

# raillfuture

SCOTLAND | ALBA



## Teachdail Rèile na h-Alba

### RAILFUTURE SCOTLAND NEWSLETTER SPRING 2024



Photo: Allison Cosgrove

#### GLASGOW MODEL RAIL SHOW, FEBRUARY 2024

As last year, the Glasgow Model Rail Show was hugely busy with thousands coming through the doors. We had lots of enquiries on all sorts of rail topics: it is so good to be able to meet and chat to our members and to everyone else visiting. They certainly come from far and wide – the first person I spoke to was from the USA who had timed his holiday to fit round the Show.

Photo shows Calum Paxton behind the newly set up stall.

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING(S) 2024

As our Secretary Jane Ann, recently said “You wait ages for AGMs and then two arrive at once!” First off is our own Railfuture Scotland AGM on Saturday 4 May, at Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh at 2 pm (turn right at Pizza Express on George IV Bridge and it’s 100 yards along). Our speaker is Eugene Clarke from the Levenmouth Rail Campaign and he will be able to give us up to the minute news about the re-opening of the new Stations at Leven and Cameron Bridge.

The second is Railfuture National AGM on Saturday 13 July at Holyrood Hotel, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh from 10 am with business starting at 11 am to allow travellers south of the border to attend. AGM business is first (members only) followed by lunch and speakers from Scotrail and Edinburgh Trams. The Rail User Group Awards will follow to round off the afternoon. Please check the Railfuture Events page to see more details and to book lunch.

It would be really good to have a great turnout of our members at both of these events.

#### ALEX HYNES MOVING FROM SCOTRAIL

The Department for Transport has announced the appointment of Alex Hynes to the role of Director General, Rail Services. Alex will join the DfT on a two-year secondment from his current position as managing director of Scotland’s Railway on 15 April 2024.



Photo: Allison Cosgrove

Allison Cosgrove, Chair, Railfuture Scotland, said “Alex has been a marvellous ambassador for Scottish railways and has led significant change to our network. We now have more stations opened, more new trains and far more people using the railway than ever before. We wish him well in his new post – but look forward to his return!”

## COUNTDOWN TO CAMERON BRIDGE AND LEVEN STATIONS

At Waverley, Cameron Bridge (CBX) and Leven (LEV) stations, actual clocks are counting down towards the return to passenger services on the Levenmouth branch on 2nd June. The temporary timetable, necessitated by a shortage of rolling-stock, will provide 1 train per hour via Kirkcaldy to Edinburgh taking 66 minutes, a saving of 41 minutes on the current bus journey. Eventually there will be 2 trains per hour from Leven to Edinburgh, the route alternating between Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline.



Photo: Allison Cosgrove

## ST ANDREWS UPDATE

Meanwhile, there is light at the end of the tunnel as the LRDF St Andrews appraisal has STAGgered across the finishing line and the Detailed Options Appraisal is now with Transport Scotland. The options have been whittled down to either heavy rail or light rapid transit, the latter timed to connect with every mainline train in a way which the bus service has never managed to do over the past 55 years. Each has pros and cons: heavy rail is more expensive and requires more engineering, and due to post-closure developments would have to terminate at Petheram Bridge car-park, but on the other hand only heavy rail can give a completely seamless journey from St Andrews to Edinburgh (or Dundee), including the Edinburgh airport interchange. LRT could be constructed more quickly, at less cost and run right into the former station site next to the bus station, but would require re-excavation of the bay at Leuchars, plus a re-jigged access to enable a change on the level, and it would still be a case of 'all change at Leuchars' albeit much more easily. LRT would probably not result in as great a modal shift or revenue as would a heavy rail service and only the latter would enable the lucrative charter train market to reach St Andrews.

<http://www.starlink-campaign.org.uk>

However this is not the end, nor the beginning of the end, but we hope the end of the beginning, because now that the report has been submitted, the ball is in Transport Scotland's court. To encourage them to get on with the Outline Business Case, another piece of work is being undertaken by E-Rail, generously funded by Railfuture, Fife Council and St Andrews Common Good Fund. This exercise should give an indication of where at least some of the capital funding required could come from, based upon land value uplift capture. We hope this work will be an antidote to the usual government inertia.

## NEWS FROM BEATTOCK STATION ACTION GROUP - A SETBACK (BUT WE'RE STILL HERE!)



Last year we received the letter from Transport Scotland after they received our completed STAG saying that the station did not offer value for money in economic terms and taking it into the business case the outcome would be the same result. This was a setback but we will continue to fight for our station.

We are currently seeking a meeting with the Transport Minister and last year we had a stall at events in Moffat and Beattock; this allowed us to keep the public informed with what was happening. The Swestrans Regional Transport Strategy (2024-2042) should be signed off in March 2024 by the Transport Minister; contained in this is the proposal for the Station reopening and a local service on the WCML.

### PHOTOS FROM THE ARCHIVE

Photos of Portobello Station kindly provided by John Wilson



*Portobello station looking towards Edinburgh 14 April 1956 by late J.L. Stevenson (thought original Edinburgh/Dalkeith Railway Station on extreme right)*



*Portobello Station*



*Portobello station - last day of operation 05 September 1964*



*Stranraer Harbour station - passengers board 'Antrim Princess' train from London Euston 1984 (Adrian Nicholls)*

## THE RAILWAY RETURNS TO EAST LINTON



Photo: Network Rail  
 Front Row: East Linton Primary School pupils with Head Teacher Gill Gardner  
 Back Row Alex Hynes, Scotrail; Fiona Hyslop, Transport Minister; Bill Reeve, Transport Scotland

Wednesday 13 December 2023 – after almost 60 years the railway returned to East Linton, and it seemed that the whole village had turned out to welcome the first Scotrail train to stop at the new Station.

Rail Action Group East of Scotland (RAGES) had been spearheading the campaign for the re-opening of East Linton since the group's formation in 1999, alongside the Berwickshire station of Reston. With Reston opening in May 2022, the construction team moved swiftly on to East Linton and this campaign group can justifiably be proud of their hard work in achieving two re-openings in a short period of time.

On the opening day itself, I joined RAGES members at Dunbar for an early train to Edinburgh where the first train south would stop at East Linton. The platform at Edinburgh Waverley was extremely busy with Fiona Hyslop the Transport Minister accompanied by Transport Scotland officials, the local MSP, Paul McLennan, local councillors Norman Hampshire and Lyn Jardine and many interested travellers. As the train drew into the new station only 15 minutes later, all on board were amazed at the number of people waiting to greet it – both platforms and the bridge were full of people and the entire Primary School were lined up in the Park waving at the train. For our young people, it will be a game-changer in terms of easy access to jobs and further education in Musselburgh or Edinburgh, and for all ages it will be a wonderful connection back to the national network, with a journey to London achievable in 4 hrs 47 mins with only one change.

The station will be served by Scotrail and Transpennine Express with 10 services daily to Edinburgh Waverley and 11 return services.

*Allison Cosgrove*