

ECCLES STATION

NEWS

NOVEMBER 2014

Welcome to Eccles Station News. News, views, oddities, and the second of a series of analytical articles entitled 'Transport for Eccles'.

NEWS

Friends of Patricroft Station (FrOPS) will hold this year's **AGM meeting on 13th November** at 7 pm in the Community Room of Eccles Fire Station. The Fire Station is close to Patricroft Station and there is limited car parking. The entrance to the community room accessible from the back of the fire station off Green Lane.

*On Monday 13 October **a four month trial of free Wi-Fi began at Bolton Station**, courtesy of Northern Rail working with public transport experts 'LetsJoin'. It will allow customers free access to the internet, unrestricted access to the 'LetsJoin' infotainment channel which includes the latest news, weather and entertainment as well as localised train running information. Customers can use their smart phone, tablet or laptop to register and enjoy free access while at the station. If the trial at Bolton is a success, Northern plans to roll-out station Wi-Fi to more stations across its network. Connect to: LetsJoinFREEWiFi and share your feedback with @northernrailorg #NorthernRailWiFi*

Abellio Greater Anglia, FirstGroup, London Overground, London Underground, Network Rail, Northern Rail, and South West Trains manage more than **1,000 stations which host charity collections** that raise millions of pounds for good causes each year. These companies have jointly introduced measures to combat fraudulent charity collections. The new measures include

the introduction of a standardised application process for charities wishing to fundraise on their premises and closer monitoring of charity collections. In order to fundraise at these stations, charities will have to:

- *Complete a standardised application process, providing details of collectors and collections.

- *Inform collectors of their obligation to maintain best practice standards for cash collections, as set out in the Institute of Fundraising's Code of Fundraising Practice. This covers fundraiser conduct, requirements for collection materials and the security and prompt banking of the proceeds

- *File their annual charity return information on time with the Charity Commission.

- *Indicate whether they are signed up to fundraising regulation as a member of the Fundraising Standards Board (FRSB).

The rail and station operators are also working closely with the British Transport Police to ensure that any suspicious activity is promptly reported and investigated.

Work continues on the forecourt of Eccles Station. A row of green bollards has appeared and metal edgings mark the boundary of the tarmac. Of the parking bays, Daniel Wride, Salford's Senior Project Officer for regeneration says, "(We) have decided to proceed with a traffic order for 20minutes parking with no return within 40 minutes. **This essentially provides 'drop off' parking.** I've been advised that if we were to place sign at the bays that read 'drop off only' this would not be enforceable. A 'drop off only' sign will also be installed for visual completeness."



*It took seven years of discussion, lobbying and fund raising to get this far – so it is pleasing to see it taking real shape. Freccles member **Steve Clapham** says, “We need to acknowledge that, although we have made no significant progress on the service development front, on all other aspects - gardens, infrastructure (booking office, forecourt, cycle store etc) and heritage, **we have been extremely successful thanks to the hard work of those involved.**”*

As part of **Network Rail’s** plans to improve the railway between Manchester and Preston via Bolton, they will shortly be undertaking work to electrify this route. To complete this, two bridges, one on **Oldfield Road** and one on **Broughton Road** in Salford require reconstruction in order to accommodate the overhead line equipment. In order to complete these works safely, Network Rail will closing the following roads:

Oldfield Road - Full road closure from 27th October 2014 to 29th May 2015.

Broughton Road -Full road closure from 24thNovember 2014 to 16thJuly 2015

Network Rail’s Communications Team says. “The first step towards an electrified railway is to make sure **all structures spanning over the railway have sufficient clearance to accommodate overhead wires which will run underneath them.** Following surveys of the aforementioned structures it became clear that reconstructing both bridges was the only feasible solution. We appreciate that there is never a good time to close roads and will complete the work as quickly as possible given the vast number of utility pipes and services within these structures which take considerable time to divert and is the reason for lengthy closures. However once complete, this work will mean

both bridges will be able to have their existing weight restrictions removed giving capability to carry HGV traffic and with a structure lifespan of over 120 years this work will greatly enhance both the railway and road network”.

*Readers will probably already be aware that **nine sets of Trans Pennine Express (TPE) stock will be transferred to Chiltern Railways** in the near future and that this will occur **despite the frequent crowding that often occurs on TPE** trains to York, Glasgow and Edinburgh and against the wishes of TPE. In fact TPE specifically invested in the building of these diesel class 185 units, and created a dedicated depot at Ardwick to service them. As a result of the enforced loss of this rolling stock, TPE now doubts that it will be able to run all the services for its two year franchise extension.*

*The transfer is as a result of **Chiltern Trains** bidding to **Angel Trains** (the rolling stock leasing company for the 185 units) for the stock while TPE’s future franchise was up in the air. This uncertainty for TPE was **because of the initial mess made by the Department for Transport** in their refranchising project.*

Still on the above topic: it took several weeks before The Times and The Daily Mail on the same day reported the horrendous fare increases imposed on off peak travel in the north. It began to look as if the above farrago would be overlooked as well. This produced a welcome letter from one of our regular readers:

“Dear Editor,

You have really made an impression on the Times after your recent Blast. Today on page 39 they devote a FULL page to Transpennine Express being about to lose 9 of its diesel trains to a new route in the south adjacent to David Cameron’s constituency in Oxfordshire. TPE say that may not now be able to run trains on some routes and the Times helpfully produces a picture of a TPE express on the Barrow line.

Yours sincerely,

John Sunley 20th October 2014.

PS - I wonder why they are not sending some Pacers down to Oxfordshire?”

And then - a few days later Christian Wolmar wrote a 'Thunderer' column in The Times: '**The North Needs new Trains Now** – not years down the line'. Where he comments that you could excuse the trains as being cheap to operate, but then came the off peak unfair increase.

See: <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/letters/article4243478.ece>

See: <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/thunderer/article4249692.ece>

But need to be a subscriber for full articles.

Ed: does anyone know how to find newspapers on the new Salford Library Website?

*On Thursday 30th October **David Cameron, along with George Osborne** formally announced that they were considering **a high speed rail link between Manchester and Leeds**, then on to Hull and possibly extending this to Liverpool as well. Older readers may remember that there used to be a frequent fast (70 mph) Trans Pennine Express between Liverpool and Hull with its own dedicated (five? car) units. Planning could start next March.*



Photos taken on 9th October show the **abundant growth in the large tubs on the Manchester platform** of Eccles Station. The gardening team must have green fingers! It's dated news though – the planting has already changed for winter. Go and take a look for yourself.

Do you enjoy gardening?

Would you like to help with the care and maintenance of Eccles Station gardens?

**Freccles (the Friends of Eccles Station) is looking for a small group of volunteers (5 or 6 if possible) that we can call upon from time to time to help with specific garden tasks:
e.g. planting bulbs, planting annuals, pruning, re-planting the tubs, helping with watering during dry weather etc.**

We will need 2 or 3 people about 5 or 6 times a year for up to a couple of hours each session.

Volunteers need not become involved in other aspects of Freccles unless they wish to do so. Existing Freccles members are very welcome to join this group. You would be contacted from time to time in the hope that one or two could come to a gardening session.

Are you interested, or do you know anyone who might be interested?

If so, please contact
janiceclapham@yahoo.com
or phone 789-5777.

LEISURE ON LINE.

An absolute must go event is on at the Manchester City Art Gallery. The exhibition is called The Sensory War 1914 – 2014 and there is plenty time to visit because it is on between Saturday 11 October 2014 - Sunday 22 February 2015. Admission is FREE, and with GMT and winter weather what about a Sunday afternoon visit when the trains run to Oxford Road station? The cafe does a decent (not cheap) lunch anyway.



The show examines how artists from 1914 onwards depicted the devastating impact of new military technologies, utilised in a century of conflict beginning with the First World War. It brings together work from a range of leading artists including Henry Lamb, CRW Nevinson, Paul Nash, Otto Dix, Nancy Spero, Richard Mosse, Omer Fast, and features works, by the *hibakusha* (survivors of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima) which were created in the 1970s and are being shown in the UK for the first time. **This is powerful stuff brought together in two large rooms.**

See <http://www.manchestergalleries.org/whats-on/exhibitions/index.php-itemID=121.html>

Still on at The Walker Art Gallery until November 30th is the 'JOHN MOORES PAINTING PRIZE' on show. See:

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/walker/johnmoores/jm2014/index.aspx>

Technically nothing to do with leisure on line, but also worth a visit is Peel Park museum and gallery. Firstly there is a large room devoted to a first world war display. This contains many Eccles related items including the war memorial from Patricroft engine shed.



In addition there is a display about Pilkington Pottery and its fine lusterware, and also a section about Henshaw’s school for the blind.



ARTICLES

Metrolink Matters.

As part of the £1.5bn expansion of public transport services in Greater Manchester, Metrolink’s new line to Wythenshawe and Manchester Airport will open to passengers on Monday 3 November, 2014. Pleasingly this is well over 12 months ahead of schedule and on Monday 20 October test trams

started to run 'out of service' between Cornbrook and the airport at the planned frequency of every 12 minutes.

From 3rd November, trams in service from the airport will run as far as Cornbrook, until Metrolink's second city crossing opens in 2017 and unlocks extra track capacity through the city centre. At Cornbrook passengers from Wythenshawe and the Airport direction will be able to connect with frequent services to stops across the Metrolink network.

The route, a continuation of the St Werburghs Road branch, will have fifteen closely spaced stops so trams will take around 45 minutes for the journey, and will increase the number of trams running between St Werburgh's Road and Cornbrook. There will be a 300-space park and ride facility at the Sale Water Park stop, conveniently located just off Junction 6 of the M60.

Fuller details and a map of the route can be seen on:

<http://www.metrolink.co.uk/futuremetrolink/Pages/airport-line.aspx>

Next there is news of a planned Metrolink Route. Transport for Greater Manchester has held a consultation on the proposed 5.5km route for the Metrolink tram to the Trafford Centre. The proposed route heads east to west through the centre of Trafford Park which will greatly improve public transport access for workers. The route branches off south west from Pomona (as originally planned), goes under Trafford Road and along Wharfside Road to pass the Imperial War Museum. Then it turns away from the canal to Trafford Park Village, and Parkway (the junction of Tenax and Westinghouse Roads) where a park and ride facility will be provided. After this it joins Barton dock Road (at Parkway) to head north west to The Trafford Centre. Stops are proposed at Wharfside, Imperial War Museum, Village, Parkway, Event City (Barton Square) and Trafford Centre. The work will require road junction remodelling at Parkway and Event City.

Feedback from the consultation will be considered and TfGM will report the results to the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee, and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority before seeking formal approval to make an application for a Transport and Works Act Order. The application will include a

Transport Assessment and an Environment Statement for the scheme. The Order will provide the powers needed to build and operate the Trafford Park Line. Following a period of tendering, construction of the Trafford Park Line is likely to commence in 2016 and the new Metrolink Trafford Park Line is planned to be in service in 2019/20.

For map and links to other aspects of the plan see:

<http://www.tfgm.com/Corporate/Consultations/Metrolink-Trafford-Park-Line/Pages/Trafford-Park-Line.aspx>

Transport for Eccles (II).

In last month's **Transport for Eccles** we examined the route provision for road transport, and found that route provision for cars, lorries, and vans, was very good. It might not be perceived as such by these users because without road charging most of these users will experience the over use of the generous infrastructure at peak times, leaving it greatly underused at other hours; and also because of the strange psychological effects of motorised vehicles on their drivers (another matter, another time!). Here are two views of 'busy' roads at 1.00 clock on a weekday afternoon:



Improvements to meet the motorised sector's desires would be very expensive and extremely damaging to the area. The real short term need is for stringent safety measures along with reduced, enforced speed limits off the motorways. These are cheap and easy to do. In addition 'Intelligent' real-time signage would be comparatively cheap and effective for both traffic flow and safety.

In contrast, cyclists and pedestrians are poorly served by the infrastructure yet all improvements of provision for these two groups would be inexpensive and life enhancing. Such improvements would include segregated cycle ways, and pavements; improved priority at road junctions and crossings, more crossings, and reduced speed limits in town.

Infrastructure for Taxis and private hire vehicles are covered in the above and in Eccles area there seems to be good provision of these services. Within Eccles itself there are six operators offering cabs, cars and minibuses. As you extend the boundary of search out a little way from Eccles the number increases greatly.

The emphasis so far has been on personal transport which can provide fairly precisely for the requirements of the individual able to employ that transport mode. The first article did touch on buses though, and it noted the benefit of bus only lanes, but the relatively low provision made. Bus transport suffers from the traffic jams created by cars: bus lanes rebalance priorities; are cheap to do, and greatly enhance the overall capacity of a route. With specific reference to Eccles, great improvements for bus operators and passengers would come from bus lanes on Regent Road into Manchester and increased bus priority around the Trafford Centre approaches.



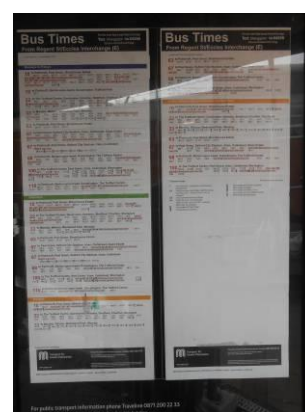
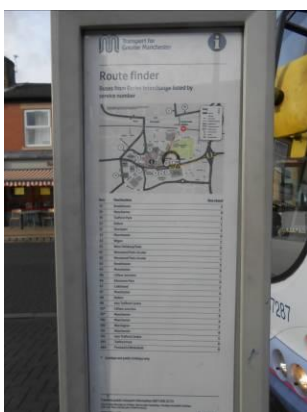
In Eccles all of the bus services call at a central bus station providing shelter from the elements. This is kept clean with regular jet washes and clearance of litter. It is adjacent to the tram stop, has a taxi rank, is 3 minutes walk to a private hire office, and 5 minutes walk from the railway station facilitating changing transport mode. There is a public pay toilet. This bus station has four east bound stops and one, separate west bound stop, ironically an inversion of

the old system (Lane End, the west bound bus station, had about 10 stands whereas all east bound services used the one stop at the Lamb Hotel car park!).

The east bound stands are in a spacious and comfortable shelter with seating provision, litter bins, and a small staff office. The west bound stand is covered and has a few seats but it is small, cramped and restricts the customers' view of approaching buses. The space between the shelter and boarding point is hampered by Metrolink steps down from the platform. Litter is a problem: provision needs to be improved.



Information posters are systematic and of clear layout. They start with a list of where to catch the desired bus. At each stand is a journey duration poster, and a timetable clearly divided by weekday, Saturday, Sunday and Public Holiday sections. Each section is then subdivided by hour of day. This is good.



There are also press and listen buttons for the poor sighted to use.

The electronic displays at east and west bound sections are merely repeats of the actual timetable, and although they add value this is nowhere near as good

information as would be provided by real time running information. The technology for real time information has been available for over twenty years and TfGM should be deeply embarrassed that so far it has signally failed to provide the benefits of this information service to passengers at any stop in the 'county'.



Away from the bus station most, but far from all stops have shelters and all appear to have the good standard timetable display with divided sections. Many main road stops have a concrete lay by which allows the other traffic to flow while the bus is stopped, but at the expense of the bus sometimes having to wait to get back into the traffic stream. The spacing of stops seems to be reasonable as well. In contrast there are no electronic displays (real time or otherwise) at all.

Each stop has a simple plate at the top. The side facing the approaching bus displays the stop location, the direction of travel expressed as the next key destination, and the bus service numbers serving the stop. The reverse side has a much larger travel logo, and a telephone number for public transport information (0871 200 20 30). There is also a web address (www.traveline.info) underneath which is a

text facility for finding the next scheduled bus Text: stopref to 84268 the stop ref being 8 letters such as 'mangmgtj'. This is simple and effective information – if it can be faulted it is that the print is probably rather small for some eyes.

As a last word on bus infrastructure it is necessary to say that nothing has been seen in this survey to indicate that the Eccles infrastructure is significantly out of line with that provided elsewhere in greater Manchester. It is hardly TfGM's fault that the bus station is geographically cramped compared to many other town centres (eg Middleton).



EDITORIAL

HS3?

ESN intends to take a wider look at the High Speed Rail situation in a series of articles in 2015. However it is felt worth including an editorial on this recent announcement of a possible high speed link from Manchester to Leeds.

The important cross country railways in the North have suffered badly from lack of government interest and investment in the last 40 years, as have northern railways in general. Policies of pricing off traffic, and reducing permanent way and rolling stock capacity were followed for decades, and the brains of Marsham Street cannot think why the Northern Rail network does not turn a profit. It would not be unreasonable to suggest that Whitehall maps of the United Kingdom could be on a scale that is inversely proportional to the distance from the capital.

In this context, the announcements this week should be welcomed as a sign that the Executive in Westminster could be starting to recognise that there is a constituency beyond the Home Counties. However ESN, along with a number of other observers must caution against optimism on the part of northern readers and rail travellers for reasons given below:

*this was merely an announcement of a possibility. It was not an intention or even a politician's promise (for what those are worth) to undertake such a project.

*Plans would have to be drawn up; options and costings produced, and then cost benefit analysis carried out before the project becomes an intention.

*To carry out this planning would take beyond the next General Election to complete.

*There is a General Election on the way. ESN would not like readers to think that this is no more than an illusion to gather a few votes on that one day, and then be forgotten.

* Nor would ESN like readers to think that it could be a smoke screen to cover the undoubtedly embarrassing record of Westminster Government when it comes to transport investment in the North.

*Other context to bear in mind when judging this announcement is that the Executive has recently enforced a massive **UNFAIR rise** in off peak tickets in the North only; has talked about the Nodding Donkeys (sorry Pacer units) having to run for another 15 to 20 years (!!!); suggested service reductions be part of the requirement for the two year Northern Rail franchise extension, and cannot understand why rail in the north is not better used and profitable! On the positive side this Government has been investing in some electrification outside the south east, but in contrast notice that it has not felt like committing to new rolling stock to go with that work.

Given the above facts ESN thinks that optimism would be a giddy response. The recommended response is that northern rail operators, rail users and their representatives, community rail groups, transport unions, railway workers, council officers etc., unite in a spirit of extreme scepticism. A collation of hard and unavoidable questions should be put forward to test the resolve of politicians on this matter.

To find out more about **FRECCLES** or to make contact see our **website:** www.freccles.org or e mail us at info@freccles.org.uk

