

Issue 13
October 2007

Railtalk Magazine

Railtalk Magazine is brought to you monthly, free of charge, by the Railtalk team.



Hull Trains,
is it an 86?

North Yorks Moors
helps out SVR

Could Class 58's
be set for a return

Front cover

Class 170 424 waits at Glasgow Queens St. to work the 12.15 1R48 Glasgow Queens St. - Edinburgh. on the 13th Sept.

Jonathan McGurk



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Site/Forum

For more information on our website or joining our forum, please contact the editor by email at

editor@railtalk.net

Submissions

Pictures and news can be entered through the forum, or by email us at

entries@railtalk.net

Please give a brief description, your name and the date.

Railtalk editorial team

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Thanks

As always, thanks to everyone who have contributed this month especially the following:
Richard Hargreaves, Jonathan Gill, David Dawson, Jonathan McGurk, Jonathan Lewis, Brian Battersby, Jim

When is it published

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The months review

With Winter on it's way, the autumn galas are providing a full calendar here at Railtalk. We have already had several excellent galas, at the Severn Valley, Peak Rail and the Mid Norfolk, with many more to come over the next few weeks, we hope that you will send us your pictures of these events.

Another sign that winter is on its way is that the DRS, EWS and newcomer Seco Rail have all started the annual RHTT trains, we initially thought that we would try and decipher all the various working around the country, but such is the diagramming, that you could easily take up an entire issue, needless to say, that there is an excellent site that does, <http://rht2777.blogspot.com> has all the information.

My congratulations this month must go to Martin Walker and the team that has successfully fitted a marine version of the Deltic engine into 55022 and sorted out all the complications that were incurred. On top of this the Class 40 schedule has been hectic and the CFPS must also be congratulated on turning out a Class 40 which is still making heads turn wherever it goes.

The Severn Valley Railway and Vintage Trains have also done the railway community proud with their fantastic effort at the Autumn Stam Gala, Very pleasing to see that the crowds came in large numbers just like any other year. Next month sees the beginning of the end for many popular franchises, goodbye to Virgin Cross Country, Silverlink, Midland Mainline, GNER, Central Trains, and we wait to see what the new operators will bring. Several have promised much, but can they deliver?

As we go to deadline, one piece of news that has filtered through to us is that the new boys at EWS/DB, are looking at returning to service Class 56's and Class 58's to relieve loco shoutages elsewhere, we await this one with excitement.

As always, thanks for reading and keep the news and pictures coming.

Class47



Class 221 118 16.10 1V74 Glasgow Central - Plymouth departs Glasgow. 10th Sept. Jonathan McGurk



September started with an excellent trip by D1015 to Aberystwyth, seen here on the 1st

From the Editor

Welcome to issue 13 of Railtalk Magazine, if there is anything you want to say or write for the next edition please let us know.

Many thanks to all who have contributed this month. Remember any news, articles etc can be sent to the address on page 2.

You can send us your email address so that we can email you as soon as a new issue is out. Just go to the contact us section of the Railtalk website and send in the form. This means that you will never miss another issue ever again.

Remember we are always looking for a wide range of pictures. Your pictures do not have to be digital, if you want to send us slides, or scanned pictures, just contact us for details.

Also if you have any news or information please send this into us. If you want send information into us in a different way please email the editorial team for other ways of contacting us.

If you missed issue 12, just click on the picture to the right. This will take you to the last issue. If you want any earlier issues please visit the website and all back issues will be found on there.

Andy Patten, Editor



Charter Scene

This month's round up of the British Charter scene

Welcome to the first edition of Charter Scene. Charter Scene is the monthly article aiming to detail some of the most prominent charter operations in the UK.

If you have any articles to include, photos or accounts of tours, then get in touch via editor@railtalk.net and hopefully your material will be featured here.

September has been a busy month for 40145 in Large Logo livery, with trips to the north and south.

Liam.



Above: 40145 powers up Goodrington Bank on the Preserved Paignton and Dartmouth Steam railway with "The Devonian" charter from Banbury - Kingswear, on the 8th September. [Liam Yates](#)

Below: The return working of "The Devonian" is seen passing through Dawlish Warren. [Richard Hargreaves](#)





Above: Mark Elderkin's excellent first railtour took the CFPS's Class 40 to Buxton, where it is seen here in its controversial large logo livery. [Andy](#)

Below: The railtour was top and tailed with West Coast's Class 37248, which attracts some attention of passengers as it waits to depart Leeds. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



37410 and 37417 slow for the 10mph restriction at Glandyfi on the 1237 Reading - Aberswyth on the 22nd September. **David Dawson**





Above: Class 37 410 and Class 37 417 work the 08.56 1Z76 Edinburgh Park - Oban - Northern Belle Charter Approaching Dalreoch on the 9th Sept. [Jonathan McGurk](#)

Below: Cotswold duo Class 47 813 with Class 47 810 at the rear working the 20.38 1Z40 Glasgow Central - London Waterloo, seen here waiting to depart Glasgow Central on the 10th September. [Jonathan McGurk](#)





Above: The CFPS's Class 40 has been far and wide over the last few weeks, this is the loco on its way to deepest Devon, and as I type this, the loco is at the opposite end of the country, in Scotland. Looking immaculate, as it passes Langstone Rock, on the 8th September. [Andy](#)

Below: EWS's remaining Class 37's still continue to draw the crowds, 37410 and 37417 depart Birmingham New St on the 22nd September. [Richard Hargreaves](#)





Above: 37248 is seen at Stafford in charge of 1Z46, a section of the Buxton Forester that ran from Birmingham International to Manchester, Buxton, Leeds, Bradford, Morcambe and back to Birmingham. 37248 was working in conjunction with 40145 which was on the rear of the train and both were scheduled to run different legs of the tour around the North West. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Left: 66708 Powers out of Eastleigh towards Southampton with GBRf Staff tour to Weymouth 73s will make return trip. [James P.](#)

Contributing

If you would like to contribute to Charter Scene or any other part of Railtalk Magazine, please email editor@railtalk.net

Pictures



Above: Will they, wont they. The general opinion seems to be that there will be no HST additional summer services to the South West next year. This was the final working down the sea wall, through Dawlish Warren, on the 8th September.

Below: DRS continues to supply Class 37's to top and tail the "stand in" Network Measurement Train, seen here running as 1Z87. [Jonathan Gill](#)





Above: 43016 speeds along the sea wall at Dawlish, this should be the last year for the Valentas with FGW as the MTU program completes. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Below: Friendly crew give the camera a wave as 66412 passes with the 6X73, near Taunton. [Jonathan Gill](#)



South West Railways



Above: Medite liveried 66709 passes Fairwater Yard, Taunton with the 5Z91 stock move from Derby Litchurch Lane on the 11th Sept. **Jonathan Gill**

Below: Not often in the news are the Class 334 units, 334 015 departs with the 11.50 1W31 Glasgow Central - Wemyss Bay 10th Sept. **Jonathan McGurk**





Above: Class 318 270 and refurbished Class 318 253 arrive with the 11.13 2K18 Ayr - Glasgow Central, seen on arrival at Glasgow. [Jonathan McGurk](#)

Below: In a shot that was originally considered for our "from a different view" section, 220011 and 220024 at Stafford on the 8th Sept. [Richard Hargreaves](#)





Above: Class 334 009 and Class 334 038 19.03 5C77 Motherwell - Glasgow Central - Shields T.M.D. departs Glasgow Central, 10th Sept. [Jonathan McGurk](#)

Below: Whilst Peak Rail may have an imitation Regional Railways Class 31, Network Rail have bagged the real thing. 31465 awaits its return at Derby.





47802 passes Rowton with the 7X47 Birkenhead - Crewe. EMU tyre turning move. [David Dawson](#)



Class 47, 47815 heads the 5Z91 - HST stock move on the 18th Sept. [Jonathan Gill](#)



Above: Network Rail 73212/213 Working 6G14 Datchet to Tonbridge West Yard These Two were seen previously that week on Route learners on this line.
Below: 73204 (Janice) working 6G15 Datchet to Hoo In 73136 was planned to work with this working but for some reason did not.





What an immense variety there is at Salfords Bridge, near to Gatwick Airport. Top: First Capital Connect services, Left: Gatwick Express services, Above: 73136 & 442424 on a test run back to Stewarts Lane, the 73 was dead in tow for insurance, Bottom Left: Southern local services and Bottom Right: South West Trains 158890 heading towards Brighton.



FOUR TRAVEL, TWO PAY WITH GROUPSAVE!

National Express Group's 'one' railway, the train operator for London and the East of England has extended the availability of its GroupSave ticket product to apply over the entire 'one' railway network from 9th September 2007.

GroupSave was previously available only in the London, Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire areas and allows three or four passengers to travel for the price of two adults on selected tickets. The group can consist either of all adults or a combination of adults and children, with at least one adult in the group. In addition to the 'core' group of four, up to four additional accompanying children can also travel for just £1 each.

The GroupSave facility is available for passengers purchasing a variety of ticket types including: Saver tickets, some Off-Peak Day Travelcards and Cheap Day singles and returns. Some travel restrictions will apply and passengers are advised to check details at www.onerailway.com or call 'one' Customer Services on 0845 600 7245

GroupSave is also offered by many other Train Operating Companies (TOCs), so it can also be used for journeys that include travel with two or more operators, provided the entire journey is made on services of TOCs that offer GroupSave.

Rachel Dawson, Sales & Marketing Director for 'one' railway said:

"The extension of GroupSave will provide many more of our customers with attractive savings when travelling with their family and friends on days out by train, and we hope GroupSave will encourage new customers to travel by train and leave the car at home."

First Capital Connect managers go back to the floor

Managers from train company First Capital Connect will be going back to the floor as part of National Customer Service Week.

National Customer Service Week takes place from 1 to 7 October and provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the vital role played by customer service staff.

First Capital Connect is taking part through a series of special events, including Meet the Manager sessions on our trains. At larger stations customers will be able to see managers working alongside frontline staff, working on automatic tickets gates and information desks. All managers will be easily identified by distinctive First Capital Connect pink high visibility vests.

"ONE" COMMUNITY SCHEME SEES MARKS TEY STATION 'ADOPTED'

'one' railway, part of the National Express Group plc, revealed that Marks Tey station is to receive some extra tender loving care after being adopted by Tom Stageman, under 'one's Adopt-A-Station initiative. Tom was presented with his official certificate of adoption on Wednesday 26th September at 4.30pm at Marks Tey Station

So far around a hundred of the train operator's 167 stations have been adopted and more volunteers are being sought. Tom Stageman commented: "We used to live next door to the railway at Chappel. That started the craze and I've been interested ever since. I just thought that being a station adopter was something I would really like to do."

Jill Casswell, Communications Manager for 'one' railway said: "The Adopt-A-Station scheme is going from strength to strength. We have already seen many of our stations benefit from the involvement of adopters, who bring a huge range of interests and skills to the role. Recently Burnham-on-Crouch station won the Best Station Award in the Anglia in Bloom competition due to the hard work and vision of adopter Una Norman. Most of all, adopters suggestions for station improvements help us to better understand our customers' needs and to improve the station environment which benefits the whole community. We are delighted to have Tom on board."

Adopt-A-Station volunteers report to the train operator about the standard of facilities at the station and many have also worked hard to bring their own schemes to fruition - such as acquiring new benches for the platform, planting gardens and filling flower tubs, and helping to keep the platforms free from litter. In return, volunteers receive a complimentary travel pass for leisure use on 'one' train services.

Amazing goings-on in Manchester

(from the Manchester Evening News)

On the 20th September, a schoolboy brazenly brandished what appeared to be a rifle on a railway platform in the middle of the afternoon. The boy, aged about 14, aimed the weapon at a terrified crane driver working on the opposite side of the tracks at Newton Station in Hyde.

But even though the workman's boss immediately dialled 999, a dispute between police and their British Transport counterparts meant the gun-toting thugs evaded capture and are still at large.

We have shown the images to ballistic experts, and they believe the weapon is a Kalashnikov-style assault rifle. They say there is a every possibility that it is real.

Crane driver David Wood has told how the drama unfolded. He saw one teenager take the gun from a plastic bin liner, fit it with an ammunition magazine, and then pass it to the other boy - who aimed it directly at him.

Mr Wood, 25, said: "I was fearing for my own safety, it was very threatening." I immediately radioed my office to say they had a gun." His boss, Frank Ridley, the director of Premier Waste Services, targeted his CCTV on to the platform and captured a series of startling images. He called Greater Manchester Police at 4.54pm. It is understood GMP called British Transport Police two minutes later, but GMP did not send an armed response unit and no officers went out.

SIXTH SUCCESSIVE PERIOD OF PUNCTUALITY OVER 90% AS 'ONE' RAILWAY EXTENDS BEST PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE SINCE ITS FRANCHISE BEGAN

The punctuality of train services on routes operated by 'one', part of National Express Group plc, was over 90% for a sixth successive period in the four weeks ending 18 August, with the train operator continuing the most consistent period of performance since the franchise began in 2004 and one of the best periods of the past 15 years.

Over the period in question, 91.42% of 'one' railway services arrived at destination "on time" (within 5 minutes of the published arrival time for all services except intercity services - where the national measure is within 10 minutes). The positive results mean that the company has built on its commitment in its Joint Performance Improvement Plan with Network Rail (launched in March) to reach a Moving Annual Average (MAA) of 88% punctuality this summer to reach a MAA of 88.54% - building on the increase already achieved between April 2004 and March 2007 from 84.96% to 86.94%. The plan then targets reaching a MAA of 90% over the next year. 'one' and Network Rail each committed to 10 targeted actions to address the key causes of delay and disruption, including upgrades and extra resources to improve the reliability of trains and infrastructure (track, signalling and overhead power lines). All the actions due to be in place by this summer have been delivered. The company has published a leaflet outlining the progress to date.

Commenting on the performance figures, Andrew Chivers, Managing Director for 'one' said :

"We're pleased to be able to report a sixth successive period of punctuality over 90% and a Moving Annual Average up to 88.54%. We are delivering the most sustained period of good performance for over 7 years. Indeed some routes including the Rural lines in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire and the West Anglia lines in Hertfordshire, Essex and Cambridgeshire are regularly delivering punctuality as high as 92/93%. Our priority now is to maintain the progress achieved by our employees and those in Network Rail since March to provide customers with these higher standards on a continuing basis over the coming months, as well as minimising the occasions when problems do occur and ensuring we handle those incidents effectively."

The Class 87's have only weeks to go in service, unless GBRF installs the required OTMR equipment before the 1st Jan 2008. Here Class 87 028 and 3 Class 325 E.M.U.'s work the 15.31 1M44 Shieldmuir R.M.T. - Warrington R.M.T. Approaching Carlisle on the 21st Sept.
Jonathan McGurk



First Capital Connect counts down to moving to St Pancras International

First Capital Connect has started the 90 day countdown to moving to their brand new station at St Pancras International. The company marked the occasion by switching on a countdown clock at King's Cross Thameslink station counting down to the last train leaving, on Sunday 9 December 2007.

Mark Woodbridge, Head of Stations, said: "First Capital Connect is very excited about the opening of St Pancras International. Last year King's Cross Thameslink station served over two million customers and this figure will continue to rise. St Pancras International will be a fantastic station offering a huge number of benefits that King's Cross Thameslink simply cannot. Customers using this service have struggled with the limitations of this station for long enough so are we thrilled they will soon be able to enjoy St Pancras International."

First Capital Connect's Thameslink services will serve St Pancras International from Sunday 9 December. The station will offer superb new facilities including state of the art customer information screens as well as lifts and escalators to easily accessible and larger platforms.

Chiltern scoop two awards at the National Rail Awards 2007

Chiltern were named 'Passenger operator of the year' at the prestigious National Rail Awards ceremony, held on the evening of Wednesday 5 September. They faced strong competition from other train operators to win this top award, demonstrating their ongoing commitment to running fast, reliable and comfortable trains for passengers and offering exemplary customer service.

Adrian Shooter, Chairman of Chiltern Railways, said: "We are delighted to receive this award. While I am aware that we do not always get things right, and that there is always room for improvement, awards like this spur us all on to try even harder for our passengers.

"We have made significant investments that have benefited passengers recently. In addition to major engineering improvements - such as new platforms and signalling - we have also introduced new trains and innovative ways to buy tickets. We also continue to invest heavily in staff training, which is reflected in the positive feedback we get from our customers."

We were also short-listed for a total of five awards and, in addition to winning 'Passenger operator of the year', was also presented with a further award for its major engineering project - Evergreen 2 - which has enabled the company to run more trains, reduce delays and increase the reliability of its services.

Luton Airport Parkway wins station award

Luton airport parkway station has been highly commended at the prestigious National Rail Awards. The station was one of only two stations that were highly commended in the Station of the Year (large station) category. Judges from the National Rail Awards liked Luton Airport Parkway's well-staffed ticket office, spacious car park, shuttle bus to Luton Airport, and smart café area. Station Services Manager, Joe Healy, said: "I am really delighted formy team at Luton Airport Parkway. They really deserve this recognition for all their hard work in making the station an attractive and welcoming environment for our customers."

c2c helps out NSPCC

Top performing train company c2c, part of the National Express Group, is, for the second year running, sponsoring long standing commuter Nigel James and his walking companion Richard Quinn, on their annual walk to raise money for the NSPCC.

c2c Operations Manager Chris Loder signed, on behalf of c2c, the pledge to support them, laying down the challenge that they should complete the walk and return to claim the sponsorship money.

Nigel, who has been a commuter between Pitsea and Fenchurch Street for over 20 years, and Richard Quinn, who last year walked the length of Hadrian's Wall, will this year be staying in the south of the country, walking the South Downs Way National Trail from Winchester to Eastbourne.



STATION MURAL HELPS SPREAD SAFETY MESSAGE

Ten children from three Rhondda Valley schools have worked together to create a colourful new mural which has been unveiled at Tonypandy railway station. The pupils from Trealew Primary, Alaw Primary and Porth County Community School helped design and paint the mural in a project led by Trealew Communities First and Rhondda Cynon Taf Community Arts. The arts project forms part of the 'Adopt a Station' scheme run by Arriva Trains Wales where community volunteers help keep their station in the best possible condition. Mary Duckett, co-ordinator for Trealew Communities First, said: "The station was adopted by the pupils of Trealew Primary in April 2005 and this is the second mural project we have completed." Each of their drawings were put together to complete the overall design."



News in brief

Amazing Video Clip

<http://view.break.com/368159>

Train Runs Through Bangkok Market.

How hard is real estate to come by where a public market is forced to do this every time a train comes through? What happens if the train shows up a bit early?

Hull Trains, now its a Class 86

We have had the Wessex 442's, the HST's and the top and tail 67's, but the latest rumour from the Hull Trains camp, is that as a replacement for the damaged Class 222 unit, 86101 plus the Mk3 Cargo-d set is to become a standby, with a DRS 47 doing the Hull to Doncaster part.....We shall see!!!

Protests over Graffiti jail sentences

The parents of two graffiti artists jailed for spray painting trains and railway bridges are protesting at the length of their sentences. Thomas Dolan, 20, and Thomas Whittaker, 18, both from Macclesfield, Cheshire, caused about £13,000 damage. Both admitted criminal damage at Manchester Crown Court and were jailed for 15 and 12 months respectively. Denise Dolan said she knows her son did wrong but insists the punishment does not fit the crime. More than 500 people have also signed a petition on the social networking website Facebook after the pair were sentenced last month. The pair caused about £13,000 worth of damage. The men were traced after British Transport Police (BTP) tracked website postings of their work. Dolan used the graffiti name, or tag, of Krek and Whittaker went by the name of Mers.

Would it happen here?

Train operator Connex says it is still awaiting the details of a StateGovernment plan to make train travel free for passengers who arrive at their destination before 7am.

Premier John Brumby today announced the scheme would be trialled on the Sydenham and Frankston lines from late October and would be extended to all other train lines if successful.

The Early Bird tickets will be available free from city and premium suburban stations and will allow passengers to take 10 trips provided they arrive at their destination by 7am.

Launching the tickets at Southern Cross Station this morning, Mr Brumby said they could save zone two commuters up to \$52 a fortnight or up to \$1100 a year.

NEW ARTWORK TO BRIGHTEN SWANSEA STATION

Arriva Trains Wales are to introduce a vibrant new mural at Swansea Station to highlight the attractions and natural beauty of the Heart of Wales line. The artwork is the result of a recent competition involving students from Swansea Institute of Higher Education. The mural will be in place at Swansea Station for summer 2007.

Students were invited to produce a mural that would promote the Heart of Wales line and the surrounding area. Following a lot of hard work and effort from the competition entrants there was a day of difficult judging. The winner selected for Swansea Station was Amy Ward, who is in her second year of the General Illustration degree at the Institute.



More megatrain.com destinations

More megatrain.com destinations Stagecoach Group is expanding its budget rail service megatrain.com to more stations on our network. Megatrain.com services, which offer fares from just £1*, will now be available for travel to and from Axminster, Honiton and Havant, offering an additional 370 bargain seats a week. Tickets for the new destinations will go on sale from Friday 14 September for travel from Monday 29 October 2007 to coincide with the completion of Network Rail's major engineering works in the Portsmouth area. A total of 16 stations on our network will now provide megatrain.com fares

EWS wins China Clay Contract

China clay rail volumes increase as Imerys reduces carbon emissions using EWS Network services

Imerys and EWS Network have agreed a new five year contract for the haulage of china clay by rail from Cornwall to locations across the UK.

The contract discussions had a central environmental remit where both Imerys and EWS Network worked on the objective to maximise volumes moved by rail rather than road and, in doing so, reduce carbon emissions for the haulage of china clay.

As a result of this work, both companies are pleased to announce that a significant increase in the amount of china clay moved by rail will be generated early on in the contract through the introduction of longer trains. Importantly, this will mean Imerys reduces CO2 emissions generated by its distribution network.

Imerys currently avoids the release of one tonne of CO2 a week by using the rail network as opposed to the equivalent tonnage being moved by road. There are also considerable road safety and congestion benefits by this freight being moved by rail.

NETWORK RAIL ANNOUNCES TRACK RENEWAL CHANGES

Network Rail has recently announced the result of a six month assessment of its track renewals aimed at reducing the number of contractors delivering work from six to four.

The proposal to rationalise arrangements, originally announced in December 2006, forms part of a wider programme to drive improved delivery performance, including safety and engineering quality, whilst improving the efficiency of the rail renewals programme.

The four contractors are: Amey SECO (JV), Balfour Beatty (BBRIS), First Engineering Ltd, and Jarvis PLC.

The announcement also includes an alignment of the delivery of switches and crossings (points) and plain-line track renewals by all contractors.

This change is designed to improve the ability to plan and coordinate renewals work. It will also allow each contractor to reduce the distance between its depots and worksites.

Announcing the result of the assessment, Peter Henderson, Group Infrastructure Director, said: "By making these changes, Network Rail aims to achieve significant improvements in the delivery of our track renewals programme."



Forget the famous people naming trains, this loco in Europe was named by a mutt, advertising an ice hockey team.

Virgin Voyager to run on West Somerset Railway

A Virgin CrossCountry Voyager train will again contrast the latest in West Country rail travel with the past glory of steam when it runs from Bristol to Weston-super-Mare and Taunton and to Bishops Lydeard on the West Somerset Railway in October.

On Saturday and Sunday 6 and 7 October, the state-of-the-art Voyager will leave Bristol Temple Meads, call at Weston-super-Mare and Taunton and connect with an historic steam train at Bishops Lydeard for journeys to Minehead.

The Voyager will then run a shuttle service between Bishops Lydeard and Taunton throughout the weekend for visitors to the West Somerset Railway's Autumn Steam Gala before making the return trip to Weston-super-Mare and Bristol Temple Meads each evening.

£75 million investment for Snow Hill passengers

Passengers are set to benefit as Network Rail starts the next phase of a £75 million programme to improve the railway between Birmingham Snow Hill, Solihull and Warwick this autumn.

The project will see the old signalling renewed with modern state-of-the-art equipment along 23 miles of railway and improvements to the track at Tyseley.

Chris Rowley, Network Rail's Area General Manager said: "This major investment will mean a better, more reliable service for passengers while a new junction at Tyseley will relieve what has become a significant bottleneck on this route by increasing the capacity of the track as well as the speed that trains can travel."

"We do have to close the railway while we undertake this major project and have been working closely with train operators to ensure that a robust timetable of replacement bus services will be put in place to minimise disruption for passengers."

To enable the project to be completed, the line will be closed and buses will replace trains between Birmingham Snow Hill Station and Dorridge and Shirley.

100% bio-diesel rail trial cuts Royal Train CO2 emissions by 19%

EWS, operator of the Royal Train and Britain's largest rail freight haulier, today (Friday 14 September) announces that His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales will become the first passenger in Britain to travel on a train hauled by a locomotive fuelled by 100% bio fuel, in a trial that will reduce CO2 emissions by 19% for its journey to Scarborough.

The service forms part of a four month programme of testing to assess the suitability of this fuel for mainline rail services. EWS has worked closely with the Royal Household as part of its continuing work to lower the amount of carbon emitted from transportation to Royal engagements. If the results from the trial prove positive, it will assist in the decision making process regarding the Royal Train being permanently powered by 100% bio fuel and allow EWS to consider operating freight trains for its customers using the same fuel, subject to acceptable levels of bio fuel duty. Passenger train operating companies could also consider using this fuel.

Alison leaves fg Wonderland

FirstGroup announced that as of 19th September, Alison Forster, Managing Director of First Great Western, has been appointed to the newly created role of Rail Safety and Performance Director.

Andrew Haines, Managing Director of the Group's UK Rail division, will also take responsibility for day to day operations at First Great Western as Chief Operating Officer.

Commenting on the appointments Moir Lockhead, FirstGroup's Chief Executive, said: "Alison is renowned throughout the rail industry as an expert in safety and operations. Her experience is unparalleled and in this new role she will strengthen our team and drive safety and operational enhancements across our UK Rail division.

"Alison has run First Great Western for the last three and a half years, successfully leading our franchise team in 2006. In recent months Alison and her team have been addressing the challenges faced by the new franchise and their efforts have resulted in improvements in our performance. I am very grateful for her hard work with First Great Western and am delighted she has agreed to take on this important new position within FirstGroup.

"Andrew's record at South West Trains was exceptional – we were very pleased that he joined FirstGroup to head our UK Rail division just over two years ago. Since then his contribution has helped to deliver sustained improvements at First TransPennine Express, First ScotRail and First Capital Connect, our newest franchise. At each franchise punctuality and reliability has reached over 90% in recent months.



The best thing to come out of Alison's reign at First Great Western is the excellent livery now being applied to its fleet.

165101 waits at Didcot Parkway with a service to London **Jim**

FGW announces Sleeper upgrades

Train operator First Great Western have announced that as part of a £200 million package of investment, it is updating its Sleeper Service, also known as the Night Riviera Sleeper, which runs between Penzance and London Paddington.

The contract to carry out the work, which is worth £2,000,000 has been awarded to Railcare in Wolverton.

Michael Rodber, who has worked for Porsche and Eurostar and was responsible for designing First Great Western's new look High Speed Trains (HSTs) that were introduced earlier this year, has been tasked with creating a refreshed interior that is more akin to a hotel room than a train carriage. Work has already started on upgrading the 17 carriages and is expected to be completed by March 2008. The colour scheme and lighting will be updated to give the carriages a more relaxed feel, reupholstered First Class style seating will be introduced and the toilets have been redesigned. The exterior of the carriages will also be re-liveried to reflect the new corporate branding that is being introduced on First Great Western's fleet of High Speed Trains (HSTs).

In addition to replacing fixtures such as carpets, taps and blinds, First Great Western will also be investing in better quality bed linen and towels.

Germany to build maglev railway

Shanghai's maglev train started commercial service in 2003, now Germany has come up with the funds to launch its first magnetic levitation - or maglev - rail service.

The state of Bavaria is to build the high-speed railway line from Munich city centre to its airport, making it Europe's first commercial track.

Maglev trains use electric-powered magnets that enable them to float above their tracks, allowing for much faster speeds than traditional rail services.

The 1.85bn-euro (\$2.6bn; £1.3bn) project had faced financing problems. However, the Bavarian state government said had signed an agreement with rail operator Deutsche Bahn and industrial consortium Transrapid that includes the developers of the train - Siemens and ThyssenKrupp.



DfT says East Coast was not won on price

The government has admitted it turned down a higher offer for the London-Edinburgh rail franchise than the record £1.4bn that won the contract for National Express. The Department for Transport said one shortlisted bidder, believed to be Arriva, bid more than £1.4bn but the offer was rejected, contradicting a widely held assumption that the government award franchises to the highest bidder.

Two years ago, GNER won the east coast mainline franchise with a £1.3bn offer that dwarfed its rivals, only for the company to hand back the route last year.

A DfT spokesman confirmed that an offer of more than £1.4bn was turned down this time, but declined to name the bidder. The spokesman indicated that there were concerns over "deliverability", adding: "It is true that the winning franchise was not the highest bidder. We award franchises not only on cost but also on deliverability."

There is also speculation within the rail industry that the east Midlands franchise was awarded to Stagecoach ahead of a bid that offered better financial terms to the government.

Virgin Trains' Capital Link for Liverpool

Virgin Trains has become an official partner of the Liverpool Culture Company. The deal will see Virgin Trains, which operates high speed, high quality train services between Liverpool and London, supporting Liverpool's year-long celebration as Capital of Culture.

Virgin Trains Sales and Marketing Director Craig Inglis said: "We are delighted to be supporting Liverpool and its community as an Official Partner of the prestigious Capital of Culture. There are going to be some amazing events in 2008 and we look forward to getting involved. And, Capital of Culture year is just the start, we are committed to improving the region for the long-term with more trains and slashed journey times from 2009.

"We are especially pleased that rail has become the travel mode of choice for journeys to and from London, with thousands of passengers voting with their feet and turning their back on domestic air routes."

Virgin Trains' second wave of Go Greener, Go Cheaper advertising campaign

Following on from the success of the 'Go Greener Go Cheaper' marketing campaign in March this year, the second burst of this activity again takes the environmental fight directly to both the car and domestic airlines. The £4m campaign is led by a heavy weight TV burst and also includes outdoor, direct marketing and promotional activity. However it is a striking new video based online campaign that really hammers home Virgin Trains' environmental message this time round.

Entitled 'Nature Speaks', the online campaign sees the flora and fauna of the UK uniting to speak out about people's 'filthy travel habits' when opting to take the plane or car over the train. The message is delivered in a very Virgin way, fun and not over worthy, featuring colourful characters such as a South London 'it girl' cow, a Bee and Sunflower from Manchester and a Scottish Hedge from Glasgow.

Track upgrade for Chiltern and Cross Country route

Network Rail is to upgrade track in the Warwick area to raise line speeds and reduce delays for passengers. Work gets underway this autumn on a £75m scheme to improve the railway between Birmingham Snow Hill, Solihull and Warwick. The project will see old signalling renewed with modern equipment along 23 miles of railway and improvements made to the track at Tyseley.

The current line speed over Tyseley junction is 20mph, which slows down fast trains and can cause delays. Network Rail is building two new junctions either side of Tyseley station that will increase the line speed to 60mph. This will allow non stopping trains to pass through the station more quickly, improving journey times for the current Central, Chiltern and Cross Country services and enhancing operational flexibility for train operators by increasing the capacity of the line.

Chris Rowley, Network Rail's Area general manager, said: "This major investment will mean a better, more reliable service for passengers while a new junction at Tyseley will relieve what has become a significant bottleneck on this route by increasing the capacity of the track as well as the speed that trains can travel."

Once the Birmingham-Warwick project is completed in February 2008, signalling operations will transfer into Network Rail's new West Midlands Signalling Centre in Saltley, Birmingham. As part of the project, Bentley Heath signal box, near Dorridge, will close with the level crossing converted to CCTV control from the new Saltley centre.

Could Royal Bank of Scotland sell off Angel Trains?

Britain's fleet of high-speed Pendolino trains could become the latest infrastructure asset to fall into the hands of private equity after bankers were appointed to line up buyers for the largest train-leasing company in the country.

Royal Bank of Scotland has hired Lazard to explore options for Angel Trains, owner of the 53 tilting Pendolino trains that are leased by Virgin Trains for its London-Glasgow service. Angel is an important player in the British rail market as the owner of about 5,000 carriages and locomotives, and is valued at £4bn. RBS confirmed yesterday that it was "investigating options into disposing of Angel Trains" but declined to confirm whether it was in active discussions with potential buyers. It is understood that the bank hired Lazard in order to flush out interest from the private-equity sector, although Barclays and Babcock & Brown, an Australian investment company, are also expected to run the rule over the business. Potential bidders are expected to pay close attention to any tax liabilities attached to acquiring a leasing company. RBS is exploring the sale of Angel as it prepares to offload Southern Water, another significant infrastructure business on its books, in an auction also valued at £4bn that has attracted several bidders. It is offloading subsidiaries as it closes in on the acquisition of ABN Amro, the Dutch bank.

Angel is considered an attractive asset for private equity because of its large asset base and dependable income stream, which has a predictable revenue line because its trains are leased to operators such as Virgin and South West Trains who have franchises lasting up to 10 years. However, the stability of the business was put under threat in April when the Competition Commission was asked to investigate the carriage and locomotive hire market by the Office of Rail Regulation. Haydn Abbott, managing director of Angel, said at the time that the two-year investigation could force the postponement of train orders because it would leave question marks hanging over the long-term return that lessors can make from their carriages.

"One" loose out in unit shuffle, but no one wants 180's

In November, One Railway are going to loose 3 of their 153 units. These are the three which were stored by ATW then moved to Norwich as short term loan units, and since then One Railway have diagrammed them into permanent use, the DfT then underwrote the permanent lease for them, although with London Midland rather than One!

This will cause problems for one as they will have 5 Class 153 units for 7 diagrams. The latest news for the 180's is that they are still not being liked and as the 180s are due to come off lease progressively from December and will go into store unless they are either retained at FGW or move to another TOC. At the moment there is no deal for them because Angel Trains still will not drop the lease charge for sets which one person in the industry told us were "crap and unreliable". TransPennineExpress won't take them - even if offered free of charge for ever -> because they are so unreliable and managers up here had enough of dealing with Alstom over the 175s...

The stock shortage at one is causing concern there - remember the DfT allocates trains, not the TOCs, and DfT has allocated every single available DMU from December 2007 (except the Adelantes) - with even the 150s at Central / London Midland already provisionally allocated. "One" has looked around the whole of the UK and according to a manager there - "there is nothing that isn't allocated".

Retaining the 180s at FGW and cascading a few units out to where they are needed on local/rural trains would be the ideal solution - but Angel need to get real for this to happen. (And remember, in connection with this, DfT has to underwrite the leases of any trains in case the TOC goes bust suddenly or has its franchise withdrawn for some reason - and DfT isn't going to underwrite the leasing of trains which the ROSCO is over-valuing!). Angel & Alstom lost a fortune in penalty payments on the 180s, and as pointed out banks don't like to lose money on assets, but these assets need expensive warm storage and one would think it better to get something, rather than pay to keep the asset idle. OC is being turned over to HST operation as it will be the base for the entire 2+7 High Density Fleet. Much of the equipment installed for 180 maintenance is very useful for work on HST. The first of the refurbished 158s enters service in early October, to be followed soon after by the first 150.

North Yorks Moors Railway helps out Severn Valley Flood appeal

The NYMR are pleased to announce a mixed traction event to be held on Sat 3 and Sun 4 November on the NYMR in aid of the SVR flood appeal features to include. Diesel 50 049 on the Esk Valley Branch and a Double headed run on the NYMR also last chance to ride behind a Legendary Deltic over the moors in 2007. SteamK4 61664 'The Great Marquess' on the moors and Esk valley branch. Timetable is to be confirmed in next couple of weeks locos to be from: Diesel Pool : Special Guest 50 049 'Defiance' Seasonal Guests D6700, D9009 'Alycidon', 55 019. Home Based D7628, 50 027 'Lion' Steam Pool: Special Guest K4 61664 'The Great Marquess', Seasonal Guests B1 61264, Home Based BR Standard 75029, A4 60007 'Sir Nigel Gresley' Locomotives are all to be confirmed. So if you like Diesel or Steam come and support a worth while event and help get the SVR back on track

GREAT CENTRAL HOSTS BOOK LAUNCH.

"For the love of trains" tells story of UK railway preservation

The Great Central will entertain several specially invited guests for a luncheon train, marking the launch of a major new book about UK railway preservation. The launch of "For the love of trains" will take place on the 24th of October.

The book is written by Denis Dunstone with a foreword by Sir William McAlpine. Denis has written several books about railways in Wales and is an active member of the Heritage Railway Association.

The chairman of the Great Central Railway David Morgan (also chairman of the Heritage Railway Association) said, "We are honoured to have been chosen to host the launch of this major new work. The story of railway preservation in the UK is unique, fascinating and complex. Some two thousand locomotives have been preserved and several hundred miles of private railway exists. Naturally the Great Central is part of the books story, so we're pleased to welcome the author and publishers to see how far we've come since 1969."

Pictures with a Different View



Above: An excellent shot, now that the sun is getting lower in the sky, 40145 stands at Morcambe after working a railtour on the 15th Sept. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Below: At first glance, this is just another Class 40 shot, but this is actually a reflection in a window of the local Tourist Office in Morcambe.



Preserved Railways



Above: This year's Severn Valley Steam Gala had nearly been cancelled, but thanks to the determination of its members and staff, an excellent weekend was provided and the number of people visiting seems to have been more than satisfactory. One of the stars of the show was, 4771 Green Arrow.

Below: Another of the stars of the Severn Valley Steam Gala was 4953, seen here at Bewdley on the 22nd September. [Richard Hargreaves](#)





Above: As part of the Severn Valley Steam Gala, Vintage Trains ran several special trains between Snow Hill and Kidderminster. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Below: Pannier tank loco 5764 is seen here at Bewdley working a service to Kidderminster. Has this scene changed much since the 1960's??





Above: 46443 looking excellent pictured here at Bewdley on the 22nd September. The trees in the background just changing colour.

Below: Vale of Rheidol's superbly restored number 9, "Prince of Wales" waits to depart Aberwystwyth on the 1st September



EMRPS

visits

SVR

The ever popular
East Midlands
Railway
Photographic
Society visited
the Severn Valley
Railway on the
15th September,
and we are
delighted to bring
you two rather
nice shots of Class
37906.

David Dawson



International



Following a recent trip to Germany and Belgium, we are delighted to bring you four photos from the area, courtesy of [Brian Battersby](#). The amount of freight in the area is immense, and Brian says that the whole region is well worth a visit. Above: SNCF veteran 115021 on the 23rd August. Below: They get everywhere, and in all sorts of colours, Euro Class 66 number 6609 on the 31st August





Above: CFL loco 4014 with a train of double deck stock on the 23rd August waiting to depart Neuweid. [Brian Battersby](#)

Below: Swiss cargo loco number 421-384 with an intermodal cross border service on the 31st August. [Brian Battersby](#)



From the Archives



We have delved deep into the modern day archives this month with two excellent shots. Above: 15.20 Looe-Liskeard near Sandplace Halt on 2nd July 1983.

Below: The Looe branch local service is seen near Sandplace Halt on 2nd May 1981. Both shots are thanks to [David Mead](#)





Nearly an archive shot, but most certainly a quality unit. [Julian G](#)