

ECCLES STATION

NEWS

AUGUST 2016

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On 7th July 2016 **The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR)** published statistics for the Northern Franchise area running up to the end of financial year 2015 to 2016. The comprehensive table can be viewed at:

<http://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/displayreport/html/html/54da2941-27f3-4459-9797-609d9b33f907>

The number of stations, and the route kilometres have remained steady since 2010. Since then the following numbers have increased: number of employees + 10%; passenger journeys +12%; passenger kilometres +15%, and passenger train kilometres +2%. Therefore, more people are travelling on average further on a similar number of trains, which is very positive. Less impressive are the punctuality, cancellation and complaints statistics. Punctuality has got slightly worse (90.7%) and cancellations (1.5%) are showing only a slight downward trend over the period. The complaints rate remains roughly steady but only 86% of complaints are dealt with within 20 days.

*On 20 May 2016 the **Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)** referred the **Northern franchise** award to **Arriva** for an in-depth investigation. In response, Arriva comments: "Phase 1 of the Competition and Mergers Authority (CMA) investigation has not cleared the award of the Northern franchise to Arriva. As a result, the CMA has commenced a Phase 2 investigation. Arriva strongly believes that the operation of the Northern franchise alongside our existing bus and rail businesses in the region does not lead to a substantial lessening of competition. "The CMA has stated that their deadline for the final report is 3 November 2016."*



#REALITYCHECK
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Alarming new figures from **Network Rail** reveal that children are twice as likely to trespass on the tracks over the summer months, compared with winter. Longer evenings, coupled with the start of the summer holidays spell danger for Britain's youth, with almost 600 trespass events reported in August, compared to less than 300 in December. **Network Rail and British Transport Police** are urging parents to warn their children of the dangers of playing on the tracks this summer. Over the past 10 years almost 170 young people have lost their lives after trespassing on the railway. The data shows that just under half of those killed are under the age of 25.

*As part of the **Ordeal Chord project** to connect Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Victoria, rail engineers are to undertake restoration of Stephenson's historic bridge over the River Irwell. The Grade I-listed 1830 bridge has been obscured by other structures which have been built nearby.*



Network Rail has removed the old Princes Bridge which obscured the view of Stephenson's bridge – and can now gain access to carry out the restoration work. Work will also remove a large steel girder to provide a full view of the bridge. Terry Strickland, area director for Network Rail, said: "A new footbridge will cross the River Irwell and will allow members of the public to view Stephenson's Bridge close at hand for the first time in over 150 years. From there, you will be able to fully appreciate the detail of George Stephenson's work ... how the bridge looked when it was first built." The work will be completed by December 2017



Just before 1800 on Tuesday 5th July 2016 four old diesel locomotives made their way through **Manchester Victoria** on Tuesday hauled by 56 098 of UK Rail Leasing.





A few of the delights of Eccles station garden are shown on these photos taken from the archives.

Photos JERayner.



*The line from **Eccles Station down to Weaste Junction** on the **Manchester Ship Canal (MSC)** has been in use again recently following inspection and gauge checking. Lafarge has been running trains down to the cement depot at the side of the canal on Fridays. The reason is that ships could not come up the canal because it has been blocked by the damaged bridge deck of the bridge under construction at Barton. Although this is now cleared there appears to be another problem (possibly the aqueduct) so the trains may continue to run for a while. The train arrives at 0725. Its return schedule is:*

6H37	1253	Weaste to Tunstead	
WEASTE	12:53	715	ORIGINATING PT

<i>ECCLES</i>	<i>13:03 13:26 3</i>	<i>CALLING POINT (Run round and then via Victoria)</i>
<i>GUIDB UDL</i>	<i>14:14 15:31</i>	<i>CALLING POINT</i>
<i>NEWMLSSJN</i>	<i>16:07 16:12</i>	<i>CALLING POINT</i>
<i>GT ROCKSJ</i>	<i>16:33 16:35</i>	<i>CALLING POINT</i>
<i>TUNSTDBLI</i>	<i>16:41</i>	<i>TERMINATING PT</i>

The first photo shows that both blades of the junction point are now shiny from use (there have been five trains so far). The pictures are of 66603 on a rake of empty cement wagons back at the top in the loop at Eccles on Friday 1st July at about 14.00.





ARTICLES

Change at the Top

Under David Cameron as Prime Minister there was welcome stability at the Department for Transport (DfT) under Patrick McLoughlin and Claire Perry. This was in complete contrast to other post war administrations in which transport ministers rarely held the post for even two years. The resignation of David Cameron as PM resulted in the selection of Teresa May as Conservative Party Leader and her consequent instalment as The United Kingdom's second female Prime Minister.

In choosing her cabinet McLoughlin and Perry were dropped as transport ministers, and a new team was installed as below:



• [The Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP](#)

[Secretary of State for Transport](#)



[The Rt Hon John Hayes MP](#)

[Minister of State](#)



[Andrew Jones MP](#)

[Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport](#)



[Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon](#)

[Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport](#)



[Paul Maynard MP](#)

[Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport](#)

Whether this is a serious and stable team we shall see, but ESN believes that this is what is required rather than Transport being treated as a brief and insignificant staging post to other Ministerial appointments. The railways were treated seriously and made significant (if uneven) progress during the Cameron years. At the very least stability at the top of DfT is a necessary condition for improvement of the railways and may even be a direct cause of progress.

PASSENGER COUNT

Members of Freccles undertook the annual passenger count at Eccles Station on 30th June 2016. This involves a member standing at the station for an hour or two and counting all the passengers alighting and boarding from every train in that period, and then handing over to the next member for their allotted period. This is done right from 05.47 in the morning until the 23.16 in the evening. Freccles members were pleased to note a substantial growth in passenger traffic to and from both Manchester and Liverpool directions.

1) Total Passenger Numbers Recorded (2015/2014/2013 figures in brackets)

Manchester Bound	<i>Alight</i>	162	(110)	(107)	(147)
	<i>Board</i>	297	(156)	(144)	(177)
Liverpool Bound	<i>Alight</i>	271	(121)	(129)	(182)
	<i>Board</i>	144	(101)	(95)	(118)

TOTAL 874 (488) (475) (624)

2) Analysis

- The total recorded of 874 represents a 79% increase on the figure for 2015!!
- Increases on the Manchester services seem to have been consistent throughout the peak and non-peak whereas the increase in the Liverpool figures is more marked in the peak hours.
- Clearly, the closure of the Metrolink service from Eccles has had a bigger impact on station use than perhaps we anticipated. Passengers boarding to Manchester increased by 90% and those alighting from Manchester by 123%! Mark in the booking office **has** noted an increase in passengers

since the tram closure and has had a number of requests for weekly tickets. We must hope that some of these recruits from the tram service might stay with the train when they realise how quick it is!

- Perhaps a more reliable guide is the set of figures relating to Liverpool services. Liverpool bound passengers increased by 42% and those alighting from Liverpool by 47% giving an average improvement of 45% which is very encouraging. This might suggest that approximately half the Manchester increases may be down to the Metrolink closure but the other half represents a genuine upturn in passenger numbers in parallel to those relating to Liverpool journeys.

Conclusion

It is difficult to draw firm conclusions from the figures given their wide variation from previous years but at first sight there does appear to have been a genuine and significant rise in passenger usage especially as revealed by the Liverpool figures.

In the light of the volatility in numbers, we might wish to consider running the count again in the autumn and given the support and prompt responses that I have received from members that would not be too difficult a task.

Stephen Clapham

Passenger count coordinator.

Stop Press

Our junior correspondent, Mrs Oatcake, has discovered that Eccles Station is a 'PokeStop' for the new interactive game



At FRECCLES we are pleased to see visitors of all ages to capture their rewards and PokeBalls etc at the station but **PLEASE stay safe on the railway** at all times. Eccles station, like others up and down the country, has trains travelling through 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, often at high speeds.

Eccles Station News welcomes feedback from readers. Please do not hesitate to send in your own views, photos or snippets of news to the e-mail address below.



FRECCLES

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