

Tuesday 10 & Wednesday 11 October

	RAILWAY 93		
Hexham	0956		£4.60
Carlisle	1045	1050	£9.60
Wigan NW	1213	1249	
	rtn Wigan to Liv £6.70		
Liverpool Lime St	1321	1328	
Liverpool Central	1330	1405	
Headbolt Lane	1428	1439	£9.10
via Daisy Hill	rtn Wigan to Hadfield		
Salford Crescent	1555	1605	
Manchester Picc	1615	1633	
	via Glossop		
Hadfield	1711	1714	
Manchester Picc	1755	via Glossop	
York	1638	£35.60	
Newcastle	1739	1808	first class
Hexham	1848		

A trip to The Christie to see Dr Barriuso, but I didn't buy my tickets very early. Across to Carlisle and straight down to Wigan. The connection to Liverpool was cancelled, but I had plenty of time (and time for lunch at Gregory's by Central station). There is currently only one train an hour to Headbolt Lane. The Merseyrail network has been extended from Kirkby (where the single line from Liverpool used to terminate, then you walked under the bridge to get the connecting train to Wigan) a mile or so to Headbolt Lane. Apparently building a station here was in a plan produced in 1972. The station has cost £81 million (how can you spend that much?) and there is lots of new housing around, plus a bus interchange and a car park.





The electrified third rail has not been extended from Kirkby - rather new units have been built with batteries. You can either see this as a brilliant innovation enabling greener trains to run (no nasty diesel engines), or you can see it as railway modernisation on the cheap - don't do the job properly and electrify, rather stick batteries on the trains and (most of the time) use extra energy to transport unused batteries around. One report I saw has suggested you save money for the first five years, but after that it would have made more economical sense to have electrified the line. We don't actually know how costs will work out - most trains are in use for several decades, so I assume that the current batteries will need replacing at some point (more expense).

Headbolt Lane has been built with two platforms for Merseyrail and one for Northern - and the Northern one is hidden behind a black fence. At the moment there is a 1 minute connection between the arrival from Wigan and the departure to Liverpool - which could make for a seamless connection, or more likely for a long wait. Headbolt Lane does not yet appear on the Northern app. Will we ever have a national network again?





On to Wigan, the link via Daisy Hill, Salford Crescent, then to Piccadilly. The Hadfield line is one I haven't done for ages, although when we first arrived in Derby there was a rush hour train that did the third side of the triangle at Dinting - in other words, Manchester to Hadfield not via Glossop. There are now only through trains at 0532 and 2329 - and I am not that mad (well, I'm not now). A fun ride - "Flowery Field" must be the most inappropriate station name on BR.

Lynette was home for a quick supper before she and Jon went off to a football match, and I went and slept. When she returned - they lost - we put the world to rights until midnight.

I was woken by the first tram at 0537, then dozed for a bit. A leisurely breakfast, bus to The Christie, a waiting Hannah, bloods and Dr B. The CT report was not overly positive - mucus still being produced, tumours no smaller - but at least it doesn't seem to have spread. Dr B doesn't seem too sure what to do and the obvious chemo will not do my kidneys any good, so he'll talk to the oncologist at the Freeman and see if they can come up with a plan.

As Hannah had driven across my plan was to go back over the M62 with her, then train north. We were running late, and it was wet, and we needed petrol (why does she always need petrol when my credit card is in her car?!), so we had no chance of catching the train at South Milford, just missed it at Selby, and she took me to York. I had a first class single from Doncaster which at least gave me a decent seat and food (not much food).

At Newcastle we were all surprised when “Flying Scotsman” came through with a couple of support coaches - presumably en route from Scotland to York. I got chatting to an old chap who then travelled to Hexham with me - he works for the Catholic church. We got chatting about the “Any Man’s Kingdom” film and he knew that there are two versions - train and bus. Julie is staggered there are two sad men in this world! The car was at Hexham, so I was glad to get home.

