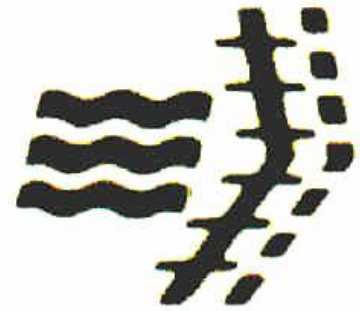


# MARLOW - MAIDENHEAD PASSENGER ASSOCIATION

## Newsletter Number 147

### Summer 2010



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MMPA covers transport in Maidenhead - Marlow, High Wycombe and Twyford - Henley-on-Thames.

#### First Great Western Timetables

With this newsletter we are distributing copies of First Great Western summer mini-timetable leaflets that come into force from 23<sup>rd</sup> May and stay in effect until 11<sup>th</sup> December 2009. Following discussions by MMPA with FGW last year, an earlier Sunday morning train has been added to the new timetable. This departs Maidenhead at 08.35 arriving Marlow 08.58. The return departs Marlow at 09.01 arriving Maidenhead 09.24. FGW will be monitoring use of this additional service so it will be a question of **use it or lose it**. Please tell as many people as possible to encourage them to use it.

For the rest of the timetable changes there is one reduction of service – the 18.33 from Paddington will no longer operate between Paddington and Oxford – but there will be replacement services for Maidenhead and Twyford, albeit slightly later, at 18.42 and 18.48 respectively.

The following is the package of Monday – Friday changes to services and formations for Maidenhead, Twyford and the surrounding area proposed for May 2010:

- 0703 Maidenhead – Paddington non-stop service (0620 from Didcot Parkway) to be formed as a 5-car instead of 4-car. This provides an additional 100 Standard seats on a key morning peak service and is the connecting train for Furze Platt and Cookham
- 0602 Reading – Slough – Paddington service to call additionally at Maidenhead, providing a new fast service into London
- 1736 Paddington – Oxford service (fast to Maidenhead) will be formed as a HST instead of a 4-car Turbo
- 1742 Paddington – Bourne End to be accelerated, running 5 minutes faster to Maidenhead and 4 minutes faster to Furze Platt, Cookham and Bourne End
- Continuation of recent introduction of Maidenhead call in 1750 Paddington – Oxford HST service
- 1818 Paddington – Oxford service (fast to Maidenhead) to run as currently; with a better connection to Furze Platt, Cookham and Bourne End, arrival time will be accelerated by 4 minutes
- 1833 Paddington – Oxford ceases to operate between Paddington and Oxford
- For Maidenhead, the 1833 will be effectively replaced by an accelerated & retimed 1842 Paddington – Bourne End service, calling at Slough, Maidenhead, Furze Platt and Cookham. Instead of taking 36 minutes to get to Maidenhead (which makes it a relatively unattractive service), it will depart at 1836 and get to Maidenhead in 27 minutes. It will be formed as a 5-car turbo service instead of the current 3-car unit, providing an additional 186 seats on this train. End-to-end times between Paddington and Bourne End will be unaffected. An £8m refresh of the turbo fleet is underway.

- For Twyford, an additional call will be inserted into the 1848 Paddington – Cheltenham HST
- For Slough, the accelerated 1836 departure effectively represents an additional service (taking 18 minutes to get to Slough), as the current 1842 Paddington – Bourne End is caught up by the 1851 Paddington - Oxford
- The Furze Platt, Cookham and Bourne End connection out of the 1918 Paddington – Oxford will be retimed, accelerating the journey time from Paddington to Bourne End by 4 minutes
- An additional Maidenhead call will also be inserted into the 1947 Paddington – Cheltenham HST service, taking the pattern of fast services to Maidenhead up to 2000

Please let MMPA know how the new timetable affects your travel arrangements – for better or worse; we do like to commend improvements as well as press for changes to unsatisfactory modifications.

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#### MMPA 2010 40<sup>th</sup> AGM – Chairman's Report Summary

Although the future of the branch looks secure for now, it certainly did not in the early days of the Association and many challenges remain for MMPA. The branch is well used, but attention and improvements are still imperative to assure that it remains a valuable asset for local communities and that the passenger experience is a positive one. Our current challenges and priorities include:

1. **Station improvements** this includes communications, facilities, infrastructure, security and cleanliness. In November 2009, the Better Rail stations Report was issued, providing us with very a useful, independent benchmark to use in setting goals for improvements at branch stations.
2. **Consistent and reliable service and connections** from statistics and anecdotes we know this has improved greatly but we have to remain vigilant.
3. **Maintenance and repairs along the line**, including refurbishment of the Bourne End Bridge. This was one of our big disappointments of the year. The repainting was budgeted and planned but fell through when Network rail failed to get proper planning permission in time. We will continue to pursue the topic when feasible.
4. **Big rail investment projects** such as Crossrail, FGW electrification, Chiltern's Evergreen 3 and station redevelopment planned or underway at Paddington, Reading and High Wycombe. Despite reassuring words from officialdom, I think we would be naïve to think there won't be disruption and inconvenience for passengers in our area due to these massive projects that surround us and are all supposed to happen in the next 10 years.
5. **Keeping members informed** about the impact of these big projects as well as about any other fare, fee, service, or policy changes that might matter to them. We've been doing this via the newsletter and AGM but would like to find other ways to get a message out quickly when it matters. If you have suggestions please let us know.
6. **Making sure local passenger problems and concerns are heard** by parties who can do something about them. This might include train operating companies (TOCs), Network

Rail, the bus operators and British Transport Police or some combination. To do this we try to establish good working relationships with all those groups.

Finally - the current FGW franchise agreement which includes the branch runs until 2014 during which time no stations can be closed and certain minimum service standards must be maintained – the peak direct BE-Paddington trains are one example. In preparation for the new franchise period after 2014, there will be public consultation and the government will establish new minimum service standards, probably in 2012. If we want to influence that process, **NOW** is the time for us to begin expanding our membership base, building our list of influential contacts, and establishing our case for what the community needs and expects over the next franchise period. This is a long term effort but one that is necessary to secure the future health of the branch. In difficult economic times with tough budgetary constraints, if we want to see significant station and service improvements, we have to be prepared and make a compelling case based on community need and benefit. Just being a squeaky wheel may not be enough and more.

Maurice Oram remains as President. At the AGM the MMPA Committee roles for the next year are:

Chairman	Susan Morrison
Secretary	Paul Murphy
Treasurer	Susan Morrison
Webmaster & Membership	Richard Porter
Newsletter Editor	Rob Latham
Bourne End Representative	Paul Murphy
Cookham Representative	Ken Fulker
Cookham Society	Jacqueline Crabb
Furze Platt Representative	John Smith
High Wycombe Representative	Mike Cooper
Maidenhead/Twyford Representative	Mark Jameson
Marlow Representative	Susan Morrison
Marlow Society Representative	Harriet Wilson
Committee Member	Trevor Kilner

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**A404(M) bridge replacement over the Western Main Line**

Considerable disruption of train users between Maidenhead and Reading and road users of the A404(M) between the A4 and M4 will continue over the next few weeks while the bridge over the railway is replaced.

The A404(M) has been or will be closed in both directions between junctions 9a and 9b on the following dates:

- Saturday 24 April 15:00 to Sunday 25 April 2010 18:00
- Saturday 8 May 20:00 to Sunday 9 May 2010 15:00
- Saturday 22 May 20:00 to Sunday 23 May 2010 21:00
- Saturday 5 June 20:00 to Sunday 6 June 2010 21:00
- Saturday 12 June 18:00 to Sunday 13 June 2010 23:59
- Saturday 19 June 20:00 to Sunday 20 June 2010 15:00
- Saturday 26 June 15:00 to Monday 28 June 2010 05:00

This extended closure is to incorporate a forthcoming scheme to replace the Kimbers Lane Footbridge which is located approximately 1 mile south of the Western Region Railway Bridge. There will be fully signed diversion in place throughout the closure diverting traffic through Maidenhead on to the A308(M). It will also be necessary for train services to be suspended whilst the demolition work is underway and when the new bridge section is installed.

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**FGW Turbo Upgrade**

Refurbishment of the FGW Turbo fleet used for local services has commenced with unit 165/109 going through the Reading works. The units have all to be refurbished by March 2012 to satisfy the remedial notice issued by the Government to FGW. The work includes new carpets, 'refreshed' seats (*sic*), upgraded toilets and air conditioning (presumably new in class 165 which is not currently fitted) overhead racks,

repainted interior and a GPS linked passenger information displays and public address. The withdrawal of 2 units at a time has caused short formations to be used resulting in severe overcrowding and earlier in the year replacement of an Oxford – Paddington HST (caused by fire) by the loco hauled 'Night Riviera' rolling stock.

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**Improvements to Branch Stations**

There is an issue regarding funding for investments for improved station facilities along the Marlow and Henley Branches. Currently FGW's budget only allows for the minimum of investment to Branch stations with non upgraded help points and CCTV at Bourne End only. We need more passenger/community security, safety and communications. These enhancements could make a HUGE difference to security and communications for passengers on the branch, particularly those stations that have only part-time or no staff. We are continuing to work with FGW and Network Rail to get what is best for the branch stations.

If you are concerned about improvements at local stations and would be willing to contact your local government representatives to express support for such funding requests please contact MMPA at [www.mmpa.org.uk](http://www.mmpa.org.uk). We can provide you with additional necessary information.

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**MMPA membership**

If you are a branch line passenger or local transport user please help MMPA get what's best for our community by joining now. With preliminary consultations on franchise rebids beginning next year, now is the time to begin building strength so that our voice can be heard before it's too late to protect local interests and push for improvements Please also spread the word amongst friends, neighbours and fellow passengers who could benefit by having our public transport services be the best they can be by joining us. With your support, MMPA can have a positive impact for all those living, working or visiting in the area served by the branch line. Many thanks!

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**Return of The Bristolian**

To celebrate the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Great Western Railway, First Great Western and Vintage Trains ran a special service on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2010 between London and Bristol and return. The target 2 hour non-stop of the 'The Bristolian', steam hauled all the way by former GW locomotive No.5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* was well beaten on the return journey with a time of 1hr 49m from Bristol (Temple Meads) to London (Paddington) resulting in a 46 minute early arrival! Note that current regular service times for this journey range between 1hour 38m and 1hour 51m!

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**TRAVEL INFORMATION**

BBC Radio	95.4, 104.1 fm and DAB.
Berkshire:	(also phone 08459 - 311333)
National Rail	08457 - 484950 (24 hrs)
enquiries:	or <a href="http://www.nationalrail.co.uk">www.nationalrail.co.uk</a> or text
First Great Western:	08457 - 000125 (0700 – 2200 daily)
Chiltern Railways:	08456 - 005165 (08.30 – 17.30)
Arriva Bus:	0844 8004411 (0900 - 1700 Mon - Fri)
First Berks Buses:	01753 524144
Carousel Buses:	01494 533436
Traveline:	0871 - 2002233 (0700 - 2200 daily)
	10p/min on BT landline
RBWM	01628 796666
Transportation	
helpline	

Also see our web site [www.mmpa.org.uk](http://www.mmpa.org.uk) for links.

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**Contact MMPA**

If you have any issues or comments regarding public transport in the area that you would like to raise please use the Contact Us links on the MMPA website [www.mmpa.org.uk](http://www.mmpa.org.uk).

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