

From the Chairman

After much anticipation, we now know the details of the new franchise the Department for Transport (DfT) has negotiated with East Midlands Trains (EMT). Details are listed elsewhere in *Rail Lincs* so instead of repeating them here, I will instead list the key wishes we made to DfT in their consultation and our success or otherwise.

A Lincoln – Nottingham Saturday service similar to weekdays – coming by December 2016.

A full evening service on the Joint Line and a Sunday service – nothing.

Better connections at Newark Northgate – a few minor improvements mainly on Sundays.

An hourly Newark Northgate to Grimsby service – nothing.

Better Sunday services on all routes – a possibility of earlier trains to Nottingham, subject to signalling work being completed.

More rolling stock to reduce overcrowding on all routes – nothing.

Disappointing is probably an understatement. If the government are getting £150million in premium payments, surely they could have afforded to fund a couple of units to combat some overcrowding at least. With the ex District Line trains soon coming available, the excuse of no spare rolling stock is no longer valid. Then perhaps my train home from Nottingham one Saturday earlier this month, would not have had passengers standing all the way down the centre of the carriages!

Next to come is the Northern franchise in around December 2015. We already know this will include improved Lincoln –

Sheffield services. We can but hope there will also be something for the Brigg Line. The success of the promotion of this line, mentioned elsewhere, is proof that there is a demand for better services.

On a more positive note, there is quite a bit of anecdotal evidence that the improved Castle Line service from May 2015 has seen an increase in passengers at Hykeham. The car park is now often full by 08:30 and on some days the access road has been full up by mid morning. I was hoping to see a start made on the car park extension by now, but progress with this is excruciatingly slow. However an extended bus service past the station to Teal Park has been registered and is due to start in early November.

A special thanks to Don Peacock, Mike Savage and Sue Dovey for helping me with the Railfuture stand at the Grantham Rail Show. It is two long days at the show and at least a day spent in preparation, but we do meet a lot of rail users and get the opportunity to talk to them about Railfuture and what we are doing.

I hope that the few branch members who did attend the national conference in Newark in June enjoyed it. Judging from the complimentary messages I have received from delegates, the conference was a success.

Special thanks to the East Midlands branch chair, Terry Holt, and vice chair, Ariadne Tampion, who jointly chaired the conference, whilst I was busy ensuring that the event ran smoothly. Also to the Lincs branch committee members who helped on the day. It was a great pity that

Railfuture Lincolnshire Branch Committee 2015 to 2016

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Lincolnshire Branch Autumn Meeting **SATURDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2015 – SAXILBY METHODIST CHURCH**

This will be at the Methodist Church in Saxilby on 14th November 2015. The meeting will start at **13:30** and will be finished in time to catch the 15:54 train to Lincoln and 16:35 to Sheffield.

The speaker will be Sarah Turner who is General Manager (East) for East Midlands Trains.

Come and hear the details of the new franchise and an update on other matters affecting our branch area.

Tea/coffee and biscuits will be available from 12:40 and during the break. It will help with catering if we

have some idea of numbers, so if you are coming, please try to let the chairman know in advance (*contact details on page 2*). Even if you do not tell us in advance, you are, of course, still welcome to attend.

The Saxilby Methodist Church is just over ten minutes walk from the Railway Station. Walk down Station Approach and turn left at the Fish & Chip shop, on the corner of High Street. Continue along High Street, passing the Village Hall; the Methodist Church is on the right, almost opposite a riding school.

continued from page 1

Chris Brown, who did all the organising, was unable to be there due to illness.

Whilst on the subject of our branch committee, I am reminded of the phrase “none of us are getting any younger”. The vast majority of our committee are over 60 and four committee members have suffered from serious illness in 2015. We really do need to recruit some younger members to the branch, or else the time when we no longer have a functioning committee may come sooner rather than later.

We also need to widen the membership by recruiting more females.

At a meeting for all branches last week, the two lady members present raised some issues of concern to passengers that our largely male and elderly group never think of. They were the same issues that our lone female on our branch

committee frequently tells me we are neglecting.

The branch Autumn meeting, mentioned elsewhere in this *Rail Lincs*, has been organised in response to requests at the AGM for more meetings for all members. This will be an ideal opportunity to hear about the new franchise and question a representative from EMT about this and other local matters.

Members of the public are welcome, so if you have any friends who would like to come, please bring them along. If there is a good turnout of members we will try to make this an annual event.

I know it is early and I suspect many of you agree with me that the shops are full of Christmas merchandise far too early, but as this is the last *Rail Lincs* of 2015, I wish you all a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

David Harby, Branch Chairman

East Coast Upgrading

The National Grid has recently constructed a large sub-station North East of Ryhall on Uffington Road, Essendine, close to the former Essendine – Stamford branch line. The sub-station is to provide power supply to the new Network Rail Feeder Station in Glen Industrial Estate, Essendine, which is part of an upgraded power supply scheme for the East Coast Main Line (ECML). The upgrade is necessary to provide power for the increasing number of train paths on the ECML and, when signalling and other improvements are carried out, the eventual introduction of 140mph trains. *(Peter Honniball)*

Metheringham Protests

According to local press reports in early September, some fifty-five residents in Metheringham and elsewhere along the Joint Line, held a public meeting in Metheringham to vent frustrations at the speed of trains passing through the village, at all times of day and night. As a result, Metheringham Parish Council had two councillors attending a meeting of North Kesteven District Council Environmental Committee on the subject.

Residents alleged excess noise, structural damage and disturbed sleep patterns to those alongside the railway.

The Metheringham Parish Council would like trains to pass slowly (40mph) and has asked local MP, Stephen Philips to assist. Many of those protesting live in new properties in a development alongside the line in the former goods yard. *(PBJ)*



Andrew Court

26th May 1952 – 5th July 2015

When I was writing an obituary for Brian Hastings for the last *Rail Lincs* I little thought that I would be writing an obituary for another branch committee member so soon after. It was a great shock to all his friends on the committee to hear that Andrew had died. Not least because he had seemed in good health at a committee meeting only a week earlier.

Andrew had been an active committee member ever since he joined us in 1997. He rarely missed a meeting and, though never serving as a branch officer, his contribution in organising a room for our meetings and looking after our tea and coffee for many years was just as valuable. Andrew arranged for the printing of a Saxilby Rail Guide and distributed it himself around the area for many years.

Railfuture was represented by seven members of our committee at the Service of Thanksgiving. The congregation, at a full Saxilby Methodist Church, heard that Andrew came from a railway family and had a life long interest in railways among many other interests. He was a dedicated Christian and a very well respected member of his local community, who was always willing to volunteer for whatever task needed doing.

It was clear from the comments that he will be greatly missed by his many friends and colleagues. (DH)

East Midlands Trains' Franchise

The new directly awarded franchise was announced on 16 September 2015.

The new franchise will commence on 18 October and run until 4 March 2018. The DfT has the option to extend the contract by up to one year. Key features are:

- Freeze on Anytime fares and on-board enhancements on trains to London.
- Extra services and faster journey times on Saturdays on the Lincoln – Newark – Nottingham route. An extra £250,000 invested in community rail.
- An improved online compensation system for delays.
- £1m investment in station accessibility improvements; and extension of secure stations programme.
- Catering trolley service extended to more stops on Liverpool to Norwich services.
- £150m in forecast premium payments to Government. (DH)

Ruskington Car Park

Now that the upgrade of the Joint Line has settled down, it has been observed that some rail users, who stopped using the car park to avoid the long walk to/from platform 1, by parking elsewhere, appear to have returned to using the station car park, (PBJ)

Meeting for Adopters

Jayne Wingad, Lincolnshire County Council Rail Officer, organised a meeting on 29 July in Lincoln for Lincolnshire Station Adopters. The East Midlands Trains Adopters' meeting was held at Derby on 4 September. Unfortunately, Paul Jowett was unable to attend both meetings. (PBJ)

A Lincolnshire Anniversary

We have a Golden Anniversary in Lincolnshire in October, but in this instance it is something to regret rather than celebrate. The Lincoln to Honington section of the Lincoln to Grantham line officially closed from 1 November 1965 but the last trains actually ran on Saturday 30 October.

Withdrawal of passenger services to intermediate stations had started in September 1962 when Waddington, Harmston, Navenby, Caythorpe and Honington were closed. The 1963 Beeching Report proposed that the line should remain open and surprisingly Leadenham station is not listed for closure. Presumably this was because it was the local station for RAF Cranwell.

However the fate of the line was to be determined by the consequences of the strong opposition to Beeching plans to close the Lincoln to Nottingham route. Sometime during 1964 a decision was taken to reprieve Lincoln to Nottingham and build a curve at Newark linking into the East Coast Main Line (ECML). This was opened on 1 March 1965. Proposals for closure of Lincoln to Honington were also put forward in 1964 and after a Public Enquiry, the Minister of Transport quickly gave permission for closure, with services being diverted via Newark. The

line had failed to reach its Centenary by 18 months having opened on 15 April 1867.

In his Oakwood Press book "The Lincoln to Grantham Line via Honington", Stewart Squires quotes seven trains each way in 1935 with two of these stopping only at Leadenham with the others calling at all stations. Typical journey times for the 24¾ miles were 40 minutes fast and 50 minutes all stations. There was one through carriage each way from Lincoln to Kings Cross which was attached and detached to an express at Grantham. The return journey in the evening was the quickest and took 2 hours and 43 minutes from Kings Cross.

Just imagine how quick a Lincoln to Kings Cross service would now be via that route. Hull Trains do Kings Cross to Grantham non stop in 60 minutes so even averaging 60 mph for the branch we are talking about Lincoln to London in 85 minutes. Much better than the best times now of 116 minutes Up and 104 minutes Down!

Also closed on 1 November 1965 were all the intermediate stations between Lincoln and Barnetby: Reepham, Langworth, Snelland, Wickenby, Holton le Moor, Moortown, North Kelsey and Howsham. *(David Harby)*

High Speed Trains to Skegness

The High Speed Train working on the Skegness line ran unadvertised from the first Saturday in July until its advertised period. As the service did well in early July, it should be advertised throughout its operation. Generally the service has been well used and other services arriving and departing the resort have also been reported as being very full.

It is understood that the steam hauled charter to Skegness with B1 61306 'Mayflower', rearranged for 29 July was cancelled due to poor loadings. *(PBJ)*

Highlighting problems at Gainsborough

The saga about crossing the line to access the Sheffield bound platform at Central station continues. Passengers are currently able to cross by a barrow crossing and a footbridge, but there were plans, to be implemented when the route is resignalled, to close the barrow crossing and renew the footbridge without adding ramps. Disabled passengers would then lose access to the Sheffield platform. This was originally planned to follow on from the North Lincolnshire Scheme which is nearing completion.

Friends of the Barton Line (FoBL) and Gainsborough Rail and Bus Group (GRaB) have raised strong objections to the loss of disabled access, but were being told that a footbridge with a ramp was too expensive and it was not safe to have a barrow crossing when the line speed was increased. Following representations to DfT by Sir Edward Leigh MP, they now have a letter from the Under Secretary of State, Claire Perry MP, saying that:

- a) The footbridge renewal and foot crossing review are two separate projects.
- b) Network Rail is progressing with investment of new bridges at Gainsborough Central and Brigg. Both will have provision for ramps or lifts, should

investment come available in the future.
c) Network Rail is not planning to remove the foot crossing in the near future as the resignalling project is under review.

There is however a paragraph in the letter about level crossing safety remaining a high priority and Network Rail currently reviewing the safety options, so we can expect the removal of the foot crossing to be proposed again in the very near future and the vigorous campaign to retain full disabled access to continue.

Meanwhile the poor state of both stations has now attracted the attention of the rail media with *RAIL magazine* doing a special item highlighting how badly Gainsborough has been treated for many years. The stations have also had a visit from Anthony Smith, chief executive of Transport Focus.

At the same time passenger numbers on the 3 return trains a week serving the Brigg Line have continued to grow with some excellent loadings recorded this summer. FoBL with the assistance of Northern Rail have done some excellent work promoting the services, with posters promoting the route being put up at all stations along the route and at Leeds.

(DH)

New Book Available from Railfuture

THE REGIONAL RAILWAYS STORY: Sectorisation to Privatisation – Three Decades of Revival by Gordon Pettitt and Nicholas Comfort.

Gordon Pettitt, former Managing Director of Regional Railways and the last General Manager of BR's Southern Region, writes the inside story of the history of the third passenger sector of British Rail with insights from other leading personnel in the industry at the time.

This hardback book is published by Ian Allan at a list price of £30 but Railfuture is able to offer it to members at £22. Orders can be placed via www.railfuture.org.uk, or if you do not have the internet, send a cheque for £22, payable to Railfuture, to David Harby. Orders are sent direct to the customer by Ian Allan Ltd.

Lincolnshire Charters

Compiled by Geoffrey Meanwell

Friday, 4 December

London Victoria to **Lincoln**.

Hauled by Class 67. Promoter Belmond

Friday, 4 December

Linlithgow, Edinburgh, Drem, Berwick on Tweed, Alnmouth, Morpeth, Newcastle, Durham to **Lincoln**

Hauled by Class 47/57, Promoter Scottish Railway Preservation Society

Saturday, 5 December

Kings Cross, Potters Bar, Stevenage, **Peterborough** to **Lincoln**

Steam hauled by 60009. Promoter Railway Touring Company

Saturday, 5 December

Tysley, Coleshill Parkway, Nuneaton, Leicester, Loughborough to **Lincoln**

Steam hauled by 4965. Promoter Vintage Trains

Saturday, 5 December

Skegness, Wainfleet, Boston, Heckington, Sleaford, Grantham to **Manchester Victoria**.

Hauled by Class 47/57. Promoter West Coast Railway Company

Wednesday, 16 December

Kings Cross, Hertford North, Hitchin, Arlesey, St. Neots, **Peterborough**, Retford to **York**.

Steam hauled by 6201. Promoter Steam Dreams

Saturday, 19 December

St. Neots, Huntingdon, **Peterborough, Grantham, Newark North Gate**, Retford, Doncaster to **Edinburgh**

Hauled by Class 47/57. Promoter West Coast Railway Company

Saturday, 27 February 2016

St. Neots, Huntingdon, **Peterborough, Grantham, Newark North Gate**, Retford, Doncaster to **Carlisle**.

Hauled by Class 47/57. Promoter West Coast Railway Company

Saturday, 5 March

Cleethorpes, Grimsby, Habrough, Barnetby, Market Rasen, Lincoln, Newark North Gate, Grantham to **Portsmouth Harbour**.

Hauled by Class 47/57. Promoter West Coast Railway Company

Saturday, 2 April

Peterborough, Spalding, Sleaford, Lincoln, Saxilby, Gainsborough Lea Road, Retford,

Worksop, Barnsley to **Carlisle**. Hauled by Class 47/57. Promoter West Coast Railway Company

Saturday, 9 April

Skegness, Wainfleet, Boston, Heckington, Sleaford to **Stratford upon Avon**.

Steam hauled (to be advised)* Promoter West Coast Railway Company

Saturday, 14 May

St. Neots, Huntingdon, **Peterborough, Grantham, Newark North Gate**, Retford, Doncaster to **Whitby**.

Hauled by Class 47/57. Promoter West Coast Railway Company

*Steam for part of journey only – remainder Class 47/57

Celebrations at Grantham

There was a double celebration at Grantham Station on 30 September, when the Mayor of Grantham, Cllr Jacky Smith and Chair of South Kesteven District Council, Cllr Ray Wootten opened the new Customer Information Office on Platform 1 and unveiled a stained glass window in the Waiting Room on Platform 2, created by local artist Mike Brown, depicting the legendary Mallard locomotive.

The Customer Information Office is in the former Supervisors' Office, the computer screens for the TOPS (Total Operations Processing System) and TRUST (Train Running System) are now in a side office out of public view and customers are now dealt with from a reception office style counter. Because it is situated on Platform 1, the new office is only accessible by passengers having accessed the platform with a valid ticket to travel (unless the barriers are not being used!) and is presumably aimed at providing information about delayed trains or onward connections, but is not designed to handle more general enquiries. Some years ago before the Booking Office was upgraded, there was a staffed information office near the station entrance which dealt with enquiries and reservation etc and was easily accessible. The area is now used just as an information point with racks of timetables and leaflets. (PM)

No more crossing the lines

The foot crossing at the South end of Grantham Station has been removed, so passengers and staff have to use the footbridge and lifts. Warning lights which illuminated the crossing when a train was approaching have been covered over for some time. (PM)

Grantham Bridge Strikes . . . a continuing problem

In *Rail Lincs 71*, we reported on the problem of lorries hitting the three low bridges in Grantham. In the eight months to the end of July, there had been twenty-seven incidents of bridge strikes, a rate of more than one incident a fortnight, it has now become a major issue for the town and, indeed, for Network Rail and the train operating companies. Lincolnshire County Council is now having discussions with Network Rail to find ways of reducing the number of bridge strikes by installing seven LED reactive warning signs on approaches to all the low bridges in the town. It is hoped to install them far enough from the bridges to enable drivers to turn round and seek an alternative route. Lincolnshire County Council has stated that it would expect Network Rail to meet all costs for the purchase and installation of these signs.

During July, two boxes of plant seedlings that fell off a lorry that struck Barrowby Road bridge, were still littering the side of the road over a week later and South Kesteven District Council was treating the incident as fly-tipping.

(PM – source: *Grantham Journal*)

A Joint Line Anniversary

2015 sees the 40th anniversary of the re-opening of Ruskington and Metheringham stations.

Ruskington was opened on 5 May 1975 at a cost of £8,523 and Metheringham on 6 October 1975 at a cost of £7,415. It is a sobering thought to reflect that despite the high hopes at the time, no more stations were re-opened.

When one considers that even a very basic station would now cost over a million pounds, the prospects of re-openings get even dimmer by the year. (DH)

Music Trains

The Music Trains provide an unusual venue for a variety of live music acts and there is time for a stop at Batemans Brewery in Wainfleet, where passengers are offered a warm welcome and refreshments at their Windmill Bar.

Normal scheduled service trains are used for the Music Train events between Sleaford and Wainfleet. A normal rail ticket is required for the journey (current train fares apply) and can be purchased as usual from stations/conductor on train. Passengers can take advantage of GroupSave ticket availability. There is no additional charge above the current train fare to join a Music Train event.

Upcoming Dates 2015

Thursday 29 October – Join the Music Ghost Train with Halloween fancy dress (optional) and prize for the best costume! “Identity Crisis” – Electro-Acoustic Duo; Mark Hickman and Tango Ellerby playing a variety of songs from Paul Simon to The Waterboys, Crowded House to the Proclaimers and everything in between. The Music Train on Thursday 29 October departs Sleaford Station at 18:55; Heckington 19:02; Boston 19:21 for travel to Batemans Brewery. Revellers catch the return train from Wainfleet at 21:10 to arrive back in Boston at 21:35pm; Heckington 21:51 and Sleaford at 22:00.

Thursday 26 November – “Karate Party” are a three piece acoustic band that play pop/rock/rap covers with an original twist.

Thursday 17 December Christmas Carols

Sleaford Concert Band – join us for an evening of music and carol singing with a small group of musicians from the Sleaford Concert Band; a fine start to the festive season

Stamford News

Plans are being submitted for a new platform canopy on Platform 1 at Stamford station. The original wooden canopy was dismantled some time ago as it was unsafe. Network Rail submitted an application in February for a new glazed canopy which was approved in March. However, a new amended plan has been submitted reducing the depth of the canopy to achieve increased clearances for “trains and operational infrastructure.”

The need for the work was identified in August 2014 after a stone corbel from the station building fell to the platform surface. An investigation found this was a result of excessive movement of the canopy beams caused by wind uplift as freight trains passed through the station. Therefore, the canopy was removed to prevent further damage or risk to passengers.

The barrow crossing is still in use, but there is now a notice instructing users to use the 'phone to let the signaller know that you want to cross. A lock on the gate is then released when it is safe to cross.

The well-known Robert Humm's book shop has now moved from the station building into the town centre. It is noted that the signal box is now in a very poor condition.

(Peter Honniball)

A Letter to the Editor

The Finance and Corporate Governance Group met on Saturday. We would appreciate it if you would publish the following statement in the forthcoming edition of *Rail Lincs*:

“On behalf of the Board, the members of the Finance and Corporate Governance Group would like to express their thanks to David Harby and Sue Dovey for stepping in at the last moment to run the recent Newark conference. The primary organiser, Chris Brown had to stand down due to a severe medical condition and the caterers were double-booked, so whilst they could provide the food they were unable to staff the event. They went the extra mile to overcome these problems, and despite having to cope with unacceptable behaviour by a couple of attendees, their commitment ensured that the conference was a success, receiving praise from the stakeholders that were present “.

Chris Page, Vice Chairman, Railfuture, 24 August 2015



Councillor Robert and Mrs Rita Crowe, the Mayor and Mayoress of Newark along with Sue Dovey and David Harby, after Sue had presented a bouquet of flowers to the Mayoress at the Summer Conference

Friends of the Barton Line

Services on the Barton branch continue to suffer from poor performance due to various reasons, ranging from speed restrictions due to hot weather, staff shortages and train failures. On a more positive note, the re-signalling work has been progressing apace with much cabling and signal posts already in place in July. The level crossings within Grimsby were being closed in turn for two weeks each. Key locks were installed at Bystable Lane and automatic barriers installed at Barton Lane (Thornton Abbey). Marsh Lane crossing gates in Barton have been replaced by a permanent fence, but at New Holland metal fence posts have been stolen, presumably for their scrap value.

(AASB)

PRELIMINARY NOTICE – RAILFUTURE LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH AGM

The Committee has set the AGM for Saturday 19 March 2016 at Saxilby in the Methodist Church. Further details including the Agenda and Branch Officers' reports will be in the February *Rail Lincs*.

The purpose of this notice is to remind members that the posts of Hon. Chairman, Hon Vice Chairman, Hon Treasurer and Hon Secretary are open to all fully paid up members of the Lincolnshire Branch of Railfuture.

In accordance with the Branch procedures, members wishing to stand for these posts are invited to inform the Hon Secretary in writing before 31 December 2015.

Any person wishing to stand should provide the Hon Secretary with a signed written declaration of willingness to stand along with a 100 word manifesto which will be published in the next *Rail Lincs*. The declaration must be supported in writing by another fully paid up member of the Lincolnshire Branch of Railfuture.

No canvassing for votes is permitted other than the manifesto published in *Rail Lincs* and the question and answer session at the AGM.

Similarly fully paid up members of the Lincolnshire Branch of Railfuture should provide a signed declaration of willingness to stand with signed support by another fully paid up member of the Lincolnshire Branch of Railfuture to the Hon Secretary by 31 December 2015. No manifesto is required for Committee membership.

If there is only one candidate for each of the four executive posts then there will be no election and the meeting will be asked to ratify the selection. In this case the manifestos will not be published.

Dr Don Peacock Hon Secretary

Diary Date

Railfuture Lincolnshire Branch

AUTUMN MEETING

Saturday, 14 November
Saxilby Methodist Church
Main Street, Saxilby LN1 2HA

Commencing at 13:30

Speaker from
East Midlands Trains



Follow the Branch on Twitter
@RailfutureLincs

Rail Lincs 74 will be published in February 2016. Please let the Editor have copy by 9 January.

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Refer to page 2 for contact details of branch officers mentioned in Rail Lincs.