



Could Do Better

Everybody agrees that performance is not what it should be. Delay analysis shows that, while the level of "TOC-on-TOC" and "TOC-on-Self" delays are fairly constant, the delays down to Network Rail (NR-on-TOC) have been heading north.

(TOC = Train Operating Company)

Network Rail has a plan. It's to spend £140 million upgrading the eastern end of the Great Western Main Line. The work will be funded from the agreed budget for Control Period 7 (April 2024 to March 2029) with no additional contribution by the taxpayer.

NR cites six factors that cause the bulk of delays: points, axle counters, power supplies, track, trespass and network management which includes signalling and timetables.

The Elizabeth Line has increased the number of trains on the line by 17% since 2019, and there's also been an increase in the number of freight trains.

The renewal of the overhead line equipment from Paddington to Heathrow Airport Junction is being brought forward from CP8 to CP7. Axle counters, used to detect trains, were the best thing since sliced bread in 2021 but have now gone a bit stale, for which read unreliable. Some outstanding track renewals will also be done in CP7.

Fares

You'll have noticed that regulated fares went up by an average of 4.9% in March, and that London Day Travelcards went up by slightly more. The result is that you can get a day return into London which is slightly cheaper than a Travelcard, but without the flexibility.

Timetables

The new timetables come into force on 2nd June this year, a bit later than normal. The good news is that we get an extra service on the branch at the start of the evening peak.

The new service will look like this:

Maidenhead d: 15:38¹, 16:06, 16:37¹

Bourne End d: 16:21 16:52 (both ways)

Marlow d: 16:10¹ 16:41

¹ timing adjustment, d: = departure

Membership Renewal

The year of free MMPA membership we offered to help with cost of living expired on 31st March. We hope we can count on your support this year by renewing your subscription.

Those who left their subscription in place for 2023 thank you. It will show on the accounts as a donation.

Subscription rates remain as before: £5 for personal membership and £10 for organisations and businesses.

PayPal subscriptions still in force will continue as before.

Please pay by bank transfer if possible to Marlow-Maidenhead Passengers' Association
Sort code 60-14-12, Account 72748745
Reference: your membership number if remembered, or last name.

Cheques should be sent to

MMPA Membership, 1 West Barn, Altwood Road, Maidenhead, Berks. SL6 4PF

AGM 2024

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Marlow-Maidenhead Passengers' Association will be held at the Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Road, Bourne End SL8 5SX on Friday 31st May 2024 at 19:45 hrs.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on September 23rd 2023 (follows)
3. Chairman's Report
4. Financial Report for the year ended 31st December 2023.
5. Re-appointment of Wilkins & Co as Independent Examiners
6. Election of Committee Members.

The following are offering themselves for re-election:

Eileen Bune - Cookham PC rep.

John Fowler - MTR Elizabeth Line liaison

Geoff Herbert - Taplow station rep.

Rob Latham - Membership Sec., Maidenhead station rep. & acting Treasurer

Nigel Phillips - Chair, Chiltern Railways liaison, Bucks C.C. liaison and High Wycombe station rep.

Richard Porter - Newsletter Editor, Webmaster and Furze Platt station rep.

Cllr. Laura Tull joined us during the year and is offering herself for election as Cookham station rep.

Vacant: Marlow station rep.

7. Any Other Business

Presentations, Q & A

Minutes of the 2023 AGM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Held at Bourne End Community Centre on
26th May 2023 at 1945

1. Welcome

The acting Chairman Nigel Phillips welcomed sixteen members and guests as well as representatives from GWR, MTR and Chiltern.

2. Apologies

Received from G Burston, Nigel and Mindy Cairns. . Network Rail were unable to attend

3. Minutes of last AGM

The Minutes had been circulated in Newsletter 192. There were no matters arising. They were accepted as a true record.

4. Committee Report

See Newsletter 194.

5. Financial Report

Finances reported to be in reasonable state despite a small loss in the year of £138. We have significant reserves which enable MMPA to continue for the foreseeable future. The accounts were approved by show of hands.

6. Auditors

It was resolved that Wilkins & Co be re-appointed as Auditors on a show of hands

7. Election of Officers

The following offered themselves for re-election and were all duly elected with a show of hands:

Eileen Bune- Cookham PC

John Fowler - MTR Elizabeth Line

Geoff Herbert - Taplow Station Rep.

Rob Latham - Membership, Maidenhead Station and Treasurer

Nigel Phillips - Chiltern Railways, Bucks CC, High Wycombe Station

Richard Porter- Newsletter Editor
Webmaster, Furze Platt Station

In addition Cllr. Laura Tull (Cookham PC) was proposed and elected to the committee as Cookham station representative, replacing Mandy Brar.

8. Any Other Business

Presentations: see Newsletter 194.

Congratulations...

to our friends at MTR Elizabeth Line who won four awards at the Rail Business Awards including Rail Business of the Year and Train Operator of the Year. Special congratulations go to Scott McCloud who picked up the prize for Young Professional of the Year.

Bus Diversions in April

The multi-storey car park in Broadway, Maidenhead is being demolished as the building is in an unsafe condition. This will affect local bus services.

A full road closure on Broadway will be required from 17th to 26 April, weekdays only between 9am to 3pm, in order to enable the safe demolition of the staircase tower. A diversion will be in place via Frascati Way, Bad Godesberg Way, St Cloud Way, Forlease Road, Bridge Road and High St.

As a result of the road closure weekdays between 17 and 26 April the following bus routes will be affected:

Thames Valley Buses routes 3, 7, 8, 9, 16, 234, 235, 238 and 239 will not call at Broadway, Market St, Library, Queen St, York Rd East bus stops between 9am and 3pm, but will outside these times. All other stops served as usual.

Arriva route 7 and Red Eagle Buses route 63 will only pick up from Frascati Way stop S1/S2 and turn at the roundabout south of the station, at all times, not just between 9am and 3pm.

"Where to catch your bus" information will be posted at all bus stops to help people find the right stop, in addition to extra signage explaining which buses are calling where during this period.

Down the Line

Taplow South Side Parking

The car park is now one-way from the A4 to Station Road. The cars presumed to belong to a car repair business on the other side of Station Road have been removed.

Work is underway to dig up the car park presumably to resurface it and mark out parking bays. It is hoped to increase the number of spaces by at least 20.

This was discussed by MMPA, Network Rail and Taplow Parish Council last year.

Taplow - North Side Parking

Approach Road, where parking is free, continues to cause issues on a daily basis. The influx of passengers from Beaconsfield and High Wycombe continues to increase. Unfortunately TfL is of the opinion that the increase has been caused by the building of local flats. Their research is somewhat lacking - parking on the road on some days is reaching to within 75m of Bath Road. The re-take involved getting double yellow lines for the road continues behind the scenes and will take some time, as it did with Institute Road some years ago.

There is a serious concern that when the double yellow lines are finally in place in Approach Road the problem will simply move further away from the station. Those who currently park for free don't wish to pay thus will not move to the southern car park. They will probably move to Boundary Road which is slightly further to walk. This is an ongoing worry for the Parish Council as eventually cars will begin to be parked in the village itself.

Taplow Station

The station itself continues to look fine. The large flower pots dotted around the platforms have been refilled with different species and appear to be looked after by someone as they are thriving. The ticket gates appear to be working more often than not but there would appear to be continuing issues with the ticket machines.

Maidenhead Station

Work continues on platform 2/3. A "Fatality fence" has been installed but work on the new stair case and lift won't be finished before the Autumn.

We've heard rumours that automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras were installed on Maidenhead station forecourt and that drivers would be fined. GWR has assured us that there is no ANPR on the forecourt, and waiting is free for 20 minutes for setting down and picking up passengers.

One empty stock working from Reading overshot Maidenhead and got to Slough before turning back. On another occasion a guard forgot to collect a token before setting off (How was this possible? -Ed)

Furze Platt ...

and down the branch: new stainless steel benches and defibrillators have been installed.

Cookham

The ticket office at Cookham has been closed on frequent occasions due the lack of a relief clerk. GWR has told us that they have recruited a new staff member who will, after training, provide cover for stations like Cookham.

Unfortunately, while the station is unstaffed the toilets and waiting room have to remain locked to avoid vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Bourne End

Two train guards received shocks when touching the token equipment, and one needed attention when the train got back to Maidenhead.

Off-Peak Fridays

Transport for London (TfL) is conducting a three-month trial (ends 31st May) of making all contactless Pay-as-you-go fares including Oyster off-peak for whole of Friday. Daily caps are adjusted accordingly.

The concession does not apply to paper tickets, Travelcards or bus and tram fares.

Battery Train Sets New Record

The ex-District Line ex-VivaRail battery train, 230001 has set a new record for the distance travelled by a battery powered train on a single charge. It was 86 miles which beats the 2022 record set by a Siemens Class 777 by two miles. A mobile charging unit was on standby just in case, but it wasn't needed.

The train is now at West Ealing and has been running on the Greenford branch. The trial will run for one year.

Photo: Great Western Railway

