



Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership

MINUTES Annual General Meeting

17th June 2024 at 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Abbey Theatre, Westminster Lodge,
Holywell Hill, St Albans. AL1 2DL
Nearest train station: St Albans Abbey

Present

Steering Group

Cllr. Sandy Walkington (SW)
Robert Varney
Kate Swindells (KS)
Val Male (VM)
Jenny Swatton
Robert Yorke
Peter Brooks (PB)
David Parry (DP)
Paul Webster

Chair
(Vice Chair) Communities 1st
Officer
Hertfordshire County Council
St Albans City and District Council (SADC)
Bricket Wood Station Heritage Trust
ABFLY – Rail Users Group
Independent Member
Community Rail Network (online)

Other

Prof Stephen Joseph
Paul Spelzini
Richard Burton
Paul Norman
Avni Lakhani (AL)
David Charlton
Leslie Freitag
Robin Hall (RH)
Anna Addison
Lauren Murkin
PCSO Bushby
David Berryman

Invited speaker, University of Hertfordshire
ALCRP volunteer
ALCRP volunteer
ALCRP volunteer
Communities 1st and ALCRP volunteer
Watford Rail User Group
Watford Rail User Group
Watford Rail User Group
Watford and Three Rivers Friends of the Earth
Oaklands College
British Transport Police
St Albans Community Pantry

Apologies

Andy Smith
Steve Cavinder
Joy Mendelsohn
Pedro Ubeda

Steering Group -Watford Borough Council (WBC)
Steering Group Independent Member
Park Street Residents Association
ALCRP volunteer

Cllr Jesus Pastor
 Vivien Cannon
 Gill Westwood
 Alison Cotterill
 Cara Higgs
 Salpi Gulbekian

SADC
 St Albans BID
 Network Rail
 Network Rail
 London Northwestern Railway
 Everyone Active

Agenda item	Notes	Action				
<p>1. Welcome, Introduction & Apologies</p>	<p>SW Chaired the meeting and led the introductions.</p> <p>Apologies as noted above.</p>					
<p>2. Approval of Minutes of Previous AGM</p>	<p>SW: Minutes from the AGM on 26th June 2023 – were approved by members</p>					
<p>3. Motion to retain chair for an additional year</p>	<p>SW: Proposed the following motion:</p> <p>This AGM recognises the special circumstances of the recent appointment of a new Community Rail Partnership Officer and that for continuity and effective handover it is desirable that Sandy Walkington continues in post as Chair of the Partnership for one more year until the next AGM. Accordingly it was agreed that section 6.2 of The Terms of Reference for the Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership be suspended for one year only and Sandy shall serve as Chair until next year's 2025 AGM.</p> <p>This was put to the vote and was passed unanimously.</p>					
<p>4. Election of Partnership Chair and Vice-Chair by Partnership members</p>	<p>As per the ALCRP constitution, each year a Chair and Vice Chair must be voted in and only members of the steering group can vote. One vote per organisation. Email votes are accepted for those eligible to vote but not present.</p> <p>Candidate for Chair: Cllr Sandy Walkington Proposed: DP Seconded: AL Result: Cllr. Sandy Walkington re-elected as Chair for 2024/2025</p> <p>Candidate for Vice-Chair: Robert Varney Proposed: RY Seconded: DP Result: Robert Varney re-elected as vice-chair for 2024/2025</p> <p>Confirmation of ALCRP members is as follows Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership members and representatives 24/25</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="365 1871 1333 1934"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="365 1871 846 1906">Member Organisation</th> <th data-bbox="846 1871 1333 1906">Representative</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="365 1906 846 1934">Hertfordshire County Council (Host)</td> <td data-bbox="846 1906 1333 1934">Val Male</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Member Organisation	Representative	Hertfordshire County Council (Host)	Val Male	
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<p>5. New Chair Address</p>	<p>SW focussed his address on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thanking Edna Woname the out-going, long-serving community rail officer - Welcoming Kate Swindells, the new officer - Welcoming Stephen Cavinder - who was co-opted to the steering group at the last steering group meeting - Congratulating the Bricket Wood Station Heritage Trust for the completion and opening of the restored Bricket Wood Station and its successful tea room - An update on the Garston Community Garden, with particular thanks to Andy Smith and WBC for clearing the ground ready for planting - Our greater focus on sustainability - Our growing links with community groups along the Abbey Line <p>He concluded with well-deserved thanks to all involved with the Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership, especially to the funders: London Northwestern, Avanti West Coast, SADC and WBC, HCC for funding and hosting the partnership, and St Stephens Parish Council for hosting our meetings.</p>																																			
<p>6. CRP Annual Report overview</p>	<p>KS thanked those present once again and to all involved with the partnership.</p> <p>She asked everyone to take a copy of the Annual Report which covers the period from 2023 to 2024.</p> <p>KS thanked existing volunteers and spoke of new station adoption groups forming at Garston and St Albans Abbey stations.</p>																																			

	<p>This year, a big focus has been on connecting our communities with nature – by making better use of railway land and by encouraging integrated sustainable travel.</p> <p>The Garston wildlife-friendly garden is finally beginning in earnest, and the Abbey Line trails has had a refresh, with the installation of new map lecterns at Abbey Line stations.</p> <p>The partnership has been involved in community rail week and stakeholder engagement events. Additionally, we have been working with small groups to develop rail confidence and are working in partnership to deliver rail safety training to local schools.</p> <p>We're looking forward to continuing our existing projects and adding new ones too - guided by the four pillars of community rail - such as undertaking an assessment of line use, promoting sustainability and community resilience, engaging more with schools and community groups, and station enhancements, particularly Watford Junction.</p> <p>We're especially excited to get stuck in at the Garston Community Garden and plans for Railway 200 celebrations in 2025!</p> <p>More information can be found in our annual report on our website.</p>	
<p>7. Adoption of Financial Reserves Policy And Financial Overview</p>	<p>SW: The partnership's financial reserves policy was formerly adopted. This was based on advice from the Community Rail Network to have 12 months of reserves for operational activities. RH proposed and PB seconded.</p> <p>VM: directed attendees to the annual accounts in the financial section of the annual report. We have funds available to conduct our business and projects for the coming year.</p> <p>There were no questions.</p>	
<p>8. Speaker</p>	<p>Prof Stephen Joseph from the Smart Mobility Unit at the University of Hertfordshire gave a thought-provoking presentation entitled 'A new agenda for sustainable travel'.</p> <p>The presentation in pdf format and recording – is available on the ALCRP website.</p>	
<p>9. AOB</p>	<p>There was no AOB.</p>	
<p>10. Close</p>	<p>SW thanked all those present, and the meeting was closed by the Chair at 8pm.</p>	

