



return to **KESWICK**



...on a modern train from your station !

UPDATE NUMBER 53

WINTER 2012- 2013

POLITICAL SUPPORT IN PENRITH

Penrith MP Rory Stewart recently advised CKP Railways plc that he supports re-instatement of the Railway between Keswick and Penrith.

This is very welcome news as interest has always been strong in and around Keswick, but more patchy at the eastern end. Some members of Eden District Council have been supportive, but the Authority as a whole has tended not to feel that there is any relevance.

Rory Stewart has spoken to Government colleagues and has tried to encourage Eden District Council to be more receptive to the Project.

There are signs that some doors are beginning to open.

Mr. Stewart has pledged ongoing support.

2013 should be much more positive for the Railway Project !

At last the “supertanker” of political opinion in and around Penrith seems to be turning.

Scepticism is natural, but local authorities can either help or hinder the re-opening of the railway. Attitude is everything. Eden District Council apparently had doubts about the likelihood of re-opening the Railway because of alternative uses of the trackbed – the Council has absolute control over that aspect (land use planning) and the ability to guide events in the right direction.

Under Government planning policy guidance, local authorities have a duty to identify and protect railway trackbeds for potential re-opening.

Government has indicated that sustainable transport is much needed and is looking round the country for schemes which can be easily implemented.

Here is one: a relatively undamaged trackbed (90% intact overall, with minimal intrusion by developments), substantial local support, design, environmental studies and consultations well advanced, people, knowledge and skills available locally and regionally

Eden District Council has over the years often expressed concern at the plans of Train Operators on the national network to reduce the numbers of trains stopping at Penrith: the Train Operators long ago told CKP Railways plc that they would be interested in stopping more trains at Penrith (and running more trains into the area from different directions) if the Keswick line was open !

That was brought to the attention of Eden District Council a long time ago.

Then there is the potential to relieve parking problems at Penrith station and in Penrith generally, encourage visitors to arrive, as well as move between centres, without cars; connect everyone, regardless of age or ability in the complimentary communities and economies of Keswick, Penrith and Carlisle more sustainably; reduce dependence on fossil fuels, ease congestion and parking issues in the Lake District National Park and at Penrith, contribute to a more integrated local public transport system and under-pin regeneration; plus of course create the potential to re-connect west Cumbria with a more direct and attractive rail link

18 miles of re-instated Railway (all on brown-field land), bringing benefits for a much wider area. Managed locally, this Railway re-instatement would be cost-effective and relevant.

LOCAL, REGIONAL OR NATIONAL ?

There is no doubt the re-opening the Railway between Keswick and Penrith will bring benefits:

- Locally, including significant potential to increase visitor numbers and spending (and hence local employment) while reducing traffic and parking problems in Keswick and the North Lakes, also better connecting local businesses to the outside world
- Regionally, providing a more robust regional transport link (railways usually manage to continue working in worse weather than roads and other forms of transport), with many new direct train services possible right across the north of Britain
- Nationally by opening up public access to one of the most popular National Parks for everyone, of any age, whether or not they have access to a car (or would prefer not to use one)

Government is now encouraging planning and development to be controlled at a more local level.

In recent correspondence, the Department for Transport advised CKP Railways plc that it did not view the Keswick to Penrith Railway as a project of national significance.

Although that may seem like a put-down, it actually has many positive implications, as it simplifies the planning and approvals process and allows a more creative approach to financing, planning and construction – to suit local conditions.

COUNTY COUNCIL CRUCIAL

Government only provides money for infrastructure projects it deems necessary at a national level. Re-connecting Keswick is considered to be of regional importance, so must be developed “locally”.

That means we need the County Council, as the local Transport Authority, to be openly supportive. The support of District Councils is also important.

Lobbying can, of course, help. The more that County and District Councillors hear from “people who want to use the Railway”, especially people who vote for them, or pay business rates in the area, or who would travel to the area and spend money, the better.

Petitions are not helpful – a petition with a thousand signatures registers as one comment; a thousand individual letters from different people have enormous impact.

Useful addresses:

- Leader, Cumbria County Council, The Courts, CARLISLE, Cumbria, CA3 8NA
- Chairman, Eden District Council, Mansion House, Friargate, PENRITH, Cumbria, CA11 7YG
- Leader, Allerdale Borough Council, Allerdale House, WORKINGTON, Cumbria, CA14 3YJ

Please let us know what responses you receive.

IN THE “TOO DIFFICULT” BOX ?

Some Councillors seem to think that re-opening a railway is somehow “too difficult”.

It was much harder to start from open fields and build it all with picks, shovels and wheelbarrows in the 1860s. Even now, 40 years after closure, most earthworks and all major bridges are still in place.

With modern technology and equipment, re-instatement would not be a long or disruptive task.

Design work has been done, a scheme description is complete, detailing what needs to be done at every location. Costings have been done and verified by several independent sources.

All of the survey, design and development work has been done by professionals who design and build railways in the UK and abroad.

- An aerial digital mapping survey of the whole route was completed in just over ONE HOUR and produced data much more detailed than the Ordnance Survey can provide
- Relaying the track and commissioning it (with bridges etc. ready) would take about 40 DAYS
- Getting through the planning and approvals process, however, could take one to two years.

CARING FOR BRIDGES

Bridges over and under the line are responsible for a significant part of the cost of building and maintaining a railway. Bridges on the Keswick to Penrith route date from the 1860s and 1890s. All bridges under the line were strengthened in the 1930s so that main line trains could run to Keswick to cater for tourist traffic – especially the Keswick Convention which brought special trains from London. Summer Saturday trains, with buffet or restaurant cars, ran from Newcastle.

Bridges over the line carry roads and paths, many of them being the only means of access to farms and houses in some of the remoter areas. Maintenance, refurbishment and replacement is an on-going task throughout the life of a railway.

One particular over-bridge, No. 91, at Highgate (6 miles from Keswick) now needs major attention. It still belongs to what remains of British Rail – British Railways Board (Residuary) Ltd.

A proposal has been put to the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) to “infill” the bridge with earth and concrete. That would preserve road access over the bridge, but would add to the cost of re-opening the railway and create a visible “barrier” across the line.

CKP Railways plc has commented to the LDNPA that other repairs and strengthening methods for bridge 91, which would not obstruct the re-opening of the railway, should be considered.

The planning application number is 7 / 2012 / 3110.

Please send your comments to the LDNPA, quoting reference 7 / 2012 / 3110.

Write to: Andrew Smith, Planning Case Officer, Lake District National Park Authority,
Murley Moss, Oxenholme Road, KENDAL, Cumbria, LA9 7RL,

Or e-mail: planning@lakedistrict.gov.uk



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THANK YOU AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR !!!

W e w ish everyone a Happy and Successful New Year !

The world did not end on December 21st 2012 – many observers read the date as the start of a new era of co-operation and understanding – certainly there have been some promising signs for this Railway Project towards the end of 2012.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Keswick to Penrith Railway Re-opening Project in so many ways – with advice, moral support, publicity, becoming ambassadors, advocates and “champions” and, of course, with money.

Every piece of support, thought and effort makes a difference.

Nothing is impossible given a positive attitude.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR UPDATES IN 2013

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.

Next Update planned for Spring / Summer – 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 Railovers and offering 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.

Order forms are distributed with printed 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 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.

About £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, giving your postal address, to receive a free copy of the Prospectus.

Cedric A. Martindale.

BSc.Hons, AUS, CEng., MIMechE, CMILT. - Director

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