

## Markinch Railway Station Update 13/05/2006

I'm very glad to be able to report that since my letter to Gordon Dewar, Commercial Director of the First ScotRail, in March 2005 I had been travelling by train regularly.

This is not because Markinch, my local station, has become accessible but because First ScotRail now provide a taxi service to my local nearest accessible station, Kirkcaldy. When booking my place and ramp onto the train through First ScotRail Disabled Assistance (0845 605 7021) I am now able to request this taxi service. When I first started using this service there were quite a few unfortunate misunderstandings! Now, however, as long as I remember to check with the taxi provider at least half an hour before the pickup time at Markinch Station, everything runs smoothly. I can even miss my return train, and as long as I phone Kirkcaldy Station to inform them of this event, my taxi will be rearranged for the following train.

I acknowledge that this is still a second-best service. If I allow myself to think about it too hard then I get very irritated at all the extra arrangements I have to make merely because I'm in a wheelchair. I remind myself that Rome-wasn't-built-in-a-day and that every little change is one to celebrate.

Much better news is on the horizon. But patience is still necessary. The contract to upgrade Markinch Station to the new "Integrated Public Transport Exchange" has been awarded to Mowlem Construction. Work is due to start in August 2006 BUT will not be completed until August 2007.

Eva McCracken