had just returned to traffic following a long period in the works at Bury receiving an intermediate overhaul. [Christopher Sutcliffe](#)



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY SETS AMBITIOUS FUNDRAISING TARGET TO RAISE THE ROOF!

Appeal launched to refurbish Loughborough station canopy.

First stage of works set to begin in April.

Work is all set to begin on one of the Great Central Railway's biggest maintenance projects. The refurbishment of Loughborough Central station's impressive overall glass canopy is expected to cost around half a million pounds and could take around two years.

The glass canopy, described locally as Loughborough's Crystal Palace is now in its second century of service. The station was built in time for the opening of the line to London in 1899. The repair plans are thought to be the biggest single refurbishment the structure has ever undergone. Members of the lines supporters club, Friends of the Great Central Main Line are due to receive details of the scheme in the latest edition of society magazine 'Main Line', published at the start of March.

Supporters of being called to arms with the 'raise the roof' appeal. They are being asked to raise at least £120,000 towards the projects half a million pound price tag.

GCR director Tony Sparks is leading the project. "Without doubt this is an ambitious plan", said Tony. "The canopy is a complex structure and needs a full refurbishment to see it fit for another century. We have a funding plan to raise the money and we hope supporters will help us on the way raising at least £120,000. They have already been generous with collections during our recent Winter Gala raising £1000. The David Clarke Railway Trust have also pledged £50,000 meaning we are 10% of the way there already. We'll make a start on the repairs in April."

Scaffold will appear under the north end of the canopy as work begins. The first phase of the work should be complete by the Summer, a small but significant part of the overall project.

Providing funds are in place, contractors will then work at the southern end of the platform, followed by the two platform faces. Ultimately if enough money is raised, the street level entrance roof will also be refurbished.

The appeal is being arranged by the David Clarke Railway Trust, the charity which supports the GCR. Gift aid can be collected on donations. The money will be ringfenced for the canopy appeal. The GCR is providing incentives for donors including the chance to ride in the footplate rides and brake vans trips during gala events.

The work is going ahead following exploratory repairs in 2006 which helped establish how the project should be tackled. The repaired section is clearly visible from Great Central Road on the approach to the station.

Tony continued, "We had a magnificent and generous response to the appeal to buy the former GCR goods office at Loughborough last year. The success of that campaign and the high quality repairs which are now talking place in the building are only happening because of the people who supported us. We are hoping for a similar emotional response for the canopy campaign. It's an essential part of the station and it's going to take time to do the whole job. When it's finished though, it will be a crowning glory."

Appeal leaflets are available from GCR stations and are being sent to members of the Friends of the Great Central Main Line. Donations can also be made on line (from 1st March) through the GCR website at www.gcrailway.co.uk

Photo: © Richard Hargreaves





Class 73 005 and 73 002 stand at Birkenhead Hall Road depot on a frosty December 28th 1995. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



From the North Wales Coast, Class 37 408 stands at a snow covered Crewe on January 27th 1996 waiting to work a service to Bangor. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Top Left: Class 08 784 stands at Chester Depot in the company of a single Shell fuel tank in March 1988
Brian Battersby



Bottom Left: Long before the Class 350's and Class 323's were even thought of, Birmingham - Liverpool services were in the hands of Class 310 units. In this photo Class 310 106 is seen travelling ECS through Crewe enroute to Liverpool Lime St.
Brian Battersby



Top Left: Carrying the livery of Greater Manchester PTE, Class 142 013 is seen at Llandudno Jct. on August 28th 1987.

Pete Cheshire

Top Right: Netherlands Class EM2 Loco 1502, the former BR 27000 "Electra" is seen at Tyseley open day on October 4th 1987.

Pete Cheshire

Left: Class 37 414 leads 37 683 through Warrington Bank Quay on July 15th 1991 heading down the West Coast Main Line with a diverted freight.

Pete Cheshire



DRS Class 66 432 approaches Harringay hauling the Tilbury - Daventry "Sugar Liner" on February 17th. [Charlie Robbins](#)