



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

*left: The **RAGES** Committee meet in Dunbar's Lauderdale Park for the first time since easing of Covid-19 lockdown restrictions – see article below.*

(Photograph: T. Dickson)

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RAGES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Due to the ongoing CoVid-19 Pandemic, it has been decided to cancel the 2020 RAGES Annual General Meeting

A copy of the Chairperson's Report and 2019-2020 Financial Accounts are included in this issue of RAGES Rag

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT 2020

Chairperson's Report 2020

This has been a year that no one could envisage, Covid-19 coming in March and affecting everyone

In different ways.

RAGES have been able to hold committee Zoom meetings and one in Lauderdale Park, Dunbar, keeping social distancing during the year .

We have continued to liaise with TransportScotland, Network Rail, and Train Operating Companies.

Luckily ground survey work for East

Linton and Reston Stations was completed before lockdown, to enable Network Rail to move to the next stage in the reopening of the stations.

Due to Covid-19, many events were cancelled, including

Gala days at East Linton, Reston, Coldingham and St. Abbs which

RAGES have previously attended and very much enjoyed.

Due to the present situation we have had to cancel our AGM.

The committee have all agreed to stay on for the coming year.

I would like to thank all committee members for their commitment and helping me in my first year as Chairman.

My thanks on behalf of **RAGES** to all members past and present for your continued support in helping **RAGES** continue their aims.

Let's hope we can get back to a near-normal situation in the coming months, and enjoy travelling again by train.

Keep Safe, Keep Well

Barrie Forrest

Chairman

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS 2020

RAIL ACTION GROUP EAST OF SCOTLAND Statement of Income and Expenditure For Year Ending 31 March 2020

Bank Balance at Bank 31 March 2019		510.87
Income		
Subscriptions	1016.00	
Donations (Members)	102.00	
Donation (Reston & Auchencrow CC)	218.00	
		1336.00
Expenditure		
Stamps and Envelopes	343.76	
Printing RAGES Rags	203.23	
Printer Paper and Ink	39.00	
Address Labels	33.46	
Gala Day Table and Chairs	36.90	
Website Support	50.00	
Railfuture Membership	25.00	
Xmas Cards	90.00	
St Abbs Gala Day Stall Hire	10.00	
		831.35
		504.65
Represented by Bank Balance at 31 March 2020		1015.52

Audited and found to be correct from information provided

Chris McArthur

Membership Secretary's Report 2020

Membership

Our membership currently stands at 198, this number includes three honorary members.

Last year seen our membership at its highest since 2002, but from a high of 231 members last year our membership numbers have dropped to 198. Each year we always have a very small number of members who do not renew their membership. This year the number of members not renewing has been quite large, this has probably been due to the COVID 'lockdown'. Unfortunately, this drop in membership numbers has not been offset by new members. Local galas and civic weeks has previously proved to be successful in the recruitment of new members but the lock down restrictions has prevented these sort of events from taking place. Hopefully next year we can begin to reverse the situation when COVID restrictions are eased.

This year we have recruited 7 new members.

The use of standing orders or bank transfer as a method of subscription payment continues to be a more popular method of payment, 43% of members now pay by this method compared to 26% last year.

RAGES received very generous donations amounting to £198 when members renewed their subscriptions. Membership breakdown by station is as follows:-

Reston 51%
Dunbar 15%
East Linton 11%
Haddington 4%
North Berwick 4%
Drem 4%
Berwick Upon Tweed 2%
Others 9%

RAGES continues to enjoy support from nine corporate members, seven of which are community councils; Ayton Community Council

Dunpender Community Council
Eyemouth Community Council
Dunbar Community Council
Reston And Auchencrow Community Council
Coldingham Community Council
Haddington and District Community Council
Dunbar
T Tunnock Ltd

Email

This year we have changed over to a new email system (Moosend). The previous system was designed years ago, at the time it was modern and fit for purpose. It has not been possible to update this software to cater for bulk emails with large attachments and faster internet speeds, and also our new email system complies with the latest Data Protection and Privacy guidelines.

Web Site

The web site continues to be updated regularly. Since the last AGM we have had around 3686 page views, which averages out at 68 per week, a dramatic increase on last year's figure of 2530 visits and 49 per week. The website has been regularly updated with the progress of Platform 2 at Dunbar during its construction and also for East Linton and Reston stations. Selected images showing the progress can be seen on the web site with the latest at the top of the web page and captions below each photograph.

Facebook

Our Facebook page continues to attract a lot of interest from users of social media, this has allowed us to reach out to a wider audience and to provide a broader content of transport related issues.

Data Protection and Privacy

Policy

In order to maintain contact with our members, it is essential to have some way of recording a member's details. This is done using a commercial database alongside an e-mail distribution application.

In May 2018, **RAGES** put in place the necessary documents to comply with the current Data Protection Requirements (GDPR).

These documents comprise: Privacy Notice for **RAGES**; Data Audit for **RAGES**; and Data Retention Policy for **RAGES**.

The Privacy notice can be seen on our web site: www.rages.org.uk

The Data Audit, which records how data is kept and used, was carried out and no further actions were required. The Data Retention Policy describes the mechanics of storing and using the members' data which need to be followed by the committee.

RAGES recognises the importance of your privacy and personal information and we have therefore outlined in the Privacy Notice how we use, disclose and protect this information. The **RAGES** Committee is the data controller, because they decide how your data are processed and for what purpose.

You can request details of the personal information which **RAGES** holds about you by contacting our data controller at DataController@rages.org.uk

As a non-profit organisation, **RAGES** is exempt from registering with the Information Commissioner's Office.

EAST LINTON & RESTON STATIONS PROGRESS

Reston Station Progress Report

On 4th May, **RAGES** Chairman Barrie Forrest wrote to TransportScotland asking for an update on the planning applications for Reston and East Linton stations. On 15th May, Sarah Cooper sent the following reply:-

“Thanks for your email and I’m pleased to hear you’re staying safe and taking sensible precautions in the current situation. I can confirm that ground investigation work was completed at Reston and substantially completed at East Linton before the current COVID 19 restrictions were introduced on 23 March. This has allowed Network Rail’s designers to continue progressing with the design of each station.

Network Rail submitted Environmental Impact Assessment screening documentation to both Councils earlier this year formally starting the planning process for both stations. In response both Councils have advised that both stations do not require to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Network Rail is currently reporting that the ‘Proposal of Application Notice’ for Reston Station will be submitted by the end of May 2020. Network Rail is developing plans to ensure local communities have the opportunity to provide comments, in line with the revised Scottish Government Guidance on public consultation associated with planning applications which was published on 23 April.

Preliminary design discussions with both planning departments are scheduled to take place this month.”

On 23rd July, Reston & Auchencrow Community Council arranged a meeting with Network Rail to discuss Reston station. A summary of this is given below:-

Present Derek Christie (Network Rail), Allan Brooking (Community Liaison Manager), Nicola Slaven (Planning Officer Network Rail) Barrie Forrest (Chairman **RAGES** & Reston and Auchencrow community council) Logan Inglis (Secretary Reston and Auchencrow community council).

Below is a list of questions raised at the meeting from Barrie and Logan to the other members.

Proposed timeline: Due to the present conditions it cannot be hard & fast, but it is proposed to have the design submitted to Scottish Borders Council planning for mid-August 2020, with a 16-week consultation period. Presently two studies are awaited before the planning submission, an ‘Ecology Study on Bats’ and a ‘Flood Risk Study’. Once these have been completed Network Rail will submit the planning application. It is hoped to have a website created in this time where details of the planning application can be viewed and commented on. Once present conditions allow further public engagement will be carried out. A proposed completion date for the construction is **December 2021** all going well but may go into 2022.

Car park i.e. size capacity: discussion on the size of the car park, this was mentioned as previous designs were of a car park to take a capacity of 200 cars, presently the design is citing a capacity of circa 70. The new design will be in the region of 70 vehicles but there is sufficient land being purchased to incorporate the 200 capacity as originally intended should the need arise.

Electric charging points: this was raised and, in line with government policy, electric charging points will be installed.

Toilet facilities: there are no plans to install toilets at the station; this would need to be taken up via Scottish Borders Council (SBC), as they see this is as an unmanned station. It is not SBC policy for toilets to be installed at unmanned stations.

Ingress and egress points to the station, major concern: The question was raised with a view to a site meeting to best explain and demonstrate the ongoing problem of traffic flow within the village. Reston Main Street is linear in design and has historically suffered

from traffic flow problems due to the bottleneck near to the local shop, with an increase in on-street parking. With envisaged increase in traffic flow, the proposed station access from the B6438 will exacerbate the traffic problem further.

A proposed roundabout is to be included to the design for access to the station car park. This will be near to the existing access road ‘The Orchard’. ‘The Orchard’ road will be closed off from its existing access point and access to ‘The Orchard’ will be via a new road running parallel to it.

Further questions were raised as to why the railway underpass was not used in the design. The underpass was not used as this was not suitable for safety concerns primarily because of the existing farm vehicle traffic and present pedestrian use. Two lifts are to be installed, these are to be the first ones in the UK of this design, to be installed at Reston and East Linton stations. To be more suitable for disabled users.

On 27th July, a further update was received from Sarah Cooper as follows:-

“Thanks for your email. Design work is proceeding for both stations. Network Rail is progressing the necessary design work and surveys to support the planning application for Reston and intend to submit the planning application for East Linton in Winter 2020. Network Rail is developing a project specific webpage which will be launched in the next few weeks via the Scotland’s Railway website to provide the public with information on the project as it progresses. Due to the restrictions imposed as a result of Covid-19, Network Rail has been developing alternatives to face to face engagement to support the planning applications. There will be an opportunity, in August, to attend an on-line engagement event to discuss the projects with their project team. The rail industry is working together to develop a timetable plan for the East Coast

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East Linton & Reston Stations Progress Reports (continued from Page 4)

Main Line including the new stations. Bids from operators who wish to serve Reston station need to be submitted to Network Rail by Spring 2021.

We continue to feel the impact of the development and delivery of the Covid Pandemic on each of our rail programmes but are working with our industry partners to mitigate this. We are grateful to those stakeholders who understand and acknowledge that this may have an impact on the delivery of the works.”

East Linton Station Progress Report

Allan Brooking, Network Rail’s representative on the East Linton/Reston Station re-openings, has provided the following information about work on East Linton Station in response to questions from Dunsper Community Council:

Car Parking? – there will be 126

parking spaces and 19 bicycle spaces. None of these spaces will be in East Linton Park, but will be on land already allocated for parking.

Access to the Station? – will be through Andrew Meikle Grove as already identified by the Council.

What will happen at Markle Level Crossing? – this will be upgraded to a manually controlled barrier with obstacle detection.

Will there be lights on the platforms all night? - Each platform will have Shelters/ lights/ help points/ ticket vending machines and validators. Platform furniture will be in line with other stations in Scotland. Lighting will be on during hours of darkness up until the station is no longer operating for services.

Where will the platforms be located? - Platforms will be near the existing underpass. A footpath will be provided across the park, providing

access to local shops and allowing easy access to the station. Access to platforms will be from both sides of the railway.

What about lifts? – there will be lifts on each side and the design will be shared as soon as it is available.

Impact of additional travel on East Linton? – The Council has put in place traffic calming measures in the new development. Network Rail is working to provide cycle facilities and access to encourage active travel.

Further information on the length the time the building of the station will take will be provided once it is available. Network Rail will keep local people informed at all stages.

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DUNBAR REPORT

Dunbar Platform 2 Completion & Landscaping

The new platform 2 and connecting lift to platform 1 were opened on 15th December 2019. However, some minor work was unfinished at that time and continued after opening. The main work was the completion of the cladding at the platform 2 side of the lift. This work was suspended in March 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions, but has recently re-commenced. Clearing of vegetation between platforms and planting of trees between platform 2 and adjacent housing has also been in progress, though the former has returned after initial clearance, and local residents have complained about the noise.

(below: Work has re-commenced on the completion of the cladding for the new lift at Dunbar station. Photograph: T.Dickson)



RAGES ELECTS HONORARY PRESIDENT

RAGES Elects Honorary President

We reported in the last RAG (Issue 74) that **RAGES** founder member Tom Thorburn has stepped down after nearly 20 years as Chairman.

Tom has now agreed to remain a Committee member in the role of Honorary President, and he was duly elected to this role at our last Committee meeting. Tom has a lot of

knowledge and expertise on the operation of the railways, and his continued support is greatly appreciated.

NORTH BERWICK REPORT

North Berwick Report

The North Berwick service has been running to timetable since early August. Commuting passenger numbers are well down due to the work from home Covid-19 advice.

However, passenger numbers on certain services at the weekend are up, with people visiting the town.

Lack of seat reservations may also be discouraging some passengers from travelling.

right: North Berwick station planter in bloom.

(Photograph: A. Cosgrove)



‘SPACES FOR PEOPLE’

‘Spaces For People’

‘Spaces for People’ funding has been released to local councils by the Scottish Government for making essential travel and exercise safer during Covid-19. This has generally been interpreted as trying to create more room in our town and city centres for people to be able to keep apart from each other, but it can be used for other measures to make exercise safer such as creating suitable leisure cycling and walking routes.

East Lothian Council was

awarded £1.4m and Scottish Borders Council £1.2m under this fund. Both councils are concentrating on introducing 20mph limits in their towns and villages, with additional measures such as pavement widening in places where crowds are expected e.g. North Berwick town centre and outside certain shops in Musselburgh and Tranent. The 20mph limits are intended to create a more attractive environment for cycling, and to make it easier to cross the road.

Additionally, East Lothian has

allocated a significant proportion of its funding to an on-street electric bike hire scheme. This will be similar to the Edinburgh bike hire scheme which is sponsored by 'Just Eat', except all of East Lothian's bikes will be electric in view of the greater distances people might want to travel in more rural areas. The bikes will be located in batches around the west of the county, and will link to train stations at Prestonpans and Musselburgh and Longniddry. "

EDINBURGH AND BEYOND

Waverley Station Upgrade

Despite the gloomy predictions by Beeching and Serpell last century, annual footfall at Waverley - 10m a decade ago - is projected to double from (pre-Covid) 24m to 49m by 2048. Some of the increase will of course come from the new and additional services from East Lothian and Berwickshire long called for by **RAGES**.

Following a public consultation last year, concept designs, prepared by Edinburgh-based consultants Arup, have been revealed by Network Rail, the Scottish Government and City of Edinburgh Council. Key to handling more and longer trains, and providing greater operational flexibility, is the proposed lengthening of platforms 1, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18 and 20. Not only does this require removal of both ramps from Waverley Bridge, but also eats significantly into the existing passenger concourse, which currently lacks sufficient capacity. The proposed solution is the construction of two mezzanine decks, each with wide circulating space, on the north (New Town) side and south (Old Town) side, linked by two bridges from which fully accessible entrances to platforms will be obtained. In addition, the existing Waverley Bridge would be widened, providing new public space, from which

additional entrances to the mezzanine decks would be constructed. To accommodate the proposed mezzanine decks and bridges, much of the existing (listed) roof - itself overhauled a few years ago in a multi-million pound project - would need to be raised by two metres or renewed. Further engineering studies are proposed to further develop the designs and particularly to find the most appropriate solution for the station roof.

MD of Scotland's Railway, Alex Hynes, said "We believe there is a compelling case for making ambitious changes to Waverley, which will improve the station for our customers, while respecting the history and heritage of this listed structure."



*above: Edinburgh (Waverley) main concourse as it is at present.
(Photograph Courtesy of: L. Marshall, Capital Rail Action Group)*

1722 TRAMWAY RED WHEEL AWARD

1722 Tramway Red Wheel Award

The Waggonway museum at Cockenzie has been awarded a Red Wheel Plaque in recognition of its historic importance. It is only the 4th such plaque awarded, the others being at Paisley Canal, Glenfinnan and Wemyss Bay.

Scotland's very first railway opened in 1722, but 275 years ago today traffic was disrupted by the Battle of Prestonpans. Red Wheels denote sites of transport heritage, and the first three in Scotland are at Paisley Canal, Glenfinnan and Wemyss Bay.

*right: Waggonway Heritage Group chair Ed Bethune and National Transport Trust vice-chair John Cameron with a replica wagon, underneath the Red Wheel.
(Photograph: J. Yellowlees)*



RAGES wishes all of its members and friends a merry Christmas and a
happy new year

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:

Tom Dickson
Membership Secretary (RAGES)
44 Kirk Park
Dunbar

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

Title Surname Forename(s)

Company

Address

Post Code Telephone

Email