



# return to **KESWICK**



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

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### **POLITICAL PROGRESS**

Trudy Harrison, who was elected as Copeland MP (including Keswick) in February 2017, met with CKP Railways plc (CKP) to discuss the Keswick to Penrith Railway Project.

Shortly after making her Maiden Speech in the House of Commons, however, the General Election was called for June 8th, so the whole process starts again.



Mrs. Harrison had several carefully prepared technical and financial questions about the Railway Project, clearly understanding the issues and potential benefits.

She was also clear about ways to co-ordinate the relevant Authorities to make progress.

Mrs. Harrison has shown great interest in transport and development right across Copeland, hosting Ministers' visits as well as meeting local business and community representatives.

During the By-Election Campaign, Mrs Harrison also met James Ingrams who runs the "Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith Railway Enthusiasts" Facebook page.

The Cumbria County Council elections on 4th May saw changes in several seats but, as before, no party won a majority. It is not yet clear how leadership will be resolved.

Cumbria County Council as the Local Transport Authority is key to the Railway Project's progress. National Government views the five yearly "Local Transport Plan" produced by Cumbria County Council as a statement of all the County's needs. The Keswick to Penrith Railway Project was included in the first edition, but omitted from later versions.

Please continue to write to Cumbria County Council telling them why this Railway is needed.

Their new address is Cumbria House, 117 Botchergate, CARLISLE, CA1 1RD.

Councillors have confirmed that e-mails from the general public do not get through.

website: [www.keswickrailway.com](http://www.keswickrailway.com)

email: [ckp@martindale.force9.co.uk](mailto:ckp@martindale.force9.co.uk)

## TRANSPORT BALANCE

The Friends of the Lake District, in their February 2017 news e-mail, expressed concern at the number of road schemes being developed in the northwest of England, ranging from Motorway enhancement schemes around Manchester to dual carriageway proposals in parts of Cumbria. Such schemes benefit from Government funding for the feasibility studies and consultations.

The Keswick to Penrith Railway Project – and any others which are not directly commissioned by national Government – have to find their own funding for all these stages.

The money for such independent projects has to work much harder as investors expect returns on their money (interest or an increase in value) as well as return of their capital over time.

Transport for the North (TfN) in December 2016 reported that joint initiatives such as “Go Lakes Travel”, and “See More” had increased visitors’ use of public transport by about 8% in the Lake District over a period of 5 years.

TfN remarked that “Travelling through the Lake District and other parts of Cumbria has become a visitor experience in its own right and continued investment and improvement is needed”.

Among its sustainable development goals, the LDNPA wants 40% of visitors to arrive by public transport in the longer term – currently about 95% of visitors arrive by car (seeing little alternative) and only use public transport or cycles locally within the area.

Full public service railways are the only way to achieve this goal.

The whole area would breathe more freely, with less congestion, car parking and pollution issues.

The most recently available comparable figures from the Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) for visitor spending in National Parks in northern Britain are as follows:

National Park	Annual visitor numbers (millions)	Annual visitor days (millions)	Total annual visitor spending	Figures derived;	
				Average visitor stay (days)	Average spend per visitor per day
Lake District	15.8	23.100	£ 952.7 m	1.46	£ 41.24
Yorkshire Dales	9 – 10	12.600	£ 400.0 m	1.33	£ 31.74
North Yorks Moors	7	10.700	£ 411.0 m	1.53	£ 38.41
Northumberland	1.79	2.867	£ 140.0 m	1.60	£ 48.83
Peak District	8.42	10.389	£ 356.6 m	1.23	£ 34.32
Loch Lomond / Trossachs	4	7.000	£ 190.0 m	1.75	£ 27.14
Cairngorms	1.495	3.053	£ 185.0 m	2.04	£ 60.59

An hourly train service to Keswick could provide at least 1 million return journeys per annum.

A more frequent service (with double track sections re-instated) and longer trains on the most popular services could carry a large proportion of Keswick and the North Lakes’ current visitors.

Keswick and other areas currently have their business volumes effectively “capped” – when the car parks are full, no more customers (visitors or residents) can enter those areas.

Adding the rail link would remove that cap and boost business potential significantly.

Every visitor arriving by rail would increase demand for local bus services, helping to end the annual lottery of which routes might survive Local Authority spending cuts.

Keswick, Penrith and Carlisle have interdependent economies.

Having a railway would also put Keswick and the North Lakes back “on the map” for business.

This will all become more critical once the decision about the Lake District’s bid for World Heritage Site status is announced by UNESCO this summer.

## **RE-CONNECTING THE KESWICK TO THRELKELD PATH**

CKP Railways plc recognises the value of the Railway Path and suggests that with a path and railway between Keswick and Threlkeld, the benefits would multiply. People could, for example, walk one way and catch the train in the other direction if tired, or if the weather deteriorated.

Methods that could be used to provide a path with the railway re-instated could include:

- A parallel path just outside the railway fence in open areas
- Side decks on the main river bridges to carry pedestrians and cycles
- Links in to other existing paths and by-roads along the route.

A preliminary scheme, together with costings, was developed by Corus Rail Infrastructure Services with reference to Sustrans and other interested parties.

Capita, working for the LDNPA, examined options for the route after Storm Desmond in December 2015 destroyed two bridges and 200metres (220 yards) of embankment.

The LDNPA has committed to restoring a path link between Keswick and Threlkeld in such a way that future re-instatement of the Railway is not compromised.

CKP Railways plc met with Capita and LDNPA management to share and compare ideas.

A public consultation was carried out in the winter of 2016 -17 with a number of "options".

The most popular option involved use of as much of the original railway route as possible and re-opening Big Tunnel. Interestingly, the costs to re-open the tunnel for the path may be more than for the Railway, as permanent lighting may be needed for pedestrians and cycles ... but not for trains.



CKP, through the LDNPA's predecessors, had contacted the Company that built the Greta Gorge A66 bridge and established how the railway tunnel had been dealt with during that project. That gave great confidence that the tunnel has actually been carefully preserved.

The excavated spoil may be useful for embankment fill in the replacement section at Brundholme. The section of embankment which was washed out was particularly vulnerable as it had restricted and diverted the natural flow of the river when it was built in the 1860s.

That it took more than 150 years to breach is a great testament to the original engineering and ongoing maintenance by the railways up to closure of the line in 1972.

The 1860s alignment was a pleasing geometric curve but not environmentally sensitive.

The river has actually reverted to something closer to its 1860s course.

In the 19th Century, Engineers were confident they could tame nature, while Engineers now are more likely to "go with the flow" and build for resilience and ease of maintenance - both of which are now better understood.

## **SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR 2017 – PRICE STILL HELD**

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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.

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

*N.B. All prices above include second class postage to addresses in the UK.*

*Please add £ 7.50 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
2010	Lake District National Park Authority protects the route in its Local Development Framework policies
2013	Project described as "worthwhile" by Regional Growth Fund assessors but no money forthcoming