



return to **KESWICK**



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UPDATE NUMBER 60

WINTER 2015- 2016

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Cumbria's Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is gradually taking on more of the roles formerly performed by the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA).

A significant proportion of funding for Local Authorities now comes through the LEP, which is run by representatives of those Authorities and the business community.

A strategic planning function is now beginning to emerge, with some interest in transport and other infrastructure becoming apparent.

The LEP held some public sessions to present its ideas and some supporters of the Keswick to Penrith Railway project were able to meet consultants who are helping to put the strategies together. CKP Railways plc has submitted documents describing how the Keswick to Penrith Railway and related new or re-instated railway lines could benefit the County.

ACTION GROUP

A North Lakes Railway Action Group is being formed out of the meetings hosted by Keswick Town Council over the last few years. The new Group will have a formal identity and expects to be more effective in lobbying than individual voices. The Group brings together community and business organisations who all have an interest in seeing the Railway across the North Lakes re-opened to support economic, environmental and social goals.

CKP Railways plc looks forward to working with the Action Group.

Several of the founding members had been inspired by the successful re-opening of the Borders Railway from Edinburgh towards Carlisle.

NEW FRANCHISES

On the 9th of December the Government's Department for Transport (DfT) announced that the new franchise holders in the North of England would be:

- Arriva for the Northern Franchise - which operates local services in Cumbria and across the Pennines to Newcastle and Leeds
- First Group for the TransPennine Franchise - whose routes include Manchester Airport to Lancashire, Cumbria and Scotland.

Both franchisees are expected to run more and better trains, working more closely with communities and will be overseen by Rail North (a consortium of 29 Local Authorities) as well as the DfT.

The new focus on growth and development is welcome, as is the link with Local Authorities - which should help to integrate land planning and transport planning. There is more freedom under the new franchising arrangements to develop new stations and routes to meet local demand.

The new arrangements with a consortium of Local Authorities also means that much more effort will be needed to reach decision makers who will plan and control rail services in the north.

STORM DAMAGE

Storms over the weekend of the 5th and 6th of December 2015 wreaked havoc in several parts of Cumbria. Floods and landslides blocked roads, damaged bridges, knocked out power supplies and forced people out of homes and business premises. On the road network, the worst casualty was the A591 through the heart of the Lake District. Landslides blocked the road and several parts were washed out or under-mined. The road is expected to be closed for some months.

Some communities were hit for the second or third time in only a few years. Fortunately there were less reported injuries or fatalities to people than in previous floods. Farmers across Cumbria lost many animals – a few were lucky and came ashore many miles from home.

The route of the Keswick to Penrith Railway took a battering too.

On the section between Keswick and Threlkeld, which is maintained as a foot and cycle path by the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) and Sustrans, the swollen river swept away caravans, brought down trees, heavily eroded banks and cliffs and damaged some bridges.

Bridge No. 66 (Low Pearson, grid ref NY 294 247) had two spans with arched girders supporting a lighter deck. That bridge has been completely destroyed.

A section of trackbed was completely overwhelmed by the river which changed course dramatically while in flood. CKP Railways plc is providing advice and guidance on ways to restore the path quickly which are sympathetic to the longer term re-instatement of the Railway.

Bridge No. 71, one of the iconic bow girder bridges, near Brundholme Woods (grid ref. NY 299 247) was swept off its abutments and now sits on a new bank of debris, almost parallel to the river bank. CKP Railways plc has suggested to the relevant authorities how this bridge could be recovered.

Bridge No. 73 (Rawsome, grid ref. NY 304 246) suffered some damage to the stonework of the western abutment and is currently closed pending repairs.

The LDNPA wants to re-open the foot and cycle path as soon as possible – Keswick and Threlkeld have noticeably less visitors to shops, pubs, cafes and other attractions.

Although this damage is severe, it is recoverable.

It is all concentrated in one relatively short section of the 18 mile (30 km) route.

Overall the railway route between Keswick and Penrith remains mostly intact (except of course for track) and is a much simpler re-construction prospect than the Borders Railway was.



The gap left by the destruction of bridge No. 66. Photograph © Cedric Martindale.



**The damaged trackbed east of bridge 66 (at the top).
Photograph Copyright © Terry Abraham**



**Bridge No. 71 at Brundholme Woods swept off its abutments but recoverable
Photograph Copyright © Terry Abraham**



Damage to the western abutment of bridge No. 73 at Rawsome. Photograph © Cedric Martindale

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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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No. 60, December 2015.

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