

## ACTION PLAN 1 - ROAD NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS (*Progress in italics*)

### Short Term

- **Main Road Congestion:** Establish local study groups to identify solutions to increasing delays for bus and car commuters, business traffic and shoppers - which also create excessive pollution for nearby residents - particularly bad along Knaresborough Road, Leeds Road, Skipton Road and Wetherby Road. *PROGRESS: Nil. Council meeting on Skipton Road/Wetherby Road, March 04.*
- **Traffic Light Optimisation:** Reduce severe delays caused by many ill-timed traffic lights at cross-over junctions on radial roads and around the Town Centre. Adjust day/night cycle times and also optimise the timing of pedestrian-controlled "PUFFIN" lights at key crossing points. Use CCTV to monitor junctions. *PROGRESS: Nil. Situation is worse with more lights and crossings installed.*
- **Mini-Roundabouts:** Recommend the installation of mini-roundabouts and filter lanes instead of traffic lights where space permits. Note Wetherby Town Council's successful mini-roundabout by the bridge on the A661 which has greatly reduced congestion in the Market Place. *PROGRESS: Nil.*
- **Critical Junction Study Group:** Establish study groups of most frequent users to consider possible solutions for the most congested junctions. The study group should include representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Bus Company, Taxi Operators, Royal Mail, Police, Conference & Exhibition Organisers and similar key vehicle operators. *PROGRESS: None - repeated to new Council leader.*

### Medium Term

- **Town Centre Gyratory System:** Devise and evaluate a comprehensive smooth-flowing gyratory system for traffic passing through the town centre. (Similar to the Leeds Inner Loop or Istanbul Ring) *PROGRESS: Good Press publicity but rejected by HBC-DTS but roadworks showed it could be OK.*
- **Commuter Routes into Harrogate Town Centre:** -Establish additional radial routes from perimeter housing estates into the town centre suitable for private cars, but not necessarily for large vehicles - eg Jennyfield, St Georges, Bilton. Claro, etc.. *PROGRESS: None - awaiting HAKITS Report & LDF.*
- **Parking Restrictions:** Restrict car parking on roads that are designated as principal through routes or gyratory routes through the town centre, so vehicles manoeuvring into and out of parking spaces do not hold up the traffic – eg Parliament St. *PROGRESS: None. Awaiting overall Parking Review.*
- **Starbeck Level Crossing:** Reduce delays at this major bottleneck on the A59 between Harrogate & Knaresborough by improving train signalling system. *PROGRESS: None. Referred to Consultants*

### Longer Term - *PROGRESS - NIL.*

- **Housing Policy Traffic Impact:** Review current Harrogate Planning policy which appears to approve extensive house-building without the essential new link roads - resulting in more congestion and delays at critical junctions. The unbalanced location of schools and the tip creates more traffic.
- **Killinghall Bypass:** Press for implementation of the planned Northern Relief Road between A59 south of Killinghall and A59 east of Knaresborough to link up with existing Southern By-pass.
- **Spofforth/North Deighton By-pass:** Press for the promised bypass around Spofforth on A661 to be reinstated into the NYCC programme or build a new link from A661 to the new A1(M) junction at Kirk Deighton. *PROGRESS: Spoke at A1(M) Public Enquiry - Inspector recognised need for action.*
- **Major A-Road Improvements:** Press NYCC and Highways Agency for improved road links from Harrogate to the A1(M) south via Wetherby, the M62 west via Leeds or Bradford and the A1(M) north via Ripon and the M65 via Colne - existing A59, A661, A61 & A658 roads are all slow & dangerous.
- **Harrogate Western By-pass:** Re-evaluate the long-term need for an effective by-pass to the west of Harrogate from the A61/ A658 junction at Pannal then north near Harlow to Killinghall - possibly by upgrading some of the existing roads along this corridor. *PROGRESS: Rejected by County Council*
- **Harrogate Ring Roads:** Evaluate the possibility of creating a middle ring road and an outer ring road system linking the radial roads and commuter routes into Harrogate town centre.

## ACTION PLAN 2 - BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS (*Progress in italics*)

### Short Term

- **Community Transport Services:** Press for an official safe pick-up and dropping-off point for all community transport vehicles very near to the new Bus Station and the Railway Station - on the correct side of the road for safe loading and unloading. *PROGRESS: Still not a satisfactory solution.*
- **School Travel Services:** Support NYCC/HBC initiatives to reduce the percentage of children being taken to school in private cars that cause so much congestion at peak periods. Reduce the distance limit for School Buses. Encourage schools to introduce safer cycling, "park & ride" and "walking bus" schemes, etc. Press for school starting times to be delayed until after normal office and bank starting times. *PROGRESS: Good publicity but no agreement to change school starting times.*
- **Real Time Bus Information:** Support the introduction of a computer-controlled real time information system by H&D Travel and the various associated applications being pursued by the County and Local District Councils. Improve publicity of routes and timetables. *PROGRESS – Trials started.*
- **Additional Bus Services Westward:** Promote the planned new bus services on the A59 west from Harrogate to Kettlewell Head with links to Skipton, Pateley Bridge and other outlying rural areas throughout the District. *PROGRESS: New NYCC subsidised services started Spring 03.*
- **No 36 to make Leeds Station connection:** Press H&D Travel to re-route their excellent No 36 executive bus service via Leeds City Station to provide a bus-rail interchange for those who are not close to existing Stations on the Harrogate Line. *PROGRESS: Access problems for DD bus.*

### Medium Term

- **Public Transport Interchange:** Strongly support HBC Development Brief for a comprehensive redevelopment of the Railway Station area with a covered walkway between Bus and Rail Stations and proper public amenities including toilets and refreshment facilities with extended hours of service. *PROGRESS: HBC published Dev.Brief September 2005- but split ownership is a problem.*
- **Airport Bus Service:** Press for a regular express bus service from Harrogate to Leeds/Bradford Airport for air passengers, family and friends - and possibly onward to Bradford - similar to the existing Leeds-Airport-Otley Services. *PROGRESS: Started April 2005 – but only every 90 mins.*
- **Additional Bus Services Eastward:** Press for regular "east-west" bus services on the A59 east from Harrogate to York via Knaresborough, Hammerton and Poppleton. Access to the centre of York is particularly difficult, but a link up with Park & Ride Scheme might work. *PROGRESS: None*
- **Promotion of Bus Services:** Promote the bus as an alternative to the car for commuters, shoppers and students on the key corridors (A61 Ripon-Harrogate-Leeds and A59 Harrogate-Knaresborough) so as to achieve modal shift, reduce congestion and assist with staff recruitment. *PROGRESS: None*

### Longer Term

- **Community Transport:** Press for increased financial and practical support for Harrogate Community Transport that provides a vital service for elderly and disabled people who would otherwise be housebound. It is currently too dependent upon sponsors and volunteers.
- **Park & Ride Scheme:** Investigate the feasibility of a new bus or rail shuttle service from the south side of Harrogate to the east of Knaresborough - essential for commuters, shoppers, conference and exhibition visitors and tourists. This would require a new bus park and car park on the south side of Harrogate close to the southern by-pass and the A61/A658 junction - likewise on the east of Knaresborough close to the A59 Knaresborough to York Road and the A1(M) junction Investigate the possible use of dual mode sites for both bus and rail shuttles at each extremity of the route.

## ACTION PLAN 3 - RAIL SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS (*Progress in italics*)

### Short Term

- **Publicise Missing Connections:** Publish a timetable showing all of the available connections between the East Coast Mainline and the Harrogate Line via York and Leeds. At present less than 50% of the potential connections are listed in the GNER timetable. Persuade Conference/Exhibition Organisers to publicise all Harrogate rail connections to the East Coast mainline and Trans-Pennine services. *PROGRESS: Compiled and published by Harrogate Chamber as an example to GNER.*
- **Harrogate Rail Services Quality:** Press the SRA for an improved quality and quantity of rail services to and from York and Leeds - needed by commuters, conference and exhibition visitors, shoppers, students and tourists. *PROGRESS: Refurbished rolling stock 2005. Longer Trains 2006?*
- **Community Rail Partnership:** Establish an official CRP in conjunction with North Yorkshire County Council, Harrogate Borough Council and West Yorkshire Metro in order to develop detailed plans to upgrade the existing Harrogate line between Leeds, Harrogate & York, particularly by improving the existing signalling and the level crossings in order to enable more trains to run closer together. *PROGRESS: Consultancy study Phase 2 now in progress - funded by NYCC, Metro & York City.*
- **London Return to Harrogate:** Press GNER to reinstate the evening direct return service from London Kings Cross to Harrogate at a time suitable for business travellers - around 17.00 to 18.00 departure from KX would be ideal for attracting Conference and Exhibition visitors. *PROGRESS: nil*
- **Starbeck Level Crossing:** Investigate the feasibility of relocating the York-bound platform on the south side of Knaresborough road instead of on the north side as at present. This would enable York-bound trains to go over the crossing before pulling up at the platform. The gates could then be opened and the overall duration of crossing closure reduced substantially. *PROGRESS: None*

### Medium Term

- **Upgrade Rolling Stock:** Press the SRA for early replacement of the existing obsolete rolling stock with more up to date diesel units with improved suspension, better seating and additional carriages. *PROGRESS: Part of the consultancy study in progress - funded by NYCC, Metro & York City*
- **Additional Rail Station/Halts:** Press for an urgent Rail Passenger Partnership Bid for SRA funding for several new Stations/Halts to serve residents and businesses along the existing rail lines - for example Bilton/Claro, Knaresborough East/ Flaxby and Yeadon/ Leeds/Bradford Airport. *PROGRESS: Part of the Consultancy Study in progress - funded by NYCC, Metro & York City*
- **Park & Rail Scheme:** Investigate the feasibility of a new light rail shuttle service from the south side of Harrogate to the east of Knaresborough - essential for commuters, shoppers, Conference and Exhibition Visitors and Tourists. This requires a new rail halt with car park on the south side of Harrogate close to the southern by-pass and the A61/A658 junction - likewise on the east of Knaresborough close to A59 Knaresborough to York and A1(M) junction. *PROGRESS: Nil*
- **Skelton Junction/York Station:** Press for feasibility study on installing an extra section of line from the Poppleton approach to York station through Skelton junction, alongside the National Railway Museum to the westerly platform, so that the Harrogate line does not have to cross the western pair of East Coast Mainline tracks. *PROGRESS: Part of Consultancy Study in progress.*
- **GNER Parkway Station:** Support GNER's plans for electrification of main line east of Leeds so that London Trains can be more frequent. Build Parkway Station near M1/A1(M) with a bus link to Hgte.

### Longer Term - *PROGRESS: All part of Consultancy Study in progress.*

- **Restore Missing Dual Track between Knaresborough and York:** Press Network Rail successor for an assessment of track restoration to enable better time-keeping and an increased frequency.
- **Increase the frequency** of services between Harrogate and Leeds from every 30 minutes to every 15 minutes during the day and every 30 minutes during evenings and weekends.
- **Increase the frequency** of services between Harrogate and York from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes during the day and every 60 minutes during evenings and weekends.
- **Ripon Rail Reinstatement Project** - evaluate the viability of reinstating a railway line from Harrogate to Ripon with a possible extension to Northallerton. *PROGRESS: Consultancy study done*

## ACTION PLAN 4 - AIR SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS (*Progress in italics*)

### Short Term

- **Leeds/Bradford to London Heathrow:** Press British Midland (BMI) for an increased service frequency - essential to connect with more international services. *PROGRESS: Aircraft capacity and quality has been improved but not the frequency due to limited slots at Heathrow.*
- **Leeds/Bradford to London Gatwick:** Press British Airways to release slots they had at Gatwick to Eastern Airways in order to restore the connection with Leeds Bradford - essential to connect with more international services. *PROGRESS: BA stopped the service altogether as part of their cost reductions - with sale of Jet-Prop fleet to Eastern Airways. Little chance of a change of policy.*
- **Leeds/Bradford to Amsterdam:** Promote the benefits of the KLM and Jet 2 services to and from Schiphol which is an excellent hub for international travel to Harrogate from all around the world.
- **Airport Bus Service:** Press for a regular express bus service from Harrogate to Leeds/Bradford Airport for air passengers, family and friends - and possibly onward to Bradford - similar to the existing Leeds-Airport-Otley Services. *PROGRESS: Started April 2005 – but only every 90 mins.*
- **No 36 to make Leeds Station Connection:** Press H&D Travel to re-route their excellent No 36 executive bus service via Leeds City Station to provide a connection to the Transpennine Service to Manchester Airport for those who are not close to existing Stations on the Harrogate Line. *PROGRESS: Access problems for DD bus entering Leeds City Station Bus Interchange.*

### Medium Term

- **London Heathrow Terminal 5 impact:** Press for extra slots for services between LBA and Heathrow once Terminal 5 is operational. Press BA to introduce a rival service to BMI.
- **Support Jet2 Services:** Promote the benefits of Jet2.com services to and from LBA for business travellers as well as leisure travellers. Encourage Jet2 to add extra destinations and flights.
- **Airport Rail Halts:** Press for a new Airport Station at Yeadon or a bus link to Horsforth to serve passengers and relatives using Leeds/Bradford Airport. *PROGRESS: Leeds City Council are investigating various light and heavy rail options to connect the Airport to the existing line.*
- **Trans-Pennine Express Rail Service:** Press for a direct link from Harrogate to Manchester Airport. *PROGRESS: Not part of SRA specification for new TPE Franchise bids. First say "No Chance"!*
- **Manchester Airport Express Bus:** Alternatively evaluate the potential for a direct express coach service from Harrogate to Manchester Airport in busy seasons. *PROGRESS: Not economic.*

### Longer Term

- **Leeds/Bradford to European Capitals:** Support efforts to attract more low-cost airlines such as Jet2, EasyJet, Ryanair and BMI Baby to initiate additional services from Leeds/Bradford to more European Capitals in order to satisfy both business and tourist markets. *PROGRESS: Many new flights from LBA to Europe from new low-cost operators, Jet2, MyTravel and extra charter flights.*

*Compiled by Brian L Dunsby, Chief Executive, Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, incorporating comments and feedback from several Focus Group discussions and the circulation of earlier editions.*

COMMENTS TO: [traffic@harrogatechamber.org](mailto:traffic@harrogatechamber.org) or fax to 01423 870025 or post to PO Box 8, HG2 8XB