



Railfuture Limited

18th Annual General Meeting

SENATE HOUSE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



Saturday 15 July 2023

Rail User Group Awards 2023

start at 13:45 followed by presentations
from some of the winning RUGs

Aiming to finish around 15:30

Rail User Group Awards 2023

Roger Blake

Railfuture Director and Awards Organiser



RUG Awards Judging Panel

Comprising four Railfuture Vice Presidents

For this year's 9th awards judges were encouraged to visit nominees as has been the practice since the 6th awards in 2017. Where a visit was not possible, contact was made via Zoom or telephone. Roger Ford (aka Captain Deltic) said: "*This (the judging panel) has always been one of my favourite events with good company and the chance to get up to speed on parts of the railway I don't usually cover.*"

Four judges met in London on Thursday 6 July to decide on the winners. The judges were Ian Brown CBE, Roger Ford, Chris Green, and Stewart Palmer.



This year's venue was the Bishops Finger at Smithfield. In 2022, thanks to one of the VPs taking part, it was at the Reform Club in London (photo taken by Ian Brown).



RUG Awards 2023 Presentation

This year there were 13 nominations, from eight groups across five of Railfuture's 14 branches in Britain.

- Six categories
- Ten Award-winners
- Four commendations

Presentation by Christian Wolmar,
Railfuture's Honorary President



RUG Awards 2023: 1 - Best Website



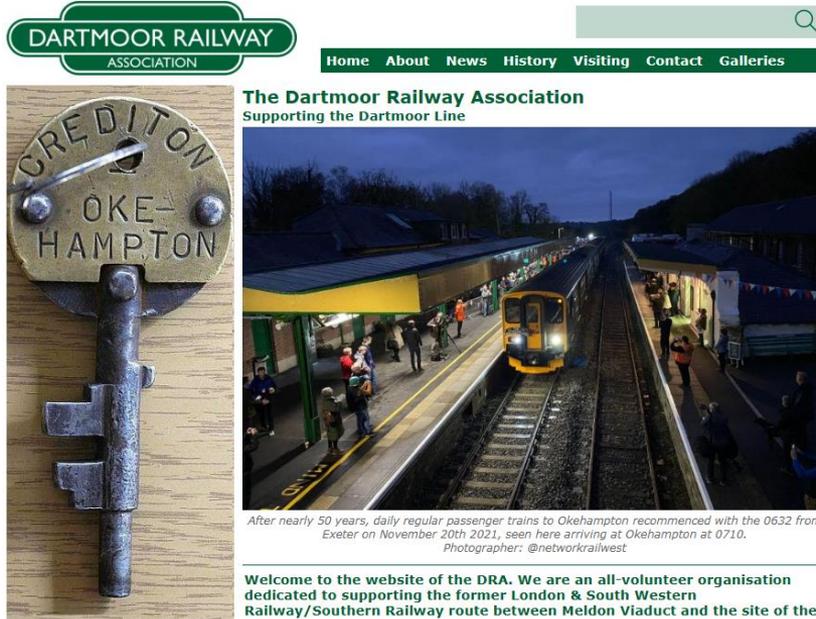
The inaugural *Adrian Shooter Award* - in tribute to a former Vice-President and RUG Awards judge since 2012 until last year.

■ Joint Gold Awards

- including the 100th Award / Commendation since inauguration of these RUG awards in 2012!

■ Commendation x 2

Best Website: Joint Gold Awards



DARTMOOR RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

Home About News History Visiting Contact Galleries

The Dartmoor Railway Association
Supporting the Dartmoor Line

After nearly 50 years, daily regular passenger trains to Okehampton recommenced with the 0632 from Exeter on November 20th 2021, seen here arriving at Okehampton at 0710.
Photographer: @networkrailwest

Welcome to the website of the DRA. We are an all-volunteer organisation dedicated to supporting the former London & South Western Railway/Southern Railway route between Meldon Viaduct and the site of the

www.dartmoor-railway-association.org

www.bedwyntrains.org.uk

Home Realtime Info Recent Performance Timetables More...

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Campaigning for Better Services for Kintbury, Hungerford and Bedwyn Since 2006.

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12:22	Bedwyn	2		On time
13:10	Reading	3		On time

[Home pages shown for each website]

Judges' comments: *“Each in their own way supporting existing users and encouraging new users of their railways, Bedwyn evolving into so much more than a traditional RUG website, and Dartmoor reflecting its wider role since the restoration of regular mainline services in 2021.”*

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Best Website: Joint Commendations

<https://friendsofbishopstone.org.uk/>

www.railcargoliner.com

FOBS Friends of Bishopstone Station Home How to find us About FOBS FOBS Media Projects FOBS Notice Board Hire the Hub and Classes Events Contact

Welcome To
BISHOPSTONE STATION

and
The project to restore this unique Art Deco railway station to its former Art Deco glory

Bishopstone Station, located on the Seaford to Brighton line (Sussex Downs Line), is unique in that it is the only railway station in the country to be built with two gun emplacements among other things. Sadly, over the years, it has become run down and a bit unloved.

The FOBS (Friends of Bishopstone Station CIC) was formed to bring about the restoration of this wonderful Art Deco building and to bring it back into use with new facilities, one of which is a Community Hub. We invite you to look through our website and learn about Bishopstone Station, who we are and what we are doing.

Community Rail Network Network Rail Sussex Communities Rail Partnership

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INTRODUCING
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A new express freight carriage with integrated cargo loading system

Watch the explainer video

ALL YOU NEED IS
TRACK 'N' TARMAC
FOR NET ZERO LOGISTICS

Simplify Rail Terminals, with Rail CargoLiner...

[Home pages shown for each website]

Judges' comments: *"FoBS website very professional, focused on the station as a thriving community hub using re-purposed parts of the unique Art Deco listed building; Rail CargoLiner website also professional, excellent animations, a project in its early stages deserving a wider audience."*

RUG Awards 2023: 2 - Best Newsletter



The Paul Abell Award – in memory of a former Vice-President and RUG Awards judge.

- Commendation
- Gold Award

Best Newsletter: Commendation Tonbridge Line Commuters

Judges' comments: <https://tonbridgecommuters.org.uk/>

“Clear and informative, a traditional 'essay' format with few illustrations, it addresses the right issues but does need to be brought into the electronic era.”



The newsletters (far right) do not appear to be available on the group's website (home page, shown right)

Tonbridge Line Commuters
Campaigning for better rail services

About us | Where we cover | News | Membership | Fares & Travel Tips

Welcome to Tonbridge Line Commuters

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN US](#)

Membership
Join Now
Renewals

Latest News
March 2023 rail strikes - more misery in store for passengers

Tonbridge Line Commuters campaigns for better rail services in the Tonbridge area. Covering Tonbridge, Hildenborough, Paddock Wood, Leigh, Penshurst and Edenbridge stations, we are the largest passenger group of our kind in the South East. We are totally independent and can therefore act in our members' best interests by working with the train operators, bus companies, local and national government to help ensure a better deal for the travelling public in our area.

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tonbridgecommuters.org.uk @Ton:linCommuters H facebook.com/tonbridgecommuters

Travel Topics

Issue 137 Spring 2023

The watchdog for all Rail Travellers
from Tonbridge, Paddock Wood,
Hildenborough and towards Edenbridge

Redhill to Tonbridge Line: Significant cuts to services averted by TLC

No changes until December 2023, with small reductions thereafter. Key school services protected.

During the course of the past few weeks, we have been in intense discussions with GTR, parent company to Southern Rail, who operate the service between Tonbridge and Redhill, a line with which we have recently become more involved following our adoption of Leigh, Penshurst and Edenbridge at last year's AGM.

GTR had previously indicated to us their concern about the need to make company-wide economies, and that the Tonbridge 'branch' needed to share in these. In this connection they had shared with us proposals which saw a major reduction in the current shuttle service between Redhill and Tonbridge at certain times to a less than hourly service. More importantly, the proposals gave no consideration to the line's key user group (school students), or the potential of the line to provide a link between Kent and Gatwick Airport. After reviewing and condemning the GTR proposals as effectively mothballing the line, we compiled a new service pattern which respected GTR's need to reduce costs but retained the majority of services, including school time services, and introduced direct services from Tonbridge to Gatwick Airport via Redhill.

Our proposals link to longstanding ambitions across the Southeast to improve connectivity and make better use of available infrastructure. Above all they protect the key user group of the line, school students travelling between Edenbridge and Tonbridge, whilst making better use of the rolling stock and available connections. The proposals were fully worked up, including train wait times, connections with other services, gap utilizations within other service patterns and available platform at Gatwick and stations across the

proposed route, therefore giving GTR little room for outright rejection.

We submitted our proposals to GTR and in a subsequent meeting at the beginning of April GTR showed us a new timetable proposal effectively incorporating virtually all our suggestions. They invited comment and stressed that no changes would be introduced before December 2023 at the earliest. We were somewhat surprised that, instead of rejecting the Gatwick extension out of hand, they stated that they were 'working on a proposal which could potentially be extended to Gatwick in the future' and put forward some hurdles which included funding the service. We do not see the issue of funding being a main detractor for the extended service, as the line would see a significant growth in users from across Kent and would be attractive to Kent County Council, Surrey County Council and the operators of Gatwick Airport. Furthermore, we believe the commuter base exists, the support exists, and that the route is viable, therefore we will be pushing GTR to introduce this service as soon as practically possible.

Subsequently, GTR have confirmed publicly at a stakeholder event on the 27th March that there will be no changes to the Redhill to Tonbridge service before December.

TLC will continue to advocate on behalf of the line as a lifeline for those communities that it serves, as well as the more widely potentially benefitting. We believe that without the improved service, and the consequent increase in passenger numbers, the line will continue to be a candidate for cuts and will wither away - harming those who depend upon it today and a lost opportunity for others. ZD

TRAVEL TOPICS - SPRING 2023

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RUG Awards 2023: 3 - Best Social Media



- Commendation
- Gold Award

Judges' comments:
“Still not seeing enough nominations for what should now be a primary communications medium this far into the 21st century”

Best Social Media: Commendation

Friends of Bishopstone Station

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/591547987945845>

https://twitter.com/fobs_seaford @fobs_seaford



Friends of Bishopstone Station

Judges' comments:

“Professional use of technology, including a WhatsApp group, primarily devoted to promoting use of the highly successful community hub in restored non-rail operational parts of the station building.”

F.O.B.S @fobs_seaford · 26 Jul 2020 Pinned Tweet



 **Michael Spence**
22 June at 20:12 · 🌐

Next event we have this coming Saturday.


Friends of Bishopstone Station
Community Food Project
Sustainable Propagation

June 24th – 11:00am to 1:00pm
Reduce your gardening costs and help the environment
Join Darren Ferris, who will lead a practical workshop, talk and discussion on the propagation of herbs and vegetables, including seed sowing and cuttings. Bring your own light gardening gloves.

Limited seating, first come first served. Doors open 10.45am, event starts at 11:00am. This is a free event.
We promote food equality through opportunities for food and gardening education. Helping our community access healthy, locally sourced food.



Email: friendsofbishopstonestation@yahoo.com • Twitter: [@fobs_seaford](https://twitter.com/fobs_seaford)
Facebook: Friends of Bishopstone station • Tel: 07501 672424
www.friendsofbishopstonestation.org.uk

 Friends of Bishopstone Station

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

 **Jim Stanford**
24 June at 16:23 · 🌐

From today's sustainable propagation workshop



👍 15 💬 2 ➦ 4

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RUG Awards 2023: 4 - Best Campaign

- Bronze Award
- Silver Award
- Gold Award

Best Campaign: Bronze Award

Tarka Rail Association's ACE Rail campaign

“Enthusiasts vision for trains from the Torridge area through CREDITON”

news story in CREDITON Courier on 1 April 2023.

Photo caption: “Tim Steer, Dr Michael Ireland and David Northey with the big poster, one of which is at CREDITON.”

(photo taken at former Bideford station, now Heritage Centre)



Judges' comment: *“For a re-opening campaign starting from nothing two years ago, initially led by someone with no previous experience doing this, the campaign has come a remarkably long way, building up an admirable breadth of public and stakeholder support, in a remarkably short time. It's still early days but many foundations for future success are already laid.”*

Best Campaign: Silver Award

Bedwyn Trains www.bedwyntrains.org.uk

Aims: To restore our pre-pandemic direct services to Paddington. To be a voice for Kintbury, Hungerford and Bedwyn Station passengers. To keep Bedwyn Station as a nice environment and to promote its use along with the bus connection to Marlborough. To maintain and improve train services from Bedwyn, Hungerford and Kintbury.

Story: In 2006 First Great Western were set to halve our off-peak service. This is something we managed to get overturned.

In March 2020 Covid hit, putting us on a diesel shuttle to Reading. This was only three months after the new December 2019 timetable, the best eastbound timetable we'd ever achieved.

Slowly we started to get our bi-mode (direct to Paddington) trains back. But in 2021 cracks were found in the IET bi-mode fleet. Kintbury, Hungerford and Bedwyn were an easy target, we were put on a diesel shuttle to Newbury while the reduced fleet was spread out elsewhere.

Slowly we started to get our bi-mode (direct to Paddington) trains back. However, in 2022, post-Covid, the DfT instructed GWR to make massive cost savings. Again our bi-mode trains were taken away and assigned elsewhere (replacing older expensive to maintain trains) and we were put on diesel shuttles for all of our off-peak and the majority of our evening peak trains.



Judges' comment: *“Did their campaign succeed? Yes, it did. Has it all gone wrong? Yes, it has! Have they sat back and accepted it? Most certainly not; they have a plan and the knowledge, experience and persistence - and maturity of approach - to succeed again.”*

Best Campaign: Gold Award

Rail Action Group, East of Scotland

www.rages.org.uk

Judges' comment: "Really uplifting, impressive achievements not just aspirations (Reston and East Linton stations, service improvements for Dunbar and North Berwick), campaigning style an example to all with a tight and professional campaign group, creating a common purpose with an inclusive approach and winning over politicians (not embarrassing them!)"



RUG Awards 2022: 5 - Best Campaigner

The Clara Zilahi Award

In memory of a stalwart Railfuture campaigner, who died in 2013

- Joint Gold Awards

Best Campaigner: Joint Gold Awards

Barbara Mine, Friends of Bishopstone Station

Tim Steer, ACE Rail campaign (Atlantic Coast-Exeter Railway)



Southeast Communities Rail Partnership

FOBS chair Barbara Mine named as Coronation Champion

We are delighted that Barbara Mine, the chair of the **Friends of Bishopstone Station** community rail group, has been named as one of the official Coronation Champions.

The nomination from Southeast Communities Rail Partnership means Barbara has been recognised by Their Majesties The King and The Queen Consort as part of the official Coronation celebrations in conjunction with Royal Voluntary Service.

Judges' comments: *“Tim (above) has proven to be an inspiring mobiliser of engagement and support across a wide spectrum of local organisations for what started as a one-man campaign, since adopted by the 1977-established Tarka Rail Association. Barbara (right) has been the driving force of FoBS, has networked superbly, seen the community hub opened by the Lord Lieutenant of Sussex, developed a sustainable financial model for the CIC, and been rewarded as a 1 in 500 'Coronation Champion' - a role model for any rail-related community project.”*



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RUG Awards 2023: 6 - Judges' Special Award

- One Award

Judges' Special Award: Devon County Council

Judges' comment: "Our first award to a local authority, for their sustained delivery of rail development. **Marsh Barton** most recently (the third new station in Devon Metro), plus winning DfT funding for their SOBC for the **Tamar-Tavistock RYR project**, opening the **Dartmoor Line** and **Okehampton station**, then winning Levelling-Up funding for a new **West Devon Transport Hub** at east Okehampton, **dedicated bus links** connecting Tavistock, Bude and Launceston with Dartmoor Line trains at Okehampton station plus Lynton & Lynmouth and Ilfracombe with Barnstaple station's Tarka Line trains, all based on high-level political and officer collaboration with their train operator and other key stakeholders."

Devon
County Council



RUG Awards 2023

- Congratulations to all winners
- Slides for all years are available at www.railfuture.org.uk/RUG+Awards
- Keep in touch with all our rail user groups at www.railfuture.org.uk/Rail+User+Express
- Why not nominate your own RUG next time?

GUEST SPEAKERS FROM THE RUG AWARDS WINNERS

- ❑ **Steve Smith, Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group**
- ❑ **Sue Baxter, Dartmoor Railway Association**
- ❑ **Roger Davis, Stourbridge Line User Group**
- ❑ **Tim Steer, Tarka Rail Association's ACE Rail campaign**
- ❑ **Tom Dickson, Rail Action Group, East of Scotland**
- ❑ **Barbara Mine, Friends of Bishopstone Station**
- ❑ **Councillor Andrea Davis, Devon County Council**

Best Website: Joint Gold Awards

DARTMOOR RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

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live-departures.info	Device	Venue	Privacy Policy	Contact Us
Bedwyn Departures				
Bedwyn Live Arrivals Bedwyn Timetable Buy Tickets Click destination for service details:				
12:52	Newbury	2	PLATFORM	EXPECTED
13:48	Newbury	2		On time
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[Home pages shown for each website]

Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group

Campaigning for Better Services for
Kintbury,
Hungerford and Bedwyn Since 2006.

2009

Electrification Announced as far as
Newbury

2009 to 2019

A long fight...

2019

From December 2019, after a siding extension, we got our best service ever

December 2019

With new IET bi-modes, we had our best timetable ever – 27 weekday Bedwyn departures for Paddington (19 direct, average journey time 73 minutes across all services).

2020

Covid

IET Cracks

March 2022

A phone call from Mark
Hopwood

They need our three IETs to
replace the HSTs

Proposed May 2022

GWR/DfT looted three of our IETs,
relegating us to 20 Paddington departures
(6 direct, average journey time 86
minutes).

Now

We now have the timetable up to 22
Paddington departures, (7 direct, an
average journey time 81 minutes)

GWR / DfT are saying

- We don't have the passenger numbers / revenue to warrant the return of our IETs in the current climate
- Okay to extend to Carmarthen!
- IET fleet problems lead to cancellations, short formations

Lots of missed connections at Newbury

- No West Facing Bay
- Station not always staffed
- Appears to be hit or miss whether holds are implemented
- Freight and through services take precedence over us
- One Newbury to Bedwyn shuttle doesn't stop at Kintbury or Hungerford so it can make way for freight

An example-June 15th

- The 1157 Bedwyn to Newbury shuttle was held to allow a delayed West of England through (the 0711 off Penzance).
- It was then further held to allow two freight (stone) trains through. Annoyingly the CIS screens showed a 'creeping' delay, as opposed to the reality that the signallers were aware of due to holding it to allow three trains through.
- The 1157 departed Bedwyn at 1209 and arrived in to Newbury at 1230.
- The 1221, off Newbury, connection had already left at 1222.

Because things are so bad

- We've had to redesign our website to be give real time information on the move
- We've developed our own train graphing software so we can put forward timetable changes to GWR

This site was designed with the **Wix.com** website builder. Create your website today. [Start Now](#)

Bedwyn Departures

[Bedwyn Live Arrivals](#) | [Bedwyn Timetable](#) | [Buy Tickets](#) | Click destination for service details:

		PLATFORM	EXPECTED
14:57	Newbury	2	On time
15:50	Newbury	2	On time

[live-departures.info](#)

Device ▾

Venue ▾

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Bedwyn Arrivals

[Bedwyn Live Departures](#) | [Bedwyn Timetable](#) | [Buy Tickets](#)

		PLATFORM	EXPECTED
15:42	Newbury	1	On time
16:36	Newbury	1	On time

[live-departures.info](#)

Device ▾

Venue ▾

[Privacy Policy](#)

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Newbury Departures

[Newbury Live Arrivals](#) | [Newbury Timetable](#) | [Buy Tickets](#) | Click destination for service details:

		PLATFORM	EXPECTED
15:07	Reading	3	On time
15:17	Paignton	1	15:25
15:22	Bedwyn	2	On time

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- GWR Network Status
- Westbury Departure & Arrival Boards
- Pewsey Departure & Arrival Boards
- Bedwyn Departure & Arrival Boards
- Kintbury Departure & Arrival Boards
- Hungerford Departure & Arrival Boards
- Newbury Departure & Arrival Boards
- Thatcham Departure & Arrival Boards
- Theale Departure & Arrival Boards
- Reading Departure & Arrival Boards
- Paddington Departure & Arrival Boards

Passenger Group.

Services for Kintbury, Bedwyn Since 2006.

mail list. We are here to help:
bedwyntrains.org.uk
[Banner](#) GWR: 0345 7000 125

Time	Destination	Platform	Expected
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Bed Bedwyn to Paddington Morning Weekday
Campaign Bedwyn to Newbury Morning Weekday
Hung Paddington to Bedwyn Evening Weekday
Get in touch, or **Refunds** to help:
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Bedwyn Trains Passenger Campaigning for Better Service Hungerford and Bedwyn

Get in touch, or join our newsletter email list
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live-departures.info Device Venue

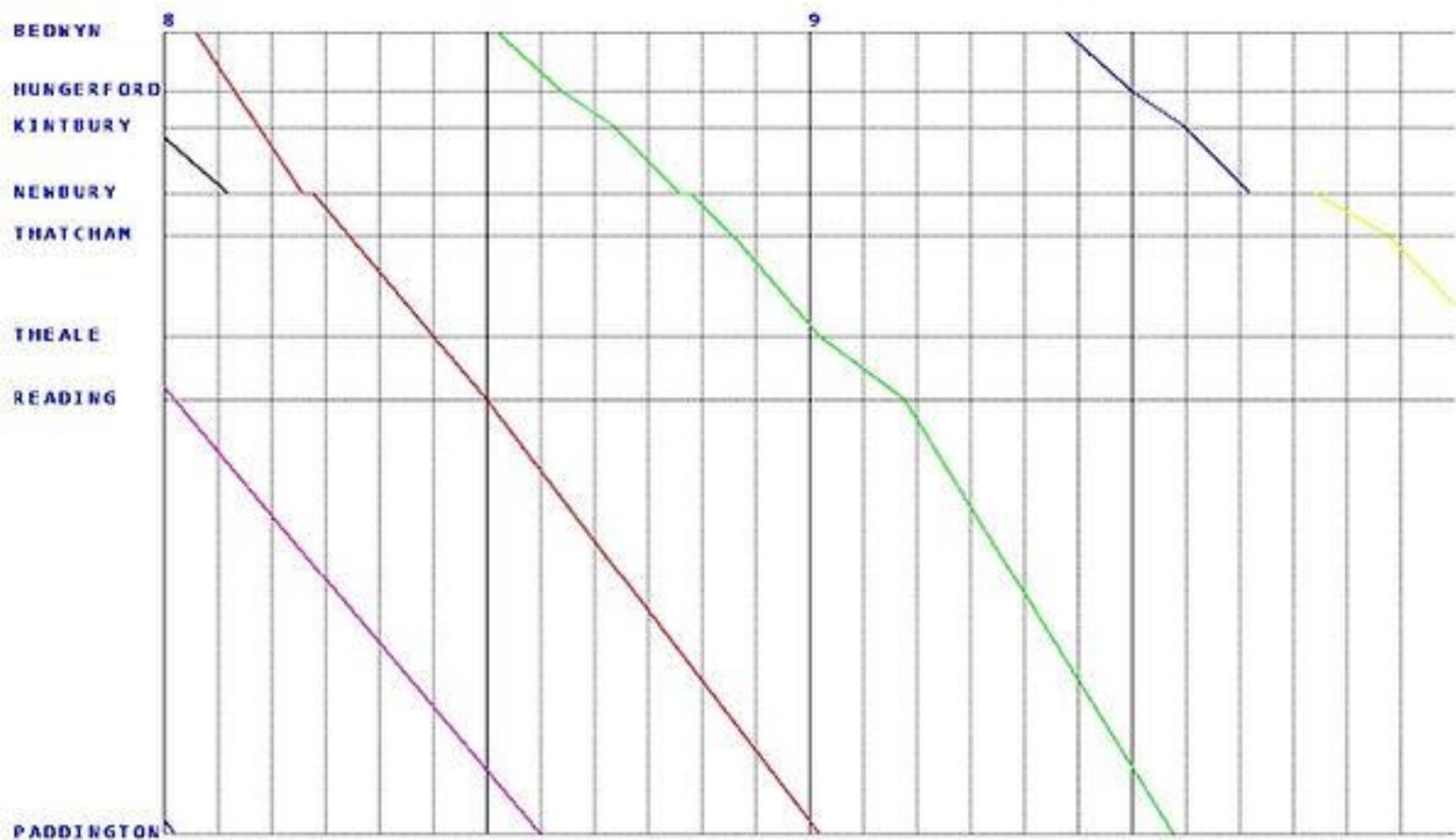
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- Latest News
- GWR Journey Planner
- Refunds
- Hints & Tips
- Marlborough Bus Times
- Local Information
- About Us
- Our Activities & Campaigns
- Our Published Documents
- Our Successes
- Our Electrification Saga
- Our Train Graphing Product
- Our Station History
- Our Picture Gallery

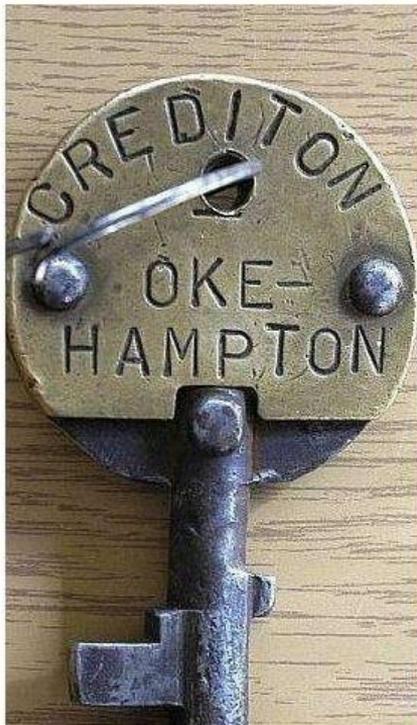


The Dartmoor Railway Association

Supporting the Dartmoor Line



*After nearly 50 years, daily regular passenger trains to Okehampton recommenced with the 0632 from Exeter on November 20th 2021, seen here arriving at Okehampton at 0710.
Photographer: @networkrailwest*



The Dartmoor Railway Association

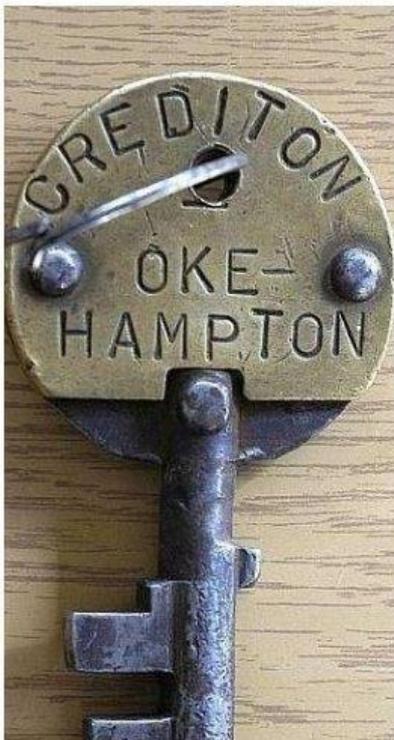
The Dartmoor Railway Supporters' Association (DRSA) was formed in 2009 to support the Dartmoor Railway. In 2020 the Dartmoor Railway Community Interest Company went into administration and the Dartmoor Railway effectively ceased to exist. Subsequently ownership of the Aggregate Industries owned line was transferred to Network Rail to enable the reinstatement of an Exeter-Okehampton service operated by Great Western Railway. In preparation for the new challenges ahead, DRSA renamed itself Dartmoor Railway Association (DRA) in May 2021.

The objectives of DRA are:

1. To record and promote interest in Okehampton area railway history.
2. To support the 'Dartmoor Line' Exeter - Okehampton rail service, and Okehampton Station.
3. To explore the possibility of operating heritage rail services between Okehampton and Meldon Viaduct.
4. To support the Northern Route initiative, i.e. the reinstatement of the entire former London and South Western Railway Exeter - Plymouth route.

Membership

Volunteers need to be DRA members, but we are also very keen to attract members who are not in a position to volunteer but who wish to support the association's



Service Information

Trains, buses, refreshments and parking.

Industrial Action

Latest news on strikes from GWR: "The RMT (on board and station staff) will strike on Thursday 20, Saturday 22 and Saturday 29 July. On these dates we will only be able to run a limited service, starting later and finishing much earlier than usual – and most of our network will have no service whatsoever. Trains that are planned to run will be subject to short notice changes and cancellations. We are also expecting there to be an impact on the days before and after strikes too, in particular Friday 21 July". As ever, please check with www.gwr.com/strike before travelling.

Exeter-Okehampton rail service

The Exeter-Okehampton rail service is operated by Great Western Railway. Rather than trying to reproduce the latest timetable and give up-to-date short term service information, we provide a few links so that potential travellers can get accurate information from the horse's mouth.

Look up basic train info and buy tickets at <https://www.gwr.com/travel-information>.

Check for service problems at <https://www.gwr.com/check>.



Tavistock bus service

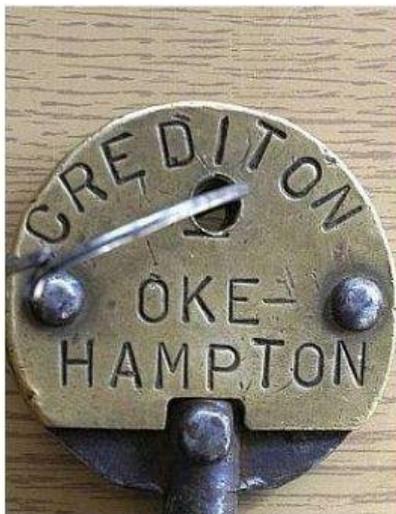
Dartline Coaches operates the 118 bus service between Okehampton and Tavistock, the timetable for which can be seen at <https://bustimes.org/services/118-tavistock-okehampton>.

Other bus services to and from Okehampton

Following a number of changes recently, Devon County Council has now published the latest West Devon Area timetables at https://www.devonbustimetables.info/current/west_devon/.

In particular note the changes to Service 5 (Exeter - Crediton - Okehampton/Barnstaple/Chulmleigh) and Service 6 (Exeter - Okehampton - Holsworthy - Bude/Launceston).

[For those interested in some of the background to the changes, there's informed commentary at <https://busandtrainuser.com/2022/03/10/a-new-chapter-for-stagecoach/>.]



Okehampton Station Cafe

More properly called the Bulleid Buffet (*) after Oliver Bulleid, the Southern Railway's innovative engineer, the station cafe is run by Leanne Knight and her team from The Amazing Brownie Bakers of Lifton. From the 1st of November the cafe will move to winter hours which will be:

Monday to Saturday 0800 to 1600 (food served 0900 to 1500)

Sunday 1000 to 1600 (food served 1000 to 1500).

The Bulleid Buffet has a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/people/The-Bulleid-Buffer/100005065062565/>. They can be contacted on 07440 600400 or



Where To Go

On this page we suggest destinations and activities for visitors to Okehampton Station. The page is evolving, and contributions are welcome.

We strongly suggest looking at the [Visit Okehampton](#) website, for an overview of the attractions of the town and its environs. Visit Okehampton has also produced an excellent brochure 'Okehampton - The Gateway to the moor', which is available in hardcopy at many outlets including our shop, and can also be downloaded from their website.

The Okehampton and Meldon area, and the entire railway back to Coleford Junction, is contained on Ordnance Survey 1:25000 Explorer Map 113. Please note that the railway east of Okehampton is not very accessible.

For an overview of the Meldon area, particularly its industrial archaeology and geology, download our [Exploring Meldon](#)  (274Kb) information sheet.

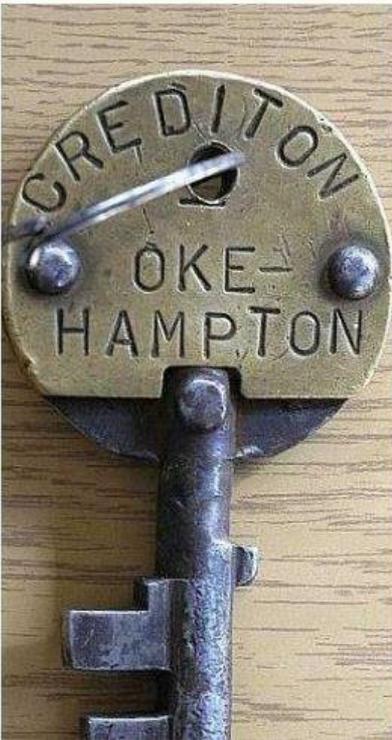
Much more detail about Meldon is to be found in Peter Keene's excellent 'Exploring a Dartmoor Valley - The Meldon Beneath our Feet', for sale in the DRA shop.

Tramlines footpath access.

Please note that safety issues have led to the closure of the of the useful flight of steps from Okehampton Station carpark to the Tramlines footpath. To reach the start of the footpath you have to exit the car park and immediately turn right. The area now comes within the Network Rail estate and their risk assessment led to the closure. We have been advised by NR that bringing the steps up to standard would be expensive.

Okehampton Castle

Originally built by the Normans before becoming the Courtenay family residence, Okehampton Castle was Devon's largest castle, and there are substantial remains. It is



Pony Magazine (and Pony Express newsletter)

From number 21, the Spring/Summer 2015 issue, DRA members had the option of receiving the Pony magazine electronically, thus reducing printing and postage costs and enabling the association to spend a higher proportion of subscription income on more direct support for the railway. As magazines and newsletters become 1 year old, we will make them available to download from this page. Pony Express newsletter number 5 was published on September 6th 2022; the current Pony issue, number 45, was published May 1st 2023.

Please note that Issues 1 to 20 are scans of printed copies, and are much larger files (up to 25 Mb) than the later issues.

[Issue 43 Winter 2021/2022](#)  (4.9Mb)

[Pony Express 4 November 2021](#)  (303Kb)

[Issue 42 Summer 2021](#)  (1.4Mb)

[Issue 41 Spring 2021](#)  (1.4Mb)

[Issue 40 Winter 2020/21](#)  (2.9Mb)

[Pony Express 3 September 2020](#)  (218Kb)

[Issue 39 Spring 2020](#)  (2.1Mb)

Stock Movement Day

Paul Vodden

Spring is the time of plans and projects - Leo Tolstoy

By the middle of March the secret was out. Okehampton would once again become a living, breathing railway destination. Much to do to get to that point!

Wednesday 17th March 2021 – a 'normal' station maintenance day – or was it? After remaining stationary since January 2020 the 31452 type 31 diesel and D4167 08 diesel shunter had to be fired up by RMS locotec in readiness for their move to Meldon to make space for Network Rail engineering works at



Okehampton Station. DRSA volunteers had ably assisted RMS charging up batteries over the preceding weeks and those present for station maintenance sprung into action assisting on the day. Naturally it was not a textbook mission, with much head scratching going on to start the 31, in particular, as many procedures had to be carried out in

the correct sequence before the start button could be pushed. Several relays after a long lay-up were jammed and needed coaxing back to life. When all checks were completed and with many fingers crossed both locos came back



to life with a cloud of smoke, spluttering into that familiar rhythmical chug, much to everyone's delight and relief 'time for another brew'.

Rosie's Diary – Driver Training

by Rosie



This will only be a short article because my paws are so hard worked at the station, up to five days a week. Not only do I patrol the platforms and check over all the new orange 2 legs, but my rodent patrols have extended to the Bude Bay line and a basement! The track was well

grown over under the sleeper carriages, and I did not mean to disturb the robins which were trying to nest there, but there were lots of other snug places in the pipes and under the rubbish for miskies. Then I went down below the Signal Box where Christine certainly needed my help as she went through smelly nibbled papers. You remember that my father was a terrier.



Anyway I have a lot to do and so when a wagon was by my nose with a four legs space I thought someone would offer me a ride, but no



luck. On another occasion I tried charming the Driver, no luck. So I took all the Colas Drivers up the line to show them the route, and even pointed out the way to good pasties over Bridge 613, Meldon Viaduct. My efforts may pay tasty future dividends.



Back at the station I was having to restrain one of my two legs when he spotted a Boys Own Awayday Roadrailer with seats for mates at the back. Good job the virtual police were on duty everywhere.

I was puzzled when I spotted that the Okchampton ground frame now has its own lights. But I suppose the new drivers eyesight might not be as good as our Tom and John.



At the end of a day I like nothing better than to lie where I can keep an eye on everything. But I am also dreaming of the train which will take me to Exeter and beyond to the beach at Teignmouth, then a salty sea ride to a canine cafe terrace at Shaldon. Just so long as the drivers know the way from Okchampton!





The Dartmoor Pony

The Magazine of the
Dartmoor Railway Association

No.43 Winter 2021/22 £2.50



The Dartmoor Line is Open!



Image 74 / 170





Image 91 / 170



Peter Ritchie and Graham Parkinson hard at work in the



Image 5 / 170



Rail grinder in Okehampton Platform 2, pending departure

Work in Progress - DRA volunteer activity



This page showcases the activities of the DRA's volunteers. It relies heavily on the contributions of volunteers, especially team leaders. Carriage and Wagon reports are by David Bell unless otherwise stated. Thank you to all our contributors.

Note that there is also coverage of the restoration of brakevan LDS55625 on its dedicated [page](#).

Our content management system's mechanism for limiting file size resulted in the unplanned loss of reports between sometime in 2015 and April 2018, including vital information on David Bell's 79th birthday cake. We now periodically remove reports into archive pages, as follows:

[Archive page 5](#) 2021

[Archive page 4](#) 2020

[Archive page 3](#) Sept 2019 to Dec 2019

[Archive page 2](#) Dec 2018 to Sept 2019

[Archive page 1](#) Apr 2018 to Nov 2018, plus a jumble of earlier, departmental volunteer reports.



Community Rail Day at Meldon Viaduct July 5th 2023



Best Newsletter: Gold Award

Stourbridge Line User Group
www.stourbridgelineusergroup.info



Issues 1 to 12
 October 2015 to June 2018



Issues 13 to 24
 September 2018 to June 2021



Issues 25 onwards
 From September 2021



Issues 1 to 12
 October 2015 to June 2018



Issues 13 to 24
 September 2018 to June 2021



Issues 25 onwards
 From September 2021



Issues 1 onwards
 From October 2015

Judges' comments: "Three different newsletters with different intervals and topic coverage - Platform, Platform 2 and Platform 3! Professional-quality presentation and content, result of close links with membership, much more than just a user group magazine, has taken user group publications to a new level."



Issue 21
 March 2023



Issue 21
 March 2023



Issue 21
 March 2023

STATION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																							
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Stourbridge Line User Group

www.stourbridgelineusergroup.info

Roger Davis



Atlantic Coast Exeter Railway

ACE Rail

Presentation on behalf of



railfuture

The national
Rail User Group awards

15.7.23



August 2022 Torrridge and West Devon MP meets local councillors, Tarka Rail Association and GWR to support ACE Rail.

October 2022. A project to develop the case for an extension and upgrade of the Tarka Line has received a £6,500 grant from Great Western Railway. Roger Blake confirms Railfuture's £5,500 fighting fund to the Business Case.



GWR MD Mark Hopwood CBE visits Barnstaple

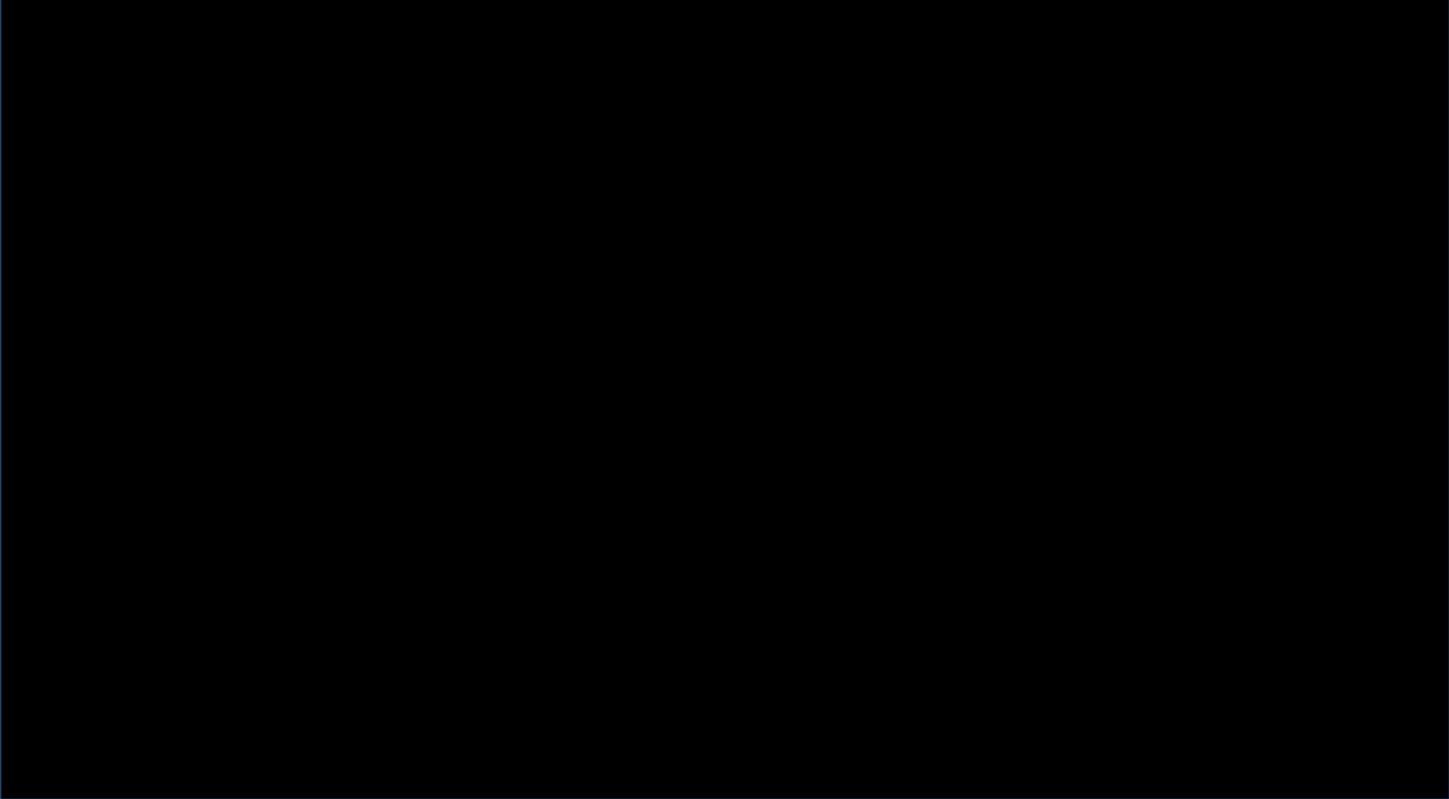


December 2022

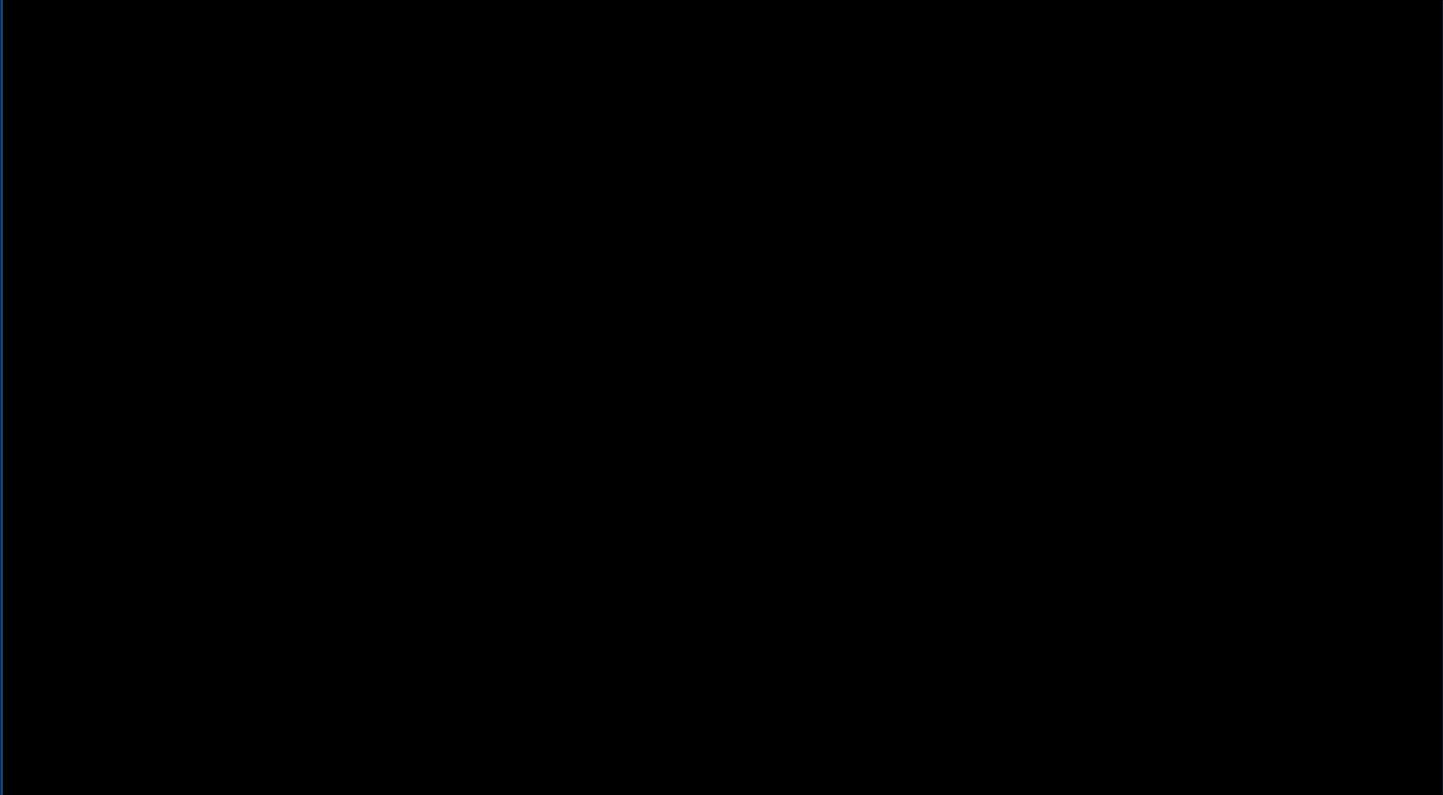


January 2023 – House of Commons Transport Committee – Rural
connectivity

Mark Hopwood CBE mentions his visit to Barnstaple



January 2023 Restoring Your Railway fund – Westminster Hall debate
The North Devon MP speaks on Tarka Rail Association's behalf.



Crediton railway station

Bideford, Barnstaple and Crediton town councils support ACE Rail



March 2023 ITV West Country ACE Rail interview
The 60th anniversary of the Beeching report



May 2023 GWR's senior management return to meet with the Tarka Rail Association



Best Campaign: Gold Award

Rail Action Group, East of Scotland

www.rages.org.uk

Judges' comment: "Really uplifting, impressive achievements not just aspirations (Reston and East Linton stations, service improvements for Dunbar and North Berwick), campaigning style an example to all with a tight and professional campaign group, creating a common purpose with an inclusive approach and winning over politicians (not embarrassing them!)"





Rail Action Group East of
Scotland
RAGES

Tom Dickson

13th. January 1999 – RAGES formed



Photo: Stewart Stevenson, MSP, left, with Tom Thorburn (© RAGES)

Tom pictured with then Minister for Transport, Stewart Stevenson, MSP in March 2008

Strategic Aims of RAGES (1999)

- To improve the rail service between Edinburgh and Dunbar with extension to Berwick upon Tweed at a later stage.
- To have East Linton Station reopened for active use and to press for the reopening of Reston Station.
- To consider the implications with regard to car parking and bicycle storage at Stations between Waverley and Berwick upon Tweed.
- To improve the level of service to North Berwick.
- To keep under scrutiny the standards of passenger facilities at stations between Waverley and Berwick upon Tweed, including North Berwick, and to draw the attention of the relevant bodies to shortcomings which arise.
- To reopen the branch line from Longniddry to Haddington.
- The group, being environmentally minded, will actively strive to encourage rail travel within its geographical area.



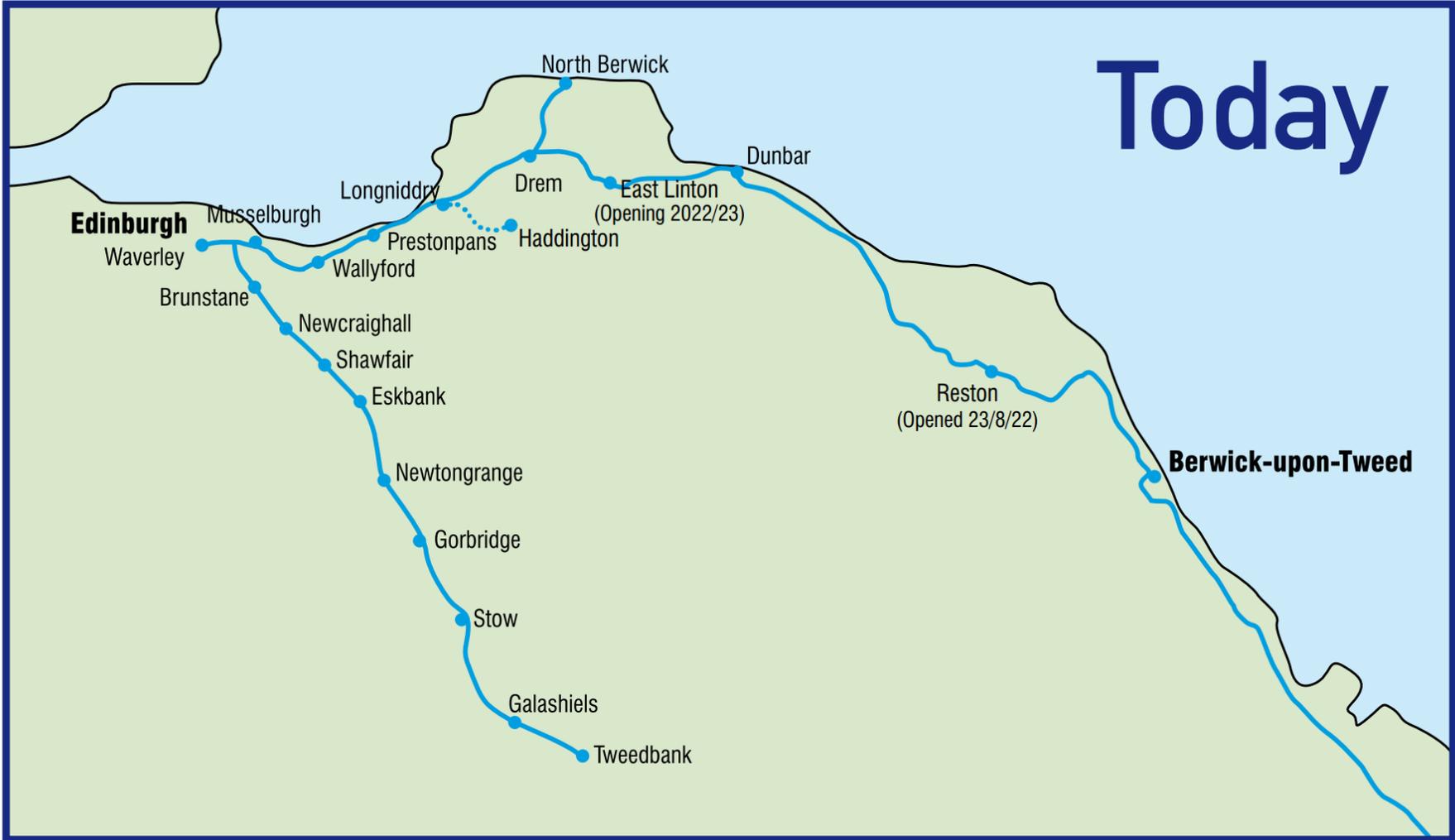
Key Dates

- 22/06/1846 Reston station opened
- 22/06/1846 East Linton station opened
- 22/06/1846 Haddington station opened
- 05/12/1949 Haddington station closed to passenger traffic
- 04/05/1964 Reston, East Linton Station closed as part of the Beeching report
- 02/02/1968 Haddington station closed to freight
- 23/05/2022 Reston station entered into service
- 2024 East Linton enters into service
- TBA Haddington station enters into  service

1947



Today



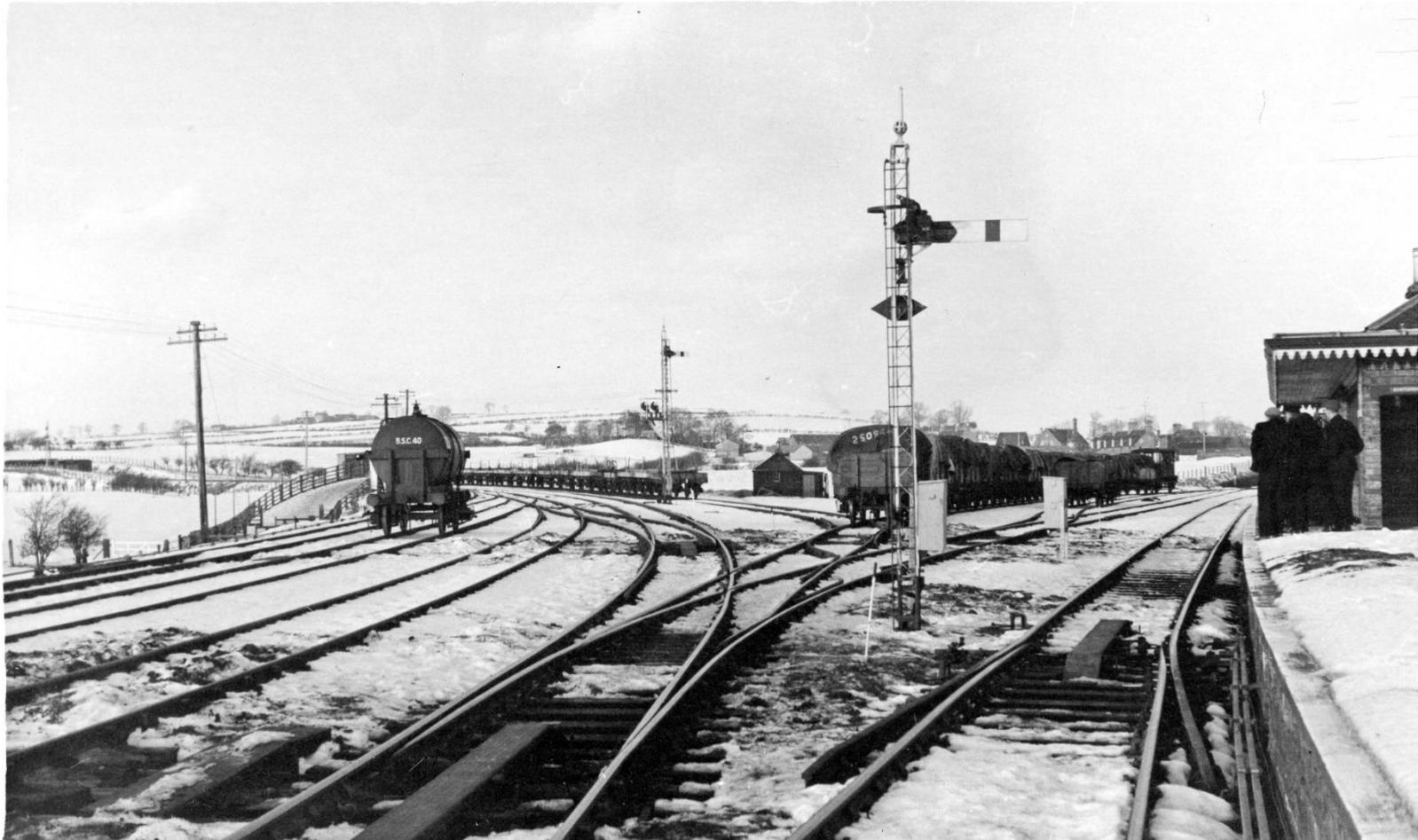
RESTON





Reston Railway Station Circa 1905

Circa 1953



Circa 1955



Februar
y 2020
site
survey
work



May 2021



September 2021



8th. February 2022



April 2022



April 2022



May 23rd, 2022

First passenger train to arrive at Reston in 58 years
05.29am from Edinburgh Waverley arriving at Reston 06.21am





East Linton





Looking East 24/04/1954



Looking West 24/04/1964

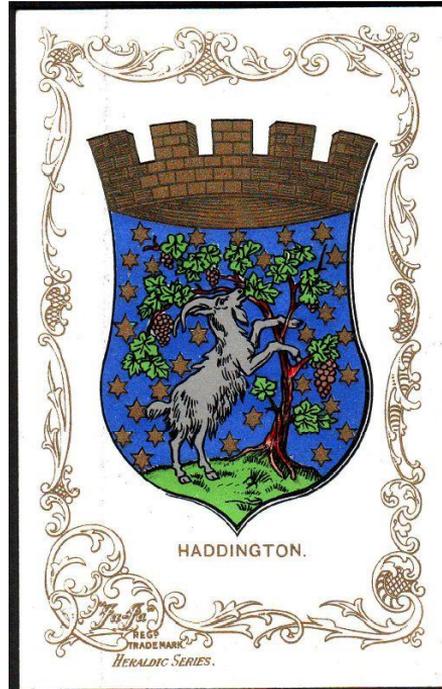








Haddington





Return of 1/8 Royal Scots, Haddington T30/4/19/1

Photo by: C. Bruce
Haddington.

BRITISH RAILWAYS

C L O S I N G

or

HADDINGTON STATION

From **MONDAY, 5th December 1949**

ON and after the above date **HADDINGTON STATION** will be **CLOSED** to **PASSENGER TRAINS**, and thereafter the following arrangements will apply:—

Passengers for Haddington will be booked to Dunbar or Edinburgh, from which places bus services are available.

Passenger train parcels and miscellaneous traffic, for or from Haddington, will be conveyed to or from Longniddry by rail and between Longniddry and Haddington by road motor or freight train service.







RAGES

RAIL ACTION GROUP EAST OF SCOTLAND

Working to improve
the rail service between
Edinburgh and
Berwick-upon-Tweed



Join RAGES and help campaign
for better local rail services

www.rages.org.uk

RAGES

RAIL ACTION GROUP EAST OF SCOTLAND

Working to improve
the rail service between
Edinburgh and
Berwick-upon-Tweed

Our Main Aims:

- Reopen the branch line from Longniddry to Haddington with all services running through to Edinburgh.
- Improve rail transport in the east of Scotland with the aim of reducing social isolation and improving connectivity in rural areas.
- Promote rail as an environmentally friendly and sustainable mode of transport.
- Improve rail services between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed, and the intermediate stations including North Berwick.

Join RAGES and help campaign
for better local rail services

www.rages.org.uk

Best Campaigner: Joint Gold Awards

Barbara Mine, Friends of Bishopstone Station

Tim Steer, ACE Rail campaign (Atlantic Coast-Exeter Railway)



Southeast Communities Rail Partnership

FOBS chair Barbara Mine named as Coronation Champion

We are delighted that Barbara Mine, the chair of the **Friends of Bishopstone Station** community rail group, has been named as one of the official Coronation Champions.

The nomination from Southeast Communities Rail Partnership means Barbara has been recognised by Their Majesties The King and The Queen Consort as part of the official Coronation celebrations in conjunction with Royal Voluntary Service.

Judges' comments: *“Tim (above) has proven to be an inspiring mobiliser of engagement and support across a wide spectrum of local organisations for what started as a one-man campaign, since adopted by the 1977-established Tarka Rail Association. Barbara (right) has been the driving force of FoBS, has networked superbly, seen the community hub opened by the Lord Lieutenant of Sussex, developed a sustainable financial model for the CIC, and been rewarded as a 1 in 500 'Coronation Champion' - a role model for any rail-related community project.”*



Annual General Meeting 2023 London

railfuture



Barbara Mine

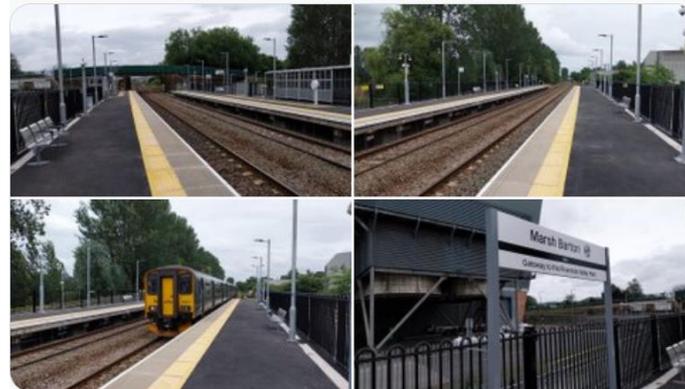
Judges' Special Award: Devon County Council

Judges' comment: "Our first award to a local authority, for their sustained delivery of rail development. **Marsh Barton** most recently (the third new station in Devon Metro), plus winning DfT funding for their SOBC for the **Tamar-Tavistock RYR project**, opening the **Dartmoor Line** and **Okehampton station**, then winning Levelling-Up funding for a new **West Devon Transport Hub** at east Okehampton, **dedicated bus links** connecting Tavistock, Bude and Launceston with Dartmoor Line trains at Okehampton station plus Lynton & Lynmouth and Ilfracombe with Barnstaple station's Tarka Line trains, all based on high-level political and officer collaboration with their train operator and other key stakeholders."

Devon
County Council



Callum @callumLtfc · 11 Jul
England's Newest Railway Station - [#MarshBarton](#) ✓ Now Let's go for lunch in [#Exmouth](#) 😊 - @GWRHelp



1 7 453

Annual General Meeting 2023 London

railfuture



Railfuture Awards 2023

Councillor Andrea Davis

Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport
Chair of Peninsula Transport Sub National Transport Body

Developing our Devon Metro vision

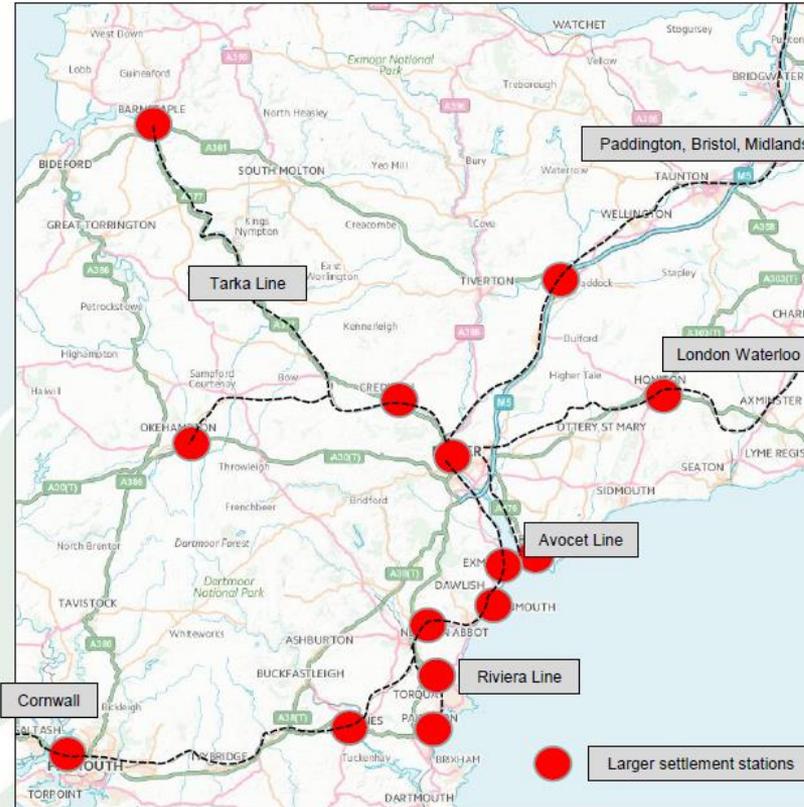
- Good coverage across the County
- Growing patronage and population but unfulfilled potential

Strategy

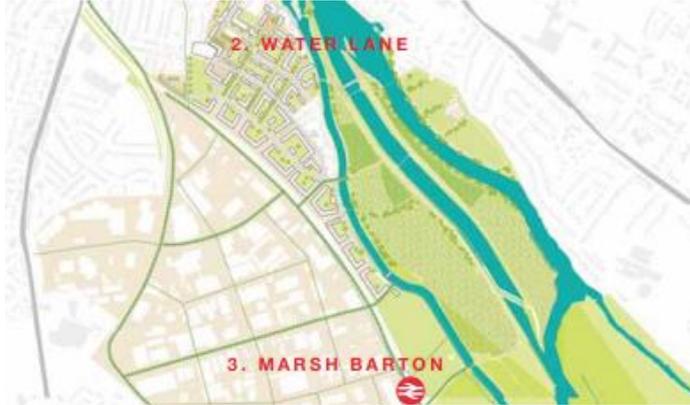
Access: to existing and delivering new stations

Capacity: longer and more frequent trains

Quality: comfort, efficiency and information



Devon drivers for Rail investment...



1) Supporting
Economic Growth
& Prosperity

2) Decarbonising
Transport

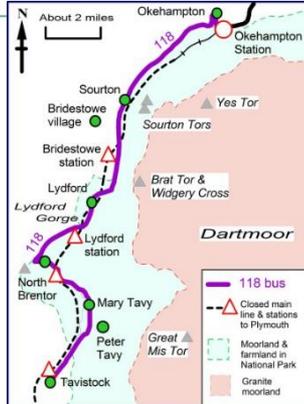
3) Connecting
Communities

1) Supporting Economic Growth & Prosperity

Marsh Barton Station



2) Decarbonising Transport – multi-modal integration



3) Connecting Communities



Dartmoor Line



...and we also work at a sub regional level to build
a more resilient and reliable railway





Key to success:
*Partnership
working and
always striving
for improvement*



Railfuture Limited
18th Annual General Meeting
Saturday 15 July 2022

Closing Remarks

**THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING
GOODBYE**