

WEST SUSSEX RAIL USERS ASSOCIATION

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Annual General Meeting

Following the AGM of the Association on 8th June your Committee is now: Monica Edmonds (also representing Christ's Hospital): Treasurer and Membership Secretary – Trevor Tupper (also representing stations on the West Coastway *other than* Chichester and Bognor), Roger Leat (Bognor Regis), Jake Clausen (Littlehaven); Paul Brady (Amberley), Valerie Webb (Pulborough), Moira Tracey (Crawley), Jane Cobb (Horsham), Peter Bulling (Barnham), Roger Keyworth (Chichester), Nigel Denton (Littlehampton and Angmering), Michael Cover (Franchise negotiations) and Kevin Gordon (Website).

Membership Renewal

Our membership year runs from 1 March and a few subscriptions for 2013-14 are now overdue. If you have not paid, a renewal form is enclosed. The subscription remains at £2 and can be paid by cheque through the post, by direct bank credit or by standing order, the renewal form gives details of all these options. A few did not pay their subscriptions for last year and rather than deleting them as members, we are asking them to pay for 2 years and for those members the payment slip shows £4.

New Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern Franchise

The process for awarding the contract for the new franchise has resumed with the Department for Transport (DfT) expected to issue the Invitation to Tender (ITT) later this month. We have tried to persuade DfT to include some of our priorities for changes to existing services in the ITT and a copy of our letter to the DfT Minister is on our website. Also on the website is the response from Simon Burns, the DfT Minister. Although the DfT has not acceded to our request to alter the ITT, the Minister does state that it is up to bidders to consider changes to the specification and include these in their bids. We are now talking to the 5 bidders and we will be asking each of them to consider our priorities in the bids that they will be making later this year. Michael Cover is taking the lead on this and we will report further on the attitudes and aspirations of each bidder to rail services for West Sussex in future Newsletters and on the website.

Arun Valley Line resignalling

Work on the Arun Valley line resignalling between Christ's Hospital and Amberley is progressing well and the keen-eyed may have spotted the new signals now in position but currently lying flat as these are hinged at the base (much easier to change parts) and completion still expected in later this year. As mentioned later in this Newsletter there will be some line closures during October and November to complete the installation and testing.

Your Committee

Your Committee has been active in many areas. Apart from our meetings with Southern, we have attended presentations on the London Bridge modernisation programme organised by Network Rail and we have been to Stakeholder Forums arranged by Southern and First Capital Connect. We continue to support the Arun Valley Community Rail Partnership and we attended the 150th Anniversary celebrations at Arundel on 17 August and at Littlehampton on 31 August. The next big event will be in October 2014 when Bognor station will celebrate its 150th Anniversary.

Engineering work aka Improvement work (sorry about the smaller typeface, but there is a lot to fit in)

Over the remaining weeks of 2013 there will be continuing work at London Bridge. In addition to this there will be work at Victoria on Saturday 21 September and Sunday 22 September. On top of this buses will replace trains between Three Bridges and Horsham.

Saturday 21 September - The trains from Victoria at 02 and 32 minutes past each hour will be replaced by Barnham, Chichester and Southampton portions on the 17 minutes past each hour via Hove, and by Barnham, Chichester and Portsmouth portions on the 47 minutes past each hour, also via Hove. There will be a half-hourly service between Horsham and Bognor calling at all stations. There will be changes to

Sunday 22 September - Trains between Victoria and Bognor will only run between Billingshurst and Bognor. Trains between London Bridge and Horsham will only run between London Bridge and Three Bridges (half hourly). Trains between Victoria and Portsmouth Harbour / Littlehampton will be diverted to / from London Bridge and call additionally at Three Bridges and Ford. Replacement buses are running half hourly between Three Bridges and Horsham and hourly between Horsham and Billingshurst.

In October, there are works every weekend with widespread retiming and diversions especially on Saturday 5th/Sunday 6th, Sunday 13th, Sunday 20th and Saturday 26th/Sunday 27th. Some of this relates to the Arun Valley resignalling. Look out for station posters giving details or check the Southern website.

I know it is a long way off but over the Christmas/New Year period there will be a huge amount of work going on and because many members may be considering travel in this period, I have distilled the following from an 18 page note from Southern giving details of the changes to our services. It is pretty basic (and even confusing!) with no actual times but these will be available in nearer to the festive period. But at least you will be able to see when it will be possible to travel to London, Gatwick or elsewhere. Again watch for station posters and I will try and do some updates as information becomes available.

Advance notice of Christmas & New Year Train Services - Tuesday 24 Dec to Wednesday 1 January

Southern is operating a revised service over Christmas and New Year. This is a brief summary of the planned services between 2300 on 24 December 2013 until 0400 on 2 January 2014. Engineering work is taking place over this period in three locations and Network Rail considers it less disruptive to carry out all this work over the Christmas period rather than spreading the disruption throughout the year. The main work is to the junctions south of Purley. These are being completely renewed and as a result all the rail lines between Redhill and Purley are closed from Christmas Day until 0400 on Thursday 2 January 2014. The new junction will improve train performance in this area which has suffered from speed restrictions over recent years. The second location is Gatwick where major civil engineering work to complete a new Platform 7 will take place, together with associated changes to track and signalling in the area. Platform 7 will be used for services from February 2014, at which point platforms 5 and 6 will become dedicated Gatwick Express platforms. The extra platform will mean more space for trains and the removal of operational pinch-points to the north of the station, which in turn will improve train service performance through the station, particularly during the peaks. Finally, Victoria mainline railway station is closed on Christmas Day and Boxing Day. This is to allow Network Rail to replace all the signalling power supply and control systems operating between Victoria and Battersea. This work can only be undertaken when no trains are running.

There will not be any Gatwick Express trains in this period. For Southern services the day by day service summary is:

Christmas Eve 24 December – Early close down of services by 2200.

Christmas Day 25 December – No services

Boxing Day 26 December – Half-hourly service from London Bridge to East Grinstead calling only at East Croydon with connecting buses at East Grinstead for Gatwick and Three Bridges. There will be an hourly train service from Three Bridges to Brighton calling only at Haywards Heath

Friday 27 December and Saturday 28 December – Four trains each hour from Victoria to East Grinstead with connecting buses for Gatwick and Three Bridges. Half-hourly service from Victoria to Gatwick calling at Clapham Junction, Sutton, Dorking, Horsham and Three Bridges. Half-hourly service from Three Bridges to Brighton calling at all stations. There will also be four trains an hour from London Bridge to Coulsdon Town with connecting non-stop buses to both Three Bridges and Gatwick.

There will be two trains an hour from Three Bridges to Littlehampton calling at all Arun Valley stations including Faygate in the peak. These will divide at Littlehampton with a portion to Brighton calling at all stations except East Worthing, Southwick, Fishersgate and Aldrington. One portion an hour will be for Southampton Central calling at Ford, Barnham, Chichester, Southbourne, Emsworth, Havant, Cosham, Portchester, Fareham and Swanwick. One portion an hour will be for Portsmouth Harbour calling at Ford, Barnham, Chichester, Havant, Fratton, Portsmouth & Southsea. There will be almost normal weekday services along the West Coastway between Brighton, Littlehampton, Portsmouth and Southampton, the main variation is that there will be no through services to Bognor, instead there will be four trains each hour from Barnham to Bognor.

Sunday 29 December – Two trains each hour from Victoria to East Grinstead with connecting buses for Gatwick and Three Bridges. Half-hourly service from Victoria to Gatwick calling at Clapham Junction, Sutton, Dorking, Horsham and Three Bridges. Half-hourly service from Three Bridges to Brighton calling at all stations. There will also be four trains an hour from London Bridge to Coulsdon Town with connecting non-stop buses to both Three Bridges and Gatwick.

There will be two trains an hour from Three Bridges to Littlehampton calling at all Arun Valley stations These will divide at Littlehampton with a portion to Brighton calling at Angmering Goring, Durrington, West Worthing, Worthing, Shoreham and Hove. One portion an hour will be for Bognor calling at Ford and Barnham. One portion an hour will be for will be for Portsmouth Harbour calling at Ford, Barnham, Chichester, Southbourne, Emsworth, Havant, Fratton, Portsmouth & Southsea. There will be normal Sunday services along the West Coastway except that the Portsmouth to Victoria service will run via Littlehampton and Horsham to Three Bridges only with connections for Victoria at Horsham.

Monday 30 & Tuesday 31 December – As shown above for 27 and 28 December except that the two trains an hour from Three Bridges to Brighton via Littlehampton and splitting there for either Portsmouth or Southampton will start and terminate at Redhill giving a through service from Gatwick to Arun Valley and West Coastway stations.

Wednesday 1 January – As shown above for Sunday 29 December except that the two trains an hour from Three Bridges to Brighton via Littlehampton and splitting there for either Portsmouth or Bognor will start and terminate at Redhill giving a through service from Gatwick to Arun Valley and West Coastway stations.

Thursday 2 January 2013 – normal service returns.