



return to **KESWICK**



...on a modern train from your station !

UPDATE NUMBER 58

SPRING 2015

CHANGING TRAINS ON THE MAIN LINES

Most passenger services on the main line railway network in the UK are operated by private companies under franchises from the Government's Department for Transport (DfT).

Some of the franchises affecting Cumbria are due for renewal soon.

Bids for the Northern Franchise and the TransPennine Franchise must be submitted this June.

The shortlisted bidders are:

- Abellio Northern Ltd
- Arriva Rail North Limited
- Govia Northern Limited
- First Trans Pennine Express Limited
- Keolis Go-Ahead Limited
- Stagecoach Trans Pennine Express Trains Limited

Government expects the bidders to make proposals for improvements to train services and ways to increase the number of people travelling by train. Train Operators have direct contact with the public and are therefore expected to have the best understanding of the market.

The next round of franchises will give Train Operators more freedom to expand services beyond those specified as a minimum by the DfT.

CKP Railways plc has sent information about the Keswick to Penrith Re-opening Project to all the shortlisted bidders. Some have already shown interest.

THE POLITICAL YEAR AHEAD

General Election year is likely to be filled with promises.

There were lists of worthy railway re-opening projects (including Keswick to Penrith) from all major parties last time around.

Challenge your candidates for Parliamentary and local elections whether they will now deliver on those 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 !

ANNIVERSARIES

6th March 1972 was the official closure date of the line from Keswick to Penrith for passenger trains, although freight trains continued to run from Blencow quarries for a while.

This Update is being distributed around the 150th anniversary of the first passenger trains (1865). Some celebrations have been suggested in Keswick - information will be available locally.

Construction of the line from Cockermouth to Keswick and Penrith started in 1862 and was completed in 1864. That was all achieved using lots of manual labour and a few machines.

Re-construction with modern techniques to modern standards should take no longer.

But first we have to get through the political and legal stages.....

SPENDING ON ROADS

Cumbria County Council recently confirmed that it will spend £2.3 million on improvements to a road junction leading to one of the major industrial estates in Penrith.

That sum would pay for about 10% of the track for the re-instated Keswick to Penrith Railway.

PLANNING ISSUE – A “HOUSE BY STEALTH”

In Update 57 we described a planning application to Eden District Council about a building on the edge of the trackbed approximately 2 miles from Penrith, in the Newbiggin – Hoghouse area. Originally described as a stable block in 1999, subsequent applications over the years sought to make it partly then permanently occupied as a dwelling.

At least one Parish Council was expected to object and Eden District Council had previously told the owners that this was not a residential area.

The application was due to be decided in January 2015 but it was withdrawn.

That is good news, but the building still stands.

Its presence causes a restriction in re-instating the railway but does not block it completely.

PLANNING ISSUE – WATER PIPELINE FROM THIRLMERE RESERVOIR

United Utilities is consulting on routes for a water pipeline from Thirlmere to West Cumbria.

The preferred route would pass under the trackbed of the Keswick to Penrith Railway in Keswick.

CKP Railways met representatives of United Utilities to discuss technical issues.

There are standards for pipeline and railway crossings, to ensure the safety of both systems.

As currently proposed, construction and operation of the pipeline should not affect the Railway.

United Utilities had examined several proposals, including laying pipes along the trackbed.

That proved impractical and was quickly ruled out.

Protection of the trackbed by the Lake District National Park Authority and awareness of the Railway Project helped them come to a more accommodating decision.

Several years ago, CKP Railways plc also fought off a proposal to route high voltage electricity cables along the trackbed.

There is still some concern in the town about more general water-related issues, particularly flooding from the river and drainage from new developments.

United Utilities plans public consultation meetings along the proposed route of the pipeline.

Comments can be made by e-mail to myview@uuplc.co.uk

Reports and other contact details appear from time to time in local newspapers including the Keswick Reminder. The Reminder is available electronically on subscription.

TRANSPORT UNCERTAINTIES

Every spring is a period of uncertainty for local bus services as the Local Authorities decide how much they can afford to subsidise services.

A long term approach to funding and planning is needed to provide services that people can rely on. Buses reach places far beyond the railway and play a vital role in every day life for a vast number of people. Boats, buses, trains and taxis all have a part to play in everyday life – for work, education, leisure, health and other important visits.

Politicians and Planners with expenses and allowances may assume that ordinary people could use taxis as a substitute for trains and buses. With a single taxi fare from Keswick to Penrith or Windermere (the nearest railway stations) in the order of £40 to £50 each way, that is un-realistic.

Transport that costs more than a day's wages prevents people taking employment or educational opportunities, or leads to them moving away.

PUBLIC SECTOR CHAMPION

Keswick Town Council continues to pull together support from Local Authorities and business groups in particular. Regular meetings are being held and representatives of the various organisations are drawing on the experiences of Local Authorities and Campaign Groups in other areas of the UK where railways are being promoted and re-built.

MESSAGES OF SUPPORT

Recent statements of support for this Railway Project have been made by:

Penrith Chamber of Trade – new President, Aryn Fazal, confirmed that the Chamber will continue to have a representative specifically contributing to the success of this Project

Allerdale Borough Council Conservative candidate Ron Mumby (a former Mayor) pledged his continuing support for the Railway Re-opening Project.

The Northern Regional Council of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) unanimously passed a motion which expressed support for this Project. The motion was proposed by the Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) Union, through a representative from Carlisle.

NORTHERN POWERHOUSE

The present Government has recently spoken a lot about investment in infrastructure in the North – including new electricity generation and transport networks as well as improved telecommunications and internet services to support businesses and expanding communities.

The Cumbrian Coast would be one focus for much of this investment, but road and rail connections are currently slow and long – dictated by the presence of mountains.

Re-instating the Railway from Penrith to Keswick, then on to Workington (the latter stretch closed in 1966) would provide a much more useful, faster link with greater capacity, journey time reliability and better safety standards than roads.

CKP Railways plc is focusing on re-instating Penrith to Keswick as it is largely undamaged, relatively straightforward and economic to build.

Keswick to Workington would need to be mostly built from scratch on new alignments, needing a lot more political resolve. But it is all possible – it has been costed in outline and routes can be found.

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) suggested in March that there should be a “Transport for the North” body with a budget of £15 billion to concentrate on regional matters in a similar way to Transport for London (TfL).

The Chartered Institute for Highways and Transportation (CIHT) at its AGM in March supported calls for devolution of transport decision making.

Local authorities have recently come together to form “Rail North” which will co-ordinate policies and negotiate with the rail industry, but not have as many formal powers.

Locally, Government funding for all purposes tends now to be delivered through Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) which have members from local authorities and the business community.

£47 million for the “Cumbrian Growth Deal”, spread from 2015 to 2021, was announced on a ministerial visit to Cumbria in March – but that was only confirmation of funding for projects which the LEP had already decided to support.

Many of the current bodies are rather nebulous – even the established railway industry sometimes finds it hard to make contact with them. The former Regional Development Agencies have been missed. They had identifiable presences and permanent staff for contact and continuity.

Developing a Project becomes ever more bureaucratic – our aim is to keep it simple so that other communities around the UK can follow our example and get re-connected.

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 !).

Cheques or Postal Orders payable to Iceni Enterprises Ltd for all items above, please.

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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