

## North East Combined Transport Activists' Roundtable

Information Bulletin      Issue 120      October 2014

**Due to a shortage of funds and capacity, this will be the last monthly NECTAR eBulletin produced for the foreseeable future.**

As a replacement – a NECTAR Facebook Group has been set up: it is the intention to update this with information of interest the NECTAR on a frequent basis, with access open to all group members to post. There is also scope for an events calendar and rather more discussion and immediate response than the eBulletin allows.

You can find the group at [www.facebook.com/groups/nectar.transport/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/nectar.transport/)

Apologies to anyone who – for whatever reason cannot or chooses not – to use Facebook, but it is the best solution we could come up with.

The NECTAR website is [www.ne-ctar.org.uk](http://www.ne-ctar.org.uk) will continue to be maintained, with downloadable copies of recent NECTAR submissions and links to other useful sites.

A NECTAR Group also exists on Linked-In – if subscribers use this rather than Facebook, we will at least try to echo the Facebook Group activity there. Let us know! For those not familiar with it, Linked-In is social-networking for professionals focussing on skills, networking, work CVs etc. See [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

For all these matters, contact Nic Best on [nickel@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:nickel@globalnet.co.uk)

### Diary Dates

Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Oct: **CfBT Road Campaigner Conference**, Toynbee Hall, London.  
See [www.bettertransport.org.uk/roads-nowhere/conference-2014](http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/roads-nowhere/conference-2014)

Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Oct: **Two Day Guided Bike Ride** with WATBike “**Kielder & beyond**” Starting from Corsenside Common Artillery point then around Kielder lakeside, with o/night stay at Bellingham Demesne bunkhouse. Cost £85 pp – required four weeks in advance. Contact Colin tel 01670 522999 mob 07918 075187 email [colin.watbus@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:colin.watbus@yahoo.co.uk)

Tues 21<sup>st</sup> Oct: **North East Combined Authorities (NECA)** meeting 2pm Newcastle Civic Centre – vote on **Quality Bus Contract operation for Tyne & Wear**. Tyne & Wear Public Transport Use Group lobby, meet at 1:15pm

Weds 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec: **Tyne & Wear Freight Partnership** time, venue tbc. Martin Murphy represents NECTAR at these meetings

Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> Dec '14: Newcastle Cycling Forum

Weds 14<sup>th</sup> Jan '15: **Hartlepool Transport Champions** (Council-led community scrutiny network) "*Car Parking*" 3:30pm-5pm Hartlepool Civic Centre

Weds 4<sup>th</sup> Mar: **Tyne & Wear Freight Partnership** time, venue tbc. Martin Murphy represents NECTAR at these meetings

Weds 13<sup>th</sup> May: **Hartlepool Transport Champions** (Council-led community scrutiny network) "*Rail Services – including connectivity between modes*" 3:30pm-5pm Hartlepool Civic Centre

## Regional News

1. **SENUG has relaunched their website** [www.senrug.co.uk](http://www.senrug.co.uk) – including a new chairman's blog - and also adopted formal email addresses for their officers on advice from Passenger Focus. Chairman Dennis Fancett is taking a break till midDecember, so the new email address [chair@senrug.co.uk](mailto:chair@senrug.co.uk) will reach deputy chair, Dan Nesbitt, for the present. SENUG has also produced a new 12pp colour brochure setting out their various campaigns.
2. **Shipbreaker Able UK has reported large drops** in both turnover and pre-tax profit. Turnover fell to £12.1m for the year ending Dec 2013, compared to the £18.9m in the year before. Pre-tax profit fell from £1.18m in 2012 to £720k last year. <http://www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/123318-able-uk-suffers-profit-drop-remains-confident-about-future?utm>
3. **Able UK is investing around £25m** in the continuing upgrading and expansion of facilities at **Able Seaton Port**. They are currently constructing new quays for a six-year contract to decommission four major structures from the Shell Brent oilfield in the North Sea. One of the quays will be able to be used for structures of up to 48,000 tonnes. [www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/123168-able-uk-continues-huge-seaton-port-investment](http://www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/123168-able-uk-continues-huge-seaton-port-investment)
4. **Northumberland's first long-distance mountain bike route** "The Sandstone Way" is being developed. This off-road route runs for 100 miles between Berwick and Hexham, following the line of the sandstone ridge, linking numerous sandstone features, crags and outcrops. For more info contact Duncan Wise, NNP Visitor Development Officer tel 01434 611521 email [duncan.wise@nnpa.org.uk](mailto:duncan.wise@nnpa.org.uk)
5. **After removing cycle specific infrastructure** on Silver Lonnen in 2010 and Elswick Road in 2012, Newcastle City Council continues to dismantle existing cycle lanes, now at a school in Heaton. <http://newcycling.org/news/20141012/newcastle-city-council-continues-remove-cycle-infrastructure>

6. **SENRUG** recently ran a **competition where local schools invited to make a 7-10 minute DVD** setting out their **business case for re-opening the Ashington Blyth & Tyne Line**. All the DVDs are now available on the new SENRUG website and the winning team will travel down to London to present their DVD to their MP.
7. **Go Ahead has reported pre-tax profits of £91.2m** for year ending March 2014, up 50% from £63.1m in 2012-13. Revenue reached £350m, up £13.2m. Operating profit from bus operations increased from £75.2m to £83.5m, while its rail division increased operating profit from £11.5m to £19.7m. <https://bdaily.co.uk/industrials/04-09-2014/go-ahead-group-sees-50-increase-in-pretax-profit-after-record-year>
8. **Southeastern**, the train operating company 65% owned by the Go-Ahead Group, has agreed a direct award contract to **continue to run the South Eastern franchise until June 2018**. [www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/123161-southeastern-awarded-2018-contract-extension](http://www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/123161-southeastern-awarded-2018-contract-extension)
9. Calculations carried out by the Newcastle Cycling Campaign, show that the **contribution economic current Newcastle commuter cyclists make** is worth over £3 million every year. Click [here](#) to read the full article.
10. **Grand Central Rail is to invest £7.8m** to improve the reliability, capacity and comfort of its services over the next 12 years following the extension of its operating license, which gives it permission to run trains between London, the North East and Yorkshire until 2026. [www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/125324-grand-central-make-long-term-investment?utm](http://www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/125324-grand-central-make-long-term-investment?utm)
11. **Living Streets – Tyneside Area** are looking at developing their Metro Survey campaign using the ‘whole journey’ concept to the integration of walking with public transport. Contact Colin Green [green43@talktalk.net](mailto:green43@talktalk.net)
12. The final designs for **improvements at the Cowgate roundabout on Tyneside** are posted on [www.letstalknewcastle.co.uk/](http://www.letstalknewcastle.co.uk/) and it is hoped to start work in the next few months.
13. **Prof Paul Salvesen’s Hannah Mitchell Foundation** has submitted a strongly-worded response to the Government’s consultation on **the future Northern and TransPennine Express franchises**. They want:
  - a new fleet of trains to replace the unloved and life-expired ‘Pacers’ - and for the trains to be built in the North.
  - the franchise to have scope for growth with an expanding network with re-openings across the North, including the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne network, as part of a wider strategy lining regional rail with the proposed ‘HS3’ route across the Pennines.”

- the franchise to be accountable to people in the North, run by a not-for-profit company which involves employees and passengers and re-invests any surplus back into the railway”.
- properly staffed trains with a stronger focus on passengers and their needs

See the full response at: [www.hannahmitchell.org.uk/2014/08/15/railways-a-better-network-for-the-north-accountable-to-the-north/](http://www.hannahmitchell.org.uk/2014/08/15/railways-a-better-network-for-the-north-accountable-to-the-north/)

14. ippr North in The Guardian: “**Why the north of England needs a new transport plan**” [www.theguardian.com/public-leaders-network/2014/aug/08/north-england-new-transport-plan-infrastructure](http://www.theguardian.com/public-leaders-network/2014/aug/08/north-england-new-transport-plan-infrastructure)

15. **Gateshead IT business On:trac** has secured a multimillion-pound contract from **Network Rail** which will use the company’s ‘eTrac’ application to help plan and manage work on its infrastructure and improve safety for staff. The system will be used to collect information including the speed and direction of trains, local hazards and risks, signals, bridges, structures, overhead lines, level crossings and stations. <https://bdaily.co.uk/technology/01-08-2014/gateshead-it-company-secures-multi-million-pound-contract-with-network-rail>

16. **Results from Directly Operated Railways (DOR)** - the government business that manages the East Coast Mainline franchise - for the year to 31 March 2014 show a turnover increased from £694m to £720m with passenger journeys up 4.5% to 19.9 million. This generated an operating profit before DfT service payments (of £216.9m) and tax of £225.3m (up from £208.7m). The franchise will be re-let to a private operator in March 2015. [www.insidermedia.com/insider/national/123000](http://www.insidermedia.com/insider/national/123000)

17. A new bus operator, **Spirit Buses of Rothbury**, launched the following services from 1<sup>st</sup> Sept – see [www.spiritbuses.co.uk](http://www.spiritbuses.co.uk)

- 14S, Sundays, Thropton and Rothbury – Morpeth, complementing the Arriva service on this route on Mondays to Saturdays;
- 15, daily including late evening Fridays and Saturdays, Thropton and Morpeth direct to Alnwick and Alnmouth Station;
- 16, Tuesdays Thursdays and Saturdays, also Friday and Saturday evenings, Rothbury to Alwinton and Harbottle (Upper Coquetdale);
- 17, Wednesdays, Rothbury to Elsdon
- 18, Mondays and Fridays, Rothbury to Wallington.

18. Northumberland CC will be carrying out a consultation on **proposed changes to bus services X15, X18 and 418** from 9<sup>th</sup> November. Contact Ian Coe [ian.coe@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:ian.coe@northumberland.gov.uk) for information.

19. **Hilary Florek** has been appointed **chairman of the Port of Tyne**, with Dr Jon Hargreaves as deputy chairman. [www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/124436-port-tyne-appoints-new-chairman](http://www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/124436-port-tyne-appoints-new-chairman)

20. **Nissan reports record sales of the LEAF car:** 851 vehicles were sold in Sept '14 up 156% from Sept '13 and higher than the previous record month – March 2014 – when 630 were sold. [www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/124970-record-sales-nissan-leaf](http://www.insidermedia.com/insider/north-east/124970-record-sales-nissan-leaf)

## National & International News

21. The LGIU has published a [useful guide](#) to the **Government's Road Reforms Programme** bringing together the various strands of policies which constitute a massive road building project. **CfBT's Roads to Nowhere** campaign asks questions about the economic and environmental credentials of these plans.
22. **Some 33% of drivers admit driving too fast for safety on country roads** - speeding, taking bends fast and overtaking - according to [road safety charity Brake](#) and [Digby Brown Solicitors](#). Four in 10 (37%) have had a near-miss on a rural roads, while driving, walking or cycling. With less traffic on country roads, drivers feel a false sense of security but in fact, rural roads are the most dangerous for all types of road user per mile travelled.
23. **Northern Rail has paid dividends of more than £28m** to its two shareholders Abellio and Serco after the train operator's pre-tax profit neared the £40m mark. [www.insidermedia.com/insider/national/124883-profit-nears-40m-northern-rail](http://www.insidermedia.com/insider/national/124883-profit-nears-40m-northern-rail)
24. **Centre for Cities** has published a briefing on the **Government's Local Growth Deals** funding LEP schemes. Over half the £2bn total is allocated to transport projects, though much of this is rebadging existing funding commitments. [www.centreforcities.org/assets/files/2014/14-07-22%20Growth%20Deals%20Briefing.pdf](http://www.centreforcities.org/assets/files/2014/14-07-22%20Growth%20Deals%20Briefing.pdf)
25. ippr report **“How Tackling Climate Change Can Deliver Better Living Standards and Shared Prosperity”** [www.ippr.org/assets/media/publications/pdf/a-brighter-future-tackling-climate-change-report\\_Aug2014.pdf](http://www.ippr.org/assets/media/publications/pdf/a-brighter-future-tackling-climate-change-report_Aug2014.pdf)
26. DfT has published the **recommendations of its Transport Resilience Review**, an independent study of all modes of transport and their ability to function in a wide range of extreme weather events. [www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-resilience-review-recommendations](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-resilience-review-recommendations)
27. **An ippr study** suggests that **bus services outside London need better regulation**. Since 1986, overall bus use outside London has fallen by 32.5%, while rising 99% in London. [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-28934854](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-28934854)

28. **Transport Direct** has been closed down: it is understood that updates to **The Traveline** have effectively made Transport Direct redundant, notably that The Traveline's journey planner can now plan journeys across the whole country, and not simply within each region. It also has mobile phone apps with journey planning and real time information. [www.transportdirect.info/Web2/downloads/closedownletter.pdf](http://www.transportdirect.info/Web2/downloads/closedownletter.pdf)

## Adverts

29. **LiftShare** has celebrated its 16th anniversary with a new website, the creations of "Lift Share Week" and the launch of a blog: see [www.liftshare.com](http://www.liftshare.com) [www.LiftshareWeek.com](http://www.LiftshareWeek.com) and [blog.liftshare.com](http://blog.liftshare.com)

30. **Newcastle Cycling Campaign is using Localgiving to raise funds:** From 10:00am on 14 October 2014, all online donations up to £10 made to Newcastle Cycling Campaign will be doubled: <https://localgiving.com/charity/newcycling> and it will continue until the 31st January 2015 or when the pot runs out - whichever is first.

31. **Recyke y'bike** has opened a **second branch at 25 North Road, Durham** (by bus station) selling a range of bikes refurbished at the workshops in Byker, and also a range of accessories and parts – both new and second hand - and a servicing and repair facility. Volunteers are needed to help run this new shop, see [www.recyke-y-bike.org/](http://www.recyke-y-bike.org/) to find out more about volunteering.

## Contacts

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## NECTAR

NECTAR, the North East Combined Transport Activists Roundtable, is an open, voluntary, umbrella body, established to provide a forum in which the many organisations with an interest in sustainable transport in all its forms can develop a co-ordinated view on contemporary transport issues. NECTAR provides opportunity for the exchange of news, studies and information.

The NECTAR area of interest covers the North East of England from the North Sea coast to the Pennines and from Scotland to North Yorkshire. NECTAR provides a voice for dialogue with government, transport providers, transport users and similar bodies concerned with transport and related policy and practice locally, nationally and internationally.

Membership of NECTAR is open to organisations which:

- support the use of sustainable transport and sustainable changes to the transport infrastructure
- broadly support integrated transport and land use policies which reduce the need to travel
- promote better provision for public transport, walking and cycling
- seek to minimise any negative environmental or social impacts of transport, whilst maximising accessibility, safety, good health and quality of life for all
- NECTAR is one of a national network of Transport Activists' Roundtables working together with the Campaign for Better Transport, railfuture and similar national bodies that share the core aim to promote sustainable transport.

NECTAR executive committee members currently include Campaign to Protect Rural England (North East), CTC - the national cycling charity, Durham Coastliners, Friends of the Earth (North of England and Newcastle/Gateshead), Living Streets Tyneside Area, railfuture northeast, Saltburn Line Rail Users Group, Tyne & Wear Older People's Transport Forum, Tyne & Wear Public Transport Users Group and the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership, but all are welcome to participate.