



return to **KESWICK**



...on a modern train from your station !

UPDATE NUMBER 57

WINTER 2014 - 2015

INVESTMENT IN WINDERMERE

In November 2014 Transport Minister Baroness Kramer announced that the Oxenholme to Windermere line would be upgraded and electrified at a cost of £16m, to be completed by 2017.

She said: "Electrifying this key rail link will support the vital tourism industry in the area, and help us build a stronger economy in the Lake District and beyond".

Windermere serves the South Lakes, whose visitors predominantly come from areas further south.

National Government has chosen to invest in that route because it simplifies their planning of passenger train franchises on the existing national network, all of which are specified in great detail by the Department for Transport (DfT).

Keswick is the hub for the North Lakes – whose visitors predominantly come from the North and North East of England, Scotland and much less from the Midlands and the South, although there are many overseas visitors using Manchester Airport.

All studies done to date indicate that re-opening the railway to Keswick would have significant benefits for the area's economy, support re-generation and diversify employment.

Re-instating the Keswick line is recognised by the DfT as a scheme of local and regional significance – meaning that it is expected to be funded and developed independently, with local political support.

TRAINS TO KESWICK - HOW MUCH AND HOW SOON ?

£16 million is about one quarter of the estimated cost of reinstating the Penrith to Keswick line in something better and more flexible than a basic form – to allow hourly all day everyday services and some special traffic for excursions, festivals and so on.

The whole legal and construction process would take between 3 and 5 years but needs formal approvals before it can start.

Potential independent funders want to see solid local political support to minimise the risk of the project being delayed and costs rising.

Some local politicians, on the other hand, seem reluctant to give their support until they can see solid evidence that the railway will be built (or, perhaps, may only be convinced when it has been built ?).

This is an impossible stand off.

Crucial will be the attitude of Cumbria County Council, which is the local "Transport Authority". They are not being asked to pay for the railway or manage its construction, but so far the Keswick to Penrith Railway Project has only been mentioned in their first Local Transport Plan, disappeared from later editions and has not been built into in any other policy framework.

Keswick Town Council is leading efforts to co-ordinate local political and business support.

Anyone who would use the line, or whose business or life would benefit from its re-opening, is invited to write to their local Cumbria County Councillor or, if further away, to write to the Chairman of Cumbria County Council in Carlisle. CKP Railways plc would appreciate copies of correspondence, so that the Council's responses can be monitored.

ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

Long-term exposure to air pollution contributed to more than 28,000 deaths across the UK in 2010, government figures show. Public Health England (PHE) said 5.3 per cent of all deaths in over-25s were linked to air pollution, although the figures varied considerably by region.

People whose death was hastened by pollution lost an average of 10.6 years of their lives.

Rural areas suffered less than some cities, but the Lake District is not immune from the problem

With over 90% of visitors arriving by car, roads and town centres become very congested with vehicles trying to park. Pollution then becomes an issue as well as the visual impact of traffic – which many visitors find detracts from the natural beauty of the area.

The Railway has been estimated to reduce the amount of fossil fuel (mainly petrol and diesel) burnt by over 2 million litres per annum - irreplaceable resources worth almost £3 million per annum.

Other helpful consequences would be:

- 150,000 less return car journeys per annum on the A66 and other Lake District roads
- Relief of up to 500 car journeys (and demand for parking) from Keswick on a peak day

THE POLITICAL YEAR AHEAD

General Election year is likely to be filled with promises.

There were lists of worthy railway re-opening projects (including Keswick to Penrith) from all major parties last time around.

Challenge your candidates for Parliamentary and local elections whether they will now deliver on those promises and wish lists. They may have more powers soon if there is more “devolution”.

Please let CKP Railways plc know what answers you get !

TRANSPORT DEMOCRACY

If only a fraction of national and local Government’s transport budgets was allocated to the schemes that people themselves nominated, great progress could be made towards re-connecting many communities to all services and opportunities, right across the UK.

- The Department for Transport had a total budget of slightly over 15.98 billion pounds (£15,983,596,000) in 2010 - 11
- Programme costs (recorded as spent on transport projects) were £12,845,279,000 - about 80% of the total - although that would include administration at various levels
- County Council (local transport authorities) transport spending on capital projects typically average between £100 and £200 per household per annum across England and Wales
- The UK Census in March 2011 was expected to survey about 25 million households

If just 20% of the DfT’s and Counties’ / Unitary Authorities’ spending were allocated according to people’s requests, there would be a pot of money worth up to £ 150 per household per annum.

That may not sound much, but a community (Parish or town for example) of four thousand homes (ten thousand people) would accrue a budget of £ 600,000 per annum which could be directed into necessary local improvements, in the same style as a Business Improvement District.

Some communities already have the expertise needed to bring their projects to life.

In such cases, Government at all levels should match fund those communities’ efforts and allow those skills and energy to be used rather than limiting development to what they can do themselves.

Match funding from several sources could rapidly create the required budgets for significant transport improvements which people really need - and will use.

PLANNING ISSUE – A “HOUSE BY STEALTH”

In the Newbiggin – Hoghouse area, about 2 miles from Penrith, a building known as “Valhalla” sits on the edge of the trackbed of the Keswick to Penrith railway.

The applicant to build it in 1999 described it as a stable block for horse welfare.

Concerns were raised at the time that the style of construction suggested a house – which would not be permitted by planning policies in that area.

In 2003 an application was made for part time occupation in relation to the animal welfare activities. That was granted despite some Councillors publicly describing it as a “house by stealth”

In late 2014 an application to request permission for full time occupation was made by the original (deceased) owner’s family.

That application is due to be decided by Eden District Council in January 2015.

Apart from the planning / political issues of getting permission for residential accommodation against local policies, a residential property would complicate re-instatement of the railway.

At least one Parish Council is expected to formally object to the application.

The formal consultation period has ended but written representations could still be helpful.

E-mail to planning.services@eden.gov.uk

Or write to Planning Services, Eden District Council, Mansion House, PENRITH, CA11 7YG.

Eden District Council’s planning reference is 3/14/1018.

The Council has a policy (No. RE 7) which should protect the Railway trackbed.

PLANNING ISSUE – WATER PIPELINE FROM THIRLMERE RESERVOIR

United Utilities is consulting on routes for a water pipeline from Thirlmere to west Cumbria.

Some of the possible routes would have to cross the trackbed of the Keswick to Penrith Railway and could run roughly parallel to it on the outskirts of Keswick.

CKP Railways plc has asked to be included in the formal consultation to try and ensure that there is no technical issue between a water pipe and the re-instated railway.

The Lake District National Park’s core policies include protection of the route of the Railway.

United Utilities has published a brochure which does not show any detail of the routes and does not mention the Railway as a potential issue.

United Utilities have held a few public displays and invited comments.

United Utilities’ General Manager for Cumbria is John Hilton.

His e-mail address, published in that brochure, is: john.hilton@uuplc.co.uk

The office address is: Haweswater House, Lingley Mere Business Park, Lingley Green Avenue, Great Sankey, WARRINGTON, WA5 3LP

Please write to make United Utilities aware that the Railway Project is relevant.

MYTH BUSTING

One of the most popular “urban myths” about the Keswick to Penrith Railway is that it was closed by Doctor Beeching as un-economic.

The railway from Workington to Keswick was closed to release land for fast construction of the A66 road, to support the British Leyland bus factory in Workington. That factory was meant to reduce unemployment in the area resulting from the decline of mining and iron and steel manufacture.

Keswick to Penrith was reprieved until 1972, but its timetable stayed almost identical to that which it started with in the 1860s, not keeping up with social and economic development.

Even so, estimates made by railway staff in the 1970s to fight the closure suggested that even that under-resourced railway more than covered its costs.

Other Railway sources suggested that had it lasted a few years more, it would still be open and thriving – like the Settle to Carlisle route.

UPDATE SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2015 – PRICE STILL HELD

Subscription for a full year has always been £10 (*despite rises in VAT and postage costs !*)

If you have access to e-mail, we can send Updates electronically - saving all resources.

... but please, please, do tell us if you change your e-mail address !!!

Cheques payable to "Iceni Enterprises Ltd", please, and send to the address below.

Next Update planned for spring / summer – plus e-mail or website alerts for hot news.

Iceni Enterprises Ltd. does not pass on mailing list details to anybody else !

WHAT TO BUY TO SUPPORT THE RAILWAY PROJECT

25% of the price of each item goes directly to the Keswick to Penrith Railway Project.

The BBC found that only 8% of the price of charity Christmas Cards goes to the named causes.

1. The report "Return to Keswick - the case for a New Railway" is available at £20 per copy direct from us (post free), or order through bookshops by quoting ISBN 978-1-902543-02-4.
2. "Trains to Keswick" is a professionally produced film featuring people along the line. Originally in VHS format, the DVD version with additional information is available at £14 per copy.
3. Fine Art prints and greetings cards featuring a stunning winter view of the steam hauled "Lakes Express" near Bassenthwaite Lake station, painted by Eric Bottomley of the Guild of Railway Artists. Prints (24" x 16") are £18 each, cards (6" x 8") with envelopes - £1.40 each (minimum order of 3 cards please).

Interested in Sustainable Transport generally ?

CKP Railways plc Director, Cedric Martindale, has produced a book to inform and encourage debate.

Too often planning of communities neglects transport, while transport planning may be done later by operators who are not part of the communities they are expected to serve. Communities may not know what is available while Local Authorities may not have a clear idea of what transport would be appropriate.

The book takes a broader view of transport in the light of people's needs, economic and environmental factors, planning systems - offering information and opinions gained from working and living in many different places. It aims to help anyone studying transport or trying to find solutions for transport and connectivity problems.

The book has 264 pages and many illustrations, with a soft cover. ISBN 978 1 902543 04 8.

Available direct from Iceni Enterprises Ltd. at £ 27.50 per copy including UK second class postage.

Order forms are distributed with Updates and can be downloaded from the website

N.B. All prices above include postage to addresses in the UK, but please add £2.50 per order for posting to addresses outside the UK (Posting packages to overseas destinations is not cheap !).

Cheques or Postal Orders payable to Iceni Enterprises Ltd for all items above, please.

A FEW DATES FROM HISTORY

1845	Cockermouth and Workington Railway opened
1861	Cockermouth Keswick and Penrith Railway Company constituted by Act of Parliament
1864	Railway open for freight traffic linking west Cumbria with north east England heavy industries
1865	Passenger trains started running
1901	Double track sections opened Threlkeld – Penriddock and Blencow – Redhills because of increasing traffic
1920s	Bridges strengthened for heavier main line trains to Keswick such as Convention specials and Newcastle dining trains
1963	Beeching Report published listing Workington to Penrith route all for closure
1966	Workington to Keswick closed to make way for the A66 road to support British Leyland bus factory in Workington
1970	A66 road mostly complete with railway still in place
1972	Keswick to Penrith closed after reprieve in 1966 because of massive protests
1988	CKP Railways plc formed with the aim of re-opening the route for all day every day modern train services
1990s	Project qualifies for Millennium and Heritage Lottery Fund support but receives no money
2000	Bonds first issued to provide independent funding for design and development work
2001	Digital survey and alignment design work commissioned by CKP Railways plc
2007	Business Case report by Northwest Regional Development Agency
2008	Keswick Town Council becomes Public Sector Champion for the Keswick to Penrith Railway Project
2013	Project described as "worthwhile" by Regional Growth Fund assessors but no money forthcoming

Cedric A. Martindale.

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