

If ever you needed proof of how important railways are, take a look at the picture on the right.

All 150 of the people pictured can comfortably fit in the London Tube carriage behind them.

And this is just one carriage which will be added to the six-carriage trains on the Jubilee Line.

Imagine all the people on that Tube train getting into their cars and trying to go to work.

London would come to a halt and completely choke on its own pollution. And contrary to what some people have been trying to tell us, there is no way buses could even approach the kind of service given by the Tube.

There has also been a lot of hot air in official places about air being carried in empty trains. Tell that to most of the people crammed into crowded coaches in London and many parts of the network. Most of the useless air

being carted around Britain is in the cars with only one person – the driver – in them.

And out the back of those cars comes the dirty air that makes it difficult for the rest of us to breathe fresh air.

Currently the Jubilee line capacity is approximately 16,500 people per hour when running 24 trains an hour.

When the extra coach is added to Jubilee Line trains and four new trains join the fleet in January next year the line will be able to cope with 19,500 passengers per hour.

The improvements are part of a £10billion five-year investment programme by Transport for London.

Mayor Ken Livingstone said: "London Underground is improving but we know there is much more to do."

Tube Lines is the company rebuilding the Jubilee line as

Jubilee 150

part of a £450million project. It showed off the extra coach – one of 59 being built by Alstom in Barcelona at a cost of £100million – at Canary Wharf Tube station on Monday 6 June.

The Jubilee line is an important part of the transport package within London's bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

In addition to the longer trains and larger fleet, Tube Lines will deliver a full line upgrade in 2009, including a new signalling system, which means trains will run faster and at more frequent intervals. Journey times will be cut by up to 20%.

Eric Prescott of Alstom said: "We are working closely with Tube Lines to ensure that the

project will be a success and the Jubilee line will have the seven car trains and an additional four new trains in service for early 2006. We have delivered three new carriages to our Stratford Market depot already and the project is on time."

Tube Lines – owned by Amey and Bechtel – is responsible for the maintenance and upgrade of the infrastructure on the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines.

London Underground is responsible for operating the Underground, for employing drivers and station staff, for ticketing and fares, and for the Tube's safety regime.

For more information see www.tubelines.com

Picture: Tube Lines



Peterborough 2005 Railfuture AGM

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Mayor of Peterborough Raja Akhtar

The mayor of Peterborough welcomed the 100 people who attended Railfuture's annual general meeting in Peterborough on Saturday 7 May 2005.

Councillor Raja Akhtar stayed most of the morning, buying a couple of souvenir mugs from the Cast.Iron stall.

James Adeshiyan, the route director for WAGN Railway – which runs trains between London King's Cross and Peterborough – told us how his company's performance was improving.

Tim Phillips, chairman of Cast.Iron told us about his group's fight against Cambridgeshire County Council's proposals for a guided busway over the central part of the old Cambridge to St Ives railway which was closed in 1970 (see map).

Tim pointed out that over that section the buses could travel just as fast on the to-be-improved parallel A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon road and that the sections where the buses were to run on the ordinary city roads would be the parts where separate reserved guided bus tracks would be the most useful, were there to be a guided bus anywhere!

Railfuture president Peter Lawrence told us about various high level national meetings over the year between Railfuture officers and senior politicians, such as the Liberal Democrats, Paul Taylor, Labour's then minister for transport Tony McNulty and

enquiries he had dealt with over the year and he encouraged all branches to keep him informed of developments in their areas so that he could be as well prepared as possible when faced with media enquiries.

Chairman Mike Crowhurst thanked the directors departing from the board (Keith Dyall, Peter Kenyon, Richard Pout and Howard Thomas) for their past service and welcomed Jerry Alderson, Philip Bisatt, Trevor Garrod and Clara Zilahi.

He congratulated Jerry Alderson on a well-fought campaign for the chairmanship.

Mr Crowhurst also paid tribute to the departing national treasurer Tony Sheward for his five years of sterling service and who would be a hard act to follow. A replacement treasurer was still being sought and the ongoing vacancy for sales officer was also of concern.

Mr Crowhurst also commented on the loss, as employed staff, of Peter Harris and Robert Stevens and the impending closure of the national office in London – all of which had been necessitated by the worsening financial situation.

With regard to external matters, the chairman commented on the Railways Act which he felt was rushed legislation and which heralded the return of central government "command and control" of the railways.

The loss of the Strategic Rail Authority was of concern as there would no longer be a co-ordinated voice to challenge the

Government. However, the loss of regional rail passengers committees would leave a vacuum which Railfuture might strive to fill wherever possible and where resources would allow.

Finance

Treasurer Tony Sheward said Railfuture was unlikely to be liable for value added tax because the limit was £60,000 and we remained below that threshold even when including branch finances in the central finances. VAT was not imposed on cash held in the bank.

He presented his sixth set of accounts, although they were the first as a company limited by guarantee.

Because of the change of status, he was required to prepare the accounts to a different format and to present them in a different layout, and one in which more information was given.

Cash balances held by branches were now included in the general accounts and delays in receiving some of this information had resulted in the delay in



Passengers prepare to board a WAGN train at King's Cross

the publication of the Annual Report. 2004 had been something of a "make or break" year financially.

The employment of Peter Harris as a fundraiser had been largely unsuccessful, particularly in the aim of achieving long-term "core" funding for the company. However, it was hoped and anticipated that Peter's groundwork would yield further results in the future.

With regard to the situation for 2005, Mr Sheward predicted that income and expenditure should balance in the second half of the year.

In response to a request for questions or comments from the floor:

Rowland Dale expressed his dissatisfaction with the way in which the board appeared to have handled the finances over the past year.

Trevor Garrod requested details of the current level of membership, to which membership secretary David Harby responded that the figure was 2,650 and that previous figures may have contained inaccuracies due to bank

problems with standing orders.

Mr Garrod also requested details of the Rail Defence Fund, in response to which Mr Sheward explained that the change of status had necessitated the closure of the old Abbey National account and, for convenience, the transfer of the balance into the high interest Birmingham Midshires Investment Account. However, the RDF balance was "ringfenced" and accounted for separately, with the Passenger Committee being responsible for considering applications for grants.

The accounts were adopted by a clear show of hands, with five abstentions.

The reporting accountant David Harrison (in place of an auditor) submitted a written report to company secretary John Lee declaring himself satisfied with the accounts.

He confirmed that Railfuture was below the "small company" threshold to have to have properly audited accounts, so his work was mostly to ensure correct accounting format to satisfy Companies' House legislation.

On current trends RDS Ltd will exhaust its funds in two years and late-received branch accounts caused some repetition of work.

Election results

President Peter Lawrence and membership secretary David Harby were elected unopposed.

Eighteen existing and one new Railfuture vice-presidents were



WAGN performance is still improving, the AGM was told

elected while members suggested names for future vice presidents.

The current vice presidents are: Jim Beale OBE, Lord Berkeley OBE MICE, David Bertram, George Boyle, Dr Michael Caton, Rt Rev Alan Chesters, Rhodri Clarke, Ron Cotton, Cynog Dafis, Dr Winifred Ewing, Lord (Ronnie) Fearn, Stanley Hall, Peter Rayner, Patricia Routledge OBE, Brian Simpson, Lord (Peter) Snape, Tony Speller, Wendy Toms, Paul Tyler, S F Wilkinson MInstA.

Chairman elected: Mike Crowhurst 242 (Jerry Alderson 228).

Vice chairman elected: Ray King 233 (Ian McDonald 226).

Board

Elected: Clara Zilahi 356, Jerry Alderson 353, Andrew MacFarlane 333, Ian McDonald 305, David Redgewell 302, Philip Bisatt 300, Trevor Jones 298, Rowland Pittard 286, Trevor Garrod 280, Norman Bradbury 274.

Not elected: Richard Pout 270, Howard Thomas 268, Michael Harrison 230.

For the AGM resolution, see page 12.

News in brief

Aviation impact: The European Passengers Federation has responded to a consultation by the Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas on reducing the climate change impact of aviation.

EPF referred to the potential role of aircraft fuel taxes and managing demand for air transport, while pointing out the potential of high-speed and conventional rail in providing an alternative for shorter flights.

It is claimed one transatlantic air traveller causes one tonne of carbon dioxide.

"Every airport is an ecological and environmental disaster," said London *Evening Standard* writer Brian Sewell.

Wherry good: Railfuture president Peter Lawrence has been elected chairman of the Wherry Lines Community Partnership, which promotes the Norwich to Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft lines. Rod Lock from the East Suffolk Travellers Association is vice-chairman.

Farewell Desmond: Desmond Crofts of Sutton Coldfield, for long a member of Railfuture, died during March 2005.

A life-long interest in the Great Western Railway was complemented by an active interest in the development of today's railways and he was keen to support the aims of Railfuture.

Music was another great interest and as a tenor with a distinctive voice he sang in his local church's choir until recent years.

Bonus: The East London Line – transferred from the Strategic Rail Authority to Transport for London in November – is expected to net about £10billion in economic regeneration for an outlay of £892million.