

The ups and downs of Market Rasen waiting room

When Market Rasen station was staffed, up to the early 1990s, the waiting room on the Down platform (platform 2) was in two sections: general waiting room, plus a ladies, with W.C. Heating was provided by a solid fuel stove. The chimney pipe could glow "red hot" at times when the porters rarely had it stoked up. The stove was later replaced with electric wall heaters, when health and safety regulations were introduced.

Following withdrawal of staff, the waiting room fell into dis-repair and soon became the subject of vandalism. At this stage, British Rail (or Railtrack) wanted to replace it with a "bus type" shelter. It then came to light that it was a listed building and subsequently was partially rebuilt.

Things became bad again around 2003 and remedial work was done in 2007, with the assistance of the Railway Heritage Trust. In 2009, Market Rasen received a Best Station award.

East Midlands Trains have just carried out a general painting of the station, including the waiting room. A local contractor pressure washed all the windows free of charge. The Station Adoption Group has on display photographs and press cuttings covering the history of the station over the years. Photographs show the restored waiting room; the fireplace is a plywood replica. (RC)



Photographs: Ralph Coulson

Rail Lincs 64 will be published in October. Please let the Editor have copy by 15 September.

The views and comments expressed in Rail Lincs are not necessarily those of the Railway Development Society.

Railfuture is the campaigning name for the Railway Development Society.

The Railway Development Society Limited is a (not for profit) Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England & Wales No. 5011634. Registered Office: 24 Chedworth Place, Tattingstone, Suffolk IP9 2ND

www.railfuture.org.uk

Letter from the Chairman

The last few weeks have been a busy time for Railfuture both at branch and national level.

Nationally we have been lobbying vigorously to get our favoured schemes included in the plans for Network Rail Control Period 5 (2014-2019). In many cases Network Rail are just as keen as we are to see progress with the schemes but this is only the start of the battle. The DfT are expecting major rail industry cost savings over the term of CP5. £3.5 billion is the figure most often quoted. To maintain the railway and carry out some enhancements whilst at the same time make large cost savings is not going to be easy. I fear there could be some turbulent times ahead.

This takes us to something else that is not going to be easy. Yet another DfT consultation. This time Fares and Ticketing. Some of the cost savings are expected to come from the train operators and the fares and ticketing review hints at where DfT thinks these can be found - closing ticket offices. Railfuture are busy preparing a response to this consultation.

Locally, Lincoln High Street level crossing is in the news again, we have the imposition of car parking charges at Ruskington and Metheringham, albeit with a last minute postponement of the Metheringham charges and, as I write these notes, we have a train drivers' strike.

A few weeks ago I was asked by a Lincolnshire Echo reporter if I knew anything about plans to replace the

Lincoln High Street and Brayford Wharf East level crossings with pedestrian bridges. At that time the plans for a new building alongside the High Street crossing, incorporating a pedestrian bridge, were not in the public domain so I confined my comments to saying that any bridge must be disabled friendly. This is important not just for the mobility impaired but also for the many parents with pushchairs who use the level crossing.

Members from the Lincoln area will know that the Lincoln High Street level crossing has been a contentious issue for many years. I have made no secret of my personal view that the sooner that section of the High Street is pedestrianised the better. However there are suggestions that the latest plans go further than this with the High Street being blocked by a physical barrier with no pedestrian access across the railway except by a bridge. This would radically change the views up and down the High Street and raises other issues such as 'if the bridge is part of a retail building alongside what happens when the shops are shut?'

This is more of a planning issue than a rail issue, but personally I think a physical barrier would cut off the lower High Street from the rest of the City and damage local businesses so I oppose it. I am sure the branch will be asked to comment by the local media so we do have to have a branch view. Any media comments I make should represent the views of local members - not my own - so I would like to

continued on page 3

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

Railfuture Lincolnshire Branch Committee 2012 to 2013

Alphabetical list of members:

Anthony Berridge
Friends of the Barton Line
Representative

47 Eastfield Road, Barton on Humber
DN18 6AW 01724 721397

Chris Brown
National International Committee Member

24a Lannimore Close, Lincoln LN5 8SF
01522 544913 07766496466
cmb-24@ntlworld.com

Ralph Coulson

24 Willingham Road, Market Rasen LN8 3DR
01673 842177 07792947498

Andrew Court

Rock Cottage, 91 High Street, Saxilby
Lincoln LN1 2HA 01522 702651

Alan Gouldthorpe
Barton–Cleethorpes Community Rail
Partnership Representative

48 Overton Court, Barton on Humber,
N Lincs DN18 5QH 07412060971
bartonrail@aol.com

David Harby - Branch Chairman,
Exhibition Screen Officer,
National Treasurer, Media Spokesman
National Freight Committee Member

6 Carral Close, Brant Road, Lincoln LN5 9BD
01522 874513 david.harby@railfuture.org.uk

Brian Hastings - Emeritus Chairman
Media Spokesman (North)

Rail Lincs Northern Correspondent
312 Wharf Road, Ealand, Scunthorpe,
N Lincs DN17 4JW 01724 710528
brian.hastings@railfuture.org.uk

Paul Jowett - Corresponding Member,
Rail Lincs Southern Correspondent
Branch Representative on North Kesteven
District Council's Partnership Group

8 Deepdale Drive, Leasingham, Sleaford,
Lincs NG34 8LR

Wallace Lee

13 Thirlmere Close, North Hykeham,
Lincoln LN6 8ES
01522 686592
francis.lee1@ntlworld.com

Colin Lingard - Branch Treasurer

12 Home Close, Bracebridge Heath,
Lincoln LN4 2LP 01522 526620
colin.lingard@railfuture.org.uk

Phil Mason - Rail Lincs Editor
Branch Vice-Chairman

10 Cottesmore Close, Grantham NG31 9JL
01476 407569 (home) 01476 405959 (bus.)
fastrack@cottesmorepress.fsbusiness.co.uk

Geoffrey Meanwell

12 Kirkby Lane, Woodhall Spa LN10 6SA
01526 352389

Don Peacock - Hon Branch Secretary
National Passenger Committee Member

1 Queens Road, Barnetby le Wold,
N Lincs DN38 6JH 01652 688549
don.peacock@railfuture.org.uk

Reg Poole – Corresponding Member

52 Hebden Moor Way, North Hykeham, Lincoln
LN6 9QW 01522 883988
r.poole2@ntlworld.com

Tom Rookes - Minutes Secretary

77 Ruskin Avenue, St. Giles, Lincoln LN2 4DE
01522 540513

Carolyn Sharp

33 Firbeck Ave., Skegness, Lincs PE25 3LA
01754 766581
carolyn@hotmail.co.uk

SELTA Representative Position vacant

Membership Matters

FROM THE HON SECRETARY

• The committee recognises that travel to committee meetings may not be convenient and therefore invites members to consider contributing to the committee's work by providing information about local rail problems, good practice which could usefully be spread to other areas, anything in the way of developments which could prevent future rail expansion, providing comment on local transport plans.

• Members are reminded that they can send items to the Hon Secretary for discussion at the earliest committee meeting following the receipt of the item. The member may come to the meeting if he/she wishes to provide more information and/or fully explain the concern.

• The committee is still concerned about the lack of new members being attracted to Railfuture and that the organisation is very much lacking in female members. The committee invites members' suggestions in ways of addressing these problems.

• The committee intends to repeat the exercise of asking the membership to provide a survey of their local station. A questionnaire is included with this edition of *Rail Lincs*.

• The next committee meetings will be on 21 July and 22 September at Saxilby.

Please contact me if you want to comment on any of these items.

Dr Don Peacock, Hon Secretary
Railfuture Lincolnshire Branch

• 2013 AGM

It was decided at the recent branch Annual General Meeting that the 2013 AGM will be held in Cleethorpes. This departure from a Lincoln venue is to celebrate 150 years since Cleethorpes station was opened on 6 April 1863. We expect to have a venue booked and be able to advise a date in the autumn *Rail Lincs*.

• ELECTRONIC RAIL LINCS

At the AGM there was a discussion about an electronic alternative for *Rail Lincs*. Views were almost evenly divided between those who think that electronic versions are second best because they are not read thoroughly as the printed version and those who prefer an electronic version because they can pass it on to others. There is no intention of restricting distribution of the printed version, but an electronic version is available to anyone who wants to receive it. Just ask the editor to email one to you.

• USEFUL WEBSITES

Here are a couple of new websites which look useful:

brfares.com shows every fare available - without having to select trains first.

trains.im shows through trains between any two points including stops en route, with an option to call up Working Times including passing points, distances (to 0.1 mile) and a map. Similar format to opentraintimes.com which gives trains arriving, departing or passing a selected station.

Charter Trains from Lincolnshire Branch Area

In the Autumn, Railtourer of Hull has two charter trains departing from the Branch area. On Wednesday, 19 September "The Scarborough Spa & Wolds Coast Steam Special", although originating from St. Neots picks up at Peterborough, Grantham, Newark, Retford and Doncaster to York where a steam locomotive is attached to haul the train to Scarborough. At Scarborough, the locomotive is turned and after a three hour break the journey continues along the Wolds Coast through Filey, Bridlington and Beverley towards Hull, then west alongside the River Humber and via Selby to York where diesel traction takes over for the return to home stations.

On Saturday, 6th October "The Welsh Borders Steam Special" departs from Skegness picking up at Wainfleet, Boston, Heckington, Sleaford and Bottesford, then following a cross country route to Crewe where a steam locomotive is attached for haulage through Chester and on to the scenic line through Welsh border country. Passing through Wrexham, Ruabon, Chirk and Gobowen to historic Shrewsbury. After a break, steam haulage continues through Whitchurch and Wrenbury completing a circular route back to Crewe where diesel traction takes over for the return to Skegness.

Fares for both trains are Premier Dining £159.00, First Class £79.00 and Standard Class £59.00. Bookings and further details from local agent Carolyn Sharp (see page 2) or Railtourer Ltd telephone: 01482 659082. (PM)



Rail Lincs 63 - 10

Branch presence at 25th GRANTHAM RAIL SHOW 1 & 2 September 2012 Walton Girls' High School & 6th Form

Railfuture Lincolnshire Branch will again be having a stand at the 2012 Grantham Rail Show model railway exhibition. This year's exhibition on Saturday & Sunday, 1 & 2 September, moves to a new venue: Walton Girls' High School and Sixth Form, Kitty Briggs Lane, off Harlaxton Road NG31 7JR (the A607 Melton Mowbray road).

As well as a new venue, the organisers, Grantham Railway Society, celebrate the 25th Silver Jubilee anniversary of the Grantham Rail Show. The first exhibition in 1988 celebrated the 50th anniversary of the record breaking run of Sir Nigel Gresley's A4 Pacific "Mallard" which attained 126mph on Stoke Bank, a few miles south of Grantham.

The Rail Show will be opened on the Saturday morning by BBC Radio Lincolnshire presenter, Sue Taylor.

For a location map and further details email the editor.

Safer to Cross at Stamford

For many years, passengers with limited mobility and parents with pushchairs who have difficulty using the footbridge, had to travel to Peterborough in order to cross the track and then catch the next eastbound train to travel back to Stamford and on to their destination.

A new system has now been installed whereby passengers can use a telephone adjacent to the gated barrow crossing to call the signaller at Ketton signal box, who will then remotely unlock the gate if it is safe to cross the line. (PH)

continued from page 1

hear what you think.

The imposition of car parking charges at Ruskington and Metheringham is reported elsewhere in *Rail Lincs*. Personally I find it difficult to understand these charges. There is plenty of alternative on street parking nearby so faced with paying to park at the station drivers will just park elsewhere. A lot of money has been spent upgrading the car parks. It will be a sad waste of this money to see the car parks nearly empty whilst local residents find their streets filled with cars.

It is difficult to know what to say about the strikes. Railfuture is strictly non political so the ideal Railfuture position would be to say nothing. However when I was asked by Radio Lincolnshire to comment on how rail passengers are effected by the strikes I followed the advice of our national media spokesman which is to never refuse an interview opportunity. In the event I was able, without commenting on the merits or otherwise of the strike, to point out that what passengers want is a reliable service which gets them to their destination on time and to express the hope that the dispute can be resolved without any more disruption to services.

Elsewhere in this edition of *Rail Lincs* you will see that the branch has contributed to Railfuture consultation responses. All members are welcome to have their views considered before the branch response is finalised. I normally

circulate invitations to respond to consultations, and other documents I receive, by email to the branch committee. This email list is not a closed shop. To be included on the distribution list and have your opinions included just send me an email asking to be added to the list. Not all the documents I receive are as big as the 118 pages of the fares review but they are big enough for me to have to say that the costs of printing and posting out to members are beyond our resources, both financial and time.

I end my notes this time with another plea for assistance. I have been asked to look in to reports of excessive delays experienced obtaining a ticket at Lincoln station, with queues sometimes stretching out of the entrance door. One instance reported to me was a Saturday morning when there was only one ticket window open and this was blocked for a long time by someone, thought to be a tourist, buying an advance purchase ticket. There was also no working ticket machine, apparently due to lack of change.

I have personally never had any problems, but my journeys are normally early morning when the station is not busy. If you use Lincoln station I would appreciate hearing your experiences, good or bad. Please give me as much detail as you can, such as what time of day was it, how many ticket windows were open, how long did you have to wait and was there a working ticket machine?

David Harby

Funding for Hykeham station

Lincolnshire County Council has received notification that the Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid for Access LN6 has been successful. The project has been awarded £4.9million for delivering sustainable transport projects for the LN6 area of Lincoln, which includes revamping Hykeham station to become a multi-modal transport hub, behaviour change initiatives to encourage people to leave the car at home and use public transport, a Wheels to Work project to promote cycling, and marketing campaigns.

BUSES GET A MENTION

I was pleased to see David Harby mention buses in his "Letter from the Chairman" (*Rail Lincs* 62). For I'm one of those who use buses not only to my nearest rail head, but for journeys where there is no realistic rail option. Sadly, it seems that thanks to the cuts in the Bus Service Operators' Grant mentioned by David, many bus services in the Grimsby area will be hit hard. At the time of writing (27 February) there is talk of an end to Sunday services on some routes, along with an axe being taken to most buses running after 9.00pm. The consequence of this will be social isolation for those without private transport and good physical mobility, and a growing reluctance of those with cars to take the environmentally friendly alternative. Which is very much to be regretted, as I know just how improved the rail product is today compared to when I trainspotted in the late 1970s. So yes, we public transport campaigners do need to work together. And with that in mind, I would draw your attention to the multi-agency Eng-Age transport group that meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 10.00am in Grimsby Central Library. We have representatives from Stagecoach East Midlands in attendance, and links with local rail companies. Unity really is strength.

Tim Mickleborough, Grimsby

TEASER TRAINS

A timetable conundrum (*Rail Lincs* 62; Feb 2012)

I was interested to read Peter Honniball's timetable teaser re Nottingham to Spalding. I think it could be argued that the two trains in question do pass over a short section of line twice and that is between Werrington Junction and Peterborough station, but the point he makes is a good one.

Also, I think another train which very nearly meets the criteria is the 0510 from Nottingham to Grantham, Peterborough and Spalding which is footnoted as a through train in Table 49 of the GB Rail Timetable. If you still use the example of the 2100 Spalding to Nottingham (via Melton Mowbray) as the return service, the duplicated section of line is that between Helpston Junction and Peterborough station (approx 6 miles) but still essentially different outward and return routes.

It's a sobering thought most of these manœuvres are only necessary because presumably EMT haven't got a depot/servicing presence in the Peterborough area!

*Gordon Bestwick
(East Midlands Branch Member),
Sutton in Ashfield*

Footfall Figures for Local Stations 2010–2011

Station Name	County or Unitary Authority	Station Facility Owner	1011 Entries & Exits	0910 Entries & Exits
Barton-On-Humber	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	46,088	46,428
Barrow Haven	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	1,906	2,168
New Holland	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	21,460	20,490
Goxhill	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	18,834	21,148
Thornton Abbey	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	1,196	1,056
Ulceby	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	7,746	6,280
Habrough	North East Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	29,922	25,632
Stallingborough	North East Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	9,784	9,626
Healing	North East Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	10,204	8,562
Great Coates	North East Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	8,468	8,110
Grimsby Town	North East Lincolnshire	First TransPennine Express	416,870	391,982
Grimsby Docks	North East Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	3,998	3,792
New Clee	North East Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	298	322
Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire	First TransPennine Express	245,100	204,850
Barnetby	North Lincolnshire	First TransPennine Express	61,526	54,190
Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire	First TransPennine Express	375,006	322,882
Althorpe	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	8,430	6,700
Crowle	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	31,650	22,496
Brigg	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	702	414
Kirton Lindsey	North Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	224	220
Gainsborough Central	Lincolnshire	Northern Rail	1,134	1,438
Gainsborough Lea Road	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	146,836	136,284
Saxilby	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	54,100	55,024
Lincoln Central	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	1,461,738	1,477,752
Market Rasen	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	57,746	57,390
Metheringham	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	98,262	98,722
Ruskington	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	81,646	80,838
Sleaford	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	323,306	316,894
Spalding	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	183,278	197,072
Ancaster	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	4,388	3,764
Rauceby	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	1,822	1,970
Stamford	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	296,430	287,638
Hykeham	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	25,508	23,262
Swinderby	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	11,544	7,200
Collingham	Nottinghamshire	East Midlands Trains	48,296	46,548
Newark Castle	Nottinghamshire	East Midlands Trains	348,938	413,900
Newark North Gate	Nottinghamshire	East Coast	976,526	924,528
Grantham	Lincolnshire	East Coast	1,071,320	1,033,374
Heckington	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	61,234	55,022
Swineshead	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	2,378	1,312
Hubberts Bridge	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	342	296
Boston	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	207,822	205,046
Thorpe Culvert	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	418	382
Wainfleet	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	64,676	67,960
Havenhouse	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	100	378
Skegness	Lincolnshire	East Midlands Trains	361,390	359,202

Participate in our Station Survey

A Station Survey questionnaire is included with this edition of *Rail Lincs* and the Branch Committee asks members to complete during the next two months.

The survey enables our widely spread membership to participate in a single exercise.

We know from our membership distribution that some stations will be 'local' to more than one member and some are not local to any members. We would appreciate more than one view on stations, so please do not assume that someone else will do it. Also, if you wish to survey more than one station, this also would be much appreciated.

Pay to Park at Metheringham

East Midlands Trains (EMT) is introducing parking charges at a number of rural stations including Metheringham and Ruskington. This continues the policy throughout Britain's railways to raise income from station car parking. According to press releases, the income will go to EMT station improvements. The charges were set to commence on 30 April, but there has been a last minute postponement (see *Chairman's Letter*). One wonders how many regular users at these busy rural stations will resist the charges and park elsewhere. With so few parking spaces, will the charges recoup the cost of installing and maintaining the equipment plus the management and cash collection? The cash ticket machine is in a very vulnerable remote area! The charges are Daily £2; Weekly £8. The Monthly £24 and Annual £240 charges can only be paid by using a special 0845 telephone number (PBJ)

(Editor's footnote: Regular users will most likely try and park elsewhere. My youngest son works at a hotel a short distance from Narborough station on the Leicester - Nuneaton line. Recently, the owners of the hotel have been forced to introduce pay and display parking in the large car park, because it was becoming full with commuters' cars using the railway station, which has a small car park only available to permit holders. Fortunately, hotel patrons receive a refund on the parking fee! (PM)



Rail Travellers are being treated harshly

Railfuture agrees with Passenger Focus that rail travellers are being treated harshly when they haven't got exactly the right ticket. "We believe that passengers making an innocent mistake should be treated with fairness - they shouldn't be made to feel like a criminal", said chairman Dr David Berman "We support the rail industry's attempts to tackle fare evasion but it's financially counter-productive for a train operator to upset a passenger so much that they might be put off from using the train ever again." "Railfuture has been approached by members of the public who have experienced the same situations as stated by Passenger Focus, so we know that their report is accurate. We survey our members, and they consistently tell us that they want a simpler fare structure. It's one of the big issues that would make people more likely to use the train more often."

"Being scared that their ticket isn't valid is one factor that puts people off travelling by train. It's yet another reason not to close ticket offices, as ticket machines cannot give the same reassurance that face-to-face contact with a human can. Sometimes the stress of being at the head of a long queue can lead to people making mistakes at the ticket machines, and people cannot reasonably be expected to take in all the information on cluttered screens. Fare simplification must come first. It's an issue which is frequently raised at our conferences."

(Railfuture Media Release)

Track Laying continues at 'Fever Pitch'

Track renewal work is now racing ahead on the Joint Line in the Sleaford area. Since Easter and through to late May, Up and Down lines were re-laid in Sleaford and through Ruskington. Network Rail has leased farm land at Leasingham Moor user crossing for an engineering base and workers' facilities. (The land concerned is normally used to store strawbales for power station burning). Work is done weekend night times, so train services are not interrupted.

While he was carrying out Station Adopter work at Ruskington on 17 May, Paul Jowett was fortunate to meet Network Rail engineer, Paul Durina. During their conversation, it was possible to elicit some up to date information on the Joint Line upgrade work. It was confirmed that Sleaford Avoiding Line will be double track, but the unused Down line on the embankment near South Signal Box is going to be a major task due to years of neglect. Fully grown trees and vegetation, plus Rabbit infestation, means rebuilding from its original foundations, prior to relaying track.

Track relaying is now reaching 'fever

pitch' and is continuing south of Sleaford with work being carried out after 17:00 at Weekends. Apparently so much work needs to be done that Network Rail will be stretched to complete by 2014.

It would appear that many of the existing cross-overs on the Joint Line will remain. However, as yet no decisions have been made re Werrington Junction. Line speed on the line will be 75mph and level crossing work is progressing with allied state of the art safety apparatus which are still being trialled on a minor line in Yorkshire.

Modern signalling operated from Lincoln until it is superceded, at a later date, by control from York and Derby, will re-introduce more sections of line, which were lost when the old manual signal boxes closed. The modernisation of level crossings will reduce operating costs and the Joint Line will have the viable capability to once again become operational for 24 hours, which as traffic builds up will be considered. Diversions from the East Coast Main Line will once again be simpler. (PBJ)

Nottingham blockade

Advance notice that due to major track and signal renewal, Nottingham station will be closed for around five weeks in July/August 2013. Work has also commenced on constructing a new bridge to carry the tram line extension over the station on the alignment of the former Great Central line bridge.

Station Adopters' Meeting

Friday, 6 July will see East Midlands Trains holding their now established Station Adopters gathering at Derby. (PBJ)

Get a New Bitecard

Do you know that Bitecard holders can get a 20% discount on most purchases at a range of station catering outlets? Including: "Burger King", "Caffe Ritazza", "Camden Food Co.", "Delice De France", "Millie's Cookies", "Pumpkin Café", "Sloe", "The Pasty Shop", "Upper Crust" and "Bars on Stations". If you already have a Bitecard, you will need to replace it with a new style card as the old one is being withdrawn and will no longer be accepted. To register for a new Bitecard or replace your old one, go to <https://www.bitecard.co.uk/Home> (DH)

‘Big Hitters’ join Railfuture

Railfuture welcomed some respected big names from the rail industry into its ranks at its AGM in Worcester. The group’s new president is Christian Wolmar, the well-known writer on rail issues. Former rail minister Lord Andrew Adonis is vice president, as are Adrian Shooter CBE, former boss of Chiltern Railways, Chris Green, who was chief executive of Virgin Trains and a non-executive director of Network Rail, Roger Ford, who writes for Modern Railways magazine, and Barry Doe, an expert on fares and timetabling. Christian Wolmar said: “I am delighted and honoured to have been elected president of what is an increasingly important organisation. Over the years Railfuture has shown precisely what its name implies. The railways have a fantastic future and the fact that this is now widely recognised in political circles is down to the lobbying of organisations like Railfuture. Now it is vital that the current levels of investment are maintained to ensure that Britain has a railway fit for the 21st century.”

Railfuture’s new chairman, Dr. David Berman, said “These people are serious big hitters from the rail industry, and their willingness to join us shows that our campaigning is on the right track. We hope that these respected names will further strengthen our work in fighting for a better railway for all”.

(Railfuture Media Release)

North of England Franchise

Lincolnshire branch has contributed to Railfuture representations on a new franchise for the North of England. As far as local services are concerned, we are suggesting that the Lincoln to Sheffield service is speeded up by having an hourly limited stop service (Saxilby, Gainsborough Lea Road, Retford and Worksop only) along with an hourly all stations services from Retford to Sheffield. Ideally, some of the Sheffield – Retford services would continue to Cleethorpes via Brigg.

We are also suggesting that Lincoln – Sheffield, Barton on Humber branch and Cleethorpes – Manchester are transferred to the East Midlands franchise. *(DH)*

Grantham Station Approach Development

Development of the approach to Grantham station has taken a step closer with Lincolnshire County Council submitting an application for a Compulsory Purchase Order to acquire 5.47 acres of land on Station Approach, Grantham (Station Road West), which is bounded on the north by Wharf Road, on the east by Grantley Street and on the south by part of one of the Station car parks.

The intention is to develop the land for public realm works, residential units, offices and incubator units, hotel, leisure, retail and community uses together with associated modification and creation of vehicular and pedestrian access.

This appears to be the initial stage of a major redevelopment east of the station which originally included a multi-storey car park to replace existing station parking. A few year’s ago, there was a proposal to extend the town’s inner relief road along the Station Approach and Station Road East alignment. *(PM)*

Barton Line News

- Barton Cleethorpes Community Rail Partnership (BCCRP) has expressed concerns about the unkempt state of the land on the south side of Barton station which was due to difficulties in agreeing a lease with Network Rail.

- The not-for-profit Humber Region Rail Development Company Limited has been launched as a voice in the formulation of franchises to the Department for Transport-Rail. An open meeting for CRP members was to be held at Hull Paragon station on 14 April.

- Performance and patronage on the line had improved in the first three months of the year by 8.56% and 5.7% (114,000 more passengers respectively over the same period last year.

- Name stickers could become available for the Class 153 units used on the line. The BCCRP favour “John Harrison” of chronology fame, whereas those present at a Friends of the Barton Line meeting favoured “Samuel Wilderspin” – Barton’s international pioneer in education.

- During February, a train passenger bemoaned the fact that because she had not seen out of the carriage window, the name signs at Barton station, she had missed her stop and travelled out again. The signs had been raised above window-viewing level to deter further youths from swinging on them.

- On 27 April, Michael Portillo was filming on the Barton Line as part of his series of Great Railway Journeys. The material is due to be broadcast in the autumn *(AB)*

Skegness News

Member Paul Jowett, recently observed improvements to the ride quality on the new continuous welded rail between Boston and Skegness, during a trip to the resort. It was noted that the cross-over at Bellwater signal box had been renewed, but as per Network Rail policy, the cross-over at Wainfleet had been removed.

The alterations at Skegness station left Paul with mixed feelings. The opened out frontage is certainly different as one can now see the trains and platforms. The original plan which had suggested cafes and retail outlets has not materialised, possibly due to the economic climate. This has resulted in the Plaza and a very open space. It is a pity that it received a bad press due to misuse by some of the younger generation, resulting in an injury. It is not known whether the Plaza is an interim solution pending further development when finances allow; even the proposed road improvements at the location remains to be seen. Part of the concourse has been fenced off to provide staff parking near platform 7, leaving less space for passenger queues and circulation at very busy times. As busy times are more frequent now that Skegness and Butlins becomes almost an all year resort, there are likely to be challengers in the future.

South East Lincs Travellers Association (SELTA) monitor services and footfall at the station and will no doubt make known their concerns if problems occur. *(PBJ)*

