

# RAILFUTURE WESSEX BRANCH (RFW)

AGM 17 MARCH 2012

Meeting held in City Church Hall, Jewry Street, Winchester

**PRESENT** : Officers: John Friedberger, (Chair), John Holland (Treasurer), Charles Burns (Sec)

Committee: David Brace, Brian Cook (Membership), Mike Southgate,

Members: Jo Martin, Andy Hutchings, Terry Putman, Edwin Potter, John Gillard, Robin Crawford, Denis Fryer, Norman Cox, James Michell, Paul Godfrey, Mike Perkins, John Planham, Stuart George, Piers Sherwood, Martin Ball

The Chairman opened the meeting at 1400hrs, welcomed members and guest speaker John Salmon from Network Rail Western Region

## **PRESENTATION:**

John Salmon explained Network Rail's new structure, which has improved coordination with train operators, leading to greater efficiency and cost-saving. Wessex Region and South West Trains now take joint decisions when, for example, there is a disruption to services. The new 'Railway Operating Centre' to be built at Basingstoke will improve this process.

In presenting a survey of recent train performance in Wessex Region John explained the problems caused by unfortunate occurrences such as attempted suicides and thefts on signalling equipment. He then reviewed current major engineering projects - the Southampton to Midlands freight upgrade (including the diversionary route via Andover) and Salisbury to Exeter resignalling. It was a necessary but unfortunate by-product that old signal boxes and semaphore signals became redundant as a result. In future all signalling in the region will be controlled from Basingstoke. Other schemes include station improvements – for example lengthening platforms and reusing the International Terminal at Waterloo, a new overbridge and lifts at Brockenhurst - and Poole to Wool resignalling which will connect the Swanage Railway to the main line.

Questions included the state of track south of Yoevil, confirmation of track works at Wool to save freight services having to travel to Dorchester to turn, management of lineside vegetation and that NR did not have any viable use for the Weymouth Tramway after which the Chairman thanked John for giving up a Saturday afternoon to address the meeting.

After a short break the AGM resumed.....

**1 APOLOGIES:** Tony Smale (committee) Johanna Friedberger, Celia Gardener, David Gammage, John Cassen, John Franklin, Bob Driscall, Maurice Whitehouse, Dr. David Berman (RF Liason rep)

The Chairman expressed pleasure the gathering included past Secretary Mike Perkins and Membership Sec Jo Martin and thanked them for the work they had done before leaving the committee last year and spoke of the sad passing of Jean Davidson from Romsey who had been supportive over the years.

**2 MIINUTES** of the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2011 AGM.  
APPROVED – Nem com

**3 MATTERS ARISING** – None raised

**4 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT:**

John Friedberger made brief reference to his annual report that had been issued with the Notice for the meeting and introduced Nick Farthing, Chairman of the 3 Rivers (Avon, Test & Itchen) Community Rail Partnership.

Nick gave a very positive report of how The 3 Rivers CRP had set up groups supporting local stations that had encouraged increased use and with great reduction of anti social behaviour problems and the Inn Line Guide promoting eating and drinking venues easily served by the line. Southampton had approached the P’ship to take on Bittern, Woolston & Sholing Stations.

**5 ACCOUNTS:** John Holland presented the year’s accounts.  
RFW has an ageing membership and needs to recruit young people and ladies.

APPROVED nem com

## **6. COMMITTEE & ELECTION**

John confirmed that having been in the Chair for 5 years he wished to stand down.

The Committee had proposed Mike Southgate to take The Chair and in the absence of any other nominations Mike was APPROVED nem com and joined the ‘top table’

The existing committee offered themselves for reelection APPROVED nem com

The Isle of Wight Bus and Rail users Group had proposed Stuart George to serve on the committee  
APPROVED nem com

Mike Southgate presented John Friedberger with a framed print of a landscape including Hurstbourne Viaduct (near John’s home) from the committee in recognition of his work to raise the profile of the Branch during the last five years.

## **7. PLANS FOR 2012**

Proposed joint meeting with Severnside probably 26 May

Visit to Isle of Wight (late) summer (September)

Station Surveys – to be arranged by Tony Smale who will look to call on those who have previously offered to help.

Reviewing (simplifying) the Development of Rail Services campaigning document

## **8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Suggestion for the AGM to be a more social event with lunch. To be considered by incoming committee. .

Compliments about the Winchester library which has an extensive collection of railway publications.

## **9 CLOSING REMARKS**

John Freidberger thanked members for attending and closed the meeting around 1615.