

**Dee Cota**

From: Adrian King <adrian.king@hotmail.co.uk>
Sent: 21 January 2015 10:11
To: dee.cota@morpeth-tc.gov.uk
Cc: Dennis Fancett SENRUG
Subject: Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan
Attachments: SENRUG_RLC1.pdf; SENRUG_RLI1.pdf

Hi Dee,

Further to my attendance at the meeting on 16 January 2015 at St. James' Hall, I can now respond on behalf of the South East Northumberland Rail Users' Group (SENRUG).

As you will appreciate, our concern is the future of rail services in S.E Northumberland, including the area covered by the proposed Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan.

I append two documents in this regard which detail SENRUG's hopes and aspirations, including:-

1. Half hourly day time local services to Cramlington and Newcastle.
2. Hourly services in the evenings.
3. Hourly services on Sundays (there are currently only a few mainline trains on Sundays, none of which stop at Cramlington).
4. An increased inter city service providing trains every two hours in each direction.
5. In conjunction with (4) above, the provision of some intermediate stops to enable passengers to easily reach Alnmouth, Berwick and Dunbar.
6. The extension of alternate Metro Centre / Morpeth trains proceeding on to Pegswood and Widdrington.
7. Further provision of local services to Acklington, Alnmouth and Chathill.
8. The reopening of stations at Belford and Beal (for Holy Island) and the extension of services to these stops.
9. The re-opening of the Ashington, Blyth & Tyne line - a first step could be to extend the Newcastle / Morpeth local services to Choppington and Bedlington, and thence to Ashington, and eventually to Woodhorn.
10. Customer information systems at all stations (currently only available at Morpeth).
11. Morpeth station ticket office, waiting room and toilets to be opened all day (only mornings Mon-Sat at present).
12. Decent facilities at other stations.
13. Rail and bus integration including proper station bus stops and smart ticketing.
14. Non bookable covered cycle stands at stations.

The attached documents detail our many achievements to date and the various bodies that we work with.

We applaud your work in regard to the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan, and look forward to working closely with you to achieve the best possible outcome.

We are available to discuss matters further with you - I have been nominated as the appropriate SENRUG liaison officer. Please contact me as follows:

Adrian.King@hotmail.co.uk

01670 505748

Wansbeck Villa, High Stanners, Morpeth, NE61 1QS.

Kind Regards,

Adrian King (SENRUG Treasurer)

How SENRUG Campaigns

SENRUG seeks to work constructively with the Train Operating Companies, Network Rail, Statutory Authorities (County Council, Regional Groups, and Town or Parish Councils), Regeneration Agencies, Elected Representatives (Councilors, MPs and MEPs), Department for Transport, and other pro-rail groups and passenger organisations.

SENRUG seeks to put forward suggestions and recommendations that are credible, logical and commercially viable, so we are taken seriously and our voice is listened to by people of influence. We don't simply want to complain (though are not afraid to when circumstances justify), but want to say what can be done to make things better.

We can help train companies by letting them know what's happening on the ground in this region and by pointing out simple things they can do to improve the passenger experience, as well as campaigning for larger schemes.

As part of our activities SENRUG:

- attends meetings organised by Rail Industry Companies, Statutory Authorities and Passengerfocus
- sends emails and letters to appropriate Train Operating Companies and other organisations
- invites senior managers to meet us and takes up issues of concern
- responds to consultations on rail services that affect this region
- keeps up a close relationship with local MPs and other elected representatives
- works closely with the press to ensure our campaigns remain profiled and in the public eye



Please support SENRUG.

If you support our campaigns and objectives, please join SENRUG. The more people we speak for, the louder our voice is heard.

Our annual rates are:
Individual or couple £5.00
Concessions £2.50
Corporate member £10.00

To join:

Go to www.senrug.co.uk, print an application form, complete it and send it with your cheque or with the standing order section completed to the address below.

Alternatively, send a cheque payable to SENRUG for the correct amount according to the class of membership required, with your name, address including postcode, and phone number (in case of queries) and email address (if you have one and are willing to let us use it) to:

SENRUG Membership Secretary, PO Box 75, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 2WG.

Providing us your email address saves us considerable time and postage.

Please make sure you print your details clearly.

'Corporate Member' applies to companies, trade union branches, county, town or parish councils and other unincorporated groups. Please give the name of your organisation, your nominated contact person, and contact details including email for that person.

To contact SENRUG about your membership please email: membership@senrug.co.uk. For all other SENRUG matters other than membership enquiries, please go to www.senrug.co.uk, email: chair@senrug.co.uk or phone the Chair on 01670 825500 (home phone number)



Campaigning for Better Rail Services In South East Northumberland

Please take a leaflet



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Introduction

SENRLUG - The South East Northumberland Rail User Group - is a voluntary pro-rail campaign group that promotes rail travel and lobbies for better rail services in, within, to, from and through South East Northumberland, representing the interests of both existing and potential rail travellers in the area. By "potential", SENRLUG means those who would use rail services if the trains went where they want to go, at a suitable time, price, and in a clean, safe, secure, accessible and easy to understand manner.

Since SENRLUG was formed in 2000, a number of significant improvements that SENRLUG has campaigned for have already been delivered. However, we are disappointed and angry to find that there are ways to improve rail services in Northumberland.

What's Been Achieved So Far:

- CrossCountry trains stop at Morpeth.
- Local trains throughout the day call at Manors (benefits commuters who work irregular hours)
- Doubling of peak hour East Coast trains at Morpeth - Passengers from Morpeth can now arrive in London an hour earlier, and leave an hour later.
- Level access to both platforms at Morpeth (through Customer Lifts)
- Customer Information System (CIS) Screens at Morpeth giving next train information
- Car Park extension at Morpeth Station

Our Campaigns

Newcastle - Cramlington - Morpeth

SENRLUG believes the current hourly local services, with no trains through most of the evening or on Sundays is completely inadequate. SENRLUG wants to see the frequency increased to half-hourly, with an hourly service throughout the evening and on Sundays.

This could be achieved by extending the existing hourly TransPennine Express services from Liverpool and Manchester to Newcastle, forward to Cramlington and Morpeth. Instead of letting these trains sit idle at Newcastle for 55 minutes before returning south.

The new service would also offer direct journey opportunities from Cramlington and Manchester to Durham, York, Leeds and Manchester, growing the overall rail market through the wider range of journey opportunities.



Our Campaigns Continued.

More Inter-City Trains To Call At Morpeth Station

SENRLUG wants an inter-city service call at Morpeth every 2 hours throughout the day, in each direction. These services would be provided by a mixture of East Coast and CrossCountry, both of whom run inter-city services between Newcastle and Edinburgh.

There is a particular need for more off-peak inter-city services to call at Morpeth. The inter-city trains that currently stop at Morpeth are well used, and SENRLUG believes extra stops would be commercially viable for the train operators. It would help them to fill seats on journeys such as Morpeth - Edinburgh, where trains are often less than half full. Although operators want to achieve the best possible journey times between Newcastle and Edinburgh, in some cases there are inter-city trains running between Newcastle and Edinburgh within 20 minutes. These do not all need to run non-stop or with just one stop. One train could be designated to call at all intermediate inter-city stops, allowing travel between Morpeth and Alnwick, Berwick and Dunbar.

Local Services North Of Morpeth

SENRLUG wants to see a regular, daytime local service north of Morpeth, initially to Pegwood and Widdingham, but eventually running all the way through to Berwick via Aicklington, Alnmouth, Chahill and reopened stations at Bellard and Beal for Holy Island.

As a first step, SENRLUG believes alternate trains on the MetroCentre - Morpeth route should be extended on to Pegwood and Widdingham, giving these stations a service throughout the day. In addition, SENRLUG wants a feasibility study to look into extending this service to Berwick, calling additionally at Aicklington, Alnmouth, Chahill and reopened stations at Beal and Bellard. This could be achieved by working with Transport Scotland who are investigating a local service from Edinburgh to Berwick with reopened stations at East Lothian and Reston, but may want to extend the service south from Berwick to Newcastle.

A Northumberland Coast service would not only offer a choice of commuter services for passengers north of Morpeth, it would additionally increase the tourism and leisure potential in North Northumberland. With the line running parallel to the coast through a designated 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty', the rail journey would provide extremely scenic views of the coast line and Holy Island. It would offer walkers and cyclists using the coast path or coast cycle route return opportunities, and connect with St Cuthbert's Way at Bellard, and the Holy Island Causeway at Beal.

As with the Settle-Carlisle route, it is likely that a local Northumberland Coast service would attract visitors to the area simply to travel on the line, boosting Northumberland's underdeveloped tourist industry.



Our Campaigns Continued

Ashington Blyth & Tyne Line Passenger Services

Find out this brochure for details of SENRLUG's campaign to re-introduce passenger services on the working freight line between Newcastle and Ashington then on to Woodhorn.

Improvements In Station Facilities

SENRLUG believes all stations should have level access to all platforms, seating and shelters on all platforms, timetables displayed on all platforms and some means of communicating live train running information with passengers. This could be a Customer Information System, Help Point or alternative technology. It should not depend on customers being able or willing to use mobile phones.

SENRLUG specifically calls for Customer Information Systems at Cramlington, Manors, Pegwood, Widdingham, Aicklington and Chahill, and for level access to be provided at Manors.

At Morpeth, SENRLUG wants to see the Ticket Office, Waiting Room and Customer Toilet upon throughout the day, in view of the significant number of inter-city trains calling at the station.

SENRLUG calls on the Department for Transport to establish a minimum set of facilities for stations of different sizes, and believes it should be mandatory requirement for Train Operators to provide these facilities at the stations they manage.

Bus And Rail Integration For Passengers

Integrating bus and train travel makes overall door to door journeys easier, thus generating greater use of public transport as a whole and increasing revenue for both bus and train operators.

SENRLUG would like to see buses pull in to the station turning circles at Morpeth and Cramlington. Additionally, a smart ticketing system would allow journeys to destinations such as Berwick to be by train one way and return using the bus. SENRLUG would also like Morpeth station to be included within the popular "PlusBus" system. This would allow journeys to and from Morpeth to include a connecting bus journey within the immediate area, making it easier for passengers to get to and from the station, resulting in reduced pressure on station car parking facilities which are full to capacity.

SENRLUG also would like to see non-bookable covered cycle stands at local stations to encourage use of bike to get to and from the station.

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1 - A. John Buckley
5 Steve Miller

Produced with financial assistance from an anonymous donor and Aicklington Town Council.

Ashington, Blyth & Tyne Line

RE-OPEN ASHINGTON BLYTH AND TYNE LINE

SENTRUG wants to see the reconstruction of passenger services on the fully operational and modern freight line between Newcastle and Ashington, with intermediate stations at Northumberland Park, Morpeth, Choppington, Seghill, Blyth, Bedlington, Ashington, Widdrington, Linton, Alnham, and Washington.

By re-opening the existing freight line between and passing alongside the Widdrington, Morpeth and Northumberland Park, a major general corridor in the region. A station appears to the museum would serve as a base. This includes the communities from the outlying villages of Bedlington by the Sea, Linton, Widdrington and Alnham, as well as creating an effective demand for services to the Museum.

Blyth would be initially be served by stations at Morpeth, on the outskirts of the town, and the station at Blyth.

By opening the Ashington Blyth & Tyne Line, we will regenerate the region by providing access to employment in Newcastle and beyond, as well as at places such as Cullin Farm Park, served by the station at Northumberland Park. The line would connect areas of opportunity with areas of need.

Good transport connections including links to Linton, Linton and Blyth through connecting services at Newcastle would make the area more attractive for industry. Blyth has already been a major centre for the region and the other communities in the area have become attractive places to live due to the only railway connecting to Newcastle, and so would bring new money into the local economies.

The line would eventually be a commuter railway and reduce growing road congestion in the A169 / A16 corridor. Additional investment in the station at Widdrington would create a major hub and bring visitors to the park from further afield, creating an off-peak flow which is a luxury for our economy.

As the line is working, fully operational, passenger freight line, SENTRUG expects the relative location of passenger services to be completely appropriate to the needs of the region and the location of the original platform buildings.

After several years of campaigning, the line is now being programmed by Northumberland County Council.



After The Line Is Re-Opened, What Then?

- Once the core line is re-opened, that will set the rest of the campaign. The route has lots of further potential and SENTRUG will continue to campaign for the following:
 - Creation of stations at both Station Dalston and Seghill (this are not included in the open re-opening scheme).
 - Station at both Ash & Tyne station at Widdrington (to form the Widdrington Museum of Mining and Northumberland Life) (this are not included in the open re-opening scheme).
 - Introduction of a service between Morpeth and Choppington with an intermediate station at Choppington. This can be achieved by extending the Morpeth to Alnham (to form the Widdrington Museum of Mining and Northumberland Life) (this are not included in the open re-opening scheme).
 - A line between Widdrington, Choppington and Widdrington. While the original passenger line has been built over a few miles, SENTRUG has identified the former freight line (this part could be used for the remaining section to the town centre, and with an intermediate station where the freight line crosses under Clayton Road).
 - Extension from Widdrington to Northumberland Park. This would require re-configuration of track at a mile of new track along the former line, and from a point where the existing working freight line crosses under the road at the A169 (to form the A169 station).
 - The primary reason for extending freight line from Ashington to Seghill is to provide a link to the rest of the network. The Ashington Blyth & Tyne Line to the East Coast Main Line, through Widdrington and a small station at Linton, is currently being built, and the location of Seghill would need to be revised to take into account the East Coast Main Line. SENTRUG believes the location of the line should be extended, so that after freight operations cease at the end of operation, it could be used to create extra capacity for local services between Newcastle and Alnham via Widdrington.

SENTRUG 2014 Schools Competition

November 2014 marks the 30th anniversary of the closure of the Ashington, Blyth & Tyne Line to passenger services. The anniversary has been a focus for thinking ways forward to how the line would benefit the community when passenger services are re-opened. SENTRUG organised a competition amongst local schools who were asked to create a 2-10 minute DVD setting out their business case for re-opening the line.

5 local schools participated in the competition, inspiring a new generation of young people to think about the importance of good transport links, for more information and to view the winning DVD, go to www.sentrug.co.uk

SENTRUG 2008 Charter



This campaign to re-open passenger services centred on the freight only Ashington, Blyth & Tyne railway took a significant step forward on the line. SENTRUG selected a school team to run the line. The school's charter was to build a link to Ashington during the day, and SENTRUG provided the freight only passenger services. SENTRUG provided the freight only passenger services, SENTRUG provided the freight only passenger services, SENTRUG provided the freight only passenger services.

Significant progress was achieved with the freight only passenger services, SENTRUG provided the freight only passenger services, SENTRUG provided the freight only passenger services, SENTRUG provided the freight only passenger services.

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History

The line was opened in 1874 and operated as a passenger line as part of the Blyth & Tyne Railway, which was incorporated in 1874. Ashington was originally a branch line from the Blyth & Tyne Railway, which was opened in 1874. The line was closed in 1964, and the line was closed in 1964. The line was closed in 1964, and the line was closed in 1964.

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6. Graham Gibb
7. John Briffley

