



Railfuture annual draw winners

£500: Mr and Mrs C Bournier, Reddish Vale, Stockport, Cheshire.

£200: Mr J Ward, Newark, Notts

£100: Mrs M Wade, Chiswell Green, St Albans, Herts.

£50: Ron Kennedy, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 5AJ

£20: Peter and Jenny Rowland, Ditton Priors, Bridgnorth, Shropshire .

£20: Mr M Lloyd, Long Eaton, Nottingham.

£10: Mr A P Koolman, Bromley, Kent, D R Porter, Thames Ditton, Surrey, Mr E Stock, Wellingborough, Northants, D M Miller Stratford-upon-Avon, Rosemary and Michael Morris, Lawford, Manningtree, Essex, Mr B Head, Mansion House Street, Dartmouth, Chris Sepke, Horsham, West Sussex, Mr Yaersley, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham.

Rail Times

A new monthly lightweight timetable book is published for the first time on 9 December, as a replacement for the National Timetable which was published for the last time in May.

Network Rail has provided the licence agreement for Bradshaw-Mitchell which is the pen name for the editor, Vic Mitchell.

The name was suggested by fellow railway advocates, in view of his life-long passion for timetables.

Each copy will be less than half the weight of the last edition of the National Timetable. The publishers believe the new version will as a result be more popular with travellers and take less paper.

Rail Times is A5 size, easy to use, with built in maps, showing table numbers. Full colour diagrams give the routes of all the train operators.

Bradshaw-Mitchell's Rail Times for Great Britain is £14.95 post free in the UK. Publishers: Middleton Press, Eastbourne Lane, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9AZ. Tel: 01730 813169 Fax: 01730 812601. Email: sales@middletonpress.co.uk

Political power

The founder of the Stagecoach bus firm which is now also a big wheel in railways donated £500,000 to the Scottish National Party. Brian Souter reportedly said he wanted to correct the imbalance in Scottish politics.

Car killers

More people are killed by speeding drivers than all other causes of homicide, said Amy Aeron-Thoma, founder of RoadPeace. She also says having a "blind spot" on a car or lorry should be a criminal offence.

Cyclists using stations have long struggled to cope with stairs, usually getting from one platform to the next. When loaded with bags, it is even more difficult.

In China, India and some European countries, many station stairways are fitted with a simple ramp to allow the bike to be pushed up on its wheels rather than being carried.

Now "high-tech first-world" Britain is catching up. Tests are being carried out using an aluminium track with a new product called Bykramp.

The words which can be seen on the inside of the ramp are made of hard-wearing ribbed PVC to provide traction in wet weather and which will also allow a sponsor or provider's name to be included.

Bob Richards of the Department for Transport Cycling Team said: "Traditional cycle ramps can be both difficult and quite expensive to install and clearly as part of our support for rail and cycle integration we would be keen to see a simple inexpensive solution."

He said that the Bykramp could become part of best practice guidance to train operating companies if it does well in the trials.

First Capital Connect is to allow a trial at Finsbury Park station, London, with input from the Association of Train Operating Companies.

Andy Cameron, co-author of Manual for Streets, said: "The ramp looks very elegant indeed, clearly a simple but effective design and

something that you can see instantly how it will work." With luck, the Bykramp will become a normal part of future station access plans.

More information: www.bykramp.com

Bikes on trains remains a sensitive subject in Britain despite the European Parliament and MPs calling for proper provision for them.

Train operator Northern has announced that it is "strongly committed to promoting cycling as a sustainable and healthy means of transport". But carriage of cycles is "subject to a normal maximum of two cycles per train". This effectively bans most family groups and friends travelling together with bikes.

But Northern says that when trains are undergoing refurbishment it will look at opportunities for providing additional "flexible" space for cycles and other luggage.

Northern admits that "there is considerable potential to develop packages which involve rail travel and cycling".

MPs and MEPs may well have to step up demands for cycle space on trains. There is a long way to go before train operators wake up to the truly green potential of their trains.

You can download Northern's 20-page 2007 Cycling Strategy booklet at:

<http://www.cyclingengland.co.uk/viewer.php?fd=209>

■ A Sustrans report shows that four cycle routes in the North East of England brought in over £13million to the regional economy.



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