

MID CHESHIRE RAIL REPORT

No. 113

WINTER 2021

ISSUED FREE TO MCRUA MEMBERS

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

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. We are also on Facebook for our latest news and discussion www.facebook.com/Mid-Cheshire-Rail-Users-Association-MCRUA-124008736132899.

The Annual General Meeting of the Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association took place on Tuesday 16 November 2021. Thanks to all those who took part in the zoom meeting, or sent apologies and proxy voting intentions. The following committee members have stood down from the committee: John Oates, John Hulme and Harry Boardman. We thank them all for their years of dedication on behalf of MCRUA.

At the first committee meeting, held on 6th December, the committee elected Mike Battman to the role of Chairman. Mike has been a committee member for several years. We thank Mike for volunteering to step up and look forward to working with him in the future.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT by Mike Battman

Welcome to my first Chairman's Report, it is an honour to have been elected by the Committee to take over the Chair's role from John Oates. John is leaving the area in the new year and will be living in a town with no railway station! John has been a steady hand as Chair since 2006 and his knowledge of the railways and his many contacts built up over the years make him an incredibly hard act to follow.

There have been other significant changes to the committee with long term members John Hulme and Harry Boardman also leaving. A big thank you to them. They will both be sorely missed. Consequently, the committee is looking for new members, so if anyone would like to join us, especially if you are in the Knutsford area, please contact us.

Throughout the covid epidemic the committee has continued to meet regularly via Zoom and we are hoping to recommence in person meetings in January, as always subject to Government guidelines.

Over the last period Northern's performance on our line has been at times abysmal and rarely better than just about acceptable. Hardly a day goes by without at least one cancellation or late running trains. The majority of the problems are described as "issue with train crew". Manning trains in this Covid times has been a problem and it seems particularly bad for Northern. The inability to train new crews or existing crews on new routes and with new stock has not helped. Additionally, we have had broken down freight trains and in recent days flooding between Skelton Junction and Stockport adding to the disruption. My predecessor, John Oates, has written a piece for this Rail Report detailing the events of the worst day.

We are trying to reinstate a communication system with Northern that flags when we expect passenger numbers to be greater than normal. This was highlighted to me when I returned from Chester Races in August to be met with a two-carriage unit that was standing room only all the way to Knutsford. So, in future

we will make sure once again that Northern are aware of race days at Chester, concerts, etc at Delamere and other events along the line.

Finally, may I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year.
Mike Battman

RETIRING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MCRUA wants to place on record its appreciation for three long serving committee members who have stood down recently.

John Oates has been MCRUA's chairman and leader and chief spokesman for fifteen years and treasurer before that. Besides his undoubted skills as a chairman, his knowledge of the working of the railway is extraordinary and his range of contacts very wide indeed. He and his wife Steff are moving from the area to start the next phase of their lives and surprisingly will not be living within dog-walking distance of a railway station! John has indicated that he will continue to be a member of MCRUA and available to advise us. We thank him warmly for this and for his years of service.

John Hulme BEM has been MCRUA's vice chairman, web master, publicity writer and IT guide for many years. He is well known as a life-long Northwich resident and transport enthusiast whose memories of steam trains as a youngster in Cheshire led him to a life-long passion for the railways. John's deep belief in the value and benefits of the local rail network have made him a passionate advocate for our local lines. We continue to benefit from his knowledge and advice and we are most grateful for his continuing support.

Harry Boardman was MCRUA secretary for several years and has been a committee member for many more. His local knowledge delivered with an acerbic wit has enlivened many of our meetings. More recently, ill health has limited Harry's activities but he continues to follow the local rail scene and stays in contact with us. We thank Harry too for his efforts for MCRUA over a long period and send him our best wishes for better health in future.

MCRUA has been fortunate to have all three people on the committee for a long time and we wish them well for the future.

Our recently appointed **Community Rail Officer Sarah Morgan** has stepped down from the role. Thanks to Sarah for all her work up and down the line, especially during the difficult Covid period. She will be greatly missed and we wish her well in her new role. The Community Rail Partnership is seeking a replacement.

VACANCY – Social Media And Website Manager

The MCRUA committee is keen to recruit a volunteer with experience to manage the MCRUA social media and also our web presence. For further information: please contact any committee member or the secretary – details on final page.

NO TRAINS, NO BUSES, NO INFORMATION

Sunday 31 October – The Day Northern forgot to run a service
By John Oates

The day dawned very wet and windy. I have been following train running performance along the Mid Cheshire Line for well over 10 years. I checked to see how the first two trains were doing (Sundays are a particularly bad day for cancellations due to driver shortages, something especially painful on the line with only one train every two hours). The system showed no trains were running until mid-afternoon with bus replacements.

This puzzled me. I hadn't noticed any publicity about this at Mobberley Station and didn't remember being notified of engineering work along the line that morning (Andrew Macfarlane monitors this). I checked the Northern website – no mention of engineering work. I checked National Rail – no mention. I checked journeycheck.com/northern – no mention. Very strange.

I emailed MCRUA committee members and other active colleagues. No-one had been aware of this.

Then the reports started coming in. There were passengers waiting at Stockport for the bus. No sign. The Stockport staff couldn't find out what was going on. The passengers contacted the Northern Twitter Team with the Twitter team asking if they were standing in the right place for the bus. They were. Then reports from Altrincham with passengers waiting for the bus which hadn't arrived. Luckily for them there are staff there. At that time on a Sunday the only other stations along the line with staff are Chester and Piccadilly.

I emailed our Northern contacts asking what was the position. By then it seems the realisation had hit Northern that they'd agreed to Network Rail's request for short-notice engineering work, but then not followed through placing the relevant customer information notices, nor organising the replacement buses.

Early afternoon in Mobberley I noticed a replacement bus apparently lost, as well as a Chester taxi checking at the station.

I received a number of emails from Northern letting me know this clearly embarrassing situation would be discussed at their weekly briefing meeting on the Monday morning. I requested a formal statement that we could publish.

I received the following from Becky Styles, Northern's Regional Community & Sustainability Manager. *"We apologise for the disruption along the Mid Cheshire line this Sunday and take full accountability for anyone whose journey was affected. The failure of one of our suppliers was key in this instance and we will be following this up to ensure such a scenario does not occur in future. The situation around provision of rail replacement bus services has been extremely challenging over the past couple of weeks with Arriva Road Transport Services recruiting almost 700 vehicles and running over 2500 bus services to cover significant engineering work on the network and keep our customers on the move. However the situation on Sunday morning was not acceptable and we take full responsibility for this."*

I have been involved in monitoring performance on the Mid Cheshire Line since I joined MCRUA in 1987. I cannot remember a time when either British Rail or subsequent train operating companies omitted to run the services.

Then to cap it all the first service from Manchester planned to run in the afternoon (and the second from Chester) was cancelled – Driver Shortage.

TIMETABLE CONSULTATION by Simon Barber

Despite all the changes in committee posts recently, I would like to re-assure members that MCRUA remains active, in good financial health, and that we have enough committee members to carry on the association's work. We continue to have access for advice to former chairman John Oates and former vice-chairman John Hulme, and we are grateful to them both not only for their long service to MCRUA, but also for their continuing support for us. If you are interested in seeing the work of the committee, and maybe joining it, please contact me, our secretary Paul Wilkinson, or our chairman Mike Battman.

One of our continuing activities is responding to rail timetable consultations. The major timetable concern right now is, in fact, one on which we were not consulted; the missing 'peak hour extras' on the Mid Cheshire line, especially the missing 0715 Chester to Stockport, which has left an absurd 74 minute gap in

departures on the line eastbound in the morning peak. This affects stations all along the line with school students particularly inconvenienced as there is no train at Hale or Altrincham which comes close to matching school start times. MCRUA has raised this repeatedly with Northern and is supporting the school parents' campaign too.

However, we also need to focus on a formal timetable consultation taking place in parallel. This is the consultation on the proposed December 2022 timetable for Manchester following the work of 'Manchester Rail Recovery Task Force'. The decision of Transport for the North (TfN) to disregard all the timetable options proposed by their task force and instead recommend their 'Option B+' is a shocker. This 'B+' was not one of the options that was consulted on. Of the options consulted on, Option C was the firm favourite in Mid Cheshire and would have delivered two trains per hour on weekdays to this line. The task force's analysis of their options showed that Option C was the best for reducing the delays through Manchester's Castlefield Corridor, which was the over-riding objective of the exercise. TfN have disregarded their own objective and their own task force's work for political reasons and chosen a timetable which tries to squeeze extra trains through the corridor. It will necessarily be less reliable than Option C would have been. It will not be the 'high performing timetable' that they claim.

That is the background to the latest consultation. Northern have published for consultation their draft timetables for December 2022 which will implement Option B+. You can find them here <https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/manchester2022> (look for Manchester-Altrincham-Chester).

The planned timetables are :

Mon – Sat: [Manchester – Altrincham – Chester EWD](#) [Chester-Altrincham – Manchester EWD](#)

Sunday Only: [Chester-Altrincham – Manchester SuO](#) [Manchester – Altrincham – Chester SuO](#)

MCRUA will be responding to this consultation and we encourage members who are affected to do so too because the number of responses does matter. You can respond either by completing a feedback form on the draft timetable page, by email to consultations@northernrailway.co.uk, or even by free post to FAO December 2022 timetable, FREEPOST Northern Railway. The deadline for responses is 31st December, so please act quickly. Some of the points that members may like to consider making are:-

- Generally the proposed December 2022 timetable is close to even-interval ("clock face times") throughout the day, which we welcome.
- The proposed timetable changes the regular departure time from Piccadilly from xx40 (approximately) to xx10. This results in departures shifted by 30 minutes all along the line. This may cause problems for passengers who have fixed journey times such as school students; others may find their journeys improved. If this will affect you, please check the times at your station, give details when you respond and let MCRUA know.
- The two morning peak Chester-Stockport 'extras' are re-introduced and the evening peak Stockport-Chester trains are too. However one of the Stockport-Chester trains is very badly timed indeed. It is proposed to depart from Stockport at 1707, which will be only 12 minutes ahead of the following Manchester-Chester train. In other words there will be a 48 minute gap in the peak hour westbound followed by two trains only 12 minutes apart. The 1707 needs to be re-timed about 20 minutes earlier.
- The proposed timetable does not re-introduce the morning extra Stockport-Chester service which has not run since the Covid service reductions started. A morning 'extra' between Manchester and Chester is still needed to fill the gap between the proposed 0709 and 0810 departures from Piccadilly. The Mid Cheshire Line sees two-way commuting. The previous extra train (0818 Stockport-Chester) was introduced to relieve congestion on the morning peak trains from Manchester and is still needed. There also needs to be a balancing afternoon

working at or around 1530 from Chester to avoid overcrowding on the mid afternoon services eastbound.

- The last departure from Manchester on a Sunday is proposed to be 2106 which is too early.
- The proposed timetable does not implement two trains per hour on the Mid Cheshire Line which was promised to passengers from December 2017/18 and has never been delivered.
- The proposed timetable does not implement the hourly service on Sundays which was promised from December 2017 and has never been delivered.

Please look at the timetables and let MCRUA know if you have further concerns that MCRUA has not yet spotted.

The London Northwestern Railway timetable for the Birmingham-Crewe-Liverpool service is not affected by the December 2022 changes. We will however be making representations to LNR about the new late-evening Saturday service from Liverpool, the supposedly very welcome 2216 departure which starts on 18 December 2021. The current last LNR departure from Liverpool on Saturdays is a too-early 2134 (it's later on Sundays!). However, LNR have now revealed that the new 2216 will run non-stop to Crewe, where it terminates. It won't call at our Mid Cheshire stations of Acton Bridge, Hartford and Winsford, or anywhere else. MCRUA will try to get this changed.

The work of trying to secure the right timetables for our two railway lines never stops, or so it seems!

THE DECEMBER 2021 TIMETABLE STARTED ON SUNDAY 12TH DECEMBER:

Mid Cheshire Line timetable:

There are no major changes to train frequencies along the Mid Cheshire Line. Most times are unchanged or within a minute of the previous time. However, be aware that many trains will depart Manchester Piccadilly two minutes earlier, at 39 minutes past the hour instead of 41. The Sunday service will be unchanged until 3 April when the 1056 from Chester will depart at 1058, run 3 minutes later to Stockport, and call additionally at Heaton Chapel and Levenshulme.

Route 17: Manchester to Altrincham and Chester

[N17 Manchester to Chester via Altrincham \(Mid Cheshire Line\). 12 Dec — 14 May](#)

[N17 Manchester to Chester via Altrincham \(Mid Cheshire Line\). 12 Dec — 14 May](#) **A4 printable pdf**

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR TRAIN TIMES by David Miller

Northern have announced the service changes over the Festive Period. If you're planning to take the train over the Christmas and New Year period, please make sure you plan ahead and check times before you travel. There will be changes to train services across the rail network over the holiday season.

MID CHESHIRE LINE:

Fridays 24 and 31 December: The last trains will be -

2102 Chester to Manchester Piccadilly. 2039 Manchester Piccadilly to Chester.

Saturday 25 December and Sunday 26 December: No trains.

Monday and Tuesday 27 and 28 December: 0556 Chester to Manchester Piccadilly will not run. Normal service otherwise.

Wednesday 29 December and Thursday 30 December: Normal service.

Saturday 1 January onwards: Normal service except for late night replacement buses 3 – 6 January – see detail below.

LATE NIGHT ENGINEERING WORK by Andrew Macfarlane

The last train from Chester and the last two trains from Piccadilly are still being replaced by buses every six weeks due to planned engineering work.

Monday 3rd to Thursday 6 January: Buses will replace the 22.52 from Chester to Manchester and the 22.42 and 23.41 from Manchester Piccadilly to Chester. Additional buses will depart Knutsford to Manchester at 23.37 and from Knutsford to Chester at 23.25 and 00.25.

[N17 Route improvement Manchester Piccadilly - Chester.](#) [3 Jan — 6 Jan](#)

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR SERVICES: IN GENERAL: there will be changes to train services across the rail network over the holiday season. Check before you travel:

Christmas Eve – 24th December 2021 Services will end from 19:00.

Christmas Day – 25th December 2021 No services running.

Boxing Day – 26th December 2021 Merseyrail and a limited Northern service will operate Liverpool Lime Street – St. Helen's Central. No other services will operate.

27th – 30th December 2021 Engineering works significantly affect journeys through Manchester and Leeds. Check your journey before you travel.

31st December 2021 services will end from 19:00. Engineering works will also affect journeys through Manchester and Leeds. Check your journey before you travel.

1st January 2022 Normal services will operate on most routes but will start later than usual.

1st - 3rd January 2022 Engineering works significantly affect journeys through Manchester and Leeds.

Check your journey before you travel. Manchester Victoria is closed with services using Piccadilly Station.

METROLINK SERVICES: Christmas and New Year

The below should be used as a guide only, passengers are advised to check before they travel. Real-time service information can be found [here](#). Follow [@MCRMetroLink](#) for live updates.

Thursday 23 December Normal weekday service.

Friday 24 December Services will operate 6am to 9pm (with additional peak Bury-Altrincham and East Didsbury-Shaw and Crompton services).

Saturday 25 December, Christmas Day No service.

Sunday 26 December, Boxing Day Services will operate 7am to midnight at a 12-minute frequency. Additional services will also operate to and from the Etihad Stadium for Manchester City v Leicester.

Mon/ Tues 27 /28 December Services will operate 7am to midnight at a 12-minute frequency.

Weds / Thurs 29 /30 December A normal weekday service will operate from 6am to midnight (with additional peak Bury-Altrincham and East Didsbury-Shaw and Crompton services).

Friday 31 December, New Year's Eve A normal weekday service will operate from 6am to 1am (with additional peak Bury-Altrincham and East Didsbury-Shaw and Crompton services).

Sat / Sun / Mon 1/2/3 January 2022 Services will operate 7am to midnight at a 12-minute frequency.

Please note Victoria station will be closed for engineering works 1st – 3rd January and a rail replacement bus service will be in operation to bring the Bury, Rochdale and Airport lines into the city.

Tuesday 4 January A normal weekday service will operate.

Tram times can be found using the journey planner on the Traveline website at www.traveline.info

The start and end times of Metrolink services above are a general guide only. [Search for the first and last tram times for the stops you are travelling between.](#)

INTEGRATED RAIL PLAN FOR THE NORTH AND MIDLANDS by Andrew Macfarlane

This long-delayed Government plan sets out the plans for HS2 in the Midlands and the North of England and HS2's relationship with Northern Powerhouse Rail (the proposed Liverpool-Manchester-Leeds new line).

The Government finally published its Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands on 18th November. The construction of the HS2 line from Crewe to Manchester Piccadilly was confirmed and the plan also

includes an HS2 link back onto the West Coast main line north of Crewe station. The "Golborne Spur" from the HS2 Manchester line to the WCML was not confirmed and is said to depend on the outcome of the Union Connectivity Review. Two sections of the Northern Powerhouse Rail line were announced, a new line from Warrington Bank Quay Low Level to join the HS2 Manchester line south of Manchester Airport and a new line from Manchester Piccadilly to Marsden to join the existing line towards Leeds. Neither of these two new sections of line will be open until the early 2040s, which is also the forecast opening date of the Crewe to Manchester section of HS2. The existing line between Liverpool Lime Street and Warrington Bank Quay Low Level via Fiddlers Ferry will be upgraded and Warrington Bank Quay Low Level station will be reopened. Manchester Piccadilly HS2 station will be an elevated structure alongside the existing trainshed and this will also cater for Northern Powerhouse Rail. Northern politicians had favoured an underground station at Piccadilly for Northern Powerhouse Rail but this has been rejected on the grounds of cost and the time taken to build such a station.

AVANTI WEST COAST DECEMBER 2021 TIMETABLE

Avanti West Coast increased the Manchester-London service back to three trains per hour each way from the December timetable change on Sunday 12th December.

CONSULTATION ON NEW CHEADLE STATION

A public consultation has recently taken place on a planned new station for Cheadle on the site of Cheadle LNW station closed on 1st January 1917 (on the existing Altrincham-Stockport line). The station would have a single platform on the north side of the single line with a 100-space car park. The consultation is being carried out as part of drawing up a business case for the station.

'REVERSING BEECHING' FUND by Simon Barber

There was some welcome news recently from the government's optimistically-named 'Reversing Beeching' fund. Of course the amount of funding available is nowhere near sufficient to reverse any Beeching rail closures, even supposing that the lines of the routes are still available. Nevertheless some good has come of it. The 'Middlewich Line' (also known as the Mid Cheshire Rail Link or the Northwich-Crewe railway), which closed to passengers in 1960 and was therefore a pre-Beeching cut, attracted £50,000 in funding towards the next re-opening study. The Middlewich line has survived as a freight line with occasional passenger diversions and so its re-opening is more feasible than some. MCRUA understands that this grant is to go towards the next phase of developing the business case for the re-opening, a project which is being managed by Cheshire & Warrington LEP. MCRUA is a stakeholder in the project so we have called for a fresh stakeholder meeting and will keep members updated on progress.

MUSIC TRAINS

The Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership is looking to restart the music trains on the line from April 2022, Covid permitting.

METROLINK NEWS by Andrew Macfarlane

The TMS (Tram Management System) signalling at Timperley was commissioned on Sunday 28th November and went live from Monday 29th November. This changes the "red/green" signals at Timperley with "white" tram signals. The 10mph speed restriction heading towards Manchester from just north of Deansgate Junction signal box remains in force for the time being. New tram 3134 was delivered on 4th December. Trams up to and including 3133 are now in service.

FARES NEWS by Andrew Macfarlane

NATIONAL RAIL FARE INCREASE The Guardian newspaper recently reported that the Government would be announcing a 3.8% increase in regulated rail fares from the beginning of March. This is disappointing at a time when air passenger duty on internal flights has been reduced and duty on petrol remains frozen.

NEWS FROM THE LINE by Andrew Macfarlane

The Cheshire Midland pub next to Hale station may be reopening. Sam Smith's are advertising for a couple to manage the pub, which has been closed since 2019.

LATEST ON DISABLED ACCESS AT NORTHWICH

Disappointingly the Government has announced that step-free access to the Chester-bound platform will not be provided when Northwich station is rebuilt next year. An application for funding will have to be made to the Department for Transport's Access for All scheme, the next round of which does not open until 2024.

LOCAL RAIL NEWS by Andrew Macfarlane

A new siding is to be provided between Miles Platting Junction and Brewery Junction to enable empty passenger trains to be turned round while work takes place on the Castlefield Corridor. A sign that such work is reasonably imminent?

FRIENDS OF ALTRINCHAM INTERCHANGE by Judie Collins

The FoAI have been very busy through recent months. They are working with Rail Alliance (Network Rail, Northern, TfGM) to make their rooms available for community use. A group visited Heaton Chapel who are part of the same project and the Friends of Heaton Chapel kindly donated a bookcase which has been painted in Northern colours and is now well stocked. A second bookcase has been purchased to display Mid Cheshire material and a young adult's section with Blessed Thomas Holford school. The Mayor and MP visited to look at Poppy themed installations which has been supported by Altrincham Town Centre Partnership. The MD of ISS's MD visited to give an award to Michelle who does so much on the Interchange to ensure it looks as spruce as it does. The Interchange achieved a NW in Bloom award at "Thriving" status just 3 points short of "Outstanding". Staff and a local community group *Two Little Ducks* together with donations from local businesses have an excellent Christmas display including a very festive adorned with transport themed decorations. All the efforts are very much appreciated by passengers and special thanks are due to Bev Robinson who joined the Friends group only last year and has brought new inspiration to the group's efforts with her continued hands on contribution.

ALTRINCHAM WINTER LECTURE SERIES

The Altrincham winter railway lectures at Altrincham Methodist Hall are restarting in January (Covid permitting). Please contact Andrew Macfarlane for the up-to-date position on 0161 928 9394 or andrew.macfarlane6851@gmail.com Some talks may be switched to zoom.

The Methodist Hall is a short walk from Altrincham station in the direction of Manchester. The talks start at 7.30pm. Admission is £4 for non-members of the Altrincham Electric Railway Preservation Society. The forthcoming programme is:

Friday 14th January. Steam in the BR era in East Anglia. Colour Rail slides by Alf Storey.

Friday 11th February. People and Places 1 by Paul Shackcloth.

Friday 11th March. Railway Postcards Part 2 Postcard Departures - trains and railway stations from postcards and archive film. by Nick Dodson.

STEPHENSON LOCOMOTIVE SOCIETY MEETINGS IN MANCHESTER

The Stephenson Locomotive Society meets at the Friends Meeting House in Manchester on Saturdays at 2pm. The venue is very close to St Peter's Square Metrolink station. Meetings are open to non-members. There is an optional donation of £3. Forthcoming meetings are:

22nd January. Centre AGM (short) followed by Melvyn Roberts on "The Indian Summer of the Somerset and Dorset Railway".

19th February. Jody Ball and John Robson. "CrossCountry Trains Regionalisation; its successes and challenges".

19th March. Alexander Fitch. "A Railman's Holiday".

16th April. Simon Holroyd, Engineering Manager, NRM 'Flying Scotsman'.

SKELTON JUNCTION TO GLAZEBROOK & WARRINGTON RAILWAY FACEBOOK PAGE by Andrew Macfarlane This Facebook page has been recommended to me by several people and is probably worth a look if you are interested in the two lines which ran west from Skelton Junction (Timperley). [Skelton Junction to Glazebrook & Warrington Railway | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1573102759580466) or www.facebook.com/groups/1573102759580466

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

The following members have joined since the previous issue of the Rail Report: Robin Anson of Ollerton and Eric Wright of Cuddington.

IN MEMORIAM

We regret to report the death of long standing MCRUA member Gordon Alan Hutcheon of Neston.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

National Rail Enquiries	03457 48 49 50 or 0207 068 0500
Avanti West Coast 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)	03333 110 006
Northern ticket sales	0800 200 6060 (0800-2100 Monday to Sunday)
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 (0800-2100 Monday to Sunday)
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.eastmidlandsrailway.co.uk (to buy any GB rail ticket using a credit or debit card)
- www.tfgm.com (the website of Transport for Greater Manchester)
- www.metrolink.co.uk (shows any current problems with tram service and details of future engineering work)
- www.traveline.info (a national public transport journey planner for bus, train and tram).
- 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)
- www.traintimes.org.uk (an unofficial website which provides rail information derived from official sources in a user-friendly format).
- www.brfares.com (lists all available fares on the National Rail network).
- www.railwayherald/railtours (lists special trains (both steam and modern traction) on the main line).

YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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MID-CHESHIRE COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP

Community Rail Officer: (vacant) <https://www.midcheshirerail.org.uk/contact-us/>

Community Rail Partnership address: The Council Offices, 78 Church Road, Northwich CW9 5PB.

Visit: <http://www.midcheshirerail.org.uk>

FRIENDS OF ALTRINCHAM INTERCHANGE – Please contact Andrew Macfarlane.

MCRUA is affiliated to **Railfuture**, the national, voluntary body for rail users. www.railfuture.org.uk

This newsletter prepared by Paul Wilkinson with support from Andrew Macfarlane, who is recovering from illness, and other committee members

DISCLAIMER

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