

raileast

THE NEWSLETTER OF RAILFUTURE: EAST ANGLIA BRANCH

www.railfuture.org.uk

www.railfuture.org.uk/east.html

Edition 150: June 2011

Yes welcome, indeed, especially to new members, A.G.Day of Girton and David Smith of Halesworth, and also to nothing less than Edition 150 of our East Anglia Branch Newsletter. This is surely is something to celebrate, starting back in 1972 as it does. Much was recalled by Steve Wilkinson and Trevor Garrod to the extent that Trevor wrote a synopsis history; so what better than to offer those recollections.

"Number 1 to 47" he says, "were simply entitled "East Anglian Branch Newsletter". The first was a single sheet of foolscap (!), printed on a Roneo (!) machine, doubled-sided, dated February 1972. It reports the inaugural meeting of the Branch, in Norwich on Saturday February 12th. That meeting was addressed by Mr John Barfield who called for longer-term grants and said he felt that BR management "was now more prepared to develop and maintain rail services than it had been ten years ago; and that pressure must now be directed more at government policy". Discussion at that meeting also noted "Freight on the Felixstowe branch was prospering - but we must beware of its 'edging out' passenger services, as on the Manchester - Woodhead - Sheffield route."

"Later in the 1970s, the newsletter became A4 size and up to 8 sides. Issue 47, Summer 1983, was the last one in this format. Under its new title and A5 booklet format, the new "Rail East" included a report of a submission to BR by Peter Wakefield arguing for a better service between East Anglia, the Midlands and the North West; and an item on preparations for the publication (in spring 1984) of the first "East Anglia by Rail. The Autumn 1983 Rail East also contained our reaction to BR plans to single track..." And there was much more, but space as usual forbids. But grateful thanks to Trevor for the potted history. TG

Both Stephen Lawrence and Nick Dibben have put in many hours as editors since, for which much appreciation. Today the Editor's 'red pencil is called the Delete Key, and I, like my predecessors, would have little to edit if it wasn't for the contributors, to whom the biggest "thank you" is due. Keep it coming, please. CB



The new East Coast mainline Timetable

By the time you read this the first timetable revamp for twenty years will have been operating for a couple of weeks or so. For most East Anglians Peterborough is the connecting point. From there, for those travelling up to and including York and Leeds, the service is at least as good as it was and in some cases much better.

But if your destination is north of York, especially Scotland, the news is not so good, as you have doubtless learnt from earlier editions of Rail East. Whatever you do, first check the waiting time at Peterborough, as it is not always attractive.

Above: The **Highland Chieftain** for Inverness pulls in to Peterborough in early May. From 22 May this is one of several Anglo-Scottish services which no longer call here. Looking on is one of the station's excellent Customer Service Staff. Phot: Chris Burton

All the northbound services directly linking London with Aberdeen, Glasgow and Inverness, are now first stop York which is also the last stop south-bound prior to London for a good many trains from various parts of Scotland.

To help you plan such journeys, here below are tables of direct services to and from Edinburgh via Peterborough, For full details of the timetable go to: www.eastcoast.co.uk

TO SCOTLAND	
07.45	To Edinburgh only
08.16	" "
09.45	" "
10.15	" "
12.15	" "
13.45	" "
16.15	" "
17.15	" "
20.16	Fridays only to Ed'

FROM SCOTLAND (Edinb' dep time. only)	
05.45	
06.55	
08.00	Ex Glasgow
10.00	
12.00	
14.00	
17.00	
17.30	Ex Aberdeen
18.30	

The timetable reveals York arrival times for non-stop's from King's Cross, little changed from when they called at Peterborough. In fact, only the 12.00 from Kings Cross is seriously faster, by a whopping 6 minutes. The 15.00, though, is 6 mins **slower** yet is still non-stop to York. Is jettisoning station stops **really** the only way to achieve better punctuality figures for EAST COAST? You can view the Branch correspondence with *East Coast* at: www.railfuture.org.uk/east.html CB

Realising the potential of GB Rail

Thus the main title of the much vaunted *Report of Rail Value for Money* which went public on 19 May. It can be found at:
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/rail/strategyfinance/valueformoney/realising-the-potential-of-gb-rail/>

Essentially it is not a Beeching or a Serpell style appraisal as it was charged *not* to explore the case for cutting the network. But it was emphasised that our railway costs us around 30% more than its continental European counterparts. Its fragmented nature was cited as a prime cause, it should be said.

A criticism which might worry many of us is the assertion that train kilometre-miles are ill-matched to passenger kilometre-miles. In other words, too few bottoms are warming too many expensively leased seats, and that service frequency on some routes should be re-evaluated. Not unrelated is McNulty's criticism of high fares and ticket options complexity which discourages too

many potential travellers.

Despite congratulating the railway on the substantial increase in usage in recent times, it was still felt that "ability to grow the market was hampered by..... fares regulation, particularly in relation to Saver fares." Much illuminating data on this topic is contained in the full report which is worth seeking out.

One area for potential conflict was that Network Rail (NR)/Train Operating Companies (TOCs) had allowed salary levels "to drift" over the years. It was firmly stated that NR, Government and the TOCs needed to work far more closely and openly together. Recent statements suggest this already in hand.

Other items there were aplenty, some of which we may well cover at the next Branch Meeting (25/6) as well as forthcoming editions of Rail East. Meanwhile, Government will be studying McNulty's conclusions and reporting its reaction, probably in the Autumn. Until then plenty of time to download the report, Summary or Complete, and indulge some extensive screen-reading as printing out will be expensive. CB/ND

High Speed Rail (HS2) Nick Dibben, reports:

*High Speed 2 (HS2), from London to Birmingham; does it offer better value than spending a similar sum on modifying existing routes to increase capacity. Of one thing we can be certain; there will never be enough money for both policies. Our Secretary, Nick, now puts the case for.....***Why the East should support HS2**

At first glance there appears little to link Eastern England with the debate about the proposed high speed rail line between London and Birmingham known as High Speed 2 (HS2). But a link there is, and it lies at the heart of what HS2 is all

about: extra rail capacity. Forget the talk about maximum speed and journey times; HS2 is about dealing with the growing numbers of passengers and freight needing to use our rail network. HS2 will not only release train paths on the West Coast Main Line out of Euston but, when extended towards Leeds, will free up space on the lines out of St Pancras and Kings Cross as well.



It has often been said that high speed passenger, local passenger and freight trains don't mix. This is true, as they tend to get in each other's way, reducing the overall capacity of a route. However, move some of the high speed long distance passenger trains onto a dedicated high speed network and suddenly there is more timetable space to run extra local passenger trains and freight.

Anyone who has travelled on one of the recently introduced 12 car commuter trains on First Capital Connect will know that still they quickly fill up. The Thameslink project will provide for 12 coach trains on most services to Peterborough and Cambridge. Then what? Removing lorries from our roads and onto the railways is a very popular policy with the public. Fuel costs and road congestion are already resulting in many distribution companies and high street stores moving to rail. But when (if?) they can run them is consequently fast becoming the issue.

It is by removing the long distance Inter-City trains that extra train paths can be found. Other benefits from HS2 would include the ability to stop more trains at Peterborough and other stations further north, providing far greater journey opportunities to and from East Anglia.

**High Speed Rail:
Investing in
Britain's Future**

Have Your Say

<http://highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk>

The same applies to freight: new paths; new opportunities. Result: a more effective and efficient railway. What's not to like? So HS2 has major virtues well beyond its actual route; virtues which are reasons enough as to why I feel we should support HS2. So, please, as per the picture, register your opinion at: <http://highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk> ND

www.railfuture.org.uk - High Speed Rail Conference

[Bletchley Park on Saturday 9 July 2011 Full details at:](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=High+Speed+Conference)

<http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=High+Speed+Conference>

NEWS DIGEST

A change of Plan

Cambridgeshire County Council has amended its Local Transport Plan (LTP) and included a proper section on rail following letters sent in by Branch members. Although County Councils have little direct involvement in major rail projects. Support and inclusion in the LTP is essential if Government funding is to be obtained by the rail industry. The draft LTP did not exclude rail, the new station at Chesterton Junction, just north of Cambridge was one of the major projects to be carried out over the next few years, but that was about it. The final version reaffirms the County's support for East-West Rail, will seek ways to follow up the Association of Train Operators report on the re-opening of the line to Wisbech and the creation of Community Rail schemes for lines in the County.

Thank you to all those who wrote to Councillors: it did make a difference. *ND*

Hitchin Flyover approved.

The Government has agreed to the Transport and Works Order for the construction of a new rail flyover at Hitchin. The new 2km line will allow trains from London to reach the Cambridge route without having to cross the other tracks on the East Coast Main Line. Work on the scheme is expected to be complete in 2014 and will save many minutes of delays to services at an estimated cost of £62m. It is, though, likely to add about a minute to northbound schedules. *ND*

Downham Market

Owing to frequent 'near misses', the 'barrow crossing' between the two platforms has been closed. Clara Zilahi reports that this means anyone travelling to King's Lynn has to allow much more time to cross the road by the level crossing before the barriers come down (at risk from road traffic), and then make a detour towards Fairfield Road. The extra time involved could be significant. Not to be forgotten is that NR had planned to build a footbridge to replace the foot crossing but in response to an outcry about its aesthetics, it was rejected by the planning authority. *CZ / PW*

Network Rail strategy for station crowding

The latest Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) from Network Rail covers overcrowding at stations. Using the same processes seen in previous RUS documents, this study attempts to identify which stations across the rail network will have overcrowding problems by both 2019 and 2031. Stations divide into three main areas: the Access Zone around the station entrance; the Facilities Zone where passengers buy tickets and/or use other services; and the Platform Zone. Predictably, major city stations and key suburban stations are those experiencing the worse congestion.

Although Cambridge and Chelmsford are among the top 20 busiest stations outside London, the study says they produce no major problems. However, *Peterborough* is the station in our Branch area with congestion problems, the RUS noting that the proposed extra platforms alone may not solve this in the longer term.

Railfuture will be submitting a national coordinated response to this RUS and there will be a discussion on the subject at our Ipswich meeting. Do let us have your thoughts on this important subject. Meanwhile the full document is available to view at: <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/aspx/4449.aspx> ND

[EC Funding for Resignalling Kennet to Bury St Edmunds \(and Nuneaton link\)](#)

The European Commission has confirmed funding (£4.2m) for installing the Nuneaton link with West Coast Main Line and resignalling the area covered by Kennet manual signalbox near Newmarket.

These are very necessary schemes which increase the effectiveness of the Felixstowe to Nuneaton freight link, which was recently passed for carrying 9'6" containers. Good news though this is, the route is still bedevilled with antique block signalling plus congested pinchpoints at Ely & Leicester. We hope that the highly cost effective and efficient new signalling systems about to be implemented between Ely and Norwich and Crewe and Shrewsbury may prove just the system for at least part of this lengthy route. CB

BRANCH MEETING-25 JUNE
Friend's Meeting House, Fonnereau Road, Ipswich.
Starting 14.15 hours with a very full Agenda, so
do try to attend as the more feedback the better.
See Accompanying Flyer for full details

[Re franchising of Greater Anglia railway network](#)

The Branch committee members have had contact with the three DfT preferred bidders for the short franchise leading through the Olympic Games period. Although this short franchise will be a management of the status quo, we have made clear our aspirations for the future should one of the bidders be given the subsequent 'long' franchise. The three bidders are Abellio; Go-Ahead Group; Stagecoach. (See page 11 for our formal submission) PW

East Anglia Station Footfall

In February The Office of Rail Regulation published its annual spreadsheet indicating just how many passengers were using our stations during 2009-10 (yes, it does take that long collating the figures, apparently). Rather than publish the whole spreadsheet, I will limit myself to those which produced an increase, only 21 out of 109. Every other station produced a slightly reduced total, which given the state of the economy is unsurprising.

Berney Arms	Mistley	Stowmarket
Buckenham	Needham Markt	Thetford
Bury St Ed.	Newmarket	Thurston
Cambridge	Salhouse	Westerfield
Darsham	Shepreth	Wickham Mkt
Hythe	Shippea Hill	Woodbridge
Kings Lynn	Brandon	Wymondham

No change in the stations with the greatest throughput which are Cambridge, Stansted Airport , Colchester, Peterborough and Norwich respectively. Pretty well what you'd expect with 3.4m at Norwich to 8.2m at Cambridge. The full Footfall table is at: www.railfuture.org.uk/east.html PW

The Branch Committee has agreed that in conjunction with MARPA, we should conduct a follow-up footfall count at Newmarket in the early Autumn. I will contact previous volunteer counters from the membership. If you haven't done this before and would like to help, please contact me as soon as possible.

A Little Knowledge Goes a Long Way?

A member wrote to remind us that too often, getting the best ticket price requires unreasonable effort. He says: " I have booked with Scotrail a berth on the overnight sleeper from London Euston to Fort William(FW), plus Ipswich to Liverpool Street for £8.00. However, I am planning to return using the Pendolino between Glasow Central and London Euston."

He continued " I asked Scotrail for a single fare from FW to Ipswich. Their 'preferred' route was offered included changes at Glasgow Queen Street, Edinburgh and Peterborough with a ticket price of around £130.00. However, by asking for three 'split' journeys, I was offered the same route for about £65.00."

When I asked about via London, the fare was, FW to Glasgow Queen Street £12.10, Glasgow Central to London Euston £47.50 and Liverpool Street to Ipswich £8.00. Total = £67.60, around half the original quoted price of £130.00 and with one less connection than via Peterborough."

"It is unreasonable to expect Joe Public " , to spend as much time as it took him to discover these options. Absolutely, and the McNulty Report wholly agrees with you. A simpler ticketing scheme is a prime policy of Railfuture. CB

Ipswich Station New Footbridge

We are reliably informed that the new footbridge and lift at Ipswich station should be open for use by the time you read this.

MARPA AGM 12 March 2011

Ben Walsh reports that "This A.G.M. was particularly good with twenty-seven people attending, which has to my knowledge been the largest attendance so far. Alan Trett was our Guest Speaker who is the Area Station Manager for our line.

He took us through his lifetime history on how he had gone through the ranks to where he is today, and then told us about how the service along the line had grown and what is might happen to its Railway Stations. The caveat, as always, was FUNDING! Station Adopters were valuable, he said, and the concept would be relaunched in the next couple of months or so. So lookout for publicity about this-and if you want to get involved contact him. Then it was time for questions and these were answered in a upbeat and positive way. All told then, a very good and vigorous event." BW

Norwich to Peterborough

John Saunders writes with good news: "...during 2010, 94.4% of Liverpool-Norwich trains arrived on time by government targets and in the autumn 2010 wave of passenger surveys, 94% of their passengers expressed satisfaction with the service." There's no doubt that Stagecoach and the Government have effected significant change on this route, particularly in the refurbishment of the Class 158 units which though twenty plus years old, appear as virtually new trains to most users. Well done. Now we need shorter transit times. For the fullest news go to: www.penrug.org.uk and then better still, join them. JS/CB

CHESTERTON STATION: WHY BUILD IT?

A personal view from Branch Committee member , ALAN MAYES

Railfuture is campaigning to build a new railway station at Chesterton Junction on the Cambridge to Ely line next to Cambridge Business Park . This new station is also part of Cambridgeshire County Council's Local Transport Plan. So why

build Chesterton Station and what is the case in its favour?

For those who live in Milton and North Cambridge, a station at Chesterton would encourage people to switch to the train, and enable current car-travellers to Cambridge or Waterbeach Station to walk or cycle to Chesterton Station instead. This would include the many thousand of Science and Business Park employees.

Cambridge is an important centre of high technology industry. The cost of housing in Cambridge is high with not enough to accommodate the staff and students of the two universities, many language schools and those many high technology companies located in and around the city. Consequently many people who work in Cambridge have to commute from places a considerable distance away. Many of the jobs are highly specialised and it is unrealistic to expect to find staff for every possible job in a city of approximately 115,000 people.

The success of big centres of employment such as the City of London and San Jose, California depends on having several million people living within a daily commute to ensure the widest possible pool of recruits. It is largely unrealistic to assume that people will move every time they change jobs.

Providing there is room enough to avoid overcrowding, the train allows people to travel over a far greater distance than any other form of surface transport. A tiring long distance drive to work is a poor start to the working day.

Thanks to good rail links to London and other places on the lines to Liverpool Street and Kings Cross, several million people can commute by train to and from the centre of Cambridge. At this point cycling or the bus is only possible for those who live in or close to Cambridge. But it takes at least 45 minutes to get from Cambridge Railway Station to north Cambridge. Hence many car journeys.

I work in an office on Cambridge Business Park, part of the Crown Estate who deliberately built offices with fewer parking spaces to discourage commuting by car. However, those who do not live nearby or in places commutable by train to Chesterton Station, can only commute by car; result: an overflowing car park.

Significantly, Microsoft located their Cambridge office near to Cambridge Railway Station and not at the Science or Business Park.

Building Chesterton Station will therefore put several million people within a daily train commute to the Science and Business Parks. In the fullness of time, re-opening March to Wisbech and the proposed East-West route would add Wisbech, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Oxford etc, to the list of commutable train journey's to Cambridge.

Despite strong support for this new railway station, plans to provide the £20 million needed from the Transport Innovation Fund and the Regional Funding Allocation both fell through as government policy changed.

The bid for money from the new regional growth fund also failed. So the only issue to be resolved is finding an alternative source for that £20 million funding. One possibility is to get the train operator (*the Government? Ed*) for railways in East Anglia to bankroll the station as part of the new franchise agreement. This is logical as the train operator would get additional income from journeys made by train from and to the new station. *AM*



Change is a comin' in for the King's Lynn to King's Cross route service; but not immediately.

Big plans are gestating in that government bunker known as the Department for Transport (DfT). It all hinges around Thameslink, due to arrive on Great Northern routes in 2018.

What is pretty certain is that Thameslink will run to Peterborough, but to Cambridge only on the Kings Lynn route. This is where the Hitachi Intercity Express Project (IEP) may play its part. This super-duper 125mph (south of Hitchin) train is destined to power the King's Cross to Cambridge and King's Lynn service.

IEP specification will make it the fastest accelerating UK express train, which might well bring modest time reductions. We shall see. It will also be air-conditioned; so bye-bye to the conversation-killing noise of today's Cl.365's, especially when the hopper-lights are open. Slightly more seats will also be on offer in this

five coach configuration. However, IEP is **not yet** a confirmed for the route, but given the need for a 100+mph train, nevertheless really the only 'train in the game' at the moment.

You have probably gathered by now that the service from Cambridge might be split between IEP on the fastest services, and Thameslink on the rest, usually on the slow lines. Whether this implies chiselling two franchises out of First Capital Connect, and therefore non-interchangeable ticketing, is also yet to be confirmed. But it does seem logical if undesirable.

It's worth remembering that new Thameslink rolling stock will be basic 'pack'em in' design, fit for rapid decanting of passengers in London

Apart from us, the Fen Line Users Association, FLUA for short, are very firmly on the case and well worth joining. Find them at: www.flua.org.uk/ . My thanks to 'Mr FLUA', Robert Stripe, for so much information on this ever evolving project. CB

The Branch Aspiration for the next Greater Anglia franchise

Essex

Must provide half hourly stopping service Colchester North/Town to Clacton.
Provide better canopies at Colchester North.

Aspiration: Work to provide a through route from Braintree to Stansted Airp.

Suffolk:

Must provide hourly service Ipswich - Lowestoft and provide Beccles loop.

Must provide hourly service Ipswich to Peterborough.

Improve Lowestoft station.

Improve all of Bury St Edmunds station by bringing into use all closed /boarded up buildings.

Improve Newmarket station including ticket machine and better car parking.

Provide extra capacity for Newmarket race meetings.

Resist moving Lowestoft station.

Norfolk:

Mix of fast and semi-fast services on London to Norwich to get balance of journey times and connections.. see also below re the need for extra tracks in Essex.

Improve Great Yarmouth station and links to the town centre

Work towards linking Yarmouth - Norwich service to the Norwich - Cambridge service to provide a through service Yarmouth -Cambridge.

Work towards an average speed of 100kph for Norwich to Cambridge and to Peterborough services.

Cambridgeshire:

Improve Cambridge station with full length platform canopies.... passenger comfort and safety reasons.

Cambridge... connect new island platform footbridge to a new eastern entrance.

Improve Cambridge station booking hall Provide hourly fast service to London Liverpool Street via Stratford peak/offpeak.

Work to provide station at Chesterton.

Work to provide additional hourly service from Cambridge to a reopened station at Wisbech and serving a park and ride station at Manea for Chatteris and Manea.

Plan towards an East West Rail Link to Oxford.

General:

Commit to an improvement of interior and exterior cleanliness of rolling stock especially the dmu fleet...currently badly maintained interiors.

Work with NR to improve line speeds on all routes to match speed capacity of rolling stock especially Cambridge to Norwich and Ipswich.

Work with NR to provide dynamic loops in Essex to enable speeding up of Norwich to London I/C services.

Work to improve connectivity of all EA network so ALL services connect well at Colchester, Manningtree, Ipswich, Lowestoft, Stowmarket, Norwich, Ely, Cambridge, Peterborough. **Fares**....Simplify fare structure - retain and promote

Anglia Day Ranger, co-operate with TfL for additional zones on London Travelcard Inter City rolling stock... Retain/introduce suitable stock with catering for London - Norwich services - replacement stock for franchise extension.

Bank holiday services to be run as Saturday NOT Sunday service.
Sunday service times on all lines to run in same as Saturday timings albeit with a 'later start'. Boxing day services with a 'later start' Saturday service on all routes.

*And there we have to finish for this Rail East150, hope you enjoyed it. If you have anything to say or any news and/or photographs to contribute, all the contact details follow this text. The deadline for the next edition is **30 AUGUST**. We hope you enjoy a splendid summer. CB*

Railfuture

EAST ANGLIA BRANCH : OFFICERS

Chairman: Peter Wakefield (PW)

7 Hollymount, St Matthews Street, Cambridge CB1
1QD
01223 352364
peter.wakefield@railfuture.org.uk

Vice Chairman: Peter Lawrence (PL)

3 Hellesdon Road, Norwich NR6 5EB
01603 627217
pandwlawrence@waitrose.com

Secretary: Nick Dibben (ND)

24 Bure Close, St Ives PE27 3FE
Tel: 01480495101,
nick.dibben@railfuture.org.uk

Treasurer: Lewis Buckingham

25 Drury Road, Colchester CO2 7UY Tel: 01206
571734

Membership Secretary: Clara Zilahi

31 Wimsbotsham Road, Downham Market PE38 9PE
01366 383954
clara.zilahi@railfuture.org.uk

RAILEAST Editor: Chris Burton (CB)

2 Stone Terrace,
Cambridge, CB1 2PN 01223 352327
cfb79ten@googlemail.com



EAST ANGLIA BRANCH :

Dates for your Diary

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Branch Meeting

**Ipswich: Friends Meeting
House, IP1 3JH. 14.15 hrs
25 June 2011**

NORWICH 1 October
Chapel Fields
Methodist Chapel. NR2 1SD

CAMBRIDGE 3 December
Little St Mary's Church, CB2 8AE

AGM: BURY ST EDMUNDS
25 February
Friends Meeting House, IP33 1SJ

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