



# return to **KESWICK**



## ...on a modern train from your station !

*UPDATE NUMBER 59*

*AUTUMN 2015*

### THE NEW POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

The election of a Conservative-only Government came as a surprise to many.

This means that some of the transport, social and environmental policies promoted by the Liberal Democrats may be softened or dropped, but there is now a visible emphasis on the prosperity and development of the north of England through the “Northern Powerhouse”.

This has its own Minister – James Wharton MP. Lobbying him about the benefits that this railway re-opening can bring to the Lake District, Cumbria and right across the north should be helpful.

Cumbria County Council is the Local Transport Authority and should be embracing transport solutions for the County. Its 2011 – 2026 Transport Plan strategy document talks more about understanding transport need.

The North Lakes has been clear about what it wants, with Keswick Town Council and the Lake District National Park Authority clearly supporting re-opening of the Keswick to Penrith Railway.

A group of Local Authority and business representatives now meets regularly to make that support more effective. Some local residents are also talking about forming a campaign group to demonstrate that the community really wants this Railway.

Some of the group visited the new Borders Railway and met campaigners from the Regional Council. They took great heart from seeing what can be done when the political will is there.

Challenge your new MPs and Councillors about how they will deliver on their promises and wish lists. They may have more powers soon if there is more “devolution”.

Please let CKP Railways plc know what answers you get !

### FUTURE OPERATORS

The closing date has passed for bids for the Northern Franchise and the TransPennine Franchise which include many of the passenger train services to and through Cumbria. Three of the bidders met or had discussions with CKP Railways plc about the Keswick to Penrith Railway Project.

Increasing the use of rail in general is one of the aims of the new Franchises.

The previous Northern Franchise had been based on a Government assumption of “no growth” – which turned out to be false, leading to insufficient trains, inadequate timetables and crowding.

The Department for Transport will be busy for some time evaluating the bids.

### BE BOLD

It is tempting for Local Authorities to focus on small patchwork projects which can be managed within uncertain annual budgets, but they will not secure the long term well-being of the area. Project funding can be secured for long term developments, so it is time to be bold

The first technical feasibility and commercial studies were published by Cedric Martindale, Director of CKP Railways plc, 20 years ago. More detailed studies by others have all confirmed the idea.

Passenger numbers predicted 20 years ago for the Keswick to Penrith route would at least cover operating costs. The potential for a commercial operation now and in the future can only be better.

Rail passenger numbers in the UK as a whole have reportedly doubled in the last 20 years.

## LOOKING BACK AND FORWARD

28th of June 2015 saw a modest celebration, organised by Threlkeld Quarry and Mining Museum, for the 150th anniversary of first passenger trains on the Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith Railway. A steam locomotive from the Quarry attracted significant interest near Keswick Museum.

The re-opened Keswick to Penrith Railway is not intended to be a “heritage” line – although it has significant heritage and history. The new line must work as a major transport artery for the North Lakes, moving people in an efficient and more environmentally friendly way than by car.

It is now 43 years since the line closed between Keswick and Penrith.

Re-opening is quite realistic long before that number creeps up to 50 – if the local politicians want it.

A further effort could see the link re-instated to the Cumbrian Coast (a section which closed in 1966) to help underpin developments on the Energy Coast. Trains for passengers and freight from the Cumbrian Coast via Keswick and Penrith to the rest of the UK would be much faster and more efficient than road or rail around the coast either via Barrow or Carlisle.

## WORLD HERITAGE STATUS

A bid for World Heritage Site status for the Lake District National Park is being prepared by a partnership of many organisations. A decision is expected in the summer of 2017.

World Heritage Site status would be expected to increase the number of visitors, with even a 1% increase expected to generate £20 million per annum of extra revenue.

Conservation and sustainability are key themes. The ability to handle more visitors without damaging the character of the area will be crucial. Transport solutions will need to be on a grand scale – much bolder than schemes that have been implemented over the last few years.

Many years ago the Lake District National Park Authority identified Keswick as one of the key transport “hubs” for the future, with re-opening of the Railway from Penrith to Keswick or even Cockermouth as key factors for a “low carbon” future.

Sustainable transport to get large numbers of people in and out of the National Park must be part of everybody’s plans, starting right now – working out how to manage them after they have arrived by car is not tackling the big issues.

## INSPIRATION

Spotted on the *wake up world* website:

“Those who say it can not be done should not interrupt those who are doing it”

## RECOMMENDED READING

For a fascinating insight into the value of rail connections – realised after the routes had closed: *The Social Consequences of Rail Closures* by Mayer Hillman and Anne Whalley, published by the Policy Studies Institute in 1980. ISBN 0 85374 178 6.

One of the routes studied was Keswick to Penrith, among ten examples from all round the UK. Loss of rail connections had many negative effects in all the studied areas including:

- Young people moving away to access education and employment
- Reductions in staying visitors using hotels and local facilities
- Feelings of isolation from family, friends and facilities
- Greater dependence on use of cars, many relying on lifts by others

## BONDS EXTENDED

A meeting of CKP Railways plc Bondholders at the Keswick Hotel (Keswick Station) on the 2nd of June decided to extend the term of the Bonds to 30th June 2018.

Over 63% of Bondholders (by value) voted, with the decision to extend carried by nearly 94%.

This gives the Company more time to work on the legal stages and construction ahead.

The Directors explained recent developments with Local Authorities and the railway industry, all pointing to a greater chance of success in the coming years.

Bondholders' patience and loyalty is greatly appreciated – this is a pioneering project to re-instate a full public service railway locally from scratch. Such efforts take time.

The first Bonds were issued in 2000, after applications to the National Lottery and other sources of funding came to nothing. A significant proportion of Bondholders live locally, with the money raised in Keswick alone equivalent to £10 for every resident.

All can be proud of such a solid show of support for a special Project which will contribute to everyone's future.

## RE-CONNECTION IN DORSET

The Swanage Railway has been re-connected to the national rail network at Wareham in Dorset, having been closed and partly dismantled in 1972.

Much of the land had been sold off with expectations of new roads and town centre re-development.

Plans are now progressing to operate regular public passenger services along the whole route, connecting into mainline services to London and other parts of the UK.

The line is about 10 miles long but its value to the local community and economy is enormous.

The determination of local people, supported by the Local Authorities, has made this possible.

The Swanage Railway started as a heritage railway, to retain and safeguard the route, but will be transformed to operate a full time public service. They are two very different types of railway.

A public service railway needs much higher standards of equipment and maintenance, full time staff and more sophisticated control systems.

The route of the Keswick to Penrith Railway is protected in the Lake District National Park Authority's core policies, so this Project can leap-frog those difficult early stages.

Other routes which are beginning to realise their potential by running trains beyond their own boundaries include;

North Yorkshire Moors Railway (Pickering to Grosmont, with services to Whitby)

North Norfolk Railway (Holt to Sheringham with services to Cromer or Norwich)

At the moment they are mainly tourist / charter type services but will establish the principle of properly re-connecting areas of the country which had lost their train services.

## NOT ROCKET SCIENCE

- Keswick station still stands in a useable form
- about 90% of the trackbed is un-damaged
- all the major bridges are still in place
- the tunnel under the A66 can be unearthed (like north of Nottingham the "Robin Hood" line)
- the A66 can be crossed by new bridges over and underneath
- ..... and tracklaying for the whole route could be achieved in as little as 40 days

All of this is based on work done on main line railways in the UK in recent years, not wishful thinking or fantasy. All of the development work, design, costing, environmental study etc. has been done by qualified and experienced professionals - many local, mostly based in the north.

## UPDATE SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2015 – PRICE STILL HELD

Subscription for a full year has always been £10 (*despite rises in VAT and postage costs !*)

If you have access to e-mail, we can send Updates electronically - saving all resources.

*... but please, please, do tell us if you change your e-mail address !!!*

Cheques payable to "Iceni Enterprises Ltd", please, and send to the address below.

Next Update planned for summer / autumn – plus e-mail or website alerts for hot news.

*Iceni Enterprises Ltd. does not pass on mailing list details to anybody else !*

## WHAT TO BUY TO SUPPORT THE RAILWAY PROJECT

25% of the price of each item goes directly to the Keswick to Penrith Railway Project.

*The BBC found that only 8% of the price of charity Christmas Cards goes to the named causes.*

1. The report "Return to Keswick - the case for a New Railway" is available at £20 per copy direct from us (post free), or order through bookshops by quoting ISBN 978-1-902543-02-4.
2. "Trains to Keswick" is a professionally produced film featuring people along the line. Originally in VHS format, the DVD version with additional information is available at £14 per copy.
3. Fine Art prints and greetings cards featuring a stunning winter view of the steam hauled "Lakes Express" near Bassenthwaite Lake station, painted by Eric Bottomley of the Guild of Railway Artists. Prints (24" x 16") are £18 each, cards (6" x 8") with envelopes - £1.40 each (minimum order of 3 cards please).

## Interested in Sustainable Transport generally ?

CKP Railways plc Director, Cedric Martindale, has produced a book to inform and encourage debate.

Too often planning of communities neglects transport, while transport planning may be done later by operators who are not part of the communities they are expected to serve. Communities may not know what is available while Local Authorities may not have a clear idea of what transport would be appropriate.

The book takes a broader view of transport in the light of people's needs, economic and environmental factors, planning systems - offering information and opinions gained from working and living in many different places. It aims to help anyone studying transport or trying to find solutions for transport and connectivity problems.

The book has 264 pages and many illustrations, with a soft cover. ISBN 978 1 902543 04 8.

Available direct from Iceni Enterprises Ltd. at £ 27.50 per copy including UK second class postage.

Order forms are distributed with Updates and can be downloaded from the website

*N.B. All prices above include postage to addresses in the UK, but please add £2.50 per order for posting to addresses outside the UK (Posting packages to overseas destinations is not cheap !).*

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## A FEW DATES FROM HISTORY

1845	Cockermouth and Workington Railway opened
1861	Cockermouth Keswick and Penrith Railway Company constituted by Act of Parliament
1864	Railway open for freight traffic linking west Cumbria with north east England heavy industries
1865	Passenger trains started running
1901	Double track sections opened Threlkeld – Penruddock and Blencow – Redhills because of increasing traffic
1920s	Bridges strengthened for heavier main line trains to Keswick such as Convention specials and Newcastle dining trains
1963	Beeching Report published listing Workington to Penrith route all for closure
1966	Workington to Keswick closed to make way for the A66 road to support British Leyland bus factory in Workington
1970	A66 road mostly complete with railway still in place between Keswick and Penrith. Road re-routed in places to avoid railway
1972	Keswick to Penrith closed after reprieve in 1966 because of massive protests
1988	CKP Railways plc formed with the aim of re-opening the route for all day every day modern train services
1990s	Project qualifies for Millennium and Heritage Lottery Fund support but receives no money
2000	Bonds first issued to provide independent funding for design and development work
2001	Digital survey and alignment design work commissioned by CKP Railways plc
2007	Business Case report by Northwest Regional Development Agency
2008	Keswick Town Council becomes Public Sector Champion for the Keswick to Penrith Railway Project
2013	Project described as "worthwhile" by Regional Growth Fund assessors but no money forthcoming

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