

RAIL ACTION GROUP, EAST OF SCOTLAND (RAGES)

RAGES Committee Meeting

24th. August 2022, 2pm East Linton Community Hall

1. Welcome and Apologies.

Barrie opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.

Attended: Barrie Forrest BEM, Allison Cosgrove, Tom Thorburn, Tom Dickson, Ian Bowman.

Apologies: Stewart Leslie, Glenn Moulding.

2. Approval of Minutes of meeting held on 22nd. June 2022

Minutes of previous meeting were approved subject to removing Tom Thorburn as an attendee and changing £78.40 to £56.40 in the Treasurers report section.

3. Matters Arising from Minutes.

Revised constitution has been circulated to committee members and approved.

4. Station Reports

- Berwick

Barrie reported that the station seems to be busy, but there are still people travelling from the Reston area choosing to travel from Berwick due to the continued issue with TPE trains being cancelled and the cost of train tickets.

- Dunbar

Tom reported that based on observation when travelling to/from Dunbar that the station seems to be busy and also the ticket office is busy. Ian however reported that that there are still empty car park spaces which were previously filled pre-pandemic.

The proposed car park extension for Dunbar has been cancelled, see the reply that Tom D got from Scott Prentice ScotRail:-

'Good morning Tom

I hope you are well and thanks for the query. We took the members of the East Lothian Council rail forum through this in detail, and whilst I recall some RAGES members being present, I know you weren't in attendance.

Dunbar currently has 50 car parking spaces. Network Rail's proposal to convert the waste land to the north of the existing car park into more spaces would increase the number of spaces to around 88 whilst also providing a layout which is easier for vehicles to manoeuvre in. Unfortunately the estimated cost of the works was £1.5m in addition to the funds already spend on design work already. This is some order of magnitude more than the usual "going rate" for constructing a new car parking space. In conjunction with Network Rail we examined some options to amend the scope of the works and reduce cost. However we weren't able to reduce cost sufficiently to be able to justify requesting substantial funding from Transport Scotland and the taxpayer. There is also some uncertainty as to how Dunbar will be used in future with the pandemic resulting in fewer commuting

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journeys across the country and the new stations at Reston and East Linton will also abstract some journeys.

In short, we just wouldn't have been able to justify the funding.

However we do recognise that if we want to grow use of rail beyond pre-pandemic levels, we do need to make accessing stations easier for customers. As a result John Lauder, the director of Sustrans in Scotland, has been seconded to the rail industry for 18 months to prepare a strategy to improve sustainable access to stations. He will work with local authorities, RTP's, active travel and mobility groups as well as bus operators to make a pitch for the increase in active travel funding Scottish Government has committed for 2024 onwards. John has already started work and we have directed him to East Lothian where there is a proactive local authority as a partner and some integrated transport schemes on the shelf. The plan is to do some trial projects to prove what can work in different parts of the country – I would hope that one of the stations in East Lothian forms one of the trials.

I hope this clarifies the position and please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Best wishes

Scott'

Action – Tom D to write letter to P McLennan and P Forsyth regarding the cancellation of the car park extension.

Allison suggested carrying out another passenger count survey at Dunbar, but this will have to wait until a full timetable has been reinstated for Dunbar.

- East Linton & Markle

Construction work is progressing at East Linton. Piling work continues in preparation for the installation of the lift towers and bridge.

Scotrail have been in contact with Dunpender Community Council regarding accessibility issues for East Linton. DCC forwarded the request on to John Swift chairperson of the local access panel.

Markle – Agreement has been reached with the land owners over purchase of the land required for the new flyover, survey work has taken place

Action: Allison to contact Allan Brooking network Rail for update on Markle.

- Haddington

RAGES attended Haddington Farmers Market on Saturday 30th. July. Another successful day with Ian, Tom D and Allison in attendance. Good engagement and interest from the public.

The RAGES 2022 AGM date and venue has been confirmed. Thursday 29th. September, 7.00 to 9.00pm at Knox Academy Haddington.

- North Berwick & Drem

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Allison reported that both Drem and North Berwick car parks are very busy.

John Wilson ScotRail meeting Harry Barker East Lothian CRP to visit all stations from Musselburgh onwards.

- Reston

There is an absence of road signage for Reston Railway Station, Barrie and Tom T has been in contact with SBC. It is the intention to fit temporary signage followed by permanent signs.

Allan Brooking and Rebecca Meechan Network Rail visited Reston to interview Barrie and to make a promotional video about Reston Railway Station.

5. Membership Report.

Tom D reported that RAGES has 232 members, of which 139 have renewed leaving 93 members still to renew. New members since 01/01/2022 – 23. There are 22 members associated with East Linton station, 21 members associated with Haddington. There are 49 members still to renew who are associated with Reston.

6. Treasurers Report.

Ian provided the following treasurers update –

Income: -

Seven ordinary members and two corporate members - £48.00

Expenditure: -

Lothian Printers for Haddington flyers - £24.00

East Linton Hall hire for June meeting - £14.00

Tweed Valley Rail Campaign membership - £5.00

500 RAGES leaflets - Jill Taylor - £199.00

Cook Computing - website support - £50.00

Total - £292.00

Balance in bank £1840.77 on 24/8/22

Ian gave an update on progressing the Treasurers Account from the current paper and cheque based account to an on-line version. It is proposed that the new account signatories for the on-line account would be Ian Bowman, Tom Thorburn and Tom Dickson. The proposed signatories were approved at the meeting.

7. Haddington Farmers Market

See update under Haddington station report.

8. Correspondence and Meetings attended

Meetings attended and correspondence received

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04/07/2022 East Lothian Rail Steering Group Meeting

30/07/2022 Haddington Farmers Market

07/08/2022, Barrie and Tom D visited Print Spot, commercial printer, at Berwick upon Tweed. Kevin has completed the text edits and is now awaiting ScotRail train pictures to complete the work. Tom D will provide the pictures.

Future Meetings

05/07/2022 RAGES presentation for SENRUG at Morpeth, Barrie, Tom T & Tom D attended.

28/08/2022 Dunpender Community Fair, Allison & Tom attending.

30/08/2022 East Lothian Rail Steering Group Meeting.

02/09/2022 Barrie, Tom T & Tom D meeting with G. Meiklejohn TPE at St. Abbs.

06/09/2022 LNER Forum, Barrie and Tom attending.

03 & 04/09/2022 Aln Valley Model railway Exhibition, Tom T, Barrie, Allison & Tom D attending.

19/10/2022 RAGES presentation for Duns Probus Group.

26/10/2022 RAGES presentation for Reston Women's Guild.

9. Next RAG

Discussion took place about missing the window for sending out a RAG with the AGM invitation. It was agreed that we would target a winter issue of the RAG with a merry Christmas message included in the RAG.

10. TVRC visit to Reston update

The TVRC committee visited Reston on the evening of 11/05/2022 and were given a tour of the site. They thanked us very much for our hospitality.

The committee agreed that RAGES should become a member of TVRC. Tom D to complete the application form.

11. AOCB.

When next at Print Spot Tom and Barrie to enquire about the cost of producing a Christmas card.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 19th. September 2.30pm – Zoom meeting.