

# Don Valley Railway

# News



## Don Valley Railway petition submitted

There had been 2600 signatures to the Don Valley Railway petition when it closed in September 2013.

We presented it to Stocksbridge Town Council in November 2013 who recommended that we also present it to Sheffield City Council.

It was presented to Sheffield City Council in January 2014. In their response, the Council's Cabinet indicated support to improving transport links to Stocksbridge, but that given limited resources, other proposals were more likely to be prioritised in the near future.

Our response to the Council set out how following the McNulty Report in 2011, Network Rail has worked to introduce innovative approaches to reduce taxpayer subsidy of provincial railways and that we have been developing alternative delivery models to deliver a rail service on the route that completely removes the need for subsidy.

Don Valley Railway has established a partnership with Pre Metro Operations Ltd (PMOL), an organisation headed by the former Financial Director of West Midlands PTE, to introduce a Light Rapid Transit (LRT) system as a means of delivering the project. PMOL are already successfully operating a similar system in the West Midlands and are seeking to develop a larger application of the technology in order to pioneer a vehicle that will be transferable for wider rail network usage. The Stocksbridge line ticks all the boxes for a trial of national significance.

We see an opportunity for Sheffield City Region to innovate with LRT in a manner similar to Supertram opening up tram technology in the 1990's and the forthcoming Rotherham Tram Train trial. The further development of LRT in Sheffield from its current limited application could be extended to other locations, meet the aspirations outlined by McNulty and provide a low cost effective transport solution.

## Railtour visits Deepcar

Local rail enthusiasts as well as members of the Don Valley Railway were to be found at various locations along the line on Saturday 28 December.

The "Road to Hull" Railtour from Kings Cross took the East Coast Main Line (ECML) to Retford. It then headed west through Worksop, Darnall and the remains of Sheffield Victoria Station before visiting Deepcar on its way to Hull.

The sight of a top and tail loco hauled special offered a tantalising glimpse of more frequent services for the future.

Don Valley Railway is exploring the possibility of running our own charter train to Deepcar.



## Stocksbridge St Mathias to Sheffield Victoria?

St Mathias Church on Manchester Road which has been struggling in the face of a falling congregation and financial difficulties have expressed an interest to share the church with other organisations as a means to save the historic church.

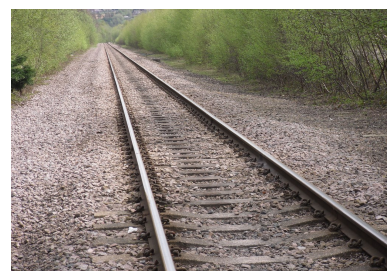
The church is situated next to the rail line and is an ideal location for a Central Stocksbridge station.

DVR has raised the possibilities of a station with the Church wardens.

## New Directors of Don Valley Railway

At our AGM the appointment of Matt Dolby, Adrian Hackett and Chris Hyomes as Directors of Don Valley Railway Ltd was supported by members.

The Directors bring a wealth of expertise which will be pivotal in the ongoing development of Don Valley Railway.





## High Speed rail makes Parliamentary progress

The House of Commons has given the green light for detailed consideration of the legislation required to enable the proposed HS2 high-speed rail link between London and the West Midlands to be built.

The hybrid Bill stipulates that there should be a high-speed railway between Euston and a junction with the West Coast Main Line at Handsacre, with a spur to Birmingham Curzon Street and intermediate stations at Birmingham Interchange and Old Oak Common.

The Bill is not expected to become law until after the 2015 General Election and HS2 cannot be built without the Bill becoming law

At this stage the Government proposes to start construction in 2017, with the line between London and Birmingham due to be operational by 2026.

## HS2 a tool for urban regeneration in Sheffield?

The HS2 Growth Taskforce was created in summer 2013 to advise the government on how to maximise the return from the investment in HS2.

The Taskforce have recently reported on a range of challenges for the government, local authorities, HS2 Ltd and UK businesses and workers.

Taskforce Members drew on their collective knowledge and experience in business, the public sector and academia and direct involvement in major infrastructure projects around the world. The Taskforce report also includes evidence gathered through engagements over 6 months in seven locations of which Sheffield was one of five core cities involved.

The taskforce's report, 'HS2 Get Ready', recommends the steps needed to ensure the whole country shares in the job and business opportunities HS2 will deliver

The announcement follows Sir David Higgins report, published 17 March 2014 which set out how HS2 might be delivered sooner.

The taskforce report calls for action now to simplify and join up funding to deliver construction fast around HS2 stations sites. By accelerating regeneration and development of brownfield land on the route the report argues that big benefits will be seen in just a few years. It also calls for city regions to work together to

integrate local transport networks.

The taskforce's recommendations include:

- New local bodies to create tailored growth plans for cities along the HS2 route
- Local leaders and business use HS2 to supercharge their city regions by creating world leading transport links and kick starting urban regeneration
- Work to begin now to ensure young people understand and capitalise on the career opportunities HS2 will open up
- Help given to British firms to bid for HS2 contracts
- Ensuring HS2 contracts lead to local job creation, skills development and apprenticeships

The site of the former Sheffield Victoria Station has been identified as the preferred location of a city centre HS2 station by Sheffield City Council in its consultation response which set out key business and regeneration benefits of a city centre HS2 station.

Irrespective of the outcome of the HS2 station location decision, a reopened Victoria Station could provide an alternative Sheffield terminus for services to London during work to electrify the Midland Main Line north of Chesterfield and also during engineering works.

The current Lincoln-Sheffield service could also be diverted into Victoria, reducing bottlenecks to the north of Sheffield Station.

Further alternative usage of Victoria could be around a new integrated local transport network.

We will explore these options in more detail in our Autumn 2014 Special Edition Newsletter.







## Don Valley Railway speaks at Railfutures AGM

Don Valley Railway was one of the key speakers at the 10th Annual General Meeting of the Railway Development Society (Railfutures) which took place in Sheffield in May.

Company Secretary Chris Bell gave a comprehensive presentation that set out how the Don Valley line was perfectly placed for the introduction of a passenger rail service.

Chris informed the audience which included a Shadow Minister that the line is currently only lightly used, is in a good condition which enables an easy return to passenger use with commuter potential within a corridor that is in line for major development including up to 1000 more homes being built as well as the development at Fox Valley. The line also provides a gateway to visitor attractions.

Chris set out the history of the Don Valley Railway since its formation in 2005 originally with the aim of developing a heritage and commuter rail service.

Chris outlined developments since the beginning, firstly the study in 2006 and a follow up study in 2010 which showed that the condition of the line was better than had been previously thought. This work had enabled the development of options for commuter rail shuttle service along the route between Sheffield and Stocksbridge.

The presentation outlined further developments that the line and other routing options could bring, such as improved links between Sheffield, Huddersfield, Halifax and Bradford as well as eastward extension to include the developments at Waverly and the Advanced Manufacturing Park and Meadowhall via Woodbourn Junction.

Chris outlined where the project is and the direction we are taking on realising the vision of returning a passenger rail service along the north west Sheffield corridor.

The full presentation is available on our website.

## Don Valley Railway volunteer Aidan Lee Croft tells us about being the first official passenger on the Edinburgh Tram.



It's finally here! Edinburgh Trams has finally joined the "tram family" of Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, Croydon and Nottingham - mainland Britain's public tram systems.

And so at 0500 on the 31st of May 2014 the first load of passengers boarded at Gyle Centre, just as the sun was rising with yours truly being the first official passenger with the first ticket purchased after travelling overnight from Sheffield and in the end spending a gruelling twenty-seven hours awake in order to experience the historic day.

In common with all of Britain's tram systems, Edinburgh features a long segregated section allowing it to bypass local roads whilst still serving all of the important city centre streets. This is the huge benefit of light rail - to passengers it is far preferable to anything else as it offers city centre access whilst picking up speed elsewhere, this benefit being accentuated with the tram-train concept.

The first day was popular with some 21,000 travelling on the eleven trams then in service with severe overcrowding seen later in the day as everyone came to sample this new civic feat.

Unfortunately a small number of protesters were present who asked "£776 million - what for?" And they have a point. Adjusted for inflation the cost of Edinburgh's system ended up being four times the cost of Sheffield's. The main problem it would seem is contractor-council disputes, arising particularly from the diversion of underground services. This has for many years been the single largest cost of tram systems, as acknowledged by UK Tram, the representative of the light rapid transit industry.

Despite this, there is a feeling in Edinburgh that some of the original phases will now go ahead and thanks to a witty use of Twitter using such phrases as "careful now" and "ding ding" the public has quickly warmed to the system with all seats quickly filled well before the city centre and trams heaving with passengers attending events at the Murrayfield Stadium.

Hopefully the city centre loop via Leith and Granton as well as the short spur to Newbridge will soon enter the planning stage and the full fleet of twenty-seven CAF-built trams can enter service.

Single tickets are £1.50. Day tickets for the full route (York Place-Airport) are set at £9 with the Ingliston-York Place day ticket being £3.50. The closest tram stop to Edinburgh Waverley railway station is St Andrew Square. Tickets must be purchased before boarding - only coins and cards are accepted and no change is given.



Edinburgh photos provided by Aidan Lee Croft.

## Bloomberg “Mayor’s Challenge” entry

The Bloomberg Philanthropies founded by the former Mayor of New York set up the Mayor’s Challenge. In 2014, the Challenge, an innovation competition was run in Europe with a €5m prize and four €1m runner up prizes.

Don Valley Railway worked collaboratively to submit a proposal on developing Ultra Light Rapid Transit (ULRT) based on using flywheel and supporting energy generation and storage technologies as a way of bringing under-used or disused urban rail lines back to life without the prohibitive expense of overhead electrification and high performance vehicles.

Don Valley Railway saw the Sheffield-Stocksbridge rail line as a test bed for developing a low cost solution to bringing back numerous examples of underutilised rail infrastructure across the UK and further afield that ULRT could bring back to use.

Unfortunately, our submission was unsuccessful.

## NEXT DVR NEWSLETTER

Our Autumn 2014 next Newsletter is a Special Edition and will look at options for an integrated local transport network.

There will be also be a roundup of developments.

## Don Valley Railway in the media

Since our December 2013 Newsletter, Don Valley Railway has received local media coverage both in The Star and on BBC Radio Sheffield over the petition and Mayor’s Challenge entry.

We also made the national rail media with an article in the February 2014 Edition of Sheffield based Today’s Railways UK.

Alan Yearsley from Today’s Railways UK wrote a comprehensive article which set out how Sheffield has a minimal local rail network, a situation even more acutely evident in the north-west corner of the city, along the route of the former Woodhead line to Manchester.

In his article, Alan wrote about our journey so far and explored options for the likely future shape of the project.

## Paypal payments on the way

We are currently exploring using Paypal as a method of payment for membership fees and donations.

## 60 years ago...

The new Woodhead tunnel was opened 60 years ago.

Don Valley Railway is currently developing plans to mark the anniversary.

Contact us for further information.

## Become involved with Don Valley Railway

### Volunteer and attend our drop in meetings

We are always looking out for supporters and volunteers to help us.

Come along to our meetings to find out how you can work with us to make the project happen.

We meet every month in Sheffield City Centre.

**Sheffield:** We meet every first Thursday of the month 7-9pm at the Harlequin Pub, Nursery Street, Sheffield.

**Stocksbridge:** For details or our meetings in Stocksbridge, email: [info@donvalleyrailway.org](mailto:info@donvalleyrailway.org) Or visit our website: [www.donvalleyrailway.org](http://www.donvalleyrailway.org)

## Become a member

Please complete the form below. Please state which type of membership you require:

Individual Membership £12 per year.....	
Family £18 per year.....	
Junior Membership £6.....	
Life Membership £120.....	

Name.....

Telephone No.....

Address.....

Post Code.....

Email.....

Please return your membership application including cheque or postal order to:

Don Valley Railway  
11 Clarke Street  
Sheffield  
S10 2BS