“Should the promoters of the scheme to reopen the route from Skipton – Colne be successful in securing funding, then it is likely that this line will have been reopened”..... a look back from the future by Network Rail ..... as published in the Lancashire and Cumbria Route Utilisation Strategy, August 2008.

So the sooner our potential funding partners show their hand and open their purses, the sooner the Skipton-Colne line will become a reality..... Ed.
REOPENING A RAILWAY HAS BEEN LIKENED TO PUSHING A BOULDER UPHILL. BUT SELRAP HAS GONE ONE BETTER AND MOVED MOUNTAINS.

Tireless campaigning has metamorphosed the case for reopening the Skipton-Colne railway. And now it’s official. Funding is now the remaining obstacle to reinstatement of the Skipton-Colne line. Looking back from the future, the quote on the front cover says it all:

*Should the promoters of the scheme to reopen the route from Skipton – Colne be successful in securing funding, then it is likely that this line will have been reopened.*

But it gets better. For, within Network Rail’s recently published Route Utilisation Strategy for the Lancashire & Cumbria region there are further references to the potential for reinstating the Skipton-Colne line. And all of them point in the same direction ..... towards a working assumption that the line will reopen. The quote below says it all. And there are more ..... 

*A study commissioned on behalf of local stakeholders has identified a potential high level case for reinstatement of the line and services between Skipton and Colne. The most significant issue now is how the scheme could be funded.*

Promoter, local stakeholder ..... call, the Skipton-East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership what you will. For the fact remains that the study Network Rail refers to was carried out by JMP Consulting on behalf of SELRAP. And, published last year, it has proved to be a turning point for the campaign ..... opening doors previously closed to the group.

The photographs below epitomise that fact!

Reopening a railway has been likened to pushing a boulder uphill. But SELRAP has gone one better and moved mountains.

Tireless campaigning has metamorphosed the case for reopening the Skipton-Colne railway. And now it’s official. Funding is now the remaining obstacle to reinstatement of the Skipton-Colne line. Looking back from the future, the quote on the front cover says it all:

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Beyond the technology to fix red lights, *CravenRail 11* closed with the notion that if you only do what you’ve always done, you’ll only get what you’ve always had. Those of us at the thick end of the campaign are more than aware of this. And it has to be said that this is one of the reasons why we are where we are ..... with green lights now pointing the way towards engaging with potential funding partners. And that new trans-Pennine rail link .....
Comment

Time was when most parts of the country were accessible by rail. Look at it now ..... 

Once upon a time there was a railway that everyone regarded as a National Treasure. Big enough and bold enough to carry everything that moved, the Queen was proud of her country’s trains, for they enabled factories to be built, towns to grow, and people to travel almost anywhere they wanted. Best of all, they helped to make her country wealthy.

But, as all those familiar with the Department of Fairy Tales will be acutely aware, once upon another time there was a big bad wolf ..... who huffed, and he puffed, and well ..... you know the rest! Yet despite unprecedented demands on our rationalised rail network, with surprising similarity to another of those childhood tales, putting it all back together again appears to be beyond the combined wit of all the king’s horses and all the king’s men. So to speak.

Enough of that. And back to the grown up reality that the nation’s wealth really is closely tied to its transport network. Since half the rail network was trashed, there has been a sixfold increase in road traffic. And what with 35 million vehicles currently doesn’t take years to cover the UK, it does the other 30 million of us, who had their railways surgically removed ‘cos they can wait another twenty years. And it begins to sounds like a sort of policy. But for the other 30 million of us, who had their railways removed ‘cos they weren’t making a profit, all of this is as much hot air.

Worldwide statistics tell us that transport infrastructure almost never makes a profit. Meanwhile, fixed, still, with the holy grail of business case, profit et al, worthwhile projects remain stuck in the sand. That said, ask yourself how much profit the road outside your home makes. And then ask how life would be without it.

But, thanks to tireless campaigning, SELRAP is on track to ”Mend the Gap” between Skipton and Colne. And then, wearing my baby boomer’s hat to cover a balding pate, there’s a wild card to consider. The most travelled generation ever ..... and many with disposable income that makes this possible well into retirement ..... by 2015 there will be 15 million of us over sixty. Right now I’m perfectly happy to climb into my car and drive it over for years, and not many of my cohorts would say the same. But how we will feel in the years to come remains to be seen. Yet, having developed the travel habit over many years, I guess that only the wooden box would stop us. Now like it or lump it, the alternative transport of choice for car users is rail. And that’s going to mean a whole lot more demand for rail services. On a much rationalised network that is half the size it was in our youth ..... and already bursting at the seams with more traffic than ever in peacetime Britain.

Back to where we came in ..... and questions concerning problems that are with us now. Problems that need addressing within timeframes we can all get our heads around. With policies that embrace a programme of strategic rail reopenings based on tightly controlled and agreed parameters.

And yes ..... backed by a business case that points to the fact that the quantifiable benefits of reopening the Skipton-Colne line will exceed incurred costs by a factor of 2.4:1 ..... the campaign goes on.

Andy Shackleton - Editor
AS THOUGH REGULAR FOLLOWERS OF ......

SELRAP’s campaign needed reminding. But with circulation of CravenRail going off the scale, it figures that many readers will be new to the Skipton-East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership. Together with the campaign for re-instatement of the Skipton–Colne railway line as part of a new, modern, trans-Pennine route for passengers and freight.

A voluntary group with 350 members, and rising, SELRAP is led by an Executive Committee with task-specific officers. Tireless campaigning has metamorphosed the case for reopening the Skipton–Colne railway from headlines that screeched “Non Starter” and “Pipe Dream” ..... to ones that read quite simply When and How Soon? Those at the thick end of the campaign are driven by a passion to rebuild just a tiny part of a network trashed in the dash for modernity. And after seven years of amazing work that has taken members of the group to the limit of their experience and, at times, beyond ...... SELRAP is aware that the remaining obstacle to reopening the line is funding.

AS THE STYLISED MAP BELOW ..... makes abundantly clear, juxtaposed between Leeds and Manchester, when reopened as a through route [in tandem with the 400 yard stretch of line known as the Todmorden Curve] the Skipton-Colne railway will create a much-needed new rail route for those wishing to access the North of England’s major economic drivers. And the increasing numbers wishing to travel between them for both business and leisure purposes.

With commute times of approximately one hour to Leeds and Manchester, the population of much of Pennine Lancashire will be able to take advantage of new employment opportunities. And then there’s the bit about the environment, sustainability, the easing of road congestion, air quality, et al ..... The writer’s wife once famously commented that: Good ideas sell themselves. More famous by far, in a recent interview, Foreign Secretary David Miliband said: The whole point about good ideas is that they don’t die. OK, so both quotes are taken out of context. But whichever way you look at it, the messages within them remain. As does the continued growth in support for SELRAP’s campaign. Which points to the notion that, for all sorts of reasons, the proposal to reopen the Skipton-Colne railway is selling itself.

And the proposal is so far from dying as to beggar belief. So it’s official! Reopening the Skipton-Colne railway is a good idea!

126 MPs THINK SO TOO ..... Which translates into the fact that 20% of UK MPs now back SELRAP’s campaign to reopen the Skipton-Colne railway. In the last six months, letters or messages of support have been received from: David Heyes (Ashton-under-Lyne), Joan Walley (Stoke-on-Trent North), Mark Hunter (Cheadle), Jeff Ennis (Barnsley East & Mexborough), Lynne Jones (Birmingham Selly Oak), Nick Clegg (Sheffield Hallam), Rt Hon George Howarth (Knowsley North & Sefton East), Anne McIntosh (Vale of York), Michael Clapham (Barnsley West & Penistone), Derek Twigg (Halton), David Crausby (Bolton North East), Paul Rowen (Rochdale), Roger Williams (Brecken and Radnorshire), Adrian Sanders (Torbay), Tim Yeo (South Suffolk), Steve Webb (North Avon), Alan Beith (Berwick-upon-Tweed), Richard Younger-Ross (Teignbridge), Danny Alexander (Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey), Andrew Stunnell (Hazel Grove) and Douglas Carswell (Harwich).

We now have the backing of 47 members of the House of Lords. Sadly one supporter from the House of Lords, Lord Beaumont, has died. The latest peers to support our campaign are: Lord Roberts of Llandudno and Lord Lofthouse of Pontefract.


Action: If your MP or MEP is not listed as a SELRAP supporter, please contact them and ask them to write a letter or email supporting the reopening of the Skipton to Colne railway.

Scotland: Catherine Stihler, David Martin, John Purvis CBE. London: John Bowis OBE, Jean Lambert. Wales: Glenys Kinnock
A TALE OF TWO LINES:
Both were engineered for heavy use by passenger and freight trains. Both serve surprisingly similar areas ….. with similar population density and profiles. For more than 120 years they were part of a trans-Pennine route that linked markets and communities with each other ….. and their economic drivers.

But look at them now. Just 800,000 passengers use services on the 40 mile route between Colne and Blackpool, whilst a staggering 7 million use the 30 mile Aire Valley line that links Skipton with Leeds. Station footfall figures on the diagrams above and below say it all.

AIRE VALLEY: CRAVEN/SKIPTON-SHIPLEY:
- Mix urban industrial/rural: population: 180,000
- Distance Skipton-Shipley: 17 miles
- Service: Up to 6 per hour (Mainly electric)
- Rail passengers 2007: 4.86million (station figures below)
- Rail journeys/head of population: 26.7

with Leeds. Station footfall figures on the diagrams above and below say it all.

The Colne branch currently shelters under the umbrella of a Community Rail Partnership that, under difficult circumstances, is working hard. Indeed, at the time of writing a brand new Transport Interchange is close to completion a couple of miles down the line in Nelson. This exciting combination of bus and upgraded rail facilities on the station site has integrated transport stamped all over it. But, situated on the downgraded and singled, remnant of that once-through route, in rail terms, the region it serves will [for now] remain semi-detached.

Yet less than a dozen miles away, the Airedale line linking Skipton with Leeds carries 75% of the commuter flow within the corridor. Indeed, electrified in 1994, the line has gained the enviable reputation of being one of the most heavily used commuter routes outside London. But there is more. For, factored into the equation are frequent long distance freight services.

The result is a line that is plainly doing just what it said on the [promoter’s] box. Linking the wider corridor of the route with Leeds, Bradford, and the rest of the nation’s growing industrial economy, it made a vast contribution to the region when the line was built a hundred and sixty years ago. And, thanks to thoughtful investment and upgrading to meet the increasing demands of the 21st century, it continues to do so.

Pre-investment in electrification and upgrading, half empty Pacer Trains that mirrored those on the Colne branch used to rattle up and down the line. But look at it now: the transport of choice for millions. And part of the nuts and bolts of society.
MEANWHILE ..... 

Back on the other side of the Pennines, Lancashire County Council, the East Lancashire Community Rail Partnership, Northern Rail and Network Rail are working hard to make the best of the limited potential of the Colne branch. Stations on the line have been smartened up and, close to completion at the time of writing, Nelson’s new Transport Interchange looks set to make a start on integrated transport for the region.

But there is no escaping from the fact that, for now, the Colne branch is a dead end line. A cul de sac. Posh for a street that goes nowhere. There’s one just round the corner from you. Remember? And the closer to the end you get, the less traffic uses it. That so few use the Colne line is less surprising already.

Typically, rail journeys from Colne-Manchester take 1¾ hours whilst those to Leeds take 2½ hours. Both journeys require a change of train. And single line stretches can result in trains being delayed. Or cancelled without notice! Moreover, as no direct routes are available, costs are commensurate with the distance travelled.

Without doubt, the Colne branch, is being all dressed up. But, isolated from the region’s economic drivers, there is still nowhere for it to go. Stuck between a rock and a hard place, its massive infrastructure will remain under utilised on a grand scale. The only option for its future viability is reinstatement as part of the through route it once was. Juxtaposed between Leeds and Manchester, when reopened as a through route [in tandem with the Todmorden Curve] the Skipton-Colne railway will create a new route for those wishing to access the North of England’s major economic drivers. And the increasing numbers wishing to travel between them for both business and leisure purposes.

SO WHAT’S SELRAP DOING ABOUT IT ..... 

Commissioned by SELRAP and published in November 2007, the landmark JMP study confirmed SELRAP’s long-held belief that the Skipton-Colne line has a promising future. For those unfamiliar with the facts, the key messages within the JMP study are that:

- The Skipton-Colne line has strategic and regional value and could be catalyst for the restoration of direct rail links between East Lancashire and Manchester. Also, the line could provide a link between the East and West Coast Main lines. And ports.
- The entire trackbed is safeguarded against development that would prevent its re-use as a railway, and construction of a single or double track railway, at a cost of between £43 Million and £81 Million, is feasible.
- By 2014, passenger figures for the line could be as high as 565,000 per annum rising to 759,000 by 2024 generating an income of £2milion.
- The Benefit:Cost ratio for the Skipton-Colne line could be as high as 2.43:1. In other words, for every £1 spent on reopening the route and providing train services on it, the quantifiable benefits for doing so would be £2.43!
- NB In accordance with DfT guidance, figures used within the study include loadings of 66% for capital costs, and 41% on operating costs. And still the figures stack up. Ed.
- Reopening the Skipton-Colne line would reduce Co2 emissions, reduce the number of road accidents, and deliver environmental and safety benefits of between £7 million and £12 million. And deliver improved accessibility, benefiting areas with high levels of deprivation.
- Additional employment and visitor spend in the region are estimated to have a value in the range £86 million to £195 million over the appraisal period.
- The scheme enjoys strong local, regional and national support. And offers value for money.

To see the full study visit: www.selrap.org.uk

BROAD BASE OF SUPPORT

The fact that 126 MPs, 47 Peers and 40 MEPs have already written to SELRAP endorsing the campaign is little short of astonishing. But it is far from accidental. Indeed, it is the result of monumental efforts to develop a broad base of support for reopening the Skipton-Colne line that simply cannot be ignored.

Thanks to those efforts, SELRAP now has backing of the following County Councillors:

**Lancashire (35):**

**Action:**

If your County Councillor is not listed, please contact them and ask them to write a letter or email supporting the reopening of the Colne to Skipton railway.

Terry Aldridge, Albert Atkinson, Timothy Ashton, Malcolm Barron, Jean Battle, Terry Burns, Mike Calvert, Susie Charles, Chris Cheetham, Christopher Coates, William Cropper, Shelagh Derwent, Sarah Fishwick, Christopher Holton, Jennifer Mein, David O’Toole, Tim Ormond, Miles Parkinson, Mark Perks, Tony Pimblett, Doreen Pollitt (Deputy Leader), Sonia Robinson, Duncan Ruddick, Elizabeth Scott, Thomas Sharratt, Richard Shepherd, Joyce Stuart, Stephen Sutcliffe, Matthew Tomlinson, Colin Walton,
Michael Welsh, Dorothy Westell, Francis Williams, Valerie Wilson, Jean Yates.

North Yorkshire (19):

Please understand that the supporters listed here, and on previous pages, are elected individuals and/or bodies who have taken time out to study SELRAP’s aims and objectives ..... and written in support of them. If your local Councillor / Council is not listed here, or on our website: www.selrap.org.uk please contact the Leader or the Chairperson and ask them to write a letter or email supporting the reopening of the Colne to Skipton railway.

The more support that SELRAP’s campaign to reopen the Skipton-Colne railway has, the more difficult it is to ignore.

But then it gets better. For, since the last issue of CravenRail, Councils for the following areas have signed up to support the campaign to reopen the Skipton-Colne railway, bringing our total Council support to 147:


NEW PATRON

Anne McIntosh, MP for the Vale of York has become SELRAP’s eleventh patron. Pictured below, she writes:


2008: ANOTHER VINTAGE YEAR

With the case for reopening the Skipton-Colne line proven beyond doubt by the JMP study, and an eye on progressing the proposal to the reality, SELRAP embarked on a strategic programme of major new initiatives.

The list of those initiatives is a long one. At the top of it are plans to present the case for reopening the Skipton-Colne line to the Minister responsible for rail. Indeed, prior to the recent Cabinet reshuffle, a meeting with former Rail Minister Tom Harris was lined up for the latter part of 2008. And, at the time of writing, SELRAP Patron Gordon Prentice MP is arranging for a delegation to meet the recently appointed Minister of State for Transport, Lord Adonis.

SELRAP is aware that any rail reopening is conditional upon the unequivocal support of the appropriate Local Authorities and Regional Development Agencies. Thus has evolved a programme designed to address those crucial requirements.

With this in mind, 2008 has been quite a year for SELRAP. Indeed, to date, delegations have met with and made presentations to the following bodies and organisations:

• Lancashire County Council
• North Yorkshire County Council
• The North West Regional Development Agency, North West Regional Assembly Government Office for the North West & The Department for Transport (joint meeting!)
• Yorkshire Forward & The Northern Way
• West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
• Network Rail
• Northern Rail
• East Lancashire Chambers of Commerce
• The All Party Parliamentary Rail Group
• The Kilbride Group (Development Company)
• Haworth Parish Council
• The Inland Waterways Association

At each of these meetings, SELRAP was in receipt of sound advice on the way forward. And with this in mind, also in the frame for future meetings are:

• The Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Assembly
• Government Office for Yorkshire & Humberside
• Greater Manchester PTE

Additionally, as demonstrated by the growing list of supporters published elsewhere in CravenRail, throughout the year SELRAP’s campaign has gained the support of countless other organisations that include Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority, Passenger Focus (Rail Passenger Watchdog), Railfuture, The Campaign for Better Transport, the Confederation of British Industry, and more. And with the aim of bringing even more on side, SELRAP has liaised with and lobbied many more besides the above.

So. If your organisation has not been approached already ..... we’ll be on to you! All in the best possible taste, of course ..... aimed at bringing...
joined up and sustainable transport to a corridor much in need of it.

It might be worth remembering at this point that, despite a growing reputation and breathtaking list of achievements that might be interpreted otherwise, SELRAP is a voluntary organisation. The fact that the group is able to engage on a regular basis with bodies and organisations such as those outlined above is testimony to the vast amount of hard work willingly undertaken by its members. Together with their sheer passion for reinstating the Skipton-Colne railway as part of a new trans-Pennine route for passengers and freight. It also says much about the rationale behind that reinstatement. For, amongst those who matter it is no longer the “if” word. But “when” the line will reopen. And now with formal recognition of the fact that funding is the remaining obstacle, SELRAP is aware of the need to rack up the pressure on those with the power to say “Yes”.

STILL MORE ARE HEARING OF SELRAP

CravenRail is distributed free of charge to SELRAP members and all other readers. 5,000 copies of CravenRail 11 were printed. But interest in reopening the Skipton-Colne railway is soaring. And readers will be thrilled to learn that, such is the demand to keep up to speed with the campaign that, astonishingly, 8,000 copies of this issue have been printed.

SELRAP wishes to thank printers Hudson and Pearson for their proactive support of SELRAP’s campaign to reopen the Skipton-Colne railway ..... that makes it possible for us to produce CravenRail in eye catching full colour.

That said, readers will also appreciate that printing costs are not inconsiderable. And SELRAP also wishes to thank Northern Rail for sponsoring this issue of CravenRail.

Pictured below, Kathryn O’Brien, Stakeholder Manager for Northern Rail writes the following:

As the Client and Stakeholder Manager for your area, I am delighted to be back after almost 14 months off, and find myself working with you all yet again to provide a “shopper special” service all the way from Skipton through to Colne! It is great to see!

Northern is a huge company with a mammoth task of "doing the day job" of running 2,500 trains each weekday serving over 500 stations across the North of England. We are primarily a local train operator with a vision of providing the most sustainable means of connecting people to opportunities. Our services are vital to the economic, social and environmental health and well being of the communities we serve.

Since our franchise began in December 2004 we have made a real difference to communities in the North of England. We have supported a range of charities we have sponsored a growing number of community rail partnerships and we are backing a wide range of local community projects. Our station adoption programme is a model for others to follow.

All of this was reflected in winning the 2007 award for ‘train operator of the year’ in the national community rail awards, and also getting Business in the Community’s national award for excellence in rural action.

You are all passionate and dedicated people with endless patience and determination! I wish you all the very best in your campaign and I look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead.

NB For details of the train trip Kathryn refers to, see the back page of CravenRail.

ROUTE UTILISATION STRATEGY

Network Rail is required by the Office of Rail Regulation to produce Route Utilisation Strategies for each of the UK regions. Taking a strategic look at the entire rail network, together with its usage and capability in relation to current and anticipated future demand, where shortfalls in capacity are identified the RUS is tasked with identifying options for addressing them.

Whilst, for obvious reasons, relating to the Yorkshire & Humberside and North West regions, the Skipton-Colne route falls entirely within the remit of the Lancashire and Cumbria RUS.

And guess what. Published by Network Rail in August 2008, that self same Lancashire and
Cumbria Rail Utilisation Strategy includes no less than six references to reopening the Skipton-Colne railway. But it gets better, for the combined message within those references points to the fact that within Network Rail there is a working assumption that the Skipton-Colne line will reopen. Eventually!

Citing the remaining obstacle to reinstating the line as funding, the report states that there is broad support for the scheme. And that it would offer new journey opportunities and reduced journey times for communities both within and beyond the new corridor. Together with the fact that deprived communities would benefit from improved links to Leeds. The report also suggests that, due to its gentle gradients, the line may be a suitable alternative freight route.

To see the entire report visit: www.networkrail.co.uk/browse/documents/rus%20documents/route%20utilisation%20strategy/lancashire%20and%20cumbria/lancashire%20and%20cumbria%20rus.pdf

Should the promoters of the scheme to reopen the route from Skipton – Colne be successful in securing funding, then it is likely that this line will have been reopened.

Quotes from the Lancashire and Cumbria RUS, published by Network Rail appear on this, and other pages.

To the left is a peek back from the local press, and other pages.

THE LINE BETWEEN SKIPTON AND COLNE IS CLOSED AND HAS BEEN COMpletely out of service since 1979. As a consequence it is not possible to travel by rail between conurbations on the route, and between most of the route and Leeds. A number of communities on the route between Nelson and Skipton suffer from deprivation and would benefit from improved links to Leeds. In addition, the Leeds – Hedenbridge – Blackburn – Preston route currently has a service frequency of one train per hour and to access it passengers from Nelson and Skipton would have to either interchange at Accrington or walk across the centre of Burnley. For passengers in Burnley this service via Skipton and Colne would be 10 minutes faster than the existing one via the Calder Valley. The line may be a suitable alternative to routing existing and additional trains through the Calder Valley, especially freight due to the gentler gradients.

Network Rail: Lancs & Cumbria RUS August 2008

AND THE MEDIA TOO ….

Throughout the course of the year, SELRAP has been the subject of much media attention. The campaign to reopen the Skipton-Colne railway has featured in Railway Magazine, Rail Magazine and Today’s Railways. But that’s far from the whole story … for, in addition to regular updates on progress in the local press, full length features have appeared too. But, grand daddy of them all has to be the four page illustrated feature on SELRAP’s campaign that found its way on to the front page of the Yorkshire Post Magazine. Regarded by many as the region’s national newspaper, interestingly, the paper’s editor describes the relationship with SELRAP as a partnership.

In addition to featuring on local radio news, the campaign to reopen Skipton-Colne railway was highlighted on Radio 4 with a fifteen minute slot on the prestigious You and Yours programme. The campaign also featured on BBC TV North West Tonight.

AND MORE SUPPORT, STILL

SELRAP’s campaign enjoys vast support across the spectrum … ranging from large business concerns to trade unions, sports clubs, colleges, and more. With apologies for the font size [‘cos there is so much support], they appear below:

70 businesses:

ANOTHER NEW PATRON

Brian Simpson MEP for the North West has become SELRAP’s twelfth patron. Pictured below, he writes:

With our railways at bursting point it is essential that our railway infrastructure receives the investment levels needed to ensure that they can do the job we require of them. In my role as the Socialist Group’s Spokesman on Transport in the European Parliament I get to see at first hand how other countries provide services, not only domestically but internationally also. One factor that always emerges is that for any inter city or international high speed service to succeed it must be supported by well developed feeder services that link in the whole of a region to the railway network.

That is why Skipton to Colne is important. This is a missing link that when re-instatement occurs will not only link in with the railway network, but will also provide the stimulus for much needed economic regeneration and social mobility.

This link is long overdue and it is about time something was done to put this situation right.

TELL THE PRIME MINISTER ABOUT SELRAP

A member of the public has put a petition on the Government website.

Action: (for those with an email address)
Please go to our website: www.selrap.org.uk & click on the box as on right, fill in your details, then click on ‘sign’ & then to validate it ….

Click on the email No 10 sends you … & then spread the word!

Sign our Petition

With apologies for the font size [‘cos there is so much support], they appear below:

9
Please understand that the supporters listed throughout CravenRail are real individuals, bodies/organisations, businesses, pressure groups and the like. Each and every one of them has taken time out to write to SELRAP offering their support for reopening the Skipton-Colne railway. That is why they are listed. Support on such a scale as this simply cannot be ignored. Those with the power to say “yes”, please note! 


7 Trade Union Organisations:
ASLEF, RMT, TSSA and Lancashire Association of TUCs, the TUC Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Council, Unite the Union & Unite the Union, Burnley Branch.

NB Includes all three Rail Unions!

14 Rail and Public Transport Organisations:

27 Educational bodies:

38 Other:

40 affiliated organisations.

Action: Please encourage any group you are a member of/business you work for or use/ union branch, not on the above list, to go that extra step further and affiliate to SELRAP. Membership is modest at just £10 p.a. Not only will it show that extra commitment to the reopening but it also adds much needed funds for our campaign.

With every last bit of it piling up at the feet of those with the power to say “Yes”!

APPRECIATE THE SCALE OF IT NOW?

For there can be no doubting the clamour to reinstate just 1½ miles of railway line which will open up rail travel to whole new tranche of the population. And its message is unequivocal.....

SOME SUPPORTERS GO THAT EXTRA MILE ..... 

As the reader will begin to appreciate ..... 

Brighouse station was crowded with over 250 people early one morning over the [August] bank holiday to catch a rail excursion organised by Kirklees Green Party. A twelve carriage train, operated by Green Express Railtours of East Yorkshire, carried 600 people to Edinburgh who were picked up in East Lancashire and at Hebden Bridge before Brighouse. The train travelled up the east coast and returned via the west coast mainline.

Organiser Clive Lord of Batley said: “This was one of the best Green Party annual excursions. Passengers had five hours to enjoy the festival atmosphere and the sunshine of Edinburgh. Over £300 was collected for the charity Practical Action to fund the cost of rebuilding 10 flood resistant housing in Bangladesh. A further £200 was shared between the Skipton-East Lancashire Rail Partnership and the Huddersfield Transition Town project.” Prizes were donated by Edinburgh Bicycle Cooperative (Leeds shop) and Vinceremos Organic Wines.
SELRAP NEEDS YOU!
Events Officer, Paul Haywood tells it how it is:
As any reader will know, if you put your head above the parapet, you risk getting it shot off! Equally, unless you make the effort to look up and out, all you’ll see is the mud in the trench!
I am a comparatively new member of SELRAP and my decision to join the campaign as an interested bystander stemmed from my wish to ride on SELRAP’S first “Missing Link” special train between Colne and Skipton in April 2007. This first through train for 37 years had to take the ludicrously long, 50-mile Burnley/Blackburn/Hellifield route to achieve its goal, highlighting the lack of just 11½ miles of track between the important regions of Pendle and Craven.

SELRAP continues to go that extra mile or two. In more ways than one. You can join in the fun by taking the Boundary Mill Christmas Shoppers’ Special train from Skipton to Colne on Sunday 7th December. But what with the direct line being closed, SELRAP’s third excursion will, once again, follow a zany route....this time out and back via Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Hebden Bridge and the Copy Pit line. A 150 mile round trip featuring six reversals in direction. How daft can it get? But that’s the whole point. To highlight the lack of just 11½ miles of track between the important regions of Pendle and Craven.

Yes ..... this was crazy, and I decided to become a member. Even then, my decision to join was more in the way of a sympathy gesture and my £5 membership fee seemed a reasonable sum to pay for the feel-good factor of thinking that I was “doing my bit.”
But then ..... I started to attend meetings and listen to the presentations given by long-standing members of the Executive Committee who regularly and successfully make well-researched representations to the high and the mighty to promote our cause.

“Best of luck to SELRAP with their excellent plan”
Ian “Off the Rails” Hislop
Editor Private Eye & TV Panellist on “Have I got News for You”

Thanks to these presentations, it soon became evident to me that the Skipton-Colne route was more than just a lost country railway linking two small towns. The reasons why our line is essential will be made elsewhere in this issue, but I soon became convinced that our campaign was absolutely essential for the urban regeneration and the renaissance of rail services linking Pendle and East Lancashire with Craven and Airedale, with benefits at both ends of the route.
As a lifelong believer in railways, having travelled on them in more than thirty countries, I knew that the tide was turning back in favour of rail. Even hard-headed car users now understood that roads do not solve our national transport problems.
So ..... where did that leave me? If I was to be true to my convictions and beliefs, I would have to do whatever I could to help. To do nothing was to believe nothing. Knowing that I needed to put my money where my mouth was, I nervously took on the role of Events Coordinator. This grand sounding title simply meant that I arrange for SELRAP displays and leaflets to be on show at various local and regional exhibitions and fairs. But my job, and those of everyone on the Executive Committee, would be made so much easier if we had more help.
I’ve no special skills other than my enthusiasm and a belief in the cause. We can’t all be academics with analytical minds, capable of penning persuasive prose backed by solid facts. Like any organisation, we need a cross-section of involvement - so just by attending meetings and events, your presence will keep us encouraged and more able to move forward.
We need someone like YOU, who believes in our cause, and can give us just a few hours of your time each month. Maybe you’re good at fund-raising, maybe you have experience with mailshots or publicity, perhaps you have some good ideas which we need to take on-board?
Don’t be afraid ..... come and get involved. I did, and I don’t regret a minute! And ush think ..... when the line reopens and your Grandson/daughter says to you “Grandad/Grandma, what did YOU do during the great SELRAP campaign?” You can stand back, take a deep breath, and proudly tell him: “Lad, I did my bit!”
Here’s one way in which you can help NOW ..... We need volunteers to help staff our display stands at future events. For details of these, see back page.

If you would like to get involved, please contact:
Paul Haywood, 3 High Croft Way, Farnhill, Keighley BD20 9AP  Tel: 01535 630369

FUNDING THE GAP
£43 million for a single track rebuild. £81 million for a double track rebuild. Sounds like an awful lot of money. Until you consider it in the grand scheme of things. Respectively representing just 72p and £1.35 each for the UK population of 60 million, it begins to sound like something of a bargain. The more so when set against those bail-outs that have been floated across our bows recently.

And whilst the world is busily coping with financial problems on a previously unimaginable scale, the UK Government has hinted at the possibility of building our way out of recession. The notion is not new. It happened in the ‘thirties, when all manner of transport infrastructure was built/upgraded.

And if the weather in 2008 is anything to go by, we will have our railway sooner rather than later!
All of that said, SELRAP is busily unravelling all those acronyms and keeping up the pressure on those with the power to say “Yes”.

Interesting times ahead!

DR JIM BURTON
Founder member of SELRAP, and group stalwart, Dr Jim Burton MBE died earlier in the year after a long illness.
A former regional chairman of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, and a Vice-Chairman of the Yorkshire Dales Society, Jim was a passionate and experienced campaigner for environmental issues.
Jim was a good friend of SELRAP. His enthusiasm, experience and expertise is sadly missed by the group.

STOP PRESS
In his response to a question about reopening the Skipton-Colne railway from SELRAP Patron Gordon MP, the Rt. Hon Geoff Hoon, Secretary of Statefor Transport, said:
“I am sure that, with his commitment to local government and democracy, he will not mind me saying that if there is a strong local case for reopening railway lines, the case can be made and brought to the Department, where it will be looked at favourably. I am sure that he would not want me to interfere in these matters from the lofty heights of central London, as it would be better if he could persuade the local authorities along the line in question to make the case for reopening the line and to get on with it.”  HoC: 21st Oct .2008

And if the weather in 2008 is anything to go by, we will have our railway sooner rather than later!
See SELRAP’s website: www.selrap.org.uk for more information on progress towards the restoration of rails between Skipton and Colne.

No internet at home? Then access our website at your local library (free) .... or maybe via a friend or relative.

With 20,000 hits per month already, SELRAP’s website has got to be worth a look!

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e mail: cravenrail@selrap.org.uk

If there are issues you wish to raise, or draw to the attention of the Executive Committee, please make use of the contact details above.

IN A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP WITH

BOUNDARY MILL STORES

CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS’ SPECIAL TRAIN

Sunday 7th December

SKIPTON to COLNE (5 minutes walk to store)

The first train originating in Skipton and going direct to Colne for 38 years! A scenic train ride over the Aire and Calder valley routes, plus over four hours for:

LUNCH AND BARGAIN SHOPPING AT

BOUNDARY MILL STORES

COLENE’S NEW MILL SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

• 10% Discount At BBs – The In-Store Coffee Shop
• Optional Bus Tour of Pendle Heritage Sites

SKIPTON dep. 09.30, return at 18.45
Keighley dep. 09.43, return at 18.35
Bingley dep. 09.47, return at 18.29
Shipley dep. 09.52, return at 18.24
Leeds dep. 10.13, return at 18.07
Bradford Int. dep. 10.32, return at 17.51
Halifax dep. 10.45, return at 17.37
Hebden Bridge dep. 10.59, return at 17.24

Arrive COLNE: 12.07, DEPART: 16.30

Refreshment facilities on board
FARES FROM ALL STATIONS: £17.50
(£12.00 under 16s, regret no other reductions)

Booking form can be printed from SELRAP’s website: www.selrap.org.uk ..... or please send an SAE & cheque payable to SELRAP to:
Derek Jennings, 3 Hamilton Road, Barrowford, Lancs BB8 9DE Tel: 01282 690411

Please specify if you want to take the bus tour. Regret, no seat reservations possible.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

At the time of going to press, SELRAP will be represented at the following public events:

November 15/16th: Pendle Forest Model Railway Exhibition
Official opening of Nelson’s new Bus/Rail Interchange. Date TBA. See local press.

December 7th: Christmas Shoppers’ Special Train (see above).
January 18th: Blackburn & Darwen Model Railway Exhibition.
February 5-7th: Pendle Beer Festival, Colne.

We also hold open meetings for members and new supporters. See below for details. Come along and learn about what SELRAP is doing, and how you can get involved in our exciting venture.

OPEN COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2009

• Mon. 12th Jan. @ 7.00pm: St. Stephen’s School, Gargrave Road, Skipton.
• Mon. 9th March @ 7.00pm: NB, also AGM: Lesser Municipal Hall, Albert Road, Colne.
• Mon. 11th May @ 7.00pm: Rainhall Centre, Rainhall Road, Barnoldswick.