

From the Editor

Readers will notice something different about this edition of *Rail Lincs*. It is our ninetieth issue and this landmark is marked by having a joint publication with Railfuture East Midlands Branch. Geographically our two branches have a lot in common, with local services operated by East Midlands Railway (EMR) and, in many cases, their Regional services link together the two branch areas.



Electric to Corby. Class 360 in Kettering siding on a driver training working. Photo: Steve Jones

Across the area there are aspirations for restoring local railways and a comprehensive report on page 4 details these schemes, from Lichfield/Burton in the west to Firsby/Louth/Mablethorpe on the east coast.

The new EMR timetable was introduced on 16 May and this is analysed on pages 6-9. But, at the time of writing, it has been announced that a revised Regional timetable is to be introduced from 19 June, due to

Easy Stations Survey 2021

Railfuture's national campaign to put passengers first, where every journey matters, is looking at what makes a station easy to use.

Before they even get onto a train, passengers have to travel to the station, buy their ticket (if there is a ticket machine or booking office) and then find the platform they want. I know from my own experiences at my local station there are quite a few passengers who are not regular travellers and the signage is not always helpful. For example, parking is free, but there is no sign telling users that parking is free and there are no signs in the car park pointing passengers to the platform entrances, which are not visible from the car park.

As part of this campaign, Lincolnshire

and East Midlands branches are asking our members to provide feedback on the stations that they use most often. The area we are covering is both Lincolnshire and East Midlands branch areas.

Included with this newsletter is a checklist for you to fill in and return to the address on the form. If you use or visit more than one station in the survey area you are most welcome to download more copies of the survey from the Lincs branch website page here: <https://railfuture.org.uk/display2694>.

When the forms are returned, we will have details of which stations our members consider easy or difficult to use. Some of the deficiencies will be quite inexpensive to correct but others might cost £100,000+. The information you provide will help us decide our campaigning priorities. *David Harby*

PLEASE SET ME FREE

No, I haven't been a naughty boy, I just want to travel where I want to when I want to, not a lot to ask is it.

So what am I rambling on about? Quite simply it is the obsession of certain Train Operating Companies, LNER and Cross Country, with compulsory reservations to travel on their services even when the current travel restrictions end. They claim that they are long distance operators and that passengers want the security of knowing that they will have a seat if they travel on their services and so compulsory reservations are essential for this to happen and LNER backs this up with saying that a survey said that 33% of people polled said that they were more likely to travel if they were guaranteed a seat.

I have problems with this for a variety of reasons. Both operators are also local service providers as well as long distance providers with services for example from Nottingham to Beeston, Grantham to Retford and Durham to Darlington or Newcastle.

On all services operated by these two companies, passengers have always had the option to reserve seats and if I have travelled from Newark to Edinburgh or London I have always reserved a seat but when travelling from Retford to Doncaster or Wakefield to Leeds I would never dream of reserving a seat.

Are these operators going to check

reservations as passengers board trains to prevent unreserved passengers boarding or will they eject passengers without reservations if there happens to be an onboard ticket check.

When challenged about local travellers, LNER responded by saying that coach C will continue to be a reservation free coach, as it always has been, to cope with unreserved travel. I don't know about anyone else but if I have to reserve the Newark to Grantham section of a Hykeham to Grantham service I will drive instead.

Given LNER's obsession with being a long distance operator should they hand over their semi-fast services to other operators and let for instance, Trans Pennine provide an all stations service from York to Edinburgh and another operator provide the semi-fast service from York and Lincoln to London and forego their share of revenue.

I do wonder if there is an ulterior motive here and if they are heading in the direction of a Ryanair style of operation where passengers will be required to pay to choose where they sit and I wonder how much longer the current extra refreshments passengers get in first class will continue. Who knows, reservations may be compulsory and be charged for even when you do not choose where to sit.

How do you feel about this situation? Is this the way rail travel should be going?

Chris Brown (Lincs branch)

◀ problems implementing the new timetable, caused by staff issues and rolling stock availability. This revised version will be similar to that operated prior to 16 May. However, in recent days, there have been reports that the (19 June) timetable is not working, resulting in numerous cancellations, with demands to EMR from local stakeholders for explanations.

On 20 May we had publication of the long-awaited Williams Review, now

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renamed "Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail". The launch did not receive the media attention it deserved as Covid-19 and other matters dominated the news reports. A new public body "Great British Railways" is set to run the railways. There are numerous promises to solve the industry's woes, which Railfuture will be reporting on in due course. At this stage, all we can comment is "wait and see".

Phil Mason, Editor

A Day Out, but at what cost?

With Covid restrictions relaxing and a new timetable, I wondered about a trip to London, so had a look at the online journey planner to see what is available on Saturday 12 June leaving Lincoln after 08:00 and returning from London around 17:00. I also didn't want to restrict my options by buying Advance Purchase Singles.

The first service that comes up is Lincoln to Kings Cross a Super Off Peak Return at £82 by EMR to Peterborough then LNER. Not showing, unless I click on the link for slower trains, is an EMR only Super Off Peak Return to St Pancras, via Nottingham, at £69. Longer journey time but quite a saving in price.

However, now there are evening trains on the Joint Line, there is another option which doesn't appear on any journey planner and that is splitting your ticket at Peterborough and using Thameslink to St. Pancras. £17.90 EMR only via Spalding plus a GNR only Super Off Peak Day Return at £21.50 making a total of £39.40. That's less than half the LNER fare shown on the journey planner and if you make the 4 minute connection at Peterborough, journey time is only 5 minutes longer.

A weekday journey using the journey planner is much more expensive with the cheapest service to Kings Cross via LNER at £131.80 and that is with severe restrictions on both the outward and return times. There are also a multitude of other options at varying prices depending on the route and times, but again, none as cheap as splitting your ticket at Peterborough. At £49.60 it is not quite as cheap as on a Saturday, but the big bonus is no restrictions on what time you leave London on the return journey. The seats are a little harder than an Azuma but on the other hand you can sit where you like without having to sit where

the LNER seat reservation computer chooses to put you.

The moral of this tale? Fares are still extremely complicated and to get the best buy you have to have a much more detailed knowledge of the fares manual than the average passenger.

David Harby, Lincolnshire Branch

Editor's Mail



I'm afraid that the more I read, the more I despair for our rail network. Take for instance an article in the *Morning Star* in which the RMT union is calling for a ban on on-train ticketing.

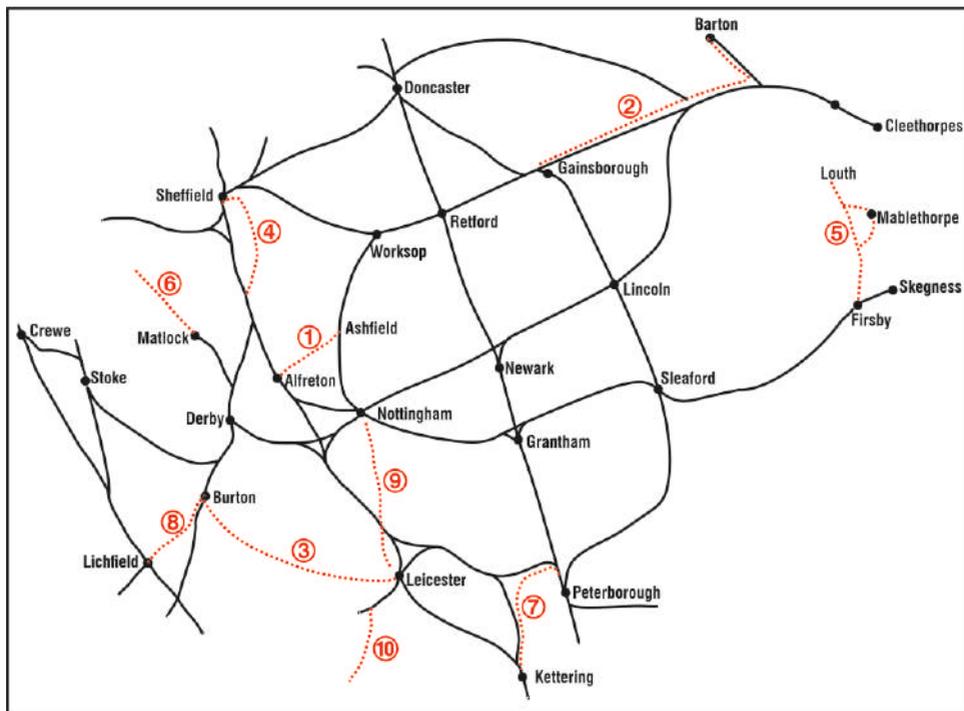
Now I can understand their worries over Covid. But if such a policy was implemented, what would it mean to those boarding trains at unmanned stations? My only post-Covid journeys have been from Great Coates, to Cleethorpes. Like many however, I don't have the facility to purchase tickets in advance on-line. So if the RMT get their way, would I be prevented from going by rail?

Meanwhile, one of the many scientists to have their say, has mooted the idea of those travelling by public transport having to wear face coverings indefinitely. I know that deters me from taking to the tracks, as one of those spectacle wearers whose glasses are prone to steam up every time I wear a mask. Of course car drivers won't have these restrictions, another case of train/bus users being regarded as second class citizens.

And to think we are supposed to be considering the environment and the effects of climate change!

Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby

RESTORING YOUR LOCAL RAILWAY



The DfT's Restoring Your Railway Fund is split into three parts:

- The Ideas Fund, to provide development funding for restoring lost rail services connections to communities;
- To provide support for schemes already being considered for restoration;
- Proposals for new stations and restoration, reopening of old closed station sites.

Bids have now all been submitted, and we are waiting for DfT to announce which schemes have been accepted for Round 3 funding. The current situation for schemes in our area is as follows:

1. Maid Marian Line

Reinstating passenger services utilising an existing freight route between Alfreton

and Ashfield. Successful in Round 2 but now in abeyance until the Government's Integrated Rail Plan has been published and a decision is made about the HS2 East route and a station at Toton.

2. South Humber Rail Link

Introducing a 2-hourly service between Gainsborough Central and Barton-on-Humber utilising a freight curve at Ulceby. Successful in Round 2 and consultants currently preparing development proposals.

3. Ivanhoe Line

Reinstating passenger services on the existing freight route between Leicester and Burton. Successful in Round 1; strategic outline business case now being prepared for submission by the end of May. Further advice from the DfT is now awaited following a recent meeting ▶

◀ they have had with Network Rail.

4. Barrow Hill line

Reintroduce passenger services on the existing Rother Valley freight route between Sheffield and Chesterfield. Successful in Round 1; now being progressed following successful completion of the strategic outline business case.

5. Firsby to Louth and Mablethorpe

Bid submitted in Round 3 to rebuild this section of the East Lincs route. No decision yet.

6. Reinstate the Peaks and Dales Railway

Bid submitted in Round 1 to rebuild the Matlock to Buxton and Chinley sections of the old Midland Main Line between Derby and Manchester. No decision yet, but much work is under way on building relationships with the various stakeholders in this environmentally sensitive area.

7. Welland Valley Rail (Kettering – Peterborough – Wisbech)

Bid submitted in Round 3 to link the Kettering to Manton and Manton to Peterborough routes via a part-reopened and part-newbuild chord via South Luffenham. No decision yet.

8. Lichfield to Burton upon Trent/Derby

Bid submitted in Round 3 to restore a regular passenger service on the existing freight route, which is already used as an alternative route for passenger services to Birmingham during engineering possessions of the route via Tamworth. A station for the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas is part of this proposal. No decision yet.

9. ‘Reconnecting South Nottinghamshire’

Bid submitted in Round 3 for a

development study to look at possibilities of connecting the GCR at Ruddington to NET2 by Very Light Rail, a commuter service to Leicester Midland and some freight links. Linked to major improvements to the GCR (North) and the Ruddington Heritage Site. No decision yet.

10. Cosby to Lutterworth

Despite the label, this bid submitted in Round 3 is effectively to reopen part of the Great Central route between Leicester and Rugby, with a new connection near Narborough to the existing Leicester to Nuneaton line. At the Rugby end, it would use the old Midland route, with a direct freight connection into the Magna Park logistics site near Lutterworth. Includes new stations at Cosby and Lutterworth. No decision yet.

Steve Jones (East Midlands branch)



Record-breaker: InterCity ‘Swallow’ liveried HST power car 43102 at the rear of the 15:34 St Pancras - Nottingham as it departs Market Harborough on 24 February 2021.

43102 was on the trial run on 1st November 1987 that achieved the world speed record for a diesel train, 148.5mph, between Northallerton and York. The record still stands, and 43102 is destined for the National Railway Museum in York.

Photo: Steve Jones

MAY 2021 TIMETABLE

Prior to the Covid pandemic, EMR had a franchise commitment to introduce new timetables on the Midland Main Line (MML) from December 2020, and by December 2021 on Regional routes. As members will be aware, this plan was disrupted by Covid-related delayed commissioning of the MML electrification to Corby, which then delayed driver training on the Class 360 units. The completely revised MML timetable was finally introduced on Sunday 16 May, along with some smaller changes on other EMR routes.

MML - general

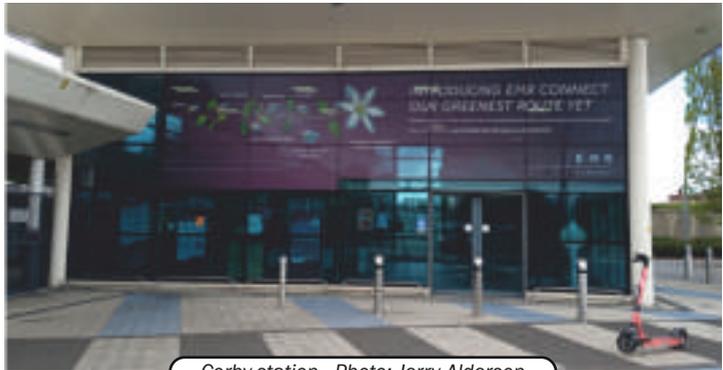
The new MML timetable from May 2021 is a significant part of EMR's transition to a more standardised railway. Ultimately, EMR will only have three types of rolling stock: the new Aurora bi-modes for Intercity from 2023, Class 360s for the Corby electric route, and Turbostar Class 170s for Regional. Even the interior fit-out of the different types of train is expected to become more consistent. This standardisation is reflected in the new timetable, which builds on an already well-established structure but with even more regular calling patterns.

The big news is, of course, the Corby electrification, which enables the long-planned segmentation between the commuter and Intercity markets. This was intended for December 2020 but was delayed by Covid. Doubling of the Corby - London service increases departures from St Pancras from five to six in each standard hour: two each for Sheffield, Nottingham and Corby.

Departures are flighted: every half-hour the fastest train, to Sheffield via Derby, departs first and runs non-stop to Leicester; closely followed by the Nottingham service, non-stop to Kettering and calling at Market Harborough; then the electric service to Corby, calling at all intermediate mainline stations. After a gap of usually 17 minutes, the pattern repeats. There are, of course, variations from this during the peaks and at weekends.

EMR Connect

This is the branding for the new electric service to Corby. The essential pattern is



Corby station - Photo: Jerry Alderson

trains departing St Pancras at xx:15 and xx:45, and Corby at xx:11 and xx:40, calling at Luton, Luton Airport Parkway, Bedford, Wellingborough, and Kettering. This also serves as the 'Luton Airport Express', matching similar services for the other London airports. The Class 360 electric units, transferred from Greater Anglia, are to be refurbished in due course.

The changes have attracted some controversy, especially at Wellingborough and Bedford, which consider this a downgrading from an Intercity service to effectively an outer-suburban one calling at all stations - and with no First Class. (It is still to be decided whether the refurbishment of the Class 360s will include First Class.) Moreover, ►

◀ Wellingborough and Bedford lose their through services to stations north of Kettering, except for one or two weekday peak calls for commuters to Leicester or beyond. At least the peak-time replacement bus between Bedford and Wellingborough can be removed.

Though obviously not electric 'Connect' services, a few trains continue to run north of Corby, though only as far as Melton Mowbray via Oakham. Melton has an 08:15 to St Pancras via Corby, which joins the 08:13 from Nottingham via Market Harborough at Kettering. There are a couple of trains around the middle of the day that allow a weekday round trip from Kettering via Corby to Melton and back, giving a good

big uplift in capacity, with train formations potentially up to 12 cars, and 2tph through to London rather than the previous mix of through trains and local shuttles to Kettering. It is a source of local pride that, after the vigorous 'Corbyrail' reopening campaign in the 1980s, supported by Railfuture, Corby now has a frequent service of high-capacity electric trains.

EMR Intercity

As noted above, standard-hour Intercity services comprise two trains at half-hourly intervals to Sheffield via Derby, and another two to Nottingham. This basic pattern has been running for a number of years, but calling patterns become more standardised, with most

stations receiving two better-spaced trains each hour.

The distinction between fast and semi-fast trains, particularly for Nottingham, is reduced by means of the transfer to EMR Connect of the intermediate calls south of Kettering. Indeed, having been relatively poorly served for many years, Kettering is the big winner this time. It becomes the interchange point between stations from Market Harborough

northwards, and intermediate MML stations to the south. As a result, it has 4tph to and from London: two Intercity non-stop, and two Connect electrics. This means that, though some through ▶



*Connection point: Kettering station, looking north on the fast lines. Electrification covers all four lines through Kettering, though the electric 'Connect' services will use the slow line platforms, behind the buildings on the right. A consequence of electrification is that the ornate iron canopies are being modified and handsomely restored. This view shows work in progress on 6 April 2021.
Photo: Steve Jones*

opportunity to travel over the famous Welland Viaduct at Harringworth. Oddly, however, these trains do not run on Wednesdays!

The other major change for Corby is a

◀ journey options have been lost (the loss of direct trains to Luton Airport Parkway has attracted comment, for example), there is good connectivity, albeit with one change of train. However, Kettering's two Intercity calls are both on the Nottingham service; requests that they be divided between the Nottingham trains and those to Sheffield via Derby have not been met. That means, though the basic frequency on all EMR MML routes is half-hourly, a journey from, say, Wellingborough to Derby will require two changes of train, at Kettering and Leicester.

Market Harborough loses its hourly non-stop services to and from St Pancras. These were popular locally but controversial elsewhere, having been added as an afterthought when Stagecoach EMT introduced Market Harborough calls on the otherwise fast Nottingham trains so as to preserve 2tph for the town. However, the new pattern of all Nottingham trains calling only at Kettering and then running fast to St Pancras combines fast through journeys with good local connectivity. (Anyone wanting a non-stop dash from Market Harborough can still do so, however, on the 05:06 on weekday mornings (05:33 Saturdays) and, perhaps surprisingly, several trains on Sunday afternoons!)

Improvements in the new timetable include:

- Earlier first northbound trains on weekdays and Saturdays, though these start from Kettering rather than St Pancras, and do not run on Sundays.
- Reinstatement of peak-time trains both ways at Bedford.
- A later last southbound train from Leicester on weekdays.

Though the new timetable is structured around a standard hourly pattern, there are some variations:

- Lincoln gains an extra train to St Pancras via Nottingham, doubling its through MML services to two per day to

London in the morning, though still only one back in the evening. Several intermediate stations between Nottingham and Lincoln are served by these trains, such that Hykeham and Swinderby (for the first time ever) now have direct London trains.

- Belper has one train to Sheffield (though not Chesterfield!) in the early morning, and two back in the evening.
- Kettering and Corby to Oakham and Melton, as noted above.

However, there are some losses in the new timetable, including:

- Alfreton and Langley Mill are no longer served by EMR Intercity.
- The withdrawal of the HSTs, which were maintained at Neville Hill, means that apart from the weekdays 16:32 from St Pancras to Leeds via Derby, returning later in the evening to Derby, no EMR services run north of Sheffield.
- Similarly, though not an HST, the weekend train that ran through to York, and Scarborough in the summer, has also ceased.

There are some improvements that Railfuture and other stakeholders sought during the consultation on the new timetable, but which have not been accommodated. Chief among these are:

- A day-long extension of MML services through to Leeds.
- Kettering calls on some Sheffield trains.
- A later last train south from Leicester on Saturdays.

We also seek a few more main line calls at Belper, to give connections throughout the day to Chesterfield and Sheffield.

Finally, the long-held aspiration for 'Nottingham in 90' remains to be fulfilled. With the likely loss of premium business traffic post-Covid, maybe such headline fastest times are no longer quite so important?

Regional

On the Regional routes the biggest ▶

◀ change is that the destinations have been switched on the Newark Castle – Matlock and Derby – Crewe services. There is now an hourly Newark Castle – Crewe service and a separate hourly one from Nottingham – Matlock. This gives an extra hourly service each way between Nottingham and Derby, with Attenborough being served by the Matlock service.

The Leicester – Lincoln service is extended to Grimsby every other hour with the intention of this change becoming hourly from December 2021. This service also now stops at Attenborough and Swinderby every hour so, with the Matlock service as well, Attenborough now has 2 trains per hour to and from Nottingham.

As the Leicester service is extended to Grimsby, the previous Grimsby – Newark Northgate service now becomes an hourly shuttle between Lincoln and Newark calling at all stations in most hours with some variation of destination in the morning and evening peaks. The outcome of these changes is a major uplift in services at Collingham, Swinderby and Hykeham, who now have 2 trains per hour each way in most hours.

On the Poacher Line, the major change is that, after many years of campaigning, the route now has an all-day Sunday service all year round instead of a Sunday afternoons only service for most of the year. There are more improvements to come in December 2021.

What we don't yet know is how EMR intend to deal with the heavy loadings during the school summer holiday period. In recent years additional capacity has been provided by an HST doing one or two return trips on Saturdays, but with the withdrawal of all the HST fleet this is no longer an option, though we understand there are two 'express' paths allocated between Nottingham and Skegness on Saturdays for the school summer holidays.

The Joint Line sees a modest morning uplift with the first train to Peterborough now leaving Lincoln at 06:12 instead of 08:00 previously. The major change is after 18:00 where, again after many years of campaigning, there is at last a passenger service south of Sleaford with the last train from Peterborough to Lincoln departing Peterborough at 23:10. This train is also booked to use the Sleaford Avoiding Line which is the first regular passenger service on this route for decades.

The Doncaster – Lincoln section still only has 5 trains each way per day but the times have been altered so they are spread out more evenly throughout the day. This section is due to become hourly from December 2021.

As members will be aware, the DfT plan to split the Liverpool – Norwich service. This has been delayed until at least December. The service remains hourly with small enhancements. Two evening trains from Norwich that terminate at Nottingham have been extended to Sheffield and there is a later departure from Norwich which gives a 22:18 Grantham – Nottingham.

The Barton branch transfers to EMR from 16 May but continues to be worked by TPE crews until the end of May. At the time of writing we understand trains will be crewed by staff from a freight operator until December when EMR train crew take over. Rolling stock now comes from EMR, instead of Northern, and to make this work some complex train swaps will take place which result in some Lincoln to Grimsby services extending to Cleethorpes.

*David Harby, Lincs Branch
and Steve Jones, East Midlands*

See update from Editor, page 1.

A Covid Journey to Italy

In October, armed with a four day Europe pass I left Peterborough and took Eurostar to Gare du Nord, then Metro to Gare de Lyons where I caught Milan train. Usually I take sleeper, but these were discontinued because of Covid. As in England, all journeys were with an empty space beside you. My temperature was checked as was my passport en route and I was asked the purpose of my journey and how much money I had. 400 euros satisfied them. I arrived at Milan Garibaldi and had a hotel booked nearby. I left from Garibaldi for Ancona on the east coast the next morning. The train ran under the city and emerged into a forest of railway lines on the south side of the town. We had about five stops including

the loading gauge would be too large for Britain unfortunately. The train wound through the country side in a westerly direction stopping at country stops often no more than a concrete strip for a platform. One entirely new station had been built since last year and there was lots of improvements taking place along the line including my destination San Severino where an underpass was being created to make access easier for those living on north side of the line. The next day I had to buy a ticket as I did not want to use the pass for my one stop journey. The ticket machine baffled me but the cleaner kindly assisted me. I had to insert the ticket in a machine to compost but I managed to jam the machine and despite the cleaner's best efforts could not retrieve it. She took it on herself to inform



Internet photo of Reggio Emilia Stazione Mediopadana

at a modern one – the extraordinary new station with transparent sides at Reggio Emilia Stazione Mediopadana. The station is built on a viaduct and the canopy is 483 metres long and consists of a succession of 25 metre portals a metre apart. The glass canopy and facade are realised by placing laminated glass between the portals by means of an aluminium frame. I did not find it attractive, but it is remarkable.

At Ancona I took a Polish made Pesa train with low access entries and steps up to main seating area. It was so quiet, I could hardly believe it was diesel and there was no detectable smell or smoke.

the train driver and the next day the machine was working again. Incidentally by pressing a Union Jack on the ticket printer, the instructions were put into English (all the trains in Italy had English announcements). I was visiting Camerino a hill town devastated in the 2016 earthquake. Its a ghost town at the summit

with all the buildings standing but held in place with wooden or metal beams and steel hawsers. Camerino has a university founded in 1365! Next day I was off to Assisi and triumphantly boasted to the cleaner that I had bought a ticket all by myself and I verified it successfully. I changed at Fabriano where I had a long wait. Surprising as this would appear to be on the main east west link between Ancona and Rome. Another journey winding through hill country. One more change and I was at Assisi. A stationer sells you bus tickets and the buses go half hourly and you are in the old town in 10 ▶

◀ mins. I had a beatification to attend and stayed three nights. For my return the travel agent had not spotted a 09:15 departure for Florence and thence Milan for my journey home, so I was not booked for that part of the journey and had to pay 20 euro surcharge but was fortunately able to get a seat. The route was via Bologna and it seemed that we travelled for half an hour in tunnel on our way to the town. Back in Milan I had a chance to use their metro and a young woman offered me a seat which I accepted, but its still a shock when you realise that you look old. Next morning I had to get 06:00 train to make the only available Eurostar

(reduced service because of Covid). I spent an unhappy hour as I watched the expected departure time become later and later. we left at 07:00 and if the train were not further delayed, I could have made the connection but there were endless unscheduled stops. I confided my anxiety to the drinks trolley man who summoned the guard. He consulted his magic machine and told me that I could reach Brussels in time for the last Eurostar. Thanks to my pass, the Brussels ticket cost 20 euros, full price 90 and the Eurostar was 25 euros. Got into St Pancras, took the stopping train (no fast ones at that time) which was late to

Peterborough, but we were detrained at Huntingdon and waited for the following one. Instead of the planned bus to Bourne (last departure 20:15) I had a £30 taxi which conveniently ignored all speed limits. Home sometime after midnight greatly relieved.

*Peter Honniball,
Lincs branch member*



Internet photo of Reggione Emilia Stazione Mediopadana

Improved car parking at Grantham

LNER has announced the completion of a £1.5million scheme to improve car parking at Grantham station, including 115 additional parking spaces and improved and safer access for pedestrians. This must have been designed and planned long before Covid restrictions were introduced and the ensuing dramatic reduction in rail usage. Even prior to the Covid situation, the car parks on Station Road East were never fully utilised and the one towards the

bottom of the road has remained closed apart from the Sunday morning car-boot sale. The new car park has been named the Mallard Car Park as a nod to the extension making use of land formerly occupied by redundant sidings last used in 2013 for the visit of A4 Mallard. The environment for pedestrians is greatly improved and there is ample space for taxis and short-stay drop-off parking. Surprisingly, I have yet to locate a bus stop!

Phil Mason

Friends of the Barton Line

- Operation of Barton Line services moved from Northern to East Midlands Railway (EMR) with the introduction of the new timetable starting 16 May. A mess room was being prepared at Cleethorpes station for the exclusive use of EMR staff.
- EMR is to repaint the Running In Boards at Thornton Abbey station in their house colours and the Friends are to ask



Photo: Tim Mickleburgh

EMR to contribute to the cost of repairing them which would need to be done before they were painted.

- As no passenger trains had run on the line since January, a Freedom of Information Request is being made to the DfT to ascertain why the Barton Line train service has been suspended for a quarter of a year and also concerning the short opening hours of the booking office at Grimsby Town Station. *Anthony Berridge*

Visit Lincolnshire display at Kings Cross

Photo: Jerry Alderson



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Forthcoming EM Branch events are listed on the EM Branch webpage:

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

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Please let the Editor Phil Mason, 10 Cottesmore Close, Grantham NG31 9JL, phil.mason@trackprint.net have copy by 18 September.

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