

Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group Meeting AGENDA

14 December 2016, 7PM for 7:30-9:00

27 Elin Way, Meldreth, SG8 6LT (Sheltered Housing Community Room)

1. Attending: Barbara Pankhurst, Philip Shaw, Margaret Shaw, Dawn Goodchild, Malcolm Howe, Will Evans (VolkerFitzpatrick), Liam Farrell (Network Rail), Gerardo Austria (Network Rail), Elizabeth Allen, Beatrice Fisher, Sarah Westbooke, Sue Hanson, Rosemary Chiderley, Geoff Barnes, Andrew Rut, Paul Gray, Karen Gregson, Laraine Pocknell, Mark Howard, Bianca Wild (Royston Crow), Susan van de Ven (chair, County Councillor for Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton), Karen Gregson (Govia Thameslink Railway), Paul Gray (British Transport Police)
Apologies: Jane and Jim Eggleton, Ron McCreery, Ann Barnes, Hilary Marsh, Julie Draper, Richard Handford, Rebecca Willers, Christine Adams, Maeta McKenzie, Peter Wakefield, Paul Hollinghurst, Robert Stripe, Jason Clarke, Sarah Hatcher, Hannah Briggs (Network Rail).
2. Minutes of the previous meeting: Approved
3. Network Rail Platform Extensions
Network Rail presented information in advance of work to extend the Cambridge platform at all three stations, starting February 19 and lasting for about six months.
Work will take place at night Monday – Friday when trains are not running and at least over three weekends (these will be overnight possession periods run under another project so some uncertainty about exact timings).
NR are liaising with South Cambs District Council to obtain necessary licences around nuisance (mainly noise).
Asked to clarify parking situations at all three stations during this period as NR will take up some parking area for their equipment – this will be provided to parish newsletters.
Timber fence at end of each platform before works commence.
No reworking of existing platforms expected except tactile surface for Shepreth.
Contact with GTR has been through Katherine Cox; Karen Gregson as Area Manager asked to be made a contact point for our stations.
Network Rail liaising with Aurora Meldreth Manor on access issues at Meldreth during works.
Letters will be sent to local residents to inform them in advance of works start date, etc.
Susan requested NR to provide an article for Parish Newsletters as extra means of disseminating information.

Network Rail proposal to close Foxton Level Crossing Barrington Rd gate

Foxton residents and rail users were asked for their views on the current NR proposals. No support was expressed. Comments made during the meeting:

- There is no clear case for closing the gate other than convenience for Network Rail.
- Traffic over A10 is dangerous. Much jumping of barrier red lights. Therefore 3.2 metre-wide paths as suggested by NR still put pedestrians and cyclists in highly dangerous environment, i.e. alongside fast and chaotic vehicle traffic within

unsegregated environment. (BTP confirmed Foxtton is a 'hot spot' level crossing and drivers regularly prosecuted for jumping the barriers.)

- Proposal design shows no understanding of local use.
- Traffic island is unsafe.
- Don't cut mature trees for the proposed short cut path to Barrington Rd.
- Closure of ancient right of way.
- Traffic needs to slow down.
- Build the bridge or underpass as outlined in Network Rail's published feasibility study.

Susan will take these points to her meeting with County Council officers.

4. British Transport Police issues (BTP attending)

On October 17 a passenger had returned to Meldreth Station and found her car tyres slashed. BTP had investigated via CCTV footage, however the car was parked outside of the camera range. The passenger was thanked for reporting the incident, and apologies given for the impersonal nature of the initial BTP reply. It was clear from tonight's visit that BTP take the matter seriously and had followed up.

Our stations have a relatively low incidence of crime – ¼ the rate at similar stations (eg Newport). Please report crime however minor.

Telephone reporting numbers: Non-urgent 0800 405040; Urgent 999; Text from train: 61016.

Suggestion: Signage at station advertising BTP contact numbers would be useful.

BTP confirm that station gardens do give the impression of a well-tended station and this can decrease the likelihood of criminal activity.

5. Train services issues: Geoff Barnes reported lack of communication around disruption to train services on Remembrance Sunday. Karen Gregson (GTR) aware.

6. Meldreth Station issues:

Ticket machine not working. Karen confirmed on-going problems; trying to sort it.

Booking office closed twice last week – on-going recruitment across the patch. Tricky to fill the slot which is not full time. Pool of temporary staff is limited, and there had been much staff sickness recently. Efforts continue to recruit regular permanent staff member.

People asked about boarding a train without being able to purchase a ticket. In the event machine broken and booking office closed, OK to board a train and pay at destination.

Ticket machine faults are known to staff at destination.

7. Shepreth Station issues: Newspapers for hedgehog hospital – resuming but not regular yet.

The person who had been looking after this is on maternity leave. On the radar.

BT line problems at Shepreth.

8. Foxtton Station issues: Geoff reported that BT want to remove the phone box in Station Road, which is the only working phone box for the station vicinity. Foxtton Parish Council is contacting BT.

Thanks given to GTR: Foxtton Station sound system now working again.

9. Community Rail Partnership update as provided on the agenda (see below).
10. Thanks to Sue Hanson for providing refreshments for tonight's meeting, and for supplying and decorating Rail User Group Christmas Tree at Meldreth Christmas Tree Festival.
Thanks to Network Rail, British Transport Police and Govia Thameslink Railway for attending tonight's meeting, as well as newcomers and regulars.

Meeting closed at 8:55 PM. Date of next meeting: March 14 (AGM)

Community Rail Partnership update

Our overarching group, the Community Rail Partnership (CRP), is working to bring in more support to help realize aspirations for Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxtton Stations at a time of rapid growth. In essence, the Rail User Group should be the lobbying group for improvements to daily rail services, while the Community Rail Partnership is a collaborative partnership including the rail industry, councils and local businesses that supports community activity and helps leverage funding for strategic improvements for the three stations. To do all these things well, there are some bureaucratic hoops to jump through, as follows:

Station Adoptions: Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxtton stations have been formally adopted as individual station partnerships with Govia Thameslink Railway – Risk Assessments completed and papers signed. This should help support sustainable local groups to champion community activities around each station. This has brought in £500 per partnership and can be used for minor infrastructure at each station – for example, replacing the flower tubs which are showing their age. Please get in touch with Susan if you would be prepared to help coordinate community activity around individual stations – there is lots of room for creativity, and this should be a rewarding activity.

Paid Post to run day to day work of CRP: The job of maximizing all opportunities for our stations, at a time of huge growth in footfall, is becoming bigger and would benefit from a paid (part-time) post. Fundraising for a post has been successful, with grants of £700 from three parish councils and Govia Thameslink Railway. South Cambridgeshire District Council is actively exploring the possibility of hosting the paid post. The CRP is looking at setting up a Community Interest Company to hold and spend funds for these activities.

Station Travel Planning: The Greater Cambridge City Deal has agreed to contribute funding for 'Station Travel Planning' work – the necessary collection of data to understand station usage including all access patterns – which is a necessary precursor to accessing infrastructure funding.

Support from the national Association of Community Rail Partnerships: A grant of £1K is available to support the work of the Meldreth, Shepreth, and Foxtton Community Rail Partnership.