

raileast

THE NEWSLETTER OF RAILFUTURE: EAST ANGLIA BRANCH

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Issue 154

June 2012



It's looking good, it's looking 21st Century

Last March the new western entrance to Kings Cross station was revealed to rail users and mighty impressive it is too, as you can see. For those of us from the eastern counties who use this station, this is the first dividend from the £550m project to bring this drab, dark terminus into the light and the 21st century. Member, John Henderson, feels a little more daylight is needed here, and this picture was taken on a sunny day. Still, the whole scheme is due for completion in 2013.

This also continues the sprucing up of London's major stations which just twenty years ago seemed unthinkable. With Liverpool Street, St Pancras and others completed and London Bridge on schedule for 2017 these are exciting times. So well done Network Rail, the Department for Transport and the talented architects and builders involved in this revolution amidst our ancient railway infrastructure. Heavens, we've even heard the French are taking note! CB

NEWS

BECCLES:



AT LAST, after many, many years of lobbying by both our Branch and the East Suffolk Travellers Association (ESTA), Network Rail has descended on Beccles station and installed the much needed loop and associated signalling. Most of the work had been completed by 13 May ultimately making possible the hourly rail service expected in the next timetable change in December.

But (isn't there always), as ESTA member, David Bickell, points out " it still leaves a dilapidated old station building, no waiting facilities, and just four parking spaces (these are usually taken up by local residents). Hardly conducive to attracting new business for the hourly service being introduced in December!" No indeed, so much more work to be done by the railway in collaboration with the local council. Our thanks to David for the information and the excellent pictures. DB/CB

MANEA:

Martin Thorne, Station Adopter for Manea and Whittlesea writes to tell us that " Manea, unlike many other Fenland villages, is growing with a considerable number of new houses built there in recent years, although this is not apparent from the train as the village is strung out over a considerable distance. Land has been earmarked by Network Rail behind the down platform for a car park should station calls come down to 2-hourly. It is also intended to become a transport 'hub' for the Fenland area, particularly for Chatteris (which lost its station when the St.Ives-March line closed to passengers in the late 1960's) which is just 10 minutes away by car and is also growing in size, with about 1,600 new houses likely to be built there over the next few years on the south side of the town."

"Although nothing much will happen until the 15-year EA franchise commences in 2014 or thereabouts, the intention is to make the service between Peterborough and Ipswich hourly - this is dependent on finding sufficient rolling stock of course - with Manea being served every 2 hours and Whittlesea being increased from 2-hourly to hourly (CrossCountry would cease to serve Manea). It is also an aspiration that the platforms at both stations be lengthened to take 4-car trains, to meet future requirements." MT

NEWMARKET STATION NEEDS 'GEEING-UP'

"A poor reflection of the town" - or so said a reporter for the Newmarket Weekly News following Mid Anglia Rail Passengers Association (MARPA)/Railfuture's passenger count and review of the facilities at Newmarket station in September last year.

MARPA's Ross Taylor tells us that the results showed that passenger numbers had increased by almost a third since April 2008. However, the station facilities are poor bearing in mind the importance of the town especially in horse racing terms.

At the end of April MARPA organised a successful 'first' meeting at the station to review the facilities and the scope for improvement. Those at the meeting included Councillors from Newmarket Town Council and Forest Heath District Council as well as representatives of Suffolk County Council, the train operator, Greater Anglia, MARPA, as well as the two station adopters. The local MP (Matthew Hancock) is holding a watching brief.

The meeting was encouraging, with hopefully some significant funding available. A follow up is being organised by the train operator for the end of May. Network Rail are about to clear more debris from the disused part of the platform to accommodate three car trains. The first we hope of many initiatives to improve the travel experience for the growing number of station users. RT

UNFAIR FARES AND.....

A Railfuture press release noted that a recent Passenger Focus report on the indiscriminate use of Penalty Fares mirrored the experience of its own members. Railfuture Chairman, David Berman, said, "We believe that passengers making an innocent mistake should be treated with fairness - they shouldn't be made to feel like a criminal.....We support the rail industry's attempts to tackle fare evasion but it's financially counter-productive for a train operator to upset a passenger so much that they might be put off from using the train ever again."

BBC Radio 4's 'You and Yours' also gave this subject an airing on Tuesday 22 May when the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) felt unable to field a spokesman although invited to the studio. ATOC added that they were trying to construct a nationwide policy on this topic which is more 'customer friendly'.

Your Editor also related to You and Yours the sad tale of his brother in law, who found himself travelling from Scotland to Kings Cross on a seat reservation ticket. This cost him a £140 penalty, even after mailing the original correct ticket and receipt to East Coast Train's senior marketing manager. CB

THAMESLINK FRANCHISE: BRANCH ASPIRATIONS

The Branch has been considering its aspirations for the new Thameslink Franchise, an amalgam of FCC< Southern and 'bits' of South Eastern. Although

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happy with the existing Peterborough line service, we have called on the new operator to increase services to Kings Lynn to half hourly. The Branch has suggested more stopping services between Cambridge and London, so that the fastest trains can run non-stop all day with a journey time of 45 minutes between the two cities. South of London, we have suggested that the long distance services should serve East Croydon and Gatwick Airport.

We have called on station improvements at all stations to achieve a consistent high standard across the network and note that due to increasing passenger numbers, staffing levels need to be maintained. ND

Although new trains for the franchise are on order, we have called for any existing trains that remain in use to be fully refurbished and fitted with air-conditioning and wi-fi.

The Branch will be working with the London Branch of Railfuture to produce a combined document that will be sent to all the franchise bidders. I close with the great news that, as from 19 May, **THAMESLINK** will at last be open again in the evenings and at weekends. ND

SHEPRETH, MELDRETH et al:

As part of its ongoing level crossing safety campaign on Foxton Level Crossing, the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group hosted a public meeting on May 21st with Network Rail's Route Director, Dave Ward. This was devoted entirely to questions and answers, with frank and constructive discussion. Mr Ward outlined short term improvements which go beyond the wicket gate repairs for which the RUG has been pressing:

- Repair of the self-locking pedestrian gates to be completed July 30th
- CCTV cameras covering the two pedestrian crossings to be installed; if safety concerns arise evidence will be available to review what went wrong
- Equipment inside the signal box will be relocated to improve the field of vision
- Lighting will be installed to illuminate both pedestrian crossings

Mr Ward then raised the question of longer-term safety improvements, in line with Network Rail's aspiration to close the level crossing. He candidly suggested that a pedestrian or vehicle bridge and bypass would be desirable. Mr Ward and I will shortly be meeting senior council officers to follow up, and the outcome will be reported to the next meeting of the Rail User Group on 20 June, 7:30 at Shepreth Village Hall. (Worth noting all of this post Elsenham, as crossings and safety are creating new speed restriction at a few locations in our area).

Susan van de Ven, MSFRUG Chairman

FREIGHT NEWS: The earthworks have begun for the installation of a loop just to the east of Ely on the route to Fordham and Ipswich. Eventually this bit of new

double track will connect with the double track eastward from Soham, thus easing the timetabling of services at the approach to Ely. A service road is being constructed from A142 at Stuntney, just out of our view to the left. All part of a much bigger scheme, of course, and likely to include the remodelling of Ely North Junction. Here the plan is for returning the single track leads to Kings Lynn and Norwich, to the double track they once were. Raising the 20mph limit (for freight only) over the two bridges further south would contribute greatly to a still swifter transit, and more efficient use of train paths through the 'funnel' that is Ely. CB



FREIGHT 2:

Passenger users of the Felixstowe-Ipswich service have been horrified to hear suggestions that rather than fund the admittedly expensive dualling of the line from Westerfield onward to Trimley, it might be better value to transfer the off-peak service to buses. The Branch thinks not: leaving the route single track could make a nonsense of the considerable improvements being made for freight trains west of Ipswich right through to Nuneaton, not to mention the new berths currently under construction at the port owned by Hutchinson who, ironically, were the source of this suggestion that buses be used off-peak. CB

STATION IMPROVEMENTS:

Work is underway to improve the stations on the Hitchin to Peterborough line. Platforms are being extended at Sandy, Biggleswade and Arlesey to allow for 12 coach trains to be introduced as part of the Thameslink project. The photograph shows the platform extension work at Sandy.



At Huntingdon station, the new footbridge is complete (and receiving very favourable user reaction) with work on the new lift shafts nearly complete. The design aims to match the existing station building, together with dummy arched windows. Additional waiting shelters are also being provided at some stations. Meanwhile at Cambridge a new cycle rack has appeared sited in the short wait car park. More please. ND



East Anglia Footfall Statistics 2007-11

Around March each year the Office of Rail Regulation release the station usage figures ending the previous year. Yes, they do take a while to collate. However, our indefatigable Chairman pores over these national statistics and laboriously extracts those pertaining to our area. Over the following three pages are spread the results of his diligence, and fascinating they are too. After which you can read his commentary.

Station Name	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	interchange plus total
Norwich	3,449,928.00	3,568,618	3,496,082	3,749,474	264,516 = 4,013,990
Salhouse	6,475	6,056	6,120	6,822	
Hoveton/Wroxham	101,084	104,096	100,254	109,022	
Worstead	20,553	22,072	20,014	18,896	
North Walsham	218,295	225,072	210,800	215,874	
Gunton	16,399	18,200	17,136	18,714	
Roughton Road	13,508	14,544	13,906	13,306	
Cromer	181,546	188,700	171,236	178,778	
West Runton	21,220	23,748	22,042	23,030	
Sheringham	177,090	185,888	179,542	183,990	
Brundall Gardens	9,178	11,096	10,720	11,010	
Brundall	92,143	89,204	87,732	90,594	
Lingwood	47,586	53,526	48,244	49,492	
Acle	53,213	50,764	45,482	48,170	
Great Yarmouth	416,713	417,212	403,428	428,320	
Cantley	17,935	17,866	16,062	16,668	
Reedham	36,889	36,552	25,294	40,326	545=40,671
Berney Arms	1,014	1,038	1,628	1,686	very limited service
Haddiscoe	9,877	10,650	10,246	10,292	
Buckenham	97	132	154	106	very limited service
Somerleyton	12,240	12,600	9,850	10,833	
Oulton Broad North	118,081	119,074	108,634	113,582	
Lowestoft	410,244	423,632	412,246	418,866	
Oulton broad South	18,028	18,684	17,660	21,240	
Beccles	84,989	89,836	82,146	83,762	
Brampton	5,569	6,440	5,980	6,826	
Halesworth	69,597	68,940	65,970	73,212	
Darsham	39,862	39,356	39,744	43,434	
Saxmundham	110,028	106,394	102,002	112,874	
Wickham Market	28,767	28,524	28,810	29,682	
Melton	36,727	42,060	40,012	43,216	
Woodbridge	114,036	115,888	115,940	133,398	
Westerfield	9,764	11,100	11,688	13,346	3197=16,543
Derby Road	39,319	38,758	35,868	37,544	
Trimley	42,413	40,724	37,910	40,382	
Felixstowe	208,587	203,244	190,136	193,986	

Station Name	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	interchange plus total
Ipswich	2,807,395	2,825,352	2,774,536	3,004,678	423,462=3,428,140
Mistley	48,600	49,682	53,722	57,120	
Wrabness	22,540	19,778	17,736	21,912	
Harwich International	92,166	108,722	98,454	103,082	
Dovercourt	147,528	149,228	129,620	118,126	
Harwich Town	145,527	147,764	151,438	175,078	
Diss	551,781	559,544	539,234	600,904	
Manningtree	910,384	833,888	799,776	890,624	332,762=1,223,386
Colchester North	4,525,791	4,502,739	4,218,622	4,362,914	318,131=4,681,045
Colchester Town	442,593	448,381	394,882	381,232	
Hythe	51,836	60,188	69,124	90,822	
Wivenhoe	335,294	328,872	309,328	330,030	2588=332,618
Alresford			56,012	62,516	
Great Bentley			71,628	69,768	
Weeley			23,270	22,806	
Thorpe-le-Soken	128,996	124,466	118,324	124,146	297,967=422,113
Clacton	704,196	713,108	660,964	713,998	
Kirby Cross	39,715	44,542	41,508	42,114	
Frinton	171,663	173,404	165,828	168,460	
Walton-on-Naze	115,112	117,998	113,330	118,520	
Marks Tey	459,980	443,724	428,804	428,816	395,106=823,922
Chappel & Wakes Colne	29,903	30,940	31,674	32,756	
Bures	48,383	50,532	49,216	51,370	
Sudbury	285,865	284,938	270,390	292,124	
Kelvedon	799,437	797,236	763,240	791,312	
Needham Market	43,937	52,782	58,054	67,056	
Stowmarket	705,583	751,802	756,484	855,692	30,911=886,603
Elmswell	53,597	61,844	60,828	65,738	
Thurston	38,387	40,208	41,030	49,060	
Bury St Edmunds	373,739	415,914	419,914	469,500	217=469,717
Kennett	17,675	16,274	14,542	18,878	
Newmarket	148,515	164,548	165,592	197,924	
Dullingham	26,723	26,354	24,304	26,476	
Cambridge	6,997,883	7,571,828	7,661,146	8,245,416	758,860=9,004,276

Station Name	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	interchange plus to
Cambridge	6,997,883	7,571,828	7,661,146	8,245,416	758,860=9,004,276
Shelford	125,588	145,304	137,754	149,788	
Whittleford Parkway	314,895	333,144	317,244	338,306	
Great Chesterford	97,949	100,158	98,418	116,328	
Audley End	773,805	765,608	722,606	746,746	
Newport	215,036	212,566	200,314	220,370	
Elsenham	181,425	186,176	163,942	173,080	
Stansted Airport	5,521,687	5,241,387	4,458,756	4,074,210	14,534=4,088,744
Stansted Mountfichet	383,993	401,474	363,204	395,658	
Foxton	63,418	76,898	72,072	76,860	
Shepreth	75,052	75,704	79,104	83,524	
Meldreth	213,562	216,990	205,836	198,626	
Royston	1,147,905	1,155,024	1,112,974	1,193,504	18,369=1,211,873
Ashwell & Morden	104,417	116,908	112,350	115,720	
Baldock	419,784	473,396	455,473	495,896	
Letchworth	1,364,936	1,445,886	1,366,714	1,447,418	
Hitchin	2,543,526	2,569,494	2,478,832	2,594,012	162,005=2,756,017
Arlesey	398,128	413,870	411,056	444,680	
Biggleswade	751,154	734,458	703,386	739,632	
Sandy	449,698	446,186	424,906	444,122	
St Neots	979,356	1,029,338	1,001,248	1,091,388	
Huntingdon	1,564,270	1,592,696	1,542,100	1,629,780	
Peterborough	4,070,725	4,099,754	3,936,754	4,076,724	621,940=5,320,604
Whittlesea	26,064	24,896	23,506	23,474	
March	293,434	305,256	301,832	316,292	85=316,377
Manea	2,506	3,048	2,596	3,368	very limited service
Ely	1,505,730	1,583,246	1,579,948	1,731,956	221,222=1,953,178
Shippea Hill	845	868	942	812	very limited service
Lakenheath	552	536	370	404	Sunday service only
Brandon	50,232	65,342	71,406	84,648	
Thetford	212,576	218,542	236,470	242,756	
Harling Road	4,323	4,152	3,900	3,494	very limited service
Eccles Road	1,643	1,966	1,796	1,676	very limited service
Attleborough	151,389	154,064	153,410	161,610	
Spooner Row	493	718	618	640	very limited service
Wymondham	115,983	133,464	134,518	138,006	
King's Lynn	680,230	739,282	750,783	821,772	52=821,824
Watlington	100,664	111,612	107,956	113,898	
Downham Market	361,434	365,612	360,032	406,690	
Littleport	148,836	156,124	149,428	178,254	
Waterbeach	250,039	277,470	266,026	301,376	

Peter Wakefield adds: "Note that ORR state that the figures often do not capture all users: for example, some season, ranger/rover ticket movements. Nor of course do they capture ticketless travel. The overall figures are thus indicative and are in most cases under recording. The stations are grouped around the

major economic hubs of East Anglia in the order they are placed on each individual route radiating out from that hub. Some stations are major interchanges so users who are doing that are added to the total count.

Overall, it will be seen that growth has resumed across the network after a previous slight downturn at some locations which despatch large numbers of travellers towards London each day.

The Bittern Line continues its climb and particularly pleasing is the resumption of growth along the Wherry Lines. Business is also expanding along the Ipswich to Cambridge route, continuing what started when the present hourly service was installed a few years back, plus provision of higher quality rolling stock.

These figures back our case for considerable improvements to Newmarket and Bury St Edmunds stations. The pressure for an hourly service through Bury St Edmunds from Ipswich to Peterborough will bring, we feel sure, another surge in business along the route when this campaign is successful. The growth of traffic to/from Ipswich on all routes, indicates an urgent need to provide more platform capacity there. The figures for the Ipswich–Cambridge route may predict a surge in numbers using the East Suffolk Line when the hourly service materialises later this year. These we eagerly await in a couple of years' time.

The hourly service already operating between Ipswich and Saxmundham through Woodbridge, and inaugurated during the period these tables were collated, seem to indicate some growth already. Interesting are the 10 interchanges a day at Westerfield!

Cambridge station remains the busiest on the East Anglian network outside London, with sustained growth leading to an incredible footfall of over 9m when interchanges are added. This is a strong indication of the expanding economy of Greater Cambridge region.

The new station at Cambridge Science Park cannot come soon enough. When built it will be significant to see to what extent it generates increased usage on all its services radiating through Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. Unsurprisingly the entire group of stations on these routes passing through Cambridgeshire and West Norfolk have continued or resumed strong growth. *Which all shows the need for a continued, greater investment in our network.* PW

***DIARY DATE: NEXT BRANCH MEETING
23 JUNE YMCA, COLCHESTER CO1 2JX***

BIG HITTERS JOIN RAIL CAMPAIGN

At its AGM in Worcester Railfuture welcomed some highly respected names from the rail

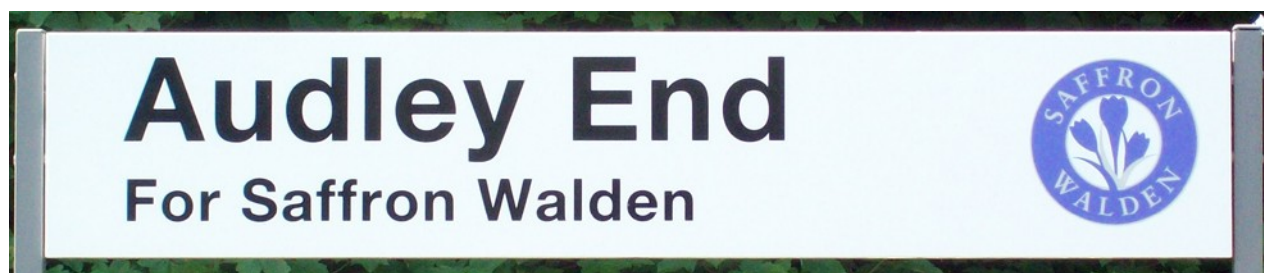
industry into its ranks. Our new president is Christian Wolmar, the well-known writer on rail issues. Vice Presidents are former rail minister, Lord Andrew Adonis, Adrian Shooter CBE, former boss of Chiltern Railways, Chris Green, who was chief executive of Virgin Trains and a non-executive director of Network Rail, Roger Ford, Modern Railway's highly 'Informed Source', and Barry Doe, the expert on fares and timetabling.

Railfuture's new chairman, Dr. David Berman, said "These people are serious big hitters from the rail industry, and their willingness to join us shows that our campaigning is on the right track. We hope that these respected names will further strengthen our work in fighting for a better railway for all".

CAMBRIDGESHIRE – NEW MONEY

The County Council has been awarded £5m from the Government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund for improving access to public transport along the Cambridge to Ely and Cambridge to Huntingdon corridors. The A10 and A14 roads are heavily congested and the Council is looking at a number of schemes to encourage commuters to leave their cars at home. Access to the railway stations is part of the proposal and station travel plans are to be developed. Improvements to cycle facilities, bus interchange and signage are proposed.

One early sign of this intent, is that some park and ride buses within Cambridge are to call at the railway station. In contrast, it is likely that Stagecoach will be cutting the number of buses that run to Huntingdon station from 3 to just one per hour when timetables change in July. ND



MAKING AUDLEY END MORE ACCESSIBLE – WORK CONTINUES

It has been noted several times recently that much effort is being made to improve access to Audley End station for users, current and potential: there's the new footbridge with lifts; new cycle stands and shelters, and the new bus stand, with screens indicating when the next bus should arrive. To this has been added rebranded name plates, as you can see above.

This is something which we and others, have been requesting for some time so that non-local users understand that Audley End is the station for the attractive and historic market town of Saffron Walden. The name plate also incorporates a crocus, the symbol for the town. Many thanks to the local station manager, Alan

Neville, for 'championing' this important change to its fruition over the last three years. Still to come is the *dedicated* bus link between Audley End and Saffron Walden. This project is progressing well and by the Autumn will include through ticketing from any UK station. PW

GreaterAnglia

Greater Anglia (GA) is making the rail travellers' life a bit easier in other ways too: as of mid-May Off-Peak tickets may be used at **any time** during the evening between London Liverpool Street (only) and stations on both the Cambridge and Manningtree/Harwich routes, as well as inward journeys.

GA has also introduced a Super Off-Peak ticket valid on services arriving *after* 12 noon in Liverpool Street but with **no** return between 15.59 and 19.01hrs. It is however valid all day at weekends and on Bank Holidays.

Full details are at GA's website: <http://www.greateranglia.co.uk/tickets-fares/daily-tickets/off-peak-and-super-off-peak-tickets> PW

EAST-WEST RAIL LINK NEWS



Courtesy of member, John Henderson, here's a photograph of East West Rail between Bicester and Winslow with a Network Rail maintenance unit on the part of the line that's still operational. Yes, these days NR actively acknowledge its existence as does Chiltern Railway Company. JH/CB

BRANCH MEETING 23 JUNE IN COLCHESTER (*NOT IPSWICH*)

Members and public meeting

The Saturday June 23rd meeting is in Colchester, a truly interesting town and the oldest urban settlement in the country features many layers of history. Please note that this is a switch from our more usual venue in Ipswich.

The venue is a pleasant one, being the YMCA Hall, which is very close to Colchester Town station. (Please see the enclosed flyer for exact directions from the station.)

The speakers are Thijs Jan Noomen, who is Greater Anglia's Project manager. Mr. Noomen will among other topics, outline the campaign priorities, as GA see it, for the varying periods into the future. It is important that so far as possible, we all ask for the same things.

Derek Monnery is Chairman of the Essex Rail Users Federation. He is well placed to talk about their aspirations for the railway to serve east Essex effectively.

John Smock of Ontrack will speak about the need to upgrade/revise service patterns in the Tendring Peninsular, emphasising the social role of the railway.

The talks and discussions will be very important in informing the search for a high quality railway that seeks to serve many differing roles within the community. So do try and be there for what promises to be a very informative afternoon. PW

And once again this is where we have to leave you. Thanks to all our contributors of text and pictures with due apologies for content which didn't make the mix. Deadline for the next issue is 1 September. Have a good summer, on or off the railway!

Railfuture

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EAST ANGLIA BRANCH :

Dates for your Diary

23 June 2012 at 14.15hr
Branch Meeting in Colchester
YMCA Hall, 159 Magdalen Rd
CO1 2JX: Guest Speakers; Thijs
Jan Noomen, Greater Anglia
Project Manager + John Smock
of OnTrack and Derek Monnery
of Essex Rail Users Fed.

29 September at 14.15hr at
Chapelfields Chapel, Norwich
NR2 1SD: Guest Speaker; David
Horne, MD East Midland Trains.

8 December, Cambridge

23 February Bury St Edmunds
AGM at Friends Meeting House
IP33 1SJ

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