



# Press Release

## Railway Heritage Trust funds heritage projects at Kings Cross



### **The Railway Heritage Trust has funded three projects to enhance heritage features of the rebuilt Kings Cross Station, and hopes to fund two more**

Network Rail's redevelopment of Kings Cross Station has been highly praised for its bold reorganisation of the station, and its creation of new features around the original buildings. The Railway Heritage Trust has been delighted to support three projects associated with the original train sheds that improve or reuse key aspects of the heritage.

The footbridge over the centre of the station linked two office blocks, but was of little use to the passenger, and obstructed the view along the station. Network Rail removed it, replacing with a modern footbridge that was more accessible, but less visually intrusive. Network Rail also aid to relocate the bridge to Ropley on the Mid-Hants Railway, where the Trust funded its re-erection to give public access to a new boiler and carriage shed.

At the centre of the bridge was a massive clock, immortalised in innumerable films, from 'The Thirty Nine Steps' to 'Elizabethan Express'. The removal of the bridge meant that the clock was redundant, and the Trust gave a grant towards its re-erection on Platform 8. In this location, it balances an equally old timepiece on Platform 1, so that a passenger in either train shed can usually see a historic clock.

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The Trust's third recent intervention has been much more spectacular. The electrification of the East Coast Main Line in the 1980s was done to a very tight budget: one outcome was that the wires which transmit electric power to trains in the Kings Cross train sheds were suspended from steel gantries. These, whilst functional, were visually intrusive, and disrupted the view along the train sheds. The Network Rail project team managed to find enough savings in the project to fund some 60% of the cost of replacing the gantries with headspan wires, and approached the Trust to put in the balance of the funding, which it was delighted to be able to do. This work has opened out a much clearer view along the shed.

The Trust does not see these three projects completing its work at Kings Cross, and intends to fund two more projects there.

One covers the repair of the canopy that projects out beyond the main roof at the end of Platforms 8 and 9. The Trust is looking to fund the restoration of some missing tension ties on this structure, removed many years ago, the lack of which means that the structure is not stable, and has had to be propped for many years.

Finally, the Trust will support repairs to the former Great Northern Railway and London & North Eastern Railway war memorials. These memorials, and the names of the fallen, were originally on Platform 8, and were then moved to the new front concourse in the 1970s, where the company plaques remain on a temporary mounting. The Trust is working with Network Rail to find a suitable permanent location on the station to re-erect all the memorials.

Kevin McGeever, Network Rail's Project Director for the Kings Cross redevelopment said:

'As custodians of this beautiful listed station, we felt our responsibility to its heritage extremely keenly. From the beginning of the project the Trust guided and advised us, as well as providing additional resources to ensure the history could be maintained and recorded for generations to come.'

## **Note to editors**

## **Railway Heritage Trust**

The Railway Heritage Trust is a Company Limited by Guarantee, which aims to:

- encourage the conservation and enhancement of railway buildings and structures which are listed or scheduled and are of special architectural or historic interest, and;
- act as a catalyst between outside parties and owners in the conservation and alternative use of non-operational property, including the possible transfer of responsibility to local trusts or other interested organisations.

The Trust awards grants to a value of some £2 million a year to achieve these objectives.

For further details or pictures, please contact the Trust as below.

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