

Copy deadlines

Copy for the next issue, to be published in December, must be in the hands of Mr King by 1 October. Copy to: editor@railwatch.org.uk

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Railfuture

is an independent voluntary campaign group.

Railfuture is the campaigning name of Railway Development Society Ltd, 18a Grantham Road, Bracebridge Heath, Lincoln LN4 2LD

Media enquiries

President: Peter Lawrence
3 Hellesdon Road, Norwich NR6 5EB Tel: 01603 627217
pandwlawrence@waitrose.com

Membership

£20 per year.

Family: Plus £2 for each extra person.

Pensioners, students and unemployed £12.50.

User groups, community and parish councils: Rates on application.

All membership enquiries to: David Harby, 6 Carral Close, Lincoln LN5 9BD
david.harby@ntlworld.com

Policy

Chairman Mike Crowhurst
33 Station Court, Aberford Road, Garforth, Leeds LS25 2QQ
Tel 0113 286 4844

Elections

The board is elected annually and nomination forms can be obtained from the Returning Officer, PO Box 7690, Hinckley LR10 9WJ.

You can also download a form from www.railfuture.org.uk

Time to vote

By Chris Precey

Returning Officer

The time has come for Railfuture members to think about who they would like to see on the board of RDS Ltd for 2007-2008.

All members and branches should arrange for nomination forms to be obtained from the Returning Officer, PO Box 7690, Hinckley LE10 9WJ. Please enclose an SAE.

You can also download a nomination form from www.railfuture.org.uk and follow the elections link.

The form has to be sent to the returning officer by 1 February 2007.

Nominations are required for chairman, vice chairman, treasurer, membership secretary, sales officers and 10 directors.

At next year's annual general meeting, a vote will be taken about changes to the RDS Ltd constitution which will affect the way board members are elected.

If passed, the new voting arrangements will come into force for the 2008 annual general meeting.

Rail users conference

A separate leaflet is enclosed with this *Railwatch* with information about the Railfuture national rail users conference at Reading on 4 November.

The speakers include Shadow Minister for rail Stephen Hammond.

Railfuture draw

The Railfuture draw will take place at the national rail users conference at Reading on 4 November.

Don't forget to send your counterfoils and money by the end of October to the address on the tickets.

If anyone wants more tickets, please send an SAE to Chris Precey, PO Box 7690, Hinckley LE10 9WJ.

There are four main prizes of £500, £200, £100 and £50, plus further prizes of £50.

Face to face

Railfuture representatives regularly meet rail and political officials.

Among recent meetings, President Peter Lawrence and East Anglia secretary Nick Dibben met the East of England Regional Assembly.

Other meetings are planned with Government ministers and a meeting with Chris Austin, director of public policy at the Association of Train Operators, took place on 12 September.

Lottery winners

March: H Maughan, G Heathcock and D G G Hoare. April: R Burrows, M H Lloyd and C T Palmer. May: D A Stocks, Mary Bosi and P Wilson. June: T R Sheppard, Derek English, David P Riley. July: T Swinson,

Mrs I Graham, D J Barr. August: W Stoneham, D Townsend, Neville Bramhall.

Group travel

A seven day visit to Germany by train is planned by RDS Group Travel for 14-20 May next year. Jim Walker will lead a party travelling by Eurostar, Thalys and German inter-city trains to Leipzig, a historic city in the east of the country.

Leipzig is within easy reach of the Erzgebirge mountains along the Czech border and famous cities such as Dresden and Halle, while Berlin is now just an hour or so away to the north by fast train.

Attractions of Leipzig itself include Auerbachs Keller, the beer cellar which was frequented by the famous writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and the massive monument to the battle fought just outside the city by Napoleon on his way back from Moscow in 1813.

More modern attractions include one of the largest rail stations in Europe and a good tram system. Work is in progress on a north-south rail tunnel under the city.

Details of the trip will be in the next *Railwatch*. Meanwhile, to receive information when available please send an SAE to Trevor Garrod, 15 Clapham Road South, Lowestoft, NR32 1RQ.

Harwich-Hook

Stena Line has announced, following a review, that it will be withdrawing its high speed ship Stena Discovery from the Harwich-Hook of Holland route early in 2007 and upgrading the two other vessels.

They have not specified how long the other vessels will take to complete the journey, currently done in only three hours 50 minutes.

It is likely there will be a day crossing and a night crossing, however. As chairman of the European Passengers' Federation Trevor Garrod has written again to Pim de Lange, Stena's North Sea director, expressing our concern while understanding the company's reasons for this change. Trevor has urged him to continue to work with the train operators on either side of the water to ensure that attractive rail/sea/rail fares and facilities continue.

Stratford International

There are fears that Eurostars will not call at this new station when the second and final stage of the high speed line to the Channel Tunnel is opened in December 2007.

Trevor Garrod has therefore written to Eurostar's managing director, and to train operator ONE, pointing out that a lot of public money has been spent on this facility and the travelling public, especially in East London and East Anglia, will expect it to be open from day one.

If it is not possible for a fixed link, such as a Docklands Light Railway extension or a travelator, to be built by the end of 2007, then a dedicated bus shuttle could be operated to and from Stratford main line station.

Eurostar is planning to alternate between non-stop trains to the Continent and trains which will call at two stations in south east England.

Euro training

In July Trevor Garrod gave a presentation for the third year running to the European Training Centre for Railways in Bruges, Belgium.

The two-week seminar brought together 45 managers from train operators and infrastructure companies throughout Europe.

Trevor explained the aspirations of the European Passengers' Federation (of which Railfuture is a founder member) for easy rail travel and for rail to attain a greater share of the transport market.

He also pointed to the challenges faced by would-be travellers in finding out about services, buying tickets and making reservations.

Some participants suggested a European Rail website to help potential customers find out about, and book, their tickets but Trevor stressed the need for properly trained call centre staff to help international travellers.

European AGM

The annual general meeting and conference of the European Passengers Federation will take place on Saturday 10 March next year in Munich which can be reached in a day from London by train. Details will appear in the next *Railwatch*.

Colne Connected Conference In partnership with SELRAP

Friday 13 October 2006 09.30 to 16.00

Reconnecting your Region - moving rail forward

The Colne-Skipton Rail Link - Conference at the Stone Trough Inn, Colne Road, Kelbrook, Colne, BB18 6XY

Speakers include Brian Simpson of the North West Rail Investment Campaign, Ian Yeowart of Grand Central Railways, Jim Morgan of First Group.

Please send £20 (cheques payable to SELRAP) to: Peter Nowland, c/o. Blackburn Diocesan BSR, The Olive Branch, St Anne's Church Hall, Wheatley Lane Road, Fence, Lancashire, BB12 9ED