

In The News: 4th May

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Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has revealed what could be done to keep people apart under the plan to take the UK out of the lockdown.

In an article in The Daily Telegraph, he says the Government will bring in hand sanitiser, one-way systems, spacing on platforms, as well as staggered work starting times to limit crowds.

He also said he would be asking train companies – now government controlled – to put on more train carriages with many likely to have to be 85% empty to observe social distancing rules.

Meanwhile, rail union leaders have written a joint letter to the Prime Minister warning that this is not the time to lift the lockdown and run more trains.

ASLEF, RMT and TSSA warn that it is completely unacceptable to put the lives of passengers and rail staff at risk. They say it should not be lifted until it is safe to do so.

Trains in part of northern England run at 'painfully slow' speeds barely quicker than a horse and cart because of congestion on the railways, research has found.

That is according to an article in The Times which says a study published today says that improvements to the network cannot wait for the construction of new high-speed lines in 20 years' time.

The Revisiting High Speed North report says that freight trains in the north travel at average speeds of 16mph on major east-west lines.

It recommends a 'super hub' in central Manchester with a tunnel into Piccadilly station from the west.

Finally and HS2 has today started the search for the specialist contractor that will deliver around 280km of state-of-the-art high speed track.

Four separate track packages will be awarded totalling nearly £2 billion, which cover the design and build of the systems between London, Birmingham and Crewe.

Shortlists are expected towards the end of the year, with contract awards in 2022.

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