Lucy Wright: Hello and welcome to this episode of Life on Rails. I'm Lucy Wright.

Juliette Maxam: And I'm Juliette Maxam.

Lucy Wright: We work in PR at Greater Anglia and host this podcast, all about one of the UK's largest train companies.

Juliette Maxam: In this episode, we speak to Dame Trott, aka actor Richard Gauntlett, who has a starring role in this year's panto at Norwich Theatre Royal.

Dame Trott: I am a very, very busy person plus I'm, obviously, chairwoman of the Norwich WI, obviously, and I do play in their basketball team.

Lucy Wright: Wow, I didn't expect that.

Juliette Maxam: Our resident fares guru, Ken Strong.

Ken Strong: You can either go out clubbing, spend all night raving in London and have a bit of breakfast somewhere and then jump on the first train back in the morning, or you can have a bit of a lie in, hotel breakfast, and then come back at a leisurely time mid- morning.

Juliette Maxam: Alan Neville, Greater Anglia's community and customer engagement manager.

Alan Neville: They were rewarded in the autumn with the arrival of a spectacular colored moth, which is actually normally only seen on the south coast.

Juliette Maxam: And Keely Lopes, Head of Business Readiness.

Keely Lopes: Trying to launch new trains during a global pandemic was not something I'd factored into the planning but we did it with so much commitment and hard work from everybody within the business.

Juliette Maxam: Lucy and I will also be hosting a myth buster section all about the train service at Christmas.

Lucy Wright: To kick things off, though, we're going to speak to Ben Brandon, Greater Anglia's train planning manager.

 For today's Meet A Member Of Staff I am joined by Ben Brandon. Ben manages our team of train planners, and it's perhaps not a well known job. When people think of the railway they think of drivers, conductors, station staff. I don't think people would immediately think of a train planner but train planners are so, so important to our organization and we've got a really great team here. So, Ben, thank you so much for joining me.

Ben Brandon: You're welcome.

Lucy Wright: For anyone listening who doesn't know, can you just tell me a bit about the train planning team, the role of a train planner and the work you do?

Ben Brandon: Yeah, I can. Basically the train planning team are in control of creating the timetables for the railway but as well as that they create resource diagrams, so that would be deciding what train is going to be working on which leg of each journey, but also what train crew, so drivers and conductors where they're needed, and they will try and diagram those as efficiently as possible to get best value for money for the taxpayer.

Lucy Wright: So every single train that runs and every person working on that train, that comes from your department?

Ben Brandon: Yes. Yeah. I mean, well, I say everything, everything planned comes from my department. Anything that happens on the day, disruption, is dealt with the Control department who do a stellar job of getting things going again. But yeah, everything planned, all journey times, all connections, and not just with our own trains but meeting in with other TOCs, making sure we're not clashing with freight, everything like that, yeah, my team deals with.

Lucy Wright: Ben, you just said TOCs there. Can you explain for anyone listening who doesn't know, what is a TOC?

Ben Brandon: Okay, a TOC is a train operating company. There are also FOCs, which are freight operating companies.

Lucy Wright: Sounds like a massive Tetris puzzle. It sounds stressful.

Ben Brandon: Yes, it can be. It can be stressful when you've got very tight timelines to deal with. So, things like when we've been doing planning for the short notice events and things you're really up against it, you're trying to get a plan in so that you can let the customer know what the timetable's going to be as quickly as possible. But with all the checks and processes we have to go to and the specific rules we have to follow, it's not always as easy to respond as quickly as we'd like.

Lucy Wright: No, I think that's a really important point because sometimes you're working months and months in advance when you know what planned engineering works are going to happen but then sometimes we might get notice of a very large event, a football match, a concert which is being held in a couple of weeks, and if possible you try and put on extra trains, don't you?

Ben Brandon: Yes. Yeah. Where we can, we'll try and put on additional services. Where we can't put on additional services we'll try and strengthen all the trains that are running around that route to try and give us maximum capacity for the customer as we can.

Lucy Wright: Is that an easy thing to do? I think people think, " Oh, there's an event in a couple of weeks, why can't you run 10 extra trains?"

Ben Brandon: No, it's not an easy thing to do. I mean, we'd love to put on as many trains as we can, but there are some very strict guidelines we have to follow when we're planning. It's all part of the network code that Network Rail provides. So on a certain section of route, if we give the West Anglia route as an example, for events happening at Tottenham, there are certain limits like headways and things where you're only allowed to have a maximum amount of time between each service that you run. So you can't get any closer than two minutes to the train in front because of the signal system that works. There's a finite number of trains you can have running in that time.

Lucy Wright: And I think it's just worth saying for anyone who doesn't know, because I wouldn't have known this unless I worked for the railway, we can't just write a timetable and go and run it. We have to write it and send it to Network Rail and bid, basically, ask them if we can run those trains. Is that right?

Ben Brandon: Yes. Yeah. We bid our timetable to Network Rail who are the custodians of the network. They will then sit there, look at what we have bid, they will make sure it doesn't clash with other TOCs and FOCs and then give it back to us. And we also have rules on the amount of trains we're allowed to run.

Lucy Wright: You guys do such a great job, you and your teams, it's not an easy job, but I'm a big fan of the train planners. What's the best part of your role? What's the most satisfying thing?

Ben Brandon: For me, it's the team. And I know that sounds a bit corny but they are such a good team to manage. It makes my life very, very easy in that I know that whatever gets thrown at us, they're such a strong team and they're willing to pull out all the stops and do all they can to get the requests done and over the line that, yeah, it's just a joy to work for them. Well, yeah, I work for them. They don't work for me. It's all good.

Lucy Wright: That's such a nice thing to say. I wonder if Juliette says that about me.

Ben Brandon: I'm sure she does.

Lucy Wright: That was great. Thank you so much for joining me, Ben.

Ben Brandon: That's okay. Thanks for having me.

Lucy Wright: It's December, Christmas is coming and whether you are heading to London for a party, meeting up with friends or going to the capital to see the lights, we are going to help you get there for less. We've got two tickets, London Evening Out and London Night Out, which offer great savings and here to tell us all about them is our fares guru, Ken Strong. Welcome back, Ken.

Ken Strong: Thank you for having me back.

Lucy Wright: Happy Christmas and happy birthday because you are indeed born on Christmas Day, aren't you?

Ken Strong: I was, yes, this is true.

Lucy Wright: So just tell me what is the difference between the London Evening Out and the London Night Out ticket?

Ken Strong: Well, the London Evening Out ticket allows you to go... It doesn't cover the whole of our network but it covers the lines from Norwich plus the branch lines and from Clacton and towards Colchester and into London. And it's a ticket to take you into London for, as the name suggests, an evening out. And you can go anytime after 14: 00, two o'clock in the afternoon, and return anytime after 19:00, seven o'clock in the evening until the last train that evening. But the important point is that the outward train is booked like an advanced ticket so you have a specific train booking on your train towards London but on your return you're free to take any train after 19:00, seven o'clock in the evening. So it's a very flexible ticket at a very good price, £ 25 return and £ 39 for first class.

Lucy Wright: So that's really good value. Can people buy them online? Where can they be bought?

Ken Strong: They can buy them online. It comes up if you put in a search so that the times of your journey fit the times of this ticket, it will show as a valid, an available, ticket on the GA website or the GA app and you can also buy them at the ticket office.

Lucy Wright: And whereabouts can people use them on the network because they're not for everywhere on the network, are they?

Ken Strong: No. You can use them on the Norwich main line into London, so Norwich, Diss, Stowmarket and Ipswich into London. Also on the Clacton line, Clacton towards Colchester, and also the branch lines that connect in with those services, so from the likes of Bury St. Edmunds and Lowestoft and Yarmouth and Sheringham and so on, to travel into London.

Lucy Wright: So someone can buy this ticket, it's £ 25, and they can go to London and back, for £ 25, from Sheringham.

Ken Strong: Yes, that's right. It's very good value.

Lucy Wright: That is really good value, isn't it?

Ken Strong: It is.

Lucy Wright: And how about London Night Out? Tell me all about that.

Ken Strong: Well, the London Night Out ticket is very similar except, as the name suggests, you actually spend the night in London and come back the next morning. On the outward journey it's the same as the London Evening Out, you have to have a specific booking on a specific train and, again, it's after two o'clock in the afternoon, 14: 00, and then you stay the night in London and you can come back on any train between the start of service and 12 o'clock, except on a weekday you can't travel between seven o'clock and eight o'clock inclusive.

Lucy Wright: Okay, so it allows a bit of time for the hotel breakfast and a bit of a lie in and then come back.

Ken Strong: You can do it either way. You can either go out clubbing, spend all night raving in London and have a bit of breakfast somewhere and then jump on the first train back in the morning. Or you can have your hotel breakfast, a bit of a lie in, hotel breakfast and then come back at a leisurely time mid- morning.

Lucy Wright: I think that sounds perfect. Brilliant. Thank you so much, Ken.

Ken Strong: Thank you.

Juliette Maxam: It's time for our new train slot and this time we are joined by Keely Lopes, Head of Business Readiness at Greater Anglia. Hello, Keely.

Keely Lopes: Good morning, Juliette. How are you?

Juliette Maxam: Very well, thank you. Thanks for joining us.

Keely Lopes: No problem.

Juliette Maxam: So I've got to ask you, what is business readiness?

Keely Lopes: So business readiness is all about getting the business ready for a certain project. In this case, getting the business ready for the delivery of our new trains, making sure all departments within Greater Anglia are joined up, understand the plan of action, and are basically making sure we are ready to introduce the new trains onto the different parts of our network.

Juliette Maxam: And it's 191 new trains, isn't it, in total that we're getting? How did you get the business ready for all of these trains which are longer than the trains that they replaced?

Keely Lopes: They are indeed, Juliette. It takes an awful lot of planning that started quite a few years ago now. We needed to make sure that the infrastructure, for starters, was ready for the introduction of the new trains onto our network, that all of our colleagues across the business were trained and briefed on the new trains, that our planning departments were very clear on how and when we'd introduce each new train onto what route, onto what part of the network, and how they would be serviced and cleaned, for example. We also had to consider the removal of our older trains, our legacy fleet, how and when they would be removed and when they would be returned back to the owner.

Juliette Maxam: And when you talk about getting the infrastructure ready, what do you mean? Do you mean the stations, the signs, all sorts of things like that?

Keely Lopes: Yes, many different elements to that, for example stop boards, where the driver stops at a platform to make sure all the stepping distances are compliant, for example.

Juliette Maxam: What are stepping distances?

Keely Lopes: The gap between the train and the platform.

Juliette Maxam: Now, recently you've involved the PR department in a large piece of work, which is getting people ready for longer trains at stations where the platforms aren't as long as the trains.

Keely Lopes: Yeah, that's correct.

Juliette Maxam: How did you work out what carriage people need to get on and off at different stations?

Keely Lopes: So, as you said, some of our new, longer trains are longer than the platforms at a certain number of our stations. Initially, an assessment of each platform at each station in each direction was undertaken and then confirmed by a process called route proving where, basically, you take the train itself, of all the different lengths that train can be, out to each platform at each station in each direction that that train can travel and then that confirmed the initial assessment that was done. And basically we used this information to advise customers before the trains, the longer trains in particular, were launched.

 By various different means, as you refer to, the train itself via the passenger information system, will tell customers how far forward or backwards they have to move to be able to alight at the next station. The information screens on the platform also have that information. The announcements at the station for each individual service also have that information. It's on our website. There's posters at stations. We've even, as you know, launched social media videos to advise customers of how to know where to be, to be able to get off the train. And also we provided onboard support for the first four to six weeks after we launched our first longer trains.

Juliette Maxam: I think you've done an incredibly thorough job on it. Do you think customers have appreciated it?

Keely Lopes: Initially they appreciated the onboard support in particular, people actually being there telling customers actually, " This is one of our new longer trains. To be able to get off at the next station you need to move forward a few coaches." I really think they appreciated that initial support when the first longer trains were launched.

Juliette Maxam: Such a huge amount that goes into getting new trains, isn't it? I mean, I think if you don't work for the railway, you have no idea about the complexity.

Keely Lopes: There was an awful lot of work that went into the introduction of the new trains. Yes, correct.

Juliette Maxam: So what would you say has been the biggest challenge in getting ready for new trains?

Keely Lopes: So I think what we've just discussed about launching longer trains, that are longer than our platforms, where that's never been the case before, that was a challenge about thinking about how we would advise customers and we've tried every way we can to do so. But I suppose also Covid, trying to launch new trains during a global pandemic was not something I'd factored into the planning but we did it with so much commitment and hard work from everybody within the business that assisted in the launch of the new trains.

Juliette Maxam: Well done, Keely. I think you've done a great job.

Keely Lopes: Thank you, Juliette.

Juliette Maxam: I'm sure the customers, who do seem to love our new trains, appreciate it because even during Covid we managed to train drivers and we introduced so many new trains on new routes that it's a transformed railway.

Keely Lopes: It is indeed, yes.

Juliette Maxam: So thanks very much, Keely.

Keely Lopes: Thanks, Juliette.

Lucy Wright: For today's Myth Buster slot I'm joined by my co- host Juliette Maxam to discuss one of my favorite topics, Christmas. We're going to be talking about Christmas on the railway. Welcome, Juliette. Happy Christmas.

Juliette Maxam: Happy Christmas to you. We both love Christmas, don't we, Lucy?

Lucy Wright: No, we really do. I love Christmas so much.

Juliette Maxam: It's brilliant. Yeah. Christmas trees, sparkly lights, sequins. Oh, you can't beat it.

Lucy Wright: Everything. Not everyone is at home having turkey, tinsel, tree on Christmas Day, are they? Because some people are still working for the railway. We have people in our control center on Christmas Day, don't we?

Juliette Maxam: That's right. We don't run trains on Christmas Day. It's the only day of the year when we don't run trains. But we've still got people working. We've got people in Control, like you say, we've got them in the depots preparing the trains to go out on Boxing Day and we've got people on call, you and me on call, press on call, but also people who are concerned with our buildings, IT, security. And, remember, the railway is a 24- hour operation and although we are not running on Christmas Day there may be freight trains, there may be Network Rail engineering trains, especially as Christmas is a good time for engineering works, of course.

Lucy Wright: And, like you said earlier, we have people in the depots getting the trains ready for the next day, Boxing Day. We only run Stansted Express services, don't we? So airport services to and from London.

Juliette Maxam: That's right because traditionally, across the whole country, not many people used to travel on Boxing Day and so the railway as a whole decided not to run services on Boxing Day except for specific services to airports because airports are still working and people still need to get to them. So our Stansted Express service, the quickest way to get to Stansted Airport from London, still runs on Boxing Day.

Lucy Wright: And a question, not from me, from our listeners. This question gets asked quite a lot. Why is there always engineering work at Christmas?

Juliette Maxam: Well, good question. There's not many people travel at Christmas. People tend to take a couple of weeks off if they can so we don't have our commuters traveling. People tend to just stay at home and so it's a really good opportunity to get some engineering work done because it's inconveniencing people the least. And it's also because there are so many bank holidays and holidays, it's a good long stretch of time for Network Rail engineers to really get stuck in. So for Network Rail engineers it's not a great time of year. They certainly aren't spending Christmas with their families. They're spending Christmas making the railway better for all of us.

Lucy Wright: And what should passengers do if they're thinking of traveling at Christmas?

Juliette Maxam: Definitely check before you travel. It's what we always say. It's not just that there may be some engineering works, there's also bank holidays and on bank holidays we run different timetables. And of course if you are going to travel and there's engineering works, doesn't mean you can't travel. It just means that part of the service is by a bus. And the rail replacement bus service is a very good service and if you want to find out more about them listen back to Episode Seven of the podcast to find out all about them.

Lucy Wright: Brilliant. Thank you so much Juliette, and happy Christmas.

Juliette Maxam: Happy Christmas to you, too. And to all of our listeners

Lucy Wright: In this episode's Greener Anglia section I'm here with Alan Neville, Greater Anglia's community and customer engagement manager. Alan manages our team of station adopters across the network. Welcome, Alan. Thanks for joining me.

Alan Neville: Thank you very much.

Lucy Wright: So tell me, what is the role of a station adopter?

Alan Neville: So a station adopter volunteer is, as it says, it's a volunteer. And we are just absolutely privileged to have this great big team of people who are helping us constantly on and around our stations. It's about asking volunteers who come forward to help improve a station or to increase its positive links with the communities. And we've developed this initiative now over the last 20 years to the point now where we have actually over 300 station adopters and 126 stations actually adopted.

Lucy Wright: Oh, wonderful. I know that people listening will have seen some of the work of our adopters as they travel through. They look really beautiful. There's a lot of work which is done specifically to benefit the environment as well, isn't there? So tell me about some of the initiatives because we've had a few bug and bee hotels, we've had all kinds of initiatives to save water, to rewild some areas to give it back to nature, haven't we?

Alan Neville: Absolutely. And certainly this is something we've developed in the last few years. We've got some really amazing things out there. We've got bee and bug hotels on stations aplenty. We've developed lots of water saving initiatives. We've lots of water butts and intricate pipe work fixed to waiting shelters et cetera which actually, if you like, harvest rainwater because we have, these days, to do the best for the environment. And we are also doing some work with Wild East and Wildlife Accreditations.

Lucy Wright: We've recently created a new category of the Annual Adopter Awards, haven't we, which is focused on innovation and the environment, so can you tell me a bit about who was the last, or first, group to win that award?

Alan Neville: Yes. We recently created this category for the awards and it was an idea I had because I knew that all the time our adopters were coming up with some very, very special ideas focused on the environment and focused on innovation and I wanted this to be recognized. So, in actual fact, we've had a highly commended, which was Thetford, and a special award, the winner, which was Shelford. Now, Thetford, there's a whole team of people who've been focused, in 2022, on developing little homes for birds on the station, again, with the work they've already been doing in terms of planting plants and foliage which will attract wildlife.

 And our winner, Shelford, what can I say about Shelford? Just the most amazing twosome there, Phil and Catherine, who've developed a wildlife garden on the edges of the station behind the fencing and they record all the wildlife, the bees, the butterflies, the moths, which actually come to that garden and all that is noted in a special book, which is in the ticket office with the photographs which are actually pinned up against the wall for people to actually see. They've charted the arrivals of butterflies and moths over 2022 and our customers just absolutely love it. And in 2022, later in the year, they've started to develop this special moth garden, which will attract special moths.

Lucy Wright: Oh, lovely.

Alan Neville: And in actual fact, they were rewarded in the autumn with the arrival of a spectacular colored moth. They sent me the picture, which is actually normally only seen on the south coast.

Lucy Wright: I don't think people would think of a rail station being a place to attract a rare moth.

Alan Neville: Well, they don't, no, but in actual fact, on either side of railway lines, apart from the area where there's housing development or towns or cities, there's huge amounts of areas of grassland, trees, shrubs, et cetera and, as my colleague once said, " These are the motorways for our wildlife."

Lucy Wright: I love that.

Alan Neville: So it is just amazing that our adopters want to work with that and develop these station ideas.

Lucy Wright: And if anyone listening would like to be an adopter, do we have any openings?

Alan Neville: We do, and if they go onto our website, then look up station adoption, they'll find the details on how to contact us.

Lucy Wright: Brilliant. Come and join us. We would love to have you. Alan, thank you so much for joining me. And thank you so much to all of the station adopters for their continued hard work. We really, really appreciate them.

Alan Neville: Thank you.

Lucy Wright: We are in a very special location for today's travel surgery. We are back at Norwich Theatre Royal with Dame Trott.

Dame Trott: Good morning.

Lucy Wright: Good morning.

Dame Trott: How lovely to be here so early in the morning. I would've still been in bed, I must be honest, but I'm not. I'm up now. You've got me up.

Lucy Wright: Well, thank you so much for joining us. You are in this year's Norwich Theatre Royal pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk.

Dame Trott: Jack and the Beanstalk, yes. 10th of December we open to the general public and then we run to the 7th of January. So we're really looking forward to it.

Lucy Wright: Lots of opportunities to see you over the festive period.

Dame Trott: Yeah, oh yes, everyone's got to book their tickets now, I think, I suggest, otherwise they won't get the seats they want.

Lucy Wright: Exactly.

Dame Trott: That's the important thing, isn't it?

Lucy Wright: Very much. So, we want to just find out a bit about you today.

Dame Trott: Oh yeah.

Lucy Wright: And so we work for Greater Anglia, the train company.

Dame Trott: Oh, lovely.

Lucy Wright: And then we're going to send you on a destination. We'll find out a bit about you, find an appropriate destination and send you on your way.

Dame Trott: Lovely, that would be splendid. Does it have to be in Norfolk?

Lucy Wright: It doesn't. No. No. It depends, it depends.

Dame Trott: No, I'd prefer it in Norfolk but I just wondered if there were any parameters, you know, when I couldn't go to, say, I don't know, the Seychelles.

Lucy Wright: Not quite the Seychelles. We can manage London.

Dame Trott: Oh, London's good, we like London.

Juliette Maxam: Or Felixstowe, that's close to the Seychelles, isn't it?

Dame Trott: Felixstowe, yeah.

Lucy Wright: So tell us about you. You live on a farm in Norfolk with your son Jack, don't you?

Dame Trott: Yes. We live on a little dairy farm called Trotts Dairy Farm.

Lucy Wright: Oh, great name.

Dame Trott: I know. We sat around for a long time thinking that one up. But we have one cow called Pat and we run a dairy business. Yes. It's all very lovely.

Lucy Wright: Oh, lovely. It sounds idyllic. How's it going? How's business?

Dame Trott: It's going all right. It's going all right but we do have a dreadful giant, that's our only problem at the moment. We have a dreadful giant. We're trying to get rid of him.

Lucy Wright: Oh, no.

Dame Trott: But that'll happen. It'll all happen. It'll only take a couple of hours, I'm sure.

Juliette Maxam: What's so dreadful about this giant then?

Dame Trott: Well, giants are dreadful because they're dreadful, aren't they? They're just big. They're just big and they get in the way, don't they?

Lucy Wright: You are the most glamorous farmer I've ever seen. We have a lot of farmers in Norfolk and they don't all look like you.

Dame Trott: Thank you. No. Well, I think the fashion's gone out of farming. It's taken a few years but the fashion's gone from farming, which I think's a pity, I really do. I mean, you know, all those young farmers, they're asking for a decent suit, aren't they? Don't you think?

Lucy Wright: Well, I suppose if you've like corduroy and check...

Dame Trott: Asking for a decent suit, but no, but no, they just get muddy, don't they? So they don't. I think it's a shame. I like to put a lot of fashion into farming which is why I wear different dresses in different entrances, really.

Lucy Wright: A lot of dresses. I've heard, this year's pantomime, there are a lot of dresses.

Dame Trott: Yes. Well, I think I've always done it. I've always come on in a different dress every time I come on. So we've got to keep up tradition, haven't we? And now I'm approaching my mid to late 40s-

Lucy Wright: No.

Dame Trott: Thank you.

Lucy Wright: No, never.

Dame Trott: Correct response. I have been thinking a lot more about my clothes, obviously, and the little lady that makes them for me. And she's been beavering away for some new creations this year so we're looking forward to showing them off.

Lucy Wright: Oh, we're excited to see them.

Dame Trott: Oh good.

Lucy Wright: And how do you keep in such great shape?

Dame Trott: Oh, I go swimming every morning.

Lucy Wright: Every morning?

Dame Trott: Every morning in the sea. I have a nice swim in the sea. I don't run. You know, mention jogging to me, I'd run a mile. But I do like my Pilates and my Zumba, Zumba rhythm, I like that. That's the latest one, the Zumba rhythm, yeah.

Lucy Wright: Zumba rhythm?

Dame Trott: Yeah.

Juliette Maxam: And presumably you dress up for that too, I mean, leotard-

Dame Trott: No, just a stretch fabric, you know? Don't really have to dress up for that, do you? It's more like dressing down, really.

Lucy Wright: You're very busy.

Dame Trott: Very busy.

Lucy Wright: You have a son, you have a farm, Pilates, swimming daily. How do you do it?

Dame Trott: I like to keep myself busy. The days go quicker, don't they? You're not sitting around doing nothing. But I am a very, very busy person plus I'm, obviously, chairwoman of the WI, the Norwich WI, obviously, and I do play in their basketball team, so very busy.

Lucy Wright: Wow, I didn't expect that. Neither did you.

Juliette Maxam: And you make a lot of jam, presumably then, as well?

Dame Trott: Make an awful lot. No, we don't make jam, it's a dairy.

Juliette Maxam: Has she been out before?

Dame Trott: It's a dairy, you know? That's all milk goods.

Juliette Maxam: But I thought, as a member of the WI, surely, in your spare time...

Dame Trott: No, no, no, no. We don't do that anymore. That's all disbanded. WI, they're not allowed to make jam now, are they? Don't think they're allowed.

Lucy Wright: Just basketball.

Dame Trott: Just basketball. It's WI basketball club, obviously.

Lucy Wright: Obviously.

Dame Trott: Obviously.

Lucy Wright: So, I would say, " What you like doing in your spare time?" But I don't think you have a lot of it.

Dame Trott: I don't have a lot. Don't have a lot of spare time.

Lucy Wright: No. Any time for husband, partner, boyfriend?

Dame Trott: Well, my husband has left me, unfortunately.

Lucy Wright: Oh, no.

Juliette Maxam: I can't imagine why.

Dame Trott: Disappeared. He disappeared. It's unknown. It's unknown to the reason but I am presently looking but we'll see if something pops up, shall we?

Lucy Wright: Anyone who frequents the farm, maybe? Anyone at Pilates?

Dame Trott: Well, there is someone, yes, there is someone that I'm keeping an eye on at the moment but you'll have to come and see the show to find out who it is.

Juliette Maxam: So, well, we're very keen to get you on our trains. I imagine you could become an influencer. I mean, imagine that, Dame Trott.

Dame Trott: Yeah, they do have first class cabins?

Juliette Maxam: Oh, well, obviously, only first class for you, Dame Trott.

Dame Trott: Thank you.

Juliette Maxam: Do you like traveling by train?

Dame Trott: I do. I love a train. I love it. You can sit back with a book, can't you? I do love a train. Or nowadays with, I suppose, one of those new tablets that you can watch television things on.

Juliette Maxam: You can plug it in, in the USB ports.

Dame Trott: I love a train, yeah, I do like a train.

Juliette Maxam: Oh, brilliant. Now we are thinking, I mean, just look at you, I mean, you are splendid. I mean, what you're wearing, your makeup, your hair, it's just incredible so we want to send you to London.

Dame Trott: London, yeah, yeah, I'll go and see London. London would be nice. We could take in a show.

Lucy Wright: We could.

Dame Trott: Take in a show.

Juliette Maxam: Take in a show after, maybe, a trip down New Bond Street.

Dame Trott: New Bond Street, the shops.

Juliette Maxam: Yeah, the designer shops because, I mean, you just are obviously a designer person, aren't you, designer woman?

Dame Trott: It doesn't mean to say I never frequent George.

Lucy Wright: You can't beat Asda.

Dame Trott: You can't. You can't. I know.

Juliette Maxam: Or Primami.

Dame Trott: Oh, I mean, superb. For school uniform young Jack, oh yes.

Juliette Maxam: So we propose, we're going to give you a first class ticket.

Dame Trott: First class.

Juliette Maxam: Just a different experience with you in the cab and, yeah, so down to London. Send you there for... Maybe one of our London Evening Out tickets, do you think, Lucy?

Lucy Wright: Yes, so you can-

Dame Trott: London Evening Out?

Lucy Wright: Yep.

Dame Trott: What time's the last train back, may I ask?

Lucy Wright: So there's London Evening Out, London Night Out. So you can either come back on the last train, which is half past 11, or you can even stay over and then get the hotel breakfast the next day. Big fan.

Dame Trott: Marvelous.

Juliette Maxam: That's definitely the ticket for you and the destination for you. And all I can say is, " London, look out. Dame Trott's coming."

Dame Trott: London will be lovely.

Lucy Wright: But in the meantime, you're going to be at Norwich Theatre Royal from December the 10th until January the 7th.

Dame Trott: January the seventh. Yes. Yes. It's going to be there all the time.

Juliette Maxam: All the time?

Dame Trott: Daily shows, yeah. There's lots of different times so you've got to look at the times but if you want to come, yeah, come. We're all here all over the Christmas period, and we're (inaudible) .

Lucy Wright: It's not Christmas without panto.

Dame Trott: It isn't. I don't know Christmas without Panto.

Lucy Wright: No, you really don't do you.

Dame Trott: I really don't.

Lucy Wright: Brilliant. Well, thank you so much for joining us today. Enjoy London. Are you going to be taking Jack with you or somebody else?

Dame Trott: Probably not.

Lucy Wright: No?

Dame Trott: Probably not.

Lucy Wright: Solo trip.

Juliette Maxam: Someone special that you've got your eye on that you mentioned, maybe-

Dame Trott: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Oh no, definitely, definitely. If he happens to pop onto the train, who knows what will happen.

Lucy Wright: Oh dear. Have a good time. Thank you.

Juliette Maxam: I think we'll have to warn the conductors.

Dame Trott: Thank you very much. Thank you very much.

Lucy Wright: That brings us to the end of this Life on Rails episode. We hope you've enjoyed learning new things about Greater Anglia.

Juliette Maxam: If so, let us know on Twitter @ GreaterAngliaPR and leave a rating or review on your podcast platform.

Lucy Wright: Life on Rails releases every other month so we'll be back then for Episode Nine.

Juliette Maxam: While you wait, follow or subscribe to the podcast and visit our website at greateranglia. co. uk/ podcast for more information.

Lucy Wright: Thanks for listening.