

# MARLOW - MAIDENHEAD PASSENGER ASSOCIATION

Newsletter Number 162

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

## **SUPPORT MMPA – RECRUIT A NEW MMPA MEMBER**

**The future of MMPA and its campaigning for the future of the local branches and transport in the area is dependent on a steady flow of new members to support the work. Members need not be involved directly in work of the organisation but can provide details of travel experiences, good or bad, to enable our work to be effective. With annual membership of £4 for individuals, £5 for families and organisations, and £3 for senior citizens and students under 18 it is not a significant price to pay to support and try to improve your travel needs. Use the *Contact Us* links on the MMPA website [www.mmpa.org.uk](http://www.mmpa.org.uk) for more information. Please persuade other local travellers and commuters to join us.**

### **Membership**

Thanks to everyone who has renewed their membership. If you haven't received a reminder with this newsletter please take it that I have received your subscription. If you haven't yet paid I hope you will continue to support the Association as there is a lot still to achieve.

*Richard Porter*

### **Timetables**

The summer timetables for First Great Western and Chiltern Railway have been issued and copies are included as appropriate to your location.

### **AGM report**

A summary of major points from the Chairman's report presented at the Annual General Meeting of the MMPA follows:

- Good progress on Reading Station redevelopment; when the project is finished in Spring 2015 the station will have 5 new platforms and a viaduct to take fast lines over slow ones.
- Crossrail enabling works continue at Maidenhead. Bus replacement service for the Branch resulted in some serious hiccups for passengers about which MMPA provided extensive feedback to First Great Western. We hope bus replacement will run more smoothly in the future but MMPA will remain vigilant.
- Work began on restoring the link between Bicester Town and the Chiltern Railways line. When complete in two years, Chiltern Railways will provide service to Oxford from High Wycombe every 30 minutes.

We will do our best to keep members informed during these major projects about planned changes to service and of course will provide feedback to Network Rail and the train operators to improve the process where possible.

Some positive developments during the year were:

- A programme of repair and repainting on the Bourne End railway bridge has been completed.
- New Customer Information System (CIS) Screens have been installed at all Marlow Branch stations.
- A rubbish filled patch of land adjacent to Bourne End station has been cleared and the space is currently used for materials storage.
- We agreed to absorb the former Taplow Rail Users Group (TRUG) and begin watching over Taplow station. The station has seen above average growth in number of passengers but might otherwise have been left without anyone to advocate for them.

Our aim is to recruit a local "Friends" group at Taplow and at other stations along the branch. The Marlow Branch Working Group is an example of what can be achieved when interested parties work together for benefit of the local railway. MMPA believes this is a productive approach and would like to see it advanced more formally through a Community Rail Partnership (CRP). We are investigating whether it makes sense to pursue that as part of an alliance of Thames Valley Branches, including Marlow, Henley and Windsor. There is no doubt that some decisions about service, costs and investment are best made with local input and CRPs have proven to be an excellent way to manage that in other parts of the country. Budgetary constraints on local authorities seem likely to prove a major obstacle, however, so we are considering alternative solutions. In the meantime we will try to pursue Station Adoption or formation of local Friends groups as an interim step towards a CRP. The broad base of community support required for a CRP should help us better meet continuing challenges. A planning application submitted for development of housing adjacent to Marlow station late in 2013 is just one example. Network Rail has an easement on the property because it provides the only access for maintenance and repairs at that end of the Branch. MMPA was concerned that the ability of Network Rail and any train operator to run the Branch sustainably or to improve it in necessary ways was not being considered at all as part of the planning process. After we alerted FGW and Network Rail to the application, both objected and have now become involved in discussions with planning authorities and the developer. Another challenge is better integration of the railway with other modes of transport. We are trying to work with others in the larger community to improve provision for parking, cycling, pedestrian and bus links.

During the year MMPA participated in several external conferences, surveys, and public consultations to stay informed about plans that might impact our area and to ensure that community and passenger interests were represented. Amongst

all this activity and change, MMPA's challenge remains the same: Stay informed, stay involved and when necessary, be a strong voice for all those who rely on the Marlow-Maidenhead railway branch.

Ensuring a sustainable future for our railway and related transport links is a real team effort that will be most effective with participation from members with varied experience and background. Thanks for your support!

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### Revenue Protection on the Branch

Yet again we are often hearing that passengers are once again often having trouble buying tickets on Branch trains, either because no guard comes through to sell them or because tickets sold from the portable ticket machines don't work at the barriers at Paddington. It is unacceptable for people travelling from the Branch onward to stations beyond Maidenhead to be expected to get off the train at Maidenhead to purchase a ticket because they couldn't obtain one on the train. If you experience any of these problems, please let us know and give us as much detail as possible.

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### Station usage

In the table below you will find a chart which shows station usage of Marlow, Henley and Windsor Branches in 2013 compared with 2012. All stations have shown an increase although Cookham and Windsor are below average at only 1%. Compare this with High Wycombe (10%) and Beaconsfield (5%) on Chiltern Railways.

<u>STATION</u>	<u>ENTRIES- FULL</u>	<u>ENTRIES- REDUCED</u>	<u>ENTRIES- SEASON</u>	<u>TOTAL ENTRIES</u>	<u>ENTRIES/EXITS 2013</u>	<u>ENTRIES/EXITS 2012</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>	<u>INTER- CHANGE</u>	<u>% SEASON</u>
Marlow	37,218	54,393	51,351	142,962	285,924	277,352	3%		36%
Bourne End	29,477	39,491	55,868	124,836	249,672	239,870	4%	61,995	45%
Cookham	23,793	33,879	47,314	104,986	209,972	207,050	1%		45%
Furze Platt	16,397	18,032	43,537	77,966	155,932	152,812	2%		56%
Maidenhead	424,192	761,867	876,578	2,062,637	4,125,274	3,963,876	4%	485,562	42%
Henley-on-Thames	75,695	157,714	130,588	363,997	727,994	693,142	5%		36%
Shiplake	12,637	12,867	21,229	46,733	93,466	86,928	8%		45%
Wargrave	9,739	9,673	26,237	45,649	91,298	84,300	8%		57%
Twyford	145,035	252,293	276,261	673,589	1,347,178	1,299,324	4%	611,011	41%
Taplow	32,943	42,011	44,604	119,558	239,116	230,048	4%		37%
Burnham	128,444	195,442	256,253	580,139	1,160,278	1,117,064	4%		44%
Slough	648,479	1,135,941	1,002,434	2,786,854	5,573,708	5,460,832	2%	1,570,311	36%
Windsor (Central)	172,547	517,636	234,225	924,408	1,848,816	1,830,732	1%		25%
High Wycombe	408,381	383,547	444,573	1,236,501	2,473,002	2,244,250	10%		36%
Beaconsfield	210,376	179,850	329,983	720,209	1,440,418	1,374,402	5%		46%

### Recruiting Members

There are major rail projects under way in the area which will have a significant impact on travel. Crossrail, western route electrification including the Intercity Express programme, electrification of the Branches and even HS2 which will have an interchange at Old Oak Common will certainly change peoples travel patterns. Support of the membership is more important than ever so that MMPA can monitor what's happening and advocate for our passengers when necessary and have a stronger voice when speaking up for local interests. Typical of the issues we anticipate:

- When Crossrail arrives in 2019 will there be sufficient car parking space for the expected increase in rail usage
- Can the local buses be reorganised to form an effective transport hub at Maidenhead Station which integrates bus and rail services
- Possible establishment of Station Adoption Groups leading to Community Rail Partnership(s) in the Thames Valley to provide coordinated liaison with Train Operating Companies and the Network Rail

What can you do? As at the heading see if you can recruit a new member or two.

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### TRAVEL INFORMATION

BBC Radio Berkshire:	95.4, 104.1 FM, DAB, or 08459 - 311333
National Rail enquiries:	08457 - 484950 (24 hrs) 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 ) 10p/min on BT landline
RBWM helpline	01628 796666

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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