

# GETTING ON TRACK

## Fenland Rail Development Strategy 2011 - 2031

Manea



March



Whittlesea



# Fenland Rail Development Strategy 2011 - 2031

Adopted Version – 19.4.2012

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## Fenland Rail Development Strategy 2011 – 2031 - Executive Summary

### Why are the railways important for Fenland?

- Access to education, employment and also services such as shopping and hospital appointments are all important journeys that can be made by public transport
- Transport is a key priority for Fenland with many people relying on public transport. Around 20% of all householders do not own a car
- Nearly 40% of Fenland's working population commute out of the district for work. Rail services give people options for how to travel to work.
- Every year there are large numbers of people visiting Fenland. There are opportunities for some of these journeys to be made by train.
- The Fenland Communities Development Plan Core Strategy sets out proposals for large numbers of new homes and for new employment opportunities in the District. Wherever these homes or jobs are located public transport will be an important part of making this growth more sustainable.

### What are the priorities for the Fenland Rail Development Strategy?

The priorities are based on views that the Fenland Transport and Access Group have received over a number of years along with the 2011 consultation responses. We have 3 priorities for this strategy which are more community involvement, better stations and rail service improvements. Further details on this are below:

#### **1. More community involvement - Community Rail Partnership**

What is a Community Rail Partnership?

A Community Rail Partnership is about establishing greater community involvement in the railway and its stations. They are concerned with providing a local voice to help deliver local priorities for the railways. There are many successful examples of Community Rail Partnerships across England including the Wherry Lines in Norfolk, the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership and the Abbey Line in Hertfordshire.

Further details about existing Community Rail Partnerships can be found on the website of The Association of Community Rail Partnerships at:

<http://www.acorp.uk.com>

Why form a Community Rail Partnership?

- To assist station adopters and station adoption groups such as The Friends of March Station and the Street Pride work
- To enable local people to have their say on the development of the railways in our area
- To have regular discussions with representatives from the Train Operating Companies so that the rail industry fully understands local priorities

- To encourage the use of existing rail services and promote the direct trains from Fenland Stations

Examples of Community Rail Partnership Projects:

- Community art schemes for stations
- Young people projects including working with schools
- Station gardens and floral displays
- Improved links between train services and buses including community transport services
- Cafes or refreshment rooms
- Use of redundant station buildings

## 2. Better Stations – Stations Investment Plan

What is a Stations Investment Plan?

A Stations Investment Plan sets out a programme of improvements for rail stations to address current issues. The issues included in the plan have been developed from a station audit which took place in September 2010 and from local feedback. By setting out the problems and issues at each station as part of a wider plan this will help to access funding or to match funds that will pay for improvements.

Developing a Stations Investment Plan

The stations audit work and discussions with key partners identified a number of common themes which form this plan. The themes are:

1. Station adoption and community involvement
2. Local planning and growth issues
3. Parking for cars, motorcycles and cycles
4. Bus service integration and improvements
5. Station platforms – extensions, access and shelters
6. Information and signage issues
7. Train service improvements
8. The station environment and presentation

Examples include:

### March

- Continue station adoption work including assistance with on-going works to improve the presentation of the station e.g. cleaning, planters, cleaning of brickwork
- Formal marking out of parking bays and addressing on street parking issues
- Refurbishment of the ticket hall
- Bring the redundant buildings on the station back into use for the local community
- Investigate options for better integration of rail timetables with bus and community transport services

## **Manea**

- Improve the signage and customer information
- Improve or replace the wooden fencing that forms part of the station and platform entrance
- Provide covered cycle parking
- Investigate options for providing a customer car park
- Lengthen the platform to take 3 or 4 car trains

## **Whittlesea**

- Improve the signage and customer information
- Improve platform access by making the ramps Disability Discrimination Act compliant.
- Formalise the car park including an extension to allow for greater numbers of cars
- Replace the existing shelters on the station platforms
- Lengthen the platform to take 3 or 4 car trains
- Investigate the potential for a Whittlesea Parkway Station providing improved facilities at the station, an improved level of rail service for the town including options for commuters to travel into Peterborough.

### **3. Rail Service Improvements**

The Fenland area has seen significant growth in levels of housing and employment in recent years and this growth is set to continue in the future. Providing travel choices by sustainable modes of transport is an important part of the process for delivering growth as well as assisting local residents. Rail services are an important part of this process, particularly as some Fenland Stations have limited services. The Fenland area also has three train services provided by 3 different operators. Two of these services provide for long distance travel with objectives which may not agree with local priorities.

Our priorities for rail service improvements are:

- An hourly Ipswich to Peterborough Service
- Hourly services from Whittlesea and two hourly from Manea
- Half hourly services between Birmingham New Street and Stansted Airport including stopping at March
- Additional Norwich to Liverpool services stopping at March
- Understand the impact of increased passenger and freight services on the operation of level crossings to minimise the impact on local communities

In order to assist with the delivery of these priorities it will be necessary to work with and lobby the rail industry and Government. Our proposals in this area include:

- Developing a business case for the improved Ipswich to Peterborough service. This is to demonstrate that an improved frequency of service will be profitable.

- Engage with Department for Transport to influence the priorities for new rail franchises. The Coalition Government are currently reviewing rail franchises and are looking to set up new longer term contracts lasting for 15 years.
- Work with Network Rail and the Train Operating companies to assess the future impact of increased services on level crossings.

#### **4. Additional Projects covered by the strategy**

We have now added 4 additional projects to the strategy which are the electrification of the Peterborough to Ely line, direct services from Fenland to London, the Wisbech to March rail line and rail connections from Chatteris. During the public consultation you told us that you would like to see these included in the Fenland Rail Development Strategy and we agree that they are important and should be included.

#### **Implementing the Fenland Rail Development Strategy**

Now that the Fenland Rail Development strategy has been adopted the Transport and Access Group will be working towards delivering the projects. In order to provide you with details about the projects we are working on an action plan has been produced. The action plan is a separate document which can be found on Fenland District Council website and in the Fenland @ your service shops in the four market towns.

We will provide regular progress updates on the action plan on the website, in the shops and on posters at the railway stations in Manea, March and Whittlesea.

## **Foreword**

### **A Railway fit for the future**

The railway is an important asset for the growth of Fenland and to help improve accessibility for local people, businesses and tourists. We need to ensure that the potential of such facilities is maximised both now and in the future.

The Fenland rail stations are located between Peterborough and Ely, on a line which services two long distance services and a local service between Peterborough and Ipswich. The services which travel across England include locations such as Stansted Airport, Birmingham New Street, Liverpool Lime Street and Norwich. Along with short journey times to Peterborough this rail line makes most of England, Scotland and Wales easily accessible by train. Locally however, we recognise that more can be done to make rail travel easier and to ensure that appropriate facilities are available at stations.

We are aware that rail customers and local residents want to have more of a say on rail issues. You also want to see improvements that meet your priorities. Some people want to take a more active role and volunteer to help deliver projects. We want to ensure that everyone who wishes to do so can have a role in future.

The Fenland Transport and Access Group have produced this Getting on Track Rail Development Strategy to explain how we intend to develop your local railway over the next 20 years. During 2011 we asked for your views and comments on a draft of this strategy and we have now taken account of these views in this final strategy.

The delivery of the projects listed in this document are aimed at improving our train stations, improving rail services and ensuring that local people can have more involvement. The publication of this document is an important step forward and signals our intention to take an active role in the development of our railways over the next 20 years.

We look forward to working with you and to securing a railway that is fit for the future.

Councillor Kit Owen  
Fenland Transport & Access Group Chairman  
Fenland District Council Portfolio Holder for Growth and Transport

## Glossary

ACORP	Association of Community Rail Partnerships
ATOC	Association of Train operating Companies
CCC	Cambridgeshire County Council
CRP	Community Rail Partnership
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DfT	Department for Transport
FDC	Fenland District Council
FSP	Fenland Strategic Partnership
LDF	Local Development Framework
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LTP	Local Transport Plan
NXEA	National Express East Anglia
ORR	Office of Rail Regulation
PENRUG	Peterborough – Ely – Norwich Rail Users Group
RUS	Route Utilisation Strategy
SIP	Stations Investment Plan
TAG	Transport and Access Group
TOC	Train Operating Company



## **1. Introduction**

This document sets out a plan and strategy for rail development in Fenland from 2011 - 2031. It includes plans for local station management and maintenance and rail services. It will also seek to establish a Community Rail Partnership to give local people more of a voice in the development of the railways. The Fenland Strategic Partnership Transport & Access Group will manage and champion the development of this strategy.

In recent years a considerable amount of work has been undertaken in Fenland to develop the rail stations and make real improvements for customers and local residents. This strategy is about recognising these achievements and the people who have helped to make them possible. It is also about how we take rail development work forward in the future and deliver even more than at present. With the help of everyone working in partnership it is hoped that this strategy will ensure the Fenland area has a solid foundation for rail development.

Achievements to date:

- Significant levels of partnership working between the local community, the local authorities and the 3 train operating companies and Network Rail
- Clearance of the disused platform at March Station. This was a partnership project between Network Rail, National Express East Anglia, Fenland District Council, local residents and the probation service. It has proved to be a catalyst for other projects to come forward
- The Friends of March Station Group was established in 2009
- Station Adopters have come forward for March and Whittlesey through National Express East Anglia (NXEA) Station Adopters Scheme.
- Station Audits of the 3 railway stations during 2010
- Improvements at March and Manea stations including planters, gardening, signing and information

To have delivered all of the above in around 4 years is a tremendous achievement and it is hoped that this type of work will continue. However there are still many issues to resolve and this strategy aims to set out some new ideas so that more can be delivered in future.

In the autumn of 2011 we consulted the public about the plans and priorities that we believe should be in this strategy. We had an excellent response to the consultation and were given a clear view from the public that you agree with the plans and priorities. This adopted rail development strategy document reflects the public consultation comments.

This document has 4 main sections which are:

- Rail Development Strategy
- Rail Service Improvements
- Stations Investment Plan
- Community Rail Partnership

## **2 Fenland Rail Strategy**

This Rail Development Strategy consists of:

- Background and context
- Policy Development
- Principles of the strategy

### **A, Background and Local Context**

#### 2.1 About Fenland

Fenland District covers some 54,645 hectares of mostly agricultural land in Cambridgeshire. There is an estimated population of 93,300 (2009 Cambridgeshire County Council) with around three quarters of the population living in the market towns of Chatteris, March, Whittlesey and Wisbech. The northern part of the district borders with the Counties of Lincolnshire and Norfolk.

The district is predominantly rural with services and facilities mostly found within the market towns or within neighbouring districts. These factors increase the need for travel, and they place an important emphasis on the ability to access services and facilities on the door step.

20% of Fenland residents do not own a car and 19% of residents are of retirement age which is higher than the national average. Travel by public transport is therefore important for ensuring that our residents can meet their daily needs.

#### 2.2 Why do a Rail Development Strategy?

This section aims to provide information as to why a rail development strategy for Fenland is important. It will also demonstrate areas where a strategy can assist with developing policy for Fenland.

##### Transport & Accessibility

The Transport Issues in Fenland Evidence Base Report (2009) demonstrates that:

- Around 20,000 people live in villages or more sparsely populated rural areas
- The highest levels of traffic growth in Cambridgeshire in recent years are on roads in the Fenland Area including A1101, A141 and A142.
- The average distance travelled to work from Fenland is 16.01km or 9.94 miles
- There are difficulties accessing services and facilities such as supermarkets, post offices and leisure centres by public transport from the following wards - Manea, Parson Drove and Wisbech St Mary, Roman Bank and Elm and Christchurch.

FDC are working with key partners to:

- Ensure that new development is located close to services, facilities and good transport links
- Improve the existing transport network through the production and implementation of Market Town Transport Strategies
- Offering travel concessions for dial a ride services and senior rail cards.
- Improve travel for the elderly and more vulnerable residents through the extension of community transport services including dial a ride and volunteer car schemes across Fenland and to key service centres
- Encourage use of the rail network specifically in terms of the short journey times to a range of destinations locally such as Ely, Cambridge and Peterborough.

### Community Development

- Fenland is within the London – Stansted – Peterborough Growth Area. Between 2001 and 2021 a minimum of 11,000 new homes are expected to be built. A large number of new people will be moving into the area within the next few years creating an increasing demand for service, facilities and transport. It is essential that these new people are offered a choice about how they travel.
- Street Pride is a scheme designed to build pride within the community to prevent anti social behaviour such as littering and graffiti through the organisation of litter picking days. These days are held in community locations such as parks, woods and cemeteries. The March Street Pride Group worked at March Railway Station during 2009. The whole scheme is very popular with 728 hours being donated from 164 volunteers across Fenland in 2007/08 alone. This scheme is continuing to expand with new Street Pride Groups and Friends of Groups being established. (FDC Corporate Plan 2012 – 2015)
- A Youth District Council was formed in Fenland in 2006 to give young people a voice within the District and to introduce young people to the concept of local democracy. Transport and access for Children and Young People is a critical issue, particularly because we have very limited or no bus services in the evenings or at weekends except for Saturday in the daytime. The Fenland Youth Bus is a pilot project being developed to try and improve access for children and young people.
- The key element of FDC community development work is the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy with key partners. This is undertaken within the umbrella of the Fenland Strategic Partnership (FSP). Further details about the FSP can be found later in this document. Transport and Access however forms a key part of the Strategy.

### Business, Tourism & Economic Development

FDC Economic Development Vision and Strategy Framework 2007 – 2027:

- Nearly 40% of Fenland's working population commute out of the district for work.

- Existing Fenland Businesses need space to expand, and new businesses moving into the District or new business enterprises need suitable sites or premises to operate from.
- Manufacturing provides 20% of the jobs in the district compared to 11.5% for the East of England Region. This is typically from the food industry and creates significant requirements for transporting goods, primarily by road.
- In retailing, Fenland has to compete with surrounding areas such as Cambridge, Kings Lynn and Peterborough.

Economic Impact of Tourism Fenland District Council 2007 report states that:

- The total number of trips (day and staying) is 2,083,500 per year
- The total visitor spend for 2007 was £109,747,500
- Tourism related employment in Fenland is currently relatively low at around 5%

All of the above create opportunities and increase the need for travel whether it is for employment, business, and tourism or private purposes. Good transport links by a range of modes are essential along with new policies and procedures to reduce the need to travel for certain journeys. It is envisaged that the rail network and its services can play a greater role than at present in transport for employment and business.

FDC is looking to:

- increase the number of visitors to Fenland
- Increase the % of people employed within the tourism industry within Fenland
- Ensure that visitors travel to Fenland by sustainable modes of transport where possible. Travel by train is an important option as it allows people to come to the area from considerable distances without a car.
- Increase opportunities for new businesses to establish in Fenland including developing a more diverse range of businesses than are available at present.

### Housing and Growth

The population of Fenland is rising fast, between 2001 and 2009 it grew by 11.5% making it the second fastest growing district in Cambridgeshire. This is growth of 2.7% above the total average for Cambridgeshire as a whole. The number of dwellings (houses, flats etc) has also significantly increased in recent years from 32,400 in 1991 to 42,100 in 2009. This is an increase of 14.4%. Housing in Fenland also remains low in price making it more affordable compared with other parts of the county. On average housing prices in Fenland remain approximately £42,000 lower than in the neighbouring district of East Cambridgeshire. In 2009 there were about 31,800 jobs within Fenland.

Fenland District Council is currently preparing its Local Development Framework that will set out levels of future development for the period 2011 to 2031. The final Core Strategy document is expected to be adopted at the

end of 2012. Based on the Core Strategy Preferred Options from July 2011 it is expected that levels of housing growth will increase between 11,000 and 16,000 new homes. It is also expected that the LDF will release another 125 hectares of employment land, seeking jobs in all sectors including industrial, office and warehousing along with retail development.

This increase in levels of housing and employment will increase the need for travel. Public transport must be at the heart of ensuring that journeys can be made in a sustainable manner. Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy is aimed at facilitating the creation of a sustainable transport network in Fenland. This is aimed at ensuring development and transport planning can be coordinated to improve accessibility. There are strong links between this Rail Development Strategy and the Local Development Framework.

### 2.3 Fenland Railways - Route Description and Rail Services

Fenland District has 3 stations at Whittlesea, March and Manea. They are part of a route serving three long distance rail services. The stations therefore offer enhanced accessibility to a large range of stations across England without the need to change trains. Alternatively they are a short journey from Peterborough which offers access to the East Coast Mainline including London and destinations in Scotland. The line is as follows:

Peterborough  
Whittlesea  
March  
Manea  
Ely

The very limited services from Manea and limited from Whittlesea act as a barrier to people accessing rail within Fenland. It is expected that any CRP will seek to work with the rail industry to try and address the issue of services. However, it is recognised that Station improvements can also act as a catalyst for improved use with people taking pride in their local environment.

There are three rail services operating the line, although each service does not stop at every station. Greater Anglia, also known as Abellio are the operator of the stations in Fenland. The services are as follows:

Table 1 – Fenland Rail Services

<b>Service</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Stopping</b>
Birmingham New Street – Stansted Airport	Cross Country Trains	March & Manea
Liverpool - Norwich	East Midlands Trains	March
Peterborough to	Greater Anglia	Whittlesea & March

Ipswich		
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Table 2 – Stopping Pattern at Fenland Stations

Service	Stations	Stopping Pattern
Birmingham New Street – Stansted Airport	March Station	About hourly through the day into the evening
	Manea Station	2 trains each way per day (M – S)
Liverpool – Norwich	March Station	3 – 4 trains each way per day.
Peterborough - Ipswich	Whittlesea Station*	2 hourly service throughout the day
	March Station	2 hourly service throughout the day

\*There are also a small number of additional services stopping at Whittlesey Station. These services provide key journeys and make connections for commuters etc.

## **B. Policy Development**

It is important that a Rail Development strategy is not developed in isolation. Links must be made to wider plans and strategies in order to maximise value and potential.

Here is a list of some of the key local plans and strategies which will link to Rail Development:

Plan or Strategy	Relationship to Rail Development Strategy
Localism Bill	Ensuring people can travel and access local places, links with new development and meet the aspirations of local people
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	Seeking to achieve economic growth including improvements to transport infrastructure.
Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan	Sets out policies and proposals for all forms of transport including rail from 2011 – 2026. Rail and the Fenland area aspirations for a Community Rail Partnership also form part of the LTP.
Cambridgeshire Accessibility Strategy	This provides an evidence base to show the communities that are the least accessible by public transport. It aims to develop proposals to improve accessibility.
Cambridgeshire Green	Aims to develop a strategic network of walking

Infrastructure Strategy	and cycling routes. These routes will be multi-purpose and they aim to link with other forms of transport including access to stations.
Cambridgeshire Climate Change Strategy	This sets out proposals to reduce vehicles emissions and to encourage people to use public transport.
Cambridgeshire Rural Strategy (Cambridgeshire ACRE)	This rural strategy acknowledges accessibility and rural access issues including the importance of public transport. It also recognises the importance of improvements to public transport.
Fenland Economic Development Strategy	See section 2.2 above
Fenland Culture and Tourism Strategy	See section 2.2 above
Fenland Sustainable Community Strategy	The Fenland Sustainable Community Strategy includes a Transport & Access Group that has a cross cutting role to help deliver the work of the strategic themes. The strategic themes include health and social well-being, children and young people and environment. Each theme has a strong transport focus. The Transport & Access Group is helping to establish the Community Rail Partnership as well as working on projects for young people, a project with the health service and developing integrated transport hubs.
Fenland Community Cohesion Strategy	Community cohesion covers many issues but it is about encouraging people to participate and providing people with opportunities. Transport is essential for accessing the opportunities and has the benefit of being able to improve people's lives through the taking part in an activity.
Fenland Local Development Framework (LDF)	See section 2.2 above
Fenland Street Pride Programme	The purpose of the Street Pride project is to build community pride and ownership through improving the local environment. Please see example 2 below.
Building Schools for the Future	The level of education attainment in Fenland is lower than other Cambridgeshire Districts and there are high levels of young people not in education or employment. Transport is a barrier for young people accessing education or employment. Thomas Clarkson School in

	<p>Wisbech &amp; Neale Wade in March are in receipt of Building Schools of the Future monies and are in the process of developing new facilities. Access to these sites will improve access to education within Fenland and increase the chances of young people.</p>
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In addition to the above local plans and strategies there are also a range of published rail strategies focusing on both local and national issues that are important for the Fenland Rail Development Strategy. The table below sets out the key documents that relate to Fenland:

<b>Plan or Strategy</b>	<b>Relationship to Rail Development Strategy</b>
<p>Great Anglia Route Utilisation Strategy</p>	<p>Route Utilisation Strategies (RUS) are undertaken by Network Rail. They focus on longer term planning and the management of railways both in terms of infrastructure and services including freight. They assess the existing situation, highlight issues for further consideration and propose a range of solutions before testing ideas and producing a final strategy. The Great Anglia RUS includes plans for the Ely to Peterborough, along with Freight issues such as Felixstowe to Nuneaton. Timetable changes including the Peterborough to Ipswich Service.</p>
<p>East Coast Mainline Route Utilisation Strategy</p>	<p>The East Coast RUS includes interchange with services at Peterborough, freight issues including Felixstowe to Nuneaton, service patterns and network flexibility. Constraints of the network including power supply in Cambridgeshire. Station capacity issues at Peterborough.</p>
<p>East Midlands Route Utilisation Strategy</p>	<p>The East Midlands RUS includes the relationship between East Midlands services and Cross County in Cambridgeshire, freight issues including Felixstowe to Nuneaton, overcrowding issues on services at key locations such as Ely, Stansted Airport and Cambridge. Freight capacity and regional interchange. Discussion about March – Spalding Line on the longer term.</p>

Below are two detailed examples of linkages between the rail development and other plans and strategies. These examples are to demonstrate in more detail how rail development can be effective in a number of areas.



### Example 1 – Tackling Climate Change

Tackling Climate Change in Cambridgeshire is a Cambridgeshire County Council 2005 strategy that is concerned with reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport both internally and through transport planning.

Fenland District Council Climate Change Strategy Framework 2007 seeks to ensure a planning framework and new Local Development Framework (LDF) aimed at reducing carbon emissions. Policies seeking to ensure sustainable development through the delivery of a settlement hierarchy are essential to this approach. Development in terms of houses and jobs will be concentrated towards the towns and also the main service centres. Transport is a key component of this strategy with the towns and service centres having a much greater choice of transport.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Cambridgeshire: Phase 2 October 2008 shows that 20% of people do not have access to a car.

Both Local authorities are already working on programmes of improvement for walking, cycling and public transport including Market Town Transport Strategies, new community transport schemes and improvements to bus services. We want to continue this approach to actively deliver on climate change strategies but also improve our work with the rail industry and encourage more passengers on trains.

### Example 2 – Improving the local environment & Building Communities

Cambridgeshire County Council Climate Change Strategy Action Plan 2008 includes priorities to change behaviors in terms of waste and recycling and improving an individual's awareness of their environment. Increased use of public transport is another key priority. Improving your environment needs to include public transport in terms of vehicles and other infrastructure.

FDC has a number of corporate objectives one of which has the title Streets Ahead. This priority is concerned with the environment including waste, recycling, transport, open space and parks and gardens. An initiative known as Street Pride forms a key component of delivering on this priority.

FDC Street Pride gives volunteers the opportunity to make a difference to their local environment by holding clean up events, planting bulbs, making the parks and open spaces more attractive by maintaining areas and reporting environmental crimes, such as illegally dumped rubbish, graffiti and abandoned vehicles. The intention behind Street Pride is to build community pride and ownership through improving the local environment and making Fenland a cleaner, greener and safer place to live, work and visit.

March Street Pride Group and National Express East Anglia worked in partnership with a range of organisations to clear a disused platform at March Railway Station during 2009. Funding was also found for planters and floral displays on the platforms. This has led to the formation of the Friends of March Station Group involving the local community and Fenland District Council staff. Consideration is currently being given to Street Pride Groups working at Manea and Whittlesey Stations.

It is envisaged that work of this nature will not only support wider plans and strategies but will form an essential part of providing a community emphasis for rail development. This strategy is not just about the trains and the services but also about the stations and the links to their wider environment particularly access routes.

### **C. Principles of the Rail Development Strategy**

Sections 2A and 2B above have shown that local railways can assist with delivery of ambitions and priorities locally as well as increasing use of rail services. This view is also supported by national research from June 2008 commissioned by Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACORP). The Value of Community Rail Partnerships report considered the economic benefits of the approach. A quote from the report is as follows:

*“We have undertaken detailed analysis of use of all stations in England and Wales (excluding London) between 2002/03 and 2005/06. By looking at growth on lines against the local and regional trend, we conclude that active and effective Community Rail Partnerships should reasonably expect to increase footfall and fares by an additional 7% over 3 years”*

This national research also shows how a CRP can assist with economic growth and regeneration that are also important local priorities. References are made in the report to:

- How a CRP can improve access to education and training citing examples from the Bittern line and the Tamar Line where high levels of people use the train for accessing college or work. A CRP can help to support this and the customers through items such as innovative ticketing schemes and interchange facilities for onward journeys.
- Regeneration and new opportunities through tourism and the role of the CRP in helping to generate tourism income. Market research in the South West of England has shown that around 10% of holiday makers look to use buses or trains as more sustainable modes of transport. This is therefore an important target market for the CRP.
- The development of a transport and economic appraisal model demonstrating the economic benefits of a CRP. The model has been developed to ensure that it is consistent with the Department for Transport

Appraisal system with examples showing a rate of return in excess of 4:1. This means that the scheme is classed as high value for money.

Fenland local priorities as discussed above include:

- Accessibility – helping those without access to a car get around more easily. This includes changes to planning and transport policy to ensure people without a car are not disadvantaged. We would also like to see a reduction in car use where there are opportunities to travel by more sustainable modes, greater use of our rail services is an important priority.
- Achieving community priorities – Developing parish plans to reflect needs of local communities, Fenland Youth District Council working to deliver improvements for Young People. The Street Pride initiative where local residents work on environmental improvements.
- Business/Economic Growth – Business travel, company relocation and tourism. Access to education for improving skills and culture.
- Housing Growth & Planning Policy – ensuring travel options are available for those who currently live in Fenland, or those who move into the area. Ensuring that new development is planned in sustainable locations where people can access local services and facilities.

The delivery of a local sustainable railway has the best chance of moving forward if those delivering local priorities and the rail industry can work together in areas of common ground.

There are 3 areas where the ambitions above can be met and where the rail industry can work with local providers. This strategy therefore has 3 priorities which are:

1. More Community Involvement
2. Better Stations
3. Rail Service Improvements

Why chose these priorities for the Fenland Rail Development Strategy?

The reasons for these priorities are as follows:

More community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The railways are a significant part of the transport infrastructure locally. They provide an easy opportunity for people to travel long distances</li> <li>• There is already a core group of people using the railways locally which we can build upon</li> <li>• Word of mouth or recommendations is one of the best ways to encourage further use</li> <li>• Community Involvement generates local pride in the station and its presentation, which contributes to the ‘better stations’ priority.</li> </ul>
Better Stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The station is the gateway to the rail network</li> <li>• People want to feel ‘safe’ waiting at the station</li> <li>• Residents don’t want their area to be seen negatively</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rail users have requirements whilst waiting at stations such as refreshments, toilets, seating areas etc...</li> </ul>
Rail service improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some Fenland Stations have limited services. This reduces their use as people cannot make journeys so easily</li> <li>• Cambridgeshire County Council and Fenland District Council want to see more people using the services</li> <li>• Travel by train reduces your carbon footprint when compared with using the car</li> <li>• The Fenland area has some unique selling points for rail travel. Most destinations in England are only one change of train away or they are direct across the Country e.g. Birmingham.</li> </ul>

Public Consultation Response on the Rail Development Strategy Priorities

As part of the 2011 public consultation exercise on the draft Rail Development Strategy, the public were asked to indicate whether they supported the three local priorities. 97% of the people who responded to the consultation stated yes to the question, do you agree with our local priorities for rail.

An introduction to the Delivery of the Rail Development Strategy priorities

In order to deliver on these 3 priorities it is proposed there are a number of task/work areas which could come forward, these are:

Better Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on the successful work that is being completed by the station adopters, Manea Station Action Group and The Friends of March Station</li> <li>• Establish formal adoption groups at the other Fenland Stations</li> <li>• Regular meetings between the Community and the rail operators</li> <li>• Develop realistic opportunities for local people, organisations, stakeholders etc to be more involved in rail issues</li> <li>• Establish a Community Rail Partnership (Please see section 3 of this report) – this will encompass all of the above.</li> </ul>
Better Stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rail station audit work (see appendix one). It is expected that this will be updated and reviewed during the life of the strategy</li> <li>• Implementation and delivery of the Stations Investment</li> </ul>

	Plan (please see section 4 of this report) – this sets out a programme of improvements with costs and delivery mechanisms. It is also an important tool that allows S106 Planning commitments to be captured and used in a beneficial way.
Rail Service Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic planning &amp; business case work. This will provide supporting evidence to show the benefit of extra services. This work will be led by the Local Authorities</li> <li>• Working with Department for Transport and the rail industry to influence rail planning documents and franchise specifications.</li> </ul>

The above priorities and principles set out a strategic and comprehensive approach to considering rail issues within Fenland. It is possible to deliver each of the work areas in isolation and at different times. However, a combined approach should ensure that the maximum benefits are accrued. Each individual action has the potential to assist with improvements in the other work streams. The following chapters of this document will set out the suggested approach for each of the strategy priorities in more detail.

### **3. More Community Involvement - Community Rail Partnership (CRP)**

#### **3.1 What is a CRP?**

Community Rail Partnerships bring together the local community, local organisations and interested parties to help develop their local railway in a manner that is tailored to suit its specific requirements and priorities.

These projects provide a community based approach and voice to help deliver improvements along a rail corridor. These improvements will be many and varied depending on each area but typically can include station adoption, improvements to railway stations such as decoration, car parking, improved connection times for services and increased patronage on rail lines that have low patronage. The objectives depend on local circumstances

According to the Department for Transport (DfT) website, in December 2009 there are 27 designated Community Rail Routes, which are a combination of rail line designations or services. Examples of these within the East Anglia area are the Wherry Line between Norwich and Great Yarmouth and the Bittern Line between Norwich and Sheringham.

Community Rail Partnerships and the work of these partnerships are seen as one element of delivering successful rural railway services. In many cases the introduction of a CRP has made a significant contribution in ensuring the continuation of rail services for an area. These services may have been lost without a CRP.

#### **3.2 Why establish a Community Rail Partnership?**

A CRP is a means to establishing greater community involvement in the development of a railway and its stations. From the perspective of Fenland District this presents the following opportunities:

- to build on recent successes such as the Station adopters, station adoption groups such as the Friends of March Station and the Street Pride work
- to engage local people in the development of the railway stations in Fenland
- To promote existing rail travel and encourage greater use of the services available. This should ensure the future sustainability of these services.
- To engage with operators about rail services and the development of the services in future
- To provide a greater local voice on rail development issues. Many organisations collectively making the same comments can have a greater impact than one organisation on its own. This also gives a clear steer to the rail industry about local priorities.

### Example – Peterborough, Ely, Norwich Rail Users Group

Peterborough, Ely, Norwich Rail Users Group (PENRUG) has a vision and mission statement. This CRP will help PENRUG to deliver on their objectives, which are listed below:

Help us to work constructively with opinion-formers, official bodies and the rail industry to deliver our vision of:

- reliable, clean and comfortable trains with high levels of customer service.
- accurate real time information for passengers at all times
- welcoming stations, where facilities meet or exceed all government targets for their size, approached by attractive, secure cycling, walking and wheelchair routes.
- fares, parking and management structures to develop our services.
- full hourly service seven days a week between Birmingham and Stansted Airport, Cambridge and Norwich, Liverpool and Norwich.

### 3.3 CRP Vision and Objectives

The proposed objectives of this CRP are:

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Commentary</u>
More rail users	Increasing the use of rail services between Peterborough and Ely, including the destinations in between. Encouraging longer journeys by train that start and finish at the destinations within the CRP. We also want to see an increase in the number of rail users as a way of reducing car use and carbon emissions.
Community Involvement & ownership	Greater community involvement in the railway as volunteers, users and promoters.
Stations - Cleaner and more inviting	Ensuring that the stations are attractive and inviting.
Stations – facilities and Services	Ensuring that they have services and facilities of a high standard.
Interchange – all modes of transport	We want to see an enhanced journey experience through bus and rail integration but also interchange with cars, walking and cycling.
Influence DfT Policy	As an area we want to be a bigger player to help influence decisions. We want to respond to consultations and also to be consulted by the rail industry. We would like to see an hourly Ipswich to Peterborough rail service combining an hourly service from Whittlesey and two hourly from Manea.

TOC involvement in the community	We would like to work better and more closely with the rail industry. We hope that developing a CRP or other rail related projects will ensure that there are meetings between the community and rail operators/Network Rail. Local people want to have a voice with the rail industry.
Publicity and awareness	Ensuring the community as well as the industry is involved in promotion and publicity of services. This could include issues such as things to do and places to go by train. Promotion of leisure and tourism activities that you travel to by train.

These objectives will then be taken forward to develop a range of proposals and actions for the short, medium and long term. Some of the actions have already been started, it is expected that the remaining items will come forward once the CRP has been launched.

### 3.4 Community Rail Partnerships - Example Projects

Here are some examples to demonstrate the value and importance of community rail partnerships.

- The Severnside CRP saw growth on services around Bristol and South Gloucestershire stations by around 30%. Between 2005 and 2010 the number of passengers on the Severn Beach line had more than doubled.
- New artwork and the restoration of the station gardens was achieved at Weston Milton
- A Station has been adopted at Weston Milton by two local primary schools
- Support to Yatton Station Group to help them achieve their station café
- New information leaflets aimed at encouraging families to travel by train to local attractions and also leaflets aimed at employees looking to commute into Bristol from nearby areas. The new local rail-bus service has also been promoted at Nailsea and Blackwell.
- Gobowen Station on the Chester to Shrewsbury Line has links with Darwen College that provides opportunities for young people with learning disabilities. Through this partnership the young people have been able to work on the station garden. This helps with developing social skills and learning to live independently.

#### Flora Displays & Station Gardens

Flora displays in the form of planters, hanging baskets and station gardens have become an important part of local community involvement in the railways. They not only enable volunteers to have a role in helping to improve the station entrance and platforms but they benefit rail customers whilst waiting for trains. Responses to the public consultation in 2011 stated that the public appreciate the floral displays and other work undertaken by the Friends of March Station.



Images – Floral Displays at March Railway Station



3.6 Public Consultation Results to the More Community Involvement Priority

As part of the 2011 public consultation exercise on the draft Rail Development Strategy, the public were invited to give their views on the More Community Involvement Priority which asked respondents whether they would like us to establish a Community Rail Partnership. The % of respondents who stated that they strongly agree or agree with the delivery of a CRP are listed below. The remaining respondents indicated neutral, disagree or strongly disagree.

Priority Area Name	% of respondents who Strongly agree or agree
Do you agree that there should be a Community Rail Partnership between Peterborough and Ely that will help to promote rail services and improve links with Fenland Communities?	96%

The consultation questionnaire also allowed respondents to provide information about the priority projects they would like to see come forward along with any additional comments people would like to make. We received many responses about local community involvement many of which were dependant on where people live.

<u>Place</u>	<u>Consultation Responses</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Manea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to promote the station and the rail service</li> <li>• The importance of volunteer work with Street Pride and the links between Street Pride and the Manea Station Action Group</li> <li>• School poster competition with the winning poster being displayed on the station</li> <li>• Encourage youth involvement in the railways</li> <li>• Links to Manea Carnival.</li> <li>• "Rail for Manea all day" promotion</li> </ul>	<p>All of the comments and suggestions listed in this table are good examples of what a CRP could achieve.</p> <p>Working in partnership with key stakeholders and the local community we will progress these projects through the CRP.</p>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community use of redundant buildings on the station</li> <li>• Encourage more station adopters</li> <li>• Recognising the importance role volunteers make regarding station security</li> <li>• Promotion of an improved rail service</li> </ul>	<p>The CRP will have a 12 month action plan for each year so that it is clear what will be delivered. We will ensure that the items listed in this table are included. It should however be noted that it will not be possible to deliver all the projects at once.</p>
Whittlesea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local people to promote rail services within the town</li> <li>• Marketing and leaflets needed that should be posted through peoples doors to promote the service</li> </ul>	

### 3.7 What are we trying to achieve?

It should be noted that the strategy will support the programme of the CRP, which is expected to contribute to the wider objectives of this strategy.

**By the end of this strategy in 2031 we aim to:**

- **Support the delivery of a fully functioning CRP**
- **Raise awareness amongst the community about the local rail groups and organisations that members of the public can get involved with**
- **Ensure there are station groups and station adopters for each station**
- **Ensure there are opportunities for any member of the local community to get involved in volunteering at their local station**
- **A year on year delivery plan for each station to be developed by the CRP**
- **Assistance with providing finance to support the work of the CRP**
- **To support and assist the CRP work programme**

### 3.8 Delivering a CRP

The management and programme of the CRP will come forward through its own group. The local community will be represented on this group. There will be a separate work programme and action plan that will develop in partnership with local stakeholders.

Information about this group along with its work programme, once it is developed will be made available on FDC website. The monitoring and reporting of the CRP will be included in any updates for this Fenland Rail Development Strategy.

## **4. Better Stations - Stations Investment Plan (SIP) & Access to Information**

### **4.1 Stations Investment Plan**

#### 4.1.1 What is a Stations Investment Plan?

This Stations Investment Plan (SIP) sets out a programme of improvement for rail stations and considers opportunities and ways to match available funding to deliver the improvements. This Plan can also act as a way of accessing additional funding to ensure identified improvements are made.

#### 4.1.2 Why are we developing a Stations Investment Plan?

Rail stations are an important part of any rail journey. If the station is poorly maintained and looks neglected it will not encourage people to use trains. The station and its associated infrastructure are an integral part of the rail service. Ensuring that the basic facilities that are important to customer needs are provided – for example information, shelter and personal security is an important first step that can be supplemented by community activity to improve the stations' appearance and atmosphere. It is a proven fact that these basic enhancements will help to ensure an increase in the use of local rail services.

A Stations Investment Plan is concerned with ensuring that all partners in support of the railway are fully aware of the investment needed at each station and can therefore work together on Jointly funded projects to deliver a range of priorities.

Improvements are needed at different stages. By setting out a clear plan for improvements over a number of years, project partners have the ability to plan funding and submit bids for new money. The Stations Investment Plan is also needed to enable partners to communicate clearly to customers about what work is required and when it is expected to be delivered.

A clear approach and project plan is a more realistic way of achieving value for money and ensuring that targeted improvements are made. By working together there is the potential to make improvements more easily and more quickly.

#### 4.1.3 Why does the Stations Investment Plan form part of the Fenland Rail Development Strategy?

The reason this Stations Investment Plan forms part of this Rail Development Strategy are as follows:

- The Stations Investment Plan helps to support community led planning of the railway.
- Station Improvements are one element of rail development
- Community and local investment in stations shows the rail industry that the local area is serious about rail development and their local environment

- Station Investment is an element of rail development planning that links with rail franchises and operators bidding for franchises.

#### 4.1.4 Fenland Rail Station Audits

The initial audit of stations required in order to assess the priorities for an investment plan has been undertaken by Fenland District Council and National Express East Anglia, using guidance established by the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) in its Station Travel Plans Programme.

Appendix one of this Rail Development Strategy includes the initial audit of all the Fenland Rail Stations that was undertaken during September 2010.

The audits have been put together under four key headings:

- General Station Information
- Access to the station
- Customer facilities at the station
- Other issues and opportunities.

Below is a table setting out the specific areas that have been considered.

#### Station Audit Categories

<b>Audit Category</b>	<b>Elements to be considered</b>
General station information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location of station</li> <li>• Layout of station</li> <li>• Site amenities</li> </ul>
Access to the Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car access, car parking &amp; pick up and drop off</li> <li>• Motorcycle parking</li> <li>• Bus services and bus stops</li> <li>• Pedestrian access</li> <li>• Cycle access and parking</li> <li>• Taxis</li> <li>• Signage for all users</li> <li>• DDA compliant routes to platforms</li> </ul>
Customer Facilities at the Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff</li> <li>• Ticket purchase</li> <li>• Ticket machine</li> <li>• Information on train and bus services</li> <li>• Waiting shelters and seats</li> <li>• Toilets</li> <li>• Help points</li> <li>• CCTV</li> <li>• Lighting</li> </ul>
Other issues and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All issues identified above for each station where there is something to be addressed. Please note that this will be different for each station.</li> </ul>

#### 4.1.5 Establishing Investment Opportunities at Fenland Stations

This Stations Investment Plan is hoping to achieve improvements for everyone. These types of improvements should ensure achievements to:

- Provide better value for rail customers and encourage use of rail services.
- assist the operators in delivering growth for the railway
- assist local authority targets to ensure people travel by sustainable transport.
- assists developers and land owners looking to deliver new homes and jobs to the area.
- ensure people living in properties next to or nearby the 3 rail stations in Fenland have a better local environment.

It is clear from the station audit work that there are many similarities between the 3 stations. In turn, there are a number of common themes that link to what we hope to achieve. These investment opportunities will also become an important part of developing a Community Rail Partnership, and will form part of this Stations Investment Plan. These themes are as follows:

1. Station Adoption, presentation and Community Involvement
2. Local Planning and Growth Issues
3. Parking - for cars, motorcycles and cycles
4. Bus service integration and improvements
5. Platforms – Extensions access and shelters
6. Information and signing package

Below are ideas for each theme of this Stations Investment Plan, setting out the types of projects to be funded, with indicative costs.

#### **Theme 1: Station Adoption, Presentation & Community Involvement**

*This theme is closely linked to the CRP and it will help to deliver its work programme.*

Scope	Improvements to the appearance of the station both on the approach and within the station itself. Types of improvements could be planters, painting, benches, and clearance of abandoned areas.
Process	Community/station adopters & groups/Street Pride group lead with support from the Train Operator and the District Council.
Prioritisation of Projects within the theme	Identification of the improvements that need to be made should be through the local community and will help to form part of the CRP work programme.
Indicative Costs	This will depend on the types of improvements that are needed. Suggested £10,000 per year through CRP. Bids for smaller amounts could then be made from this money for specific improvements at each station.

## Theme 2: Local Planning & Growth Issues

Scope	Significant growth of Fenland District which must be supported by infrastructure linked to the growth.
Process	FDC Planning to lead along with key stakeholders from the rail industry and the FSP Transport and Access Group.
Prioritisation of Projects within the theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assessment of key housing and employment development sites that may be located close to railway stations</li> <li>• Ensure that Rail and station investment forms part of a developer contributions policy</li> <li>• use of the final stations investment plan to act as a basis for financial contributions from developers</li> </ul>
Indicative Costs	No new funding required for this task. FDC staff time will facilitate this work.

## Theme 3: Parking – Cars, Motorcycles and Cycles

Scope	Formalisation of car parks including marking out bays along with lighting and possible CCTV for security, this also applies to motorcycle parking. Provide cycle parking and identify options for additional cycle parking
Process	FDC, CCC & Greater Anglia to lead on projects. Process will need to be tailored to suit individual projects.
Prioritisation of Projects within the theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short term – mark out bays at March Station</li> <li>• Short term – identify cycle parking standards for each station</li> <li>• Short term – identify options for new cycle parking at March</li> <li>• Medium Term – Cycle parking at Manea and Whittlesea stations</li> <li>• Medium Term – Provide additional cycle parking at March</li> <li>• Long Term – formalise the existing car park for Whittlesea station</li> <li>• Long Term – extend Whittlesey Station car park to accommodate proposals for a parkway station</li> <li>• Long Term – formalise a car park for Manea Station</li> </ul>
Indicative Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking bays at March £5,000</li> <li>• Cycle parking at Manea, Whittlesea &amp; March £10,000</li> <li>• Improvements to Whittlesea Car Park £50,000</li> <li>• Extension to Whittlesea car park £300,000</li> <li>• Manea Car Park £20,000</li> </ul>

#### Theme 4: Bus service Integration and Improvements

Scope	To work with the bus operators and community transport providers to seek improved integration between bus and rail services to and from the Fenland Rail Stations. Associated costs such as marketing and new infrastructure should also be part of the scope for this theme.
Process	CCC Passenger Transport to lead with support from FSP Transport and Access Group and the Parish Planning process. An individual proposal is needed for each of the Fenland stations.
Prioritisation of Projects within the theme	All tasks below should be deliverable in the short – medium term however they will need to be kept under review. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping and feasibility study to undertake an assessment of public transport timetables to compare services and their links with rail services, identify opportunities for improvement</li> <li>• Discussions with bus operators about identified priorities for integration and possible opportunities</li> <li>• Promotion and marketing of integrated services</li> <li>• New infrastructure such as flags, poles and shelters may be needed to service bus stops.</li> </ul>
Indicative Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping &amp; Feasibility work to be undertaken by Transport &amp; Access Group. No cost</li> <li>• Discussions with operators include staff time, this will come from existing budgets</li> <li>• Promotion and marketing £1000. This includes design and print and repeat marketing on at least one occasion.</li> <li>• Infrastructure – £10,000 for location for a rural interchange including bus shelter, cycle parking, flag, information board. Infrastructure for larger schemes will need to be costed individually.</li> </ul>

#### Theme 5: Platforms – Extensions, Access and Shelters

Scope	Platform extensions as Manea and Whittlesey to accommodate 3 car trains at those stations. Access routes and ramps need to be DDA compliant.
Process	FDC and CCC to lead with the Rail Operators and Network Rail
Prioritisation of Projects within the theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short Term – Assess and develop access routes for walkers and cyclists</li> <li>• Short Term - Discussions with the Highway Authority regarding accessing and signing to the station</li> </ul>



Indicative Costs	£500,000. Further discussions will be needed about costs and requirements for this work with Network Rail.
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## Theme 6: Information and Signing Package

Scope	Promote the use of rail stations and services throughout Fenland. Improve the signing to the station and the information available at the station. Undertake wider promotion of rail services and facilities in all Fenland towns and villages. This should be developed through a local brand to identify that this part of the CRP.
Process	Partnership working between TOC, Station Friends Group and the Transport and Access Group to identify and deliver priorities.
Prioritisation of Projects within the theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short Term - Development of CRP branding</li> <li>• Short Term – work with TOC to improve the use of existing customer information boards. This is being done successfully at March Station</li> <li>• Medium Term – development of improved signs from the town centre to the railway station, linked to station access work.</li> <li>• Medium/Long Term – Real Time Information at Manea and Whittlesea</li> </ul>
Indicative Costs	Leaflets £200 Posters £200 Highway Signs £1,500 Wider promotion and advertising £500 Real Time Information £

### 4.1.6 Public Consultation Results for the Stations Investment Plan

As part of the 2011 public consultation exercise on the draft Rail Development Strategy, the public were invited to give their views on the Better Stations Priority which includes the Stations Investment Plan priorities.

The public were asked to give a view on each of the main topics for this priority. The % of respondents who stated that they strongly agree or agree with the project are listed below. The remaining respondents indicated neutral, disagree or strongly disagree.

Priority Area Name	% of respondents who Strongly agree or agree
Improve customer information at stations	90%

Improve access to the station	84%
Improve customer facilities at stations	94%

The consultation questionnaire also allowed respondents to provide information about the priority projects they would like to see come forward along with any additional comments people would like to make. The second largest number of comments that we received in response to these questions were about improvements to rail stations.

<u>Name of Priority</u>	<u>Tasks for each station</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Improve Customer Information at Stations	<p><u>Manea</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the information available including timetables and wider public information at the station and in the village</li> </ul> <p><u>March</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve customer information about train delays</li> </ul> <p><u>Whittlesey</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train information should be displayed in the Market Square</li> <li>• Better information for local residents about services at Whittlesea Station</li> </ul>	<p>This rail development strategy includes a SIP in order to enable us to maximise the potential for funding local projects at railway stations.</p> <p>The strategy is committed to the delivery of the projects for each station that form part of this strategy. Some projects will be delivered through the support of the Community Rail Partnership.</p>
Improve Access to the Station	<p><u>Manea</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop integration with the bus service</li> <li>• Improve access to the station for people living in other villages</li> </ul> <p><u>March</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the lighting in the car park</li> <li>• Improve the bus service links</li> </ul> <p><u>Whittlesea</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address Kings Dyke Level Crossing</li> <li>• A bridge over the road and railway to access the Peterborough platform</li> <li>• Bus service from the town centre</li> <li>• Improve signage to the station</li> </ul>	<p>Improving customer information at stations will form part of this strategies approach to improving information about rail in general.</p>

	for all users	
Improve customer facilities at stations	<p><u>Manea</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve car and cycle parking</li> <li>• Improve the safety fencing</li> <li>• Provide a ticket machine</li> </ul> <p><u>March</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make use of the redundant buildings</li> <li>• Ensure the station is always clean and tidy including the toilets</li> <li>• Improve the heating in the waiting room and ensure the waiting room is open for longer</li> <li>• Can we have more seats on the platform</li> <li>• Provide more cycle parking</li> <li>• Provide more secure cycle parking</li> <li>• CCTV &amp; station security</li> <li>• Improve the car park</li> </ul> <p><u>Whittlesea</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the shelters and seating on the station</li> <li>• Improve the lighting on the station and at the car park</li> </ul>	

#### 4.1.7 Funding for Stations Investment Plan Projects

In order to deliver improvements, funding will be needed and in some cases considerable funds will be required. Obtaining funding can be difficult but it is hoped that by developing a Stations Investment Plan, shared priorities on work area and projects will generate opportunities for investment. Organisations want to fund projects that will deliver the greatest value and also which represent local priorities.

There are many potential opportunities for funding from different sources, undertaking research to find funding is important. Possible opportunities include:

- Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan
- District Council – community development funds or project funds
- Rail Industry – Rail Operators and Network Rail
- Bus Operators in respect of interchange opportunities
- Developer Contributions linked to planning applications

- In kind support – working with volunteers and community groups to deliver improvements
- Funding Bids – there are often opportunities to bid for money from one off funds or competitions at local and national level. Examples of this include the Department for Transport - Local Sustainable Transport Fund.
- Community Rail Partnership – the partnership will have funds for its ongoing work programme and for the community and volunteers to make improvements

It is important to note that if a range of organisations are working together everyone will achieve greater value for money. Combining funding from a number of organisations could help to deliver an improvement that could not be made by an individual organisation on its own. Opportunities to work in partnership and combine funding should be considered.

#### 4.1.8 Delivering and Reviewing the SIP

The delivery and management of the SIP will be through the Transport and Access Group in partnership with local stakeholders and the Rail Industry. Fenland District Council is the local planning authority and through this role will work with agents and developers to secure funding from developments to help deliver projects in this stations investment plan

Information about the SIP and its delivery will be made available on FDC website. The monitoring and reporting of the SIP will be included in any updates for this Fenland Rail Development Strategy.

A full review of the SIP will take place every 5 years including the production on updated SIP document. The amended document will be added to this strategy.

## **4.2 Access to Information**

### 4.2.1 Why include Access to Information?

The Stations Investment Plan includes a theme for improving access to customer information at stations. 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that improved customer information was important. Wider comments that we received as part of the 2011 public consultation exercise, suggest that many respondents see access to information is a high priority and that more attention should be given to the information that is provided about rail services in general.

Due to the high priority that local residents have given to this matter additional information is provided here about the approach of the strategy to the provision of information and the consultation responses.

## 4.2.2 Access to Information Strategy

Information can be provided in many forms, it is concluded that the Fenland Rail Development Strategy include the SIP and CRP should have an access to information strategy. This is based on responses from the public to the consultation.

The train operating companies have their own processes and procedures for providing information to customers and this is undertaken in a variety of ways. There is a need for the CRP and other stakeholders locally to work with the operators to address the concerns raised by the public in the consultation.

The information strategy is as follows:

### Information about rail services

Information about rail services should be clearly available in a wide range of formats. This should include posters, flyers, timetables, mobile phones and internet access. Delivery approaches will include:

- The availability of timetables across Fenland and in a range of venues not just at rail stations
- Clear and simple timetable information
- Development and implementation of an electronic rail information strategy
- Consistency of information about services at stations including links with bus and community transport services

### Information at stations

A range of information should be available at stations and it should be consistent across all 3 stations. Delivery approaches include:

- Awareness raising amongst the local community about existing rail facilities and stations
- Ensure that timetable and other key information is prominently displayed and that the public are aware of this information
- Develop a clear strategy for informing customers of delays and problems  
Ensure that this strategy is effectively communicated to the public
- Promotion and publicity of the help points on railway stations
- Development of real time information at Whittlesey and Manea

### Signing

Clear signing is needed to enable people to get to the railway station and to access the facilities at the station. Delivery approaches include:

- Develop a signing strategy for access to each Fenland Railway station
- Improve the signing at all Fenland Railway stations

### Promotion and Publicity

Promotion and publicity is needed to ensure that local residents, tourists and businesses are aware of what information is available about rail services and stations and where it can be found. Information provision should go beyond the station and its immediate vicinity. Delivery approaches include:

- Promote existing sources of information on rail services, stations and signing
- Develop a promotion and publicity plan in conjunction with the CRP & train operating companies
- Work with the train operating companies to harness the use of new technologies for providing information about services and stations through mobile phones and computers

### 4.3 What are we trying to achieve?

By the end of the strategy in 2031 for the Better Stations Priority we aim to:

#### Stations Investment Plan

- Establish a formal link between the planning process and rail development for the ongoing funding of rail development work
- A bus service link from each station with a service level that reflects local demand
- Appropriate facilities for bus passengers at railway stations
- Platform extensions at Manea and Whittlesea to accommodate longer trains
- Adequate parking arrangements at each station for cars, motorbikes and cycles
- Ongoing support for the CRP, Station Groups and Adopters etc to present the station and support the rail industry

#### Access to Information

- Ensure there is active delivery of the communication strategy and the components within the strategy
- Have consistent information about rail services and at rail stations across a range of information sources
- Ensure there is wide spread communication about rail services and stations across Fenland District in a good range of locations that are not specific to the railway

## 5. Rail Service Improvements – Rail Services & Ticketing

### 5.1 Rail Service Improvements

The Fenland TAG supports specific rail service enhancements and commits to working with other parties to promote them and ensure they are given a fair opportunity locally and through the franchising process. We also want to see more people using rail services.

The rail industry is a constantly changing environment with new operators and new franchises coming forward along with changes in national and local policy. In order to get a fair deal for Fenland it is important that the industry is aware of local views from Fenland. A strategy for rail development that takes account of local views is an important part of this process.

As with any railway line there are a range of issues and proposals that will affect that line both now and in the future. The table below sets out these issues for the Fenland Rail Stations and provides some evidence or comments to support each issue.

#### 5.1.1 Route Development Issues

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Comments &amp; Discussion</u>																
Fluctuating use of rail services	Office of Rail Regulation statistics show on Station usage show the following in terms of growth base on entry and exit figures: <table border="1" data-bbox="497 1310 1380 1473"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2009/10</th> <th>2008/9</th> <th>2007/08</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Manea</td> <td>2,596</td> <td>3,048</td> <td>2,506</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March</td> <td>301,832</td> <td>305,256</td> <td>293,434</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Whittlesea</td> <td>23,506</td> <td>24,896</td> <td>26,064</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2009/10	2008/9	2007/08	Manea	2,596	3,048	2,506	March	301,832	305,256	293,434	Whittlesea	23,506	24,896	26,064
	2009/10	2008/9	2007/08														
Manea	2,596	3,048	2,506														
March	301,832	305,256	293,434														
Whittlesea	23,506	24,896	26,064														
Large catchment areas & untapped potential	Fenland is a rural district with a wide range of different types of settlements including towns, villages and hamlets. The district has also grown significantly in recent years as part of the Peterborough – Cambridge – Stansted growth area. Due to the rural nature of Fenland the catchment area for the station is often substantially larger than the settlement where the railway station is located. Here are details about the town and catchment for each station based on 2009 figures from Cambridgeshire County Council Research Unit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manea – the parish has a population of 2,040 compared with 1,580 in 2001. This is a 29.1% increase.</li> <li>• March – The town has a population of 20,730, the parish also includes Westry which has a population of</li> </ul>																

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Comments &amp; Discussion</u>
	<p>around 200 people. The villages of Wimblington and Doddington are close by and each parish has a population of around 2,000 people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whittlesey – The town has a population of 12,990, the parish which includes Eastrea and Coates takes the population figure to 16,110, an increase of over 3,000 people.</li> </ul> <p>It should be noted that with continued plans to grow Fenland in future years these population figures will continue to increase.</p>
Passenger Services	<p>Passenger services in Fenland are currently shared between three different train operators, each providing a service of an inter-regional nature. The route between Ely and Peterborough therefore amounts to only a small section of these 3 routes, and the timetables, stopping patterns and train capacities are often driven by factors outside the Fenland Area. Although the Greater Anglia franchise is responsible for management of the three Fenland Stations and services at Whittlesey, services at Manea are provided wholly by Cross-Country Trains, and those at March are shared between all three companies.</p> <p>The Great Anglia Franchise, which has been let on an interim basis for 2012 with a more substantive approach expected in 2014, provides an opportunity to improve the distribution of services to Fenland Stations, together with some service enhancements. Upgrading of the Ipswich – Peterborough Service to hourly, with a two hourly call at Manea and an hourly call at Whittlesey would allow this to become the local service. The longer distance services to Stansted Airport and Birmingham (Cross-Country Trains) and Norwich and Liverpool (East Midlands Trains) could focus on the main stations at Ely, March and Peterborough.</p> <p>As a supplementary item to the above, platform lengthening may be required at Manea and Whittlesea stations to accommodate a minimum 3-car train.</p>
Freight Services	<p>The ports at Southampton and Felixstowe are nationally significant deep sea container ports, receiving increasing quantities of 9' 6" containers. Increasing the capacity of these ports to transport goods by rail is essential. In 2006 Hutchinson Ports UK received approval to reconfigure the southern part of the Port of Felixstowe, including a new container quay aimed at</p>



<u>Issue</u>	<u>Comments &amp; Discussion</u>
	<p>delivery extra capacity. Works will be ongoing in several stages up to 2014. As part of this planning approval S106 monies were obtained to increase the Felixstowe branch line capacity and increase the gauge enhancement of the rail line between Ipswich and Peterborough and onto container terminals in the West Midlands, North West and South Yorkshire. It is expected the extra capacity will ensure 49 trains per day from the ports by 2028 instead of 26 trains per day today. This will have a significant impact on the amount of time that the level crossing barriers are closed. Further assessment is needed to better understand the implications of these closures.</p>

### 5.1.2 Passenger Service Improvements – Ipswich - Peterborough

The railway stations at Manea and Whittlesey have lower levels of passenger services than might be expected. Many trains pass through these stations each day but do not currently stop. A key priority for passenger service improvement is to ensure that Manea and Whittlesey have a better level of service. There is an aspiration in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk for the Ipswich to Peterborough Service (which is currently two hourly) to become hourly and that this could stop at Manea on a two hourly frequency and Whittlesey on an hourly basis.

### 5.1.3 Kings Dyke Level Crossing, Whittlesey

The A605 is a strategic road located from A141 between March and Peterborough that runs through the centre of Whittlesey. The Kings Dyke Level Crossing is situated on this road between Whittlesey and Peterborough, to serve the Peterborough to Ely rail line.

Cambridgeshire County Council Local Transport Plan monitoring shows that over a typical 12 hour period in 2009, 31,435 people were using the A605. This monitoring also shows that the most heavily congested part of the road is the section between Peterborough and Whittlesey with traffic levels dropping significantly as travel approaches the villages of Eastrea and Coates.

Recent surveys by CCC for the Bassenhally Farm planning application and also surveys undertaken by Fenland District Council suggest that in the morning peak between 7.30am and 9am, the level crossing barriers are closed between 6 and 10 times. This adds up to downtime of between 25% and 50% of that 90 minute period. This clearly causes significant congestion and with more trains set to travel along this rail line the effect of the barrier downtime will increase in future. Proposals have been set down in a number of policy documents including the Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy (adoption will be summer 2012) for a bridge to replace the current level crossing. Whilst it is acknowledged that such a scheme would be expensive (potentially up to 10million) it is considered that there would be safety, operational and cost

benefits to the railway. The Local Authorities and Network Rail will need to consider how a scheme for Kings Dyke could be delivered.

#### 5.1.4 Public Consultation Response to the Rail Service improvements Priority

As part of the 2011 public consultation exercise on the draft Rail Development Strategy, the public were invited to give their views on the Rail Service Improvement Priority.

The public were asked to give a view on each of the main projects for this priority. The % of respondents who stated that they strongly agree or agree with the project is listed below. The remaining respondents indicated neutral, disagree or strongly disagree.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>% of respondents who Strongly agree or agree</b>
Work with the train operators to encourage greater use of existing rail services	95%
Undertake Business Case work related to the Ipswich to Peterborough Service. This is to support a two hourly service from Manea and an hourly service from Whittlesea	95%
Negotiate additional services for March as part of future service increases to Stansted Airport and Birmingham new Street	98%
Assess the impact of increased passenger and freight services on the operation of level crossings and mitigation measures to minimise the effect on local communities	87%

The consultation questionnaire also allowed respondents to provide information about the priority projects they would like to see come forward along with any additional comments people would like to make. The largest number of comments that we received in response to these questions were about improvements to services.

<b><u>Name of Station</u></b>	<b><u>Tasks for each station</u></b>	<b><u>Comments</u></b>
Manea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More trains from Manea</li> </ul>	Work is currently ongoing to develop a business case for the two hourly services from Manea and hourly from Whittlesea. This is in partnership with other local authorities, the train operators and
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Norwich to Liverpool Trains from March</li> <li>• Direct services to London</li> <li>• More carriages on services especially Birmingham – Stansted. There is a need to reduce overcrowding</li> <li>• Longer trains specifically at</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>peak times</li> <li>• More direct trains to Cambridge</li> <li>• Improved connections to Stansted airport to meet with flights. Services starting earlier and later.</li> <li>• An improved Sunday service</li> </ul>	DfT.  We will work with the train operators, DfT & Network Rail to influence changes through ongoing discussions, Timetable consultations and franchise agreements.
Whittlesea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase service frequency at Whittlesea</li> <li>• An hourly service from Whittlesea</li> <li>• More direct trains to Cambridge</li> </ul>	

## 5.2 Ticket offices, pricing and availability

### March Ticket Office

In early 2010 Sir Roy McNulty was appointed to head a jointly sponsored study by DfT and Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) to examine the opportunities and barriers to improving the value for money of GB rail for taxpayers, passengers and freight customers. This study was commissioned under the Labour government and subsequently supported by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government.

The conclusion of this study saw the production and publication of the report "*Realising the Potential for GB Rail: Report of the Rail Value for Money Study*" in the summer of 2011. Within the recommendations of this report is a conclusion that 675 ticket offices at smaller stations should be closed. The ticket office at March Station is included in this list.

In the public consultation for this rail development strategy you told us that you want to ensure that March Ticket Office remains open. You think it is important for the whole community that a member of staff is available at the ticket office and especially for older people.

It is important to make clear that the Sir Roy McNulty report is an independent study; it is not the view of Government. At the time of adopting this rail development strategy the coalition have not confirmed their view of the study or its recommendation. Unless the Government decides to adopt the recommendation in the study there should not be any immediate cause for concern.

This strategy supports the view that March Railway Station should remain as a staffed station. If required, we will work to try and ensure that ticket office remains open during the life of the strategy.

## Rail tickets and Pricing

You told us in the public consultation that you would like to see cheaper rail fares, a better range of cheaper tickets and special offers along with greater availability to purchase the full range of tickets from unstaffed stations.

Certain standard class rail tickets have their fares regulated by Government. In terms of the increase in price these fares are capped at the Retail Prices Index (RPI) plus a maximum of 6%. The cost of many train fares are regulated nationally and are therefore beyond the scope of changes through the train operating companies or this strategy. For regular train users the purchase of season tickets will reduce the cost compared with standard travel tickets.

Advance purchase tickets and special offers or tickets where you purchase entry to an event with your train travel are unregulated fares. This means that there is scope with these types of tickets to look at pricing. In partnership with the CRP there is capacity to consider the introduction of more tickets of this nature. Wider promotion and publicity is also needed on the types of cheaper ticket that are already available and when and where they can be used.

New technologies are now offering additional opportunities to purchase and print rail tickets such as print at home and use of mobile phone applications. Where possible this strategy wants to make people aware of these opportunities and possible savings that could be available.

Fenland has two unstaffed stations and we want to ensure that the full range of tickets including discounts is available to local residents who use these train stations. Wider promotion and publicity of what tickets are available is needed along with details about where and how to purchase them in addition to purchases made onboard the train.

## Car parking pricing

Many people raised concerns as part of the public consultation about car park charging both now and in the future at Fenland Rail Stations. We are already aware that there are issues with car parking on Station Road in March that is linked to the cost of parking in March Station car park.

Work as part of this strategy will include discussions with train operating companies, car park operators and other stakeholders to consider car park charging and how this can be balanced with other policies and processes.

### 5.3 What are we trying to achieve?

By the end of this strategy in 2031 we aim to:

#### Rail Service Improvements

- In partnership with the CRP and the Rail Industry look to improve the timing of connections on existing services to improve journey times
- Have a minimum of hourly services from Whittlesea and 2 hourly from Manea
- Increase the number of Norwich – Liverpool trains stopping at March
- Ensure there are more trains to Stansted Airport and Birmingham New Street for longer periods of the day. We would like these services to stop at March and Whittlesea.

#### Ticket Offices, Pricing & Availability

- Ensure that March Ticket office remains a staffed station
- Local promotion of special offers and cheaper tickets including development of new offers in partnership with the CRP
- Ensuring full availability of all fares, particularly at unstaffed stations on the train or through new technologies.
- Work with train operators and other stakeholders in relation to car park charging.

## 6. Wider Strategy Objectives

In addition to the 3 priorities above, through the public consultation, local residents and stakeholders clearly told us that there are other objectives that you would like to see in the Fenland Rail Development Strategy.

This section will set out the additional objectives and provide some clarity about how the strategy will approach these objectives.

The additional objectives as raised through the consultation are as follows:

<b>Objective Number</b>	<b>Objective</b>
A	Electrification of the Peterborough – March – Ely Rail line
B	Direct Services to London from Fenland
C	Wisbech to March Line
D	Rail Connections from Chatteris

### A, Electrification of the Peterborough – March – Ely rail line

The Fenland Rail Development strategy supports the electrification of the railway line between Peterborough and Ely.

Any decisions however about the electrification of the railways will be made at national level by Government and supported by Network Rail. The ability of this strategy to influence decisions about electrifying railways is more limited; however we fully support any decisions that can deliver a scheme of this nature.

In recent years some progress has been made through Network Rail long term planning processes. In 2009 they set out their long term strategy for further electrification of railways in England in the Electrification Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS).

This strategy included the Peterborough to Ely line. Evidence and analysis work identified this area as a type B gap which means that the predominant reason why this line could be electrified is due to enabling a more efficient operation of freight services. From evidence supplied in the RUS document passenger services are unlikely to be a reason why the line will be electrified.

The RUS considers the following option as a way to address the issue of electrification in this area.

*Electrify Felixstowe to Ipswich and Haughley Junction to Nuneaton following Midland Main Line (MML) and Nuneaton to Water Orton. Also convert Felixstowe to Ipswich, London to Peterborough via Ipswich and Birmingham to Stansted Airport passenger services to electric traction.*

The RUS strategy recommends that the Business Cases for a range of schemes are reviewed to inform the decision and also in light of changes from April 2010 on the appraisal framework. The schemes on the list include:

*Felixstowe to Ipswich and Haughley Junction to Nuneaton (providing an electric route for freight trains from the Haven Ports to the East Coast Main Line, the West Midlands and the West Coast Main line and providing an electrified diversionary route for the East Coast Main Line between Hitchin and Peterborough. This would enable the Birmingham to Stansted Airport, London to Peterborough via Ipswich and Felixstowe to Ipswich services to be operated by electric trains. The Felixstowe to Ipswich section could be electrified in advance of the remainder of the route, allowing electric services routed via the Great Eastern Main Line to run directly from Felixstowe)*

The assessment work undertaken for the RUS showed that the strategy scored highly against all the criteria. When considered against other possible electrification projects this area is not considered to be a top priority however, it is considered as a further option.

In the public consultation you told us that you wanted to see the electrification of the Peterborough to Ely line included in the strategy. You also told us that you think it is important for improving links to Cambridge and into London.

In response to the inclusion of this matter in the strategy will seek to ensure the best possible case is made for why this project should be delivered by:

- Making representation to the rail industry and Government about the importance of electrifying this railway line and its importance for the increased growth of housing and jobs
- Take an active role in commenting on Route Utilisation Strategies including any change to the electrification strategy
- Work with Network Rail forward planning team to ensure that the business case for electrification is up to date and using the latest evidence available. Use of the latest evidence will help to ensure that the best possible case is made for this project.

#### B, Direct Services to London from Fenland

There are currently no direct services between the Fenland Stations and railway destinations in London. In recent years there has been a direct service calling at March between Peterborough and London Liverpool Street. This service has now been split with the Fenland stations service terminating at Ipswich. There are connecting services onto London.

The alternative and main route for London travel is via a change of train at Peterborough. There are regular train services between Peterborough and London Kings Cross.

In the public consultation you told us that you would like to see direct train services from Fenland into London. Residents living in March and Whittlesea also made comments about the importance of ensuring there are good connecting trains, for outward and return journeys especially at Peterborough.

As part of this strategy we will:

- Lobby and work with the train operating companies to see if we can establish some services that are direct to London, particularly at peak times for commuters
- We will undertake a desk top study to look at some key journeys and connection times by assessing train timetables to a range of destinations. The results of this study will provide us with some evidence to have discussions about improving connection times.
- Seek to influence train timetable consultations and reviews to improve connection times where a change of train is required.

### C, Wisbech to March Line

The Wisbech to March Railway Line known locally as the Bramley Line was in operation between 1847-1968 by the Wisbech, St Ives and Cambridge Junction Railway. The line continued to be used for freight purposes until 1980s but has been mothballed since that time.

Rail access from Wisbech is predominately via the X1 bus service between Great Yarmouth and Peterborough. This bus service is linked to the rail timetable and takes passengers from Wisbech direct to Peterborough railway station. There is a regular bus service 7 days a week from early morning into the late evening. Rail passengers with a car will travel to different rail stations depending on their final destination but they mostly use Peterborough, March and Kings Lynn.

Amongst local people there is a strong opinion that the rail line should be reopened and that passenger services should be available direct from Wisbech. There is however a difference of opinion about what form the reopening of the line should take and what the new service should be. One view supports the need for a train company operated service as part of the national rail timetable. There is also a group known as The Bramley Line Group who are looking at the potential for this line to be a heritage railway.

Wisbech has seen significant levels of new development in recent years resulting in large numbers of new homes and jobs. This development has led to increased volumes of traffic and it is considered that the reopening of the railway may offer a solution to local road transport issues.



### ATOC Report

In 2009 the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) published a report titled: *Connecting Communities: Expanding Access to the Rail Network*.

This work was commissioned by DfT and the train operators in response to the growth of the rail industry in recent years, the need to develop feeder services into specific routes and to ensure there is greater local access to the rail network. The Wisbech to March line was considered as part of this report. Key elements of the document are listed below:

- The focus is on England only and includes towns and catchment areas with a population of at least 15,000 people. Population growth and future levels of development have also been taken into account.
- A methodology has been developed for assessing each site and area based on ensuring that a site meets the Department for Transport (DfT) cost benefit ratio for reopening railway lines which is 1.5 to 2.
- The research has assessed 75 towns and surrounding areas including Wisbech. A site visit was undertaken to each of the 75 settlements to look at the line and assess constraints. This included consideration of potential capital expenditure including the need for a station, track, work at the level crossings and access into March Station.
- The assessment of Wisbech has so far concluded that it does not quite make the DfT cost benefit ratio but that it is worth further assessment

### County Council Assessment Work

In 1995 and 1996 Cambridgeshire County Council commissioned feasibility studies to look at the potential and costs of reintroducing a passenger rail service between Wisbech, March and Peterborough. These studies assessed patronage levels, income from passengers, costs to reintroduce the rail line and economic forecasts. These two studies concluded that the service would not generate enough income to cover its costs. It would therefore require an ongoing public subsidy. It is acknowledged however, that these studies were produced sometime ago now and that circumstances have changed since that time. There could be some merit in updating these studies to more accurately reflect current circumstances.

As part of the Getting on Track 2011 public consultation you told us that you would like to see the reopening of the Wisbech to March Rail line. You told us that it is important for a town the size of Wisbech to have a passenger rail service and that this could be part of a solution to reduce congestion and traffic issues within the town.

Getting on Track supports the view that the March to Wisbech Line should come back into use. However, this strategy is primarily concerned with improvements to rail lines and stations that are already in operation for passenger and freight services. It is beyond the scope of this strategy to deliver a new railway line. We recognise its importance locally and the

strategy will support the work of individual organisations in the Transport and Access Group to take plans forward for reopening the line.

#### D, Rail Connections from Chatteris

As part of the Local Transport Plan, Cambridgeshire County Council has a programme of Market Town Transport Strategies. These are supported by Fenland District Council. Each strategy aims to provide a programme of transport improvements for each market town and its surrounding area. The improvements support and contribute towards the prosperity and well-being of each town.

Chatteris Market Town Transport Strategy was adopted in June 2010. It includes proposals to investigate the potential for a public transport interchange at Furrowfields Car Park in the centre of Chatteris. Linked to this interchange proposal local residents requested transport to Manea as part of proposals for an improved rail service at this station. This proposal was included in the final adopted strategy.

In the 2011 Getting on Track public consultation you told us that you would like to see improved access to rail services for Chatteris residents. You also told us that accessibility to rail stations generally is important including the need for a shuttle service from villages and towns to Fenland rail stations.

To improve connections to the railway from Chatteris, this strategy will:

- In line with the rail service improvements priority, look to improve train services at Manea so that they are at least two hourly
- Deliver a shuttle service from Chatteris town centre to Manea station for connecting services
- Improve the links with current bus services to March and Ely train stations
- Undertake research and feasibility work to look at the potential of bus services between March, Chatteris and Huntingdon railway station.

## 7. Fenland Rail Development Strategy Work Programme

This document with its 3 components - The Rail Development Strategy, Stations Investment Plan and Community Rail Partnership are concerned with securing improvements both now and in the future. A work programme based on the 3 priorities has therefore been developed below. This will list short, medium and long term actions.

### 7.1 Short Term Actions – 2011 - 2017

<b><u>Rail Development Strategy Priority</u></b>		
<b><u>More Community Involvement</u></b> (includes the CRP)	<b><u>Better Stations</u></b>	<b><u>Rail Service Improvements</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch the CRP</li> <li>• Develop CRP name and branding</li> <li>• Have competitions and links to local events</li> <li>• Formal station adoption groups at Manea and Whittlesea. Ongoing support to the Friends of March Station</li> <li>• An action plan for each station</li> <li>• Surveys of train users and non train users</li> <li>• Develop leaflets and promotional materials to advertise services</li> <li>• Improve information at stations and also in the town and villages centres about rail</li> <li>• CRP website</li> <li>• Work with TOCs to develop ticket deals</li> <li>• Meet the Manager Sessions</li> <li>• Develop a programme of events for each station</li> <li>• Refurbish redundant buildings at March</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve interchange options for Manea, March and Whittlesea – bus, taxi, community transport etc..</li> <li>• Mark out car parking bays at March station</li> <li>• Improve the waiting shelters at Manea and Whittlesea</li> <li>• Improve cycle parking at Manea and Whittlesea including development of cycle parking standards</li> <li>• Identify new locations for cycle parking at March</li> <li>• Improve the Lighting at Manea, March and Whittlesea Stations</li> <li>• Improve the fencing at Manea</li> <li>• Improve the outside seating at Manea, March &amp; Whittlesea</li> <li>• Improve station security at each of the 3 stations</li> <li>• Improve platform access at Whittlesea by making ramps DDA compliant and providing portable ramps to allow access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More trains stopping at Manea and Whittlesea - Ipswich to Peterborough Business Case etc working with DfT for hourly service</li> <li>• Input into Network Rail Route Utilisation Strategy Project Planning</li> <li>• Ongoing discussions with DfT and TOCS re future franchises</li> <li>• Ongoing discussions with TOCs about timetabling and interchanges</li> <li>• Ongoing discussion about more carriages on Stansted – Birmingham services</li> <li>• Assess the impact of level crossing closures and mitigation effects</li> </ul>

<b><u>Rail Development Strategy Priority</u></b>		
<b><u>More Community Involvement</u></b> (includes the CRP)	<b><u>Better Stations</u></b>	<b><u>Rail Service Improvements</u></b>
	<p>into trains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align this strategy with Fenland Local Development Framework to ensure developer contributions are obtained for projects.</li> </ul>	

## 7.2 Medium Term Actions – 2018 – 2023

<b><u>Rail Development Strategy Priority</u></b>		
<b><u>More Community Involvement</u></b> (includes the CRP)	<b><u>Better Stations</u></b>	<b><u>Rail Service Improvements</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update strategies as developed in the short term e.g. station action plan</li> <li>Ongoing programme of ticket deals and offers for rail passengers</li> <li>Ongoing programme of promotion and publicity</li> <li>Develop programme to encourage new customers who don't use the train</li> <li>Development of links between Whittlesea Station and the nearby industrial estate including promotion of rail services for businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access and signing to the rail stations, through an access strategy for each station</li> <li>Improve interchange options for Manea, March and Whittlesea – bus, taxi, community transport etc..</li> <li>In line with Chatteris MTTs, investigate a bus service linked the town to improvements at Manea station</li> <li>Formalise the car park at Whittlesey Station</li> <li>Formalise a car park at Manea Station</li> <li>Footbridge at Whittlesea Station to the Peterborough Platform</li> <li>A ticket machine at Manea</li> <li>A ticket machine at Whittlesea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing discussions with DfT and TOCS re future franchises</li> <li>Ongoing discussion about more carriages on Stansted – Birmingham services</li> <li>Work with TOCs &amp; DfT for more Norwich to Liverpool trains stopping at March</li> <li>Work with TOCs &amp; DfT to ensure 30 min frequency Birmingham – Stansted service includes March</li> <li>Later and earlier trains to Stansted and Birmingham</li> <li>In support of Fenland LDF work to address the issues with Kings Dyke Level Crossing at Whittlesea</li> </ul>

### 7.3 Long Term Actions – 2024 - 2031

<b><u>More Community Involvement</u></b> (includes the CRP)	<b><u>Better Stations</u></b>	<b><u>Rail Service Improvements</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing programme of ticket deals and offers for rail passengers</li> <li>• Ongoing programme of promotion and publicity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Platform lengthening at Manea and Whittlesea</li> <li>• Extend Whittlesea Station Car Park to accommodate proposals for a parkway station for Peterborough</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing discussions with DfT and TOCS re future franchises</li> <li>• Input into network planning issues for future proposals</li> <li>• In support of Fenland LDF work to address the issues with Kings Dyke Level Crossing at Whittlesea</li> </ul>

### 7.4 Implementing the Action Plan

The implementation of the projects within this strategy will be developed by many different organisations including the local authorities, train operating companies, the local community, bus and community transport operators and Network Rail. During each year an agreement will be reached with the relevant organisations about which projects will be delivered. The role of co-ordinating the work and projects will be delivered through the Fenland Strategic Partnership Transport and Access Group who are the champions of this strategy.

### 7.5 Informing the Public & Stakeholders on delivery progress

To keep you all informed about the progress we are making on the delivery of the strategy we will provide an update every 6 months. This update will be made available on a poster board at each of the railway stations in Manea, March and Whittlesea. We will also provide this information on the Fenland District Council website at [www.fenland.gov.uk](http://www.fenland.gov.uk).

## **8. Contact us & Finding out more**

The local community in Fenland have made clear that rural transport and accessibility is one of their top priorities. This includes people from across the community whether they are old or young, living alone or with families. Businesses and local stakeholder organisations also support the view that addressing local transport issues is a priority.

Addressing the needs of the local community combined with changes in the rail industry allow an opportunity for local authorities and key stakeholders to set out our priorities for the future of rail within Fenland. It also allows us to present these priorities to new organisations and also to fit with new policy frameworks as they are developed in the future. During the 2011 consultation the public gave a very clear view that they support the rail priorities in this strategy and that they want to see the implementation of projects which support the priorities.

With the current economic climate and reductions in finance those who have clear plans that are fully costed and with local support are more likely to be delivered. We believe that a Rail Development Strategy with a Stations Investment Plan, supported by a Community Rail Partnership gives confidence to investors and provides clear opportunities to make improvements that otherwise may not be delivered. During the next 20 years we will work to deliver a range of short, Medium and long term projects that meet the requirements of the Rail Development Strategy priorities. In turn this will also show the success of the Fenland Rail Network for many years to come.

### Contacting us about the Fenland Rail Development Strategy

Copies of this document, the summary document for this strategy and the action plan are also available online at:

- [www.fenland.gov.uk](http://www.fenland.gov.uk)

Email us your views to: [neighbourhoodstrategy@fenland.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodstrategy@fenland.gov.uk)

Post your comments to:  
Neighbourhood strategy  
Fenland District Council  
Fenland Hall  
County Road  
March  
PE15 8NQ

If you have any questions about this document please telephone 01354 654321

## Appendix One – Rail Station Audits

### WHITTLESEA [WLE]

#### General Information

Location	Station Road, Whittlesea, Peterborough PE7 1UF
Layout	2 staggered platforms with separate accesses either side of level crossing at west end of the station. Up side (to March), Down side (to Peterborough). Conventional level crossing with hand operated gates, staffed 24/7 from adjacent NR cabin.
Site amenities	Adjacent to employment areas, around ¾ mile from town centre.

#### Access to Station

Vehicular access	Off Station Road to access road on up side only. Shared access to industrial premises at east end of station yard.
Car parking	No formal car parking – 9 vehicles observed parked on side of access road.
Drop off and pick up points	On up side access road – informal only, not marked.
Motor-cycle parking	None provided.
Cycle parking and access	None provided. 1 cycle observed secured to fence post alongside up side access road.
Taxis	Local taxi information on station poster. No formal rank and no telephone for contact.
Bus services and stops	Local bus stops appear to be unmarked. Service 32 connects Benwick and Doddington with Whittlesey and Peterborough, only 2 journeys per day in each direction.
Pedestrian routes	Footpath on walking route towards town centre.
Signage	No signage to differentiate direction of travel from each platform. Up platform not visible from main road and no signage of walking route from the road to the platform. Single sign directing walking route to town centre.
DDA compliant routes to platform(s)	Ramp to down platform too steep. Ramp to up platform appears compliant. No portable ramps available for boarding trains.

#### Customer facilities on the station

Staff	Unstaffed.
Ticket purchase	From train conductor.
Customer information on train services	Provided at station entrance on welcome boards, and within down side platform shelter, but none provided on up platform.
Customer information on local bus services	None provided.
Information on local attractions and amenities	Originally provided on UK Media board mounted on fence to down platform access ramp. Poster frame still extant, but content has disappeared.
Waiting shelters and seats	Small waiting shelters with internal seats to both platforms. Up side in poor state of repair. Litter bins provided on both platforms.
Toilets	None available
Help points	On both platforms. Checked in working order.
CCTV	None
Lighting	3 lamp columns on up platform, 2 on down.

## Other issues and opportunities

<b>Platform Shelters</b>	Replace existing with enlarged shelters with greater visibility.
<b>Platform Access</b>	Make access ramps DDA compliant and provide portable ramps to allow access to trains.
<b>Cycle Parking</b>	Provide covered cycle rack on up side access road.
<b>Car Parking</b>	Formalise car parking arrangements with marked spaces on up side.
<b>Bus Service Improvements</b>	Co-ordination of bus services with rail services. Look at options to provide link through town service improvements. Provide bus information to customers leaving station. Identify locations for marked bus stops.
<b>Information &amp; Signage Package</b>	Improved signage to platforms and to/from town centre. Option to provide central information point on station, adjacent to level crossing.
<b>Platform extensions</b>	Lengthen platforms to take 3-car trains without selective door opening. Relocation of the up platform to a position closer to the level crossing would improve access and visibility.
<b>Train Service improvements</b>	Investigate the case for increasing the service to hourly.
<b>Local Planning &amp; Growth Issues</b>	Investment possible in relation to growth scenarios for the town. Rail as sustainable access to Peterborough.

## Photos

	
<i>General view of station from crossing, looking towards March.</i>	<i>Station information boards at entrance to up side access road.</i>
	
<i>Informal car parking on up side access road</i>	<i>No visibility of up platform from access road.</i>





*Ramped access to the up platform*



*Help point and shelter on up platform.*



*General view of up platform, looking towards Peterborough.*



*Down platform access gate and ramp.*



*Down platform shelter.*



*General view of down platform.*

## APPENDIX A – STATION AUDITS

### MARCH [MCH]

#### General Information

Location	Station Approach, Station Road, March PE15 8SJ
Layout	Former major junction station, with two platforms in use and two further redundant platforms to the north. Main station buildings on platform 1 (down platform – to Peterborough). Adjacent full barrier level crossing on Station Road, operated from signal box.
Site amenities	Located on fringe of residential area to the north of the town centre, which is around ¾ mile away. Large areas of operational and redundant railway land on either end of the station.

#### Access to Station

Vehicular access	From Station Road, via station approach on south (down) side of the station. This access also used by a number of businesses located on the station approach, some of whom have dedicated parking spaces.
Car parking	On station approach. Spaces are poorly marked out, which results in poor parking and inefficient use of space. NCP managed car park, and charges apply. Some evidence of commuter parking on-street.
Drop off and pick up points	Station forecourt. Also possible on Station Road adjacent to access to/from up platform, although this will cause congestion at peak times.
Motor-cycle parking	None formal. Some motor cycles observed on down platform, adjacent to cycle racks.
Cycle parking and access	On down platform, partly under canopy. Sheffield stands provided for 40 cycles (25 occupied at time of audit). On up platform, Sheffield stands provided for xx cycles (1 occupied at time of audit). Some CCTV coverage of both.
Taxis	Operate from down side forecourt.
Bus services and stops	On Station Road, immediately to north side of level crossing. Local bus services have recently changed, and connections with rail services not optimal. No specific town services – those past the station operate inter-urban routes between March and Wisbech.
Pedestrian routes	Good pedestrian access from Station Road. Additional footpath across open land to west of the station from the far end of the south side forecourt, but believed to be some behavioural problems in this area.
Signage	Road signage within the town generally good. Walking routes through residential areas could be better signed, as could route from station to town centre.
DDA compliant routes to platform(s)	Level access to down platform. Compliant access to up platform via path and ramp from north side of level crossing and Rail Staff Association car park. Access between platforms across footbridge is not compliant.

## Customer facilities on the station

Staff	Staffed ticket office with 1 window, open 0700-1730 Mon-Sat. Unstaffed on Sundays. Retail unit on down side also staffed during similar time period.
Ticket purchase	See above. Other times from conductor on train. No ticket vending machine available.
Customer information on train services	Station welcome boards provided on down side approach. CIS screens provided on both platforms.
Customer information on local bus services	None provided on station. No indication of location of nearest bus stops.
Information on local attractions and amenities	UK Media board on station frontage (down side). Nothing on up side. Tourism posters displayed in ticket hall (down side).
Waiting shelters and seats	Canopies to both platforms. Waiting rooms provided on both sides.
Toilets	All on down side, in need of some refurbishment.
Retail facilities	Newspaper kiosk in down side ticket hall, which also sells hot and cold drinks. Vending machine on down platform.
Help points	Provided centrally on both platforms.
CCTV	8 cameras covering station car park, ticket hall and both platforms. Monitored from ticket office and recorded.
Lighting	Satisfactory – meets current standards.
Overall station presentation	Excellent work from local adopter group on planting and presentation, but the station would benefit from a deep clean, repainting and attention to brickwork and small architectural details.

## Other issues and opportunities

<b>Station Adoption and Community Involvement</b>	Aspirations for community use of redundant buildings would significantly improve station environment. Build on excellent base of existing adoption group.
<b>Car Parking</b>	Formal marking out of parking bays on station forecourt to increase capacity. FDC will also look at parking management on highway.
<b>Cycle Parking</b>	Options to provide additional capacity within same area of down platform by installing two-tier racks.
<b>Bus Service Improvement</b>	Investigate options for better integration of bus and rail timetables to improve access to the station from residential and town centre areas. Better signage to bus stops and information for customers.
<b>Information &amp; Signage Package</b>	Improved signage to platforms and to/from town centre. Option to provide central information point adjacent to each entrance / exit. Upgrade of CIS system required.
<b>Station Presentation</b>	Repainting scheme and cleaning of brickwork. Refurbishment of ticket hall would significantly improve first impressions of the station.
<b>Local Planning &amp; Growth Issues</b>	Proposals for housing growth to the north of the railway would require good pedestrian access to the station. Growth elsewhere in the town should be accompanied by improvements to bus services linking in to the station. Growth in rail traffic may result in increased barrier down-time at the level crossing, which suggests that future town bus services will need some form of turning area on the down side to avoid the need to use the level crossing.

Photos



*Station platforms looking east*



*Main entrance onto down platform*



*Station adopters' flower displays*



*Cycle parking on down platform*



*Cycle parking on up platform*



*DDA access to up platform*



*Ticket hall interior*



*Ticket hall retail unit*



*Station frontage and taxi rank*



*Out of hours exit from down platform*



*Down side car park*



*Up side access route to Station Road*



*Redundant station buildings*



*Level crossing looking south to town centre*



*Station Road bus stop (northbound)*



*Poor bus stop information*



*Access signage, up side*



*Brickwork condition, down side buildings*

## APPENDIX A – STATION AUDITS

### MANEA [MNE]

#### General Information

Location	Station Road, Manea, March PE15 0HG
Layout	2 platform station adjacent to level crossing over Station Road. Both platforms for 2-car trains only, and selective door opening used when necessary. Up side to Ely, Down side to March. Automatic half-barrier crossing operated from adjacent signal box to south of the road.
Site amenities	Located at northern end of long linear village, adjacent to residential development and around 1 mile from the village centre (2 miles from the southern extent of the village).

#### Access to Station

Vehicular access	Station Road only. The only vehicular access to railway land is from the south-east side of the crossing, to the rear of the signal box, and is used for NR trackside access.
Car parking	At side of highway only. No evidence of customers parking on day of audit.
Drop off and pick up points	At side of highway, to village side of station.
Motor-cycle parking	None formal
Cycle parking and access	None formal
Taxis	No specific arrangements, although station welcome poster carries information on local taxi firms.
Bus services and stops	No marked bus stops. Local services to village centre with nearest point over ½ mile from station.
Pedestrian routes	Footpath on sections of walking route to village.
Signage	Station totem visible from road but needs to be cleaned, and station symbol on road signs in village centre. No signage from station to village centre.
DDA compliant routes to platform(s)	Both routes to platforms involve use of ramps which are too steep to be compliant

#### Customer facilities on the station

Staff	Unstaffed
Ticket purchase	From conductor on train
Customer information on train services	Station welcome poster alongside access path to down platform.
Customer information on local bus services	None provided.
Information on local attractions and amenities	UK Media poster adjacent to welcome poster boards
Waiting shelters and seats	Wooden hut shelter on up platform in poor condition and appears to be leaning. Standing room only inside. Metal framed Perspex glazed shelter on down platform with small bench seat, both in need of refurbishment.
Toilets	None provided
Help points	On both platforms. Checked in working order.
CCTV	None
Lighting	4 columns on up platform, 3 on down platform.

## Other issues and opportunities

<b>Station fencing</b>	Wooden paling fencing to access paths and ramps, generally in very poor condition and needs replacing with metal posts and rails, as currently at rear of platforms.
<b>Information and Signage package</b>	Signage on station, including totem, needs updating and/or cleaning.
<b>Platform shelters</b>	Replace existing with enlarged shelters with greater visibility.
<b>Car Parking</b>	Investigate options for providing a small car park adjacent to the station, possibly on Network Rail land adjacent to the signal box.
<b>Cycle Parking</b>	Provide small covered cycle rack.
<b>Bus Service Improvements</b>	Investigate options for bus services to link all parts of the village with the station.
<b>Platform Lengthening</b>	Lengthen platforms to take 3-car trains without the need for selective door opening.
<b>Train Service Improvements</b>	Investigate options for increasing the service, possibly to 2-hourly.
<b>Station Adoption Group</b>	Establish a station adoption group in the village with a remit to work with the TOC and Network Rail to improve the appearance of the station.

## Photos



*Overall view of station, looking northwards from Station Road*



*View along Station Road towards the village, station to the right*



*Access to down platform – paling fence in poor condition.*



*Station Information Boards adjacent to down platform access.*





*Down platform waiting shelter and seat.*



*Down platform access ramp.*



*Access gate to up platform.*



*Up platform shelter.*



*View of level crossing from up platform.*



*Area of railway land behind signal box – a suitable site for a small station car park?*



**Fenland District Council**

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