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# RAILFUTURE; EAST ANGLIA BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

28 FEBRUARY 2015 AT 14.00 HRS



**FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE,  
SAINT JOHN'S STREET,  
BURY ST EDMUNDS,  
IP33 1SJ**

# Railfuture East Anglia Branch

## *Annual Report to Branch Members*

### *from Chairman, Peter Wakefield*

The Branch has continued with its now well established routine of 4 members' meetings per year. These were held in centres that hopefully enable all members to attend at least one gathering and meet the Branch Committee. The average number of attendees last year was 35. Besides members, the general public has been welcomed too. A speaker connected to the railway industry is invited to talk to members as well as the usual business of a meeting being conducted. This year, meetings have been held in Bury St Edmunds, Colchester (jointly with colleagues from the L&SE Eastern Division) Norwich and Peterborough (jointly with colleagues from the Lincolnshire Branch.)

The Branch Committee has met on the same day as the above plus a planning meeting in Cambridge at the end of March. Each member of the Committee has a specific and agreed task. Before each meeting, the newsletter, "RailEast", has been produced and either posted or emailed to all members including Corporate Members.

This year, in addition to the above, the Branch organised an all day national Summer conference, on behalf of the Board, in Cambridge. This was well attended and was agreed by attendees as a positive experience. It certainly took a lot of time to organise.

A warm welcome to the new members who have joined us during the year!

#### *Activities promoting the railway and Railfuture.*

Members of the Committee have appeared on local TV and local radio about 10 times. Local press has frequently asked for and received opinions on rail matters. The Branch has kept up regular contacts with senior members of Abellio Greater Anglia, Govia Thameslink Railway and its predecessor First Capital Connect. Indeed, we were asked to speak at the valedictory event held for stakeholders by FCC in the House of Commons.

We have regularly met with senior local authority officials of Cambs CC, Norfolk and Suffolk CC as well as elected members from all parties. This has been at conferences, on-site visits as for example the Cambridge rail/bus interchange, or in their offices. We have contributed in detail to the Rail Prospectus For East

Anglia, a document compiled by our two LEPs and County Councils. Our Branch secretary has produced influential papers and maps alluding to EWRL and distributed them appropriately. We have maintained a positive and productive relationship with Passenger Focus.

Our key campaigns of East-West Rail Line and reconnecting the Wisbech-March line to the national network have made significant progress throughout the year involving numerous meetings, leaflet drops and petitions. All of which has been progressed with significant help from others within the Railfuture organisation, for which we are very grateful.

The Branch is working with the Haverhill Rail Re-opening group and has addressed large public meetings on this matter in Haverhill. A draft 'Re-opening' leaflet has been prepared by our Branch committee for this group. We have kept open very good and active relationships with line user groups throughout the region wherever possible.

This year we organised, with our colleagues in ESTA a footfall count at Halesworth station.

The Branch actively Tweets and keeps up the Wisbech rail website and Facebook pages as well as the EWRL pages, Ox-Cam, on the national website. The Branch has a well developed section of the national website. Many thanks to our Branch secretary and Committee member Jerry Alderson for the latter. We have produced responses to the Network Rail and DfT Consultations.

In particular our 'aspirations' response to the DfT East Anglia Re-Franchising process and the NR Anglia Route Consultation was very time consuming but very worthwhile. The former was sent to every MP and elucidated much support from them. There is a third consultation, again from NR, concerning 'Improving Connectivity'. This potentially very useful document will need a very careful response and will be further reported on at the AGM.

The Branch newsletter has two aims...to inform and involve the membership and as importantly, to act as a campaign tool. A paper version goes to every regional MP and MEP and other significant opinion formers. Hundreds more versions are emailed to anybody thought appropriate. We must specially thank our long suffering editor of Rail East at this final point. PW

***The AGM venue, as you can see from the cover, is but ten minutes away on foot from Bury St Edmunds station, and is situated in close proximity to the delightful town centre and all its many shops, cafés and restaurant. Fuller details are in the Flyer.***

The meeting format will be as before:

*14.00 hrs: Welcome and introduction to our Guest Speaker, Alan Neville, who is the Manager of London Liverpool Street Station. And that will be his topic; 'A Day in the Life of a Great Station'.*

*He is a good friend of Railfuture and has spoken of his previous role at Greater Anglia, out in the Fens. But now he's in charge of the largest of our stations and it is this he'll be talking about. So, please, do make his journey worthwhile by attending.*

*15.15 hrs: Branch Business Meeting including;*

*Branch Annual Report; Secretary/Chairman*

*National Report*

*Treasurer's Report*

*Election of Officers*

*Election of Committee*

*Year Ahead; Discussion*

I hope our current Committee will continue as its members have done good work over the last busy year. The Committee membership covers the region fairly well, yet we'd value a member with relevant expertise, resident in or near Norwich. An active email address is essential. If this appeals to you, do please get in touch with our Secretary, Paul, as soon as possible. We need you. PW

## Membership

Being a member of an organisation takes many forms....all the way from passive to very active. Whatever form your membership takes, it is very important. A large membership implies support for what we do and gives authority to our work....so 'passive' is good. Active takes many forms...on the committee, delivering leaflets, answering consultations as a citizen....engaging in social media. Twitter is a medium that can be useful in getting our message disseminated....if you have a twitter account please follow our Railfuture East Anglia account and 're tweet' comments and information placed in it by our Secretary. Why not open your one (free) account and have some fun? Finally....please if you can, recruit a new member this year. PW

## Consultations

As you will have read above, this has been the year of the Consultation....and more to come! All our responses are online at our website.

If you have no access to the web please write to ask for a printed copy of the responses to the East Anglia Re-Franchise aspiration paper and the Anglia

Route Study Consultation. This latter response is still in draft form as it is sent to NR via our Infrastructure Group chair, Chris Austin, who finalises the document. It will shortly be available online.

The third consultation is the Improving Connectivity from NR which appeared this January and to which our response is not yet complete.

This document has produced some interesting ideas for discussion on how connectivity throughout East Anglia might be improved. It is based on the principle of a timetable of tightly controlled connections of trains at centres, nodal points. In our case Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester, Cambridge and Ely. It reflects the Swiss 'Taktfahrplan' concept honed over many, many years to approach perfection. And of course in which their services also connect with buses!



So here in East Anglia it would be anything but an 'overnight' event, requiring much planning and considerable expenditure. Many routes will require shorter travel times and to effect this, new, robust, reliable infrastructure. In the meantime, a start must be made on looking at the many poor connections we have throughout the East Anglia network.

Please let us know your examples but not before you've been to: <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/publications/long-term-planning-process/improving-connectivity/> or your Editor, who will happily email a copy. You'll certainly get a better understanding of the many ideas this Network Rail team, working in collaboration with the Department for Transport are proposing.

It's a shame though that last Autumn's East Anglia Route Study consultation shows so little awareness of the thinking within this stimulating 53 page '...Connectivity' report. After all both are viewing pretty well the same span of years. If you wish to submit your ideas to NR, do not claim to be representing Railfuture as we will be responding formally. PW/CB



## NEWS ITEMS

### CAMBRIDGE SCIENCE PARK RAILWAY STATION

Railfuture welcomed the announcement in the Autumn Statement that the government will provide the money between 2014-15 and 2016-17 to build a new railway station at Chesterton, linked to Cambridge Science Park. The new railway station is scheduled to open in May 2016.

Network Rail is undertaking detail design for the new railway station and the surrounding infrastructure including car and cycle parking and bus stops. Cambridgeshire County Council is continuing to build the busway extension to the new railway station.

Railfuture has written to Network Rail to request that Network Rail's private access road from Milton Road to Chesterton railway sidings is made into a public footpath and cycleway for pedestrians and cyclists travelling to and from the new railway station.

This would be more pleasant and convenient than the pedestrian and cycle route currently proposed for Cowley Road up to the boundary of the current sidings, especially for the thousands of people who work on the Cambridge Science Park, the Cambridge Business Park and the St John's Innovation Centre.

It would also enable the Crown Estate to install side entrances on the North side of the Cambridge Business Park to shorten the walk between offices on the Cambridge Business Park and the new railway station and encourage travel to the Cambridge Business Park by train.

Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are consulting on Cambridge Northern Fringe East area action plan for further development of the area near the new railway station made possible by the building of the new station. The various options envisage the creation of new office space for an additional 13,000 to 25,000 people. Clearly the new railway station will need to have enough capacity to support this development and the other expected enhancements to rail capacity and improvements to rail services in the Cambridge region will all be essential to support this. AM

### CROSS COUNTRY (XC)

Arriva Cross Country have asked for ideas for improvements as there may be an opportunity for some additional expenditure during their long franchise

extension. The East Anglia branch response to this request focuses on the only Cross Country service which penetrates East Anglia, the Class 170 operated service linking Birmingham to Stansted Airport. This provides the following important benefits for the region:

- Cross country route spanning the country to Birmingham
- Connections to main lines from London; West Coast Main Link, Midland Main Line and East Coast Main Line
- Link to Stansted Airport and to the cluster of companies in Cambridge
- Local rail access at Ely to March and Peterborough, Kings Lynn, Norwich and Ipswich services

It is sometimes forgotten that this is just as much an important local service, as a long distance one. Railfuture East Anglia's short term aspirations focus on the problems with this service within the Branch area: i.e. Peterborough to Stansted. In the longer term the service should be developed with rolling stock significantly better suited to this long distance service (and the other XC services with Cl.170s) providing more capacity and shorter journey times.



X-Country at Ely on a winter's evening

### *XC Overcrowding*

Cross Country should identify overcrowded services and strengthen these services with additional rolling stock, or work with other operators to adjust the timetable and other services to mitigate for this issue.

### *XC Reliability and Punctuality*

Cross Country should publish a separate Public Performance Measurement for the Birmingham to Stansted Service, and a focus to improve punctuality particularly in the evening where there is currently a decline.

### *XC Comfort*

Some of the Class 170s have very poor legroom with seats spaced at 24" (or in some cases down to 22") compared to an ATOC recommended "dimension between seat back squab and the rear face of the seat in front of "27". The

seats should be moved to increase legroom.

#### *XC Late evening and Sunday morning services*

The service provides the main link from Cambridge to March and Peterborough. However, as it is treated as a long distance service, the final service from Stansted to Birmingham is at 20:21, with the last 3 services terminating at Cambridge. This is the dominant reason why the final trains from all over East Anglia to March are significantly earlier than those to Ely, only 12 miles away, as there is no way of getting from Ely to March after 21:15 in the evening. So, for example, the final train from Cambridge to Ely is 3¼ hours later than the final one for March. A simple initial aim would be to extend the 22:27 from Stansted to Peterborough (23.52), then after a short five minute layover return to Cambridge by 00.40. This would greatly improve late evening connections to March and from services on the ECML and a safe connection from the 22:00 from Kings Cross to Peterborough (or tighter one from the 22:10).

In a similar way, Sunday mornings have a very late start to the service with the first direct Cambridge to Peterborough service being at 11:00 arriving in Peterborough at 11:51. In the reverse direction the service is even worse with the first service to Cambridge being the 13:18 arriving at 14:08, so no morning service at all. Cross Country should run additional services on Sunday mornings. The full response can be viewed here:

<http://railfuture.org.uk/East+Anglia+Cross+Country> PH

## **East Anglia Station Footfall 2011-14**

Many thanks to Mike Farahar and Paul Hollinghurst for compiling this set of statistics from the huge national data list issued by the Office of the Rail Regulator.

As ever the stations are listed line by line. Junction stations with several routes converging are listed slightly apart. We have not shown the numbers of passengers that are estimated to change trains at these junctions.

By and large growth has resumed all over the network....or in many cases the growth has continued. Cambridge has continued to leap ahead of all other East Anglia stations with nigh on 10m users which is about 30% more since 2009. However, you will note that this impressive percentage is by no means unique.



The Ipswich to Bury St Edmunds and Cambridge line has seen very strong growth. This indicates the urgent need for at least 2tph throughout the day with those stations served presently only every 2 hours, increasingly seen as an anomaly, to go to hourly.

Growth on the Felixstowe line has faltered which must indicate customer reaction to the uncertain service reliability of the last few years.

Predictably the stations with a very limited train service exhibit the least, if any, growth in use. Anyhow see for yourself on the following pages. PW

### **EAST ANGLIA STATION USAGE ESTIMATES 2009-2014 + % change since 2009 & 13**

Station name	2011	2012	2013	2014	% 2009	%2013
Norwich	3,749,474	3,911,508	4,126,012	4,139,820	16.0	0.3
Salhouse	6,822	6,250	8,412	9,390	55.1	11.6
Hoveton & Wroxham	109,022	113,896	119,696	122,653	17.8	2.5
Worstead	18,898	21,906	21,140	21,604	-2.1	2.2
North Walsham	215,874	222,306	242,386	241,604	7.3	-0.3
Gunton	18,714	16,740	18,400	17,290	-5.0	-6.0
Roughtn Road	13,306	13,648	13,052	11,854	-18.5	-9.2
Cromer	178,778	185,278	194,444	186,672	-1.1	-4.0
West Runton	23,030	23,798	25,124	23,972	0.9	-4.6
Sheringham	183,970	189,004	190,844	189,976	2.2	-0.5
Brundall Gardens	11,010	10,964	12,144	10,534	-5.1	-13.3
Brundall	90,594	88,986	94,554	92,892	4.1	-1.8
Lingwood	49,492	48,252	46,640	50,072	-6.5	7.4
Acle	48,170	52,596	52,356	50,282	-0.9	-4.0
Great Yarmouth	428,320	441,456	461,574	460,921	10.5	-0.1
Cantley	16,668	16,174	18,008	18,898	5.8	4.9
Reedham	40,326	43,868	46,112	45,482	24.4	-1.4
Berney Arms	1,686	1,436	1,054	1,510	45.5	43.3
Haddiscoe	10,292	9,524	9,662	11,236	5.5	16.3
Buckenham	106	100	72	80	-39.4	11.1

Somerleyton	10,822	10,580	11,902	11,830	-6.1	-0.6
Oulton Broad North	113,582	118,972	126,064	124,368	4.4	-1.3
Lowestoft	418,866	413,984	459,166	471,338	11.3	2.7
Oulton Broad South	21,240	21,796	28,030	42,884	129.5	53.0
Beccles	83,762	78,822	85,040	101,280	12.7	19.1
Brampton	6,826	6,052	6,628	7,284	13.1	9.9
Halesworth	73,212	76,790	84,350	93,962	36.3	11.4
Darsham	43,434	44,522	47,676	55,498	41.0	16.4
Saxmundham	112,874	123,026	132,418	139,254	30.9	5.2
Wickham Market	29,682	33,144	38,900	44,270	55.2	13.8
Melton	43,216	55,558	63,196	68,516	62.9	8.4
Woodbridge	133,398	170,476	186,486	202,440	74.7	8.6
Westerfield	13,346	14,792	13,282	9,864	-11.1	-25.7
Derby Road	37,544	43,216	45,720	46,336	19.6	1.3
Trimley	40,382	37,746	40,164	37,134	-8.8	-7.5
Felixstowe	193,986	196,532	210,762	211,238	3.9	0.2
Ipswich	3,004,678	3,159,348	3,348,394	3,312,522	17.2	-1.1
Mistley	57,120	63,370	59,548	64,492	29.8	8.3
Wrabness	21,912	20,120	24,484	23,042	16.5	-5.9
Harwich Inter.	103,082	93,014	89,844	102,792	-5.5	14.4
Dovercourt	118,126	137,188	145,740	163,132	9.3	11.9
Harwich Town	175,078	176,856	156,344	155,938	5.5	-0.3
Diss	600,904	621,728	646,158	675,527	20.7	4.5
Manningtree	890,624	983,054	1,093,178	1,154,294	38.4	5.6
Colchester	4,362,914	4,584,110	4,291,055	4,402,045	-2.2	2.6
Colchester Town	381,232	464,398	743,017	762,235	70.0	2.6
Hythe	90,822	100,428	112,316	124,000	106.0	10.4
Wivenhoe	330,030	354,152	351,316	367,722	11.8	4.7
Alresford	62,516	58,734	57,342	57,480	13.0	0.2
Great Bentley	69,768	65,430	66,450	64,075	-13.2	-3.6
Weeley	22,806	21,220	23,244	25,748	6.7	10.8
Thorpe-le-	124,146	124,362	121,300	130,164	4.6	7.3

Soken						
Clacton	713,998	752,666	743,038	785,578	10.2	5.7
Kirby Cross	42,114	42,266	43,816	40,400	-9.3	-7.8
Frinton	168,460	175,884	175,226	189,644	9.4	8.2
Walton-On-Naze	118,520	123,358	117,288	123,352	4.5	5.2
Marks Tey	428,816	437,006	473,162	494,998	11.6	4.6
Chappel	32,756	38,176	41,642	47,976	55.1	15.2
Bures	51,370	53,942	57,632	60,172	19.1	4.4
Sudbury	292,124	313,510	326,340	329,154	15.5	0.9
Kelvedon	791,312	827,358	812,610	837,236	5.0	3.0
Needham Market	67,056	77,554	85,078	91,358	73.1	7.4
Stowmarket	855,692	884,962	927,856	944,466	25.6	1.8
Elmswell	65,738	68,810	79,482	80,558	30.3	1.4
Thurston	49,060	53,932	64,082	70,500	75.3	10.0
Bury St.Edmunds	469,500	490,154	566,110	578,007	39.0	2.1
Kennett	18,878	20,238	27,530	30,992	90.4	12.6
Newmarket	197,924	233,234	268,696	285,062	73.2	6.1
Dullingham	26,476	27,464	31,596	36,536	38.6	15.6
Cambridge	8,245,416	8,823,236	9,168,938	9,824,859	29.8	7.2
Shelford	149,788	145,900	154,060	152,976	5.3	-0.7
Whittlesford	338,306	343,772	396,622	431,544	29.5	8.8
Great Chesterford	116,328	118,656	110,484	106,940	6.8	-3.2
Audley End	746,746	751,194	810,540	838,804	9.6	3.5
Newport (Essex)	220,370	210,846	208,416	195,246	-8.1	-6.3
Elsenham	173,080	176,222	172,546	182,252	-2.1	5.6
Stansted Airport	4,074,210	3,723,836	3,692,934	3,685,987	-29.7	-0.2
Stansted Mountfitchet.	395,658	458,130	485,210	509,178	26.8	4.9
Foxton	76,860	83,364	87,974	87,164	13.4	-0.9
Shepreth	83,524	82,422	86,304	92,146	21.7	6.8
Meldreth	198,626	204,582	221,774	243,646	12.3	9.9

Royston	1,193,950	1,217,514	1,229,092	1,300,508	12.6	5.8
Ashwell & Morden	115,720	130,196	119,042	131,148	12.2	10.2
Baldock	496,896	517,036	535,106	568,182	20.0	6.2
Letchworth	1,447,418	1,513,292	1,569,410	1,652,253	14.3	5.3
Hitchin	2,594,012	2,641,482	2,764,232	2,902,568	13.0	5.0
Arlesey	444,680	503,446	535,054	562,728	36.0	5.2
Biggleswade	739,632	788,120	819,356	858,474	16.9	4.8
Sandy	444,122	461,884	456,216	480,552	7.7	5.3
St.Neots	1,091,388	1,138,698	1,181,134	1,214,383	18.0	2.8
Huntingdon	1,629,780	1,673,200	1,685,132	1,692,134	6.2	0.4
Peterborough	4,076,724	4,208,166	4,290,598	4,398,491	7.3	2.5
Whittlesea	23,474	22,538	23,494	26,938	8.2	14.7
March	316,292	336,240	350,246	357,864	17.2	2.2
Manea	3,368	3,050	2,898	3,694	21.2	27.5
Ely	1,731,956	1,824,036	1,878,426	1,976,134	24.8	5.2
Shippea Hill	812	376	50	12	-98.6	-76.0
Lakenheath	404	390	440	378	-29.5	-14.1
Brandon	84,648	89,638	101,396	102,090	56.2	0.7
Thetford	242,756	258,510	287,024	289,790	32.6	1.0
Harling Road	3,494	4,224	3,592	3,222	-22.4	-10.3
Eccles Road	1,676	1,242	1,930	2,126	8.1	10.2
Attleborough	161,610	171,018	157,792	154,172	0.1	-2.3
Spooner Row	640	338	264	388	-46.0	47.0
Wymondham	138,006	156,860	168,486	178,034	33.4	5.7
King's Lynn	821,772	869,006	879,836	913,458	23.6	3.8
Watlington	113,898	129,146	137,874	131,742	18.0	-4.4
Downham Market	406,690	432,014	452,674	460,056	25.8	1.6
Littleport	178,254	199,804	206,596	225,024	44.1	8.9
Waterbeach	301,376	312,216	335,660	344,722	24.2	2.
<i>Total</i>	<i>55020636</i>	<i>57237564</i>	<i>59221236</i>	<i>61267442</i>	<i>12.5</i>	<i>3.5</i>

As you can see, the changes at some stations are minimal while at others substantial: note Shippea Hill has diminished by -98% since 2009, but of course, with virtually no train service! At Kennett and Salhouse the increases are 90.4 & 55.1% respectively reflecting not just increased train service, but

also significant local housebuilding.

In fact figures across several stations between Ipswich and Cambridge show increases from rapidly growing communities responding to a service which is now hourly instead of two-hourly. Similar growth percentages can be found elsewhere too. All telling us that if a regular, reliable, comfortable service is provided more business results. What a surprise! CB/PW

## FURTHER NEWS ITEMS

### CLARA'S LEGACY

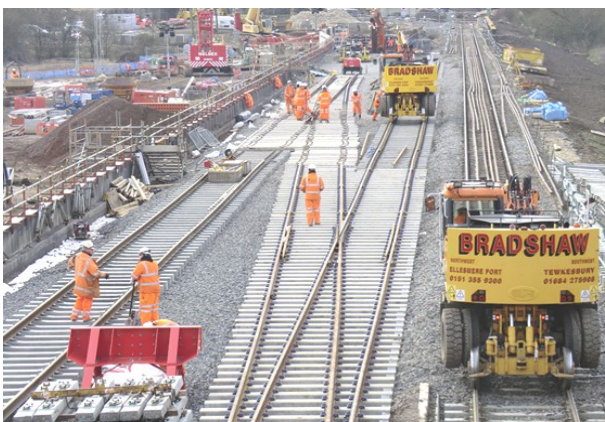
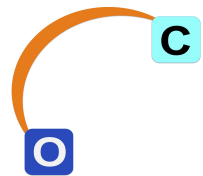
In August 2014 the Branch received a legacy of £960 from the late Clara Zilahi's estate. A tribute to Clara was published in Rail East 158, June 2013.

The branch committee are considering options for this legacy, believing Clara would wish it to be applied towards specific local projects rather than merely funding ongoing branch running costs or indeed being left in the bank. Whilst provision for the future is always prudent there's a limit to the amount of "rainy day" funds required!

We would therefore welcome suggestions as to projects towards which Clara's legacy might usefully be applied. If Members would kindly let me know their ideas (contact details on back page), they can then be discussed at our next committee meeting. MF

### EWRL: PROGRESS REPORT

John Henderson reports that in Bletchley itself, we've seen some useful plans for big improvements to the station environment including better access for pedestrians, cyclists, buses, and cars.



**Looking west at Bicester A41 bridge showing widened embankment and new entrance to Bicester MoD depot. Sign across track on fence at Verney Junction. Photos: John Elvin**

From Bletchley to Bedford progress is slow. A major upgrade of the line and



Bedford station will not start until 2019 or 20. Railfuture is campaigning for the upgrade to include a curve around Bletchley station to allow a fast Bedford–MK service. In Bletchley itself, we've seen some useful plans for big improvements to the station environment including better access for pedestrians, cyclists, buses, and cars.

Finally – the most important part – what of Cambridge to Bedford? Network Rail are assessing seven routes and will short list three by at some point There seems to be no public consultation about this process, but Railfuture has produced its own report on the options, and you can read it here:

<http://www.railfuture.org.uk/ox-cam/docs/Railfuture-OxCam-Cambridge-Bedford-Route-Options-2nd-Ed.pdf>

Our aim is to have the project included in NR's Plan for the next Control Period, 2019-24. There's no time to be lost as a new East West road, the A428 dual carriageway is being designed now, and it makes sense to allow space for both road and railway. JH

## 50% STUDENT RAIL DISCOUNT RE-APPROVED

As previously reported, under Great Northern's Management Contract, all local schemes negotiated with the Train Operating Company by the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group need to be reviewed by the Department for Transport to confirm that they are revenue generating. The 50% 16-18 student discount scheme that came into being for Cambridgeshire students in 2010, has now been re-approved by the DfT and so will carry on for 2015-16. This is brilliant news for students facing steep education transport costs, and helps to set a baseline standard.

As a postscript, GTR will be supporting the MSFRUG's approach to Cambridge sixth form colleges, as we urge them to promote more actively the use of sustainable transport options by students reaching driving age. Cambridge is increasingly prone to gridlock traffic, and on-street parking by commuters in residential areas is a problem too. The 50% rail discount offers a competitive alternative cost-wise so the case is there to be made. SvdV



## THE LOWDOWN ON WIFI (on Thameslink)

*Technology explanation is not something Rail East normally provides. That's for the 'Net' or techno' journals. However, once it became known that the forthcoming Thameslink Siemens trains would not offer wi-fi connection for laptops*

*and such like, confusion arose. So our 21stC technology 'guru', Jerry Alderson set about clarifying what-is-what, in his thankfully concise and clear prose. If not, it will be down to my ham-fisted editing! So all due apologies. CB*

"First, don't confuse Wi-Fi with phone calls. Wi-Fi is not about speech (or texting) but data. It is silent. I'll explain the technical stuff (with a very simple high-level view of a rather complex reality, and therefore an over-simplification of how it does work) and then explain how the reception..... trick might work."

"Every device has a digit Media Access Control (MAC) address. It's needed as almost every piece of electronic equipment (car, watch, TV, radio, alarm, doorbell, oven, microwave, fridge, smoke detector, burglar alarm, light, ...) will become Wi-Fi enabled there could easily be 100 devices per person. Authentication takes a lot of time and effort (in computer terms anything longer than a millisecond is an eternity) so it is not constantly done. If it were every time you press any icon/link on your smart phone /laptop (i.e. send a request for data) it would have to authenticate again. That would seriously reduce appeal."

"There are various methods by which to access someone's WiFi network: your smartphone, just like a laptop, is a mobile device. This means that you will move around, losing your connection as you do so and need to be able to reconnect, whether that is the same place or somewhere else. On a train there is a *single* network but *multiple* antennae—one per carriage—where you obtain your signal. (In a hotel there would be one antenna (perhaps more) per floor but still a single network, although larger hotels may have a separate network per floor because greater capacity is needed.) The use of multiple antennae is just like having different cells on a mobile network. It will know which of those you have connected via. It can therefore have different sign-on requirements. Hence, in a first class carriage it could be open but in standard class you may need to enter additional sign-on information."

"Whilst you stay in that carriage you will be using the same antenna. If you move carriages then you use a different antenna because of the construction of the carriages (being metal). On the Class 379s it is free to everyone. In an open carriage there will be leakage from First Class to Standard Class. As a single network you would normally expect to be able to move around and maintain your connection, and should be completely unaware that it has disconnected from one antenna and connected to another (just as your phone conversation continues when you move between cells as you travel)....."

"It appears that **AGA** have a different sign-on when you initially connect but they have not limited which antenna you can use once you have connected (i.e. once your MAC address is in the list). This is something they could change if they decided that they were losing revenue."

The fact remains that WiFi *can* be retro-fitted to any rolling stock as East Coast HSTs and Mark1Vs testify. So cost is the only valid Dep.for Transport argument against installation. JA/CB

And there we must leave you. A big 'thank you' to every contributor, the material was much appreciated even if occasionally it did not make it into print. The deadline for Rail East 166, is Monday 15 May. Pictures ideally in JPEG format, please. Comments and constructive criticism always welcome via Editor's email/postal address.

In the next issue we are hoping to start a regular Page 15 item on featuring one of our many *Rail User Groups*: who are they; what are their current priorities, and what might be done to help. All this in Rail East 166 at the beginning of June!

## **Railfuture**

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## **Railfuture**

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

*Saturday 31 January at  
Friends Meeting House  
Bury St Edmunds  
IP33 1SJ*

*Guest Speaker:*

*Alan Neville, Abellio Manager  
of Liverpool St Station on  
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A  
GREAT STATION*

Saturday 27 June

14.00 hrs  
**Branch Meeting**  
St Mary at Stoke Church Hall,  
St Mary at Stoke Church,  
Stoke Street  
IPSWICH  
IP2 8BX

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