



BA13 COMMUNITY AREA PARTNERSHIP

Report

November 2017

The most recent BA13+ Community Area Partnership meeting took place on 16th November at the Leighton Rec and looked at Public Transport issues in the Westbury area.

This latest in an increasingly popular series of public meetings, which have in the past year also covered issues as diverse as the Environment, the Arts and Business Issues, welcomed as a guest speaker on this occasion Graham Ellis, the Community Rail Officer for the area.

Graham explained that the line through Westbury is one of 19 designated services across the UK which means the Rail Partnership gets a degree of influence in the service provision.

Westbury Station also being an operating depot, Westbury has a far better train service than you might typically expect for a town of this size. Nevertheless there are a number of issues around access to Westbury Station, including an “improved” northern slope which is anything but, and an issue with the level crossing over the high-speed avoiding line. Graham revealed plans to make a one way in and one way out system for road vehicles and extend the car park. On the Trans-Wilts line to Swindon, trains are being extended to two carriage trains in January 2018. On the Berks and Hants line, the afternoon gap in services will be disappearing when a more even stopping service is introduced next year. There will also be an hourly service to Southampton Airport introduced.

Graham was warmly thanked for a particularly interesting presentation.

In her presentation to the meeting, BA13 Partnership Chairman Carole King explained that the Partnership is pressing ahead with the project to get Westbury recognised as a Dementia Friendly Town. There had been some helpful and positive coverage in the White Horse News about this. Shops and businesses would soon be displaying Dementia Friendly Westbury window stickers that the Partnership had arranged for.

The next Partnership meeting, which is on 15th February 2018, will take place at the Laverton commencing at 7pm (6.45 arrival for refreshments) and will have a health theme. The guest speaker is to be Sarah Maclennan, Associate Director of Communications for the NHS, who will address the specific issue of Non-Emergency Patient Transport. The NHS are currently undertaking a public questionnaire about the service, to gather feedback and comments to help the NHS work with Arriva to improve the service. The cut-off date for responses to the questionnaire was 10th November, and now all of the NHS south west commissioners are considering the feedback to help inform and identify where and how changes need to be made. It is a report on that feedback which is to be presented to the Partnership’s next meeting.

We very much look forward to welcoming anyone interested in this subject to the Laverton on 15th February 2018, and meanwhile the compliments of the season to you all.

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