



## From your Branch Chairman

The new East Midlands Railway (EMR) franchise was launched at Derby on 19 August with the usual new franchise circus. Abellio are promising to invest £600m in improvements to trains and stations during the life of the franchise. I am devoting this article to explaining what we can expect in Lincolnshire and the issues that our branch officers are going to have to closely monitor during the next two years.

We are to see all stations painted and given a deep clean. They will all also receive ticket machines and digital information screens. High on our radar is concerns about how the Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) will operate. We don't want to see another situation occur, as was recently experienced with the Northern TVMs at Worksop, where the opening screen displayed a list of

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'popular' tickets which included an any permitted route fare to Nottingham which was a lot more expensive than the more direct, and more popular, East Midlands Trains only Robin Hood Line fare.

We are to see more modern trains on our local routes with power sockets, air conditioning and WiFi. More modern being in relation to the existing rolling stock as these 'new' trains will be around 20 years old when they arrive with us and some will probably be the same units as were operated in our area by Central Trains 15 years ago.

There will be timetable changes from December 2021. These have been outlined in previous *Rail Lincs* so here I will just summarise the changes as earlier and later trains, an all day Joint Line service and better and all year round Sunday services except on the Joint Line south of Sleaford, where there will still be no Sunday trains.

It is the detail of this new timetable where your committee will be looking to have an influence. Issues such as: Market Rasen needing to keep one change connections to London after losing most of their direct services to Newark North Gate; the Doncaster to Peterborough service to have decent connections into and out of services to Boston and Skegness; the Lincoln to Newark North Gate shuttle to call at Hykeham and Collingham; the East Coast Main Line (ECML) service was due to be revised in December 2021 (although there are indications this could be delayed to May or December 2022) so when this happens we need to ensure that connections at Grantham are not lost.

All these might seem easy to implement, but we have to remember that there are a lot of constraints on the timetable planners. Issues such as the Lincoln to Nottingham timetable being

dictated by when trains can cross the ECML and both Nottingham and Lincoln stations will have problems fitting in all the extra services.

One would expect that as we are getting rolling stock with 100mph maximum speeds we will see journey time reductions, but in Lincolnshire life is not that simple. In reality, except for some currently slack timings on the Joint Line, our line speed limits are so low that even the existing rolling stock rarely reaches maximum speed so there won't be much improvement.

In my review of the EMT franchise I have commended EMT management for always being willing to listen to stakeholders and do what they can to help us. Except for two changes at senior management level, the management is unchanged under East Midlands Railway (EMR). With a major timetable revision on the agenda, my biggest hope now is that Abellio allow this management to get on with the job as they have done previously and their willingness to listen to stakeholder input continues as before.

In our favour is the monitoring of the new franchise where Transport for the East Midlands have a role to play and have recruited 2 extra members of staff to do this monitoring. This is going to bring more local oversight as opposed to previous oversight by DfT alone. The closer collaboration with Network Rail is going to help now many Network Rail functions are being devolved to a more local level.

To sum up there is potential for some major improvements for passengers in our area. Only time will tell how well this potential is fulfilled.

*David Harby, Branch Chairman*

# Weekend Engineering Work at Kings Cross

This year, in addition to the usual closure of the network on Christmas Day and Boxing Day, a reduced train service will also be in operation at King's Cross on the morning of Friday 27 December. Specifically, Platforms 0-6 will be closed until 13:00 meaning that fewer trains will be running. After 13:00, a normal Saturday service will be in operation until the end of the day.

Over the weekends of Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 January, as well as Saturday 29 February and Sunday 1 March, no trains will run in or out of King's Cross as engineers work to renew track and reinstate track on disused bore of Gasworks Tunnel on the approach to the station, and continue work to relocate the

signalling system to the state-of-the-art Operating Centre in York.

In addition to the two weekends when no trains are running, there will be some route diversions, service disruption and platform closures at King's Cross station during the other weekends in January and February:

Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 January, Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 January, Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 January, Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 February, Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 February, Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 February, Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 February. Disruption will be significantly less on these dates than over the weekends when no trains can run.

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## Azuma comes to Lincoln

The formal launch of Azuma services from Lincoln took place on 21 October and from the December timetable change, Lincoln will benefit from a two-hourly service to and from King's Cross, with LNER providing five extra trains to augment the current weekday peak-hour HST service.

Initially these services ran from Kings Cross, terminating at Newark North Gate. The availability of sufficient Hitachi-built class 800/2 five-car bi-mode trains has allowed four services each way to be extended through to Lincoln, with an extra weekday train and weekend services being added in December, the

Saturday service is being introduced a week early to serve the popular Lincoln Christmas market..

LNER has now accepted 35 of the 65 Class 800 and 801 trainsets. The entry into service of five-car Class 801 electric sets on the West Yorkshire route has released bi-mode units to work the Lincoln trains.

The first of the 30 nine-car Class 801 electric sets was accepted mid-October and is undergoing tests before entering revenue service.

Arrival of the remaining units will displace five and nine-car bi-modes to operate the Inverness and Aberdeen routes, allowing the final HST diesel trains to be phased out by the end of the year.

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## Editor's Mail

What great news about Gainsborough Central (*RAIL Lincs 84*)! Let's hope the next development is more trains on the line to Cleethorpes.

Incidentally I was bemused by ending of the article about Grantham Railway Society's trip to the North Norfolk Railway, which mentioned the cost of the journey with a Senior Railcard. For some of us alas don't qualify for any such discount.

*Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby.*



# 11 years of East Midlands Trains

**a personal reflection by your chairman**

11 November 2007, when the East Midlands Trains (EMT) franchise started, seems a long while ago now and memories of how dysfunctional the Central Trains franchise seemed to Lincolnshire passengers is but a distant memory. We have seen a lot of changes during the past 11 years with the franchise being transformed into one that is by and large reliable and punctual with rolling stock which, although it is largely 30 year old, is in reasonable internal condition.

For myself the two specific items that stand out, because I was closely involved in the campaigns, are the extra rolling stock secured for Liverpool – Norwich services and the transformation of the Lincoln – Nottingham route, but we do have quite a few other changes for the better to remember.

Thinking of stations, Lincoln has seen a lot of improvements both internally and externally along with the new cycle hub. Spalding station building has been tastefully renovated and a lift is to be installed this year. ‘Carriages’ eatery in the long disused Newark Castle station building is very popular, no doubt because it is so different to the ‘Pumpkin’ type food outlets available at most stations. Car parking has been improved at some stations especially Metheringham, Swinderby and Hykeham, which all benefited from additional financial help from Lincolnshire County Council.

Away from the branch area, but important to anyone making a journey

across the Midlands, has been the redesign of the track layouts at Nottingham and Derby which will bring some serious journey time reductions from December this year.

EMT started out the franchise with a shortage of allocated rolling stock with some of these having stood unused in sidings for months beforehand, so they did have to spend the first 2/3 years of the franchise bringing them back up to a respectable standard. There is still a rolling stock shortage, so we often see short formed trains whenever there has been a breakdown, but we cannot fault EMT for this. Along with us stakeholders, EMT have pressed DfT for extra but this has largely fallen on deaf ears.

In my experience EMT train and station staff cannot be faulted for the way they interact with and help passengers, despite having some very ‘difficult’ individuals to deal with. I have witnessed incidents where I’m sure I wouldn’t have been able to stay so calm and in control in the face of the behaviour of a passenger.

Thinking again of EMT staff, and often volunteers from among the ranks of station adopters and stakeholders, they are to be commended for the way they have dealt with regular events such as Lincoln Christmas Market and summer Saturdays at Skegness and one offs such as Nottingham and Derby resignalling blockades.

There has been the odd ‘niggle’ every so often, but by and large the EMT franchise has been a good franchise for passengers. The biggest strength for me has been the way EMT have been willing to work with stakeholders to improve stations and services. We have not always agreed with each other, but EMT management have always been willing to listen to us and do what they can.

*David Harby*

# Skegness Area News

Skegness has had a busy summer season, but numbers are slightly down on 2018. The HSTs have been well loaded on inward and outward journeys, although the first one always wins with often 300 to 400 passengers; top being 462. Luggage from Derby and Nottingham is carried in the front or rear power car. The first HST from Derby attracted 100 passengers with Long Eaton and Beeston being well supported.

The amount of luggage on the 15x units is still causing problems. The 11.15 departure on Fridays is the busiest service of the week and is always a 2-car despite pleas for more. Consequently over 100 passengers are often left to wait for the next service. Overall trains have not been strengthened as much as in previous years, except for Sunday.

The Skegness service was lucky on days of the guards' strikes as all trains ran with managers performing guard duties, apart from the 17:45 Nottingham departure which was always cancelled.

Network Rail has improved the drainage system in Platform 3 and taken away all old ballast and replaced with new. Also

there has been some work in the sidings. There has been night possessions since early September and work is due to finish on 22 October.

Skegness is still fairly busy. As soon as the winter timetable began, all trains have consisted of 2-cars or sometimes just a single Class 153 unit – neither of which are sufficient for Mondays and Fridays.  
*Carolyn Sharp*

## BOSTON – SKEGNESS FLOODING

During the weekend, 15/16 June, heavy rain flooded the railway and surrounding areas near Thorpe Culvert between Boston and Skegness. The line remained closed until early the following week to allow for flooding to dissipate and necessary checks and work to be carried out on the track.

Trains continued to run between Boston and Nottingham in each direction, with a rail replacement bus service running between Boston and Skegness. However, local roads were subjected to flooding and deterioration, with replacement buses unable to call at Wainfleet which also suffered severe flooding.



*Class 156 at Boston with interim East Midlands Railway branding. Photo: John Ginns*

# Friends of the Barton Line

On Sunday, 18 August, Abellio began operating the East Midlands Railway franchise as planned. However, the DfT had had second thoughts and decided to postpone the transfer of the Barton line service from Northern Rail to East Midlands Railway, possibly to the timetable change in May 2020 or more probably December 2020, pending the resolution of certain issues. In this interim period, in order to satisfy the Persons of Reduced Mobility regulations, there could be one of several possible changes to the unit in service: continued use of Class 153 units under special dispensation arrangements, or a Class 153 unit paired with a compliant unit (probably a modified Class 156), or a compliant Class 156 unit on its own, or a Pacer, or a Class 150 and finally a Class 170 subject to training of TransPennine Express crew.

- Barton Civic Trust is investigating the provision of better amenities at Barton Interchange. Plans are progressing with designs for brick-built waiting facilities, public convenience and additional parking at a cost in the region of £330,000. A public consultation is promised before a firm commitment to proceed is made.

- As reported in *Rail Lincs 84*, concern has been expressed about the inconvenient timing of engineering works on the Barton Line and the consequential disruption to services to Cleethorpes during the peak summer season. Three stations: New Clee, Grimsby Docks and Thornton Abbey have had no service during the works, with claims that it was not possible to for the substitute bus to serve them.

A.A.S. Berridge



TransPennine Class 185 at Grimsby Docks. Inset: Suggitts Lane crossing at Cleethorpes, recently controversially closed by Network Rail on safety grounds. Campaigners have taken the fight to London, with the issue raised by a local MP in the Commons.

Photos: Tim Mickleburgh

# EMR Developments . . .

## What do you think ?

### Rolling Stock:

East Midland Railway (EMR) is supposed to be getting 9x2-car Class 156 from Anglia by 31 December 2019. This should ensure that all single-car diagrams cease by the year end. It does not see the end of Class 153 as EMR plan to retain seven and use them joined to a 156 or 158. This has come about because the expected 5x3-car Class 170s from Scotland will not now arrive until May 2020. Ultimately by the end of 2021 all our regional services will be operated by Class 170 in 2 and 3-car formations.

### Timetables 2019:

No major change to Regional services in December 2019. Newark Castle to Matlock will be changed by a few minutes at Derby due to the major revision of Cross Country services. Midland Main Line changes are more extensive to take benefit from Market Harborough and Derby remodelling.

### December 2020:

Grimsby – Lincoln – Newark North Gate will be revised. There will be two hourly Grimsby – Newark trains in the hours when the Lincoln – Kings Cross Azuma service does not run. In those hours there will just be a Grimsby – Lincoln service. Draft December 2020 timetables are almost complete. There will be a twelve week consultation with passengers / stakeholders probably starting next month.

### December 2021:

second part of the timetable recast including Peterborough – Lincoln – Doncaster and Leicester – Grimsby every hour. At same time East Coast Main Line (ECML) services are supposed to have a revised timetable. There will have to be compromises in the 2021 timetable to

take into account operating congestion at various places. Lincoln station only has three through platforms and one of these will be blocked for 30 minutes+ every hour by the Northern service to Leeds laying over. EMR trains into platform 2 at Doncaster have to fit in with ECML services. Lincoln – Nottingham have to cross the ECML at a fixed time every hour dictated by ECML services. There are platform constraints at Nottingham with MML and Cross Country trains terminating there in addition to the terminating Nottingham to Worksop and Nottingham – Skegness. Barnetby – Grimsby is also a busy route with freight to fit in as well as TransPennine Express.

If EMR is going to run a Grimsby – Leicester service, the timetable will almost certainly be dictated by when it can cross the ECML. There may be a choice between a fast Grimsby to Nottingham service with poor connections into London trains at Lincoln or good London connections but with slower journey time to Nottingham for Market Rasen and Grimsby passengers.

*Question to you all is which of these options do you consider to be most important?*

*Another stakeholder has suggested truncating the Leicester – Grimsby at Lincoln and instead running a Grimsby – Newark North Gate service timed to connect well at North Gate even if this has poor connections into the Leicester trains at Lincoln. What do you think of this suggestion?*



# Lincolnshire Charters

*Compiled by Geoffrey Meanwell*

## **Sunday, 17 November**

Kings Cross, Potters Bar, **Peterborough to York**  
Haulage to be advised. Promoter: Steam Dreams

## **Sunday, 17 November**

York **Peterborough**, Stevenage, Potters Bar to **Kings Cross**  
Haulage Class 47/57. Promoter: Steam Dreams

## **Thursday, 28 November**

Norwich, Wymondham, Attleborough, Thetford, Brandon, March, **Peterborough to York**  
Haulage 60009. Promoter: Railway Touring Company

## **Thursday, 28 November**

York, **Peterborough**, March, Brandon, Thetford, Attleborough, Wymondham to **Norwich**  
Haulage 60009 York – Peterborough. Class 47/57 Peterborough – Norwich.  
Promoter: Railway Touring Company

## **Wednesday, 4 December**

**Peterborough, Grantham, Newark North Gate, Retford, Doncaster to Edinburgh**  
Haulage Class 47/57. Promoter: West Coast Railway Company

## **Friday, 6 December**

London Victoria to **Lincoln**.  
Haulage Class 67. Promoter: Belmond

## **Saturday, 7 December**

Kings Cross, Potters Bar, Stevenage, **Peterborough to Lincoln**  
Haulage 46233 Promoter: Railway Touring Company

## **Saturday, 7 December**

Kings Cross, Potters Bar, Stevenage, **Peterborough to Manchester Piccadilly**  
Haulage to be advised. Promoter: UK Rail

## **Sunday, 8 December**

Kings Cross, Potters Bar, Welwyn Garden City, Stevenage to **Lincoln**  
Haulage to be advised. Promoter: UK Railtours

## **Sunday, 8 December**

Kings Cross, Hertford North, Hitchin, Huntingdon to **Lincoln**  
Haulage to be advised. Promoter: Steam Dreams

## **Wednesday, 11 December**

**Lincoln, Newark North Gate, Grantham (circular tour)**  
Haulage Class 47. Promoter: Northern Belle

## **Saturday, 14 December**

Kings Cross, Stevenage, **Peterborough to York**  
Haulage 60163. Promoter: Railway Touring Company

## **Saturday, 14 December**

York, **Peterborough**, Stevenage to **Kings Cross**  
Haulage 60009. Promoter: Railway Touring Company

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### **Thursday, 19 December**

Stevenage, Cambridge, Ely, March, **Peterborough**, Oakham, Melton Mowbray, Leicester to **Chester**

Haulage 46233. Promoter: Railway Touring Company

### **Saturday, 21 December**

Kings Cross, Potters Bar, **Peterborough to Beverley**

Haulage to be advised. Promoter: UK Railtours

### **Saturday, 15 February 2020**

Kings Cross, Stevenage, Huntingdon, **Peterborough to York**

Haulage 46233. Promoter: Railway Touring company

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## **From Lincoln to Bredbury**

*A train journey experience by Tom Rookes*

Art was always my best subject at school for a very good reason. Whenever I developed an interest I wanted to draw whatever I had seen. So when I saw steam locomotives at about the age of five I wanted to draw them. When I was ten my father brought home two Tarzan comics, one which had some remarkable drawings by an artist called Burne Hogarth who became known as The Michelangelo of the Comics, so I wanted to draw like this. As well as drawing the human figure I developed a passion for the writings of Edgar Rice Burroughs who wrote the Tarzan books and many other stories in a concise, visual, punchy style. This had a positive impact on my English and from then on I became a regular letter writer to anything connected with Burroughs while attracting responses from people in Britain, the U.S.A. and elsewhere. I also joined fan clubs. Although Burroughs was enormously popular in his lifetime with stories, radio broadcasts, films and comics, and although there were revivals after his death in 1950, with nothing much happening in the last few decades, people's interests elsewhere. Even so there is still a large group of followers in the U.S.A. and a small group in Britain. So it was that I decided to attend the fan club

AGM on Saturday 27 July in Oldham at the house of one of the fans. Initially I travelled to Bredbury, a suburb of Stockport. My first intention was to travel on the TransPennine Express to Stockport, but I was informed that Bredbury was four miles away with no longer a direct connection, but had a very good stopping train service run by Northern which runs from Sheffield via Bredbury to Manchester Piccadilly.

I left Lincoln on the 09:29 service to Sheffield which takes about 1 hour 15 minutes, arriving on time at 10:42. The four coach train was well patronised. The train for Bredbury was due at 12:14 and was helpfully listed on the internet at Platform 2C. This is one of those terminus platforms which lies between two through platforms. For whatever reason the train had only two coaches so there were many standing passengers. By then the rain had started. The train was two minutes late arriving at Sheffield but most significantly there was a signal check of ten to twelve minutes on leaving, so the journey to Bredbury which normally takes one hour was about 15 minutes late. Although my friend at Bredbury only lives about 5 minutes walk from the railway station he had agreed to collect me in the

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case of bad weather. On arrival I made cordial exchanges with the other members and we then journeyed in two cars to the meeting in Oldham which took just under one hour. We then partook of a nicely provided light lunch and proceeded through the AGM, which was followed by a 20 questions quiz on items related to Edgar Rice Burroughs. Something perhaps unique was that those attending had been asked to submit items for an on the spot magazine which was then collated and distributed to members. There were then discussions about further items of interest which were handed round. We then made our farewells and five of us journeyed back to Bredbury. Later three of us enjoyed a fine carvery meal at a local pub. As there are no buses in Lincoln from town on my route after 18:20 and as I do not drive, my friend had agreed to provide me with overnight accommodation. We were therefore able to have interesting discussions and I was shown his collection of books and other collectibles. Next day it was noticeable that the rain had persisted all night so my friend gave me a lift to the railway station for the 09:59 train which arrived on time. As with the Lincoln to Sheffield trains those from Sheffield to Manchester also run hourly on Sundays. This time there was a four coach train but being a Sunday there were far fewer passengers. The rain persisted until we reached Sheffield and after a short delay we arrived at 11:04. The train from Sheffield to Lincoln was due out at 11:41 with the passengers waiting at Platform 5B as scheduled on the Passenger Information Screen (PIS) and the train listed as being on time. As the minutes ticked over no train appeared but mysteriously there was a train waiting at Platform 5A. Eventually a railwayman – I think it was the guard – realised that there was a mix up and ran

towards the passengers shouting where the train to Lincoln was. Whether the information screen was incorrect or the train was in the wrong place I have no idea but the PIS has previously been showing a train for Huddersfield at Platform 5A. I think all the passengers must have been relieved not to have been left behind. We arrived in Lincoln early at 12:56. A convenient time for me to catch the 13:05 bus home.

I was impressed with the service from Lincoln to Sheffield and that from Sheffield to Bredbury. Both of these were well patronized and show how good services can attract more passengers. Hopefully the former will eventually be extended to run from Cleethorpes.

Tom Rookes

**Rail Lincs welcomes details of your train travel experiences. Contributions of material for Rail Lincs are always welcome**

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## Signal Box Open Days

A number of public open days held by signallers during September, gave Helpston residents the opportunity to get behind-the-scenes access, in a bid to promote level crossing safety.

239 people from the local community attended interactive sessions at the Helpston Signal Box situated at the widest level crossing in the country, with six tracks and a line speed of 125mph on the East Coast Main Line.

The public could meet with Network Rail signallers who explained certain curiosities related to the crossing: for example, why they sometimes have to wait longer than planned before crossing, how dangerous the misuse of crossings can be and how it can ultimately lead to longer delays for passenger and freight trains.

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On 10 August, EMT ran a charter train for staff to commemorate the end of the franchise. Starting at Leeds, it was routed along the Midland Main Line to Bedford and north of London to join the East Coast Main Line to Grantham and on to Nottingham, terminating at Derby. The two power cars carried special liveries featuring senior staff during the 11 years of the franchise.

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## PRELIMINARY NOTICE – RAILFUTURE LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH AGM

The Committee has set the AGM for Saturday 7 March 2020 at Lincoln. Further details including the Agenda and Branch Officers' reports will be in the next *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 2019.

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 wishing to join the Branch Committee 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 2019. 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.*

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**<https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Lincolnshire+Branch>**



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Please let the Editor Phil Mason, 10 Cottesmore Close, Grantham NG31 9JL, [phil.mason@trackprint.net](mailto:phil.mason@trackprint.net) have copy by 18 January.

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