



**STOP SIGNS:** Glasgow Central looking to the Clyde bridge

# All signals at red?

A multi-million pound revamp of Stockport station was scrapped in late May as part of the Government's £6.2 billion public sector spending cuts.

The Department for Transport said the £50 million grant to improve the 10 worst stations in the country, including Manchester Victoria, Liverpool Central, Crewe, Warrington Bank Quay, Preston and Wigan North Western, is being withdrawn as part of a £100 million reduction in spending by Network Rail.

But the coalition Government has confirmed its commitment to high-speed rail and also says it supports London's Crossrail and rail electrification.

In fact rail has the best claim to investment in any period of austerity. It is the most economical and fuel-efficient transport system and is open to all.

Air travel is scandalously subsidised and road transport goes nowhere to paying its full costs.

Both air and road have a shameful pollution record and blight the lives of millions of people.

Transport Secretary Philip Hammond has said he wants to reverse the "war on the motorist" and is stopping funding for speed cameras.

In fact bus and train passengers' travel costs have gone up over the past 20 years while motorists' costs have come down.

When money is short, the Government should be "taxing" drivers who break the law to make life easier for the rest of us.

And of course, setting up a national network of charging points for electric cars is a complete waste of money and will solve virtually none of the problems caused by over-reliance on road transport.

There have been signs over the past few years that many politicians are waking up to the fact that years of throwing vast amounts of money away on road building has actually made the country's transport problems worse.

Rail has common sense and logic on its side and Railfuture must continue to put forward the case for rail investment. While funding may be in short supply, no sensible



**GREEN SIGNAL:** New Transport secretary Philip Hammond, right, with the first train to leave the new platform 0 at King's Cross, London, with East Coast managing director Elaine Holt and Network Rail's Robin Gisby. Now NR can begin refurbishing the station's existing platforms, which will be taken out of service on a rolling basis in a £500 million redevelopment of the station

Government should divert cash away from rail into any other form of transport.

One of Mr Hammond's transport ministers is Norman Baker, the Liberal Democrat MP for Lewes, who is also a Railfuture vice president. We

can expect Mr Baker to argue the case for rail robustly from within Government. Another of Railfuture's vice presidents, Caroline Lucas, made history at the general election by becoming Britain's first Green MP. We wish them both well.

You can download information from [www.railwatch.org.uk](http://www.railwatch.org.uk) and [www.railfuture.org.uk](http://www.railfuture.org.uk)