

# Marpa

Mid Anglia Rail Passengers' Association  
[www.marpa.org.uk](http://www.marpa.org.uk)

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## Autumn 2016 Newsletter

Welcome to the autumn newsletter. There are quite a few things to tell you about in this edition.

First an apology as my comment in the 'other station works' section of the spring newsletter berated Abellio Greater Anglia for not providing temporary facilities where station toilets were closed as part of the improvement works. This was incorrect and corrected in the noticeboard edition, but AGA had provided temporary toilets and I'm happy to acknowledge that.

Secondly at the AGM there was a request from a member to change the subscription year from August – August to align with the calendar year as this is easier to remember. This was discussed at the following committee meeting and thought a good idea. Therefore you need not renew until January 2017. If you have renewed already don't worry, your membership is extended until December 2017 so no-one is out of pocket.

A huge benefit to the membership secretary is that it will enable me to get to grips with the membership database which is out of date. I fear I email people who have moved on or don't wish to receive emails and I also fear I post newsletters to those who might no longer exist or who have moved house. **Can I please ask those receiving this by post who would be happy to have an email copy to let me know.** Also, if anyone is reading this as a hard copy and is no longer a member please can they let me know. It costs around £100 per annum to issue the newsletter.

### AGM Report

The AGM took place on 16<sup>th</sup> April in Bury. We had around 15 people present and heard an interesting talk by Philip Smart. Topics included Campaign Update on the Rail Franchise, the Hendy Review/Anglia Route Study. Soham station proposals, Railfuture campaigning: East Cambridge Transport Study, Cambridge City Deal, Easy stations, Reliability - 'Leafgate': Devolution.

The usual AGM business was transacted then we had an 'AOB' session which included discussions on the ticket machine on Newmarket station (the print on the tickets was blurred but has been fixed seen the AGM was held).

## Franchise Change

The headlines are as follows:

Abellio has been named as the preferred bidder for the new East Anglia franchise which runs from October 2016 to October 2025.

- £1.5bn investment to replace the entire train fleet with new trains (over 1040 new electric and bi-mode vehicles) by the end of 2020
- 32,000 more standard class seats into London in the morning peak – up from 58,000 to 91,000 (a 55% increase)
- More trains to more places – 1,144 additional weekday services (an increase of 13%)
- Improved journey times, including some trains achieving London to Norwich in 90 minutes and Ipswich in less than 60 minutes
- Free high quality WiFi on all new and refurbished trains, and at every station.
- Improved punctuality, with PPM improving from 89.7% to 92.9% - delivered through a more robust timetable, investment in infrastructure, people and processes, and a strengthened Alliance with Network Rail
- Investment in the local economy and jobs, with £120m on depots, including a new light maintenance facility at Manningtree
- Taking on 20 trainees per year, with a minimum of 30 apprenticeships by 2019
- An investment programme to improve our customers' journey experience, including: nearly £60m on improving stations, with major schemes at Broxbourne, Cambridge, Cheshunt, Harlow and Southend Victoria; digital customer information screens at all 132 stations; more ticket vending machines; nearly 1,800 additional car parking spaces and 4,000 additional cycle parking spaces.

the Department for Transport's official announcement is at the web address <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/better-journeys-for-rail-passengers-and-boost-for-derby-train-industry-as-new-east-anglia-franchise-announced> Note that the DfT site has an interactive map with individual line benefits which is worth clicking on for some additional information.

## BUT

And it's a big 'but', a huge question mark in my mind is that Abellio are paying a premium of £3.7Bn over 9 years for this franchise. I'm a bit out of touch with how this has worked elsewhere on the privatised railway but surely the bottom line is that East Anglia's passengers will be paying, somehow for this premium. We are 20 years 'post rail privatisation' and unless I'm corrected, I think this is the biggest premium paid to run a franchise

In fact it is hard keeping up with all the news. Our Chairman John Drake attended a further briefing at Ipswich Station on 28<sup>th</sup> September and has written these notes.

*Summary of plans for franchise (more general information is available from publications)*

*3 phases at start of franchise*

- 1. Getting ready for changes (to May 2019)*
- 2. May 2019 – May 2020 new trains and services, change timetables*
- 3. From 2020 new railway*

*Mobilisation is under way and on schedule, 9 year franchise with possible 1 year extension, Premium of £3.7bn payable to government (£3 out of every £9 received), new timetable with faster times on many key routes. Regional bi-mode and intercity trains will be 2+2 seating with 1<sup>st</sup> class in intercity. All will be based at Crown Point depot. Negotiations for the old ICI site at Manningtree for an additional depot. All trains will have WiFi, power points, air conditioning and retention toilets.*

*2019/2020 rewrite timetable, 3<sup>rd</sup> London – Norwich train is an Ipswich terminator extended*

*East Suffolk line timetable as now with 4 trains extended to/from London Ipswich – Peterborough will be hourly with many extended to Colchester*

*5 Major station (Broxbourne, Cambridge, Cheshunt, Harlow Town and Southend Victoria) upgrades, every station gets an uplift, ticket machines all stations, customer information screens at all stations, multimodal screens at interchange stations(?30) to include bus information*

*£5m fleet reliability initiatives, joint performance teams with Network Rail, Transport for London and freight operators. Enhanced alliance with Network Rail.*

*Target 93% punctuality by end of franchise (now 89%). Abellio cause 30% of delays, Network Rail 60%, other operators and freight 10%. Need Network Rail works to achieve improvements, needs campaigning from stakeholders.*

*More station travel plans and cycle spaces, WiFi fitted progressively to all present trains*

*Long term regional approach is focussed on stakeholders, business, economic and local aspirations*

*More support for community rail partnerships, customer experience and community fund, trainees and apprenticeships, innovation fund and innovation academy, stakeholder advisory board established, better rail offering for Stansted airport, supporting local events etc.*

*Next steps*

*Communicate plans more widely, engage with stakeholders about future aspirations, secure infrastructure investment and upgrades, deliver positive change in first 3 years.*

*Autumn leaf fall: this year to deal with damage will have more capacity at Ilford, more access to Hornsey and Etches Park, own wheel lathe at Crown Point – will enable damaged trains to be repaired quicker. Network Rail to clear problem sites, upgraded sanding, additional sanding trains and devegetation, special vehicle on Marks Tey – Sudbury line. If normal autumn or slightly worse will be fine, if as bad as last year will not be fine but will be better than last year.*

*Timetable changes – small changes May 2017, May 2019 overlay Norwich –Stansted and London – Lowestoft on existing timetable. December 2019 rewrite most of timetable (still some old trains), May 2020 fully new timetables and new trains.*

*WiFi will be free after 16 October (where available)*

*Looked at increased frequency Ipswich – Cambridge but not possible on present infrastructure. Increased Sunday frequency from 2019 (?May) ? hourly.*

*Outer suburban Bombardier trains will have 3+2 seating, Stadler trains 2+2 seating*

## **MARPA Membership**

The membership of MARPA is from **1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December** each year. If you have **NOT** renewed for the year August 2015- 2016 please do so now! Currently MARPA does not have the IT capability to send reminders to each and every member when the subscriptions are due other than to issue reminders in this Newsletter. Your membership is valued by us and the subscription is vital if we are to continue to campaign in support of issues that members feel strongly about in relation to our local rail routes etc.

Annual Membership Subscription Rates:

Adult - £5.00

Family/Joint - £6.00

Concession - £4.00

*(Student / Senior / Unwaged / Disabled)*

Our Membership Secretary is Peter Rutt. His address is:-

MARPA (Membership)

c/o Well House, The Street, Elmswell, Bury St Edmunds, IP30 9BS

Please make your cheque payable to 'Mid Anglia Rail Passengers Association'.

## **WEB SITE REMINDER**

An ongoing reminder to visit/use our website [www.marpa.org.uk](http://www.marpa.org.uk)

## **Parting Shot**

An Ipswich bound 3 car 170 unit crossing the August stubble fields near Elmswell. This view might well change in the next decade as Elmswell's potential bypass will go through this field and the Class 170s will be replaced with new trains

