

Alastair Chisholm B.Mus.

Director of Music
Cathedral of The Isles

42 Glasgow Street
Millport, Isle of Cumbrae KA28 0DL

Tel: 01475 530657 Mob: 07772 983129
Email: mauraofcumbrae@googlemail.com

13th February 2012

Rail 2014
Transport Scotland
Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Rd
Glasgow G4 0HF

Dear Sir / Madam,

Rail 2014 - Public Consultation

As an inhabitant of Great Cumbrae, resident in Millport, my nearest railhead is Largs, and particularly with the recent new trains, we enjoy a reasonable train service to Ayrshire and Glasgow. I use the railway weekly in the winter months to travel from Largs to Ayr where I give music lectures to adults. Over the years a couple of ideas have crossed my mind which would greatly

improve aspects of our train ⁽²⁾service for a relatively modest outlay.

At the moment two trains an hour travel from Glasgow to Ardrossan South Beach, but between South Beach and Largs there is only an hourly service. If an electrified passing loop, with appropriate signalling, were to be installed near Hunterston (roughly the halfway point between Saltcoats and Largs), two trains an hour would become a possibility for the first time in over twenty years. Already there are two functioning parallel lines from Saltcoats to Hunterston. For a relatively small outlay the service could be doubled, and with this greater flexibility more passengers could be encouraged to leave their cars at home and "let the train take the strain". For journey times the bus companies cannot compete.

The journey from Ayr to Largs by train is usually quick & comfortable if you choose the train departing Ayr at 43 minutes past each hour. One changes train at Kilwinning and platforms 2 & 3 are adjacent to each other. Not so on the Largs to Ayr journey. At Kilwinning the change from platform 1 to platform 4 involves negotiating

two separate footbridges (both now showing signs of rust). The whole exercise would be much more user-friendly if a purpose-built bridge were installed which spanned the whole station from platform 1 to 4, with stairs down to platforms 2 & 3. Such a bridge did exist in pre-electrification days, but was not replaced at that time. Once more, for a relatively small expenditure, the lot of the humble passenger would be much improved. Remember that for those of us living in Stevenston, Saltcoats, Ardrossan, West Kilbride, Fairlie, Largs, Cumbernauld and Arran, our local council's administrative centre is Irvine. If we propose to visit the council offices by tram we must interchange at Kilwinning. As far as I know the loop at Dubs Junction is not used by passenger trains.

Of course many much more ambitious could be proposed - I leave that to others. In these cash-strapped days my two modest proposals seem worthy of consideration.

Yours sincerely Alastair Christolm