

MID CHESHIRE RAIL REPORT

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SUMMER 2019

ISSUED FREE

The Newsletter of the Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association, the Voice for Users of the Manchester-Stockport-Altrincham-Knutsford-Northwich-Chester and Crewe-Winsford-Hartford-Liverpool Lines.

Visit our website at www.mcrua.org.uk and find us on Facebook by searching for Mid Cheshire Line or by clicking on the link - <https://www.facebook.com/#!/betterrailservicesmidcheshireline?fref=ts>.

FROM THE SECRETARY:

TAKE NOTE: The Annual General meeting of the Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association will take place on **TUESDAY 11 JUNE 2019** at 7.30pm for 8pm in the Function Room at the **Gladstone Club, Station Road, Northwich CW9 5RB** some 10 mins walk from Northwich Station. Suitable trains are the 1841 from Piccadilly arriving Northwich at 1937, 1900 from Chester arriving Northwich at 1932. Return trains at 2133 for Piccadilly and 2138 for Chester.

The meeting will be followed by a presentation given by **Vicky Cropper**, Head of Stakeholder and Community for London Northwestern Railway.

The agenda for the meeting and copies of the minutes of the 2018 AGM will be available at the meeting or from the Secretary in advance by email. If you don't have access to email and would like copies please contact the Secretary.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS by John Oates

We are pleased to provide our latest "Rail Report" to coincide with the beginning of the **summer timetable**; the Mid Cheshire Line timetable is enclosed for those of you receiving this by post. For Mid Cheshire there are no significant changes to the previous timetable and we are no nearer getting the promised "two trains an hour" service due in December 2017. I have written separately about this below. However, in complete contrast there are some very good improvements to services on the **Crewe-Liverpool line** including **Sunday services at Acton Bridge** after many years with none and a **half hourly service northbound at Hartford (so now mainly half-hourly in both directions)**. There is now an hourly through service (or two an hour in some hours) from Hartford to London Euston via Birmingham New Street. Indeed in stark contrast with Arriva's Northern, Abellio's London Northwestern is delivering in excess of their franchise commitments.

The Community Rail Partnership (CRP) has a new quarterly publication, "**Along Mid Cheshire Lines**". The first issue came out at the beginning of May and is being distributed to venues on and near the Mid Cheshire Line. It covers attractions along the line and how to reach them. The first issue focuses on Knutsford. Many thanks are due to John Hulme, the CRP's Marketing & Communications volunteer for conceiving of the publication and managing its development. Watch out for the next issue in late summer.

Meanwhile, the CRP's very popular "**Marvellous Days Out**" publication was close to being out of print again. John's organised a reprint, this arriving last week in plenty of time for our summer leisure travellers. The **Marvellous Days Out touring exhibition** is currently open on platform 3 at **Stockport Station** until 10 July courtesy of Virgin Trains. Thanks are due to Lisa Magee and her team at Stockport for facilitating this. They tell us the exhibition is proving very popular with plenty of "Marvellous Days Out" and "Amazing

Women by Rail” booklets and “Along Mid Cheshire Lines” being taken away by visitors. All great publicity for the Mid Cheshire Line and the Calder Valley Victoria to Leeds and Blackburn lines.

And lastly on the CRP, our **Community Rail Officer (CRO), Sally Buttifant** moved to a new position within Cheshire West & Chester Council from February. Very many thanks are due to Sally for the huge amounts achieved over the last 9+ years, including the wonderful “Over by Christmas” events, as well as the “Marvellous Days Out” initiative. The CRP is working to recruit a replacement CRO. In the meantime the CRP remains very active with volunteers and local Northern staff helping in many ways including publicity, station care and publication distribution. To get in touch with the CRP for the time being please use the email address railofficer@midcheshirerail.org.uk and one of the volunteers will reply.

Train performance on the Mid Cheshire Line continues to disappoint. For those who find this of interest, the Moving Annual Average at the end of Period 1 (to 27 April 2019) stood at 77.09% against a target of 92.2% and a line best in 2011 of 91.57%.

The long-running saga at **Greenbank Station** continues after Northern demolished the historic shelter on the Chester-bound platform last May, eventually replacing it with a much poorer version. The poster cases, Customer Information Screen and litter bins removed at the time have still to be returned. Northern made proposals on improvements at a meeting with Northwich Town Council on 1 February, but since then nothing has happened. At least the wonderful voluntary work being carried out by **Men in Sheds** at Greenbank Station on cleanliness, gardening and the World War One mural stands out alongside the poor facilities provided by Northern for a station with a “footfall” in excess of 200,000.

Summer’s almost here. Time to go “out and about” through Mid Cheshire using both of our lines, whether it’s walks in the forest, visits to towns and cities, or visiting local attractions like Altrincham Market, Lion Salt Works, Anderton Boat Lift, Stockport’s Hat Museum, Chester Zoo, Tatton Park and local shops, cafes and restaurants.

MID CHESHIRE DECEMBER 2017 PROMISED “TWO TRAINS AN HOUR” SERVICE by John Oates

It’s now 18 months since the service promised in the Northern franchise commitments should have started, but delays continue. In January, we heard that Northern’s proposed short-term alternative of an extra hourly service between Chester and Altrincham had also been turned down by Network Rail. Apparently this is due to new safety regulations, meaning that each “user-worked crossing” along the line has to be reassessed. These are mainly farm crossings.

Some of us in the Tatton Constituency arranged to meet our MP, Esther McVey on 8 February. Meanwhile, those in the Weaver Vale and Sale & Altrincham Constituencies have been keeping their MPs, Mike Amesbury and Sir Graham Brady informed of the situation.

We had asked Northern in January to provide us with more detail on these new crossing restrictions. They asked Network Rail, expecting us to have the detail for the 8 February meeting. In the event this was not forthcoming from Network Rail, though we heard it would be available before a meeting Esther had requested with David Brown, Northern’s Managing Director on 22 February. We hear this wasn’t available for that meeting either. We had a good meeting with Esther. As noted above, she then met with Northern’s David Brown who we understand explained Northern could not introduce the promised services as Network Rail would not allow it. (Remember, Network Rail is an agency of the Department for Transport (DfT) and it is Northern’s contract with the DfT which requires them to introduce the services).

Prior to these meetings Esther had written to Chris Grayling, Secretary of State for Transport on 19 January. She received a reply which she provided to us. It states:

Thank you for letter of 19 January 2019 about rail services from Knutsford to Manchester.

Further to my previous correspondence, and your question to Andrew at Transport Questions on 10 January, I have now been advised by Rail North Partnership that the proposal has been postponed, as both Northern and Network Rail feel the additional paths cannot be accommodated without adversely affecting the reliability of other services on the network.

I know this will be disappointing to you and to residents in Knutsford. When we awarded the franchise in 2016 we could not have predicted the disruption that the timetable recast of May 2018 would cause or indeed the delays to engineering works. As you know, my priority, following the disruption caused by the introduction of the May 2018 timetable, has been to stabilise the timetable and the services, and, following the recommendations of the review, by Stephen Glaster, future timetable changes being introduced incrementally.

The requirement for the second train per hour from the Mid-Cheshire line to Manchester remains part of the Train Service Requirements of the franchise agreement. However, Northern did not put a bid in to run this service in the May 2019 timetable as, until there are some more fundamental changes to all operators' services between Stockport and Manchester, the same delivery challenges remain.

I am pleased to say that throughout the lifetime of the franchise, passengers from Knutsford station will benefit from investment in rolling stock, including the removal of the outdated and unpopular Pacers by the end of 2019 and new and refurbished trains making journeys more comfortable. The station itself will also be refurbished with a new waiting shelter and more seating.

I have tasked Richard George, an independent industry expert, to assist with railway industry performance improvement in the region covered by Transport for the North. In the short to medium term, the objective is to re-establish a stable operational railway service across the region; this in itself will help rebuild public, political and industry confidence. In the medium to longer term the objective is to establish a platform for sound, sustainable railway operations whilst continuing to improve the infrastructure, grow the capacity, grow the capability and improve service levels in the region to the level that is planned and desired. It is intended that the recommendations will be provided to the Department in Spring 2019.

We have experienced a difficult period for the railways in this country but please be assured that Government is working hard to ensure the rail industry delivers the level of service that your constituents right expect.

That you again for raising your concerns with me and I hope you both find this reply helpful.

With best wishes, Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP, Secretary of State for Transport”

Following discussion of the above with members of the MCRUA Committee, I put together the following for Esther.

Dear Esther,

Many thanks to Angela for circulating this letter, which I've circulated and which we've now discussed between us. I've provided a detailed response below.

I appreciate that other things are taking up a lot of time, so I'm providing a brief summary of my email first for those short of time.

Brief Summary

- The writer of the letter does not appear to be “au fait” with the situation
- The letter does not address the core point of better connecting Mid Cheshire with Manchester

- The letter states “Northern did not put a bid in”. We know from our contacts that Northern bid at least twice and were turned down by Network Rail
- The letter states “Knutsford ... will benefit ... from new ... trains”. This is not so. The Pacers dating from 1985 are being replaced by refurbished Sprinters dating from 1984
- The rest of the letter is very general.

Mid Cheshire’s Needs are reasonable

- What is being requested, two trains an hour and hourly on Sundays is reasonable
- In the morning peak (up to 0830) Knutsford currently has 2 direct trains to Manchester at 0642 & 0735
- The above trains take 43/44 minutes
- In 1986 in the morning peak Knutsford had 5 direct trains to Manchester at 0713, 0733, 0746, 0803 & 0816
- The above trains took 33-36 minutes (see attached 1986 timetables)
- The evening peak comparison is similar
- Since 1990 Mid Cheshire connectivity to its main employment base has been progressively reduced resulting in serious road congestion and a poorer regional economy.

The Detailed Response

It seems to us that the person writing the letter for Chris Grayling is not “au fait” with the true situation.

The letter does not address the core point of better connecting Mid Cheshire with Manchester.

The letter states “... that Northern did not put a bid in to run this service in the May 2019 timetable ...” We know this is not the case from our contacts within the rail industry. Indeed, we understand Northern applied for these paths at least twice and that Network Rail turned these applications down.

The letter also states “... Knutsford station will benefit from investment in rolling stock, including ... new ... trains ...” There are no new trains planned to operate services through Knutsford. Rather, on removal of the Pacers which were built from 1985, these will be replaced by refurbished Sprinter trains built from 1984, 35 years ago. Hardly new!

The rest of the letter is very general. As you are aware, Network Rail granted these paths to Northern for the December 2017 timetable change, but Northern could not go forward with them as the Network Rail delays on the Great Western electrification meant the older trains cascading north from Great Western Railway were mainly not available.

There then followed the May 2018 timetable “meltdown” due to further Network Rail delays to electrification through Bolton originally due to be completed in 2016, together with last minute Network Rail delays to the electrification to Blackpool North. This led to Northern at desperately short-notice having to throw together a timetable from May 2018, quite simply because they could not continue with the previous one as DfT insisted TransPennine Express operate their new timetable from that date using the Ordsall Curve meaning the old timetable could not continue to operate. It seems that since then Network Rail (or is it DfT?) has been blocking any increase in services from Piccadilly through Stockport. This affects the lines through Macclesfield to Stoke, to Crewe, and the Mid Cheshire Line.

You’ll remember in our meeting we discussed that Northern had submitted a bid to instead operate an extra hourly service between Chester and Altrincham, terminating there before returning to Chester. This does little to satisfy our objective of better connecting Mid Cheshire with its main employment area of Manchester, but would be better than nothing. However, Network Rail has also turned this down. The reason given was the number of occupation (user-worked, i.e. farm) crossings along the line. This was a surprise to us. We asked Northern in January to ask Network Rail to provide further detail prior to our meeting with you, but as you know they did not. However, Northern had told us you should have it by the time of your meeting with David Brown. I understand however that this was not provided to you at that meeting either.

We now hear Network Rail believes it has to carry out an assessment of each crossing before any increase in services. However, such assessments are yet to be scheduled.

“More delay” is probably the politest way to put this.

Returning to the objective of improved services from Mid Cheshire to Manchester to support the Mid Cheshire economy and its growth, we believe the request to be very reasonable.

To support this, I attach a copy of a timetable from 1986.

You'll see in 1986, Knutsford had 5 direct services to Manchester in the morning peak (up to 0830) leaving at 0713, 0733, 0746, 0803 & 0816 taking 33-36 minutes.

In 2019 Knutsford has only 2 direct morning peak services at 0642 & 0735 taking 43-44 minutes.

The service reductions took place in 1990 in conjunction with the line through Sale being transferred to Metrolink, then further in 2008 to facilitate the introduction of the "VHF" (Very High Frequency) services to London through Stockport.

Summary

Mid Cheshire needs much better connectivity to and from its major employment area, connectivity it used to have. This poor connectivity is damaging the local economy and its ability to contribute more effectively to the national economy. Mid Cheshire needs and deserves its 2 trains an hour, and hourly trains on Sundays.

Would it be helpful for some of us to come and meet with you again to discuss this further?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

John Oates

Mobberley resident, Tatton constituent and Chairman, Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association"

Our response was also provided to other MPs along the line and elsewhere.

It's all very well saying the railway is too congested, but apart from various reports from consultants, what is being done to resolve this?

MAY 2019 TIMETABLE by Andrew Macfarlane

As we mentioned in the last issue, the May 2019 timetable for the Mid Cheshire Line is largely the same as the previous one except that some trains have been retimed slightly. The first train from Chester to Piccadilly on Monday to Saturday runs two minutes earlier (now 05.56 from Chester) and the 06.51 from Chester to Piccadilly leaves Navigation Road one minute earlier. Also the last train from Chester to Piccadilly runs 4 minutes later (leaving Chester at 22.52) on Monday to Friday.

MAY 2019 TIMETABLE CHANGES ON OTHER LINES by Andrew Macfarlane

The following changes took place across the wider Northern network:

New hourly service between

- Chester and Leeds (via Warrington Bank Quay and Manchester Victoria) except on Sundays. Most trains run non-stop between Chester and Warrington Bank Quay.
- Sheffield and Gainsborough (including weekday services for the first time in many years at Gainsborough Central).

Hourly services between

- Blackpool North and Manchester Airport (via Piccadilly)
- Blackpool North and Hazel Grove (via Piccadilly)
- Preston and Manchester Victoria

Previously the service from Manchester Victoria towards Preston only went as far as Buckshaw Parkway so this is a welcome improvement. A new, hourly Transport for Wales service began from 19th May between Chester and Liverpool Lime Street via Frodsham and Runcorn over the upgraded "Halton curve". This means that Helsby and Frodsham now have two trains per hour (there are no level crossings on that line!) and the new service will be useful for access to Liverpool Airport via Liverpool South Parkway station.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS by Paul Wilkinson

2019 Membership update (data as at 23rd May 2019) - **Thank you for your continuing support.** If you received this Rail Report by Post: Please check your envelope for your membership number. If it is in the form of:

18xxx - your membership ran out on 28 February. We invite you to renew using the enclosed form. If you received this Rail Report by email, you will also receive the renewal form if appropriate. This will be the last communication from MCRUA if you do not renew. Standing Orders are held at the same price for five years. Forms are available from the Membership Secretary.

19xxx - (or higher) you have recently joined or already renewed. Thank you for your continued support. There is no need to take any action.

Members were asked to specify how they wished to receive future communications from MCRUA on the back of the 2019 subscription renewal form. The Committee would like to clarify that those who opted for “post ONLY” (option A on the form) will only receive the newsletter (and the pocket timetable if a new one is starting). They will not receive email updates which are occasionally sent out between mailings of the newsletter. These will not be sent out by post. If you wish to receive the newsletter by post and the email updates (by email) and you opted for “post ONLY” you need to switch to Option C (receiving everything by email and by post). Option C will keep you updated with MCRUA’s Occasional News. **Please note:** To reduce costs, electronic distribution is preferred. You can change your mailing option by contacting the Membership Secretary at membership@mcrua.org.uk or by filling in the form on the back page of the newsletter.

PROPOSED SUBSCRIPTION RATE INCREASE

Your committee is minded to raise the Membership subscriptions for 2020 up by £1 to £8 for individuals and £11 for families. This is to cover increases in printing and postage costs for a fourth Rail Report each year. This will be formally proposed at the Annual General Meeting for members' agreement.

BUSES REPLACE TRAINS ON TWO SUNDAYS DUE TO PLANNED ENGINEERING WORK

All trains on the Mid Cheshire Line will be replaced by buses on Sundays 30th June and 7th July due to planned engineering work. Buses will run between Stockport and Chester calling at or near all stations. The bus times are in the Journey Planner on the National Rail website or they can be obtained from National Rail Enquiries on 03457 48 49 50. The work also affects late night trains on the Saturday evenings 29th June and 6th July. From Monday 24th June to Thursday 27th June (inclusive) the 23.41 Piccadilly to Chester train is replaced by a bus due to planned engineering work. From Tuesday 25th June to Thursday 27th June (inclusive) the 22.52 Chester to Piccadilly train is replaced by a bus. Following the “every 6 weeks” pattern, the 23.41 Piccadilly to Chester and 22.52 Chester to Piccadilly are also replaced by buses from Monday 5th August to Thursday 8th August (inclusive).

METROLINK NEWS by Andrew Macfarlane

The pointwork for the new bay platform at Crumpsall on the Bury line was installed over the Easter weekend. This will be the terminus for the new Metrolink service to the Trafford Centre, due to start in early 2020. The Trafford Centre will be in Fare Zone 3. Work was carried out at Pomona over the late May bank holiday weekend in preparation for linking up the Trafford Park line to the Metrolink network. The junction points at Pomona have already been installed.

NEWS FROM THE LINE by Andrew Macfarlane

The famous new-build steam locomotive no. 60163 *Tornado* came through Altrincham hauling “The Mad Hatter” return excursion from Chester to Darlington North Road on Saturday 11th May. It was the first visit

of the loco to the Mid Cheshire Line. The special train was routed from Altrincham via Northenden Junction, Cheadle Heath, Hazel Grove High Level Junction and Disley Tunnel to reach the Hope Valley line and Sheffield. UK Railtours were due to visit the Winnington branch with their "Curvey Weaver" railtour on Saturday 1st June. Please ignore a scrolling message about Penalty Fares on information displays along the Mid Cheshire Line. The line is not yet in a Penalty Fares area. I have rung Northern to advise them about this. An original platform seat has been reinstalled at Mouldsworth station. The seat was previously at the Brookside Garden Centre. There is to be an engineering blockade at Acton Grange Junction south of Warrington from 20th July to 4th August (inclusive). We may well see some freight diversions via the Mid Cheshire Line during this period, in particular the Carlisle to Chirk log train.

NEW WEST COAST PARTNERSHIP FRANCHISE

On 10th April it was announced by the Department for Transport that Stagecoach/Virgin had been barred from bidding from this and any other rail franchise due to their unwillingness to provide open-ended funding for the railway pension scheme. Stagecoach has now mounted a legal challenge against their disqualification from both the East Midlands and West Coast Partnership franchises. The new West Coast Partnership franchise, for which Stagecoach/Virgin were bidding in conjunction with SNCF, is due to start in March 2020.

WINNER ANNOUNCED FOR EAST MIDLANDS FRANCHISE

Abellio (Netherlands Railways) will be the new operator of the East Midlands franchise taking over from Stagecoach. Unfortunately it is planned to split the current Liverpool-Norwich service at Nottingham from an early stage in the new franchise. Either Northern or Transpennine Express will operate a service between Liverpool and Nottingham and there will be a separate Derby-Norwich service via Nottingham operated by the East Midlands franchise.

ANOTHER SPECIAL TRAIN ON THE MID CHESHIRE LINE

On Saturday 13th July UK Railtours are running through Altrincham, Northwich and Middlewich with their "Buxton and Peak Forest" trip on its way back from Buxton to London Euston.

LOCAL RAIL NEWS by Andrew Macfarlane

Handforth station is to be equipped with lifts as part of the Government's "Access for All" programme. We still wait for a similar scheme for Northwich.

NEW DVD ABOUT THE ICI HOPPERS

Nick Dodson and Bob Avery have produced a new DVD about the history of the ICI Hoppers. "The Hoppers – Moving Derbyshire into Cheshire" is available at £20 from the Telerail website at <https://www.telerail.co.uk/railway-dvds-railfilms-titles/special-releases/the-hoppers-moving-derbyshire-into-cheshire>.

CREWE DIESEL DEPOT OPEN DAY ON SATURDAY 8th JUNE

At the time of writing (Thursday 30th May) tickets were back on sale for this event (£12.50 for adults) at <https://www.classicmagazines.co.uk/promotion/allchange>.

2019 MUSIC TRAINS PROGRAMME by Michael Ross

We have a full programme arranged for 2019, running from April to October. New bands as well as returning regulars and a new venue – in Knutsford - as part of Knutsford Music Festival. The season began

with a lively Chester Folk Festival Music Train from Chester to Plumley in April – three bands playing music in both carriages both ways. A week later a cheerful group from Hale enjoyed Loose Change Buskers on the train and So What Now at Alexanders in Chester.

Music Trains from Chester to Plumley and Knutsford

Friday 21 June – to the Angel in Knutsford with Nelson Peach

Wednesday 10 July - to the Golden Pheasant at Plumley with Pastry Shoes

Wednesday 7 August – to the Golden Pheasant at Plumley with Terry Burgin Blues Band

Wednesday 4 September - to the Golden Pheasant at Plumley with Port Sunlight Sea Dogs

Wednesday 2 October - to the Golden Pheasant at Plumley with the Time Bandits

Music Trains from Altrincham to Chester

Wednesday 3 July – to Alexanders with jazz from Loose Change Buskers on the train and Terry Burgin Blues Band at Alexanders

Wednesday 11 September – to Alexanders with jazz from Marts ManJazz3 on the train and the Deportees at Alexanders

(You need to book the combination package of taxis to and from the station plus sausage'n mash at Alexanders through the Alexanders website alexanderslive.com).

Groups and Music Trains

Groups are very welcome to join the Music Trains. We are happy to arrange extra Music Trains for groups of 30 or more people on weekdays - five are arranged already. They can be in the daytime or in the evening. In the daytime we mostly go to the Railway Inn at Mobberley.

More information

Watch the Mid Cheshire rail website <http://www.midcheshirerail.org.uk> or subscribe to this newsletter for details. You can unsubscribe from the newsletters at any time by sending me an email headed 'unsubscribe'.

COACH TRIP TO THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY ON SATURDAY 5TH OCTOBER

The Altrincham Electric Railway Preservation Society is running a coach trip from Stockport, Sale, Altrincham and Knutsford to the Great Central Railway's Autumn Steam Gala with an option of visiting the King Richard III Visitor Centre in Leicester on Saturday 5th October. Further details and a booking form will be available on the Society's website www.altrinchamelectric.org.uk or by ringing Andrew Macfarlane on 0161 928 9394 (answerphone available).

8E RAILWAY ASSOCIATION PROGRAMME

The 8E Railway Association continues to meet at the Gladstone Club, Station Road, Northwich CW9 5RB, which is a short walk from Northwich station in the direction of the town centre. Meetings take place on the second Tuesday of the month and start at 7.45pm. Admission for first-time guests is free, subsequent meeting entrance fee is £3. Free sandwiches are provided at the half-time break. The forthcoming programme is:

10th September: Speaker to be announced.

8th October: Speaker to be announced.

12th November: "Cornwall (Part 2)" by Stephen Gay.

10th December: "The Story of the Crewe Heritage Centre" by Mike Lenz.

14th January: AGM and Jon Penn Film Show.

MID CHESHIRE LINE PEOPLE

We welcome **Tim Shoveller** as the new Managing Director for Network Rail North West and Central. Tim has come from Stagecoach Group.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sorry to report the death of former MCRUA member **Alan France** from Rudheath at the early age of 58. His funeral took place on 8th April.

DISCLAIMER

Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the MCRUA Committee.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

National Rail Enquiries	03457 48 49 50 or 0207 068 0500
Virgin Trains Ticket Sales (to buy any rail ticket)	0871 977 4222 (08.00 to 22.00 every day)
London Northwestern Railway ticket sales (to buy any rail ticket)	03333110006
Northern ticket sales	0344 241 3454
British Transport Police for non-emergencies	0800 40 50 40 or text 61016.
Network Rail (to report infrastructure faults)	03457 11 41 41 or 0207 557 8000
Train Running Information - TrainTracker	03457 48 49 50 and then Option 1.
Northern Customer Services	0800 200 6060 (0700-2200)
Transport Focus (complaints appeals)	0300 123 2350
TfGM Bus, Rail and Metrolink Enquiries	0161 244 1000 (0700-2000 Mon-Fri, 0800-2000 Sat/Sun)
Metrolink Customer Services	0161 205 2000 (seven days a week)
Merseytravel Public Transport Enquiry Line	0151 236 7676 (08.00 to 20.00 every day)
National Public Transport Enquiry Line	0871 200 22 33 (07.00 to 22.00 every day)

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.nationalrail.co.uk (includes a journey planner which shows times and fares and a facility to obtain real time train running information for any station)

www.northernrailway.co.uk (includes details of forthcoming engineering work under “Travel” and then “Improvement Works”)

www.networkrail.co.uk (includes a link to download the National Rail timetable)

www.eastmidlandstrains.co.uk (to buy any GB rail ticket using a credit or debit card)

www.tfgm.com (includes a Journey Planner called “MyTfGM” which shows scheduled tram times if you plan a journey involving Metrolink).

www.metrolink.co.uk (shows any current problems with the tram service and details of future engineering work)

www.traveline.info (a national public transport journey planner).

www.transportfocus.org.uk (the website of Transport Focus, the statutory body for rail and bus users).

www.railfuture.org.uk (the website of Railfuture, the independent, national, voluntary body for rail users)

traintimes.org.uk (an unofficial website which provides rail information derived from official sources in a user-friendly format).

www.uksteam.info (details of steam-hauled special trains on the main line).

www.brfares.com (lists all available fares on the National Rail network).

railwayherald.com/railtours (lists special trains (both steam and modern traction) on the main line).

YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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FRIENDS OF ALTRINCHAM INTERCHANGE – Please contact Andrew Macfarlane.
MCRUA is affiliated to Railfuture, the national, voluntary body for rail users.

MCRUA MEMBERSHIP There are five classes of membership of the Association:

Individual under 21 years - £2.00, Individual 21 years and over - £7.00, Family - £10.00, Voluntary body - £20.00 and Corporate - £100.00.

You can join online at www.mcrua.org.uk/membership. Alternatively, you may pay by standing order, details available from the Membership Secretary membership@mcrua.org.uk. Standing Orders are fixed price for five years from the start of the payments.

You may also pay by cheque made payable to **Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association** and sent to the **Membership Secretary, 48 Romana Square Altrincham WA14 5QB.**

You can change your mailing option by contacting the Membership Secretary at membership@mcrua.org.uk.