

Rail For Herefordshire P O Box 299 Hereford HR1 2YE
www.RailForHerefordshire.org.uk Email: Railfh@aol.com

MINUTES Meeting May 11 2006, Held at The Lounge, Green Dragon, Hereford

Present: Gerald Dawe (chair), Rachel Allan, Nick Jones, Ronald Gow, Janet Shott, Michael Hughes, Richard Birt

The newsletter was finalised. This has been distributed; we have two new members so far as a result and several renewals. We also checked through the new leaflet and have a quote from Orphans for printing (about £300 as there is quite a bit of design involved). JS suggested putting them in Tourist Offices and they also need to go to libraries. One problem is there are two important misprints so the whole lot needs to be corrected. Gerald does a few in the evenings but just keeps up with the demand at the station.

There was a **general discussion** about the 20% increase in passengers, the need for platform tickets onto the station. The hopeless Sunday service was discussed, we raised this with the Franchise agreement requirements – our letters are on the website. We talked about slam doors and automatic doors, which add 30-40 seconds to journeys. The slowness of the trains is an economic issue for Hereford; the times to Birmingham and London are too long. Moreton on Marsh station is better than Hereford and could be used as a model, it is a smaller town, why better facilities.

News:

Malvern station finally has real time information on the Hereford platform, it wasn't working when I was there (RR) but hopefully this just a blip.

Member Owen Morgan has written to his MPs regarding the exorbitant price of train fares. He had a response from Minister McNulty saying it was a balancing act between subsidy and fares and that the fares weren't expensive in any case because demand is going up (see letter on website). The next week comes the Gov Transport Select Committee saying fares are 'absurdly high'. Owen also wrote to Lib Dem transport spokesman via his MP asking why not train passes for people without cars, and again the lack of Central Sunday service. The response was – passes, a good idea, we will consider it for our policy, and he will ask Government about the volunteer status of Sunday Central trains (the few there are timetabled).

May 24 a bridge bash between Hereford and Ledbury has resulted – according to FGW announcements – in six tons of rubble on the line. Expect cancelled trains for a while. Bridge bashes are a frequent occurrence and I wonder just how severely drivers are penalised for this major inconvenience.

Next Meeting: June 8th 2006, The Lounge, Green Dragon, Hereford. June 8
Following meetings July 13, Aug 10, Sept 14, Oct 12, Nov 12, Dec 14