

# ECCLES STATION

# NEWS

MAY 2013

The contents of this month's e issue are as follows:

**News section.    Articles.    Editorial.    Trip of the month.    Advert.**

*The May newsletter warns of the **engineering work** that will be taking place and includes the usual articles about your local railway.*

*The Trip of the Month is            **Editor***

NEWS



**The next gardening and station cleaning day is on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May at 11.00.**

Join the team for a pleasant couple of hours exercise.

*Photo J E Rayner*

For those who want something more challenging but still pleasant for a Bank Holiday Sunday, FRECCLES and FrOPS are hosting another of the guided **'Caked in History'** walking trails on the same day (**5<sup>th</sup> May,**) meeting at Eccles Station at 12.45pm for 1pm start. The walk is part of the Salford 'Walks and Water' programme. More info is available by clicking [here](#) (this walk is detailed on page 6) or contact the walk leaders Elizabeth & Mark on 0161 - 789 5016.

**Mark Barker** retired from Northern Rail on 26<sup>th</sup> April and will be replaced as Northern Client & Stakeholder Manager for the North West by **Don Jary**.

*Mark was a great supporter of FRECCLES and we wish him a pleasant retirement. You may remember him as he represented Northern Rail at the unveiling of the memorial plaque for the crash victims at the station on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2012.*

If you want to go out for the day (or come to Eccles) on **May Bank Holiday weekend** then trains are operating as normal from Eccles station, including on the Sunday (5<sup>th</sup> May). However the electrification engineering work means that **trains will be replaced by buses on most Sundays** (except 26<sup>th</sup>) up to and including Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2013. This also applies on **Saturdays** 1<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

On these days, **Arriva Trains will go non-stop from Piccadilly to Chester** on the Cheshire lines route and a replacement bus will run from Piccadilly to Warrington Bank Quay, Runcorn East, Frodsham, Helsby and Chester. **For Northern Trains services a bus will run from Piccadilly to Huyton through Eccles**. For full details of these changes and the impact on your journey, please use the National Rail Enquiries [Journey Planner](#) . Wire is going up on much of the route now and it cannot be that long until the work is completed.

*Eccles Station News thought it worth **mentioning the contents of a recent bulletin from one of our travelling correspondents:***

*"I went on a few trains in Norfolk recently and they were generally empty. The emptiest was **a Norwich to Lowestoft train which had 4 new diesel coaches***

*with about 6 people on including me. The rolling stock was underused compared to the NW but strangely more up to date as if East Anglia was a higher priority.*

*Also the Norwich to London line via Ipswich was electrified - a strange case of priorities - considering that usage is likely to be much less than the NW”*

*The editor of ESN wonders if this illustrates the benefit to the south east of the country of having **a regional government**.*

The rail industry is **seeking 50 more graduates** to join its unique 18-month paid work placement scheme called **‘Track & Train’**. Graduates are employed for three six-month placements: one at Network Rail and two at either a passenger or freight operator or another company within the rail sector to gain a broad range of experience. The scheme is open to young **people who have graduated in the last two years but remain unemployed or more likely under-employed in a non-graduate level role**. It is not intended for a graduate who has had appropriate level work and now found themselves unemployed.



Track and Train railway graduate Simona Lungu.

Track and Train is a paid work placement scheme based where the successful applicant lives. Typical roles will be in network operations, station and train teams, customer service, sales and marketing, route strategy, asset management and project management.

There will not be roles in corporate functions such as finance, IT, or engineering, where the industry has bespoke graduate schemes already in place.

*Photo: Network Rail*

Successful applicants need to be available to **start on 1 October 2013**, and will they be **paid £22k per annum**. Besides **Network Rail** the participating companies with local operations are **Virgin and Cross Country**. People can apply until 13 May at: <http://www.trackandtrain.org.uk>

*On Monday (8 April) work commenced on the transformation of **Manchester Victoria** station. The first stage of the work is to build a spectacular new station*

roof, and scaffolding is already being erected to install a temporary roof deck before dismantling the old roof. **The station will remain open during the work.**

Key elements of the scheme include:

- A new, brighter replacement roof that allows for future expansion of the station
- Improved station concourse area, including a new bridge link to the Manchester Arena, making the entire station fully accessible
- Improvements to the footbridge spanning platforms 3-6 allowing for future growth in passenger numbers
- Sympathetic refurbishment to Grade II listed parts of the Victoria Buildings, including the war memorial, glass dome, Soldiers Gate, the wall map, and the glazed canopy at the front of the building.
- New lighting and glazed entrances to revitalise the Victoria Buildings
- Revamp of existing retail spaces and provision of new retail facilities for a better shopping experience
- Improvements to the ticket hall and external improvements to the paving on station approach
- Upgraded Metrolink facilities



Graphic courtesy of Network Rail.

The **works will allow improvements to services** included in the Northern Hub rail expansion scheme, which could see passenger numbers double by 2019. Funding for the £44,000,000 station transformation is being provided jointly by **Network Rail, Manchester City Council and Transport for Greater Manchester** and is expected to be completed by the end of 2014.

The **FRECCLES Annual General Meeting** was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2013. David Yates, Eoan Edwards and Elizabeth Charnley were re-elected as Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary respectively (it is difficult to find replacements!). Pressure on the current chairman, who is also a leading light in Eccles Community Hall Organization, is to be relieved by the creation of an additional post of Vice Chairman, Steve Hopkins.



The members of FRECCLES assemble for the **FRECCLES AGM** in the newly refurbished Old Town Hall at Eccles.  
*Photo J E Rayner*



Talks were given by **Councillor Lisa Stone** on the topic ‘FRECCLES and Eccles’, and by **Simon Geller** of **Sustrans** who spoke about the proposed Eccles Station Cycle Hub. *Photos J E Rayner*

Stephen Hopkins gave a presentation on the proposed improvements to Eccles Station forecourt. At this meeting Steve was elected as Vice Chairman of FRECCLES.

*Photo J E Rayner*



## **OUT AND ABOUT...**

GENTLEMEN will be pleased to learn that a real shopping experience is to be had, and that it is just a short train ride from Eccles station. Board the train to Stalybridge and you will find there two wonderful emporia stocking many of life's essentials and also many goods you did not realise that you needed.

Upon return to the station, the Buffet Bar provides a range of suitable refreshment for the tired shopping man. This beats useless clothes and shoe shops hands down!



Almost opposite the station entrance, Paul's contains a vast range of hardware. There are new and second hand tools, including huge spanners and drill bits. It is worth going in even if only to admire the goods on display. Remember to watch out for moving vehicles as you cross the road.

*Photo J E Rayner*

Turn right out of the station and go under the viaduct. On the same side of the road you will find the unprepossessing Stalybridge Homecare shop. It is appropriately named because here is a great range of smaller hardware and tools suitable for DIY.

*Photo J E Rayner*



Inside is an Aladdin's cave. Service here is not just of the exciting goods, but includes excellent advice from Mike.

Mike, who has been at the shop for 'too many years' is proud of the quality of the tools he sells. In the range are Sheffield chisels (of very high quality) that are cheaper than Chinese ones!

*Photo J E Rayner*

**...By TRAIN from ECCLES STATION.**

## **ARTICLES**

# **STATION DEVELOPMENTS.**

In the next few years Eccles Station should benefit from two strategic investments in the Railways. The first of these is the electrification of the Liverpool & Manchester line by Network Rail which should be completed by

2016 and will cost about £100,000,000. Secondly, the L&M line is also a key route in the Northern Hub Project which is to improve the speeds and frequencies of rail links between Liverpool, Manchester, Manchester Airport, Huddersfield, Leeds, York and Newcastle. Work has already started on this project which will see the line quadrupled between Lime Street and Huyton; the construction of the Ordsall chord, and the provision of four through platforms on the South Junction side of Piccadilly railway station. The project will take about five years to complete at a cost of £500,000,000.

On a much smaller, more local scale, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is still seeking funding from the National Station Improvement Board (NSIB) to install passenger help points, CCTV, real time information screens and public announcement systems at Eccles, which is one of the fourteen stations in Greater Manchester that still lacks such facilities. TfGM is also exploring the alternative possibility of these being a franchise requirement for the new North of England franchise, but this would mean a long wait for such improvements on account of the delayed refranchising process.

There are also more immediate improvements due for Eccles rail travellers. Northern Rail has received planning permission and the required highway approvals to replace the veteran portakabin which has given 40 years of temporary service as a ticket office. Works are planned to start on site very soon and the long awaited new station building is due to be completed in summer 2013. In turn the provision of a new station building allows money provided by Salford City Council and Eccles Community Committee to be spent on a redesigned forecourt area that will look a lot better and improve pedestrian access to the front of the station.

Along with the forecourt improvements the station is due to receive a new secure cycle shelter during summer or autumn this year. It has been funded by the Department for Transport's Linking Places Fund. Although Northern Rail will install and maintain this facility, it is expected that it will be promoted and managed through the TfGM membership scheme which uses a smart-card entry system.



A secure cycle store at Waterloo station (Merseyside) includes lockers for clothing (foreground). The racks above the bicycles bend down to allow a bike to be inserted and then rise to allow a second tier of storage in the space.

*Photo J E Rayner*



Things might not stop there! Northern Rail has asked NSIP Board permission to undertake design and development works in preparation for the installation of new platform shelters at Eccles. This is part of a scheme for Greater Manchester stations between 2014 and 2019. Capital to put in the shelters would need to be allocated if the design work is carried out. It is not definite therefore and not necessarily soon, but at least it is thinking in the right direction. To ESN it seems that at long last Eccles Station is getting the attention it merits.

### **Big rises in passengers.**

New figures from the railway regulator show that in 2011-12, passenger numbers at Eccles Station rose by a massive 23% from 122,000 per year to 149,000 per year. This is far higher than the average growth for Greater Manchester (7.9%) and is one of the biggest improvements in the region.

There will be many reasons behind this increase. They will include the recent growth in population of Eccles (reversing decades of decline); employment at Salford Quays; reasonable fares; improved reliability of Northern services; the arrival of eastern European migrants who are much more likely to use public transport, and the valuable work undertaken by FRECCLES to improve the environment of the station and to encourage more passengers to use the station. The figures also support the case that FRECCLES has been making that

there should be a better train service at Eccles and the group will be raising this again with the railway authorities.

The same official figures also show an increase of 14% in passengers using Patricroft Station (up from 39,000 to 45,000), which is again way above the national average. As with Eccles station the figures appear to back up research showing that stations cared for by Friends Groups tend to get higher numbers of passengers using them. FrOPS, Friends of Patricroft Station have been making big improvements at their station since inception.

There is also scope for further growth at the station as travellers become aware that Patricroft Station is well-located for passengers to change onto buses to reach both the Trafford Centre and the Salford Reds Stadium.

## **OUR OWN PASSENGER SURVEY.**

A new survey by FRECCLES members also reveals that, in rush hour periods, 20% of passengers using Eccles Station are now changing there to travel to Salford Quays and Media City - taking advantage of the new jobs and leisure facilities developing in that area and this trend can only get better.

The survey was masterminded by FRECCLES member Steve Clapham, and used a prepared questionnaire and was carried out on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April. The aim was to find out about the travel habits and other forms of transport used by those visiting Eccles. Members of FRECCLES interviewed 70 passengers during the evening rush-hour between 4pm and 7pm using a prepared questionnaire.

**The results are as follows:**

### **Frequency of use of Eccles Station:**

58 passengers reported using the station 3 or more times per week, which reflects mainly business users in the period sampled.

4 passengers used the station weekly.

8 passengers used the station less frequently.

## Where had passengers travelled from to visit Eccles?

Passengers had visited Eccles from 37 different locations with seven coming to from Manchester, ten from Stalybridge and beyond. 29 passengers had come from stations in Greater Manchester and 27 from stations in Merseyside. The most distant visitor was from Lancaster – visiting friends. The full results are below:

Originating Area	Passenger Numbers
Manchester City Centre (7)	7
Stalybridge (5)	5
Earlestown (4)	4
Lea Green (4)	4
Newton-le-Willows (4)	4
Rainhill (4)	4
Bromley Cross (2)	2
Greenfield (2)	2
Huyton (2)	2
Liverpool (2)	2
Mossley (2)	2
St Helens (2)	2
Swinton (2)	2
Warrington (2)	2
<b>One passenger each from:</b>	

Ashton-under-Lyne, Broad Green, Bury, Chester, Crumpsall, Delamere via Frodsham, Disley, Hazel Grove, Holmfirth, Huddersfield, Lancaster, Middleton, Mills Hill, Patricroft, Prestwich, Radcliffe, Rochdale, Smithy Bridge, Stockport, Wavertree, West Kirby, Whiston & Wirral.
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### **How had passengers reached their originating station?**

The majority (32) had walked to their station of origin. Four had used the Metrolink, eleven had used the bus and four had cycled. Nineteen (almost 30%) had travelled to the original station by car. The early starts required to reach work in Eccles may lead people to seek lifts from family or friends (which several mentioned) or use car parks near stations.

### **Purpose of visit to Eccles.**

Business/Work - 59	Visiting family/friends – 6
Hospital/Medical Reasons – 2	Education – 2
Shopping – 1	

### **Final Destination of the passenger journey.**

Eccles and local area – 36	Salford Quays/Media City – 14
Salford Royal Hospital – 11	Trafford Centre – 2
Colleges – 4	Salford - 2
Trafford Park – 1	

So, Salford Quays and Salford Royal Hospital are significant contributors to passenger numbers at Eccles.

### **Forms of transport used for onward journey from Eccles.**

To reach local destinations in Eccles, 34 walked, 1 had a lift by car and one used the bus.

To reach Salford Quays and Media City, 12 used the tram and 2 cycled.

To reach Salford Royal Hospital and the education colleges, all passengers walked.

Of the 2 passengers travelling to the Trafford Centre, 1 used the bus and the other a taxi/private hire cab.

Of those travelling to Salford, one used the tram and one cycled. The lone traveller to Trafford Park also cycled.

### **Passenger Views on Facilities at the Station.**

From a list of possible infrastructure improvements, passengers were asked to say which they thought were a priority:

56 named Real Time Information

33 named Disabled Access

25 named CCTV

13 named improved shelters and seating (3 specified the need for seats inside shelters.)

5 wanted longer ticket office hours.

Other matters mentioned were:

Better Lighting (2) Better Access (2) Emergency Phone (1) Waiting Room (1)  
Raising of M/Cr Platform (1) Bike Access (1)

### **EDITORIAL**

The survey shows that Eccles is becoming an important interchange for travellers to reach Salford Quays and Salford Royal Hospital, and that there is an express desire for improvements to the station facilities: the passengers surveyed would welcome the improvements mentioned in our first article if they are introduced.

FRECCLES must not be about just the station but also the passengers who use it, and this is our first formal exercise to take such soundings. It is to be hoped that more public consultations will be held in future for there is much to find out. What do passengers think about the frequency of the trains? What is their experience of reliability and punctuality? How important are these in comparison to station facilities? These are just a few of the questions to seek answers for.

It might be thought even more important to find out from those who rarely or never use the railway station as to why. Could it be possible to identify 'swing travellers' who can be moved onto the rails by minor improvements or improved information?

### **Cake Hole Histories: update**

ESN understands that this project (funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund) is progressing well and a date for your diaries is **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May**, when a pop-up "Memory Booth" will be in the Eccles Shopping Centre/Market area 10am to 3pm for people to bring and share their memories, books, photographs and other memorabilia about living, working, growing up, playing out and travelling in and around Eccles and Patricroft.

Got memories or memorabilia?

- Contact Elizabeth or Mark on 0161 789 5016 for more information
- to arrange to meet the oral historian
  - to share your memories/memorabilia

## **TRIP OF THE MONTH**

Should the weather prove to be good then this is a lovely little walk, inexpensive, and takes only part of the day. The trip is Number **Eighty four**:

### **MARPLE – WATERWAYS CIRCULAR.**

If you don't like countryside views, canals, rivers and woodland then don't do this walk. It's only short but very varied. You ascend the Marple Flight of locks, pass a busy canal junction and then descend to return along the Goyt Valley.

Take the train to Manchester Victoria and from there a tram to Manchester Piccadilly Station. From here catch a train to Marple (NOT Rose Hill). *Option: - turn right as you get off the tram and on Fairfield Street use the lift on the left to the link bridge lounge.*

Alight at Marple Station. Go straight ahead, up the steps and turn right uphill. Cross the canal at lock 9 and walk along the towpath. *This is the Peak Forest canal, built to carry limestone from the High Peak. Samuel Oldknow's warehouse is on the opposite side.*

Ascend the flight of locks up to No16. *Notice that some of the pounds (stretches between locks) have stubs off for docking on the far side –very nice having one of these at the bottom of the garden!*

After lock 16 pass the old lock office on the right on Sutton Lane.

Cross the canal bridge (*over the Macclesfield Canal*) and drop down towards the left to rejoin the bank of the Peak Forest Canal.

At bridge 19 swap to the other side of the canal (left, left, left) and continue on to pass under a footbridge. *There are now beautiful open views of the hills.*

Just prior to bridge 21 turn left off the canal bank and left onto the road.

At the hairpin bend to the right there is a stile on the left.

Cross the stile to go ahead through the field (*this stretch could be very muddy in wet weather!*) and left around the large tree.

Cross the next stile and walk along the path behind the houses.

At the main road, cross and go to the footpath sign to your left.

Go right onto this path *and you start an immediate steep descent of many, many steps on the wooded valley side. The river Goyt is at the bottom.*

Cross the river on the attractive pack-horse bridge and turn left at the lane (Lakes Road).

A little way on there is an octagonal cottage – *was it a toll house?*

There is a weir and then you pass under the railway viaduct.

On you right now are the Roman Lakes. *These were ponds for Samuel Oldknow's Mellor Mill. Take a look in. Tel: 0161 427 2039. They are now used for boating and fishing - daily rod hire is available for fishing. Tel: 0161 427 1621.*

Follow along Lakes Road and pass in front of Bottoms Hall (*Charmingly named, impressively sited - Georgian?*).

Continue until you come to Bottom's Mill Road. *You may see some of the foundations of the old mill on your left on this stretch.*

Turn right up Bottoms Mill Road (*It becomes Low Lea Road part way along*) and follow this along into Marple Bridge. *Marple Bridge is an attractive stone village. There are two churches opposite.*

Turn left along Town Street and past the shops. *On the right is The Royal Scot - selling Robinson's real ales.*

On the left is the River Goyt with The Midland overlooking. *The Midland is a free house selling cask marque real ales, tea, coffee, snacks and full meals.*

Cross the main road ahead and turn left over the river.

Ascend opposite The Midland and past the entrance to Brabyns Park - *a large public park.*

Just after the lych gate fork right across the station car park to Marple station.

Enter the station and cross the footbridge to catch a train back to Manchester Piccadilly. *Notice the brick staithe supports - presumably once for loading trains from the canal barges above.*

CLASSIFICATION:                      SHORT, MODERATE (a very muddy stretch in wet weather)

COUNTRYSIDE, CANAL, RIVER, PUBS, CAFE, VIEWS, WOODLAND.

RAIL FARE: category one (£4.10 adult day return).

MAPs OS 1:50 000 sheet 109 or Philip's Street Atlas Greater Manchester



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*Delve into the past! Look at FRECCLES history!  
See how things have changed!*

of

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