

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

### ***EXTRA CAPACITY – A STRATEGIC LOOK, OR ONE YEAR AT A TIME?***

Your committee considers the issue of providing sufficient capacity for growing passenger numbers to be vital. Either trains need to be lengthened (to 6 cars) or there need to be extra services to and from Leeds. We are looking forward to learning about the preferred solution when the draft Yorkshire & Humberside Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) is published early next year.

Network Rail has however published two important documents recently. Your Chairman has been warming up for the RUS debate by carefully scrutinising these two documents. Published in October was Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan. The local plan (North Trans Pennine, North & West Yorkshire) forecasts growth in peak passenger flows of over 20% in the five years from 2009 to 2014.

Clearly this kind of growth can't be accommodated on Airedale without increased capacity to and from Leeds – and there are plans for this. By the year 2011/12 a turnback facility is proposed at Keighley (probably an extra, bay platform). Reading between the lines we could perhaps imagine that our all stations Leeds to Skipton service would be terminated at Keighley – while a half hourly Leeds to Skipton service would run fast to Keighley and then serve local stations to Skipton.

The Skipton fast service could perhaps incorporate some or all of the services

which run beyond Skipton (to Morecambe or Carlisle). This could be done for our ever-extending 'peak' hours or, maybe, throughout the whole working day. Skipton and Leeds to Bradford services could continue as now (half-hourly). (Remember that in 2010/11 the proposed new stations at Apperley Bridge and Kirkstall Forge are due to be opened. These, on present plans, will be served by Leeds-Bradford FS trains, and, while to be hugely welcomed will add to the overall capacity problems on the Leeds North West Network - Ed.)

This plan (the Keighley turnback) has considerable merit. It may however prove to be very expensive. Not only would we need a new platform at Keighley – with associated resignalling, in my view there would also need to be an upgrade of the signalling between Shipley and Keighley (from three to four aspect) in order to reduce headways on this busy stretch. If that were done then it might just be possible to fit the six passenger trains per hour in each direction as well as the freight traffic.

The option of platform lengthening is rejected in this Strategic plan – because of lack of space at Shipley station. The Network Rail 2007 Business Plan (published on the 1<sup>st</sup> November) takes the same view of platform lengthening. Unfortunately it also excludes the plan for an extra platform at Keighley. It suggests that likely growth in passenger

numbers will be 2% per annum (i.e. 10.4% over five years, half of the growth rate according to the Strategic plan).

We do not consider that this is a realistic estimate of likely growth in traffic in Airedale. You only have to look at the number of new housing developments close to our stations to realise that many more people will be commuting. This plan then comes to the unhelpful conclusion

that "one of the biggest challenges will be to accommodate growth on the Aire and Wharfe Valley services". It totally fails to suggest any solution.

We wait to read the draft Route Utilisation Strategy with interest. Will it provide a Strategic plan – or will it take one year at a time and hope that the challenge of growth will just go away?

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## ...meanwhile, in Germany...

We have family connections with Nuremberg, a city of similar size to Leeds – but blessed with two cross-city underground lines (one of them extends now to the Airport), an extensive network of trams and excellent rail service. This includes three 'S-Bahn' lines which provide fast (heavy rail) local services on segregated tracks. Because they run on their own tracks, free from interference by long distance and freight services they perform really well. I have seen **punctuality** figures of over 99% within 5 minutes of schedule!

They have recently announced extensions to their 'S-Bahn' services,

increasing the length of the network from 67km to 206km. The new, segregated tracks (to Ansbach, Forcheim & Hartmannshof) will be open by December 2010, at a cost of 200 million Euro. Meanwhile they have ordered 42 '4 car' electric trains from Bombardier at a cost of 170 million Euro. These new 100 mph units will operate all the 'S-Bahn' trains. And, another thing, these costs do not include the money earmarked to develop the new high speed InterCity line out to Forcheim (and eventually Erfurt).

What could we achieve with a fraction of this investment?  
*Tim Calow*

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## The V.C. at the BAFTA awards ceremony?

**Well**, not quite. As a member of the newly-formed British Transport Police, National Independent Advisory Group, I was asked to attend the launch of a DVD produced by BTP in the wonderful setting of the British Academy for Film and Television Arts on 12 September 2007.

The DVD aims to promote understanding of police stop and search powers, particularly those under the Terrorism Act 2000. The DVD explains how and why this power is exercised and people's rights.

BTP is the single biggest user of stop/search under section 4W of the Terrorism Act 2000, having carried out 30,000 over the last year, three quarters of which in London.

The Chief Constable, Ian Johnston, noted that as well as launching the DVD, he was also briefing officers and supervisors to make sure they understood how intrusive and unwelcome these stops could be. Officers must ensure they always recognise the dignity of the individuals concerned and did not carry out searches in a discriminatory manner. Ethnic or religious profiling is not used to select people for search.

There was a very useful question and answer session and useful feedback. To find out more about stop and search visit the [www.btp.police.uk](http://www.btp.police.uk) or write to BTP, 25 Camden Road, London NW1 9LN. I must thank BTP for allowing me to use information from their staff magazine: *The Blue Line*, issue 199. *Marten Lougee*

# Engineering work leads to unsatisfactory bus replacements



*Engineering work taking place at Crossflatts at end of September, showing the waterspray membrane prior to ballast being laid.  
Keith Preston*

**W**hile there are no big improvement schemes taking place on the Airedale line itself, there have been a whole series of weekend blockades of our line, largely caused by track renewals needed to cater for the increasing coal traffic on the Leeds-Carlisle line.

There have been bus substitutions on many weekends (Saturdays & Sundays) during the autumn and we have been unhappy about a number of aspects of the engineering work and your Chairman has been working hard behind the scenes to help tackle some of the problems. (The dates of such planned blockades and the resulting train service changes, as advised by WYPTE/Metro, can be found on our web site [www.avrug.org.uk](http://www.avrug.org.uk) - Ed.)

We are firstly unhappy about the length and timing of the blockades. November weekends normally see our train packed with people who are going out to do their Christmas shopping. Many of the passengers have been arriving at the stations expecting a normal train service – and have been severely disappointed. We would like to see

blockades for routine track relaying of no more than 30 hours so that normal Saturday services can run. Disturbingly, the Network Rail Strategic Plan hints that our railway may have to be shut more often for maintenance work and we believe that this is not appropriate.

Secondly there have been major problems with the passenger information available. We have worked hard, together with Northern Rail, to try and improve the quality of information on their posters. Thanks to this hard work, the posters are much improved. However it has proved much more difficult to sort the problems with the information on the various computerised passenger information systems.

We have pointed out many errors, and staff at Network Rail have worked hard to take on board our comments. However very often the correct information has not been available until a few hours before the trains (or bus replacements) are due to run. This is not satisfactory. Accurate train information should be available months, not hours, before

planned engineering work.

Thirdly, we are uncomfortable with the provision of information at unstaffed stations (like Saltaire, Crossflatts, Steeton and Cononley). Not all passengers avidly read all the posters – and unless they do they are likely to have a long wait on the station platform – for a non-existent train service.

We are told that the screens cannot be programmed to tell passengers that there are no trains. We have, however, been promised that frequent announcements will be made. That will just leave passengers to tackle the 'Find the bus stop' competition.

On the first weekend of bus replacements there were no directions from the stations, neither were there any bus stop signs. If they are lucky they will find a bus. If they are really lucky the bus will be going in the right direction. The 'winners' can then 'enjoy' the extra 20 minutes (plus) that their short journey will take.

There is much more I could grumble about – but I'd better stop now. The really unlucky passengers are those heading down the Carlisle line on more buses but they can join the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle line. *Tim Calow*

**Footnote:-** Your Editor lives on the Ilkley line, and has had two bad experiences lately, related to poor information, despite also being the one that updates AVRUG's web site with the information.

On the first date, a Sunday, I forgot that the Airedale work prevented trains running Leeds-Guiseley, and (there being no information apparent at my station) I boarded the train at Burley, only then to find out that it was going only as far as Guiseley, where a bus awaited. The trouble was that the bus soon got full, and people were left behind, with an hour to wait for the next bus, hardly a good start to a Sunday journey, with connections missed, etc.

On the second date, when trains were apparently affected by "leaves on the line" I arrived at Burley station to see all trains shown on the screens as being 'on time', and the PA system was quiet. 15 minutes after the booked train time, a replacement coach arrived outside the station and the driver told us no trains were running. When, after 30 minutes, we finally got to Guiseley the driver told us a Leeds train was imminent, so we got off the bus, and the train, from Ilkley, duly arrived! *SB*

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## Better facilities for Shipley station

**airlines** understands that improved facilities are to be installed at Shipley station, in line with the government's proposals to bring some stations up to the standards required by the Disability Discrimination Act.

Local papers suggest that a new footbridge is to be built between platforms 3 and 4 (the ones serving the Bradford-Leeds and Ilkley trains), and this, and the existing bridge between platforms 1 and 2 (on the main Leeds-Skipton line) will be equipped with lifts.

A leaflet noted at Shipley station in

mid-November mentions only the lifts, and at the time the WYPTE/Metro was unclear what was happening, as this is a Network Rail, rather than Metro or Northern Rail, project. The leaflet indicates the work will be completed by next summer.

This is in addition to the planned work which will improve the pedestrian route between Shipley's bus and rail stations.

Other longer-term work in the pipeline for the rail station includes the easing of the speed restrictions on the approach to platform 5, freeing up capacity.

# Leeds-Lancaster-Morecambe Community Rail Partnership's Executive Group - Report of latest meeting

Firstly I need to apologise that I omitted two of the bodies represented on the CRP in my first article. These are the Settle and Carlisle Development Company and Lancaster City Council. At least it shows that they read the articles in *airlines!*

It was agreed that we would seek to obtain representation from the Craven District Council as well.

One of the options put forward by the Consultants (TAS) was for an additional train each way Monday to Saturday, known as option 2. We are now pushing Northern Rail to examine the business case to be made for such a development. It does mean that retimings will be needed on other services such as the morning Ribbleshead-Leeds, however overall it would provide for increased capacity on the line and allow commuting between Lancaster and Leeds because the first train will be earlier and the last one later.

Bentham Development Trust has taken out a lease for the use of the station buildings at Bentham which is a positive step as it makes use of the site.

We are still waiting to hear if there will be any changes to rolling stock: however for the time being Pacer units are the order of the day.

A leaflet entitled "Places to Visit" has been prepared by our friends from LASRUG and copies are in the station booking halls. It covers the whole line so some of our stations get a mention as well as those from Skipton onwards.

The last report prompted a letter from Michael Lockley. He makes the point about connections at Carnforth being poor for South Lakeland; he feels that consideration should be given to other destinations other than Morecambe and Lancaster for the line. What do you think?

*Rodney Tickner*

*Following the launch of the L+M CRP earlier this year, the party of rail and council representatives are pictured under the famous clock on Carnforth station*



# Rail franchise and other news

*a round-up by Steve Broadbent*

**I**n the last edition of *airlines* I previewed the many changes to the ownership of the train services which pass through Leeds, and noted that there would now be no further changes for some years to come. I should stress that the changes do not affect our local operator, Northern Rail, nor the operation of the Trans Pennine Express (TPE) services which serve Manchester, Liverpool, Hull, Scarborough, York and Newcastle from Leeds.

But what is happening will doubtless cause problems on the ground as new names are seen and heard around the stations, and as old liveries slowly give way to new. These changes do nothing except cause confusion to passengers and uncertainty to staff, give work to those who design and implement livery changes - at considerable cost - and a general musical chairs among managers, who, either transferring from one train operator to another finding themselves out of work, their expertise lost to the industry. But someone in Whitehall thinks it's a jolly good idea....

It should be stressed that none of the former train operators lost their franchise because of poor performance or any similar complaints, it is simply change for change's sake - and not all the new operators won on lowest price.

Anyway, as the changes are so basic, here is a summary.

## **As from November 11...**

a/ The Cross Country franchise which runs through Leeds from/to Newcastle and Scotland in the one direction and Birmingham and the south in the other, changed from being run by Virgin to Arriva, and will be known as CrossCountry. For now the timetable stays the same, but expect major changes in December 2008. The web site is [www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk](http://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk), and the

contact phone numbers are:- Customer Relations 0870 010 0084, Ticket Sales 0844 811 0124.

b/ The former Midland Mainline Service which runs in the morning peak from Leeds to London St Pancras via Derby, and back in the evening, changed from being operated by National Express to Stagecoach, and is known as East Midlands Trains. Again expect timetable changes next December. The web site is [www.eastmidlandstrains.co.uk](http://www.eastmidlandstrains.co.uk), and the phone number does not seem to appear on the web site. (That is, of course, yet another issue, the cost of all these complex new web sites for the in-coming operators, which are not designed to a common standard.)

c/ As from December 9, the GNER service between Leeds and London Kings Cross, including the daily trains from Skipton, Harrogate and Bradford, ownership changes from Sea Containers to National Express and is known as National Express East Coast (NEXC). Here, there will be major timetable changes in December 2010. The web site is [www.youeastcoast.co.uk](http://www.youeastcoast.co.uk), and the phone number "for comments, ideas and questions" is 0207 324 8127.

There are also changes in operator ownership for some trains in the Midlands and London, so the web site and phone number you are used to may have altered, if you are seeking information on services in those areas.

Elsewhere, the long-proposed new 'open access' service by Grand Central ([www.grandcentralrail.co.uk](http://www.grandcentralrail.co.uk)) linking London Kings Cross with York and Sunderland (and therefore giving easier travel between Leeds and the Durham coast, has been delayed but should finally start in December.

In London, the new Eurostar terminal at London St Pancras started operations



*A view of the interior of St Pancras station, taken by the editor a month before its formal opening for Eurostar trains.*

on November 14 ([www.eurostar.com](http://www.eurostar.com)), greatly speeding rail travel between Yorkshire and the continent. With just a five minute walk between the platforms at Kings Cross and the Eurostar departure area at St Pancras (even less if you travel south by East Midlands Trains direct to St Pancras), journeys to Lille, Brussels and Paris - all of which offer connections into high-quality trains for destinations further into Europe - will be quicker and easier. Paris, for example, is now 2 hours 15 minutes from St Pancras.

If you are in London and get the chance, do pay a visit to the new St Pancras station, which is truly superb, even a Frenchman is quoted in the rail press as saying it is the best station in the world, bar none!!

And in the same area, on December 9 the new St Pancras Thameslink station opens, with easy access from the concourses of both St Pancras and Kings Cross onto trains heading for Brighton, Gatwick Airport, Croydon, Sutton and other destinations south of Kings Cross, as well as north to St Albans, Luton and Bedford. The Kings Cross Thameslink station down Pentonville Road closes on the same day, again making interchange at Kings Cross very much easier.

Further into the future, new high speed 'domestic' services start from St Pancras into Kent from December 2009, bringing places such as Dover, Margate and Canterbury that much closer in time to the Aire Valley.

And I cannot help myself in drawing your attention to the 16 BILLION just committed to the new London Cross Rail project, due to open in 2017, and compare it with the paucity of money being spent on rail in the north. It is reported that Trans Pennine's bid to add a fourth carriage to its trains to cope with demand and overcrowding has been rejected by the Department of Transport, even though the operator offered to fund the acquisition without any additional subsidy - the DfT was not prepared, it is said, to underwrite these extra carriages with regard to any future operator of the franchise who might decide to cut back and do without them. So your trains on the TPE network will get ever more crowded, as demand soars.

Similarly, *airlines* understands that the contract Northern had with Angel Trains, the train leasing company, to provide 12 extra 15+ year old Class 158 trains in December has been "amended", some reports suggest under pressure

from the DfT, and instead, as well as being able to lengthen some existing Class 158s from two carriages to three, Northern will be bringing ten of the widely-hated Class 142 Pacers out of storage, whence they went earlier this year when Northern thought it had done with them.

## Timetable

As is now the custom, the British railways timetable has its annual change in December, but this year there are no changes to report on our line, apart from small changes on Sunday evenings, nor indeed many across the north.

The one change which has come to notice is that as from, December 9, a new Leeds-Hebden Bridge via Dewsbury and Brighouse hourly service starts, which will give faster journeys, especially from Hebden Bridge and Brighouse to Leeds, passengers will no longer have to go via Bradford - although the existing services on that route remain unaffected.

I have seen no reports of any other changes to Northern, Trans-Pennine, Cross Country, or NXEC services from/ to Yorkshire in the new timetable, but as always, do check before setting out!

## Engineering Works

Engineering works which affect services on the Aire Valley line and the routes to Carlisle and Morecambe are placed on our web site, [www.avrug.org.uk](http://www.avrug.org.uk), as soon as they are received from WYPTE.

Further afield, in the run up to Christmas there are extensive works on the East Coast Mainline towards London, which means if you are heading that way you will face seriously long coach rides on some days.

Similarly, there will be line closures in the Manchester area which will affect access to the city and the airport. Christmas and New Year is the annual clash between the public's desire to travel home, to see friends and relatives, and the railways' desire to tear up key bits of track and disrupt plans. Again, do check first, the National rail web site is <http://www.nationalrail.co.uk>, and the phone is 08457 48 49 50. It is also worth noting that this web site allows you to monitor the progress of any train, so you can readily check if the one you want to catch or are meeting is running on time.

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## On the line

*by Tim Calow*

Generally services have been running well (except for weekends, see earlier!). There have been delays, as usual in autumn, due to leaves on the line. It really is a problem. I recently experienced a Pacer sliding along the rails for some four or five seconds before the driver managed to stop it in the platform at Hornbeam Park. There were particular problems in Airedale on 7 and 8 November after many leaves were brought down in strong winds. We have also had:-

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September  
Major disruption continued most of the

day after engineering work was finished late. Leeds to Skipton services had to be diverted via Guiseley, with extended journey times. Bradford to Leeds (and Ilkley) services had to be cancelled.

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September

Services in the morning peak were disrupted after a unit failed at Keighley.

Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> October

Services between Keighley and Skipton were badly disrupted by a failed freight train. Fortunately the disruption occurred after the morning peak. However services throughout the Leeds North West area were disrupted.

# SELRAP train highlights

## “Missing Link”

*Steve Broadbent reports*



the Mayor of Skipton, Councillor Carole Manley, and the Mayor of Pendle, Councillor Allan Buck at Herriott's, the train sped off with its 200+ passengers to Leeds, and then routed via Bradford and Rose Grove to Colne.

SELRAP has come a very long way since 2001, but still has a mountain to climb if it is to succeed in its aim. But it has gathered immense support, and has certainly achieved

**I** didn't have a stop watch on it, but SELRAP's special 4-coach class 156 charter train on October 28 made the non-stop run from Skipton to Leeds in a tad under 28 minutes, and it was quite something, writing as the chap who founded the group over six years ago, to see the Platform 9B departure screens announcing the 14.48 to Blackburn via Colne - if only the train could have gone the direct route!!

SELRAP, the Skipton-East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership, campaigns for the “Missing Link” between Skipton and Colne to be re-opened as part of the national rail network. October's train was the group's second to link the two towns by the scenic route. Like Train 1 back in April it went from Colne to Skipton via Blackburn and Hellifield, taking 100 minutes to cover what could be done in 15 by the 11.5 mile direct route, closed in 1970.

After a lunch break in Skipton, where members of SELRAP's committee joined

more than any similar English campaign group. It features in all the right forward planning documents, and, following a study by the consultants JMP (which SELRAP's 300+ paid-up members helped fund, although several supporting bodies also gave much-appreciated donations) Network Rail is considering including the scheme in its forthcoming North West Rail Utilisation Study. News on this is expected shortly, and will be found, along with full details of SELRAP and a gallery of photos of the “Missing Link” charter train at [www.selrap.org.uk](http://www.selrap.org.uk)

If the Skipton-Colne line is re-laid, hopefully in another six years' time, it will open up a raft of new journey opportunities by rail, such as from the Aire Valley and Skipton to Manchester or Preston, and from East Lancashire towns to Leeds. But before routes and rolling stock are decided by the government of the day, there is still a great deal of campaigning for SELRAP to do, which continues to drive forward with real passion, enthusiasm and commitment.

# Performance and traffic growth remain good despite bad weather and disruptive engineering works

**D**espite a downward blip in the reliability of the Leeds-Skipton train service in the summer, due to the very wet weather, the Moving Annual Average of the Public Performance Measure (PPM) has remained steadily above the target of 85% throughout the past 12 months, being generally at or slightly above 90%.

Being closely interlinked, the figures for Bradford-Skipton are very similar. The PPM measures the percentage of trains arriving within five minutes of scheduled time, and the PPM for Northern Rail as a whole continues to be higher than target - at over 90%, it has recently been as much as 2.5 percentage points above the corresponding figure for last year.

In the four week period covering late-July/early-August, the monthly Leeds-Skipton PPM fell to 81.8%, but rebounded to over 93% in the subsequent two periods and has exceeded 90% in six of the periods up to September 2007.

While these figures are very heartening, given the almost independent nature of the Aire Valley services, that is we have our own dedicated fleet of modern trains and virtually sole use of Platforms 2-5 at Leeds, as well as sole use of Bradford Forster Square, they are really only to be expected.

As Tim Calow points out on page 3, the chaos caused by recent engineering works along the line is a cause for concern, and, as I write, the situation on November 7 following a night of strong but by no means exceptional winds, was simply awful, both in the morning and the evening, long after the weather had abated. In this instance

inconvenience and delay to passengers by weather which really ought not to have been an issue, was heightened by the total lack of information. The day-long delay to services will doubtless causes another blip in this month's figures!

Nevertheless, passenger figures on our line, and indeed on the whole of the "Leeds North West" group, which includes the Ilkley line, continue to rise strongly, and peak-hour trains become ever more packed. Northern Rail as a whole saw passenger numbers grow by 10% in each of its first two years, and is on course for a similar figure in Year 3, and the growth on Leeds North West is above this average - it is likely that well over 12 million passengers will be carried by our Class 333 trains this year. But what the solution to the resulting overcrowding this success brings might be far from clear - all options I have seen discussed go far beyond any money there might be available, but a solution is needed.

In the last *airlines* I described the proposed new automatic ticket gates to be installed at Leeds station. Work was initially due for completion before Christmas, then the work was likely to be done either side of New Year, now it is delayed until well into 2008.

The weekned engineering works on our line are over for the time being, but if you are travelling by rail over Christmas and the New Year DO CHECK before making arrangements, there will be a lot of disruption in other parts of the country - those works we know about are on AVRUG's web site [www.avrug.or.uk](http://www.avrug.or.uk), but it does not claim to be comprehensive.

# On board a charter steam train



*The recently restored WD 2-8-0 '90733' at Oxenhope, rebuilt from a Swedish locomotive on the Worth Valley Railway.*

Keith Renshaw

**Earlier** this year I was a voluntary steward on some of the Kingfisher tours from Hellifield to Carlisle and return, *writes Keith Renshaw*. I was given a blue Kingfisher tours T-shirt and for each train I was allocated a coach. My duties were to ensure passengers were occupying the right seats, answering any questions and keeping them informed on the journey. All trains were fully booked with 8F 48151 hauling water stops were made at Appleby in both directions with about 2

hours available at Carlisle. I did have one rather strange question to answer from someone who had never been on a steam-hauled train. He wanted to know whether the steam engine needed separate tracks!!

With 12 full passenger coaches in tow, 48151 did struggle but kept to the schedule. Kingfisher is planning to increase the number of trains for 2008, some of which may be midweek rather than Sundays. Compared with other steam charters, the fares are much cheaper. The downside is that the Sunday Northern Rail services to/from Hellifield are infrequent and in the evening the charter arrived at about 19.35. but the next train to Skipton was not until 21.05. Consequently, most people used their cars and West Coast Railway opened their open unsurfaced car park in the former goods yard, but it was free of charge.

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## 1977 – 30 years on, part 3

**There** was a special deal for cyclists who could get free tickets for their cycles via the Cyclists' Touring Club, subject to "accommodation being available in guard's vans" – such phraseology now seems somewhat quaint where space is provided on some units but in quite limited numbers.

Prices were interesting – the *Railway Magazine* cost 35p an issue and the Cambrian Coast Express cost £4.50 from Bristol with haulage by a class 40. A specially chartered HST to Edinburgh would cost £18.50 from King's Cross.

The cost of infringing BR rules increased, most at least doubling:  
Trespass and stone throwing – £200  
Failure to produce a ticket - £50

Smoking in a non-smoking compartment - £50

Improper use of the communication cord - £50

The comments about trespass were pertinent as there was increasing concern at trespass by photographers especially for steam specials – the enthusiast denouncing the casual visitors who also trespassed but did not appreciate the need to keep off the rails.

On October 8<sup>th</sup> there was the first-ever through working from BR onto the KWVR. It was a Scottish special from Falkirk using coaches which were on their first visit south of the border.

*Rod Tickner*

## Letters, ?? and !!

**AVRUG** welcomes 'Letters to the Editor', whether questions about our railways or comments on them, for possible inclusion in *airelines*. Please address them to the Editor, as below, and we will do our best to fully answer points raised. Letters will be published as space permits, and may be edited.

Longer contributions to *airelines* are also welcome, but please contact the Editor in advance, to ensure space is available and to agree content and deadlines, etc.

## Subs and £££

**AVRUG** does its work in lobbying for better and more reliable services along the Aire Valley thanks to its loyal membership, who pay just £3 a year for the privilege!! Donations or

sponsorship to allow us to do even more are just as gratefully welcomed! The address for subscriptions is below, for donations please contact the Treasurer.

## Web site

**Our web site**, [www.avrug.org.uk](http://www.avrug.org.uk), is continually being developed, and includes more travel news - especially news of local engineering works. Do keep an eye on it!!

## Next Newsletter...

...**is due** to be published in March 2008, and every quarter. Very final copy date is 15 February

## Thanks to...

...**Northern Rail**, for generous sponsorship which makes publication to this standard possible.

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