

Dear Member



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## Our Annual Meeting will be Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March in St Albans

This year's annual meeting will be on **Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March at 7:30pm** at the Friend's Meeting House in St Albans.

We will be joined by Stuart Cheshire, the newly appointed Passenger Service Director for the Thameslink route, by Dyan Crowther, the Chief Operating Officer (subject to confirmation), Larry Heyman (all from Govia Thameslink Railway ('GTR')) and a senior Network Rail Manager.

The main focus for the meeting will be

1. Current performance / improvement plans
2. Passenger information / improvement plans
3. December 2015 timetable

### Getting to the Friend's Meeting House

We've been to the Friend's Meeting House before - it is at 7 Upper Lattimore Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3UD; from the station, head down Victoria Street<sup>℞</sup> towards the centre of St Albans and turn right at the second set of traffic lights (where there is a Cotswold Outdoor Sports shop) and the Friends Meeting house is on the approximately 4th on the left - see <http://www.quaker.org.uk/st-albans>. The hall is accessible by the disabled and has an accessible toilet.

℞ Victoria Street is straight ahead from platform 4; from platform 1, turn right and cross the bridge over the railway.

### Questions for the meeting

If you have any questions or specific topics for GTR or Network Rail, can I please have these by **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March (evening)**. There will be no 'ban' on raising additional topics on the evening, but GTR or Network Rail may need to respond later rather than on the night.

### Compensation survey

A gentle reminder to complete this, and to ask friends and colleagues to complete as well (it is not just restricted to APTU members). The survey can be completed here:

<https://www.surveymoz.com/s/146297CUCCI> - please do this by Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February.

### GTR performance

The bad news for GTR continues...

- Which (Consumers Association) has ranked them bottom in their 2015 survey at 43%. The top ranked was Grand Central, an Open Access operator on the East Coast Mainline at 76%. The scores of those that can be more reasonably compared to GTR ranged from 48% (South West Trains) to 44% (Southeastern). London Midland, which also has significant operations outside the travel to London Market scored 44% and the two top London TOCs scored 62% (C2C) and 57% (Chiltern).
  - Their survey can be read at <http://www.which.co.uk/home-and-garden/leisure/reviews-ns/best-and-worst-uk-train-companies/best-train-companies-overall/> (limited access unless you are a Member)
- Passenger Focus has ranked them second from bottom in the National Passenger Survey Autumn 2014 at 77% (unchanged from FCC at 77% in Spring 2014). Bottom was Southeastern at 74%. The survey can be read at <http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/research/national-passenger-survey-introduction>

## Improvements to customer information

GTR recently provided us with this update:

Following feedback from our passengers and stakeholders we have worked to make improvements to how our customer information is delivered. Key changes include:

- Twitter:
  - Our Twitter feed will be manned 24 hours a day, every day, from mid-February 2015 by our in-house team
- On Track app (NM note: For Android and Apple IOS)
  - New banner alerts that automatically pop up when trains are delayed or cancelled
  - Storing recent searches and journey information
  - More personalised filtering of search results so passengers get information most relevant to them
- Website:
  - Better information during disruption: new technology that informs passengers in real-time if a service is short formed or cancelled

## Behind the scenes

We've been provided with this update:

### Darwin information system goes live

On Tuesday we connected our Customer Information System (CIS) to the national Darwin CIS.

Darwin is a cross industry project that takes multiple information feeds to provide real time predictions on trains running, providing consistent information for our passengers and staff.

Key benefits

- Consistency of information between websites/apps/station screens
- Better sharing of information between train companies

It is a somewhat cryptic update - however, in my view very important, as GTR are now receiving information from the strategic national solution and this should give them a reliable start point for onward updating to us.

## Office of Rail Regulation on Industry Financials

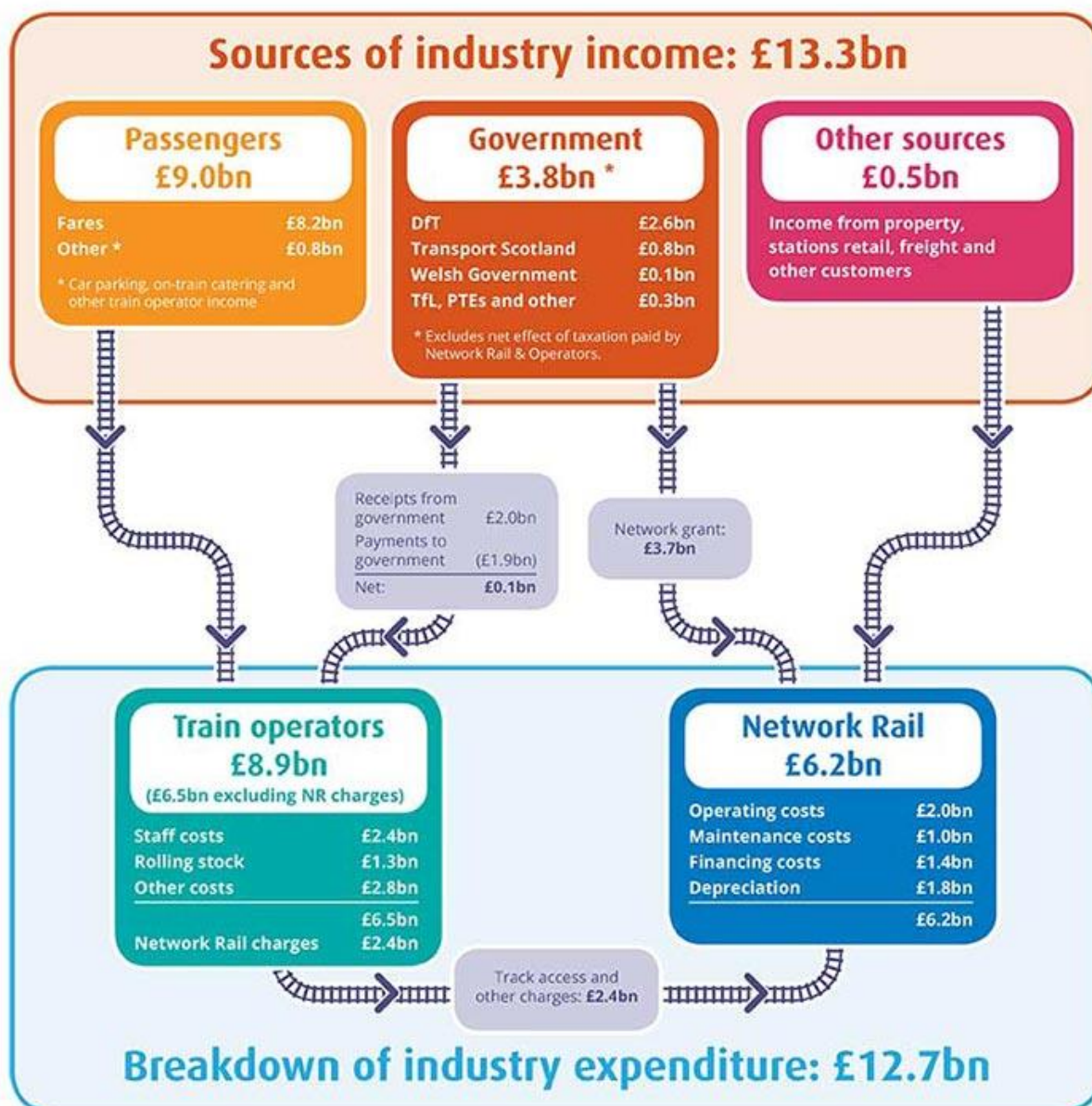
The ORR has recently published the rail industry financial report for 2013/4. Key Highlights (or Lowlights, depending on your view) include:

- Costs have remained stable - A rise of 0.03% (adjusted for inflation) over 4 years, despite 17.2% passenger growth and 18.1% freight growth
- Passengers have contributed an increasing proportion of the rail industry's income relative to taxpayers over the past four years - up from 55.6% in 2010-11 to 61.5% in 2013-14.
  - For First Capital Connect (including Great Northern routes), the key figures are: Passenger income £549m, other income £46m and net government funding of £25m.

The ORR Graphic showing how money flows is of interest: but remember it includes some heavily subsidised operators:

## Who pays for Britain's Railways?

GB Rail Industry Financials Information Report 2013-14



Full details at: <http://orr.gov.uk/news-and-media/press-releases/2015/rail-regulator-publishes-industry-financials-report-for-2013-14>

Regards

*Neil*

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