

**Minutes of Marshlink Steering Group meeting
held on 24th April 2008
at Rye Town Hall, 10.10hrs**

Present:	Nigel Whitburn (chairman)	Rural Kent
	Janet Whitman	AirS
	Sam Bryant	Development Officer Marshlink and Uckfield & East Grinstead Line
	Kevin Nye	Southern
	Philip Ayers	MCL
	Kevin Boorman	1066 and Hastings DC
	Robin Symington	Sussex Top Attractions
	Granville Bantick	Rye Town Council
	John Spencer	THAWART
	Dave Rouse	Stagecoach East Kent Buses

1. Welcome and Introductions

Nigel welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

2. Apologies for absence

Jeremy Cooper	Stagecoach
Tim Sparrow	SCRP
Tessa McGilvary	ESCC
Emma Oldham	Rother District Council
Rachael Simpson	Tourism South East
Anne – Marie Batson	Network Rail

3. Minutes of previous meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

John Spencer raised the fact that Winchelsea did in fact have demand for passenger services. A submission had been made to the DfT by THAWART, which stated the official passenger journey figures of 8574 for Three Oaks and 7728 for Winchelsea in the year before the service was decreased.

4. Sussex Community Rail Partnership

4. Philip read out the statement from Tim (attached) and Nigel asked for any comments, he explained that bids had been received from Action in rural Sussex, Action with communities in rural Kent and MCL. The Kent bid would mean combining the Kent and Sussex CRPs and was really meant as a fall back position. The overall aim was of course to reduce costs. Janet added that the Kent offer had not been seen by the Board and that ESCC had offer office space. Janet continued by explaining that Action in rural Sussex overheads are in fact Full Cost Recovery methods used by charities generally. She also added that the

bid included asking AirS trustees to underwrite any deficits, if the income targets was not achieved in the short term.

Nigel finished by saying that the Board had not reached a decision therefore a further meeting will be held shortly.

5. Development Officers Report

Please attached

In addition Sam stated that there is some interest in station adoption at Appledore working in conjunction with Shepway District council. And a possibility of having all the stations along the line adopted, one way of taking this forward might be a station adoption conference.

The filming of the Marshlink line by a Dutch TV Documentary will mean that more attention should be given to the tourism aspects of the line.

Network Rail have plans to undertake some enhancement work along the line, including some doubling and signalling improvements. The timescale and details are yet to be confirmed.

The Kent RUS process is now beginning and we will follow this carefully. The current stage calls for stakeholders to forward any development plans or matters of interest to Network Rail. The document is expected late summer and we will discuss this further at our next meeting.

Action: To Keep Kent RUS on the agenda for next meeting

John Spencer added that he has delivered copies of the lineguide to Greenwich Tourist Information Centre in the past.

A short discussion followed about distribution and it was decided that this most continue on an ad hoc basis.

Kevin Boorman added that he felt the response from Southern regarding the filming had been slow and unprofessional. This was a magnificent opportunity for the line and should not be missed. The programme will be shown on the equivalent of BBC 1 in Holland at prime time. The Dutch are both very 'green' and lovers of the railway.

As short discussion followed and Kevin Nye agreed to chase Head Office

Robin Symington suggested that lineguides be displayed on trains in racks.

Action: Kevin Nye to check with Head Office

Action: Sam and Nigel to investigate displays at Ashford (Steven Fielder, Eurostar)

Dave Rouse has agreed to display them on buses.

Action: Sam and Dave to arrange

6. Presentation of Action Plan Already Circulated

A discussion was held around the presented action plan

Action: Sam to update based on discussion and re circulate.

7. A.O.B.

Kevin Nye: Will try to find contact regards to enhancement works and confirmed that Ham Street is still vacant and ideal for small business

John Spencer: Thanked the group for inviting THAWART to be involved. And called for its continued support in reinstating services to the stations.

Robin Symington: Asked for an update on the Lydd airport proposal to which Nigel stated he knew that no planning permission had been entered.

Granville Bantick: A planning application is due to be presented to Town council on Monday 28th April for development along the railway line. He asked if this would affect duelling of the line. A short discussion followed and Kevin Nye agreed to look into the matter and come back to Granville before Monday night.

Dave Rouse: Asked if stagecoach could proof the next edition of the lineguide.

Sam Bryant: The ACoRP awards are again open and suggestions for entries welcome. Please see attached

Nigel Whitburn: Saturday 17th May Kent CRP have a music train and Sunday 18th a commentary train on the Redhill line.

Maidstone have a going green week in late June which Kent CRP will be attending and will give out lineguides for Uckfield & Marshlink.

Action: Sam to forward to Nigel

September 22nd is 'Car Free Day' and CRP involvement should be encouraged.

Action: Sam to see which towns are involved and get CRP involved (Hastings?)

8. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting will be Thursday 23rd October 2008 – Rye Town Hall - 10.10am