

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**VISIT TO WEST YORKSHIRE RAIL STATIONS BY THE RAIL WORKING GROUP
ON MONDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2009**

PRESENT: Councillor M Bolt (Mirfield Station only)
Councillor D Robinson

In Attendance: A Haley - Northern Rail
J Oxley - Metro
R Chaplin - WYITA

23. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carter and Rhodes.

24. VISIT TO WEST YORKSHIRE RAIL STATIONS

Members of the Working Group visited Sandal & Agbrigg, Mirfield and Sowerby Bridge Rail Stations.

Sandal & Agbrigg Station

It was proposed to extend the existing car park into land owned by Network Rail. This would provide an additional 23 spaces, making a total of 110 spaces, 7 of which would be for disabled person's use.

The station is served by 2 trains per hour to Wakefield and Leeds, one train per hour to Doncaster and one train per hour to Sheffield. Passenger usage is c. 4,000 - 5,000 per week.

The following observations were made:

- The platforms were of wooden construction and had numerous 'patched' repairs.
- The litter bags were full and Mr Haley advised that they were emptied twice a week. However in the past week staff had been giving priority to snow clearing duties.
- Cars not displaying valid badges were parked in the disabled bays. It was suggested that PCSOs could issue parking tickets as is the practice at some other stations.
- The fencing around the station was well maintained.

- The general impression was very good.
- Witnessed possible drug dealing in the car park – British Transport Police were subsequently notified and there has also been an article in the local press about drug dealing at several locations in the Wakefield district including Sandal and Agbrigg Station.

Councillor Robinson interviewed passengers on the platform who advised that they were happy with the station and service provision. They commented that the services had operated well during the recent bad weather.

Mirfield

The entrance to the station car park was by an unadopted cobbled road which was in an adequate state of repair.

The existing car parking facilities provided 34 spaces. It was proposed to provide an additional 37 spaces, 5 of which would be for disabled person's use.

The station provided a good, regular service to Manchester, Leeds, Wakefield, Huddersfield and Bradford and passenger usage was c. 2,000 – 3,000 per week.

The following observations were made:

- Disabled access available to platform 1 but not for platforms 2 & 3. Access to those platforms was via steep steps and it was noted that there was no practical solution to provide disabled access. Mr Haley explained that disabled passengers requiring rail travel from platforms 2 & 3 could contact Northern prior to their journey and they would arrange for transport to an accessible station.
- The steps to platforms 2 & 3 had a covered walkway which was in poor repair. It was suggested that this could be removed as passengers became exposed to the elements once they had climbed the steps before reaching the passenger shelter.
- Shrubbery next to the shelter was overgrown and blocking passengers' views of the track. It was suggested that investigations be made for the garden area to be 'adopted' by a local environment or community group and the shrubs either be cut back or replaced with lower level planting.
- In excess of 50 cars were parked on streets around the station. It was reported that local councillors were being lobbied to put Traffic Regulation Orders around the station. However this was being resisted until adequate car parking was provided at the station.

- Platforms 1 & 2 were untidy with scattered litter.
- Good timetable information provided.

Sowerby Bridge

It was proposed to extend the car park and double the number of spaces provided from 72 to 144, with 9 for use by disabled persons.

The following observations were made:

- A bus shelter and passenger information provided at the front of the station.
- There was a height restriction barrier for vehicles entering the car park. However there was evidence of this being abused by large vehicles as there were tyre tracks on the land at the side of the barrier.
- A private company was renovating a building next to the station which would provide café/restaurant facilities.
- General cleanliness was good.

Councillor Robinson interviewed a passenger who expressed concern regarding the lack of public transport integration in the Calder Valley in general.