

THE TRAVELLER

NEWSLETTER OF FELIXSTOWE TRAVEL WATCH

FELIXSTOWE



TRAVEL WATCH

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Chairman's Editorial



Graham Newman
(Graham.Newman.FLX@gmail.com)
writes...

Dear Members. As the 50th year of Felixstowe Travel Watch's operation draws to a somewhat subdued close - it's certainly been no Golden Jubilee - we're staring down the barrel of further cutbacks in bus services. Whilst peak hour travel has largely returned, off-peak use - often helped by concessionary pass holders - remains stuck at around 50% of pre-Covid levels. Many government subsidy schemes come to a close during October, and we are already hearing of severe cutbacks in some parts of Suffolk - thankfully not in Felixstowe... yet. Bryan discusses this in more detail in his article on page 3.

But there are some brighter things going on. Nearly 1800 copies of FTW's Public Transport timetables have been printed and distributed over the past year - to our own members, at Felixstowe Library and Job Centre, and at the sea front's Tourist Information Beach Hut.

In another piece of good news, I am delighted to welcome - and thank - our member Brenda Jeffery for offering to take on the role of FTW's Hon Secretary on an "acting" basis.

To round off on a positive note, this newsletter has won an award - from Railfuture's Rail User Group. *The Traveller* won the Silver Award in the Best Newsletter category (See [back page](#)). The competition was judged by no less railway luminaries than the likes of Roger Ford (technology editor of *Modern Railways*), Chris Green (former Chief Exec of Virgin Trains) and Adrian Shooter, the man who founded Chiltern Railways at the start of the railway privatisation era, and later became Chair of Viva Rail, the company converting former London Underground trains for use on the Isle of Wight railway network and elsewhere.

I look forward to welcoming you to our next Members' Meeting on Tuesday 18th October at 2.30pm in the Salvation Army Hall.

Felixstowe Travel Watch Tours 2022

Richard Holland
(richolland1@btinternet.com) our Vice Chairman - is - with his wife Jenny - also our Tours Organiser & Felixstowe Station Adopter; and now also FTW's temporary Treasurer. He reports:



So far this year we have only been successful with one "day out by train" Tour - we went to Ely on 7th July (postponed from June). Tour 2 to the East Anglian Transport Museum was all set to go but was postponed when the "do not travel unless your journey is essential" warnings during the heat wave put a stop to it. There was not much interest in a trip to the City of London, and - given the hot weather - probably just as well we hadn't made any arrangements.

The good news is that we still have three "days out by train" tours lined up. Tour 2 to East Anglian Transport Museum was taking place on Thursday 22nd September (after the press date for this edition of *The Traveller*), with full details for Tours 3 & 4 enclosed with this Newsletter - Tour 3 to Sheringham and the North Norfolk Railway and Tour 4 to Norwich. The advantage of these arrangements is that you can use the Tour information pages as a "crib-sheet" to go by yourself if you can't come with us on the days we have chosen. NB All arrangements are subject to there being no rail "industrial disruption" on the Tour dates.

Members who booked the 28 seats we reserved for the **Co-op Juniors Christmas Snape Maltings show at 4pm Friday 2nd December (by coach)** are now being asked to confirm their interest and pay a £10 deposit. If you didn't reserve a place let me know if you are interested in taking up any unwanted seats if they become available. Full details of the tour are at the foot of the next page.

Our Next Members' Meeting is on Tuesday 18th October at 2.30pm - see Back Page

**FELIXSTOWE
TRAVEL
WATCH
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Tour 3: North Norfolk Railway & Sheringham
Thursday 20th October 2022

Sheringham, located in North Norfolk is a delightful Victorian seaside resort with all the attractions you would expect including places to eat and shop. It is the home to the terminus of the North Norfolk Railway line, which runs through to the Georgian town of Holt.

By going in October we will have the "early and late season" railway timetable - see below - which allows plenty of time to visit Sheringham and travel on the railway, before we leave for our homeward journey. The "railway afternoon cream tea" option is sold out for this year.

North Norfolk Line adult tickets - £16.50 or £15.00 if you book in advance on-line. For more information and book a reduced price advance ticket go to - www.nnrailway.co.uk

North Norfolk Rail timetable

Depart Sheringham		Arrive Holt
12.15	Heritage diesel	12.40
13.10	Steam	13.35
14.05	Heritage diesel	14.30
15.00	Steam	15.25
Depart Holt		Arrive Sheringham
13.15	Heritage diesel	13.36
14.10	Steam	14.31
15.05	Heritage diesel	15.26
15.55	Steam	16.16

TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY

Depart Felixstowe 08.54 (Trimley 08.57 or Derby Road 09.07) to arrive Ipswich 09:24 (platform 1) then onto Norwich departing at **09.43 (platform 3)** to arrive in Norwich at 10.22 (platform 1)

The final stage - we leave **Norwich at 10.45 (platform 3A)** to arrive in Sheringham at **11.42**.

You can spend all day in Sheringham and/or board a North Norfolk Line train - steam or diesel - to go to Holt and back using the above timetable.

Depart Sheringham (Greater Anglia) station **16.49** to Norwich - arriving at 17.41 (platform 3A) then onto the Great Eastern main line 18.00 train (platform 4) to Ipswich arriving at 18.40 (platform 2) and finally onto the Felixstowe line train 18.58 (platform 3B) to be back at Derby Road by 19.09; Trimley by 19.18 or Felixstowe at **19.24**.

Greater Anglia Return Fare: £21.20 (or £13.95 with a Railcard)

Tour 4: Norwich
Thursday 17th November 2022

Plenty of things to see and do, including many historic sites, market, shops, plenty of places to eat and drink, arts and culture, riverside walks and gardens. For more information about the Castle renovation project and to buy on-line admission tickets to the restricted areas, go to www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/norwich-castle.

This will be a simple day-trip taking advantage of the good connections when we change trains at Ipswich, with a relaxing journey time probably quicker than by car.

A map will be provided to plan your way around the City and the short walk to and from the station.

TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY

Depart Felixstowe 08.54 (Trimley 08.57 or Derby Road 09.07) to arrive Ipswich 09:24 (platform 1) then onto Norwich departing at **09.43 (platform 3)** to arrive in Norwich at 10.22 (platform 1)

Depart Norwich 16.00 (platform 1) to arrive in Ipswich 16.40 (platform 2) then stand at platform 2B to depart on the 16.58 and arrive at Derby Road by 17.09, Trimley by 17.18 and **Felixstowe at 17.24**

STAY LONGER? If you leave Norwich for the homeward journey on the 16.00 it allows you five and a half hours to explore, shop and eat. But if you want to stay longer - catch the next train at 17.03 and be back in Felixstowe by 18.24 or even later ones.

Greater Anglia Return Fare: £20.40 (or £13.45 with a Railcard)

GENERAL INFORMATION

All train tours start and finish at Felixstowe railway station, with the advantage of near-by on-street parking if needed. (The Co-op has not so far charged to use their customer car park). There are also the options of picking up and dropping off at Trimley or Derby Road stations. Your "FTW Tour Guide" will be on hand to be sure that you buy the correct ticket and escort you as we change trains along the routes, with advice on places to go and things to do at our destinations.

Contact: Richard Holland, 14, Princes Gardens, Felixstowe IP11 7RH or richolland1@btinternet.com
 Phone: 01394 278061 or mobile 07922 623646

Tour 5: Co-op Juniors
Christmas Show
Snape Maltings- Friday
2nd December 2022 @4pm

Price £33.50 (includes concert hall seat, coach fare and drivers gratuity)
 We have booked 28 seats for this performance now all taken by members. But just in case anyone should not be able to come, I have opened a "first reserve" list. Please let me know if you would like your name added to that list.
 Depart by coach from Felixstowe train station at 1pm, then straight to Snape, with plenty of time to look round and have a drink before the performance starts at 4pm.

Public Transport Notes



Bryan Frost
(E-mail: bmwfrost@btopenworld.com)
Chair of FTW's Public Transport
Committee, updates you on latest
developments

BUSES

A Permanent "Temporary Timetable" on the Buses?

This may seem a contradiction in terms, but for the moment at least, the bus service to and from Ipswich is operating to the 25th October 2021 timetable, advertised at the time to be a temporary arrangement. As reported in *The Traveller* #141 (March 2022) this has both its advantages and drawbacks, but the fact remains that in the current situation where bus routes are being withdrawn throughout the country, we are certainly very fortunate to have a service operating at 20 minute intervals during the daytime, with an early evening service until very late - the last bus from Ipswich to Felixstowe leaves at 2315 on weekdays.

We also have a half-hourly service during the main part of the day on Sundays and Bank Holidays - a facility which simply does not exist in many places nowadays. As ever we make an earnest plea to 'use it or lose it' and a cautionary example is to be found towards the west of the county where the route which links Stowmarket with Bury St Edmunds (384) now only operates on school days, resulting in sizeable places such as Woolpit, Elmswell and Thurston with a very restricted service on Mondays to Fridays during term times only. This is a clear demonstration of how a facility can be lost if the public simply do not turn up and use it.

Whilst First operates the Ipswich to Felixstowe route on a commercial basis, the service linking Felixstowe with Woodbridge 73 is supported by Suffolk County Council and the fact that it serves two educational establishments en route at certain times of the day (Felixstowe School and Kesgrave High) does assist in enabling a reasonable level of provision to be made; also permitting an approximately two-hourly facility to serve Old Felixstowe and the Grove Medical Centre. As far as the Woodbridge to Felixstowe section is concerned, this represents an improvement in frequency over that which applied in the 1960s - at least out of the peak summer period. A reason to be very thankful indeed!

A £2 maximum bus fare from January next year

The government has recently announced that single bus fares in England will be capped at a maximum of £2.00 for a three month period from January to March next year - outside of London where normally a cheaper fare applies - in an effort to help passengers cope with the cost of living crisis and encourage those who had ceased to use buses during the early stages

of the pandemic to return. Although many of our members possess free bus passes, these are only valid after 09:30 on weekdays, so this action will assist in particular those who need to travel to early hospital and medical appointments.

TRAINS

Rail performance holds up over the summer months, although the strikes are causing inconvenience

At the risk of 'tempting providence' it is welcome to report that, for the most part, our rail service has achieved high levels of punctuality and reliability during the key summer holiday period, and it was noticeable that the trains were very popular especially when temperatures were soaring - no doubt the air conditioning in the new trains was much appreciated!

More's the pity then, that there have been several days when services did not operate owing to strike action and at the time of writing further action is planned as we go into autumn.

Weekend engineering works set to continue

In what now appears to be an annual ritual, weekend engineering work will be carried out on the Great Eastern mainline on most weekends during this autumn, although there will be some respite over the October half term weekends. This would inevitably involve the tedious and inconvenient bus replacement journeys between Ingatestone and Newbury Park, followed by a change to the Central Line for the subsequent slow haul into Liverpool St.

If this weekend work is necessary next year perhaps the rail company will consider a possible alternative plan once the Elizabeth Line (Crossrail) commences through running from Shenfield through central London and beyond. This alternative would be to operate the replacement buses into Stratford Bus Station, very close to the Elizabeth Line station, from where a speedy onward journey will be available.

This would cut out the transfer to Newbury Park and enable the journey to be made on the new Elizabeth Line trains rather than on the elderly Central Line stock. Just a thought.

Central core of the Elizabeth Line is now open!

A major improvement for passengers travelling onwards from Liverpool St. occurred at the end of May, when the central section of the Elizabeth Line opened. This has transformed the formerly tedious slog on the Circle/Hammersmith & City Underground from Liverpool St. to Paddington into a smooth 10-minute ride on one of the new trains.

It also connects Liverpool St. with destinations south of the Thames, as trains now travel to Abbey Wood - where frequent connections to Kentish destinations can easily be made. It's just a 15-minute ride from Liverpool St. to Abbey Wood!

Public Transport Notes (cont'd)

AbellioOUT, Transport UK IN

It was recently announced the Dutch state-owned railway company has agreed to exit the UK transport market which will allow a new company, Transport UK Group, to takeover Abellio's UK services including Greater Anglia. The necessary formalities to complete this buyout will probably take until the end of this year, resulting in Greater Anglia being in majority UK ownership, under the leadership of a management team with extensive local rail industry experience.

This certainly sounds encouraging and hopefully the team will continue to build on the improvements which have been achieved in recent years including the replacement of the entire train fleet with new rolling stock. We look forward to the future with great interest.


The Traveller's Silver Award


Railfuture Rail User Group Awards 2021-22

The Paul Abell Award for Best Newsletter

Silver Award in recognition of your
contribution to rail campaigning

Felixstowe
Travel Watch


Christian Wolmar
President


Chris Page
Chairman

July 2022



'Flying Banana' gets an outing to Felixstowe



The unusual sight of a Network Rail Test Train on 'our' line during daylight hours- this around 12:30 on 3rd July this year at Gun Lane, Trimley St Martin [Photo: Michael Frost]

Our Next Members' Meeting

Our next Members' Meeting has been arranged for **Tuesday afternoon 18th October, starting at 2.30pm**, in the Salvation Army Hall, Cobbold Road.

We are looking forward to a visit from Councillor Alexander Nicoll, Suffolk County Council's Deputy Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy. He will be accompanied by Simon Barnett, Suffolk County Council's Integrated Transport & Enhanced Partnership Manager, who lives locally in Felixstowe. They have been closely involved with the development of an Enhanced Bus Partnership for Suffolk - which was a Government prerequisite for funding the much heralded "Bus Back Better" schemes - working closely with our local Bus companies.

Cllr Nicoll and Mr Barnett will give a presentation and take members' questions on how the Enhanced Bus Partnership might affect us here in Felixstowe.

In addition to all our usual facilities at the members' meeting - including our public transport information display and of course our membership desk to receive any outstanding renewals or new member enrolments - we will of course have tea, coffee and biscuits!

Memberships 2023

If the envelope in which you received this edition of *The Traveller* has a RED spot against your address, you will find enclosed a membership renewal form seeking confirmation of your details and your permission for us to continue to use them; plus an envelope addressed to Mrs Jean Leitch, our Membership Secretary.

We'd be really grateful if you could return the completed form in the envelope provided, together with a **cash** remittance. Alternatively please pay by BACS (or make an annual standing order), payable to East Suffolk Travellers Association Felixstowe (a/c No:8113 5775; sort code: 40-21-06). This is because the Bank is now (incredibly) charging us 40p to pay in individual cheques! Please use the reference **M-SHIP-your surname** when paying by BACS.

Membership fees remain the same at £3 per annum for individuals or £4 for families, with a postage supplement (for addresses outside our Felixstowe and Trimley hand distribution area) of £2.50.

Our Members' Meeting on 18th October is an ideal opportunity to renew for both 2022 and 2023. New memberships taken out at the meeting will be valid until 31st December 2023 - 14½ months for the price of 12!