

WEST SUSSEX RAIL USERS ASSOCIATION
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NEWSLETTER No 1: APRIL 2010

This Newsletter covers membership renewal, our Annual General Meeting, latest information on fares, new compensation arrangements for delays, those affected by this winter's disruption to services and May 2010 timetable changes, our website and twitter address and our work on your behalf.

Membership Renewal

Our membership year runs from 1 March and subscriptions for 2010-11 are now due. Many members have already paid their subscription either directly or by standing order. 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 cheque or in cash at the AGM, by direct bank credit or by standing order, the renewal form gives details of all these options.

What do you get for your membership?

We represent our members in regular and frequent discussions with Southern. We also meet Network Rail from time to time and represent your interests at Rail Industry events throughout the year. In the past 12 months we have attended meetings with Network Rail on their Sussex Route Utilisation Strategy to ensure that there are no plans that affect our services adversely. The only real question is about the survival of the through service to London Bridge after about 2012 when London Bridge is remodelled for the new Thameslink services and the number of terminating platforms is reduced. Southern say that despite current loadings, the Arun Valley trains to and from London Bridge are the least overcrowded and if they have to make a reduction in services, our only train might be the one to go. Needless to say we are pressing the case for this service to survive as we have no alternative through trains and we will campaign actively to retain the service. If you are a London Bridge user and would be interested in supporting a campaign for the LB train please contact us via our web site. .

We have had discussions with the developer for the new neighbourhood west of Bewbush in Crawley now called Kilnhurst. There will be several thousand houses in this development and the developer would like to see a new station provided between Faygate and Ifield. But their timescale and that of West Sussex County Council are different and there is a real risk of much of the development taking place before the new station and its car park are provided in which case the station may never be built. Negotiations on this are ongoing and we will continue to press the case for the station to be provided early in the development and for the proposed 200 space car park to be enlarged.

We have also been involved in discussions with various parties on Station Travel Plans under which there should be better integration of rail and bus services and improved facilities at stations. The discussions are concentrating on Crawley, Three Bridges, Horsham, Chichester and Worthing and we will keep you in touch with developments on this. There is still time for you to tell us how what improvements you would like to see at these stations, please email us before 11th May or speak to us about this at the AGM.

Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the Association will be at 10.00 am on Saturday 15th May at the Salvation Army Hall, Booth Way, Horsham. This is a few minutes walk from Horsham Station's eastern entrance and is off Depot Road. It can also be reached from the roundabout just north of Horsham Station, Booth Way is a turning off this roundabout. Refreshments will be available beforehand. This year our guest speaker will be James Burt, Service Delivery Director of Southern. Mr Burt will address us after the formal business of the AGM has been completed and there be ample time for you to ask questions.

The formal business of the AGM will be the Chairman's report, receiving and approving the accounts and the election of the Committee. The following existing Committee members will be seeking re-election at the AGM: Chairman – 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)); Other Committee members - Roger Leat (Bognor Regis); Jake Clausen (Littlehaven); Chris Cooper (Amberley), Valerie Webb (Pulborough), Moira Tracey (Crawley), James Warwick (Billingshurst), Jane Cobb (Horsham), Peter Bulling (Barnham), Roger Keyworth (Chichester), Louise Stemp (Ifield) and Kevin Gordon (Website). We still require a new Secretary and

we are also looking for new Committee members to represent Arundel, Littlehampton, Angmering and Worthing. We hope that volunteers will come forward at or before the AGM to fill these vacancies.

Fares A bit of stale news is that the annual changes to rail fares came into effect on 2 January. Regulated fares (seasons and most standard day tickets 2010) fell by 0.4%. Non regulated fares mainly off-peak fares rose by an average 4%. The rise in off-peak fares has been offset to some extent by various web offers, with half price day returns during February and a continuing 15% on-line discount for Southern only tickets. Also the cheap advance tickets from coast stations to Victoria have continued to be available although these may cease soon.

Compensation for disruption

Southern have introduced a new simpler scheme of compensation for delays called Delay Repay scheme and many members have made claims under it for delays during the bad weather earlier in the year. If you have been delayed and wish to claim compensation then you must do so within 28 days of your delay and you must have proof of travel such as the original ticket, a ticket receipt or a copy of your season ticket. Claims are made on a Delay Repay claim form obtainable at staffed Southern stations or downloaded from the Southern website. The levels of compensation for single and return tickets are:

Delays of 30-59 minutes:	Delays of 1 hour or more	Delays of 2 hours or more
50% refund of single ticket price	100% refund of single ticket price	100% refund of single ticket price
25% refund of return ticket price	50% refund of return ticket price	100% refund of return ticket price

Refunds on season tickets purchased on or after 20 September 2009 are based on the same scale as those which have been described for single and return tickets. The refund will be calculated on the proportional daily cost of your ticket. in our Passenger's Charter. Claims on seasons can be made either by post or online, other claims have to be sent by post to the address on the form.

May 2010 timetable changes

There is only one significant change in the new timetable that starts on Sunday 23rd May. The 06.11 from Bognor will start at 06.07 and run 4 minutes earlier to Barnham and then 3 minutes earlier between Arundel and Three Bridges. It will no longer stop at Redhill and arrival at Victoria will be 8 minutes earlier at 07.49. A yet earlier start for some, but a speedier journey for everyone. We could hardly complain as we have been pressing for fewer stops at Redhill, particularly during peak hours. The new timetables can be downloaded from the Southern website and the printed versions will be available at stations in early May. The Arun Valley timetable is no. 16 and the West Coastway spread over Tables 11, 13 and 14. The useful existing Train Times booklets will no longer be available.

Class 313 units

You may have read in the press that Southern are taking on several of the class 313 units that have previously been working around North London. These are 3 car units without air conditioning or toilets and originally designed for inner suburban work. The units are being refurbished but will still be without toilets and the plan is to use them on the shuttle services from Brighton to West Worthing and to Seaford. This will release some 377 units that will be used to strengthen trains running from the coast to London as well as along the Coastway. We will be watching the use of these units closely as we would not want to see them being used on longer distance Coastway services. However as the 313s are not compatible with our 377s the risk of this happening is low.

Website and Twitter

Kevin Gordon has kept our website up to date and you will find copies of all recent newsletters there together with a mine of other information. Please look at it regularly. If there are matters requiring immediate advice, I will send this by e-mail to those members for whom we have an e-mail address. I did this during the bad weather giving details of the trains that would be running on the following day. I was ready to repeat the operation had the RMT strike taken place. So if you have an e-mail address that you have not passed on to us, please do so. Not only will you get these snippets of information but you will also get these newsletters a day or two earlier and you will save us postage! We have recently set up a twitter address for those of you who tweet, this is intended for you to use to inform fellow passengers of incidents, delays etc. when you are travelling on the line. Our twitter is at <http://twitter.com/WSRUJA>. Please use it and help this to become the twitter Southern sit up and notice!

Trevor Tupper
Membership Secretary