



# Minutes of Meldreth, Shepreth, Foxton Community Rail Partnership Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019, 2pm Shepreth Wildlife Park

## Attendees:

- Susan van de Ven - Chair
- Sarah Grove – CRP Project Officer
- Peter Wakefield - Railfuture
- Richard Godding - Meldreth PC
- Sarah Hatcher – Cambridgeshire County Council
- Andrew Chillingsworth - GTR
- Kathryn Cox - GTR
- Daniel Washington - North Herts DC
- Ruth White - Shepreth Parish Council
- Geoff Barnes - Foxton Parish Council
- Jay Clark – South Cambs District Council
- Rebecca Willers – Shepreth Wildlife Park

## 1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from:

- Amanda Davies - The Plough
- Stephen Pritchard – Melbourn Science Park
- Sally-Ann Hart - Melbourn PC
- Barrington Parish Council
- Network Rail (Claire Webb has moved roles, her replacement just initiated contact with)
- Tim Sparrow - Sussex CRP
- Paul Webster - ACORP

## 2. Minutes of previous meeting

Network Rail did a three week survey of the Foxton and Shepreth Level Crossings, but haven't circulated due to sensitive content. Downtimes are inconsistent and seems to be related to who is in the signal box at Foxton. Work in progress.

AGM hasn't happened yet, aiming for early Feb.

## 3. Community Interest Company update

The three directors - Peter Sutton, Bev Cotterell and Brian Clarkstone - have been busy overseeing the transition of Sarah Grove's project officer role into a more long term role hosted by SCDC and funded by partnership of parish councils, GTR and SCDC. SCDC provides all the HR and hosting of role and has financial responsibility. In progress ahead of new financial year in April.

## 4. Half Year Report

The report gathers together activities over last 6 months and is organised over the same themes as the Line Action Plan and the DfT's Community Rail Strategy. The structure has 4 'pillars' and a 'plinth':

- Providing a voice for the community
- Promoting sustainable, healthy & accessible travel
- Bringing communities together, supporting diversity and inclusion
- Supporting social and economic development, and
- Strengthening the partnership

### ***Providing a voice for the community***

The CRP has responded to a number of consultations:

- *Passenger Benefit Fund*. Each station has £80k to spend on fabric improvements and passengers were asked what they would like to see the money spent on. Responses were gathered together and sent to GTR. Paul Daniels from GTR came out to talk about the request - he came from an engineering point of view, eg accessibility issues at Meldreth. All has to be signed off by the DfT as to which bits of improvements would go ahead. This would supplement significant contributions leveraged from s106 agreements.
- *Melbourn Greenways consultation*. This is looking at improving access to stations for cyclists and pedestrians.
- *Local Transport Plan*.
- *Foxton Travel hub* - proposed car park near to Foxton station comprising 750 parking spaces and 75 cycle spaces. SG was invited to a meeting to talk about concerns.
- *Cambridge South Station*. CRP invited to be a stakeholder but meeting has been cancelled due to General Election.

There have been a number of networking opportunities:

- Round Table dinner and brainstorming session with GTR.
- Three Bridges control centre visit with RUGs from the same rail line.
- ECML stakeholder group.
- Rail Delivery Group - gathering opinions about what needs to be done in Cambridge
- GTR stakeholder day.
- Keeping the Facebook page going.

### ***Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel***

- Sustainability is going to be the big watch word for 2020. Continuing to press for improved accessibility at Meldreth - our ideal will be a DDA-compliant station eventually. Always suggesting improvements to access in all consultations.
- *Junior Travel Ambassadors*. Funded by CCC Public Health. Keen to roll out as soon as possible, ambassadors are really enthusiastic. Melbourn Primary has now joined so 3 out of 4 local schools in CRP area.
- Dealing with the issue of shared access at Meldreth station. There are safety concerns and circulation problems within the car park with the additional 25 properties.

### ***Bringing Communities Together, supporting diversity and inclusion***

- *Station Gardens*. All station pots were replanted in June and October. Tea and cake for volunteers in summer. Junior Travel Ambassadors came along with their parents to keep it going over the summer, in addition to the DofE volunteers. Shepreth Memorial Garden is meant to be minimal attention but brambles have taken over. A retired landscape gardener has offered to help.

- *Try the Train trips.* A GTR initiative but up to us to organise them. For groups of people not confident about travelling on train, who - in the absence of someone to come along - might not travel on train. Started with local disability groups. 'Eddies' – travelled from Cambridge to Stevenage to go bowling. 'Red to Green' – an autism group visited Shepreth Wildlife Park. GTR provided train tickets and Shepreth Wildlife Park provided park tickets. A visible difference was made to the people who joined the trip. 'Safe Soulmate' - people with various disabilities and learning difficulties, although the trains were unfortunately cancelled on the way back, GTR got everyone home in taxis. 'MVC Young Carers' (caring responsibility at home) is a group that meets regularly, and promotes building confidence and self esteem for young carers. Some Y11s who will be at 6th form next year had never been on a train or to Cambridge so it was a really good worthwhile trip. Still in touch with MVC, trying to organise a trip with The Cabin. Also looking to organise trips with CamSight and have been invited to Melbourn Intergenerational lunch, to see if any scope there for a trip.

#### ***Supporting Social and Economic development***

- Attended 'Community Rail in the City' at Cambridge Station and handed out leaflets for Shepreth Wildlife Park. Next date is 13th May 2020.
- Improvements to station environment. Waiting room repainted at Meldreth and new shelter installed. Yellow lines are being redone. Waiting for passenger benefit fund for the rest.

#### ***Strengthening partnership***

- There was a celebration of the partnership in May 2019, attended by Heidi Allen MP and the Chair of SCDC at The Plough.
- Updated Facebook, Twitter, website etc
- Sarah has undertaken safeguarding training, regularly attends Railfuture events. She has also started mentoring other CRPs, for examples Sevenoaks, North Herts, and Littleport.
- Funding – the Access for All application was not successful. However, the profile of the station has been raised and the aspiration remains for a DDA compliant station. Will continue to look for sources of funding.

#### **Discussion of code of conduct**

ACORP is encouraging organisations to adopt the Women in Community Rail code of conduct as a code for their organisation. Can help to gain accreditation so that CRPs can be measured against a quality standard. Once accredited, you can put mark on literature etc and go to organisations for funding, such as the DfT from specific pots. SG suggested we adopt code and the group all voted in favour.

#### **4. Key forward plan action points**

- Improvements we want to see at our stations and partner funding (Meldreth developer contributions).
- Upkeep of three stations through gardens, a year-round effort. Have very little in terms of vandalism. Continual new offers of help, eg from First Orwell Scouts.
- Shepreth Level Crossing and highway issues. Very challenging piece of work.
- Rate of growth in Greater Cambridge.

All are live issues and will need to be monitored.

## 5. Updates from members

- Shepreth Parish Council. Signing and lining has been carried out now. Queues still stretch back to the village hall and commuter parking remains an issue especially in Docwras Close and for bin lorries getting in and out. In discussion with residents, agreed that residents' parking and yellow lines should be pursued for Station Road.
- Railfuture. Trying to initiate a common plan for the area, Bike+Train+Bike. Need to convince people to cycle to the station but need the bike lanes and cycle storage. Small parishes are having to spend their small parish precept dealing with station overflow. Also, with new timetable coming into effect, there will no longer be a direct train to Cambridge North, meaning 100 people from our local stations will have to change at Cambridge.  
**ACTION** - SH to feedback through Network Rail Quarterly meeting issue of releasing land formerly used for informal parking.
- GTR. Delay Repay - can choose to donate to Samaritans or Railway Children. 5th December, collecting socks at Royston station.
- Meldreth Parish Council. Access at Meldreth is the main issue, also congestion at junctions. Pleased with infrastructure changes at station such as shelter.
- Foxton Parish Council. General consensus that the travel hub is a bad idea.
- Shepreth Wildlife Park. Entry to park is half price for people arriving by bus, train or bike. Has been around 6-7% , however in August 2019 12% came by train. Probably coincides with push on social media to arrive by train. 7000 school visits per year.  
**ACTION** - CF to put RW in touch with one of marketing managers.

## 6. Next meeting

AGM will be on 26<sup>th</sup> March 3-5pm.