

In The News | 12th April 2023 | Latest Rail News

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Punctuality and reliability continued to be the top cause of passenger complaints, accounting for 18.6% of all rail passenger complaints, a report has found.

Official figures on passenger rail service complaints released by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) have revealed that train companies closed 97,254 complaints in the latest quarter, an increase of 8% from the same quarter in the previous year, showing a rate of 26.4 complaints per 100,000 journeys.

The ORR requires train operators to provide passengers with a timely and good quality response, as a minimum, responding to 95% of complaints within 20 working days. In the latest quarter, 92.9% of complaints were closed within 20 working days, mainly driven by the poor performance of operators Grand Central and CrossCountry.

The ORR said it has taken action and recovery plans have been put in place, with both operators showing progress.

[Read the full story here.](#)

Construction costs for a road bridge on a passenger rail line due to reopen in 2024 have trebled to £30.6m, figures have revealed.

The BBC reports the 18-mile Northumberland Line between Newcastle and Ashington is set to be revived six decades after it was shut, with the cost for the bridge at Newsham previously estimated at just over £11m in 2021, with inflation blamed for the rise in costs.

Northumberland County Council cabinet has now commissioned a report agreeing a new funding package, with Council leader Glen Sanderson saying the money had to be found “urgently” if the line is to open on schedule in August next year.

The next stage of the roll-out of the Liverpool City Region’s new publicly-owned trains is underway with Merseyrail trains now operating on the Ormskirk line.

An article from Insider Media said the new fleet has launched in time for the Grand National Festival, with some services heading to and from Aintree to be operated by the new trains before their wider introduction on the line over the coming weeks.

Liverpool City Region mayor Steve Rotheram said: “Visitors from around the world flock to our region for Aintree races every year and this is our chance to show them the very best that our area has to offer – including some of the best trains in the land.”

Finally, a group of refugees, asylum seekers and people living in challenging circumstances have been taken on a day trip to the city of Lincoln to help reduce social isolation and boost their confidence in travelling by rail.

The trip was organised by South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA)’s Community Rail programme in partnership with Sheffield charity Open Kitchen Social Club (OSKC), and included a scenic rail journey followed by a visit to the Cathedral Quarter and communal picnic.

The SYMCA said the trip aimed to promoting inclusion and reduce social isolation for participants who arrived in the UK without any friends, family or resources and showcased how easy and convenient it is to

take advantage of the UK's rail network.

[Read the full story here.](#)