

Local view

WRITTEN BY

BARRY COWARD



Work on railways is long overdue

Over the last couple of months, Gainsborough has featured in the columns of Rail Magazine.

The considerable exposure of the plight of Gainsborough's railways has resulted in some action.

East Midland Trains have, after three years of asking, replaced the lighting in the ramp to platform two at Lea Road station.

However, the ramp continues to slide down the embankment.

Another consequence of the coverage in Rail Magazine was an invitation to our colleague Paul Johnson of the Friends of

the Brigg and Lincoln Lines to join Network Rail's Northern Lincolnshire working group.

This body will suggest to Network Rail infrastructure works needed between 2019 and 2024.

Of course we will press for improvements to the despicable state of our stations.

But in addition, we shall make a case for a spur line to connect Gainsborough Central with Lea Road which will route freight trains away from Lincoln High Street level crossing and enable passenger trains from all directions including Lincoln to reach Gainsborough Central station.

Among the visitors to Gainsborough that have come to see



East Midlands Trains have replaced lighting at Lea Road

for themselves the state of our transport infrastructure was Anthony Smith, chief executive of Transport Focus – a body

charged by the Government to represent the needs of rail and bus passengers, as well as road users.

Having travelled from London to Retford on Hull Trains, he stepped back in time to travel on our beloved Pacer train to Lea Road.

Here he admired the excellent work done by the Friends of Lea Road Station volunteers, while at the same time observing the lack of maintenance carried out by East Midland Trains.

As for Gainsborough Central, Mr Smith felt it gave out the wrong impression of the town.

We concluded our tour at the Old Hall where town centre manager Samantha Mellows explained the significance of Mayflower 400 upon our town.

Read Samantha's column in the Standard next week.

Anthony Smith is not the on-

ly visitor we have toured around Gainsborough of late.

An official from one of the three companies bidding to run Northern rail from next year was also appalled at the state of our stations while exclaiming 'wow' on entering the Old Hall.

He asked why Gainsborough was not already on the national tourist map.

Finally just a reminder that the 98 bus to Doncaster makes excellent connections with trains in all directions.

Especially useful is the 6am bus which can connect you to trains arriving in London or Newcastle by 8.30am.

The bus fare is also cheaper than the £15 charged for parking all day at Doncaster station.