

raileast

THE NEWSLETTER OF RAILFUTURE: EAST ANGLIA BRANCH

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www.railfuture.org.uk/east.html

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Hello there. As this edition of Raileast goes to press the first details of the new coalition Government's spending cuts, reflecting the UK's dire fiscal position, were being revealed. £683m is to be sliced from Department for Transport budget of which £183m comes from the Transport for London budget. Nothing profound is threatened, as yet, for the railway. However, railway spending Control Period 5 begins on 1 April 2014 its financial basis as yet unpublished, but a point at which Government support might seriously ebb. The Government will of course declare its hand well before then. But in the meantime, on with the lobbying and out with the 'prayer-mat'! *CB*

A warm Welcome to Rev Tony Hodgson of Oundle, Ken Tricker of Felixstowe and Chris Wright of Caister, who have recently joined our Branch. We hope your support will be active. Good to have you aboard. It also serves as a reminder that effective campaigning requires a large membership. So please, do renew your subscription **and** make 2010 the year you signed-up a new member! See: <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=JoinUs>

Ipswich Meeting Saturday 26 June

Peter Wakefield writes: "You will see from the enclosed flyer that we have changed the venue to the Friends Meeting House in Fonnereau Road. The reason is largely to do with the ever important battle to keep down costs."

"Guest Speaker, Ian Dinmore, will explain the success of the community rail partnerships in Norfolk and we can no doubt mull over whether other routes should be dealt with similarly. Guest Speaker No.2, John French, will lead a discussion about the new Greater Anglia franchise and our hopes for it. He is representing First Group. We will endeavour to meet the other franchise hopefuls in due course. Please come along to help make your views known."

NEWS:

SHERINGHAM LINK-UP

Although your editor anticipates gasps of "what, a steam engine in Raileast?", he can also explain. 11 March was a truly auspicious occasion, a celebration no less, with a Britannia Class locomotive, Oliver Cromwell, seen here edging

forward with the very first passenger train to use the brand new track



reinstating the link between Network Rail's station with the preserved North Norfolk Railway station at Sheringham, behind the photographer. Between 6-8000 people turned up at Sheringham alone for this historic occasion. Many more watched along the route to Weybourne and Holt.

In turn, great praise is due to Network Rail and the North Norfolk Railway for really making a considerable effort to meet the

target opening date despite an 11th hour safety concern. Media coverage was copious. My thanks go to Ian Dinmore of www.railarchive.org.uk for generously providing us with the picture. A splendid day, admirably planned and executed. *CB*

East Midland Trains (EMT)

By the time you read this EMT should have received four extra Class 156 diesel multiple units primarily for use to Skegness from Nottingham and Leicester, at a leasing cost of £9.9m for 4 years.

This will release more of the 'plusher' Cl.158s for the Norwich to Liverpool service. Consequently the 05.50 from Norwich now becomes a 4-car unit greatly easing current overcrowding. Further good news is that the 13.52 to Nottingham is now extended to Norwich, filling the irritating gap and creating an hourly service eastwards from 06.47 to 17.52 hours. Westwards to Liverpool the last train is still the 15.52 although the 16.57 from Norwich does reach Manchester Piccadilly.

Grateful thanks are due to EMT and the Department for Transport. Also, let us not forget, Railfuture East Midlands and Travel Watch East Midlands, both of whom have run a concerted campaign for a long time to increase capacity on the route. Congratulations all round. Now to improve the schedules! *PW*

Lowestoft Station

Trevor Garrod reports that Company, First East's plans for several parts of Lowestoft underwent a consultation exercise during April and May. The outcome revealed little concern for public transport users and, predictably, even less detail about just what facilities a new, repositioned station might offer.

Although the original proposal to move it 400 metres westward has been abandoned, an 80 metre southward move is mooted. East Suffolk Travellers Association (ESTA) and Railfuture are on the case. Learn more from the excellent ESTA website at www.eastsuffolktravel.org.uk/. *TG*

Hitchin Flyover:

Railfuture, Vice-Chairman, Jerry Alderson, reports that the public enquiry into the Flyover which started on 11 May in Letchworth, has now closed . What follows is Jerry's synopsis of the outcome, further edited.

"All landowners whose interests would be compulsorily acquired have either withdrawn their objections; are imminently expected to; or have not appeared to pursue them. NR's assertion that no farm would go out of business has not been challenged. The objections of the statutory authorities have also been withdrawn, as has insistence on materials delivery by rail

Based on current service levels, train performance assessment shows that the scheme provides annual benefits of £3M using DfT appraisal methods. The scheme also helps to maximise timetable options by avoiding extra 'pathing time' reflecting previous infrastructure constraints, and improving the reliability of services. The flat junction will be retained for use by the heaviest trains (in excess of 2000 tonnes+++ trailing load)." For the full report go to: www.railfuture.org.uk/Ox-Cam . JA/John Henderson

Railway Herald Adverts (www.railwayherald.co.uk)

Committee member John Henderson wrote an article for Railway Herald, the popular internet magazine, outlining our campaign to reopen the Cambridge to Oxford railway. Concurrently we placed a series of adverts drawing attention to Railfuture and this campaign. These initiated a very large number of hits to our website and so far 250 people have signed up as supporters of the campaign. Are you one of them? If not www.railfuture.org.uk/Ox-Cam is the website to visit, not least because it will update you on the most recent developments. The adverts were funded by national Railfuture. PW

New User Group

It is pleasing to announce the formation of a new railway user group aiming to represent users between Cambridge and Royston, called "**Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group**. If you use this line I hope you will join this group. The first meeting is in Foxton Village Hall at 8pm, June 16th. See more details at www.foxtoncamb.info. Congratulations to Cllr Susan van de Ven for getting the group up and running. It is worth noting th many other groups you can join. Please see the websites of PENRUG, FLUA, MARPA, ESTA, Felixstowe Travellers Association, Friends of Brandon Station. PW

Station Footfall Counts at Dullingham and North Walsham

The Branch has undertaken to conduct footfall counts at these two stations this year, probably in early Autumn. More details will follow. However, although we have a very good and willing team of volunteers, we definitely need more :

could you spare a little time to help? If so, do please contact me as soon as possible. See back page for details. *PW*

BRANCH MEETING: IPSWICH 26 JUNE

Hunstanton Talk

Chairmen, Peter Wakefield reports that on 2 March he was invited to speak to the Hunstanton Civic Society (HCS) about the work of Railfuture East Anglia.

"I outlined our aspirations over the years and how through our hard work much had been achieved and so doing, helping to create a railway which is hugely better than it was at the end of the "Beeching" retrenchments. "

"I was very taken with the bitterness expressed by many in the 100 plus audience over the loss of the Kings Lynn to Hunstanton railway, even after so many years. I was asked how it could be brought back. My reply was that it would be very difficult but if anything is regarded as a benefit for the local good, the only way to make it happen was by way of a campaign initiated by the *local* community through the *local* politicians."

East Anglia Railfuture and the HCS will maintain active contact. *PW/CB*

General Election

I do hope you received a copy of the Railfuture "Rail Manifesto for the 21st Century". The Branch Committee also sent a copy with covering letter to **every** candidate standing for the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat Parties in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire/Peterborough and adjacent parts of Essex, Hertfordshire.

Replies were received from the candidates: Elizabeth Truss South West Norfolk; Bernard Jenkin North Essex; Tim Yeo South Suffolk; Richard Bacon South Norfolk; James Paice South East Cambridgeshire; Andrew Lansley South West Cambridgeshire; Jonathan Djanogly Huntingdonshire; Oliver Heald Hertfordshire North East; Julian Huppert Cambridge; Nick Hillman Cambridge; Tony Wright Gt Yarmouth; Peter Smith South West Norfolk; an acknowledgement of receipt from David Ruffley.

We intend to publish all the replies on our website as soon we have the person-power to do so. (Any skilled IT volunteers about?) All the replies were supportive of rail. Julian Huppert for example calling for 'Chesterton station to be built, the East West route for freight and no ill conceived gimmicks like the guided bus-way, which is now up to £162m'! *PW*

Two Parties better than one?

We now have a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition which has declared its programme for the next 5 years. The section on transport contains a number of bullet point headings which are relevant to rail. These are:

- We will grant longer franchises in order to give operators the incentive to invest in the improvements passengers want - like better services, better stations, longer trains and better rolling stock
- We will make Network Rail accountable to its customers
- We will establish a high speed rail network...
- We support Crossrail and further electrification of the rail network
- We will turn the rail regulator into a powerful passenger champion
- We are committed to fair pricing for rail travel

Elsewhere in the document plans for airport expansion at London's main airports are *scrapped* stating that the method of deciding transport investment priorities will recognise the benefits of low carbon proposals. Amazingly, there are no proposals for road schemes expenditure.

Of course Railfuture can only wait and see how these proposals work out in practice, especially on the matter of rail fares. Still, despite having an allegedly pro-road Transport Secretary (Phil Hammond), they seem to augur well for overall transport policy developments. *ND*

Branch aspirations for the.... Greater Anglia Franchise Consultation

Our Branch, working with the London Branch of Railfuture has submitted detailed comments on the Government's proposals for the new Greater Anglia Franchise. Our response covered issues such as train service patterns, new services, ticketing, connections, rolling stock, stations and arrangements for bus substitution.

On the main line between London and Norwich we called for a revised stopping pattern to give a better balance between faster journeys and need to maximise journey opportunities between centres. We suggested that the existing London -Ipswich service be extended to Norwich to provide links between all the towns thereby allowing other services to be speeded up. We also argued that any replacement stock should be to "Inter-City" standard with buffet facilities. On rural routes we called for additional rolling stock to be



provided to ease overcrowding and also to allow an hourly service on all routes. We noted that connections between lines must be improved.

We called for a simplified ticketing system which ensured that the best value fares were always easy to find on ticket machines.

The Branch backed longer franchises in return for increased investment. This not only meant new trains and station improvements but also the re-opening of lines, for example to Wisbech and support for the East-West Rail Link.

Finally we felt that bus substitution should only be used as a last resort and that the train operator should work with Network Rail to minimise the need for buses. And, as you will see elsewhere, that passengers are kept much better informed about engineering disruptions. *ND (Some of these are already promised, of course CB)*

www.eastcoast.co.uk/eureka

We have already mentioned in previous issues the proposed EAST COAST 2010-2011 timetable (called EUREKA) and our dissatisfaction with it: not as a self-contained timetable, but with reference to the poor deal it delivers to Peterborough in terms of connections, especially to Scotland. Since it was first mooted your Chairman has been in regular written contact with EAST COAST supremo, Elaine Holt, whose replies have always been of the highest quality, which we value and greatly appreciate.

Despite our constructive objections and a minimal expectation that there was any great will to modify these plans, we have nonetheless received some good news from Ms Holt. Her response indicates a sensitivity to the shortcomings at Peterborough and a practical intent to try and address our concerns.

She says "it *MAY* be possible" to stop the otherwise non-stop-to-York 'Scotties', at Peterborough at three extra key times in the day, and *without* comprising the target time of 4 hours 20 minutes from King's Cross to Edinburgh. That this proves tenable will not be known until after mid-August when Network Rail switches its attention from the 'Eureka' weekend timetable back to the weekday version.

Apart from only half the total current Anglo Scottish services stopping at the city, our other gripe referred to the extended connection times. These, it must be said, could be helped by re-timing or increasing the cross-country services which feed into Peterborough from East and West; no minor challenges in themselves. So we await firm improvements with renewed hope. *PW/CB*

A station for Soham?

The proposal for a new station at Soham is now being given serious consideration. Cambridgeshire County Council has told the branch that it is a "good idea" as the level crossing at Ely, closed so often for the passage of trains, disrupts bus services between Ely and Soham.

The local planning authority prefers the location of the former station site. However, this presents problems as the junction between the single and double track is in the middle of this site. There are three options for dealing with this: 1. Reduce the double track and have a single platform; 2. Extend the double track and have two platforms; 3. Extend the double track and have a single bi-directional platform. This would need a crossover in the double track to the east of the platform to enable trains to Ely to call, but allow westbound freight trains to pass while passenger trains stop at the station, which a platform on single track would not.

Network Rail has offered to undertake a "Fast Track" feasibility study to include timetable and capacity modelling. At the time of the MARPA meeting the council's decision on funding the study was awaited. *ND*

The 5-day Great Eastern Mainline and bus-substitution....

As the rebuilding of the GEML infrastructure continues apace and we suffer further weekend closures, member Max Roberts makes this comment:

"I was wondering if you knew of a way of obtaining statistics for weekend closures? I've lived in Wivenhoe for 17 years now, and am faced with yet another bust-substitution on 23rd of May. In fact, I think that our line has been closed just about every single Sunday for the last 17 years..... so has anybody kept a record of the number of times this route has been closed. If so, please let us have the detail."

Indeed so, for the extensive vital work still has no publicised completion date. Not so on the extensive recent rebuilds of the Chiltern routes, where customers were presented with detailed commentaries of what had to be done and when, together with the benefits, the cost, completion dates; and all available on-line and in pamphlet form. This is how it *should* be done!

But not here in East Anglia, it seems, where despite us requesting such things of Network Rail/NXEA, nothing has emerged. Just why is it so difficult keeping East Anglian customers firmly in the picture, when train companies elsewhere seem to manage it? *PW*

Don't forget: Branch Meeting, Ipswich 26 June

Lifts for Peterborough?

Secretary, Nick Dibben, writes to say that Network Rail is considering options for providing passenger lifts at Peterborough Station. At present, mobility impaired passengers need a passenger buggy driven by station staff using the former post office bridge between platforms. Sadly, many passengers are unaware of the service. Network Rail is drawing up plans to upgrade the station by adding a new island platform for cross-country services and also a new platform (**P**) on the up fast line for London-bound trains.

Platforms also need to be lengthened to take 12 car Thameslink trains and, possibly, new Inter-City trains. Although the new platforms will have lifts, this is not much use unless all the platforms are linked, especially Platform 2 where passengers enter the station. The study also involves the feasibility of providing lifts at either the main footbridge or the old post office bridge(see picture). Once a way forward is agreed, funding for the lifts will be sought. *ND*



Thousands of bicycles a day at Cambridge Station.

Jim Chisholm of CambridgeCyclingCampaign (CCC) sent us a fascinating one-day snapshot of bicycle manoeuvres at Cambridge station. From which.....

Here are the headlines for that day?

1200 cycles through the barriers:

1000 cycles parked.

Other interesting facts were:

- 30% of bikes through the barriers were Bromptons or similar folders

Before midday:

- 340 bikes exited the station (83 folders)
- 221 bikes entered the station (92 folders)
- 130 bikes were removed from parking spaces for onward trips into Cambridge.



This shows the significant numbers of bikes used for inward commuting to Cambridge, either bringing a bike for the whole trip or collecting a bike left in the cycle racks overnight. Obviously, large numbers use folding bikes to avoid

peak hour restrictions on the carriage of non-folding bikes. Jim Chisholm

Jim wrote much more than this which can be found on: www.camcycle.org.uk

Network Rail confirmed that the proposed footbridge linking to the soon-to-be-built island platform will contain a lift, internal size of 1.6metres square, while the staircase and bridge width between handrails will be 3.3metres, which in old money is about eleven feet. Is this cycle-friendly? CB

East Anglian station-by-station footfall 2008-09. (Previous year)

Well now for a numbers overkill, tediously extracted by Peter Wakefield from the full national table, and apologies for less than perfect tabulation. So is your station on here, and has its business grown? Many thanks to Peter. CB

Peterborough	4,451,330 + 614,819 interchanges	(4,070,725)
Huntingdon	1,608,532	(1,564,270)
St. Neots	1,036,380	(979,356)
Sandy	450,380	(449,698)
Biggleswade	737,998	(751,155)
Arlesey	416,088	(398,128)
Hitchin	2,379,988 + 64,283 interchanges	(2,543,565)
Stevenage	4,362,852 + 206,273 interchanges	(4,206,418)

Letchworth	1,450,524	(1,364,936)
Baldock	474,574	(419,784)
Ashwell & Morden	117,290	(104,417)
Royston	1,160,248 + 8794 interchanges	(1,147,905)
Meldreth	217,558	(213,567)
Shepreth	75,894	(75,052)
Foxton	77,172	(63,418)

Cambridge	7,659,818 + 329,669 interchanges	(6,997,887)
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Newport	212,736	(215,036)
Audley End	767,930	(773,805)
Gt. Chesterford	100,318	(97,849)
Whittlesford Pway	333,684	(314,895)
Shelford	145,592	(125,588)
Waterbeach	278,436	(250,039)

Ely	1,599,592 + 220,316 interchanges	(1,505,730)
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Manea	3,082	(2,506)
March	311,166	(293,434)
Whittlesey	25,148	(26,064)

Littleport	156,330	(148,836)
Downham Market	364,492	(361,433)
Watlington	111,876	(100,665)
King's Lynn	746,662	(680,230)

Shippea Hill	868	(845)
Lakenheath	538	(552)
Brandon	76,781	(65,818)
Thetford	225,538	(212,576)
Harling Road	4,154	(4323)
Eccles Road	1,970	(1,643)
Attleborough	155,874	(151,389)
Spooner Row	722	(493)
Wymondham	136,712	(115,983)

Norwich	4,220,312 + 291,205 interchanges	(3,449,930)
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Salhouse	6,130	(6,475)
Hoveton&W	109,446	(101,084)
Worstead	22,630	(20,553)
North Walsham	236,148	(218,295)
Gunton	19,206	(16,399)
Roughton Road	14,938	(13,508)
Cromer	199,072	(181,546)
West Runton	25,032	(21,221)
Sheringham	199,920	(177,090)

Brundall Gardens	11,330	(9,178)
Brundall	91,654	(92,143)
Lingwood	54,618	(47,586)
Acle	53,996	(53,214)
Great Yarmouth	481,522	(416,713)

Berney Arms	1,054	(1,014)
Buckenham	132	(97)
Cantley	18,224	(17,935)
Reedham	37,392	(36,889)
Haddiscoe	11,140	(9,819)
Somerleyton	13,078	(12,240)
Oulton Broad N	121,092	(118,081)
Lowestoft	488,082	(416,244)

Oulton Broad S	21,882	(18,028)
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Beccles	101,118	(84,990)
Brampton	7,300	(5,689)
Halesworth	80,310	(69,595)
Darsham	50,846	(39,862)
Saxmundham	124,890	(110,025)
Wickham Market	32,666	(28,767)
Melton	47,226	(36,727)
Woodbridge	129,824	(114,036)
Westerfield	11,348 + 2,020 interchanges	(9,764)

Derby Road	38,920	(39,319)
Trimley	41,306	(42,413)
Felixstowe	209,596	(208,587)

Ipswich	3,022,570 + 173,264 interchanges	(2,807,395)
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Manningtree	846,484 + 131,930 interchanges	(910,384)
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Mistley	49,762	(46,800)
Wrabness	19,846	(22,540)
Harwich Int	111,258	(92,116)
Dovercourt	149,740	(147,528)
Harwich Town	148,748	(145,527)

Colchester	4,575,024 + 385,636 interchanges	(4,516,616)
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Colchester Tn	451,247	(451,666)
Hythe	60,334	(51,836)
Wivenhoe	330,440 + 1,102 interchanges	(335,294)
Alresford	50,996	(46,833)
Thorpe le Soken	124,908 + 274,522 interchanges	(128,996)
Frinton	174,378	(171,603)
Walton/Naze	118,580	(115,112)
Clacton	718,226	(704,195)

Marks Tey	444,618 + 350,596 interchanges	(459,980)
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Chapell & WC	31,166	(29,903)
Bures	50,694	(48,383)
Sudbury	287,004	(285,863)

Needham Mkt	53,874	(43,987)
Stowmarket	806,142 + 19,557 interchanges	(705,682)
