

## EAST SUFFOLK TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

### ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021/2

Our Annual General Meeting in July 2021 was the first one in person for two years and had to be held with social distancing – but it took place, in Saxmundham, and heralded a gradual return to more normal activity. This included mounting a “Days Out” exhibition in Lowestoft (with support from the Wherry Lines Community Rail Partnership), distributing the three train & bus leaflets originally produced for 2020 and in October conducting our first survey for two years. We held two well attended public meetings, in Lowestoft and Woodbridge and were also able to hold our usual Christmas Meal – this time in Halesworth.

Something new was the Katch electric minibus, with which we organised two excursions to Framlingham for our members. Thanks to digital technology we were able to hold some committee meetings by Zoom or TEAMS and ESTA representatives were also able to use this method for some dialogue with politicians and managers – but as restrictions eased some in-person meetings also resumed. In future we shall probably use both types of meeting as appropriate.

ESTA submitted comments on the Government’s Bus Back Better paper and then on the Suffolk County Council Bus Service Improvement Plan. We were disappointed by the Government’s response to the latter, but are continuing dialogue with relevant decision makers.

ESTA also responded to other consultations, including Network Rail’s on Ely, East Suffolk Council’s on The Visitor Economy and the Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan.

We have continued to use every opportunity to put the case for a better bus service along the Southwold – Halesworth – Norwich corridor; some Lowestoft - Liverpool Street through trains; and the reintroduction of paper timetables for trains and buses.

ESTA has worked with neighbouring user groups where appropriate – Felixstowe Travel Watch showed our exhibition for two weeks in the summer, for example and the East Norfolk Transport Users' Association allow us to display our material on their boards where relevant.

ESTA NEWS has continued to appear each quarter and our volunteers have kept our notice boards up to date. We held a stall at the East Anglia Transport Museum trolleybus weekend, when visitors were also able to see some of our exhibition material. Our website has been regularly updated and posters have been produced to advise the travelling public about engineering work and temporary service changes.

During the winter of 2022 we decided to go ahead with five train & bus leaflets – three updated ones and two completely new ones. These have now been produced and we are grateful to four outside bodies for helping with the cost. These now provide an attractive shop window to help boost usage of our local public transport links.

Thanks are due to all our members for their support during the past twelve months. In a voluntary body changing personal circumstances may cause some to be less active but also enable others to play a bigger role. We therefore welcome new offers to help and new ideas on how to develop our campaigning in the future.

Trevor Garrod

Chairman

21/05/2022