

## From your Branch Chairman

The beginning of the year is traditionally the time to look ahead. This year my railway crystal ball is distinctly cloudy, especially on the national scene where so much depends on decisions from our new Government.

Top of the agenda is the Williams Review of franchising and where we go from here. There have been 30 previous rail reviews since 2006 which have just resulted in some tinkering with the franchise system, so I don't hold out much hope that this one will be any different. As before, if the politicians don't like what they are being told it will just be shelved.

Another topic waiting for a political decision is HS2. The eastern leg of HS2 will get no closer to Lincolnshire than Toton and Sheffield but the go ahead for the eastern leg is crucial for long term expansion of our inter urban services. There are serious Midlands Connect

plans for a direct Lincoln to Birmingham service, but this can only happen when space is freed up by transferring the fast Nottingham to Birmingham services to HS2. Likewise we will not see any more East Coast Main Line services serving intermediate stations until the fast Leeds – London services move to HS2.

By the time you read this we may have a decision on the mess that is Northern Railway. Is it going to the operator of last resort? Will it be split into an Eastern and Western Train Operating Company (TOC)? Whatever the decision it isn't going to be an instant fix to all the current troubles. Junctions to the north of Sheffield station will still be trying to cope with more services than was ever designed for. Without some service reduction, late running trains are a certainty. Likewise services in the Manchester area unless the same happens between Manchester Piccadilly and Oxford Road.

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## BRANCH AGM

**Saturday, 7 March**

**St. Swithin's Community Centre**

**Baggholme Road,**

**Lincoln**

***Details page 5***

*A pair of Azumas working the Lincoln service passing at Collingham.  
Photo: Graham Lightfoot.*



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There are press reports that the Government is going to change the way that schemes are appraised financially to decide which are approved. Currently two schemes costing exactly the same do not stand an equal chance if one is in a densely populated area and the other is in rural Lincolnshire. The one in the densely populated area will get the approval because the financial benefit per head of population is higher. A change to this method that benefits the rich South East at our expense cannot come soon enough.

Looking forward to branch activity in 2020, we plan to again attend some exhibitions and shows to promote Railfuture. We will continue to press for

station improvements such as more shelters at Gainsborough Lea Rd and Hykeham and replacement of the footbridge at Lincoln Central with something much wider and with cover from the weather.

By the time you read this, we will have responded to East Midlands Railway (EMR) and Northern timetable consultations for December 2020. We will then be moving on to lobbying for the December 2021 timetable when the rest of Lincolnshire services are due to be revised. A full Sunday service on all routes throughout the year will be high on our agenda, especially the Joint Line where there is still no confirmation that we will see a Sunday service south of Lincoln.

*David Harby, Branch Chairman*

## A New Platform at Gainsborough Lea Road



*Gainsborough Town Mayor welcomes new train to new platform*

improvements at Lea Road station. Combined they make trains an attractive option for travel to and from Gainsborough, our growing town”

Barry Coward, Chair of North Notts and Lincs Community Rail Partnership said “We welcome the new platform as the first step in upgrading Lea Road station.”

A new platform 1, mirroring platform 2 is planned to be opened in spring 2021.

It was in the summer of 2016 when we invited Ian Prosser, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Railways to visit Lea Road. Alighting from the train was his first difficulty. Ian is short in stature and has a club foot and the tight curve at which the platform was sited resulted in a big gap to navigate. After Ian’s visit, Network Rail suddenly took note of Lea Road.

*Barry Coward*

At 07:03 on Monday 16 December, Councillor Keith Panter, Gainsborough Town Council’s Mayor, welcomed the first train to stop at Lea Road station’s new platform 2.

The new platform replaces the original platform 2 which was on a tight curve. Passengers will no longer have to step across a wide gap to board or alight.

Councillor Panter said “Following the introduction of a hourly service to Sheffield from Central station last May, I now welcome these further

## HELPSTON SIGNAL BOX

Reading the item about the Signal Box Open Days at Helpston in *Rail Lincs 85*, took me back to the early 1960s, when I was a student in Coventry – returning home to Boston for the holidays. Despite being fully-funded (unlike today's students) I still needed to earn some “holiday money” and my choice was a job as a travelling ice-cream salesman round rural south Lincolnshire, despite only having passed my driving test a few months earlier. The small Lyons Maid depot was almost alongside Sutterton & Algarkirk station, which I think was then goods only – the line being taken up a few years later. Driving round fixed routes, I drove past many rural stations, some of which were closed even then: Moulton, Pinchbeck, Twenty, Bourne, Gosberton, Morton, Ripplingale, Littleworth. Wednesdays saw me tackle my longest journey, some 80 miles of stop-start driving and selling, and lunch-time would find me just north of Peterborough.

After taking a lunch-break in Helpston village, sitting in the sunshine beside the memorial to the poet John Clare, I would strike up the Bedford van (3-speed, column-change!) and make my way to Maxey. This entailed driving over Helpston crossing which, in those days, consisted of a series of traditional crossing gates. Depending on the timings, I would sometimes find the first set of gates open and the major set of gates closed. I soon learned to drive over the first set of railway lines and wait for the main line to clear, otherwise I could be kept waiting for ages. The memory of the first time when the first set of gates then closed behind me - thus leaving me “stranded” between the two sets of lines - is still with me. Very weird!!

*Richard Hackford, Crosby, Merseyside*

## WISHING FOR DIRECT LONDON SERVICES

Regarding your suggestions for future East Midlands Railway services, as a Grimsby resident I feel it is more important to have good connections with the East Coast Main Line at Newark North Gate (*Rail Lincs 85*) for those going to London. Mind you, given that Lincoln now has a two-hourly London service, I can't help wishing that we in North East Lincolnshire had such direct trains.

*Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby.*

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## Azumas to Lincoln – more than an intercity service

The introduction of bi-modal Azuma trains has enabled LNER to provide six return services from Lincoln to London Kings Cross, Monday to Saturday with one less on Sunday. This is a step-change for Lincoln providing increased travel opportunities for tourists, students and businesses.

For the first time since closure in 1965 of the direct route from Honington Junction, the city now has a reasonably good connection with the East Coast Main Line from London via Newark North Gate. When the line from Honington

Junction closed, the current Eastern spur at Newark flat-crossing was constructed and services ran from Kings Cross to Lincoln and on to Cleethorpes, albeit infrequent.

The new service was launched in increments, without fanfare, from 21 October 2019, yet there appears to be little recognition that in addition to the county city having improved rail connections, Grantham, one of the largest towns in the county, now has a

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good connection with the city of Lincoln for the first time in fifty-five years. Prior to this, travellers from Grantham had been put-off using public transport to Lincoln when faced with a lengthy bus journey or the rail journey to Lincoln involving an often lengthy wait for connections at Newark North Gate, not helped by the lack of liaison between operators of the ECML and Newark North Gate to Lincoln route. Fortunately today, timekeeping is more robust where a connection between LNER and East Midlands Railway services is still necessary. However, unfortunately reliability the Azuma service has not been without problems with services being cancelled due to delays in delivery of new units and driver

training, not to mention a shunting incident at Neville Hill Depot, Leeds, which reduced the availability of the new trains.

The new Azuma service offers travellers from Grantham the opportunity to leave the town at, say 11:20 on Saturday, arriving Lincoln 12:01 and returning home on the 15:24 or 17:27 from Lincoln, arriving Grantham 16:06 or 18:29 – ideal for a day's shopping! Perhaps LNER should indulge in some local advertising to make the service widely known.

A request to LNER: will train announcers at Grantham please state that the next call for a northbound train is *Newark North Gate* and not just Northgate!  
*Phil Mason*

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## **Lincolnshire Goes to Yorkshire**

As a result of living in North Lincolnshire (the industrial bit near the Humber) and being a regular user of the Doncaster to Scunthorpe line, I've been invited to a number of meetings and consultations by the Yorkshire branch. This led to their chair, Nina Smith, giving me a title of Yorkshire/Lincolnshire Liaison when ITV News needed someone to talk about rail fare increases at Doncaster Station last summer!

It was in this role that I attended the Yorkshire Railfuture AGM in Leeds at the end of January and heard Steve Hopkinson from Northern speak about developments. At this stage, they were still unsure what was going to happen to the franchise. What he did know was that they were now in possession of 85 new trains, 64 of which were in service. Drivers are being trained on them but they are experiencing crew shortages partly because of shortages and partly through leakage to other TOCs.

Class 142 and 144 (Pacers) are to be fully withdrawn by May 2020 and the new

Class 195s will dominate the fleet (Hurrah!). However, it will be Class 150s Doncaster to Scunthorpe and Sheffield to Gainsborough. Hope Valley will be the last to lose Pacers.

On the 17 February, there will be minor timetable changes affecting Nottingham to Lincoln and Sheffield to Lincoln. He reported success in negotiations with ASLEF to accommodate Sunday working which will have an impact in the North West quite soon, but will, hopefully, open the way to a seven day railway, subject to train availability as Sunday is a day for maintenance.

Feedback from attenders at the meeting included the unpopularity of seat reservations on the new Northern trains. It's more important to improve capacity. More and more people are using the train which will increase as more cities close their streets to road traffic. It was also noted that the changes to the Lincoln service and extension to Gainsborough Central were encouraging

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# **railfuture** Lincolnshire Branch ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, 7th March at St. Swithin's Community Centre  
Baggholme Road, Lincoln commencing at 13:15 *Directions on page 8*

## Timetable:

- 13:00 Assemble – Complimentary coffee or tea available  
13:15 AGM (Agenda below)  
14:15 Break – Complimentary coffee or tea available  
14:30 **FORUM/DISCUSSION led by Ian Brown, CBE FCILT Railfuture Policy Director**  
**Looking at big issues facing our rail network. HS2, Franchises, electrification, fare restructuring, quality of service and anything else that crops up.**  
16:00 Meeting Closes

*please support this event*

*This year it has proved difficult for the branch committee to find a suitable speaker to address the AGM. There are various reasons including the franchise upheavals and unavailability of potential speakers on a Saturday afternoon, coupled with this is the poor attendance at the AGM in recent years, which means we cannot justify inviting a high profile speaker from the rail industry to travel some distance to address the meeting*

## BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Dear Member,

The Annual General Meeting of the branch will take place on Saturday, 7 March 2020 at St. Swithin's Community Centre, Baggholme Road, Lincoln LN2 5AX.

### AGM AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of 2019 meeting
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Report by David Harby
5. Hon. Secretary's Report by Dr Don Peacock
6. Financial Report – Branch Income & Expenditure Account (see page 8)
7. Election of Officers:
  - a) Chairman
  - b) Vice Chairman
  - c) Hon Secretary
  - d) Budget Holder
  - e) other committee members
8. Any other urgent business (notice of items appreciated by Hon Secretary before meeting commences or telephone 01652 688549)

Yours sincerely, Don Peacock, Hon Secretary  
1 Queens Road, Barnetby le Wold DN38 6JH. Tel: 01652 688549

*No members contacted the Hon Secretary to stand for the posts of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary and therefore there will be no candidates' statements published and no voting carried out at the AGM. Branch full members can volunteer to join the committee at the AGM.*

*Dr Don Peacock, Hon Secretary*

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more passengers.

Looking at the year ahead, Yorkshire Railfuture is going to be running campaigns on the following:

- \* illuminated signs on stations
- \* signage at key stations in languages other than English
- \* minimum standards for train interiors

\* issues of overcrowding on Cross Country trains.

# **Chairman's Report to be presented at the 2020 AGM**

## **2019 A year of success**

Welcome to my report for 2019 in which it gives me great pleasure to be reporting a very successful year.

The highlight of the year was Monday 20 May when we saw the return of weekday services to Gainsborough Central for the first time in over 25 years. Gainsborough Central now has 13 trains per day to Sheffield calling at all stations.

The next station to see new services was Lincoln Central when on 21 October LNER started operating their extra daily services to London Kings Cross. Initially this was 4 extra services on Monday to Friday only, with weekend services starting on 7 December for the Lincoln Christmas Market and a full seven day service from 15 December. From a token 1 return service per day, Lincoln now has 6 return services to London Kings Cross Monday to Saturday with 1 less on Sundays.

Another Lincolnshire station to benefit from improvements in December was Habrough, where after 20 years of campaigning, local users finally achieved their target of all of the hourly Cleethorpes to Manchester Airport services calling at the station.

December saw Northern Rail introduce their new Class 195 units on Lincoln – Sheffield – Leeds services. These are a transformation from the mixed bag of 20+ year old rolling stock that was previously used.

The new East Midlands Railway (EMR) franchise, run by Abellio, was launched on 19 August. This comes with promises that the long awaited timetable improvements in Lincolnshire will all be in place by December 2021 along with better quality rolling stock.

There is one factor that is common to all these successes and that is all of them have not come quickly. Every one has taken at least 5 years to come to fruition from the initial lobbying, some such as the LNER service to London, was a target 15 years ago. The lesson learned is we have to be patient and keep on campaigning until we are successful.

We have also seen some infrastructure improvements confirmed. Both Spalding and Retford are to have their long awaited lifts installed. The new Platform 2 at Gainsborough Lea Road opened on 16 December with a new Platform 1 expected during 2020. There is totally inadequate waiting shelters on Platform 2 and we have made strong representations to EMR for at least one more shelter.

On the negative side, the flooding in June around Wainfleet caused considerable disruption to Poacher Line services. These services also suffered throughout the year due to a shortage of rolling stock. Two factors contributed to this unsatisfactory situation. Class 156 and 158 units were away from service whilst improvements were made to their disabled facilities. These units along with the Class 153s are also starting to show their age and breaking down ever more frequently. Thankfully they should all be gone by December 2021 to be replaced by Class 170 units of similar age but better quality.

Away from the new rolling stock and train services, the day to day branch activities have continued. We have kept close contact with all four Train Operating Companies active in Lincolnshire and had numerous meetings and copious email correspondence with them on many issues over the past year.

We have also liaised closely with Yorkshire and East Midlands branches over issues of mutual concern. The remoteness of Platform 0 at Doncaster and what we consider to be an inadequate connection time allowed in timetables for passengers to reach Platform 0 has been an ongoing concern.

The one really sad news item came in March with the passing of Paul Jowett. Paul had been an active transport campaigner for many, many years and is missed not just by his friends within Railfuture but also his friends in the many other local organisations that he had supported.

I don't normally single out anyone for special mention but this year I'm making an exception.

During the year the branch has had exhibition stands at Caistor Rail Show and an important international 2-day conference at Lincoln University in August. Thanks are especially due to committee member Ann Hindley for doing the behind the scenes organisation and to everyone who helped out on the days. We also helped out at a stand organised by East Midlands branch at the Great Central Model Rail show in Quorn.

Phil Mason has edited and printed *Rail Lincs* now for 22 years which is an exceptional level of dedication for which he deserves the thanks of the whole branch membership. There are few other Railfuture branches who have a newsletter that is as comprehensive as *Rail Lincs*.

Stephen Moir has joined the branch committee during 2019. I would personally like to thank all committee members for their contributions during the year and again make no apologies for mentioning that none of us are getting any younger and for saying that I do hope we see some more new (and younger) blood on the committee next year.

*David Harby, Branch Chairman*

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## **Hon Secretary's Report to be presented at the 2020 AGM**

Another busy year as you will see from the Chairman's Report. The committee members have put in a lot of effort on various projects for which I thank them.

There will be no election for Chairman, Vice-Chairman, or Secretary because there has been no member proposed and seconded for these posts. The lack of volunteers to become committee members is a matter of concern. As the Chairman has pointed out the committee needs new members preferably ones which will reduce the average age. This also applies to recruitment to the Branch in general. Railfuture in general is looking at this problem nationally. The work of Ann Hindley and the subcommittee on this has identified a number of possible strategies. One of these is having a Branch stall at certain events such as model railway exhibitions, Lincolnshire Show, Green Fairs and annual fairs and events. This as you will realise will require a lot of time and it is something that the committee hope would appeal to our members who although they do not want to commit their time to committee work might give a half or full day to staffing the Branch stall.

The committee has also devoted a lot of time to work relating to Transport for the North. Greater Lincolnshire (North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire and the shire county of Lincolnshire) is effectively marginalised by both the Northern Powerhouse which deals with Yorkshire and the Humber but at best sees Humber as being Hull and totally ignoring what used to be South Humberside (North/North East Lincolnshire), and Midlands Engine does not consider Lincolnshire as really in its domain. We spend a lot of time pointing out the error of their ways in any consultation document. It would help if the membership monitored the online output of Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Connect and respond to point out that we are here and want to be considered and, if possible, told me what they had done. It seems that on their maps the region east of the ECML is a blank space with "Here be dragons" on it. There is no consolation in knowing that Cumbria and England north of York/Newcastle feel similarly marginalised.

I will conclude by saying next year is not expected to be less busy and that if members can help share the work load by joining the committee they will be very welcome. I acknowledge that "Greater Lincolnshire" is a large area and not very well provided for in public transport (bus and rail) or roads and so travel can be difficult. However the committee does provide for committee members to be corresponding members providing reports and drawing attention to issues in their areas to the Committee.

*Dr Don Peacock, Hon Secretary*

# North & North East Lincolnshire News

- TransPennine Express (TPE) introduced two new services on the South TPE route from 15 December 2019. These are the 05:21 Sheffield – Cleethorpes (Mon – Sat) and the 21:26 Cleethorpes – Sheffield (Mon – Fri), 21:16(Sun).

- From the new timetable TPE has been running a number of six-car trains (2x3) into and out of Cleethorpes. Unfortunately at present only the front 3-car unit is open westbound between Cleethorpes and Doncaster and eastbound between Scunthorpe and Cleethorpes, with both units being open on the west end of the route. The front 3 coaches are detached when the train reverses at Manchester Piccadilly, meaning that passengers from northern Lincolnshire stations travelling to Manchester Airport must change

carriages. All six coaches will come into use when TPE introduce Automatic Selective Door Opening.

- On Monday 3 February 2020, Transpennine Express introduced penalty fares across its network. Penalty fares do not apply at Habrough due to a lack of facilities for passengers to pay their fares at this station.

- The transfer of the Barton Line from Northern Trains to Abellio East Midlands Railway will go ahead at a date to be determined, likely to be the December timetable change. Operation of the trains and management of the stations may transfer on different dates.

- Despite the deadline of 31 December 2019 for trains to be made accessible for persons of reduced mobility, temporary dispensation has been issued to allow

unmodified Class 153s to run on the Barton Line, between Doncaster and Scunthorpe and between Newark and Grimsby. Unmodified Class 144s have temporary dispensation to operate between Doncaster and Scunthorpe. Class 185s continue to work the first and last trains on the Barton Line, despite the coach containing the wheelchair spaces and universal access toilet being locked out of use on these services.

*Tom Irvin (FoBL)  
Mike Savage*

<b>Railfuture Lincolnshire Branch Income &amp; Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2019</b>		
	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Opening balance</b>	304.81	429.85
<b>Income</b>		
Funding from national funds	877.00	740.00
New members	0.00	15.00
Donations	41.00	31.00
<b>Total income</b>	<u>918.00</u>	<u>786.00</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Branch campaigns	392.00	398.00
Branch AGM	84.00	84.00
Branch admin	73.50	112.00
Branch newsletter	342.16	317.04
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<u>891.66</u>	<u>911.04</u>
<b>Closing balance</b>	<u>331.15</u>	<u>304.81</u>
Prepared by David Harby Acting National Finance Officer 12 January 2020		

# Annual Passenger Journeys from Office of Rail & Road Data

Station	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Althorpe	10,702	9818	7,978
Ancaster	7,162	6,572	5,904
Barnetby	63,100	71,268	73,998
Barrow Haven	1,526	1,432	1,916
Barton-On-Humber	39,784	39,488	39,798
Bleasby	6,808	8,014	7,426
Boston	211,824	217,872	226,940
Brigg	1,710	1,688	928
Burton Joyce	11,542	16,270	16,084
Carlton	46,578	54,316	54,632
Cleethorpes	288,094	285,412	296,002
Collingham	102,974	114,322	116,434
Crowle	29,164	28,354	26,956
Fiskerton	26,760	32,822	37,102
Doncaster	3,825,644	3,857,370	3,917,948
Gainsborough Central	996	970	1,494
Gainsborough Lea Road	156,776	159,670	164,188
Goxhill	13,334	14,362	13,716
Grantham	1,369,610	1,364,650	1,413,006
Great Coates	10,354	11,144	11,042
Grimsby Docks	4,574	4,502	4,830
Grimsby Town	438,050	454,166	456,768
Habrough	33,724	33,412	39,172
Havenhouse	106	172	158
Healing	9,822	8,820	8,490
Heckington	64,624	66,576	66,494
Hubberts Bridge	1,182	1,412	1,262
Hykeham	107,614	143,482	176,244
Kirton Lindsey	358	290	190
Lincoln	1,816,018	1,864,830	1,963,938
Lowdham	57,236	67,308	72,494
Market Rasen	66,398	64,264	69,840
Metheringham	99,704	99,490	101,878
New Clee	1,286	1,236	1,720
New Holland	14,996	14,254	14,488
Newark Castle	752,394	767,494	802,590
Newark Northgate	900,824	918,902	960,922
Nottingham	7,468,864	7,858,974	8,004,938
Peterborough	4,774,744	4,909,286	5,059,576
Rauceby	10,948	9,714	10,256
Retford	506,900	507,008	519,976
Rolleston	5,532	6,418	6,608
Ruskington	91,016	89,726	82,020
Saxilby	64,358	67,130	75,172
Scunthorpe	415,526	417,530	417,880
Skegness	349,008	357,428	350,864
Sleaford	316,570	309,326	310,906
Spalding	189,884	188,596	193,034
Stallingborough	10,602	10,112	9,460
Stamford	355,532	375,616	384,560
Swinderby	14,462	17,616	18,026

Station	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Swineshead	3,686	3,406	3,508
Thornton Abbey	1,040	1,042	1,114
Thorpe Culvert	210	148	258
Thurgarton	2,470	2,156	3,462
Ucelby	6,598	7,872	7,320
Wainfleet	46,326	47,216	42,160
Worksop	490,276	459,200	440,390

## NOTES

Figures are based on tickets sold so the substantial numbers who travel from some stations without buying a ticket are not counted.

There has been a steady increase in passengers from most stations but there are notable exceptions.

The 2 trains per hour Monday to Friday Newark Castle to Nottingham service, along with a better service from Hykeham, Collingham and Swinderby, started in May 2015 with, an improved Saturday service in May 2016. After a large increase at Castle Line stations after the service improvement the figures are still growing at most of them.

Hykeham is a big success story with another 23% increase over last year. Our observations and discussions with passengers tell us that it is being used as a park and ride station from north of Lincoln in preference to Lincoln. That is in addition to substantial local growth from the nearby new housing developments.

In. 2016/17 Rauceby gained an additional stop which enabled school travel to Sleaford and this could be seen in the figures. This increase has been maintained.

Market Rasen is constrained by an irregular service and crowded trains. Now all services are 2-car and the service goes regular 2-hourly from December 2020 we can expect an improvement above average.

When all routes go to regular hourly from December 2021 we can expect some increases similar to the Castle Line 3 years ago.

The figures for Gainsborough Central are for the period before the weekday hourly service started.



## Getting to the AGM

*Please support the AGM on 7 March*

Branch meetings are held at St. Swithin's Community Centre on the corner of Croft Street and Baggholme Road, LN2 5AX, ten minutes walk from Lincoln railway station. From the station, cross St. Mary's Street and head for Sincil Street (via Norman Street), at end of Sincil Street, cross River Witham by footbridge to Waterside north, pass Witch & Wardrobe public house, then to Thorngate and left on to Broadgate, crossing the dual carriageway at the pedestrian crossing. After the crossing, bear left into St. Rumbold Street. Continue on St. Rumbold Street into Croft Street. Entrance to St. Swithin's Centre is on your right, near the junction with Baggholme Road.

If travelling by car. Proceed southbound down Broadgate and turn left into St. Rumbold Street (just past the Premier Inn) or into Waterside North. There is no parking at, or close to, St. Swithin's Centre. The most convenient car park is Siemen's Car Park (available weekends only) situated between St. Rumbold Street and Waterside North. Walk to St. Swithin's Centre via St. Rumbold Street, as described above. (approx. 5/10 minutes).

# RAILFUTURE LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH COMMITTEE 2019 – 2020:



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# A Commemoration with a positive message

A year of events to commemorate the closure 50 years ago of the East Lincolnshire Line and all the branch lines between Lincoln and the East Coast started on 23 January with the naming of 158 864 “ELR50 Visit Lincolnshire in 2020” at Skegness station.

As outlined by the Butlin’s Manager, when he spoke at the naming, the loss of most of our railways was a serious blow to the towns of East Lincolnshire. Now 50 years after these closures ELR50 aims to put on a year of events that will bring visitors back to these towns. Among the events planned are a 60 day long exhibition of hundreds of items of railway history at Bateman’s in Wainfleet, a steam special from Kings Cross to Skegness hauled by 6100 *Royal Scot* which was originally preserved at Butlin’s Skegness, special events with Magnificent Mabel Roadshow at Mablethorpe, Sutton-on-Sea and other locations, a film show and special steam running days at the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway. Batemans are brewing a special ELR50 beer. For a full list of events have a look at [www.elrevents.co.uk](http://www.elrevents.co.uk). All surpluses raised from the ELR50 events will be donated to the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway line extension fund.



*Mablethorpe Town Crier with the nameplate.  
Photo: Philip Eldridge, LWR newsletter editor*

*David Harby*

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## Record track laying at Grantham

Network Rail has invested £2.1 million to replace track south of Grantham over the Christmas Day and Boxing Day period, using the latest Track Renewal System track machine, as part of the East Coast Main Line upgrade scheme. Over 2.4 miles was replaced from Christmas Eve to the 27 December in record time. The Track Renewal System machine can relay up to half a mile of track per night, and was used constantly over the Christmas and Boxing Day period, as no trains were running on the East Coast Main Line.

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**[www.railfuture.org.uk](http://www.railfuture.org.uk)**

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Please let the Editor Phil Mason, 10 Cottesmore Close, Grantham NG31 9JL, [phil.mason@trackprint.net](mailto:phil.mason@trackprint.net) have copy by 9 May.

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