

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SOMETHING TO SAY? *Surveyor* welcomes letters from readers. Our address is 32 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SS. Fax: 020 7973 6677. E-mail: editorial.surveyor@hgluk.com We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and brevity.

On-line timetables not always the answer

I was most interested to read the article by Mark Smulian about the problem of getting more people onto public transport ('Read all about it', *Surveyor*, 9 October).

Most of the article was taken up with timetables and websites - where these timetables can be found. I think a great deal can be learned from the London Underground system. I wonder how many people have ever looked at a timetable related to the Underground.

The important factors to bare in mind

about the Tube are:

- That they are fixed routes, which are clearly shown on the famous diagrammatic map;
- Inside every carriage there is a map so that newcomers know exactly where they are and when to get off;
- Nobody goes to an underground station because they have looked at a timetable - they simply go there and expect to wait for a reasonable amount of time for their train.

In light of this, two distinct systems of

timetabling are therefore necessary: one for town/city use with regular, frequent services and another for rural applications where it is necessary to publicise times, both in published timetables and at stops, since it may be quite a long time until buses arrive.

So I am sure there is little hope of getting people to use inner city public transport systems via the Internet or timetables - neither of these get people onto the Underground.

David Marques

CUWare

Regional assemblies: the right way forward?

I write to offer my personal view on proposals for an elected North West Regional Assembly and consequent changes in local government.

I respect the Government's aim to achieve better co-operation within the Northwest region, but I think there are better ways of achieving it than by the creation of an expensive elected regional assembly in which Cheshire would have less than 8% of the members.

There is scope to develop joint working between the major local authorities in the region which could be less costly and more effective. Although the present two-tier system in Cheshire is not perfect, it does work. I do not want to see any changes at present, and regret that current proposals have set authorities that usually work quiet well together at loggerheads.

Should change be enforced, I would wish to see a unitary council for Cheshire, with the

capacity to delegate decision making to local councils. Far more local autonomy is possible under a 'Cheshire umbrella' than by pairing hard-to-match districts.

Under such arrangements, for example, it seems much more logical for somewhere like Chester to regain the Lord Mayoralty and have a council specifically for the city area of Chester.

Councillor David Rowlands

Cheshire County Council

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

● **Mike Williams** has been appointed to head the new Herefordshire Jarvis Services organisation.

An ex-miner in his native Northwest, Williams joined Herefordshire Jarvis Services as project director from Amey Highways.

The Herefordshire project brings together a broad range of operations that have transferred from council control and been brought together as a partnership with a single private organisation. As well highways maintenance, the new Herefordshire Jarvis Services is responsible for street cleansing, parks and grounds maintenance, buildings maintenance, schools catering and road signs. The new organisation is also responsible for a previously council-owned printing plant.

Williams will lead a team of over 512 ex-Herefordshire Council employees.

● **John C Bullas** (pictured), formerly a researcher for the AA Foundation for Road Safety Research and the CSS with Hampshire County Council's Technical Advice Group, has joined the Transportation Group of the University of Southampton studying for a PhD researching the



early life skid resistance of road surfaces and related tyre safety issues.

● Econ Engineering, the North Yorkshire-based highway maintenance equipment supplier, has appointed **Joanne Carver** as a sales executive.

Carver has been with the firm for four years and was previously based in the marketing department before being promoted to this new post. She now has specific responsibility for managing Econ's after-sales business in the North of England, the Midlands and Wales.

In this role she will liaise with local authorities and contractors over servicing, parts and re-furbished vehicle sales.

Please send details of appointments and contracts to **surveyor**, 32 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SS. Fax: 020 7973 6677. E-mail: editorial.surveyor@hgluk.com

COMPANY FOCUS

● Consultant **FaberMaunsell** has launched a new transportation division, bringing together its infrastructure and planning businesses in a single 'client-facing' operation.

The new division employs 700 staff and has a turnover of more than £42M. Plans for growth over the next five years will see the staff numbers swell to 1,000 with a planned turnover of £70M.

The consultant has also joined the POLIS network of cities and regions - an international grouping of local authorities, public transport organisations and research centres which aims

to improve access to transport and information, increase safety on the road network and reduce the environmental impacts of traffic.

● **JMP Consultants** has opened a Brighton office as part of its continued expansion. Neil Wisher, divisional director, and associate Richard Booth will manage the office and it is expected that further senior support will be in place in future.

JMP aims to develop new business in the area through the new office and continue to serve existing clients including Brighton and

Hove City Council.

● **Brett Landscaping** has acquired Lafarge Concrete Products' operation at Barrow-upon-Soar near Loughborough, Leicestershire. Among the products manufactured at the plant are raised safety kerbs to help prevent vehicles from mounting roundabouts and corners, and stippled block paving for public transport access points. The sale of the Barrow business follows a review by Lafarge of its UK business. Other Lafarge building block plants in Kent, Leicestershire and Berkshire remain part of the group.