



# Newsletter 131

Spring 2006

## TIMETABLES

As many of you will be aware the new First Great Western franchise commences on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006. Timetables currently in use will, apart from minor and seasonal summer amendments, remain in place until December 2006, after which date a major revision will be introduced. We have no advanced knowledge of proposals, but by the time you receive this newsletter we will be in a period of consultation on the draft timetable. We hope the draft proposals will be made widely available via FGW website (also linked via the MMPA website).

One possible change to **current** schedules is departure time of the current 0727 from Maidenhead to Paddington. A review of the timing of this train indicates late arrival in London on most days - often due to conflicting train movements at Airport Junction (Heathrow). Consideration is being given to running this train a couple of minutes earlier from Maidenhead - if you use this train please be aware of this review.

## CHILTERN

The recent fire at High Wycombe station has meant temporary facilities being erected, arrangements which are likely to remain for some months. It is probable that there will be a delay in completing the repairs as the area is also part of the proposed station renewal project - a scheme for which planning consent is awaited.

Following the departure of Chad Collins, Trevor Fenwick has been appointed station-manager at High Wycombe. Due to start on 14<sup>th</sup> February, we wish him well following his transfer from GNER.

Timetables for the Chiltern line services remain much the same, and again we do not envisage significant changes in the foreseeable future.

## SECURE STATION STATUS

Maidenhead station, along with Twyford and Henley, has been awarded Secure Station status. This is part of a nationwide scheme to make stations more customer friendly and safe - consideration for the award includes staffing, CCTV, availability of help-points, good lighting, etc. in conjunction with FGW and BT Police. The awards normally last 2 years and are then reviewed - and hopefully re-awarded. The scheme is

## ADOPT-A-STATION SCHEME

Last summer MMPA was asked to help with expanding community involvement at Maidenhead station - part of First Group's policy at a number of stations around Western region. We are pleased to announce that Braywick Nurseries accepted an invitation to help brighten Maidenhead station by attending to the flowerbeds and tubs. We look forward to the rewards in spring and summer, and thank Robin Pemberton and his team.

In addition to this we hope to arrange a photographic display, produced by 3 different sources, to be displayed in the main waiting-room. This has proved a little more difficult to coordinate but we are hopeful of completion by the end of March.

completion by the end of March.

## **CUSTOMER PANEL**

The First Great Western Customer panel continues to receive regular input - some of the correspondence is dealt with as part of normal activity of the FGW Customer Relations Department, but, as some of you are aware, a few messages are referred to panel members for consideration and response. All clerical activity is coordinated through the Customer Relations team, based in Plymouth.

Contact - email : [customer.panel@firstgroup.com](mailto:customer.panel@firstgroup.com)

- postal : Customer Panel, c/o Customer Relations, FGW/FGWL, Freepost SWB 40576, Plymouth PL4 6ZZ

## **CONTACTS WITH MMPA**

**SECRETARY - 15 Calder Close, Maidenhead, SL6 7RS**

In addition to the FGWL customer panel, MMPA committee members continue to respond to complaints passed to us either by mail or through the website. Members of the committee are aware of many on-going problems along the branch-lines, and have regular meetings with FGWL: to discuss these, but we cannot monitor all problems. We are here to help - we may not always be able to resolve things but we will try to do so.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

AGM - Bourne End Community Centre on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2006 at 8.00pm. If there any nominations for committee posts please contact the Secretary before 10<sup>th</sup> March.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**FRIDAY 24<sup>th</sup>MARCH 2006**

**BOURNE END COMMUNITY CENTRE**

*(small hall)*

**8 pm**

**Meet local transport managers**

**and air your views - MAKE THIS MEETING A SUCCESS!**

*We look forward to meeting you*

*The meeting is open to both members and non-members*

## **MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

The time has come around once more to renew your annual subscriptions! Thanks to all of those who have supported us during the past year and the committee hopes it can rely on your continued support for the forthcoming year. A special thank you goes to all those members who added a donation to their subscriptions - it really is most generous, and much appreciated. A warm welcome is extended to all those who have joined us during the past year. As you are aware, we had to adjust the rates last year, but I am pleased to say that they

are being held at the current level until at least 2007. Your membership is becoming more important than ever. As you know, FGW now has the franchise for the next seven years and we need to see a vast improvement in current service levels, particularly to London, both in peak times and off peak. Your committee will do all it can to ensure we get the best deals possible for commuters and travellers within our area, but we must have your support and backing.

So, **PLEASE** renew **NOW** while it is fresh in your mind and help us to reduce admin costs, **reminders are very costly!** So, grab that chequebook - it really is still good value for money and you can have your say on **YOUR** local transport systems! Thank you in advance for your co-operation. The membership year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March, so subscriptions for the year 2006/2007 fall due on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006. These may be paid in person at the AGM on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March, or by post to the address below. Please complete the attached subscription form and return to the MMPA Secretary, either by post or in person at the AGM (see notes below).

### **MEMBERSHIP NOTES FOR YOUR GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION:**

1. **Data Protection Act** - the committee advises you that members' names and addresses are held on computer solely for the purpose of producing labels for the distribution of newsletters, and will not, under any circumstances, be divulged to third parties unless required to do so by law.
2. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to either 'MMPA' or 'Marlow-Maidenhead Passengers' Association'.

**Please send your remittance to: Secretary MMPA, 15 Calder Close, MAIDENHEAD, Berkshire, SL6 7RS**

3. If you require your membership card to be sent to you immediately, **please enclose an SAE**, otherwise your card will be forwarded to you with your next newsletter.

**IMPORTANT** - If you pay by standing order, please check with your Bank to ensure that you are paying the correct rate. Thank you for your co-operation.

### **VISIT TO FAWLEY MUSEUM RAILWAY, HENLEY-ON-THAMES**

You may recall that I gave advance notification in the last Newsletter of a proposed visit to the above Museum. I can now confirm that the visit will definitely take place on Sunday afternoon, **2<sup>nd</sup> July 2006**. The fee will be £5 per head, £4 going directly to the Museum locomotive coal fund, and £1 covering the MMPA costs in setting up the visit.

Tickets, maps, etc., will not be available until May, but at this stage I do need to know the level of interest, as the party is strictly limited in number. If you would like to go, please complete the attached form and return it to me when you renew your membership. **This is not a definite commitment at this stage, so please do NOT send any monies.** If you have expressed an interest by completing the form, I will contact you when I receive the final details and tickets, probably during May. Bookings will be reserved on a first come, first served basis. Thank you.

### **TRAVEL INFORMATION**

National railway enquiries (incl. First Great Western Link): 08457 - 484950 (24 hrs)

[First Great Western Link](#) Telesales : 08457 - 300700 (Mon - Sat)

[Chiltern Railways](#): 08456 - 005165 (0700 - 2000)

Arriva Bus : 01494 - 520941 (0900 - 1730 Mon - Fri)

Traveline : 0870 - 6082608 (0700 - 2100 daily)

Chiltern Trains (Holidays), Brunel House, 36 Station Road, Chinnor, Oxon OX39 4 GW (0870 - 8110150)

## **BBC RADIO BERKSHIRE TRAVEL NEWS.**

BBC Radio Berkshire has put more effort into Travel News in recent months. They say it's a high priority for them. Their travel presenters speak regularly to all the train operators and broadcast news of any serious delays and disruptions. It's an interactive service, so passengers can contact them with any information which they can then pass on to other commuters. The travel hotline number is 01189 311333.

On the roads - they now have exclusive access to the travel cameras across the county and broadcast live from Berkshire Traffic Control every 15 minutes during the morning and evening rush. Then it's every half hour during the rest of the day.

There's also up to date travel information on their website at: [www.bbc.co.uk/berkshire](http://www.bbc.co.uk/berkshire).

Of course; there's always room for improvement. So if you have any comments why not let them know!

**BBC RADIO BERKSHIRE broadcasts on 104.1, 104.4 and 95.4 MHz FM.**

## **FGW Franchise - Extract from Media factsheet (issued December 2005)**

The following regional information is specific to the Thames Valley, Kennet Valley, North Cotswolds and Oxford and is supplementary to the press statement from FirstGroup plc (First) regarding the award of the Greater Western franchise which includes extensive key highlights.

The current timetable will remain in operation until December 2006 as timetables in the UK, along with the rest of Europe, are now reviewed on an annual basis.

Timetable highlights from December 2006 include:

- Introduction of additional peak stopping train between Paddington and Slough, running every half hour
- Reinstatement of off peak calls at Slough in fast London/Oxford/North Cotswolds services
- Half hourly off peak services on the Windsor branch line to provide good connections with non-stop trains to and from London
- Additional morning and evening peak services for Twyford, Maidenhead and Slough
- Faster off peak journeys between London and Twyford/Maidenhead
- Additional morning through service from Henley to London, returning in the evening
- Regular hourly services between London and Westbury
- Two additional morning peak services from Westbury to London, returning in the evening peak and providing extra services for Kennet Valley stations
- Additional early morning train from Westbury-Cardiff
- Additional early evening Oxford-Reading stopping trains
- Reading-Gatwick service increased from hourly to half hourly off peak
- Reinstatement of seven trains each way between Oxford and Bicester
- All North Cotswold evening peak trains from London calling at Honeybourne and Pershore

We have plans to improve stations across the region with more car parking spaces and ticket machines, more help desks and information points, more cycle parking and customer information screens, better signage and increased CCTV.

In addition highlights of our plans for specific stations include:

- Improvements to booking hall and ticket office, refurbishment of toilets and waiting room and more ticket machines at Ealing
- A new waiting facility at Slough including new toilets, waiting areas and refreshment facilities. Additionally, covered cycle storage, upgraded ticket office and booking hall and refurbishment of the subway
- New toilets and improved disabled access and facilities at Burnham

- Improved waiting areas including toilets and refreshment kiosks at Maidenhead along with refurbishment of the subways and ticket office with a new ticket counter and information points and improved lift access
- Refurbishment of footbridge at Twyford with additional CCTV and new help points
- Improved transport interchange and ticket office at Newbury with an additional enclosed waiting area and refurbishment of the footbridge and stairs
- Redesign of the ticket office at North Camp with better access and facilities
- A new waiting facility at Oxford including new toilets, waiting areas and refreshment facilities. Additionally, waterproof cycle storage, a combined ticket office and travel centre, improved helpdesk and refurbishment of the subway
- Redesign of the forecourt at Westbury with refurbishment of ticket office, waiting room and subway
- Redesign of ticket office at Trowbridge with increased cycle parking and new help points
- Provision of weather proof cover to footbridge at Hungerford along with new lighting and PA system, improved car park layout, additional cycle spaces, and improved help points

*Comment - we await to see if First Group delivers the promises relating to our area of the Thames Valley.*

[Newsletter Archive](#) | [MMPA Home Page](#)