

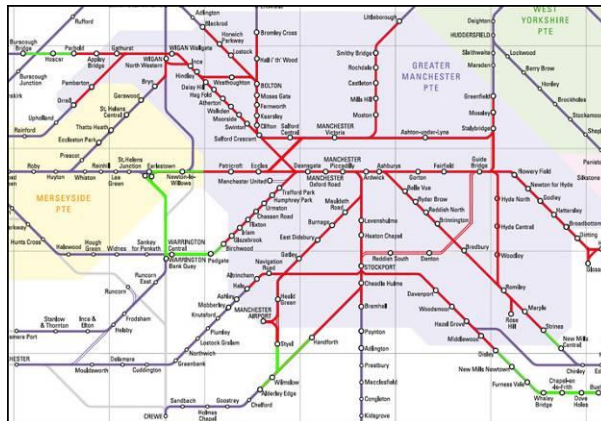
ECCLES STATION NEWS

OCTOBER 2014

Welcome to Eccles Station News. Within is the first of a series of analytical articles entitled 'Transport for Eccles'.

NEWS

Would be passengers are reminded of the **restriction on use of local off peak tickets for rail departures between 16.01 and 18.29 on Monday to Fridays**, introduced on Monday 8th September 2014. This also applies to Greater Manchester Daysaver Tickets for bus & train, tram & train, or bus & tram & train. Passengers are also reminded that the restriction applies to off peak returns just outside Greater Manchester as marked on green on this map:



*It has come to ESN's attention that some guards are telling passengers that the Wayfarer (formerly 'Peak Wayfarer') cannot be used during these times. **This is not correct!** The Wayfarer ticket is valid for use at the above times. ESN advises passengers to pick up the leaflet '**IMPORTANT Off-Peak is CHANGING**' from stations and have it ready to show if they are challenged while travelling on a Wayfarer ticket.*



Four views of the station garden as we move into autumn. The first two show the thread of the grey 'wave' design – symbolic of travel. The third shows a composition climbing to the walls above. The last picture is of the late flowering sedum spectabile fronting the 'alpine' section. Photos: JERayner.



Our garden group is looking for **occasional volunteers to provide seasonal help**. No interest in railways necessary – see the ad that follows the news section.

The Cambrian Coast line reopened on 1st September after repairs to embankments washed away by the rough tides earlier this year. For those in the area Arriva Trains Wales is offering reduced fares as a (re)introductory offer.



Network Rail has awarded an £8,000,000 contract to the engineering consultancy firm Parsons Brinckerhoff **for design work on the east-west rail project** which is to re-establish a passenger and freight rail link between **Oxford, Bedford, Milton Keynes and Aylesbury** for the first time in more than 40 years. The work includes timetable modeling, the design and alignment of track, civil engineering works to bridges and embankments, geotechnical investigation and survey works, studies on how the reinstated railway will affect level crossings, station design, consents, ecology and environmental works.

The first phase of the scheme is already underway with the construction and doubling of track for more than 18km of railway to increase line speeds to 100mph along with a variety of other works. These include the construction of new overbridges, underbridges and footbridges, closure of 37 level crossings, construction of a new station at Oxford Parkway and work to upgrade Bicester Town and Islip stations along with a new signaling system.

Rainhill Station is now the test bed for **new energy efficient LED lighting** installed by Northern Rail and project partners DEXECO and PICOW. All the old fittings have been replaced. This has enhanced the look of the station and has already reduced the stations energy consumption by half. A dimming function is available for selected lights so that they reduce their output to 10% when they are not needed, but will come on instantly when somebody approaches them, further reducing the station's energy usage.

Northern's project manager, Euan Hilton, comments: "We have installed LEDs at Rainhill which give a much clearer light, improving the station for our customers and staff, whilst at the same time reducing our energy consumption. The trial here at Rainhill has already been very successful and **we are hoping to roll out this type of scheme at other locations.**"



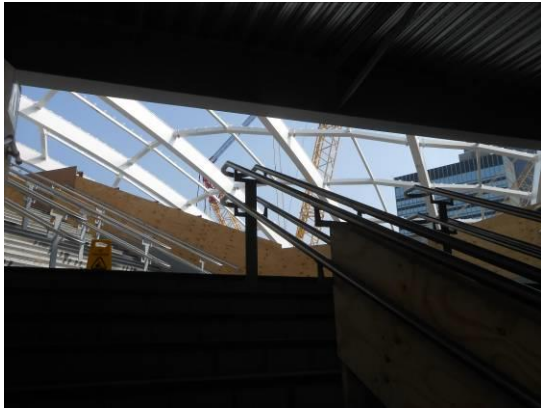
Work is taking place to make the forecourt area of Eccles Station into an attractive as well as functional focus at the top of Church Street. Planters have been provided by 'Incredible Edible' with various food plants. Unfortunately the sign on one of these has already received attention from an Eccles idiot.

Photos J E Rayner.



*Virgin Trains has undertaken one of its most extensive pieces of customer research to use the results to determine investment priorities for the new franchise. Customers were asked to name their top priorities for an ‘**ideal customer experience**’, from booking a journey and on-board experience through to arrival. One of the top priorities for customers was being rewarded for their loyalty, with 84% saying they would like this. Another key experience was **boarding guidance and assistance on the platform**, with 72% of passengers keen to see more pre-boarding help when catching their train. **Improvement of station waiting areas also featured highly**, with 62% of customers asking for better facilities to enable them to work or wait in a comfortable environment. Other recent developments include the introduction of a customer reward programme with Nectar, a Priority Boarding service for vulnerable passengers, and even a Teddy Tracking [\[R1\]](#) service to reunite children with their lost toys.*

Rapid progress is being made at Victoria Station on the modernization of the station interior. A new passenger bridge had appeared by 11th September 2014 leading temporarily through a poly tunnel.



Much work is being done on the tram lines to increase the number of platforms and it can be seen that at this stage there are still four elliptical beams to go in at the east end for the new inflatable roof.



A mezzanine floor that will presumably provide retail space has been added above the concourse.



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.

ESN visited The Walker Art Gallery to see the entries for the 'JOHN MOORES PAINTING PRIZE' on show until November 30th. See:

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



ESN's reviewer did not feel as inspired as at some of the previous years' displays. That however is partly personal and it is still well worth a visit because as always the entries are of a high standard, displaying great imagination.



The rest of the Walker Gallery is anyway a great treasure house of arts and crafts so while there pop into a few of the other rooms for a real treat.

Interesting fact: John Moores, of Littlewoods Pools, Painting Prize and other fame, was born in Eccles, at the Church Inn (formerly on Church St, next to Eccles Rec, now a car sales place.) *Sub Ed.*



ARTICLES

Return of Club 55 tickets.

Good news for older passengers is the return of the Club 55 offering on both Arriva Trains Wales and First Trans Pennine Express services.

ARRIVA TRAINS WALES

Anyone aged 55 and over can travel with an Arriva Club 55 ticket. Just remember to carry proof of age when you travel as you may be requested to show this during your journey. [We] only accept valid, original documents from the following list: passport, driving licence, proof of age related pension, Senior Railcard or birth certificate. Please note *bus passes are not accepted*. Arriva Club 55 tickets are a **special offer** and only available for travel starting from **1 September 2014**. Club 55 '**Anyday**' tickets are valid on every day of the week whereas Club 55 '**Not Friday**' tickets are not valid for travel on Fridays. Travel using a Club 55 ticket is **not** permitted before 0900 Monday to Friday.

Outward travel is only permitted on the date shown on the ticket. The return journey must take place within 8 days, the first day being the outward travel date printed on the ticket. The last day of sale and outward travel will be **23 October 2014**. **All travel must be completed by 30 October 2014**. You can travel throughout the Arriva Trains Wales network (blue coloured routes on

the [map here](#)) using any rail operator. In addition, travel can be made on the services of specific rail operators only on the purple, yellow, green, pink, purple/yellow, and grey colour coded routes shown on the [map here](#) www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk/Club55/Map.



FIRST TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS

This offer lasts until 15th November 2014. The fares are to English stations £19 (£15.20 with 20% railcard discount), and to Scottish stations £29 (£23.20 with 20% railcard discount).

The Scottish stations are Lockerbie, Glasgow and Edinburgh because you can only use Trans Pennine express trains, but there are no evening restrictions like there used to be; the only restriction is trains after 9.30. Within England one can travel to Newcastle, Middlesbrough, Scarborough, Hull, and Cleethorpes. Return journeys must be made within one month of the date of outward travel. See <http://www.tpexpress.co.uk/tickets-offers/offers/club-55/>

Transport for Eccles (I).

If you gave consideration to what makes for a thriving town you would almost certainly create a very long list, and somewhere on that list there would likely be an entry along the lines of 'good transport links'. With many small towns ailing, or even failing, in social and economic terms this is no mere academic exercise: rather it is actually a matter of real urgency. While not being

complacent we should note that Eccles is doing rather better than many such towns (thank goodness) and this may be due in part to 'good' transport links and proximity to a major city with all the attractions that has to offer. Indeed Eccles is noted as a place that is 'very good for getting out of'.

A quick inexpert survey of road links shows that Eccles should be considered a motorist's paradise. In the latter half of the twentieth century, while people were being told they didn't want to use the buses and trains, Eccles acquired an impressive set of fast road links. What is remarkable is that though there was much damage done by this construction the character of the area was not completely destroyed.

Near to Eccles are eight motorway junctions onto a countrywide network of motorways of a speed to be competitive with rail: J2 (M602), J3 (M602), J1&12(M602/M60), J13 (M60), (J14 M60/M61/A580), J11 (M60), J10 (M60). Over the same period a great deal of money was spent on the A roads giving some impressive connectivity: A576 Eccles Old Road: to Lancaster Road and A580 west and to Pendleton, A57, Regent Road (or motorway) to Manchester and its ring road connections and into Trafford Park via Centenary Bridge. Of course most of this investment improved things for the minority of road users – those driving motorised transport and further heavy investment for that never-satisfied constituency would require Eccles and Manchester to be under 10 lane 90mph roads leading to vast (free) car parks with no room for much else. However there is much room for softer investments and a crying need for change to safety policy which is so far still of mediaeval standard.

The practical improvement to road links needed around Eccles (everywhere?) is simple, affordable, not so destructive, and a democratic rebalancing: it is to improve provision for pedestrians, cyclist and bus users. These include segregated cycle and pedestrian lanes, greater priority for these when crossing the motorised roads, and more bus priority lanes. Enforced (by policing or engineering) and reduced town speed limits (maximum 20mph) would greatly improve the safety of all road users, give a quieter, pleasanter town environment and at little expense increase the traffic capacity of the roads. Real time 'intelligent' road signs would also contribute to safety and free traffic flow.

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

