

# ECCLES STATION

# NEWS

FEBRUARY 2011

NEWS

**Civil engineering work will affect Eccles** for up to twenty weeks from the end of March. 'Four bridges' footbridge, Wellington Road Bridge and Albert Road Bridge will all be demolished and replaced with higher bridges to make room for the catenaries needed for overhead electric power on the railway. The two new road bridges will be stronger to support the weights of (those far too big) lorries that come through our town.

Vehicular traffic diversions will take place – **buses that cross Albert Road Bridge will need to take alternative routes.** Access to the industrial estate will be maintained during the works and temporary provision made for pedestrians to cross the railway. Detailed planning of the operation is in hand and Eccles Station News will keep you informed.

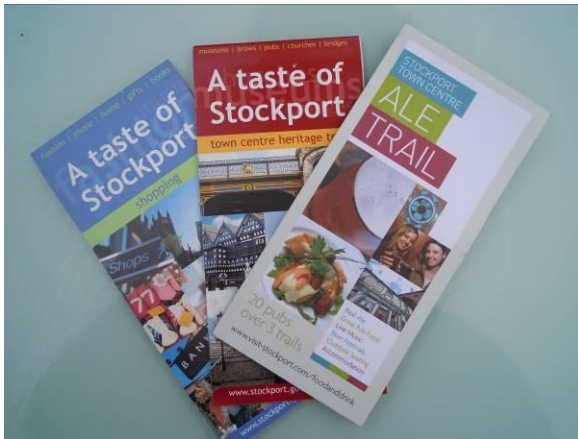
*Our next **Eccles station tidy up day** will be on Sunday February 6th at 11.00. If you have some spare time then do come along to help out.*

Minister for decentralisation, Greg Clark, is looking for suggestions for **rules and regulations that could be removed to help deliver better transport** and other services under the Sustainable Communities Act.

Any suggestions you might have can be made at the website:

<http://barrierbusting.communities.gov.uk> (note: there is no **www** prefix)

*The old town centre in **Stockport** is a delight to visit, (and was last month's recommended day out). If you haven't been yet make a point of it. There is plenty to do and **Stockport council now produces three very good free leaflets.** They are available from the racks in the booking hall at Stockport station.*



The leaflets cover SHOPPING, HERITAGE TRAIL and ALE TRAIL.

Stockport scores well on all these aspects. There are a surprising number of very fine pubs!

*Courtesy of J E Rayner*

**\*\*\* Good news – Arriva trains Wales resumed the club 55 offer from January 9<sup>th</sup> and it runs until the 9<sup>th</sup> April.** For £15 you can buy a one month return ticket to any station on their network provided that you are aged 55 or over. You can buy these tickets at Eccles station - and a small supplement covers you to Manchester Piccadilly or to Newton le Willows to catch the Arriva train. See <http://www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk/club55> for full details.

Suggestions from the editor:–

**Conwy, Llandudno and Shrewsbury** are well worth visiting and there are suggested itineraries at [www.freccles.org.uk](http://www.freccles.org.uk) under 100 days out from Eccles Station. **Ludlow** – this is a delightful and busy old market town with a historic castle. **Cardiff** – capital of Wales with galleries and museums, and the impressive Victorian Cardiff Castle is not far from the station. **Tenby** – two beaches at this lovely seaside town in Pembrokeshire (like Cornwall without the tourists!), or **Llandrindod Wells** if you like quiet places. **Church Stretton** for hill walking. Enough for now!

*Unfortunately there is **no news yet of First Trans-Pennine Express repeating the club 55 offer!***

**The qualifying age for the National Concessionary Travel Pass (Bus pass in plain) will gradually increase over the next few years.** This change started in April 2010 with an increase to age 61 for both sexes and will continue to increase in step until it reaches the age of 68 years for both men and women. If you already have the pass then you are not affected by this change. There is an online calculator that allows you to work out when you can get the pass at <http://pensions-service.direct.gov.uk/en/state-pension-age-calculator/home.asp>

**With your pass, you can travel on the trains for free between 9.30am and midnight Monday to Friday, and all day at weekends and on public holidays.** Before 9.30am Monday to Friday, you can travel for half the current standard fare. Your pass is valid only for journeys which begin and end within the Greater Manchester rail boundary. **You cannot use your pass on trains outside Greater Manchester.**

For full details about the pass and its validity see:

[http://www.gmpcte.com/journey\\_planning/tickets\\_low\\_fares\\_over60.cfm?submenuheader=1](http://www.gmpcte.com/journey_planning/tickets_low_fares_over60.cfm?submenuheader=1)

## ***TIMETABLE PATTERN FOR ECCLES STATION (ii)***

*This review deals with departures in the Liverpool direction only. The details apply until 21<sup>st</sup> May when the summer timetable comes in.*

*Monday – Saturday: The first train is at 05.46 then the basic scheduling is that trains depart **hourly to Liverpool Lime Street from 07.46 until 22.46.** The last train to Liverpool is at 23.16 in the evening.*

*There are extra trains at rush hour. In the morning these are at 06.16, 07.16 and 08.16 and in the afternoon the additional trains are at 17.16 and 18.11 – this latter one does not call at Patricroft, Earlstown, Whiston or Edge Hill.*

**All trains (save that one) call at all stations giving the following approximate journey times:**

<i>Patricroft</i>	<i>03mins</i>
<i>Newton-le-Willows</i>	<i>15mins</i>
<i>Earlstown</i>	<i>18mins</i>
<i>St Helens Junction</i>	<i>23mins</i>
<i>Lea Green</i>	<i>26mins</i>
<i>Rainhill</i>	<i>30mins</i>
<i>Whiston</i>	<i>33mins</i>
<i>Huyton</i>	<i>37mins</i>
<i>Roby</i>	<i>39mins</i>
<i>Broad Green</i>	<i>42mins</i>
<i>Wavertree Technology Park</i>	<i>45mins</i>
<i>Edge Hill</i>	<i>48mins</i>
<i>Liverpool Lime Street</i>	<i>57mins</i>

*The last train back from Liverpool Lime Street departs at 23.16 picking up at all the above stations to arrive back in Eccles at 00.08.*

*Change at Newton-le-Willows for connections to **Warrington (Bank Quay), Frodsham, Helsby, Chester, and North Wales** stations. There is an 11min wait on the same platform if you use the xx.46 trains to Newton.*

***On Sundays the trains run hourly from 09.00 until 23.00 in the evening missing out Patricroft and Edge Hill stations. Again, change at Newton-le Willows for Chester and North Wales (15min wait on same platform). The last train back from Lime Street is 23.01 arriving in Eccles at 23.49.***

## FARE BARGAIN.

### NORTHERN DUO TICKET.

A **DUO TICKET** gives you one adult day return ticket **and a second half price adult day return ticket** when two adults are travelling together. This means a saving of 25% on what you would normally pay. For example Manchester Piccadilly to Buxton would normally be £8.20 day return each (not bad anyway!) but the Duo Ticket is only £12.30 – a saving of £4.10. This is not a limited offer – duos are permanently available Northern tickets. The duo tickets are available for certain lines only. From Manchester these are the lines to Buxton and to Southport. You can buy the tickets at Eccles when the booking office is open and also buy a day return to Manchester to start on your duo route. Treat a friend to a day out! Suggestions – Southport, with Lord Street Shopping or a stroll to the beach (the sea might be too far!). Also Whaley Bridge for a walk or elegant Buxton - take a look at [www.freccles.org.uk](http://www.freccles.org.uk) for some suggestions as to itineraries.

## BOOK REVIEW

**‘LIVERPOOL & MANCHESTER RAILWAY OPERATIONS 1831 – 1845’** by Thomas J. Donaghy. ISBN 0715357050. David & Charles, Newton Abbot.

Not a new book, it was published in 1972 (so probably not in print) but an important one. It is in Eccles Library Reserve Stock.

Making the point that the L&M could well have been called **Britain’s Great Experimental Railway**, the book gives a well researched, thorough survey of all aspects of the working of this historical railway – permanent way, rolling stock, finances, freight operations, passenger operations, accidents, safety developments, employee policies, system growth and eventual amalgamation with its various branches and the Grand Junction Railway. There are ample data tables covering profits, dividends, locomotives and Acts of Parliament.

Essential reading for transport and local historians, but those with a general interest in railways might want to take a look too.

# A DAY OUT BY TRAIN!

## No. 50 CHESTER – SOME REAL ALE PUBS

If you like the idea of real ale (forget keg rubbish), good food and historic inns then Chester is hard to beat. Treat yourself too - during the day you can combine this with shopping, visits to Museums, an afternoon at the races, or a boat ride on the Dee.

SHORT EASY.

ARCHITECTURE, SHOPS, PUBS, FOOD,

MUSEUMS, BOAT TRIPS

**RAIL FARE: £14.50 day return\***

**Fifty**

**CHESTER-SOME REAL ALE PUBS.**

Catch the stopping train to Newton-Le-Willows and change there to catch the Llandudno/North Wales train soon after on the same platform. Alight at Chester Station.

Leave the Station and go ahead between the Queens Hotel and the Town Crier. *Notice the elegant hotel and once across the road look back to see the impressive Italianate façade of Chester General. It was opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 1848 built by the famous railway contractor Thomas Brassey.*

Continue down the road, which has many hotels, and cross the Canal Bridge. *To your left you see The Steam Mill and the shot tower.*

Descend the steps on the left to 'The Old Harkers Arms'. U-turn to your left, and follow the canal towpath into Chester. *(The Old Harkers Arms has a selection of well-kept real ales and has a good menu.)*

On your left you pass 'The Frog and Nightingale' *(real ale and food)* and go under a bridge. A little further and take the path going left from the canal bank to a set of wooden steps up to the wall.

At the top of the steps go left along the wall. *On your right is Chester Cathedral.* Then cross the bridge over Eastgate *On this bridge is the Victoria Jubilee Clock (1897).*

Descend the steps onto Eastgate and turn left past the front of the Grosvenor Hotel. A short way along Eastgate you will see a sign on the right for 'Ye Olde Boot Inn 1643'. *Go up the steps onto the row to visit this one. (Classic Samuel Smith's real ales and food. It's not a pub for tall people though!)*

Continue along Eastgate Street to the stone pillar. Turn left to go down Bridge Street.

Half way down at the crossroads is the Chester Heritage Centre; on the right is 'The Falcon' and down the street on the right is the Grosvenor Museum with many Roman artefacts. *(The Falcon is a half timbered pub; it serves Sam Smith real ales and good food. Well worth a visit)*

Continue down Bridge Street towards the River. On the right up a flight of stone steps is 'The Brewery Tap' at number 52.

*This is the home of The Spitting Feathers Brewery. When I opened the door I thought I'd gone to heaven! In a Jacobean hall there is range of well-kept microbrewery ales and an excellent menu of freshly prepared food served.*

Continue down to 'The Bear and Billet' on the right. *This is a half-timbered old pub offering good pub food and serving well kept Okell's Isle of Man beers!*  
[OPTION: At this point you may retrace your steps through the centre. *Is that a challenge?*]

Otherwise go through the Bridgegate *Take a look at the bridge and the Roman symbols of justice and power on the Bridgegate.*

Turn right, and then right again onto the walls.

Continue along past the Watch Tower. *There is now a fine view of the River Dee. On the right is the pleasant quayside where one can hire rowing boats or take the tourist boats along the river, and also the suspension bridge.*

Continuing, down on your left is 'The Albion'. You may wish to visit this – *real ales, range of whiskies, and food.*

Eventually you will come once again to the wooden steps near the Cathedral. Descend these to the canal bank to return towards Chester General station.

On the left of the canal you will see the Mill Hotel. *This serves a good selection of real ales and an extensive menu of good food.*

Back at Chester General Station catch a train to Newton le Willows and change there for Eccles.

**MAP OS 1:50 000 sheet 119  
Atlas Cheshire.**

**Chester A-Z.**

**Philip's Street**

***Why not join Freccles?*** It is only £5 a year and this contribution helps us to improve the gardens and tubs at the station as well as to campaign for a better station and services.

To find out more about **FRECCLES** or to make contact see our **website:** [www.freccles.org](http://www.freccles.org) or e mail us at [info@freccles.org.uk](mailto:info@freccles.org.uk)

