

14 April 2017

SLUG Public Meeting and Annual General Meeting on 9 May 2017



The 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Stourbridge Line User Group will take place on Tuesday 9 May 2017 at the Severn Valley Railway Station at Kidderminster. The event will be held in the Refreshment Room (at the rear of the King and Castle Public Bar) and will commence at 7.30 pm.

The last few months has seen positive news on the opening of the proposed Metro line from Brierley Hill to Wednesbury as part of a package to improve connectivity from all parts of the West Midlands to the HS2 stations at Curzon Street and UK Central. Work has started on clearing over 20 years of vegetation from the route and the current intention is to have the Metro line open by 2023. The connectivity package was revised very recently and a "rail-based" service from Stourbridge Junction to Round Oak has been added to the package. It is too early yet to get information.

The project to redevelop Kidderminster station is progressing slower than hoped but the current plans are for the contract to be awarded in May for work to start on site in May 2018 with the upgrade completed by February 2019. For more details, please see the news item on this website dated 5 April.

2017 should also see the start of a new West Midlands Rail franchise. The minimum requirements have already been specified and these will see improved evening and Sunday services. In June, we should know which of the two bidding companies is successful in winning the right to operate the new franchise and what improvements over and above the minimum requirement they are going to implement. The new franchise should start in October.

So, there is a lot going on at present and you, the travelling public will be able to listen to guest speakers from the rail industry and county travel planning departments with the developments listed above featuring strongly in the presentations. Whether you have praise or criticism of the rail service on our line or you have a suggestion to make or a question to ask, you are most welcome to take part.

Confirmed speakers are as follows :-

Brenda Lawrence, Head of Route (Snow Hill Lines), London Midland
David Heathfield, Stakeholder Manager, Chiltern Railways
Tom Painter, Franchise Delivery Manager, West Midlands Rail
Peter Sargent, Head of Rail Development, Transport for West Midlands
Andy Baker, Integrated Transport Manager, Worcestershire County Council OR Ian Baxter, Rail Strategy and Operations Expert, SLC Rail

Hopefully, we'll see you there.