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**RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY**

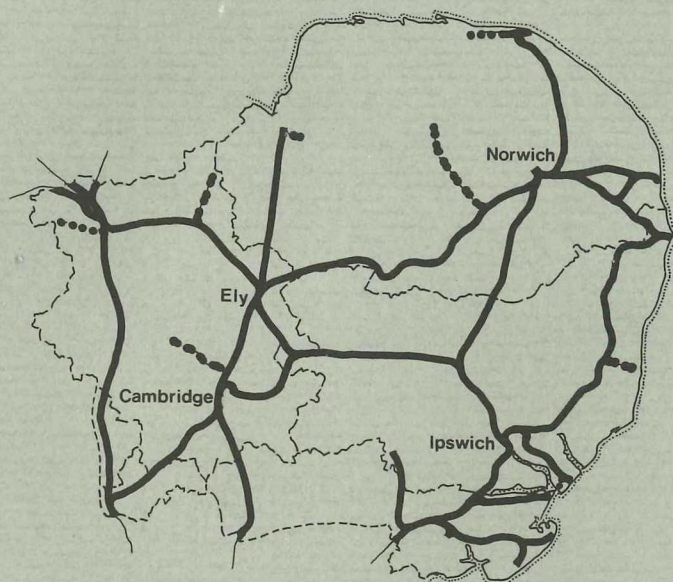
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# Rail East

**A Voice for Rail Users**

No 60 Autumn-Winter 1986-7



Cambridge Electrification  
Road Policy Fallacies  
Railfreight Latest

Newsletter of the  
**EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH**

RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY  
EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH

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Trevor Garrod, 15 Clapham Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1RQ  
(tel. 81721)

The full Branch Committee meets at least four times a year.

The Printing & Publications Sub-committee is appointed by the Branch Committee, and presently consists of Bryan Davey (Secretary, 88 St George's Road, Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 9YA), Peter Lawrence, Peter Wakefield, Louis Hipperson and Trevor Garrod, with the Chairman and Secretary *ex officio*.

Lewis Buckingham is responsible for the Branch exhibition material, and is always pleased to hear from members with suggestions for places where it can be displayed, such as local libraries and building societies.

Peter Lawrence, as Branch Membership Secretary, keeps up-to-date records of paid-up members, addresses, etc. The coding on the label on the envelope containing this issue of *Rail East* tells you when your subscription is due. For instance, "86.03" means that you were due to renew on 1 March 1986.

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The Railway Development Society is a national, independent, voluntary body representing rail users and campaigning for the retention, modernisation and greater use of rail transport for both passengers and freight.

The East Anglian Branch covers Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, plus north Essex (as far south as Kelvedon and Bishops Stortford), north Hertfordshire (as far south as Hitchin) and east Bedfordshire (Arlesey, Biggleswade and Sandy).

# RAIL EAST

No 60

AUTUMN-WINTER  
1986-7

Editor: John Brodribb, 12 Kemp's Lane, BECCLES, Suffolk NR34 9XA (0502) 716961

## OBITUARY

It is with very deep regret that we report the death of David Jones, British Rail's Area Manager at Norwich, on 31 August. He had been in the post for only four months, but in that time had strongly committed Anglia Rail to the drive for improved standards of punctuality and cleanliness. We extend our sympathy to his wife.

## TRANSPORT USERS' CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

The TUCC reports for 1985/86 appeared just too late for the last *Rail East*, so a very brief summary of the main points is given here.

The report of the Central Transport Consultative Committee notes that British Rail's performance in respect of reliability and punctuality is patchy, and a rise in fares above the rate of inflation cannot be justified. The CTCC is not impressed with facilities for longer-distance travel in the Class 150 "Sprinters", and is pressing for improvements. They favour the "big bang" approach to track and signalling renewal, with a route being closed completely for the work for a short period, rather than disrupting it for a much longer time. BR policy on overcrowding is criticised, as is the inconsistent policy on connecting services.

The report for Eastern England comments on the performance of each line, as well as operations in the area generally. Anyone especially interested in a particular line should contact the local users' group. The report deplores the poor general standard within the area, whilst paying tribute to "the hard working, dedicated and able staff running the railways". Sectorisation is seen to cause problems, and especially the remit of Inter-City; the loss of stopping services on the "East Coast Main Line" is deplored. Improvements in information at staffed stations are noted. The TUCC is scathing about the refurbished Class 307, 308 and 309 electric multiple units, and deplores the decision to drop the two extra tracks into Liverpool Street.

On the particular lines, improvements are generally noted on Clacton and Walton services, with overcrowding on Braintree trains at peak hours. Sudbury station is "an eyesore". It is hoped that Harwich will now enjoy a better service. The service to Ipswich and Norwich is treated with withering scorn. Punctuality is grim, especially in view of the long period of disruption during electrification work. The East Suffolk Travellers' Association (Felixstowe) is given a pat on the back for its efforts, and the new Dock railway is welcomed. On the East Suffolk line, excessive singling is criticised, together with some incredulous comments on the Beccles loop saga. The success of the campaign to keep the Reedham-Yarmouth line open is welcomed.

Poor timekeeping is noted on the King's Lynn line, and the station buildings at Lynn are described as "being in a very poor state". On the "East Coast Main Line", serious overcrowding is noted on many High-Speed Train services, and the lack of stopping trains is also criticised. Improvements are sought in the frequency of services between East Anglia and the North-West, and the lack of connections to Lincolnshire is again noted.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### *New members*

We extend a warm welcome to the following who have recently joined us:-

Gareth Guest, 27 Mailes Close, Barton, Cambridge, CB3 7BQ;  
Richard J.Hollingham, 3 Keswick Close, Cringleford, Norwich, NR4 6UW;  
Paul Keepin, 2 New Road, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE17 4BG;  
A.C.Miller, 4 Margrave Avenue, Needham Market, Ipswich, IP6 8ES;  
Andrew J.Stannard, 249 Mill Road, Cambridge, CB1 3BE;  
J.S.F.Turville, Emmanuel House, 21 Earl Street, Cambridge, CB1 1JR.

### *Welcome to East Anglia*

Mr & Mrs F.Bell, 14 Chaucer Road, Cambridge, CB2 2EB.

### *New addresses*

R.G.Crawley, 2 Regis Avenue, Beeston Regis, Sheringham,  
Norfolk, NR26 8SW;

Steven Leven, 34 Clarke Road, Norwich, NR3 1JL;

J.W.Peacock, 34 Half Mile Close, Norwich, NR3 2LW;

D.A.Sherlock, 12 Boundary Court, Rathmore Road, Cambridge, CB1 4BB.

R.M.Slaughter, 48 Creffield Road, Colchester, CO3 3HY.

### LIVERPOOL STREET - COLCHESTER IMPROVEMENTS

Plans are "well advanced" for the full re-signalling of the line between Liverpool Street and Colchester: Bethnal Green - Chelmsford will be the first stage. A start will be made towards the end of 1989, with completion to Shenfield in 1992. Whilst BR cannot justify provision of a third track between Witham and Shenfield on financial grounds, they are pursuing the option of full bi-directional signalling between Colchester and Shenfield.

A total of £400,000 has been added to the budget for maintenance of rolling stock, EMUs and signalling on the Great Eastern and London, Tilbury and Southend sections, compared with 1985.

### EAST SUFFOLK LINE

Beccles South signal-box was demolished on 11/12 August, and Melton followed suit on 26 August.

The track was slewed from the up to the down platform at Beccles before the start of services on Sunday 12 October. The first train to use the down platform since the line was singled in 1985 was the 0951 to Ipswich, which arrived and departed in a cloud of rust thrown up from the track. After it had gone, members of the East Suffolk Travellers' Association ceremonially transferred the remaining seat from the up to the down platform. British Rail also wish to demolish the footbridge at Beccles, linking the town with the Common, although newspaper reports now suggest that this has been rejected on grounds of cost.

### EAST NORFOLK TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

ENTA held its Annual General Meeting in Cantley Village Hall on Friday 1 August, when Chairman James Apsey reviewed the past year and current situation.

The past twelve months had been dominated by the Reedham-Yarmouth line closure threat. Sufficient money had been pledged to do the necessary maintenance work, but until legal documents between BR and the local authorities and other donor bodies (including ENTA and RDS) had been signed, this remained the biggest single threat hanging over the local community.

"But all is not gloom," said Mr Apsey, for a new through service had been introduced between Yarmouth and Liverpool. ENTA had campaigned for the restoration of through cross-country services from Yarmouth, but felt more publicity was needed. Perhaps the new train could be given a name?

With the start of electric trains from Norwich to London in May 1987, the *East Anglian* would cover the distance in 100 minutes, and smart connections into and out of it on the Yarmouth lines were hoped for. But would this be the only fast service from Norwich? There was some fear that additional stops at Diss and Stowmarket by too many other trains would detract from the benefits of electrification for Norwich and Yarmouth passengers.

On the buses, Mr Apsey said that Great Yarmouth Borough Council had been very helpful, but other operators less so. It was desirable for ENTA to have more consultations with them.

The existing officers were re-elected: Chairman - W.J.H.Apsy; Secretary - P.C.W.Warner; Treasurer - E.Woodward. Steve Hewitt, Publicity Officer, reported an encouraging renewal rate for subscriptions and a current membership total of 110.

In the latter part of the meeting, the RDS General Secretary, Trevor Garrod, reported on the Society's local and national plans and activities; and BR's Area Passenger Manager, Stephen Rattue, answered questions on local services and facilities.

## **NORWICH SOUTHERN BY-PASS PROPOSAL**

Norwich Friends of the Earth have lodged an objection to this multi-million-pound road scheme, for which the public inquiry started in late September. RDS has provided them with data on the rail alternative. Since the Leitch Report in 1978, the Department of Transport is supposed to look at the rail alternatives to such schemes.

## **BICYCLES ON TRAINS**

On behalf of RDS, Trevor Garrod has had two useful meetings with representatives of Norwich Friends of the Earth and the Cyclists' Touring Club. We have been assured by BR that our "Sprinter" trains, when they arrive in 1988, will carry bicycles. The question is: how many and under what conditions?

A further meeting of representatives of RDS, Friends of the Earth and the Cyclists' Touring Club was held in Norwich on 7 October, when the text of a questionnaire for commuters presently taking bicycles with them on trains was finalised. It is planned to hand it out to people arriving at stations with bicycles during the week 10-14 November.

The three main stations to be covered are Norwich, Ipswich and Cambridge, between 0720 and 0900 and between 1600 and 1815 on any day during that week. If you can help in any way, even if only for an hour, please contact Trevor Garrod as soon as possible. Thanks to those members who have already volunteered to help.

It is important that we collect as much useful information as possible in a bid to ensure as good a deal as we can for cyclists on trains when the new "Sprinters" come in. We therefore also hope to conduct a survey of leisure usage of the bikes-on-trains facility next spring or summer.

Meanwhile, Frank Lincoln has already taken a count of commuters with bicycles at Norwich station. On one day in September, between 1635 and 1810, no less than 52 people with bicycles departed on trains to Lowestoft, Yarmouth, Sheringham and Cambridge, the first-named being the most popular destination.

## **EAST ANGLIAN RAIL FREIGHT NEWS**

Carriage of freight by rail continues to grow in the area, helped by another heavy grain harvest. New traffic from King's Lynn includes steel and petroleum coke; British Sugar is renewing its tracks into its Lynn factory. Firmyn Coates have installed a siding at their own expense near to the Mayer-Newman scrap works private siding at Snailwell. At Brandon, tiles have now started to be despatched by rail, as well as the burgeoning timber traffic. This has now grown to such an extent that the old cattle dock sidings on the up side have been reinstated. The "Colne Estuary Study", being undertaken by Essex County Council, Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council, suggests that rail be used to relieve pressure on roads in the Wivenhoe area, caused by lorry movements to and from the port there.

Current rumours suggest that ARC at Fen Drayton will shortly invest in new wagons to replace the aging MTVs, which have had a long and useful life.

The goods yard at Biggleswade on the "East Coast Main Line" is now in use by a manufacturer of building blocks: it functions as the national centre for this company. The yard had been disused for some time, although it remained intact, and this represents another valuable source of rail freight.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS NORTH OF CAMBRIDGE**

The Cambridge Structure Plan Review, which has recently been published, includes a commitment to investigate the potential for re-opening the Cambridge - St Ives line. Together with possible provision of a new station at Clittering (north of Waterbeach), this depends on the growth of new settlements in these areas, which seem likely to go ahead. Steve Wilkinson and Peter Wakefield have already held discussions on these prospects with Peter Field (Network Business Manager - East) and Martin Williams (Planning & Investment Manager - East).

## **THANK YOU FROM TREVOR GARROD**

I should like to thank all members who contributed towards the electric typewriter with which I was presented at the Branch Meeting on 20 September. This was a total surprise - members are to be congratulated on keeping a secret so well!

My old typewriter was over 20 years old and beginning to look it. The new one, called Erika, can do certain things which the old one could not, and will certainly be used for much of my work in future - though since a fair proportion of my RDS letters are written on moving trains, some of you will still receive handwritten correspondence. BR do not (yet) put sockets for this type of electrical appliance on their trains and Erika is in any case fairly heavy.

## FOR YOUR DIARY

**Saturday 22 November:** YMCA building, Gonville Place, CAMBRIDGE at 1400. RDS Meeting. Speaker: Heather Mayall, Deputy General Secretary of the National Federation of Women's Institutes.

**Saturday 29 November 1986:** Lecture Theatre, Norfolk College, KING'S LYNN at 1500. Fen Line Users' Association Annual General Meeting.

**Saturday 21 February 1987:** BURY ST. EDMUNDS. RDS East Anglian Branch Annual General Meeting.

## FEN LINE USERS' ASSOCIATION

FLUA is holding its Annual General Meeting this year on 29 November, from 1500 to 1700 in the Lecture Theatre, Norfolk College, King's Lynn. There will be a guest speaker from British Rail: either Theo Steel or Peter Field, who is the Business Manager (Eastern) for Network South-East.

During October FLUA conducted a passenger survey on the Fen Line, which involved handing a questionnaire to passengers. Completed forms were then collected in boxes at stations on the line. The survey was partly funded by British Rail.

For news of the Fen Line electrification proposals, see p.7

## RDS EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH SECRETARY

John Brodribb has been forced to give up the post of Branch Secretary because of the pressure of other commitments. However, he will continue to act in the post until a replacement can be found, and also to edit *Rail East*. The Branch Committee will be delighted to hear from volunteers, and also from any member who feels that she or he might like to serve on the Committee.

## CROSS-COUNTRY SERVICES

### *Norwich-Birmingham*

A discussion document on this service and its future development has been produced by RDS East Midlands Branch Committee member Darryl Taylor-Smith, and is now being considered by the committees of the East Anglian, East Midlands and West Midlands Branches.

British Rail's own proposals are to reroute the service via Coventry; and the definite plans to introduce a new Stafford-Nuneaton-Coventry local service next May need to be considered. So too does the increase in trains between Leicester and Hinckley following the very successful reopening of South Wigston station. There is understandable resistance to too many stops on these long-distance trains; concern that Super-Sprinters may not be able to cope with all the traffic on offer; interest in the possibilities of extending trains eastwards from Norwich (to Yarmouth and Lowestoft), westwards from Birmingham (to Shrewsbury or Cardiff?), and in providing connections southwards to Stratford-upon-Avon and Oxford.

### *East Anglia - Lincolnshire*

Discussions are also taking place with the RDS Lincolnshire Branch about the provision of better connections between East Anglia and Lincolnshire. Peterborough station and its possibly inadequate size may also be considered.

Any member with views on these matters should initially write to the Acting Branch Secretary. It is hoped to put some well thought out ideas to BR early in the New Year.

## RDS SPEAKERS

Trevor Garrod spoke on the rail users' lobby to a meeting of the Norfolk Railway Society on 16 October.

RDS is always willing to provide speakers to meetings of other organisations. If you are a member of an organisation which you think would be interested in receiving a speaker, on railways and/or the work of RDS, please contact the Administrative Officer, Reg Snow, 48 The Park, Great Bookham, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT23 3LS, and he will provide a copy of the Speakers' List.

## RDS AUTUMN MEETING IN NORWICH

At our autumn meeting in Norwich Assembly House on 20 September, we were pleased to welcome as guest speaker Mr Richard Jones, Railfreight External Relations & Training Manager.

With the aid of "visuals", Mr Jones explained the objectives set by central Government for BR's freight sector. Railfreight was one of three sectors making up the "commercial railway", and had not received any Government subsidy for some eight years. It had to "stand or fall by its own efforts" and had an annual turnover of more than £500 million - a fairly large business in anyone's terms".

Railfreight's objective was to earn a 5% profit each year by 1988-89 and, within this financial objective, to win as much freight from road as possible. The business was now organised on commodity rather than regional lines. In recent years, management had also been restructured so that the marketing and operating/engineering sides were no longer separate. Each Business Manager had "bottom line responsibility", both, for generating and for spending money.

Coal remained the largest single commodity, accounting for two-thirds of the total tonnage and half the revenue. Coal for power stations was the biggest part of that and the most profitable. The miners' strike had hit BR, but most of the power station traffic was back on the rails, although domestic coal had been hit more.

Growth areas, said Mr Jones, included aggregates for the construction industry; refuse from large conurbations; edible goods such as tinned foods and drinks. Indeed, the aggregate business had grown from almost nothing in 15 years, particularly as demand from the building industry in the South East now had to be met from places 150 or more miles away. In household refuse, BR had important contracts with councils in London, Manchester and Avon, to carry refuse to be dumped in worked out pits and quarries; and expected to gain further contracts from other large city councils. BR also now had 40% of the trunk-haul pet-food market and was "getting back into tinned foods and drinks" after being almost out of this market a few years ago. Rail was best at handling "heavy dense stuff" rather than light spacious loads like comflakes, however!

Mr Jones explained how Speedlink trains work, catering for less than train-load traffic, and described the trend in manufacturing for distribution and warehousing to be contracted out to specialists. BR had therefore developed a total package linking with private storage and road haulage firms. There was more scope for growth here than in heavy train-load traffic.

A review of Railfreight's finances was under way, as it was likely that they would be £55 million short of their target by 1988. There was a need to cut costs and be more competitive. Sometimes this could be done by more effective use of locomotives and smaller links of crews. There were advantages in Railfreight having its own fleet of locos. It was also hoped ultimately to overcome inter-depot demarcations. If the financial objectives were achieved, we could expect to see a new generation of diesel and electric freight locos after 1988.

Mr Jones answered a variety of questions on matters such as the Channel Tunnel, dedicated locomotives (e.g. those owned by Foster Yeoman) and Section 8 grants for firms wishing to transfer traffic from road to rail. He also conceded that sometimes Railfreight might not have sufficient capacity, sidings, etc. for all the business on offer, pointing out that "no company these days can afford to have facilities lying around just in case". Railfreight should be able to react more quickly when business was available, however.

Our Society has for many years campaigned for more freight to go by rail, and it was encouraging to hear what Mr Jones had to say. Railfreight management certainly seems to be making a vigorous effort to be efficient and meet Government-imposed objectives. To what extent these are fair and realistic objectives is, of course, a political matter - and it will be one of the tasks of our Society to air its views on this question in the run-up to the next General Election.

## JOBS ON THE MOVE

A dismal picture of job loss and transport decline is revealed in the latest report *Jobs on the Move*, published recently by the environmentalist organisation Friends of the Earth. While much of Britain simply is not "getting there", increasing numbers of transport workers join the dole queue, and environmental problems mount.

This picture is revealed by the independent transport consultants Transport and Environmental Studies (TEST), who were asked by FoE to look at the job implications of a more environmentally sensitive national transport policy. In some respects the scale of the opportunities is mirrored by the catalogue of setbacks in recent years. Among the findings were the following:-

### *Rail engineering*

Britain has been closing its workshops at a time of a buoyant world market for rail worth £5,000,000,000 annually. Despite recent rolling stock modernisation, there are 15% fewer passenger seats available now than in 1980. Large costs are incurred in making wagon-building staff redundant at a time when British Rail have no spare freight wagons.

### *Rail operation*

BR have shed proportionately more staff than any other European railway. Despite this, they are not particularly efficient performers. The German and French systems have the highest numbers of employees - and are first and second in terms of revenue per employee. Destaffing on trains and light rail probably causes as many problems as it solves. BR should invest more in electrification, cross-country journeys and cross-city links.

### *Car industry*

Britain produces high-capacity, polluting, short-life cars - virtually the reverse of what is required. The UK's uniquely perverse system of "company cars" - i.e. subsidising the more affluent - is unhealthy for our transport system, our environment, and quite probably for the industry itself. Jobs could be retained and expanded in repair and maintenance if Britain built cars that lasted longer. Safer, more energy-efficient cars with vehicle emission controls are an urgent necessity.

### *Roads and freight*

Money has been poured into new road-building since 1979. However, apart from rather expensive jobs in construction, the employment gains are uncertain. Many firms use new motorways and larger lorries to shed staff. The effect of future changes in freight movements is less clear. Job losses resulting from a transfer to rail might be balanced by transshipment depots and greater use of smaller lorries. The report calls for more research here. Investment is needed in rail wagons and inland waterways.

### *Conclusions*

Friends of the Earth Transport Campaigner Don Mathew commented: "The forefront of any new transport thinking must be to reverse this frightening decay in jobs and services. There is now a very real worry that our public transport systems are so run-down that they will be difficult to revive and expand in the future. This is particularly true with their manufacturing base".

"As for the rest, we seem to be spending most money in the areas which create least employment and most environmental damage. We list how much it costs to create some of these jobs - e.g. £39,000 each in road building, but only £11,000 for a bus conductor. Furthermore, of course, it actually costs society money to make people redundant and to keep them when unemployed. Other nations know that investing in decent transport systems gives you a better economy and a better environment."

## **WYMONDHAM AND DEREHAM RAILWAY ACTION COMMITTEE NEWS**

### *Elmham to Ryburgh*

We have to report what we had feared for some time. With freight trains now running only as far as North Elmham (5 miles north of Dereham), the remaining five miles or so of disused track between North Elmham and Great Ryburgh has now been lifted. The line had not been used for freight since 1979, except for an odd load of malt in 1981; in fact the main traffic ended a year before the closure of Fakenham. The last train to leave Ryburgh was the weedkiller train in May 1982, followed by a track recording machine a few weeks later.

The track is now being sold as scrap, and some considerable quantity of rail has been stolen from the site, as reported in the *Dereham and Fakenham Times*. However, the route may not be entirely lost, for local councils are considering buying it for use as a public footpath, because of its "outstanding natural beauty".

A piece of good news is that work has started on re-sleepering between Dereham and North Elmham. It has taken a year since the ballast train delivery for the engineers to get started. The planned re-laying at Hardingham, expected two years ago, has not materialised, even though the ground has been prepared.

### *Traffic and shift patterns*

Recent concern about the line's financial position was allayed by the new order from Redlands (of Swaffham) to ship roof tiles from railheads at Dereham and Bury St. Edmunds. However, after a year of this, the company has now concentrated all its rail movements on Brandon, a yard which was once disused, but which is now a hive of activity with the Redland orders and timber traffic from Thetford forest.

The daily freight train on the Dereham branch is now worked by one three-man crew, instead of the previous two, thus saving three men's wages, and a van driver's run, from the line's cost account. Staff released will be on duty elsewhere; the second relief crew used to be needed as the run could not be completed within the eight-hour shifts, which it now can with the Elmham-Ryburgh section closed.



### *Dereham station canopy*

Despite being closed for seventeen years now, Dereham station is still in good condition. The platforms are fairly tidy and the canopy still intact. Apart from the need for a coat of paint, the station still looks quite neat. This could, however, soon change, thanks to so-called rail preservationists. The Nene Valley Railway at Peterborough have expressed interest in buying the canopies at Dereham and County School (on the former Elmham-Ryburgh section), to use on their new Peterborough - Orton Mere extension.

This is being hotly contested by WyDRAC, Dereham Society and the tenants in the station buildings (Dereham Kitchen & Bathroom Centre). We have made an offer to the BR Property Board at their request, to maintain the canopy and to take limited responsibility for its upkeep, in return for its being left at Dereham on its original site. It is possible that local job creation schemes may become involved, as has happened with station improvements elsewhere.

### *Membership/subscriptions*

The subscription to WyDRAC remains at £1 per annum. If you are interested in this line, or know of any other person, club or organisation that might be, please contact the Membership Secretary, Ian Spooner, 30 Cecil Road, Dereham, Norfolk, NR20 4AN.

## **ELECTRIFICATION TO HUNTINGDON, CAMBRIDGE AND BEYOND**

In mid-October British Rail announced that electric trains are to start serving Huntingdon on 3 November 1986 and Cambridge on 19 January 1987 - both dates well ahead of earlier expectations. This is so that BR can get some of its modern stock on the tracks in time for the worst of the winter months. Commuters have complained in the past about trains breaking down in cold weather, and electric trains reduce the failure rate by 70%.

From November, the 0739 train from Huntingdon to Kings Cross, stopping at four stations and arriving at 0854, will be replaced by a Class 317 electric multiple unit leaving at 0750, stopping at five stations and arriving at 0853. There will also be an evening peak electric service leaving Kings Cross at 1739. From 19 January at Cambridge, the 0615, 0706 and 0720 departures will be electric, as will the 1605 and 1705 from Liverpool Street. The introduction of electric trains will coincide with the completion of the £650,000 re-vamping of Cambridge Station, including a new travel centre, telephone inquiry bureau and other improvements. A royal opening is planned, according to the *Cambridge Weekly News*.

At the same time, BR also announced its new timetable for the full electric service to Cambridge and Peterborough starting next May. An extra 2000 seats are promised in the peak periods, and all diesel services between King Cross and Peterborough (except for HSTs) and between Liverpool Street and Cambridge will be withdrawn. According to Theo Steel, Assistant General Manager (Eastern Region), the main benefits on the Peterborough line will be for commuters from St. Neots, who will get a faster and much more frequent through service. In the last eight years, traffic at St. Neots has increased by 60%, at Sandy by 66% and at Huntingdon by a staggering 210%. BR has recognised that St. Neots and Huntingdon are fast-growing areas, and from next May it will give these towns their own fast electric services: passengers will no longer have to change at Hitchin, as all trains will run through to Stevenage and Kings Cross.

At Cambridge, next May will see the introduction of a new off-peak pattern of two electric trains per hour to Liverpool Street. One will call at Audley End only and will take just one hour; the other will call at all stations to Bishops Stortford as well as Harlow, Broxbourne, Cheshunt and Tottenham Hale, giving a regular through service for the first time from Shelford, Whittlesford, Great Chesterford, Newport, Elsenham and Stansted. Peak hour services will also be improved.

Looking further ahead, the Business Manager (Eastern) of Network South East, Peter Field, said that BR hopes to recoup its investment in these electrification schemes within ten years, from the great savings in running and maintenance costs of electric trains over their diesel predecessors. New plans for Cambridge-Royston electrification had been submitted and he hoped that they would be passed. They also wanted to electrify Cambridge - Ely - Kings Lynn, but this would be more expensive because of the need to replace old signalling equipment; it was hoped that County Councils would contribute.



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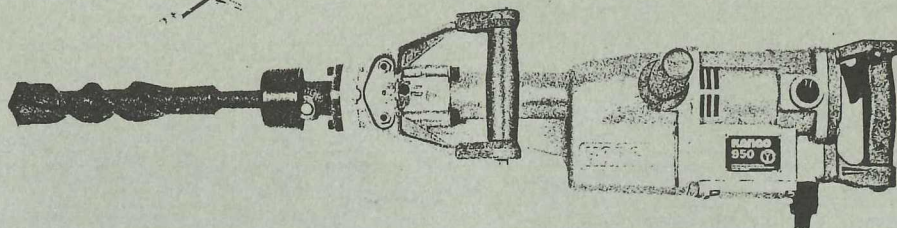
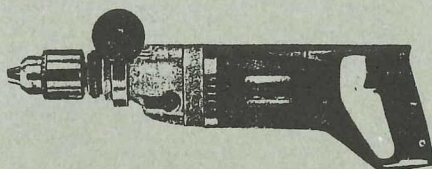
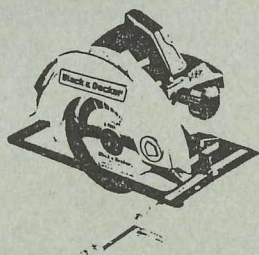
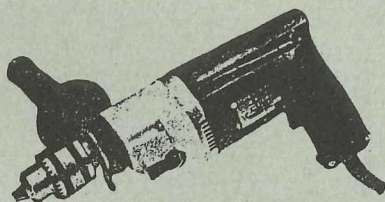
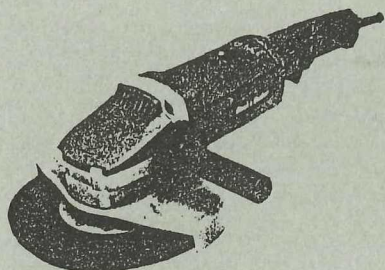
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