

NNLCRP

INTEGRATING TRANSPORT

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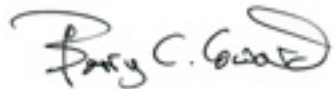
North Notts & Lincs CRP The First Iteration 2012-2020



At the time of writing the UK is in the grip of a Covid 19 lockdown with bus and rail travel discouraged for all except key workers and those with a genuine need to travel.

While the future is uncertain, the Covid 19 emergency offers opportunities to plan sustainable transport as an adjunct to sustainable living which will be a prerequisite if society is to reduce global warming.

Meanwhile here is the story of the creation and first three years of a community rail partnership focussed on integrating transport.



Barry Coward

Chair, North Notts & Lincs CRP CIC



NNLCRP members at Gainsborough Central for the launch of the new service
20 May 2019

Left to right: Cllr David Pidwell (Bassetlaw DC), Rick Brand (NNLCRP Deputy Chair), Brian Siddow (Lincoln volunteer), Peter Harrold (Lincoln Rotary), Rachel Martel (CRP officer), Paul Webster (Community Rail Network), Richard Allsopp (Friends of Worksop Station), Barry Coward (NNLCRP chair).

Photo Wendy Osgodby (WLDC)

The broad aim of community rail is to connect communities with their railways, ensuring that people benefit from them and have a voice in their development.

The North Notts & Lincs Community Rail Partnership (NNLCRP) covers eleven stations: Barnetby, Brigg, Gainsborough Central, Gainsborough Lea Road, Kirton-in-Lindsey, Lincoln, Market Rasen, Retford, Saxilby, Shireoaks and Worksop.

Our mission is to encourage use of integrated public transport with rail as its focal point. It does this by supporting, improving and promoting relevant, integrated and effective transport solutions across North Nottinghamshire, North and Central Lincolnshire.

Back in 2012 Lesley Rollings, a Gainsborough Councillor, formed a group of residents with the aim of restoring a local bus service which had been withdrawn with only one week's notice to the community. The group, known as GRaB (Gainsborough, Retford and Brigg rail and bus users), were successful. Flushed with their success they turned their attention to Gainsborough's two stations.

Guided by Jodie Booth, a strategic planner at North Lincolnshire Council, and John O'Grady at Northern Rail, a Brigg and Lincoln Lines Action Plan was developed. This detailed improvements desired for Brigg, Kirton in Lindsey, Gainsborough and Retford stations in addition to train service improvements. The plan was revised at quarterly meetings, usually held at North Lincolnshire Council offices in Brigg or Marshall's Yard in Gainsborough.

An early development arising from the plan was the creation of the Friends of Lea Road station. At that time the station was somewhat neglected, with a forest standing at the approach to the station.

An appeal to the local bus company, Stagecoach East Midlands, for a bus connecting Gainsborough and Doncaster ultimately resulted in a two hourly service, with the unique opportunity of making the return journey on the direct train service between the towns using the bus ticket.

In 2014 GRaB produced a video supporting a submission to the DfT, during consultation on the Northern franchise. Although now somewhat out of date parts of it were used in 2018 to produce a video to mark the end of our first full year. Visit <https://youtu.be/auq9CfEKdQE>



By May 2016 it was considered that the time had come to form a community rail partnership (CRP) for an area not covered by any other CRP. This included the city of Lincoln where the local Rotary club had adopted the station. Following a meeting in Worksop Town Hall potential partners were contacted and the first meeting of the North Notts and Lincs CRP took place on 10 February 2017 in the Old Hall, Gainsborough, just in time to join the DfT and ACoRP annual conference, held in Lincoln.

For the first 18 months we relied entirely on volunteers. While train operating companies were sympathetic towards us there was no provision to fund us in their franchises with the DfT. Eventually *ex-gratia* funding was secured. Meanwhile two district councils, Bassetlaw and West Lindsey, offered valuable start up funding and officer support.

During this period we made another submission to the DfT, this time for the forthcoming East Midlands franchise. Although our proposals were not included in the DfT's invitation to tender we were able to discuss our proposals with all three bidding companies.

We sought a dedicated bus link between Louth, with a population of 17,000 the largest town in Lincolnshire devoid of a railway, and Market Rasen station (a limited bus link operated by Call Connect has since been introduced).

We also requested that trains running between Nottingham and Worksop along the Robin Hood Line be extended every two hours via Brigg to Cleethorpes enabling more trains to call at the urban stations between Habrough and Grimsby as well as introducing a regular daily service along the Brigg Line for the first time in 25 years. The idea is still being pursued along with a recent submission made to the Rail Minister for us by Martin Vickers M.P. to extend the Sheffield - Gainsborough Central service to Barton on Humber via Brigg.

Lea Road station platforms sit on top of an embankment which became unstable as a consequence of the 2008 earth quake. Following an inspection by Ian Prosser, H.M. Chief Inspector of Railways, our suggestion that a new platform 2 be constructed south of the existing platform was taken up by Network Rail. In December 2019 Cllr. Keith Panter, Mayor of Gainsborough and a member of NNLCRP, was able to welcome the first train to stop at the new platform. Now it appears platform 1 is sliding off the embankment. In preparation for constructing a new platform soil samples were taken just days before the Covid 19 lockdown was imposed in March 2020.

Ian Prosser also visited Gainsborough Central station served by 3 trains a week in each direction on Saturdays only. Here Network Rail intended to remove the barrow crossing in favour of a bridge accessed solely by steps. After a campaign in local media, including BBC Look North showing disabled folks using the crossing, it was retained.



By the autumn of 2018 we had secured sufficient funds to be able to employ a part time officer. As an unincorporated body it was not sensible for us to employ staff so West Lindsey District Council kindly agreed to employ our officer on a 15 month contract. As we had no bank account the council also agreed to manage our funding.

Our officer, Rachel Martel, commenced work in December 2018. As well as an annual plan for NNLCRP, she produced annual station plans in association with station adopters and train operating companies. Much of Rachel's time was devoted to assisting station adopters. Rachel also partnered with Lincoln BIG's *Imp Trail* and, with funding from East Midlands Railway, two schools will create their own mini imps. Design work on these is continuing during the lockdown.



Worksop Refurbishment

2018 was an important year for Worksop station. Following representations from us and Bassetlaw District Council, Network Rail refurbished the magnificent station canopies, footbridge and East signal box in the original LNER colours, with help from a grant provided by the Railway Heritage Trust. The contractor, CML, provided the backing for two running in boards on which the letters, created by volunteer Alan Smalley, were copied from a photograph supplied by volunteer Richard Allsopp. At the same time local volunteers formed the Friends of Worksop station who have adorned the station with planters and flower beds. Northern has plans to improve those parts of the station within their lease area including the provision of cycle storage.



Right: A train from Nottingham arrives at Worksop under the refurbished canopy, maybe one day it will continue to Cleethorpes?



Meanwhile at Shireoaks a friends group was also created. Here the problem was gathering water. Northern's contractor installed a water butt purchased by the friends on the disused building on platform 2. Consideration on the possible uses for this building and for painting the signal box are in hand.

Much time and effort has been spent by the Friends, NNLCRP and Bassetlaw District Council to secure car parking on Network Rail land.



Retford is an important interchange station between the East Coast Main Line and the Northern trains serving low level platforms 3 and 4. When these platforms were built in 1965 a lift was installed on platform 4, primarily for newspapers delivered by train from Manchester. As newspapers were a one way traffic, platform 3 missed out and no lift exists. In 2018 LNER approached us to help gather support for a lift. We set to work, along with Bassetlaw and West Lindsey district councils, to produce letters of support from a wide variety of community organisations. LNER's bid to the DfT was successful and soon a contract to construct the lift is expected to be agreed.

Once the present lockdown is lifted we shall be pleased to help form a station friends group.

LNER with help from the Retford Civic Trust produced platform signs, benches and display panels that announce the town as the "Gateway to the Birthplace of the Mayflower Pilgrims". As such Retford is the centre for the Pilgrim Roots project, part of Mayflower 400. NNLCRP has been heavily involved in Mayflower 400, not just locally. Sadly this event, which was expected to attract Americans to our area this summer, has been postponed.



Photo call for the local press to announce the lift project had been approved by the DfT



The biggest single event for NNLCRP in Gainsborough was the commencement of the first regular weekday train service between Gainsborough and Sheffield. The service does not form part of Northern's franchise, it is purely commercial between Retford and Gainsborough and represents the culmination of many years campaigning. Both Northern and Network Rail pulled the stops out and turned Gainsborough Central into a welcoming gateway to the town centre.

Central station is just a short walk from Gainsborough Old Hall a 15th century manor house with many historical associations. In 2015 the international Mayflower 400 project was launched at the Old Hall. A large image of the Old Hall was displayed in London's Kings Cross station as part of Community Transport in the City 2019. Both NNLCRP and the Poacher Line manned the event with volunteers in period costume.

At Lea Road the hourly train service to and from Leeds lacked any sensible bus connections. Following a request from NNLCRP Stagecoach improved the bus service providing 10 minute connections with trains as well as connecting villages that had no regular bus service with both Lea Road and Saxilby stations. This improvement to bus services helps to relieve rural isolation.

An advert in Lincolnshire Life placed by West Lindsey District Council with funding from Lincolnshire County Council.



WORK VISIT LIVE

DISCOVER | GAINSBOROUGH CENTRAL
www.discovergainsborough.com

Discover the historic market town of Gainsborough, just one hour from Sheffield by train, stopping at Worksop and Retford!

- Visit one of the best-preserved manor houses in England
- Discover local history dating back to Anglo Saxon times
- Discover Gainsborough's Pilgrim Roots and the connection to the Mayflower story
- Discover what's on, with events all year round for all ages

Twitter Instagram Facebook



| Mayflower
400 |



Lincoln station accounts for half the passenger numbers for our area and as such it is important that it became a worthy gateway to the city. East Midland Trains spent much on improvements to the station and the station adopters, Lincoln Rotary, have adorned waiting areas with historic pictures and maintain planters on platforms. They have plans to place panels along the back wall of the disused platform depicting aspects of Lincoln's history.

Top right: Planters flower in an empty Lincoln station during the Covid 19 lockdown.
(Photo Danny Bromfield, EMR)

Centre right: Lincoln Rotarian Roger Hall clears the former platform 8 at Lincoln station.
(Photo Rachel Martel)

Right: In the station forecourt a sculpture of George Boole, a Lincoln teacher renowned for devising Boolean logic, the basis for countless computer algorithms, will one day appear.>NNLCRP has assisted the station adopters in this project funded by the Heslam Trust.
(Artist impression courtesy of the Heslam Trust)



Barnetby station's windswept platforms are most inhospitable during inclement weather. We worked with TransPennine Express to secure a large shelter on the westbound platform. Subsequently TPE asked us to provide support for their submissions to the DfT for extending the platforms to accommodate 6 car trains. Both submissions were successful.

We assisted Barnetby Parish Council in securing permission to adopt the approaches to the road bridge.

Barnetby station has more freight trains than passenger trains. At one time when coal was moved by train the station accounted for 25% of the UK's freight train movement's, mainly to and from the port of Immingham, the UK's largest port by tonnage



In 2017 we published a Gainsborough Travel Guide containing all bus and train times. A second edition was published in 2019 and distributed to 7,700 homes thanks to a grant from Gainsborough Town Council. A similar Market Rasen guide published in 2018 was distributed to homes in the town by Market Rasen Town Council. Finally a second edition Kirton in Lindsey travel guide, extended to cover Brigg and Barnetby appeared in February 2020. Kirton in Lindsey Town Council and Barnetby Parish Council had agreed to distribute the guide, but the Covid 19 lockdown prevented the distribution.

All our travel guides are designed and printed for us by Stagecoach. Without their support the guides would never have appeared. Funding comes from train operators, councils and Stagecoach's own budget.

The May 2020 edition of Buses magazine featured an article on the ill fated Kirton in Lindsey guide.

The article is reproduced with kind permission of Buses magazine

JOINED-UP JOURNEYS

A community rail partnership in the East Midlands has teamed up with bus and train operators to provide three North Lincolnshire communities with comprehensive multi-modal public local transport information that includes connections with the small regional airport that serves the area with a handful of flights per day



Kirton in Lindsey, Brigg and Barnetby (including Humberside Airport)

Travel Guide Bus and Train Times

from
February 2020

minibus service. 'My sincere thanks go to Chris Brooke and Becky Waby at Stagecoach East Midlands without whom this guide would not exist,' says Barry Coward of the rail partnership.

This cooperation is all the more impressive when one appreciates that Hornsby rather than Stagecoach operates most of the buses in the area, notably the 4, X4 and Saturdays-only c4 between Brigg and Scunthorpe, as well as the Brigg town service provided on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Stagecoach's main routes — none more frequent than two hourly and all of them daytime only — are the Cliffsider 103 linking Scunthorpe, Kirton in Lindsey and Lincoln and the 450 between Brigg, Barton and Immingham.

The railway timetable combines the separate services of East Midlands Railway,

when all trains — up to four an hour at points in the day — call there.

Hornsby's X4 provides an infrequent connection on weekdays between Barnetby and the airport, with five buses from Barnetby on weekdays and seven from the airport. The c4 offers just two from Barnetby on Saturdays, four from the airport. There are only around eight flights a day, mainly to Amsterdam, Aberdeen and Exeter.

The airport is one of the target outlets for the timetable, both in the terminal building and at the nearby Hampton by Hilton hotel. Copies will also be in the tourist information centre in Brigg.

Kirton in Lindsey Town Council and Barnetby Parish Council have both agreed to deliver copies to homes in their areas, but Brigg Town Council declined to do the same on its patch.

East Midlands Railway — operated by Abellio — and ACoRP, the Association of Community Rail Partnerships, have provided financial support for the publication. 'It is fantastic to see a community rail partnership joining up all the modes of public transport in North Lincolnshire to promote more sustainable journeys,' says ACoRP.

In a comment on Twitter, one early user commented: 'Excellent, great to see the public transport industry working together to provide passenger information and spreading awareness of services through distributing these guides. This sort of thing really should be the national standard, so well done for taking the lead.'

The latest publication from the North Notts & Lincs Community Rail Partnership is a pocket-size public transport timetable guide for the residents of Kirton in Lindsey, Brigg and Barnetby in North Lincolnshire.

It has details of all Stagecoach East Midlands bus services in the area as well as those of Hornsby Travel and contact details for the council-operated CallConnect demand responsive rural

TransPennine Express and Northern into one so that passengers using Barnetby station, the nearest to Humberside Airport, have a single source of information of

Brigg to Barton, passing connections to Immingham										service 450									
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While travel guides are an important feature of our work we also maintain over 20 poster sites on which we have displayed posters we have devised as well as information such as Stagecoach's Bus Walks which start from Lea Road station. There are to be more Bus Walks starting at Retford, Worksop and Shireoaks stations.

NNLCRP has developed good links with local and regional media. Every 5 weeks our chair writes a column for the Gainsborough Standard including a column with the most unlikely headline!

Stay away from public transport

The chairman of a community rail partnership in Lincolnshire is requesting people to stay away from buses and trains unless they are a key worker, attending a medical appointment or any other urgent cause.

Analysis of passenger data on the Lincoln to Sheffield service calling at Lea Road station indicates that 80 per cent of passengers are key workers.

Ten per cent are other genuine users but there is still a ten per cent minority whose reasons go unaccounted for.

Barry Coward, chairman of the North Notts and Lincs Community Rail Partnership, said: "I would like to thank the 90 per cent of folks who are observing the government's requests on travel.

"Although the government declines to indicate what measures they will

take to return peoples' lives to 'normal', the transport industry is making preparations by creating a number of options so as to cover whatever process the government decide upon to remove the lockdown.

"In the short term, bus and train operators will not be able to return to normal services straight away as staff recruitment and training has stopped, primarily due to the two metre distancing rule.

"In the long term there is a greater threat to the way we live than the current pandemic - global warming.

"Society cannot just return to the former levels of pollution. In order to persuade motorists to use less polluting forms of transport, operators in conjunction with councils, need to make travel by bus and train an attractive proposition."



Waving goodbye at Gainsborough Central when only 3 trains a week called in each direction and the Times described it as Britain's worst station. Since this photo was taken in June 2015 the station has been refurbished, the old signal replaced, the Pacer train is no more and there is an hourly service on weekdays to Sheffield.

NNLCRP won third place in the Community Rail Awards 2019 for achieving the new service at Gainsborough Central.

