

If you could let me have a number of your yellow postcards (say 200 max) I will try to get them signed by Leigh Woods residents and sent to the West of England Partnership in the next couple of weeks. I look forward to hearing from you.

Ann Lawson

What's On

Thursday 6 to Friday 21 November. FOSBR stall at Henbury Library and the chance to pick up cards.

14 November 2008 West of England Partnership Joint Scrutiny Cttee

Friday 21 November West of England Partnership Group Leader will announce the number of campaign postcards received.

December 8 / 9 / 10 Transport for Bristol Alliance meeting in central Bristol. Speakers Christian Wolmar, transport journalist and John Savage, Business West.

Saturday 13 December Join us for a fun-filled day on and around the Severn Beach Line to celebrate the success that FOSBR has had this year, including the introduction of more frequent and reliable services on the Severn Beach Line and find out what you can do to help re-shape rail services in Bristol and its surrounding areas. (flier enclosed)

Saturday 12 January 2009 FOSBR Annual General Meeting
All posts up for grabs:- The meeting starts at 6 pm (check website).

To get to Great Western Staff Club, walk from Temple Meads Station down Approach Road to metal rail on right, then down steps to the lobby. Meeting ends in time for 8.13 pm train

Suggested speakers:- a campaigning transport speaker from Severn Tunnel Action Group (STAG) or a Nottingham councillor.

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Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways

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The Portishead and Northern Bristol Rail Campaign

Thanks to FOSBR members who lobbied councillors and political parties as requested in the September newsletter. People emailed councillors calling for a cross-Bristol passenger route linking the Portishead and Henbury freight lines with frequent stops at local stations in the 2009 bid.

Despite daily reading of the Evening Post and round the clock monitoring of every radio channel, we heard nothing. So, once again, FOSBR has had to take the initiative supported by members at our October meeting. Eric Wildman drafted the campaign flier and post card. We printed 3000 copies of each plus large versions of the ***Rail in Bristol*** map using the ASLEF £200 donation.

We launched the campaign at Temple Meads Station on Thursday 30 October celebrating the 27% increase in passengers on the Severn Beach Line since May. The more frequent FGW service, funded by Bristol City Council, and improved reliability, supports the case for restoring local passenger rail services on the Henbury and Portishead lines. Speakers included Councillor Mark Bradshaw, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, Bristol City Council, Councillor Comer, Alan Matthews, Portishead Rail Group, FOSBR members Rob Dixon and Bernard Lane. The launch was reported in the Evening Post, the Clevedon Mercury and on Radio Bristol.

FOSBR and Henbury Community Council will share their dreams for a passenger service on Friday 7 November on the bridge near Henbury Station filming a passing freight train. Councillors Helen Holland, Derek Pickup derek.pickup@bristol.gov.uk, for Henbury and Brentry; and Councillor Peter Tyzack; Peter.Tyzack@southglos.gov.uk have accepted our invitation to speak on the funding application. Doug Naysmith MP naysmithd@parliament.uk and Mark Weston mark.weston@bristol.gov.uk have been invited.

Councillors are also invited to sign up to this statement:-.

"We, the undersigned Bristol councillors, agree to ensure that the South West Regional Assembly and the South West Regional Development Agency include the Portishead line and Henbury loop passenger / freight line on their list for RFA2 funding. We note that SWRA needs to submit advice to ministers by the end of February 2009 and believe that investment in these rail based developments will significantly improve the transport services in and around Bristol."

Transforming travel in the West of England Partnership area

- Nigel Hutchings, Business West, has promised to promote the more frequent and reliable Temple Meads to Avonmouth service building on research by FOSBR member Neil Jacobs in 2006.
- Opening up the Portishead and Henbury loop freight lines to passengers in the current transport bid will improve existing rapid transit aka Local Rail. Filton to Temple Meads 10 minutes, Bristol Parkway to Bedminster 15 minutes, Stapleton Road to Clifton Down 9 minutes... .
- Lawrence Hill and Clifton Down Stations are rail and bus interchanges
- Shirehampton Park and Ride needs a new Halt or platform with facilities for bikes.
- Stapleton Road and Clifton Down Stations need to be promoted. The shopping facilities of St Marks Road and Whiteladies Road are first class. Clifton Station is in easy reach of the Zoo and Durdam Downs.
- Travelling along to Hallen Marsh the line joins the main freight line to Henbury, close to Cribbs Causeway Shopping Mall, and beyond to Bristol Parkway.
- Henbury is on the national cycling route and the Forest of Avon Communiity Forest Path. (www.forestofavon.org)
- If the Portishead and Henbury loop freight lines are re-opened to passengers, our decision makers will demonstrate that time saved for train passengers, cyclists and pedestrians is as important as time saved by motorists.
- Filton North Station platforms are still place and could easily be re-opened to serve Rolls Royce, Airbus, Royal Mail and Filton College.

Campaign postcards are available at Ashton Gate Library, Bristol City Council Environmental & Sustainable Unit, Create Centre 200, Spike

Island Art / Design Centre, 133 Cumberland Road, Restore, Filwood Broadway , Henbury Library, Sustrans; Katz, 55 Gloucester Road. Portishead Railway Group is distributing 500, ASLEF 50, RMT 50. We gave out cards at Temple Meads Station and plan to visit Bristol City Football Grounds.

A new station at Henbury and freight consolidation is included in the West of England Partnership's "Our Future Transport" proposals. Medium-level tonnage growth is forecast to 2017 on the Henbury line. The Freight RUS also highlights the potential development at the Port of Bristol allied to a predicted 62 % increase in import coal trains from the port for the electricity supply industry.

Letter to the Guardian 03 November 2008 *High speed rail will not benefit Bristol commuters until the suburban rail service is improved.*

Travelling from home to Bristol Parkway or Temple Meads Stations can take as long as the rail journey to London. Peak time travel from Portishead, for example, to Bristol can take 2 hours.

It is for this reason that Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways (FOSBR) urge our local politicians to include funding to open the Portishead and Henbury loop freight lines to passengers in the current transport bid. This will extend local rail in the Bristol area, increase demand, reduce road congestion and deliver economic social and environmental benefits to the city and region as a whole.

As for rail travel between London and Bristol, a reliable service, certainty of a seat and an affordable ticket are essential. Julie Boston

Email from Ann Lawson *I saw the piece in today's Evening Post and then looked you up on the Web.*

I live in Leigh Woods. Residents here are more and more fed up with our roads being congested by commuters every weekday, many of whom now choose to park here on what used to be quiet residential roads and then walk over the suspension bridge.

Most Leigh Woods people would very much like to see the re-opening of the Portishead line to passengers and a reduction in the number of cars commuting in to Bristol along the A369 from Portishead.