

MARLOW - MAIDENHEAD PASSENGER ASSOCIATION

Newsletter Number 163

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MMPA covers transport aspects in Maidenhead - Marlow, Taplow, High Wycombe and Twyford

Membership

Thanks to all of you who have renewed your subscriptions. If you haven't paid for 2014 this is the last communication you will receive. It won't come as a surprise that increasing postage and room hire charges have caught up with us and it is necessary to raise the membership fees for the first time since 2004. The new simplified rates will be £5.00 for personal membership including couples and £10.00 for groups and organisations. The new rates will apply from 1st January 2015 (renewals are due on 1st April).

Richard Porter (Webmaster and Membership Secretary)

Coverage of the Henley Branch is being taken over by the Henley Branch User Group: they can be contacted at henleybranchusergroup@gmail.com. They are having a General Meeting Thursday 25 September at 7pm in Henley Town Hall.

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Crossrail works at Maidenhead

MMPA has received an update this week from First Great Western of works to be carried out shortly at Maidenhead Station which will significantly affect journeys from the station. The text of the message reads:

"I promised to keep you up to date with developments at Maidenhead station as it undergoes the modifications necessary to modernise the route as well as operate Crossrail services from late 2019.

The first two weekends of next month

4 - 5 October and 11- 12 October 2014, Network Rail will be removing the platform canopy and train shed from platforms 4/5. This is to allow for the installation of overhead line equipment to power new electric trains. Replacing the existing canopies will also be essential for the longer Crossrail trains that will require lengthened platforms.

These changes will allow the station to accommodate future customer demand and are part of the planned scheme to increase capacity on this key route and bring Maidenhead within easier reach of key business and leisure districts in London.

In between removal of the existing canopy and installation of the new one, temporary platform coverage to the East (London end of the platform) will be fitted. The interim canopies are being built over the next weeks and will be in place before the removal works start next month.

Changes to station operations and services while the works take place

On the affected dates, the main entrance and platforms 4 and 5 will be closed. Platforms 1 and 2 will only be accessible through the Shoppenhangers Road entrance, which will mean an additional five minute walk to get to trains.

The Marlow Branch and the relief lines will also be closed.

Rail replacement bus services will be in place for the branch and Slough, Burnham and Taplow and Maidenhead and Slough while the works are going on.

Car-parking operations

The equipment used to remove the canopy and train shed will be located within the station forecourt. This means the car park will not be available and we will be asking customers to start to remove their vehicles from the station by Friday morning.

Customer information and an invitation

As usual, we have a full communications plan in place to inform our customers about these works and this will include, station posters (as per the attached), station and on-train announcements, as well as online and social media channels.

We will also be inviting interested parties to watch part of the removal, which will involve a 300 tonne crane dismantling the infrastructure section by section, from 1200 hrs on Saturday 04 October at Maidenhead. You are most welcome to join.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, do not hesitate to get in touch with Jane Jones, jane.jones@firstgroup.com, who will be happy to help.

Thanks,

Sue Evans

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For more information on our range of services or to book your tickets online, please visit:-

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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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Bus change

We note with regret that the X9 service operated by First Group between Maidenhead and High Wycombe has been withdrawn at short notice despite recently increasing the service frequency. No reason or justification has so far been given.

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TfL Journey Planner

Have you used the Journey Planner provided by Transport for London to plan a journey into London? You may find some strange results if you start from our area. For example if you start from one of the Maidenhead locations offered the plan always suggests catching a bus to Slough to catch a train for the onward journey! A typical journey starting at Bourne End brings a strange result

Walk to Bourne End (Bucks), Railway Station catch a 37 bus to Loudwater Turn then a 740 bus to Belmont Road (UB8). Then follows a U1 bus to Uxbridge Station, Metropolitan line to Baker Street Underground Station and finally Bakerloo line to Oxford Circus Underground Station.

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Unwanted building developments

It has come to our attention that a planning application to build housing that will in part cover the trackbed of the line between Bourne End and High Wycombe has been submitted to Wycombe District Council. Several organisations with interest in the application were not initially informed but that has now been rectified and their objections submitted. Wycombe District Council was due to make a decision by 11 November but the applicant has now been asked to supply more detailed plans of building heights, road and pavement widths and sewage plans by the end of September which may delay the decision date. MMPA has submitted objections to the application based on the impact of the development on the loss of a transport corridor.

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New at Maidenhead Station, Customer Ambassadors.

First Great Western have introduced a new facility at several stations including Maidenhead. Customer Ambassadors can be found across the Great Western network, including Bristol, Reading and London Paddington. Ambassadors, easily identified by their smart purple uniforms, offer help and advice from assisting passengers on and off trains, helping plan journeys, tracking down that bag left behind on the train to Oxford. Or if you're just looking for a chat they will happily wait with you until your train arrives. You won't see them doing safety critical tasks such as dispatching trains or selling tickets in the ticket hall but they will assist you in buying

or picking up tickets from the ticket vending machines. Your Ambassadors at Maidenhead are Amjad, Brenda and Mudassar.

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Furze Platt level crossing

You may have read in the local papers that Network Rail and British Transport Police are carrying out a campaign at Furze Platt Station to inform walkers and road users of the danger of misusing the level crossing. The Furze Platt crossing is reported to be the most ill-used crossing in the western sector of the railway with examples of quite idiotic behaviour such as walking across the crossing in front of a moving train.

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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? See if you can recruit a new member or two.

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TRAVEL INFORMATION

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|--------------------------|---|
| BBC Radio Berkshire: | 95.4, 104.1 FM, DAB, or 311333 |
| National Rail enquiries: | 08457 - 484950 (24 hrs) or www.nationalrail.co.uk 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 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.

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