

Rail & Bus for Herefordshire Newsletter Spring 2017



Latest News (see inside)

Meeting the Train Operators who are bidding for the new
Wales & Borders Rail Franchise

Bus cuts campaign continues
New bus service for the St Weonards area

Herefordshire stations usage continues to grow

Call for a new approach to deal with Herefordshire's
public transport problems

What's at the bottom of your garden?

*Keeping you informed about your
rail and bus services*

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Meeting the Train Operating Companies

Bidding for the Wales & Borders Franchise



At this stage of the franchise process four bidders are in the running for the Wales & Borders Franchise to be awarded in 2018. All four were keen to meet with representatives of the Marches Rail Users Alliance (MRUA) which includes Rail & Bus for Herefordshire (RBfH). The franchise is being administered by Transport for Wales, an arm's length company of the Welsh Government. Accordingly, during December Chris Clarke (Vice Chairman of MRUA) and myself as chairman of MRUA and RBfH arranged four separate meetings in Hereford.

Who will be the next Wales & Borders operator? Arriva Train

Wales northbound service passes the site of the once Woofferton Junction between Leominster & Ludlow.

The four TOCs in the running are:

1. Abellio Rail Cymru, owned by Dutch Railways. They currently operate the Greater Anglia and Scotrail franchises and have a 50% holding with Serco in the operation of the Merseyrail franchise.
2. Arriva Rail Wales, owned by Deutsch Bahn who currently operate the Wales & Borders, the Chiltern Railways, the Cross Country and the Northern Rail franchises. They also own the Grand Central open access company and run the Tyne & Wear Metro. They operate London Overground in partnership with the MTR Corporation.
3. Keolis Amey, 70% owned by SNCF (the French National Railway) and 30% Quebec Deposit & Investment Fund. Keolis operate the Nottingham Express transit trams, the London Docklands Light Railway and has a 30%

holding in Govia who operate the Thameslink Southern, South Eastern and the West Midlands (London Midland Trains) franchises.

4. MTR Corporation (Cymru), owned by the MTR Corporation (Mass Transit Railway). They operate the Hong Kong transport system and the London Crossrail franchise and in partnership with Arriva operate the London Overground (LOROL).

Following the discussions with stakeholders, which includes ourselves, all four will by now have given their outline proposals to Transport for Wales. The final bidding phase of the franchise process will then commence and the shortlist may be reduced. All the companies representatives were keen to point out they wanted to see a massive improvement in the quality of all aspects of the service offered. They wish to give an improved service with new trains providing a good quality service with better station infrastructure. They all stated that the new franchise would not be restricted in its ability to cater for growth and improvements, as is the case with the current franchise.

The MRUA emphasised that the Marches area is in a process of development as stated by the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership who see rail improvements as essential to future economic and social growth. A number of key matters were highlighted by MRUA as needing urgent attention in the new franchise. These are:

1. The need for adequate and clearly defined channels of representation for the Marches line to the Welsh Government. The line runs mostly in England and yet will be controlled by a Welsh Government on which there is no English representation. Whilst this was not the concern of the bidders they undertook to state our concerns to Transport for Wales. The Train Companies were asked to consider a management structure which included a senior manager at board level directly responsible for the Marches and other cross border lines with England (see note at end of article).
2. The provision of new and higher capacity rolling stock is essential to any programme of improvement on the Marches line.
3. Service improvements should cater for passenger growth in the Borders and should include as a minimum an hourly all stations service between Cardiff and Manchester with increased frequency at peak periods. Improved connections with West Midlands services at both Shrewsbury & Hereford are considered important as are connections with the Heart of Wales Line at Craven Arms. In the context of service improvements, it was emphasised that the new franchise holder should ensure that sufficient train-crew are

employed to operate the service. It was pointed out that this matter is a current problem leading to cancellation of trains.

4. Close attention should be paid to improving station infrastructure most stations in the borders are somewhat basic and not a good introduction to travel by train. In this respect MRUA are preparing a station infrastructure report and all the bidders representatives asked for a copy of this which is the final stages of production. MRUA indicated the wish to strengthen links between station and community.

5. MRUA also pointed out that trains should have clean working toilets available at all times and that the use of on board cleaners be extended throughout the journey. Fares inconsistencies were also highlighted.

All four bidders were receptive to our comments and suggestions, but did point out that improvements would not be immediate from commencement in October 2018. The MRUA recognise that most improvements will take time to introduce but did request that the new franchise document should give clear and firm dates as to a programme for these improvements.

Since the meetings with the bidders the House of Commons Welsh Affairs Committee has met to debate the transfer of the franchise to the Welsh Government. Significantly in its conclusions and recommendations there appeared the following:

9. When rail franchising powers transfer to the Welsh Government, this will remove the UK Government from the process. As a result, oversight will switch to the National Assembly for Wales, and Members of Parliament will not have a direct scrutiny role. Whilst Welsh residents and users can raise concerns through their Assembly Member, English residents and those who use the parts of the franchise that are solely in England, will have no such representation.

10. We (the House of Commons Committee) welcome the approach taken by the Welsh Cabinet Secretary, who said that he would be willing to take up complaints about the rail franchise from English MPs in the same way as he does from Welsh AMs. We therefore recommend that a protocol be established whereby Members of Parliament for English constituencies can write to the Cabinet secretary on behalf of constituents using Wales & Borders rail franchise services in England, with an expectation that they will receive a substantive response within a reasonable time, such as 15 working days.

Meanwhile the West Midlands franchise contract award is due in June of this year. There are two bidders: the incumbent London Midland Trains and Abellio Rail. London Midland have stepped up their bid with news of their past and future investment strategy together with updates on station improvements. However, if we are not careful Herefordshire will remain a backwater at the end of the line as the West Midlands Combined Authority has a lot more clout and of course a lot more money to throw at train service improvements. Herefordshire Council is a part of West Midlands Rail Ltd, the organisation set up to administer the franchise in the near future. Let us hope that our representative on the WMR Ltd board is vociferous and knowledgeable enough to make sure Herefordshire gets a fare slice of rail improvements on the Birmingham route.

Article based on notes of meetings prepared by Chris Clarke, Vice Chairman of the Marches Rail Users alliance

Herefordshire Council Bus Consultation

As RBfH predicted the recent bus survey divided opinion as to the way forward...there were so many leading questions and so many ridiculous options, one for example, being the removal of supported buses on Saturdays, one of the busiest days of the week and one where young people can get to town to meet their friends.

The savings from the proposed cuts in this budgetary round amounts to a mere 0.6% of the Council's budget. To what end? The results highlighted that nearly 90% of respondents considered that any cuts to their service would lead to a high impact, not an unreasonable conclusion given the withdrawals to date have left a minimal rural service and a so called University City in the making without evening or Sunday buses on most nights and most routes. Some 30% of people asked for no cuts at all and 30% did not have a car available or any other reasonable alternative. Hardly a favourable response to the council's proposals to withdraw services.

The Buses Sub-group will continue its dialogue with Cabinet members of the council. We want to stress three points:

1. That the Council needs to be more upbeat and promote existing services as a value for money contribution to our economy and social life...the constant gloom about buses is damaging every day services
2. That the definition of secondary core services in the future needs to re-

instate those which serve large settlements (see below)

3. That it needs to accept that Community Transport cannot make up for the loss of mainstream routes in some areas.

We urge you to write to the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Councillor Rone at prone@herefordshire.gov.uk to ask for a modification to the proposed budget to ensure that the network of routes to our main rural settlements are maintained in the future, places which have populations of approximately 700-1000 and deserve a service, places such as Bosbury, Canon Pyon, Colwall, Cradley, Eardisland, Eardisley, Hoarwithy, Kingsland, Leintwardine, Pembridge, Peterchurch, Shobdon, Staunton-on-Wye, Tillington, and Wigmore. Their services are all at risk!

490 Bus Support Continues

Members may recall that the 490 Leominster to Ludlow service (now with through journeys from Hereford on the 492 service) is operating via Ludlow Caravan Touring Park; both improvements have been well received. Two of the midday journeys are supported by Leominster Town Council and all of the parish councils on the route. As we go to press we have heard that Ludlow Town Council is reviewing its position; a recommendation is going to Council to offer financial support. RBfH has worked with the supporters group to bring about change of fortunes for the route and Ludlow's involvement is a step in the right direction.

I&S Launch New Market Day Bus

One of our respected local bus companies has launched a new market day bus between St Weonards and Abergavenny via Broad Oak, Garway Common, Skenfrith, Grosmont, Cross Ash and Llanvetherine. The 438 service operates at 0930 from St Weonards and returns from Abergavenny Bus Station at 1315 on Tuesdays only. The journey takes just under an hour and commenced on 22nd November 2016. Ian Phillips of I&S Coaches comments:

“The aim is to serve our local borderland community; we know that Abergavenny market attracts people from far afield. We have timed the bus from St Weonards so as to connect with the 0840 Stagecoach 36 bus from Hereford and look forward to welcoming passengers back to a service which has not operated for at least 20 years. If this succeeds we'll look to provide



more market day buses to other towns from the Broad Oak and Garway area. The day return fare is £5 from St Leonards/Garway area and English and Welsh bus passes are accepted.”

Les Lumsdon, our RBfH Bus Campaign Coordinator comments:

“Members can enjoy one of the best scenic rides in the

Welsh borderlands by catching the 0840 Stagecoach bus from the Country Bus Station to St Leonards and then the 438 onward to Abergavenny. Enjoy one of the liveliest markets in Wales and return on the X3 Stagecoach bus to Hereford at 1330, 1500 or 1600 arriving back in Hereford one hour later. Of course, those who live in the south of the county might drive to St Leonards and park up there for a return trip to Abergavenny. We need to give Ian all the support we can for this service is operated commercially and its future depends on there being sufficient passengers on board.”

Intending passengers needing more information should contact Ian on (01432) 264968 or see Herefordshire Council’s Bus Travel section for the current full timetable.

Bus Users Shropshire

Bus Users Shropshire has stepped in when Shropshire Council decided not to issue details of timetable changes and to abandon a route map. It has produced a county wide map showing all routes and this is available in local libraries and tourist information centres (the few remaining in this threadbare authority). It has been made possible by financial assistance from Tanat Valley Coaches and from the estate of the late Keith Gallop, former vice Chairman of BUS. Tanat Valley Coaches operate excellent services between Shrewsbury and Montgomery and between the Tanat Valley and Oswestry. Needless to say, Herefordshire’s Public Transport Team are spot on when it comes to providing public transport information in contrast to Shropshire.

Congestion turning people off buses and damaging the economy

On 14 September, and with my RBfH hat on, I attended a seminar at the House of Commons entitled 'The Impact of Congestion on Bus Passengers'. It was chaired by Louise Ellman MP and Andrew Jones MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, gave a short address.

Sponsored by Transport Times and Greener Journeys, leading academic and public transport campaigner Professor David Begg has produced a five-point plan assessing the impact of congestion on bus users. The object of the seminar was to discuss his findings and build a consensus for action.

The thrust of the report is that urban congestion is significantly increasing journey times for buses and this is reducing ridership. The report argues that only by improving the quality of the urban bus journey, and in particular increasing buses' average speed, can modal shift be sustained.

The principal tools available to Local Government to combat congestion are Demand Management and Bus Priority measures. Essentially the first seeks to reduce congestion by penalising private car use, while the second seeks to reallocate road space for use by public transport vehicles only. Implementation of either requires huge conviction and political nerves of steel. Andrew Jones made it very clear that, while he supported such measures, responsibility for introducing them lay entirely with the local authorities.

The weakness of both measures is that they can become victims of their own success. As people are forced from their cars onto public transport congestion is reduced, resulting in some people being tempted back into their cars.

Throughout the session I tried to relate the discussion to Hereford, which I visit both by bus and by car. Congestion on the ring road is not limited to the morning and evening peaks, but seems to erupt unpredictably throughout the day. A congestion zone could not be imposed until a ring road to the west is complete, and there is generally insufficient road space to allow the creation of bus lanes. A third possibility is of course the development of currently disused corridors for use by buses or trams and this, though relatively expensive, may prove more feasible.

I found the experience of 'business' in the House of Commons compelling

(although the room was unbearably hot) and the sometimes conflicting views of a number of prominent managers and academics in the bus industry fascinating.

Report by committee member Will Frecknall. The full report is available through the 'Greener Journeys' website.

Hereford Station Transport Hub

Most of you will have seen and or experienced the mighty upheaval outside Barrs Court Station as contractors drive through the Hereford City Link road as part of Herefordshire Council's all singing, all dancing roads policy to help solve Hereford's transport problem. The original Edgar Street Grid Plan, included a new transport hub at the station. Eventually Herefordshire Council officers agreed to meet RBfH to provide an update on what is happening.

Mairead Lane (Head of Herefordshire Council's Infrastructure Delivery Team) introduced the meeting by advising that the Inner Relief Road was expected to be completed by October 2017 and that Herefordshire Council would not be starting work on the Transport Hub until early 2018 as they did not wish to create too much disruption for passengers. Since a previous meeting much has changed, not least the fact that FirstBus has withdrawn from Hereford City Centre and their replacement Yeomans may now have different views on serving the station.

Herefordshire Council has already had discussions with both Network Rail and Arriva Wales who own much of the land but as Gareth pointed out Arriva may not be the franchisee in 2018. However both Mairead Lane and Alan Lewis (Herefordshire Council Passenger Transport Manager) were positive in their attitude towards a transport hub adjacent to the station.

It was intended that the new Hub would have real time bus information.

Andrew asked whether it was still the intention to dispense with both the Country and City Bus Stations and was advised that it was proposed that the City Bus Station would go and operators of city services would depart from stands in Newmarket Street and Maylord Orchards (the only country buses using the City Bus Station are X39, 437, 477, 446 (single journey), 447 and 449 (both single journeys), 492 (Sundays only), 501, 502 and 504. However no decision had been made over the future of the Country Bus Station.

The objections that RBfH raised at a previous meeting were reiterated:

1. There was not enough layover space for buses at new Hub.
2. There were no facilities for drivers or passengers i.e. toilets, café.
3. What was the position of buses coming from the East of the county e.g. 426, 420, 405 and 469? Alan advised that 426 and 405 would continue to terminate at St Peters Square and there was no intention to alter that terminus but it would be unlikely that it could be used for layovers. Some 420 services continue to St Peters Square and most depart from there and he did not envisage any change to that arrangement.

However RBfH are concerned that if the Country Bus Station is closed there is no link between the city and the hub for eastern bound passengers and the suggestion that passengers could change buses at the Hub to get into town was not passenger friendly. Alan advised that there would not be a shuttle service between town and the Hub. The Hub on the original plans had a cramped look rather than a new interchange and Mairead agreed with this. It was agreed by all that if you had just had a long journey from London, Manchester etc. you wanted the last part of your journey to Ross, Hay etc. to be a smooth transition and not waiting around in some dingy bus shelter.

A request was made that better temporary facilities for bus passengers, pedestrians and cyclists be put in place during construction works. An assurance was given that this was already in hand moving the temporary bus stops nearer the station entrance. An update meeting is targeting for the early Spring at which bus operators will be present.

This article is based on a report by RBfH Buses Sub-group member Andrew Pearson.



Can we look forward to a new state of the art interchange as at Wythenshaw (left: picture supplied by Nick Jones) and Telford (right)? All should be revealed at our next meeting with Herefordshire Council!!

Trail in the Making

Our previous chairman Professor Les Lumsdon is closely involved in developing an innovative railway based walking trail. Following a feasibility study, the go ahead has been given for implementing this new exciting project. Trail in the Making will start in the old railway town of Craven Arms and will meander via existing public rights of way along the route of the Heart of Wales Line to the salt marshes of the Loughor Estuary and the Millennium Coastal Park at Llanelli. It will be suitable for people looking for a long distance challenge, but equally those who wish to walk the trail in sections, using the train to access day or weekend walks and using local shops, cafes, pubs and overnight accommodation along the way.

For further information and donations to the trail development fund, contact Les Lumsdon on leslumsdon@hotmail.com

Herefordshire Stations Show Continued Growth in Passenger Numbers

The latest Office of Rail Regulator statistics show that passenger usage of stations in Herefordshire has shown sustained growth over the period since 1997. In the case of Hereford this amounts to a trebling of annual passengers. The figures are collated below for your information . Other stations in south Shropshire are included in order to demonstrate the strategic value of this line to the Marches area.

Year	Hereford	Ledbury	Colwall
1997-1998	482,010	101,307	39,997
1998-1999	519,014	113,832	42,956
1999-2000	552,985	114,227	41,932
2000-2001	571,991	126,498	44,206
2001-2002	577,571	132,237	44,023
2002-2003	602,219	133,968	43,788
2003-2004	-	-	-
2004-2005	732,320	130,403	40,574
2005-2006	800,448	135,033	44,596
2006-2007	854,475	147,496	51,392
2007-2008	899,199	162,588	56,384
2008-2009	974,844	180,136	56,528

2009-2010	974,668	184,340	63,062
2010-2011	1,017,114	189,308	61,356
2011-2012	1,081,990	193,952	66,110
2012-2013	1,085,918	185,588	63,374
2013-2014	1,103,764	195,348	65,210
2014-2015	1,192,912	203,612	63,560
2015-2016	1,226,444	214,632	66,642

Note the strong growth at Hereford and the more than doubling of usage at Ledbury and near doubling at Colwall. These figures prove the growing value of train services in this area, especially with regard to improved connectivity with the West Midlands and with London. Recent estate agents comments on property prices in these areas include the fact that both Ledbury and Colwall have excellent train services, a major selling point.

Year	Leominster	Ludlow	Craven Arms	Church Stretton
1997-1998	71,780	130,280	48,074	89,088
1998-1999	82,878	141,569	50,380	88,608
1999-2000	95,434	150,447	53,096	90,848
2000-2001	99,756	164,620	56,896	99,107
2001-2002	100,405	162,257	57,303	102,840
2002-2003	103,901	177,818	63,946	107,449
2003-2004	-	-	-	-
2004-2005	143,300	218,834	72,375	100,068
2005-2006	190,930	224,250	81,427	104,206
2006-2007	216,889	242,381	88,822	111,834
2007-2008	218,506	272,381	99,547	125,955
2008-2009	241,384	287,800	103,024	125,024
2009-2010	234,790	270,682	95,908	117,812
2010-2011	252,206	280,058	98,512	118,990
2011-2012	264,638	292,734	100,338	119,254
2012-2013	264,436	297,798	99,834	125,604
2013-2014	248,828	287,350	100,610	126,118
2014-2015	273,912	308,384	116,762	131,766
2015-2016	276,904	299,776	109,478	127,748

The figures for the Marches Line are equally important with Leominster passengers more than trebling and Ludlow passengers more than doubling. The figures point to the importance of the Marches Line to both Herefordshire and Shropshire both in terms of local and long distance

movement. The Marches Rail Users Alliance and Rail & Bus for Herefordshire have been foremost in stressing the importance of the Marches Line to the future economic and social development of the Marches area. This point is given greater emphasis with the Wales & Borders rail franchise being devolved in its entirety to the Welsh Government at Cardiff. Clear and adequate lines of communication and representation for English areas that are served by the Wales & Borders Franchise are essential. The MRUA and RBfH welcome the recommendations of the House of Commons Welsh Affairs Committee on this matter as reported on page 4.

A Sustainable Transport Plan for Hereford

It is common knowledge that Herefordshire Council is very biased towards roads in its transport policy. It sees roads as the panacea that will solve all of Hereford and Herefordshire's problems. Did it come as a surprise therefore that the Department for Transport decided not to approve funding for the development of the Hereford Transport Package bid? Not really as the DfT have consistently refused over the last quarter century to fund in its entirety a bypass and have equally and consistently requested Herefordshire Council to consider a balanced transport plan. In other words both the economic and environmental case for a bypass (or a series of linked up distributor roads masquerading as a bypass) is weak and nobody outside of the Council has seen the evidence submitted in line with the DfT guidelines for submitting a Transport Business Case. These guidelines clearly state that any transport plan is supported by '*a robust case for change that fits with wider public policy objective; demonstrates value for money; is commercially viable; is financially affordable; and is achievable*'. Clearly Herefordshire Council's bid did not satisfy these DfT criteria.

Interestingly the DfT stated '*Herefordshire Council and the Marches LEP are free to submit the case in future should further funding opportunities arise and one of the criteria we would look at, amongst others, is the overall strength of support, and opposition, from the public and key stakeholders*'. Reading between the lines this is yet another case of the DfT hinting that a balanced transport plan should be presented as, in the present day context, a roads only policy does not stand the test.

So what now? Are we in for another a decade or so of inaction on Hereford's transport front? Are we to suffer increased congestion as more houses are built, a public transport system that is disintegrating, an increased conflict between the car, the pedestrian and the cyclist, an acceleration of the

deterioration of air quality and no stop to the economic decline of the City? All this is bad news for achieving the Council's Local Transport Plan objectives of economic growth, providing a good quality transport network for all users, promoting healthy lifestyles, making journeys safer, easier and healthier, reducing the dependence on the private care and ensuring access to all services for those living in rural areas.

Surely it is time for a practical rethink. With this in mind Rail & Bus for Herefordshire and the Hereford Transport Alliance are developing a Sustainable Transport Plan. The initial blueprint for this comprises the following:

Detailed examination of the feasibility for a high capacity light tram route between the large residential areas south of the River Wye and the city centre. The route would use an existing right of way and river crossing incorporating a segregated footpath and cycleway.

Development of a new city wide bus network utilising electric and/or new breed hydrogen cell buses.

Detailed examination of the demand for and feasibility of peripheral park and ride sites on main road corridors into the city.

Development of a city wide network of well-defined and safe footways and cycle-ways, segregated as far as possible.

A comprehensive programme of traffic management and pedestrian safety measures including re-designed junctions, easing and/or elimination of pinch points, centralised traffic control, provision of bus only lanes.

A re-examination and evaluation of residential development site locations correlated with the proximity of employment zones, e.g. Rotherwas Enterprise Park and brownfield inner city sites.

Development of high quality inter-urban public transport links between Hereford and the market towns. Development of local sustainable transport plans for each market town and its catchment area.

This evolving plan is in line with government thinking on sustainable transport and the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement which confirmed that significant funds will be made available for supporting local transport networks including:

£1.8 billion from Local Growth Fund for English Regions

£1.1 billion extra investments in English local transport networks

£220 million to reduce traffic pinch points

£1 billion to improve and develop digital infrastructure (such as centralised traffic control)

£150 million to fund new electric and hydrogen buses

That's a lot of money on offer. Will Herefordshire be getting any? Doubtful the way it looks as our elected leaders continue to squabble as to whether a 'so called' bypass should go east or west of the city when most people (75% of all journeys) want to travel within the city not around it!

TIME FOR A RETHINK. TIME FOR AN EXAMINATION OF INTEGRATED TRANSPORT IN TOTAL NOT JUST ROADS



Our Prime Minister supports buses.

‘As the most popular mode of public transport, buses provide access to essential services for millions of passengers. Nearly 1 in 4 persons in the UK is at risk of social exclusion and 1 in 4 households lack access to a car. For 1 in 5 bus journeys a practical alternative does not exist. For some this may mean not taking a job, not making it to college, not taking care of health needs or simply not meeting friends and family. Greener Journeys is recommending that decision makers should factor in the wider social benefits that bus services can deliver’.

Taken from an article by Claire Haigh in Focus, the Journal of the Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport. Claire Haigh FCILT is chief Executive, Greener Journeys.

What's at the bottom of your garden?

About the early 1960s there was a new outcrop of complaints from local residents about the Ffestiniog Railway, but from a new angle. This time they were directed at local authorities for rating assessment of property adjacent to the railway. Understandably in Blaenau Festiniog a derelict railway is detrimental to the values of nearby property. But not so further down the line, where it appears that a re-opened railway is worse! A resident opposite

the Harbour Station in a rating assessment claim complained of ‘*engines shunting late at night.*’ She was bluntly told not to live near railways if they bothered her. A resident at the top end of Penrhyn Station was more successful. He complained that between thirty and forty trains a day passed in season, the engines often setting fire to his hedge, while photographers demolished his garden. But after all - it’s not everybody who can truthfully claim to have Fairlies* at the bottom of the garden!!

**The Fairlie is a type of locomotive designed for use on the Ffestiniog Railway.*

Subscriptions & Committee Matters

Just a reminder that subscriptions were due on the 1st February. Prompt payment of the subscription will help considerably the work of RBfH in promoting and helping maintain and develop a rail and bus public transport network for the county. As you will see from this newsletter there is a great deal happening and raising the profile of RBfH takes time and of course money for such items as printing and publicity and the holding of public open meetings.

As a result, this is also a call for any members who feel they can devote some time to help in the running of the organisation via the committee. In particular we are looking for a membership secretary and a webmaster.

After years of stalwart service, Rachel Allum our current treasurer and Naomi Bell our current membership secretary have decided to step down for a well earned rest and do a bit more travelling, by train and bus of course. We owe both a huge thanks for the years of service during which they have kept the money and the membership sides of the organisation in excellent order. We give them our best wishes for the future and I have no doubt we will continue to see them at our meetings.

Peter Gwatkin, treasurer to the Hereford Branch of the Workers Educational Association, for which I occasionally run courses on transport and industry, has kindly agreed to take on the role of treasurer. At the present time however Peter is recovering from open heart surgery but is making good progress. We wish him a sustained recovery and hope that he will still wish to take on the role when fully recovered.

We welcome Will Frecknall of Ross-on-Wye onto our committee as a full member and Andrew Pearson who is assisting Les Lumsdon as a co-opted member on the buses sub committee.

We also give a hearty welcome to Professor John Whitelegg who has agreed

to become our Honorary President. John has a vast experience in the world of transport and land use planning, environmental matters and has been deeply involved in numerous campaigns to both save and develop public transport in Britain and worldwide. Perhaps he is best known for his very active part in saving the Settle & Carlisle railway line from closure and also its subsequent development. John is Professor at the Stockholm Environment Institute. Professor Whitelegg was proposed and seconded as our president at the excellent talk he gave to us in November 2017

RBfH is also affiliated to the following organisations: RailFuture and RailFuture Wales: BusUser UK: TransportFocus: Campaign for Better Transport. Any member requiring further details of these organisations can contact Gareth, your chairman, on gghal@btinternet.com

Website Development

The value of a website has been more than demonstrated recently with other user organisations, in particular for disseminating information and attracting new members, especially amongst the young. Our website is at present moribund so we have engaged Lakewood Media to develop a new one which we can access and insert items such as the newsletter, various reports and other news etc. Lakewood via Sue Warren our vice chair have given us a very good deal, part of which should also be offset by external funding via donations and a limited amount of relevant small advertising in the newsletter. We will however require a person to look after the site, not an onerous job. So if you know of anyone who may be interested please get in contact with Sue or myself.

RBfH Meetings

Our series of afternoon meetings last autumn proved quite a success with a very good turnout for all three. We hope to continue, this starting with our **AGM on Tuesday 21 March (1400 Merton Hotel, Commercial Road, Hereford)** which will be followed by an illustrated talk on Narrow Gauge Railways in Wales & The Borders.

Contribute to your Newsletter

Articles, news, photographs etc. with a railway and/or bus content are always welcome for the RBfH Newsletter. Articles up to a maximum of 400 words plus illustrations are suggested as a guideline. Articles and other items can be submitted to your chairman either in hard copy via the post or electronically via the chairman's address or email shown in the RBfH Committee list.

HEREFORD
UNIVERSITY CENTRE



University
of Worcester



Herefordshire &
Ludlow College

*In association with the Hereford Civic Society,
you are invited to the public lecture*

Planning Hereford: how to get it right

An illustrated lecture by John Bothamley CBE FRSA BA(Hons)

Thursday 23 March 2017

Arrival from 7.00pm, for 7.15pm start,
and a 8.30pm close

at, The Events Suite,
Herefordshire & Ludlow College,
Folly Lane, Hereford

Expanding on the views of Sir Terry Farrell, and the Farrell Report of April 2014, John will consider how our built environment is created by site owners and developers rather than the community. A quick run through of the history of the creation of Hereford and how we can best look forward to creating a unique city that we all enjoy. Following the forum, there will be an opportunity to ask questions.

RSVP by Thursday 16 March to Julia Davis
email: DavisJulia@hlcollege.ac.uk, or tel: 01432 365431.

Hereford Civic Society in association with our emerging University Centre have arranged an important event focusing on 'Planning Hereford' (see above). Planning, land use and transport go hand in hand in what should be joined up thinking when it comes to the future of Hereford and the County. RBfH has a close association with the Civic Society (our chairman gave an illustrated lecture on sustainable transport at a recent HCS meeting) and RBfH is keen to forge contacts with the University so if you can please support them by attending what looks to be a very informative meeting.

Join Rail & Bus for Herefordshire and help protect and secure the development of our rail and bus services

Herefordshire stations handle in excess of 1.5 million passengers per annum and the number is growing. Herefordshire buses account for in excess of 36,000 passenger journeys per week.

Herefordshire rail and bus services are important.

- ◆ *Help in the development and future of rail and bus services in Herefordshire*
- ◆ *Help get improvements at your local station*
- ◆ *Help give rail and bus services a fair chance against an over emphasis on roads*
- ◆ *Help develop new innovative ways of providing rural and urban public transport*

The RBfH Committee

Chairman: Gareth Calan Davies 01531 633594: ghal@btinternet.com

Vice Chair: Sue Warren **Treasurer** Rachel Allum

Membership Secretary: Naomi Bell 100A Green Street Hereford HR1 2QW

Buses Sub Group: Les Lumsdon: leslumsdon@hotmail.com

Committee Members:

Michael Sullivan; Philip Baeur; John Thorne; Will Frecknall; Andrew Pearson

Membership Application

railfh@aol.com

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Email.....

Tel no.....

Membership is £8.00 for one year and is renewable on February 1st annually. For those joining after July, membership is free until the following February.

Please send cheque payable to Rail for Herefordshire and application form to:

Rail for Herefordshire
100A Green Street
Hereford HR1 2QW

Alternatively you can pay by direct debit. For details please contact the Membership Secretary at the above address or email railfh@aol.com

**PLEASE ENCOURAGE A FRIEND OR COLLEAGUE TO
JOIN US**