



Hello, and welcome to the first Ebbw Valley Railway Community Newsletter! This newsletter will be produced quarterly and provides news updates, helpful information, website links and other sources of information on the progress of the scheme to reintroduce passenger services back to the Ebbw Valley Railway Line.

The scheme involves the re-opening of an existing freight railway line to passenger services with an hourly service planned between Ebbw Vale and Cardiff with stations constructed at Rogerstone, Risca & Pontymister, Crosskeys, Newbridge, Llanhilleth and Ebbw Vale Parkway.

Ebbw Valley Railway in the News!

On the 28th September Crumlin played host to a crowd of local news reporters as Andrew Davies, Welsh Assembly Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks turned up to see the start of main works on the scheme. The Minister along with Assembly Members Irene James and Trish Law were welcomed by Council Leaders from Blaenau-Gwent County Borough Council and Caerphilly County Borough Council. The assembled crowd watched as Olwen the Ballast Cleaner (see right) marked the official start of main works by sifting and cleaning the existing

ballast on the line. The event was covered by regional BBC & ITV news programmes as well as a number of local newspapers.

Just The Beginning...

Over the coming months more works will be taking place until reopening next year. At present double tracking works are taking place so that trains will be able to pass each other. We will keep you posted about all major developments and works on the line, but in the meantime if you would like to read more about the main start of works please see the following article:

<http://www.capitasymonds.co.uk/>

[ournews/article.asp?newsid=1487](http://www.ebbwvalleyrailway.co.uk/news/article.asp?newsid=1487)



Olwen the Ballast Cleaner at the Start of Works

Event: 28th September 2006.

Ebbw Valley Railway - A Look Back at the Line

When services recommence next year it will be the first time passenger trains have run on the line since 1962.



Risca Station Circa 1961/62

The Western Valley and Ebbw branches, which make up the Ebbw Valley Line, lost their passenger services in 1962, but remained open to freight traffic servicing the coal and steel industries in the valley.

However, as industrial activity has declined so has freight traffic on the line.

The freight traffic ceased altogether with the closure of the Corus Steelworks at Ebbw Vale in July 2002 and the final train removing scrap metal from the

works site ran in 2003.

The re-introduction of passenger services on the line next year will generate new employment opportunities and help trigger development, but it's also an important step in restoring this historical transport link through the valley.

Turn over the page now for an update on safety news and information on Level Crossings

For more information about the scheme including a detailed route plan, news and current progress and for more detailed railway safety information please refer to the website at

<http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/ebbvalleyrailway/>

Further copies of this newsletter can also be printed in colour from the website.

Railway Safety News

Safety is a major consideration on the Ebbw Valley Railway Line, it has been a long time since trains have regularly run on the line. Now that main works have started on the line it is important to remember that the line is now **active** and is used frequently by trains and construction vehicles.

What's Happened So Far?

- A series of letters have been sent out to schools in close

proximity to the line offering safety advice and access to free publications.

Arrangements have also been made for school safety visits with Network Rail's Railway Crime Education Manager, which will begin in early 2007.

- Rail safety is also a topic being covered in the current 'Crucial Crew' programme (a child safety education scheme) and in visits

for those schools that attend the 'Safety Zone' project.

- Earlier this year the scheme contractor Amey sent out letters to households adjoining the line to let them know what works had begun and to provide a point of contact in the event of a problem. For those who did not receive this the Amey Helpline is **07000 7245929 (07000 RAILWAY)** if you have a specific issue relating to the ongoing works.



Railway Safety on the Web

There are a number of websites which offer railway safety information, particularly useful are

www.no-messin.com.

No Messin' - a nationwide Network Rail campaign aimed at young people aged 8 -16. The campaign aims to encourage children to engage in alternative activities in their area rather than use the railway as a playground.

<http://www.trakkies.co.uk/>

Useful website with sections for 5-7 year olds and 8-12 year olds, there is safety information throughout the site with safety quizzes in the Play Live sections.

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/981.aspx>

Information about railway safety and the consequences of trespass on the railway in terms of both the law and personal safety.

What Happens Next?

- We will continue to keep local residents and schools up-to-date with what is happening on the line through letters and other appropriate forms of communication. In addition to this each newsletter will also highlight a different safety issue, in this edition it is Level Crossing information.

Level Crossings

You have probably seen the current Network Rail Level Crossing campaign called "Don't Run the Risk" on the television. Level Crossings are an important part of the railway environment but if misused they can be dangerous. Last year, one person died every month at a level crossing in the UK, either through making an error of judgement or through deliberate misuse.

On the Ebbw Valley Railway Line there are 6 level crossings including a highway crossing at Lime Kiln, Risca. As a result its really important to be aware of the

dangers. Every year, over 1,800 pedestrians and motorists are reported to have misused a crossing and tragically some people are injured or killed primarily because they have made an error, deliberately made a violation or have become complacent about using the crossing.

To get more information check out the Network Rail website; <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/2292.aspx>

If you see a pedestrian or motorist misusing a Level Crossing, please call the British Transport Police on **0800 40 50 40** or the Police on **999**.

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