

Lincolnshire

By Brian Hastings
01724 710528



■ ■ Gainsborough boost

Railfuture Lincolnshire is renewing lobbying and starting a publicity campaign aimed at boosting the use of Gainsborough Central station, which is currently served by only three trains each way on Saturdays. New opportunities arise as a result of the opening of Marshall's Yard retail park near the station. Even the scant service will allow people from Grimsby, Barnetby, Brigg, Kirton Lindsey, Retford and Worksop to visit the retail park and the pleasant market town by rail.

Another boost will occur in August when the Lincoln enhancement scheme will mean Northern Rail's trains from Sheffield will divert to Gainsborough Central for a bus service to Lincoln via Gainsborough Lea Road and Saxilby. We will be urging Northern Rail to maximise publicity and introduce lower fares. We will also be urging that Gainsborough Central gets a makeover after years of neglect.

■ ■ Brigg

Years of campaigning for more rail freight to Hull and Immingham have paid off. Railfuture Lincolnshire was represented at a ceremony at Hessle when Network Rail and Associated British Ports announced investment plans.

Rail access to Immingham is set to be improved by the full reopening for freight of the Brigg line between Wrawley Junction and Gainsborough Trent East junction. The route has enjoyed many false dawns since 1989 when BR shocked us by proposing closure of the entire route and from Gainsborough to Doncaster. Mercifully BR withdrew the proposal after we launched a vigorous campaign against the plans. Now trackwork, signalling and level crossings are to be improved over four months from December. Single-tracking to save money in the 1980s will still allow 16 freight trains per day to run. The improvements will encourage Brigg and Gainsborough to step up their campaign for a proper passenger service too.

■ ■ £55million for Lincoln

A new power signal box and track changes at both ends of Lincoln station will allow trains to access all platforms at Lincoln station faster and more efficiently. The work will be carried out during two blockades in August 2007 and summer 2008. Buses will take the strain from Gainsborough, Sleaford, Newark Castle and Grimsby.

■ ■ Cancellations

The branch is planning to protest over repeated cancellations by Central Trains, which are accused of abandoning responsibility for maintaining a reliable train service on the county's key routes.

■ ■ Partners' success

There has been passenger growth on the Barton-Cleethorpes route – after years of decline – following the launch of the local rail partnership. One pinch point, the Ulceby level crossing, has just been given a £1million upgrade.

■ ■ Recruiting campaign

A new branch leaflet is being prepared for a membership recruitment campaign led by new branch chairman Alan Waddington. He can be contacted at 25 Viking Way, Metheringham LN4 3DW.

Oakwood Three



YOUNG LOOK ON THE LINE: Students Marie, Dami and Tina

You may have noticed some changes in the design of *Railwatch*. They are the result of some expert input from three design students at Middlesex University.

The Oakwood Three, who are based at the campus near Oakwood Underground station in north London, are helping Railfuture with design ideas for both *Railwatch* and the Railfuture website.

They have been advising co-editor Ray King about how to make Railfuture more relevant for young people.

For instance they asked young people on campus, in the street and on stations and trains about Railfuture and railways generally.

None of the young people questioned had heard of Railfuture or *Railwatch*, but everyone questioned liked the idea of an organisation campaigning for better trains.

The respondents gave price as the number one disincentive to travelling by train, followed by a perception of trains as being dirty and unhygienic. This supports



Railfuture's campaign for cheaper fares and a National Railcard, and it backs up a user group survey in East London which put station cleanliness as the most important issue. But it does beg questions about train companies' commitment to cleanliness. Many regular travellers get used to grimy, untidy and sometimes smelly interiors but newcomers to rail expect higher standards. In a separate exercise, the students provided alternative designs for the Railfuture logo and the *Railwatch* titlepiece.

The Oakwood Three are Marie Swift, 22, who comes from Kingsbury, London and regularly travels by train in London and from London to Edinburgh; Dami Osinaike, 21, originally from Nigeria, but now living in Hackney, who travels regularly by train in London; and Tina Ogbulie, 21, from Wood Green, London, who also travels regularly by train.

Railfuture AGM 2007: Board changes

The number of members on the Railfuture board will be reduced by two as a result of the constitutional changes approved by the annual general meeting at Preston on 12 May.

In future, however, the board will be able to co-opt two additional members (who will have full voting rights) if necessary.

The other constitutional change will see that the vice chairman is elected from within the board rather than by the members directly.

The Mayor of Preston, William Tyson, welcomed members to Britain's newest city. He also welcomed the West Coast main line refurbishment and noted the much-improved Pendolino service from

Preston to London, but said much more work needs to be done to get old freight branches reconnected to the network and to factories back on the railway.

Railfuture vice chairman Jerry Alderson gave a talk on passenger benefits from new technology, standing in for speaker Richard Watts who was unable to attend. Several resolutions were passed:

Electrification

This AGM urges Railfuture members to sign the online petition to the Prime Minister calling on the Government to implement a national electrification strategy. It further urges members to ask their relatives and friends to sign the petition. See also page 6 and 19.