

SixShiresRail

Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire & Rutland

Newsletter for Railfuture East Midlands
& Lincolnshire branches

railfuture

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EDITOR'S COMMENT

Train-flows, passenger-flows and cash-flows are crucial to the running of our railway. In this edition of *SixShiresRail*, we report the good news that East Midlands Railway (EMR) has achieved a record increase in turn-over and passenger usage. But, on the other hand, is experiencing loss of income through fare evasion. To remedy this, EMR is looking at ways to stop this leakage of revenue including the closure of the footbridge at Nottingham station. There are many solutions to the problem, but these can possibly incur additional costs which outweigh the benefits. In many ways we come back to ticket office closures and/or reduced opening hours together with the various difficulties in purchasing tickets form vending

machines or on-line.

We can also report the positive news that EMR is in a position to obtain justification for improving train-flows on all routes to at least one train per hour. The article on page 12 explains the work of Midlands Connect in respect of this.

I helped to staff the Railfuture stall at the recent Caistor model railway exhibition where a large laminated version of the map on page 9 was put to good use. The map created a lot of interest and visitors were able to point to their local station and its connections to the rest of the network. One lady was impressed (so was I!) when her young son traced their recent rail journey from Lincoln to Stoke on Trent to visit Granny.

Phil Mason



Promoting Railfuture at
Caistor model railway show

EMR Passenger Survey Results

There has been much media comment about how much the reasons for travel by rail have changed since Covid. Typically we are told that commuting has collapsed but leisure travel is booming. Commuting into London has certainly reduced, with morning peak trains no longer as overcrowded as they used to be and there are plenty of reports of very busy trains on Saturdays, but is this the full story and is this true for the East Midlands?

East Midlands Railway (EMR) were working on the assumption that post-Covid 68% of journeys were for leisure, 26% for business and 6% for commuting. However this was a 'rough and ready' assumption based on factors such as season tickets are purchased by commuters, cheap day for leisure and anytime tickets for business.

To obtain more accurate data, EMR signed up station adopters to survey customers during two weeks in May. Customers were asked for details of origin and destination, ticket type and purpose of journey. Surveys were conducted by 64 adopters at 42 stations and over 6,500 customers were surveyed providing some very useful indicative findings.

Detailed results are set out in the table below.

The surveys were conducted at random times over the two weeks so results will not be as accurate as a detailed targeted survey, but they do still give some very useful information. Indicative findings from this survey of reasons for travel

post-Covid is 49% leisure, 14% business and 37% commuter.

So, what does this tell us?

The first point that stands out is that commuting is much higher than assumed (37% / 6%). From my personal observations on the Lincoln to Nottingham route this doesn't come as a surprise as there is a significant level of commuting for education. I also encountered quite a few commuters on their way to work who were only travelling 2 or 3 days a week, so no longer purchased season tickets.

It would be interesting to know if commuting by EMR to London is still as depressed as some other routes into London. Anecdotal evidence from Market Harborough is that there are commuters who only travel on Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Many travel off-peak with Travelcards, a ticket that would generally be called a leisure ticket.

Business travel is still low and a lot of that is either off-peak or with advance tickets. This has implications for rail funding as pre-Covid business travellers paying peak fares were a significant revenue generator and this income helps to justify expenditure on further electrification to Nottingham and Sheffield.

As a comparator, it would be interesting to know what business travel on internal air services is like post-Covid. Are the peak-time planes between Manchester or Glasgow or Edinburgh and London as busy as they used to be? ►

Purpose	Ticket type				
	Peak	Off peak	Advance	Season	Other
Leisure %	14	60	20	0	6
Business %	28	38	25	4	5
Commuter %	44	20	13	13	10

◀ Leisure travel being 19% less than assumed could be partly explained by the survey being conducted in May. Leisure travel by EMR to Skegness and Norwich (for the Norfolk/Suffolk holiday resorts) would have been significantly more in July and August.

This survey was about reasons for travel, which is useful information to know but it is only part of the story. For Railfuture campaigning, what we really need to see is increased revenue as it is that figure which HM Treasury want to see when they are considering requests for additional services or rolling stock. Indeed, apart from massive cutbacks and closures, growing the revenue is the only way to reduce the railways' dependence on subsidy, the present level of which has been described as 'unsustainable'. Any service enhancement that we want to see must be supported by a sound business case.

Here the situation is very encouraging. Recently released Office of Rail and Road (ORR) data for the first quarter of 2024/25 shows overall revenue to be up by 8.2% and 'informed sources' are reporting a record two weeks in September.

EMR passenger journeys at around 7.5 million for each of the last 3 quarters are also the highest they have ever been for the East Midlands franchise since 2011 at least.

These figures do give EMR the opportunity to make a good case to DfT for hourly services, at least, on all our routes and 2 trains per hour Lincoln to Nottingham. We must not let our politicians and DfT forget that a minimum of hourly services was promised in the EMR franchise. Moreover, regular interval services of at least hourly frequency have been shown to grow revenue significantly. If people don't need to worry about the specific

timetable, they are more likely to use the train.

David Harby

Northern to sell Advance Purchase on Departure tickets again from ticket offices

Northern have agreed to sell Advance Purchase on Departure (APOD) tickets at ticket offices from Monday 4 November for routes where APOD is available.

Railfuture and allied User Groups mounted a vigorous campaign to get these reintroduced after Northern removed the product from tickets available at ticket offices. Northern say this demonstrates their commitment to listening to feedback and maintaining ticket offices as one of their retail channels, selling the same products at the same prices as their other ticketing channels.

Northern say "the pricing and the number of tickets available for Advance Purchase is regularly adjusted to respond to capacity and demand. Therefore, APOD availability will continually change but will always be consistent across our ticket office, ticket vending machine and digital sales channels. APOD can be bought up to 15 minutes before departure, where available, which will also be consistently applied across all of our sales channels". *David Harby*

First Class removal

Cross-Country Trains is to remove first class seats from its Class 170 units used on the Stansted Airport – Leicester – Birmingham, and Nottingham – Birmingham – Cardiff routes from the introduction of the new timetable on 15 December. Hopefully this will help to reduce overcrowding on these frequently very busy services.

Trial closure at Nottingham station of middle footbridge

East Midlands Railway (EMR) is implementing a pilot project to prevent passengers from platforms 1 – 6 using the middle footbridge to exit the station or even move between platforms. Customers needing to reach these platforms or the NET tram platforms will therefore need to use the station's front entrance.

Many readers will probably not be aware that the middle footbridge is a public right of way between Station Street (beside the NET tram access) and Queens Road (accessed from platform 7), so EMR is prevented from closing off access from platform 7.

EMR tell us that customers will have to “allow a little extra time for their journeys”. Even using the middle footbridge, it is a long trek from platform 2 to platform 4. This closure will make the trek even longer. To help passengers work out how far they have to walk the station signs at the bottom of the stairs from the concourse have the walking distance from platforms 2 and 4. Using these helpful signs passengers will be pleased to learn that if they are now arriving in platform 2 on a Skegness train and transferring to a Matlock or Crewe

service (which usually depart from platform 4) they have a walk of only a third of a mile.

Passengers from Robin Hood Line, who often arrive at the bottom of the middle footbridge on platform 1 and have a walk of around 20 metres to the station exit for the NET platforms will now have a walk of around ten times that distance.

According to EMR, the reason for this trial is to tackle a persistent issue of fare evaders using the footbridge to bypass ticket checks and avoid payment. Maybe a better way would be to ensure that tickets are checked on its trains – unlike today when there was no ticket check on my journeys to and from Nottingham? We in Railfuture support efforts to prevent fare evasion, for both revenue and footfall reasons. However, we do not see the increased inconvenience to passengers from closing most access to the middle bridge as the best way to achieve it. We also support calls for a new footbridge to be provided at the east end of the station.

Since the last election, the phrase “Putting passengers first” has been frequently used. Clearly EMR haven't taken this on board yet. *David Harby*

Bridge closure leads to a walk too far



New Peak Line Campaign

A new splinter group calling for the reinstatement of the disused central Peak District train line is to set its stall at a public meeting in Matlock, but the latest signals from the new East Midlands Mayor suggest there is no light at the end of the tunnel.

The Campaign for the Peak Line (CPL) is a new vehicle led by Stephen Chaytow, who recently left his role as chief executive of the Manchester and East Midlands Rail Action Partnership Limited (MEMRAP), and will host its first public event at the Imperial Rooms, starting 6pm, on Friday, October 25

For the last six years, Stephen has been the public face of efforts to re-establish the rails from Ambergate Junction to Buxton, Chinley and beyond, allowing a regular Derby to Manchester passenger service for the first time since the line closed in 1968.

While speaking diplomatically about the reasons for his departure, Stephen thinks that branching out into a new organisation can ultimately help realise the ambitions of all those who share his vision.

He said: "It's such a large and complex project that it may not be a bad thing to have people coming at it from two different standpoints, and I think there's merit in what I'm doing.

"If the East Midlands Mayor eventually gets to the point where she says 'Well done, Stephen' but we're going with this other set of proposals, I'll step down and play golf knowing we have still managed to reopen the line."

Though the separation between the now Manchester-based MEMRAP and CPL may become clearer over time, Stephen says there are key differences in their working methods and scope.

He said: "MEMRAP is now taking a

very 'back office' orientated approach with a small team at the Department for Transport, whereas I'm very close to the ground and all the different local stakeholders."

Various proposals for reinstatement of the line have talked up its advantages for the Peak District stone and minerals industry in an era when carbon emissions are an ever greater concern and governments have tilted towards private financing of infrastructure.

But an emphasis on freight traffic might not be what many Derbyshire residents would hope to gain from the project.

Stephen said: "There are two potential groups of passenger services. Those travelling in and out of the Peak District, and then the intercity set serving Leicester and Derby, currently connecting to Stockport via Chesterfield and the Hope Valley Line.

"I don't think that second group are of much interest to MEMRAP now, but for me they are the glittering jewel in the crown and provide a large chunk of benefit in any cost-benefit calculations."

The proposed line reinstatement would run through the heart of the Peak District National Park.

The *Derbyshire Times* reports it has approached MEMRAP for comment but in its last public statement in May, operations director Martyn Guiver described a significant step towards beginning a full feasibility study.

Of course, if they are ever to succeed any strand of the campaigns will still have to overcome the buffers erected by the Peak District National Park Authority – which maintains the Monsal Trail for walking and cycling along the old rail route – Derbyshire County Council and decision makers in Westminster.

Stephen and CPL maintain the proposition from MEMRAP that an improved trail could be created alongside the railway line, though that has so far done little to sway public officials.

But with regional transport policy now devolved to the East Midlands Combined Authority (EMCA) and Mayor Claire Ward, and a carriage-load of new MPs now elected in key constituencies, Stephen believes they will look at the idea with fresh eyes.

He said: “The last public meeting I had with MEMRAP was in Belper in April. It couldn’t have gone any better. All four mayoral candidates were there, and they all said they would be willing to fund a study on reinstatement.”

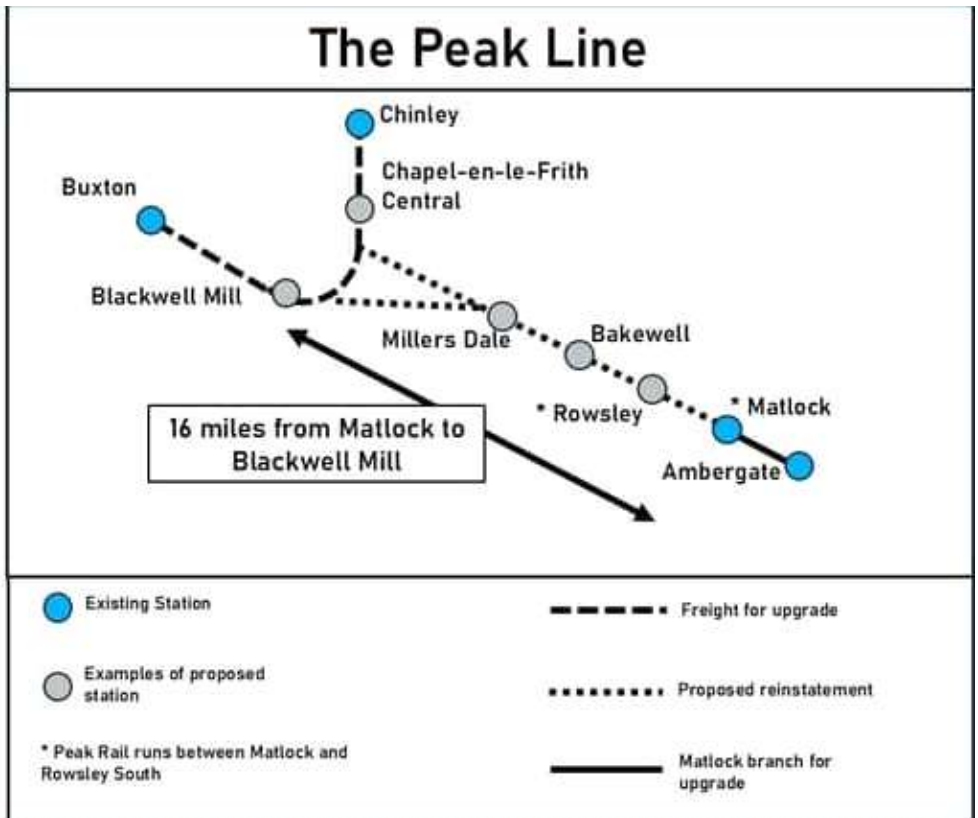
Also among the candidates was former Conservative MP Ben Bradley, leader of

Nottinghamshire County Council and now also portfolio holder for transport at the EMCA.

However, when approached by the *Derbyshire Times*, the Mayor took a different line on reinstatement.

She said: “During my campaign, I had the opportunity to meet with local residents and hear directly from passionate campaigners about restoring the Peaks and Dales Line.

“While I recognise the enthusiasm and commitment of the campaigners, given the current freeze on rail projects across the country and the fact that the Combined County Authority doesn’t yet have the relevant transport powers, we are unable to offer support for this proposal at this time.



◀ “We will, however, continue to follow transport developments closely as we prepare for future opportunities.”

The central theme of the Matlock meeting will be revisiting the Scott-Wilson official report from 2004 which did not advocate reinstatement but recommended safeguarding land along the line so the option was always there. Stephen will be laying out the case based on changing conditions in the years since. He said: “In previous discussions with Network Rail, they’ve said this is one of a tiny number of projects with the potential to significantly reshape the national

network.

“Its become increasingly apparent that since the financial crash the UK has been on a bit of a slide. This is an opportunity to turn things around that’s only available to Derbyshire and the East Midlands.”

For more details of the meeting and to register interest in attending, visit tickettailor.com/events/thepeakline/1396150.

For updates from the campaign, visit thepeakline.org or follow [@Cam4ThePeakLine](https://twitter.com/Cam4ThePeakLine) on Twitter/X.

Stephen Chaytow



*Internet photographs of
Millers Dale (top) and
Rowsley (below)*

Rail Priorities for the East Midlands Region

The map opposite highlights our priorities for the region. Some can be implemented quickly and others are more long term. Our next stage will be to produce individual leaflets explaining the projects in more detail.

Doncaster to Scunthorpe

We are asking for an hourly local service and pointing out that, as a key freight route to Immingham Docks, we see this as a priority route for electrification. Prior to Covid we were celebrating the success of a long campaign for an hourly local service between Doncaster and Scunthorpe but celebrations were short lived when, after Covid, trains were replaced by an inconveniently timed rail replacement bus service. Passengers who already needed to use a car to get to their local station just decided to drive to Thorne North station (on the Hull route) instead. The local service between Doncaster and Scunthorpe has now been restored but only as a train every two hours. With easy road access, free car parking and an hourly service to Doncaster, it is understandable that passengers are choosing to continue using Thorne North and will continue to do so until the hourly service is restored.

Mansfield to Ollerton

We are asking for passenger services to be introduced on this existing freight route. This was part of the Maid Marian Line bid, which was included in the second round of the Restoring Your Railway schemes, but everything has come to a halt as a result of the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 29 July 2024. We will be lobbying the new East Midlands Combined County Authority for this to be one of their priorities.

Peterborough – Sleaford – Lincoln

We are asking for a regular hourly service, seven days a week, on the whole route from Peterborough to Doncaster. With only five sporadically timed return services on weekdays between Doncaster and Lincoln and none at all south of Lincoln on Sundays, stations on this route are very poorly served. For anyone without a car, access to leisure opportunities on a Sunday is near impossible.

As a key and increasingly busy freight route we see this as a priority route for electrification.

East – West Main Line

Regular rail service between Oxford and Cambridge have been a long-standing campaign priority. With test trains now running from Oxford to Milton Keynes a good start has been made. Decisions remain to be made about the exact route and timescale for the eastern section between Bedford and Cambridge. In the interim, Bedford will be the terminus of East–West Rail services. Even without the Cambridge section, and the potential interchange with the East Coast Main Line at a new station at Tempsford, Bedford will be a key interchange with the Midland Main Line. However, the present layout is not suitable for this, so further decisions remain to be made on that. We are keen to see good interchange at Bedford as this will give the East Midlands access to important destinations that are currently hard to reach by rail.

Peterborough to Birmingham

This is a busy passenger route stretching from Stansted Airport in the East to Birmingham in the West. There are at least two services per hour on most of the

continued on page 10 ►

Chesterfield - Beighton - Sheffield

New passenger service on existing freight line to serve new development.

Matlock - Buxton - Chinley

New rail route to create a strategic link to Manchester.

Derby - Birmingham

Key passenger and freight route - priority for electrification.

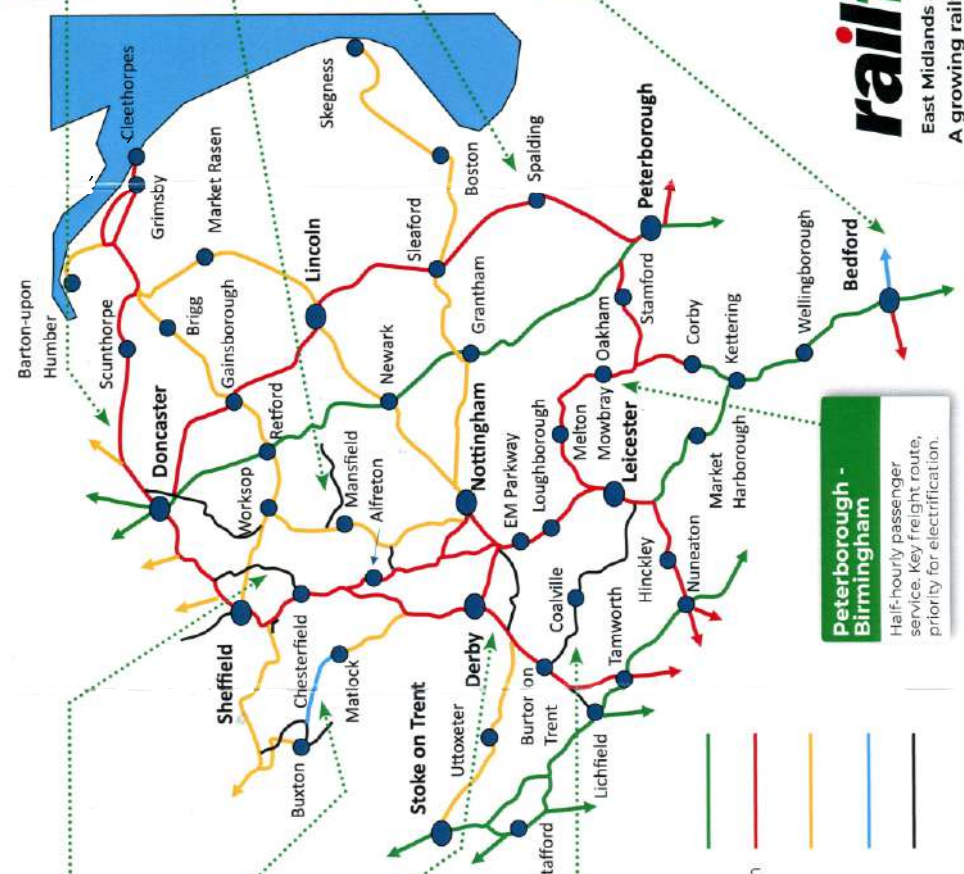
Burton on Trent - Leicester

New passenger service on existing freight line.

Key

- Existing Electrified route
- Priority route for electrification
- Route for future Battery/ hydrogen Trains
- Proposed new route
- Freight route

Note: not all stations shown



Doncaster - Scunthorpe

Hourly local passenger service. Key freight route, priority for electrification.

Mansfield - Ollerton

New passenger service to Nottingham on existing freight line.

Peterborough - Sleaford - Lincoln

Regular hourly and Sunday passenger service required. Key freight route, priority for electrification.

East - West Main Line

New rail route linking Oxford and Cambridge.

Peterborough - Birmingham

Half-hourly passenger service. Key freight route, priority for electrification.

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◀ route, though these need more capacity. The central section between Leicester and Peterborough still has a substandard hourly service where overcrowding is the norm. We see a doubling of frequency and increased seating capacity as a priority.

The route is busy with freight services, mainly going to and from Felixstowe. We see electrification as a priority.

Burton-on-Trent to Leicester

There has been a long-running campaign for restoration of passenger services to this lengthy but under-used freight-only route. As well as providing access to several large towns that are cut off from the rail network, it would also give another connection between the East Midlands and the West Midlands. Having secured early approval for preliminary studies under the Restoring Your Railway scheme, the abandonment of that scheme by the incoming Government was a major blow. However, the outcome of a related DfT review of transport projects is awaited and may yet save this project, or at least the western section of it between Coalville and Burton. Access at the Leicester end is hampered by the loss of the west to north curve at Knighton Junction.

Derby to Birmingham

This is a key route with heavy use by passenger and freight. If the Government

is serious about combating climate change this must be a priority for early electrification. Decisions on the future of the eastern branch of HS2, following its abandonment by the previous Government, will affect this route, too.

Matlock – Buxton – Chinley

As well as providing important access to the Peak District both for local communities and tourists, this former main line has the potential to be a valuable inter-regional link, directly connecting the East Midlands to Manchester and the North-West. There is evidence of increasing support among a variety of stakeholders, though the sensitivities of reinstating a main line through an environmentally sensitive area must not be underestimated.

Chesterfield – Beighton – Sheffield

This existing freight route links substantial and growing population centres that are currently poorly served by public transport. This was recognised when it was included in the first round of successful Restoring Your Railway bids, but everything has come to a halt as a result of the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 29 July 2024. We are urging EMCCA and SYMCA to work together to bring this important scheme to fruition.

David Harby, Steve Jones



Knighon Junction (left) and a busy scene at Leicester station (right) – (Internet photos)

Possible Geological Nuclear Waste Facility at Mablethorpe

The former oil pipeline terminal at Theddlethorpe, just north of Mablethorpe on the Lincolnshire coast is one of a number of sites in the country that are being considered for a deep underground storage facility for nuclear waste. The other sites are in Cumbria. At present nuclear waste is stored on the surface at various sites in the UK and these are costly to operate as they need a lot of maintenance and have to be replaced every 100 years. The geological storage option is to bury the waste in very stable rock up to 1km in depth and out under the sea.

The site selection process is lengthy and a final decision is not expected until 2027, and would be after a local referendum to ensure the plan is supported by local people. As part of selection process Nuclear Waste Services that are managing the site selection process held an exhibition in Mablethorpe between 19–23 October to update local residents and answer questions that people might have.

So how does such a project affect the railways? It is generally accepted that rail transport is the safest way to move radioactive materials and therefore any facility would have to be rail served. Sealed containers of waste would arrive by rail and then be moved to the underground storage areas. The railway would also be used for delivery of construction materials and the removal of some of the excavated spoil. The rest

of the spoil would be used on site to create the site perimeter bund or used to back-fill the storage areas when they are full. Mablethorpe and Theddlethorpe once had stations on the rail network served by a loop line from the Boston–Louth–Grimsby main line. The line north of Mablethorpe closed in 1960 and passenger services on the remaining routes including the main line ended 1970. Freight continued to Louth until 1980.

Discussions are being held with Network Rail on the options to restore a rail link to Mablethorpe including a new passenger service. Part of the route to Grimsby has been built over by a new road and another section is now part of the Lincolnshire Wolds Preserved Railway. The original route to the south has been less affected by development, but the existing rail route towards Skegness would need extensive upgrading to cope with the new passenger and freight traffic. If another major infrastructure project, to build a new flood barrier and port across the Wash proceeds, that would favour the southern connection to Mablethorpe as the line to Skegness and adjacent roads would have to be upgraded for the flood barrier work.

As noted above this is a lengthy process and there will be opportunities for Railfuture to comment on the rail proposals in the years ahead.

Nick Dikken



Internet photographs of former stations at Mablethorpe (left) and Theddlethorpe (right)

Improvements to Castle Line rail corridor

Improvements to the Castle Line rail corridor in the East Midlands would boost economic growth in tourism and hospitality sectors, according to the latest research.

The Castle Line is an important route linking multiple key destinations – Nottingham, Lincoln, and Newark.

Midlands Connect submitted plans to upgrade the route, to the Department for Transport last year. The proposals include increasing the line speed from predominantly 50mph to 75mph, with a long-term aim to double the frequency of services in the future.

A recent report titled ‘Tourism on Track’ explores how improved connections to the East Midlands would expand the visitor bases of these hotspots, shift the demographic groups attracted to the area and reduce car use.

Hamish Falconer, MP for Lincoln, said: “I wholeheartedly support Midlands Connect’s outline business case for funding to improve the Castle Line from Nottingham to Lincoln, allowing for faster and more frequent trains along the route. But it is clear that the state of the city’s rail links has become a barrier to the city’s growth as a competitive tourist destination.

“Visitors are a major driver of our local economy, and by investing in the Castle Line rail upgrades - better connecting Lincoln to the wider Midlands and East Coast main line – we would support our tourism industry to flourish. Midlands Connect's plans have my full support, and I hope to see the project progress.”

Tourism stakeholders in the East Midlands outlined concern that the current rail provision between Lincoln and Nottingham is presenting a challenge to the tourism and hospitality sectors in both cities.

The research found these sentiments were shared by rail customers who referenced issues such as slow, crowded and infrequent trains, affecting the appeal of using the trains for tourism.

About Midlands Connect:

Midlands Connect is the transport partner of the Midlands Engine and the Midlands' Sub-national Transport Body.

Midlands Connect researches, develops and champions long-term transport projects to provide the biggest possible economic, social and environmental benefits for the Midlands and the rest of the UK.

We examine every option for improving major transport infrastructure in our region. The fundamental aim of these improvements is to transform regional and UK gateways, bringing the Midlands closer together and accelerating cost-effective improvements to unlock east-west connectivity that will enable the Midlands' economies to work more effectively together.

Our 25-year transport strategy for the region has the potential to add £5 billion a year to the UK economy, supporting the work of the Midlands Engine partnership to drive pan-regional economic prosperity.

Our partnership is made up of 22 local authorities, East Midlands and Birmingham airports, and Chambers of Commerce stretching from the Welsh border to the Lincolnshire coast. The partnership also includes the Department for Transport, Network Rail, National Highways and HS2 Ltd, who we work alongside to drive an unprecedented level of collaboration for the good of the Midlands and the UK.

Fare Evasion

In *SixShiresRail* February 2024, Tim Mickleburgh was puzzling over the need for ticket barriers at Lincoln but not at Grimsby. Although I cannot speak for the situation at Grimsby I can say that ticket barriers are needed at Lincoln to prevent fare evasion. To my knowledge there are no ticket offices at any of the stations between Lincoln and Peterborough. (*Ticket Offices at Sleaford and Spalding are only open for limited periods, Ed.*) This means that there may be some people who will attempt a free ride by boarding or alighting at any of the intermediate stations. I was witness to one such incident on Saturday 27 July. I was travelling to a meeting at York and boarded the 8.51am train from Lincoln to Doncaster. As the train, which had been delayed 17 minutes because of a level crossing barrier problem, was waiting to depart it became evident that there would be another delay because of fare evaders.

There were I think two people just in front of me without tickets. One person

did not have enough money and the guard was insistent that the train could not move until a fare was paid otherwise the passenger would be evicted. I think they had enough to pay for their destination by travelling on the train from Platform 5 which was probably the Sheffield train. Eventually a passenger on the other side of the coach paid the fare or the part which was due. This is an example of why passengers need to be dissuaded from attempting free travel. Guards need to be vigilant in checking that all passengers have tickets. If some people get away with it others will be tempted.

Although I missed my scheduled connection for York at Doncaster there was another train 17 minutes later. The service between Doncaster and York is excellent. A regular service between Lincoln and Doncaster would make things even better.

*Tom Rookes
Lincoln*

House Prices and Railways

Naturally I support any plans to re-open the Ivanhoe line. Though it is “out of area” for me at the moment. I do recall being taken by car to an open day at Coalville in the 1980s when I lived at Atherstone in the Midlands.

I’m sorry that there are objections by local residents, which have to be properly handled as the report says. But it is a pity when you say that “proximity to a station actually raises house prices, potentially quite significantly.”

For property has become increasingly unaffordable for many, with the dream

of owning your own home disappearing rapidly. What therefore is needed in any plans for new railways is the provision of cheap affordable homes, including those that can be rented from a council or other social housing provider.

Otherwise there is a real disadvantage of building the new tracks we all desire.

*Tim Mickleburgh,
Grimsby*

A Tale of Three Shelters

Peartree railway station has been improved out of all recognition from being semi-derelict two decades ago. Under the East Midlands Trains franchise

(2007-2019) a robust waiting shelter was installed on the platform for Uttoxeter, Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe. A waiting shelter for the Derby

platform was not considered necessary, but extension of Crewe – Derby services eastwards in 2021 to Nottingham and Newark Castle has led greater pressure to provide shelter for the elements, than when trains terminated at Derby.

Finally some spare funding led to a new shelter being installed on the Derby platform in Summer 2024. In fact, without a request, the new shelter was to have a companion on the Crewe platform, regardless of the condition of that being replaced. One thing for certain, it was not a BOGOF (buy one, get one free)! There is a chocolate-box feel to the station right now.

The problem at Peartree is, where are the trains? On weekdays there are two train departures each way in both the am and pm peaks, with fewer trains on Saturdays. There is no provision for off-peak travel at all, something that is very important to the railway right now

and could be simply remedied by stopping an additional train each way across lunchtime. This is something that East Midlands Railway (EMR), despite requests, has failed to do.

Looking at statistics, Peartree had the greatest level of growth, based on the adjoining Normanton and Sinfin Council Wards, of any EMR Regional station from 2001 Census – 2021 Census. The combined population of these wards in 2021 was 36,987, an increase of 9,711 in 20 years. In terms of passenger footfall, in

2022/2023 Peartree was perilously near the bottom of EMR's services in the East Midlands Combined Authority area, with only rural Rolleston (pop.) 342, (pop. 342), Thurgarton (pop. 445) and Elton & Orston (pop. 591 Est.) worse, with both Rolleston and Thurgarton having a superior level of service.

Another feature overlooked by EMR is the potential for traffic generation at

Peartree following the eastwards extension from Derby to Newark, though principally to Nottingham. There is significant travel between the geographically close cities of Derby and Nottingham. In addition to four 4 trains an hour there is a competing Trent Barton 'Red Arrow' express coach ►



Crewe platform at Peartree



Derby platform at Peartree

◀ service every 10 minutes, plus an additional six stopping buses per hour. There are no public transport facilities from South Derby other than Peartree to Nottingham by rail. Two separate journeys and fares are required, together with an intermediate walk across Derby centre. The only realistic transport is via car along the A50 & A453, possibly picking up the tram at Clifton South park and ride.

There had been an inkling from EMR that services at Peartree may be improved as part of timetable restructuring to accommodate Meir station, near Longton being reopened. Unfortunately Meir was part of the 'Restoring Your

Railway' scheme that has now been torpedoed by the new Labour Government. So what next at Peartree?

Network Rail has recently published 'Derby area stations strategic advice' that identifies options to improve services at certain stations by incorporating additional stops and reducing station dwell times, without increasing overall journey times. These stations are Belper, Spondon, Peartree and Willington. How will any desperately needed service improvements be driven through, and by whom?

Ian Clark.

Images by Stephen Clark.

Friends of the Barton Line

- TransPennine Express (TPE) staff have been commendably helpful to passengers enduring rail disruption during the Armed Forces Day events at Cleethorpes on 6-7 July. The train operator has also upgraded planters at Grimsby Town and Cleethorpes stations.

- Plans are being prepared to celebrate in 2025 the 150th anniversary of New Clee station, the 175th anniversary of Barrow Haven station and the 200th anniversary of the world's first public passenger rail service between Stockton and Darlington.

- There is concern over the apparent reduction in reliability of the Class 170 units, which has resulted in reduced confidence in the service.

Following a run of poor performance and unit failures resulting in service cancellations East Midlands Railway (EMR) is confident that unit reliability would soon start to improve, leading to an increase in Barton Line performance. There will also be tweaks to the timetable from December 2024 to improve punctuality.

- As EMR has been unable to reinstate the additional second weekday service out of Barton, as a compromise the first service out of Barton will change from 07:08 to 07:54 starting from Monday 16 December. It is felt that this sacrificing of the 7 am service would deny early starters access to work and further afield, and that it struck yet another blow to the viability of the Barton Line. It was felt that, as a last resort a 7 am bus service for the Barton-Harborough part of the route and to having the first Lincoln-Grimsby train service call additionally at Stallingborough, Healing and Great Coates.

- On Thursday 12 September, a TPE Class 802 Shinkansen Nova unit visited Cleethorpes for publicity filming purposes. The opportunity was also taken to do route validation work at the TPE served intermediate stations between Doncaster and Cleethorpes in case the need ever arises for these units to be used on the south route in the future.

Anthony Berridge

RAILFUTURE LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH AGM

The 2025 AGM will be held on 15 March, further details will be notified later. Branch Officers' reports will be in the next *SixShiresRail*.

The purpose of this notice is to remind members that the posts of Hon. Chairman, Hon Vice Chairman, 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 2024.

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 *SixShiresRail*. 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 *SixShiresRail* 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 2024. 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, Lincolnshire Branch

EAST MIDLANDS BRANCH

Chair: *Phil Thomas* phil.thomas@railfuture.org.uk

Vice-Chair: *Terry Holt*

Secretary: *Steve Jones* steve.jones@railfuture.org.uk

Email: eastmidlands@railfuture.org.uk

EM Branch Web-page: <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/East-Midlands-Branch>

EM Branch Twitter handle: [@RailfutureEMids](https://twitter.com/RailfutureEMids) <https://twitter.com/RailfutureEMids>

LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH

Chair: *David Harby* – david.harby@railfuture.org.uk

Vice-Chair: *Phil Mason* – phil.mason@railfuture.org.uk

Secretary: *Don Peacock* – don.peacock@railfuture.org.uk

Lincolnshire Branch's Twitter handle: [@RailfutureLincs](https://twitter.com/RailfutureLincs)

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

NEXT LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, 15 January 2025.

All meetings to be held at the community room, Sleaford station at 12 noon.

Non committee members are welcome to attend as observers.

www.railfuture.org.uk

Direct link to Branch News visit:

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

Follow the Branch on  **@RailfutureLincs** (Formerly Twitter)

SixShiresRail 6 will be published in February 2025.

Please let the Editor, Phil Mason, 10 Cottesmore Close, Grantham NG31 9JL, phil.mason@railfuture.org.uk **have copy by 25 January.**

The views and comments expressed in Rail Lincs are not necessarily those of Railfuture.

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