

Shrewsbury
Aberystwyth
Rail
Passengers'
Association



Newsletter
No. 59
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First Class Safety

A still from the new award-winning safety film made by Arriva Trains Wales and pupils of Harlech and Tywyn Schools. See p.14.

Chairman’s Message.....	2
News in Brief.....	4
Annual General Meeting and accounts.....	5
The View from Milepost 62 with the Brigadier.....	7
On the Swanage railway.....	8
Still some way to go?.....	9
The Beeching Model.....	10
ACORP Awards for Arriva Trains Wales.....	14
“Daytime hourly service by 2011” - the pantomime continues.....	14
The Llangollen Railway Corwen extension.....	16
Wales Public Transport Users’ Committee (PTUC) meeting, 31st October.....	17
Leo miaows.....	17
The Franchising Fiasco - SARPA Comments.....	18
SARPA meetings.....	18

This is the quarterly newsletter of the Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Passenger Association. Contributions are welcomed from members and non-members about the mid Wales rail scene. Views expressed in it are those of contributors and not necessarily representative of the Association and its Officers as a whole. Information provided is published in good faith, but the Association cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage arising therefrom. The Editor reserves the right to abridge or amend copy.

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The membership fee is currently (for membership up to 31 December 2013) £8.00 per annum for individuals and for organisations. Please make any cheques payable to SARPA. Donations are of course welcome.

- SARPA will lobby for better rail services.
- Act as a watchdog to safeguard the lines future.
- Meet in public once a month.
- All members will receive our quarterly Newsletter free of charge.
- Members with access to e-mail can be included in our electronic network if they so desire.

The majority of our expenditure goes towards the cost of publishing and distributing our newsletters. We subscribe to the Shrewsbury Rail Users Federation and occasionally pay for room hire. Any surplus is held as an emergency fund for the future. None of the officers gains financially in any way from SARPA.

Please send cheques, payable to SARPA, to:

SARPA Membership Secretary: [23 High Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7JP](#). Make sure to include full name, address and telephone number and also e-mail address if you wish to become part of our electronic network.

Chairman's Message

"Nobody knows what he does not know until he knows it."

At first sight this does of course, sound blazingly obvious; so much so as to be ridiculous. It was written by the notable Argentinian thermodynamicist and railway engineer, Dante Porta, to describe the attitudes of typical engineers during the steam era, who for the most part blindly carried on doing the same thing and making little progress as a result. Some of them continued to do this, rather than admit they were wrong, even when the results of doing things differently were showing better results right before their eyes. Indeed, many of the problems thought to be inherent with steam traction have since been shown to be, just, well ordinary engineering problems. To cut a long story short, the myopia of these people is one of the reasons we do not have steam locomotives in general use today.

The implications are that if you do not have knowledge of something, then it's less likely you will be receptive to it. Because you have no knowledge, you will not have any understanding of the concepts involved, so the chances are you will carry on doing the same thing and make little progress, until change is unpleasantly forced upon you by circumstance. Conversely, once this simple concept is realised and accepted, you are in a position to broaden your knowledge and see the world in a new light. What you do not know or comprehend is not necessarily wrong; an enquiring mind becomes a prerequisite.

So what relevance does this have for the railway today, and especially our line here in this corner of Wales? After all, steam is long gone and Porta himself died in 2003.

Recently, we have seen how a failure to understand a situation has been just a little embarrassing for the UK Government. The basic problem is one that increasingly, the rail industry is voicing; that the franchising system as we know it is broke and doesn't work and that actually, the government owned operation on the East Coast is giving better value for the taxpayer. The DfT and the Westminster Government meanwhile still cling to the franchising process as if it were the only way to organise a railway. In fact, the whole thing has become needlessly complicated and indeed expensive so really, it's no wonder that the civil servants (and presumably un-named persons who really should know better) managed to make such a dog's breakfast of the West Coast franchise bid.

All the same, would it be wise to advocate simply a return to British Rail as it once was? Although widely respected throughout the World for what it managed to achieve on a very limited budget, it was nevertheless flawed in having to go cap in hand to the Treasury for all investment. It was not allowed to borrow money independently. Neither was there any mechanism for another operator to take over a route for which BR had decided it had little further use. Indeed, such a facility might have saved us the railway over Woodhead, the Great Central and the Waverley Route, currently being partially rebuilt by the Scottish Government.

How does this bode for us here in Wales? Are ministers and civil servants any better informed than their Westminster counterparts? Worryingly, we remain to be convinced. There is of course, nothing wrong with not knowing something. No-one can know everything, but it is an unforgivable sin to pretend that you do and bluff your way without being truly cognisant of the facts.

Many good folk will know that the Cambrian has been the route selected for the UK trial of the new ERTMS signalling system. The rail industry is now widely of the opinion that to fit this into trains which were not originally designed to use it is prohibitively expensive. So earlier this year we asked the Welsh Government if they had any plans for when the Class 158 trains we use here become due for replacement in 10-15 year's time. A senior official wrote back and told us that the Class 158 units used on the Cambrian "are fit for purpose and are all ERTMS compatible." We would most sincerely hope that they are, for otherwise they would not be allowed to run on this section! Indeed, any rail vehicle you like can be made to operate with ERTMS provided you throw enough money at it, which is precisely our point. To receive a response like this is insulting to the intelligence and gives rise to suspicions that there is a huge gulf of knowledge somewhere within the administration. We are not trying to catch them out, but it would be more encouraging if they were to seek dialogue when they seem not to have a clue. After all, we pay the bills as taxpayers and when the government gets it wrong, those bills are very, very big indeed.

In truth I feel sorry for those in government, charged with the administration and planning for transport. As I have said, we are not trying to catch them out. I'm sure they are all fantastic people and if any one of them were the next door neighbour, who would not hesitate to water their roses or feed the cat if they went away on holiday?

Now that they are charged with planning the railway, in many ways it is difficult not to admire their tenacity. At least British Rail was nominally independent of government and at arm's length. Instead they cling to the present structure as if it were an upturned life raft from the wreck of the Titanic; all the while they are beset by the vagaries of the most arcane and labyrinthine industry configuration ever foisted upon the railway, where even the most determined sometimes have difficulty getting to grips with the minutiae.

How easy then, to reach for those nice friendly road plans from the 1970s where the world was an easier place to understand and the triumph of rubber tyre on asphalt seemed certain. How easy to ignore the vexed question of rolling stock replacement fifteen years ahead. How simple to set the bar for improved services or reopened stations so high that it is difficult for anything to happen. It avoids the whole inconvenient business of knowing a better way of doing things. It can even avoid the difficult business of even thinking about a better way.

Blinkered thinking eventually led to the demise of steam traction and consigned it to the museum, essentially because it cost too much to operate. Let's hope that the same myopia does not eventually have the same effect on the whole railway. A natural curiosity as to what new solutions rail transport is capable of delivering would be a good start.

Angus Eickhoff
Moel y Garth, Welshpool
A Postscript.....

November 2012

As we closed for press we learned that the gentleman who wrote to us has "moved on" as they say. Now, we know there are good people in the administration who can well rise to the challenge of delivering the railway we need here in Wales. We look forward to the opportunity to work with them.

News in brief

Lack of Six Coach Trains

Network Rail's metal stockade at Caersws is one reason stopping the running of six car formations promised from May, according to the industry jungle drums. With the Class 158's on our line not having selective door opening the platform at Caersws is now just too short to accommodate a six car train with all doors open. The stockade put up at great expense when the level crossing was automated will now have to be altered, though no sign of it being done has yet been seen.

However ATW have told us that the reason is that the Office of the Rail Regulator in London has to give approval for a change in working practice at Aberystwyth, and this is not forthcoming yet. It seems the rules of the route don't allow DMU's to join up with each at Aberystwyth station. This would prevent the commuter train being coupled to the 0930 departure.

Either way over-prescriptive "safety" rules seem to be impairing common sense solutions to real concerns.

Approval was given in September for the change of practice at Aberystwyth, and permissive working has allowed coupling of the two trains in Aberystwyth. The commuter train now sits empty in the platform until the arrival of the 0925 from Birmingham most mornings. The two trains are then coupled, before passengers are allowed to board and the train goes forward to Machynlleth. However, the



The 0925 arrival in Aberystwyth, on the right, is about to be coupled to the 0844 arrival from Machynlleth.
Photograph: Glyn Jones.

adding of another set at Machynlleth does not take place. Sometimes the unit off the ex 0624 from Birmingham New St unit is taken off at Machynlleth and the Pwllheli train joins up with the unit off the 0807 ex Machynlleth, at other times the 4 go forward with coast passengers changing.

ATW tell us that it will be Easter 2013 when the train will finally go forward from Machynlleth as six cars.

Bus news

Arriva's bus division no longer serves Machynlleth. As of 24th September their last remaining route, the X32 Traws Cambria (Aberystwyth - Bangor) was withdrawn, and replaced by a much reduced T2 service over the same route operated by Lloyds and Express Motors. There are now only three through buses and one with a change in Dolgellau on this North to Mid - "One" Wales service! Connections with trains at Machynlleth are non-existent (either designed to miss by 10 minutes, or with "hours" to wait, thus proving counter to Arriva Trains Wales' franchise agreement to substantially improve train/bus integration (which really has been a non-starter).

Borth Station Museum

The first AGM of the station museum's volunteers took place on 24 September.. Since opening in 2011 there had been more than 10,000 visitors. The museum's collection was still growing, with the support of local people and former railway staff.. Exhibitions included Borth as a seaside resort, sea defences, and Uppingham by the Sea (Uppingham School was temporarily moved to Borth in 1876, after an outbreak of typhoid).

Next year, 1913, sees the 150th anniversary of the opening of the station, and celebrations will take place on the weekend of 6 July.

Friends of Borth Museum, an informal support group, has been launched.

The museum's website, which has been receiving about 80 hits a month, is
www.borthstationmuseum.co.uk

Aberystwyth - Carmarthen line re-opening campaign

Cardiff University tutor Mark Worrall has recently launched a petition to the Welsh Government to reopen the Aberystwyth to Carmarthen line. Signed by over 600 people, he had hoped that 1,000 signatures would have been added to it, which would have forced a debate on the subject.

However, the WG won't even run a feasibility study before 2015. The government spokesman said: "The objective of the prioritisation process was to ensure the delivery of the key Welsh Government priorities within the available budget and to publish a programmed timetable for delivery of these priorities. The prioritisation process did not consider including additional projects to the existing Plan. As the reopening of a railway line between Aberystwyth and Carmarthen was not included in the original National Transport Plan, it was therefore not prioritised for delivery in the period to 2015, and we therefore have no plans to consider a feasibility study as suggested. There is a commercial bus service that operates between Aberystwyth and Carmarthen and this operates on a regular service interval."

[From the *Cambrian News* 11/10/2012]

In the same issue, a letter from Matthew Hague, of Llandre, suggested the building of a new link between Lampeter and Llandeilo, and termination of the reinstated line at either Llanfarian or Rhydyfelin, just south of Aberystwyth.

Vale of Rheidol Railway Santa Specials

For the first time since privatisation, the Vale of Rheidol Railway are running Santa Specials. Unlike the BR ones, these will run to Capel Bangor rather than Devil's Bridge. Trains will run on the weekends of 15-16th and 22-23rd December, at 1000, 1130 and 1300hrs., and bookings may be made on the VoR website. This states that "Trains will depart our station at Aberystwyth and travel a short journey to Capel Bangor where we pause for a few minutes before returning to Aberystwyth. During the journey, Santa and his elves will pass through the carriages meeting families, handing out presents and of course finding out what everybody would like for Christmas!"

Will Santa and his elves spirit themselves from one carriage to the next - or are corridor connections being put in?

Annual General Meeting

The 2012 AGM was held at Shrewsbury Station on Saturday 6th October. Nine members were present, together with Ben Davies and Mike Vaughan of Arriva Trains Wales as guests.

Gareth Marston stepped down as Chairman in July 2012 and kindly agreed to chair the AGM so that election of a new chairman could take place. Gareth is no longer active in SARPA.

Chairman's Report Outgoing Chairman Gareth Marston, in his address to the meeting, said that he had stepped down after 13 years, due to pressure of work, and potential conflicts of interest between his job as a civil servant and being an activist for improved rail services. He said that the Cambrian line was performing better than it had done for about 10 years and congratulated Arriva on their work

to bring this about. He said that the challenge not only for the Cambrian but for the entire Welsh rail network was to maintain the present high level of performance. He thanked past members of the committee for their assistance with the work of running SARPA.

Treasurer's Report It was noted that the group is not as well off as last year, but one of the newsletters had to be reprinted, and there had been two invoices for webhosting. If we took account of this and the fact that a newsletter had been reprinted, then the group's finances didn't look too bad at all. The meeting was asked to vote on the subject of raised membership fees. It was proposed and seconded to raise them to £8.00 per annum. Angus Eickhoff said that as there were only 9 members present, the meeting was technically not quorate and we would have to ratify the decision at the next opportunity. It was also agreed to fix the AGM at Machynlleth in the future.

Election of Officers and Committee Members The following have been elected or re-elected. However, as the meeting was non quorate, the proposals will have to be ratified at the next quorate meeting.

Chair Angus Eickhoff
Vice Chair Ifor Morris
Treasurer and Membership Secretary Tony Harvey
Newsletter Editor Denis Bates
Liaison Officer Roger Goodhew
Webmaster Angus Eickhoff
Committee Member Robert Knight

These posts were ratified at the Committee Meeting held in Aberystwyth on 6th November.

SARPA accounts 2011-12

Balances	30/9/2011	30/9/2012
Community Account	938.94	859.02
Business Premium Account	275.51	275.61
	1214.45	1134.69

Income		Expenditure	
Memberships		Newsletters	
(65 individual, 3 corporate†)	558.50	(55-57, 58*)	516.42
		Web Hosting**	144.00
	558.50		660.42

Notes:†Potentially more to come in.

*Includes reprint for No.58 at £67.50.

** Includes web hosting cost for 2010-2011 of £72.00.

The View from Milepost 62 with the Brigadier

My old chum from observing the Vietnam War and NATO days Colonel Charles Abraham Dwight Snitzelburger the Third, ex US Army 13th Cavalry, was over in the UK recently, I met up with "Chuck Cads" at my club in London. Well I say my club - the family have held membership in it since 1873. Nowadays there's a big TV screen in it with News 24 or whatever; it was the day the West Coast franchise fiasco broke.

Chuck said *"What kind of cockamamie system are you using to run your railroad, can't Maggie sort it out?"*

After a very deep breath I then tried to explain rail privatisation; how the private sector were going to be wonderfully more efficient; the fragmentation; Railtrack more interested in share price than safety; franchise holders walking away; No growth franchises; the whole thing needing more public money than BR; lack of improvements; grotty stations; ridiculous expensive and complex fares; overcrowding; government Ministers refusing to accept responsibility; civil Servants dithering with procurement processes and micromanaging; profit going to pay for improvements to other European country's state owned railways - the whole depressing shebang.

"Gee someone needs shooting" said Chuck, indeed. *"So let's get this straight: the railways are in private hands but civil servants specify timetables and rolling stock in a Byzantine straightjacket and expect operators to cover their running costs; the running cost of loss making regional franchises make some profit of their own and give the Treasury a wedge, except it's never worked out as unit costs are higher than BR and the operators' lawyers run rings round the civil servants, yet Government won't change the system for fear of admitting they make mistakes and pretend its all working due to rising passenger number since 1997, whilst failing to realise passenger numbers have been in a long term growth cycle since 1982?"*

Not bad for a first stab at it I thought! *"At least you knew where you stood with napalm in the morning"*, indeed. Miles away was my preference especially if the Americans and especially Chuck were dropping it.

Over the morning Chuck asked more and more and it was rather embarrassing. *"So instead of phoning up a train manufacturer and asking for their best price for some off the shelf locos and cabooses they spent six years trying to reinvent the train at a cost of extra hundred of millions, and it still isn't built?"* I noticed some civil service types in the club sulk off. *"So franchising is a legal contract for being crap at your job and uninventive? Hell boy I'd sue"*.

Some Lawyer type fiddled with his gold cuffs on the table opposite and passed over his business card! I'd gone to the toilet and saw Chuck staring intently at the TV on my return *"Now that's what I'm talking about this guy's talking sense, who is he?"* Bob Crow of the RMT Union was on. Which really sums the whole thing up if an American sits there and agrees with a dinosaur left wing union leader on nationalisation.

Now on the off chance that a Conservative MP is reading this please please please use some common sense about the railways franchising is broke, fix it!

Three Cocks Cottage June 2012

Adrian Bailey's article in the last issue

Sources: Adrian used the 2010 EU Energy and Transport Figures and also googled Swiss Railways and other Internet sites to draw comparison with the UK. GDP and rail expenditure are easily found:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/publications/doc/2010_energy_transport_figures.pdf

Christmas trains

Newtown Station Travel advise that if you want advanced purchase singles the trains with the best availability are the 0514 ,1730 and 1930 ex Aberystwyth.

On the Swanage railway



Above: Corfe Castle signal box.

Below: Train hauled by 2-6-4T No.80104 waiting to leave Swanage. Ex-Devon Belle observation car is the first vehicle in the train.



Dusty and The Brigadier went to Swanage in Dorset for their summer holidays this year: here are some pictures they'd like to share of the Swanage Railway. Many heritage lines would not exist without the dreaded Doctor and his infamous report. Though listed for closure in the report, the 11 mile long Wareham to Swanage line managed to survive until 1972, and the first three miles of it continued to serve heavy freight flows from Furzebrook oil depot. An intensive service is run over the operational six mile length in the high summer peak with the railway promoting itself as a park and ride outfit, and some excursions arrive from the main line connection.

Still Some Way to Go?

The Chairman attended a "World Café" event on 15th November, organised by the Welsh Government's Enterprise and Business Committee as part of their inquiry into Integrated Public Transport in Wales (See:- <http://tinyurl.com/ccuvws8>). The meeting was held at the new Maritime Museum in Swansea, and beforehand participants were sent a briefing paper by email.

All very well and good, or so it would seem. However, even a casual glance at the programme for the day would indicate that the Welsh Government still has some way to go when regarding its own attitude to public transport. Under the section "How to Get There", the first heading is "By Car"! This is followed with "By Bus", which in the event tells the reader that Swansea has a brand new bus station, without actually giving any details of services to the museum. Now, as the bus station is closer to this venue than it is to the railway station, for anyone arriving by train this information is fairly useless. The next heading below is "By Road", with detailed directions given from the M4 motorway!

The meeting contained a healthy number of representatives from disabled groups and one or two of these people tended to monopolise the event, with the effect of steering the subject matter towards their own concerns and away from a strict integration agenda. Clearly the committee could learn something from their fellow conspirators in the Transport Committee at Westminster (TRANSCOM), where discussions are rigidly controlled to keep the matter in hand on topic. There was no actual sound recording of the proceedings either, the obverse of the case at Shrewsbury in 2004, when TRANSCOM visited the town as part of their investigation into rural railways.

Notes were taken by civil servants present but were not a factual record of what was actually said and by whom. The danger here is that the information gathered could descend into a collection of Chinese whispers, which with the best will in the world is not a good starting point for developing an integrated transport policy - particularly so because for public transport to work effectively, it requires those involved to grasp some pretty arcane concepts in some detail.

The overall impression was that the committee and their civil servants were essentially trying to do a good job. At the same time, one must ask whether their perception of public transport is the right one. Do they think that it is just something to be provided for the disabled, the young and the old and those who, for whatever reason, do not have access to a car? Or do they think that it is transport provided for the public, an important public service which can benefit the economy and help to alleviate poverty by the opportunities thus made available? Only when it becomes the latter, can we begin to make some progress.

In the end, should we not ask whether civil servants and politicians are the right people to do what is in effect, designing a transport system? They are good intelligent, dedicated people - they make the law and they administrate but they are neither designers nor transport professionals. They have never been trained to do this. Would the reader expect me (a trained designer) to make a good job of being say, a surgeon without an extensive period of additional training? The conventional business model for transport - to make a profit from what the user pays into the farebox - is no longer universally successful. Indeed, given the convoluted industry structures here in the UK, this is presently less of a viable option than may be strictly necessary. We are in new territory and debate is necessary.

In conclusion, we hope that the Committee develops a vision as to what public transport is for and what they expect it to do. We hope that they take a look around Wales and indeed go abroad to look at best practice. We think that Wales should be an example of this in itself, and this will require attention not only to integration but improved and new infrastructure too. This may be easier to achieve in the more populous south, but the challenge is to make it work for those more rural parts of Wales as well.

Angus Eickhoff

The Beeching Model

By Amateur Rail historian Tim James

Continuing the series of articles about the Beeching closures

One of the more famous aspects of the report was the model for costs of running stopping services that was drawn up. Undoubtedly it painted a picture of doom and gloom unless services were heavily used, but as I will show using the report itself the real picture was very different.

The report helpfully (page 16) tells us what its authors thought the comparative costs of running Passenger DMU's were versus stopping trains hauled by steam locomotives, though the report was hoping to use a hypothetical model to demonstrate the hopelessness of trying to modernise. The section was liberally interlaced with reference to private motor car ownership rising and declining traffic levels (no evidence presented), and finished with a rant about how savings on stopping services could not be made. The Beeching "model" told us that a roughly hourly stopping service on weekdays plus some Sunday trains (224 services per week), assuming a manned station every 2.5 miles on a fully signalled single line, would require £3,000 per mile of track per annum to maintain and £2,500 per station per annum to staff/maintain. Steam hauled trains cost 15 shillings per train mile to run whilst DMU's, dependent on type and size, cost 4 shillings to 6 shillings per train mile. Passenger revenue was assumed to be 2d per mile travelled – this being the world where Victorian legislation governing pricing on a national scale still existed. This works out as £12,736 per mile per annum to run with steam, and between £6,912 and £7,495 per mile per annum to run with DMU's. Given those figures an hourly DMU service would need 17,000 passengers per week to be profitable (an average loading of 76), though the report conceded if there was 10,000 a week (an average loading of 45) income from other services on the section might help cover the costs.

The usage maps and the decisions on closure and survival in the report were geared around the model, with lines beneath the magic 10,000 passengers per annum figure condemned as loss making and nearly always subsequently closed. It seemed clear cut, however the model was inconsistent with other figures provided in the report, and in practice the model's assumptions about what ran on any particular line were rarely if ever found.

Credibility Check 1 - On Page 10 we're told that single track lines (5,900 route miles) were costing £20 million a year to run, an average of c£3,400 per mile per annum, and of course this included the cost of running freight and other services on them. Remember this would have included signal boxes, passing loops and goods sidings, and the cost of running steam hauled pick up goods trains! The Beeching Model says a steam hauled stopping passenger train service on a single line cost nearly £13,000 per mile annum to operate. Clearly the two figures don't square with each other. Nearly half of all stopping services were at the time of the report still steam hauled.

Credibility Check 2 – The report tells us on Page 8 that the direct cost of running Stopping Passenger services was £56.1 million, and that 90.1 million train miles were run in this category. An average cost of £0.62 (in decimal) per mile of stopping services ran, the model said steam hauled service worked out at £1.09 per mile and a DMU between £0.59 and £0.64. The figure was consistent if Stopping services were already totally DMU run, which they weren't.

Credibility Check 3 – The revenue from Stopping Services was £30.8 million or 7,392 million pennies, with 90.1 million miles run and each passenger generating 2d per mile in revenue an average load can be worked out as 41 passengers per stopping train. As a sector Stopping services appear to have been averaging loadings close to the viable point if sharing tracks with other services. Yet the report treated the whole sector as a hopeless basket case.

In reality

The report on pages 100/101 produces a table which shows comparative costs of running services on ten different lines – all "loss making"; the mix included short branches worked by DMU's, a railbus, steam and some longer ones, in all 189 route miles. The total savings expected to be made by withdrawing passenger services/closure on these lines were claimed to be £301,065.00. Costs were

stated at £500,220.00 the direct revenue allocated was £190,795.00, contributory revenue was estimated at £230,240.00. The ten lines were allegedly running up a loss of £99,685.00. Contributory revenue is that proportion of a ticket bought to a destination off the line in question not allocated to it, i.e. if you travelled from London to Aberystwyth most of the ticket costs would be allocated against the Shrewsbury to London section, it being longer in distance.

The average anticipated savings (see Table 2) of axing the ten lines/services worked out at £1,325.00 per mile of movement costs, £485.00 per mile of Terminal Costs and £837.00 per mile of Track and Signalling Costs - substantially lower than the report's model sums at £3,000, £1,000 and £3,000 for the categories. Some explanation is needed. The movement costs were lower than the model as some branches with 3 or 4 trains a day were looked at, the average for the ten lines being 124 trains a week nearly half that of the model. The terminal costs equated to a station every 5 miles @ £2,500 per station, not the model's 2.5 miles. The expected savings in track and signalling were substantially lower than the £3,000 per mile costs the model claimed. Some branches that were to close completely would save £2,000 per mile per annum and others even less. Parts of routes were to remain open for freight or other passenger services, meaning that savings could not be made. The Sunderland to West Hartlepool line remains open to this day as a double track freight line, no savings in track and signalling were claimed.

Closure/withdrawal of passenger services on these lines would result in savings of £301,065.00, apparently all cut and dried, but the underlying assumption was that 86% of the contributory revenue would remain as passengers from these lines would railhead. Nearly two thirds - £192,370.00 - of the expected savings were retained contributory revenue. The report provides no clue as to how it decided the amount of contributory revenue that would be retained. What happened in reality of course was that the railheading ex-branch line passenger didn't materialise, but abandoned rail travel almost completely. Several sources suggested that when a branch line closed that 90-95% of the contributory revenue went as well. You can see how the savings expected failed to materialise – the report and British Railways made no provision for how these branch passengers would get from their originating point/destinations to the branch line station. We've closed your local stations, please ride with us again from the junction on the mainline, but you have to make your own arrangements to get there!

The figures show there was no "one size fits all" line. Four of the lines had strong contributory revenue, which meant that if this was not retained the closure of the passenger service would actually cause a loss in revenue for the railway as a whole and not make any savings - Chippenham to Calne (Wilts), Yatton to Clevedon (Soms), Elgin to Lossiemouth (Sct) and Sunderland to West Hartlepool (Dur). If 75% of their contributory revenue disappeared – a not unnatural assumption given what actually happened, then the closure of these services ended up losing c£20,000.00.

Banff to Tillynaught (Sct) was still steam operated – if a railcar was substituted at the cost seen on the Gleneagles to Comrie line (2s 6d or £0.125 per mile), then it would be in the category of a high contributory revenue line, where closing it and losing that revenue might actually cause a loss. For some reason Elgin to Lossiemouth (Sct) was run by a diesel locomotive: again substituting a railcar would produce savings. The report states that the York to Beverley (E.Yorks) line was being worked by a mixture of Diesel locomotives and DMU's, giving an average cost per mile of 6 shillings and six pence in movement costs. The DMU only line from Bradford and Leeds to Skipton via Ilkley (W.Yorks) was managing 3 shillings and 8 pence. If this could be repeated in E Yorks the Movement Costs could be slashed by over £30,000.00 per annum, putting a different complexion on the line's viability, as its total revenue would exceed the running costs to be saved by closure.

It's clear if further effort could be made on savings and the potential loss of contributory revenue factored in, many lines were viable at a far lower level than the magic 17,000 a week passenger mark the report claimed. Gerard Fiennes whose book "I tried to run a railway" got him the sack from BR as the General Manager of BR's Eastern Region, reckoned a relatively lightly used line such as the East Suffolk only cost around £1000 a mile per year to maintain following sensible rationalisation of track capacity. There's no mention of track maintenance savings by using DMU's in the report, tank locomotives such as the BR Standard Class 4 that worked on the Cambrian in the mid 60's weighed 86 tons plus coaches; a Class 101 DMU weighed just 32 tons. Could a more realistic model be developed?

A more "typical" branch line with 8 trains a day on weekdays say 100 trains a week using a DMU similar to the example in W.Yorks, say 4s per mile and with an allowance of £1,000 a mile for

track and signalling and £500 per mile for terminal costs, at a length of 19 miles with 4 stations (the average of the above lines) would look like this.

Movement Costs	$100 \times 52 \times 0.2 \times 19 =$	£19,760
Terminal Costs	500×19	= £ 9,500
Track and Signalling	$1,000 \times 19$	=£19,000

Total Costs per mile £47,500 or £914 per week

Using the model's 2d revenue per passenger mile for the £48 per mile per week, the above would need 5,773 passengers a week to cover direct costs – a third of the report's 17,000 a week.

The above also gives some indication that a lightweight railcar only branch might even slash costs further and have a break even point even further. However, with track and signalling maintenance you must factor in the effect of bridges, tunnels and viaducts, and these are the killer items in terms of cost. Lines with lots of them would naturally cost more irrespective of what ran, compared to lines that went through relatively flat farmland, and indeed heavily graded lines would cost more to operate as well.

Another important factor that seems to have been completely ignored in the calculation of viability was the other things carried by passenger trains:

"The regular passenger train services are the principal means of conveyance for Post Office parcels and letter mails, as well as for the railways' own parcels service" (Page 22).

Page 8 tell us that Freight carried by Passenger Trains - Parcels, Newspaper and Milk etc., was bringing in revenue of £57.3 million whilst costing £40.2 million to provide, thereby making a healthy profit. Some 220 million miles were operated by Passenger trains of all types, giving an average of 3 shillings and 10 pence freight revenue per passenger train mile operated. Clearly there would be large flows between big population centres, but every line would still have its morning and evening mail train, and every train had a Guards compartment for parcels. Milk flows clearly benefited rural areas. The report makes absolutely no mention of revenue from these sources that could be set against the cost of running lines. A crude way to find some sort of formula would be to divide the revenue by head of population - which would still heavily weigh toward the urban areas. This gives, using the 1961 census, a Passenger Freight revenue "add on" of £1 1s 7d per person or £1.08 in decimal. For instance Montgomeryshire's population in 1961 was 41,165 potentially giving £44,500 in parcels, mail, and milk revenue. With roughly 70 route miles of railways in the county this would give £635 a year per mile to top up passenger receipts.

OK you can accuse me of being a revisionist looking on from 50 years hence but I've just used what was in the report to cast doubt on the model and its magic 17,000 passengers per annum claim that was used to condemn many lines to closure. It's clear that dependent on a number of factors the real point of viability was a lot lower in terms of usage than was portrayed at the time, and a substantial number of lines could potentially have been saved from closure if these had been taken into account.

- Contributory Revenue, how would it be retained?
- Seasonal traffic?
- Freight sharing track costs?
- Revenue from freight carried by passenger trains?
- Was the rolling stock in use the cheapest for the line?
- Was Track and Signalling rationalisation possible?
- Viaducts, tunnels and bridges many or relatively free from?
- How hard was the line to work- Gradients etc?

The ignorance of these factors by the report certainly fuels the feeling that the report was not impartial, and had a pre set agenda to make the case for closure regardless of what the actual situation was or could be. The assumption that contributory revenue would just magically be kept was plain naïve at best, however ranting about how savings could not be made and setting a misleading and inaccurate high break even point for stopping passenger services was manipulation and lying at its worst. The

report maps split into 3 types, below 5,000 passengers' week, 5,000-10,000 and above 10,000. Why if the point of minimum viability was 10,000 would you split the lines beneath into further categories? The Cambrian Mainline between Aberystwyth and Shrewsbury was selected for "modification", though the report tells us not what the rationale of saving it was. The "modification" was in fact a program of track, signalling and station rationalisation, combined with introducing DMU's designed to reduce operating costs – exactly what the report tried to argue couldn't be done! The remaining smaller stations were closed to passengers and freight withdrawn, double track sections singled and passing loops initially retained at an average of one every seven miles. DMU's were introduced on most passenger trains and freight became wagonload only from the remaining centres. Opportunity denied elsewhere.

Table 1 Revenue

	Route Miles	Train Miles	Direct Revenue	Contributory Revenue	Total Revenue
Hull to York via Beverley	42.00	260,000.00	90,400.00	37,680.00	128,080.00
Banff to Tillynaught	6.00	37,400.00	800.00	6,130.00	6,930.00
Bradford and Leeds to Skipton Via Ilkley	27.00	404,200.00	59,700.00	34,370.00	74,070.00
Thetford to Swaffham	23.00	86,000.00	3,700.00	16,000.00	19,700.00
Chippenham to Calne	5.00	48,600.00	4,700.00	56,900.00	61,600.00
Yatton to Clevedon	4.00	46,600.00	6,100.00	23,200.00	29,300.00
Elgin to Lossiemouth	6.00	11,200.00	625.00	18,330.00	18,455.00
Sunderland to West Hartlepool	18.00	38,400.00	8,500.00	3,370.00	11,870.00
Aberdeen to Ballatar	43.00	161,000.00	14,370.00	21,980.00	36,350.00
Gleneagles – Crieff – Comrie	15.00	65,300.00	1,900.00	12,280.00	14,180.00
	189.00	1,158,700.00	190,795.00	230,240.00	400,535.00

Table 2 Costs to be saved by closure.

	Movement	Terminal	Track and Signalling	Total Costs Saved
Hull to York via Beverley	84,400.00	23,100.00	43,300.00	150,800.00
Banff to Tillynaught	14,150.00	950.00	600.00	15,700.00
Bradford and Leeds to Skipton Via Ilkley	73,900.00	31,600.00	48,400.00	153,900.00
Thetford to Swaffham	13,200.00	3,900.00	17,200.00	34,300.00
Chippenham to Calne	15,500.00	8,900.00	10,000.00	34,400.00
Yatton to Clevedon	11,500.00	5,600.00	8,030.00	25,130.00
Elgin to Lossiemouth	3,150.00	1,500.00	1,800.00	6,450.00
Sunderland to West Hartlepool	7,400.00	3,300.00	0.00	10,700.00
Aberdeen to Ballatar	19,850.00	9,250.00	20,480.00	49,580.00
Gleneagles-Crieff-Comrie	7,500.00	3,480.00	8,280.00	19,260.00
	250,550.00	91,580.00	158,090.00	500,220.00

Table 3 Expected Savings

	Total Costs Saved	Lost Direct Revenue	Lost Contrb Rev	Expected Savings
Hull to York via Beverley	150,800.00	64,790.00	4,900.00	81,110.00
Banff to Tillynaught	15,700.00	800.00	4,000.00	10,900.00
Bradford and Leeds to Skipton Via Ilkley	153,900.00	59,000.00	3,930.00	90,970.00
Thetford to Swaffham	34,300.00	3,700.00	1,700.00	28,900.00
Chippenham to Calne	34,400.00	4,700.00	5,700.00	24,000.00
Yatton to Clevedon	25,130.00	6,100.00	1,100.00	17,930.00
Elgin to Lossiemouth	6,450.00	625.00	370.00	5,455.00
Sunderland to West Hartlepool	10,700.00	5,300.00	170.00	5,230.00
Aberdeen to Ballatar	49,580.00	14,370.00	7,000.00	28,210.00
Gleneagles-Crieff-Comrie	19,260.00	1,900.00	9,000.00	8,360.00
	500,220.00	161,285.00	37,870.00	301,065.00

ACORP awards for Arriva Trains Wales

The Cambrian Railways Partnership won two national awards at the ACORP (Association for Community Rail Partnerships) Award ceremony held at Swindon's STEAM museum. The local rail partnership won awards for 'Best Marketing Publication' for their 'Wales on Rails' families' brochure, and also the award in the 'Involving Young People' category for their 'First Class Safety' schools safety film. The picture shows Phil Caldwell, Schools Liaison Officer of Arriva Trains Wales, and Rhydian Mason (Cambrian Railways Partnership) with Mark Hopwood, Managing Director of First Great Western (centre) who presented the safety award.

'Wales on Rails' is an ideas and inspiration brochure that shows how family groups can spend a low-cost holiday in mid-Wales by train. It features Machynlleth, Aberystwyth and Aberdyfi and focuses in on 'quality family time' whilst on holiday.'

'First Class Safety' is a guide to using the railway made initially for and with pupils from Ardudwy (Harlech) and Tywyn secondary schools. Both schools played an important part in the making of the film, which has already led to a number of unique and forward thinking initiatives in both of them.

Rhydian Mason, Community Rail Officer,. writes: 'We need to acknowledge a number of organisations who we've worked with to make these awards possible - TraCC (the mid Wales transport consortium), Mid Wales Tourism Partnership, Mid Wales Tourism, Network Rail, British Transport Police, Tywyn and Ardudwy Schools, AMP Productions from Aberystwyth, Good Journey Publications from Machynlleth, and all member organisations of the partnership that include Ceredigion, Powys, Gwynedd and Shropshire Councils as well as Arriva Trains Wales.'

The brochure can be viewed at the Cambrian Railways Partnership website:
www.thecambrianline.co.uk.

The film is on Youtube, in Welsh and English, at
<http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2N8d9tidPiWqNkFwmKYLZQ?feature=plcp>

“Daytime hourly service by 2011”- the pantomime continues

Over the preceding months, Welsh Government Ministers and Officials have ducked and weaved whenever asked about the commitment made in the 2010 National Transport Plan regarding the much vaunted hourly service on our line. Perhaps the oddest excuse given was by James Arden of Welsh Government's (WG) Rail Unit at the line liaison meeting in July. After quickly scanning the room and making sure no one from Network Rail was there he told the meeting that the passing loops had been put in the wrong place, that the loop at Westbury needed to be restored and the double track section from Welshpool to Fron extended. It would appear if he was to be believed of course that it was the other boys' fault not WG's. This raised a few eyebrows especially when no one in the industry could be found to corroborate the story. As we saw at our AGM, there is a huge reluctance to go on the record about anything to do with the scheme. However, Messrs. Davies and Vaughan from ATW did confirm that ERTMS has now settled down and has been like that for some time. So no more can it be used as an excuse which the Transport Minister was doing in written replies to Montgomeryshire AM Russell George a few days afterwards (see below). In November's edition of "Modern Railways" ATW's Commercial Manager Mike Bagshaw says on p.71 "ERTMS has bedded down". A railway journalist having heard of all the supposed trouble with ERTMS travelled to Mid Wales and to his surprise found the trains running on time! Indeed the official punctuality for the line (ppm of 87-89%) is better than the West Coast and East Coast Mainline and has been for over a year. So if the signalling is so problematic how do the trains run on time? Red herrings indeed.

SARPA has tracked down and obtained "off the record" comments from various sources within the key players involved. Hopefully the more complete picture outlined beneath cuts through the fog of misinformation that's been put about in public.

Sources inside Network Rail tell us that their primary concern is to do with the performance of an hourly service, a view which mirrors some lengthy correspondence between SARPA members in the fairly recent past. WG opted for the barebones and cheapest option of those presented to it in

2007 to increase line capacity. As things stand there is no "get out of jail card" for late running with high line occupancy, if an hourly service is run. All trains must present themselves as on time at Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth if it is to work. NR are implementing line speed increases from 29/10/12, then looking to abolish level crossings and speed restrictions near them, followed by raising speeds over turnouts at Welshpool and Newtown. The time created will be used to create recovery margins in the timetable. The source mentions no new loops, and goes on to confirm that the performance implications for running a few extra trains are not as great as running a full blown hourly service. There are no technical reasons why you couldn't run 10/11 trains a day the whole way now. WG has apparently blown hot and cold over the exact nature of what it wants which hasn't helped.

A different source in Network Rail tell us that ERTMS is no more or no less reliable than other signalling systems in use in the UK.

Sources in the fleshpots of Cardiff Bay tell us that the scheme is seen by the Labour administration as an unfinished hangover from its coalition with Plaid Cymru which it doesn't want. Firstly it is seen as a scheme that does not benefit Labour areas. Secondly Labour are nowhere near as keen on rail, seeing road improvements as greater value – this despite public noises about rail electrification which should be viewed in the context of playing party politics with the ConDems in Westminster. Thirdly, with tighter budgets nowadays there's no headway to get it done quickly without impacting on something seen as a bigger priority for Labour. In short it's not seen as a priority by Welsh Labour, though they feel trapped by it being partially complete and resent being questioned about it. They daren't publicly state they don't want to spend money in Mid Wales due to the political stick it would give the opposition parties, so they progress the scheme as slowly as possible through gritted teeth looking for external reasons for delay.

Meanwhile ATW seems happy to provide what others wish and fund. This may not always be the best approach for passengers and the railway, based on their experience of actually operating it. WG has apparently blown hot and cold over the exact nature of what it wants which hasn't helped. A source within Penarth House (ATW's Head Office) has said that ATW had no input into the infrastructure options selected by WG, and that a proactive operator would have better utilised existing infrastructure to ramp up existing services, before looking to leap to a full blown hourly service all the way to Aberystwyth.

So in short, though the above sources could be all wrong or all right or something in-between, we get a picture that fits the facts as many see them of lethargy and reluctance, rather than insurmountable technical issues causing delay. No doubt there will be official denials all round from ATW, NR and WG, but please remember there would be no need for this article if the project had actually been completed and your own people are so keen to tell us these things!

Here's the latest from Cardiff: in short the signalling system that runs the trains to time is still thought to be problematic, Network Rail will finish their unspecified infrastructure doings in Summer 2013 and WG might make a decision after that. **Floreat inertia!**

Written assembly question for answer by the Minister for Local Government and Communities 08 October 2012

Russell George (Montgomeryshire): Is the additional infrastructure that was installed on the Cambrian Line in tandem with the European Rail Traffic Management Signalling (ERTMS) system still considered sufficient to permit the introduction of an hourly service and if it is not, is additional computer performance modelling work being undertaken to establish what additional infrastructure is needed? (WAQ61271)

Carl Sargeant: Network Rail has commissioned its new ERTMS signalling system on the Cambrian Line and technical difficulties with this led to reliability problems with train services. Network Rail is undertaking further infrastructure work to address these issues and to ensure that future service enhancements are robust. This work is being scoped and funded by Network Rail and is expected to be completed by summer 2013.

Russell George (Montgomeryshire): Will the Minister clarify when the hourly train service on the Aberystwyth to Shrewsbury line will commence? (WAQ61299)

Carl Sargeant: Confirming the date for the additional train services will be subject to the completion of Network Rail's further infrastructure upgrade.

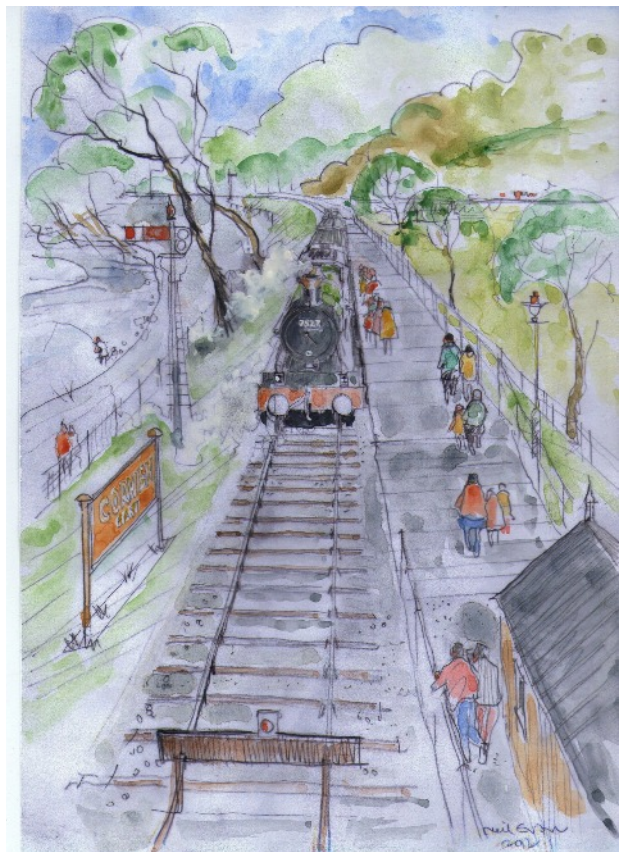
In the meantime Carl Sargeant AM has been devoting time and energy demanding from Westminster that two rail lines through his constituency are electrified. (Wrexham-Bidston and Chester-Holyhead) – though there was no mention of trains to run on them!

Llangollen Railway Corwen extension

The extension west of Carrog, as far as Plas Bonwm Farm, has seen shuttle services on a number of occasions (below left, a DMU on the extension approaching Carrog).

More tracklaying is expected during the winter, and it is hoped that the line will be opened to a temporary Corwen East station (below right) in 2014,

The Llangollen Railway Trust continues to work hard to raise the match funding for the grant aid of £500,000 provided by the Welsh Assembly Government which kick started the project. To date the Trust has received over £110,000 from donations from supporters and well wishers, including gift aid claimed. A current estimate of the costs indicates a requirement for £236,000 to complete phase 1 of the project and more support is needed in terms of donations and sponsorship for elements of this work.



The Shropshire Railway Society

The Shropshire Railway Society is a small group of Railway Enthusiasts who meet at the Gateway Arts and Education Centre every other Friday from September – April, for railway slideshows, talks, presentations, lectures and quizzes.

Visitors are welcome at meetings, they ask for a minimum donation of £3 per visit.

14th December - Films from the Archives, by Frank Banfield

For more information about the society, membership and its events contact Ron Williams, General Secretary (01743) 243295, or check the society website at: www.geoffspages.co.uk/srs/

Wales Public Transport Users' Committee (PTUC) meeting, 31st October

The webmaster writes.

I went along to the meeting of the PTUC on 31st October in Aberystwyth. It was held at the brand, spanking new Welsh Government building there, which is a bit like Fort Knox when it comes to getting inside, with doors operated by electronic passes to go anywhere in the building. The fun starts if you need to go to the lavatory. You can get out to the foyer to use the facilities but with only a visitor's pass, you can't get back to the meeting again; not without help anyway!

I arrived late, this on account of the meeting starting before the arrival of the first train. I was given a long laminated list of "Don'ts for Observers". There weren't any "Do s" I can recall, the nearest thing being a sort of "Do buy your own lunch because we're not providing it"! This is, of course not very welcoming and seems aimed at discouraging dissent. So it was quite a strange atmosphere, a bit like being on a film set and not really being "there" at all. The long laminated list was whisked away whilst I was buying my own lunch, presumably to prevent me from roadcasting these unfriendly terms to the great wide world.

In the coffee breaks it was possible to speak to members of the committee and I was told that actually this is the "protocol" of the organisation as it stands. Indeed, it was refreshing to discover that in the flesh, they are dedicated human beings with a determination to improve public transport and hold the Welsh Government to account. During the proceedings the chair went so far as to comment on her frustration at the "glacial pace" of progress with regard to the rail industry. We agree.

I presume that whoever drew up the terms of reference obviously had an axe to grind and didn't want any insurrection from the great unwashed such as myself. I contrasted this with the old RPC, where time was allowed for questions from the floor. Okay, so there was always the gentleman who turned up with a dog on a piece of string and who harangued anyone from the ORR but as his appearance and performance was such a regular occurrence, I was led to believe this was almost a ritual part of an RPC meeting! All the same, I distinctly had the impression that individual PTUC members were embarrassed about some of their protocols and would actually be receptive to discussions and questions from observers. After all those present had provenance of some weight; representatives from Campaign for Better Transport; Bus User's UK and of course, SARPA being amongst those present. We live in hope.

Discussions centred around those topics which have been the staple of SARPA meetings for at least the past ten years, though probably by now we are slightly better informed, being such old hands! Connectivity and integration; reluctance to assume or accept responsibility on the part of various bodies and of course, through ticketing arrangements, all the cause of much discussion in our own group over the years..... so it's not just us then!

There is always a worry that such a body as this may take over and push the input of small organisations like RUGs out of the way. This would be a tragedy as the level of expertise amongst their membership is very high indeed. At the same time, the chair and membership seem committed to working for improvements to public transport, a difficult and uphill task given the persistent affection for roads and the private car by governments throughout the United Kingdom.

Leo miaows

ATW's Club 55 is potentially anti-feline. So says a tom from Machynlleth called Leo. He's contacted me about the terms and conditions of ATW's Club 55. In particular he's concerned that the return portion must be used within 8 days of the outbound travel: all other Club 55 offers stipulate 30 days.

Apparently the station cat at Machynlleth has told of people being caught out by this anomaly. Leo is concerned that a cat carer could arrive home late and be much out of pocket or even delayed by a day causing upset and distress to their feline. Leo says his over 55 primary care provider still has his marbles and has read the small print; however he's worried many other humans will be caught out.

With tightened budgets the consequences of an unexpected extra large rail fare could have far reaching consequences on the comfort of a feline.

So come on ATW play fair and keep to "national" terms and conditions.

Leo can be contacted at sarpa@sarpa.info

The Franchising Fiasco - SARPA Comments

In our aims and objectives (the full list is on our website) this is number one.

1. That the railway is run in the most efficient and cost effective manner: The achievement of our other aims will be easier and cheaper to achieve if this fundamental is got right. We firmly believe that multiple contractual interfaces between numerous fragmented operators in the franchise system are not the best way to achieve this as the last 15 years demonstrate.

SARPA is not affiliated to any political organisation: our opposition to the franchise system is not based on ideology but on common sense – the structure has wasted money hand-over-fist that could have improved services, started to unpick Beeching or kept fares down. We know all about how franchising has failed here in the 9th year of the Wales and Border one.

The current West Coast Mainline franchise fiasco is symbolic of the mess that's been made of trying to run the railway in the UK over the last 20 years. Mr Cameron may be angry, but this or some other cock up was sitting there waiting to bite the day he arrived at 10 Downing Street with a policy of tweaking the franchise model. First's winning bid promised to pay £1.156 Billion a year in premia to the DfT by 2025. Based on an estimated 65 million passengers a year, each of these passengers would contribute £17.78, plus the running costs of the franchise and First profits! The not so clever people at the Treasury Privatisation Unit who drew up the privatisation plan thought that the private sector would ride in to make a split up and fragmented railway more efficient than bad old BR managers had done. The profits on InterCity and commuter franchises would pay for those nasty socially necessary regional franchises and have some left over for the Treasury to pocket.

With eight other franchises all due to be let in the next few years, it's not too hard to see what direction the DfT were planning. First told them something they wanted to hear in their big bid. The trouble is that franchises have never panned out the way hoped for by successive Governments: levering in private money for investment - not seen; entrepreneurial flare - missing in action. Don't even mention how much more efficient the private operators were supposed to be as they've sucked up more state subsidy than BR ever got. Reference to the 1993 Railways Act finds two pages of vague waffle on how franchises were supposed to work – no wonder they don't!

There's a desperate myopia of refusing to accept that franchising doesn't work. "Maybe if we try one more time" seems to be the theme. We're reminded of accounts of the siege of Kohima in the Burma Campaign in World War 2. Imperial Japanese Army troops would shout "give up" at the defending British and Indian troops, alerting them to the impending attack and then charge at exactly the same spot as the previous failed attempts and end up being mown down on top of their dead and rotting comrades. Maybe their commanders thought if they tried the same tactic one more time.....

SARPA Meetings in 2012-13

Tuesday 4 th December	1830	Newtown	Sportsman
Saturday 12 January	1130	Welshpool	Royal Oak
Tuesday 5 th February	1830	Newtown	The Sportsman, Severn St,
Saturday 9 th March	1100	Machynlleth	White Lion
Saturday 13 th April	1100	Aberystwyth	The Cambria, Pier St.
Tuesday 7 th May	17.45	Shrewsbury	Railway Station
Tuesday 4 th June	18.30	Newtown	Sportsman
Saturday 13 th July	1145	Tywyn	Wharf Station, Talyllyn Rly.
Saturday 10 th August	1145	Borth	Railway Hotel
Tuesday 3 rd September	1845	Caersws	
Saturday 12 th October	1100	Machynlleth	White Lion AGM
Tuesday 5 th November	1745	Aberystwyth	Cambria, Pier St.
Tuesday 3 rd December	1830	Newtown	Sportsman

Websites

Our website <http://sarpa.info>

Webmaster Angus Eickhoff. Website host is mid-wales.net

Other sites of interest:

A useful alternative to the National Rail Enquiries site
traintimes.org.uk/

Arriva Trains Wales
www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk/

National Rail Enquiries
www.nationalrail.co.uk/

Train and Bus Information Midlands
www.centro.org.uk/wwwroot/HomePage.asp

LondonMidland
www.londonmidland.com/index.html

Virgin Trains
www.virgintrains.co.uk/default.aspx

Chiltern Railways
www.chilternrailways.co.uk/

Network Rail
www.networkrail.co.uk/

Railfuture/Railway Development Society
www.railfuture.org.uk/

Cambrian Rail Partnership
www.thecambrianline.co.uk/

The Association of Community Rail Partnerships (Acorp)
www.acorp.uk.com

North Wales Coast Railway
www.nwrail.org.uk/

Circular tour of North Wales by rail
www.penmorfa.com/Cambrian/

Ffestiniog Railway timetable
www.ffestiniograilway.co.uk/timetable.htm

Vale of Rheidol Railway timetable
www.rheidolrailway.co.uk/timetable.htm

Talyllyn Railway
www.talyllyn.co.uk/

Welshpool and Llanfair Railway timetable
www.wllr.org.uk/timetable.htm

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway
www.whr.co.uk/index.php?pid=51

Fairbourne Railway
www.fairbournerrailway.com/index.htm

Borth Station Museum
www.borthstationmuseum.co.uk

Rail Photographs by Richard Jones including many of the modern Cambrian scene
<http://railphotos.fourecord.com/index.php>

Useful addresses

Arriva Trains Wales:

St Mary's House, 47 Penarth Road, Cardiff CF10 5DJ. Tel 0845 6061 660
Email: customer.services@arrivatrainswales.co.uk

Network Rail:

Community Relations, Railtrack House, Euston Square, London NW1 2EE

Newtown Station Travel

The Railway Station, Old Kerry Road, Newtown, Powys SY16 1BP. Fax. 01686 621966
E-mail newtownstation@btclick.com

The Association of Train Operating Companies:

ATOC, 3rd Floor, 40 Bernard Street, London WC1N 1BY

London Midland

London Midland, PO Box 4323, Birmingham B2 4JB. Tel. 0121 6342040

Association of Community Rail Partnerships

Rail & River Centre, Canal Side, Civic Hall, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield HD7 5AB

Virgin Trains

Virgin Trains, Customer Relations, PO Box 713, Birmingham, B5 4HH. Tel. 0870 789 1234

Traveline Cymru for all public transport information

www.traveline-cymru.org.uk Tel.0870-6082608

Rail Franchise Performance Manager Rail and New Roads Division, Transport Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ. Direct Line (029) 2082 6849

For Train Times and Fares Call:

08457 48 49 50 (24hrs) 0845 60 40 500 (Welsh Language Service)
0845 60 50 600 (Textphone)

For ticket reservations please call: 0870 9000 773

Officers of the Association

Chairman: Angus Eickhoff, Llidiart Wood, Moel y Garth, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 9JF.
Tel. 01938-553572. E-mail angus@anguseickhoff.co.uk

Vice-Chairman: Ifor Morris: 2 Dingle Rd, Welshpool, Powys.SY21 7QB. 01938-554463

Secretary: vacant

Treasurer and Membership Secretary: Tony Harvey: [23 High Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7JP.](mailto:23HighStreet@montgomeryshire.eu)
Tel./fax. 01938 559087. E-mail Tony@Montgomeryshire.EU

Newsletter Editor: Denis Bates, 86 Maesceinion, Waun Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3QQ.
Tel. 01970-617667. E-mail deb@aber.ac.uk

Shrewsbury Rail Users Federation Representative: Roger Goodhew: 12 Granville St, Shrewsbury, Shropshire. SY3 8NE. Tel. 01743 358873.

Committee Member: Robert Knight, Tresco, 8 Tanrallt St, Machynlleth, SY20 8BE

Association email address: sarpa@sarpa.info