

# Marpa

Mid Anglia Rail Passengers' Association

[www.marpa.org.uk](http://www.marpa.org.uk)

## **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MARPA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, BURY ST EDMUNDS ON SATURDAY 18TH APRIL 2015 COMMENCING AT 14.00**

**Present: 8 committee members and 7 other members.**

### **1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies:**

The Chairman welcomed the members and guests. He introduced the speakers - Hazel Courtley, National Horseracing Museum and Alison Plumridge, Smiths Row Art Gallery. Apologies from Harriet Powney, Roger and Mrs Wolfe, R Stripe, B Moss, Ross Taylor.

### **2a Talk by Alison Plumridge, Smiths Row Art Gallery:**

Alison said the aim is to introduce arts audiences to rail and vice versa. There is a 50 page viability study. The timing of this plan is perfect because of the new Franchise coming in Autumn 2016, the community Rail Partnerships and the available property. Bury station master's house - £1 million for renovation of interior, garden space and parking. There will be a platform level gallery, community space, workshops for disabled people and allotment. Open 0730 till 1600 Monday to Friday. Also open at weekend. Later there will be artists' studios at Stowmarket station. Outcome of first stage will be known in July 2015. Abellio will fund 40% of the work then we will need another £250,000 to £500,000 for the rest of the work. There is a two year business plan. The Partnership will be signed this year. The gallery will be free to enter. Railway Heritage will fund 40%. Peter Bazalgette of the Arts Council says they are excited about this project. Worcester have four years experience of a similar project. The housing development overlooking the station master's house will be four storeys. Adjacent disabled parking will be necessary.

### **2b Talk by Hazel Courtley, National Horseracing Museum:**

Hazel said the museum holds 8,000 objects of which only one third can be displayed in the small area available at present. Therefore they are moving to the Palace House site where Charles II stayed when horseracing. Two other organisations will be there, including the Tate Gallery in King's Yard. In Rothschild Yard will be displayed Race Horse Retraining for show jumping and Riding Schools. In the four acre paddock will be live horses. There will be a one acre community space for other activities. We expect 40 to 50,000 visitors per annum. Trainers' House with atrium at side will show history of the town, interactive museum galleries, history and science of race horses and jockeys, vet practice, "Under Starter's Orders," "The Thoroughbred," "Sporting Glory"(trophies,etc). The public will be able to walk through the Courtyard from Rous Road to Sun Lane and look in the shop on the way. We started with four volunteers, now there are 30 but there will be 100 when we need to pack all the objects for the move. The Palace House site is owned by Forest Heath District Council.

The railway station will need to be improved to cater for 350,000 visitors per annum on race days: extra coaches on more frequent trains. From the road it is not easy to find the station. The existing sign is obscured by a tree.

### **2c Suffolk County Council:**

The Chairman announced that Suffolk County Council had submitted a written report because their speaker was unable to attend this meeting.

### **3 Questions and Answers:**

The DfT proposals have been sent to the Franchise bidders. The Ely bottleneck was discussed. New stations, including Soham. Doubling the single tracks.

### **4 Minutes of the last AGM held on 26th April 2014**

These were accepted as a true and accurate record.

### **5 Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

None.

**6 Chairman's Report:**

Circulated and passed by the meeting.

**7 Treasurer's Report:**

At 31st July 2014 we were £20 worse off than the previous year but we are in a better financial position now. Only expenses; £100 for website and £21 subscription to Railfuture. Friends' Meeting House room hire was £30.50. This year will be more (£36.20). Postage has been paid by members. Because the Ipswich to Cambridge line is busier this year we have more members. Members using e-mail saves postage costs. The Treasurer thanked Peter for hosting our committee meetings at his house. This has saved the cost of hiring rooms for this purpose.

**8 Election of Chair:**

Mr John Drake was re-elected Chairman, proposed by Peter Hulbert, seconded by Ben Walsh.

**9 Election of Officers and Committee:**

All re-elected except Keith who is not standing this year. The Treasurer would like a volunteer to take on this position as soon as possible.

**10 Any Other Business:**

Bury station - no signs to Town Centre buses. Bus services not connecting with trains and many villages cut off. At next committee we will set up an audit of the bus stops and signs at Bury station.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 15.47.