

Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group AGM
12th March 2014, 7:30pm
Melbourn Village College

Draft Minutes

Attending

Susan van de Ven (chair), G & H Scott, M Bruggemann, P Shaw, Jeremy Smith (Cambs County Council), Malcolm Howe, Denise Pearmain, Linda Pearmain, S Edwards, Rosemary Childerley, David Childerley, Malcome Bore (Foxton Parish Council), Jane Eggleton, Jim Eggleton, Beatrice Fisher, John Clarke, S Hawkins, Andy Hart (FCC), Robert Stripe, Karen Gregson (FCC), Christopher Stead (Melbourn Parish Council), Rebecca Willers & Nick Willers (Shepreth Wildlife Park), John Cameron, Geoff Barnes, Lorraine Pucknell, Sue Hanson, Phillipa Hart, Paul Hollinghurst, Janet Cottenden

Apologies

Peter Wakefield, Ann Barnes, Rob Bolton (Network Rail)
Susan also noted the death of Mike Sharman.

Susan opened the meeting at 7:30pm. She explained membership of the Rail User Group and forms were handed round for those interested. Membership fee remains at £1 annually.

Election of officers

The following officials were unanimously elected.

Chairman: Susan van de Ven
Secretary: Janet Cottenden
Membership Secretary: Sue Hanson
Treasurer: Beatrice Fisher
Auditor: Bruce Huett

Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the 2013 AGM and the meeting on 14th December 2013 were agreed.

Annual Report

Susan presented the Annual Report (to be read in conjunction with these minutes).

Foxton Level Crossing Feasibility Study Update

There has been a recent public consultation in Foxton. Susan introduced Malcolm Bore from Foxton Parish Council and Jeremy Smith from Cambridgeshire County Council. Rob Bolton from Network Rail was unable to attend but is due to attend the next meeting.

Foxton Parish Council

Malcolm Bore (FPC) reported that an exhibition in Foxton Village Hall had been attended by over 200 people. Information was sent to all Foxton residents with the opportunity to respond. The general response was favourable towards the diversion of

the A10 in principle, but generally against the details of the current plans, e.g. access onto the A10, a bridge rather than an underpass and pedestrian access from the Barrington side. The parish council is keen to meet with CCC to discuss how these issues could be resolved and to encourage Network Rail to find better solutions.

Susan noted that a Local Project Board has been set up, initiated by Network Rail, so that local representatives have a say in the details. She read an email from Rob Bolton (Network Rail) explaining the current situation and the plans for moving forward.

Cambridgeshire County Council

Jeremy Smith (CCC) explained that CCC is not in the driving seat on this project – it is Network Rail who took it on and they who are funding the work to look into the problem and possible solutions. However, the A10 is a CCC highway, so CCC is still very involved.

The feasibility study is ongoing – currently only on stage 2 of 8 stages. The next stage will look at the details, where hopefully the issues raised by local residents can be taken into account. The most difficult issue is the bridge versus underpass debate, and this is largely an issue of cost.

Jeremy assured us that CCC will support with additional money where they can, but that it may not be possible to achieve an underpass. However, he encouraged local people to push for an underpass if this is their preferred option.

Footpath issues will also be dealt with at this next stage. CCC's preference would be for everything to be fully accessible.

It is possible that "City Deal" funding from central government could be forthcoming which CCC could tap into towards this project.

Questions were also answered by Jeremy and Susan about Network Rail's role.

Network Rail's own consultation process has not yet happened. The Local Project Board is to include Network Rail, representatives from Barrington PC and Foxton PC, Susan van de Ven as Foxton County Councillor, CCC and Sustrans.

Network Rail will also have to agree any modifications to the highways with CCC.

Question about whether CCC should not be looking into upgrading the A10 to a dual carriageway:

Jeremy responded that the problem is not the capacity of the road, but the junctions and access points for villages along the corridor.

Susan clarified that there will be two crossings, one for pedestrians which would be at the station and would be fully accessible, and a separate crossing for the road, which could be an underpass or a bridge.

Susan said that if people had further questions they could pose them to Network Rail via the Rail User Group.

Meldreth Station Accessibility campaign update

A publicity campaign has recently taken place - in the local press and by distributing flyers in local venues, to highlight the issues to the wider community.

Network Rail and FCC have invited the RUG to a meeting in the next few weeks.

Susan will attend. This is an excellent opportunity as we need the train operating company and Network Rail to work together on this issue.

Gardens update

Shepreth gardening session – March 15th

Meldreth gardening session – March 22nd and 29th (main session)

Posters update

New RUG posters are now up at Foxton and Shepreth. Thanks to FCC for doing this. Cambridge station is looking into putting ours up again.

Meldreth ticket machine update

Andy Hart (FCC) explained that the ticket machine was broken into and had to be repaired which took a while because a piece had to go away for repair. This meant the machine only accepted cards for about 4-5 weeks. During this time the revenue team knew about the ticket machine issues and would allow people on the train if they had been unable to purchase a ticket.

The ticket machine is now fully working again.

FCC will also try to inform the RUG of any ongoing problems of this sort so that we can put information on our own website.

Shepreth Wildlife Park updates

Rebecca Willers reported that FCC staff are now collecting newspapers left on trains for the hedgehog hospital at Shepreth.

Karen Gregson (FCC) reported that an arrangement has been set up with Shepreth Wildlife Park to escort large group bookings arriving by train across the level crossing.

Priorities for the coming year

Susan proposed that the RUG's priorities would be developing links with local businesses, and linked to this, promoting Travel to Work schemes.

Dates for future meetings

17th June 2014 (Shepreth Village Hall)

24th September 2014 (Foxton Village Hall)

10th December 2014 (Maycroft Care Home, Meldreth)

11th March 2015 – AGM (Melbourn Hub)

Meeting closed at 9PM