

WEST SUSSEX RAIL USERS ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER No 1: APRIL – JUNE 2020

An apology for an unexpected delay

I am sorry for the delay in sending you this Newsletter. Normally, our first Newsletter of the year goes to members in April with news of timetable changes planned for May, membership renewal request and other relevant news. Unfortunately in mid-March your Secretary was laid low by a serious attack of the Coronavirus resulting in a 2 month stay in St Richard's Hospital and now continuing physio treatment which is likely to continue for several months. However, I am out and about and will shortly be in an on-line discussion with Southern on how our timetable might look as lockdown measures are eased. In the meantime, here is an update on changes and improvements so far this year.

May timetable changes

The current weekday timetable introduced on 17 May is basically the previous Saturday service and seems quite adequate for the number of passengers travelling. The reduction in seats available because of the need to meet the 2 metre social distancing rule has been compensated by the addition of 4 coaches to the Bognor portions of Arun Valley trains. A significant change elsewhere is the cessation of splitting and joining Victoria services to and from Littlehampton and Eastbourne at Haywards Heath. These services will be 8 cars throughout thus providing more seats for those traveling from and to stations between Hove, Worthing and Littlehampton.

Network Rail activities

The 4-car length platforms at both Lancing and Goring have been extended to take the 8-car trains to and from Victoria mentioned above.

The £150 million, 2-year programme to rebuild Gatwick Airport station started in February. The lines through Platforms 6 and 7 have been taken out of use to allow widening of the island platforms 5 and 6.

Several level crossings on our "patch" have been resurfaced and red light cameras installed at some. These cameras record details of vehicles ignoring red flashing lights at the crossing. Enforcement action against the driver then follows.

Passenger Benefit Fund

We understand that the next tranche of station improvements has been agreed with DfT and an announcement is imminent. We will let you have details of improvements affecting our stations in our next Newsletter.

Membership Renewal

Subscriptions for 2020 are now due. Many members have already paid by standing order or in advance during 2019. If you have not paid, a renewal form is enclosed. The subscription remains at £2 and can be paid by cheque through the post or by direct bank credit, the renewal form gives details of these options. A few did not pay their subscription 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. If you no longer wish to remain a member, please let me know by e-mail, post or telephone.

Trevor Tupper
Secretary/Treasurer