



Newsletter March 2010

Just a short newsletter this time – I'm holding back the best bits for a printed newsletter next month. However, I do have some interesting bits and pieces for you now.

AGM 2010

The Annual General Meeting for Lightweight Community Transport Limited will be held on Thursday 13th May at Friends of the Earth Birmingham's excellent venue, the Warehouse. This is on Allison Street in Birmingham, not far from the New Street and Moor Street stations.

As well as the usual AGM business, there will be an amendment to our rules – a change that will allow us to save money on accountancy by having a simplified audit at the end of the year.

I hope we will see plenty of you there - as well as updates on LCT's progress, we will be inviting some of the manufacturers of lightweight rail technology to attend and show off their toys. If you would be interested in standing for election to the board, there are vacancies: do please get in touch to find out more about what is involved.

Bob Chard

Welcome to the newest member of the LCT board – Bob Chard is a town planner by trade but had been working for several years with Sustraco. For the last 20 years he has worked mainly on major transport infrastructure developments in London and the south east; with particular responsibilities for town planning and environmental aspects of project development and evaluation.

Recently, Bob has been successful in linking the development of new transport proposals with regeneration and redevelopment proposals. The proposed Docklands Light Railway terminus and associated planning development brief and transport development area study for Woolwich Town Centre are an example of good practice in integrating transportation and land use planning proposals.

Sustraco are pioneers of ultra light rail (in fact, they coined that term), and Bob is working on a number of interesting light rail projects. For example, Rainham Marshes is an RSPB nature reserve near Havering; they are looking for a way for visitors to reach the heart of the marsh without disturbing the delicate ecosystem, and ultra light rail might be the solution. We're counting on Bob to keep us up to date on this and other developments.

Folkestone Harbour and the Remembrance Line

We have recently been contacted by a local group in Folkestone trying to protect the old harbour station from development. They have big plans to create a new route into the town centre, and bring in trains from London to connect with cross channel trips. But in the meantime, the existing line could contribute a useful service as it stands:

“Our objective is to work with the Folkestone Harbour Company and Shepway District Council to implement a route that would serve a park and ride station at Folkestone East and also connect with mainline trains from Ashford and London. This would provide a quick and easy transit from train and main roads to the harbour area. By terminating at the Leas Cliff Lifts passengers will also be within 100m of the Town Centre – a much better experience than walking from Folkestone Central station or threading the town's narrow roads to a seafront parking area. Other busy destinations such as Canterbury successfully place park and ride locations on the outskirts of the urban area and we believe that our approach mirrors this as far as the geography allows.”

