

18 June 2018

To:
Stuart Cheshire, Keith Jipps and Katherine Cox
Govia Thameslink Railway

Dear Katherine, Keith and Stuart,

Thank you, Katherine, for your reply to my email of June 8, on behalf of Charles Horton.

We are pleased to know that Karen Gregson and Marc Edwards will attend the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group meeting on 27 June. Yes, we will send any advance questions to you and arrange to talk with Karen by phone before the meeting.

The outstanding concern which GTR needs to address as a matter of urgency is morning peak time services in both directions. We have a worse morning peak time service now than we had on the old timetable.

- To London from Meldreth (and Shepreth and Foxton), there is a consistent gap between 6:43-8:13; with additional cancellations of the 6:43, most days last week the gap was widened to 6:13-8:13. This is totally unworkable for anyone needing to get to work or school on time.
- To Cambridge from Meldreth (and Shepreth and Foxton), the morning peak service often sees the 7:06 cancelled. Because the 7:37 appears to have been removed from the timetable, passengers say it is necessary to leave at 6:35, in order to have reasonable certainty of getting to work.

According to www.recenttraintimes.co.uk, current morning peak time services from Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton to Cambridge are about half of what they were before the May 20 roll-out.

- Before 20 May there were 5 services in morning and 6 in evening
- From 20 May 2018 there were supposed to be 6 in morning and 7 in evening
- Last week saw 3 trains in morning peak, and 3-4 in evening peak.

In addition:

- Evening peak time services from both directions is also very problematic.
- Bus replacement services are not working: the National Rail Enquiries website spells out that bus replacement services operate without a schedule, and suggests that passengers check with office staff. Foxton and Shepreth have no office, and the Meldreth office is closed after 11:15AM. Often no buses turn up at all; at other times buses directly follow trains that are running, and are therefore redundant.

The failure of the timetable in both directions has had a dramatic impact on our community: businesses in our villages have seen resignations from workers travelling in; pubs and restaurants have seen loss of patronage from the business community; some people travelling for work in London are now looking for work elsewhere; some people are finding accommodation in London during the week; people who have recently found prospective properties in our villages in order to commute to jobs are considering their options. There is obviously a renewed reliance on driving as the only sure way of getting to Cambridge or to Royston, in the hope of finding a connecting service in either direction – with the consequent additional cost not possible to claim back under Delay Repay. We've had reports of people actually buying cars to make possible a previously train-only commute.

The urgent top priority for our three stations must be the restoration of reliable peak train services. The full restoration of the May 20 timetable and reliability of services generally - not sacrificing Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton stations in stop-skipping mode - must be the wider goal, as soon as possible.

We look forward to receiving your response on these urgent concerns.

Many thanks.

Sincerely yours

Susan van de Ven

Chair, Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group