

## Transport News March 2016 to May 2016

Prepared by Tom Hart based largely on unverified reports in the press

**Wider Issues** The Scottish Government (and any post May election administration) continues to face severe financial problems despite a generous fiscal framework agreement for the next five years being reached by the Scottish and UK governments. Given priorities for education, health and welfare, overall transport infrastructure investment in Scotland in the coming five years seems likely to be severely limited, unless new sources of funding can be found – a conclusion also reached by Nicola Shaw in her report on Network Rail funding and organisation.

In the medium to longer-term, the economic benefits of improved connectivity are seen as justifying record rises in rail investment and a return to increased road investment in England and on major sections of the A9 and A96 trunk routes in Scotland. But such investment proposals are competing with a wider definition of infrastructure – including additional housing and the energy sector. An LTT editorial (18 March) has questioned why there has been a return to seeing improved connectivity and heavy transport investment as a major economic benefit. ‘Where have the voices of demand management gone? Retired? Sidelined?’

The February Report from the **UK Committee on Climate Change** drew attention to the imminence of transport being the main emitter of UK CO<sub>2</sub>, replacing power generation as the top emitter. Transport has reached 23% of all UK CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with the proportion set to rise unless a stronger action programme is adopted in the next Five-year Planning Period. Later this year, UK targets for CO<sub>2</sub> cuts may be widened to include an appropriate share of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions related to international passenger and freight movement.

### AVIATION

Boris Johnson is seeking to revive plans for a four-runway airport in the Thames Estuary or an expansion of Stansted rather than Gatwick as the only way of aiding the economy by expanding daily long-haul routes from 75 in 2015 to 114 by 2050. Gordon Dewar, CE of Edinburgh Airport says optimum expansion will depend on remaining in the EU. Amanda McMillan sees huge future opportunities at Glasgow Airport, including tramtrain access. Both agree on remaining in the EU and on a reduction and eventual abolition of APD further boosting tourism, business access, total tax receipts and the Scottish economy

The Scottish Government is consulting on possible changes in APD with business generally supportive but other groups critical of adverse impacts on a low carbon economy and the loss of tax revenues. If retained, there has been the suggestion that APD proceeds could be used to aid high-speed rail development in Britain and also improved surface access to major Scottish airports.

Edinburgh Airport was 100 years old on 2 March, starting as a Royal Flying Corps base and becoming a commercial airport in 1973 followed by completion of a new runway and terminal building. The new Glasgow Airport, relocated from Renfrew, is now 50 years old.

Passenger numbers at Inverness rose 8% in 2015 and work has started on a £900,000 expansion of terminal facilities. International passengers have grown from under 5,000 in 2010 to 37,540 in 2015 with further growth expected. New routes to Amsterdam and to London will start later this year.

Aberdeen Airport usage continues to fall with easyJet saying it has been forced to cut fares on routes to Aberdeen in an effort to retain passengers. Wizz has introduced new direct flights from Aberdeen to Warsaw. Dundee Airport's first international flight – to Amsterdam – starts in May

The National Museum of Flight at East Fortune in East Lothian has welcomed its first visitors after a £3.6m redevelopment.

### PORTS & FERRIES

Scotland's largest container port at Grangemouth has been affected by an industrial dispute with Unite.

Serco and CalMac have submitted their bids for the next West Coast ferry franchise with an RMT commissioned report from Jeanette Findlay, economics lecturer at Glasgow University, strongly in favour of the franchise remaining with publicly-owned CalMac. Feature by A Dalton in S 11 March supports the case for better island services to give better overall value from the expected £1bn cost of the next franchise.

CalMac are offering 1,000 free tickets at part of National Ferry Fortnight. A second CalMac Ferry, transferred from the Mallaig-Armadale crossing, has allowed the introduction of 50 extra sailings per week on the Oban-Craignure route. For the first time, it is now possible to commute from Mull to Oban while having two vessels will also ease capacity problems after the introduction of road equivalent tariff fares.

2016 will be a bonanza year for cruising to and from Scottish ports. A new round Britain cruise will include calls at Greenock, Kirkwall and Invergordon. Cruise calls now generate £54.6m for the Scottish economy through passenger spend alone. Greenock topped cruise passengers with 108,866 in 2015 followed by Kirkwall with 81,401. A total of 525,000 Scottish cruise passengers is expected in 2016 with the target of 1.1m by 2029

The first contract in the £5.5m restoration of the Maid of the Loch on Loch Lomond has been signed. This will return the vessel, taken into charity ownership 20 years ago, to a passenger carrying condition.

## **RAIL**

Nicola Shaw's report to the UK government on Network Rail funding may have little impact on Scotland since it concentrates on a greater devolution of decision-taking and funding involvement to Wales and regional zones in England – including a new North zone in England serving the area north from Cheshire and Humberside. Scotland already has a separate zone and funding arrangements though with some shared use of nationwide centralised facilities.

The Shaw Report advocates sharper control of costs and greater involvement of train operating companies and user interests in shaping future five-year programmes. Rail is capable of meeting a rising share of costs from user charges and tapping a mix of public and private funding for infrastructure enhancements – including a rise in funding arranged at sub-national level. Privatisation of Network Rail is rejected but opportunities are seen for injections of private funding.

The new TransPennine franchise, including a large expansion of services between Central Scotland and the north of England will involve rising annual payments to, rather than from, DfT while the new Northern franchise in England will see a fall in annual franchise payments received from £275m to £39m a year by the mid 2020s, aided by new rolling stock and improved timetables attracting more passengers plus extra capital for infrastructure enhancements. Transport Scotland regard annual payments to Abellio ScotRail as confidential but expect a £1bn fall in operating support over the ten years of the franchise and some rise in infrastructure enhancement funding. The Scottish Government may also be able to gain a share of payments to DfT as part of the new TransPennine franchise.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has recommended that several companies should be licensed to compete on busy inter-city routes such as the West and East Coast main lines. One concern arising from the Shaw Report is that it leaves unclear where responsibility lies for developing a longer-term policy the inter-city passenger and longer distance freight network – perhaps on the questionable assumption that separate plans for a high-speed rail network will deal with this issue.

The Anglo-Scottish High Speed Rail (HSR) reports published on 21 March were overshadowed in the national media by the announcement in the UK March budget of ambitious plans to reduce trip times between North of England cities through major rail and road improvements, including a possible road tunnel through the Pennines between Manchester and Sheffield plus improved rail access to Manchester Airport. In London, Crossrail 2 from the south-west to north-east was also announced though with most funding for both schemes coming after 2024.

Completion of HS2 from London to Crewe by 2027 remains a priority together with the new spur from Birmingham Airport to Leeds/York by 2033. The Anglo-Scottish HSR Report supports eventual 3 hour trip

times from London to Glasgow and to Edinburgh but with times only cut to 3 hours 38 minutes by 2030 assuming no new line or line upgrades north of Crewe and Leeds. Three options are examined for developing the East Coast corridor to Scotland via Newcastle and one via Carlisle. Using a combination of some new route north from Crewe and new build in Central Scotland, the West Coast corridor is seen as offering the earliest and cheapest way of providing 3 hour trip times to both Glasgow and Edinburgh together with 28 minute HSR travel times between Glasgow and Edinburgh, relieving the present principal route from Glasgow Queen St and allowing more services to be introduced between Queen St, Stirling and further north.

To deliver 3 hour trip times to both Edinburgh and Glasgow, East Coast options require longer sections of new route. Final decisions on a preferred option are expected in 2017 with delivery starting from 2019. Options will take account of the need to cater for substantial rises in trips between Scotland and the North of England as well as trips to London. The new organisation 'Transport for the North' and Transport Scotland have signed an agreement to work together on a preferred action programme.

Virgin East Coast is to introduce new Inter-city Hitachi Azuma trains, being built in County Durham, on the East Coast route in 2018 and hopes to gain permission for these to operate up to 140mph. The aim is to raise their share of Edinburgh-London rail and air travel from 33% to 50% by 2023

To ease overcrowding in Scotland, ScotRail has obtained additional electric units pending delivery in 2017-18 of the new Class 385 electric trains being built by Hitachi. Contrary to original intentions, more diesel sets will be retained in Scotland after electric deliveries are completed. Queries have been raised on the proposal to run new Hitachi trains on short-distance routes - e.g Glasgow to Neilston, Newton and Cathcart Circle - (Rail 791 9Jan) rather than designs more suited to City Metro operation, including more space for standing passengers, buggies and cycles. The Hitachi trains will include new stabling and cleaning facilities at Millerhill east of Edinburgh.

Letter-writers have disputed views that ScotRail rolling stock and Transport Scotland supervision is dreadful. Many improvements have been made with overcrowding set to fall as more rolling stock arrives. Usage is rising and satisfaction levels high for those with easy access to the network. But there are calls for future plans to include more stations on existing route and network extensions following on from the Borders reopening. Early extensions are being sought to Levenmouth, Ellon and St Andrew's as well as from Tweedbank to Hawick. In a Herald feature on mothballed lines (31 Mar), Helen McArdle also reports on the campaign to restore passenger services between Alloa and Dunfermline, made easier by the cessation of heavy coal traffic on this route. New calls have included a restored route from Larkhall to Stonehouse and Lesmahagow while, as well as an extension south from Tweedbank, Scottish Borders and Midlothian Councils sees prospects for restored rail links from Edinburgh to Penicuik and Peebles.

A lengthy feature (Rail 793 3 Feb) on the huge benefits of early action to restore through passenger services on the Glasgow Crossrail link has attracted criticism that this 'is a solution looking for a problem' (Rail 796 & 797 - 16 & 30 Mar). Though there is a case for restoring passenger services on this route, placing a major inter-city station on it would break the ease of interchange already provided at Glasgow Central station and capable of further improvement through development of a Central/St Enoch transport hub. SPT favours this site as a future terminus for HSR services both southwards and to Edinburgh.

Scottish RTPs has doubted whether a target of almost doubling rail freight in Scotland by 2043 can be delivered. A specific target has been dropped from the final version of the Transport Scotland rail freight strategy. Perth and Kinross Council has given planning permission for rail sidings to serve the Highland Spring water plant at Blackford.

In responses to the Network Rail Scotland Route Study, Glasgow City Council has expressed concern at the omission of any reference to a Glasgow Airport rail link. SPT is seeking a service to Largs raised to half-hourly plus action to develop the Nithsdale route south, including full double-tracking between Glasgow and Kilmarnock. It also states that extra stations and line extensions are better considered within the coming review of Scottish Transport Strategy.

An extra station at Allander between Milngavie and Hillfoot is being considered by Transport Minister Derek Mackay who has also announced that a trolley catering service will be provided on the Nithsdale route to Dumfries in spring 2017.

The City Deal for Aberdeen includes provision for acceleration of line and train improvements south from Aberdeen. Trains on the Edinburgh-Musselburgh-North Berwick line are to be lengthened to cope with overcrowding, also still a major problem on services into south Fife.

The 20 week closure of Queen St HL station has proceeded without major problems. Some shorter distance passengers inwards from Croy have found it convenient to use improved local bus services during a closure period which has lengthened rail trip times.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell sees extension of Borders Rail to Carlisle as a 'realistic prospect'. Network Rail was heavily criticised for a late decision to ban charter operations by the newly restored steam-loco Flying Scotsman into the Borders and Fife. Under pressure from the Scottish Government, the decision was reversed within 24 hours and advertised charater services were able to operate amid much public interest

Transport Minister Derek Mackay is investigating more late-night trains between Edinburgh and Glasgow. ScotRail is to become a 'living wage' employer. A Dalton (S 26 Feb) expects further expansion of steam train operation in Scotland as part of other action to improve tourist and leisure usage of scenic routes. The Glasgow-Stranraer timetable, now providing trains hourly to Girvan and every 2 hours on to Stranraer, has been criticised for not making it clear that quicker trips can be made by changing trains at Troon or Ayr rather than using longer through services via Kilmarnock

A second prohibition notice on the West Coast Railway (Heritage) Company has been lifted allowing the summer only steam-hauled Jacobite trains to operate between Forth William and Mallaig.

A Community Rail Partnership has been established for the Perth-Inverness line. Mark Norton of the Far North Line fears for its future unless there is devolved and innovative management also brining in local communities and tourism interests

## **BUS, TRAM & TAXI**

Despite all parties supporting smart cashfree travel on public transport, A Dalton, Scotsman transport correspondent reports (4 Mar) that progress is still slow with the Transport Minister threatening legislation to force bus companies to introduce smartcards. Fully integrated Scottish ticketing is the aim by 2019. The system introduced by SPT on the Glasgow Subway is due to be extended to ScotRail services while smartcards are also written into the new CalMac ferry franchise. Difficulties remain over how smartcards would relate to payments made by mobile phones and contactless cards for a range of payments, not just for travel. Within transport, back office arrangements are needed on ways to allocate revenue between operators while also encouraging interchange between different forms of transport in an integrated system supporting modal shift from car use. This will be the leading topic for guest speakers at the SAPT AGM in Glasgow on 20 May.

SPT has awarded Stadler Bussnang/Ansaldo the contract for new driverless trains for the Glasgow Subway and related work on signalling and station platforms. Work should be completed by 2020/21 (H 5Mar) The new trains have a more open design, facilitating standing. Wheelchairs can also be accommodated but, due to the high costs of adapting stations for wheelchair access, only two stations will offer this facility.

Speaking to MSPs ScotRail boss Phil Verster sees tramtrains on the Edinburgh South Suburban line (due to be electrified for freight) as a 'real practical solution' to easing transport problems in Edinburgh and the rail bottleneck between Haymarket and Waverley. Others have suggested further extensions making fuller use of the tram tracks in Princes St and even taking tramtrains into Midlothian and south Fife. Action is being sought to reduce tram delays caused by buses and taxis at some Princes St junctions. In Glasgow, the updated Clydeplan sees scope to convert some short-distance rail routes to light rail operation. Funding, legal and design issues make such schemes unlikely before the 2020s.

Tensions continue over the allocation of resources between the jointly managed and publicly owned Edinburgh Trams and Lothian Buses. An A Dalton feature (S 19 Feb) highlights the high quality of bus services in Edinburgh and the need for politicians to give more attention to improving local bus networks compared to a tendency to concentrate attention and funds on a rail network which, though attracting more usage, still had many fewer passengers than those using buses. In a supporting letter (S 27 Feb) Fiona Kerr, MD First Bus Scotland, calls for much stronger measures to ensure that buses were not delayed by city congestion and better able to attract car users 'One bus had the potential to take 70 to 75 cars off the road'

Lothian Buses are taking on 40 new drivers and 10 apprentice engineers as part of service expansion. Minimum tram and bus fares for adults are rising from £1.50 to £1.60 and from 70 to 80p for children. Transform Scotland has launched a Bus Fair campaign to encourage bus use. A new Buses Bill is about to be introduced for England but there are no equivalent Scottish proposals and strong disagreement on the amount of regulation which can be justified.

One passenger was killed when a Stagecoach bus was involved in a crash near Ardrossan. Such a fatality on scheduled bus routes is rare but there are more incidents of deaths or serious injuries in bus/pedestrian collisions in cities.

Glasgow hospitals are now linked by regular public transport services at peaks and high-quality public transport to major hospitals at other times (Health News insert in H 15 Mar) The CMA has removed former controls inhibiting First bus service changes in the Scottish Central Belt. First Bus may now proceed more quickly with service reductions in parts of east and south-east Scotland while improving services on routes with commercial potential. West Lothian and Dumfries and Galloway Councils are cutting supported bus services as part of strategies for spending cuts. SPT has reached agreement with local councils on maintaining the present level of bus support in 2016/17 but cuts are expected in the years to follow.

City Cabs in Edinburgh are threatening legal action after Central Radio Taxis won the £600,000 a year contract for the Edinburgh City Council contract to provide a discounted taxi service for severely disabled residents. Complaints have been made about increased congestion arising from an unofficial taxi stance outside the Balmoral Hotel in Princes St

Some Councils in England are considering whether Uber style taxi services could replace present arrangements for community transport. Rik Thomas (LTT 19 Feb) claims that the combined impact of car clubs and Uber may lead to city residents giving up a permanently available car or reducing the number of cars in their household.

## **ROADS & PARKING**

Recent repairs to the damaged Forth Road Bridge have cost £21m excluding the costs of extra road vehicle miles while the bridge was closed. Final costs for the new crossing, due to open in December, will be around £1.3bn, well below initial estimates

Repairs to local roads have again been hit by cuts in local authority budgets. Edinburgh has been a source of major complaints but there is also concern that, to cut costs, some cobbled heritage streets are to be replaced with tarmac. Moray has postponed plans for a £8.5m link road to ease congestion in the town and open up an area for new housing. Proposals to improve the A9 trunk road at Berriedale have again been delayed due to one statutory objector necessitating a public inquiry.

Proposals from both the right and the Greens have suggested electronic tolls to ease congestion but with varied views on use of the proceeds. The right favours more road-building while Greens favour shifts to local road and pavement maintenance, public transport and active travel. Glasgow Greens have called for an initial toll scheme for the Clyde Tunnel.

TomTom shows shows that Edinburgh's roads are the fourth most congested in Britain though Glasgow has seen a 1% fall in congestion since 2010. Drivers in Edinburgh face an average of 41 minutes per day stuck in

traffic. Scotland's roadworks czar has been criticised for a failure to produce individual reports for two years. The post has cost £3m since set up in 2005 yet has imposed only £208,000 in fines.

Despite low petrol prices encouraging a slight UK rise in car use and transport carbon in 2015, the Chancellor failed to include a modest rise in road fuel duty in his March budget. The Policy Exchange is seeking a large rise in VED on diesel vehicles with proceeds used to accelerate the scrappage of such vehicles and improve air quality on local roads and in areas beside busy trunk roads.

Average petrol prices have risen for the first time in seven months and are now 105p per litre. Oil has risen from around 30 to 40 dollars a barrel. Alastair Cumming, senior director in Glasgow for Investec, expects that solar power and the rising use of electric cars will probably prevent oil prices rising above 50 to 70 dollars a barrel.

The surplus made by local authorities on parking charges in Scotland is up 20% in the past three years to £36.1m according to an RAC analysis. Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen had by far the largest share in the 2014/15 annual surplus at £17.4m, £11.4m and £4.5m respectively

Luss residents are concerned at a flood of tourist cars swamping the village and are seeking permits allowing only residents to bring cars into the village. The adjacent visitor car park could be enlarged with the village environment improved and no loss of trade (H2Apr)

The Scottish Roads 2035 Collaboration Programme is seeking to end the crisis in road maintenance by looking both to new sources of funding and greater collaboration between Councils to produce more cost-effective road asset management – possibly including larger units but a devolution to such units of many trunk roads. The three Ayrshire Councils are seeking trunking of the A70 from Ayr to the rural M74, further A727 improvements and action to improve flows at major interchanges on the edge of Kilmarnock and Ayr.

Widening proposals for 20mph speed limits in Edinburgh, Glasgow and other towns have attracted a mix of controversy and public apathy – perhaps due to lack of awareness of the scale of proposals. A Herald feature by Iain McWhirter (H 17 Mar) welcomes 20mph as 'a great innovation where everyone can win but only if it is introduced with an ounce of that scarce commodity – common sense'. Transport Minister Derek Mackay considers that 20mph should become the norm in built-up areas but Neil Greig of the Institute of Advanced Motorists opposes blanket bans, often not capable of enforcement (see also S 25 Feb)

20mph limits will apply in Edinburgh City Centre and westwards from July with most of the city covered by 2018 if a favourable administration is returned at the local government election in 2017. Midlothian Council is to retain a 20mph pilot zone in Lasswade but plans no further extensions.

Scottish Chief Constable, Phil Gormly, has urged adoption in Scotland of the English and Welsh practice of cancelling speeding fines if drivers attend speed awareness courses. Traffic-calming and road safety education has cut the number of children badly injured on Scotland's roads to a ten-year low

More car owners are being threatened with penal charges over £100 for parking on private land. Four schools in Perth and Kinross area are to have surrounding roads closed to traffic at drop-off and pick-up times. Falkirk Council is following other Councils in seeking to decriminalise parking after Police have pulled out of warden duties – but the Council, rather than Government, will retain the income from parking charges and penalties on public land. After objections from churches, Edinburgh City Council is introducing Sunday parking charges but only after 1pm.

## **WALKING & CYCLING**

Joint campaigning for more political attention to increasing the share of walking and cycling has featured in the media in advance of the May election and during the fixing of local authority budgets. Stress is put on benefits for health and local air quality by Pedestrian Law Scotland, Road Share, Friends of the Earth Scotland and Stop Climate Chaos Scotland. FoES seeks a rise in Scottish Government investment in walking and cycling from 1.9% to 10% of the transport budget. Prospects for rises in cycling are seen as better than for walking though the latter is the most important means of access to and from public transport.

A £39,000 grant from the Central Scotland Green Network will improve a walk/cycle green route on a former railway through Stevenston, Saltcoats and Ardrossan. A footbridge may be provided at the present rail level crossing in Stevenston. Revised plans to overhaul George St in Edinburgh will give pedestrians and cyclists much greater priority with only one lane in each direction retained for motorised vehicles. Spokes has attacked Scottish Government plans for 10% of local trips to be by cycle by 2020 as 'impossible' to deliver unless a realistic action programme is adopted.

Prof Tom Rye wants more space for pedestrians in Princes St rather than cycleways encroaching on existing space. Ramblers Scotland are calling on the next Scottish Government to establish a Scottish Paths Fund. More physical exercise was vital for health with chronic illnesses linked with inactivity costing the NHS £94m a year. The first phase of a major footpath restoration from Sligachan to Loch Coruisk has been completed despite a very wet Scottish winter.

Abellio ScotRail has been attacked for ordering new trains with a worsening of the already poor ratio between seated space and cycling space (H 29&30Mar). Abellio and other train users argue that more space for peak passengers is the top priority and point to plans to increase cycle parking at stations plus growth in cycle hire at stations. But the rise in cycle tourism is also raising demand for space on trains.

Latest data shows 12% of Edinburgh residents cycling to work compared to 4% ten years ago. Glasgow is competing with Edinburgh to become the most cycle-friendly city in Scotland with 'cycle avenues' through the city centre supplemented by QuietWays using local streets. Average numbers cycling daily in Glasgow were 7,636 in 2012-14 with the aim being 15,000 a day by 2025.

In Edinburgh, there is strong opposition to proposed £1m spend on cycle lanes reducing space for other traffic and parking between Roseburn and Haymarket when an alternative cycle route is already available

## **PLANNING & PROPERTY**

A report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, '*Uneven Growth: Tackling City Decline*' has placed Glasgow 16<sup>th</sup> and Dundee 7<sup>th</sup> on a list of poorly performing cities in the UK with Edinburgh and Aberdeen (until recent oil problems) among the better performing cities. London's renaissance since the 1980s is seen as a factor in the decline of other towns and cities. More substantial City Deals were seen as essential to change this position (H29 Feb)

Edinburgh reports a bumper 10-year high in office take-up with Glasgow lagging though with take-up in 2015 6% above the five-year average. Edinburgh, as well, as Glasgow and Aberdeen now have City Deals. The Edinburgh Deal was announced in the March Budget and releases £1bn of funding aimed to secure an extra £3.2bn of private investment over the next 20 years. Transport is a relatively small component with some bias towards road-building rather than major public transport improvements. Coming after the March Budget, a £315m City Deal has been confirmed for Inverness and the surrounding area – hopefully triggering £1bn of investment by the mid 2020s. Completion of the Southern Peripheral Road round Inverness and extra housing are seen as key features of the programme along with a revitalised Inverness Castle area.

Addressing the RICS Annual Conference (H 24Mar), Transport Minister Derek Mackay confirmed housing as a 'massive priority' for infrastructure spend with new build assisted by city-region road schemes opening up areas for development. The Network Rail Scotland Route Study also indicated that, though high rail passenger growth within Scottish regions is likely to continue for another decade, subsequent growth will be slowed by more new housing being located further from rail stations.

Scotland is falling back in love with commuting over longer distances as lower house prices attract people further from costly city housing but with access still required to core employment zones in cities. The Quartermile area of central Edinburgh has seen work start on a new £35m office block while further office, leisure and housing development is planned close to the Airport. Phase 1 of the 'Garden District' will have 1,350 homes rising to 6,000 in later phases.

Ambitious plans have been announced for an eco-friendly urban quarter in the regeneration zone between Falkirk and Grangemouth, aided by tax incremental finance (TIF). Proposals are also being considered for substantial housing development on the south-east side of Cumbernauld.

West Dunbartonshire Council is relocating its headquarters to a refurbished town centre building in Dumbarton. Plans have been announced for 1,400 homes on the banks of the Clyde and Kelvin close to the Riverside Museum. Further west on the Clyde, proposals have been made for the regeneration of the former John Brown's shipyard in Clydebank

## RESEARCH & STATISTICS

Issue No. 34 of *Scottish Transport Statistics* was published by Transport Scotland at the end of February. Due to annual data being available at different times and cost/staffing issues, there is now a longer delay in publication though some data is available sooner on the website. Key data includes:-

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2014-15</u>	change on 13/14	change on 09-10
<b>Car traffic m/veh km</b>	<b>34,392</b>	<b>34,399</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>Pedal Cycles m/veh m</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>18.1%</b>
<b>ScotRail passengers (mil)</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>92.7</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>
<b>ScotRail passenger kms (m)</b>	<b>2,533</b>	<b>3,021</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>
<b>Bus passengers (m)</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>-2.4%</b>	<b>-9.8%</b>
<b>Air passengers (m)</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>
<b>Ferry passengers (m)</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>-4.9%</b>

**Notes:** Total **road vehicle kilometres** in 2014 were 44,789, up 1% on 2009 due entirely to the rise in light van movement. Influenced by lower fuel prices, road traffic growth has been slightly higher during 2015 but well below rail passenger growth. Data on average car occupancy is imperfect but there are indications of falling occupancy, especially at commuting peaks.

**Rail** data excludes Anglo-Scottish trips, heritage rail trips and trips on the Edinburgh tram and Glasgow Subway (totalling to 27m trips in 2014). Growth in Anglo-Scottish trips to London has slowed with absolute falls in trips to the rest of southern England but a large rise in trips between Scotland, northern England and Birmingham. Within Scotland, growth in intra-regional trips, especially into Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen has been as strong as on inter-city trips.

**Bus** trips are broken down by region in Table 2.2b. This shows stable or slightly rising trips in eastern Scotland (especially Edinburgh) but a five year fall of 14% in trips in the Highlands and Islands and a 21% fall in south-west Scotland (including Glasgow). Bus passenger kilometre data is not provided but Table 5.3 shows an 11% rise in bus kilometres on major roads but a 20% fall in bus kilometres on other roads – suggesting a significant rise in the average length of bus trips. Data on **car clubs, taxi and private hire travel** is not provided but this sector has been expanding.

**Air** travel has seen a resumption of strong growth, mainly on international flights but also on domestic flights to London and south-west England

**Ferry** passengers have fallen despite the widening application of RET tariffs in Scotland. The greatest falls have been on the routes to and from Northern Ireland with stronger competition from air travel. The summer ferry between Troon and Larne will no longer operate in 2016-17.

<b>Freight Movement (mil. tonne kilometres)</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>UK HGV Movement</b> in Scotland	9,059	6,788	7,773	7,700
to other destinations	6,136	4,864	4,669	4,864
from other origins	6,812	5,636	5,677	6,310
			<b>2012</b>	
<b>Rail Freight</b> moved within Scotland	632	1,329	1,181	
to other destinations	3,207	1,583	1,427	
from other origins	877	927	974	
<b>Scottish Ports</b> (mil. tonnes handled)	110.4	85.5	71.6	71.4

Notes: **Road freight** tonne kilometres are lower than in 2004 and also lower relative to the rate of economic growth. There has been a trend towards loads with higher volumes but lighter weights. **Rail freight** has been affected by the rise in coal traffic (which peaked in 2005) and the subsequent large decline even more apparent when data for 2016-17 is published. Other loads, many being container related, have almost doubled since 2004. **Port traffic** was affected by the halving of bulk fuels (mainly oil) from 87m tonnes in 2004 to 44.9m in 2014 but there has been expansion in container traffic and other commodities.

Passengers at Aberdeen Airport continue to fall but Edinburgh and Glasgow report their highest ever levels of February use. Edinburgh passengers were up 17.2% on the previous February with Glasgow up 14.1%. Edinburgh had a 30.4% rise in international passengers but 14.8% domestic growth at Glasgow was higher than international growth. Glasgow saw growth to London and on Flybe services to Cardiff and Exeter.

ScotRail data for the SPT area shows yearly trips reaching 65m for the first time compared to 55.65m in 2012-13 and 62.64m in 2014-15 when traffic was boosted by the Commonwealth Games. Park and ride use of the Glasgow Subway is up 40% since 2012/13

New car registrations in Scotland in February rose 1.3% but the UK rise was 8.4%.

Edinburgh and Glasgow improved hotel occupancy in 2015 but Aberdeen saw a sharp dip. Scotland's leading tourist attractions had a 'spectacular' year in 2015 with Edinburgh Castle and the National Museum of Scotland topping the list with more than 1.5m visitors

The target of a 50% fall in child deaths on Scottish roads has been achieved six years early. But more work is needed to reduce serious casualties. Total road deaths are now substantially lower than the rising total of drug-related deaths – up 18% to 622 in 2014. A new study by RAC Foundation has found that child casualties in Britain are highest in July, pointing to a need for more action at this time and lack of proof that the darkest time of year is the most dangerous for children on roads and pavements.

The percentage of online retail sales in the UK through smartphones has exceeded 50% for the first time, up from 40% early in 2015. Contactless payments are also rising in normal transactions, including public transport. Scottish Chambers of Commerce are urging Scotland to lead, rather than lag, in developing the potential of e-commerce

A study for Edinburgh Airport by BIGGAR economics finds that the airports contributes nearly £1bn a year to the Scottish economy and supports over 23,000 jobs across the country. Benefits could rise to as much as £1.6bn a year by 2020

Web design firm Senshi is the first Scottish company to allow staff to work from 9.30am to 3.30pm rather than 9 to 5. Swedish companies have found that a 6 hour day could raise productivity. Senshi staff now have a 5 minute screen break every 45 minutes and a lunch period cut to 30 minutes.

Trials of driverless cars are to start on British motorways in 2017 with Chancellor George Osborne seeing this as leading to 'fundamental' change in transport boosting the economy and putting Britain at the forefront of new technology

London architects HTA Design see driverless cars as permitting a new suburbia or 'Supurbia' allowing driverless cars to reduce car ownership and the amount of parking required on suburban streets and elsewhere. Overall traffic levels on streets could be reduced. Research had found that reducing space for traffic also reduced overall vehicle volumes with walking and cycling becoming more pleasant (LTT 18 Mar)

Glasgow-based Media House International has been appointed to promote an alternative to HS2 covering a wider range of destinations with less disruption. LTT 1 April has a one page review of recent reports on Anglo-Scottish and North of England HSR. A mix of new and upgraded route north from Crewe is costed at £22 to £25bn and would offer 3 hour London to Glasgow and Edinburgh trip times. Delivering such times to Glasgow via the East Coast would require much longer sections of new route and higher costs.

*CO2 Reduction : The Case for and Against* LTT 19 Feb features four pages on 'For' and 'Against.' The 'For' argument draws on the February Report from the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) on action to 2030 with a focus on the need to reduce still rising transport emissions. It assesses three scenarios offering different degrees of surface transport carbon saving up to a cut of 40% between 2010 and 2030. The two largest gains are expected to come from improvement in conventional vehicle efficiency and electric hybrids but part of this gain will be eroded by the 23% rise in road traffic by 2030 expected in the DfT National Transport Model. Hydrogen fuel costs are still seen as prohibitive for cars in 2030 but with 25% of new buses hydrogen powered by that date. A role is seen for biofuels and up to 40% of smaller HGVs sales could be electric by 2030. A 10% cut in HGV kilometres is seen as deliverable but not explained.

£15bn of planned road investment is seen as producing only a marginal boost to expected road use with rail electrification having only a limited impact on lowered carbon and best justified by other reasons. Using analysis of the National Travel Survey, CCC expects only 3% of car kilometres to shift to alternative modes in a 'low' scenario and perhaps 10% in a 'high' scenario. But the reduced cost of driving will weaken incentives to drive less. Auto manufacturers say that CCC is over-optimistic in expecting large shifts to electric vehicles unless there are larger and sustained government incentives.

In the second feature, Benny Peiser of the Global Warming Policy Forum argues that global warming will be slower than the CCC expects. The main need is to strengthen the economy and expand fracking rather than resort to expensive measures for carbon reduction. We have a new generation of young people who have grown up without constant bombardment in school and the media that we have to act 'to save the planet'.

*Comment* The presentation of the three CCC scenarios is often unclear and over reliant on other data (such as the DfT Transport Model). A 23% rise in road vehicular movement is mentioned as being only marginally influenced by a £15bn of road investment yet this implies that using say half of this investment in other ways could be more effective in terms of carbon saving and delivery of economic and social gains – including a rise in road vehicle miles lower than expected population growth but increased use of electronic connectivity and a continuing growth of inter-regional rail travel and of increased city and local use of public transport, walking and cycling. There is no reference to the carbon implications of continuing increases in air travel. Peiser seems unaware that quite low levels of global warming are having an evident impact on the British climate and the widely recognised need for more action to mitigate the impact of more rain, higher winds and the adverse impacts of even a small rise in sea levels. He skirts the issue of the most effective means of raising productivity in conjunction with a more even spread of well-being and health. The CCC could itself benefit from greater appreciation that policies seeking wider social and economic benefits can also work in favour of lower carbon. It under-estimates the impact of changes in personal and business behaviour on both wider objectives and lowered carbon - including a stronger use of fiscal, pricing and regulatory measures to encourage, rather than discourage, such changing trends. The medium to longer-term impacts of land-use planning and technical change (such as driverless cars) on resource use are not examined despite their rising importance

## **BUSINESS & PERSONNEL**

Gleaner Oils report stable, but low, profit margins on petrol it sells across northern Scotland. Fuel sales had risen as people are driving more with improving incomes and low petrol costs.

Stagecoach has reassured investors that no new pressures on profits were emerging. UK bus revenue was up 0.7% in the 40 weeks to 6 Feb. with rail revenue up 63%, mainly influenced by acquisition of the East Coast franchise. Annual survey of the bus industry finds that Stagecoach had the highest profit levels in the bus industry

Two directors embroiled in a damaging boardroom row at Lothian Buses are each to receive bonuses of £80,000. Jim McFarlane, Chair of Lothian Buses, says it is a highly successful business supporting jobs and contributing millions to the city purse as well as having one of the highest passenger ratings.

Prof S Glaister, formerly of the RAC Foundation, has been appointed interim chair of ORR for 12 months pending a fuller review of this body in the context of other changes in rail and road organisation names

J Legerwood is ScotRail's new Head of Economic Development

Former Liberal Democrat MP John Thurso is the new chair of Visit Scotland

## **Publications**

*Scottish Transport Statistics* No 34 2015 Edition, 318 pages, Transport Scotland

*Final Report on Borders Railway Baseline Survey*, Transport Scotland

*Delivering the goods – Scotland's rail freight strategy*, Transport Scotland

*High Speed Rail Scotland : Summary Report*, Transport Scotland, March 2016

*Broad Options for upgraded and high-speed railways to the North of England and Scotland*, HS2 Ltd, March 2016