

**CTC
Parklands
Railton Road
GU2 9JX**

We are happy to have our submission made public

CTC's response to the re-franchising consultation for Scotrail 2014

Introduction

CTC, the national cyclists' organisation, was founded in 1878. CTC has 70,000 members and supporters, provides a range of information and legal services to cyclists, organises cycling events, and represents the interests of cyclists and cycling on issues of public policy.

CTC notes the delivery of a number specific of cycle-rail initiatives South of the Border in addition to the equivalent of the Scottish Smarter Choices programme in the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, and Station Travel Plans, both including cycling with rail as part of wider initiatives. We note especially the success of Cyclepoint in Leeds, and the promising start for a similar operation in Haywards Heath.

In addition, we are pleased that Scotland also espouses an Active Travel Strategy with monitoring as well as the interventions to enhance the mode share of walking and cycling to the rail station. We hope that this, coupled with specification on minimum requirements in franchises, can improve cycle-rail integration and enable more cyclists on to the rail network, reducing long distance car traffic and strengthening revenue for train companies.

Through from the ATOC initiative for pilot Station Travel Plans, and the commitment in recent DfT franchises to deliver a block of travel plans (30 for the current Southern franchise), a similar aspiration, missing at present from Rail 2014, is to get a commitment to actual delivery of travel plans as a franchise requirement.

Why cycling: the end to end journey

The 'rail' journey for almost every passenger is not delivered solely by the period spent on the train. It is formed by a chain of journeys forming the shoulders and occasionally connecting elements between the individual start and finish points, with the sequence potentially incorporating walking directly to the station, or to a connecting road service (bus, taxi, private car) and then walking from this mode to the rail station, or an option of cycling the entire distance between doorstep and 'platform'.

For every connection the traveller has to factor in an overlap allowance, plus a delay variable to account for traffic congestion, or searching for a parking place. It becomes clear when the reliability and consistency of journey times by cycle and laid against the waiting time and other allowances required for the alternative arrangements for these journeys, a substantial reduction in overall journey time can be delivered. The 'shoulder' journeys to and from the station and time spent waiting for trains are considered more valuable to the passenger. It should be clearly stated that a bidder should be encouraged to demonstrate ways in which they will deliver improved shoulder journeys as part of the total package offered to the passenger.

CTC members have reported substantial reductions in overall journey times for many 'rail' journeys, in some cases reducing the overall door to door time by over an hour – sometimes on a journeys taking barely more than 2 hours. One example is of a commuter using the route Stansted Montfitchet to Liverpool Street who estimates a saving of nearly 2 hours per day in travelling time and £8500/year in direct and indirect costs.

01 What are the merits of offering the ScotRail franchise as a dual focus franchise and what services should be covered by the economic rail element, and what by the social rail element?

There are no advantages to having a dual focus franchise, and it may create problems if there are variations in how each part deals with cycles. There may however be some merit in embracing the services currently offers by private railways by specifying and sub contracting the provision of public connecting services to interchange points with the main network, where appropriate even sharing the route with modern trains providing the through service. Examples might be Grantown-Aviemore, Bo'ness-Polmont/Linlithgow Dufftown-Keith, many such routes get cyclists past a significant barrier of a major road

Consider the options for Ultra-Light rail such as that provided by Class 139 units operating on Stourbridge Town branch

02 What should be the length of the contract for future franchises, and what factors lead you to this view?

The Chiltern franchise has delivered new stations and substantial track upgrades funded through franchise revenues. This franchise has also delivered excellent cycle parking

03 What risk support mechanism should be reflected within the franchise?

04 What, if any, profit share mechanism should apply within the franchise?

05 Under what terms should third parties be involved in the operation of passenger rail services?

06 What is the best way to structure and incentivise the achievement of outcome measures whilst ensuring value for money?

07 What level of performance bond and/or parent company guarantees are appropriate?

08 What sanctions should be used to ensure the franchisee fulfils its franchise commitments?

09 Under the franchise, should we incentivise good performance or only penalise poor performance?

10 Should the performance regime be aligned with actual routes or service groups, or should there be one system for the whole of Scotland?

A whole of Scotland regime means that both the best services will be driven to best efficiency and the less viable operations pressed to reduced their drain on the premier services.

11 How can we make the performance regime more aligned with passenger issues?

Better engagement with passenger groups, possibly an annual review in the form of a public stakeholder meeting

12 What should the balance be between journey times and performance?

The focus on speed and 90+% capacity utilisation makes the service less than robust and unreliable. Overall journey times can actually be reduced by running a slower timetable which guarantees connections and arrival times, and thus reduces the time spent waiting for trains.

The promotion of cycle rail will deliver door to door journey time reduction of up to 1 hour on some journeys

13 Is a Service Quality Incentive Regime required? And if so should it cover all aspects of stations and service delivery, or just those being managed through the franchise?

SQUIRE should include an element that affirms the Franchisee's engagement with relevant third parties, and monitor/manage the integration of cycling with Scotrail services

14 What other mechanisms could be used for assessing train and station quality?

Real time feedback through SMS/Twitter/call-in when defects are noted by passengers. Scotrail has very lacklustre twitter output at present and the franchisee should show how they propose to enhance this

15 Can better use be made of existing train capacity, such as increasing the permitted standing time beyond the limit of 10 minutes or increasing the capacity limit? What is an acceptable limit for standing times on rail services?

London has 20 minute standing time. Through corridors on trains (not removal as with Class 318) will permit better distribution of passengers where multi unit trains are running, and will make better use of staff (ticket checks/trolley services). The option of standing and perch seating should be considered for the extreme peak loadings as acceptable as a reasonable balance between having an excess of rolling stock which sits idle for long periods, just to provide a seat count figure for 1-2 services during the day.

The design of the Class 318 and 320 units has a serious constraint on free flow through the narrow door vestibule width and draft screen arrangements , and fails to make use of space blanked off behind the sloping seat backs. I commend the detailing of the interior of the SWT Class 455 units after refurbishment as the better passenger flow on & off the train plus, efficient space use for flexible seating/bikes reduces dwell times, and potential for delays. All Class 158 units should be modified to remove the cupboard and enhance the inner vestibule spaces, with 3 extra seats and consideration for removal of the small toilet and replacement of the accessible toilet with a more modern arrangement to speed up boarding and provide surge space and further additional seating/flexible space.

16 Should the number of services making use of interchange stations (both rail to rail and rail to other modes) be increased to reduce the number of direct services? What would be the opportunities and challenges of this?

Cycling can connect most main Glasgow Hospitals with the rail network Scotrail should work with Glasgow NHS Trust and equally other NHS Trusts to develop direct and safe cycling routes, with departure displays at the start of the route – the point of leaving the hospital buildings.

The cycled link between Kilpatrick and Bishopton saves considerable time and equally connections at Coatbridge, and between stations in Central Glasgow

The options to mix & match between Haymarket and the stations serving Edinburgh Park/Gyle where many destinations are a long walk from any station

and services for an inbound commuter may be less convenient for the return trip so that a bike ride to an alternative may be a preferred option.

A station at Braehead would be cycleable from Renfrew as well as having car parking capacity during the working day to function as a park & ride, this would put Renfrew back on the rail map, and if traffic levels proved suitable could provide a case for extending the line back to reconnect with the town centre, and potentially link to Glasgow Airport with the added traffic generated by serving Renfrew.

This would also put rail services within cycling distance of Erskine

Restore passenger services to the Edinburgh Suburban line

The management of facilities for Network Rail at Glasgow Central is principally fronted by Virgin West Coast and at Waverley by East Coast. There is by the sheer number of passengers using Scotrail services surely a case to transfer the operation of the main facilities to Scotrail for both locations and deliver a cycle parking/hire and access regime uniformly as Scotrail for Scottish rail travel. At Glasgow Central there is a difficult to let shop units which has significant potential as a cycle hub but we believe this would be best delivered by Scotrail in co-ordination with other facilities in Scotland (eg sub-contracting the operators for a group of locations

17 Should Government direct aspects of service provision such as frequency and journey time, or would these be better determined by the franchisee based on customer demand?

There should be some base-line standards First/last trains and frequencies, and minima for train capacity at peak times, with a call-in if these are not delivered.

Cycle carriage should remain free on all services, although a premium might be appropriate for reserving a space on a specific train. For most 'local services' serving Central Scotland's travel to work area, the frequency of service generally allows a cyclist who cannot board the first train to arrive, an second opportunity after 15-20 minutes, the issues arise mainly for rural and regional inter city routes Generally self regulation is controlling the demand for peak hour travel , and the current ability to accommodate a group on most types of train off-peak provides a valuable way to win additional off-peak revenue.

For long distance travel the option to reduce a bicycle to a package which meets the EU standard large suitcase dimensions of 120 x 90 x 30 cm should make it acceptable as a piece of luggage

There is clear indication that cycles are used with trains by shift workers who would otherwise have to carry the burden of running a car, and a clear need for

Transport Scotland and Scotrail to gain a better understanding of their cycle user market.

We are also aware of a substantial traffic being generated by indoor BMX facilities, most notable Unit 23 in Dumbarton – Station Dumbarton East, when groups of minors are able to travel without a call on a family member to take them there by car. There is thus a clear need to have flexibility for the off-peak use of trains on this route, and fortunately the Class 334 units do have such flexible space

For routes to ferries (Troon , Cairn Ryan, Ardrossan, Largs, Oban, Mallaig, Kyle of Lochalsh, Thurso, Aberdeen) the level of cycle space provision needs to be generous and the route recognised as a key tourist connection.

18 What level of contract specification should we use for the next ScotRail franchise?

The franchise should ensure that the railway retains the operation as a common carrier, with turn up and travel facility. It should be possible to travel with a cycle, and other luggage, although a charge may be made for those who want to exceed the normal passenger baggage allowance.

19 How should the contract incentivise the franchisee to be innovative in the provision of services?

20 What should be the rationale for, and purpose of, our fares policy?

21 What fares should be regulated by government and what should be set on a commercial basis? Do your recommendations change by geographic area (the Strathclyde area example), or by type of journey (for example suburban or intercity)?

22 How should we achieve a balance between the taxpayer subsidy and passenger revenue contributions in funding the Scottish rail network? At what rate should fares be increased, and how feasible would it be to apply higher increases to Sections of the network which have recently been enhanced?

23 What should the difference be between peak and off-peak fares? Will this help encourage people to switch to travelling in the off-peak?

Current balance seems about right

24 How should we determine what rail stations are required and where, including whether a station should be closed?

Major journey generators such as hospitals should not be built away from rail connected locations (bad = ERI and Southern General)

See note on use of bus and other modes. Real time arrival and departure information will permit taxis and bus operators to connect with trains

The ability to cycle to an alternative station should be considered if a station closure is considered, and the gain of a station within cycling distance measured as a potential benefit (eg Blackridge for Harthill and Armadale for Whitburn are 2 reopenings that restore access, without a major cost of car parking when cycling is facilitated).

25 What are the merits or issues that arise from a third party (such as a local authority or local business) being able to propose, promote and fund a station or service?

26 Should only one organisation be responsible for the management and maintenance of stations? If this was the franchisee how should that responsibility be structured in terms of leasing, investment, and issues relating to residual capital value?

The delivery of revenue through effective use and investment is often constrained by the current arrangements

27 How can local communities be encouraged to support their local station?

The Northern and ACoRP models of station adoption seem to work and can be an avenue to pursue. The Northern Rail model of a cycle Forum, with a secretariat provided by local cycling groups, and chaired by a Northern rail manager has much to commend it, as an effective means of operating for cycling and other passenger groups

28 What categories of station should be designated and what facilities should be available at each category of station?

All staffed stations should have secured cycle parking, which can be subscribed to either by local application or through a Scotrail-wide scheme to provide access to authorised users at any secure bike parking.

A sensible review should identify stations where cyclists will travel further in preference to nearer less well served ones eg using Paisley Gilmour Street vice Paisley St James / Johnstone vice Milliken Park

Cycle hire – leisure bikes or commuter bikes should be considered as appropriate for the station, as well as a folding bike hire option (Brompton Dock)

29 Should cross-border services continue to go north of Edinburgh? In operating alongside ScotRail services, how do cross-border services benefit passengers and taxpayers? And who should specify these services, the Department of Transport or the Scottish Ministers?

Cross Border through services provide a guaranteed through transit for many tourists and business travellers who gain convenience and assured journeys in this way. This is especially the case for the long distance cycle tourist coming to or from destinations North of Edinburgh, as these long distance services offer an enhanced product for cycle carriage.

With incremental reduction in the journey times to London, the time cost of changing trains becomes a significant element in the overall journey time, and the added passenger numbers moving around Edinburgh Waverley has an impact on congestion and boarding other services. To have to alight and change trains in Edinburgh or Glasgow may often create the delay of reloading and the re-stripping luggage from a touring bike, or even reassembling a packed-down machine.

In terms of resource use, the practice of running these trains makes good use of rolling stock which would otherwise be lying idle awaiting service, and has been greatly appreciated by many commuters in Fife especially. The benefit is not just in the through service, but in the provision of extra train capacity at busy times, when it would otherwise require a larger fleet of Scotrail vehicles that are then under utilised outside peak periods

The franchise should however explore the operation of the Cross Border trains beyond Edinburgh AND Glasgow as Scotrail services with the trains and crew hired from the other TOC's. I can envisage Class 221 and Class 185 units being operated North of Glasgow to run through services from Perth or Stirling (or Kilmarnock etc) to Birmingham or Manchester.

30 Or should the cross-border services terminate at Edinburgh Waverley, allowing opportunities for Scottish connections? And if so, what additional benefits would accrue from having an Edinburgh Hub?

See 29 but equally look to integration of later arriving services, with Citylink and other express coach services through bringing these to Waverley Bridge and Gordon Street/George Square for their late night calls. The 23.59 and 01.30 Citylink services provide later Edinburgh-Glasgow connections, and Stagecoach also offer services to Ayr, Kilmarnock, Dunfermline, and Perth to connect with late inbound services, and can provide early connections also for the first departures from Glasgow and Edinburgh.

An Edinburgh hub fails to recognise the time penalties then passed to those taking a service via Glasgow. Cross Border connections with through trains should continue beyond both Waverley AND Central

31 What alternative strategies or mechanisms could be used to reduce the cost of the provision of rolling stock?

The full integration of rolling stock should be delivered through refurbishment (standardising and rectifying the mistakes of the past that has a fleet with disparate systems of coupling and operation) All future passenger trains to be fully interoperable, and include the ability to operate electric units over non-electrified routes by attaching a diesel locomotive at one end or the other.

Plans for refurbishment and future rolling stock should include all the best practice in delivering flexible and efficient use of internal space, so that all trains have sufficient capacity to be used by groups of cyclists making up between 4 and 6% of the seated capacity.

32 What facilities should be present on a train and to what extent should these facilities vary according to the route served

A move away from a bean-counter maximisation of fixed seating which will not be filled outside peak hours, to ensuring every train has provision of convertible seating areas that provide for more flexible space to accommodate the variety of potential traffic – including cyclists, those with wheeled mobility aids other than a 'standard wheelchair', prams, wheeled shopping carriers, golf bags, skis (and other sports equipment), and luggage to the permitted maximum or beyond (for which charges may be applied)

From observation and survey data relating to cycles it would appear that allowing for 4-6% of the seated capacity to be cyclists requiring space for a bicycle will deliver sufficient space to cater for demand. On some routes notably the Ardrossan 'Boat trains' and other services connecting with ferries of popular cycling destinations we regularly see 10% or even more of the passengers travelling with cycles, many of these being touring bikes set up with luggage etc and not likely to be satisfied by a cycle hire option at the destination. *NB this is 10% of the total passenger count on the train which is typically 40-50% of the seated capacity.*

The provision of this flexible space should be such that at least 1 tandem or tricycle can be accommodated. The use of cycles as Class 1 Invalid Carriages (cycles fully comply with the required specification) by Persons with Reduced Mobility should be recognised.

The provision of flexibility and clear access benefits the wide spectrum of users but reducing dwell times when large numbers are getting on/off trains. This should be included as a required feature in any refurbishment programme

33 How should we prioritise investment for mobile phone provision and / or Wi-Fi type high-bandwidth services?

The delivery of this should encourage more use of rail as a legal way to make calls and work rather than try to work & driver on long distance journeys

34 How should we balance the need for additional seating capacity and retain the flexibility of a franchisee to offer first-class services if commercially viable?

Consider the approach taken by Chiltern Railways, of having no First Class accommodation as such, but offering an enhanced use of standard accommodation for parts of certain trains (privacy, at seat services, density of use) for a supplementary fare, rather than a first class tariff. The further use of perch and tip up seating which can be counted as seated capacity, and thus permit a flexibility in the design of carriage interiors that permits the accommodation of cycles and other items

35 What issues and evidence should be considered prior to determining whether or not to ban the consumption of alcohol on trains?

36 How can the provision of travel information for passengers be further improved?

The SMS and twitter services need to improve to the standards seen elsewhere. Cycle carriage information, provided directly by other cyclists and train crew can be provided as the Caltrain (details can be provided) model shows.

This direct communication should also be extended to those requiring assisted travel, in many cases removing the discriminatory issue of the 24 hours notice requirement, and making it easier to accommodate boardings from unstaffed stations.

The full provision of 2 train crew on every passenger service is a welcomed feature that will link to this communication facility

37 Should we continue to specify sleeper services, or should this be a purely commercial matter for a train operating company?

The sleeper service should be split off from Scotrail and a separate franchise for sleeper services created by combining the sleeper operations for Greater Western and Scotrail, and consolidating the fleet of vehicles. These services should be operated from a single London terminus and both can easily run from

Waterloo International, eliminating the morning issues where the Scottish sleepers present a problem to Euston during the morning commuter peak, and I believe Paddington also has a similar issue of platform and track occupation.

The winter service may well run solely from the Central Belt, on weekdays and with some timing tweaks could deliver a later departure and faster through running, working this around the delivery of the seated service as a separate train. The sleeper service itself should provide for cycle carriages, and any refurbishment should remedy the problem at present delivered through the layout of the luggage van, which cannot easily be accessed even by a standard bicycle

The combined sleeper franchise would have an option to run through portions of their trains to Paris/Brussels via Waterloo, depending on how the timings were set up. Potentially delivering an 09.00 arrival from an 00.00 departure, and offering substantial opportunities for cycle tourism, without the known hazards of air travel

The overnight seated services should be combined to run as a single service in each direction using a day train, probably a Virgin Class 221 and swapping 2 sets over between Euston and Glasgow. Connections at Carlisle, Crewe, Birmingham, and possibly Reading could replace the Highland Sleeper calls and provide a connection through all overnight sleepers, limiting these to an official passenger stop at Preston, which delivers a substantial choice of connections that gets passengers to many cities across the UK by 08.30-09.00, or earlier.

38 Should the Caledonian Sleeper services be contracted for separately from the main ScotRail franchise? Or should it be an option for within the main ScotRail franchise?

See 37 – yes there should be a combination of the West Country and Scotrail operations which operates from a dedicated sleeper terminus facility in London – at Waterloo International, with the option for the Sleeper franchise operator to run trains through from Waterloo to mainland Europe, potentially offering through services for portions of the trains from Scotland and Cornwall

39 We would be interested in your views in the level and type of service that the Caledonian Sleeper Services should provide. Including:

- What is the appeal of the Caledonian Sleeper Service, and if there were more early and late trains would the appeal of the sleeper services change?

The sleeper still provides a valuable overnight service which arrives well before any through morning train could operate, and saves an overnight hotel bill – most current early morning Southbound services are 'difficult' to catch with local bus/rail services, and are lightly loaded until York/Preston, but arrive 2-3 hours

later than the sleeper. Late evening services that connect cease around 4-5 hours before the sleeper departs, and would leave a passenger hanging around through the night – hardly worth booking in to a hotel to catch the first morning trains, which arrive in Scotland 4 hours later than the sleeper

- What is the value of sleeper services to Fort William, Inverness and Aberdeen and are these the correct destinations, for example would Oban provide better connectivity?

A late/early day train for weekday travellers may well be a better option for Fort William and Oban, with the sleeper service only running in summer months and at weekends. A day train could leave Fort William later than the current loco hauled service (better performance/higher speeds permitted) and this would also overcome the current failings of the ticketing arrangements that block the purchase of tickets and have seen prospective passengers told the service does not exist. It is for example not possible to buy a ticket from Westerton to Crewe via Carlisle, but it is possible to buy one from Falkirk to Crewe via this route, using effectively the same train!

- What facilities should the sleeper services provide and would you pay more for better facilities?

It is pointless hauling around much more than the berths a lounge/catering area and a space for bikes and large baggage. The coaches have been assessed as structurally sound for at least 40 years of service, but do need a full rebuild, noting that a Mk 3 was used on trials at almost 150mph using the BT5000 bogie, so the vehicles can be rebogied and fully upgraded.

The sleeper provides a valuable way to reach Scotland with cycles for touring, and other sports equipment (skis surf boards etc) the overnight trains should offer this facility with appropriate incentives to travel when demand for berths is lower. A single stop for both sleeper services should be at Preston, noting that the Lowland sleeper actually makes a very good connection for Manchester Airport and many destinations across from Hull to Chester

If an overnight train is not viable for a Saturday-Sunday service, then there should be a consideration to offer a shared service with overnight road services, to deliver viable passenger services, on all 7 days of the week

40 What environmental key performance indicators should we consider for inclusion in the franchise agreement or the High Level Output Specification?

A measure of how passengers are delivered to & from the trains and the cost of doing this/revenue per passenger using car parks, bus and bike provisions?

Nowhere in this document is there any reference to Smarter Choices, the provision of cycle parking or hire at stations, and bus integration measures as part of the franchise. There needs to be something a bit stronger than the reference to Interchange hubs, and stronger commitment to delivering revenues from the 'railway effect', where the value of land connected to a rail service generates enhanced rental and other income. Note here that as an example the Kowloon-Canton Railway covered a substantial amount of their track maintenance costs from air rent of development above (or below) the tracks.

The franchisee should be invited to present proposals to deliver a total travel package with the measurable outputs of unlocking household income through selling the means to get to work and other destinations using the rail system and other modes which effectively replaces car ownership and other options that demand resources but operate inefficiently.

The cost per passenger delivered through car park cycle parking or supported bus services should be monitored, and the amount spent on each mode as a % split of costs on a route/station basis against the % of passengers delivered