



# RRUG UPDATE

## What is RRUG all about?

Formed with the help of Rugby's then MP Andy King back in late 2004, the Group aims to:

- Fight on your behalf to improve and maintain the Rugby rail service, the station and its environment.
- Act as a voice for Rugby rail users.
- Collect your views and feed them into discussions with Virgin Trains, London Midland and Network Rail.
- Take the longer term view of Rugby rail services by taking part in consultations run by the Department for Transport (DfT), Network Rail, Passenger Focus, Local Authorities and others.
- Maintain links with other Groups through membership of Railfuture.
- Provide members with information by e-mail, post, meetings and via RRUG's website.

Everyone is busy so we understand that it's difficult for you to find time to get actively involved in the campaign to improve Rugby rail services. We'll take the strain and fight on your behalf, but we can't do it without your support. You can:

- Join Rugby Rail Users Group today for just £5 to help with administrative costs (membership form on the back page of this newsletter).
- Come to periodic meetings held with the train operators and other key organisations - we will e-mail or post details to all RRUG members.
- Help with publicity and spreading news about the Group to other rail users.

Member or not, keep us informed about your rail experiences through the 'Contact us' link on the website.

## Members' Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> November

The next members' meeting will be held on **Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November** at Age Concern, The Claremont Centre, 43 Clifton Road, Rugby, CV21 3QE, at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. The meeting will finish at 9.30pm.

There will be guest speakers from the Rugby Radio Station Limited Partnership. They will cover the rail aspects of the proposed Sustainable Urban Extension to Rugby and the plans for the Daventry International Railfreight Terminal (DIRFTIII). Members will have the opportunity to question the speakers after their presentations.

The Committee wishes to stress that the speakers will deal **ONLY** with the effect on the railway and its usage, not the pros and cons of whether the schemes should go ahead, so they won't be able to answer any questions on this aspect of the proposals.

The meeting is open to all RRUG members, but non-members can join at the door by paying the £5 membership fee.

## RRUG - past, present and future:

Some major events and milestones in RRUG's calendar.

2004	RRUG formed
2005	RRUG 1 <sup>st</sup> AGM and Members' Meeting
December 2008/January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VHF timetable introduced, fast direct services to north-west lost.</li> <li>• Chaos on West Coast caused by Network Rail engineering over-run at Rugby.</li> </ul>
January 2012	DfT expected to publish final invitation to tender for new West Coast franchise starting in December 2012 (four bidders currently short listed).
March 2012	Original end date for Virgin Train's West Coast franchise. 'Moderation of competition' ends.
April 2012 to December 2012	West Coast franchise extended due to Olympics, operator Virgin.
December 2012	New West Coast franchise due to start.
December 2013	New West Coast timetable to be introduced.
September 2015	End of West Midlands (London Midland) franchise.
2026	HS2 planned to open

[www.rugbyrailusersgroup.org.uk](http://www.rugbyrailusersgroup.org.uk)



## Newsletter Sponsorship

The newsletter is produced and issued for the benefit of RRUG Members as part of the membership package. The intention is that copies will also be made available free to people using Rugby station and other facilities around the town.

Any donations to help with the print costs of extending our coverage would be gratefully received, possibly through sponsoring an issue and having your name included.

If you're interested please contact the RRUG Secretary via the 'Contact us' link on the website.

Thanks to our November sponsor:

**"Railside parking, with complimentary coffee"  
Mill Road, Rugby (opposite multi-storey)**

## London Midland - 'on track'

For those who don't know, London Midland (LM) issue a stakeholder newsletter each month called 'on track'. RRUG has been posting copies to the website for some time. The November edition is available and includes an item on the stakeholder conference (see opposite).

The newsletter also includes an article about Project 110 which is LM's proposal to run an extra fast path out of Euston provided the top speed of the Class 350 Desiros can be increased from 100mph to 110mph.

LM has issued a consultation document on this proposal and RRUG, as an official consultee, has been invited to respond by 15<sup>th</sup> December.

The consultation document is on the RRUG website. If anyone wishes to contribute to RRUG's response, please let the Secretary know via the 'Contact us' link.

## London Midland Stakeholder Conference

RRUG attended the recent LM 2011 stakeholder event held in Birmingham on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October. The theme was '**looking back - looking forward**'.

The event was well run and in addition to presentations by LM staff, delegates were split into groups to look at LM achievements over the 4 years of the franchise so far, and what people would like to be achieved going forward.

LM will be issuing a conference summary in due course, but to provide a flavour of the issues being discussed the results of the West Coast group, comprising representatives from Network Rail, RRUG, Atherstone Rail Users, Milton Keynes Council and Milton Keynes Transport Partnership, were as follows.

### Last 4 years:

**What has been outstanding?** new trains, listening, customer information at stations, liaison with the community.

**What has been good?** Desiro 2+2, Class 172, regional performance, extra services, station ambience.

**What has been disappointing?** Desiro 3+2, station staffing, TVM's not selling the full range of tickets, visibility of staff on trains, West Coast performance.

**What has been poor?** lack of or inconsistent information during periods of disruption, not exploiting local opportunities to increase patronage, accessibility with other transport modes.

### Going forward:

**What would you like LM to start doing?** amongst others, introduce wi-fi; improve ticket options on TVMs; target specific locations for reduced rate tickets; simplify ticketing; support local groups to promote services; and, allow parking tickets to be printed off at home.

**What would you like LM to stop doing?** reducing ticket office hours; increasing fares more than RPI; not 'tanking' trains; and, making ticketing more complicated than necessary.

**What would you like LM to carry on doing?** Great Escape (all stations); consultation; and, fixing partnerships with Network Rail.

**What would you like LM never to do?** reduce frequency of services; and, integrate parking into ticket costs.

LM's conference write up will be added to RRUG's website as soon as it becomes available.

**Keep up to date with [www.rugbyrailusersgroup.org.uk](http://www.rugbyrailusersgroup.org.uk)**



## On The Spot - Your Points Answered

Let us have your questions about the train services, station facilities, the station environment or other rail related issues relevant to Rugby rail users. We will then put someone on the spot to provide the answers and then report back in the newsletter. Your support is needed, so if you have any points to raise, please e-mail the Secretary via the 'Contact us' link on the website.

### This newsletter – ‘On the Spot’ with Network Rail and London Midland

**Why is the direct access from the station frontage to the Travelodge and Tesco Express (with cash point) through Car Park 1 still blocked off by the fence?**

**Network Rail was asked to shed some light on the mystery.....**

Network Rail's understanding of the situation is that the stairwell leading from the hotel and Tesco Express was built by the hotel developers with the anticipation that the railway palisade fencing would be removed. Unfortunately, this was not agreed at any stage with the Station Facility Owner (SFO).

If the SFO were to remove the fencing to allow access from the hotel, across the car park to the station, then the station car park would not satisfy the conditions required for Secure Car Park Accreditation at this location.

Secondly, if access was granted, the SFO would effectively be authorising a walking route through the car park via this route. This would import risk from people stepping from the stairwell into the path of oncoming cars that have just passed under the car park barriers.

Also, the SFO would import risk from people slipping on the slope leading down to the barriers having stepped away from the stairwell during winter months.

Network Rail's representative paced out the available route (via Murray Road) from the car park to the Tesco Express cash machine and found it was only around 30 paces more than the proposed route. It was also more accessible for disabled users as ramps are available.

*(distance comparison seems about right if the proposed car park route is taken to be via the car park barriers rather than the steps up from the pedestrian crossing, Ed)*

**A user recently travelled on a 10:09 Desiro service from Stafford to Liverpool and found both toilets out of action. The same user also mentioned that there had been complaints about toilets not working on late trains from Birmingham on Saturday nights.**

**This point was raised with London Midland's (LM) customer service manager who recognises there is a problem.....**

The number of defective toilets, toilet stops and days between CET (*Controlled Emission Toilet*) attention are all reducing. There are still problems however and these are exaggerated at weekends as the operational plan to accommodate engineering works does not always consider the CET needs.

The message is therefore that things are improving, and will get better still once Bletchley CET is fully operational. We will then need to focus on planning.

**Since the introduction of the extra train each hour in the off-peak, the only hour in the main part of the day when the xx.13 from Birmingham does not run beyond Coventry is 16:13. As this is the start of the peak period (particularly by the time this train reaches Coventry) is there any way it could be extended to Northampton to fill the gap?"**

**RRUG welcomes these additional services, but the 16:13 won't be extended at the moment, LM explain that.....**

The reason that the 16.13 terminates at Coventry is due to the need to provide additional peak capacity from London on weekday evenings. By turning this unit round at Coventry it allows another unit to work back from Northampton to Euston. The service runs through to Northampton (and Euston) on Saturdays.

**Note: due to space limitations the contents of the original e-mails have been summarised. Apologies if anything has been missed out or mis-interpreted. Thanks to all the contributors**

**This issue sponsored by "Raiside parking, with complimentary coffee" Mill Road, Rugby (opposite multi-storey)**

