

Thursday March 8th 2007 at All Saints Church, Broad Street, Hereford, at 7.00pm

Election Officers

Chair:	Gerald Dawe
Treasurer	David Plowman
Membership Secretary	Janet Shott
Secretary	Becky Roseff
Correspondence	Margaret Howell
Newsletter	Gerald, Janet and Gillian Bate
Committee Members (x 3)	Jim Redshaw (in absence), Naomi Bell, Janet Shott

Chair: Summary of the year

Gerald ran through the actions of the year. In March we had a presentation by Jane Lewis, Head Tourist Office and in April from Cllr Wilcox (Cabinet Member Transportation) and Richard Ball (Chief Officer, Transportation). We felt it was very good to have a dialogue with these people but the issues discussed had not really been acted on. We have written a number of letters, some formal consultations; FGW draft timetable and final timetable, Central Trains re-franchise, Central trains keeping the 22.21, Local Transport Plan consultation, Letters to John Armitt and Ian McCallister Network Rail regarding spending their surplus money at Herefordshire. We had good responses from all these, with timetable changes as a result and acknowledgements of needs in Herefordshire.

Treasurers Report

David listed our expenditure (Hire of meeting room, web site, postal expenses, 2 x newsletters, 1 x leaflet: total 2,382.8). Paid up membership 38 (+ 5 on evening). Total in bank, £1055.92.

Action Points for the Year

More members

Apply for Awards for All for HLF grant towards newsletters

Join the Cotswold and Malverns Transport Partnership (see below)

Becky attended the

Cotswolds and Malvern Transport Partnership meeting

Bi-annual meeting held March 2 2007 at Moreton in Marsh, BR went. Barry Dare in Chair (Leader Gloc Co), Mike Taplin (secretary), Derek Potter (CLPG), rail officers from Gloc, Oxon, Warwick, Worcs., Malvern, Stratford Rail Group other CLPG.

Discussed the meeting with Brig Robbie Burns and the one to come with Lord Faulkner of Worcester in House of Lords on Mon Mar 26th at 16.30 for two hours regarding the twin tracking of the Cotswold line. Barry Dare felt this was the most positive news the CMTP has had in 14 years. Tim Harris the Rail Minister will attend, David Cameron, FGW and Network Rail, they will ask Steve Bannerhan Central Trains to attend. BD felt we should have a short list of requirements. Representatives from rail groups may also be invited.

The CMTP has set up working groups divided into Infrastructure, Performance and Operations, and Marketing and Integration. They are asking for donations from

Councils and Train Groups along the line to fund the work. For groups under 250 members it is £250.

Richard Rowland addressed timetable issues. General disgruntlement with poor performance, RR was addressing some of these with new timetable.

Other Matters this Month

Leominster disabled access, correspondence with Brian Wilcox (Michael S)
Letter from Brian Wilcox, regarding station forecourt (Gerald D and Nick J)
HT article about Seb Coe and para Olympics (Janet S)

7.30 p.m. Speaker

First Great Western Regional Manager; presentation and questions.

Richard Rowland

Regional Manager, First Great Western, Thames Valley (includes Hereford)

Richard ran through the structure of FGW, part of a large group of train and bus companies that includes Trans Pennine, GB Rail Freight, Connect, FGW Buses, and recently Greyhound and Yellow School buses in US. The recent acquisition means they will be listed in the FTSE 100. There are 70,500 employees. The New Franchise on April 1 2006, for ten years, means £200m investment, mostly on trains. They must give back to Gov £1.3b (!) over the life of the franchise.

Currently HST are not performing, the Hereford line is only 71% on time, one of the worst performers. There are a number of reasons why, breaking it down 46% of delays are due to Network, 40% to FGW and 14% other. On this line the Adelantes (282 people on 5 car unit) are being replaced with HST (450 seats) because the break down records are much better, HSTs old go 11,000 miles before they go wrong, HSTs new will go 22,000 miles before they go wrong, Adelantes go 8,000 miles before they go wrong.

Network Rail made a profit of £750m last year, they are not allowed to make a profit, so this will go back into track. Hence the feasibility study to twin track part or all of the Hereford-Paddington line. FGW are making the case strongly for Cotswold Line. They make money on the line and see it has potential.

FGW have introduced fares to encourage people to take less well used trains, e.g. First Minute Fares, available on the internet. Fares are about 6p/mile, the most expensive in Europe, but this is a Government decision, they try to run the railways more on fares than tax.

A number of questions, the main is our old perennial, dumping at Malvern, with one questioner having been dumped seven times at Malvern returning on a Sunday. No way of communicating with anyone, you are forced to wait. RR said he would look into this, with Central. Current policy is if you have to wait more than one hour with FGW you are entitled to a taxi.

Next Meeting: April 12 2007, Green Dragon Lounge, Hereford, 7.30 – 8.30 p.m.