

Dear Friend

I hope you are staying safe.

I invite you to our meeting on **Tuesday 17th June at 19:30 on Zoom**; I am targeting a finish by 20:45; definitely by 21:00.

Our next two meetings are:

- **Thursday 17th July at 19:30 on Zoom** (note, not Weds 16th).
- A Saturday in later August or early September for our annual social outing.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88450315544?pwd=d3krdCtiUHlrMExQcGtMWm1zVU9Qdz09>; alternatively join manually via <https://zoom.us/join>, then Meeting ID: 884 5031 5544 & Passcode: 910342.

If your PC doesn't have a microphone, then use the link above to open (and download, if needed) the software and, once connected, click the up arrow next to the microphone or join audio icon (bottom left) and follow the "switch to phone audio link" If you don't have a PC, tablet or Smartphone available, call one of the 3 numbers below, enter the Meeting ID [then '#'] at the first prompt; at the second prompt just press '#' and at the third prompt, enter the password [then '#']. Phone numbers to dial: 0131 460 1196 | 020 3481 5237 | 020 3481 5240.

Topics for meeting

1. Welcome
2. Metro Newsletter, including Liverpool Street redevelopment (more below)
3. Contactless (more below)
4. East West Rail (more below)
5. Wixams station (more below)
6. Nature of our Summer "social" II
7. Performance (more below)
8. Just in case
 - ECML December 2025 Timetable
 - Fares (generally)
 - Hadley Wood Toilet
 - Long Blockades
 - Written updates
9. Round table

Newsletter content

Topics for meeting	1
Metro newsletter	2
Liverpool Street redevelopment	2
Contactless extension (Project 'Oval') and fares	2
London Northwestern under charge	2
C2C over charge	3
Alternatives to Contactless	3
East West Rail and other Government commitments	3
East West Rail	3
Wixams station (near Bedford)	3
Performance	4
Cancellations over time	4
Cancellations by week / day of the week	5
Commentary	6

GTR's brands and service changes – disruption and planned engineering work	6
Local News	6
Written updates / Topics 'on hold'	6
National AGM – 5 July	6
Engineering blockade publicity	6
For the record: Performance measures	7
Can I forward this email to others?	7
Privacy, including GDPR	7
Appendix A / Performance measures	7

Metro newsletter

I particularly wanted to mention the Metro newsletter that has also been distributed today. You can read it [online](#) or [download](#) it. Key content in it includes:

- Railfuture supports Liverpool Street Station redevelopment.
- Disabled passenger rights (turn up and go)
- The nationalisation of passenger services in full swing
- London Metro Division Rail User Group news

Liverpool Street redevelopment

If you use Liverpool Street at all, then do comment on the plan; key resources include:

- [Network Rail's web pages](#), including their [register your support page](#)
- The City of London Planning [Portal](#) – you will need reference 25/00494/FULEIA.

Contactless extension (Project 'Oval') and fares

I am continuing the issues with this as time allows. This month's update includes:

- At the GTR stakeholder meeting in June I was told that GTR's northward extension of contactless use will happen in December and that it would continue to the Radlett to Luton Airport Parkway model – ie two contactless single fares and continuation of existing national rail fares. This is different from what is happening on other lines. I will follow up for confirmation.

London Northwestern under charge

From their [website](#):

June 2025 update: Following the introduction of pay as you go with contactless earlier this year, some customers have been undercharged for some journeys due to a technical issue. This issue was fixed on 8 June 2025 and customers are now paying the correct fares.

You can check if you have been charged the correct fare using the Single fare finder via the Transport for London website. Customers will not be required to make any additional payment for previously undercharged journeys. We apologise for any inconvenience this has caused.

Asked for my comments I said:

I think that in the case of an undercharge, the perfect response from a train operator would be:

0. Realistically, they are not going to continue with the undercharging.
 1. To not seek to recover the missing revenue
 2. To confess and announce a date in the near future that the 'correct' fare would be collected.
 - a. And not to just alter the fare.

It seems to me that LNR passes on #1 and fails on #2. For most of us, the heads up is just useful to have so we then don't think we've been overcharged. For a few of us, with very limited funds, that unexpected higher charge could cause that and other transactions to fail / be declined.

C2C over charge

C2C have been doing the opposite: over charging – their [website](#) and a [news article](#).

Alternatives to Contactless

If you are registered as an EMR or Northern customer you may have been contacted about a trial about to start – see, eg, the DfT [announcement](#).

This specifically notes: “Backed by government funding, the trials will use GPS-based technology to track train journeys, ensuring passengers pay the best fare for the journey they take”.

My thoughts are:

1. Presumably you’ll need a Smartphone (that is charged and has data [although Wifi only might be an option])
2. ..so keep an eye out for other options
3. .. and at least presumably normal National Rail fares will apply
4. It should be easier to overcome some of the inherent limitations of Contactless Bank Cards – most noticeably for families.

I will ask GTR if they see this as a long term alternative to Contactless.

East West Rail and other Government commitments

East West Rail received confirmation of further funding in last week’s Government Spending Review – see Community Rail’s [website](#) which also lists other commitments.

East West Rail

More generally, our key campaign objective for now is for recognition that Bedford Midland needs platforms on the Midland Mainline fast lines for EMR services, to reduce the time impact of stops there.

East West Rail has now published their “[Non-Statutory Consultation \(NSC\) update report](#)”. They observe “It is not the purpose of this update report to include detailed responses to the feedback received through the NSC process, as that information will be provided in a “You Said, We Did” report which will be published at statutory consultation.”

Wixams station (near Bedford)

Bedford Borough Council has this update:

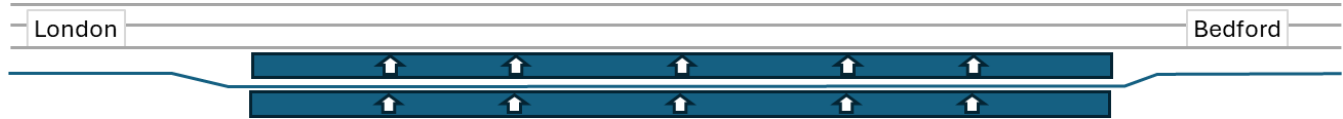
You may have noticed less activity on the Wixams Station construction site. While critical work to maintain safety continues, the Council, together with Central Government and Network Rail are now assessing the impact of the proposed larger station to ensure all options and requirements for future designs are established safely.

The YouTube Channel [ProjectUniversalUK](#) (not official) has a video from three weeks ago showing that there have been no track movements, but that overhead masts were in place ready for the track slew.

The Railfuture view is:

1. Yes, it is sensible to slow down development. The current design cannot be seen as an automatic springboard to a station that can handle many more passengers and also have platforms on all running lines.
2. A way should be found to improve public transport for Wixams residents and those visiting “now”.
3. The design of the expanded station should be a priority, so it can be understood if the current design can be expanded, or if a brand new design is needed.

The current design is broadly as follows, with blue being new build or involving move of the railway (and grey being no change):



A key “advantage” of the current design is that only one track – and the associated overhead needs to be moved. But, in my view, it is not a good start point to:

1. Cope with the numbers of arriving passengers that will be arriving after Universal opens. In particular the platform on the down slow (from London) looks very narrow for the increase in passengers (... but I am no expert)
2. To be expanded to have platforms on the fast lines. Now lines rated for 125 mph – and presumably still to be rated for this speed, will both need to be slewed.

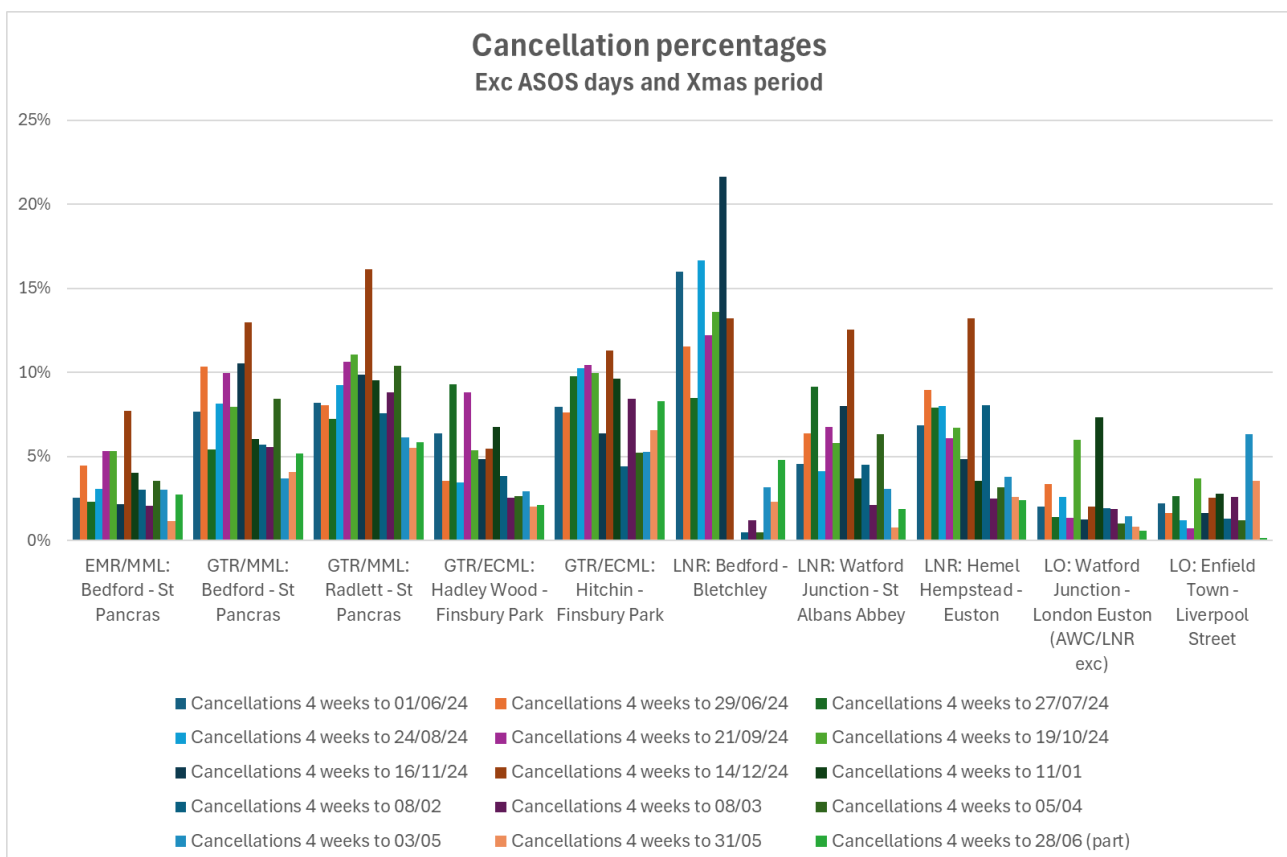
I think we should have three campaign goals:

1. For bus services to Flitwick and Bedford stations to be in place “now”.
2. For the outline design to be finalised as soon as possible and for more detailed design for any revised slow line platforms to then immediately commence.
3. For there to be a commitment to commence construction for the slow lines in 2026. The talk is for construction of Universal itself to commence in 2026.

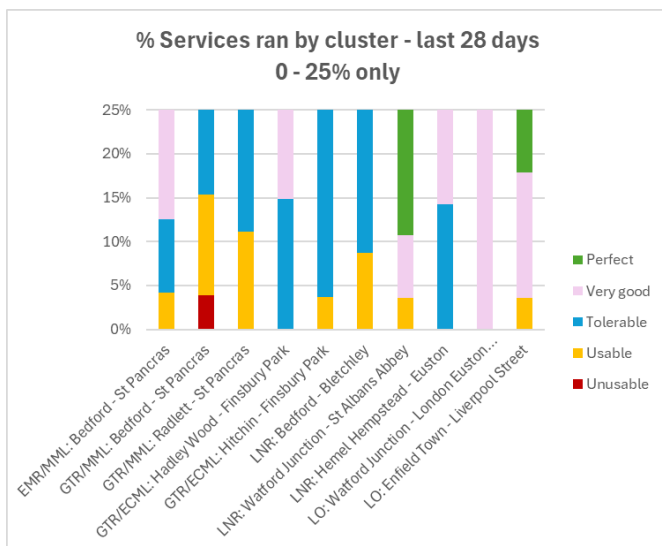
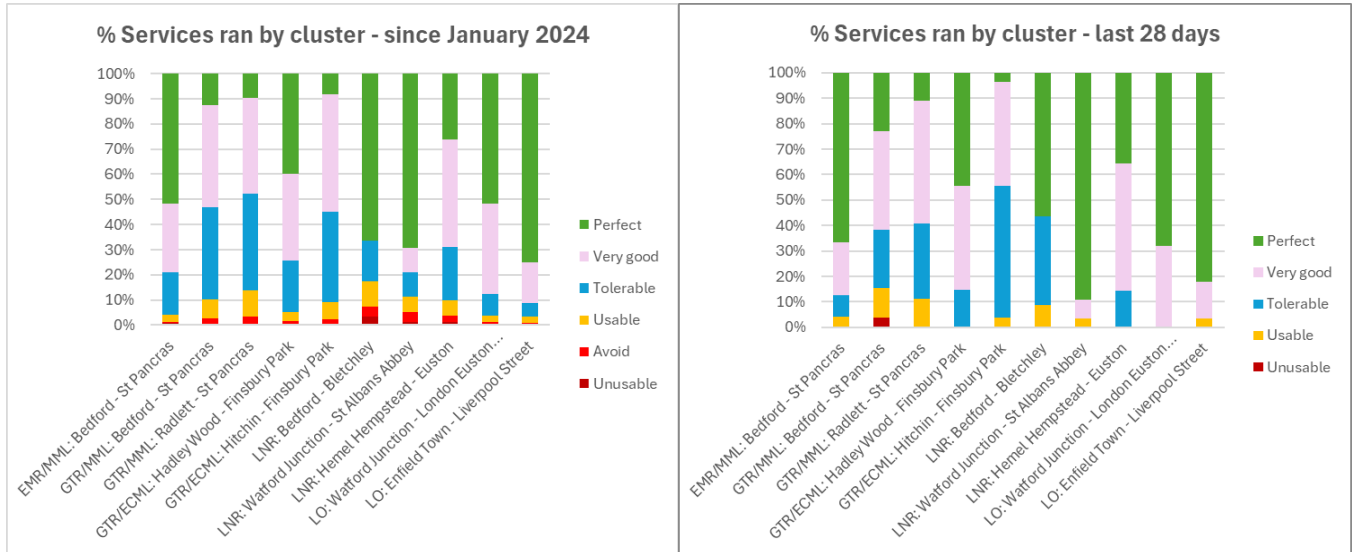
Performance

I have continued to collect the performance data for our main services via Recent Train Times.

Cancellations over time



In these next graphs, I explore the spread of cancellations (excluding the Christmas period):



Definitions

- 38% Unusable
- 50% Avoid
- 70% Usable
- 85% Tolerable
- 95% Very good
- 100% Perfect

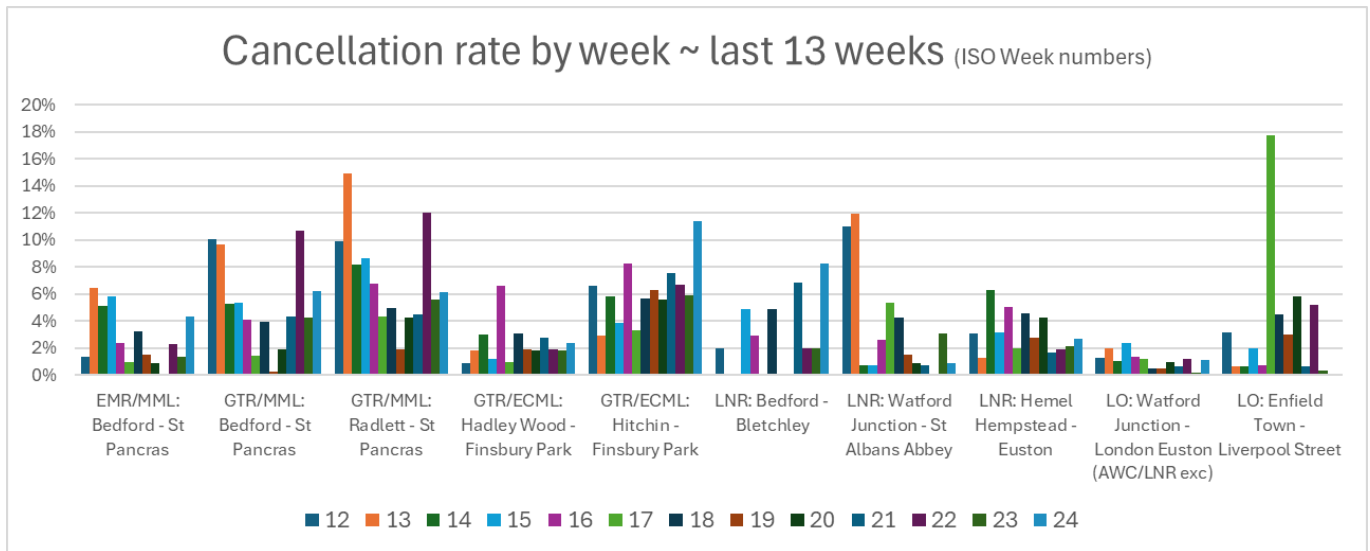
For 'all of 2024' Action
Short of a Strike days have
been excluded.

Because I am measuring this statistic across at the “whole of day” level, I do not detect long gaps within the day.

Cancellations by week / day of the week

In these graphs, I am trying to see if we can increase our understanding of the volatility of cancellations. Both graphs are quite granular, and the objective is much less to look at week X and understand the rate there and much more to understand does it change a lot. The first graph looks at cancellations by week over thirteen weeks, the second at cancellation by day of the week over the last thirteen weeks and the third cancellations by day over the last 28 days. This last graph is particularly prone to “dodgy data” at the level of granularity in place.

Continued overleaf



Commentary

My main view has to be “not getting much better – but at least not getting worse either ~ and quite a lot of volatility.

GTR’s brands and service changes – disruption and planned engineering work

Local News

The following may be of interest:

1. LNWR have now started introducing class 730/2 on their Euston services – more [here](#) and [here](#),
2. Intermittent readers of Roger French’s Blog ‘BusAndTrainUser’ might have missed his [visit to St Albans](#) in his 25 places with two stations series. He is at number 12 and starts “It’s the biggest contrast yet.”

Written updates / Topics ‘on hold’

National AGM – 5 July

- [inter-railse archive](#) (the branch’s two page e-newsletter). We recently added many more members to the list of recipients; if you are not already receiving it in your inbox, [email Roger Blake](#). Give your choice from receiving a web link or as a PDF attachment.

This year’s national AGM is in Newcastle – more on the [website](#). As has been recent practice, the morning will be the formal AGM business, for members only, and the afternoon will have speakers and is open to all. The speakers are:

- [Simon Walton](#), Journalist and the Head of News and Digital Content at news titles in the northeast (talking about: Rail freight in the North).
- [Jason Wade](#), Director North East, [Northern Trains](#) talking about: logistics behind the reopening of the Northumberland line from the operator's view point).
- [Dennis Fancett](#), Chair, [South East Northumberland Rail User Group](#) (talking about: campaign to reopen the Northumberland Line).

Both parts of the AGM will be live streamed.

Engineering blockade publicity

The next step is to “convert” the Railwatch article into a position paper. In the article I majored on multi day impacts on commuters, but a common theme of conversations has been that sometimes we organise our lives a lot longer ahead than the railway’s typical 12 week timeframe – and sometimes have choices of dates (will I go to the Panto on the 7th or the 14th?) and this should be bought into play as a key factor.

For the record: Performance measures

See Appendix A.

Can I forward this email to others?

Definitely. If you have received this email via someone forwarding it, to be added to the Herts & Beds mailing list, please send me an email. You will be able to unsubscribe at any time.

Privacy, including GDPR

You are receiving this email because you meet one or more of these criteria:

1. You are a Railfuture member who lives in the area, has provided an email address.
2. You have previously attended one of our meetings (or actively declined a previous invite) and I believe you have given us clear permission to keep you updated about future meetings.
3. You have specifically given us permission to keep you updated about future meetings.

If you want to be taken off this email list either reply to this email to that effect or follow the unsubscribe link at the foot of the email. If you are a Railfuture member, to update your general Railfuture communication preferences, follow the process set out in the member area on the website or in the address flyer for Railwatch.

Stay Safe.

Neil

Neil Middleton

Director (with responsibility for Communications) | **Convener, Railfuture Hertfordshire & Bedfordshire** |
TOC Liaison Representative for GTR | Vice-Chair, London & South East Branch
e-mail: neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk | phone: 07887 628367
our websites: www.railfuture.org.uk | www.railfuture.org.uk/Herts+and+Beds | www.railwatch.org.uk
follow us on Twitter: [@Railfuture](https://twitter.com/Railfuture) | [@RailfutureLSE](https://twitter.com/RailfutureLSE) | [@Railwatch](https://twitter.com/Railwatch)

Railfuture Ltd is a (not for profit) Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No. 05011634.
Registered Office: Edinburgh House, 1-5 Bellevue Road, Clevedon, North Somerset, BS21 7NP (for legal correspondence only)
All other correspondence to 3 Chandos Court, Martlesham, Suffolk IP12 4SU

NOTICE AND DISCLAIMER

This email (including attachments) is confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, notify the sender immediately, delete this email from your system and do not disclose or use for any purpose.

Appendix A / Performance measures

1. Lack of notice (when a likely shortage of resources in the near future is reasonably predictable in advance). Two 'test' points:
 - a. Shortly before going to the station / in time to get the previous train (our definition: 1 hour before)
 - b. In time to rearrange journeys, appointments etc (our definition: early evening the day before)
2. Loss of first or last train of the day (with the loss of the last train being worse than the first)
3. Gaps of more than 1 hour or cancellation of 2 consecutive services
4. inequity in allocation of lost services – ie better some impact on most service clusters than some service clusters taking most of the impact.
5. Cancellation via skip stopping of the first train post disruption and gaps as per #2 above.