



return to **KESWICK**



...on a modern train from your station!

UPDATE NUMBER 47

WINTER 2010 - 2011

SURVIVING CLIMATE CHANGE ...

A topical theme this winter, with the UK facing unusually cold weather for an extended period. All transport systems have been affected to some degree, although arguably the railways have been less disrupted than most. Even some European mainland countries have struggled to cope at times. In severe weather conditions, railways are usually the last form of transport to completely close down, maintaining a “lifeline” for as long as humanly possible.

Most predictions are for more severe weather conditions, more often, in the future. The new Government has maintained interest in developing and improving transport infrastructure in the UK, particularly railways, for many reasons. Saving on imported fuel would be another major factor. Value for money is being studied by the Government at the moment. The Department for Transport (DfT) concluded in its White Paper “Towards a Sustainable Transport System” that railway projects under £100 Million tend to offer better value for money. Keswick to Penrith falls easily within that definition.

Keswick to Penrith is an “easy start” reopening scheme which will have a significant demand for travel right from the start - to serve residents and visitors, support regeneration and help improve connectivity between communities such as Keswick, Penrith and Carlisle which are inter-dependent but not well linked at present. Simple concepts like allowing students from the University in Carlisle to travel to Keswick daily for holiday work could have a whole range of benefits for everybody – including accommodation businesses who then would not need so many “live in” staff in Keswick.

This year, Keswick became part of Copeland, to the anguish of many who felt there was little in common between Keswick and Whitehaven.

That change, however, links Keswick and the North Lakes with the “Energy Coast” area, where development of transport infrastructure is seen as a high priority.

It has been recognised that the Cumbrian Coast is relatively “cut off” from the major national transport networks (motorways and main line railways). That isolation has been a key factor in the rundown and departure of several industries in recent years.

Reopening the railway from Penrith to Keswick will establish a rail “bridgehead” much closer to the coast. That could reduce car travel from the coast to Penrith and ease parking issues there, opening up access to rail travel for more people around Penrith as well as Keswick and further west.

Of course, before 1966, there was a railway right through from Penrith to Workington. Much of that route was taken to build the A66, but it may be feasible to create a new route which reconnects the Cumbrian Coast via a much shorter, faster link to the main line rail network. A rail link from Keswick to Workington is out of our scope at the moment, although not out of mind. It would make a logical follow-on project once our first part is open.

The Keswick to Penrith Railway trackbed is largely intact. Less than 10% of the earthworks and bridges have been removed and most of the alignment is unobstructed.

The case for reopening has been demonstrated, there is considerable support within the area, feasibility and business studies have shown that the task is relatively simple and justified.

CAR PARKING IN KESWICK

The Lake District National Park Authority gave permission, most unusually, for a new car park in Keswick only a few weeks ago. The 81 space car park, near the Hospital, on the edge of Fitz Park, effectively replaces spaces that have been lost near street corners in the centre of the town.

That has occurred due to the painting of yellow lines by the County Council which sought to improve traffic flows and eliminate obstructions caused by cars parking at road ends.

The car park project was supported by the Keswick Business Improvement District (BID).

This all shows that the economy of Keswick is heavily dependent on car use - and restricted by it. Keswick needs people to be more mobile, but has no space to accommodate more cars.

Any restriction on car access hurts businesses, but any significant development of roads or car parks would damage the scenic qualities and peaceful atmosphere which everyone values.

Buses do help, but they also get caught up in the traffic jams at busy times.

Reopening the Railway is the only way to significantly increase the number of people travelling into and out of Keswick, without sacrificing unspoilt countryside.

The Railway trackbed is already in existence – a “brown field” site; no new land would be needed, but the potential boost in mobility would be enormous.

Everyone would be able to travel, regardless of age, fitness or access to a car.

TOWARDS LOW CARBON TARGETS

Although a lot of confusing jargon has been developed, creating an industry in “carbon trading” which few understand, the underlying principle of using less fossil fuels and doing less to spoil the environment is quite easy to absorb.

The Lake District National Park Partnership programme brings together Local Authorities and a wide range of businesses to protect and enhance the area for the benefit of all.

At its July 2010 meeting the following aims were stated:

- Developing a community-owned renewable energy trust to fund community energy projects in Cumbria
- Making sure that transport plans for the county always factor in low-carbon objectives
- Helping the Lake District to lead the way in low-carbon land management by “locking in” more greenhouse gases into the landscape.

Reopening the Keswick to Penrith Railway – and possible extensions – were cited in the earlier report “Low carbon Lake District” as being of significant value in this respect.

A short film on the topic can be viewed on the Lake District National Park Authority’s website at

www.lake-district.gov.uk/lowcarbonlakedistrict

THE BEST PLACE TO VISIT IN THE WORLD

The Lake District took this title in Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards in November. Judges said they were impressed with the breadth of work Nurture Lakeland (formerly the Tourism and Conservation Partnership) undertakes.

The judges concluded: “This destination’s results speak for themselves – £1.7m has been raised working with 1,200 tourism businesses in fundraising for local conservation projects.

“Campaigns such as a car free scheme and the Herdy Fund have been successful at encouraging visitors to the area to ditch the car, as well as promoting the conservation of the Herdwick sheep, and the rural lifestyle associated with upland fell farming in Cumbria and the Lakes.”

BIG SOCIETY

A conference hosted by the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP) in December 2010 discussed links between Community Railways and the Government's theme the "Big Society".

The current Government hopes that people on the ground will become more involved in providing what is needed for their communities and economic well being.

The Keswick to Penrith Railway project already has a very large band of supporters who have not only been vocal, but actually funded the development work to the tune of nearly £400,000. It is highly unlikely that any other public transport project in the UK has seen such commitment from the communities it will serve.

Over 1,500 people and organisations regularly receive Updates via a mailing list. Many others support the project by buying books, cards, DVDs directly, or use businesses who pay commission to the Railway Project.

There are more costs ahead to get through the legal stages and actually build the Railway, but recognition and support by politicians at all levels now would endorse what people actually want, bringing about the reopening of the Railway more quickly and more economically.

TRAVEL NOW, GET A NEW RAILWAY LATER

In November 2010, CKP Railways plc received a cheque for almost £220 from Chester le Track – an independent business selling rail tickets for the whole national rail network from the railway station at Chester le Street in County Durham .

Chester le Track has been passing on commission to CKP Railways plc for several years, from sales of tickets under a special arrangement.

This means that in the last period, the Railway Project's supporters have bought tickets totalling nearly £7,500 under that scheme.

A big thank you to everyone who has bought tickets this way !

Details of how to buy rail tickets from Chester le Track AND support the Keswick to Penrith Railway project AT NO EXTRA COST, are on the last page of this Update.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

CKP Railways plc and Icen Enterprises Ltd wish everyone a peaceful and happy 2011.

The former Chairman of the Northwest Regional Development Agency once remarked that perhaps the Keswick to Penrith Railway Project was ahead of its time.

Its time now seems to be fast arriving.

Thank you to everyone for all the support to date.

Many, many people have contributed in very different ways – professionally, financially, providing ideas or local knowledge, helping with publicity and sales or simply giving encouragement when things have been difficult.

Please stick with us – we will keep on until the task is complete.

This is your Railway - we are just the people who took up the challenge to make it happen.

We have met many people who were on the last train from Keswick in 1972 – and we expect to meet a whole lot more on the first train to arrive on the reopened Railway.

YOU CAN SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR ALL UPDATES in 2011

Subscription for a full year is still only £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.

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

Next Updates planned for April and August – plus e-mail or website alerts for hot news.

Iceni Enterprises Ltd. does not sell or give mailing list details to anybody else !

TRAVEL BY TRAIN – HELP RE-OPEN THE KESWICK RAILWAY

Phone and book your rail tickets through "Chester-le-Track" for any journey on the National Rail Network, including Railrovers and discounts for Railcard holders.

Phone Chester-le-Track on 0191-387-1387, quote "CKP Offer" and they will pay

3% of the total sale as commission to CKP Railways plc.

The total sale must be at least £25, paid for by credit card. Online sales do not qualify for this offer.

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. The DVD version with additional information is now 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.

N.B. All the 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 !).

Cheques payable to Iceni Enterprises Ltd for any of the items above, please.

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

BUY BONDS – INVEST IN THE RAILWAY PROJECT !

CKP Railways plc Bonds, in multiples of £100, pay interest at 4% per annum gross.

Nearly 400,000 raised and invested so far in design and development.

These funds are used only for the Railway reconstruction project. No unnecessary overheads !

Bonds have been bought by organisations and individual holders.

Can be bought for children, grandchildren, friends or relatives.

Fully coloured and signed Certificates are issued - designed to appeal to collectors.

Please write or e-mail with your postal address for a free copy of the Prospectus.

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