

## WIRRAL TRANSPORT USERS ASSOCIATION

**Notes from Annual General Meeting at Birkenhead YMCA on Monday evening 25.7.2016**

**Speaker - David Powell Merseytravel**

**Business Meeting**(see separate heading)

### **4 0 Chairman's Report ( 2015-16 )**

The committee meet from September - June on the second Tuesday at 19.30 hrs in Port Sunlight Station offices due to the help of Merseytravel. Very sadly we lost our newly co-opted member, Alan McGiffin who passed away.

Two excursions ran, one to the East Lancs. Railway and Bala Lake Railway/Welsh Highland Railway and we produced one newsletter (difficult to produce a second with limited resources).

We informally consult with other Rail User Groups (all lines into Chester except Crewe-Holyhead as no RUG plus WBRUA) and in this vein firstly attend an a newly formed area meeting in Liverpool (Liverpool City Region Rail User Groups Coordination Meeting) an essential regular meeting of 'minds.' There are new rail developments happening but especially unsatisfactory is the Wrexham - Bidston service. WBRUA is upping its game under new Chairman, John Allcock.

Secondly a group was started in Chester at the instigation of Chris Matheson MP for Chester under the Chairmanship of Tom Welsh who has moved to Chester from Northampton (ex. Rail User Group Member).

We also send delegates to Travel Watch NW about three times a year meeting Train Operating Companies, Merseytravel and Greater Manchester. We meet them sometimes on other occasions and Angus attends Liverpool John Lennon Airport Committee. We also meet Cheshire West and Chester Council, Train Companies and Merseytravel/Greater Manchester Transport Officers at events from time to time.

I hesitate to single out committee members but must praise on 'artistry' grounds alone Angus and his sub-group for the newsletter and our web-master, Jim Anderson. Both could do with contributions from members to place in the newsletter or on our website.

There are still vacancies on the committee such as secretary, treasurer (Angus is acting treasurer) awaiting a suitable volunteer and for one or two committee members. The lack of a secretary means we need to spend more time in committee organising things and limits networking with other organisations. We are trying to cover buses in our area by forming a small group within the committee keeping a watching brief on service changes.

If any member wishes to attend a committee meeting please ring me on 0151-334-7723 the day before i.e. on the Monday and leave a message.

### **4.1 Transport**

Last year, I gave a summary of where we are in transport - especially rail. In the ensuing twelve months developments have occurred bringing out into the open growth in rail travel. All this involves the RUG's. A leading Transport Officer once said 'If you didn't exist we'd have to invent you'

Rail improvements in the area start with the much awaited **Saltney-Rossett redoubling** on the Chester-Wrexham line almost complete, replacement of old signal cable takes place in the Spring. Also extra trains from Northwich (but maybe Chester) to Stockport/Manchester on

the **Mid-Cheshire Line** and Chester - Liverpool services via the **Halton Chord** in Dec. 2018.

the **Ordsall Chord** (Man. Vic.-Deansgate for Manchester Airport) work has started and construction continues of **Metrolink Second City Crossing**.

The **Liverpool Moorfields** platform works are just complete with **Lime Street** mainline works due last half of 2017 together with a start on a new station at **Maghull North**.

All the above have come about due to RUG pressure. Also **Halton Chord** work should be complete in the first half of 2018 in conjunction with resignalling of Weaver Junction (WCML) to Edge Hill.

**NW Electrification** - Liverpool-Manchester Stas./Wigan - Preston and Warrington Bank Quay trains became fully electric using 20 319's - 20 more are coming for other NW services e.g. Manchester - Preston in 2017 leading to more diesel train capacity. Broad Green to Huyton - provision of 4th track works now imminent.

**Freight** - Biomass is running from Liverpool Docks to Drax Power Station. The sand for Quinn Glass is now being unloaded at Helsby W Cheshire junction site near the works instead of Ellesmere Port Docks.

**Buses** - Franchising may be on the cards but the network is mostly the same as last July.

**Water** - Liverpool's new river quay nearly ready for Post-Panamx container ships.

**Air** - Passenger numbers are up due to some new routes despite the transfer of some Ryanair services to Manchester.