

## BRANCH AGM – SATURDAY, 26 MARCH

St. Swithun's Community Centre, Baggholme Road, Lincoln

*Details and Reports – page 5*

## From your Branch Chairman

Welcome to 2022. We do seem to be over the worst of the Covid pandemic, so hopefully, we can look forward to a more normal year ahead. In previous years, I have used this first newsletter of the year to look ahead to what we can expect in the coming year, so here we go with my predictions for 2022.

By the time you read this we will be close to 1st March and an increase of regulated fares by 3.8%. The last time we had a higher average fare increase was 3.9% in 2013, which followed two years of even bigger average increases (2011 6.2%, 2021 5.9%). There is quite a difference between now and 10 years ago in that 10 years ago most commuters had no option but to pay the higher fares whereas now many of these have the option of working from home (WFM) instead. This makes me wonder if DfT will actually see a revenue increase this year.

If, for example, 100 commuters are paying a fare of £10 the revenue per day is £1000. 10 years ago if the fare was increased by 3.8% then the chances are that all these commuters would have continued commuting with a revenue increase to £1038. However

with WFM it only takes 4 passengers to stop commuting for the daily revenue to fall to £996.38. However a supermarket would look at this another way. Reduce the fare by 25p and market this reduced fare to leisure passengers using off peak services and it only takes 7 extra passengers per day to increase revenue to £1043.25.

This example leads me to another topic: Great British Railways (GBR) and how the contracts will be structured between GBR and Train Operating Companies (TOCs). Within Railfuture we are concerned that TOCs may just be paid a fee to run services with fares set by GBR ▶



**What does the future hold for rolling stock in Lincolnshire?**

*Chris Brown investigates on page 3*

and no incentive for TOCs to increase revenue. You might point out that under franchises DfT used to control regulated fares, but the crucial difference was that TOCs had the freedom to set other fares and could generate extra revenue by such methods as using cheap advance purchase fares to sell what would otherwise be empty seats on lightly used services. Without giving TOCs this freedom under GBR contracts we could see our railways enter a cycle of fare increases followed by a decline in passengers.

Whilst on the subject of GBR, this is the topic for our AGM speaker, Railfuture director and Passenger Committee chair, Allison Cosgrove. She is keen to hear what you, as members, want to see from GBR so if you have views, this is your chance to air them.

You will see from the article by Chris Brown, elsewhere in this issue, we have little prospect of any meaningful East Midlands Railway (EMR) service improvements during 2022 and the chances of the full timetable promised in the EMR Franchise award ever arriving are receding into the far distant future.

Chris and myself are both members of a Nottingham to Lincoln Stakeholder Board sub group that are looking at future EMR timetables for the route, so you can be assured we will be pressing for service improvements as soon as possible.

On a more optimistic note, DfT are still considering the Strategic Outline Business Report on the Restoring Your Railway (RYR) South Humber Rail Linc scheme. If they are serious about RYR then we should hear something positive during 2022.

During 2022 your committee will no doubt be asked to contribute to national Railfuture responses on various matters. At the time of writing I have just been suggesting input into a House of Lords Built Environment Committee inquiry into public transport in towns and cities where Railfuture have been invited to submit evidence. We have also recently contributed to the Railfuture response to the Call for Evidence for the Whole Industry Strategic Plan from the GBR Transition Team  
<https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display2939>.

It is 2 years since we last had an opportunity to meet, so I do hope as many of you as possible will come to the AGM.

*David Harby, Branch Chairman*

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## Update on Activity in the North of Lincolnshire

The South Humber Rail User Group has been busy in the north of Lincolnshire, addressing the issue of cuts to the Scunthorpe to Doncaster Northern Rail service, serving Scunthorpe, Althorpe, Crowle, Thorne South, Hatfield and Stainforth, Kirk Sandall, and Doncaster. Our hourly service was cut in May 2021 to a two-hourly service, with no notice. Despite protest, this was carried forward into the December timetable. It has involved losing a key service at 07:48 from Scunthorpe. Our concerns were increased on hearing that the DfT is being pressured by the Treasury to save money and that future iterations of the timetable

will be using the December timetable as a basis to work from. We therefore arranged a meeting with Pete Myers, Stakeholder Manager of Northern Rail, in December 2021, who told us of a proposal to reinstate the 07:48 train from May 2022, which will then leave a gap of three hours mid morning. While we are grateful for any concession, we decided to lobby for full reinstatement. A meeting has been held very quickly with Councillor Rob Waltham, leader of North Lincolnshire Council who has a seat on Transport for the North (TFN). Letters have also gone to the Managing Director of (TFN), Jane Wingad, who is Rail Officer for Lincolnshire County

◀ Council, and Dan Jarvis, Mayor of South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA). We will keep the branch updated on progress.

Parking at TransPennine Express (TPE) stations – the parking arrangements have changed at Scunthorpe, Grimsby and Cleethorpes stations as TPE have taken it back in house. Tickets need to be purchased either by phone or at the ticket office. Plans are being made to remove misleading signs at Cleethorpes. Thanks to Daniel Fox, Community Manager at TPE for his help in clarifying this matter.

REVENUE PROTECTION After an incident

at Doncaster, when a member was apprehended at the foot of the stairs from Platform 0 by the Revenue Protection Officers when she had come off a train where the conductor was without a ticket machine, we raised the issue about the attitude of the officers to passengers. We are also concerned about the potential impact on passengers trying to make connections. Representations were made by chairs of both Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Railfuture branches to Northern and officers have now been asked to position themselves on the station concourse instead of at the bottom of the stairs to and from Platform 0.

*Ann Hindley*

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## What does the future hold for Lincolnshire rail services?

Had the Franchise for the East Midlands proceeded as planned, all routes except for The Barton Line, would have had an hourly service on Monday to Saturday. This was to be achieved by moving the operation of Nottingham to Liverpool services to either Northern or TransPennine (TPE) and replacing the whole EMR regional fleet of Classes 153, 156 and 158 units with all West Midlands Class 170s and all Southern's Class 171s, converted to Class 170s plus five Class 170s from Scotrail. The events of the last two years have made this impossible, but how near to achieving this are we?

East Midlands Railway (EMR) introduced an enhanced timetable in May 2021 but owing to staffing and unit problems it quickly had to make ad hoc reductions to the timetable, curtailing some services short of their normal destination or introducing gaps in the timetable of two hours, even on the Nottingham to Lincoln route. Hykeham and Collingham suffered more than most, as well as the gaps, the 15:35 from

Lincoln to Leicester has to run non-stop from Lincoln to Newark Castle as the Office of Rail & Road had given permission for an extra Grand Central Service that has taken the path designated for Lincoln to Leicester services to use the flat crossing at Newark.

EMR had been hoping to reinstate the May 2021 timetable as from May 2022, but when they looked at this it became obvious that this was not possible owing to them not having enough units to run even this service.

So, how has this come about? EMR has, over the last few years, withdrawn all its single-car Class 153 units with the first batch replaced by fifteen very tired Class 156 units from Anglia. In December 2021 the six remaining Class 153 units had to be withdrawn and four of the fifteen Class 156 units received from Anglia had to be given to Northern on the instructions of the Department for Transport plus EMR has to provide a Class 156 unit every day for the Barton branch. ▶

EMR should by now have received twenty-three Class 170 units from West Midlands to run the enhanced services and allow fifteen Class 156 units to go to Northern. So far only seven 2-car units have arrived plus one 2-car unit from Wales and five 3-car units from Scotland. It also transpired that not all the Class 171s were due to come from Southern, just eight 3-car and four 2-car units but then EMR was told that it could not have the Class 171s as there was nothing to replace them and they would get the fleet of Anglia Class 170s that had been transferred to Wales, coincidentally eight 3-car and four 2-car units. Too much of a coincidence to be credible? Who am I to question the DfT?

West Midlands is not releasing their remaining Class 170s until they get their new Class 196 units in service, but at present they have not even started to train their drivers on them. The Class 170s from Wales depend on Stadler

Class 232 units being delivered and entering service and EMR has been told it should have the remaining eleven Class 170s by Christmas 2022. However, as EMR still owes Northern eleven Class 156s, another coincidence surely, I suspect that for every Class 170 received by EMR they will have to send a Class 156 to Northern leaving EMR with no more units than they have now, meaning that no improvements to EMR services will be possible in December 2022. The future for our services looks bleak. I suspect, unless something radical happens, as even with all the Class 170s due and keeping the whole Class 158 fleet, EMR will be struggling for units. Who says the East Midlands is the poor relation of regions in England? I do, as we are far worse off than the North! It's not just the North that needs levelling up!

*Chris Brown  
Nottingham to Lincoln Stakeholder  
Board Secretary*

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## **The Integrated Rail Plan – a view from your Chairman**

After being delayed numerous times, the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) was finally launched by the Secretary of State for Transport on 18 November. The plan was variously described by Northern politicians as “woefully inadequate”, “bitterly disappointing”, “spin, lies and broken promises”. Reaction from the rail industry was no better with most of them saying it was a piecemeal approach that left out key pieces of the jigsaw rather than a strategic plan.

Opposition from the Midlands was more muted, This was no doubt because there was a commitment to electrify from Market Harborough to Sheffield (first announced 10 years ago then “paused”), faster services from Nottingham to Birmingham (more about those later) and a commitment to the Midlands Rail Hub plan. All of which the Midlands political

leaders don't want to risk by speaking out against the government.

In brief the IRP proposals drop plans for a full Eastern leg of HS2 to Leeds terminating this at East Midlands Parkway instead. There are still plans for high speed links west of the Pennines but any of these end at Marsden (near Huddersfield) rather than continuing to Leeds. Bradford is no longer on the HS map.

For us in Lincolnshire, the proposals to upgrade the ECML including a flyover at Newark sound good until we remember most of these proposals were in a plan announced 10 years ago but which was later trimmed back to little more than the recently opened Werrington underpass. All proposals come with the caveat that they will have to meet value for money

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# **railfuture** Lincolnshire Branch

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Saturday, 26 March 2022 at St. Swithin's Community Centre**  
**Baggholme Road, Lincoln commencing at 13:00**

*Timetable:*

- 13:00 Assemble – Complimentary coffee or tea available  
13:15 AGM (Agenda below)  
14:15 Break – Complimentary coffee or tea available  
14:30 **Speaker:**  
**Allison Cosgrove, Chair Railfuture Passenger Committee**  
**“Railfuture view of Williams/Shapps Review and formation of Great British Railways”**  
15:30 Meeting Closes

### **BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Dear Member,

The Annual General Meeting of the branch will take place on Saturday, 26 March 2022 at St. Swithin's Community Centre, Baggholme Road, Lincoln LN2 5AX.

**AGM AGENDA**

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of 2021 meeting
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Report by David Harby
5. Hon. Secretary's Report by Dr Don Peacock
6. Financial Report – Branch Income & Expenditure Account (see page 8)
7. Election of Officers:
  - a) Chairman
  - b) Vice Chairman
  - c) Hon Secretary
  - d) Hon Treasurer
  - e) other committee members
8. Any other urgent business (notice of items appreciated by Hon Secretary before meeting commences or telephone 01652 688549)

Yours sincerely, Don Peacock, Hon Secretary

1 Queens Road, Barnetby le Wold DN38 6JH. Tel: 01652 688549

*No members contacted the Hon Secretary to stand for the posts of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary and therefore there will be no candidates' statements published and no voting carried out at the AGM. Branch full members can volunteer to join the committee at the AGM.*

*Dr Don Peacock, Hon Secretary*

## **Getting to the AGM**

Branch meetings are held at St. Swithin's Community Centre on the corner of Croft Street and Baggholme Road, LN2 5AX, ten minutes walk from Lincoln railway station. From the station, cross St. Mary's Street and head for Sincil Street (via Norman Street), at end of Sincil Street, cross River Witham by footbridge to Waterside north, pass Witch & Wardrobe public house, then to Thorngate and left on to Broadgate, crossing the dual carriageway at the pedestrian crossing. After the crossing, bear left into St. Rumbold Street. Continue on St. Rumbold Street into Croft Street. Entrance to St. Swithin's Centre is on your right, near the junction with Baggholme Road.

If travelling by car. Proceed southbound down Broadgate and turn left into St. Rumbold Street (just past the Premier Inn) or into Waterside North. There is no parking at, or close to, St. Swithin's Centre. The most convenient car park is Siemen's Car Park (available weekends only) situated between St. Rumbold Street and Waterside North. Walk to St. Swithin's Centre via St. Rumbold Street, as described above. (approx. 5/10 minutes).

## **Chairman's Report to be presented at the 2022 AGM**

To write this review of 2021 I started by looking at my predictions for the year in the February 2021 *Rail Lincs* and to my surprise some, though nowhere near all, actually came to pass.

The Werrington dive under was completed and the first freight train used it on 29 November. After some Covid related delays in delivery of materials the lift to platform 3 at Retford and the covered walkway to the main station buildings was completed just before the year end.

The Barton branch, after having no trains at all for the first three months of the year, was transferred to EMR with the introduction of the new timetable on 16 May. This long awaited new EMR timetable, originally due for introduction in December 2020, turned out to be something of a calamity with train crew and rolling stock shortages resulting in multiple cancellations and it was soon replaced by an emergency timetable on 19 June.

EMR told us they would be operating 85% of the base timetable, but this was somewhat misleading for us in Lincolnshire as this base timetable included all the Connect and Intercity services which were not reduced. In reality the reduction in Regional services was nearer to 35% although we succeeded in our lobbying to retain an almost full summer service on the Poacher Line.

As the year progressed EMR trained more train crew but the rolling stock situation is still dire so they were able to reinstate only 22 services (some in December and the rest in early January 2022) and this was balanced by two return trains a day being removed from the Poacher Line timetable.

On our other routes, LNER did manage to gradually reinstate most of their cancelled services though, with some to Lincoln removed from the timetable again in December as another Covid wave hit us. The situation with TPE was similar up to the year end and has deteriorated since.

Northern have however struggled throughout the year. Their leisure market grew quickly during the summer, so to maintain Covid safety they clearly had to concentrate resources on the routes to holiday areas such as Bridlington, so the Scunthorpe to Doncaster route remained two hourly and Gainsborough Central to Sheffield services were suspended for the whole year except for a few months with just some peak hour trains. Until the December timetable change, Lincoln to Leeds services only ran as far as Sheffield with extra stops added to replace the missing services from Gainsborough Central.

As far as Railfuture was concerned, despite being unable to meet in person, your branch committee had a busy year. We started with the AGM which took place by Zoom. This was combined with a well attended (more than we usually see at an in person AGM) presentation from an LNER speaker followed by a lively question session.

We contributed to Railfuture national responses to consultations on the proposed 2022 ECML timetable, a House of Lords enquiry into fares reform, a Transport Focus consultation on proposed changes to LNER ticket office opening hours and a Northern Trains Accessibility for All Strategic Programme.

The long delayed Williams/Shapps report into the future organisation of the railways was issued. We know the broad proposals for Great British Railways (GBR) which appear to be an improvement for the passenger, but as the saying goes: The devil is in the detail, and so far the detail is sparse. Details of a fares reform are still awaited. A new season ticket for passengers who travel to work less than 5 days a week was announced with a big fanfare, but most part-time workers have found that it is unsuitable for them. ▶

◀ Lincolnshire, bids for development funding for three Restoring Your Railway schemes were made. The Firsby to Louth and Mablethorpe Loop bids were unsuccessful but Network Rail have been asked to consider Mablethorpe as part of a Lincolnshire Rail Study. Kicking it into the long grass is a likely best description of this outcome. The third bid, South Humber Rail Link, which proposes extending the Sheffield to Gainsborough Central service to Barton-on-Humber was successful and we have contributed to the Strategic Outline Business Case for this which is now being considered by DfT.

A new initiative with our 90th issue of *Rail Lincs* in June was a joint publication with Railfuture East Midlands Branch. This was used to launch our Easy Stations Survey of our stations. The response from members has been good and the majority of stations have been surveyed. Together with East Midlands Branch we are now preparing a list of campaigning priorities which will be useful to feed into our responses to the GBR proposals.

I would like to end this review by thanking the branch committee for their efforts during the year. As I hope I have shown 2021 was a busy year despite Covid restrictions. With all our local TOCs in a state of change, together with much more to come on GBR. 2022 promises to be just as busy.

*David Harby, Branch Chairman*

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## **Hon Secretary's report to be presented at the 2022 AGM**

This could be a very short report – Covid – Lock Down .

However as you will have seen from David's report, things have not ground to a halt even if they have been more limited.

We have continued to respond to various consultations. We have now undertaken the "Easy Station" survey in conjunction with the East Midlands Branch. I went on some of these surveys and I was very disappointed to see how neglected the stations on the former main line from Cleethorpes to Manchester (the "Brigg Line") had become. It appears that it will be necessary to expend both time and money to make a rail journey from them to be attractive. I hope that the regular service proposed from Sheffield to Gainsborough Central will come to fruition soon and be extended up the line to become the South Humber Rail Link terminating at Barton on Humber, as referred to in the Chairman's Report. One thing that I noticed particularly was the lack of ways of communicating with prospective passengers if there were service problems. Some stations had help points so it was possible to find out if a train was late or cancelled assuming that there was someone to answer at the call centre. However there was not any way of warning passengers of cancellations/bus substitutions and where such buses could be caught (some did have posters displays of where the bus stop was but there was nothing in the street to show it.

There will be an AGM in March in Lincoln which will be nice to return people face to face (providing no further Covid changes). There will be no election of officers of the committee or committee members, the current committee and corresponding members continuing. However if there is anyone out there who would like to help us by either becoming a committee member or a corresponding member please contact me in writing. There will be plenty to do when something approaching "normality" comes trying to get passenger numbers back up and keeping the Treasury/DfT in check with the savings proposals.

We have a guest speaker who is the Chair of the Passenger Committee which has formed 5 groups to look at the five elements of the Williams-Schapps Report and Integrated Rail Strategy. Allison Cosgrave is travelling down from Scotland to do this, so I ▶

◀ am hoping that there will be good support from our members to welcome her.

The remote meetings were, I think, successful and allowed more members to “attend” including non- committee members. They do however pose a logistics problem in keeping the committee members “in the loop”. I need enough prior notice of items that attendees want to bring up along with background information to circulate to those who not on the net. Once the agenda is finalised there can be no more items considered until the next meeting.

So, hopefully, things will improve in 2022. I did finally get a rail card last year and manage a few trips both on heritage lines and the main line network.

Last but not least, many thanks to the committee for all the time and effort that they have put in under rather testing times.

I hope that you are all well and will enjoy an improving 2022.

*Dr Don Peacock Hon Secretary*

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## **Railfuture Lincolnshire Branch**

### **Income & Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st December 2021**

<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
Opening balance at 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2021	0.00		
Funding from national funds	536.00	Newsletter printing and distribution	169.56
		Room hire	25.00
		Campaigns:	
		Stand at Caistorail	25.00
		Closing balance at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021	316.44
	<hr/> 536.00		<hr/> 536.00

### **MICK PAINE**

I'm sad to report that another long standing Railfuture Lincolnshire branch member has passed away. I don't know a lot about his history, but thinking back to my early days with Lincs branch I know he was a long standing friend of our late Chair, Brian Hastings. Mick rarely missed an AGM as well as sending me notes when he wanted to comment on some local rail or bus issue.

The funeral took place at Gainsborough Crematorium on Thursday 17 February.

*DH*



# New Lift and Walkway at Retford

Thanks to the completion of the new lift, wheelchair users and customers with large luggage or pushchairs will no longer be required to wait for station staff to become available, or struggle on the stairs.

The lift now links the low-level platform three with the high-level platforms one and two.

The project has also seen a new covered walkway constructed, giving people better shelter when moving between the main station building on platform 1 and the low-level platforms.



# Friends of the Barton Line

- Improvement work is being carried out on the Barton Line between December 2021 and March 2022. The scope of the work includes new help points at all stations, replacement of station seating, signage including totems and poster cases. Repainting in East Midlands Railway (EMR) brand colours will also be undertaken. Where necessary, repair of fencing and railings will be included.

- Barrow Haven platform is being completely replaced by Network Rail, with a sixteen-week closure of the station commencing in March 2022. Some surfacing improvements are also scheduled for Thornton Abbey.

- Since EMR took over operation of the line last May there has been a marginal improvement to performance, which has been enhanced by the introduction of Class 156 units on the Line in December. The single-car Class 153s have now been removed from the Line, leaving the fully People with Reduced Mobility (PRM) compliant Class 156 units in operation.

- Suggitt's Lane footbridge is scheduled to open in March 2022, but the foot crossing west of Habrough is to remain closed until May,

*Anthony Berridge*

# Editor's Mail



On a recent visit to Lincoln station, I was disappointed to find that there were no toilets on the platform nearest to the entrance where our train was due to

depart from. As a result I had to make a trek over the footbridge, hardly ideal if I'd been physically impaired.

Surely adequate provision of convenience facilities is essential in this day and age, when there are fewer public toilets in general.

*Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby*

# Annual Passenger Journeys from Office of Rail & Road Regulator Data

Station	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Althorpe	7,978	9,752	2,048
Ancaster	5,904	5,006	1,798
Barnetby	73,998	66,360	9,760
Barrow Haven	1,916	2,310	184
Barton-On-Humber	39,798	36,646	4,784
Bleasby	7,426	8,688	1,472
Boston	226,940	210,854	59,220
Brigg	928	1,678	130
Burton Joyce	16,084	15,330	1,826
Carlton	54,632	57,552	12,254
Cleethorpes	296,002	274,032	68,322
Collingham	116,434	128,032	23,820
Crowle	26,956	26,898	6,136
Fiskerton	37,102	36,708	4,284
Doncaster	3,917,948	3,946,406	890,238
Gainsborough Central	1,494	2,384	616
Gainsborough Lea Road	164,188	174,123	42,386
Goxhill	13,716	12,432	1,510
Grantham	1,413,006	1,390,648	348,058
Great Coates	11,042	8,950	1,024
Grimsby Docks	4,830	4,820	530
Grimsby Town	456,768	432,356	98,534
Habrough	39,172	40,942	10,986
Havenhouse	158	84	162
Healing	8,490	9,024	886
Heckington	66,494	60,788	12,436
Hubberts Bridge	1,262	1,252	180
Hykeham	176,244	183,026	31,522
Kirton Lindsey	190	272	10
Lincoln	1,963,938	1,966,100	430,900
Lowdham	72,494	70,442	9,216
Market Rasen	69,840	69,008	14,846
Metheringham	101,878	95,698	27,000
New Clee	1,720	1,578	154
New Holland	14,488	13,066	1,604
Newark Castle	802,590	759,898	151,190
Newark Northgate	960,922	909,804	181,014
Nottingham	8,004,938	7,864,690	1,416,536
Peterborough	5,059,576	4,934,692	1,089,232
Rauceby	10,256	9,234	2,586
Retford	519,976	541,674	116,384
Rolleston	6,608	5,408	1,118
Ruskington	82,020	78,110	18,652
Saxilby	75,172	75,654	20,848
Scunthorpe	417,880	396,638	90,570
Skegness	350,864	323,202	112,520
Sleaford	310,906	298,572	76,590
Spalding	193,034	176,342	44,986
Stallingborough	9,460	10,180	1,478
Stamford	384,560	366,652	49,894
Swinderby	18,026	17,912	3,700

Swineshead	3,508	2,648	748
Thornton Abbey	1,114	708	238
Thorpe Culvert	258	140	32
Thurgarton	3,462	4,338	324
Ucelby	7,320	7,190	1,096
Wainfleet	42,160	38,752	10,440
Worksop	440,390	474,830	116,272

## NOTES:

These figures are for the first full year of the Covid pandemic when our political masters told us not to travel for much of the year, so we could expect a substantial fall from previous years.

Always to be taken into account is that the figures are based on ticket sales, so do have some limitations and are always below the actual numbers. Even before Covid, members frequently complained to me that conductors had made no attempt to sell tickets, which is important to our area where the vast majority of stations do not have ticket machines. For much of the 2020-2021 year, this became normal practice with TOCs instructing staff, for their own safety, not to walk through the train checking or selling tickets, so passengers could in, many cases travel without purchasing a ticket and so not being recorded as travelling.

The total ticket sales for the stations in this list was only 21% of that for 2019-2020. Looking at the DfT weekly estimates of rail use during Covid (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-use-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic>) numbers varied considerably from as low as 4% up to 43%. We also know that whilst commuter and especially business travel dropped drastically, there was something of a leisure travel boom in late summer which can be seen in the Skegness figure which is 35% of the previous year.

Also to be taken into account is that the Barton branch had many weeks with no service and Brigg and Kirton Lindsey had hardly any trains at all.

*David Harby*

## A Brighter Lincoln Station



A Northern Rail Class.195 stands at Platform 5, opposite the old disused Platform 8, ready to depart with a Lincoln to Leeds service.

The wall at the back of the old platform has been decorated with artwork depicting various aspects of Lincoln and Lincolnshire, including one featuring the past and present railway scene in the city.

Photographs by Graham Lightfoot, Lincoln Railway Society..



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(VFM) requirements, which puts the Newark flyover in doubt as it failed to meet VFM requirements around 5 years ago.

Promises of faster journey times are made, but the rail media have already pointed out that these are very suspect and selective. For example a Birmingham to Nottingham time of 26 minutes is said to be around 29 minutes faster than the original HS2 plans. That may be so, but back in 2013 DfT were already quoting a time of 36 minutes.

We are told upgrading the ECML for 140mph running will save 20 minutes on typical current Leeds to Kings Cross journey times. That is a figure that ECML experts cannot reconcile with their experiences of trying to speed up journey times. Twenty two miles of continuous running at 140mph over the current 125mph only saves one minute of journey time so to save 20 minutes there needs to be 440 miles of 140mph running. The Leeds to Kings Cross route is only 186 miles long and out of those 186 miles there are 76 miles where permanent speed restrictions below

125mph apply! Even if all the constraints are removed (Bawtry and Welwyn viaducts, severe curves at Offord, poor ground conditions at Stilton Fen, Stoke Tunnel, and the entire route between Doncaster and Leeds, to quote just a few) experts suggest a theoretical saving of something like 14 minutes if there is only one intermediate station stop.

This route has had rolling stock capable of 140 mph running ever since the IC225 trains were introduced in 1991, but whenever faster speeds are considered, the costs involved against the possible benefits have been deemed to be excessive. Another factor against such high speed trains is that to achieve these times every hour nearly all the stopping trains would have to be removed from the timetable – Not a good prospect for connectivity between Doncaster, Retford, Newark, Grantham and Peterborough.

Given all I have said, and that is only concentrating on part of the IRP, I personally think the description of the IRP as “spin, lies and broken promises” is a somewhat understated description.

David Harby

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## LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH

**Chair:** David Harby – [david.harby@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:david.harby@railfuture.org.uk)

**Vice-Chair:** Phil Mason – [phil.mason@trackprint.net](mailto:phil.mason@trackprint.net)

**Secretary:** Don Peacock – [don.peacock@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:don.peacock@railfuture.org.uk)

**Lincolnshire Branch's Twitter handle:** @RailfutureLincs

**Direct link to Branch News:** <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Lincolnshire+Branch>

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