

SixShiresRail

Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire & Rutland

Newsletter for Railfuture East Midlands
& Lincolnshire branches

railfuture

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Editor's comment.....

As I was gathering material for this edition of *SixShiresRail*, there was a feeling of yet more turmoil for the rail industry when the Government announced that the northern leg of HS2 was to be axed, allegedly, in favour of spending the money saved on other transport projects. One project suggested by a minister was the possible extension of the Nottingham Tram system to Clifton South – a line that opened eight years ago! Many commentators have made comments on the likely implications of the announcement and, as with many rail-related issues, we must 'wait and see'.

On page 3, David Harby comments on proposals to close ticket offices and a letter from Lincolnshire Branch member, Tom Rookes, highlights the connection

between poor eyesight and using digital devices. This is relevant to the ticket office closure proposals, which apparently ignore accessibility issues where customers are expected to use Vending Machines or on-line devices. A correspondent in a national Sunday newspaper suggested that all vending machines should be positioned facing north to avoid the glare from the sun. I notice that digital displays on train coaches are particularly hard to see at certain times of the day and often on a station platform it is difficult to find an area in the shade to view a mobile phone.

The Governments interpretation of rail funding is challenged on page 6, but the photographs of Buddleia at Lincoln station

prompts one to question where Network Rail's £58.5bn debt is spent.

Even more confusion regarding rail funding reminds me of a photograph on the front of *Rail Lincs 91* in October 2021, when I had some fun with a photograph of Class 90 electric locomotives being discriminated due to a lack of electrification on many freight routes. Yet, ►



Network Rail have a new flower garden or is it a new low-cost 'green' solution to carriage cleaning !!

Timetable Success and Failure

After a considerable amount of lobbying by stakeholders, Department for Transport (DfT) has permitted East Midlands Railway (EMR) to reinstate some services on the Nottingham to Crewe route from the forthcoming December timetable change along with a few other minor improvements. This only restores part of the services withdrawn during Covid. The Nottingham to Newark Castle timetable still has gaps, as does Lincoln to Peterborough and Lincoln to Newark Northgate is still mornings only. Some little used services and rail replacement buses are also withdrawn.

As for Northern Trains, there are no changes in the pipeline.

Getting DfT to accept any service restoration is an uphill struggle so there doesn't seem to be much prospect of anything else being restored for another 12 months at least. This is a situation that is unsatisfactory to both Railfuture branch committees and members can be assured that we will continue lobbying at every opportunity.

EMR New Services

Weekdays 1K51 0553 Nottingham – Crewe

Weekdays 2N33 0810 Crewe – Nottingham

Weekdays 1K71 1616 Nottingham – Crewe

Weekdays 2A71 1810 Crewe – Nottingham

Weekdays 1L08 0851 Liverpool Lime Street – Nottingham (currently 1140 Nottingham to Norwich)

Saturdays 2K23 1800 Lincoln – Peterborough

Saturdays 2K20 1926 Peterborough – Lincoln

Plus strengthening of weekdays IR50 0521 Nottingham – Liverpool Lime Street and IR52 0635 Nottingham – Liverpool Lime Street from 2-car to 4-car

EMR Withdrawn Services

Weekdays 2L49 0501 Nottingham – Sleaford

Weekdays 2D00 0535 Worksop – Nottingham cancelled between Worksop – Mansfield Woodhouse

Weekdays 2W29 2225 Nottingham – Worksop cancelled between Mansfield Woodhouse – Worksop

Weekdays 2D30 2343 Worksop – Nottingham cancelled between Worksop and Mansfield Woodhouse

Weekdays rail replacement 1645 Derby – Stoke-on-Trent

Weekdays rail replacement 0506 Worksop – Mansfield Woodhouse

Weekdays rail replacement 2317 Mansfield Woodhouse – Worksop

Weekdays rail replacement 2343 Worksop – Nottingham

David Harby



more, recently, it is reported in the railway press that DB Cargo is to 'stand-down' its entire fleet of Class 90s because access charges for electric traction make them too expensive to use. Indeed, the rail industry is in turmoil. *Phil Mason*



Photograph left and on page 1 taken by David Harby on 10 October from Lincoln High Street Bridge.

Railfuture Response to Ticket Office Closure Proposals

A Comment from David Harby, Lincolnshire branch chair

Over the last four months the one railway issue that took up by far the largest proportion of my time has been in writing responses to the closure proposals. The wider issues have been well covered in the national media and the latest *Railwatch* so in this article I will concentrate on what the wider Lincolnshire branch has done.

The current proposals differed greatly between our local operators with some clearly being well thought through and others, particularly from East Midlands Railway (EMR), being very vague as to what alternatives are proposed. The amount of data provided by local operators has also varied considerably with Northern providing detailed retail figures for every ticket office and EMR refusing to provide any.

In briefings to Railfuture representatives, Transport Focus made it clear that they were looking at each closure proposal individually and that our response needed to be specific to individual stations rather than blanket comments covering all. This entailed trying to provide reasoned responses for 14 stations whilst for some having next to no data on which to make those responses.

Looking at every proposal we pointed out that passengers enquiring at the ticket office are often asking for additional information such as journey itineraries which are not available from the Ticket Vending Machine (TVM) on the station. These passengers will likely include those who don't have smartphones or internet access, those unable to use the internet or a TVM because of disabilities such as poor eyesight, dyslexia, learning disabilities and those who simply can't understand the options for a complicated journey even if they do have the internet.

We stressed that adequate provision must be made for these passengers before

the ticket office is closed and all TVMs must be upgraded to the best available which must include the ability to buy tickets in advance, Rover and Ranger Tickets and have a direct video link with a contact centre who can discuss your requirements and to tell the TVM to print the appropriate ticket. All of these features are available at some TVMs so I can see no reason why they can't be available at all.

Looking at individual TOCs, the only station for Northern Trains was Worksop where the ticket office is proposed to be replaced by a 'Journey Maker' working less hours. A particular issue is the toilets at Worksop which are opened on request by the ticket office. A positive feature for Northern Trains is that the range of tickets available is probably the most comprehensive of any TOC.

Turning to TransPennine Express (TPE), who are also replacing ticket offices with staff on the platform but for less hours, my first thought was 'what's new?' given that I receive frequent complaints already about ticket offices being closed at times when they are advertised as open. I experienced this myself one day at Cleethorpes and all I can say is that I hope the staff after closure are better trained than the TPE individual walking around the station when I was there. His knowledge was abysmal and didn't even have the code to open the gents toilet!

LNER are proposing to close ticket offices but instead have Customer Information Points. These might be acceptable provided that they are adequately staffed with well trained individuals who can help passengers extract from the TVM the correct ticket. Retford needs special consideration in that many of the station users are actually going to the lower platforms to travel by Northern Trains. For Northern this is a ►

◀ Penalty Fare station yet I couldn't see any way to extract a Permission to Travel ticket from the LNER TVM so having adequate staffing at busy times is a must.

EMR are proposing in general to replace the ticket offices with weekly visits by mobile staff with no commitment as to when they will visit. We told Transport Focus that we consider this too vague and to be completely inadequate provision. There is also the question of the toilets where arrangements vary by station but all involve some control from the ticket office. To take Sleaford as an example, the key is provided on request at the ticket office.

We are now waiting to hear what happens next. Transport Focus have until

the end of October to review the responses and are then supposed to discuss their views with the Train Operating Companies (TOCs). Government Ministers have made plenty of attempts to obfuscate and try to say that all these proposals have come from the Train Operators. In reality, under the National Rail Contracts, anything a Train Operator does can only be done with the permission of their paymasters at DfT. If we do see a lot of ticket office closures don't let your MP try to tell you these are Train Operator decisions. Point out to him/her where the real blame lies and remind him/her that they will be asking you for your vote during 2024.

If you would like to read the responses in full, these are the links:
branches:

- Rf generally: <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Ticket-Offices>
- Lincs Branch: <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display3454>
- EM Branch: <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display3463>



Photo: Internet image

New station café at Worksop

After being without a cafe since the start of Covid, Worksop now has a station cafe. Lesley and Jo serve an excellent selection of cakes and hot food cooked fresh to order unlike your usual coffee shop chain found on many stations. Open from 6am to 4pm Tuesday to Friday and 6am to 2pm on Saturdays.

David Harby



Photo: Alan Gouldthorpe

Photo: David Harby

Station Car Parking

This was an issue I raised at Passenger Group recently. I would be interested to know of any issues people are facing around station car parks. These might include stations no longer offering free short stay places to enable dropping off or picking up with heavy luggage or complex payment systems no longer accepting cash and maybe requiring complex telephone payments. It might include unsafe car parks at busy times as I recently experienced in Scunthorpe which was a no

go area for pedestrians as 2 trains arrived at once at peak time and disgorged high numbers of passengers all trying to get out the car park at the same time.

I know that some of these issues are causing some passengers to seek nearby on-street parking and avoid the station car park. It would be useful to know, to judge whether there is an issue to take back to Passenger Group. Do let me know on 01724 712337 or ann@hindley.gn.apc.org.

Ann Hindley



Internet photo

£20 Billion Subsidy? An historical view

Recently, there has been no shortage of government ministers telling us they have spent £20 billion subsidising our railways since the inception of Covid. I agree that £20bn has been spent, but can it really be called a subsidy?

When all but essential workers were being told to stay at home, it was a government decision to keep the railways operating so these essential workers could get to work. This was to maintain an essential service. Saying that is a subsidy is hardly an accurate description. Later, when we were allowed to leave home, we were still being told to only travel if it was essential, so as to keep the use of public transport to a minimum to maintain social distancing.

We are now being told that the government are providing a £2bn subsidy to the railway. In response to this, I suggest these politicians take a history lesson. Whilst I was still at school, the 1968 Railways Act introduced the concept of providing a grant of £62 million for 3 years to finance socially necessary, but loss making, services. This list included almost every route in the current East Midlands Railway (EMR) Regional network.

Following on from this, by 1973 civil servants were again looking at ways to close loss making routes and came up with the idea to devolve routes to local authorities and fund them with a Transport Supplementary Grant which would be OK were it not that the grant was to only cover around three quarters of the cost of running the railway, with the rest funded by local ratepayers. The intention was clear. Devolve to local transport bodies without the full funding and then when the sums didn't add up it would be the local councillors who would have to propose route closures.

Nothing came of these proposals, but to all those members in areas where Transport Funding is being devolved to

local Mayors this is a cautionary tale. Is this what is now quietly being planned by HM Treasury? Closures by stealth with local politicians getting the blame?

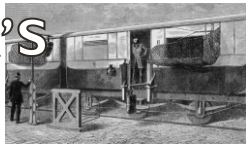
The grant system from the 1968 Railways Act was modified by the 1974 Railways Act, which introduced formally the concepts of a 'commercial' railway and a 'social' railway. This 'social' railway was mainly commuter and local passenger services which were paid for by an annual block grant to BR. This block grant is often referred to as a subsidy when politicians want to denigrate our railways but it was actually based on the concept of a 'public service obligation'.

In one form or another this concept of a public service obligation has remained with us ever since. After privatisation the block grant no longer existed but it was still there in another form in that when companies were bidding for franchises, allowances were made within the bids to cover loss making, but socially necessary services which were specified in the minimum service specification within Invitations To Tender. This gave DfT the opportunity to meddle in service levels and rolling stock provision within all our local franchises. As might be expected an opportunity they could never resist.

To me the £2bn annual funding now being provided is still a public service obligation, not a subsidy.

Whilst on the topic of funding I am grateful to Roger Ford in the November edition of *Modern Railways* for another interesting statistic. Network Rail have a debt of £58.5bn which is mainly index linked. The result of this index linking is that due to our economy collapsing, interest payments have increased from £1.8bn in 2021-22 to a predicted £3.2bn in 2022-23. Or to put it another way 40% of current fare revenue is needed just to pay the annual interest charges on Network Rail's debt. *David Harby*

EDITOR'S MAIL



Waiting at Level Crossings

I always give a groan as I enter Littlefield Lane in Grimsby only to see the level crossing gates go down. For it means that I will have a wait of over 2 minutes. But why should it be so long? In the country the gates tend to close for a maximum of 45 seconds, and that's when we can have trains passing at over 100mph. Yet in Littlefield Lane they are slowing down as they approach Grimsby Town, or haven't accelerated fully as they've just left Town station. And, there is another crossing between Littlefield Lane and the station!

So I do think the authorities are being over cautious.

Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby

Loathed to use rail

I had hoped that when the Covid restrictions were lifted, I'd be able to do a lot more travelling by train. Alas, that hasn't been the case.

Firstly we had the unreliability of services operated by TransPennine. Which has meant that if I wanted to go North of Doncaster, I would have to depend on a connection that I certainly couldn't depend on, especially if I was wanting to make a day trip somewhere.

And then there's the ongoing series of strikes or other industrial action taken by the rail unions which also creates uncertainty.

I want people to take the train rather than the car, but if I, a member of Railfuture, is loathed to use the railways, then why should I expect others to do so?

Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby.

Ticket Offices & Information Technology

The Department for Transport gives us figures about sales at ticket offices, but I think it likely that these figures are incorrect. I received an email purporting to be from Associated Train Operating Companies stating that my railcard expired on 31 August 2023. I actually renewed my railcard on 15 August 2023 at Lincoln rail station ticket office. It was due to expire on 5 September, not 31 August so if this was a genuine email they have incorrect information both about my date of renewal and stating that I had not renewed my railcard. Perhaps the technology is not up to scratch.

It is a fact of life that even if we have perfect eyesight in youth this is unlikely to last into old age. This can be influenced by occupation because people who work outdoors are likely to have better eyesight than those who work indoors and sometimes this can become genetic when we are descended from people who all work indoors, at least this has been my perception. My father's side of the family were rural people who worked outdoors and had good eyesight.

In my late teens I became short sighted through reading in poor light so I needed spectacles to correct my vision. However by my late 20s I had discovered that it was possible to use exercises to correct my vision, so by the age of 30 I no longer needed glasses. Effectively it was a case of finding a way to reset my eyes from the distortion.

From the 1970s onwards computer inputs have gradually replaced handwritten items. This has produced the advantage of IT transmission elsewhere and removed the need for paper copies. In 1992 the Health and Safety Executive introduced guidance to mitigate the

◀ problem of eyestrain because it has always been known that artificial light is bad for the eyesight. For example H&SE state that 5 to 10 minutes every hour is less stressful than 20 minutes every 2 hours.

An article entitled What is Computer Vision Syndrome? issued on 29 November 2021 states that: “These days, many of us have jobs that require us to stare at computer screens for hours at a time. This can put a real strain on your eyes”. The article continues that as we age the natural lenses in our eyes become less flexible. “Somewhere around age 40 your ability to focus on near and far objects will start to go away. Your ophthalmologist will call this condition presbyopia”. The article continues that: “There is no proof that computer use causes any long term damage to the eyes”. It ends with the recommendation that we give our eyes a break and follow the 20-20-20 rule by looking away from the screen every 20 minutes or so at something 20 feet away for about 20 seconds. Presbyopia is stated as being a typical part of the ageing process which can be corrected by using glasses or similar items.

Now that most of us have our own computers or some other form of IT it is likely that we are spending much longer in close up with artificial light. I only had my own computer in 2008 but since then I have experienced an increasing difficulty in seeing small print and looking at a screen has become more painful. This may be due

to age but it has lead me to have a cataract operation on each eye in 2019 and 2020. There is a huge waiting list for this type of operation. Although my long distance vision is still very good, close vision has become more stressful.

While it may just be my observations, there seem to be an increasing number of young people wearing spectacles. Certainly most of them appear to be addicted to IT gadgets. Officially there is no connection between the use of a computer screen and eye damage but it seems likely that long term use of IT has not been investigated. Until relatively recently dangers to health were not accepted which are now seen as factual. These include smoking, dust from asbestos and coal, use of certain types of paint and glue, and nuclear fuel to name a few. A friend who has detached retina blames excessive computer usage. While the Department for Transport is keen to have us all accessing sites by using forms of IT such as smartphones, I wonder to what extent this may be described as “A Faustian Bargain” in that we may be trading in our eyesight for the use of IT? The closure of ticket offices from our towns are seen as a necessary trade off in the name of progress but there seems to be little or no consideration for the consequential loss of this and other services which were once seen as a necessity.

Tom Rookes, Lincolnshire Branch

ECML Flooding

In early October, East Coast Main Line services were disrupted when the line was flooded north of Peascliffe Tunnel between Grantham and Newark Northgate. Flooding after heavy rain has been problematic for many years and local railway civil engineers attribute this to earthworks during the construction of a nearby golf course in the early 1990s



X (Twitter) Photograph: Roger Mortiss

Brigg Line and X90 bus service

Wolds Seaside
X90 Gainsborough - Cleethorpes
 Limited stop
 summer Saturday bus
 24 June to 2 September
 via Market Rasen

| Time | Destination | Days |
|-------|--------------|------|
| 07:00 | Gainsborough | SA |
| 07:15 | Market Rasen | SA |
| 07:30 | Cleethorpes | SA |
| 07:45 | Market Rasen | SA |
| 08:00 | Gainsborough | SA |
| 08:15 | Market Rasen | SA |
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| 00:00 | Gainsborough | SA |

Gainsborough - Cleethorpes return fare £6.40
 24 June only £4 return
 as a limited stop service bus passes are not accepted
 rail tickets are also not accepted

Readers will recall that the May timetable change saw three return services on Saturdays replaced by one return service

every weekday Monday to Friday. The return service was earlier than ideal but unfortunately timings were dictated by Brigg Line signal boxes not being open for the afternoon shift.

Our observations were that some services were very well loaded and others less so. It was clear that many passengers were only travelling to Cleethorpes on one day and returning a few days later.

Following the withdrawal of the three Saturday return trains North Notts & Lincs CRP, with financial help from Community Rail Network, arranged with Stagecoach to run a double decker bus between Gainsborough Lea Road Station and Cleethorpes via Hemswell



Photo: Alan Gouldthorpe

Cliff and Market Rasen on eleven Summer Saturdays starting on 24 June for Cleethorpes Armed Forces Day. Buses were timed to meet trains to and from Sheffield.

Despite some Saturdays with rail strikes and others with atrocious weather, the average loadings were not far below what was hoped for. *DavidHarby*

Influencing the Policymakers – Railfuture responding to consultations

Steve Jones looks at consultations as an important way for Railfuture to influence public bodies

In the June edition of SixShiresRail, we looked at Railfuture’s role in influencing the policymakers, such as the Department for Transport and the local authorities. Responding to consultations is important, as they are significant in the development of policy. The public bodies want at least to be aware of public opinion. ‘Have your say’, or ‘Your views matter’, they say, inviting anyone interested to put forward their thoughts and aspirations on a particular topic or development. Sometimes these consultations seek free-form written submissions but often they are structured around specific questions, perhaps on an online form, which we can answer. Though helpful in structuring the response, they can feel a bit like an exam paper. There is always a time limit for responses, often quite tight.

Responding to consultations is a great opportunity for Railfuture, and one we regularly take! Indeed, this is one of the most important strengths of our organisation, and therefore one of the main benefits of membership. The East Midlands and Lincolnshire Branches both keep an eye out for upcoming consultations affecting rail, and we welcome the opportunity to participate. Recent examples include:

- **Leicester Station Gateway Proposals** (April 2023), commenting on the proposed remodelling of Leicester station at street level.
- **All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the East Midlands - Inquiry into the wider social and economic benefits (and opportunities) of major infrastructure investment in the East Midlands** (June 2023). This consultation

took the form of a ‘call for evidence’. In other words, the APPG of MPs didn’t just want views and opinions on infrastructure investment in the East Midlands; they wanted evidence in support of answers to direct questions. We submitted a detailed response, pointing to independent sources of information to support our answers. We pointed out the irony that, despite being at the very centre of the nation, the region with the least per capita investment in infrastructure has such a pivotal role in transport for the entire country.

- **Ticket office closures** (September 2023). See David Harby’s separate article in this issue, on page 3
This work continues.

Under consideration at present are:

- **Design standards for accessible railway stations: a code of practice (DfT)**. This closes on 1 December 2023 and we shall be contributing towards the single-voice national Railfuture response.
- **Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan: Distribution and Logistics Preferred Approach Consultation**. This seeks views on two large industrial sites becoming available for potentially rail-served distribution centres. As such, it covers freight, though passenger transport access to employment on the sites is also relevant.

It is easy to be cynical about public consultations. There is a fear that public bodies are simply box-ticking in holding a consultation, and that they have already made up their minds and will ignore what anybody else says. However, I think that view is unhelpful. I think we achieve far more by responding, taking the ►

◀ consultation at face value. If a public body asks for our view, we would be foolish not to let them have it! We should take them at their word. At the very least, it gets Railfuture's name and role – and thereby also the importance of rail – into the consciousness of those running our public agencies. I said in the piece in the last *SixShiresRail* that we need to be both 'on the radar' and 'at the table'. Responding to consultations is a crucial way of doing just that.

Please get involved! Railfuture's strength lies in its membership, both in terms of numbers and of expertise in rail. If you are aware of relevant consultations coming up, or wish to contribute to our Branches' responses, please contact us.

Railfuture's website contains a list of national and local Branch responses to consultations:

<https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Consultation-responses>



Infrastructure investment in the East Midlands. Though we await authorisation for electrification of the whole of the Midland Main Line, it is being implemented as far as Wigston South Junction. Will the abandonment of most of HS2 improve the prospects for the Midland Main Line?

This was Kibworth, north of Market Harborough, on 7 September 2023.

Photo: Steve Jones.

Kiel Canal Bridge

Lincolnshire Branch member, Peter Honniball, describes a visit to the Kiel Canal.

In May, I joined Trevor Garrod's party to Lubeck, an attractive town in north Germany. Among the various train trips we made from there, one stood out and that was our visit to the Kiel Canal. The canal, which is 61 miles long and was completed in 1895, links the North Sea to the Baltic Sea and saves shipping from a much longer route around Denmark.

We took a train from Kiel on the eastern side of the canal to Rendsburg on the western side and found ourselves ascending gradually for about half a mile on a double track which crossed the canal with a clearance of 42 metres and then lost height as the train looped to the north until we found ourselves travelling beneath another railway which, I belatedly realised, was the track over which we had just passed. We completed a loop all elevated before reaching the station at Rendsburg at

ground level.

This astonishing piece of engineering known as the Rendsburgh High Bridge was necessitated as Rendsburgh was too close to the canal to provide the long slow incline needed to climb to 42 metres.

We made our way to the canal at the spot where the bridge crossed and found that there was a transporter bridge hanging from the rail bridge. This took traffic across the canal. I was amazed that this extra weight could be accommodated in addition to freight trains which might be passing over the top at the same time.

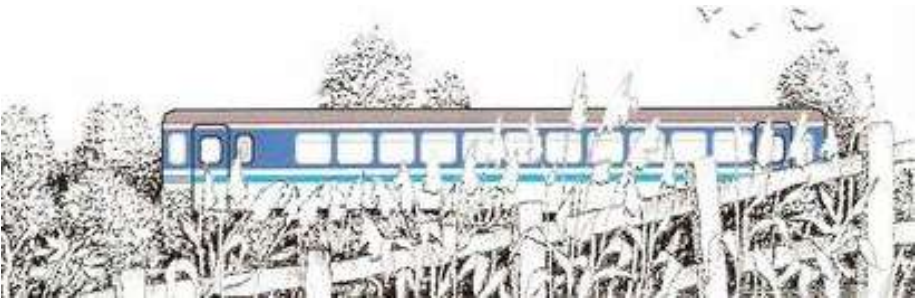
The construction was a dull metallic colour and I wondered what maintenance was necessary as this structure was far longer than the Forth Bridge with its traditional non stop painting, (now perhaps no longer needed after the last refurbishment).

Map of the route (from Wikipedia):





The photographs by Chris Burton show the structure in all its magnificence.



Friends of the Barton Line

- All Barton Line trains are now booked to be 2-car Class 170 units, although there have been occasional Class 158 substitutions. East Midlands Railway (EMR) no longer operate any Class 156 units. Industrial action apart, reliability during the summer months was generally good. However, there have been too many occasions of tickets not sold on the trains.
- On 26 June, the Rail Operations Group conducted a trial run of an LNER Azuma trains between Doncaster-Lincoln-Cleethorpes-Doncaster. Running as empty stock, the exercise was with a view to starting a regular passenger service

between Cleethorpes and London Kings Cross from May 2024.

- The Class 68 loco-hauled TransPennine services in and out of Cleethorpes have reverted permanently to Class 185 units.
- Unfortunately, there are many reports of anti-social behaviour on the Line, including stolen solar panels at Stallingborough and Healing. In response, EMR were sending Travel Safe Officers along the Line twice a week. Barton station is now a priority British Transport Police location.

Anthony Berridge



Photo: LNER
X (Twitter)

Funding for Community Events through your Community Rail Partnership (CRP)

Many Railfuture members will be aware of the existence of 'Community Rail'. Most of the East Midlands Railway (EMR) stations now have volunteer 'adopters' that are usually managed through a local Community Rail Partnership; these groups are the 'eyes and ears' for the Train Operating Company (TOC) at the station, helping reduce damage and vandalism and traditionally improving the environment by planting and maintaining flower beds. Many stations also have interesting posters and artwork from local organisations usually thanks to local connections from the station adopter group.

Less widely known is that the CRP has funds to help local community voluntary groups that are located in an area served by the rail line covered by that CRP. The way CRPs are established and managed does vary, some are closely linked to a local authority, others are independently constituted but all receive the majority of funding from the relevant TOC's and have this requirement to offer funds to local voluntary groups.

Examples of community projects supported by CRP funds can be found on the website of the 'umbrella' organisation nationally for CRP's – the Community Rail Network on www.communityrail.org.uk. I suggest you look at some of the projects that have won awards at their recent annual events.

Locally we were successful in getting

support for a proposal to offer a group from our local 'Memory Café' in Radcliffe on Trent a trip on the Poacher Line to Sleaford where EMR organised a light lunch and some entertainment. As you may be aware, Sleaford station has been very sympathetically restored and the old waiting room is now a community meeting room. It provided an excellent destination for the outing.

So last month, a group of a dozen members of the 'Memory Café' group enjoyed the rail trip and the entertainment in Sleaford. The opportunity to ride on the train rekindled memories in some and the day out gave the carers in the party a much-needed break from their normal routine. As expected, all EMR staff involved were sensitive to the needs of such a group and enthusiastically helpful.

It is sometimes not easy trying to identify a project that Community Rail can and are willing to support, but usually they look to help disadvantaged members of society develop (or in our case, remember) a link to the railway. If you have any ideas and would like help to see if community rail funding would be available, please feel free to contact me at

phil.thomas@railfuture.org.uk



*EMR Class 170
at
Radcliffe on Trent
Photo:
Phil Thomas*

RAILFUTURE LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH AGM

Hopefully, the 2024 AGM will be held in March 2024, Further details will be notified later. Branch Officers' reports will be in the next *SixShiresRail*.

The purpose of this notice is to remind members that the posts of Hon. Chairman, Hon Vice Chairman, and Hon Secretary are open to all fully paid up members of the Lincolnshire Branch of Railfuture.

In accordance with the Branch procedures, members wishing to stand for these posts are invited to inform the Hon Secretary in writing before 31 December 2023.

Any person wishing to stand should provide the Hon Secretary with a signed written declaration of willingness to stand along with a 100 word manifesto which will be published in the next *SixShiresRail*. The declaration must be supported in writing by another fully paid up member of the Lincolnshire Branch of Railfuture.

No canvassing for votes is permitted other than the manifesto published in *SixShiresRail* and the question and answer session at the AGM.

Similarly fully paid up members of the Lincolnshire Branch of Railfuture wishing to join the Branch Committee should provide a signed declaration of willingness to stand with signed support by another fully paid up member of the Lincolnshire Branch of Railfuture to the Hon Secretary by 31 December 2023. No manifesto is required for Committee membership.

If there is only one candidate for each of the four executive posts then there will be no election and the meeting will be asked to ratify the selection. In this case the manifestos will not be published.

Dr Don Peacock Hon Secretary, Lincolnshire Branch

RAILFUTURE EAST MIDLANDS BRANCH AGM

A reminder that the Railfuture East Midlands Branch AGM will be held around April 2024.

Details and further information will be included in *SixShiresRail* 3 to be published in February 2024.

EAST MIDLANDS BRANCH

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

Vice-Chair: *Terry Holt*

Secretary: *Steve Jones steve.jones@railfuture.org.uk*

Email: *eastmidlands@railfuture.org.uk*

EM Branch Web-page: <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/East-Midlands-Branch>

EM Branch Twitter handle: *@RailfutureEMids* <https://twitter.com/RailfutureEMids>

LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH

Chair: *David Harby - david.harby@railfuture.org.uk*

Vice-Chair: *Phil Mason - philmasonlnera4@gmail.com*

Secretary: *Don Peacock - don.peacock@railfuture.org.uk*

Lincolnshire Branch's Twitter handle: *@RailfutureLincs*

Direct link to Branch News: <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Lincolnshire+Branch>

www.railfuture.org.uk

Direct link to Branch News visit:

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

Follow the Branch on
@RailfutureLincs  (Formerly Twitter)

SixShiresRail 3 will be published in February 2024.

Please let the Editor, Phil Mason, 10 Cottesmore Close, Grantham NG31 9JL, philmasonlnera4@gmail.com have copy by 20 January.

The views and comments expressed in Rail Lincs are not necessarily those of Railfuture.

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