Edinburgh is our nation's primary centre for tourism, shopping, commerce and culture, as well as being our capital city and the location of the Scottish Parliament. Unfortunately, the price of this success has been increased traffic and severe road congestion.

Capital Rail

The Transport Solution for Edinburgh

The disadvantages of this are clear:

- ***CONGESTION*** causes delays to commuters, shoppers, residents and tourists
- ***CONGESTION*** hinders the emergency services
- ***CONGESTION*** causes pollution from vehicle noise and exhaust emissions
- ***CONGESTION*** leads to increased numbers of injuries and fatalities to motorists and pedestrians
- ***CONGESTION*** causes increased frustration and missed appointments
- ***CONGESTION*** adds costs to business and restricts economic development

A solution is needed urgently. We believe there should be an attractive, affordable public transport alternative to the car. We believe that the best and most popular alternative is provided by rail. The advantages of rail are compelling:

- ***RAIL*** is the most efficient way of transporting large numbers of people
- ***RAIL*** is environmentally friendly and is the safest form of land transport
- ***RAIL*** is easily accessible to the elderly, the disabled and those with shopping or small children
- ***RAIL*** offers superb acceleration and a smooth and comfortable ride
- ***RAIL*** is popular and an attractive alternative to the car
- ***RAIL*** provides new transport capacity to encourage economic growth

At present fewer than one percent of journeys to work within Edinburgh are made by rail, so there is considerable opportunity for expansion. We are also clear that rail is only a part of the overall integrated transport solution. This must include a successful bus network, provision for cyclists and pedestrians. The role of the car must also be recognised, particularly as part of park-and-ride proposals. However, there must be realistic popular alternatives to the car if Edinburgh is to have a truly integrated transport system. This is an ideal city for an integrated transport system because:

- ***EDINBURGH*** is compact with a high residential component in all parts of the city
- ***EDINBURGH*** has many natural and architectural features worth preserving
- ***EDINBURGH*** has little intrusion from major road schemes
- ***EDINBURGH*** has a history of high use of public transport

We believe that Edinburgh should set the standard that Britain's other major cities follow. It must be the pioneer for sensible transport solutions. It is very easy to say that public transport must be improved, but here we will show exactly how this can be done in a practical and affordable manner.

Rail services should be provided at three distinct service levels

- ***CROSSRAIL SERVICES*** (stations approximately 3 miles apart) mainly used to bring people into Edinburgh from the surrounding area.
- ***SUBURBAN RAIL SERVICES*** (stations approximately 3/4 mile apart) for rapid transit within Edinburgh.
- ***MODERN TRAM SERVICES*** (stops approximately 300m apart the same as for buses) for almost door-to-door travel on the busiest road corridors in the city.

Our proposals for each of these three levels are described overleaf.

Action

To advance the Capital Rail plan we propose the following action

- Promote the funding and construction of the Edinburgh Suburban Railway, beginning with the opening of the South Suburban Railway.
- The second phase would open the northern loop from Haymarket to Abbeyhill via Crewe Toll and Powderhall. The third phase would extend to Leith/Britannia.
- Support the NETCo application to the City of Edinburgh Council for permission to build the Haymarket to Newhaven tramway.
- Promote the funding and construction of the Crossrail extension to Dalkeith.
- Support the later extension of Crossrail to the Borders and the additional branch to Loanhead.
- Press for the introduction of modern street-running tramways to Burdiehouse and Gilmerton via the Bridges and Cameron Toll; and also to Granton.

We propose that funding for our proposals should be provided on a partnership basis, with contributions, where appropriate, from Railtrack, The City of Edinburgh Council, The Scottish Executive, private commercial investors and the businesses that stand to gain from a more favourable cityscape. For example, stations could be sponsored by nearby businesses, or funded by developer contributions where new projects are located near the route.

We believe that this funding is best secured by a single co-ordinating group comprising representatives from all the stakeholders. This Capital Transport Strategy Group would have the role of identifying an integrated portfolio of transport schemes, securing the funding, and managing the implementation of the proposals. It would bring together the business community, local authority planners and those with the technical skills to build and operate the desired integrated system.

CRAG

Capital Rail Action Group (CRAG) was founded in 1989 with the purpose of promoting the use of rail as a mode of transport within the city of Edinburgh. The Group has achieved success in a number of areas including the acceptance of the Crossrail (Phase I) proposals. It is now acknowledged as an authoritative source of advice, and is widely consulted in matters related to public transport in the Edinburgh area.

You can lend your support by writing to your local councillor or MSP or by contacting us Capital Rail Action Group (CRAG) via

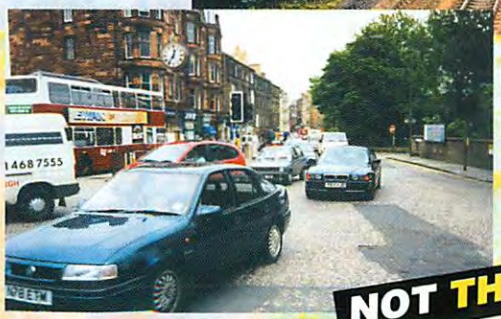
John Webster
Secretary (Capital Rail Action Group)
69 Malleny Avenue
Balerno
Midlothian
EH14 7EL
(0131 449 5003)

or visit our website at http://freespace.virgin.net/crag.edinburgh

The photographs on the front are taken from 'The Edinburgh Suburban Railway' proposal by Dr D. Low. They show a typically congested view north from the foot of Morningside Road on Friday 11 June 1999, in contrast to the view east along Morningside Station.

Rail-based solutions to Edinburgh's transport problems are:

Convenient Rapid Accessible Green



CRAG

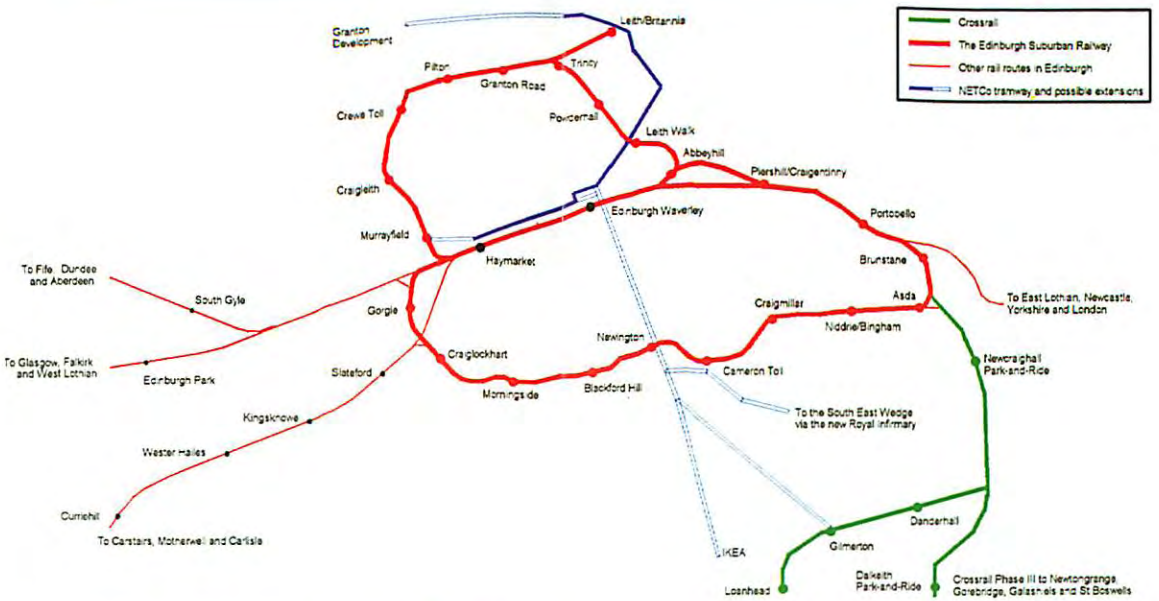
CAPITAL RAIL ACTION GROUP

Capital Rail

The Transport Solution for Edinburgh

CRAG THE FUTURE?

CAPITAL RAIL ACTION GROUP



Crossrail

An obvious gap in Edinburgh's commuter rail network is to the south and east. The City of Edinburgh Council has recently secured funding for Phase I of the Crossrail proposal. This will re-open the eastern part of the South Suburban Railway to passenger services and construct a park-and-ride station at Newcraighall. This will allow motorists to avoid driving into the most congested parts of the city. Cross-city services will be provided from Newcraighall and the new stations at Brunstane and Portobello to West Lothian and Stirlingshire. Even greater benefits will be achieved by extending Crossrail.

- Phase II will extend Crossrail beyond the city bypass to Dalkeith, with congestion busting twenty minute journeys into Edinburgh every half hour.
- Park-and-ride facilities will extend the benefits to other Midlothian towns and dramatically reduce traffic on the congested city centre to Dalkeith corridor.
- Phase III will extend to Newtongrange, Gorebridge, Galashiels and St Boswells.
- By dramatically improving accessibility to the Borders towns this will provide a catalyst for economic growth and new employment opportunities.
- A final extension could take the line to Carlisle via Hawick, providing an alternative freight route to avoid the busy high speed east and west coast passenger lines.

We also support the reopening of the line to Loanhead via Danderhall and Gilmerton.

The Edinburgh Suburban Railway

A figure-of-eight service will operate with a 15 minute frequency in each direction. Unhindered by road congestion this will provide a reliable and fast service to the city centre, with exceptional cross-city opportunities. This provides genuinely new transport capacity and fills a major gap by providing a high speed public transport option within Edinburgh This service could be operational in under two years.

- Very short and consistent journey times with reliable and comfortable services.
- Entirely off-road so no disruption to road traffic, bus services or parking or loading.
- Half the population of Edinburgh within a ten minute walk of a station. Half of those will be within five minutes walking distance.
- Seamless interchange for rail commuters from outside Edinburgh will encourage more people to travel into Edinburgh by train, leaving their cars outside the city.
- Dramatically improves accessibility to many areas of the city and provides an excellent public transport option for residents who commute within Edinburgh.
- Excellent opportunities for interchange with bus services and cycle routes.

The southern loop currently exists as a double-track freight line, and diversionary passenger route. The east side of the northern loop exists as a freight branch line. Only four miles of track will need to be re-laid, all of it on existing unobstructed track beds. All of the most expensive infrastructure remains intact.

The Haymarket to Newhaven Tramway

A modern tram uniquely combines the acceleration and comfort of a train with the ability of a bus to pick up passengers in the street from convenient closely spaced stops. It takes up very little road space and can even run on conventional rail lines.

- Modern trams are a very efficient way of providing on-road public transport on the busiest arterial routes in all weather conditions.
- They give a much smoother journey and have a much higher capacity than buses.
- Modern trams offer a very visible image of a high quality transport system.
- Modern trams follow a predictable path which makes it easier for motorists and cyclists to share the road with them.
- They run down the centre of the road so there is no kerbside disruption.
- Modern trams are exceptionally quiet electric vehicles with no exhaust emissions.

The New Edinburgh Tram Company (NETCo) proposes an entirely privately funded modern tram service from Haymarket to Newhaven via Leith Walk. This would offer excellent interchange with rail services at Haymarket.

Other routes that we believe should form part of a wider tram network are from Princes Street to Cameron Toll and the South East Wedge as well as an extension from Leith to the Granton Development and then to Haymarket.