



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 28th March 2010

AGM Signals All Change for the Bramley Line

The Annual General Meeting of the Bramley Line on 27th March witnessed significant changes to the management and structure of the Bramley Line. The meeting also adopted a new constitution which established the “Wisbech & March Bramley Line Heritage Railway Trust” to replace the old Bramley Line group.

Prior to the meeting Chairman Brian Baylis and Treasurer Sue Dockett had indicated they would not be seeking re-election. Rail industry manager Simon Rudge was elected as the new Chairman. The new Treasurer is Derek Orr who, as well as working as a guard for one of the train operating companies, also has considerable experience with the Scottish Railway Preservation Society and is also a volunteer at the Mid Norfolk Railway.

Two new members of the management committee were also elected at the meeting. Roy Miles, who had considerable experience with the Kent and East Sussex Railway before moving to Cambridgeshire, and Ray Fothergill, who has had a lifelong interest in railways. The Officers and management committee members are the Trustees of the charity.

The Trust will be the membership and policy making body of the railway while the company (Wisbech & March Bramley Line Ltd) will be a not for profit trading arm of the Trust. The company will hold the lease to the line and operate the railway on behalf of the Trust. The new structure for the Bramley Line is modelled on the very successful Swanage Railway in Dorset and has been approved by the Heritage Railway Association.

Officers of the Bramley Line met with representatives of the Heritage Railway Association last December, who were impressed with the work being carried out by the Bramley Line and the prospects for it becoming a successful heritage railway enterprise. The upshot of that meeting is that the Bramley Line is now in the process of gaining admission to the Heritage Railway Association.

Trust Chairman, Simon Rudge, paid tribute to his predecessor Brian Baylis, “without Brian taking over as chairman three years ago it is very likely that the Bramley Line Group would have collapsed. With the changes that have taken place over the past year, and at the AGM, we are now in a much stronger position and confident we will succeed in our objective of restoring trains to the Bramley Line. I hope that those who have let their membership lapse, or didn’t believe we could succeed, will now join us in creating a new heritage railway on the Fens.

Treasurer Derek Orr added, “Fundraising is the key objective now to enable us to gain the legal powers to take over the railway from Network Rail. Following on from our successful sponsored walk earlier this month, which raised over £500, we are organising a model railway exhibition in Wisbech on 19th June. Why not come along then and talk to us about how you can help with our exciting project.

Notes for editors

- This press release is available for immediate publication.
- Chairman Simon Rudge can be contacted on 07799 337283

- A key aim of the Bramley Line is to recreate a typical Fenland Branch Line of the 1960s, using first heritage diesels and later steam locos, with the ultimate aim of gaining access to March mainline station and reconnecting Wisbech with the rail network
- The Heritage Railway Association has over 250 corporate members and these include not only heritage and tourist railways and most of the railway museums and steam centres, but also the smaller locomotive and rolling stock preservation groups. Members are required to conform to a Code of Practice in order to maintain high standards.
- The Bramley Line Model Railway Exhibition will be held in St Peters Church Hall on Saturday 19th June 10am – 5pm (£3 adults £2 children). A range of layouts from a number of model railway clubs and individuals in East Anglia will be on show as well as trade stands and the Bramley Line Roadshow. Further Details from website.
- The Bramley Line website www.bramleyline.org.uk gives further details of activities and fundraising events or you can e-mail office@bramleyline.org.uk