

2020 vision for north-east rail network

- Transport Secretary visits Newcastle, Durham and Blyth to highlight government's ambition for infrastructure investment and better journeys across region
- Grant Shapps sees progress on new £10.55 million Horden Peterlee station, set to provide 70,000 passengers with better connectivity
- 'Huge potential' of reopening Beeching lines, such as Ashington to Blyth passenger services as part of £500 million fund

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps committed to reinvigorating rail connections across the north-east today (6 January 2020), outlining how new investment will boost the rail network as the government looks to level up infrastructure across the country.

Visiting Horden Peterlee, a new £10.55 million project set to be finished in May 2020, Mr Shapps hailed the importance of expanding the rail network, ensuring passengers and businesses across the region have the frequent, reliable journeys they rely on.

Improving connectivity for an area currently with no station over a 20 kilometre stretch, Horden Peterlee will be served by 1 train per hour calling at all stations between Newcastle and Middlesbrough, and has been supported by £4.4 million from the Department for Transport's New Stations Fund.

The Transport Secretary will also visit Blyth to see first-hand the potential for restoring passenger services along the Ashington to Blyth line, undoing over half a century of damage following the Beeching cuts.

The government has confirmed it will establish a £500 million fund to explore reopening former routes which could benefit communities who lost vital transport connections.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

2020 will be a year of action on the railways with the north sitting at the heart of the improvements.

Investing in new stations like Horden Peterlee will deliver more modern, reliable services for passengers. We are also ambitious to restore connections to communities who have lost out, and the Northumberland line has huge potential to deliver that.

Our focus is levelling up infrastructure across the country, ensuring passengers see the benefit of new trains, new stations and fairer fares.

In another boost to the region, London North Eastern Railway (LNER) passengers are also benefitting from a [single-leg fares trial](#), introduced last week on journeys from London to Leeds, Newcastle and Edinburgh, giving people flexible, simpler and better value-for-money tickets. This means no more single tickets priced at £1 less than the return.