

## Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group (RUG): Draft Minutes of Meeting Shepreth Village Hall 14. 12.2011

People at the meeting included: Chair - Susan van de Ven (SVDV), Richard Marchant and Karen Gregson (First Capital Connect - FCC), Robert Stripe (Fen Line Users Association), Peter Wakefield (Railfuture East Anglia), Sue Hanson, Jim Eggleton, Jane Eggleton, Mark Wyatt, Beatrice Fisher, Geoff Barnes, Paul Hollinghurst, Brian Farmer, Maurice Prove. (All try one of SVDV's lovely mince pies washed down with a nice cup of coffee.)

1) APOLOGIES: Shepreth Wildlife Park

2) LAST MINUTES: No corrections

3) HOUSEKEEPING:

:: Notetaking: In a moment of weakness Brian Farmer foolishly agrees to take notes (and takes a note of himself saying it) but wisely doesn't say he will forget to write them up.

:: Commuter grab: We'll give forms to commuters. SVDV will open a bank account so that we can accept cheques and encourage new membership, especially of commuters who may not have the time to attend meetings. Draft leaflet with new membership charges agreed unanimously (£4 adult, £5 family, £2 concessions). Leaflet to be circulated in all ways possible, by all willing to help.

:: FCC Liaison officers: Karen Gregson is the new point of contact.

4) UPDATES

:: Meldreth footfall count: Peter Wakefield gave details of a passenger survey at Meldreth but no date of when survey took place. He told how Sue brought cakes and how the "moon raced across the sky" (although it didn't stop at Meldreth). He said the number of people using every train was impressive. At least six on and off every train. Most passengers travel to and from Cambridge. The busiest direction is to Cambridge.

:: Meldreth ticket machine: Discussion with Richard Marchant about ticket machines. Options include moving ticket machine or permit to travel machine to south-bound platform? Meeting in favour of moving permit to travel machine - and of reminding people to buy tickets in the office.

:: Foxton Level Crossing: SVDV outlined on-going issues with pedestrian gates. New gates installed in June. They failed. Four weeks out of use. On station side people had to walk into the A10 with traffic. Meeting with Network Rail. Transpires that new gates were incomplete. They were missing a magnetic locking device. SVDV says she does not think she was initially given a truthful explanation by Network Rail about why the new gates failed. Transpires that the new gates were still running on 1960s wiring. The gates weren't finished. Network Rail had run out of money. When the new gates shut they slammed and the wiring was disturbed and they failed. The suggested solution while waiting for £50 000 to come through to pay for magnetic piece was four sets of spare parts. "Really not good". She says she appreciated Network Rail representative eventually being honest but says Network Rail was very foolish not to tell full story initially. She says she has made a "lot of noise" and been "quite annoying to them" and is "really unhappy about the fact that they were not honest". Discussion of what should happen when gates fail. Maybe an emergency footpath. Warning that an emergency path could be dangerous. Meeting decides that SVDV should go back to Network Rail say no to any contingency path and insist efforts focused on completing the full installation of new gates.

:: Car Park charge reductions Meldreth and Foxton. First FCC offered a 50% reduction then abolished charges at Shepreth. RUG still wants free parking at all stations. FCC reps say they want to know if changes alleviate parking on roads. Car park ticket machine in Meldreth had broken and been fixed.

:: Community transport links to Meldreth and Shepreth. Watching brief. We'll come back to it.

:: Winter planting and station enhancement. Gardens replanted - Royston Tesco had helped. Jolly picnic at Meldreth Booking Office after work finished. December all three gardens still going. One complaint about tub brackets unattractiveness but all going well. The station garden at Meldreth had spurred a gardening club at Melbourn Village College.

:: Discussion about possibility of litter bins being provided. FCC say no because of security issues - BUT a box with a slot for used tickets might be possible.

Any Other Business:

:: Brian Farmer says many commuters are worried that their favourite 1815 fast then slow service from King's X to Cambridge is being axed and wildly exaggerates their concerns. FCC say there are no plans to axe the service.

:: Discussion about problems with information displays at Meldreth.

:: Discussion about recent incident at Alex'r Palace which caused delays. FCC explain reasons. Various complaints but Brian Farmer says he thought staff at Royston were very helpful on the night.

(PS: Some were hoping that SVDV would call for re-nationalisation of the railways NOW!! Sadly it didn't happen.)

Date of next meeting: 14 March 7:30 for 8:00, Meldreth Manor School (AGM)