

Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group

June 29, 2015, 7:00 for 7:30-9:00

Foxton Village Hall

Hardman Road, Foxton

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

Attending

Susan van de Ven (chair), Janet Cottenden, Karen Gregson (GTR Great Northern), Mark Howard, Geoff Barnes, Jim and Jane Eggleton, Sue Hanson, Permaine sisters, Peter Wakefield, Robert Stripe, David Reed, John Ryecroft, Mark Wyatt, Beatrice Fisher, Marianne Bruggeman, Mr and Mrs Philip Shaw, Laraine Pocknell,

Apologies

Malcolm Howe, Ron McCreery, Rebecca Willers (Shepreth Wildlife Park), Paul Hollinghurst

No response from Network Rail.

Susan is asking local parish councils to try to ensure that a representative attends future meetings.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting on 11th March 2015 accepted.

Remaining action: to ensure that all flower tubs at all stations are properly bolted down.

3. Foxton Level Crossing: feasibility study update

Pedestrian gates have been out of order since March (station side) / May (Barrington side).

At the Community Rail Partnership meeting in May 2015, Network Rail reported that the firm that manufactured the gates has gone out of business and all of the spare parts have been used up!

Karen Gregson reports: new gates have been redesigned, which will be lighter in weight. New gates are being built, and Network Rail has today reported that they should be ready in about 10 weeks. It was felt that this was an unacceptably long wait on top of the months already elapsed since March.

The feasibility study to close the level crossing has been put on the "back burner" due to lack of funding – Susan reports it has been put back to 2020-25. Network Rail has so far been looking at a single very large project to change the whole environment of the level crossing.

It was reported that Network Rail has overspent on large projects elsewhere in the country and so funding on a number of other projects is being cut back.

Peter Wakefield - From a rail user point of view, our focus must be to promote safety of rail users, so in the immediate future this means keeping pressure on Network Rail to sort the gates as soon as possible.

Discussion about the safety of the crossing at the moment because pedestrians are having to cross along the side of the road. People walking bicycles and pushchairs find the contingency path too narrow.

Plan to take a photo for local media to highlight safety issues at Foxton station – we want assurance that the timescale will be stuck to.

Susan meeting with Network Rail, Heidi Allen MP and Ian Bates (CCC) on site in September to discuss longer term future for crossing. Can Network Rail explore possibility of pedestrian bridge/underpass only (without vehicle bypass)?

4. Station updates

- **Foxton: pedestrian gates**

See above

- **Meldreth: car park survey, cycle parking, station access update, historic Meldreth and Melbourn sign**

48 car park spaces, 2 disabled.

Most days

Lowest number 4 cars

Most days cycle parking full

Concern about overspill from station car park onto residential streets, and that this would become worse if new housing is built in Melbourn.

Population is growing and footfall at the station is rising. Also change in use of other end of station car park area with demolition of goods shed and closure of cold food distribution plant.

Karen Gregson, Larry Heyman and Susan are meeting this week to look at increased cycle parking at Meldreth and Shepreth.

Painting of lines on steps still on the agenda. Also shelter at Meldreth.

Thanks for repainting of car park lines at Meldreth and Shepreth.

Historic Meldreth and Melbourn station sign: this was in collection of Mike Sharman. His widow Margaret has offered to loan the historic sign, to be put inside Meldreth station waiting room. Karen reports (and Peter Wakefield agreed) that it has a substantial value and so not appropriate for being located at the station. A museum may be a more appropriate place. Susan will feed back to Mrs Sharman and Meldreth Local History Group.

Karen working on water issue – to see if a tap can be installed somewhere at Meldreth. Currently the only way of getting water for watering plants is from the kitchen during ticket office opening hours.

Summer Meldreth gardening session to be arranged.

Road bridge at Meldreth – temporary plastic fencing to make safer for pedestrians. Susan / Karen to chase Network Rail (Sallie Bates)

Station Access Campaign:

Opportunities have been explored for funding for an improved path leading over the field from the Melbourn direction. Susan has discussed with GTR who would be spearheading funding applications for a ramp adjoining the path. A frustrating situation at present: there had been an offer of funding for a community contribution from one of the new solar farm developers, but Meldreth Parish Council has agreed that this must first go to the parish of Meldreth for consideration along with other ideas. Another possible funding source had fallen by the wayside.

Encouragement from Susan for station and rail users who feel that improved access is an issue whose profile needs raising to make the case to Meldreth Parish Council.

- **Shepreth: new ramp and car park layout, cycle parking, poppy planting**

New ramp in – finally!

The poppy garden was planted in the wrong place by mistake, hence the high cost of fencing... but Network Rail has agreed to let us have both the original and new space.

5. Station gardens: water supply at Shepreth and Meldreth work in progress

6. Community Rail Partnership update

Foxton waiting room: has now been painted. Youth Club being involved in painting mural to reduce temptation of creating graffiti.

CRP a successful way of bringing key parties together to solve problems and work creatively on new projects. Meeting approximately every four months.

7. Strategic rail development brief update: City Deal, Cambridge North Station

Cambridge North Station – trains from our village stations are expected to terminate there as soon as new Thameslink service begins.

8. AOB

Request for better signage of the closed gates at Foxton.

Karen reports – there have been problems with the help points at Foxton and Shepreth – communications problem underground. Now rectified.

Still ongoing ticket machine problems at various station. GTR are working on this, but as users we feel that this still causes us too much inconvenience and the issue really needs to be sorted ASAP!

9. Date of next meeting

Thursday 17th September 2015 Shepreth

Wednesday 2nd December 2015 Meldreth