

The RAGES Rag

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(left: Class 380 on North Berwick line)

The newsletter of the Rail Action Group, East of Scotland, bringing members up-to-date with progress on improvements to local rail services.

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RESTON AND EAST LINTON STATIONS UPDATE

Station Plans on Track

In November, in a letter to our chairman, Keith Brown MSP, Minister for Transport, said that he had "agreed in the ScotRail franchise contract to provide a two-hourly service between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon Tweed that will call at Reston and East Linton, recognising the potential benefits that these stations could bring."

The following press release has

been issued by Transport Scotland:-

"New train stations for East Linton and Reston are a step closer after services for the stops were written into the next ScotRail franchise [let to Abellio]. A two-hourly service between Edinburgh and Berwick with timing for stops at East Linton and Reston is part of the new planned timetable, which could see trains running through both stations as soon as December 2016."

Mr Brown said: "This is a huge step forward towards the realisation of economic regeneration and shows

a real commitment from the Scottish Government and ScotRail. Scotland's railways are a driver for can bring jobs, investment and new study and social opportunities for communities. Our Scottish Stations these services and Fund is now awaiting further details from the South East Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SEStran) and East Lothian and Scottish Borders

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Councils for the funding application which will bring the new stations at East Linton and Reston to life”

RAGES Chairman Tom Thorburn also welcomed the news. He said: "This is terrific news for our area and will be of huge benefit to a whole range of people and businesses, namely those wishing to access jobs in Edinburgh, students being able to commute for their tertiary education at QMU, Edinburgh etc., the ability to take in the theatre and sporting fixtures, and tourist access to our areas from other parts of the country. It must be noted that we could not have achieved this great win for our area without the help and support of our members, MSPs, Councillors, SEStran and East Lothian and Scottish Borders Councils.

The **RAGES** Committee are extremely grateful to Transport Minister Keith Brown and Transport Scotland for agreeing to this new local rail service, with re-opened stations at Reston and East Linton a major step closer."

The station plans which were included in the first of the two council's joint reports into a local rail service from Edinburgh to Berwick published in May 2004 are shown on P3. These both show that the stations will not be in the same location as before.

Local Rail Meeting

At the regular local rail meeting

hosted by East Lothian Council in Haddington and chaired by Cllr Michael Veitch at the end of

November, this excellent news was discussed in more detail. As the announcement had noted, the granting of monies from the Station Investment Fund for the two stations is dependent on further work from the two councils and SEStran. This involves the two councils funding a detailed design specification, as required in the Network Rail Governance for Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) process, of the two stations to be undertaken by Network Rail, the cost of which is both unexpected and considerable. Initial indications suggest that confirmation of any award of central funding will not be provided until the cost of the station development work is known.

Given the level of investment involved in the design process, the Councils are seeking reassurance and commitment from the Scottish Government that funding will be available, and are also seeking clarity around the timing of any confirmation of funding particularly if the timescales which have been set out are to be achievable.

In addition, the two councils are concerned about this additional design cost and wish to receive from the Minister reassurance that the promised funding will still be available at the end of the process.

Whilst the Minister's announced target date of December 2016 is unchanged, this addition Network Rail specification work may

jeopardise it. An interesting point raised during the meeting is the possibility of the service starting then whilst the two stations were still to be completed.

Also raised during the meeting was the desired length of platforms. Whilst each station would be of a minimal design to reduce costs, future proofing of the platforms was essential, particularly with the possibility that the North Berwick service may be enhanced from the current 4-car sets to two coupled 3-car sets.

It is known that Abellio have proposed a running timetable for the new service and the meeting wished to see sight of this. The Minister's announcement declared a two hour service, but gave no details of early morning or later evening times nor if all the existing stations would be included as stops as recommended in the MVA studies.

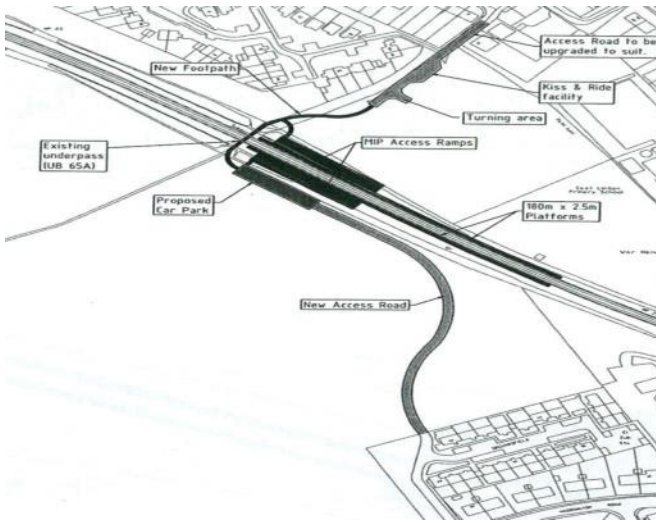
The councils noted that work had started on assessing the required infrastructure works outwith the two stations.

At a full council meeting in Haddington on 18th December, East Lothian Councillors discussed the station. They agreed to seek council support and agreement to fund the development costs necessary to fully design the new station for further consideration, in line with the GRIP process.

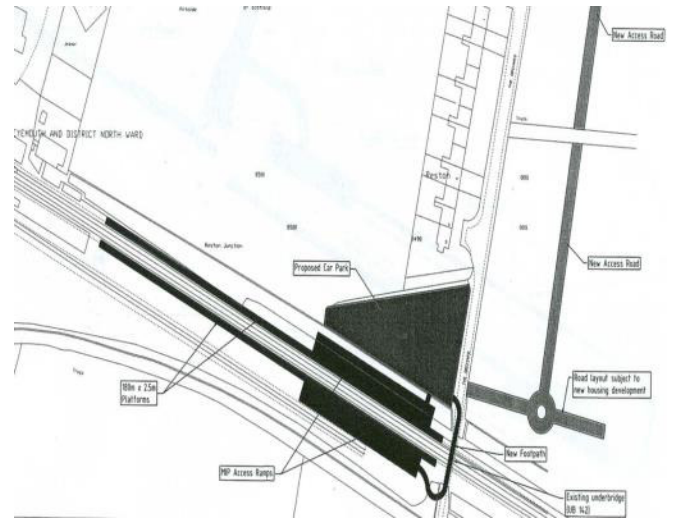
Scottish Borders Council has confirmed that it has an allocation within the proposed Capital Plan which will contribute to the design process for the new station facility at Reston.

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East Linton Station – Proposed Location



Reston Station – Proposed Location

New ScotRail Franchise Confirmed

Abellio ScotRail

It was announced in October that the ScotRail franchise has been awarded to Abellio who are owned by Netherland Railways and already have three UK rail franchises: Northern Rail; Merseyrail; and Greater Anglia. There is a six-month take-over familiarisation period with the new franchise starting on 1 April 2015.

Having had good relationships with First Group, **RAGES** now looks forward to engaging with Abellio to further our aims for East Lothian and Berwickshire. Most of all is the local service between Edinburgh and Berwick with re-opened stations at East Linton and Reston. It is hoped

the priced option part of the bid for this local service and that along with the Councils' excellent bid for funding from the Scottish Government's Station Investment Fund and the several studies done over the past few years, the Minister for Transport will be persuaded to approve this project.

Summary of What to Expect from the New Franchise

- Overall new trains, revamped stations and a huge range of other benefits will overhaul the ScotRail franchise.
- Abellio will invest millions in providing an improved service and superior facilities for passengers and a better deal for staff.
- Included in the new franchise,

worth up to £6 billion, are measures to make train travel more attractive across the board.

- There will be a break clause for the franchise after 5 years.

For passengers -

- free wifi on all trains
- new approach to cycling with more than 3,500 parking spaces and bike-hire at a number of stations.
- 23% more carriages across the network,
- reduced fares for jobseekers,
- high-speed intercity diesel trains, with over a third more seats,
- advance fares of £5 between any two Scottish cities,
- Great Scenic Railway scheme bringing more tourists to the north, the south west and the Borders,
- major shopping developments at the stations at Aberdeen and Inverness.

(continued from P3)

For staff –

- a commitment to earnings of at least the living wage for all staff and subcontractors,
 - at least 100 apprenticeships,
 - guarantee of no compulsory redundancies throughout the life of the contract,
 - rail staff pensions and travel rights protected,
 - introduction of guaranteed trade union representation on every franchise Board meeting.
- In addition, trains will have more space for prams and wheelchairs and there will be rigorous new service quality control measures ensuring cleaner trains and improved right-time measures. There will be later services for concerts and events and improved integration with bus, ferry and air timetables, alongside a £520,000 Station Travel Planning 'Plus' programme and a Journey Companion app with door-to-door travel info, to ensure passengers can get straight from A-B. Every single Scottish station will have CCTV and passengers will enjoy improved waiting facilities at 40 stations, extra retail facilities at up to 50 stations, and hundreds of new car parking spaces. In the Transport Scotland press release, Mr Keith Brown, the then Minister for Transport, concluded: *"These exciting plans mean that our railways will continue to be innovative, passenger-led and a hugely important driver in Scotland's long-term success and sustainability. This is a contract that will benefit the whole of Scotland."*

New ECML Franchise Announced

New East Coast Main Line Franchise Awarded to InterCity Railways

Inter City Railways, a consortium of **Stagecoach** and **Virgin**, is the successful bidder with the let being for eight years from 1st March 2015. Rail journeys between London and Edinburgh will be transformed by more seats, more services and new trains after the government announced its intention to award the new East Coast franchise to Inter City Railways, a consortium of Stagecoach and Virgin, today (27 November 2014).

The new deal will include a host of extra benefits for passengers:

- **23 new services from London to key destinations**, with 75 more station calls a day
- **plans for new direct links to Huddersfield, Sunderland, Middlesbrough, Dewsbury and Thornaby**
- **proposals for more trains to London from Bradford, Edinburgh, Harrogate, Leeds, Lincoln, Newcastle, Shipley, Stirling, and York**
- **3,100 extra seats for the morning peak time by 2020**
- **across the entire train fleet there will be 12,200 additional seats** – a 50% increase
- **65 state of the art Intercity Express trains** brought into passenger service from 2018, totalling 500 new carriages
- **journey times from London to**

Leeds reduced by 14 minutes, and from London to Edinburgh by 13 minutes

- **a £140 million investment package** to improve trains and stations.

The full press release from the DfT can be seen at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-seats-more-services-and-new-trains-for-east-coast-passengers>

The interactive map in the above site shows what improvements that will be seen during the franchise for each individual station.

For **Edinburgh**, the benefits are:

- **4 additional trains to and from London** from May 2016
- **from introducing open plan ticketing** making staff more visible at stations from 2018
- **regular journey times of 4 hours** from 2020
- **upgraded train interiors** introduced between 2015 and 2017
- **a station now served by new high speed IEP trains** from 2020 providing:

- more reliable services
- more seats
- more luggage space
- faster journey times
- improved wi-fi and mobile coverage

Dunbar will see the following benefits:

- **upgraded train interiors** introduced between 2015 and 2017
- **a station now served by new high speed IEP trains** from 2020 providing:

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- more reliable services
- more seats
- more luggage space
- faster journey times
- improved wi-fi and mobile

coverage

Whilst **Berwick-upon-Tweed**

benefits from:

- **introducing open plan ticketing** making staff more visible at stations from 2018
- **additional cycle parking spaces** from July 2017
- **upgraded train interiors** introduced between 2015 and 2017
- **a station now served by new high speed IEP trains** from 2020

providing:

- more reliable services
- more seats
- more luggage space
- faster journey times
- improved wi-fi and mobile

coverage.

Invitations to tender (ITT) had been issued to three bidders in early April 2014: **East Coast Trains Ltd**

(FirstGroup plc); **Keolis/Eurostar East Coast Limited** (Keolis (UK) Limited and Eurostar International Limited); and **Inter City Railways Limited** (Stagecoach Transport Holdings Limited and Virgin Holdings Limited).

At the regular local rail meeting hosted by East Lothian Council in Haddington and chaired by Cllr Michael Veitch at the end of November, the meeting noted that the new East Coast Main Line franchise had been let and that the Department for Transport's press release said there were to be four extra trains between Edinburgh and London, but no word of extra stops at Dunbar as **RAGES** has requested

since at least the time of the Eureka timetable of 2010.

Although the transfer of the administration of the Dunbar station from East Coast to ScotRail was a requirement of the franchise bid, the press release did not mention this.

The head of the new company which will take over responsibility for running rail services on the East Coast mainline next year has been announced by Stagecoach and Virgin.

David Horne, who was Managing Director of Stagecoach-owned East Midlands Trains, has been appointed to play a leading part in the mobilisation and transition arrangements for the new InterCity East Coast franchise 2015.

Speaking on his appointment, David Horne said: "I feel very

privileged to be given the opportunity to lead this major new franchise. I've travelled on East Coast on many occasions over the years and have seen first-hand the level of pride the team have and the focus on delivering a great service for customers.

"Over 20 million journeys are made every year on this franchise which connects some of the UK's most important cities and it plays a key role in the local communities it serves. There are some really innovative plans for the future which will see investment in our people, in delivering more for our customers and will provide better support for our local communities. "I'm really excited about the future for Virgin Trains East Coast and I'm looking forward to meeting the team and getting started on the next phase of the journey."

Scottish Parliament Debate



Parliamentary Debate

On 27th November there was a members' business debate, in the name of Jim Hume, on being one step closer to trains at Reston and East Linton. Jim Hume is one of the four MSPs who have supplied cross-party support for our aims. The motion debated was: That the Parliament welcomes the Scottish Government's agreement in the ScotRail franchise contract to provide a two-hourly service between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed that will call at Reston and East Linton stations; further welcomes the Scottish Government's commitment to having the service operational by December 2016; notes what it considers the socioeconomic benefits that this will undoubtedly bring to the Scottish Borders and East Lothian, a view that was echoed in the 2011 report that was commissioned by Network Rail, The Value of Station Investment, which suggested that stations can have a significant impact on the towns and cities that they serve by acting as regional gateways, attracting businesses and helping to stimulate economic growth; further notes that the Scottish Government's document, Rail 2014 – Public Consultation, states that "new stations assist with a number of strategic aims such as stimulating sustainable economic growth or encouraging modal shift"; recognises the joint feasibility study launched in December 2013, which

recommends that this local service with the reopened stations should be taken forward to the next stage; praises what it considers the tireless work of the local campaigners, Barrie Forrest and Tom Thorburn, and all their volunteer colleagues from the Rail Action Group East of Scotland (**RAGES**), in driving forward this rail transport vision for south-east Scotland, and notes the collaborative funding bid to the Scottish Stations Fund by Scottish Borders Council, East Lothian Council and the South East Scotland Regional Transport Partnership.

At the end of his seven minutes, Jim Hume said: "It is not an overstatement to say that today's debate marks a seminal moment for rail travel in the south of Scotland. As work continues apace on the Waverley line, the east is now tantalisingly within touching distance of train services at Reston and East Linton.

"I pay tribute to **RAGES** members for leading on this important local issue. They have been an impressive machine behind the campaign. They have kept up the momentum year after year, and I am sure that MSPs from across the chamber will agree that it is they who deserve the credit for bringing rail services back to Reston and East Linton."

Following on, the following MSPs spoke in support:

- . **Chic Brodie** (South Scotland) (SNP)
- . **Iain Gray** (East Lothian) (Lab)
- . **Alex Johnstone** (North East Scotland) (Con)
- . **Anne McTaggart** (Glasgow) (Lab)

In particular, Iain Gray commented: "They [the stalwarts of **RAGES**] are some of the politest and most

courteous people one could ever do business with, but their group's acronym is not for no reason. For years they have raged against the argument that it is not possible to reinstate services to their communities, they have raged against the argument that there are not enough train movements to enable services to be reinstated and they have raged against the argument that significantly underestimated potential passenger numbers on reinstated services. They have won every one of those arguments.

and: "My message to the new minister is this: make no mistake, **RAGES** will stay on the case and will not rest — and nor will we — until the victory is complete and literally on track."

In finalising his reply, the [new] Minister for Transport and Islands, Derek Mackay, said: "The final element that is still to be put in place is the capital funding for the stations. We recognise the importance of infrastructure to sustaining our economy, providing access to opportunities and bringing our communities closer together. The investments that we have delivered or are in the midst of constructing and those for which we have detailed plans confirm our commitment to improving Scotland's infrastructure. That commitment is backed by our £30 million Scottish stations fund, which was announced in June 2012 as part of Scottish ministers' high-level output specification. The fund is designed to lever in third-party funding to provide new and improved stations,

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and it gives East Lothian Council and Scottish Borders Council the opportunity to achieve additional funding for the stations just as it was designed to do.

"The bid is current under consideration and a decision will be made once Network Rail has completed the scope and design work for each of those stations. I look forward to seeing that progressed as soon as possible."

Some of the **RAGES** members were present in the public gallery and the photograph shows them outside the Parliament after the debate.

Railfuture Update

Hope for Haddington Rail?

In November, Railfuture Scotland advised in a press release which revealed their top 50 proposals for new stations on the existing rail network. They were calling on the Government to:

- . double its proposed rate of electrification
- . accelerate the capacity at, among others, the Portobello junction

- . open 23 short feeder lines, e.g. Edinburgh South Suburban
 - . build five new lines, e.g. St Andrews and
 - . re-lay eleven former lines, e.g. Haddington branch
- Longer term proposals include a further 44 stations on the existing network plus a series of major line re-openings.

Allison Cosgrove, the **RAGES** secretary, is chair of Railfuture Scotland.

RESUME OF RAGES 15TH YEAR - SEPT 2013 TO SEPT 2014

Our long awaited STAG2 into the Local Service between Edinburgh and Berwick, with re-opened Stations at East Linton and Reston by transport consultants MVA was released in December. This report was officially launched at the Scottish Parliament and most importantly, showed a positive case to achieve our Aims. The committee were pleasantly surprised when the ScotRail Franchise Draft Invitation to Tender document was published with a 'priced option' to cover the 'Local Service and re-opened Stations' within it. Both of the above were much appreciated for all our efforts in bringing these to fruition. With the ScotRail Franchise up for renewal, we met with all five of the bidders namely: - **Abellio; Arriva; First Group; MTR and National Express**. These were very useful meetings for us, and more importantly to inform the bidders of our needs in this

area. It is to be hoped that when the successful bidder is announced shortly, they will come up trumps with our requirements. The East Coast Franchise renewal on the other hand, saw us meet with only one of the three bidders, namely **First Group** under the banner of 'East Coast Trains Ltd'. This meeting was very productive. Sadly the other two bidders **Keolis/Eurostar East Coast Ltd** and **Inter City Railways Ltd**, did not respond to our requests to meet with them. It was particularly pleasing when we attended the Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Rail meeting to be informed by Transport Minister, Keith Brown MSP that of the £30m Stations Fund, the bid for East Linton and Reston Stations funding, submitted by East Lothian and Scottish Borders Councils and SEStran was the only bid to be lodged. It has to be said that the above Bid Document has been very

professionally written and surely it cannot fail to impress The Minister and Transport Scotland. The 'Group' are also very appreciative of the significant proportion of the two new Station capital costs be put up by the Councils. The establishment of the East Lothian Community Rail Partnership more recently has been welcomed by the 'Group'. This CRP will aid independently the growth of visitors and ultimately passenger numbers by Rail to our Stations in East Lothian. Dialogue continues between ourselves and the Train Operating Companies that serve our area as and when the need arises to iron out or discuss problems. Meetings continue with SEStran and again these have been hosted by Councillor Veitch at East Lothian Council. Attendances at these meetings by ourselves and the politicians you will agree have proved to be very worthwhile given the fantastic achievements above.

RAGES works to

- Improve the rail service between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- Have East Linton and Reston stations re-opened for active use.
- Improve the level of service to North Berwick.
- Consider the implications with regard to car parking and bicycle storage at stations between Waverley and Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- Keep under scrutiny the standards of passenger facilities at stations between Waverley and Berwick upon Tweed, including North Berwick, and to draw the attention of the relevant bodies to shortcomings which arise.
- Re-open the branch line from Longniddry to Haddington.
- The group, being environmentally minded, will actively strive to encourage rail travel within its geographical area.



RAGES needs your support

RAGES (Rail Action Group, East of Scotland) is the rail users campaign group for the area between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed, including the North Berwick service.

Our aim is to persuade the Government, both at national and local level, train operators and Network Rail to improve the level of service to stations in our area and to seriously consider re-opening key stations such as East Linton, Reston and Haddington.

Please join us to lend your support.

Membership will give you a say in how we influence the rail companies to improve local train services. Additionally you will get up-to-date information on significant changes in rail matters, and a regular newsletter.

The annual subscription is £4 for individual membership or £10 for corporate membership, such as community councils and organisations, and is renewable on 1st April each year.

Please send your completed form with your remittance (made payable to Rail Action Group, East of Scotland) to:

Mr R J Darling
 Membership Secretary (RAGES)
 5 Somnerfield Crescent
 Haddington
 EH41 3RW

I enclose my first RAGES membership fee of £4 / £10*. (* Delete as applicable)

Title Surname Forename(s)

Company

Address

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Post Code Telephone

Email