

## Waverley Line Receives Royal Seal Of Approval



The Scottish Parliament in Session

**The Waverley Railway successfully completed its long journey through the parliamentary process on 24th July when the Queen granted Royal Assent to the Waverley Railway (Scotland) Bill.**

The Waverley Railway (Scotland) Act is now on the Statute Book following the Scottish Parliament's decision to ratify the proposals by 114 votes to one in June 2006. Royal Assent brings the Scottish Borders and Midlothian within touching distance of an efficient and reliable rail link connection to Edinburgh.

The granting of Royal Assent marks a major milestone for the Promoters of the Waverley Railway Bill and its partners, who have worked since 2001 to develop a robust business case demonstrating the line's economic and social benefits.

The Waverley Railway Project is widely viewed as one of the most important, sustainable public transport proposals ever presented to the Scottish Parliament. The line will serve a combined population approaching 200,000 in the Scottish Borders and Midlothian, the only two remaining areas within Scotland without a link to the rail network. It will provide an effective public transport link to enable residents of the Scottish Borders and Midlothian to access important employment, education, health

and leisure opportunities.

Furthermore, the reinstatement of the 35-mile railway line between Edinburgh and Tweedbank in the Borders will allow both areas to maximise their economic development opportunities. Not only will the railway assist in addressing the Lothian's predicted labour market shortfall of 18,500 people by 2015, it will help drive tourists to the Borders, reduce congestion on the roads and facilitate affordable new housing, helping to combat the saturated Edinburgh residential property market.

Commenting on the successful passage to Royal Assent, Councillor David Parker, Leader of Scottish Borders Council, said:

*"Following last month's overwhelmingly positive vote of support for the Waverley Bill from the Scottish Parliament, I am delighted to see the Bill finally receiving Royal Assent.*

*"Since its closure in 1969, the re-establishment of a rail link with Edinburgh has remained a dream for thousands of Borders residents. That dream is moving ever closer to becoming a reality.*

*"While Royal Assent does not mean will be able to immediately start laying track, we will be able to commence the tendering process, begin land assembly and undertake detailed design work, with construction beginning in 2008."*

### Historic Vote Gives Waverley the Green Light

Scottish Borders Council, the Promoter of the Waverley Railway Project and its local authority partners Midlothian Council and City of Edinburgh Council, have hailed the Scottish Parliament's decision to pass the Waverley Railway (Scotland) Bill as 'historic', and 'the single most important economic and social decision to impact on the Borders and Midlothian communities for decades'.

Commenting on the successful Parliamentary Vote, Councillor David Parker, Leader of Scottish Borders Council, said:

*"The parliament's vote to pass the Waverley Railway Bill is a historic event, and one of the most important economic and social decisions to impact on the Borders and Midlothian communities for decades.*

*"It marks the culmination of many years of hard work by countless individuals and groups, who have tirelessly promoted the economic and social case for the re-instatement of the rail line after 37 years of closure. The significant and proven employment, housing, education, environmental and welfare benefits that the rail link will bring to the Scottish Borders and Midlothian areas will be enjoyed for many years to come, and will open up a range of extremely important opportunities for future generations to come."*

Councillor Jim Muirhead, Transport Spokesperson for Midlothian Council, partners in the promotion of the Waverley Railway project said:

*"I am delighted that after many years of debate, that the Parliament has agreed to this much needed railway. I would like to thank the Bill Committee and all others involved in achieving this historic piece of legislation, and I look forward to once again getting train services running to Midlothian and the Borders as soon as possible."*

### This Month...

- Vote Reactions
- The Waverley Route Heritage Association

# Edinburgh Poll Demonstrates Strong Support



David Parker

**A poll of Edinburgh Evening News readers has demonstrated strong support for the re-establishment of rail links between Edinburgh and the Scottish Borders.**

The survey results, published in July, demonstrated that 70.7 percent of the 4,531 people polled believed that the Waverley Line would improve transport links with Edinburgh. Just four percent said that they felt it should only run as far as Gorebridge.

Councillor David Parker, leader of Scottish Borders Council, the Promoter of the

Waverley Railway (Scotland) Bill commented:

*"We are delighted to see such overwhelmingly positive public support for this project. The results of this survey are yet another sign that this line will be embraced enthusiastically by the people of Scotland.*

*"The line will bring enormous economic, social, tourism, educational and travel opportunities to the people of Midlothian and the Scottish Borders and we're pleased to see that Evening News readers also understand that it will help to enhance Edinburgh's transport links. I'm also pleased to see that the notion of terminating the line at Gorebridge has now been comprehensively rejected by both the public and MSPs.*

*"The results of this survey go some way to vindicating the years of hard work and planning that the Waverley Rail Partnership and supporters of the railway have put into re-establishing the Waverley Line.*

The full results of the poll (published Friday 14th June) were as follows:

Which of the following most closely reflects your opinion on the proposal to re-introduce the Waverley line to the Borders?

<b>It will improve the links to Edinburgh:</b>	<b>70.7%</b>
<b>It didn't make any money previously, and is unlikely to do so now:</b>	<b>14.3%</b>
<b>It should only run as far as Gorebridge as an initial pilot:</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>Unsure:</b>	<b>10.3%</b>



Lothianbridge Viaduct



Jeremy Purvis

**Reaction: Jeremy Purvis MSP**

**Wednesday 14th June 2006 at 5.02pm. The exact time the Scottish Parliament voted to reopen the Waverley Line to Tweedbank. Reopening the line is something I have long supported and campaigned for. When I first started campaigning for election in 2003 returning the Borders Railway was a key commitment - correcting a mistake made 37 years ago by the Westminster Government.**

The Campaign for Borders Rail has had a terrific achievement. Since 1969 my constituents have contributed to the public subsidy of our rail services in Scotland without having a rail service into the heart of their community. Come 2011, as a result of this long campaign, my constituents will finally be connected to the national rail network and will have an integrated transport system to be proud of. I pay tribute to the hard work and dedication of all campaigners who have made the construction of the Borders Railway a reality once more.

The rebuilding of the Borders Railway will be the largest rail project in the UK since the Channel Tunnel. This in itself is a momentous achievement for the Scottish Parliament. Through devolution we are delivering a more effective rail infrastructure to Scotland, and helping areas, like the Scottish Borders to achieve greater economic and social development. Whilst railway lines and stations south of the Border are closing, we in Scotland are opening them and rebuilding them and the Borders Railway will be the greatest testament to that policy.

Come 2011, when the first trains will be running from Waverley Station to Tweedbank through Brunstane, Newcraighall, Shawfair, Eskbank, Newtongrange, Gorebridge, Stow and Galashiels, the Borders and Midlothian will be rightly connected to the rest of the rail network. The area will benefit from



**“Having campaigned for the re-opening of the Waverley line within the Scottish Parliament for seven years, I am delighted that this day has finally come”.**  
**Rhona Brankin MSP**

economic development, allowing more families and young people to stay in the area, new businesses will be attracted and tourism will prosper as more and more people will be able to hop on a train and visit our attractions. The Borders Touch will be open and accessible to all who wish to come and see that which we all love and cherish.



**Reaction: Christine Grahame MSP**

At last the Waverley Bill has Royal Assent but it has been a long haul.

My involvement began many years ago when I first stood in the Borders for the

Westminster parliament in 1992. It was apparent to me then that without the line re-instated, the Border's economy (and in 1992 many mills were still open and there was a future in electronics) would be vulnerable, young people would leave, reluctantly, with a knock-on effect on public services, facilities and so on. In 1994 as the European parliament candidate, this view was re-affirmed and since my election to the Scottish parliament in 1999 I have added what weight I have to the 18,000 plus petitioners who brought their just cause to the petition's committee. I was privileged to sit on that committee which came to Galashiels, in front of 250 Borderers, and then on two other committees in the town. Finally it arrived on the floor of parliament, then sitting in Glasgow, in June 2000 when there was a unanimous vote to re-instate the line all the way to Carlisle. During all of this, I set up the Cross Party Group to re-instate the line, in 1999, and this week shall intimate my intention to terminate the group, its purposes having been achieved. Parliamentary question after question was lodged by me urging more detailed reports into the tourism potential, the funding and so on. That said, I wish to take this opportunity to thank MSPs past and present whether members of the group or not for their solid support for Borderers. In particular I was delighted with the view of the Bill committee that there must be a station at Stow otherwise it was not worth the title of a Border's railway. Remember when all this started who thought we were talking about 4 stations in Midlothian?

And therein lies the rub. Three cheers for the Bill. Three cheers for Royal Assent. Three cheers for Stow (and all who never

gave up the fight there) but no cheers for single track with few passing places, a slow journey time and no versatility for freight.



**Reaction: First Minister Jack McConnell, said:**

*“The railway will boost tourism, promote jobs and help to tackle social exclusion in the Midlothian and the Borders. I would like to pay tribute to the efforts of local MSP*

*Rhona Brankin and Midlothian Council who have worked so hard to keep the project on track.”*

**“The rebuilding of the Borders Railway will be the largest rail project in the UK since the Channel Tunnel. This in itself is a momentous achievement for the Scottish Parliament.”**  
**Reaction: Jeremy Purvis MSP**



**Midlothian Council's transport spokesman Councillor Jim Muirhead, commented:**

*“I would like to thank the Bill Committee and all others involved in achieving the historic piece of*

*legislation, and I look forward to once again getting train services running to Midlothian and the Borders as soon as possible.”*



**Midlothian MSP Rhona Brankin welcomed the Scottish Parliament's passing of the Bill:**

*“Having campaigned for the re-opening of the Waverley line within the Scottish Parliament for seven years, I am delighted that this day has finally come.*

*“At last we can look forward to Midlothian residents benefiting from train services which people elsewhere in Scotland take for granted.”*



**Reaction: MSP Chris Ballance, said:**

*“I am delighted that the Waverley line has been given the green light. We now need to campaign hard to ensure that work begins as soon as possible. We also see*

*this as the first step towards creating a rail service for all the Borders, not just for Stow, Galashiels and Tweedbank.*

*I believe our first target must be to take the railway on to Hawick. Hawick is the largest town in the Scottish Borders, but its population has fallen since the closure of the railway. As the most excluded town in the Borders, it has the highest unemployment and the lowest wages. It is almost 50 miles from the nearest rail station and is the largest town in Scotland to be so excluded from the rail network. It is central Borders that most needs the economic uplift that a railway would provide, and I call on the Council to start campaigning for an extension to Hawick.”*Transport Minister Tavish Scott MSP:

*“I am delighted that this important rail project has now been given the green light.*



**Reaction: MSP Tavish Scott, said:**

*“This rail line will increase the economic opportunities and improve quality of life for communities in Midlothian and the Borders - connecting them not only to*

*Edinburgh and the rest of Scotland, but through the Edinburgh airport rail link to truly global markets.*

*“Faster journey times, greater accessibility for passengers with disabilities, improved opportunities for education, employment and leisure, reduced emissions from road traffic, safer travel - these are the tangible transport and economic benefits that the railway will bring.”*

# The Waverley Route Heritage Association



Waverley Heritage Assoc Tunnel survey

## The Waverley Route Heritage Association was formed in 2001 to support the re-opening of the former route and to assist in the development of the surrounding area.

The principal aim of the Association is to re-build some of the lost structures, re-instate trackbed, fencing and drainage and implement landscape management of the area, to provide the visitor with an experience which was accessible when the original route was in operation.

The Association has welcomed the Scottish Parliament's decision to approve the building of the Waverley Line between Edinburgh

and Tweedbank. They believe that the redevelopment of the route will help enhance the stunning heritage which the Association is working to develop. In the last five years the Association has attracted over 400 members, which reflects the very real support that exists for the Waverley Route, even 37 years after closure. Starting with a few small projects involving re-painting of bridge railings, replacing lost bridge number plates and erecting replica mile posts, the projects have now begun to gather their own momentum. In May of this year The Waverley Route Heritage Association was awarded a European grant of £49,866 from the Scottish Borders Leader Programme.

The grant will enable work on the development of a railway heritage centre at Whitrope, situated on the B6399 between Hawick and Newcastleton; a development supported by Scottish Borders Council and Forest Enterprise Borders together with other local landowners.

The heritage centre will form part of an important chain of amenities and will support a small scale conservation scheme for buildings with an historical and cultural significance by restoring a substantial section of the built environment relating to the former railway and its environs at the centre.

Looking to the future, Ian Crooks, Waverley Route Heritage Association Secretary said:

"The WRHA, like other groups, is delighted that Parliament approved the Bill to re-instate the rail line between Edinburgh and the Scottish Borders. The WRHA supports the aims of Scottish Borders Tourist Board strategy to increase visitor numbers and to market the unique attractions and beautiful natural heritage of the Scottish Borders. The Waverley Rail Project will help us achieve these aims and help to conserve the social heritage of the former railway and surrounding communities."

*mainly to benefit the region, it will also attract tourists. I hope to be one of the first overseas visitors in 2011!"*

Visits to the Project website ([www.waverleyrailwayproject.co.uk](http://www.waverleyrailwayproject.co.uk)) have increased gradually since it first went live almost five years ago but visitor numbers peaked this summer with over 16,000 visits during June and July – a daily average of over 260.

David Parker, leader of Scottish Borders Council, the promoter of the Waverley Line commented:

*"The huge number of e-mails and letters we have received over the last two months show that there is genuine strength of feeling in favour of this railway line not only in the Borders but across the UK and the rest of the world.*

*"The decision to give the line the go ahead has provided the Borders region with a huge amount of publicity world-wide and I'm certain that its opening will lead to an influx of foreign visitors.*

*"I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has written to the project team to voice their support. We are still only half way there, and there is still a great deal to be done but the political fight has been won and now we must deliver this railway line."*

## International Interest in Waverley Success

Project officials have offered their thanks to the large number of individuals who have written to the project team to voice their delight at seeing plans for the line finally gain approval from the Scottish Parliament and receive Royal Assent.

While dozens of letters have flooded in from locals and UK based supporters of the line, interest in the project has also seen website visits from as far away as Argentina, Switzerland, Canada, New Zealand, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Russia, Portugal, Denmark, Uruguay, Ireland and Spain. One Australian website visitor, John S Dowden, even wrote:

*"Congratulations to the project team and the partners on the passage of the bill. While this important infrastructure investment is*

### The Team

The Waverley Railway Partnership comprises:

- Scottish Borders Council
- Midlothian Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Supported by Scottish Enterprise Borders.

If you would like to know more about the Waverley Railway Project or would like to add your support to the project, please visit:

- [www.waverleyrailwayproject.co.uk](http://www.waverleyrailwayproject.co.uk),
- phone: 0131 623 2008,
- email: [info@waverleyrailwayproject.co.uk](mailto:info@waverleyrailwayproject.co.uk).