



## Scottish Association for Public Transport

# SCOTTISH TRANSPORT MATTERS

### Contents

- 1 **AGM Agenda Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2014**
- 2 **SAPT Annual Report**
- 3 **High Speed Rail**
- 4 **Island Connections**
- 5 **News Around Scotland**



*"Clansman" arrives in Oban from Lochboisdale. The next train connection will leave 4 hours later! See page 5.*

### **SAPT AGM**

The AGM will be held in the **Perth Mercure Hotel** on **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2014** at **11.00 am**. See next page for the programme which includes speakers from **NESTRANS** and **TACTRAN** Regional Transport Partnerships and a talk on **Scottish InterCity Express** by Transform Scotland.

Scottish Association for Public Transport, 11 Queens Crescent, Glasgow G4 9BL  
Email: [sapt@btinternet.com](mailto:sapt@btinternet.com) web: [www.sapt.org.uk](http://www.sapt.org.uk) Mobile: 07760 381 729

## Look North!

### Development of Public Transport North of the Central Belt

**Thursday May 8<sup>th</sup> 2014 at Perth Mercure Hotel (Kinnoull Suite)**

**West Mill Street, Perth PH1 5QP (half a mile from Perth station)**

The AGM will focus on rail and bus aspirations of two Regional Transport Partnerships north of the central belt. Transform Scotland will also present the *InterCity Express* proposal for fast rail services linking all of Scotland's seven cities.

#### Agenda

- |              |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|
| <b>10:30</b> | <b>Registration with coffee/tea available</b>   |   |
| <b>11:00</b> | <b>TACTRAN</b>  | <b>Eric Guthrie, Tactran Director</b>   |
| <b>11:15</b> | <b>NESTRANS</b>   | <b>Derick Murray, Nestrans Director</b> |
| <b>11:30</b> | <b>Inter City Express</b>   | <b>Paul Tetlaw, SAPT and Transform</b>  |
| <b>11:45</b> | <b>Update on Highland projects,<br/>Followed by discussion (led by SAPT President, Tom Hart )</b> |   |
| <b>12:30</b> | <b>Close of public meeting, followed by a short break</b>   |   |
| <b>12:45</b> | <b>SAPT AGM Business Meeting (expected to finish before 13.45)</b>                                |   |

#### *Overview of presentations.*

*The booming economies of **Aberdeen and Inverness** are generating more local and long distance travel.*

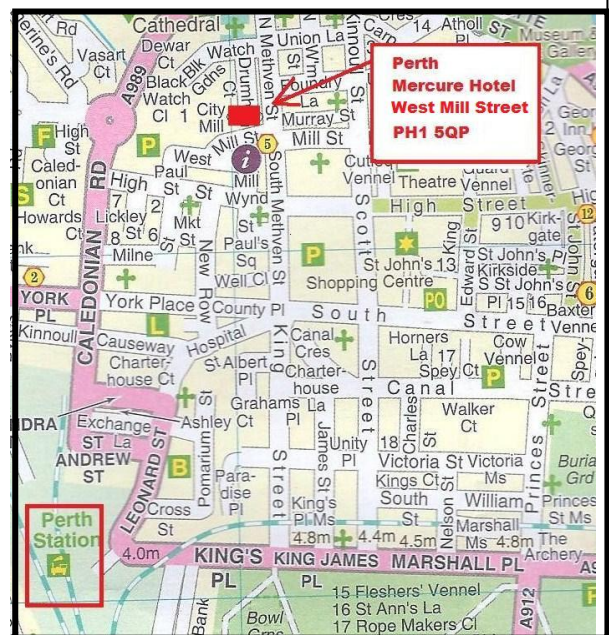
*A strategy for developing public transport is needed to meet demand and reduce car traffic growth.*

***Dundee, Perth and Stirling** also need much better public transport, including improved rail services.*

*Recent announcement of £170 million investment in the Aberdeen-Inverness line is a welcome start. The AGM is an opportunity to hear the aspirations of **Nestrans and Tactran Transport Partnerships**.*

***Highland** development will also be covered.*

*With the new ScotRail franchise due to start in 2015, there are high hopes of significant improvements to the ScotRail Express network. Paul Tetlaw will outline Transform Scotland's **InterCity Express** proposals for upgrading train services linking Scotland's seven cities, including new faster sections of line. £6 billion has been earmarked for dualling the A9 and A96 from Inverness to Perth and Aberdeen. Higher train speeds are needed to maintain rail competitiveness.*



*The direct walking route from Perth station to the hotel is via Leonard St, Hospital St and New Row. There is no wheelchair access to the Kinnoull suite.*

There has been a high level of SAPT activity over the past year. Rail refranchising of the ScotRail Sleeper, daytime services, and the East Coast Main Line has involved preparation of SAPT papers promoting our suggestions. HS2 and our involvement with the High Speed Rail Scotland group has also taken much time.

**Sleeper Franchise:** The sleeper franchise is being offered separately from the ScotRail franchise. SAPT's submission (Scottish Transport Matters ("STM") 2013/3) to Transport Scotland and the three bidders (Arriva, First and Serco) supported the possibility of upmarket premium accommodation and ensuite facilities in some coaches, budget couchette-type coaches, better catering, and a simplified booking website. SAPT had discussions with all the bidders. The preferred bidder should be announced soon.

**ScotRail franchise:** The SAPT **ScotRail** submissions on daytime services was received favourably by Transport Scotland. (see STM 2013/ 4). SAPT Chairman John McCormick had a constructive meeting with Transport Scotland officials before the draft ScotRail Invitation to Tender (ITT) was issued in November 2013. The ITT contained many of the positive ideas discussed: better inter city services, integration with buses (though it is not clear how this will be achieved), scenic tourist trains, and a focus on quality in assessing the franchise bids. SAPT continues to argue for a national regular interval timetable with reliable connections between trains, and with other modes including bus and ferry. It was encouraging to note that SAPT was quoted in the Transport Scotland press release for the ScotRail franchise ITT.

Following release of the ITT, SAPT had meetings with the five bidders (Abellio, Arriva, First, MTR, National Express). The bidding teams all consist of experienced railway people with great enthusiasm. The preferred bidder is due to be announced in Autumn 2014. We are optimistic that the next 10 years will be an exciting period for ScotRail train service development. We look forward to working with the successful bidder.

**East Coast Franchise:** Our submission to the three bidders (First, Virgin/Stagecoach and Eurostar/Keolis) focused on faster journeys, better connections in Edinburgh, continuation of North of Edinburgh through services, and upgraded terminal facilities in Waverley (see STM 2014/1 ).

**High Speed Rail:** SAPT prepared a response to the consultation on the proposed HS2 Phase 2 route from Birmingham to Manchester, Wigan, Leeds and York. (See page 6 for a summary).

The SAPT Chairman also represented SAPT on Transport Scotland's High Speed Rail Scotland group throughout the year, as a member of the Capacity and Connectivity subgroup. Meetings were held fortnightly to assess all the benefits to Scottish rail services that could accrue from an HSL linking Edinburgh with Glasgow. The group also prepared a response to the HS2 Ltd consultation on HS2 Phase 2.

**EGIP:** Changes to the Edinburgh-Glasgow Improvement Programme following the decision to scale back the original scheme will involve considerable disruption to rail services, particularly during rebuilding of Queen Street High Level Station. The main disruption will be during closure of Cowlairs Tunnel for up to 4 months to replace the concrete slab track (this is not directly related to the electrification scheme). SAPT have participated in continuing consultations. The end result should eventually be an efficient electric rail network and modern InterCity stations at Queen Street, Haymarket, and Waverley.

**Buses:** SAPT welcomed Labour MSP Iain Gray's proposals for a bus bill. We supported the draft bill's promotion of a franchising system for bus services, but with a greater focus on bus/rail co-ordination in rural areas, and development of integrated metropolitan public transport networks in cities (see STM 2013/3). There is little sign of further progress on this issue. But it is hoped that the Scottish Government may consider making changes in the bus regulatory framework in future.

Other documents which required responses from SAPT included the latest update to the National Planning Framework, and the UK Airport Commission Report. A follow-up to Transport Scotland's Ferries Plan has been prepared by SAPT (see page 5).

**Finance:** The 2013 accounts show a healthy rise in reserves from £6334 in 2012 to £7221 in 2013. There is a need to replace the computer and printer used to create the newsletter and other documents and update the website but this can be funded from the reserves. There is no need to change subscription fees.

**SAPT Committee:** The committee met ten times during 2013, with meetings held in conference rooms in Mercure Hotels, alternating between Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Progress with planning HS2 is maintaining momentum, despite opposition from many people, mostly in London and the Home Counties.

The HS2 Phase 2 plans were announced in July 2013, with a consultation period running to January 2014. In our response, we confirmed our support for High Speed Rail to Scotland, but expressed disappointment at projected journey times.

The reduction in journey time on Anglo-Scottish journeys is surprisingly small, with the predicted 3 hours 38 minutes London-Glasgow/Edinburgh journey not very much faster than the current best time of 4 hours from Edinburgh to London. The predicted modal shift from air to rail would be improved by faster train journey times.

The HS2 plan is to operate two trains per hour from London to Scotland, with each train consisting of two 200 metre portions, one for Edinburgh and one for Glasgow. The portions would split (or combine southbound) at Carstairs. It would save at least 10 minutes if separate trains ran hourly to Edinburgh and Glasgow, instead of half-hourly to both cities, though the separate trains at 400 metres long would need new, longer station platforms.



Transport Scotland is now working with the Department for Transport and HS2 Ltd to investigate ways of extending HS2 to Scotland. This is likely to follow Phase 2 but the recent recommendation by Sir David Higgins, HS2 Chairman, to bring forward the timescale for Phase 2 to 2030 is good news. He also recommended extending the Phase 1 route northward from Lichfield to Crewe, which will reduce the projected Phase 1 London-Glasgow journey time. Phase 1 is expected to be completed by 2027.

### HS2 to Scotland

SAPT is re-evaluating our analysis of the options for continuing HS2 northwards to Scotland now that plans for HS2 Phase 2 have been clarified. A number of issues have to be weighed up:

#### West or East Coast Routing:

- A West Coast extension of HS2 northwards from Wigan would serve Carlisle (for south-west Scotland), Glasgow and Edinburgh equally well, and could be extended from Lanarkshire directly northwards to Stirling to bring benefits beyond the Central Belt.
- An East Coast extension of HS2 northwards from York would have the advantage of serving Newcastle and Edinburgh. But Glasgow would be disadvantaged by longer journeys, with London-Glasgow trains having to cross Edinburgh, either through the congested Waverley-Haymarket bottleneck, or via a new HSL through south Edinburgh, or further south through the Borders

**City Terminal Stations:** Existing platforms cannot accommodate high speed trains up to 400 metres long. The potential for commercial development is an important consideration in designing additional station capacity. But connectivity with train services on the conventional network is the most important factor for rail passengers and revenue.

Our **FastTrack North** analysis will appear in "Scottish Transport Matters" and will be sent to HS2 Ltd.

Future options for Scotland's extensive ferry network were analysed in the Scottish Government's Ferry Report published in December 2013. Much of the debate on ferries centres round the needs of car traffic. It is, however, cheaper to transport passengers without their cars, both for the ferry operator, the passenger, the government subsidy, and the environment.

31% of Scottish households do not have cars. For them, good public transport links are essential for making ferry journeys. Tourists, particularly from overseas, are also increasingly using public transport to travel around Scotland. And for car owners, a good and cost-effective public transport option may swing the balance in favour of leaving the car at home, or at the pierhead, for journeys where this is practical.

A review of ferry timetables shows that, on some routes, there are issues that need to be resolved if more people are to be attracted to use public transport connections:

- Ferry departure times vary from day to day on some routes, making connections difficult (eg Oban-Tiree departures on successive days are at 08.00, 14.45, 05.45, 08.15, 05.45, 07.00 and 08.45!)
- On some routes the service frequency depends on the time taken for the crossing (eg the Arran ferry runs every 2 hours 45 minutes, making connections with the hourly Ardrossan train service difficult.)

**We recommend that ferry timetables should be reviewed** to integrate better with public transport.

Recent improvements to rail services in the Highlands should facilitate this. The proposed ferry timetable redraft should also meet the objectives of the Ferries Review. Five targets are:

1. **Improve public transport connections with ferries**
2. **Provide a sailing at least once a day to the remoter islands**
3. **Provide earlier morning and later evening sailings on the shorter ferry crossings**
4. **Encourage more tourist trips to boost ferry revenue and island economies. Scottish islands are a unique asset to tourism, Scotland's most valuable industry.**
5. **Stabilise ferry operating costs in the long term by increasing the proportion of foot passengers to reduce the growth in demand for more car carrying capacity**

A major factor influencing the choice of mainland travel mode is cost. The Scottish Government is now introducing Road Equivalent Tariff to ferry routes. Road equivalent tariff is a theoretical means of setting ferry fares based on the cost of travelling an equivalent distance by road. In the pilot scheme, the ferry tariff was set at 60 pence per mile for a car (based on average car running costs), plus a constant core fare of £5 per journey. For a passenger, the fare was set at 10 pence per mile, plus a core fare of £2.

RET has narrowed the differential between car and public transport for journeys involving ferry travel. For instance, on the Tiree-Oban route the car fare dropped from £67 to £40 with RET, a significant saving of £27 (39%), while the passenger fare dropped from £11.40 to £8 (30%) (2008 prices). With RET, the current 2014 perceived cost of a Tiree-Glasgow return trip for two people by car is £168. By ferry and train the corresponding cost is £118. While the public transport cost is lower, the differential is not enough to compensate for the sometimes lengthy connectional time in Oban while waiting for a train.

<u>Car + 2 people Tiree-Glasgow</u>		<u>Ferry + train for 2 people Tiree-Glasgow</u>	
Tiree-Oban Car+driver+passenger	£143.80	Tiree-Oban (2 passenger return)	£39.80
Oban-Glasgow (petrol for 91 milesx2)	<u>£25</u>	Oban-Glasgow (2 standard return)	<u>£78</u>
Total:	<u>£168.80</u>		<u>£117.80</u>

**Further recommendations** to shift the balance towards using public transport from the ferry port are:

- 6 **Adjust RET fares to increase the car rate, and reduce the passenger rate (this change could be cost neutral for car+driver, but cheaper for people who opt to travel without a car)**
- 7 **Offer bargain rail +sail and ferry/bus fares for through journeys between principal centres**

Our recommendations, and an analysis of ferry services, is being sent to the Scottish Transport Minister.

**AVIATION**

Passenger numbers at Edinburgh and Glasgow Airports continue on a rising trend, strongest for international trips but also showing a return to growth on flights within the UK. In February, Glasgow had a 13% international rise and 2% on domestic routes. At Edinburgh, there was 7.9% overall growth, with domestic travel up 4.9%.

Long-haul air tourism is experiencing stronger growth. VisitScotland chief executive, Malcolm Roughead, expects 2014 to be a bumper year for in-tourism to Scotland as well as a year of rising out-tourism. This is expected to lead to higher growth in overseas air travel to and from Scotland. Despite recent rises in 'staycations' January data on bookings suggests more Scots will holiday abroad in 2014

The Scottish Government has given assurance that plans for Prestwick Airport will be commercially based and will not disadvantage other airports. But Gordon Dewar, MD at Edinburgh, has challenged Dundee City Council's decision to subsidise Dundee-London flights. Edinburgh has 44 daily flights to London. Policy should favour improved surface transport links from Dundee to Edinburgh Airport. In the Budget, Air Passenger Duty rates on long-haul trips were reduced but no moves were made to devolve APD decisions to Scotland. Edinburgh Airport will be the first in Scotland to allow passengers to check in their bags at any time before flights. This should cut queuing times.

Reporting to Glasgow Airport and Transport Scotland, consultants Aecom have recommended a medium-term preferred £90m option to introduce tram trains from Glasgow Airport to the city centre. In the short-term, improved bus links to Paisley Gilmour St rail station are recommended. In reality, tramtrain costs may be higher due to restricted capacity on the 3 tracks east from Paisley Gilmour St.

**ROADS and PARKING**

New car sales in Scotland have reached their highest level for more than a decade. New car registrations in March were 14.8% above March, 2013. This is slightly below the UK rise of 17.7%. Despite rising car sales and falling fuel prices, there is little sign that this is leading to a corresponding rise in road traffic which remains almost stable. Older vehicles are being scrapped with younger people less prone to taking up driving and older people more cautious about actual trips made. Shifts to public transport and cycling are being made.

Despite lower crude oil prices and the continuing Budget policy of lowering the real level of petrol and derv taxation, UK petrol sales fell by 4.2% in the last three months of 2013. This reflects a mix of more fuel efficient vehicles, more careful driving, some shift to diesel fuel and shifts to shorter trips and to public transport and cycling. Diesel sales in 2013 were 1.8% above 2012 with some worsening in air quality due to particulates from city traffic.

Traffic information firm INRIX has found that the most congested roads in Scotland are the A8 through Corstorphine, the M8 from Provan to Anderston, the M8 from Cardonald to the Kingston Bridge and the A720 from Musselburgh to Wester Hailes. But data from Scottish Transport Statistics shows an overall decline in motorists experiencing significant congestion delays.

Nearly 18 miles of the Perth-Inverness A9 are to be dualled earlier than scheduled. Work will focus on sections where dualling is comparatively simple with low costs. The busier and more complex section between Luncarty and the Pass of Birnam will come later.

## **FERRIES & SHIPPING**

Despite bad weather late in the year, CalMac reports a 1.9% rise in passengers in 2013 to 4.59million. Cars carried were up 1.8% to 1.06 million. But commercial vehicles fell 6.7% to 92,589. The new route trialled in winter 2013/14, Lochboisdale-Mallaig, has been hardest by poor weather, with Mallaig Harbour difficult in the windy conditions. Mull has seen further complaints about a limited timetable and service disruption early in 2014.

Stena plans to cut costs on the Cairnryan-Belfast route due to ongoing losses despite heavy investment in new terminals. There are fears of increased reliance on foreign crews. 2013 was a boom year for cruise ships visiting British ports. Those disembarking for day trips had risen 20% to 866,000 with over 1m expected in 2014.

## **BUS, TRAM & TAXI**

Confirmation of a start date in May for Edinburgh tram services is imminent though full integration with future plans for bus/rail co-ordination and an improved city centre environment in Princes St and George St will take longer. Better conditions in Shandwick Place have already revived retailer interest along with other land use developments close to the tram track to the west. City leaders are expected to take the first steps soon for extending the tram to Leith with a subsequent priority for extension into south-east Edinburgh. Controversial giant adverts on Edinburgh trams may bring in £1.5m a year.

Braehead owners are planning a £200m expansion of this shopping centre by 2016 but this is dependent on Braehead gaining town centre status. It could bring increased use on the planned Fastlink bus corridor to Glasgow South Hospital, Braehead and Renfrew but could also increase problems at M8 junctions.

A Passenger Focus survey has found a higher (87%) overall passenger satisfaction with Lothian Buses compared to a 79% rating for First Bus. But First Glasgow has claimed a 91% rating, reflecting recent improvements in branding, frequency and the delivery of new buses. Glasgow City Council has supported the view that quality of service is better on publicly-owned Lothian Buses and is calling for re-regulation of Glasgow buses. The Scottish Government view is that there is a need for early changes in regulation but on a different pattern from former regulation.

Stagecoach East and Lothian Buses have gained £1.37m and £1.05m from the Scottish Government Green Bus Fund for 32 low carbon buses. SPT is to purchase 2 electric buses for £486,000 for use on the city centre-Riverside Museum subsidised service. Most of the capital cost will be covered by Scottish Government and Glasgow City Council grants. In the previous issue, a new Stagecoach service from Edinburgh to North Queensferry was mentioned. This derived from a press error. The new service is to South Queensferry and has had attractive marketing and fares, including a £3 day return to Edinburgh.

## **WALKING & CYCLING**

Glasgow is planning 20mph speed limits in the city centre, seven years after proposals were first made.

Edinburgh City Council has refuted Sustrans claims that council policy should aim for 50% cycling to work on a par with Copenhagen. Edinburgh already has one of Scotland's highest proportions of cycling to work at 7%. Official policy is to use limited funds to deliver a rise to 15% by 2020. Edinburgh is introducing secure on-street bike sheds to encourage people to cycle.

The latest survey shows that Scottish Local Authorities are reducing spending on local road and pavement maintenance despite public complaints about deteriorating conditions

In Edinburgh, there are concerns about road congestion arising from plans to increase pedestrian space in the premier shopping area, George St. Evidence from other cities suggests that extra congestion may not arise due to a continuing shift to use of public transport, walking and cycling in larger cities. Similar predictions of chaos and disruption of goods deliveries caused by Glasgow road closures during the Commonwealth Games may be countered by the planned shift of spectators to public transport and temporary park and ride sites further out from events.

## RAIL

Sir David Higgins, HS2 Chair, is seeking accelerated delivery of HS2 with the new route extended from London through to Crewe by 2027 rather than 2033. An earlier start to new construction from Leeds to the East Midlands is also envisaged plus Scottish Government action on sections of new line in the Scottish Central belt. There is also increased priority for greater use of sections of HSR route for inter-city and regional services as part of an enlarged and reshaped rail network. The HS2 Chair claims that speedier action and cost control will help stabilise costs but doubts remain about the location of some proposed stations and the total cost of HS2 relative to benefits.

Prof Peter Woodhead, Director of the Institute for Infrastructure and the Environment at Heriot-Watt University, has concluded that there is a strong case for extending HS2 through to Scotland. Transport Minister Keith Brown is opposing plans to divert overnight Anglo-Scottish passenger services to Waterloo during HS2 construction work at Euston.

Bidders are preparing submissions for the forthcoming 8 year East Coast Main Line franchise. The winner will be announced in November. Some bidders are claiming that they could cut London-Edinburgh times below 4 hours (present average time is 4 hours 23 minutes)

SPT has criticised the flimsy nature of consultation on the planned £120m redevelopment of Glasgow Queen St High Level and the late announcement of a 4 month closure of the Queen St HL approach tunnel for renewal of slab track. Present plans are not seen as maximising the passenger experience and improving conditions for pedestrians and rail/bus/Subway/taxi interchange. SPT has suggested timetable changes to minimise disruption, including additional Edinburgh-Glasgow trains via Bathgate, provision of new electric rolling stock by early 2017, and improved Glasgow Central-Edinburgh services on both the Shotts and Carstairs routes.

The forthcoming Glasgow Commonwealth Games and Gleneagles Ryder Cup are seeing rail (and bus) companies gearing up to meet the requirement that spectators arrive by bus or train. Trains will be lengthened on routes serving the events, and will operate until 01.00 on some routes. Gleneagles station is to have a temporary passenger bridge over the A9 for the Ryder Cup.

Transport Scotland has announced that 50 Scottish stations will have free wi-fi by spring 2015. By the same date, almost half of ScotRail trains will be wi-fi connected. Falkirk Council will save £80,000 a year by scrapping the present discounted rail travel for the elderly and disabled.

The Scottish Government has announced a £170m scheme for rail improvements between Inverness and Aberdeen supporting more frequent services with trains up to 6 carriages. Aberdeen-Inverurie is to be doubled. Forres station is to be relocated and new stations provided at Kintore and Dalcross (for Inverness Airport). But there is still no funding for track work between Elgin and Huntly to support an hourly Aberdeen-Inverness frequency.

As well as improved services and extra stations on existing lines, more suggestions for rail reopening are being made as part of further reversal of the Beeching axe. Proposals include services to Levenmouth, St Andrews, south from Tweedbank to Hawick, and from Alloa to Dunfermline via Kincardine.

FirstGroup reports progress in improving its financial position though the US market remains difficult. UK rail passenger revenue was up 5.9% in the year to 31 March with UK bus revenue up 1.8%

The May 2014 ScotRail timetable introduces some improvements. There will be four trains per hour from Glasgow to Gourock and four Glasgow-Ayr trains per hour (2 fast and 2 stopping services on each line). The Oban service will be doubled from 3 to 6 trains on weekdays, also with an additional 16.11 Oban-Dalmally school train. The Cumbernauld service will be electrified, by extending half-hourly Dalmuir-Springburn trains onwards (after reversal) to Cumbernauld. The Glasgow-Cumbernauld journey time by electric train will be substantially increased from the current 27 minutes via Cowlairs (diesel) to 36 minutes via Bellgrove (electric). However, an hourly diesel Glasgow-Cumbernauld-Falkirk Grahamston service will continue on the more direct route. There will be additional commuter train services on the Aberdeen-Dyce-Inverurie line, and more Sunday trains south from Aberdeen.