



2021 A Year Of Change

Annual Report by chairman, Barry Coward and Community Rail Development Officer Kate Myers

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Front page photo:- "Go Green By Train" Friends of Worksop Station, NNLCRP and Bassetlaw District Council carry the message

1. Structural Changes

1.1. A board of four, Rick Brand, Gillian Bardsley, Barry Coward and Peter Harrold, started the year. In May Rick Brand resigned and was replaced by David Pidwell. The board has since agreed to Jim Anderson becoming a fifth member of the board.

1.2. Stakeholders have a meeting twice a year and there is an Annual General Meeting in May at which CIC members can vote on the composition of the board. Membership of the CIC is free to any organisation or individual associated with NNLCRP. Area meetings continued, although only the Bassetlaw Area held meetings of the virtual variety during 2021.

1.3 Some stakeholders have actively engaged with us during the course of 2021. We would like to thank and acknowledge the support given by our four TOCs, Stagecoach East Midlands, West Lindsey District Council, Bassetlaw District Council, North Lincolnshire Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Kirton in Lindsey Town Council, Gainsborough Town Council, Market Rasen Town Council, Barnetby Parish Council, Network Rail, Community Rail Network, Barton on Humber Cleethorpes Community Rail Partnership, Network Rail, and SYMCA.

1.4. Our former officer's contract expired on 31 March 2020, by which time the country was in lockdown. The board decided that a new officer would not be appointed until the situation caused by Covid 19 pandemic became clearer. Our new officer, Kate Myers, took up her appointment on 5 May 2021.

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Rick Brand, our director who had been instrumental in the creation of NNLCRP and who left in May the month we welcomed our new officer Kate Myers

1.5 Following approaches made, the Board has agreed to enter discussions with LNER and CRN on the possibility of including Doncaster station as our 12th station.

1.6. At the start of 2021 NNLCRP was in the process of arranging on line banking at its newly opened bank account. It was to be almost twelve months before online banking was achieved.

1.7 After two years work NNLCRP has been awarded one year's Accreditation by the DfT for 2021-22.

1.8 in 2020 NNLCRP joined Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire (VANL) with the expectation they take on payroll duties as well as filing accounts to Companies House. However in December 2020 VANL was faced with funding difficulties due to their local authority's intention to withdraw funding. They were therefore unable to manage our payroll and accounts. We engaged a firm of accountants in Retford to carry out this work. However VANL has recently restructured and it is hoped that at some point in 2022 they will be able to take on our payroll and accounts function at considerably less cost than using an accounting firm.

2. Finance

2.1 Income consisted of :-

9 February 2021 West Lindsey District Council £39,700.84 .

11 June 2021 East Midlands Railway £51,696.50 represents 2020-21 and 2021-22 funding .

15 September 2021 Community Rail Network £5784.80 on behalf of LNER

8 October 2021 First TransPennine Express £2,500.00

3 November 2021 Northern Trains £8,539.00

Total income at 31 December 2021 £ 108,221.14

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In theory core funding from train companies is due on 1 April, however there has been significant delays due to circumstances beyond our control. It is hoped that for 2022/23 payments will be made promptly.

2.2 Expenditure to 31 December 2021

Operating £11,927.66

Projects £6969.87

Total £18,597.77

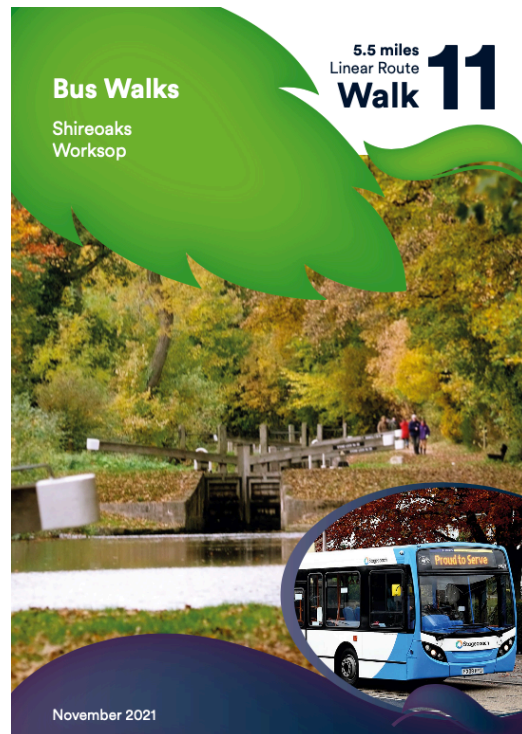
2.3 Community Rail Network (CRN) has expressed concern that our funding is wholly reliant on train operating companies. We therefore wrote to the six local authorities in our area. To date only one, Nottinghamshire County Council, has replied stating:-

"I can confirm we have no revenue budgets approved to support CRPs anywhere within the County area. We would need approvals and to be honest our revenue pots currently are limited at best and continually under pressure. I personally believe the beneficiary of CRPs are the TOCs through increased patronage and hence revenue and it should thus be for them to fund these organisations not the LAs. I have no budget for a dedicated countywide rail resource never mind to support external organisations."

3. Effects of Covid 19

3.1. Despite the restrictions created by the Covid 19 pandemic station adopters in our area continued to maintain high standards of horticultural adornment and station cleanliness.

3.2 Planned release of five different Bus Walks by Stagecoach East Midlands (each walk being linear and passing a railway station or in once case connected to the railway by a bus ride) originally due for release in the summer of 2020 but postponed due to the pandemic were finally released in November 2021.



3.3 Another casualty of the pandemic was the distribution of travel guides covering Lincoln, Gainsborough, Market Rasen, Retford, Worksop and Kirton in Lindsey Brigg and Barnetby. These guides are distributed to all homes in the area and contain information on bus and train services. The release of these guides has been postponed to

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May 2022. They are designed and printed by our partner Stagecoach East Midlands.

3.4 The frequent changes to train times caused by the Pandemic is met by a QR code and URL displayed at our poster sites and in our social media. The codes remain the same, all that is required is to amend a PDF file with each change which takes a matter of minutes once TOCs have notified the changes in times to us.

4. Relations with our TOC Partners

4.1 2021 has been a difficult year for our TOC partners - East Midlands Railway (EMR), London and North Eastern Railway (LNER), Northern Trains (NT) and TransPennine Express (TPE). However we have been able to work constructively with the TOCs during the year.

4.2 NT continues to produce weekly reports on their performance and hold monthly meetings with their CRPOs. This is a very useful method of keeping ourselves up to date on their operations.

4.3 Kate Myers, our officer, has regular meetings with EMR, LNER and NT and engages with TPE from time to time.

5. Shireoaks

5.1. Plans for two Shireoaks running in boards in the style of those at Worksop have been held up by the difficulty in obtaining the correct timber.

5.2 Shireoaks signal box timbers are now in a poor state. Efforts to have it repaired and painted met with a response from Network Rail that we would need to raise £50,000 for a full restoration or £10,000 for painting. As the building, a Great Central design from the early 20th century, is not a listed structure the Railway Heritage Trust

is unable to help. The Parish Council would like to take on the building for community purposes but as it contains relays it remains an operational building.

5.3 Efforts to secure land from Network Rail for car parking at Shireoaks continued without a conclusion.

5.4 Unfortunately we have to report concern over vandalism in 2021. The most recent being the damage caused to the hanging baskets on platform 2 and damage to the 'welcome' banner on platform 1. All of the incidents have been reported to Northern by Shireoaks volunteer Derek Stuckey. District Councillor David Pressley has contacted the local PCSO. We hope the CCTV installed at the station by Northern can be used to identify the culprits.

5.5 We have been working to improve the station's unfriendly waiting area. Plans include a banner on the back wall and painting in LNER yellow and green.

5.6 Shireoaks station continues to see a strong Friends group that has been actively taking care of the station with weekly inspections. Floral displays have been maintained by the Friends throughout the year.

5.7 The friends group continue writing articles to the village newsletter with the most recent being to promote a trip along the line to Kiverton Park station. We hope to partner with the Canal & River Trust in placing signage/ posters to promote the use of the adjacent Canal.

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The front of Worksop station painted in LNER colours

6. Worksop

6.1 A "Welcome to Worksop" banner by local artist Kyle Emmerson was unveiled on platform 2 by Cllr. Tony Eaton, The Mayor of Worksop. In an effort for cohesion across our stations similar style banners are planned for other stations.

6.2 The initial launch of Bus Walks that feature the Chesterfield canal, took place at Worksop Station. We decided to launch these walks in conjunction with Community Rail Networks 'Go Green by Train' campaign, the first event of its kind in the UK involving local partnership projects and volunteers promoting green travel. The original plan for a larger launch was delayed due to a shortage of Stagecoach staff. The official launch in spring 2022 will have access to a Stagecoach bus which we hope will attract the public. Bus Walks not

only increases those using public transport but also improves the physical and mental health of those who take part. The walks were worked on in partnership with Chesterfield Canal Trust, Stagecoach, The Ramblers and Northern Rail. The walks are available in the form of a pamphlet and can be downloaded on line at <https://bit.ly/3FBD027>. These walks include several canal walks connecting with bus and rail services. Copies of the walks placed in Retford and Worksop stations were quickly snapped up by the public.

6.3 Having successfully had Worksop station canopies and platforms restored in LNER green and yellow, with the help of a grant from the Heritage Railway Trust we worked with the Friends of Worksop Station and NT to have the station front painted sympathetically.

6.4 Certainly since the restoration at Worksop station a strong group of Friends has been active in adorning the station with floral displays throughout the year however the principal sponsor, Bassetlaw District Council is unable to continue their sponsorship for 2022.

6.5..An IBC water container has been secured and will help with water harvesting in the future.

6.6 More planters are planned, especially if our response to a planning application for a Lidl store close to the station, in which we seek a Section 106 agreement for more planters and seats on the station, is successful.

6.7. A report on some structural defects notes in the Grade 2 listed building has been sent to Network Rail and NT by Bassetlaw District Council.



6.8 During the summer we had a successful installation of a Wild in Art book bench, enhancing knowledge of the station within the local community. This was one of forty 'Book Benches' which were decorated by local schools in partnership with artists and businesses. These benches were on display across Worksop, Retford, Tuxford and the Idle Valley. The trail aimed to encourage people to explore the local area while celebrating the region's heritage and showcasing local creative talents. This trail was organised by North Notts BID in collaboration with Wild in Art.

6.9 The Friends of Worksop Station have been donated a model railway of the station and Manton colliery. A room on platform 2 that has been unoccupied for ten years would make a suitable home for the model. NT are trying to organise permission for the Friends to take on the rooms.

7. Retford

7.1 Retford station also contains a model railway, owned by the Bassetlaw Railway Society. LNER has agreed that we could share their room as our base for NNLCRP's new officer. Kate Myers took occupancy of the room on her first day, 5 May. It is important that as a young person potentially working alone there needs to be other persons present. The staff at Retford station have readily taken Kate into their fold.

7.2 A volunteer came forward to help establish a Friends of Retford Station group. Having established the group as a company limited by guarantee. The volunteer who did much to set up the structure for the friends group and recruit volunteers suddenly disappeared. A check at Companies House reveals that the company of which he was sole director, has been dissolved. Our Bassetlaw area chairman Jim Anderson is now recreating the Friend's Retford Station. Jim Anderson and Kate Myers plan to hold weekly open door taster sessions advertised through FORS & NNLCRP social media pages.

7.3 Discussions between NNLCRP, its partners and the Retford Civic Society continue over various accesses to the station.

7.4 Plans to provide a bookshelf at the station in partnership with Wonderland Bookshop, a local bookshop are well advanced. We hope this will attract local people to the station through working as a book swap shop, similar to that at Market Rasen station.

7.5 Bassetlaw District Council have mural artworks from local schools which we plan to use in the Ordsall tunnel, along with a project Jim Anderson and Kate Myers are planning with The Oaks Academy school.

7.6 Ever since platform 3 was built in 1965 it has lacked a lift. However LNER opened the lift and a sheltered walkway on 15 December 2021. LNER's successful bid to the DfT for a lift was due, in no small part, to the response from NNLCRP and its partners in making a strong case for the lift. LNER opened the lift on 15 December 2021. A formal launch will take place early in 2022 in the former dining rooms.

Platform 3 lift is now open for passengers. Chief Engineer Mr Kam Poorunsing from Dyer and Butler along with his colleague Clive demonstrated it.

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8. Gainsborough Central

8.1 From January until September, Central Station remained closed. The Saturday only service to Cleethorpes ran again from September, but bus replacements were frequently used due to the staffing difficulties NT was experiencing.

8.2 The geraniums in the planters bloomed even though there was often no access to the station. Winter pansies have replaced the geraniums in the planters but as access has been limited while the station was closed we assume one of the Network Rail signallers or permanent way staff is tending to them.



Workshop based artist, Kyle Emmerson's artwork for Gainsborough stations

8.3 A 'Welcome to Gainsborough' banner has been created for both Gainsborough Lea Road and Gainsborough Central Stations by local artist Kyle Emmerson. This is due for installation in late Feb 2022. We plan to have an unveiling event similar to the Workshop event.

8.4 Kate Myers continues to write columns in the Gainsborough Standard.

9. Kirton in Lindsey and Brigg

9.1. The Saturday only train service was suspended from January to September. Efforts to attract passengers to the service by distributing a local travel guide were abandoned due to the Covid 19 pandemic. When services started in September we posted "Trains From This Station" notices at both stations and on Kirton in Lindsey's Town Council Notice Board.

10. Barnetby

10.1 Having secured a grant of £5,000 from TPE for Barnetby Parish Council to brighten up the station approaches with floral displays, Covid 19 deferred activity until spring 2021.

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10.2 In December 2020 TPE opened a fund for improvements at stations. We consulted with partners and responded early in January. 2021. Sheffield hoop bike racks subsequently appeared at the station.

11. Market Rasen

11.1 The station adopters continued throughout the year to make the station a pleasing gateway to the town with their abundance of floral displays, posters, artwork and their book exchange. Their efforts were recognised by being short listed at the 2021 Community Rail Awards.

11.2 EMR introduced a 2 hourly service at Market Rasen in May 2021. There has never been such a frequent service before. The only method of accessing the Lincoln bound platform is by a barrow crossing equipped with a red warning light. This will not be satisfactory when the frequency of trains increase. We were informed that Network Rail had considered a footbridge and even subway but neither structure could be justified. We did ask that the barrow crossing be monitored by CCTV from the Lincoln signalling centre so that a driver could be contacted in the event of safety critical situation at the crossing. We also requested audible warning and repairs to the light so that it was illuminated at all times when a train was approaching. An audible warning system is now due to be installed.

11.3 In addition, the Friends of Market Rasen station have applied to EMR for CCTV covering both platforms and the station approach. Secure cycle storage has also been requested.

11.4 The existing vertical cycle racks continue present problems for those of short stature or folks who are unable to lift their bicycle into the rack.

11.5 North of the station are three over bridges, notorious in the town for pigeon droppings onto the pavement below. We have asked Network Rail if they can humanly discourage pigeons roosting there.

11.6 The Station Adoption Group welcomed Will Rodgers, Managing Director of EMR, on a tour of Market Rasen Station where plans were discussed for 2022.

11.7 Talks with Network Rail and Railway Heritage Trust entered on the damage to the listed waiting room are ongoing. It is hoped restoration work will take place in 2022.

12. Gainsborough Lea Road Station

12.1 In December 2019 the new platform 2 was opened. Although a great improvement on the previous structure a number of issues have arisen mainly from the project not being fully complete. Two years later some of these issues remain to be resolved.

12.2 Plans to replace platform 1 have been delayed. Originally work was due to start in 2021 but has now been put back to 2024 as the planned access to the new platform has been deemed unsatisfactory and a better solution is being sought. In the interim we have asked Network Rail to reduce the stepping distance between trains and the platform.



12.3 Now that we know work on the new platform 1 has been postponed we shall go forward next year to line the subway with artwork, involving local schools and young people in the design.

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12.4 A community action day took place on the 10th October when Network Rail, EMR and NNLCRP folks painted the entrance to the station and the walkway up to the platforms.

12.5 The Friends continue to be a strong friends group who receive funding from EMR for station improvements.

A sensory display by the Friends of Lea Road Station



13. Saxibly

13.1 A station adoption group has been established with three volunteers coming forward. An action plan had been created for 2022 including cleaning, painting, gardening, promotion and environmental projects.

13.2 A relationship has been established with the local girl guiding group who are keen to help us with planned 2022 projects.



14. Lincoln

14.1. A tripartite project between NNLCRP, EMR and the Rotary Club of Lincoln Colonia, the station adopters, entitled Romans to Railways has resulted in six panels being affixed to the station back wall. It involved two Lincoln schools, an NCS group and local artist, Mel Langton, who tutored the students along with creating three of her own pieces for the display. The official launch is planned for Friday the 25th February 2022.

14.2 The garden at the front of Lincoln Station has been successfully cleared for planting a sensory garden. Further planting of the two smaller herb gardens is planned in collaboration with the Lincoln City Football gardening group.

14.3. We worked with Visit Lincoln during the Lincoln Christmas Market, providing information at the station and increasing knowledge on the CRP.



15. Integrating Transport

15.1 Apart from bike racks appearing at Lea Road and Barnetby stations no further efforts to attract the use of cycles to reach the railway have yet been achieved.

15.2 Following our response to the Bus Service Improvement Plans required to be submitted to the DfT by Local Transport Authorities (LTA) we await an indication from the DfT as to which plans will receive funding. It has been generally considered within the bus industry that Leicester produced the best city plan, while Lincolnshire produced an excellent plan for our mainly rural communities. The Lincolnshire bus service improvements form part of the draft Lincolnshire Local Transport plan 5, an excellent document that involves community rail partnerships in the plan's objective to provide better rail facilities and services for the county.

16. Looking Ahead

16.1 2021 started with Government actively discouraging the use of public transport. However as 2021 progressed so did patronage of the trains and buses. It has become clear that leisure travel is now more important to railways recovery than commuters.

16.2 We are eager and willing to work in partnership with our stakeholders to develop schemes that bring travellers back to public transport. We see ourselves as a conduit between our communities and public transport providers.

16.3 We suggested that two methods used back in the time of British Railways that could be reintroduced. Passengers luggage in advance has recently returned on the services of Lumo, the new open access operator on the East Coast Main Line. Relieving passengers from the need to take their luggage with them on a train will also help train

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management at busy times. The other suggestion was to bring back Golden Rail. These were holiday packages which included travel to and from your home and holiday destination as well as booking your accommodation. Back in the 1980s Golden Rail was very popular, partly due to BR's marketing campaigns. With staycation likely to be prominent in 2022 we consider TOCs should work with the Rail Delivery Group to bring these features back for rail passengers.

16.4 However if we are going to attract the leisure market we must offer a pleasant and comfortable ambience at stations and on buses and trains. The bus industry is markedly improving the customer experience on board while many railways are going in the wrong direction with uncomfortable seating, poor rides, and lack of user friendly access.

16.5 Early in 2021 we proposed that a North Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire day explorer ticket available on trains and buses would encourage leisure travel with one ticket. While we received support from councils and TOCs for the idea no EOC was willing to lead with the idea.

17. Responding to consultations

17.1 The consultation on the proposed LNER timetable for May 2022, drew a response from us that focussed on the decline in service that would be imposed on passengers using Retford station. As result of a wide range of responses on the consultation the proposed timetable was withdrawn with the intention of issuing a revised timetable for May 2023.

17.2 We responded favourably to Lincolnshire County Council's draft Local Transport Plan. (See 15.2 above)

17.3 We wrote to all three Local Transport Authorities in our area with suggestions for inclusion in their respective bus service improvement plans including the provision of bike racks as provided by East Yorkshire and Stagecoach on some services outside our area.. We also held a meeting with one LTA (See 15.2 above).

18. Restoring Your Railway

18.1 In June 2020 the DfT invited Members of Parliament to submit proposals to restore passenger train services on lines closed to passenger traffic. We spotted an opportunity as the short section of line between Brocklesby Junction and Ulceby has not been used by passenger trains since 1967 although it is used daily by freight trains serving the Port of Immingham.

18.2 Our partner, North Lincolnshire Council, wrote a submission to the DfT sponsored by three Members of Parliament; Martin Vickers (Cleethorpes), Andrew Percy (Goole and Brigg) and Holly Munby-Croft (Scunthorpe County).

18.3 The proposal is to extend the existing Sheffield - Gainsborough Central service (introduced following a campaign by NNCLP, West Lindsey District Council and Lincolnshire County Council, in May 2019) every two hours to Kirton In Lindsey, Brigg, Barnetby then along the branch line to Barton on Humber. This would afford an hourly train service on the Barton branch and interchange with TPE and EMR services at Barnetby. Most important of all it would restore daily train services to Kirton in Lindsey and Brigg, two towns that have seen Saturday only trains for the past 28 years.

18.4 In December 2020 the DfT announced that 15 of the 40 submissions presented to them would be part funded for a feasibility study. Our Humber Rail Link was one of the 15. As a result of this

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funding North Lincolnshire Council engaged consultants, Jacobs, to conduct a feasibility study. An advisory group assisted and supported the consultants in the preparation of the study. The study was submitted to the DfT on 1 November 2021, with letters of support from organisations representing communities along the route. Many of the letters resulted from requests made by us.

18.5 In their summary of the study North Lincolnshire Council wrote :-

"There is strong support from the Advisory Group of elected members of parliament, rail industry and transport and planning authorities and community rail partnerships to move the project to the next phase. The commercial and management case suggests that relatively fast delivery of the scheme is possible and should secure the economic return as soon as possible."

Oil train on the line from Ulceby to Brockelsby that has not seen passenger trains since 1967 and will form the link for the South Humber Rail Link

