

## **WEST SUSSEX RAIL USERS ASSOCIATION**

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**NEWSLETTER No 1 : FEBRUARY 2019**

### **CONSEQUENCES OF BRIGHTON MAINLINE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

This is a short newsletter giving details of the weekday timetable on the Arun Valley line for the forthcoming closure of the Brighton Mainline. It applies from Monday 18 February to Friday 22 February

As mentioned in our November newsletter the Brighton Main Line Improvement (BML) Project is part of a £300 million government-funded programme to tackle delay hotspots and boost the reliability of the railway in the south east. The main closure will be for the 9 day period from 16-24 February 2019 that includes the half-term week, when passenger numbers are lower and some people may be able to be more flexible with their travel plans or take holiday. Weekend work has already started with several Saturday closures so far and this will continue over selected weekends up to May 2019. Those of you who have travelled on recent weekends affected by the BML closures may have noticed that our Arun Valley trains have been slightly retimed with joining and splitting taking place at Barnham rather than Horsham. This has freed the "fast" paths normally used by the Southampton/Portsmouth portions for use by a half hourly service from Brighton and Worthing via Littlehampton to Victoria. The bonus from this has given Horsham 4 fast trains to Victoria rather than the normal 2. Southern have not issued a printed timetable for the forthcoming BML closure but details are available on the National Rail (NRES) website and we can confirm that the off-peak service on Monday to Fridays and the all day Saturday service will be a similar service as on these recent Saturdays.

I have gone through the NRES website and extracted the timetable information shown on the attached sheet. This shows morning services towards London up to 09.00 from the coast and services from London between 15.45 and 20.16. After 09.09 there will be two Arun Valley services from Portsmouth or Southampton and Bognor joining at Barnham and running at the same minutes past each hour as the 08.40 and 09.09 from Chichester, From London there will be two services each hour from Victoria before the 15.46 and after the 20.16 running at the same minutes past each hour as the 15.46 and 16.16. There will also be two trains an hour in each direction from Brighton and Worthing to Victoria via Littlehampton throughout the day at the same minutes past each as shown in the attached timetables. I guess that in the peak, these services will be full to and from Littlehampton, although in the off-peak Horsham will have the bonus of 2 extra fast train an hour.

On the detail, there was a long (2+ hours) gap in southbound trains stopping at Amberley, that is between the 15.46 from Victoria arriving at 17.10 and the 18.03 from London Bridge arriving at 19.25. I asked Southern to look at this as a matter of urgency and it has been agreed to add an Amberley stop to the 17.03 from London Bridge and this is now shown in the temporary timetable attached.

On the BML itself, intermediate stations between Brighton and Three Bridges will have replacement buses – the numbers involved will be huge and the operation will take over the Three Bridges car park. Car park users there should have been told about alternative arrangements including space at Crawley station and Gatwick.

Trevor Tupper  
Secretary/Treasurer