

Why Harrogate Trains?

Bid to the Department for Transport
for more frequent direct train services
between Harrogate and London Kings Cross.

**Compiled by Brian Dunsby, Chief Executive,
Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce**

With valued support and contributions from:

Nigel Avison, Executive Director, Dept of Development Services, Harrogate Borough Council
Ann Byrne, Corporate Improvement Officer (Partnerships), Harrogate Borough Council
Simon Cotton, President, Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, GM, Cedar Court Hotel
Sandra Doherty, Chair, Accommodation Harrogate; Proprietor Alexa House
Andrew Easson, Policy Support Officer (Rail), North Yorkshire County Council
Lynne Farrow, Brand Manager & Billie Gill, Marketing Exec, Harrogate International Centre
Andrew Jones MP, Member of Parliament for Harrogate & Knaresborough
Mark Lancaster, Project Leader, Harrogate & Dales Convention Bureau
Mark Leving, Rail Industry Advisor (Former Managing Director of First Hull Trains)
Emily MacDowell, Economic Development Officer, EDU, Harrogate Borough Council
Cllr Don Mackenzie, Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport & Economic Development, HBC
Gill Ritchie, Principal Planner (Policy), Dept Development Services, Harrogate Borough Council
David Ritson, Chair, Destination Harrogate; General Manager, The Old Swan Hotel
Cllr John Savage, Immediate Past Chairman, North Yorkshire County Council.
Helen Suckling, Visitor Services Manager, Harrogate Tourist Information Centre
Robert N Whiteley, General Manager, Yorkshire Event Centre & Pavilions of Harrogate

Why Harrogate Trains?

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
1. Where is Harrogate?	5
2. Why more Harrogate Trains?	5
3. Residential Population	6
4. Residential Profile	7
5. Residential Property Profile	6
6. Business Population & Profile	10
7. Visitors to Harrogate	12
8. Business Events & Visitors	13
9. Accommodation in Harrogate	15
10. Current Harrogate Rail Services	16
11. Existing Passenger Numbers	17
12. Recent Developments in Harrogate District	18
13. Harrogate Line Improvements	21
14. What are the Operating Constraints?	23
15. What are the proposed Actions?	24
16. What are the attractions of London-Harrogate Trains?	25
17. How can we support more Harrogate Trains?	25

**Report compiled by Brian L Dunsby, Chief Executive & Hon Secretary
Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, P O Box 8, Harrogate HG2 8XB.**

Tel: 01423 879208 Fax: 01423 870025
E-mail: chiefexec@harrogatechamber.org

Executive Summary

Harrogate in North Yorkshire is a unique area of high economic growth forming a "golden triangle" with Leeds, Wetherby and York. It is the north-east quadrant of the Leeds City Region, which is the most significant economic driver of the Yorkshire and Humber Region.

Harrogate Town has a population of 72,000, whilst the whole Harrogate District has 158,000, with an older age profile than the Region. It has a predominantly professional demographic profile with higher than average levels of social class, household income, property values and car ownership. Harrogate has been repeatedly quoted as one of the best places to live in the UK. Hence Harrogate attracts upwardly mobile individuals to live in Harrogate and work all over the country - or across the whole world. These factors all indicate a propensity to travel.

Harrogate District is close to the geographical centre of the UK, accessible from north, south, east and west. It attracts large numbers of visitors all the year round, for both business and leisure. The latest estimate of Total Direct Visitor Spend in the District was £331m per year from a total of 6.4 million visitor-days including both business and holiday tourism visitors.

Harrogate has a unique combination of Conference, Exhibition and Event facilities alongside many well established visitor attractions. It is supported by numerous nearby hotels, guest houses and restaurants; a combination not matched anywhere else in the UK. These facilities combined with a relaxing rural environment attract international, national and regional corporate, professional and trade events of all types virtually all the year round. Planning permission has recently been granted for two new hotels, whilst older ones are being updated.

Harrogate International Conference centre is the third largest integrated conference and exhibition venue in the UK after Excel, London and EICC, Edinburgh. Phase 1 of a £45m expansion programme has just commenced which will add two new exhibition and event halls and a new entrance to the venue. These are scheduled to open in Autumn 2011.

Conferences, Exhibitions, Trade Shows and Entertainments at HIC attract well over 200,000 business visitors per annum, with around 40% visiting from London and South East. In a recent event survey, 78% of delegates came from outside Yorkshire, but few travelled by rail. Harrogate's poor rail connectivity has frustrated the attraction of some major new conferences – and risks losing others to better connected venues such as Birmingham and Manchester.

The largest event at the Harrogate Showground is the Great Yorkshire Agricultural Show which takes place in mid-July each year. With the demise of the Royal Show at Stoneleigh, the Great Yorkshire Show is now the largest agricultural show in the UK. Many smaller events of various types are also held on the Showground all the year round, with an average of over 600 events and a total attendance of nearly 440,000 visitors each year.

Harrogate has a large number of successful hotels, guest houses and restaurants that cater for both business and leisure visitors. The Tourist Information Centre says that there are 1,472 bedrooms in hotels and 284 in guest houses within Harrogate – making a total of 1,756 rooms with over 2,100 beds - excluding the surrounding District. These figures far outweigh comparable towns that already have direct London rail services.

Before the war, Harrogate enjoyed a frequent London-Harrogate-Edinburgh Pullman Car service with up to 10 trains per day. It was cut back in stages and Harrogate now has just one direct London service, south bound on weekday mornings only, taking almost 3 hours. There are no direct Sunday services despite high demand for travel on this day.

Whilst there are frequent fast services from Kings Cross to Leeds and York, connections to Harrogate are poor quality and often ill-timed. Changing trains is seen as risky, inconvenient, and time consuming - whilst the rolling stock falls significantly below most customer expectations! Nevertheless there are nearly 2 million passenger journeys a year to and from the Harrogate District Stations, confirming the local propensity for rail travel.

Recent developments in Harrogate District that could increase demand for rail travel include loss of the Leeds Bradford to London air service; opening of Harrogate International Business School; adoption of a broad Local Development Framework; new housing and business developments; aspirations for Park & Rail or Parkway Stations; a proposed Transport Interchange; and a planned Harrogate & Dales Convention Bureau.

The need for improvements on the Leeds-Harrogate-York line is recognised and there are plans to upgrade signalling and provide a new turn-back facility at Horsforth, which could also serve nearby Leeds Bradford Airport using a Rail-Air shuttle bus service.

The Leeds–Harrogate–York line is not electrified, whereas the main lines from York and Leeds to London are electrified. This means that only diesel trains can operate to Harrogate. The York to Knaresborough track has two single line sections, with manual signals, which are a major capacity and operating hours constraint; there are no plans to upgrade this section of the route.

A detailed study of operating constraints shows that Harrogate could most effectively be served as an extension of existing services via Leeds rather than via York. As several daily services are already specifically diagrammed to use diesel high speed train this option would not require any new rolling stock or extra slots on the East Coast Main Line. Platforms 1, 6 & 8 at Leeds currently used for London Trains would enable trains to reverse without conflict with other services. This would be an efficient and cost-effective way to provide services for Harrogate.

This report proposes a series of immediate, short term, medium term and long term actions needed to provide the frequent direct trains to and from London that Harrogate and its many visitors deserve. In summary, these actions and expected outcomes are:

Immediate Actions 2010 = currently 1 direct train per day HGT-KGX southbound

Harrogate Chamber will compile an integrated timetable showing all connections between Harrogate and Kings Cross and intermediate Stations on East Coast mainline.

Northern Rail is asked to change the remaining Class 14X diesel multiple units to Class 15X for all services on the Harrogate Line with 4-car units operating in the peak periods.

Leeds Bradford Airport is asked to implement a Horsforth Rail-Air shuttle mini-bus on a trial basis in view of the likely demise of the Harrogate Airport Bus Service 767.

Short Term Actions 2011= 2 direct trains per day HGT-KGX every day

The Department for Transport is asked to reinstate the evening return service from Kings Cross to Harrogate on a seven day basis in the EUREKA timetable from May 2011.

Northern Rail is asked to proceed with proposed plans to increase the duration and frequency of services on the Harrogate to York line during the evening and on Sundays.

Medium Term Actions 2012/13 = 4 direct trains per day HGT-KGX

The Department for Transport is asked to put into the new Franchise Specification for the East Coast services one new early morning northbound service from Kings Cross via Leeds to Harrogate and a corresponding evening return from Harrogate to Kings Cross.

North Yorkshire County Council and Harrogate Borough Council are asked to contact the shortlist of bidders for the new franchise so that they all come to Harrogate.

Network Rail is urged to proceed with the proposed Horsforth turn-back and the improved signalling between Leeds and Harrogate.

Northern Rail is urged to procure additional Class 150 series rolling stock needed to serve Horsforth, Harrogate and Knaresborough.

Long Term Actions 2014/16 = 2 hourly service HGT-KGX every day

The Department for Transport is asked to include in the new Franchise Specification for the East Coast mainline services several additional extensions of existing northbound services from Kings Cross via Leeds to Harrogate or alternatively via York to Harrogate.

The Office of Rail Regulation is asked to allocate additional slots on the ECML for open access operators, once planned work by Network Rail to remove bottlenecks is complete.

Northern Rail is asked to include two trains per hour between Harrogate and York as part of the franchise renewal, subject to improved signalling and level crossings.

North Yorkshire County Council & Harrogate Borough Council are asked to approve a Park & Ride or Parkway Station either south of Harrogate or east of Knaresborough.

Network Rail is asked to consider whether the Leeds-Harrogate-York line could be an alternative or diversionary route for ECML diesel services. This might also enable some Trans-Pennine Express and Cross-Country trains to go from Leeds to York via Harrogate.

1. Where is Harrogate?

Harrogate in North Yorkshire is almost midway between London and Edinburgh and between Liverpool and Hull, close to the geographical centre of the UK and accessible from north, south, east and west. It is only 15 miles from Leeds and 20 miles from York.

Harrogate District lies between the cities of Leeds and Bradford to the south, the District of Richmondshire in the north; the City of York and Hambleton and Selby Districts in the east, and the Yorkshire Dales National Park in the west. The District is part of the County of North Yorkshire and local government service delivery is split between the Borough and County Council. The southern part of the District forms part of the Leeds City Region.

Harrogate Town is situated at the junction of the A61 north-south and the A59 east west, about 7 miles west of the A1(M) motorway at Junction 47 with the A59. The market towns of Boroughbridge, Knaresborough, Otley, Pateley Bridge, Ripon and Wetherby are all within 20 minutes drive of Harrogate Town Centre. Bradford, Leeds and York are within 30 min.

The area between Harrogate, Leeds, Wetherby and York is dubbed the "Golden Triangle" – "an area of high economic growth underpinning a sustainable service-based economy". This area comprises the north-east quadrant of the Leeds City Region and in addition to a significant business sector it also serves as a dormitory area for the many Leeds and York city centre businesses. According to the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 (Section 3.5), Leeds City Region is likely to remain the most significant economic driver of the Region's economy.

2. Why more Harrogate Trains?

In our view, Harrogate needs and merits more direct trains to and from London for the following main reasons, which are amplified in this Report:

- Harrogate is a major destination in its own right for Conferences, Exhibitions and Events, both trade and public, all the year round. It is also a well known tourist destination with nationally recognised attractions. This is an important distinction, adding significant value to the provision of direct train services from London.
- Major integrated International Conference & Exhibition Centre – 3rd largest in the UK. Over 230,000 visitors at over 50 conferences and 20 large trade fairs each year.
- Great Yorkshire Showground attracts over 430,000 visitors every year to an average of 625 events in the versatile Yorkshire Events Centre and Pavilions of Harrogate.
- Significant investment in the main Conference, Exhibition and Events Centres is underway both at the Conference Centre and on the Showground plus new Hotels.
- Major tourist location, Spa Town, Harlow Carr RHS, Great Yorkshire Show, Ripley Castle, Ridding Park, Harewood House etc. - located on the edge of Yorkshire Dales.
- Harrogate has a highly professional residential community needing to travel and it is also a significant destination in its own right for both business and leisure visitors.
- Harrogate Borough's immediate population is now 158,000 with a 4.3% growth rate since 2001 (Harrogate/Knaresborough/Ripon/Boroughbridge/Pateley Bridge)
- Harrogate & Knaresborough and the associated catchments have a large percentage of the population in higher professional occupations, with substantial discretionary income and hence a significantly greater propensity to travel by rail.
- The affluent hinterland surrounding Harrogate and Knaresborough has potential for significant new growth from park and ride journey generation and development.
- Improved connectivity to the area would stimulate employment in Harrogate in the tourism and conferencing industry – the lifeblood of the local economy!
- Harrogate is a sub-regional centre of the Leeds City Region, ranked alongside Wakefield, York, Bradford and Barnsley.
- The Yorkshire & Humber Regional Spatial Strategy supports Harrogate's role as a location for quality office and conference and exhibition facilities

3. Residential Population

In 2009, the resident population of the Harrogate District was 157,869, which was a rise of

1.2% or 1,800 people on the previous year's total of 156,100. In 2001 the total population was 151,336, an increase of 6,533 or 4.3% over the period 2001-2009.

By comparison, the City of York population is 198,800 – only 26% more than Harrogate. Harrogate District has experienced the second highest annual increase in population within North Yorkshire County, after Richmondshire. The main factor behind the increase in population has been net migration with more people moving into the District than leaving.

(Source: ONS Mid-year estimate 2009, published on www.harrogate.gov.uk/immediacy-4072)

Harrogate District has a large but dispersed population poorly served by public transport, although all within 10-30 minute drive time for access to the Harrogate Line - including:

Town	Postcode	Population (2009 est)
Harrogate Town	HG1 & 2	71,594
Harrogate Rural Area	HG3	50,393
Boroughbridge	YO51	3,210
Knaresborough	HG5	14,740
Pateley Bridge	HG3	2,000
Ripon	HG4	15,932
HARROGATE DISTRICT		157,869
NEARBY TOWNS	Postcode	Population (2001)
Ilkley	LS29	13,828
Otley	LS21	14,348
Wetherby	LS22	11,155
Boston Spa	LS23	4,006
Burley & Menston	LS20	5,865

For comparison, other Towns studied in this Report are as follows:

Town	Postcode	Population (2001)
Bradford	BD	293,717
Kingston upon Hull	HU	243,589
Lincoln	LN	85,595
Skipton	BD23	14,313
Stratford on Avon	CV37	23,676
Sunderland	SU	280,807
York	YO	198,800

(Source: 2001 Census: Key Statistics: Parish Headcount - via Wikipedia)

It should be noted that the larger populations of both Bradford and Sunderland are in significant proportions more closely geographically aligned to rail links serving other than the main stations in the respective cities e.g. the Airedale line from Skipton to Leeds via Keighley, Bingley & Shipley, and the ECML from Durham. This is a function of the use of political boundaries for demographic measurement, which can distort comparative analysis when the residents' nearest or fastest route is not via the designated Town Station.

4. Residential Profile

4.1 Age & Gender

The average age of the population in Harrogate is 40, slightly above the Yorkshire and Humber average of 38. The largest age category for the population of Harrogate is between the ages of 40-44 where 8.3% of the population fall. The District has a noticeably reduced proportion of persons aged 20-24 which accounts for only 5.1% of the total population. The older age ranges are significantly higher than other areas, with substantial accumulated wealth and an inclination to travel further and more often for both business and leisure.

The age and gender profile of Harrogate District population is currently as follows:

Age Range	Harrogate	Y&H Region	England
0-14 years	16.6%	17.2%	17.5%
15-29 years	16.7%	21.6%	20.0%
30-49 years	27.8%	26.8%	28.2%
50-64 years	19.9%	18.1%	18.0%
65 years +	19.0%	16.2%	16.3%

Male: 77,639 (49.2%) Female: 80,230 (50.8%) England: Male: 49.2%, Female: 50.8%

(Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics, Harrogate + ONS Population Estimates 2009)

4.2 Demographic Profile

The demographic profile of Harrogate residents indicates a higher than average proportion of affluent and professional classes, with 60% in the ABC1 categories. One would naturally expect a higher proportion of First Class Inter-City passengers from this community.

Social Category		Harrogate	Yorkshire & Humber	UK
AB	Higher and intermediate managerial / administrative / professional	28.0 %	18.9 %	22.2 %
C1	Supervisory, clerical, junior managerial / administrative / professional	32.0 %	27.0 %	29.7 %
C2	Skilled manual workers	14.5 %	16.8 %	15.1 %
D	Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers	12.6 %	19.5 %	17.0 %
E	On state benefit, unemployed, lowest grade workers	12.9 %	17.8 %	16.0 %

(Source: Office for National Statistics, Social Grade (UV50), 2001 Census, Updated 2005)

4.3 Car Ownership

Car ownership in Harrogate is substantially higher than in the other parts of the Yorkshire Region and the UK as illustrated by the following table. Over 24,000 households have two or more cars, equal to 38% of households in Harrogate compared to 29% across England.

Improved car parking at stations served by direct Harrogate-London trains would no doubt attract the many car-owners in Harrogate District who are currently reluctant to drive into the very congested city centre car parks in Leeds or York. Currently they find it more attractive to drive significant distances on the A1(M) or M1 motorway rather use rail close to their point of origin.

CAR OWNERSHIP

No of cars	Count	Percent	Y&H	England
Nil	11,197	17.75%	30.31%	26.84%
1	27,739	43.98%	44.13%	43.69%
2	19,396	30.75%	21.00%	23.56%
3	3,619	5.74%	3.55%	4.52%
4 or more	1,126	1.79%	1.00%	1.39%
TOTAL	63,077	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

(Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics: Harrogate. Last updated March 2007)

4.4 Average Income

Average household income in Harrogate in 2009 is by far the highest in the Yorkshire Region and above average for the whole of England, as illustrated in the following table:

Income	Units	Harrogate	Craven	Bradford	Y&H	England
Av. Household	£/annum	£39,084	£30,418	£23,869	£29,902	£35,544
Net Household	£/week	£646.10	£526.00	£430.80	£441.70	£533.00
Discretionary	£/week	£275.10	£188.70	£117.90	£131.30	£200.50

(Source: Acxiom Ltd Affordability 2009 via Yorkshire Forward & Harrogate Borough Council)

5. Residential Property Profile

5.1 Property Bands

Harrogate has a relatively higher proportion of large and high value property than comparable towns, reflecting the professional and managerial status of many residents. The following tables show Harrogate and other towns in terms of Council Tax Bands, both by numbers of properties and by percentage split in each band:

Council Tax Bands and Properties 2010/11 – by number

Tax Band	Harrogate	Craven	Sunderland	Lincoln	Bradford	Hull
A	7,999	4,093	79,260	25,647	89,234	81,297
B	13,380	5,801	16,480	8,319	43,560	21,285
C	16,619	5,762	16,046	4,601	38,134	9,336
D	10,431	4,023	8,063	2,364	16,725	3,543
E	9,151	3,101	2,886	1,163	11,464	1,009
F	6,156	1,941	988	356	5,500	257
G	5,412	1,284	596	122	3,449	68
H	599	110	65	52	296	35
Total number	69,747	26,115	124,384	42,624	208,362	116,830

(Source: Head of Revenues & Benefits, Harrogate Borough Council July 2010. Requests made to relevant local authorities on behalf of Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce.)

Council Tax Bands and Properties 2010/11 – by percentage

Tax Band	Harrogate	Craven	Sunderland	Lincoln	Bradford	Hull
A	11.5%	15.7%	63.7%	60.2%	42.8%	69.6%
B	19.2%	22.2%	13.2%	19.5%	20.9%	18.2%
C	23.8%	22.1%	12.9%	10.8%	18.3%	8.0%
D	15.0%	15.4%	6.5%	5.5%	8.0%	3.0%
E	13.1%	11.9%	2.3%	2.7%	5.5%	0.9%
F	8.8%	7.4%	0.8%	0.8%	2.6%	0.2%
G	7.8%	4.9%	0.5%	0.3%	1.7%	0.1%
H	0.9%	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number	69,747	26,115	124,384	42,624	208,362	116,830

(Source: Head of Revenues & Benefits, Harrogate Borough Council July 2010. Requests made to relevant local authorities on behalf of Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce.)

5.2 Property Prices

The average prices of houses in Harrogate are significantly higher than the other Districts in the Region. For the period January-March 2010 the average price of all properties sold in Harrogate was 75% higher than the average for the whole Yorkshire & Humberside and 51% higher for detached properties. The comparison with other Districts is as follows:

AREA	AVERAGE PRICE (All properties)	AVERAGE PRICE (Detached properties)
Harrogate	£277,332	£399,607
Richmondshire	£233,707	£327,590
Craven	£227,515	£354,202
Hambleton	£224,752	£296,383
Ryedale	£210,540	£274,323
Selby	£188,315	£251,076
Scarborough	£158,904	£236,410
Hull	£96,423	£182,095
Y& H Region	£157,959	£264,635
UK Average	£224,064	£344,989

(Source: Land Registry of England & Wales via BBC News in depth, UK House Prices. 28/05/10)

Harrogate has been repeatedly quoted as one of the best places to live in the UK, including House to Home and Prime Location Magazines and Channel 4's "Location, Location, Location" TV Programme which placed Harrogate 4th in 2006.

Hence Harrogate attracts upwardly mobile individuals who wish to live in Harrogate although they work all over the country - and some across the whole world. Naturally such individuals would be frequent First Class passengers for direct Harrogate-London trains.

6. Business Population and Profile

6.1 Number & Size of Businesses

Harrogate has a relatively high proportion of small and medium sized enterprises and a low number of large businesses, compared with the rest of Yorkshire and the UK. There are 7,971 businesses with the vast majority employing fewer than 11 people as shown in the following table. By comparison Craven District including Skipton has 3,017 businesses.

Size of Firm	No of Businesses	No of Employees
1-10	6,840	18,507
11-49	904	20,132
50-199	198	16,943
200+	29	15,607

6.2 Types of Business

Harrogate has experienced significant growth arising from its conferencing and tourism offer and it now has a diverse economic base represented in several growth sectors including business services, professional services and financial services

The largest business sector in Harrogate by business numbers is the Banking, Finance and Insurance sector (34%), followed by the Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants sector (30%) and Public Administration and Health (9%).

The smallest sectors are Agriculture, Fishing, Energy and Water (1%), Transport and Communication (3%) and Manufacturing (6%).

Harrogate has a higher proportion of businesses in the Banking, Finance and Insurance sector than the Yorkshire and Humber average and slightly fewer in Manufacturing, Construction, Transport and Communications. Its other sectors are broadly similar to the Yorkshire and Humber average.

The economy of Harrogate now depends heavily on visitors of all types – business and leisure, young and old, male and female, for weekdays and weekends, day and night.

6.3 Employment Profile

Harrogate has more people employed in small sized firms, and fewer in large sized firms than the Yorkshire and Humber average.

In terms of employment and unemployment, Harrogate is one of the best performing with the highest and lowest respective employment and unemployment rate in the region.

Harrogate has an employment rate of 84.2% placing it top of the Regions Local Authority Districts. The employment rate is well above the Yorkshire & Humber average of 73.3%.

Harrogate has an unemployment rate of 2.8% which places it lowest in the Yorkshire and Humber region and 2.8 points lower than the regional average of 5.6%. It also has a low claimant rate.

Employment in the area is heavily dependent on distribution, hotels and restaurants with a high proportion of employment in these sectors and a low proportion in public administration, education and health relative to the regional average

Rates of pay in the area are above average for full time workers and are the highest in the region for part time workers.

(Source: ONS Annual Business Inquiry, NOMIS 2007 via Yorkshire Forward, February 2009)

6.4 Employee Profile

Harrogate has higher levels of qualification than the Yorkshire & Humber average at all NVQ levels, and a lower proportion with no qualification. 9.5% of the working age population has no qualification in Harrogate compared with 14.5% across the region. There is a particularly large difference between the proportion of people with higher level qualifications and the regional average. About 80% have NVQ Level 2 or above.

In terms of people employed, there is a larger proportion of people working in "higher order" occupations (managerial, professional, associate professional and technical occupations) in Harrogate (51.6%), compared to the region overall (38.9%) and nationally (43.8%). They will have a propensity to travel long distance on business - usually in First Class or at least on full price flexible Standard Class fares.

In addition a high proportion of lower paid workers need to commute to work in Harrogate due to the shortage of "affordable" housing in the Town. The current Northern Rail peak hour commuter services are often over-crowded between Harrogate and Leeds.

Occupation	Harrogate	Y&H	England
Manager & Senior Officials	22.3	14.4	16.0
Professional	16.1	11.6	13.2
Associate Professional	13.2	12.9	14.6
Admin/Secretarial	12.3	11.4	11.4
Skilled Trades	8.3	11.2	10.5
Personal Service	9.6	8.5	8.2
Sales/Customer Service	5.2	8.0	7.5
Proc, Plant, Machine Operators	7.3	8.7	6.9
Elementary Occupations	5.8	12.9	11.3

(Source: Annual Population Survey (April 2008-March 2009))

Presented in Learning and Skills Council, Yorkshire and the Humber Partnership Team Information, Draft Work in Progress, Regional & 14-19 Cluster, Facts and Figures ... March 2010

6.5 Student Numbers

Harrogate has a total of seven high performing secondary level schools, each of which has a large number of sixth form students achieving excellent grades with an average of 80% going on to University. Harrogate has one of the highest higher education progression rates in the Country. (Source HBC-DDS)

As there is no University in Harrogate this results in a mass exodus of local students to Universities all across the UK – for which rail is the most common mode of travel. In addition some of these schools have mass trips by train that would use direct services.

Current estimates of the numbers of sixth form students in each School are as follows:

School	Type	No in Sixth Form
Harrogate Grammar	State	400
Harrogate High	State	160
Rossett School	State	250
St Aidan's CE	State	700
St John Fisher RC	State	400
Ashville College	Independent	150
Harrogate Ladies College	Independent	110
TOTAL		2170

(Source: Marian Farrar, Business Liaison Officer, St Aidans C of E High School)

7. Visitors to Harrogate

7.1 Total Visitor Numbers

Harrogate District attracts large numbers of visitors all the year round, for both business and leisure. Figures were reported annually by the former Yorkshire Tourist Board until 2005 when the organisation structure changed to Area Tourism Partnerships.

Calendar Year:	1999	2000	2001*	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total visitors (million)	3.04m	3.06m	2.89m	3.16m	3.50m	3.30m	3.27m

(*The drop in visitors in 2001 was due to the Foot and Mouth Disease)

7.2 Total Visitor Spend

Estimated figures for total direct spend in the Harrogate District were also published up until 2005 as follows. These indicate the scale of the Harrogate Visitor economy, which we believe has actually grown since 2005, but comparable figures are not available.

Calendar Year:	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Business Visitor Spend	£140m	£140m	£142m	£144m	£160m	£165m	£160m
Holiday Visitor Spend	£70m	£65m	£51m*	£56m	£74m	£65m	£69m
Total Visitor Spend	£210m	£205m	£193m	£200m	£234m	£230m	£229m

(*The drop in visitors in 2001 was due to the Foot and Mouth Disease)

Harrogate Borough Council web site page on tourism states that Total Direct Visitor Spend in the District in 2006 was £331m from a total of 6.4 million visitor-days including both business and holiday tourism visitors.

7.3 TIC Enquiries – Harrogate District

The Tourist Information Centres in Harrogate and its five Market Towns count the total numbers of visitors and the total numbers of enquiries received each month from existing and potential visitors by telephone, e-mail and personal callers to each TIC. The figures for the past 10 years are as follows. These confirm that the overall volume of visitors continues to be strong except in abnormal years.

Calendar Year	Visitors to HTIC	Financial Year	Total Enquiries
2000	108,402	2000/01	323,471
2001	104,655	2001/02	324,470
2002	103,585	2002/03	276,790
2003	93,112	2003/04	268,132
2004	85,222	2004/05	247,654
2005	75,492	2005/06	233,331
2006	130,622	2006/07	244,482
2007	110,908	2007/08	214,431
2008	116,298	2008/09	219,287
2009	140,252	2009/10	226,264

In addition, the visitor pages of the Harrogate Tourist Information Centre web site attract approximately 19,000 visits per month equivalent to about 228,000 per year. This has been fairly consistent since counting web statistics began in October 2007.

(Source: Harrogate Tourist Information Centre, Harrogate Borough Council)

8. Business Events & Visitors

Harrogate has a unique combination of Conference, Exhibition and Event facilities together with numerous hotels, guest houses and restaurants that is not matched anywhere else in the UK. These facilities combined with a relaxing rural environment attract international, national and regional trade and corporate events of all types virtually all the year round.

The three main venues are the Harrogate International Centre in the Town Centre and the Yorkshire Event Centre and Pavilions of Harrogate on the Great Yorkshire Showground on the south side of the town. They have provided the following statistics on the total numbers of events and visitors at each venue over the past 10 years. Many other smaller events are held in Harrogate's other superb venues such as the Royal Hall, the Sun Pavilion, Harrogate Theatre and the larger hotels which all have a variety of meeting rooms.

8.1 Harrogate International Centre

Harrogate International Conference centre is the third largest integrated conference and exhibition venue in the UK after Excel, London and EICC, Edinburgh. Phase 1 of a £45m expansion programme has just commenced which will add two new exhibition and event halls to the venue. These are scheduled to open in autumn 2011.

The Conferences, Exhibitions, Trade Shows and Entertainments at HIC attract well over 200,000 visitors per annum, with around 40% visiting from London and South East.

In a recent event survey, 78% of delegates came from outside Yorkshire, but it is understood that a relatively small percentage travelled by rail. Harrogate's poor rail connectivity has frustrated the attraction of some major new conferences – and risks losing others to better connected venues such as Birmingham and Manchester.

It is particularly difficult to attract truly international events, which favour London, Birmingham and Manchester in terms of UK venues. Improved links to Kings Cross and St Pancras International would also enable Harrogate to compete with overseas venues.

HARROGATE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE 2000-2010

Financial Year	Number of Conferences	Number of Exhibitions	Number of Entertainments	Total Events	Total Visitors
2000/01	59	25	32	116	208,713
2001/02	55	30	41	126	223,900
2002/03	58	24	32	114	187,403
2003/04	54	25	25	104	205,158
2004/05	47	27	44	118	223,474
2005/06	52	26	41	119	216,580
2006/07	47	25	51	123	229,925
2007/08	43	26	47	116	232,815
2008/09	53	27	98	178	328,655
2009/10	48	22	87	157	261,835
AVERAGE	51.6	25.7	49.8	127	231,846

(Source: Harrogate International Centre, Ref BG, 12/08/10)

8.2 Great Yorkshire Showground

The figures below indicate a rise in the number of events from 2001 to 2010 of 29% at Pavilions of Harrogate and 90% at the Yorkshire Event Centre. There is an ongoing major programme of upgrading the facilities, including the recent new Regional Agricultural Centre incorporating the Yorkshire Agricultural Society Offices plus a farm shop and a café which cost about £5 million. There are also plans for a further investment of £6 million including a new budget hotel containing about 100 bedrooms.

GREAT YORKSHIRE SHOWGROUND 2001-2010

Calendar Year	No. of Events	No. of Events	Total Events	Total Number
---------------	---------------	---------------	--------------	--------------

	in Pavilions	in YEC	on GYS	of Visitors
2001	483	60	543	na
2002	519	68	587	462,202
2003	506	57	563	425,038
2004	596	58	654	425,281
2005	588	58	646	424,177
2006	517	58	575	467,385
2007	539	90	629	465,593
2008	561	94	655	424,205
2009	569	98	667	415,599
2010	622	114	736	na
AVERAGE	550	75	625	438,685

(Source: Yorkshire Agricultural Society – private communication)

8.3 Great Yorkshire Show Visitor Statistics

The largest event at the Showground is the Great Yorkshire Agricultural Show which takes place in mid-July each year. With the demise of the Royal Show at Stoneleigh, the Great Yorkshire Show is now the largest agricultural show in the UK.

The Organisers have provided the following visitor statistics to demonstrate the scale of this event and the potential for modal shift from private car to rail travel. Hornbeam Park Station is only a short walk from the Showground, whilst queuing cars are usually grid-locked on arrival in the morning and during the evening exit.

Great Yorkshire Show		
Attendances		
2005	134,810	
2006	135,111	Highest ever
2007	122,042	
2008	126,376	
2009	130,731	Royal Visit
2010	131,382	

Mode of travel - 2008		
Car	85%	107,420
Coach	4%	5,055
On foot	4%	5,055
Local bus	3%	4,044
Train	4%	5,055
Bicycle	0%	0
Taxi	0%	0
TOTAL		126,629

Region of origin - 2008	
North Yorkshire	34,122
South Yorkshire	12,638
West Yorkshire	44,231
East Yorkshire	1,264
North West	7,584
North East	15,166
Midlands	2,528
Other	8,846

In addition to the Great Yorkshire Agricultural Show, the Showground hosts the Harrogate Spring Flower Show with a typical attendance of 60,000 and the Great Autumn Flower Show

with another 40,000 visitors, with a similar geographical origin and mode of travel. Newer events such as Countryside Live also attract growing numbers whilst additional large-scale consumer and trade shows are being researched to fill gaps in their annual event calendar.

(Source: Yorkshire Agricultural Society – private communication)

9. Accommodation in Harrogate

Harrogate has a large number of successful hotels, guest houses and restaurants that cater for both business and leisure visitors. The Tourist Information Centre says that there are 1,472 bedrooms in hotels and 284 in guest houses within Harrogate – making a total of 1,756 rooms with over 2,100 beds - excluding the surrounding district.

This is illustrated by the following current data provided by the relevant Associations.

9.1 Hotels

In total there are currently 22 hotels in Harrogate Town, with about 1,600 beds within walking distance of the Harrogate International Centre, including a large Holiday Inn.

Destination Harrogate comprises a group of the top class hotels and hoteliers formed with a view to promoting Harrogate as a tourist and conference destination as well as the promotion of high standards within the local hotel industry. They currently represent the 13 larger hotels in Harrogate with a total of 1,341 bedrooms.

According to the Chairman of Destination Harrogate they run at an average of 70% occupancy over the whole year and bring in revenue circa £15 million per annum. The total number of room-nights per year has been consistently around 320,000 for the past 5 years for which records are available. (www.destinationharrogate.co.uk)

Planning permission has recently been granted for a new 5 star hotel golf resort hotel at Flaxby and for a new 3 star Budget Hotel in Harrogate Town Centre adjacent to the HIC.

9.2 Guest Houses

In addition to the above hotels there are a further 76 Guest Houses in Harrogate Town with a total of 479 beds.

The Accommodation Harrogate Trade Association lists a total of 40 smaller hotels and guest houses within the HG1, 2 & 3 area plus one each in HG4 and HG5. They have a total of 391 single, double and family rooms with a sleeping capacity of 758 people. (www.accommodationharrogate.co.uk)

9.3 Budget Hotels

There are two budget hotels in Harrogate that are not included in the above figures:

- Travelodge, Parliament Street, HG1 2RB - 46 rooms - in Harrogate Town Centre
- Premier Inn, Hornbeam Park, HG2 8RA - 50 rooms – by Hornbeam Park Station

9.4 Apartments

There are four organisations offering short stay apartments in Harrogate Town Centre for business and leisure visitors, mostly within walking distance of HIC:

- Royal Parade Apartments – 3 luxury suites
- Superior Stay – 7 apartments rated at 5-star standard
- The Lawrence – 19 high quality one and two bedroom apartments
- Yorkshire Apartments – 20 high quality apartments sleeping 4-6 persons in each

9.5 Restaurants

According to the Harrogate Council Business Directory there are a total of 199 restaurants within the Harrogate Town Centre HG1 area and a further 154 in HG2 & 3. There are 91 in Ripon HG4 , 69 in Knaresborough HG5 and 23 in Boroughbridge YO51 – making a total of 536 in Harrogate District.

Whilst these figures include restaurants within Hotels, they do indicate the large numbers of visitors that Harrogate is catering for all the year round.

9.6 Night Life

A recently published report by consultants TBR provides data comparing the value of the night-time economy of Harrogate compared with the UK as a whole for 2006 and 2009. The most significant figures for 2009 are as follows:

Towns:	Harrogate	Skipton	Sunderland	Lincoln	Bradford	Hull
Night-Mix turnover:	£370,255	#	£345,459	#	£435,039	#
No of Firms:	587	#	#	#	1,618	#
Employment:	5,507	#	#	#	#	4,059

The symbol # indicates that this town was not in the top 50 towns for this parameter, so this report clearly shows the importance of the night-time economy to Harrogate – again largely due to the large number of visitors and not to local residents. In addition to the towns listed above, Harrogate also has a higher night-time turnover than Aberdeen, Durham and Wakefield which are all served by direct trains on the East Coast main line.

(Source: TBR Limited Night Time Economy Newsletter, Summer 2010 via HBC DDS)

9.7 Comparison with other Towns

For comparison, we have checked the Enjoy England web site for numbers of hotels etc.

Towns:	Harrogate	Skipton	Sunderland	Lincoln	Bradford	Hull
Hotels & Guest Houses	62	18	21	30	26	19

Whilst these figures may not be precise, they do indicate the relative capacity of these towns to accommodate visitors and hence the relative number of potential passengers. Skipton's TIC list contains 20 hotels, inns and guest houses with a total of 203 rooms. Lincoln's TIC list contains 6 hotels and 13 guest houses in the City with 367 rooms.

In comparison, Stratford-on-Avon has 58 hotels and guest houses listed on the same web site. It has six direct train services each day to London and five return services, yet it has a population about one third that of Harrogate.

(Source: <http://search.enjoyengland.com> August 2010 + TIC Enquiries)

10. Current Harrogate Rail Services

10.1 Harrogate Line – Northern Rail

Northern Rail currently operates a shuttle service between Leeds and Knaresborough via Harrogate of two trains per hour from 06.00 and 19.00 and one per hour until 23.29. The scheduled journey time between Leeds and Harrogate is on average 35 minutes.

This service is extended from Knaresborough to York once an hour between 07.00 and 21.15. The last return train from York to Harrogate is at 22.11. The scheduled journey time between York and Harrogate is on average 32 minutes.

The service is operated with a mixture of 142/144 and 150 diesel multiple units, mostly 2-car units but extended to 4-car at peak periods. The performance, reliability and quality of the service are often criticised – particularly by long distance visitors who are connecting in Leeds or York off the renovated East Coast main-line HST 125 diesel and 225 electric trains.

Whilst the fastest journey to Yorkshire is from Kings Cross to York with a shortest scheduled time of 1 hour 44 minutes, waiting at York for a once-an-hour connection to Harrogate makes an overall scheduled journey time of 2 hours 43 minutes – provided both are on time! If the London train is delayed by more than about 15 minutes the connection is lost and that means a frustrating and inconvenient wait of nearly an hour for the next service to Harrogate. Hence, changing trains is seen as risky, inconvenient, and time consuming - whilst the rolling stock falls significantly below most customer's expectations! Poor connectivity is a widely recognised adverse influence on rail travel and it causes significant frustrated demand where it occurs.

10.2 East Coast Main Line

Before the war, Harrogate enjoyed a frequent London-Harrogate-Edinburgh Pullman Car

service with up to 10 trains per day. It was cut back in stages and Harrogate now has just one direct London service, south bound on weekday mornings only, taking almost 3 hours. There are no direct Sunday services despite high demand for travel on this day.

The northbound London to Harrogate service was withdrawn for primarily operational reasons in that diesel hauling the class 91 electric train (the only rolling stock available in the late 1980's) proved unreliable and time consuming during changeover at Leeds.

Neither GNER nor NXEC had any public plans to improve service frequency despite repeated requests from various stakeholders. The nature of the franchise specification means that this is unlikely to change under current East Coast control.

The EUREKA timetable offers no improvements in services between Harrogate and London. On the contrary it proposes new direct services to Lincoln (which appears to have a lower demand profile than Harrogate) whilst retaining the existing services to Bradford, Hull and Skipton. Earlier Sections of this report have demonstrated that Harrogate provides a more sustainable basis for the operation of direct services to and from London be it for originating business travel or for incoming business and leisure visitors. The following section compares historical passenger numbers at these Stations as an indication of the area's relative propensity for rail travel.

11. Existing Passenger numbers

The total number of passenger journeys in the constituency of Harrogate (i.e. Harrogate + Pannal + Hornbeam Park + Starbeck + Knaresborough stations) = 1.95 million p.a.

In comparison, the combined constituencies of Sunderland Central, Washington & Sunderland West and Houghton & Sunderland North = 372,000 p.a. (All from Sunderland station).

Lincoln with a slightly higher population than Harrogate = 1.38 million p.a.

These figures illustrate the comparatively greater propensity to travel by rail to/from Harrogate. (2008-09 figures excluding a small number of interchanges).

Detailed figures for the main stations on the Harrogate Line and comparable towns for the past five years are as follows. This station usage data is collated by Delta Rail and consists of estimates of the total numbers of people entering and exiting all stations.

Financial Year:	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Harrogate	1,054,919	1,096,944	1,141,712	1,180,509	1,204,486
Knaresborough	239,754	248,986	248,655	245,422	257,714
Starbeck	133,234	133,039	128,590	125,634	132,056
Hornbeam Park	208,661	213,823	217,508	226,409	248,600
Pannal	94,500	93,800	94,396	98,041	106,460
TOTAL DISTRICT	1,731,068	1,786,592	1,830,861	1,876,015	1,949,316
Horsforth	614,971	687,538	729,780	726,047	856,040
Bradford F.S.	403,577	394,391	1,388,668	1,529,174	1,971,327
Hull	1,961,298	1,969,919	2,050,545	2,112,980	2,162,500
Lincoln	1,277,750	1,340,184	1,417,517	1,315,410	1,379,412
Stratford on Avon	527,119	492,925	533,955	493,302	636,178
Sunderland	459,167	431,908	350,534	354,147	372,308

(Source: Office of Rail Regulation, Station Usage reports and data 2010)

It can be also seen that Harrogate passenger numbers have grown steadily by 15% over the 5 year period, compared to Hull up 10% and Lincoln up 8%, whilst Sunderland usage fell by 19% over the same period. Despite its smaller population, total usage of the five Harrogate District Stations was 41% greater than Lincoln and almost equal to Bradford Foster Square and very close to Hull, which both have much larger populations and

currently many more trains. Harrogate has about twice the usage of Stratford on Avon.

12. Recent Developments in Harrogate District

Before considering alternative ways of improving Harrogate rail services it is important to take note of several recent and planned future developments that will further increase the potential demand for long-distance rail services to and from Harrogate.

12.1 Leeds Bradford-London Air Services

In 2008, BMI withdrew the long established air services between London Heathrow and the local Leeds Bradford Airport. BMI claimed that it was uneconomic and they needed the landing slots and aircraft for other services – due it is believed to their recent takeover by Lufthansa. Likewise for Durham Tees Valley. In practice the four flights a day each way were popular with business travellers to London and business and leisure travellers to the many long-distance destinations that were best served from Heathrow.

The re-opening of a previously failed service between Leeds-Bradford and London Gatwick by FlyBE has not adequately filled the gap left by BMI. Hence the only options for international visitors to Harrogate are to fly via Amsterdam to Leeds Bradford or else via Manchester and the Trans-Pennine Express or via the East Coast services from Kings Cross to Leeds or York. Harrogate passengers needing long-haul connections have the same choices in the opposite direction. Direct trains between Harrogate and London Kings Cross would certainly attract such long-distance passengers in both directions – who would no doubt be willing to pay First Class fares!

On international travel, a strong point for the East Coast services is that Kings Cross adjoins St Pancras International for high speed connections with Paris and Brussels – and hopefully new European Capitals such as Barcelona, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Madrid, Milan, etc. This could attract more international visitors to Harrogate and the Dales for business or leisure.

12.3 Harrogate College – International Business School

In June 2010, Harrogate College, part of the Hull College Group, launched the first International Business School in Harrogate. Situated within newly refurbished facilities, the Harrogate International Business School is designed to become a regional, national and international centre of excellence. The School aspires to engage with local employers, by developing a partnership approach to the development of higher education and professional programmes which meet the needs of industry and the local community.

Harrogate International Business School will offer a range of professional development programmes from short, focussed Continuous Professional Development modules to help businesses maintain their competitiveness and individual development programmes leading to degrees and professional accreditation, to whole organisation development programmes and bespoke business training solutions

The College campus is adjacent to Hornbeam Park Station which makes rail travel the ideal choice for prospective students and staff from all over the UK and internationally.

12.4 Military Establishments near Harrogate

There is a large Army Apprentice College at Pennypot located on the east side of Harrogate which we understand has an average of 1,300 cadets on site. They have been seen to travel by rail in large numbers. There is also a REME Camp near Ripon who send bus loads down to Harrogate Station. Enquiries are being made about the numbers of such journeys.

At the nearby Menwith Hill RAF Base is a major United States Military base, part of their long-range early warning defence system. We have enquired about the number of UK and US personnel on site and their travel aspirations but we are still awaiting a reply.

12.5 Local Development Framework

In February 2009, Harrogate Borough Council adopted a Local Development Framework Core Strategy which includes the several elements relevant to the need for better Harrogate Trains. The Core Strategy provides for the management of change in development and conservation throughout the District over the next 15 years. It sets out

the framework to achieve the difficult balance of facilitating the delivery of much needed homes for local people, new jobs, improved sports and recreation facilities and better opportunities for all, whilst minimising the impact on the high quality environment and distinctive character of the District, and avoiding harmful and inappropriate development.

The Core Strategy sets out that the Council will make provision for 390 new homes per annum (net annual average) in Harrogate District over the period 2004 – 2023 of which 62% is expected to be provided in Harrogate and Knaresborough.

One of the strategic objectives identified to achieve the Core Strategy Vision is to *'Improve the provision of bus and rail services and facilities, pedestrian and cycle networks, community transport schemes, park and ride and traffic management measures to reduce traffic congestion, with priority given to Harrogate and Knaresborough'*.

Policy TRA3 on Travel Management states that in partnership with North Yorkshire County Council and other transport providers the Council will:

- a) implement appropriate travel improvements as identified in the North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan and other transportation studies;
- b) give priority to the reduction of traffic congestion in the Harrogate and Knaresborough Priority Area for the Reduction of Traffic Congestion;
- c) improve public transport and associated infrastructure, with priority given to improving:
 - the capacity, quality and convenience of routes between Harrogate and Knaresborough to Leeds and York;
 - sustainable means of access in rural areas in order to access services through Service Centre Transportation Strategies; and
 - the Key Bus & Rail Network;
- d) develop a District-wide parking strategy;
- e) prepare a Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Development Plan Document to address, amongst other matters, key transport issues including:
 - the integration of transport infrastructure provision and areas for future growth and development, including public transport provision;
 - provision of a transport interchange at Station Parade, Harrogate;
 - other transport infrastructure, including town centre and out of town centre requirements e.g. park and ride provision, pedestrian priority measures;
 - improvements for walking, cycling and travel by public transport, including safety issues.

12.6 Harrogate Park & Ride or Parkway sites

As part of work being undertaken by North Yorkshire County Council for Local Transport Plan 3 and Harrogate Borough Council in relation to the LDF Sites & Policies Development Plan Document, the potential for rail/bus based park and ride sites is being investigated.

North Yorkshire County Council aspires to implement a Park & Ride scheme in an attempt to reduce congestion on the radial routes into Harrogate. However it appears impracticable to use shuttle buses if they can travel no faster than the queuing cars. Hence the Chamber has proposed a "Park & Rail" facility running for example between Flaxby near the A1(M) and Pannal near the Harrogate Southern bypass A658 junction with the A61. There are several sites at both locations that could be developed into Parkway Stations subject to the required Planning Permission and capital investment.

Parkway Stations served by direct Harrogate-London trains would no doubt attract the many car-owners in Harrogate District who are currently reluctant to drive into the very congested city centre car parks in Leeds or York. Currently they find it easier to drive down the A1(M) or M1 motorway rather use rail unless it is close to their point of origin.

12.7 Housing and business development at Knaresborough East

As part of the Local Development Framework process, initial consultations on preferred options for site allocations for housing and employment were undertaken in 2008. This work identified as a preferred option a major urban extension at Manse Farm along side the existing Harrogate-York railway line and in between Knaresborough and the A1(M).

Indicative figures included 500 dwellings, 2-4 hectares of employment land, significant landscaping and open space with further investigation in relation to a potential neighbourhood centre to include primary school, shops and health facilities. Scope for additional homes post 2020 was also identified. A new railway station was also seen as an important part of any sustainable development in this location. Further work in relation to the potential development of this site is currently being undertaken as part of the Sites and Policies DPD.

Harrogate Borough Council and North Yorkshire County Council have appointed Arup to investigate the potential for a new station as part of master planning proposals for the site. As part of this work discussions have been held with David Phillips (Senior Route Planner for Yorkshire and the Humber) from Network Rail, Pat Beijer (Commercial Team) from Northern Rail and Brian Welch from the Department for Transport. A range of potential housing densities is being considered as part of this work.

This location could perhaps also be the suggested Park & Ride or Parkway Station, served by both Northern Rail and other services. However this needs further technical development and exploration in order to extend the double-track section from Knaresborough to the proposed new station.

12.8 Harrogate Transport Interchange

The provision of a Transport Interchange at Station Parade, Harrogate is an important strategic objective which is reflected in the Leeds City Development Programme and included in Core Strategy. A Development Brief for this site was adopted by Harrogate Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance in May 2005. This is a key site in Harrogate town centre and an important gateway to the town, especially when travelling by bus or train or for those travelling by car and using the Victoria multi-storey car park. There is also scope to improve taxi provision and access for community transport.

As part of a comprehensive development, improvements to the current transport infrastructure are envisaged and it is expected that any new development will bring the various transport modes closer together, linked by a new transport interchange. The provision of this interchange recognises the importance of enhancing the provision of public transport facilities and the importance of providing transport interchanges at a regional and sub regional level.

The provision of an interchange will also reinforce the role of Harrogate as a sub regional town as outlined in Core Strategy Policy JB4. The development of an Interchange in Harrogate is also one of the measures proposed by the NYCC Harrogate and Knaresborough Integrated Transport Strategy (HAKITS) to address traffic congestion.

Negotiations with potential property developers and the various land-owners are ongoing and work has currently been completed on traffic impact modelling and an initial design for a scheme for the diversion of the A61 trunk road south bound off Station Parade on to the east side of the Station. This would remove a current barrier between the bus/railway stations and the town centre with the potential to significantly improve pedestrian links between the railway station, the Conference Centre and key services and facilities in the town centre and improve the town centre environment. The intention being to make public transport use an easier and more attractive option

The proposed changes to the Harrogate Station would maintain its ability to handle full length HST125 Inter-City trains on both Platforms 1 and 3 as well as on the through line in between the two platform lines, currently used for "parking" rolling stock until needed.

The existing Harrogate Station Car Park is already well used but it could be extended by decking. The adjacent Victoria Car Park owned and operated by Harrogate Borough Council could easily be made available for more rail users given a later closing time. Car parking at stations is recognised as an important prerequisite of stimulating rail travel.

12.9 Harrogate & Dales Convention Bureau

Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce is currently leading a project to establish a Convention Bureau to promote the numerous facilities for hosting conferences, exhibitions and other events in Harrogate District and the adjacent Yorkshire Dales, including Skipton. This project has the support of Welcome to Yorkshire, The Yorkshire Dales & Harrogate Tourism Partnership, Harrogate Borough Council, Destination Harrogate, Accommodation

Harrogate and the Promoting Harrogate Group of providers.

When comparing Harrogate and Dales with rival locations that already have a successful Convention Bureau, the inadequacy of our current rail connections is highlighted – for example the following competing Bureaux and venues feature their rail links as a key attractions: Conference Leeds; York & Scarborough; Yorkshire South; Manchester Central; Birmingham ICC; Birmingham NEC; Excel Centre London; Edinburgh ICC, etc.

The Chamber is currently compiling an integrated timetable to show the many available connections between London and Harrogate, although we know that changing trains is unpopular with delegates – which makes Harrogate less attractive to Event Organisers.

12.10 What could happen if we do nothing?

If no action is taken to restore regular direct trains between Harrogate and London in both directions across seven days, then there is a serious risk that Harrogate will lose some of the major conferences and trade exhibitions on which its economy depends. For example the Chartered Institute of Professional Development decided to move its long-established Annual Conference from Harrogate to Manchester, ostensibly due to many complaints about poor rail links. The following report was printed in HARROGATE ADVERTISER 30 May 2008

HARROGATE'S second largest conference is to move to Manchester after visitors complained about poor transport links and a lack of accommodation in the town.

The CIPD annual conference, which attracts more than 5,000 visitors from the UK and abroad, has been held in Harrogate for 60 years but organisers pulled out of the town after negative feedback from delegates.

A CIPD spokesman told the Harrogate Advertiser the lack of a direct rail link from London was a major drawback!

13. Harrogate Line Improvements

13.1 Existing Line Capacity

At a regional level the need for improvements on the Leeds-Harrogate-York Line, to make rail usage more attractive is recognised. (Y&H Regional Transport Policy Y1)

A Consultancy study by Arup in 2006 showed that it was technically possible to operate 3 trains per hour between Leeds and Harrogate and 2 per hour between York and Harrogate using the existing track. However there has been no prospect of funding for the additional rolling stock that would be needed.

Northern Rail has had its franchise extended to run until September 2013 on the same conditions as the original franchise, which assumes no growth and provides no funds for investment. However patronage grew by 34% in the first five years that they had the franchise. Northern has recently proposed to expand hours of operation and increase local Harrogate services by nearly 25% on weekdays and 50% on Sundays in 2011/12.

13.2 Horsforth Turn-back & Signalling

West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive has made proposals for extra shuttle services on the Leeds-Horsforth section of the line utilising a new turn-back facility at Horsforth. This project is in the Network Rail forward plan for 2014.

Improvements are also planned to the old-fashioned mechanical signalling, increasing the capacity on the line between Leeds and Harrogate. This should enable a faster "express" service between Harrogate and Horsforth. It could then run non-stop into Leeds, omitting Headingley and Burley Park which would be served by the intervening Leeds-Horsforth shuttle service. These improvements would also facilitate use of the line by additional Inter-City HST125 diesel trains between Leeds and Harrogate.

13.3 Horsforth Rail-Air Link to Airport

At the suggestion of Harrogate Chamber, Leeds-Bradford Airport Management is currently investigating the feasibility of operating a shuttle mini-bus service between the terminal building and Horsforth Station which is only 2.5 miles away with a typical journey time of less than 10 minutes. One shuttle bus could meet every train from both Leeds and Harrogate during most of the day.

The existing Harrogate-London East Coast Service currently picks up at Horsforth Station every morning and it is well used. If the proposed new London-Harrogate services all stopped at Horsforth we believe they would also be well used, depending on the actual timings. It might also be possible to serve Headingley Station for major events such as Test Matches, although it would be necessary to reinstate the original longer platforms.

13.4 Tram-Trains on Harrogate Line?

Connections to Leeds and York are critically important for Harrogate, in particular given the current lack of through rail journey opportunities particularly to the north. Arup have undertaken work for the Leeds City Region in relation to the introduction of tram trains. It was thought that the Harrogate line would be a suitable test-bed for a new "Tram-train" light rail service that could also run on tram-lines in Leeds and York city centres.

Conversion of the Harrogate Line to tram train could provide a step change in the quality of the rail link in terms of capacity, frequency and connectivity to labour markets both for local and strategic journeys. However it could also jeopardise Harrogate's direct connectivity with longer distance main line rail services. As the Harrogate Line is not electrified, those aspirations have now been scaled back. The original Penistone Line trials with diesel units were cancelled as it was deemed not economically viable. Trials using electric tram trains are currently being planned on the Sheffield – Rotherham freight line before joining the Sheffield Supertram network.

We also understand that the introduction of electric tram-trains on the Harrogate Line would require electrification which is incompatible with main line rolling stock. Given these uncertainties, this option is not considered sufficiently well considered or developed to provide a solution within the foreseeable future

13.5 Harrogate Borough Council Policy

On 3rd March 2010 Harrogate Borough Council considered a Notice of Motion entitled HARROGATE/YORK RAIL LINK by Councillors Martin Leather and John Savage as follows:

We wish to propose that HBC lobby Network Rail and local MPs to upgrade the railway line between Harrogate and York to 21st Century standards. This railway line was opened around 1854. It was returned to a single track between Knaresborough and Cattal, and Green Hammerton and Poppleton, closing Marston Moor station about 40 years ago. In order to upgrade the line two measures need to be implemented: -

(a) Automatic barriers and crossing needs to be installed and signals need to be electrified. This would reduce the number of staff required and therefore result in cost savings. Examples of single track, which are fully automated, are Exmouth to Barnstable in Devon and the coastal line between Pwllheli and Machynlleth in Wales. The latter line has trains running two hourly with less passengers except at peak times.

b) Double track needs to be reinstated so the trains can run more frequently than hourly. This improvement would be of benefit to local commuters. It would also greatly improve the service to York and Harrogate and be a significant benefit to the Harrogate Conference Centre (one of the complaints by users of the Conference Centre relates to unsatisfactory access by public transport). You will be aware that the London to York line is significantly faster than the London to Leeds line.

The notice of motion was referred to the Council Cabinet who resolved unanimously that the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport should pursue the necessary courses of action on behalf of Harrogate Borough Council and the people of the Harrogate District.

Councillor Don Mackenzie, as Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport & Economic Development set out a number of aspirations for residents he believed to be realistic:

- *Double track all the way from Harrogate to York*
- *Electrification*
- *Additional rail halts at Bilton and East Knaresborough*
- *Automatic barriers for more efficient working*
- *More frequent local trains to Leeds and York, at least two an hour*
- *Linked to the above, better direct or indirect connections to London KX*
- *Tram -Train options*

- *Metro card validity over the whole line*

(Source: Minutes of Harrogate Borough Council 03/03/10 & Cabinet Meeting 17/03/10)

This report and the related meetings arranged by Harrogate Chamber with DFT, ORR and Rail Operators, have been supported by Councillor Mackenzie as part of this campaign

14. What are the Operating Constraints?

- The Leeds – Harrogate – York line is not electrified, whereas the main lines from York and Leeds to London are electrified. Thus only diesel trains can operate to Harrogate.
- The signalling on most of the Harrogate line is the old fashioned 'semaphore' type, requiring manned signal boxes, and limiting frequency of trains. Network Rail does have plans to upgrade parts of the Leeds – Harrogate section by 2014, facilitating an increase in track capacity and running speed.
- The Knaresborough to York part of the route has two single line sections, which are a major constraint; there are no plans to upgrade this section of the route.
- At most intermediate stations, platforms are only long enough to accommodate trains no longer than 4 carriages, Knaresborough is one of these. Harrogate, Horsforth and Starbeck can take longer trains.
- Leeds station is very busy, and so is access into the station both from the East and from the Wakefield direction, which are the two routes from London. In practice, direct trains between London and Harrogate only use platforms 6 & 8. It is operationally easier for trains to come into Leeds from the south via Wakefield, and not from the east via Hambleton as National Express had proposed in 2008.
- Although it would be quicker to reach Harrogate via York, the single line sections and 'token' style system for safe operation on single lines could pose a problem for the drivers of the high-speed trains when having to take and release tokens.
- The economic case for serving Harrogate directly from London is also stronger via Leeds. With the proposed journey time improvements to be delivered between London and Leeds from the Eureka timetable, it is now felt preferable that services operate via Leeds rather than York as previously proposed.
- There is a national shortage of rolling stock, with little likelihood of any new InterCity style trains before 2016. The only high-speed diesel trains that exist are the HST 125s with Class 43 locomotives, Class 180 diesel units and Classes 220 and 221 'Voyager' diesel units. At present it looks as though these could only be made available if electrification of some routes where they are used takes place, thus 'freeing' them for use elsewhere; or if some other routes where they are used were curtailed, e.g. East Coast to Aberdeen(3), Hull(1) or Inverness(1).
- A detailed study of the operating constraints shows that Harrogate could most effectively be served as an extension of existing services via Leeds rather than via York. As several daily services are already specifically diagrammed to use diesel high speed trains this option would not require any new rolling stock or extra slots on the East Coast Main Line. Network Rail have advised in principle that such services using platforms 1, 6 and 8 at Leeds (as they do currently) could reverse there to go north to Harrogate without additional conflict with other services. In some circumstances, the continuance of the train to Harrogate will also free up platform capacity at Leeds.

(Source: Andrew Easson, Integrated Passenger Transport, North Yorkshire County Council)

15. What are the Proposed Actions?

15.1 Immediate Actions 2010 = 1 direct train per day HGT-KGX southbound

a) Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce will compile an integrated timetable showing all connections between Harrogate and London Kings Cross and intermediate Stations on the East Coast mainline and will publish it on the Chamber web-site for the information of local businesses and residents and for conference and exhibition visitors.

This new timetable will also be offered to the Harrogate International Centre, Yorkshire Event Centre, Pavilions of Harrogate and Destination Harrogate for their web sites and for onward distribution to organisers of events attracting long-distance visitors.

b) Northern Rail is asked to make every possible effort to change the remaining Class 142/144 diesel multiple units to Class 150, 153, 155, 156 or 158 for all services on the Harrogate Line. Also to ensure that 4-car units operate throughout the peak periods morning and evening to avoid the present over-crowding.

c) Leeds Bradford Airport is urged to implement a Horsforth Rail-Air shuttle mini-bus on a trial basis in view of the likely demise of the Harrogate Airport Bus Service 767 in April 2011, due to the proposed withdrawal of North Yorkshire County Council funding.

15.2 Short Term Actions 2011 = 2 direct trains per day HGT-KGX every day

a) The Department for Transport is asked to reinstate the evening return service from Kings Cross to Harrogate in the EUREKA timetable effective from May 2011. This will need one diesel HST125 train that currently serves Leeds to be extended to Harrogate and then go to the Neville Hill Depot for overnight cleaning and maintenance, before returning to Harrogate for the next morning's southbound service.

All services should be operated on a seven day basis with new services in each direction on Saturdays and Sundays extended from Leeds. No extra ECML slots or rolling stock are needed, so this would be a very efficient and cost-effective means of providing extra trains to Harrogate, with some side benefits for operations in Leeds Station and Neville Hill.

b) Northern Rail is asked to proceed with proposed plans to increase the duration and frequency of services on the Harrogate to York line during the evening and on Sundays. Also to increase car parking capacity at existing Stations wherever practicable.

15.3 Medium Term Actions 2012/13 = 4 direct trains per day HGT-KGX

a) The Department for Transport is asked to include in both the Eureka Timetable and the new Franchise Specification for the East Coast mainline services one new early morning northbound service from Kings Cross via Leeds to Harrogate and a new corresponding evening return from Harrogate to Kings Cross. This service is primarily to meet the needs of Conference, Exhibition and leisure visitors from the South East to Harrogate District.

This will need two of the existing electric services between Kings Cross, Wakefield and Leeds to be changed to diesel HST125 units. For example, the diesel units currently serving Skipton could be replaced with electric units as that line is now electrified. We understand there is a question of limited power supply from Bingley sub-station on the Aire Valley line to be resolved. For example it may be possible to operate electric trains between Shipley and Skipton with one or more traction motors isolated to avoid any power supply issues.

No extra ECML slots or rolling stock would be needed, so again this would be a very efficient and cost-effective means of providing extra trains to Harrogate.

b) North Yorkshire County Council and Harrogate Borough Council are asked to contact the shortlist of bidders for the new franchise and insist that they all come to Harrogate, when we should all make the strongest possible case for Harrogate Trains.

c) Network Rail is urged to proceed with the proposed Horsforth turn-back and the improved signalling between Leeds and Harrogate to enable additional faster services between Leeds and Knaresborough. The line speed is currently limited to 60mph.

d) Northern Rail is urged to procure additional Class 150 series rolling stock needed to serve Horsforth, Harrogate and Knaresborough.

15.4 Long Term Aspirations 2014/16 = 2 hourly service HGT-KGX every day

a) The Department for Transport is asked to consider including in the new Franchise Specification for the East Coast mainline services several additional extensions of existing northbound services from Kings Cross via Leeds to Harrogate or alternatively via York to Harrogate, in order to create a two-hourly frequency of services between Harrogate and Kings Cross. This could be achieved when additional diesel rolling stock becomes available, either by withdrawal of diesel services from other routes or by cascading of diesel units replaced by electric trains elsewhere in the UK.

b) The Office of Rail Regulation is asked to consider allocating additional slots on the ECML for open access operators, once the planned work by Network Rail to remove existing bottlenecks has been completed.

c) The Dept for Transport is asked to include three trains per hour between Harrogate and Leeds and two trains per hour between Harrogate and York as part of the Northern Rail franchise renewal - subject to improved signalling and level crossings.

d) North Yorkshire County Council and Harrogate Borough Council are asked to approve construction of a Parkway Station either to the south of Harrogate or to the east of Knaresborough which can be served by all the direct Harrogate-London trains.

e) Network Rail is asked to consider whether the Leeds-Harrogate-York line could be an alternative or diversionary route for some ECML, TPE and Cross-Country diesel services.

f) The Dept for Transport is asked to examine during the Cross-Country and Trans-Pennine Express re-franchising whether some services that start/terminate at Leeds or York could operate to/from or via Harrogate, thus providing Harrogate with direct connections to Newcastle-on-Tyne, Manchester Airport and Birmingham plus major intermediate stations.

16. What are the attractions of direct London-Harrogate Trains?

In summary, the principle reasons why more direct Harrogate-London Trains are needed and why they should be a commercial success are as follows:

- High proportion of premium passengers all the year round in both directions
- Not primarily dependent on residents travelling to London – many visitors too
- Inbound long-distance business passengers for Conferences and Conventions
- Inbound long-distance visitors for Trade Exhibitions, Fairs, Shows, etc
- Inbound leisure visitors to Harrogate Town, District & the Yorkshire Dales
- Harrogate District businesses and residents would increase use of rail services
- Potential for new Park Way or Park & Ride services along the Harrogate Line
- Potential for bus shuttle services from Ripon and Wetherby to a Parkway Station
- Potential for bus shuttle service between Horsforth and Leeds Bradford Airport
- Potential for extra trains for big events such as Gt Yorkshire Show & Test Matches
- Extra commuter services between Harrogate, Leeds and York + vice versa

17. How can we support more Harrogate Trains?

The following actions are suggested to promote the need for more Harrogate Trains:

- Lobbying local Government – HBC, NYCC, LCR, W2Y, YF, LCR
- Lobbying national Government – East Coast, DfT, ORR, HMT, MP, Minister
- Convincing bidders for the East Coast franchise - HBC, NYCC, LCR, W2Y, YF
- Promoting existing Leeds & York - London services – HCTC, HIC, YEC, NR, EC
- Promoting new services to local business community – HCTC, NR, EC + Press
- Promoting new services to major Event Organisers – HCTC, HDCB, HIC, YEC
- Assisting with PR campaigns in local press and radio – HBC, HIC, HCTC, W2Y
- Direct mailing campaign across North & West Yorkshire – HCTC, HIC, YEC
- Prime space at the Yorkshire Business Market, YIBC & HIC – HCTC, YEC, HIC

Further suggestions and offers of help are invited!

COMPILED BY:

**Brian L Dunsby, BSc, CEng, FIChemE, FCIM, FIAM, FIBC,
Holder of The Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion
Chief Executive, Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce**
