

# TOGETHER, WE'RE GOING PLACES

## Hello and welcome to our March stakeholder newsletter.

This month's edition reflects the scale and diversity of activity taking place across TransPennine Express, from industry recognition and engineering progress to community partnerships, youth engagement and preparations for a busy spring period.

We were incredibly proud to secure three major honours at the Rail Business Awards, including Rail Business of the Year and Wellbeing in Rail, alongside the recognition of Industry Leader of the Year. These awards are a tribute to the hard work, professionalism and resilience of colleagues across the business, and to the progress we continue to make together.

Engineering and fleet resilience remain central to our focus. In this issue, Paul Staples shares insight into how we are strengthening reliability across our existing fleets while preparing for the next generation of rolling stock. Alongside this, we marked an important milestone with the first Class 802 unit fitted with new external decals, reinforcing our visible commitment to delivering consistent, dependable services.

We are also continuing to invest in community partnerships and social value. From strengthening our work with the RNLI on rail and water safety awareness, to supporting young people through the Active Travel Ambassador Programme, the Bishop Line safety and careers event, and new careers initiatives in the Scottish Borders, we are demonstrating how the railway can play a positive role far beyond transport alone.

At the same time, we are preparing carefully for significant planned engineering work across the network to support long-term improvements, while maintaining clear communication and support for customers during disruption.

Finally, it has been encouraging to see continued recognition for our stations and partners, from Stalybridge's success at the Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards to the HEY! Volunteers being shortlisted in the VisitEngland Tourism Superstar Awards.

As always, progress across our network is made possible through strong collaboration with partners, stakeholders and communities. Thank you for your continued engagement and support as we focus on delivering a safer, more reliable and more sustainable railway in the North of England and into Scotland.



**Chris Jackson**  
Managing Director of  
TransPennine Express

## TransPennine Express celebrates triple win at major rail industry awards



**TransPennine Express is celebrating a standout evening after securing three major honours at the prestigious Rail Business Awards, held on Thursday 19 February in Manchester.**

The train operator was recognised for its leadership, customer focus and commitment to colleague wellbeing, marking an important milestone in its continued transformation.

Managing Director Chris Jackson was named Industry Leader of the Year, acknowledging his role in guiding the organisation through a period of sustained improvement and renewed focus on performance and delivery.

TransPennine Express was also awarded Rail Business of the Year, reflecting strengthened operational performance, investment in accessibility and community partnerships, and ongoing work to provide more reliable, sustainable and passenger-centred services across the North of England and into Scotland.

Completing the trio of accolades, the company received the Wellbeing in Rail award, recognising its continued efforts to support colleague mental health and wellbeing and to foster a positive, supportive working environment.



**Speaking after the ceremony, Chris said:** *"I'm incredibly proud of our colleagues who work tirelessly every day to support customers, partners, stakeholders and each other. These awards belong to all of them. They show just how far we've come and how committed we are to building a railway that puts people first."*

# Stalybridge Station celebrates repeat success at Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards



**Stalybridge railway station has once again been recognised at the Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards Evening, reaffirming its reputation as one of the region's standout stations. The station was presented with the Chris Dale TravelWatch Award for Larger Stations, an accolade it has now won on multiple occasions, highlighting the continued pride and care shown at the station.**

The award recognises stations that combine strong operational standards with excellent passenger facilities and a welcoming environment. Judges praised Stalybridge for its historic character, ongoing investment in infrastructure and passenger amenities, and the station's role as a destination in its own right – not least due to its much-loved Station Buffet.

The awards ceremony took place on Thursday 5 February, with representatives from TransPennine Express and partner organisations in attendance.

**Vicky Cropper-Clarke, Regional Development Manager, TransPennine Express, said:** “We’re incredibly proud to see Stalybridge Station recognised once again at the Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards. This award is a real credit to the station colleagues who take so much pride in creating a welcoming, safe and well-maintained environment for passengers every day. Stalybridge is a key station on our network, and achievements like this show what can be delivered when investment, teamwork and local pride come together.”

**John Hulme BEM, President and Founder of Cheshire Best Kept Stations, added:** “Stalybridge receiving this honour would have meant a great deal to Chris Dale, in whose memory the award is given. I was fortunate to visit the station with him several times and saw for myself how highly he regarded the welcome offered by the staff. Very well done, Stalybridge.”

## Supporting Young People to Champion Active and Sustainable Travel



**TransPennine Express is continuing to support young people across the region to develop lifelong habits around active and sustainable travel, through its ongoing partnership with Modeshift and the Active Travel Ambassador (ATA) Programme.**

On 24 February, TransPennine Express provided return rail travel for pupils from St Augustine's RC School in Scarborough, enabling them to attend the Campaign Junction event in York. The event brought together secondary school students from across North Yorkshire and York to present their travel behaviour change campaigns to a panel of experts.

The ATA Programme empowers young people to design and deliver projects that encourage walking, cycling, public transport use, and other sustainable travel choices for the school journey. Now in its fourth year, the programme supports around 40 schools in Yorkshire and more than 100 nationally, helping students develop leadership, communication and environmental awareness skills.

Campaign Junction events play a vital role in this work, giving students the opportunity to pitch their ideas and secure up to £250 in funding to deliver their projects locally.

**Graham Meiklejohn, Head of Regional Development, Stakeholders and Communities at TransPennine Express, said:** “We’re really proud to support the Active Travel Ambassador Programme and help young people access opportunities like Campaign Junction, enabling students to share their ideas, build confidence, and make a real difference in their communities. Encouraging sustainable travel from a young age supports both environmental goals and long-term behavioural change.”

# In Conversation with Paul Staples

Engineering, Safety and Sustainability Director, TransPennine Express

Delivering a safe and reliable railway across the North of England and into Scotland depends heavily on the strength and resilience of the fleet. From day-to-day maintenance through to long-term rolling stock strategy, engineering sits at the heart of performance.

We spoke to Paul Staples about fleet reliability, infrastructure pressures and how TransPennine Express is preparing for the next phase of investment.



## Reliability as the foundation of a great railway

Paul is clear that a successful railway relies on dependable trains.

*“Service reliability is everything for our customers,” he explains. “We know that the reliability of our rolling stock and of the infrastructure that it runs on are the dominant influences on overall service reliability. So many other things influence our customers’ journey experience, of course, but I know that if we consistently provide the right number of carriages, in the right place, at the right time, we give ourselves the best possible platform for punctuality, consistency and customer confidence.”*

Recent months have demonstrated how train service performance is affected by rolling stock and infrastructure faults, planned engineering activity and wider network problems. Within TPE’s rolling stock stable its Class 185 and Class 397 fleets in particular require sustained reliability focus.

*“Alongside our long-established routine maintenance and performance management processes we have drawn on the strength, ambition and resources of the growing DFTO family to deploy bold plans to strengthen the fundamental maintenance arrangements and technical resilience of our rolling stock fleets. We are investing in additional resources and facilities to keep trains in better condition and attain continuous reliability growth. We are co-funding with our Class 185 suppliers far more ambitious technical enhancements to those trains than ever before. We are working with the owners of our Class 397 trains to radically streamline the routine maintenance workload, allowing us to focus on what really matters to keep trains safe, reliable and available for service,” Paul says. “I am pleased with the progress so far but our ambition is higher. I know that by correcting longstanding oddities in the maintenance arrangements of the Class 397 fleets and by ruthlessly pursuing continuous improvement in Class 185 reliability we can ensure that those fleets deliver the required service consistently. I do not accept the inevitability of ‘bad days’ and I won’t stop until we have made them an infrequent oddity or a thing of the past.”*

Relentlessly chasing down the causes of cancellations and delays and protecting peak time capacity remain key priorities, particularly on core commuter corridors into Manchester and across the Pennines but equally importantly on our longer distance Anglo-Scottish services providing critical links between Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh and valued population centres en route between those cities.

## Managing through heavy engineering activity

The scale of infrastructure delivery across the North continues to shape operations. Major programmes, including the Transpennine Route Upgrade, are essential to unlocking long-term improvements, but they also place additional strain on day-to-day resilience.

*“The major programmes in the North and their associated investment levels are fabulous to behold but of course it means that Engineering Access to deliver those upgrades is at a level we haven’t seen before,” Paul notes. “It’s an investment in a great future but while it happens it means tighter turnaround times, more diversionary routes and less margin for error.”*

In this context, fleet performance becomes even more critical.

*“While the railway infrastructure is being upgraded, the trains themselves have to be all the more robust as it may not be as easy to get them to depot or to assist them in service as it would normally be. My rolling stock delivery team stays close to our project management and service planning specialists to ensure that maintenance regimes, overnight servicing and in-service fault response are all arranged to support the ever-changing service patterns,” Paul notes, “The best and right place for a train is in service, delivering miles of smiles for our customers and I need to ensure that we deliver the out-of-service care to our trains as efficiently and quickly as possible, but I also know that there is a certain level of good quality downtime that the trains require in order to stay fit for the long term in what is an exciting but highly complex environment.”*

Continued overleaf

The focus is not only on keeping services running during disruption, but also on ensuring that safety and compliance remain assured at all times.

### Preparing for the next generation of rolling stock

Alongside improving existing fleets, TransPennine Express is competitively procuring new rolling stock designed to exploit infrastructure upgrades and meet evolving passenger expectations.

*“These trains will take advantage of electrification, improve reliability and offer a step-change in accessibility and onboard environment,”* Paul explains. *“They are being designed with long-term sustainability and operational flexibility in mind. The new trains are a further example of the immense investment that is being made in the transport network in the North”*

At the same time, significant work continues across the current fleet. This includes overhaul programmes, interior refresh activity and reliability growth plans across TPE’s Class 185, 397 and 802 fleets.

*“TPE is excited about delivering the new trains which are a vital part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade but we are not just waiting for them to arrive. We are investing in the fleet we have now to ensure customers see tangible improvements.”*

### Safety and resilience in a changing climate

As Engineering, Safety and Sustainability Director, Paul’s remit extends beyond rolling stock delivery and performance.

*“The safety of our services is so, so critical to us,”* he says. *“No service operates unless it meets all the safety requirements. If it isn’t safe to do, we don’t do it. That principle never shifts.”*

He also highlights the growing influence of climate change on infrastructure and operations.

*“Climate change is now an operational reality - heavier rainfall, drainage challenges and extreme weather events such as ‘named storms’ occur more frequently than ever before. The whole railway industry is now pulling hard together on this to understand how we adapt and invest in our systems, processes, equipment and maintenance strategies to keep the railway running safely as climate patterns change. The progressive integration of the industry, bringing track and train together, eliminating previous boundaries between organisations, is certainly helping. We are having conversations now that would have been more difficult a few years ago, and which will keep the railway running properly as our environment changes.”*

### Looking ahead

Paul’s outlook is pragmatic but optimistic.

*“We’ve worked hard to stabilise performance and begin the journey of reinforcing our engineering, safety and sustainability strategies for the emerging railway environment in the North. The next steps achieve sustained, continuous improvement, building reliability and resilience into the system so that as the wider investment in the region delivers, our customers experience consistently high performance, not volatility.”*

### Priorities for the year ahead include:

- Continued reliability growth across existing fleets
- Supporting infrastructure delivery while protecting performance
- Preparing for the phased introduction of new rolling stock
- Strengthening climate resilience and sustainability measures

*“My ambition is straightforward but uncompromising,”* Paul concludes. *“To provide a fleet that is safe, dependable and ready for the future railway the North deserves.”*

## TransPennine Kitchen’s year in numbers!

**Our onboard hospitality offer continues to go from strength to strength, with 2025 marking a full year of growth under the TransPennine Kitchen brand.**

Over the past year we have consolidated our catering offer under TransPennine Kitchen, bringing together the Coast to Coast menu and enhanced First Class services into a consistent, higher-quality onboard experience.

Seasonal menus, regional supplier partnerships and product activations have helped keep the offer fresh and locally rooted.

### The year in numbers

**Demand for onboard products has remained strong:**

- 18,131 Original Baker products, made in Malton, have been issued, including 11,806 Hog Roast sausage rolls, 1,208 Festive Rolls and 5,117 mince pies
- 11,166 Pie Demand sausage rolls, made in Carlisle station, were issued,
- 19,284 Regional Breakfasts served, making it our most popular dish
- 13,097 TransPennine Pales (brewed in partnership with Northern Monk) and 6,752 Lancaster Brewery beers were issued onboard

We have worked with Rail Gourmet to develop 23 dishes across four menus – Spring/Summer, Autumn/Winter, Christmas and Lancashire – ensuring variety and seasonality across the year.

Customer feedback has been equally encouraging with 97% satisfaction with service provided by the host, 91% likely to travel in First Class again and 88% satisfied with value for money.

In addition, 3,778 customer postcards have been completed, providing valuable insight into the onboard experience and areas for further improvement



### Emma Teal, Head of Inclusive Customer Experience & Partnerships at TransPennine Express, said:

*“TransPennine Kitchen represents a real step forward in how we deliver onboard hospitality. By working with regional suppliers, investing in our Customer Hosts and listening closely to customer feedback, we are creating an experience that feels both high-quality and authentically reflective of the food and drink across our network. The strength of our satisfaction scores shows that customers value the consistency, choice and care our colleagues bring to every journey.”*

Looking ahead to 2026, the focus remains on quality and consistency, enhanced colleague training and the continued evolution of our seasonal menus, including development of the upcoming Spring/Summer offer in collaboration with partners.

# Working Together to Keep Journeys Safe: TransPennine Express and RNLI Partnership

**TransPennine Express is continuing to strengthen its commitment to community safety through its partnership with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), by announcing the launch of a new family-friendly Water & Rail Safety education booklet.**

The booklet, which has been provided alongside this issue of the Stakeholder Newsletter, has been developed jointly by both organisations and brings together vital rail and water safety messages in a practical and engaging format, designed especially for families and young people.

Every year, TransPennine Express carries thousands of customers from inland towns and cities to coastal destinations for work, leisure and holidays. At the same time, the RNLI works tirelessly to save lives at sea, with the majority of those they rescue being visitors rather than local residents. This shared audience makes the partnership a natural fit.

The new booklet reflects this shared responsibility, helping customers enjoy their journeys safely from station to seaside.

**Fiona Fell, Deputy Chair of the RNLI, said:** *“This is an excellent family-friendly booklet produced by TransPennine Express. It helps families have fun on their journey while also learning about potential hazards at the beach and understanding important safety messages, such as how to float if they get into difficulty in the water.”*

*“We’re very grateful that this resource is now available. As a charity, we rely on the kind donations of the public to fund our lifesaving services, from training and equipment to supporting our volunteers. Highlighting what we can achieve together across coastal communities is extremely important, and we’re thankful for this partnership.”*

Designed to be both informative and engaging, the booklet combines clear rail safety guidance with essential water safety advice, real-life rescue stories and interactive activities, helping ensure key messages are memorable and accessible for younger audiences.

**Andrew Watkins, Community & Development Manager at TransPennine Express, said:** *“We carry thousands of families and leisure travellers to coastal destinations every year, so helping people stay safe is a responsibility we take seriously. Working with the RNLI allows us to share important messages in a positive, practical way, supporting customers from the moment they step onto our network right through to their time by the sea.”*



## Train enthusiast Mylo enjoys behind-the-scenes visit to Newcastle depot

**Nine-year-old train enthusiast Mylo enjoyed a special behind-the-scenes visit to the TransPennine Express depot at Newcastle, gaining an exclusive look at the work that keeps trains running across the network.**

Mylo, from Durham and a passionate train fan who shares his interest online, visited the depot with his mum for a guided tour led by TransPennine Express colleagues. During the visit he met members of the depot team, saw how crews prepare trains for service and even travelled onboard a Class 802 Nova 1 on the 13:02 departure from Newcastle.

Reflecting on the day, **JJ Fletcher, Area Customer Experience Manager, said:** *“It was an absolute pleasure to show TikTok star Mylo around Newcastle depot with his mum and give him a behind-the-scenes tour of life on the railway. Seeing his excitement and passion for trains made it a very special visit for everyone involved.”*



Mylo added that he “had the best day seeing the depot and going on a TransPennine Express train,” and colleagues at the depot were delighted to share their experiences and knowledge throughout the visit.



## TransPennine Express supports Scottish Borders railway careers programme

**TransPennine Express is proud to be supporting the Borders Community Rail Partnership with £5k of funding to help them deliver an ambitious railway careers programme for young people across the Scottish Borders.**

The project is a comprehensive series of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) aligned workshops designed to inspire and inform secondary school pupils about the wide range of careers available within the rail industry. The programme will be delivered across all ten secondary schools in the Scottish Borders, with additional schools from Midlothian and the city of Edinburgh also included to extend regional reach and impact.

Through interactive sessions, real-life case studies and engagement with industry professionals, students will gain a realistic understanding of rail careers, from customer service and train operations to engineering, technology, sustainability and corporate roles. Workshops will also explore apprenticeships, graduate schemes and school-leaver pathways, helping young people understand how to turn ambition into opportunity.

The funding will primarily support transport for senior pupils and facilitate off-site educational workshops at the Great Tapestry of Scotland, alongside employer engagement activity and learning resources. This ensures pupils can access meaningful, hands-on experiences that connect classroom learning with real-world careers.

The programme is aligned with the Scottish Government's Developing the Young Workforce strategy, supporting employability skills, strengthening links between education and employers, and encouraging positive post-school destinations. Importantly, it also aims to challenge stereotypes and promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the rail sector.

**Andrew Watkins, Community & Development Manager at TransPennine Express, said:** "We are delighted to support the Borders Community Rail Partnership with this funding.

*This programme aligns with Developing the Young Workforce ambitions, and helps build a future talent pipeline by connecting students directly with real rail professionals and real opportunities. By investing in projects like this, we're investing in the long-term future of our communities and our railway."*

The careers workshops will introduce pupils to roles such as train driver, conductor, station assistant, rolling stock technician, signaller, planner, HR specialist and cybersecurity expert, alongside showcasing the railway's contribution to sustainability and decarbonisation. Interactive elements, including journey-planning challenges and speed networking with rail professionals, will help bring the industry to life in an engaging and practical way.



## New decals to help customers boarding trains

**The first TransPennine Express Class 802 trains have been fitted with new external decals designed to help customers identify which part of the train they need to board.**

The decals provide clear, easy-to-spot signposts on the outside of the train, highlighting where customers can find key facilities such as accessible toilets, cycle storage and First Class accommodation before they board.

By helping customers position themselves on the platform in advance, the initiative provides wider performance benefits for the wider rail network, by helping to manage dwell times at stations and contribute to improved punctuality. It also aims to enhance the overall customer experience by making important information more visible and intuitive.

The updated decals will now be introduced across the wider Class 802 fleet, with installation taking place during scheduled maintenance to avoid service disruption.

**Dominic Ellis, Performance Projects Manager at TransPennine Express, said:**

*"These new decals are about making life easier for our customers. By clearly marking where facilities such as accessible toilets, cycle spaces and First Class are located, we can help people board more smoothly and confidently. Small improvements like this support on-time departures and a better overall journey experience."*

# Changes to National Rail refund rules from April 2026

**From 1 April 2026, a new version of the National Rail Conditions of Travel (NRCoT) will come into effect, introducing changes to the refund rules for walk-up tickets.**

The updated NRCoT (Version 7), issued by Rail Delivery Group, amends the conditions under which certain walk-up tickets can be refunded.

## What's changing?

If you buy an Anytime or Off-Peak ticket dated for a specific day, you can apply for a refund up to 23:59 the day before travel.

From the day your ticket becomes valid for travel, it will normally be non-refundable, even if you don't use it.

## When you can still get a refund?

You can still apply for a refund after the day of travel if:

- Your train was cancelled or disrupted, and you chose not to travel
- You started your journey but could not complete it because of the disruption
- Exceptional circumstances meant you could not travel

## **Andrew McClements, Customer Experience & Transformation Director at TransPennine Express, said:**

"Clear and transparent information is essential to building trust with customers. These updates to the National Rail Conditions of Travel help create greater consistency across the industry, and our focus is on ensuring colleagues feel confident explaining the changes and supporting customers with the right information at the right time."

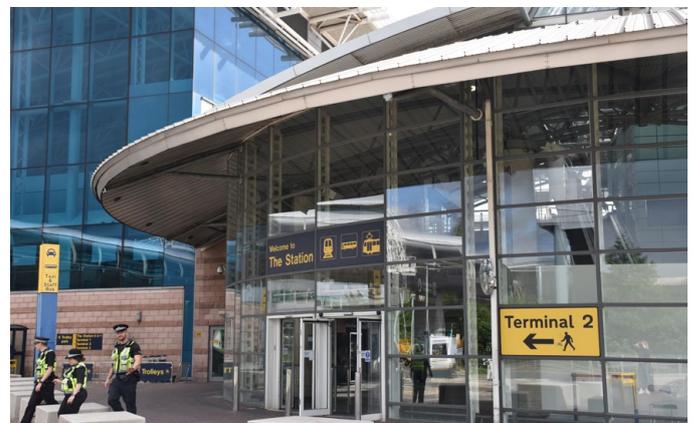
## Hull SEN students take their first rail journeys with TransPennine Express

**A group of special educational needs (SEN) students from Hull have taken their first ever journey by train after participating in a series of "Try the Train" days delivered by TransPennine Express.**

Around 25 students aged 16 to 18 from Northcott School and Sixth Form took part in the sessions, which were designed to build confidence and equip them with the practical skills needed to travel independently. For many, the return trip from Hull Paragon Interchange to Selby railway station marked the first time they had stepped onto a train.

Throughout the day, TransPennine Express colleagues supported the students at every stage of the journey – from checking departure boards and understanding service information, to navigating unfamiliar stations, identifying railway staff for assistance and learning how to stay safe on the network.

**Robert Walker, Accessibility and Equality Impact Officer at TransPennine Express, said:** *"Our Try the Train days are designed to give people the tools they need to take the next steps in their lives, whether that's accessing further education, exploring employment opportunities or simply having the confidence to travel on public transport."*



## Ticket easements support those affected by Middle East international incident

**TransPennine Express put in place temporary ticket easements for customers travelling to and from Manchester Airport, following disruption to flights serving parts of the Middle East.**

Customers travelling to Manchester Airport for flights to Middle Eastern destinations – including the UAE (Dubai), Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq and Iran – are currently being advised not to travel.

To help customers who had journeys cancelled or returned home had TransPennine Express ticket restrictions lifted on all its services from Manchester Airport to help them return home.

Customers provided proof of affected travel from the Middle East to travel, regardless of whether they held a valid ticket for that specific service or not. Station teams provided appropriate assistance to help customers complete their journeys as smoothly as possible.

**Rob Cox, Operations Director at TransPennine Express, said:** *"We know that disruption to international travel can be stressful and uncertain for customers. By providing these ticket easements on the day the international situation started, we provided as much flexibility and reassurance as possible for those affected. Our focus was on making sure people can complete their journeys safely and with the minimum additional inconvenience during what is already a challenging situation."*

## Kents Bank Station Library marks second anniversary

Although off the core TransPennine Express network, we are big supporters of The Railway Library at Kents Bank Station which has celebrated its second anniversary, marking two years since it was officially opened in January 2024 by Rail Minister Peter Hendy, then Chair of Network Rail.

More than 40 invited guests attended a birthday celebration on 3 February, where a message from Lord Hendy was shared. He said: "I was there for the inauguration, and I'm only sorry that I'm not back with you today. But bigger things are happening with the railway, at last, and public ownership and creating Great British Railways are the biggest structural changes for over 30 years and need some attention — which is why I'm not with you. I send my best wishes and congratulations to Paul and all the friends and volunteers for your noble endeavour. I hope Kents Bank goes from strength to strength, and that as you support it, you'll also watch and support the Railways Bill as it goes through Parliament, so as to create a coherent British railway again."

The celebration included the cutting of a birthday cake baked by local supporter Debbie Griffiths, alongside the opportunity for guests to explore the ever-expanding collection.

Since opening, the Library — a not-for-profit Community Interest Company run entirely by volunteers — has grown into the largest collection of railway and related books in the North outside the **National Railway Museum** in York, with more than 10,000 titles available to browse or borrow. A shop offering over 1,000 books for sale helps generate income that is reinvested directly into supporting the Library's work.

**Library Manager Dr Paul Salvesson said:** "We're a bit special in being a not-for-profit community interest company staffed entirely by volunteers. Since we opened two years ago we've developed a range of activities including monthly talks, a pop-up café offering complimentary teas and coffee, and a poetry evening."



During 2025, the Library also published two books — Northern Rail Heritage and The Loco Vanishes – Railway Mysteries from the North — with further publications planned for 2026. It works closely with neighbouring organisations including The Beach Hut Gallery and the Friends of Kents Bank Station and Foreshore, helping to strengthen the station's role as a welcoming community hub.

Looking ahead, the team plans to expand its programme of special events, attend more external events with its stall, recruit additional volunteers and grow its base of paying supporters.

**Vicky Cropper-Clarke, Regional Development Manager at TransPennine Express, said:** "Kents Bank Station Library is a fantastic example of what can be achieved when passion for rail heritage meets community spirit. It has transformed part of the station into a vibrant cultural space, attracting visitors from across the region and beyond. We're proud to support initiatives like this that celebrate railway history while strengthening the role our stations play at the heart of local communities."

In further recognition of its impact, the Library has been shortlisted in two categories at the national **Community Rail Awards**, taking place in Derby on 19 March.

The Library is open Friday to Monday, 11:00-16:00. Further details can be found at [www.stationlibrary.org.uk](http://www.stationlibrary.org.uk).

## Selby shares the love with Valentine's Day bench and coffee morning

Love was in the air at Selby station ahead of Valentine's Day, as colleagues partnered with local mental health and community support charity The Big Communi-Tea to host a special themed coffee morning and brighten up the platforms.

On Friday 13 February, volunteers from The Big Communi-Tea transformed part of the station with hand-stitched love hearts and colourful bench covers, adding a splash of warmth and creativity for customers passing through. Free tea and coffee were offered throughout the morning, creating a welcoming space for conversation and connection.

The event brought together station colleagues from TransPennine Express, alongside representatives from Communi-Tea, and two British Transport Police PCSOs who joined the occasion. The initiative reflects the shared commitment to supporting positive mental health and strengthening links between the railway and the communities it serves.



The Valentine's celebrations extended beyond Selby. On Saturday 14 February, Customer Hosts across the network handed out small chocolate love hearts and Love Hearts sweets to customers who made a purchase from the onboard retail trolley.

**Kelly Williams, Area Customer Experience Manager – Stations, added:** "The benches looked lovely and it was great to see customers stopping to chat and enjoy a cuppa. The charity is keen to work with us again, including during Mental Health Awareness Week, which shows how meaningful these small moments can be."

## Huddersfield Station takes centre stage in new More4 TV series



**Huddersfield railway station has been featured prominently in the opening episode of Britain's Favourite Railway Stations, a new television series on More4 celebrating some of the UK's most distinctive and cherished station buildings.**

Managed by TransPennine Express, Huddersfield station is showcased for its striking neoclassical architecture and rich heritage, with architect and presenter Damion Burrows exploring why it remains such an iconic landmark at the heart of the town's identity.

*"This is more than a station," Burrows says in the programme. "It's grand, imposing, it's making a statement."*

The episode also gives viewers an exclusive look behind the scenes at the £70 million redevelopment currently underway as part of the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU), a major, multi-billion-pound programme of railway improvements across the Pennines. The focus at Huddersfield is on carefully preserving the station's historic features while upgrading passenger facilities for the future.

**Scott Goddard, Area Customer Experience Manager at Huddersfield station, said:** *"It's fantastic to see Huddersfield take centre stage and we're proud of the work going on to preserve the station's unique history while creating a better experience for everyone who uses it. TRU will bring better journeys to passengers travelling across the Pennines between Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds and York."*

The programme highlights the ongoing work to protect and enhance the station's architectural character, from its grand colonnaded frontage to its ornate interior detailing, while adapting it to meet the needs of today's travellers.

Britain's Favourite Railway Stations is available to watch on More4, with Huddersfield featuring in the very first episode of the new series.



## Vote for the HEY! Volunteers in the VisitEngland Tourism Superstar Awards!

**Readers of the TransPennine Express stakeholder newsletter are encouraged to vote for the Hull and East Yorkshire (HEY!) Volunteers, who have been shortlisted in this year's VisitEngland Tourism Superstar Awards.**

Based at Hull Paragon Interchange, the HEY! Volunteers play a key role in welcoming visitors to the region, supporting the Welcome and Information Centre, major events and local attractions.

Since launching during Hull's UK City of Culture year in 2017, the programme has grown into a 2,500-strong network of local ambassadors, helping to enhance the visitor experience at one of the region's principal transport gateways.

Voting is open until Sunday 22 March 2026. You can view the shortlist and cast your vote here:

<https://visitenglandawards.secure-platform.com/tourismsuperstar/gallery?roundId=454>

We encourage partners and stakeholders to show their support for this outstanding group of volunteers and vote for them.

**Kelly Williams, Area Customer Experience Manager, said:** *"The HEY! Volunteers make a real difference at Hull Paragon Interchange. They are often the first friendly face visitors see when they arrive, and their knowledge, warmth and enthusiasm create a fantastic first impression of both the station and the wider region. We're incredibly proud to work alongside them and hope colleagues and partners will show their support in the Tourism Superstar Awards."*

With Hull Paragon Interchange serving as a major hub on the TransPennine Express network, the work of the HEY! Volunteers directly enhances the customer experience for rail passengers exploring the area.

You can find out more about the HEY! Volunteers by watching their short video and cast your vote through the link above before Sunday 22 March 2026. Let's help celebrate the volunteers who help Hull and East Yorkshire shine!



## First pint pulled at Carlisle station as heritage pub opens on the West Coast Main Line

The Scott & Brassey opened on Platform 4 following a careful £400,000 renovation of a former First Class waiting room, supported by railway funding and heritage grants. The investment ensures that one of the North West's most historic stations continues to evolve as a welcoming gateway for long-distance passengers.

For TransPennine Express customers connecting at Carlisle – whether travelling north into Scotland, south towards London, or across the Pennines – the new venue enhances the station environment, offering a high-quality and characterful space to relax before onward journeys on the West Coast Main Line.

Operated by Lancaster Brewery, the pub showcases a wide selection of locally sourced beers and spirits, including cask ales from breweries within 20 miles of Carlisle. The name pays tribute to Sir Walter Scott and Thomas Brassey, the Victorian railway engineer behind the Lancaster and Carlisle Railway.

**Hannah Clarke, Network Rail sponsor, said:** *“It’s always incredible to see these historic stations which have served their communities for so many years being restored to their best. It’s been great to work with Lancaster Brewery on this project, and we would love to hear from other local business owners with ideas on how to make these station spaces work for passengers and the community.”*

**Tim Hedley-Jones, Executive Director of the Railway Heritage Trust, added:** *“We are pleased to have supported the creation of the Scott and Brassey bar with two grants, one to Network Rail and one to the Lancaster Brewery. This is a great project which has restored a significant part of this historic station, and which celebrates Thomas Brassey, Engineer for the construction of the Lancaster and Carlisle Railway constructed in 1844.”*

**Mark Fryer, Leader of Cumberland Council, said:** *“For Network Rail and Lancaster Brewery to come together to support this innovative project—reimagining historic spaces to create the Scott and Brassey Pub, is truly amazing. We ask all residents and visitors to, of course, drink responsibly, but also to enjoy this new gem at the station.”*

The opening complements wider investment at Carlisle, including accessibility improvements and the council-led Station Gateway Project, reinforcing the station's role as a key interchange between regional and long-distance services.

Meanwhile, TransPennine Express are also progressing plans at Hull Paragon Interchange to convert the former historic ticket office and hall into a new high-quality station pub, further enhancing the customer offer at one of our key East Coast destinations.

Further updates will be shared as the refurbishment progresses and delivery timelines are confirmed.

## Transpennine Route Upgrade and Shape North Bring Communities Together Through School Rail Exchange

The Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) West Social Value team has partnered with Shape North, a creative organisation specialising in community engagement through art and design, to deliver an inspiring school exchange programme connecting communities across the Pennines.



Over two weeks, two primary schools from opposite ends of the Transpennine route were brought together, giving pupils a unique opportunity to travel by train, explore a new environment and meet peers from a completely different community. The initiative was designed to promote social inclusion, cultural awareness and confidence, while demonstrating how rail can connect people and opportunities.

30 pupils from Marsden Junior School travelled by train with TransPennine Express, changing at Mirfield before arriving in Batley and walking to Mill Lane Primary School. The day began with icebreaker activities to build friendships, followed by a collaborative railway-inspired art project led by Shape North's creative team.

A week later, pupils from Mill Lane made the return journey to Marsden to complete their artwork and learn more about the diverse careers available within major infrastructure projects such as the Transpennine Route Upgrade as well as across the railway.

For many children, the experience was particularly significant, with well over a third of the group travelling by train for the first time.

Pupils spoke enthusiastically about travelling through tunnels, spotting stadiums, sheep and rivers from the window, meeting new friends and learning how to stay safe around the railway.

**Rachel Marsden, Stakeholder & Development Manager at TransPennine Express, said:** *“Projects like this show the real power of partnership working across our network. By bringing schools together through rail, we’re not only supporting education and creativity, but also helping young people build confidence, make new friendships and see the railway as something that belongs to them.”*

# Inspiring Future Talent at the Bishop Line Rail Safety and Careers Event

TransPennine Express was proud to support the Bishop Line Community Rail Partnership's Rail Safety and Careers Event, held in early February 2026 at Locomotion, Shildon.

The two-day event brought together Year 8 and Year 10 students from local schools to learn more about rail safety, personal skills, and the wide range of career opportunities available across the rail industry. Working in partnership with Network Rail, British Transport Police, Northern, TransPennine Express and Community Rail Network, the event provided a packed programme of interactive workshops and activities.

Students took part in a carousel of sessions covering rail safety, mental wellbeing, personal skills, and career pathways.

A key highlight was the "Roles in Rail" speed chat sessions, where young people had the opportunity to speak directly with industry professionals and gain insight into different roles and career journeys. TransPennine Express was represented by **Steve Gilder, Environment Delivery Lead**, who shared his experiences and advice with students during these sessions.

Steve said: "It was great to speak directly with young people and show them how many different opportunities there are within the rail industry. Events like this help break down barriers and give students the confidence to see themselves working in rail in the future."



## March engineering works across the Hope Valley and the North-East

**Essential engineering works will be taking place across the network during March 2026 which will affect services on both the Hope Valley corridor and the East Coast Main Line.**

These works are being delivered to maintain and improve infrastructure and will require temporary alterations to some TransPennine Express services.

### Hope Valley Route – Manchester, Sheffield and Doncaster

#### Affected dates:

- Saturday 7 and Saturday 14 March
- Sunday 8, Sunday 15 and Sunday 22 March

#### Engineering works on the Hope Valley route will mean:

- No TransPennine Express services operating between Sheffield and Doncaster.
- Services diverted and not calling at Stockport.
- Manchester–Sheffield services running via alternative routes, including Huddersfield, Wakefield Kirkgate and Stalybridge (depending on the date).

Customers travelling between Sheffield and Doncaster, or to and from Stockport, are advised to use Northern services.

Journeys may take longer than usual and customers are encouraged to plan ahead and allow additional time.

### East Coast Main Line and North-East works

#### Affected weekends:

- 7–29 March 2026

Engineering works on the East Coast Main Line and in the North East will result in the following changes:

- No trains calling at Northallerton on Saturday 21 and Saturday 28 March and Sunday 8, Sunday 15, Sunday 22 and Sunday 29 March. Rail replacement buses will operate between Darlington, Northallerton and Thirsk, with additional connections via Durham and Newcastle.
- Buses replacing trains between York and Newcastle every weekend during the works. An hourly diverted LNER service will operate via the Durham Coast.
- Buses replacing trains between Middlesbrough and Redcar Central/Saltburn on selected dates.

Rail replacement services will be in place, but journey times will be extended. Customers travelling to and from the North East, including those connecting onwards to Scotland or the Humber, are strongly advised to check before travelling.

### Andy McClements, Customer Experience & Transformation Director, at TransPennine Express, said:

*"While we know engineering works can be disruptive, they are essential to maintaining and improving the railway for the long term. We are working closely with Network Rail and industry partners to keep customers moving, with clear information, rail replacement services and alternative journey options in place. We would encourage customers to plan ahead and check before they travel so they can complete their journeys with confidence."*

Full journey information and the latest updates are available at: <https://www.tpexpress.co.uk/travel-updates>

# Planned Engineering Work – March 2026

Day/Date	Stations and Route	Service Alterations
07-03-2026 to 08-03-2026	Engineering work is taking place in the Darlington area, closing all lines	<p><b>Saturday:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rail replacement buses will operate between York and Newcastle.</li> <li>• Trains to / from Redcar Central will run as normal.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sunday:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rail replacement buses will operate between:</li> <li>• York and Newcastle</li> <li>• Northallerton and Newcastle</li> <li>• Trains to / from Redcar Central will not call at Northallerton.</li> </ul>
07-03-2026 to 08-03-2026	Engineering work is taking place between Micklefield and South Milford / York, closing some lines	<p><b>TransPennine Express will operate an amended timetable between:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• York and Liverpool Lime Street</li> <li>• Manchester Victoria and Liverpool Lime Street</li> <li>• Scarborough and Manchester Airport</li> <li>• Huddersfield and Manchester Piccadilly</li> <li>• Hull and Leeds</li> <li>• Redcar Central and York</li> <li>• York and Wakefield Kirkgate</li> </ul> <p><b>Rail replacement buses</b> are available to / from Leeds and York, and to / from Leeds and Selby (provided by Northern).</p>
07-03-2026 to 08-03-2026	Engineering work is taking place between Sheffield and Manchester, closing some lines	<p><b>TransPennine Express will operate to an amended timetable between:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TransPennine Express will operate to an amended timetable between:</li> <li>• Sheffield and Manchester Piccadilly</li> <li>• Manchester Oxford Road and Liverpool Lime Street</li> <li>• Cleethorpes and Doncaster</li> <li>• You are advised to use alternative services between Doncaster and Sheffield</li> </ul>
14-03-2026 to 15-03-2026	Engineering work is taking place between York and Newcastle, closing all lines	<p><b>Rail replacement buses will operate between:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• York and Newcastle</li> <li>• Middlesbrough and Redcar Central</li> <li>• An amended timetable will run between:</li> <li>• Liverpool Lime Street and York</li> <li>• Manchester Airport and York</li> <li>• York and Middlesbrough (on Sunday services will be unable to call at Northallerton)</li> <li>• Wakefield Kirkgate and York</li> </ul>
14-03-2026 to 15-03-2026	Engineering work is taking place between Hathersage and Chinley, closing some lines	<p><b>TransPennine Express services that normally run between Cleethorpes and Liverpool Lime Street will operate to an amended timetable as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield additionally calling at Stalybridge, Mossley, Greenfield, Marsden, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, Mirfield and Wakefield Kirkgate</li> <li>• Liverpool Lime Street to Manchester Oxford Road</li> <li>• Doncaster to Cleethorpes</li> </ul> <p><b>On Saturday, the following services will not run:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 05:08 Sheffield to Liverpool Lime Street</li> <li>• 05:38 Doncaster to Liverpool Lime Street</li> </ul>
21-03-2026 to 22-03-2026	Engineering work is taking place between York and Newcastle, closing all lines.	<p><b>Rail replacement buses will operate between:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• York and Newcastle</li> <li>• Middlesbrough and Redcar Central</li> </ul> <p><b>TransPennine Express will operate an amended timetable between:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• York and Middlesbrough</li> <li>• Manchester Airport and York</li> </ul>

Day/Date	Stations and Route	Service Alterations
21-03-2026 to 22-03-2026	Engineering work is taking place between Hathersage and Chinley, closing some lines	<p><b>TransPennine Express services that normally run between Cleethorpes and Liverpool Lime Street will operate to an amended timetable as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield additionally calling at Stalybridge, Mossley, Greenfield, Marsden, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, Mirfield and Wakefield Kirkgate</li> <li>• Liverpool Lime Street to Manchester Oxford Road</li> <li>• Doncaster to Cleethorpes</li> </ul>
28-03-2026 to 29-03-2026	Engineering work is taking place between Northallerton and Newcastle, closing all lines	<p><b>Rail replacement buses will operate between York and Newcastle</b></p>
28-03-2026 to 29-03-2026	Engineering work is taking place in the Manchester area, closing some lines	<p><b>TransPennine Express will operate the following amended timetable: weekend</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liverpool Lime Street to Manchester Victoria</li> <li>• Manchester Piccadilly to Scarborough</li> <li>• Manchester Piccadilly to Redcar Central</li> <li>• Manchester Piccadilly to Hull (Saturday only: some services additionally calling at Slaithwaite, Marsden, Greenfield and Mossley)</li> <li>• Manchester Piccadilly to York (this service will not call at Normanton)</li> </ul> <p><b>Sunday only</b> - Manchester Piccadilly to Huddersfield</p>





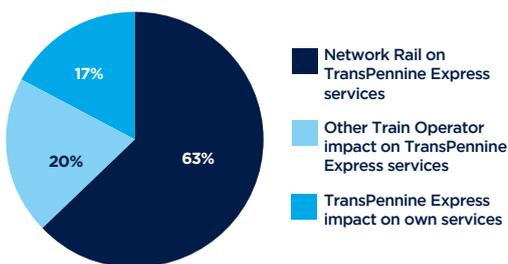
# TransPennine Express Performance

Performance Period 11 04/01/2026 - 31/01/2026

Period 11	Target	Actual
Time to 3 mins	71.06%	72.25%
Time to 15 mins	95.61%	94.34%
On day cancellations	4.05%	5.66%

Period 11	Full services removed from the plan by TransPennine Express	Partial services removed from the plan by TransPennine Express
All routes	14	22
North Route	14	22
South Route	0	0
Anglo Scottish Route	0	0

## Period 11 Delay Minutes causes



Delay Minutes Causes	Period 11 Delay Minutes	%
Network Rail on TransPennine Express services	36,995	63%
Other Train Operators impact on TransPennine Express services	11,877	20%
TransPennine Express impact on its own services	9,898	17%

Use this link to find out more about TransPennine Express performance - [Performance Transparency](#) | [About Us](#) | [TransPennine Express](#)

## Contact us

We hope you have enjoyed reading this edition of our newsletter. If you wish to contact the team or provide any feedback, we would be pleased to hear from you. Please find our details below.

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