

## *From your Chairman*

As I sit down to write this letter it is with a great sense of frustration.

I don't need to tell you that Lincolnshire rail services have been inadequate for many years. As rail users, you experience these failings every time you travel. What has been our big problem has been convincing the Department for Transport (DfT) that 'something needs to be done'. At recent meetings, DfT officials seem to have finally recognised that changes are needed.

The recent neighbouring Northern and Anglia franchises have come with new rolling stock and service improvements, so it is not unreasonable to expect similar changes in Lincolnshire. We have met with all the potential bidders for the next franchise and made clear to them that we expect major improvements.

We were told to expect the consultation to start as soon as the recent local elections were over, but with the surprise announcement of a general election, nothing can now happen until after that is all over. Even then there could be more delays. If there is a Ministerial reshuffle we may find ourselves with a new Transport Minister who wishes to review the whole franchising process, bringing with it more months of waiting for some action.

When the consultation does start, we are still years away from any service changes. I know many readers are confused about the snails pace at which all this happens so for this edition of *Rail Lincs* I have written a short guide to

franchising to try to explain the process and why it takes so long.

However, it is not all doom and gloom. A vastly improved Sunday service on the Nottingham to Lincoln route and some improvements on Nottingham to Grantham started with the May 21st timetable change. These changes include the 08.47 ex Lincoln calling additionally at Newark Northgate to enable a much earlier arrival in London. We would like to see more calls at Hykeham on Sunday mornings and are hopeful that this will be sorted in the December timetable change.

Northern have consulted on their planned timetable changes on the Sheffield to Lincoln route. The hourly all stations Retford to Sheffield shuttle is due to start in December enabling a semi-fast Lincoln to Sheffield service to start. Better Sunday services are due to start at the same time.

For the first time for many years, Lincoln residents will be able to enjoy a day out by rail on a Sunday. It should also boost the Lincoln economy with shoppers and tourists being able to finally get to Lincoln for a Sunday day out.

I have had a few complimentary comments from members about the talk at the branch AGM from Ian Brown CBE and Peter Harrold's update on plans for Lincoln station. I hope everyone else enjoyed them. It was a pity that so few members were there to hear the talks.

Sgt Ian Wright from British Transport Police (BTP) had to cancel at the last

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minute due to the need for him to be on duty at Lincoln station overseeing policing of the Lincoln City fans heading to London for the FA Cup match. We hope to organise a talk from him at a future meeting.

Personally, I think we do sometimes concentrate too much on what is going wrong with our rail network and miss the things that are going right. There is a lot of new rolling stock being delivered currently. The Intercity Express Programme (IEP) stock for the East Coast and Great Western services is being stored pending a mass launch of the new trains, but there are plenty of new EMU's already in use elsewhere.

Summer is with us so why not get out

and about and sample some of them? For example at the edge of our branch area the new Thameslink Class 700 units are being used on some Great Northern Peterborough to Kings Cross services and remember if you purchase a Great Northern services only Peterborough to Kings Cross ticket it is quite a good saving over the all operators (including Virgin Trains East Coast (VTEC)) ticket.

If you do try any new rolling stock, or refurbished old stock, I would like to hear your thoughts about what you like and dislike with it. Any comments you have would help us when we reply to the EM franchise consultation and speak with the bidders.

*David Harby, Branch Chairman*

*The above was written prior to the 8 June General Election.*

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## Joint Line Investment

Investment on the Joint Line continues as Network Rail gradually installs passenger information screens at stations along the line with one recently installed on the 'Lincoln platform' at Metheringham.

*(Photo: David Harby)*



# A Date for your diary

THE EAST MIDLANDS' CRUCIAL ROLE IN NATIONAL RAIL CONNECTIVITY

## DYNAMIC TRIANGLE



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SPEAKERS TO INCLUDE:

**Jake Kelly** East Midlands Trains managing director

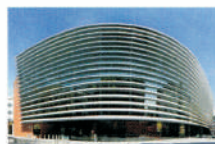
**Paul Tomlinson** Peak Rail project director

**Tom Ingall** Great Central Railway

**Dr Terri Eynon** Leicestershire County Council member for Coalville

**John Legrys** North West Leicestershire District Council member for Coalville

**UK Rail Leasing** Mark Winter chief executive officer



The Curve Leicester

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# ***Franchising – You know it makes “sense?”***

***– A personal view by Chris Brown***

So another franchise awarded, this time for South West Trains and yet another change!

Have any of you wondered how the Department for Transport awards a franchise? Well I have and I must admit I am baffled.

The main point of this award to First/MTR that I find strange is that they are going to replace new high tech trains that are not yet in service with new trains by 2019, leaving a fleet of brand new trains, that the DfT actually asked Stagecoach to order, with no work. Another claim is that they will speed up services with the same stock as now and they will bring back into service a fleet of trains that essentially date back to 1967.

The franchise is also only for seven years giving no real time to get a return on investment for a franchisee.

This award follows on from the award of the East Coast franchise based on running many extra services but with no guarantee that these services can run as they depend on the Office of Rail

Regulation (ORR) awarding paths and Network Rail confirming that the power supplies can cope with the extra trains. Since the award, the ORR has given open access paths to First Group to compete from Edinburgh to London.

It is no coincidence that the two most successful franchises have been Chiltern and C2C(London Tilbury & Southend to those of my vintage) who were both awarded long franchises, yet still the DfT. are awarding short franchises.

Wouldn't it be nice if we could have some joined up thinking, or in fact any kind of thinking, from the DfT. and the ORR.

So would the answer be nationalization? Well of course if that happened the Department of Transport would be in charge of everything, does that give you a sense of optimism, well it doesn't do anything to inspire me with confidence.

We await the next East Midlands award with bated breath, as well as fingers and toes crossed. (CB)

## **A Grand Day Out by Rail**

On the last Saturday in May, a group of Grantham Railway Society members embarked on another of the Society's popular Days Out by Rail (see *Rail Lincs* 75), this time to the Bluebell Railway in East Sussex.

Departing from Grantham at 06:39, returning at 21:14, provided participants the opportunity to travel on each of the heritage railway's scheduled trains.

Travelling to Kings Cross, we transferred to St. Pancras International to join a Thameslink Bedford to Brighton service as far as East Croydon, sampling one of the new Class 700 units, where we

changed to a London Victoria to East Grinstead Southern Rail service. Arriving at East Grinstead at 09:45, in time to make the short walk from the National Rail terminus at East Grinstead to the Bluebell Railway platform.

On joining the 11:00 departure from East Grinstead, our group was given a conducted tour, which included a break of journey at Horsted Keynes to view the Carriage & Wagon workshops and then on to the southern terminus of the line at Sheffield Park, where, after a lunch break, there was a tour of the locomotive

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shed and works. Members were particularly impressed by the restoration work in the Carriage & Wagon workshops where intricate joinery skills were employed on the restoration of 4-wheel Victorian coaches which, in some cases had been used as homes on the South Downs!

For the remainder of the day, members of the party followed their own particular interest and joined the 18:10 departure from East Grinstead for the journey home.

When the outing was first discussed, there was some concern about the reliability of the Southern Rail services because of the on-going industrial dispute over Driver Only Operations. The outing was arranged by John Ginns, who had telephoned the Bluebell Railway several weeks earlier to enquire about the reliability of the Southern Rail service at East Grinstead. The reaction of the young lady answering the enquiry was that she never used public transport! On the day, timings were excellent and on the outward journey we were able to catch an earlier train than anticipated on the Thameslink leg. Although this part of the journey appeared slow as it went under London, emerging from tunnels at London Bridge, arrival time at East Croydon was spot-on. The return service from East Croydon was running about six minutes late and more time was lost on approaching London Bridge station where engineering work was in progress.

Arrival back at St. Pancras International allowed plenty of time to transfer to Kings Cross for our 20:05 Virgin East Coast departure. It was noted that the HST set used on this leg of the journey was the same set used for our outward journey in the morning, which attracted comments about the uncomfortable ride quality – no doubt a symptom of the age of the IC125s.

Concern is often expressed about facilities provided by Train Operating Companies (ToCs) for disabled passengers, particularly wheelchair users. The Bluebell Railway has come up with an imaginative solution. Two standard coaches have been modified by removing seats in the saloon area and providing cushioned folding chairs for carers and other passengers. Doors from the saloon to one of the end vestibules have been widened and the area cleared to provide space to manoeuvre a wheelchair. The exterior door has been substantially widened and, instead of using ramps, a modified version of a delivery lorry tailgate lift has been installed. Wheelchair users are no longer confined to a luggage van and can now enjoy 'window' seats.

By booking some three months in advance, the fare for a Senior Railcard holder for two Advance Single tickets totalled £26.30 from Grantham to East Grinstead return, approx. 138 miles – proving that rail travel can be inexpensive. (PM)

## **BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Branch committee will be meeting on the following dates: 1 July, 16 September and 18 November 2017 at Swithin's Community Centre, Baggholm Road, Lincoln LN2 5AX, commencing at 13:00.

All Branch members are welcome to attend and participate in these meetings. The only restriction being that voting on appropriate issues is limited to elected members of the committee.

# A Guide to Franchising

Since rail privatisation, the technicalities surrounding franchising have changed so many times I doubt if many readers have much idea what the current situation is. To cover the topic in depth would fill a book so this guide is a very basic outline of the process. It is based on my experience with the current East Midlands franchise renewal.

It may seem an odd place to start but I will begin in the middle of the franchise period. During the franchise, Department for Transport (DfT) will be monitoring compliance with the franchise contract and having regular discussions with the Train Operating Company (TOC) and formal stakeholders, such as local authorities. There are also opportunities for stakeholders, such as Railfuture, to have informal discussions.

Around 2 years before the franchise is due to end, thoughts turn to the next franchise. A formal consultation, normally lasting 12 weeks, asking what stakeholders are looking for in the next franchise will be published by the DfT. From their formal and informal discussions with stakeholders DfT will already be aware of many of the stakeholder views. Almost inevitably, DfT will have changed their views on some policy issues as well. The questions asked in the consultation will be based on this prior knowledge.

At the same time as they are thinking about the formal consultation, DfT will be asking for Expressions of Interest from potential franchise bidders and deciding who will be invited to bid. Companies will previously have gone through a pre-qualification process to get accepted on to the list of potential bidders.

Once they know they are going to be invited to bid, potential bidders also start talking to stakeholders. Sometimes formal discussions, but often

confidential emails and meetings, where bidders might ask for stakeholder reactions to new service ideas etc.

When DfT have the replies to the formal consultation, they start to draw up the Invitation to Tender (ITT), which will be put to the bidders. This ITT is the document that bidders use to draw up their bid. Broadly it will state the level and quality of service that is required and many detailed financial requirements. It may ask for bids for specific extra services such as Lincoln to London. It also states the criteria that are going to be used to decide the winning bid.

These criteria are very important parts of the ITT. I have been told that Arriva won the Northern bid by getting more points than the others with their Community Rail and station adoption offer. The South West Trains (SWT) franchise seems to have been won by First by offering new, higher quality, rolling stock.

Putting together a bid is an expensive task and only one bidder will be successful, so the bidders are very careful to submit a bid which complies with the ITT and which will, they think, be the winning bid, whilst at the same time will not offer a large premium making the franchise unprofitable.

Once the winner has been announced they then have a set period as stated in the ITT (typically 12 weeks) to put everything in place before they take over the franchise.

What we have to remember is that, except perhaps for a few signs in a new colour, nothing much changes for quite a long while. New timetables can easily take 2 years to implement and new rolling stock is unlikely to start appearing in quantity for 3 years. Or to put it another way, we are almost half way through a 7 year franchise before we see any real benefit!

(DW)

# ***DVDs featuring Lincolnshire Rail Scenes***

***A list of currently available titles compiled by Geoff Meanwell***

<b>Title</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	
A Day at Barnetby	Videoscene	*
Cross Country to Boston	Transport Video Publishing	*
Box to Box Lincs & East Midlands	TVP	*
Class 20s at Scunthorpe Steel Works	TVP	*
Riding the Colas Oil Train Preston to Lindsey	Videoscene	*
Riding the Colas Steel Train	Videoscene	
Washwood Heath to Boston	Videoscene	*
Manchester to Cleethorpes Drivers Eye View	Video 125	*
Video Track Side Barnetby	TVP	
Rails Across Lincolnshire (1970)	TVP	
Lincoln's Railway (Alan Stennett)	Primetime	
Joint Diversion Peterborough, Lincoln, Doncaster	Videoscene	
Box by Box Selby, Saxilby, Newark, Peterborough	Videoscene	
Railscene Cab Ride August 1989 Sheffield – Cleethorpes via Brigg	Videoscene	
Farewell to Arms Barnetby Area Signal Boxes	Videoscene	
Joint Account Joint Line Signal Boxes	Videoscene	
Kings Cross to Cleethorpes HST	Videoscene	

**\* Also available in Blue Ray**

# Lincolnshire Charters

*Compiled by Geoffrey Meanwell*

## **Saturday, 24 June**

Scarborough, York, **Doncaster, Lincoln** to **Kings Cross** (via Joint Line)

Steam haulage by 60103 for part of journey only - remainder Class 47/57

Promoter: Railway Touring Company

## **Saturday, 1 July**

Kings Cross, Stevenage, **Peterborough, Stamford**, Melton Mowbray to **York**

Steam haulage by 60103 for part of journey only - remainder Class 47/57

Promoter: Railway Touring Company

## **Monday, 18 September**

Scarborough to **London Victoria**

Steam haulage by 60103 via Joint Line

Promoter: Steam Dreams

## **Saturday, 23 September**

**Skegness, Wainfleet, Boston, Heckington, Sleaford, Ancaster** to **Liverpool**

Hauled by Class 47/57

Promoter: West Coast Railway Company

## **Saturday, 30 September**

**Cleethorpes, Grimsby, Habrough, Barnetby, Scunthorpe, Thorne South** to **Betws-y-Coed**

Hauled by Class 47/57

Promoter: West Coast Railway Company

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## Friends of the Barton Line

● The Line continues to be plagued by cancellations and delayed services. During the period 26 January to 1 March, some thirteen instances were recorded. Failure of Northern Rail's Class 153 units has become the main cause of cancellations and delays. As East Midlands Trains fleet appeared to be more reliable than those of Northern rail, it is hoped that unit failure will become less of a problem after the franchise changeover,

● The station clock at Cleethorpes is undergoing restoration work by Network Rail together with TransPennine Express and the Railway Heritage Group. The work

includes repairs and redecoration of rotten timber, refurbishment of the mechanism and re-glazing.

● A Conductor working on the Line has admitted that it is often not possible to collect all fares on the busiest trains between Stallingborough and Grimsby Town (e.g. on Saturday mornings and during school holidays).

● Concern has been expressed that the Barton Cleethorpes Community Rail Partnership (BCCRP) maps of the line were becoming quite dirty and a disgrace to both FoBL and the CRP. (AASB)



## Editor's Mail

### Reductions in journeys

Dear Editor,

Despite the boom in passenger numbers, I note that last year actually saw a reduction in the number of journeys made from both Cleethorpes and Grimsby Town, with the latter only having a 11% increase over the past decade, well below the national average.

I believe one reason for this is the number of times the line is closed and replacement buses used instead. I know this deters travel, as it has stopped me making journeys in the past. For passengers pay for the speed and comfort of rail, and don't want to use an inferior mode of transport. Personally I think that if they have to have buses on part of the route then people should receive some form of financial compensation in return.

*Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby*

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## TLC for Market Rasen

The Old Railway Station in Market Rasen needs a touch of TLC and some restoration work.

Earlier this year, volunteers received a Heritage Lottery grant of £500,000 to restore the station building.

Work has already started on the roof, but come July, the restoration project to create a heritage centre, community space and offices, will start in full.

Lynn Ritson, project co-ordinator, says "it would be great to get some young volunteers who can use the opportunity to learn building skills such as bricklaying.

We will be holding demonstrations so they can see some of the traditional crafts such as the stone masonry and lime mortar rendering. And it's not just a demonstration, it's having a go as well."

## Sundays on the Castle Line

The new East Midlands Trains timetable was launched on Sunday 21 May, bringing earlier and more frequent Sunday services between Lincoln, Newark Castle and Nottingham.

To mark the occasion, special guests greeted the first service from Lincoln Central to Nottingham with a reception party. As the train pulled in just after 08:45, Lincoln's town crier Karen Crow raised the volume with a very traditional Lincolnshire welcome.

Guests then boarded the first of the new Sunday service trains and were met by another reception party with local stakeholders at Newark Castle station just before 09:30.

Lawrence Bowman, Commercial Director for East Midlands Trains, said: "It was fantastic to be joined by local partners and stakeholders to celebrate the launch of the new Sunday service timetable."

"We set off in style, being seen off by the town crier, which made it a special occasion for everyone involved."

"We're confident the new and improved Sunday timetable will bring real benefits for the local communities up and down the Castle Line between Lincoln and Nottingham."

Customers using the new Sunday services on the Castle Line will benefit from: New hourly services for the majority of the day. First service from Lincoln Central to Nottingham will now leave at 08:47 instead of the previous earliest time which was at 15:08. First service from Newark Castle to Nottingham will now leave at 09:29 instead of the previous earliest time which was at 15:50. First service from Nottingham to Lincoln will now leave at 09:30 instead of the previous earliest time which was at 15:29

(EMT)

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## **Cycle to the train at Grantham**

Part of the Virgin Trains East Coast (VTEC) franchise agreement is to improve facilities for cyclists at stations on the VTEC route. At Grantham, a two tier rack with spaces for sixty-six cycles has been installed on Station Road West opposite the station entrance, in an area formerly reserved for motorcycle parking; replacing a smaller and somewhat inconvenient facility on platform 1. Motorcycle parking has been moved to a larger area south of the station entrance on the site of the former goods depot.

## **on the Poacher Line**

Jon Moody, North Kesteven District Council's Schools Cycling Officer, is running projects along the Poacher Line taking in Ancaster, Sleaford and Heckington to promote cycling by children and parents to stations and use trains





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*A Monday afternoon and the new cycle facility at Grantham has plenty of patrons.*

# North Lincolnshire Council Concessionary Fares Scheme

Discounted concessionary travel is available in the North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) area. The NLC Scheme offers a 50% reduction on Anytime Day Return and Off-Peak Day Return tickets and 34% on Anytime Day Single, Anytime, Off-Peak and Super Off-Peak tickets for holders of Concessionary Travel Passes, and free travel in standard class for holders of Disabled Persons

Travel Passes

The scheme also entitles holders of Companion's Passes to 50% or 34% discounts on the above tickets when accompanying the person(s) named on the reverse of the pass, but not when travelling alone or with any other person.

These concessions are available for journeys between: Any two stations in North Lincolnshire (Red line on the map). Stations in North Lincolnshire and any other station shown on the map:



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*It's YOUR newsletter*

Rail Lincs 79 will be published in October.  
Please let the Editor have copy by 23 September.

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*Refer to pages 10 & 11 for contact details of branch officers mentioned in Rail Lincs.*