

Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group
September 11, 7:30
Melbourn Village College Lecture Room

Draft Minutes

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies: Mark Howard, Christine Macfadzean, Kathryn Hawkes (SCDC), David Wherrell (Royston and District Community Transport), Sandra Searles, Ann Barnes, Brian Farmer

Present: Susan van de Ven (Chair), Paul Hollinghurst, Beatrice Fisher, Susan Hanson, Geoff Barnes, Malcolm Howe, Peter Wakefield, Robert Stripe, Karen Gregson (FCC), Andy Hart (FCC), Andy Bottom (NR), Jim and Jane Eggleton.

2. Minutes from the previous meeting to be circulated by email for accuracy

3. Thameslink Franchise Consultation

This has been submitted and acknowledged with a good result from Cambridge County Council, as most MSFRUG points have been included.

4. Passenger Focus visit September 7th

Passenger focus, the national rail and bus watchdog, came to Shepreth on the 7th of September and gave the MSFRUG lots of support.

Ideas discussed in reference to this were the improvement of other transport at local stations i.e. bike facilities, buses, the cost of rail, the effective communications around Foxton crossings failings and the positive involvement of the community.

5. Railfuture's new Rail User Group awards

These are new awards from Railfuture designed to encourage rail user group developments. Nominations need to be in by the 1st of October.

6. Station updates

- Foxton: The pedestrian gates magnetic locks were upgraded at the end of July and the second stage will be to move and update the pedestal and power system in the coming weeks. However there was still a failure of the gates from August 25th to September 1st, this was due to power supply failure. Network Rail apologised for this and praised the RUG for their help in noticing and rectifying the problem. Network Rail representative Andy Bottom said the problem took so long to resolve, as the notification somehow did not get all the way through from being reported to HQ at London Liverpool Street who would have sent out a 24/7 fault team. Therefore to stop this delay happening again all problems at Foxton that last

longer than twenty-four hours will be reported straight to Andy. If you spot a problem on the Foxton crossing, you can report it to the RUG email address or directly to Susan van de Ven and she can forward the information to Andy. He also praised the Foxton signaller for fulfilling his duty by reporting the fault and chaining the gates for safety.

Other steps to help reduce problems and aid in reporting them include getting a sign for the gates with a suitable phone number, circulating the RUG's email, and improving the lighting (but this may be done with the CCTV upgrade so Andy Bottom will find out).

A separate and significant safety concern is cars unintentionally 'jumping' the gates when coming out of Station Road and trying to access the A10 north. One resident suggested a synchronized warning signal light facing Station Road. Andy Bottom said he would consider and report back.

Foxton Level Crossing Feasibility Study: this is in preparation and Andy Bottom would report back in due course

- Meldreth: The benches at Meldreth, and Shepreth will be replaced shortly after refurbishment and are high on the FCC priority list. Two platform tubs at Meldreth Station were ripped out and left upturned in the middle of the platform. Better ways of securing these needs to be discussed, however this could be difficult to achieve. Jim Eggleton kindly refilled them and tidied them up. However if this vandalism happens again they may have to be removed permanently as "safety comes first" (FCC Representative).
- On a more positive note David Piggot, of Meldreth Station fame, received praise on the letters page of The Times in August!
- Shepreth: One of the Teacake signs was vandalised, however, both were removed so the FCC representative in the meeting will look into this and see to getting the undamaged one repositioned at the station.

7. Station Gardens update

- Meldreth: The Meldreth Primary School Gardening Club is doing well and has restarted after the summer break; as well as the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and help from other young volunteers. There is currently no outside water tap for which solutions will be looked at the autumn replanting day. Contractors are coming on the 9th of December to do specialised tasks such as the strimming.
- Shepreth: the problems with the ticket machine have been quickly resolved and all machines are being updated to work with the new coinage, which will be a big job. The Station gardens are doing well, especially the school area where three new tubs are to be supplied by Granta Montessori School. The Station Garden featured in Shepreth Open Gardens. There has been some problem with the watering at this station, and at Foxton too, however as these are part of the First Capital Connect duties, FCC shall resolve this.
- There has also been a new addition in the form of a historical notice on the area by Brian Farmer.

8. Other Points

- Pocket timetable distribution

- It was suggested by Robert Stripe that it would be a good idea to drop pocket time tables around all residents in the local area when the timetable changes in December. It could also be an idea to drop information about the various railcards available, such as senior rail cards, network cards, family cards etc. Timetables could also be printed in the local magazines. An increase of knowledge on fares and timetables could increase footfall.
- Cycle Policy
- The cycle policy also needs to be more widely publicised, as quite a few bikes have been reported on the 8.10 train from Meldreth – this is the only train in the day which a cycle restriction policy, on safety ground. Equally, it is vital to make sure that passengers know that riding without a ticket is a criminal offence and prosecutions can be made.
- Also if anyone has any ideas for decorating the Christmas Tree at Meldreth's Festival please contact Susan Hanson.
- For any enquiries about Network Rail or the railway infrastructure please contact the Network Rail National Helpline on 08457 11 41 41.

9. Dates of future meetings: 12th December 2012, 7:30 (Foxton Village Hall), 13th March 2013, 7:30 (AGM) (Meldreth Manor School).