



THE CLASS 377, ARRIVING 2017; BETWEEN KING'S LYNN, CAMBRIDGE & KING'S CROSS

Yes, it is official; the Class 377, electric units, now running on Thameslink to Bedford from Brighton, will be transferring in 2017 to the Cambridge Cruiser service from King's Cross station (not Thameslink) through to King's Lynn. Compared with the current rolling stock this means air-conditioned, double glazed, quieter journeys on most of these services. Significant on a route containing no fewer than nine tunnels, especially when the 'hopper' windows are open. Read more inside on this and GTR, the new franchisee replacing First Capital Connect.



What an amalgam; the constituent parts of Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), as the franchise is to be known from 14 September this year.

For many years members of the Branch attended at least twice a year the meetings of the Thameslink 2000 Consortium; an important grouping of local authorities plus pressure groups such as ours. It kept the burning flame of the idea in the sight of all MPs and Ministers, stressing the importance of the project to the entire South-East economy, not just to London. We like to think it ensured the scheme remained regionally based rather than defaulting to just a metro-style line, like Crossrail. Obviously we were successful even if the title 'Thameslink' had to drop the suffix 2000! How time flies!

So let us not forget this amazingly stubborn work by the Consortium. After all these years it is more than a pleasure to now see all the parts of Thameslink coming together in 2018. Govia are the management team franchised from this September to do just that. And of course, to see that the consequent timetable rewrite for 2018 contains all the train services we have promoted through countless meetings with bid teams and Department for Transport representatives. But equally, let us not forget the massive effort behind the scenes of the current First Capital Connect team to bring parts of this huge project into being piece by piece. Well done to them.

On Tuesday July 15th 2014 several members of the Branch met representatives of Govia, to hear their plans and discuss various issues concerning the GN part of their franchise.

Govia outlined that there will be three management centres:

Great Northern: covering King's Cross to King's Lynn and the Peterborough peak services along with the Moorgate to Stevenage via Hertford and to Welwyn GC "inners".

Thameslink: Bedford/Cambridge/Peterborough to Brighton/Horsham and other routes that will run through the London 'Core'. (The Core being the route from Finsbury Park via the new Canal Tunnels to St.Pancras Low Level, Farringdon, City Thameslink, Blackfriars, London Bridge then on to East Croydon, Gatwick Airport, Brighton/Horsham and several other destinations.)

Southern: covering services from Victoria to Brighton, Brighton Coastal, branches off the Brighton Main Line etc including much of South London and via West London to MK Central.

Of interest to East Anglians travelling to Highbury & Islington and Moorgate, is confirmation of an enhanced service to run from Welwyn GC and Stevenage via Watton/Hertford North via Finsbury Park and along the Moorgate line seven

days a week, rather than the five currently. A new metro-type train of fixed 6-car formation will run from Moorgate. (One reason for this "surprise" is the difficulty of putting ERTMS equipment into very old class 313 cabs).

And very much in line with our hopes other services will run as follows:

2tph semi-fast Cambridge to Gatwick and Brighton;

2tph Peterborough all stations to Stevenage, fast to Finsbury Park then to Gatwick and Horsham; (Note that these 2 services run non-stop from Stevenage to Finsbury Park doubling the fast service from Hitchin and Stevenage to a train every 15 minutes.)

2tph all stations Cambridge to Potters Bar thence to south London, East Croydon and Tattenham Corner; all these services are 'pure' Thameslink using The Core route defined earlier, and formed exclusively of the new Siemens Cl.700 units in either 8 or 12 car fixed formation

2tph fast King's Cross to Cambridge and on to Cambridge SP, Ely, King's Lynn. Additional peak services connecting Peterborough with King's Cross each way. These are the only services to continue using King's Cross Station and will comprise either Cl.377 to Cambridge (currently working to Bedford) or, as now, Cl.365 emus. Although there are no confirmed plans to extend Thameslink to Cambridge Science Park, that is fouryears away, so we expect some will do so eventually.

Fares:

Off-peak: we asked that the Afternoon Return from London restrictions be lifted. Govia referred to 'The Key' Smart card introduction believing it could go some way to solving peak restrictions. However 'leg pricing'(!) will be introduced allowing travellers to mix and match an appropriate choice of Peak/Off-Peak tickets. This *new* ticket allows, for example, the peak outward return to be halved and matched with the reduced off-peak return ticket. 'Smart' ticketing, using a special card, is to be rolled out gradually from September 2015..... plus a new phone App that indicates 'loading' on approaching services.

Cambridge Bus Interchange:

This was briefly discussed and it was pleasing to hear the Govia team say that working with Stagecoach "shouldn't be a problem". Good luck to them on that!

Seating Capacity and train facilities:

From 2018, we were told, seating capacity from Cambridge will double, which includes 50% more seats being available to Ely and King's Lynn as well. However, whether overcrowding on trains *north* of Cambridge in the peaks will be actually resolved is another matter. New Cl.700 trains will be self weighing to enable loadings to be established, begging the question of what should be done in the meantime.

There was also a discussion on selective door operation ...Govia thought that

this would solve the problem of lengthy trains at short platforms, aka Waterbeach, Littleport, and Watlington. We stressed that the timetable might be compromised as passengers struggled to alight from overcrowded trains at those stations, combined with the single line stretches north of Ely. We reiterated that the platforms at those three stations should be lengthened.



Production Series Class 700 on test at Velim, Czech Republic this summer. Phot. Pedro Almeida.

The absence of Wi-Fi is largely down to lack of lineside transponders. But

even with such things, Govia said retro-equipping CI.700s will not be cheap. 4G phones have far less of a problem except through certain tunnels. The Govia team hinted "just maybe" movement regarding the lack of seat back "tables" on these new trains. Both these issues were at the forefront of Railfuture and other organisations' critique of the new trains last year.

For Stevenage station, a radical improvement plan is to be implemented when various funds can be brought together.

Slow, Slow, far too slow.....and stop!

We pointed out that unlike the routes out of St. Pancras and Euston, the 'slow lines' out of King's Cross to Huntingdon seldom rise above 80 mph maximum speed and are often well below. Because of this, some long distance Thameslink schedules could be unattractively lengthy. We requested that all future track and signalling renewals are NOT on a like-for-like basis, and where possible, will be re-tuned for use at higher maximum speeds. The impressive Network Rail representatives said they were already 'on the case' and fully aware of the shortcoming. Obviously a long-term project

The problem of congestion, both approaching and at Cambridge station, was raised: 12-car trains take far too long under current signalling arrangements south of the station to gain access to the new platforms 7 and 8. Once Cambridge Science Park comes on stream, a similar problem may be created from the northern approach as well. It was acknowledged by all to be another medium to long-term problem to resolve. It was also noted that Cambridge has only three 12-car platforms available anyway, and with four 12-car trains an hour arriving from the GN route plus peak 12-car trains from Liverpool St, space will be at a premium. Maybe this is where Cambridge Science Park station will prove vital after all as a terminus, although not included in the initial timetable.

None of this will be helped by the longish turn-around times required after lengthy journeys from Brighton or Horsham, with at least 15 minutes scheduled. With 8 or 12-car formations we appreciate that cleaning will be a time-consuming process.

Govia have plans to encourage Community-led stations, as at Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton etc. Otherwise, they intend to publish bi-annual reports plus an annual Stakeholders Conference. The departing franchise holder, FCC, held two or three well structured annual stakeholder meetings along with several reports. It also had the most approachable and accessible people we've dealt with based in London and at Letchworth. We wish this to continue. *Govia Thameslink Railway website at: <http://www.govia.info/gtr/> PW/PH/CB*

NEWS ROUNDUP

HALESWORTH PASSENGER COUNT

Mike Farahar reports that together with ESTA members the Branch plans to conduct a further passenger count at Halesworth this year, on Thursday, 16th October. Last year's count recorded an impressive 43% increase in business compared to 2012, following introduction of the East Suffolk line's full hourly service in December 2012, together with a doubling of passengers transferring to/from the connecting bus service to Southwold. Hopefully this year's data will demonstrate yet further growth.

We again aim to have volunteers on site to cover all scheduled train services, from 05.56 through to 23.10. If you can help by, say, covering a two hour time slot during the day please contact Mike Farahar, contact details on back page. MF/TG

PROMOTING TRAINS AND BUSES

The East Suffolk Travellers' Association has been busy this summer promoting public transport services, reports Trevor Garrod, with stalls at Woodbridge Regatta, the Lowestoft in Motion event and the Gala Weekend at the East Anglia Transport Museum.

ESTA members have also helped produce and distribute a new leaflet "Discover the Blyth Valley", which promotes the 88A bus route from Halesworth railway station to Southwold.

Despite promises made by senior managers, there are still hardly any announcements on the trains to tell passengers that they can change at Halesworth for the Southwold bus. TG

MEETING AT LEISTON

ESTA's autumn meeting will be on Saturday October 11th in Leiston, in the URC church hall, High Street, starting at 14.00. Speakers will be from EDF Energy (on the implications for trains and buses if Sizewell C goes ahead) and Coastal Accessible Transport Services. Leiston has no passenger trains, of course, but it is four miles from Saxmundham and the 64A bus links the two towns every hour. TG

NETWORK RAIL LOOKS TO CLOSE CROSSINGS

Network Rail has started consultations about closing all the level crossings on the East Coast Main line between London and Doncaster. Network Rail say that they are expensive to maintain and can cause delays to both road and rail users. They also provide places for trespassers to access the railway network. The intent is to replace most road crossings with new road bridges and options



have been drawn up for each location. Existing foot crossings will either be replaced by footbridges or closed completely.

Exhibitions have been held in the communities affected. A second round of consultation will take place later this year. Transport and Works Act orders to close the crossings and build replacement bridges will be issued next summer. Subject

to consents to close the crossings being obtained, work should start in 2018. The closure scheme is linked to the plans to re-signal the route in 2019/20. Fuller details of the closure time scale can be found in the August Railway Magazine, if you can still find a copy. (Above, Offord Crossing on the East Coast MainLine) ND

LEVEL CROSSINGS UPGRADED

A two week closure of the railway line between Peterborough and Spalding has seen level crossing equipment at 15 locations upgraded as part of the £280m project to upgrade the entire route. Line speeds are being increased and the new signalling system will enable more freight trains to use the route thus avoiding the busy east coast main line. ND

STRONG BUSINESS CASE FOR BUILDING THE CENTRAL SECTION OF EAST-

WEST RAILWAY

Railfuture has welcomed the high level study, published on Monday August 18th by the East West Rail Consortium, which reveals real economic and social benefits are to be gained from the building of the Central Section of EWR linking East Anglia through Cambridge and Bedford to Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and the west.

As you know, the new line has support across the political spectrum at all levels of government as well as from business leaders and transport campaigners. Now this report shows also that it has a solid economic case.

Cambridgeshire County Council, on behalf of the East West Rail Consortium (EWRConsortium), commissioned Atkins to carry out a new kind of survey called a "Conditional Output Statement" (COS). Atkins studied possible links between 25 relevant pairs of major towns looking at all aspects of their economy and movement between them....both for passengers and freight. The report (to be found on the EWRConsortium's website), also gave possible journey times between important pairs of town, for example:

*Cambridge to Oxford in just 60 minutes,
Cambridge to Milton Keynes in around 38-40 minutes
Cambridge to Bedford in just 28 minutes.*

These are just a few of many exciting connectivity improvements opened up across the EWR region. But apart from being a railway project, the COS process emphasises massive wider benefits to the economy of the regions it crosses. Which sounds like all round good news.

So, what some regarded as a 'pipe dream' back in 1995, when the East Anglia Branch of Railfuture wrote the original paper that led to local authorities across the region to set up the East West Rail Consortium, will soon (*we hope.Ed*) be a vital economic artery serving every part of the eastern counties.

Railfuture now looks to Network Rail to consult quickly with the Consortium to plan the most beneficial route from Cambridge to Bedford and establish the business case

1. To enable the route to meet the transport planning laws, thence open fully to Milton Keynes and Oxford by 2022 or earlier.
2. To enable services from Norwich, Thetford and Ely as well as Ipswich, Stowmarket, Bury St Edmunds and Newmarket, to run via Cambridge to Bedford onward to Oxford.

Additionally there could be fast trains from Cambridge to Bedford, Luton and St Albans....another branch of the Thameslink project? The target timings shown in the report mean that the new railway is being planned for intercity speeds.

Rail freight is another important traffic included in the planning for the new

line. It has huge environmental attributes that just cannot be met by other modes: for example; carbon emissions must be reduced according to the law, to which end this new railway will be a significant contributor. It will offer new capacity enabling more freight trains to run to and from Felixstowe servicing in turn more inland destinations. Thus pressure will be taken off the A14/A428/A1 trunk roads as well as relieving congestion on the Great Eastern Mainline and North London railway.

After 20 years of your unwavering campaigning for the project and support for the amazing efforts of the EWR Consortium of Local Authorities (the latter is a vindication of the democratic process and particularly...you). Railfuture members have always understood the value of this railway to the economic and social well-being of our region and the UK as a whole. You have never given up. Maintain your membership and recruit others, because fantastic news though this report is, there is a huge amount still to be done! PW/JH

FLIGHT DIRECT!



After many years lobbying for direct electric train service to Stansted Airport from Cambridge, 19 August saw an amended timetable include exactly this. Departing Cambridge off-peak only starting at 09.31 than at 26 minutes past each to 15.26. A late night 21.26 is included. From Stansted, also off-peak only; 10.05 to 16.05 and then 22.05. A great start which we hope will expand to run through most of the day (and night!) in due course. PW/CB

CLARA'S SEAT

Downham Market, Friday 27 June 2014. Clara's bench under static testing by Railfuture members (L to R) Peter Lawrence, Wendy Lawrence, Shirley Dex, Christopher Burton, John Drake.



You will be pleased to hear that the plaque and bench dedicated to the memory of our long-time campaigning stalwart, Clara Zilahi, was unveiled on Friday June 27th.. The ceremony took place on the up platform at Downham Market station.

Over 20 Railfuture and other friends took part. Readings were led by Clara's friend Patrick Bright from the 1370 Society, followed

by First Capital Connect's Karen Bothwell and finally by Railfuture Branch chair, Peter Wakefield. After appropriating testing of the bench, the party transferred for very tasty refreshments in the Station Refreshment Room. Many thanks to FCC for providing and installing the bench as a tribute to Clara. PW

MELDRETH, SHEPRETH & FOXTON RAIL USER GROUP; A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Our transition to the Govia era, reports Susan Vandeven, has been well served by the Rail User Group's participation in the DfT Thameslink Franchise consultation, which prompted a clear setting out of local aspirations for the new franchise. We have enjoyed good early communication with Govia and are pleased with their commitment to honour the 50% student discount negotiated with First Capital Connect back in 2009 - which has seen a significant uptake of rail travel by sixth formers travelling into Cambridge.

Our Community Rail Partnership is coming up to its first birthday and this provides an opportunity to take stock of what has worked well and what could be improved. Quarterly meetings with our partners – district and county councils, the TOC and Network Rail – have brought key players together to think in a coordinated fashion about projects on the horizon. Getting the two councils into the fold has been particularly valuable. This was FCC's first Community Rail Partnership, but it seemed natural territory for them. Communication with Network Rail has been mostly good; the challenge always seems to be joining up very localized projects with a huge organization. A concerted effort to get local employers to sign up for Travel for Work schemes has seen positive results. The new Plough pub in Shepreth submitted a Transport Plan with its planning application, as a result of awareness raising by the RUG and CRP – the focus being on maximizing the opportunity that good local rail service provides. SV

THE WISBECH RAIL REOPENING CAMPAIGN

The Wisbech to March railway re-opening campaign received the strongest indication yet that the line will be re-opened, with the announcement that £250k of funding is being made available by the government for a Network Rail detailed engineering study. This is part of a grant of £500k coming through The Greater Cambridge-Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership, split into funding studies into the rail re-opening scheme and dualling the A47 respectively.

The sole disappointment in this news was that the money would only be available in April 2015 adding a delay of almost a year to the project. However, Steve Barclay has since secured written ministerial approval for either or both of Cambridgeshire County Council or Fenland District Council to use their reserves to enable the studies to be carried out this year on the understanding

the government money will be forthcoming next year. This earlier timing might also help secure European Structural and Investment Funds which are being allocated to Local Enterprise Partnerships.

This level of funding would not have been announced were there not a strong chance of the line being reopened. Though much work remains to be done, this is certainly a milestone for the project and a time to reflect on just how far things have moved in the last 18 months. Certainly something for our supporters to celebrate. We feel sure that Wisbech is heading unstoppably towards reconnection to the rail network; the task now is to ensure this is done as quickly as possible. PH

WICKHAM MARKET STATION: THE BUILDING WITH A REAL FUTURE?

Mike Farahar flags up this exciting project - Building for the Future! Do go to the website and take a tour of plans for the disused Station House in rural East Suffolk. They combine historical purpose with a new community function. All that's needed is for you to cast your vote and/or join the campaign and support Station House Community Connections, a new charity, in raising funds to make it possible. Details of how to donate can be found at: [Follow us on twitter @stationhouse01](#) or www.stationhousecampseashe.co.uk By mobile phone Text VOTE TNX to 61119: [@stationhouse01b Station House Community Connections](#); www.youtube.com/watch?v=tITxz0WNbTw (Preview)

Norwich, Saturday 27 September
RAILFUTURE EAST ANGLIA, BRANCH MEETING
Friends Meeting House, Upper Goat Lane, NR2 1EW
How to get there.: no.25 bus from Station to Castle Meadow.
cross road and down to Market Place. Across this to top left
corner on to St Giles St, then right turn into Upper Goat Lane.
From Castle Meadow around five minutes walk.

GUEST SPEAKER: Mr JAMIE BURLES, MD Abellio GA

We are very pleased that Mr Burles can join us to speak about objectives for the next Greater Anglia franchise, consultation on which is imminent. Whether your views coincide or not with his, this remains a vital opportunity to discuss the issues. So do please join us and contribute.

SPECIFIC ISSUES: 1. FARES

Yes, it is that time of the year again...the bi-annual media-fest at the expense of the railway...self inflicted harm some might say. Railfuture issued a press release objecting to the seemingly relentless RPI+1% formula, especially as officially, national household income is actually reducing. Railfuture is calling for the government's preferred inflation index, CPI to be used. This is usually more than 1% lower than RPI. Our Chairman made this point and others on a Radio Cambridgeshire broadcast about the fares increase.

Given the service dislocation suffered by rail users along the Great Eastern Mainline and branches this summer, maybe no increase at all might be appropriate? When all the necessary work is completed and users start to get the railway service they deserve, perhaps we then move to the CPI index. It has been suggested that given the huge number of extra users on the trains, we should really be reaching the point where the train companies can start absorbing some of the costs they occur.

As mentioned, the GEML traveller has had a rough summer, so little wonder at this cri de coeur from a member...

"So have I got this right?

During 2014 AGA and Network Rail have given two public apologies in March and August for a catalogue of service failures, let alone the usual ongoing smaller and routine delays and cancellations. In the spring AGA and DfT agreed an extended short franchise until 2016 which has minimal contents to real service improvements but thankfully it did include new seat covers and carpets ! Then today we hear that for the umpteenth successive year that there is likely to be an above inflation fare rise in the new year. AGA should be considering a price freeze let alone milking passengers for every penny. Does anyone know whatever happened to the McNulty report where it was stated that the rail industry should be making savings of around £2 to 3 billion

with cost efficiencies ? This evening I am just waiting for a spokesman on the news from the railway to explain the yearly mantra why commuters (many with only 1% pay increases if at all for several years) are to be fleeced yet again to pay for so called investment in the railways. I travelled home on a 1988 built/converted unrefurbished '153. Some will say I am fortunate not to be bouncing along on an even older Pacer unit

On behalf of all fare payers I hope that Railfuture will be voicing some of my concerns!" Enough said. PW

SPECIFIC ISSUES: 2. THE NORWICH TO LIVERPOOL SERVICE

One unexpected issue to pop-up during the summer arose from the Department for Transport's(DfT) consultation on the forthcoming Northern Rail and Trans-Pennine Express re-franchising. In the section about the South Trans-Pennine route (Sheffield to Manchester) it was floated that the Liverpool to Norwich service might be terminated at Nottingham. Nothing though was said about how one might then get to Norwich, nor was there really any way to respond to the query, given the format of the consultation.



Since East Midlands Trains took over this service a complete transformation has occurred; the trains are well presented, comfortable and generally reliable. Additional stock has been sourced and train capacity is just about sufficient. Patronage continues to grow so that over 1000 travellers per day each way travel beyond Nottingham, leaving little doubt that the service is greatly valued. (Figures provided by EMT)

Our Branch highlighted this ominous proposition by writing a formal objection to accompany evidence of patronage. These were submitted to DfT via our Yorkshire Branch. A press release was also issued .

Not only would thousands be inconvenienced each week throughout the year, the Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal tourist industries would be damaged by this discouragement to through-travel by a change of train, should this proposal be introduced. It would evidently not help business expansion in the county. Also not to be forgotten is that this service currently links five Russell Group universities, with Cambridge a mere fifteen miles off-axis, a fact confirmed in the customer age-profile.

Overall though, it is a lethargic journey with little potential for really high speed except between Peterborough and Grantham. What *is* required is traction with a higher power to weight ratio suited to placing uphill speeds on a par with those on more favourable gradients, along with much faster exits from stations and speed restrictions. This alone would prune many minutes from the present schedule. Other ways of reducing journey time exist too.

But for the moment it is the absence of DfT proposals for the east of Nottingham service which is the most disturbing. Norwich, East Anglia's largest city by a margin, needs and deserves its hourly 'express' service to Peterborough, not least for ECML connections. Again, no mention either of how (if!) this might be provided or indeed over the busy Peterborough - Nottingham section. In short, no way to run a railway. PW/CB

SPECIFIC ISSUES: 3. CYCLES ON TRAINS; GA CYCLE FORUM

Mike Farahar tells us that Greater Anglia hosted their first Cycle Forum at the end of July, providing feedback after consultation on their draft cycle strategy. Attendees variously represented the rail industry, tourism groups, local authorities, national and local cycling groups, together with RFEA and ESTA.

With regard to Bikes on Trains, Greater Anglia's Jonathan Denby encouragingly repeated they "currently had no plans to increase the level of restriction on carriage of cycles". The need for such restrictions (only for non-folding cycles) to be clearly communicated, also for clear on-train signage - external and internal - indicating where to store bikes, was emphasised.

Specific issues arising from the high level of passengers taking bikes on trains in the Cambridge area were acknowledged, and would be progressed locally with all three train operators, local authorities, national and local cycle groups.

Investment in cycle parking at stations was welcomed, particularly secure



storage at main stations, although this is already oversubscribed at, for example, Ipswich and Chelmsford. The latter is believed to partially result from local residents, and non-rail cycle commuters, making use of the free, secure, cycle storage provided right in the city centre! Cycle parking improvements would take place at other stations during the remainder of the current franchise, i.e. to October 2016.

Installation of Bike & Go (cycle hire) sites at stations across the region is now virtually complete. Active promotion away from station premises is required to increase usage. There's believed to be potential within both tourist and corporate markets, and it is not necessary to be a rail passenger to hire a bike. (Picture:Stowmarket B&G)

Copies of Greater Anglia's draft cycle strategy and their summary of responses are available on their website. Similarly RFEA's submission, generally supportive of the strategy, may be viewed at: www.railfuture.org.uk/east.html Following the consultation and forum comments the finalised strategy should be available later this year. The cycle forum is likely to meet three times a year, based in part on an apparently successful forum already in place within Abellio's Northern Trains franchise. MF

REPORT ON JUNE MEETING WITH GUEST SPEAKER ROB FAIRHEAD.

The joint East Anglia and London and South East Branch meeting in Colchester welcomed Rob Fairhead(see photo') Senior Programme Development Manager at Network Rail for a broad, fascinating, and very informative presentation. It covered Network Rail Schemes delivered in CP4 (2009 to 2014), schemes for CP5 (2014 to 2019) and Great Eastern journey-time improvements. Rob introduced himself; joining British Rail in 1986 he spent most of his career in East Anglia, currently planning CP5 projects including the major Gospel Oak to Barking electrification scheme.



Projects during CP4 have included the Cambridge Island Platform in 2011. Here was an example of maintaining good relations with neighbours despite noise and access issues associated with a major engineering scheme in the centre of the city. It was achieved by funding a gate to control access to the site.

Other schemes were Stansted Airport platform 2 and Beccles Loop in 2012 where several factors took this project from marginal benefit to acceptable – including the planned re-signalling of the line, and land for access being provided by the council. The recent Ipswich Chord again included community benefit, this time opening up access to waterways. Farther south the double track Thameshaven Branch was re-instated to service the growing London Gateway deep-sea container port.

Major CP5 projects include Ipswich Yard capacity enhancements and Cambridge Science Park station, where relocation of current freight facilities is a little known aspect of this project.

Gospel to Barking Electrification is a challenging project due to the amount of

civil engineering to achieve the loading gauge for electrification. To this end a major sewer was moved and clearance for an LT cable structure occurred aside from modifying many bridges. Access had to be effected to private land and schools for installing electrification structures.

CP5 also included Felistowe capacity expansion, further double tracking, and other options are being weighed up. Additional 2 track sections, but not a complete doubling. Currently 30tpd (trains per day) in each direction. 48tpd by 2019. 56tpd by 2030. Possible relocation of Westerfield to west side of crossing to allow a double track line to diverge onto the branch.

Ely to Soham triggered concern in that a short section of 1 mile of single track may remain single just to cut costs. This seems out of place with the requirements to ease congestion at Ely with the Ely North Junction doubling.

West Anglia Main Line capacity increase is another major project with a third line mooted from Copper Mill to Angel Road where it will terminate, making possible an additional 2 trains per hour. This third line will be on the UP London-bound side. Extending this beyond Angel Road would require a new access route to the island platform. The Great Eastern is also to get capacity enhancements through work at Statford to allow parallel moves into platforms 9 and 10, and works associated with Crossrail.

'Norwich In 90' campaign was covered in detail with raised maximum line speed to 110mph, new rolling stock, revised stopping patterns and level crossing closures (83 crossings on the line) all under scrutiny.

It was noted that the 2004 Anglia Class 86 Farewell Railtour covered Norwich to Liverpool Street in just over 82 minutes non-stop (79.5m net), but on a 'quiet' Saturday evening although with a packed 10 coach train! The official electrification press run in 1987 with seven coaches only managed 83minutes 20seconds. So one can safely say that a one-stop schedule of 90 minutes would be perfectly feasible given 110mph running over approximately 45% of the route.

Major signalling works were also described which nationally will transfer the control of signalling from 800 signal boxes to 12 Rail Operating Centres (ROC). The Anglia Centre, at Romford, will be completed this year taking over Colchester Power Signal Box in 2016 and then in 2017, Cambridge PSB.

Other improvements will cover level crossing closures, safety enhancements and step free access at stations. So a lot is pending. PH

CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL CONFERENCE: 21 JUNE 'THE ENGINE FOR CHANGE'

Cambridge really could not have looked better to welcome our Conference delegates and guest speakers, and though marooned indoors most of the day we took in our fair share of sun and scenery at lunchtime and after this most successful event finished. The gathering was Chaired by Nick Dibben (below)



As is so often the case with Mayors across the country the schedule was hectic, and certainly true of our Mayor, Cllr Gerri Bird (above left) who had to bat on to several more engagements after ours. But not before she'd kicked off the gathering in time-honoured style.

Then in turn we heard David Statham with essentially a valedictory talk; a particularly informative presentation from Bob Menzies and Jeremy Smith of Cambs CC then followed; Network Rail's Paul McMahon ran his rule over encouraging developments in the rail freight sector.

Chris Starkie expounded the work of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and how prominently transport figures in their thinking. George Freeman, MP for Mid Norfolk and a Government Minister, eloquently told how rail transport could "open-up" his constituency in terms of employment opportunity without damaging the environment.

Then finally, Jim Chisholm struck several points about stations and access, by bicycle. All in all a splendid and highly successful day fuller details of which will be in *RAILWATCH*. The organisers should be well pleased. CB

And there we must leave you. A big 'thank you' to every contributor; the material was most welcome. Contributors deadline for Rail East 164, is Monday 15 November. Pictures in ideally in JPEG format, please. Comments and constructive criticism always welcome at Editor's email/postal address.

Railfuture

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Railfuture

**27 September:
Branch Meeting:
Norwich/ 14.00 hrs
Friends Meeting House
NR2 1EW
Speaker: TBA**

6 DECEMBER

PETERBOROUGH

(Jointly with Lincs Branch)

*Museum and Art Gallery,
Priestgate, Peterborough*

PE 14 1LF

*Start 13.30.hrs (Note earlier
than usual start time.)*

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