

ECCLES STATION

NEWS

JUNE 2015

*Once again, welcome to ESN for news, views and our look at the trams and the franchise documents. **Editor***

NEWS

Finally the Day arrived! Electric trains started regular runs from Eccles to Liverpool and Manchester Oxford Road on Sunday 17th May. On the 18th the electric trains started to run into Victoria too.



ESN's Junior Correspondent, Freccles Member Mark Charnley, photographed the first electric train into Eccles on Sunday 17th. 10 passengers boarded and four alighted from this historic train.



The first electric service train at Eccles.

The 09.02 train to Manchester Airport (2A02 08:12 ex Liverpool Lime Street) on Sunday 17th May 2015. The unit is 319361

Photos courtesy of Mark Charnley.



The spruced up class 319 trains run as four carriage units greatly increasing seating capacity on the line – this will be most welcome to rush hour travellers especially. The low ceilings leave no room for luggage racks (these trains were conceived as mainly for commuter use) but there are some generous luggage spaces between the backs of some of the seats.

The arrival of the class 319 electric units from the south has finally released sufficient diesel units for the start of a service on the Todmorden curve. This serves Manchester Victoria to Blackburn via Rochdale, Todmorden and Burnley.



A promotional leaflet for Northern Rail. The top left features a woman's face. The Northern Rail logo is in the top right. The main text reads 'New Services from Sunday 17 May'. Below this is a clock face with the text 'Time to change'. At the bottom, there is a small image of a train and text: 'Our new timetable brings a new hourly service between Blackburn and Manchester Victoria via Burnley, over the newly opened Todmorden Curve. This will operate every day of the week. Journey times between Manchester and Burnley will be approximately 50 minutes. Visit northernrail.org/timetables to view or download our new timetables'.

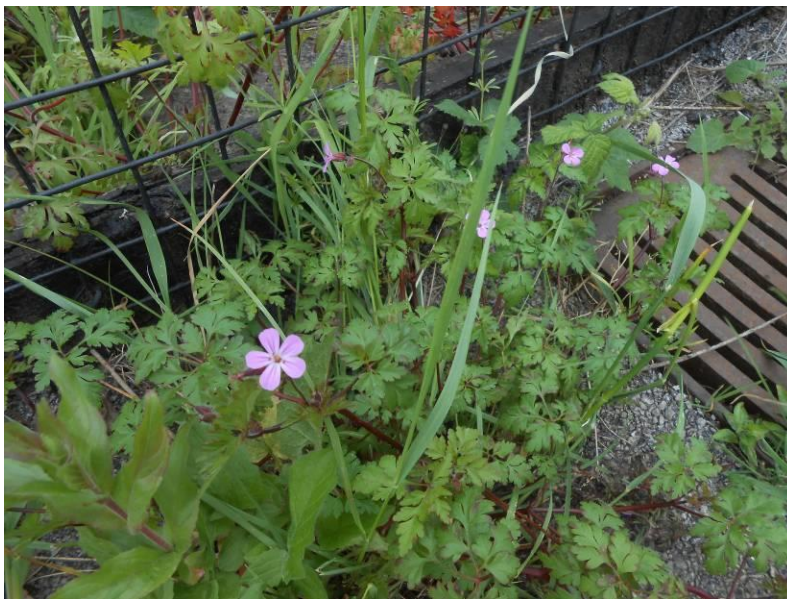


A leaflet detailing train services. The Northern Rail logo is in the top right. The main heading is 'Trains will run as follows:'. It lists two routes: 'Manchester - Burnley - Blackburn' and 'Blackburn - Burnley - Manchester', each with a list of departure times for Mondays to Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. At the bottom, it provides contact information: 'Find out more at: northernrail.org/todmorden-curve', 'Get in touch: northernrail.org/comments', social media handles for Facebook and Twitter, and the hashtag #May15TT. It also repeats the website for timetables: 'Visit northernrail.org/timetables to view or download our new timetables'.

The service will be approximately hourly every day of the week, as can be seen from the leaflet images above (kindly provided by Mark Charnley again!). In addition the trains will serve Accrington, Rose Grove, Littleborough, Castleton, Mills Hill and Moston.

See <http://www.northernrail.org/news/7680> for an article about the reopening. For the timetable see <http://www.northernrail.org/pdfs/timetables/20150502/12.pdf>

With the work on Farnworth tunnels (see next edition) limiting train services via Bolton this will be a welcome alternative route to Blackburn avoiding rail replacement buses. However on the downside ESN tried Eccles to Accrington Return in the Network Rail journey planner, this gave fares of about £12 return (adult) but the journey times are approaching two hours each way because of poor connection at Victoria with the hourly Eccles train. Victoria to Accrington comes out at £9.70 return (adult) with journey times of about one hour.



Unofficial garden at Eccles Station: Herb Robert intrudes on the Manchester platform. This geranium like plant has pretty pink flowers on juicy red stalks that unit at a 'crown' near the ground. If the leaves are rubbed they produce a very animal sort of smell.
Photo JERayner

The not so new Secretary of State for Transport gave an important speech in Leeds on 1st of June. He stated that boosting growth in the north, rebalancing the economy and creating a Northern Powerhouse were a vital part of the long-term economic plan.



He spoke about “the power of transport to change things” and pledged “not to waste a moment” on working with regional leaders to create a Northern Powerhouse of jobs, and ending the decades old economic gap between north and south through billions of pounds of transport investment is a top priority. Therefore:

- HS2 will be built, “...the full “Y” network from London to Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds”.
- In a signal of intent, the Transport Secretary confirmed the government is moving forward with plans for east-west high-speed rail links and will invest £13 billion in transforming northern transport this Parliament



Tram news – the third platform at the Deansgate/Castlefield stop has come into use this week to increase city centre track capacity and the expansion work will soon affect services to St Peters Square stop. Details can be seen on the notices in these photos (courtesy of JERayner):

St Peter's Square stop is being transformed.
 This will mean changes to services:

Phase 1: from 28 June 2015 until late August
No services through St Peter's Square
 Services from Altrincham, Manchester Airport, East Didsbury, Eccles and MediaCityUK will terminate at Deansgate-Castlefield or Cornbrook. Services on all other lines will run into Piccadilly. Replacement bus services will offer connections across the city centre.

Phase 2: from late August 2015
 St Peter's Square stop will be closed with a reduced number of services running through. Please check website for details. Information will also be displayed on-stop nearer the time.

Phase 3: Summer 2016
No services through St Peter's Square
 Services as in Phase 1 – for 8 weeks, following which services will resume at this stop.

www.transformationinformation.co.uk
 0161 205 2000 @MCRMetroLink

RESHAPING ST PETER'S SQUARE





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ARTICLES

Surprise Continuity.

Following the Conservative Party's election victory Prime Minister David Cameron has now announced his ministerial teams. Of interest to ESN and the railway industry is that Patrick McLoughlin and Claire Perry both carry on at the Department for Transport (DfT) and there seems to be a good chance that a positive stable approach to railway policy will continue. This was indicated in the speech given in Leeds, on Monday, by the Secretary of State for Transport.

The full lead team is as follows:

Ministers



[The Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP](#)

[Secretary of State for Transport](#)



[Robert Goodwill MP](#)

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



[Claire Perry MP](#)

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



[Andrew Jones MP](#)

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



[Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon](#)

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

Management



- **[Philip Rutnam](#)**
Permanent Secretary
- **[David Prout](#)**
Director General High Speed 2 Group
- **[Lucy Chadwick](#)**
Director General International, Security and Environment Group
- **[Clare Moriarty](#)**
Director General Rail Executive
- **[Jonathan Moor CBE FCA](#)**
Director General Resources and Strategy Group
- **[John Dowie](#)**
Acting Director General Roads, Traffic and Local Group
- **[Nick Olley](#)**
General Counsel

In ESN's opinion such continuity is to be welcomed in an area as complex as transport that has such long time horizons for investment projects. It seems more than likely to ESN that political amateurism, manifesting itself in short term appointments at the top of this department, was a contributory factor in the bad management and decline of the railways on the latter half of the 20th

Century. Readers should take a look at the informative data provided in Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary_of_State_for_Transport how long is the life of a transport Secretary?

This shows that many were in post for terms of months only and that being in post for two years was getting to be exceptionally long. However longevity in the role is no guarantee of good results: the longest serving Secretary of State for Transport (in place for 5 years) was the road biased and not exactly right honourable Ernest Marples. His tenure produced disastrous consequences for the railways, and these were not reversed by the short-time servers that followed in the job!

Invitation to Tender (III).

The 'Invitation to Tender' documents issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) on 27th February set out minimum service requirements for each station on the routes covered by the franchise. The new Northern franchise will begin in April 2016. To view the tender documents please visit the DfT website: [published documents](#) The tenders must be in by the end of June.

The documents go to great length to specify quality characteristics of what must be provided by the successful franchisee and in this sense the DfT (or HMG if you like) is acting as a proxy purchaser on behalf of passengers.

The following are the topics covered in the document:

Car and Cycle Parking

Customer Information Screens

Cleanliness, graffiti and etching, and exterior cleanliness (of trains)

Customer information displays (Destination boards and Passenger Information Displays)

Public address audio system

Lighting (Passenger saloon, toilet and door vestibule)

Vehicle interior condition and Interior cleanliness

Litter

Toilet Facilities

Mobile data coverage.

For each of these headings there is a column of descriptions of what will be deemed a failure to provide the required quality of service, so for example:

Toilet facilities	Fail if any of the following apply: (a) Toilet tissue not replenished. (b) Litter and disposal bins overflowing. (c) Soap not replenished. (d) All fixtures, fittings and surfaces dirty / soiled including toilet pan, seat, panels, floor, hand driers and mirrors or the floor has puddles (not splashes). (e) Hand towels not replenished (No means of hand drying available - not toilet tissue). (f) Toilet unavailable / “locked out of use”.
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The document specifies that there must be cooperation towards provision of extra services on some routes:

Example one: proposals for the provision of additional railway passenger services along the Hope Valley Route (“**Hope Valley Additional Services**”);

Example two: York Potash Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of Sirius Minerals PLC) is proposing to construct a new Potash mine near Whitby and, pursuant to the planning permission that it is requesting, it is proposing to fund four additional Passenger Services each day on the Middlesbrough – Whitby branch together with the infrastructure capacity works needed to permit such additional Passenger Services to be operated - The Franchisee shall provide all reasonable assistance and co-operation.

Example 3 the franchisee must prepare a report to the Secretary of State which sets out proposals for operating Boxing Day Services and New Year’s Day Services. The report must include:

(i) the Franchisee’s view on whether or not the operation of the Boxing Day Services and New Year’s Day Services will be commercially viable; and

(ii) the impact on Franchise Payments (if any) if the Secretary of State (at his sole discretion) elects to vary the Train Service Requirement to require the provision of the Boxing Day Services and New Year’s Day Services.

Add to this a list of environmental requirements as given below and the successful franchisee will certainly be working hard to fulfil the deal!

(a) a reduction of 25% in kg CO₂ emitted per vehicle km against the 2014 baseline figure of 1.24kg CO₂e per vehicle km over the Franchise Term.

(b) Non-traction energy use: a reduction of 2.5% year on year so that:

(i) the target for the first Franchisee Year is a reduction in kilowatt hours (kWh) of 2.5% against the 2014 baseline figure of 45,740,698 kWh and

(ii) the target for each subsequent Franchisee Year is a reduction in kilowatt hours (kWh) of 2.5% against the preceding Franchisee Year;

(c) Mains water use: a reduction in mains water use year on year, so that:-

(i) usage during the first Franchisee Year is less than the 2014 baseline of 350,748m³; and

(ii) usage in each subsequent Franchisee Year is less than in the preceding Franchisee Year; and

(d) Waste: from the end of the second Franchisee Year, the Franchisee must send zero waste to landfill and must recycle or prepare for re-use, 90% of waste (by weight) per Franchisee Year.

Transport for Eccles (VIII).

In this month's article, the last on the trams, we take a look at the Light Rail Vehicles (LRV) themselves. Metrolink has some 120 of these M5000 series LRVs all built since April 2007 so the fleet is very modern. They are similar in design to the K5000 series used in the German cities of [Cologne](#) and [Bonn](#), and were constructed by [Bombardier Transportation](#) factories in [Bautzen](#), Germany, and with electrical equipment supplied by [Vossloh Kiepe](#) of [Werdohl](#), Germany.

Unlike trains these vehicles have no toilet facilities (it must make the operator's task so much simpler!) because as we have said before, the tram routes are designed as an intermediate transport mode between buses and trains, so the tram is not really intended for long journeys

There are some differences across the fleet but broadly speaking each unit has:

2 x 93ft long carriages

60 seats and 6 'misericord' or 'perch' seats

Two wheelchair spaces with emergency communication

70 or so straps for standing passengers

Plentiful bright posts and bars to hold onto

Space for 146 standing passengers at a standard 4 persons per square metre

A total passenger capacity of 206 passengers

Eight double slide and plug passenger doors

Four emergency communication points (next to doors)

Eight emergency door opening handles

Fire extinguishers in the driving compartments

Eight network diagrams above the doors

Four dot matrix information screens (front and rear of each carriage)

Automated voice announcements plus info from driver

Priority disabled seats

Free Wi-Fi

A high ratio of glazing to maximise day light

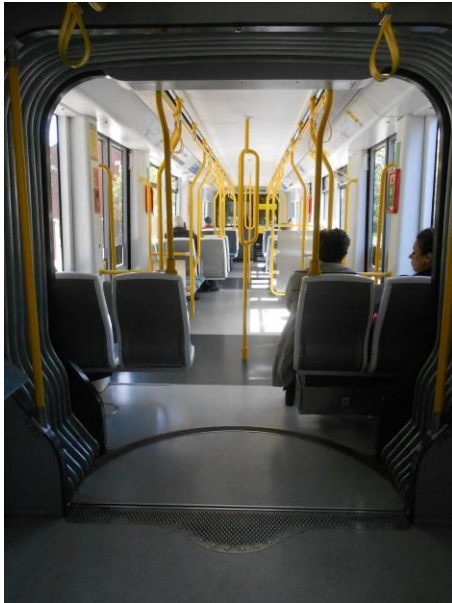
Transparent insulation film on all windows

Glare free strip lighting along the full length of the interior

Most windows have a transom top that can be opened.

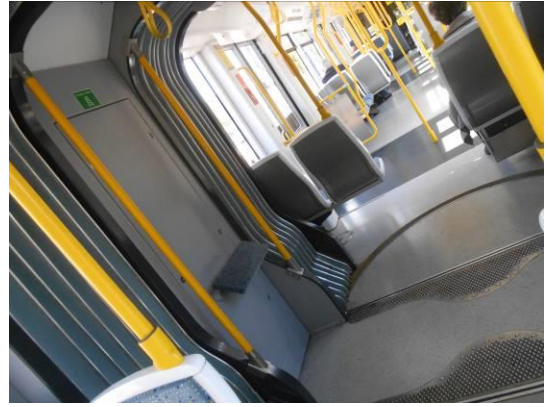
Ability to operate in pairs (4 carriages)

This is an impressive offering indeed. On top of this the interiors are kept very clean and are well maintained.

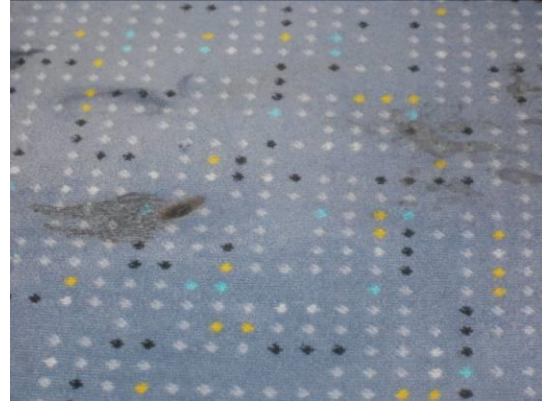


Well with all the positive features we have noted in these articles it is no wonder that the Metrolink system attracts passengers. It also boosts the towns through which it passes. In April the Manchester Evening News noted that house sales rose between 100% and 200% after the opening of a Metrolink route through a postcode area! A study using Land Registry data showed that Manchester house buyers will pay 4.6% more for a house within 500 metres of a tram stop – this is over £8000 more. Even at 1km distance there is a 2% premium!





Mind you some of the passengers don't help transport operators; quite the opposite in fact. Look at this seat on unit 3076 which has unidentified indelible patches of dirt and what appears to be a cigarette burn too:



However this is shown because it is unusual on a tram in service.

Basically with Metrolink we seem to have all the characteristics of what is basically a good, fit for purpose transport system. It is not rocket science at all – it is care and investment! In the coming articles we shall see how Eccles Station and the rail services compare to the Metrolink offering.

On, Off, On, Off...

There is still potential for strike action to disrupt railway services in June. Rail, Maritime and Transport Union (RMT) representatives rejected the pay and conditions offer reached at ACAS between Network Rail and union leaders. This offer prevented the potential May Bank Holiday strikes and work to rule from going ahead.

The terms of the latest rejected offer were:

1. Network Rail will pay all staff in the bargaining groups a 1% consolidated increase on their base salary backdated to 1 January 2015 (with a guaranteed minimum increase of £250 consolidated per annum- pro-rata for part-time staff);

2. Network Rail will pay all staff in the bargaining groups a 1.4% consolidated increase, on 1 January 2016;
3. Separately, the unions and Network Rail have committed to continue working with ACAS to discuss and agree smarter, better ways of working. If these are agreed, Network Rail has committed to paying up to 0.7% consolidated on basic salary from 1 January 2016;
4. Network Rail will guarantee that there will be no compulsory redundancies across all members of bargaining groups until 31 December 2016; and
5. Network Rail will enter in to discussion with the unions to agree a comprehensive job security package for the future.

In response Network Rail's Chief Executive Mark Carne said: "Our people know that there are ways to improve the way work is done. I have always said that if we work together to realise these benefits there is the possibility to increase pay. We are therefore ready to get around the table with whoever the RMT consider can speak on behalf of their members. It is clearly unacceptable for the RMT to massively disrupt the travelling public with strike action when we are ready to continue talks."

So talks will have continued but Members of the RMT union that work for Network Rail threatened the following industrial action:

- 24 hour strike action from 17:00 on Thursday 4 June until 16:59 Friday 5 June
- an overtime ban from 00:01 Saturday 6 June until 23:59 Friday 12 June
- 48 hour strike action from 17:00 on Tuesday 9 June until 16:59 Thursday 11 June

Such action would cause severe disruption to UK rail services because many of the 250 signal boxes and some electrical control rooms will be affected and as a result.

However talks at ACAS over the weekend produced a revised offer for the union to consult about and so as of 2nd June the above industrial action will not take place. The revised offer is for a 2% increase in pay, backdated to January this year, and then a rise in line with RPI inflation next year, based on the November 2015 figure - currently forecast to be about 1.5%.

There would also be no compulsory redundancies for the duration of the agreement, and the unions agreed to participate in discussions with Network Rail to deliver savings through areas such as sub-contracting.

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.



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