

Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership



2019/20 Annual Report



Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership

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Introduction by the Chair

I am grateful for all the hard work by our staff and volunteers this year, but must particularly mention the directors of our Community Interest Company (CIC). The firm financial basis that the CIC has given the Community Rail Partnership has allowed us to apply for additional sources of funding and apply for accreditation with the Department for Transport.



Our highlights this year include the celebration at Shepreth station – attended by local dignitaries and visited by our train cake – and also our work with groups of people who have additional support needs when travelling.

Our station planters continue to be much admired, and we were delighted that some of our Junior Travel Ambassadors joined the summer watering rota this year.

We continue to be very grateful for the support of Govia Thameslink Railway, South Cambridgeshire District Council, the Association of Community Rail Partnerships, Melbourn, Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Parish Councils and all our stakeholders. We are delighted to add Barrington and Whaddon Parish Councils to this list.

In this annual report you can read about our activities this year, as set out in our line action plan, with the pillars of the Community Rail Strategy keeping us on track to succeed.

Susan van de Ven

Chair, Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership



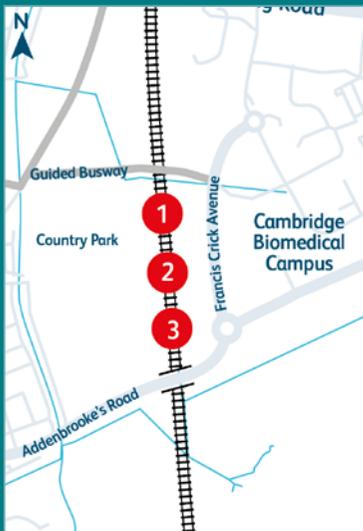
Providing a voice for the community

We continue to liaise with Govia Thameslink Railway about timetable and train service issues and to attend stakeholder meetings. In the last year we have taken part in a number of consultations which will affect the infrastructure around our stations, gathering feedback at rail user group meetings and through our Facebook page and mailing list.

Passenger Benefit Fund

We were delighted that each of our stations was allocated £80,000 from the Passenger Benefit Fund. As a result of all the submissions, the priority for Foxton and Shepreth was determined to be new ticket machines for the platforms which do not currently have them. At Meldreth, the priority will be improving accessibility.

Plan of station location options



- 1 Northern station location
- 2 Central station location
- 3 Southern station location

Image for illustrative purposes only

Cambridge South station

The first round of consultations has been announced on the positioning of Cambridge South station. The Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership has been invited to be a stakeholder in the consultation and supports the most northerly option (Option 1) as the most convenient for passengers to Addenbrooke's and Papworth hospitals, the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and the Sixth Form colleges sited on Long Road.

In future consultations we will seek to influence the look and feel of the station buildings to provide a warm, welcoming and accessible gateway for all passengers, whether patients, staff or students, and to ensure generous provision of station cycle parking.

Providing a voice for the community

East West Rail

We are pleased that Corridor E has been chosen as the preferred route for the new East West Rail route. Our response to the consultation supported the principle of the Bedford to Cambridge section of the line, with an aspiration to improve transport connections and opportunities for rail users, thus reducing car dependency.



We supported a northern route via Cambourne, which will best serve a very significant population, existing and planned, in an area that currently lacks high quality public transport. A rail service calling at a new Cambourne station will provide a clear and much needed alternative to current reliance on car travel.

The Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership is a recognised stakeholder in the planning process and we will be closely watching the route alignment process as it determines the exact approach into Cambridge through a Cambridge South Station.



Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel

This year we have been concentrating on building the confidence to travel by train of people who have particular support needs. Govia Thameslink Railway has supported us in holding 'Try a train' trips for the following groups.

Eddies provides a wide range of services for children, young people and adults with learning disabilities. The befriending scheme for young people aged 15-25 with learning disabilities and/or autism provides the friendship and support they need to participate in activities or hobbies of their choice at home or out in the community.



We took Eddies participants and their befrienders on a trip from Cambridge to Stevenage for bowling.



Red2Green helps people with learning disabilities or on the autistic spectrum achieve their goals in training, education, work, friendship and fun. The aspirations group provides life skills to people over 16 with autism spectrum conditions.

We took the aspirations group from Cambridge to Shepreth for a trip to Shepreth Wildlife Park.

Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel



Safe Soulmate is an organisation which helps diversely able adults to meet new people, socialise, and create friendships in a safe way.

We had a fun and lively trip from Cambridge to Stevenage for bowling.

Melbourn Village College Young Carers

are children and young people who have a caring responsibility for another person. Young carers are supported at Melbourn Village College when their caring role risks impacting upon their emotional or physical wellbeing and their prospects in their education and life.



We had a trip from Meldreth to Cambridge for drinks and biscuits at Caffè Nero. Some members of the group had never been to Cambridge before, and some had never been on a train. We helped them with their confidence in travelling as some of them will need to travel into Cambridge for further education next year.

Bringing communities together, supporting diversity and inclusion

Our station platform pots continue to be much admired and have been replanted by volunteers in June and again in October. In June we had tea and cake at Meldreth Station for volunteers. During the summer, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme volunteers and our Junior Travel Ambassadors kept the pots watered.

We are aware that the Shepreth Memorial Garden is starting to look a little overgrown and this spring our volunteers will undertake a tidy up to stop the brambles taking over, whilst maintaining the environment for wildlife.

We are delighted to have been awarded £6,500 from South Cambridgeshire District Council's Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme.



This will augment the £13,500 funding for cycle parking obtained through the Department for Transport Cycle Rail Fund, which will enable new cycle parking with CCTV to be installed at Meldreth, and enable us to run a cycle repair café at the station, both bringing people to the station and encouraging more passengers to access the station by bike.



Supporting social and economic development

This year we created three leaflets to showcase local attractions that are easily accessible from our train stations: churches, pubs, nature trails. The design and production were assisted by South Cambridgeshire District Council and the leaflets were used at Community Rail in the City events, and have been distributed to local attractions. You can access the documents by visiting the website.



We attended Community Rail in the City at Cambridge Station in May. Shepreth Wildlife Park were our partners on the day and we spoke to visitors about attractions accessible by train in our area.

In preparation for Community Rail in the City our part of the line is now listed on the Scenic Rail Britain website to showcase our local businesses and attractions.



This scheme is supported with funding from the
RAILWAY HERITAGE TRUST

1 Eversholt Street - London - NW1 2DN
020 7904 7354

rht@railwayheritagetrust.co.uk @RailwayHerit
www.railwayheritagetrust.co.uk



Strengthening the partnership



In May we held an event at Shepreth Station to celebrate a year of the relaunched Community Rail Partnership. It was opened by former South Cambridgeshire MP Heidi Allen and the Chairman of South Cambridgeshire District Council Douglas de Lacey and generated local press attention. We celebrated afterwards at the Plough in Shepreth. The event was attended by our Junior Travel Ambassadors, business partners, station volunteers, parish council reps and the wider community.

We are delighted that the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership has been recommended for accredited status by the Department for Transport. This recognises that the Community Rail Partnership:

- operates to high standards of governance and financial propriety
- adopts a collaborative approach and is worthy of trust by others and is a suitable entity for receiving public funds
- is a representative voice for their local community
- has a published annual line action plan setting out activities that aim to help their communities to get the most from their railways, reflecting the themes of the Department for Transport's Community Rail Development Strategy.

News from our stations



Meldreth

Although our bid for Access to All funding was not successful, we still maintain the ambition for full Equality Act compliance at Meldreth. TTP at the Melbourn Science Park has pledged generously towards partnership funding to improve access to the London Platform on the Melbourn side.

The new waiting shelter was installed at Meldreth Station and is being well used. We also lobbied for the waiting room at Meldreth Station to be refurbished, and this has now taken place.



Shepreth

Traffic mitigation measures agreed between Network Rail, Cambridgeshire Highways and Shepreth Parish Council to improve traffic flow at the Shepreth Level Crossing have started to be put in place.

We are continuing to liaise with Network Rail and recently led a visit to the Foxton Signal Box for local parish councillors and residents to better understand the working of the crossing and the safety issues involved.



Foxton

After last year's consultation on the Foxton Level Crossing bypass, this scheme has been referred back to the Combined Authority for consideration. In the meantime, the Greater Cambridge Partnership is pressing ahead on the concept of a Travel Hub at Foxton Station.

The Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership has contributed to the discussions, representing the needs of rail users including those with limited mobility. A decision on a preferred site option is expected in June.



? Who we are

Our Community Rail Partnership aims to develop links with schools and local businesses associated with our local rail services, and to enhance sustainable transport links in the wider area.

Contact us

 sarahgrove.msfcrrp@gmail.com

 meldrethsheprethfoxtonrail.org.uk  [@MSFCRRP](https://twitter.com/MSFCRRP)

Our partners

