



Newsletter May 2011

AGM 2011 – guest speaker to be confirmed

The Annual General Meeting for Lightweight Community Transport Limited will be held on Thursday 24th June at Friends of the Earth Birmingham's excellent venue, the Warehouse, Allison Street, Birmingham B5 5TH. It is not far from the New Street and Moor Street stations.

We will start at 12 noon (but please feel free to arrive any time after 11.30am), and after the formal business of the AGM there will be an open forum where ideas for the future can be discussed. Lunch and refreshments will be available. I am working hard to secure a guest speaker who will fascinate and educate – stay in touch for the latest.

Would you like to stand for the committee? We are always keen to hear from people who would like to serve on the committee – the only qualification is a strong commitment to our aims. If you'd like to find out more about what is entailed, give Alex a call on 0845 458 1473.

Will you be attending? Do please contact us to let us know you if you might be coming, so that we can supply accounts and other papers. Of course, you are very welcome to request these even if you can't be there on the day – and you can appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf. Please note the response form at the end of this newsletter.

Do you have any questions? While you are welcome to put them on the day, if you would like to email them to alex@lctLtd.co.uk in advance, I can ensure that a written answer is in the papers. Members have the right to propose resolutions for the meeting to consider; please contact Alex if you would like advice on drafting.

All resolutions, candidate statements, written questions and other notifications need to be received by Tuesday 14th June. I hope we will see plenty of you there!

Hope in Ludgershall as PreMetro ask for access



The route from Ludgershall to Andover should be the most obvious candidate for ultra light rail. Here is a branch line with a town at each end, maintained to a very high standard and yet used only once in a blue moon (according to some reports, less than five times a year). There are suitable locations for other stops along the route, in the western suburbs of Andover, near a large business park, and between the villages of Fyfield and Weyhill.

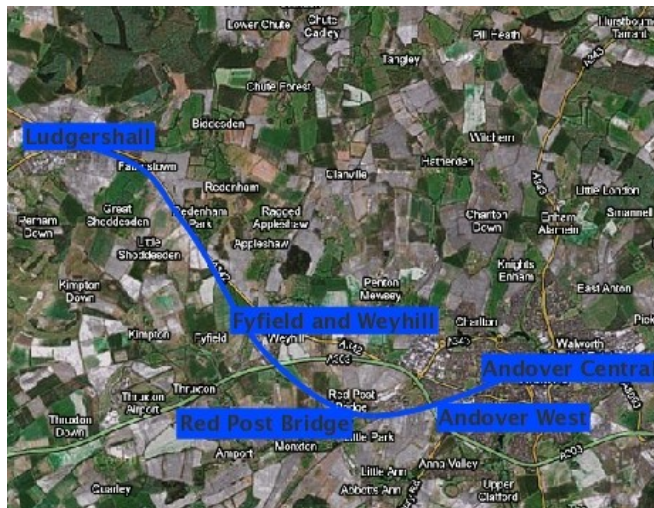
There is, however, a catch. The occasional user is the Ministry of Defence, which has numerous barracks and stores in the Ludgershall area. This picture shows the end of the branch just beyond the town centre.

Network Rail have indicated that they do not believe a ULR service could be operated safely – and reluctance to limit the freedom of movement of military trains could lie behind this, as the route is segregated from all other rail traffic.

The line remains separate from the two tracks of the Waterloo line even though it reaches an unused platform at Andover's mainline station – ideal for a class 139 Parry People Mover.

NR has made it hard for operators such as GOCO that are interested to make a formal application – and that means they have not had to justify a formal refusal. Wiltshire County Council and Ludgershall Town Council are both very interested, as you might expect; Hampshire County Council is less keen, as they are worried we may damage the viability of the existing bus service – however, stops at Red Post and Andover West may win them over.

The logjam had to be broken, and so LCT met with both PreMetro – the TOC behind the Stourbridge service – and GOCO. The agreement reached is that Premetro will put in a track application, GOCO will step in to finance and operate the service if it is successful, and LCT will provide the initial funding at risk. Watch this space...



The long (rail)road to Alton

You will I'm sure have shared my deep disappointment that our first service, on the Mid Hants railway, was brought to such an abrupt halt by technical failures. The series of problems – a failed pump, a sticking door, electrical faults and worn seating – caused us huge embarrassment and considerable soul searching. But there was never any question of giving up on the project, and intense negotiations have been conducted to reassure the Mid Hants railway that this was not the end of the story, and that a fully functioning railcar could be delivered.



As I write, Clayton Engineering are hard at work on repairs, and taking the opportunity to make other changes – the chassis has been completely redesigned, and the engine is being converted to diesel (not as environmentally sensitive as LPG, but always the firm preference of the Mid Hants railway). When it returns it will be – though superficially similar – a new vehicle.

Your contributions

Just a reminder – I am always keen to receive items for this newsletter from members. Please don't hesitate to provide opinions, ideas, and requests.

Name:

Postcode:

Email:

I will be attending the AGM I'd like someone to be my proxy at the AGM

I'm interested in standing as a candidate for election to the committee

Please send the AGM papers by post by email

(Return this slip to LCT, 12 North St, Stoke sub Hamdon TA14 6QP or email alex@lctltd.co.uk)