

# **Stakeholder Report**

March 2020

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## Introduction

Welcome to our annual stakeholder report. Its purpose is to look back on how we have engaged with our stakeholders and review how we have acted on feedback received, as well as looking ahead to those opportunities in the near future.

Our vision for TransPennine Express is Taking the North further. A vision that speaks to the opportunities, the additional services, the new trains and the enhanced customer experience will have in delivering a transformational effect on the towns and cities we serve, connecting them better and improving economic, educational, employment and leisure opportunities.

In the last year we have seen more and more people travelling on our services, making use of the many new journey opportunities available across the North by rail, with significant improvements in service provision made in the December 2019 timetable change, such as Edinburgh and Morpeth being linked via the East Coast Main Line to Liverpool and our Manchester Airport – Middlesbrough service being extended to Redcar Central.

We also saw the introduction of our new Nova fleet, with the first of 220 additional carriages being introduced, transforming rail travel across the North of England and into Scotland, with more seats and a significant uplift in the on-board customer experience.

However, due to the late delivery of some of our new trains, the performance of our services towards the end of last year was affected. We have apologised sincerely for these issues and have resolved the core issues that caused them. This impact on performance was a significant concern to stakeholders and we have worked closely with them to outline what has been done and what further work across the industry is taking place to improve performance.

In the last year, we have also worked closely with a wide range of stakeholders to progress development projects at stations operated by TransPennine Express, including developing car parks, installing Changing Place facilities and improving the accessibility of our stations.

In running train services and stations, the input of stakeholders is essential. Both in terms of the effect such services have in connecting communities and how they can better support local economies. But also, in the long term, where we work on aligned priorities to deliver more together than we would achieve by each developing plans and priorities in isolation. These ongoing live conversations are what ensures that TransPennine Express continually evolves to meet the needs of stakeholders and those who they represent.

During the last year, we also saw the sad passing of two significant representatives of the users of train services in Selby and along the Hope Valley. Reg French and Kath Aspinall were chairs of their respective user groups and were firm and fair critical friends. Both had enormous passion and energy to see a better railway for their communities, and they excelled in their lobbying delivered through a warm and consistently direct engagement approach. The developments currently happening, and planned to happen, at both Selby and along the Hope Valley are in part due to the campaigning of both Reg and Kath and the delivery of these schemes will be just part of their legacy. We convey our continued thoughts to their families and friends.

Although this report focuses on the 2019/20 year, the end of this year has been dominated by the impact of measures to manage the spread of the Coronavirus. We have worked closely with stakeholders as our services have adapted to meet the needs of key workers. We end the year focussed on working with stakeholders on these services, the impact of the essential social-distancing requirements and also on the projects to be delivered in the coming months, ensuring that when full services are restored, we continue to develop further the railway for customers and the communities served by our trains.

We hope that this report is of information and please let us know if you have any queries.

Graham Meiklejohn  
Regional Development Manager

Lucja Majewski-Kent  
Regional Development Manager

## Stakeholder Feedback

We are pleased, and thank, the following stakeholders who have provided a written contribution to this review.

*David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director, Transport for the North*

Firstly, let me pay tribute to all in the rail industry working so hard to provide essential services and connectivity across the North of England at an exceptionally difficult time with the Coronavirus pandemic. This includes our valued and talented colleagues at TransPennine Express. Your work is deeply appreciated.

TfN recognises there have been a number of significant challenges over recent months. Extraordinary weather, infrastructure issues, delays through impact from other operators – all challenged service provision. However, even allowing for this, there have been issues more closely related to the operator which have impacted on passengers.

The late roll-out of new trains, early reliability problems and driver-training pressures all impacted on service provision and, while noting TPE's apologies in relation to these issues, leaders from across the North made it clear that passengers deserve better.

We welcome that TPE has introduced a number of initiatives including removing fare increases from season tickets, discount rail offers and showing support for others facing hardship such as those who needed to travel following the collapse of Flybe. Passengers are now starting to see the benefits of the new trains and additional capacity and the priority must be completing the successful transformation.

All of us, including TransPennine Express, now need to work together as one to ensure our railways offer rail services across the North which are fit for purpose.



*Tobyn Hughes, Managing Director, Nexus:*

The last year has seen a major uplift in services to and from the North East, with the introduction of the Edinburgh service and the new Nova 1 fleet.

Although we end the year in a much better position, it has not been plain sailing. It has been a challenging few months for passengers due to reduced service levels and a high number of cancellations. TPE have however maintained positive dialogue and communicated well throughout this period.

Until the start of Covid-19 crisis we were looking forward to a more settled period with the emphasis on providing reliability for passengers using the new high-quality inter-city service linking the major centres of the North, as well as providing much-needed extra capacity.



*Dave Pearson, Director of Transport Services,  
West Yorkshire Combined Authority.*

It has been a difficult period for TransPennine Express, particularly towards the end of 2019 and in early 2020. The keenly felt impact of this demonstrates that there can be no doubt about the fundamental importance of the services the operator provides serving West Yorkshire.

TransPennine Express trains connect many of our communities to jobs, as well as providing important long-distance connections for business and leisure travel. All of these markets are important to us and continue to grow. The extra capacity now being provided by the new trains is therefore especially welcome. The new trains also provide an uplift in quality for long distance inter-city travellers, and feedback on these locally has been really positive.

TransPennine Express has continued to invest in stations, and we are pleased to be co-funding improved facilities at Dewsbury station, including new station toilets and a changing places facility. TransPennine Express is also working constructively with Kirklees Council and ourselves in development of the station masterplan at Huddersfield.

We look forward to a new start in 2020 where we can reap the benefits of the new and longer trains as their reliability builds and as the industry works together to improve punctuality across the network. We all have a big job ahead of us in restoring confidence in the rail network, this will be achieved by deep and strong partnership working between us all.

*Stephen Edwards, Executive Director,  
South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive*

TPE staff and their Management Team have remained fully committed to improving performance, despite another very challenging year for train operators in the North, enhancing our passenger rail experience and cascading much needed rolling stock to our region.

South Yorkshire PTE has welcomed, over the past year, TPE's decision to strengthen their Doncaster – Sheffield – Manchester Airport services, and we fully appreciate that this increase in capacity is above and beyond TPE's franchise obligations. Our passengers now benefit from regular six car services during weekdays and at weekends and we look forward to this expanding onto more TPE services in the near future.

We acknowledge and welcome the efforts by TPE over the past two months to introduce a new diversionary route between Sheffield and Manchester via Huddersfield in response to planned engineering work on the Hope Valley line. Keeping these two key cities connected is imperative and TPE have successfully achieved this by introducing this new route.

We have also seen excellent examples of joint working and funding of community schemes over the past year. This has included a new bespoke canopy being built at Dore & Topley station, funded by TPE, SYPT, Northern, ACORP, Friends of Dore and Topley Station (FoDaTs) and the High Peak & Hope Valley CRP. The canopy was officially unveiled by the Sheffield City Region Mayor, Dan Jarvis, in July 2019.



**E X E C U T I V E**



We have also seen the installation of a defibrillator at Dore & Totley station, joint funded by TPE, SYPTE and FoDaTs and installed by Northern and we currently have a feasibility study commissioned for expanding the car park, which has also been funded jointly by TPE and SYPTE.

We look forward to continuing our close partnership working with TPE to deliver more successful schemes to enhance current and future passengers' rail experiences.

*Julie Gibbon, Secretary, Tees Valley Community Rail Partnership*

The Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership (TVCRP) are regularly kept informed of activities affecting the business, whether it be the launch of promotions for passengers, new appointments or details affecting travel; all of which is very helpful.

TPE's CRP Growth Fund has enabled us to progress several projects that contribute to us fulfilling our remit under the DfT's Community Rail Strategy of promoting sustainable and healthy travel, of bringing communities together and of supporting social and economic development.

We are very grateful not only for the financial support from them but also the support and enthusiasm given by TPE staff when arranging and then visiting TPE stations as part of our 'Open in Winter' project. We look forward to further partnership working with them.



*Chris Morgan, Chair, Friends of Dore & Totley station*

The last year at Dore & Totley, a Northern station on the South Pennine route, has been challenging for all concerned. We started with over 100 trying to board TransPennine's 0714 three carriage Class 185s for Manchester. Now they're six carriages, but we still have a four carriage length platform - and will have until at least 2023.



We've built an excellent working relationship with TransPennine's Regional Development Manager, Graham Meiklejohn. Although those short formed and late trains were all too common, he has provided detailed explanations and passed on our feedback.

Our regular commuters have stayed loyal, their numbers increasing by 12% over the year. Graham was the driving force in pushing forward the long-delayed erection of a canopy to give extra covered space at the station. More recently TPE made a contribution towards a defibrillator just installed near the platform. We look forward to building for the future.

*Peter Kennan, Chair of Sheffield Chamber of Commerce & Industry's Transport Forum*

It has been another challenging year on the North's railways but we have continued to have regular productive meetings and discussions with TransPennine Express management.

We are now seeing the full introduction of the extra rolling stock on the Sheffield to Manchester South Trans-Pennine route, doubling the capacity on many trains.

The newly refurbished Class 185 trains are comfortable and have got even more to give when Network Rail improve the line speed on the Hope Valley corridor, a process which is frustratingly slow to say the least.

We are looking forward to reliability and punctuality improvements now that the major timetable problems around Manchester are being tackled.



## Taking the North further through engagement

Informing, listening and enabling. This is the approach that we take to stakeholder engagement at TransPennine Express.

This enables partnership working where opportunities within the franchise can be developed with local stakeholders to realise additional connectivity and economic benefits across the North of England and into Scotland. It is through this level of engagement that we set out to:

- build collaborative relationships
- improve whole industry efficiency
- support wider industry stakeholder strategies
- understand stakeholder priorities for future improvements
- update stakeholder engagement on an annual basis

The Regional Development Managers for TransPennine Express over the last year have continued to provide stakeholders across the North and into Scotland with a direct point of contact into the franchise to discuss development opportunities. Many direct face to face meetings have been held with stakeholders over the past year, as well as thousands of e-mails responded to. Whether in person or through written form, this engagement has enabled relationships to be developed and strengthened, information to be shared, partnering opportunities to be realised and priorities for future enhancements to be assessed.

The last year has seen key milestones in our transformation programme delivered, with the high point being the introduction of our new Nova fleet, which saw spectacular launches in Liverpool and York in November 2019, where we were joined by over 250 stakeholders. These new trains, and the additional seating capacity and uplift in customer experience they provide have been welcomed by many stakeholders. We were encouraged by the number of stakeholders who actively supported and promoted their introduction, promoting the transformation underway across the railway of the North and into Scotland, building on the engagement made with them since the start of the franchise.

We have also been involved with a number of stakeholders to realise long standing aspirations, driven greatly through the Transforming Cities Fund, DfT Cycle Rail Fund and other funding routes. These schemes are covered in the *Partnership* section of this report; however, their realisation has been driven through the ongoing engagement in place with stakeholders since the start of the franchise. It has been the development of these long-term, focused and strategic relationships that have enabled such opportunities to be realised. We wish to thank all stakeholders who have worked with us to progress these developments and secure the significant investment into the railway of the North of England.

We acknowledge that a significant low point, that tested engagement with stakeholders, was the decline in train service performance towards the end of 2019. While our Nova 1 trains, built by Hitachi Rail Europe, were delivered on time, we saw significant delays in the delivery of our Nova 2 and Nova 3 trains, both built by CAF. While these new trains were planned to be introduced over a two-year period, the compressed delivery (over a few months rather than the planned for two-year period) had consequences on the training schedule required to enable staff to operate these new trains in service and also the planned maintenance schedule.

As a result, the performance of services was severely affected towards the end of last year and, although this recovered at the start of the New Year, we apologised unreservedly for the disruption experience. During this period, including over the Christmas and New Year break, engagement with stakeholders was high, providing briefings while also responding to correspondence.

While the industry lost the confidence of stakeholders following the May 2018 timetable issues, the disruption faced at the end of 2019 brought a number of those views back in to focus. We have sought to explain and demonstrate the isolated factors that affected performance recently, providing data to show that it has

established and outlining how we are working with Network Rail and other operators to deliver further, sustained, improvements in performance.

The local authority members of Transport for the North, and their Quadrant meeting structure, has continued to be an effective forum for local authorities in a defined geographic area to discuss strategic issues with us. This has enabled positive developments in relation to timetable development, enhancing station facilities, rolling stock, network enhancements, ticketing and opportunities for possible development. These forums also provided important local feedback for promotional marketing activity as part of a win back approach following the May 2019 timetable issues. Identical discussions take place with Transport Scotland for our services in Scotland. We have also continued to participate in the Rail Forums organised by West Yorkshire Combined Authority and also with Hull City Council through their forum covering both sides of the Humber.

These forums also provided the environment in which to discuss the implementation of a penalty fares scheme across the franchise area.

The feedback from stakeholders through our ongoing engagement continues to inform our yearly Business Plan, the update of our Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and our Social and Development Commercial Plan, while our Stakeholder Engagement Plan was updated during the Autumn based upon feedback received and the changing needs of stakeholders. This approach is also informed by the results of the annual stakeholder survey, sent to over 500 opinion formers from across the North of England and into Scotland.

This approach to stakeholder engagement has ensured we continue to strengthen proactively our link with them to ensure that their involvement with TransPennine Express becomes stronger and that joint aspirations can be realised early, while enabling issues to be discussed in full. The next step is understanding and responding to feedback.



## Taking the North further by acting on feedback

A central component on our approach to stakeholder engagement is acting upon feedback received.

This can result in immediate improvements being made on either a local or broad scale or be the start to developing a business case for large scale enhancements to be made. Either way, the outcome depends upon acting upon feedback received.

During the year we have engaged with a range of stakeholders on improvements being made by TransPennine Express including timetable development, station enhancements, additional services, car parks and cycling provision.

We have also used feedback from stakeholders made since the start of the franchise to progress initiatives as new funding opportunities arose. This has helped to progress some long-standing aspirations that have been fed back to us across our network with a range of stakeholders.

This feedback drove the projects that we submitted to the Department for Transport's Cycle-Rail fund, securing improvements at Thornaby, Grimsby, Selby and Manchester Airport, and also helped to take forward other major improvements with alternative funding routes for projects at Dewsbury, Huddersfield and Selby stations (including new customer access routes, installation of Changing Places facilities and additional waiting shelters). It also informed the schemes we put forward for the Access for All CP6 Mid-Tier fund, which secured funding for projects, supported by stakeholders, at Barnetby, Hull, Malton and Thirsk.

While the main timetable enhancements for this TransPennine Express franchise have been delivered, which in December 2019 saw the introduction of our direct services on the East Coast Main Line between Liverpool and Morpeth/Edinburgh, as well as extending our Manchester Airport – Middlesbrough service to Redcar Central, and also improvements on our South route (including a call at Habrough), we have recently consulted on the timetable required to respond to the Coronavirus.

Following the advice of the UK and Scottish Governments that people should stay at home and work from home, with rail services only to be used by key workers, timetables were re-written to respond to the implications of this virus. We consulted with local authority members of Transport for the North, and with Transport Scotland, regarding the timetable changes that have had to be made in response to measures to manage the spread of the Coronavirus. This saw a new timetable introduced on 23 March 2020.

We were able to make further changes in response to feedback received from stakeholders, which saw a small number of additional, but essential for key workers, services introduced, such as a four hourly service to Redcar Central calling at Yarm as well as late evening services for Manchester – Leeds local stations, stations to Hull and between York – Scarborough.

During the year, we held a number of mid-franchise reviews with stakeholders. The purpose of these discussions was to look towards the remainder of the franchise term, now that the key commitments made by the franchise, such as new trains and timetable developments had, in the main, been delivered. Discussions reviewed discussions that took place when this franchise was bid in 2015, what had been delivered, what aspirations had evolved over time and what that stakeholder outlook for the franchise in the coming years was. This feedback will help inform the outputs of the franchise over the remainder of the term and during the current period (due to the Coronavirus) while the Franchise Agreement is suspended.

In dialogue with Community Rail Partnerships regarding bids to the TransPennine Express CRP Growth Fund, we continue to outline development opportunities that can be realised through this fund. While we note that all the funding available through this fund is not currently being utilised, we maintain our commitment to work with CRPs to realise opportunities for services and stations.

By having open ongoing consultative dialogue with stakeholders, the outputs of the franchise are more focussed and aligned in response to local feedback. We will continue with this approach into year five of the franchise.

## Developing the network in partnership

Across the rail network, a range of improvements have been delivered in partnership with several organisations including Combined Authorities, local authorities, Community Rail Partnerships and others.

These enabling partnerships deliver projects locally that often deliver additional economic, community or social benefits that can only be achieved through partnership working. During 2019/20 we have worked with a wide range of organisations to prioritise developments that have strong stakeholder support, both in terms of funding and project outcome.

Making stations accessible is a key priority for both TransPennine Express and stakeholders and in partnership major developments have been made in the last year. Funding for new accessible routes to stations has been secured for Selby and Huddersfield, while the scheme to install lifts at Northallerton station has progressed through its design stages towards implementation. This partnership approach will also enable the stepping distance between the platform and train to be reduced at Malton while all platforms at Hull will have tactile paving installed.

We are also working closely with the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Enterprise Partnership and Network Rail to enable a new footbridge and lifts to be installed at Thirsk station following the award of £1m in funding towards this major accessibility improvement scheme.

Stakeholders have been involved in the development of our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund projects, some part funded by stakeholders themselves, as we move from concept to design and then implementation. Once the social-distancing effects on construction sites is withdrawn, construction will commence on stakeholder supported projects at Dewsbury, Hull, Malton, Middlesbrough and Scarborough.

As demand to use the rail network increases, this puts additional demand on car parks. Providing additional parking spaces at stations is challenging due to limited available railway owned land. We were pleased to work in partnership with Grand Central and JMD Rail to double the size of the car park at Thirsk station in the last year. This Grand Central funded scheme was completed in December 2019 and was warmly welcomed by the stakeholders for that station.

Stations are often the gateway to the towns and cities they serve, and at both Middlesbrough and Selby the masterplan developments for these stations have progressed.

A strong partnership between Tees Valley Combined Authority, Middlesbrough Council, Network Rail and TransPennine Express will see the station at Middlesbrough transformed with additional customer facilities, a new platform and extension of the subway into and through a redeveloped and re-opened undercroft.

At Selby, the scheme proposed by Selby District Council received funding in the March 2020 Budget via the Transforming Cities Fund. This scheme will be transformational for the town, and we are already working with officials at the Council to progress.

During the last year, we have recognised that there will be increasing demand for electric charging points at our car parks as the nation moves to using more electric cars in order to help improve air quality. We held discussions with a range of stakeholders, including securing funding pledges, and these will be taken forward in the coming year as we work to install charging points.

We expect the foundations laid in the last year to help realise the development and delivery of schemes during 2020/21. If there is a partnership project you would like to discuss, please contact us.

## Our survey results

At the beginning of February this year almost 100 stakeholders provided feedback as part of our annual stakeholder survey which is a circa 20% response rate of those invited to respond. This was similar to the level of participation from last year and providing a comparable base in which to measure year on year progress.

The survey provides a basis for updating our stakeholder engagement plan which is reviewed and amended every autumn. The results provide useful feedback by identifying what works well and what we can do to improve.

We achieved a wide-ranging geographic spread of responses from across our network with 36% of responses from Yorkshire and the Humber, 28% from the North West, 16% from the North East, 9% from Scotland and 3% from the East Midlands. With regards to the organisations that completed the survey, 21% represented Local Government, 16% were from elected representatives, 15% were from Community Rail Partnerships, 10% from transport/passenger representative and user groups, 9% from business groups, 9% from tourism organisations and 2% from other rail industry companies.

The survey contained a series of questions that asked for stakeholder feedback on all aspects of TransPennine Express, including journey experience, reliability, punctuality, communications, engagement and value of meetings.

Our overall stakeholder satisfaction score for 2019/20 was 65%, a 6% reduction from the previous year. It is clear that the train service performance towards the end of 2019 had a huge impact on stakeholder satisfaction.

It was encouraging to see that whilst there were performance issues, stakeholders recognised the importance of communication and contact with TransPennine Express with 99% saying they value the contact and communication from us and 91% rating highly face to face meetings. Both of these scores were an improvement on 2018/19.

We will adapt our engagement with stakeholders based upon the results of this survey to improve our effectiveness as we continue working with a range of organisations during 2020/21.

## Helping Community Rail Partnerships grow

An important element of our engagement with stakeholders is to provide support to the communities we serve.

TransPennine Express works closely with Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) to develop schemes which have a positive impact on routes, including encouraging transfer between TransPennine Express services and those operated on CRP routes, such as the Esk Valley, Tyne Line or the Yorkshire Coast.

Strong engagement is held throughout the year with CRPs to develop potential projects which could be considered for funding support from TransPennine Express. Each year we make £50k available to support projects nominated by CRPs against the criteria outlined above.

In previous years we have found it a challenge to distribute the funding we have, rolling it over into the next financial year. Through engagement with CRPs we have been able to support the delivery of the following projects across the North of England over the 2019/20 year:

### North TransPennine route:

- Tyne Valley CRP – Promoting visits destinations on the Tyne Valley route during the winter from stations that TransPennine Express calls at
- Tyne Valley CRP – Support towards wider programme to refurbish redundant buildings at Haltwhistle
- Esk Valley CRP- Updating maps at Whitby to show connections at Middlesbrough
- Yorkshire Coast CRP - Marketing activity to promote attendance by rail of County cricket games played in Scarborough, including at the annual Festival of Cricket held in the summer
- Penistone Line CRP – Support for a positive mental wellbeing project at Huddersfield station
- Tyne Valley CRP - Our Place project which looks at connecting stations along the Tyne Valley line
- Tyne Valley CRP – Explore the 'Treasures of Tyne Valley' project to encourage overnight stays along the route.

### South TransPennine Route

- Hope Valley CRP - Contribution towards study to improve car parking at Dore & Totley
- Hope Valley CRP - Contribution towards defibrillator at Dore & Totley
- North Notts and East Lincs CRP - Provision of planters and landscaping improvements at Barnetby
- Barton CRP - Installation by Northern for signage at Habrough
- North Notts and East Lincs CRP - Installation of signage to indicate connectivity to Humberside Airport at Barnetby
- North Notts and East Lincs CRP – Support for Kirton In Lindsey, Brigg and Barnetby Travel Guide

### West Coast Main Line

- Settle & Carlisle Development Rail Company - Sunday bus service linking Northallerton with Bedale, Leyburn, Aysgarth, Hawes and Garsdale
- Bolton CRP - Creation of public art gallery/performance space on platforms 4/5 at Bolton Station

For CRPs looking to discuss potential future projects, please make contact using the details at the end of this report.

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## Contact details

As we enter the fifth year of the TransPennine Express franchise we will continue to work with stakeholders to develop our network of services and stations, building on the connectivity benefits and journey opportunities our new trains and timetables enable. By reaching out, listening, being open and accountable, we expect to improve and enhance plans being delivered, while enabling new opportunities to be realised.

We look forward to working with you during 2020/21. If you would like to discuss any opportunity or issue with us, please feel free to contact us as follows:

Scotland, North TransPennine routes (from and including Huddersfield east bound and stations/routes to Hull, Scarborough, Redcar, Newcastle and Edinburgh, as well as Lockerbie, Motherwell and Glasgow) ):

Graham Meiklejohn, Regional Development Manager, on [graham.k.meiklejohn@firstgroup.com](mailto:graham.k.meiklejohn@firstgroup.com) or 07595 236910.

West Coast route in England, North TransPennine (from Huddersfield west bound and all stations/routes to Manchester Airport and Liverpool Lime Street), South TransPennine routes:

Lucja Majewski, Regional Development Manager, on [lucja.majewski@firstgroup.com](mailto:lucja.majewski@firstgroup.com) or 07702 142568.

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