



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

*left: Barrie Forrest BEM, Chairperson of **RAGES**, with Graham Meiklejohn, Head of Regional Development TPE, at the opening of East Linton station. As has now become a tradition with TPE, Barrie and Graham are pictured with the naming of a train to commemorate the opening of the new station.*

(Photograph: T Dickson)

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EAST LINTON REPORT

EAST LINTON TO PARIS BY TRAIN

The opening of the new railway station for East Linton has been very well received by the residents of East Linton. **RAGES** has received many positive comments about the station and the train services. In fact, one resident mentioned that they travelled all the way to Paris by first boarding a southbound train at East

Linton, who would have thought this would have been possible.

The original Linton railway station opened in 22nd. June 1846 and like many stations across the country it was identified in the Beeching report for closure.

The station closed on 4th. May 1964. After almost 60 years a new station was opened on 13th. December 2023.

The new station built at East Linton was built at a cost of £15m and includes:

- Two new 158m long, 4m wide station platforms, waiting shelters, seating, and a ticket machine.
- A new footbridge across the railway, incorporating lifts and stairs on either side.
- Lighting columns throughout the site and

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East Linton Report (continued
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CCTV

- Car park, bus stop with shelter and a drop-off space.
- 114 parking spaces including blue badge priority parking and 18 electric vehicle charging points.
- Cycle storage facilities.

The station was officially opened by Fiona Hyslop,

Minister for Transport. It felt like the whole of East Linton turned up to witness the first trains, in almost 60 years, arrive and depart.

One of **RAGES** strategic aims to have a new railway station for East Linton has now been achieved. **RAGES** campaigned for over 20 years to have the station reopened.

RAGES recently carried out a midweek passenger survey on 27/06/2024. Over the period, 262

passenger journeys were recorded, confirming that the station patronage is positive.

However, although ScotRail and TransPennine Express both serve East Linton there are gaps in the service. **RAGES** are continuing to campaign for an improved timetable based on the positive uptake so far.

*(below: Tom Thorburn, **RAGES** Honorary President, boarding the first train from East Linton to Dunbar.
Photograph: T. Dickson)*



(above: East Linton station platform 1, showing the lift, staircase entrance and cycle storage.

Photoaraph: T. Dickson)

*(below: The arrival of the first train at the opening ceremony of East Linton station.
Photograph: T. Dickson)*



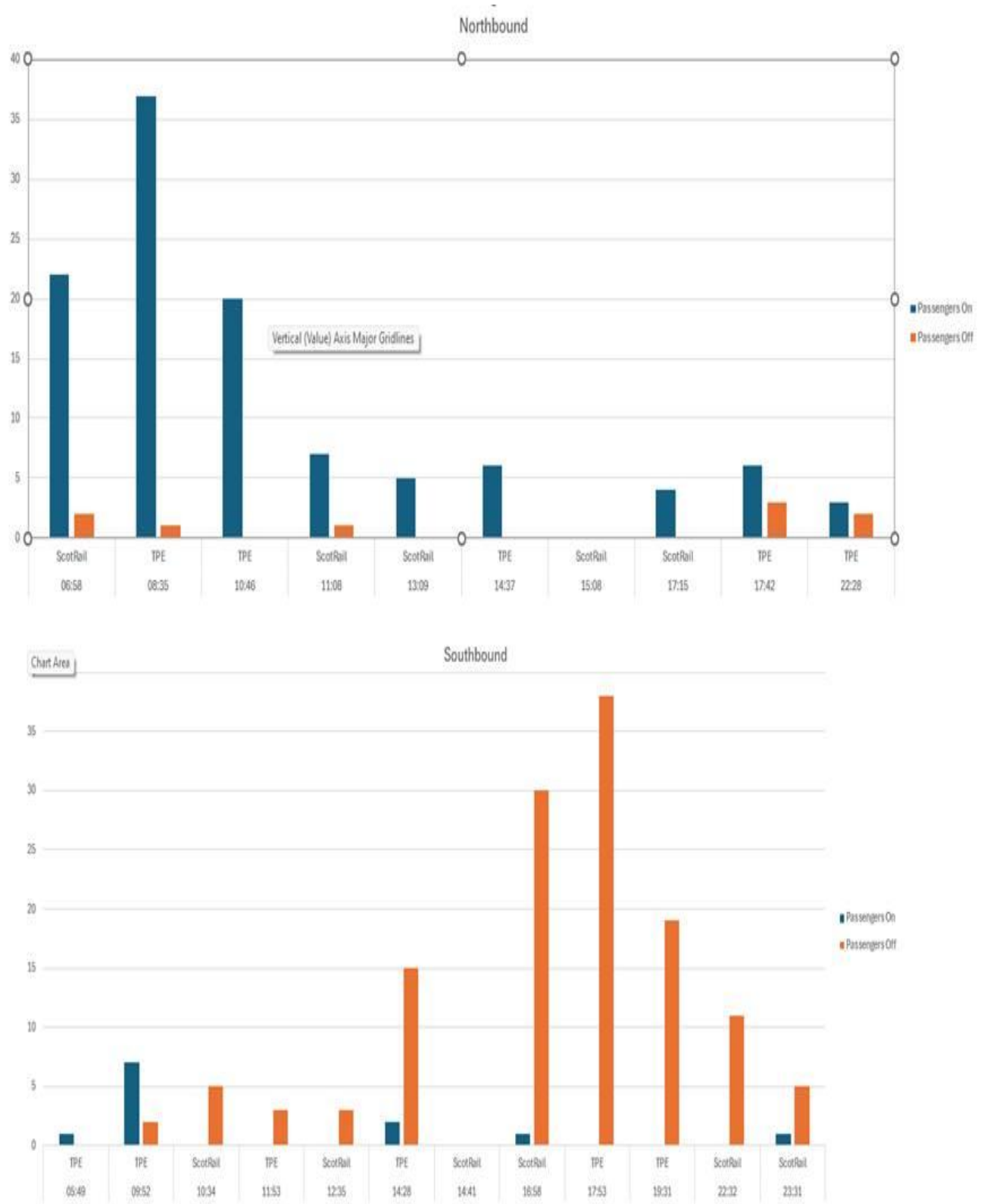
(above: Transport Secretary Fiona Hyslop with pupils of East Linton primary school holding station sign at the station opening ceremony.

Photograph: Courtesy Network Rail)



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(below: Graphs showing the results of **RAGES** passenger survey at East Linton station, carried out on Thursday 27/6/2024, showing the number of passengers boarding and alighting from northbound and southbound services respectively.)



DUNBAR REPORT

DUNBAR UPDATE

Dunbar Railway Station continues to be very busy based on observed passenger and car park usage.

RAGES carried out a passenger survey on 5th May last year. In excess of one thousand passengers were counted over the course of the day.

Based on the most recent figures provided by the Office of Rail and Road, the 2023 figure (for part of the financial year) showed a passenger count of 0.32m. Although not at the pre-pandemic passenger levels the numbers are nonetheless

encouraging. The pandemic has changed the way in which the railway network is now used with a reduction in commuter traffic and an increase in leisure/tourist traffic. (picture copyright of the Office of Rail and Road).

The much talked about car park extension and access to the station from the southern side of the town have both been shelved for the foreseeable future despite campaigning by **RAGES** and Dunbar Community Council to have them completed. Network Rail stated that while it was supportive of the ideas there was no funding for these projects. The population of Dunbar continues to grow, and these initiatives are

seen as key to promoting rail use. The station car park is regularly full causing commuters to park their cars in the streets around the station. Since then, East Lothian Council have applied for funding to deliver access to the station from the south side of the town.

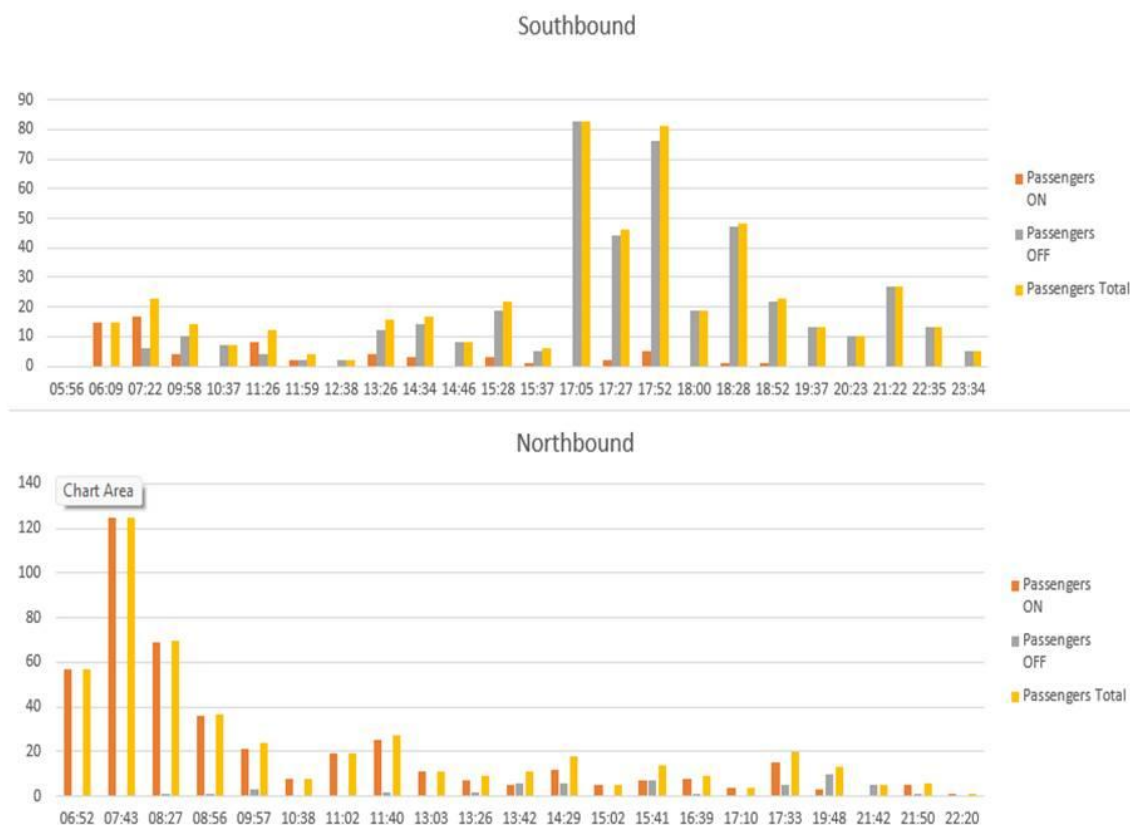
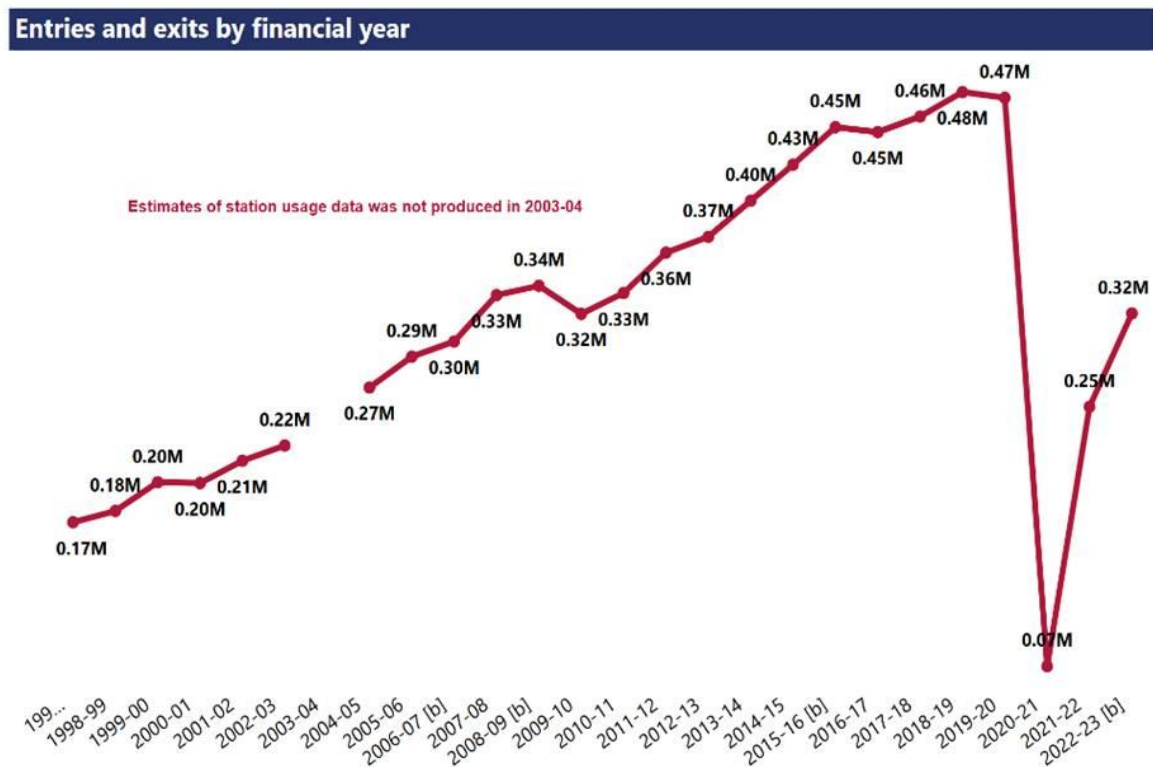
ScotRail has applied to East Lothian Council for permission to refurbish the public toilet in the main station building (24/00627/LBC, Internal alterations to building, Dunbar Railway Station, Station Road, Dunbar, East Lothian EH42 1JX). When the work is completed there will be a unisex toilet and an accessible toilet.



(above: View of Dunbar station on the occasion of a recent steam excursion with 60103 'Flying Scotsman'.

Photograph: T. Dickson)

(below: Graph Dunbar station passenger usage 1998-2023. Copyright Office of Rail and Road)



(above: Graphs showing results of Dunbar station passenger survey carried out by **RAGES** on 5/5/2023)

MARKLE CROSSING REPORT

MARKLE LEVEL CROSSING REPLACEMENT PROJECT

With the decision to build a new railway station at East Linton it was identified that the level crossing at Markle represented an increased safety risk due to its close proximity to the new station. The increased safety risk at the crossing is associated with road users becoming impatient at the level crossing barriers due to the longer acceleration and deceleration

*(right: View of new road looking west.
Photograph: T. Dickson)*



times of trains leaving and arriving at East Linton.

The level crossing is being replaced with a flyover bridge and new road.

Ten months of work to close Markle level crossing and create a new bridge and diversionary road got underway in the early part of this year.

The crossing was previously described as

*(left: View of new road looking east.
Photograph: T. Dickson)*

one of Scotland's "highest-risk public road level crossings".

At least two people have been killed on the crossing in the last 15 years.

The cost of the project is expected to be in the region of £12.5 million and is fully funded by Transport Scotland, would open alongside East Linton railway station, which welcomed its first train back to the village in December last year.

*(right: View of the east embankment foundation work for the overbridge
Photograph: T. Dickson)*



OBITUARIES

It is with sadness that we report the loss of two of our members.

Dr Ralph Jordinson passed away in February. Ralph was co-founder of our 'Group' when the then Railway Development Society (now RailFuture) brought the two of us together back in 1996. Ralph was campaigning for the re-opening of East Linton, where I was campaigning for better services at Dunbar and re-opening Reston. I travelled to Matlock by train on 22nd

January to visit Ralph and his wife Barbara in a care home to hand over a series of photographs and memorabilia on the opening of East Linton station. Unfortunately Ralph was taken into hospital just prior to my arrival. I spent a wonderful two and a half hours with Barbara catching up on all that had taken place with them since they left Scotland and going over our wonderful achievement of having East Linton now back on the timetable. Few will know that it was Barbara who came up with our Group's name all these years ago.

In April, Rev Dr Dane Sherrard passed away. Dane was an enthusiastic member who encouraged myself with all the arrangements on the re-opening of Reston when we discussed this as an aside to our church business.

Tom Thorburn, **RAGES** Honorary President

The 2024 RAGES Annual General Meeting

will be held on **Thursday 19th September**

Venue

Knox Academy, Pencaitland Road, Haddington EH41 4DT

at **6.30pm** *for* **7pm**

Guest Speaker

Ian Budd (Convener, Friends of the Far North Line)

RAGES members & members of the public are encouraged to attend.

RAGES works to

- Improve the rail service between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- Re-open the branch line from Longniddry to Haddington.
- 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.
- 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 re-open the branch line from Longniddry to 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
EH42 1BJ

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