



West Midlands Branch eNews

Issue 2 - July 2014

Introduction

As well as the news items below, recipients of the bulletin e-mail also received the following attached items, which we've received recently:-

- 1) West Coast renewals at Watford – Stakeholder Update
- 2) West Coast renewals at Watford – London Midland Leaflet
- 3) Birmingham Mobility Action Plan – Presentation at our AGM
- 4) HS2-HS1 Link - Strategic and Technical Case
- 5) Lichfield Rail Promotion Group - Newsletter May 2014
- 6) Rail User Express, 22 June 2014

Don't forget that we welcome contributions from you, our members, of any interesting news or pictures. So if you've learnt about something local, or you've been on an interesting/ unusual journeys, let us know and we'll include whatever we can.

Would You Like to Make a Practical Contribution to Our Local Railway?

Railfuture West Midlands is looking for extra members for the regional branch committee. Would you like to contribute and aid our discussions? We meet monthly (other than in August and December) at Moor Street Station in Birmingham on the second Wednesday of each month between 18:00 and 20:00. Although members from any location with our area are very welcome, we would particularly like representation from Hereford, Worcester, Stoke on Trent, Rugby, Shropshire or Coventry.

If you would like further information please contact Peter Rowland on 01789 415548 or peter.rowland@railfuture.org.uk.

Survey of Over-crowding of Cross Country Trains

On behalf of Railfuture's Passenger Group, the branch conducted a survey, on Wednesday 18th June, of XC trains arriving at New St station during the morning peak and leaving in the evening. Morning arrivals were assessed by individual volunteers at stops immediately preceding New Street, for trains arriving between 0730 and 1000. For departures we assembled a team of 5 volunteers to observe departures between 1600 and 1900. The results of these have now been collated and will be shared with Cross Country, RF's Passenger Group. After this we'll publish the results more generally including to our local members.

Midland Metro – Wolverhampton Extension

It was agreed at the Integrated Transport Authority (I.T.A) meeting on April 28th 2014 that an application for the MIDLAND METRO (WOLVERHAMPTON CITY CENTRE EXTENSION) ORDER UNDER THE TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992 would be submitted by the Passenger Transport Executive (P.T.E.)

The route of the Metro extension departs from Line One at Bilston Street, just before the St George's Stop. The existing alignment and stop to St George's will remain operational providing an alternative terminus in times of disruption and affording the ability to provide an off peak service for some trams each hour. The extension will run as a two track alignment up Pipers Row where a stop will be located outside the newly constructed bus station. Thereafter it will run along Railway Drive and to the forecourt of the Railway station where a single track section terminating stop is located immediately to the station with a taxi run round and short stay car park.

The projected cost is £111.6 million and funding is being raised from a number of sources, made up of both grants and borrowing. Subject to finalisation of funding and agreements allowing the scheme to progress, the extension could be operational by 2018. The extension will be operated utilising the CAF Urbos 3 tram fleet: no new trams are required.

This extension would facilitate a later extension beyond the railway station to be progressed in the future.

For further information see CENTRO'S website: www.centro.org.uk and navigate to Midland Metro pages.

Northern and TransPennine Express (TPE) Re-franchising Meeting Dates

The next TPE and Northern rail franchises are due to commence in February 2016.

The DfT has confirmed the venues and timings for the public consultations for these re-franchisings. Meetings are to be in Edinburgh (25th June 2014) and Preston (3rd July 2014). These will include a presentation about both the Northern and TPE train service specifications and the consultation processes, a presentation from Passenger Focus and an opportunity for attendees to ask questions.

Meetings are aimed at local user groups who are invited to attend whichever meeting is most convenient. However if you want more details contact steve.wright@railfuture.org.uk.

The joint consultation closes on 18th August 2014.

Interesting News from Railfuture Yorkshire Branch

- Calder Valley – Omitted from the Electrification Document! Suitable representations have been made. The Chairman of West Yorkshire Metro advocates electrifying the line; and sooner rather than later.
- Bradford – Support is growing for a Sheffield to Bradford service, re-opening the Crigglestone Curve. Low Moor Station re-opening is progressing.
- Wharfedale Group has disbanded – a victim of its own success!
- Leeds Station – New South Entrance. Network Rail are progressing the Project.
- Hull Trains are advocating electrification from Selby to Hull. The Branch will monitor that line's progress up the electrification "pecking-order".
- Biomass flow from Hull Docks to Drax, may not now be running within 15 years? SELRAP point out that Liverpool Docks to Drax via Colne would be a very sensible route!
- Beverley – Market Weighton – York. Worryingly, East Yorkshire Council are proposing to stop preserving the "line of route". The Minster Line Campaign will be encouraged to continue its efforts to prevent this.

More on the Dawlish Blockade - Ticket refund troubles

Mrs P purchased Advance tickets from Tunbridge Wells to Truro, but could not travel on the date she booked as the line at Dawlish had been breached and no through train service was operating. She twice went to the station for a refund but station staff refused on both occasions. She then wrote to First Great Western (FGW) for a refund. FGW referred her to Southeastern Railway (SER) but SER's Customer Relations also refused to refund the tickets as had the station.

The reason they gave for refusing a refund was that, although through trains were suspended, a bus replacement service was available. In view of her age, the amount of luggage she had and her cross-London transfer, Mrs P did not want to have to change again onto a bus for a 50-mile journey.

Passenger Focus approached both FGW and SER. FGW agreed to issue her with two complimentary first-class tickets and SER offered £14 in Rail Travel Vouchers for their portion of the journey.

Mrs P was extremely happy with the outcome as she makes this journey often to see her family.

The next Railfuture West Midlands eNews will be issue 3 in August 2014.

Other issues of *Railfuture* West Midlands eNews are available at
www.railfuture.org.uk/branches/?branch=West+Midlands

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