

Report by Cllr. Lance Stanbury
Date: January 2016
Subject: Lack of Integrated Transport

1. Executive Summary

As a new member for Red Lodge I recently carried out a survey of my constituents to ascertain their views on local services. The results are shown below in graphic form. One of the greatest causes of concern of local residents is the state of local public transport (39%) and as an occasional rail commuter to London myself I have personal experience of the infrequent train services from Kennett and the lack of integration with other forms of transport, such as buses, as well as the deficiency of passenger facilities. A number of Red Lodge residents speak of the difficulty of using public transport...

"Public transport: There is currently no viable public transport option for evenings out in Bury St Edmunds and Cambridge. The Kennett train on runs every 2 hours! Why? So I can't commute to Cambridge."

"Public Transport: I feel as I get older I will have to rely on public transport more. More regular trains and buses please"

"When I return from London, if I miss the 17.44 from Kings Cross I have a two hour wait for the Kennett train. We need better local services."

"The buses are horrendous. We only have one car and trying to get the baby to baby groups in Mildenhall and especially Newmarket & Cambridge is impossible. And no buses at all in the evenings and Sundays? Terrible."

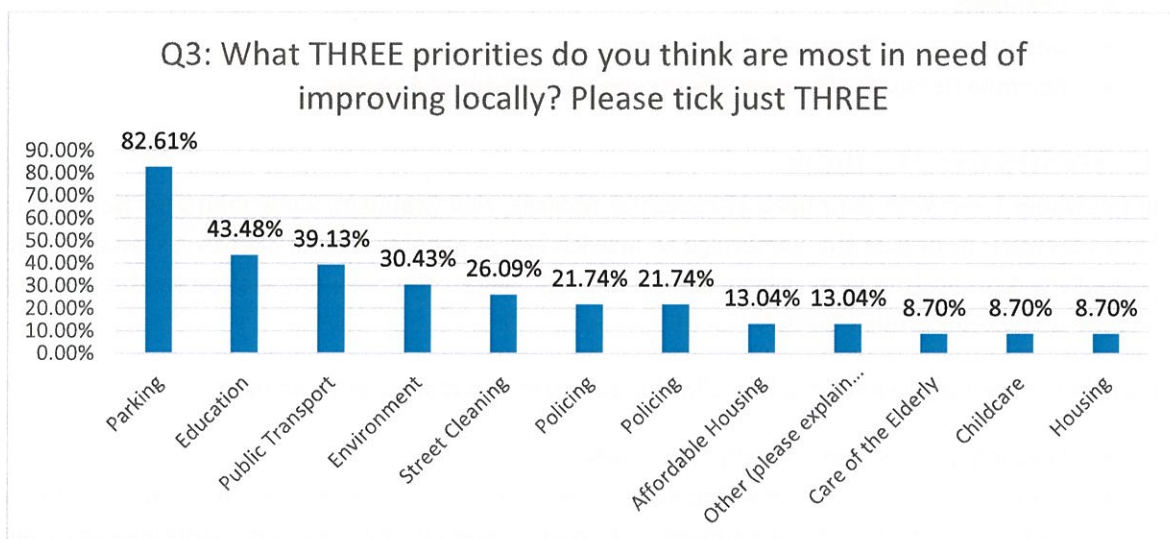


Figure 1: Survey of Red Lodge Residents. Summer 2015. Sample 248

I therefore arranged a meeting with Abellio Greater Anglia to bring to their attention the concerns of local residents, to understand their transportation strategy and to explore whether they could adjust their timetabling and train frequencies to better service existing, and attract new, customers.

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During the meeting (details of which are given below) I secured agreement of Abellio to attend a scrutiny session at Forest Heath Council to explain their strategy and how they are addressing passenger concerns over their services. I was also clear that such a hearing would benefit from attendance by all those companies who contribute to the integrated transportation that serves the residents of Forest Heath.

2. Recommendation

I recommend that a hearing be convened by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Forest Heath District Council into the integrated public transportation serving our communities, to enable the council to form a view on their efficiency, their integration, their promotion and to what extent they contribute to the economic development of the district. Such a hearing should invite, and take evidence from, rail and bus operators and the county council transport department, to allow the committee to make recommendation to council on how it might influence the improvement in the integration of local public transport.

It is hoped that the council might act as a convener, on behalf of its citizens, between transportation companies, to encourage their working together.

3. Invitees

- Abellio Greater Anglia
- Mulleys
- Stephenson's of Essex
- Suffolk Norse
- Coach Services
- Stage Coach
- Chambers
- Department for Transport: Rail Executive
- Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Director of Planning

4. Abellio Great Anglia

In December I met with their head of customer services, Neil Grabham, along with Alan Neville and James Stewart, to discuss the Cambridge to Ipswich line in general and services to Newmarket and particularly Kennett (the local railway station for Red Lodge). The company welcomed this meeting and the discussions proved fruitful.

I sought the meeting to look into the following concerns about services to Kennett.

- Frequency of services – mostly two hourly
- Times of services – e.g. morning departures at 07:04, 07:43 and then 10:07 affecting badly connections to London at Cambridge. Also poor evening services from Cambridge at 17:44, 18:44 and then 20:44 and two-hourly thereafter!
- Station facilities at Kennett including shelters, ticket machines, electronic information boards, car parking and bus stops.
- Number of carriages and their cleanliness

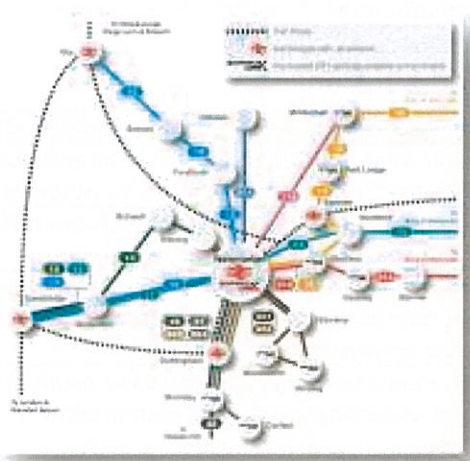
On the Cambridge to Ipswich line we touched on;

- Track modifications
- Electrification
- Speed
- Gratitude was shown for the recently improved carriages and stations.

5. Example: Bus Services Serving Red Lodge and Kennett Railway Station

There is only one bus service through Red Lodge that takes potential commuters to Kennett railway station. The timetable comparisons below demonstrate the total lack of integration of public transport. For example, if one wishes to commute from Red Lodge to Cambridge (and perhaps thence to London) there are no buses servicing the first two morning trains at 0600 and 0704. (If one needed arrive in central London for before 9am it would not be possible as one would need to take the 0704 in order to connect with the 0743 to London Kings Cross, which arrives at 0840. The 0743 from Kennett is too late).

Worse is found if one wishes to commute from Red Lodge to Bury St Edmunds via Kennett as the buses arrive on average 10 minutes after the train has departed, otherwise one would need to wait at the train station for almost two hours.



Buses & Trains Arriving at Kennett					
Bus via Red L	Train to Camb	Wait (mins)	Bus via Red L	Train to Bury	Wait
None	0600		0719	0710	-9
None	0704		0924	0912	-12
0719	0743	22	1124	1112	-12
0924	1007	43			
1124	1207	43			

Newmarket – Red Lodge – Mildenhall – Bury St Edmunds Bus 16/16A/16B

Mildenhall, Bus Station (Stand A)	arr	-	0845	0845	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400	1500	1500		1600	1715	1815
Mildenhall, Bus Station (Stand A)	dep	0657	0902	0902	1002	1102	1202	1302	1402	1502	1502		1602	1717	1817
Worlington, Walnut Tree (S-bound)		0701	0906	0906	1006	1106	1206	1306	1406	1506	1552		1606	1721	1821
Red Lodge, Thistle Way (adj)		0707	0912	0912	1012	1112	1212	1312	1412	1512	1558	1605	1612	1727	1827
Red Lodge, Ash Grove (adj)		0709	0914	0914	1014	1114	1214	1314	1414	1514	1600	1607	1614	1729	1829
Red Lodge, Laurel Close (opp)		0711	0916	0916	1016	1116	1216	1316	1416	1516	1602		1616	1731	1831
Red Lodge, Horseshoe Drive (opp)		0713	0918	0918	1018	1118	1218	1318	1418	1518	1604		1618	1733	1833
Red Lodge, Spearmint Way (opp)		0714	0919	0919	1019	1119	1219	1319	1419	1519	-	1605	1619	1734	1834
Kennett, Railway Station (opp)		0719	0924	0924	1024	1124	1224	1324	1424	1524	-	1610	1624	1739	1839

Bury St Edmunds – Mildenhall – Red Lodge - Newmarket Bus 16/16A/16B

Service	16	16	16	16A	16A	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
Operator	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	
Service Restrictions	Sch	NSch	Sch	Sch	NSch	Sch	NSch	Sch	NSch	Sch	NSch	Sch	NSch	Sch	NSch	Sch	NSch	Sch	NSch	ST	ST
Notes	1																				
Newmarket, The Guineas Bus Station (Bay 2)	0615	0635	0645	0715	-	0715	0743	0748	-	0948	1048	1148	1248	1348	1448	1448	1628	1708	1808		
Moulton, Crossroads (E-bound)	0623	0643	0653	0723	-	0723	0745	0750	-	0950	1050	1150	1250	1350	1450	1450	1630	1710	1810		
Kentford, Post Office (N-bound)	0625	0645	0655	0725	-	0725	0750	0755	-	0955	1055	1155	1255	1355	1455	1455	1635	1715	1815		
Kennett, Railway Station (nr)	0626	0646	0656	0726	-	0726	0800	0805	-	1005	1105	1205	1305	1405	1505	1505	1645	1725	1825		
Red Lodge, Spearmint Way (adj)	0631	0651	0701	0731	-	0731	0801	0806	0906	1006	1106	1206	1306	1406	1506	1506	1646	1726	1826		
Red Lodge, Horseshoe Drive (adj)	0632	0652	0702	0732	-	0732	0806	0811	0911	1011	1111	1211	1311	1411	1511	1511	1651	1731	1831		
Red Lodge, Laurel Close (adj)	0634	0654	0704	0734	-	0734	0807	0812	0912	1012	1112	1212	1312	1412	1512	1512	1652	1732	1832		
Red Lodge, Ash Court (opp)	0636	0656	0706	0736	-	0736	0810	0814	0914	1014	1114	1214	1314	1414	1514	1514	1654	1734	1834		
Red Lodge, Thistle Way (opp)	0638	0658	0708	0738	-	0738	0812	0816	0916	1016	1116	1216	1316	1416	1516	1516	1656	1736	1836		
Worlington, Walnut Tree (N-bound)	0644	0704	0714	0744	-	0744	0815	0818	0918	1018	1118	1218	1318	1418	1518	1518	1658	1738	1838		
Mildenhall, Bus Station (Stand A)	arr 0648	0708	0718	0748	-	0748	0822	0824	0924	1024	1124	1224	1324	1424	1524	1524	1704	1744	1844		
Mildenhall, Bus Station (Stand A)	dep -	0710	0720	-	0750	0755	0840	0930	1030	1130	1230	1330	1430	1530	1530	1710	1750	-	-		

The undoubted consequence of this disconnection in public transport integration is;

- Greater car use and increased carbon emissions
- Potential discouragement of commuting to Cambridge/Bury reducing income levels and the economic activity in the community, with potential effect on benefits and health
- Lower use of public transport reducing potential profits and requiring higher public subsidy
- Lower levels of public mobility with discriminatory potential

6. Notes on Meeting with Abellio Greater Anglia

Fact	Desirable
Abellio doesn't meet with local bus operators to agree an integration strategy.	All public transport companies should be encouraged to work together to better serve our constituents
Remarkably no railway station currently has a travel plan.	This should be encouraged to help produce a truly integrated public transport strategy.
It should be noted that Abellio has no assets. Trains, stations, offices, rolling stock, buildings and car parks are leased from Network Rail.	Train operating companies should be encouraged to set out their investment strategy as part of their franchise agreement.
Trains stop alternately at either Dullingham and Kennett every hour (so every 2 hours at each station) because the extra 4 minutes stop would affect the main line crossover at Cambridge.	Abellio should be encouraged to add an hourly stop at Kennett, especially around rush hour in either direction.
The inability to stop at all stations is also caused by the slow acceleration of diesel trains. Electric trains can depart quicker gaining extra time.	Electrification of the Cambridge/Ipswich line is not currently being planned and would require government investment.
The current service on the Cambridge/Ipswich line is hourly. But why not half hourly?	Abellio stated that diesel trains lack acceleration which affects timetabling. They also stated that there are a few restrictions on the line (such as some single tracks, some speed restrictions down to 10mph, and mainline cross-overs which would delay express trains. More services could be added therefore following major investment in the track. Also there is currently a national shortage of diesel rolling stock.
Newmarket has over 300k passengers per annum, and Kennett 50k. Newmarket becomes congested regularly.	Abellio should be encouraged to assess how many passengers from Kennett and other stations use Newmarket because of fewer local services. Perhaps pressure on Newmarket could be alleviated?
Newmarket has recently received new shelters, a	These works were only possible as the line made a

ticket machine (cost £30k) and digital information board. Kennett has had its platforms resurfaced, new shelters added. Digital signs are to be installed but not a ticket machine.	larger profit than expected. Abellio has one shareholder (the Dutch government) and if Abellio wins the new franchise they intend to continue with upgrading of other stations. The council should encourage the new operator to consult on the investment programme.
The car park at Newmarket has been relined. The Kennett car park remains unmade.	The train operator should be encouraged to provide a tarmac car park and also create a bus stop near the entrance.
I expressed concern about overcrowding of carriages at rush (with many passengers having to stand).	Abellio confirmed they had recently added a third carriage to the service but overcrowding persisted
Abellio's franchise was only 2+2 years which affected investment.	The new franchise, to be announced in June 2016, will be for 9+1 until Oct 2025 and will give the successful operator more opportunity for return of investment.
In respect of the new franchise, Forest Heath was a consultee of Network Rail on improving connectivity (March 2015), and those companies bidding for the franchise had recently received a letter from the MPs for West Suffolk, Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds, requesting consideration of electrification of the line, half hourly services, more trains, better toilet, wifi and direct services to London.	Regrettably none of these local necessities have been included as requirements in the tender document for the new franchise. It is now too late to influence this as the submissions are being made currently. Councils and members of parliament should consider how they influence future tenders.

7. References

Letter from Cllr. Rona Burt to Improving Connectivity Network Rail (ref RB/LW/CAR) 3rd March 2015

Letter from Newmarket Vision to East Anglia Franchise Consultation (ref NVTG Rail) 16th March 2015

Letter from Suffolk MPs

