SixShiresRail

Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire & Rutland

Newsletter for Railfuture East Midlands & Lincolnshire branches

railfuture

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Campaigning for Rail in Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire & Rutland

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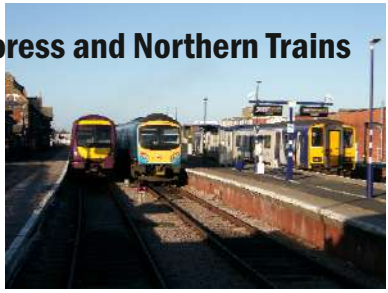
Photo: Tim Mickleburgh



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EDITOR'S COMMENT

During my conversations with non-rail enthusiast, friends and relations I have often wondered how the travelling public think our train services are financed. For example: one of my daughters-in-law recently visited her family in Norwich and told me about an extremely uncomfortable journey without air conditioning on a Norwich – Liverpool Lime Street service with East Midlands Railway (EMR); comparing the train she was on with the apparent 'luxury' of the Greater Anglia (GA) Stadler FLIRT trains seen at Norwich. I pointed out that there could be a common link here with the GA route, constituencies, and politics!

My observations were further confirmed in the edition of the *Grantham Journal* on Friday, 12 June, which included an article headlined: "Call to improve 'outdated and dirty' service", reporting on the launch of a petition to improve the EMR Nottingham to Skegness service, stating that commuters, residents and holidaymakers are 'increasingly frustrated' by the service, citing packed and poorly maintained carriages and the need for replacement buses.

What I can only described as a 'rant' did not name the instigators of the petition or name the quoted spokesperson. Railfuture has, over the years, campaigned for improvements and, recently, the situation has vastly improved. But my local paper is obviously not aware of who is behind any shortcomings by EMR, reporting that the petition urges the Government intervenes and ensures that EMR provide a modern, dependable and properly resourced service. not realising EMR can only invest using the subsidy provided by the DfT/HM Treasury and we have heard plenty of rhetoric over the years by various transport ministers wanting to reduce the subsidy.

The article includes a comment from EMR describing the investment it is making into improving the service, but this is far short of what is needed and the Government needs to loosen the purse strings if it really is serious about the future of our railways.

Being positive, I know from 'informed sources' that EMR does not intend to use buses during this year's holiday season to supplement accommodation on trains on the Skegness route and intends to increase seating capacity with three or four-coach trains. No doubt critics will say there are occasions when this is not happening, but this can be attributed to rolling stock failures or unavailability of train crew, which can be beyond the company's control, often relating to the availability of spares for some of the considerably old rolling stock.

The *Journal* decided to illustrate the article with a large photograph of an EMR train – a Class 222 Meridian unit which is being withdrawn from the Midland Main Line route and mainly transferred to Scotland at the behest of the DfT, as the new Class 810 bi-modal Aurora trains enter service. The Class 222 has never been authorised by the Office of Rail & Road (ORR) to operate on the Skegness line, although the flexibility of the '810s' allows them to be used on the route.

Phil Mason

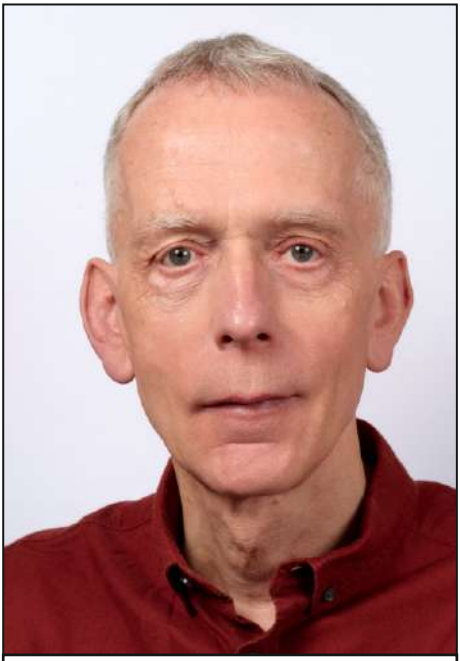
The 19:02 Column

I am starting the '1902 column' to report on how the railway actually runs, mostly focused on the Midland Mainline but with comparisons to other services

Clouds and silver linings

Let's start on 23 March with the 09:00 from Sheffield to St Pancras which I boarded at Chesterfield running 4 minutes late. The delay minutes crept up as we headed south but the clock stopped as we came to a stand at Kettering at 10:29, now 7 minutes behind schedule: a fatality at Bedford not long before had closed all lines. On learning of the reason for the unscheduled stop, my fellow passengers mood was of sombre acceptance along with a lot of 'What ifs'. However, our immediate problem was how to get to London in response to which to which station staff at Kettering did their best, advising that LN[W]R would accept our tickets from Northampton for travel to Euston. While some passengers immediately headed for the taxi rank, a check on Traveline showed a frequent X4 bus would take 70 minutes for a 21.4 mile dog-legged route via Wellingborough; the bus interchanges were about 10 minutes brisk walk from the respective stations. (For comparison, Google suggests driving direct from station to station, about 17 miles, would take half the time of the bus). Well, at least it was a dry sunny day so, apart from the scenery being countless warehouses and wondering why hundreds of houses were planned in middle-of-nowhere villages, the trip across the Midlands was not too onerous.

Although the gateline staff asked no questions about my ticket, a detour to refresh the inner man in Northampton meant I had just missed the 12:48 (ex-Birmingham) for Euston. The next service was half an hour behind, taking me to Euston in an hour with 4 intermediate stops, swift acceleration and no underfloor rumbling soundtrack (characteristics shared by ScotRail's 2+4 HSTs, but not their scheduled replacements – 'our' Meridians). The modern railway seems to do its best to ▶



After an early career in the photographic world with roles in technical support, sales and export, Richard worked in purchasing and logistics in other industries. Following an interest in languages, he became a teacher and now tutors international university students on communication- and study skills. Growing up in 1960s London, Richard witnessed a rapidly-changing railway but it was the electrification of the WCML which might explain his interest in the topic. Later he qualified as steam locomotive footplate crew on heritage railways in England and Germany. Other volunteer work included campaigning for cycling and editing a special interest photography magazine.

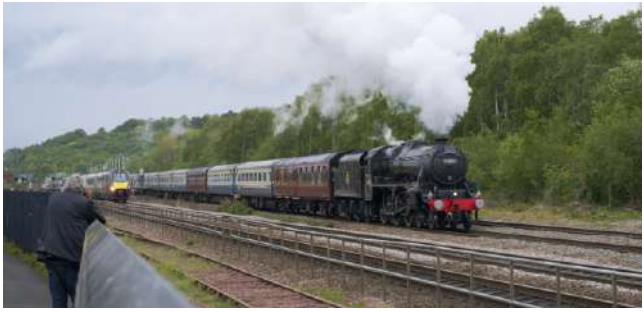
negate Robert Louis Stevenson's 'It is better to travel than to arrive'. Notwithstanding that the 'midland' platforms have been relegated to the country end of St Pancras and passengers endure the gateline scrum, at least the terminus retains a certain grandeur which Euston sadly lacks. The latter's gloomy platforms (by no means the rail network's worst offender) feel subterranean and any architectural merit the concourse once had disappeared under a mezzanine floor erected in the name of maximising the commercial possibilities of the railway estate. There is much talk of making stations a destination for retail and leisure, but who would want to hang around in such surroundings?

My return 2 days later on the ill-fated 19:02 was bittersweet: 18 minutes late at Chesterfield, though diverted to platform 1 for a direct run on to Sheffield and a saving of 7 minutes to there, at least meant I could claim Delay Repay. Most time was lost between Leicester and Derby, the Train Manager announcing that this was because the preceding train had maintenance problems. Realtime Trains, though, showed no obvious culprit.

Southbound again on 26 May, as western Europe sweltered and temperature records were being broken. On board 222009 forming the 10:00 from Sheffield to St Pancras, by Long Eaton the Train Manager was apologising to passengers in coach B where the underfloor engine was 'de-rating' itself and in doing so not only cutting the available power but also the air-conditioning. And as the train headed south, the outside temperature was rising – London at mid-day was in the low-30s, and there were regular announcements at St Pancras to drink water and to tell staff if you or anyone was in distress; being 21 minutes late was just another day.

From here until my return, I spent a few days on the 'boringly reliable' railway (the Secretary of State's aspiration) – from a Javelin to Canterbury, a Southeastern EMU to Dover and back, then via a Class 170 to Eastbourne to Thameslink back to St Pancras.

Finally, could we be starting a Meridian swansong? Sometimes the stars do align and did so with the 19:32 from St Pancras to Sheffield on 29 May which cracked on northwards to arrive 5 minutes *early* at Leicester. But all good things come to an end: after a right-time departure, we were hindered between East Midlands Parkway and Long Eaton, setting us back a minute or two for the remainder of the journey. We passed 2 Auroras (Aurorae?), maybe 014 and 015, heading south from Nottingham and Sheffield respectively, and 3 more sets (006, 011, and 013) were on shed at Derby, where 222011 looked forlorn with one of its cabs being stripped.



Travelling in style: With 5MT 44871 at its head, a Railway Touring Company special from Buxton to Ealing Broadway departs southbound from Chesterfield platform 3 at 18:51 on 16 May 2026, while 222007 accelerates from platform 2 with a Sheffield to St Pancras International EMR service. *Image © Richard Bradford*

Penny wise, pound foolish

Just before the deadline for this issue of *SixShiresRail* closed, the government updated Parliament with its appraisal of the HS2 programme. Key to this announcement was that the total cost would be between £87.7 billion and £102.7 billion at 2025 prices, but (still) no trains running between Old Oak Common and Curzon Street Birmingham for another decade at the earliest. The Transport Secretary did not answer an MP's question about whether the cost included rolling stock but Chris Gibb, a non-executive director of DfT Operator was sacked in April after he warned a Parliamentary group that the trains being ordered for HS2 will reduce the number of seats on the London to Manchester route. In the last issue of *SixShiresRail*, I estimated that the cost of electrification of the remainder of the Midland Mainline (MML) would be just under £1 billion - so about 1% of the first stage of HS2 and completion should be possible before the end of this decade. That £1 billion represents a couple of months' expenditure for HS2, and no-one would notice the project being completed a few months later.

"electrification of the remainder of the Midland Mainline (MML) would be just under £1 billion - so about 1% of the first stage of HS2"

Also outside the *SixShiresRail* area but oddly relevant, in March this year, the government announced the latest iteration of the Northern Powerhouse Rail programme. This included £1.1 billion for the DfT to progress development of the programme between 2026-27 and 2029-30. This sum was not accounted for in last July's spending review, when lack of funds was a reason for 'pausing' further MML electrification. Can one therefore assume that the Treasury had a rummage down the back of its sofa when, clearly, political expediency demanded? Would they mind doing so again?

On a more positive note, Network Rail (NR) has identified bridges to raise in the East Midlands to accommodate taller shipping containers to and across the region which would otherwise have to travel via London. NR looked as far east as Lincoln and Peterborough, but the main interest along the Midland Mainline is between Sileby and the Trent-Attenborough area where, for example Kirk Hill bridge in Sutton Bonnington was replaced last December. (*see the feature on page 9, for further details, Ed.)* This work had been scheduled during electrification work but became a victim of the 'pause' to the project. However, in a welcome example of joined-up thinking, the replacement was allowed to go ahead under the 'freight improvement' heading, so reducing the tasks to be done if electrification is un-paused and, just as important, the cost of doing so has come from another budget.

Finally, as the deadline for this issue of *SixShiresRail* approached, the Railway Industry Association announced it would be launching Electrification Cost Challenge 2.0 in early June, an update to its work from 2019, so I expect to say more on this in the next issue.

Richard Radford

Thoughts on station design

Railfuture member Nick Dibben gave a talk about station design at the Lincs Branch AGM in March based on his experience with Railfuture and through work as a engineer working on various rail station projects.

The role of station buildings has changed. When originally built, stations had large numbers of staff and the buildings were designed to accommodate them and often a live in Station Master. With many stations now unstaffed, there is less need for buildings, although there is scope to re-purpose them for new uses such as community hubs.

The station at Soham in Cambridgeshire is typical of a new station, a single platform, with limited facilities. The station which opened in 2021, cost £20m due to need to revise the track and signalling. Complying with the latest standards meant that the station required escape from both ends of the platforms and had more CCTV cameras than many larger stations. Cambridge is one of only a few cities that have multiple stations with Cambridge North Station opening in 2017 and Cambridge South due to open in 2026 and a possible Cambridge East opening as part of East-West Rail.

Cambridge North station opened in 2017, has good bus interchange and plenty of cycle parking, however the amount of cover for passengers is limited and the space for a local shop has never been used. The station at Cambridge South will serve the adjacent hospitals and bio-technology park and East-West Rail in the future. Railfuture were able to convince the designers to have pairs of lifts serving each platform due to the number of people with mobility issues expected to use the station.

Turning to work related projects, Nick's first rail project was the upgrade of Kings Cross underground station to cope with extra demand due to Channel Tunnel traffic at St Pancras and dealing with the recommendations following the Kings Cross underground station fire. The main challenges were fitting in the new ticket halls and tunnels around existing tunnels and utility services whilst keeping the station operational. Agreeing a new fire strategy with the various authorities was a lengthy process especially where new techniques were involved.

Lessons learnt from Kings Cross Underground Station and the Jubilee Line project were developed further in the design of the Elizabeth Line stations in central London. Each station had it's own design team but used agreed design elements to present a common design to passengers. Stations were designed with future 24 hour running in mind, with less time required for maintenance tasks.

Nick had recently returned from a trip to China and had used some of the stations on the country' extensive high speed network. These stations were impressive, some with 30 platforms. They were built out of the city centre, but since the station opened, the city had expanded out to the station. Some facilities were more basic than UK stations with the public address system being of poor quality.

The talk concluded with a review of the new stations in the West Midlands that had opened that week. These stations appeared to have more cover on the platforms than other recent stations, a sign that designs are improving?

EDITOR'S MAIL

Increased usage at Cleethorpes and Grimsby Town

Pleased to see both Cleethorpes and Grimsby Town included in your latest list of station usage *(Feb 2026).* More importantly, it is good to learn that the figures for both stations show that not only were they higher in 2024-2025, but more than in 2019\20. This isn't the case for some stations, including Barton-on-Humber, Derby, Mansfield and Stamford.

Perhaps it is because Grimsby Town and Cleethorpes rely more on leisure journeys, which have grown post-Covid unlike commuter trips to work.
Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby.

The Museum at York is still first rate

On Easter Saturday, myself and a couple of fellow railway enthusiasts visited York Railway Museum. We booked to travel on 8:25 via Retford arriving York at 9:52. The ideal way would be to travel via Doncaster, but the service on Saturday is every three hours.

Although we were early for the booked admission time of 11:00, we discovered that there is currently, a long walk to get to the museum entrance, due to road closure during the construction of the new Central Hall. However there is no charge and there was no problem for entry. Two years ago I had been told by a couple who live in York that the museum is not as attractive as it used to be. I saw nothing of this and my only complaint is that some of the first rate locomotive designs have not been saved. But of course time moves on and bigger usually means better. The original Rocket is only a wreck but there is a first rate replica of it. Clearly rival locomotives on display were easily outclassed by its simple well thought design. Rocket was followed by a Stirling Single, an Ivatt Atlantic, the Gresley Flying Scotsman, and Mallard showing how the Stockton to Darlington evolved into the Great Northern Railway and then into the LNER. There is a beautiful preserved Atlantic Number 737 from South East and Chatham Railway which was used on royal trains. This has no expense spared, in a beautiful green outlined in brass with copper capped chimney and dome. LMS streamlined Duchess of Hamilton is there, Evening Star the last steam locomotive, and the cut down version of a Bullied pacific showing the inner workings. The largest exhibit is a huge Chinese locomotive which towers above the rest. There are lots of electrics, diesels and many others. Early coaches look quite delicate but must have been very cramped, but later ones show how comfort evolved. In addition there were active model trains for which visitors could volunteer to be engine driver. In a separate room is a smart LMS Crabbe Number 33000 in beautiful red where for some reason the tender is narrower than the cab.

On a higher level is a huge catalogue of books which we spent time looking through. One book I was interested in was not available but as it was downstairs I decided not to bother. In retrospect an interesting three volume paperback edition on pre-grouping railways which I have, did not seem to be available, so I wonder if rare items have been removed. Some times unusual railway books appear in the Lincoln Oxfam bookshop, possibly part of someone's collection, so it is a good idea to buy them before they disappear.

There was actually so much on display, and we were all feeling tired by the early ▶

travel and fear of oversleeping. After having lunched, we went on a bookshop tour noting that small shops are struggling to survive and several second hand bookshops had disappeared. After visiting Micklegate and the Shambles, we decided to visit York Minster for Evensong but were told that no photographs could be taken. After this we made our way back to York Railway Station, but as most cafes and shops had closed we decided that the railway station was the best bet.

We then had a shock on discovering that the LNER train due to leave from York at 19:55 would be at least 20 minutes late. This meant that we would miss our connection at Doncaster. Fortunately we noticed that there was a Cross Country train due to leave York at 19:55pm so we were advised by railway staff to ask the guard if we could join the train. Fortunately she agreed and we arrived at Doncaster in good time to catch the train for Lincoln and the bus from town to home.

Retrospective

Although entrance to York Railway Museum is free the organisers have evidently decided that there are better ways of raising funds. The venue was packed and there is nowhere else I know of to get an equal experience. Apart from food there is a captive audience for people who want to buy something special from York Railway Museum whether a model, a book, or a simple memento. Steam hauled specials may take us back to halcyon days more imaginary than real but the time and effort which goes into locomotives nowadays makes them works of art.

Tom Rookes

Do It Yourself P.I.S. on Barton Line

The Friends of the Barton Line (FoBL) has raised enough money to install an electronic timetable board inside The White Swan pub, which is opposite Barton-upon-Humber railway station, when East Midlands Railway (EMR) said it had no plans to install information screens at all stations on the line, between Barton and Cleethorpes, but provided real-time journey information through a range of channels.

The board benefits from the pub's wi-fi, there are 14 stations on the Barton Line, 12 operated by EMR. According to National Rail, 10 do not have customer information screens.

Eight trains run between Barton and Cleethorpes on weekdays and Saturdays, with one every two hours on average. There is a Sunday service during summer months.

The FoBL would like to see an hourly service six days a week and a Sunday service all year round.

An EMR spokesperson said the company welcomed "the efforts of community groups in supporting their local stations, but decisions on new infrastructure must balance a range of factors including cost, usage levels and overall value for money".

Since taking over the route, EMR had invested £400,000 in station improvements and introduced Class 170 trains which are currently undergoing a £23m refurbishment programme to further improve onboard facilities.

The Information Screen used is the pub is widely advertised in the railway press and is available in a variety of sizes.

Phil Mason

Midland Main Line upgrades unlock new freight capability and resilience

The Midland corridor plays a vital role in the national freight network, providing one of the few, more direct inland links between the West Coast Main Line, East Coast Main Line and strategic inland terminals in the East and West Midlands. The route between Birmingham, Nuneaton, Leicester and Peterborough is the only practical alternative to going through London, but it can't easily handle today's larger container trains.

Although the electrification programme was paused by the Government in summer 2025, earlier structure works between Sileby, Loughborough and Trent created a strong foundation by making more space for larger freight containers to pass through key parts of the route.

Building on this, Network Rail identified further structures on the Midland Main Line that could create additional freight capability without the need for new capital investment.

One example is the Kirk Hill bridge replacement at Sutton Bonington, Nottinghamshire. The bridge was due to be reconstructed as part of the electrification of the Midland Main Line. It was agreed that, despite the pause on MML electrification, the bridge reconstruction should continue due to the clearance it would provide for larger freight containers to run through this area The old bridge was demolished over the Christmas period in 2025 when no trains were running, with the new deck lifted into place during overnight weekend possessions in February and March this year, avoiding disruption to passenger services. Larger container services commenced running in both directions under the bridge in April, taking almost immediate advantage of the quicker route between East Midlands Gateway and the East Coast Ports. The new Kirk Hill bridge brings tangible operational and freight benefits. It provides additional clearance for larger-gauge freight trains and helps to reduce road congestion by enabling more goods to move by rail. It also allows 'tamping' maintenance machines to access the area, supporting progress towards removing a long-standing speed restriction and improving reliability.

In addition, the new, raised structure offers sufficient clearance for electric or bi-mode trains, should Midland Main Line electrification be restarted in the future.

Through detailed gauging analysis and close collaboration with industry partners, Network Rail has now unlocked additional routes across the East Midlands. Trent High Level, including the Ratcliffe Junction-Toton and Attenborough Junction-Toton sections, and the Trent-Nottingham-Boultham Junction route to Lincoln, are also now available for larger freight containers.

Crucially for both Network Rail and the rail freight industry, this work has been aligned with a wider review of engineering access which has led to improvements in both maintenance access and ensuring a diversionary route is available for container traffic.

Work such as parapets, drainage and reinstatement of utilities will continue at Kirk Hill over the coming months to fully complete the project, but now that the bridge deck has been raised it is already delivering benefits to freight operators.

Katie Oliver, Network Rail lead portfolio manager, said:

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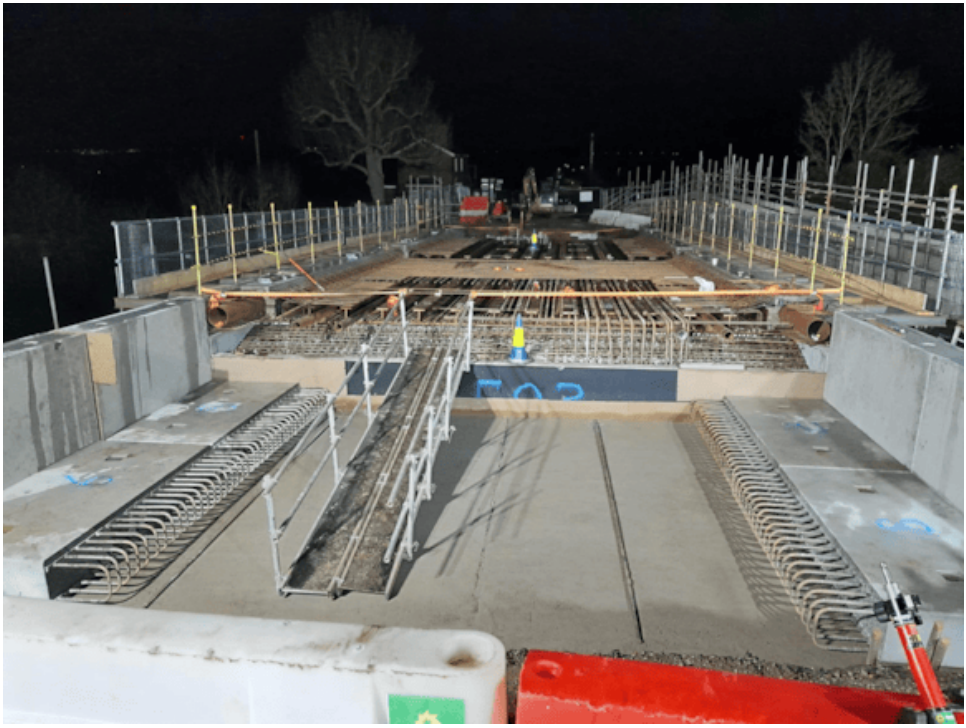
"We're really pleased to keep the momentum going on the Midland Main Line by working with freight partners to rebuild Kirk Hill bridge. It opens up a more direct route for larger containers and gives operators greater flexibility and reliability.

"By taking a fresh look at what the existing railway can handle, we've unlocked real benefits for freight, passengers and the wider economy – without the need for big new spending.

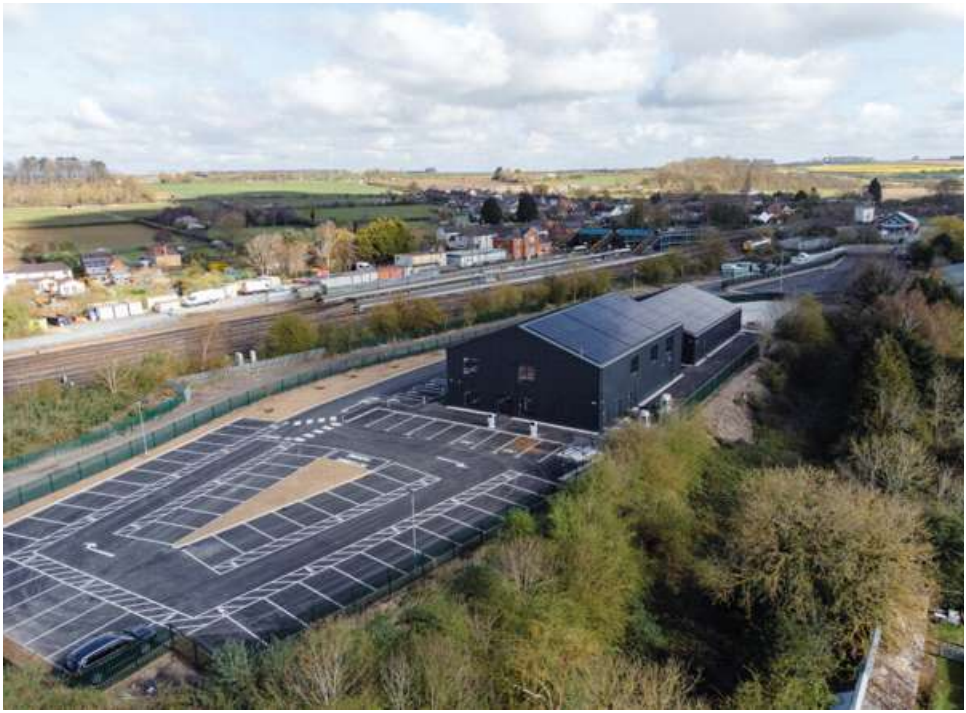
"Kirk Hill shows what can be achieved by upgrading older infrastructure: removing long-standing constraints, enabling larger freight trains and keeping the route ready for future electrification, all while keeping disruption to a minimum."

Source Rail UK.com and Railadvent.co.uk
Images credit: Network



The new Kirk Hill bridge being constructed, March 2026

Flagship Maintenance Depot at Barnetby



Barnetby MDU *(image: Network Rail)*

Network Rail has officially opened a flagship maintenance delivery unit (MDU) at Barnetby – marking an £8.8 million investment and strengthening support for the railway in North Lincolnshire.

The purpose of an MDU is to provide a physical base for maintaining the rail network.

The site, which entered into service on Monday 1 June, was officially opened on Wednesday 10 June. It replaces outdated infrastructure more than 100 years old and brings together teams from Grimsby, Barnetby and Scunthorpe under one roof.

The two-storey, timber-frame building places sustainability at its core and was designed as flagship project under Network Rail's Greener Railway strategy, supporting the company's ambition to reach net zero by 2050.

Designers embedded sustainability into every aspect of the new building. The structure significantly reduces carbon emissions and incorporates air-source heat pumps, triple-glazed windows and rooftop solar panels, enabling Network Rail's first net zero operation MDU.

More than 100 maintenance staff are based at the building, which features a mess hall, changing and shower facilities, accessible toilets, meeting rooms and office space.

The 9,000 square metre site has parking for 50 vans and 66 staff vehicles, with 22 electric vehicle charging points.

A biodiversity net gain was achieved through landscaping, planting 11 trees and more than 400 plants, and installing bat boxes. Acoustic fencing has been installed to minimise noise for ▶

neighbours.

The facility has already received national recognition, having been shortlisted for the Rail Business Awards 2026 in the sustainability and environmental excellence category.

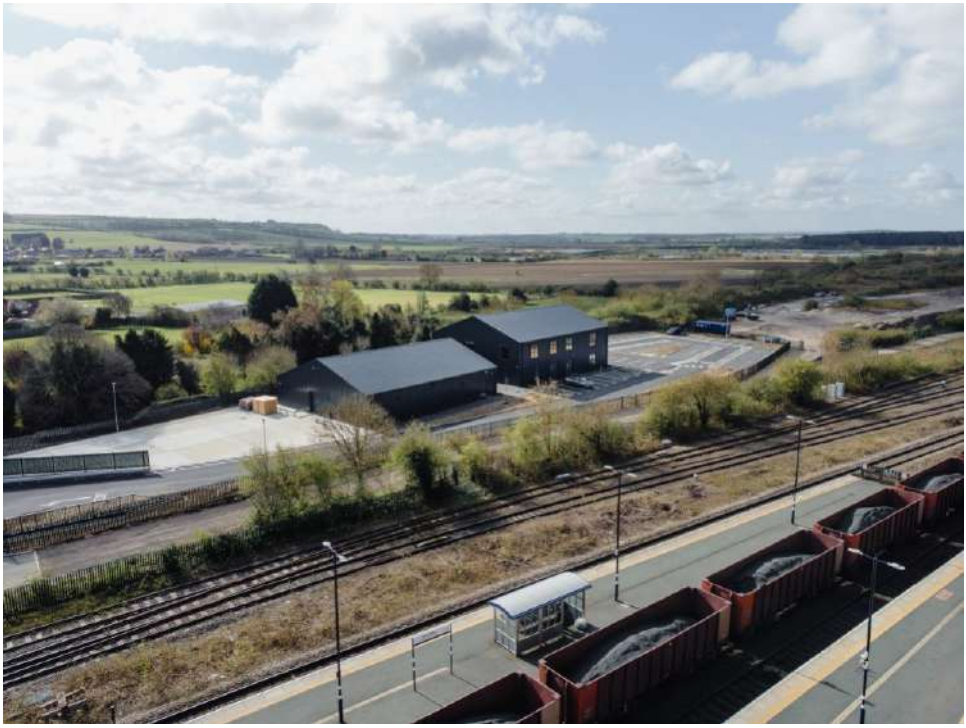
Network Rail views Barnetby MDU as a blueprint for future maintenance facilities. Its design has already influenced plans for a similar development under way in Sheffield, showing how this investment is helping to shape the future of railway infrastructure.

George Drum, Network Rail infrastructure director, said: "Our new maintenance delivery unit at Barnetby is a significant investment in our colleagues, our operations and the future of the railway. It provides our teams with modern, sustainable facilities while supporting a key route that underpins both freight and passenger services across the region.

"We're proud that the site is already being recognised nationally for its sustainability credentials, and that it is setting the standard for how we design and build maintenance hubs going forward."

The project also delivered significant benefits for the local community. As part of the project's social value commitment, planters were provided for the village and a defibrillator donated to Barnetby United FC. North Lincolnshire College students were given placements at the site with main contractor HBC Construction.

Source: Rail UK.com



Internet photograph: HBC Construction

Class 360 Refurbishment – EMR Preview Event

As well as introducing the new Class 810 Aurora fleet on their Intercity route, East Midlands Railway (EMR) is refurbishing their Connect Class 360 electric units and Regional Class 170 Turbostars. The Regional Class 158s are also being refreshed, though to a lesser extent because they are older.

East Midlands Branch Chair Phil Thomas and Branch Secretary Steve Jones were invited by EMR to join a stakeholder preview event for the refurbished Class 360 fleet, at Kettering Depot Sidings on 5 June 2026. We were met at Kettering station and taken to the nearby depot, where refreshments were available in a marquee erected for the event. Attendees heard short speeches from EMR MD Will Rogers and representatives from Angel Trains, who own the units, and Siemens Mobility, who built them and are carrying out the work at their Northampton and Bedford depots. All three emphasised the partnership approach being taken throughout the refurbishment programme. Though the units are now 23 years old, the industry representatives were 'selling' the refurbishment along the lines that the travelling public will see them as the equivalent of new trains, but that this is being achieved at a fraction of the cost to the taxpayer. Perhaps this an indication of the financial position of the industry at present!

The interiors are being completely renewed, with new 2 + 2 Fisa seats, new tables, carpets, panelling, information displays, LED lighting, and USB charging points. Luggage storage space is being increased for the Luton Airport traffic. WiFi and CCTV are being upgraded, and automatic passenger counting equipment is being installed. Toilet compartments, vestibules and saloon end panels are being repainted. The former First Class accommodation is being removed, with these areas refitted as Standard Class. The refurbishment includes the drivers' cabs. However, there is no provision for bicycles; this being a London commuter operation. Moreover, nothing is being done under the floor, though we assume any floor or bodywork corrosion problems are being addressed. The refurbishment of the whole fleet of 21 x 4-car units is due to be completed by spring 2027.

We were then shown around two units in the sidings; one refurbished, the other not. Compared with the 'new' unit, the 'old' one looked tired, with its worn-out former First Class areas, 'ironing board' 3 +2 seating in Standard, and generally rather dull ambience. Though there will be fewer seats, it was noted that the narrowness of the 3+2 seats means that they are rarely occupied by five passengers across. Actual capacity is therefore not seen as greatly reduced in practice. The refurbishment of the Class 360s and the Regional dmus is intended also to provide a consistent style of accommodation across the EMR fleet, whether Intercity, Connect or Regional.

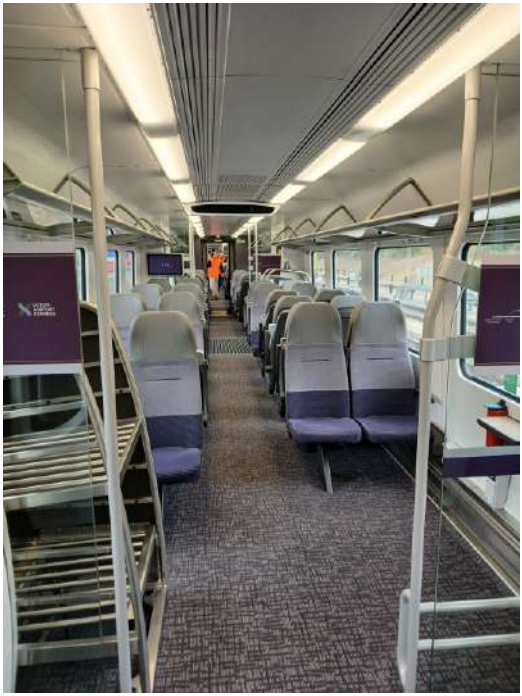
Many other stakeholders were also present, which gave a useful opportunity to network with them informally. We are grateful to EMR for inviting us to this event and we look forward to the full introduction of the refurbished fleet. We also look forward to the refurbishment of the EMR Regional fleet.

At the time of writing, however, we are conscious that a Class 360 has been in the news for all the wrong reasons, with the awful crash just south of Bedford. We in Railfuture extend our sympathy to the family of the driver who lost his life and our best wishes to all the injured for a ▶

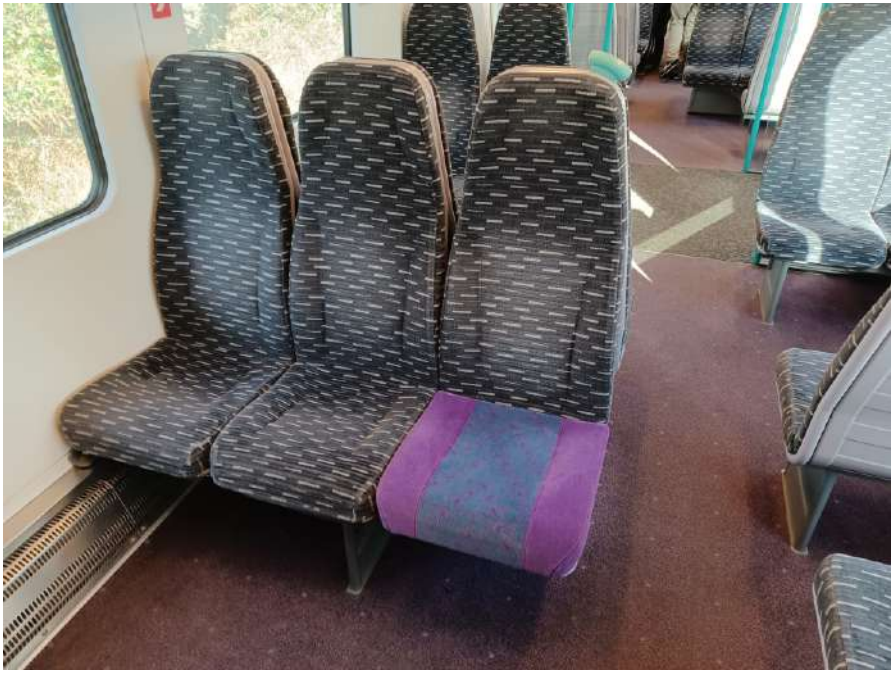
speedy recovery. We also pay tribute to all the rail staff and the emergency and recovery services involved.

Phil Thomas,
Chair – East Midlands Branch
Steve Jones,
Secretary – East Midlands Branch

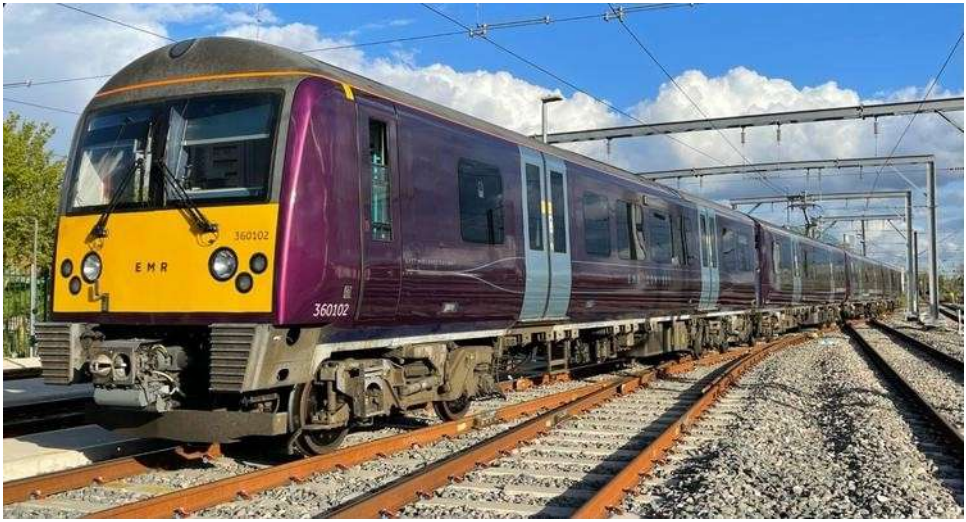
Class 360 Refurbishment



Refurbished interior of a Class 360 at Kettering Depot on 5 June 2026, showing 2 + 2 Fisa seating
Photo: Steve Jones



Unrefurbished Class 360 with 2+ 2 seats. Though one cushion has been replaced, the interiors of these trains are looking rather tired. This one was at Corby in 2022, they have had another four years' use since then.
Photo: Steve Jones

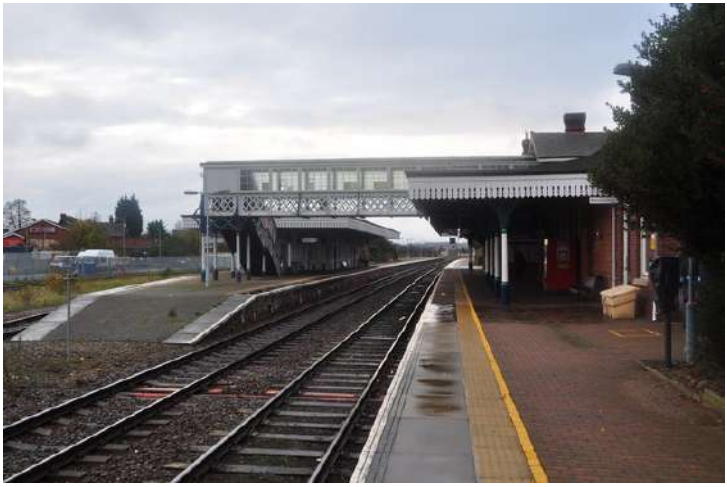


Class 360. *Photo: East Midlands Railway*

Cost of Access for All at Sleaford

Network Rail has provided cost estimates for the next design stage for implementation of the Access for All (AfA) project at Sleaford station and full delivery of lifts. The outline design, including surveys, would cost £400k - £500k and progressing to a full construction-ready design likely to cost £650k - £700k. The estimated cost to construct lift access to the island platform is c.£7m, whereas a new AfA footbridge spanning all platforms and extended to open up access to the council car park (understood to be situated south of the station – left of photograph) would cost c.£9m.

David Harby



Internet photograph

Help shape the Local Transport Plan

The Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) has launched a new survey inviting residents, businesses and communities to share their views and help shape the area's draft Local Transport Plan. Open from **Tuesday 16 June to Monday 27 July**, the survey gives people the opportunity to have their say on how transport works across Greater Lincolnshire and what improvements are needed.

Railfuture will be doing a response. If all goes to plan I will have a draft to circulate for the branch committee meeting on 15 July. If you have any specific responses you want made by Railfuture please let me have them. You are also recommended to make a personal response.

Link to the survey is here: https://greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk/home/better-connected

David Harby

EAST MIDLANDS BRANCH

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

LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH

Chair: *David Harby – david.harby@railfuture.org.uk*
Vice-Chair: *Phil Mason – phil.mason@raifuture.org.uk*
Secretary: *Don Peacock – don.peacock@railfuture.org.uk*
Lincolnshire Branch's Twitter handle*: @RailfututureLincs*
Direct link to Branch News: https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Lincolnshire+Branch

FUTURE LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Wednesday, 15 July and 14 October 2026. Venues to be arranged.
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)*

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