A 17-year campaign to reopen the Skipton-Colne link is now also supported by Bradford, which is promoting the proposal to line the railway up to the West Craven business park.

The principle has been established that the Skipton-Colne link will be a modern, fast, reliable and sustainable passenger service. The key argument remains exactly what it was in 2001, although the need is now that much more urgent. These towns need access to well-paid jobs, while the area (one of the most deprived in the UK) also needs to attract inbound commuters and visitors. With a high dependency on road travel in the area, the railway would help relieve congestion and accidents which the railway would help relieve.

With so many people living close to the railway, with the employment opportunities that already exist along the corridor, and with the vital need for regeneration, there is no doubt that passenger numbers will grow steadily. The key argument remains exactly what it was in 2001, although the need is now that much more urgent. These towns need access to well-paid jobs, while the area (one of the most deprived in the UK) also needs to attract inbound commuters and visitors. With a high dependency on road travel in the area, the railway would help relieve congestion and accidents which the railway would help relieve.
relatively recently thanks to efforts by Drax, and there is “now serious engagements with Network Rail, who are looking at wider network issues”. The appearance of Transport for the North has brought about a “sea change with regard to attitude”. Bryson suggests that while county councils and other local authorities may not fully understand rail projects, TfN certainly does.

Transport for the North recognises that rail is the right way to bring the transport improvements to city centres and ... focuses on the major cities, East Lancashire - with a population of 200,000 - is large for somewhere that is not a city.”

Northern franchise” . Then came a complete surprise to RAIL SELRAP … Transport Secretary Chris Grayling’s visit to Colne on February 3 (RAIL 846). His reason for the visit was the...
Peter Bryson

After having been the senior project manager on the early stages of the King's Cross station's western concourse development in 2014, Peter Bryson bought a copy of RAIL and read an article on that project. That issue included a small item about SELRAP, mentioning the involvement of civil engineering contractor Arup... and fired an interest which has proved to be so important to the campaign.

Peter Bryson believes that the right thing to do is to build Skipton-Colne quickly. And by 'quickly', SELRAP is thinking in terms of around five years from now to opening. This is very fast by current rail industry standards, but at Peel Port's new £100 million biomass facility handling up to three million tonnes of pellets a year, imported from North America and placed on the dockside, amongst the building blocks, is the potential to see this kind of development happen.

Peter Bryson, Chairman, Skipton and East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership

Peter Bryson is a highly experienced transport writer with long roots in both railways and aviation. He founded SELRAP to campaign for the re-opening of the Skipton-Colne Line. He joined Peel Ports and East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership in 2008, and is a regular news and features contributor.

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### Further reading

- Are we close to finding the missing link? RAIL 816
- A lifeline for East Lancs, RAIL 848
- More of the same, RAIL 853

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### About the author

Steve Broadbent, Contributing Writer

Steve is a highly experienced transport writer with extensive coverage of both railways and aviation. He founded SELRAP to campaign for the re-opening of the Skipton-Colne Line. He joined Peel Ports and East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership in 2008, and is a regular news and features contributor.