

The **RAGES** Rag

WINTER 2022, Issue 79

RESTON RE-OPENING

SPECIAL EDITION



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

left: Preserved LMS steam engine 46100 'Royal Scot' passes through the new Reston Station on 19th June, hauling the Steam Dreams excursion from Edinburgh to London.

(Photograph: B Forrest)

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RESTON STATION OPENING 1 – FIRST DAY OF OPERATION, MAY 23rd

RESTON STATION OPENING

The date May 23rd 2022 was a day to remember. After 58 years, a new Reston station opened for passengers, which will enable people to travel from neighbouring villages and towns in Berwickshire and enable people to come and visit this area of the Scottish Borders .

The day began at Dunbar station when a number of **RAGES** committee members boarded the 06:01 TransPennine Express train to Newcastle. On arrival at Reston at 06:17, the committee members stepped off the train, enabling them to say they were on the first train to Reston after 58 years. The train was timed to stop

at Reston to allow for photographs, and for **RAGES** committee members and other passengers time to board the the train and continue the journey to Berwick. After a coffee break at Berwick station the return

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Reston Station Opening (concluded from page 1)



above: Reston station on May 23rd, the first day of operation. (Photograph: T.Dickson)

journey to Reston and Dunbar was on the 07:20 LNER service to Edinburgh.

The next train to arrive at Reston was the 10:11 TransPennine Express from Edinburgh. As the train arrived, Border Piper Sandy Mutch played a selection of tunes. Getting off the train were invited guests, including Scottish Transport Minister Jenny Gilruth and TransPennine Express Managing Director Matthew Golton. After the taking of more photographs, and the arrival of children from Reston primary school, who were piped on arrival at the station by local Reston resident Anna Jones, everyone was now waiting for the arrival of the 10:20 TransPennine Express train to Edinburgh.

A special coach was reserved for the children from Reston school and a number of **RAGES** committee members, all arranged by TransPennine Express and Allan Brooking from Network Rail. The children received goody bags from TransPennine Express.

On arrival at Edinburgh, the children, along with teachers and

helpers, walked to the the National Museum of Scotland in Chambers Street, then back to Waverley station, to be piped onto the 14:10 TransPennine Express service by Anna, back to Reston. They were the stars of this history-making day. I would like to thank all who have supported **RAGES** over the years during our campaign to have Reston

station re-opened, and East Linton in the coming months; also BAM Nuttall and Network Rail.

RAGES are now stepping up their campaign to have Haddington station re-opened, which includes the branch line for Longniddry , As **RAGES** chairman, I give my thanks from **RAGES** committee to all our members who have given their support over the years. Without your membership, we would not be celebrating the success of Reston and East Linton. This year our membership has decreased in numbers - you may think because your station has been opened or will be opening in the coming months, you no longer need to be a member of **RAGES**. That is not the case - we would very much like you to remain a member of **RAGES**, giving us more voices when asking for better rail services and fare structure. Thanks again for your support.

below: Edinburgh (Waverley) station on May 23rd with piper Anna Jones and Reston schoolchildren. (Photograph: T.Dickson)



RESTON STATION OPENING 2 – OFFICIAL OPENING, JULY 28th

The official opening of Reston station was on July 28th 2022 organised and funded by Scottish Borders Council.

Thanks to Graeme Johnstone, Senior Engineer and Logan Inglis, Secretary of Reston and Auchencrow Community Council, who arranged the catering.

Invited guests arrived by the TransPennine Express 10:11 train from Edinburgh, including councillors from East Lothian Council and Transport Minister Jenny Gilruth, and were piped off the train by local piper Anna Jones.

Prior to the cutting of the ribbon by the Transport Minister, speeches were given by Scottish

Borders Council convener Watson McAteer; TransPennine Express Managing Director Matthew Golton; **RAGES** Honorary President Tom Thorburn; and Jenny Gilruth. Rev Norman Whyte, Minister of Ayton & District Churches, gave a blessing to the station, then the Transport Minister cut the ribbon and officially declared the station open.

Afterwards, all invited guests walked down to the village hall to enjoy engaging with each other, and partake of refreshments. July 28th was another day in the history of Reston and its railway station.

*below: Jenny Gilruth cuts the tape.
(Photograph: T.Dickson)*



*above: Invited guests take refreshments after the opening.
(Photograph: T.Dickson)*

EAST LINTON REPORT

EAST LINTON STATION

East Linton railway station went into service on 22nd. June 1846. Linton was renamed East Linton in December 1864. East Linton was listed for closure under the first Beeching report and duly closed on 4th. May 1964.

Now after more than half a century we will see a new station at East Linton. BAM Nuttall has been awarded the £15m contract to deliver a new station which is due to open in 2023.

The planning application number for the development of East Linton railway station is 20/01423/P. This is for the creation of a two platform station with 125 car parking spaces.

The new station is expected to be served by both ScotRail and TransPennine Express.



*above: East Linton station as it was over 50 years ago.
(Photograph: H. Stevenson)*

right: A change to East Linton skyline. (Photograph: T.Dickson)



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East Linton Report
(concluded from page 3)

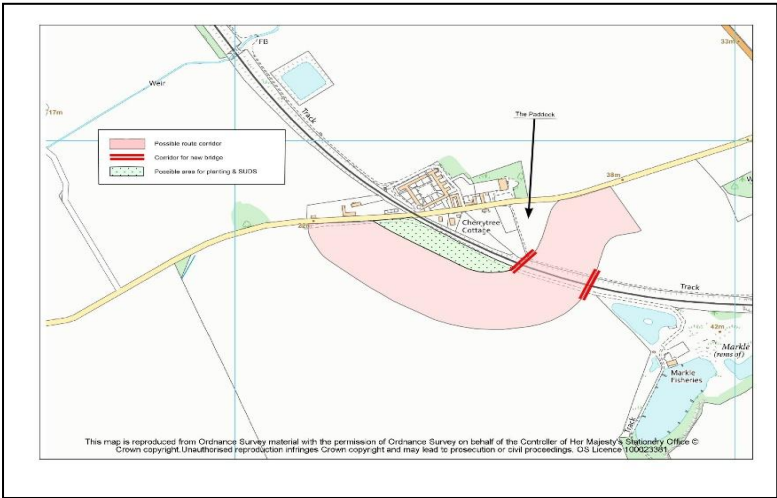
MARKLE LEVEL
CROSSING REPLACEMENT

At the October meeting of East Lothian Rail Steering Group attended by **RAGES** an item of discussion was the apparent lack of progress with the bridge

replacement work. ELC are currently negotiating land purchase with the owner of the fields and will be lodging a planning application late November for determination February 2023. Subject to establishing heads of terms and receiving planning permission, construction is planned to start late March 2023 with a 10 month

build programme. **RAGES** has expressed their concern that this work could delay the entry into service of East Linton railway station. Transport Scotland have stated they are considering various options for Markle to mitigate any delays for the East Linton station becoming operational.

below left: The proposed route of new bridge at Markle.(Reproduced courtesy of the Ordnance Survey)
below right: Markle crossing at present. (Photograph: T. Dickson)



DUNBAR REPORT

PASSENGER STATISTICS

Since the end of the last COVID lockdown and movement restrictions we are seeing lots of people “feel” the railway sector is close to being as busy as it used to be pre-pandemic, but the reality is that we are still a bit away from full recovery. The

table below shows total passenger journeys to and from Dunbar (including cross border services) for the four week period mid Aug to mid Sep. For comparison North Berwick figures for the period have been included. The figure for ScotRail as a whole for the same period is 73% with the east of Scotland recovering slightly faster than the west.

Dunbar will have been more adversely impacted than North Berwick with the recent industrial action and cancellation of services. The vast majority of the shortfall is travel to work and education in the morning and evening peaks. Normalised for industrial action, off peak travel is just above 90% of pre-pandemic levels.

4 weekly journeys	18 Aug - 14 Sep 2019	21 Aug-17 Sep 2022	% Recovery
Dunbar	39,297	29,617	75%
North Berwick	59,677	44,799	75%

above: Table showing passenger travel statistics for Dunbar & North Berwick 2019/2022 . (Courtesy [ScotRail.](#))

Dunbar Report (concluded from page 4)

STATION CAR PARK EXTENSION

The station car park extension has unfortunately been cancelled due to the high anticipated costs of this project. Cost being £1.5M. The car park extension would have also incorporated a one way system to have been introduced allowing buses to service the station. The main reason for the high cost is largely down to the cost of drainage groundworks preparation.

Although disappointing **RAGES**, Dunbar Community Council, local politicians and MSPs, are still actively campaigning for the car park extension to be carried out. Most days the car park is very busy with vehicle overspill still taking place in Countess Road and the car park located behind the old post office building in the high street.



*above: Dunbar station approach.
(Photograph: T.Dickson)*



*above: Dunbar station car park.
(Photograph: T.Dickson)*

VEGETATION GROWTH BETWEEN THE STATION PLATFORMS

Although there don't seem to be any operational issues caused by the height of the vegetation it is unsightly and aesthetically not very appealing. Not the best first impression to give visitors to Dunbar. **RAGES** has been in contact with ScotRail and Network Rail and have also raised it as an issue with the East of Lothian Rail Steering Group.



*above left: Dunbar station vegetation growth seen from platform 1.
(Photograph: T.Dickson)*



above left: Dunbar station vegetation growth seen from platform 2. (Photograph: T.Dickson)

HADDINGTON REPORT

Since March this year, **RAGES** has initiated a regular presence on Farmers' Market days, generally the last Saturday of each month. On these days, footfall in the town centre is

above average, and our stall, complete with new gazebo, has generated great engagement from the public, quite a few of whom have taken up membership. Our

updated pop-up banners reflect not only the re-opening of Reston and East Linton being under construction, but also the

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Haddington Report (concluded from page 5)

Haddington branch coming to the fore in **RAGES** revised objectives.

For our AGM in September, another first was achieved with the meeting being held in the town, at Knox Academy. We were fortunate to have East Lothian's Provost, Cllr John McMillan (Spokesperson for Environment, Economic Development & Tourism) attend and give a presentation on ELC's transport vision for the county. Some of the key points were:-

- Transport accounts for 40% of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the vast majority is from road transport, with only a negligible amount from railways as befits the greenest form of public transport.

- Over and above the spurt in new-build houses in recent

years, (bringing about a huge and ongoing increase in Haddington's population) the county will be required to accommodate another 6,400 houses in the 2024-2034 period.

- 38% of respondents to a recent ELC survey indicated that road traffic congestion needs to be addressed.

- Haddington is significantly disadvantaged to most towns in the county by having no railway stations. The ELC Access Study "Case for Change" (in line with STAG - Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance) is looking at, *et al*, quadrupling part of the East Coast Main Line to provide badly needed extra capacity and at station proposals for Haddington and Blindwells.

- Regional transport strategy includes, *et al*, relocating and extending rail services,

decarbonising transport and reducing car mileage.

- Of the 10 Study options (whittled down from >20) currently being appraised, 8 include Haddington heavy rail or light rail. The Detailed Options Appraisal Report (again in line with STAG) was due to report by June this year, but this deadline has been extended to the end of March 2023.

Subsequent to the presentation, ELC have advised that following acceptance of their Case for Change by Transport Scotland, ELC received feedback from TS last month (October). Testing and auditing of the remaining options is ongoing, and ELC confirm that they are retaining an option amongst these for a rail link to Haddington. Finally, although the preliminary appraisal is being audited, ELC is finalising its detailed appraisal for submission to TS next year.

RAGES AGM REPORT

This year's AGM was held at Knox Academy School, Haddington on 29th September. Including the committee members there were another 11 members present. The Provost, Cllr John McMillan, gave a presentation on ELC's transport vision for East Lothian.

At the AGM the post of Secretary was confirmed as Dr Tom Flanagan stepped forward to fill the breach in the position which has been vacant for some time. This should help in further sharing the burden of the officers and bringing an additional skill set to the group. Tom is based in Dunbar and spends his spare time supporting the family retail business, Nørden, a skandi-styled homeware retail store in North Berwick.

Tom has extensive experience having been a local government Chief Officer for over 30 years leading on growth, transport, regeneration and environmental services. He is well versed in partnership working and his immediate past role was Partnership Director for the Tayside and Central Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (TACTRAN).

Tom is now a volunteer for Transform Scotland, acting as a Policy Advisor on strategic transport, planning and economic growth. Tom also undertakes some consultancy work, most recently acting as Strategic Advisor to Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) on their Regional Transport Strategy which has just completed its public

consultation period.

A Scouser by birth, Tom is an avid Liverpool fan and holds a season ticket to Anfield - YNWA.



above: RAGES new Secretary, Dr. Tom Flanagan

BARRIE FORREST B.E.M., RAGES CHAIRPERSON

RECOGNITION FOR THE RAGES CHAIRPERSON, BARRIE FORREST BEM

After almost 30 years of tireless campaigning, countless meetings, discussions with politicians at all levels including government ministers, **RAGES** realised two of its strategic aims in 2022 with the opening of Reston railway station and the

commencement of construction of East Linton railway station. This success was in no small part down to the efforts of our Chairperson Barrie Forrest BEM.

In recognition of his efforts when Reston railway station was officially opened on the 28th July this year, the new station access road was named in recognition of Barrie's tireless efforts.



*above: **RAGES** Chairperson Barrie Forrest standing beside the Forrest Road sign at Reston station*

A local Berwickshire charity – Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service (BAVS) celebrated their 50th anniversary of serving the Berwickshire community this year. At their annual awards ceremony on 5th October in the Volunteer Hall in Duns our own Barrie received the award of Community Activist of the Year.



left: Close-up of BAVS Community Activist of the Year award

below left: Presentation of BAVS Community Activist of the Year award to Barrie

below right: Members BAVS celebrate the 50th anniversary with Barrie



*(Top Photograph: T. Dickson)
(Other Photographs: Courtesy of BAVS)*



RAGES WISHES ALL OF ITS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY 2023

RAGES works to

- Improve the rail service between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- Have East Linton and Haddington stations re-opened for active use.
- Monitor the level of service to Reston and North Berwick.
- 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.
- 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 and Haddington.

*If you know anyone who wants to join **RAGES**, get them to complete the form below.*

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 the address below; alternatively by bank transfer to the account below:-

Tom Dickson
Membership Secretary (RAGES)
44 Kirk Park
Dunbar
EH42 1BJ

Bank: Bank of Scotland
Branch: 95 High Street Dunbar EH42 1ER
Sort Code: 80-13-28
Account Name: Rail Action Group East of Scotland
Account Number: 00321093
(Include your name as reference)

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

Title Surname Forename(s)

Company

Address

.....

Post Code Telephone

Email