



**British Section**

**Newsletter**

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## **European Association of Railway Personnel**

**Association Européenne des Cheminots (AISBL)**

**International Association (A.R. 4.2.1985)**

**International Non-governmental Organisation with advisory status to the  
Council of Europe (6.4.1977)**

**International Non-governmental Organisation with consultative status to  
the UN (decision E/ 2002/ of 22.07.2002) and member of the  
United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**

**Registered address: A.E.C (AISBL). - 25 Square de Meeus 1000 Brussels, Belgium**

**AEC EUROPEAN BUREAU –elected at the General Assembly at Sofia (BG), May 2022. (NEW)**

**European President: Dott. Giuseppe Cirillo (I).**

**European Vice-President: Nicolae Dutu (RO).**

**European Secretary: Malgorzata (Margaret) Boczek-Kwaczynska (PL).**

**Asst, Secretary: Xosé Carlos Fernández Diaz (ES)**

**Treasurer: Jaques Matter (F). Asst Treasurer: Luc van Mele (B)**

#### **AEC BRITISH SECTION COMMITTEE**

**European President of Honour: Philip Worsfold, B.Sc., C.Eng., M.I.C.E., F.P.W.I. (GB)**

E-mail: [wors@8bwhi.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:wors@8bwhi.eclipse.co.uk)

The Annual General Meeting for 2022 took place in Boutnemouth on 7<sup>th</sup> April. The existing officers and committee were re-elected, excepting the position of Vice President. As a measure of our respect, our beloved Patrick Rigby was named Vice-president of Honour in perpetuity. We also noted the passing of our past President, Theo Steel.

#### **Honorary President:**

Colin Charman,  
formerly Operations Manager  
Eurostar Engineering Centre.

#### **President:**

Bob Clark,  
E-mail: [euroscottie@gmx.co.uk](mailto:euroscottie@gmx.co.uk)

#### **Vice-president of Honour in Perpetuity.:**

The late Patrick Rigby,

#### **Secretary & Webmaster:**

Jenny Worsfold,  
E-mail: [jenworsfold@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jenworsfold@tiscali.co.uk)

#### **Assistant Secretary:**

Peter Davies,  
E-mail: [peter@24foxglove.co.uk](mailto:peter@24foxglove.co.uk)

#### **Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Recruitment Officer:**

Nigel Hyde,  
E-mail: [nigel.hyde6@btinternet.com](mailto:nigel.hyde6@btinternet.com)

#### **Checker of Accounts:**

Colin Charman,

The British Section Newsletter is produced by a small team headed by Philip Worsfold, who fulfils the non-committee role of Editor and Translator

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**A membership Application Form / GDPR Declaration is attached to the e-mail edition of this Newsletter.**

**The European web page is at: <http://www.A-E-C.net>** (hosted by the German section)

AEC Latvia is at [www.ldzb.lv/aec/lv/](http://www.ldzb.lv/aec/lv/)

The aecitalia website is not recognised as representing the official Italian section of AEC.

Vito Visconti is no longer a member of AEC.

The **French section website** has been **re-established** at:

<http://aec-france.pagesperso-orange.fr/>

The **British Section Website** is available at <http://www.aec-europe.co.uk>

The British Section Facebook page is closed.

The British Section Newsletter is also available on line at the European website and on the British section website.

## EDITORIAL

An awful lot has happened during the past three months and a lot of it was awful. Notwithstanding the murderous activities of the Russian state in Ukraine, the home news has been pretty diabolical too. We have had disclosed the extent of partying at the heart of government in flagrant disregard of its own policies while people were obeying the 'covid' rules and denying their dying loved ones and themselves the comfort that their presence might have given. There have been numerous allegations, largely proving true; of misconduct both of a financial and sexual nature that have brought into disrepute the whole parliamentary system of our nation, for it seems that members from both principle parties in the House of Commons have been found lacking, not to mention the House of Lords. I'm writing this before the May local elections, so will comment again later, once the results are in.

Our Minister for Brexit Opportunity has discovered very few opportunities – most of which he has discarded as they will cost more than their worth. But he has admitted that our day-to-day relationship with Europe is going as badly as some of us knew it would; and has decided to defer the implementation of more rigorous import arrangements, particularly for food – Britain imports 33% of its food – to save the nation over £1 billion at a time when other factors are increasing prices at an alarming rate. Our prime Minister has emphasised yet again that Brexit will do away with EU 'red tape'. But of course without Brexit this spending would not have been necessary anyway; and it will put British exporters at a disadvantage as their exports are already subject to such checks, which add to their costs and make them uncompetitive. The Ports are also up in arms after they have spent millions of pounds on additional facilities which are now not needed – at least for now, until we are burdened with far more destructive British 'red tape'!. Such are the ways of government in our land. But we always seem to muddle through somehow. Let's see if the Government gets a bloody nose from the electorate on 5<sup>th</sup> May...

...So now we know that the British public did show their displeasure at the performance of our government, although they also showed some reluctance to full endorsement of the main opposition party, in part due to a vile and immoral campaign by our most popular but ultra right-wing daily paper to besmirch the character of its leader, perhaps one of the very few British politicians who behaves in a statesmanlike manner. The campaign tells more about the dishonesty of the newspaper than the probity of its victim; but it has led to further Police investigations, the outcome of which is as yet unclear.

Our AGM and social weekend went very well, although the increased mobility problems of some of our members meant that what we did was a bit restricted. Nonetheless our favourite trip on the open topped bus to Swanage for a short visit to the town and, for some, another ride on the Swanage Railway was blessed with glorious weather. It was good news to that several former members had re-joined the British section and also some family members had joined in their own right, bringing our membership back above the 25 required for the section to have representation at the European Administrative Council and voting rights at the European Congress. Our capitation has been paid for 28 members, so there is still a great need to try to recruit more.

Just prior to going to press, I received the results of the elections at the European General Assembly in Sofia. Whilst three members of the previous European Bureau remain – two in reversed roles – there are also new faces, giving the Bureau a truly international character, all the members now being of different nationalities. Their names and positions appear at the head of page 2.

An added and humbling pleasure was the news that I have been accepted as a European President of Honour. This is an honour not bestowed lightly and it makes me proud that the efforts of the British section have been recognised in this way.

Philip Worsfold. May 2022

*(The views expressed are personal and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Association.)*

## **Reminders.**

**Again a reminder that the British section website is up and running at [www.aec-europe.co.uk](http://www.aec-europe.co.uk) It will be a source of up to date information, so please use it regularly. Jenny Worsfold is the webmaster and material for insertion should be sent to her as an e-mail attachment.**

## **Recruitment**

Nigel Hyde has been re-elected as Treasurer and Membership Secretary as well as Recruitment Officer. Any ideas you have should be channelled through him. All enquiries about membership should be addressed to **Nigel Hyde. Please note telephone number and e-mail addresses on page 2.**

## **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 33rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 9<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2022 held at the Elstead Hotel, Bournemouth, commencing at 4 pm**

Members present: Bob Clark, chairman of the meeting, Philip Worsfold, Nigel Hyde, John Batts, John Woods, Jenny Worsfold (secretary)

Apologies for absence: John Roberts, John Wesley, Colin Charman, Peter Davies.

It was agreed that we send good wishes from the meeting to Colin Charman.

### **1. Opening remarks.**

The President, Bob Clark welcomed members to the meeting.

He expressed our regret at the deaths of our members, Theo Steel, Patrick Rigby and John Hayward, and also that of Cyril Bleasdale, an ex-divisional manager, General Manager of Scotrail and reviver of 'Rail News'..

He wished to record AEC's condemnation on humanitarian grounds of the activities of the Russians in Ukraine, in particular today's missile attack on civilians at the railway station in Kramatorsk. We also wish to congratulate the Ukrainian railway and postal authorities for keeping open their respective lines of communication.

### **2. Minutes of the 32nd Annual General meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> October 2021.**

The minutes were approved unanimously.

### **3. Matters Arising.**

There were no matters arising.

### **4. Correspondence.**

There has been some correspondence from Horst Vanselow of the German Section who is not happy about the record of attendees at the last Administrative Council. He has been advised that it was the best that could be done with the information available.

We have received a considerable amount of correspondence, from several sections, following the death of Patrick Rigby, which shows the very high esteem in which he was held.

### **5. President's Report.**

The President had nothing further to report apart from his hope for a few more members in the British Section.

### **6. Reports from Officers.**

(a) Secretary – Jenny has written to those of our members who are sick as suggested at the last AGM. Angela's reply suggested that she was progressing well.

(b) Recruitment Secretary – Nigel regretted the lack of communication with the railway industry but feels that the tide is turning back towards Europe. He noted that the SNP has brought the Scottish railways back into the national fold. He recommended we contact Neville Hodges of the "Old Southernians" to spread some information about AEC. Jenny to email him.

We can declare our membership this year as 29

### **7. Treasurer's Report and Accounts.**

Nigel Hyde submitted the accounts. He is finding it convenient to operate the account through his local Post Office. Our current bank balance is £1152.98 though we have not got the statement for 01/04/22 yet. The accounts were accepted

## **8. Election of Officers.**

Bob Clark was elected as President to serve until 2026.

The Vice President's post was left vacant. We regard Patrick as Vice President of Honour in perpetuity.

The following were elected for a period of one year

Secretary – Jenny Worsfold

Asst. Secretary – Peter Davies

Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Recruitment Secretary – Nigel Hyde

Events Officer – Nigel Hyde

**9. Checker of Accounts** – it was agreed that Colin Charman should continue in this post.

## **10.. Dates and Venues for forthcoming European Days.**

European Days in Sofia, Bulgaria, are expected to go ahead in May. The British Section will not be represented but Bob will send a goodwill message.

In 2023 the Spanish are organising an event in Portugal.

In 2024 it will possibly be in Poland.

The French Section is holding an event in Nice, jointly with FEANDC, in September.

Philip & Jenny hope to attend.

## **11. Proposed date and venue for 2023 Annual General Meeting.**

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 4pm at the Elstead Hotel, Bournemouth. It was agreed that we should book at the Elstead for 2 nights: 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> April.

**12. Reunions and Events Programme.** Monthly reunions to recommence from June at the pub on Marylebone Station, the Sir John Balcombe. Dates chosen are Thursdays June 30<sup>th</sup>, July 28<sup>th</sup>, August 25<sup>th</sup>, October 6<sup>th</sup>, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, all from 12 noon.

Nigel will look into the possibility of a visit to Belgium, or Aachen, for a Christmas market and a visit to the Beer Festival on the North Norfolk Railway.

Bob will look into the possibility of a visit to the Ffestiniog Railway to which we might invite overseas members.

**13, Any Other Business.** There being no other business, the meeting closed at 18.30.

## **THE PRESIDENT'S JOTTINGS.**

To begin:

The President and members of the British Section of the Association Européenne des Cheminots wish to congratulate Philip Worsfold on becoming a President of Honour of the AEC.

Because the section was unable to be represented at the Administrative Council and the General Assembly in Sofia, your President, Bob Clark asked that the following statement might be made on our behalf by the European President, Nicolae Dutu. In English it read:

“Fraternal greetings to all the delegates of the Assembly & participants in Sofia for these European Days. As President of the British Section I would like to wish you every success with the event. We the members of the British Section will be with you all in spirit, keep us in your thoughts as you travel through the Bulgarian countryside. Brexit has dealt a deadly blow to our travel freedom of movement with our fanatically EU hostile government making things harder to achieve. Railway privatisation and fragmentation has always been a problem making travel to and from European Days difficult as terms, conditions, change of reciprocal arrangements add to the layers of incredible bureaucracy just to tickets/coupons make it seem that we are not supposed to travel by rail. Age & health issues have also caused problems for some of the members (most actually) and therefore our physical presence will be missing probably for the first time in many years. We would like to thank the present European President & Bureau for their efforts in keeping the association going during the pandemic.

Mr Dutu, thank you for your forbearance and wise council along with the other members of the bureau in these troubled times. We also wish to thank Mr Proca Constantin for his efforts to finally achieve this long delayed event which hopefully, will lead to the establishment of a Bulgarian Section.

"As I started this statement it was May 8 the anniversary of the end of WW2 - Liberation day for many in Europe and uncertainty for others. I had thought we were all peacefully living in harmony and that war had been eradicated in Europe. The world watched in horror as the peace loving people of Ukraine were terrorised by invading hordes from the east & north. The images emerging are a chilling reminder of what a despot can do. The world stepped in to provide aid to help those fleeing from the invaders. We in the British Section stand solidly with the people of Ukraine. The 9th of May was Europe Day celebrated throughout Europe as a celebration of what the EU has achieved - peace, unity and more. I myself have always stated that I am European and always will be. We are still part of the great European railway family, a part of the European family of citizens who wish to live in peace and harmony with each other.

I remain Yours in European Friendship  
Robert (Bob) Clark.

## **PEOPLE.**

### **†Cyril Bleasdale**

Whilst he was not a member of our association, we feel that the passing of Cyril Bleasdale cannot go without comment.

I met Cyril briefly in 1972 in my British Rail days when he was Divisional Manager at Doncaster— a post in which he did not stay for long as he was destined for greater things. At the time I was an Area Engineer on that Division.

Born in Liverpool in July 1934, Cyril entered the railway service in 1950 as a junior booking clerk at Bootle. He was able to undertake a part-time economics course at Manchester University before moving on to greater things. He progressed rapidly through various regional and district appointments on the London Midland region attending the Railway management courses along the way and making a move first to Freightliner at Kings Cross, and then to Scotland for British Transport advertising. It was there he met his future wife.

With the Senior Management Course successfully behind him, he returned to the L.M. Region as Regional Freight Marketing Manager, before the move to Doncaster. From there he returned to Freightliner as Managing Director. He had time to attend a course at Stanford University in the USA. Prior to the demise of regions, he was appointed briefly as General Manager of the LM region before moving to his final job as Director Scotrail. It was on the way to taking up that appointment that he famously wrote hand written notes for a number of students on his very late running train, explaining their lateness to lectures. He retired in 1994. But that was not the end of his career.

In 1996 he became one of the founding directors of the re-vitalised Rail News, the industry newspaper, when it was sold to the private sector. He remained with Rail News, serving as Managing Director until 2021

### **†Ursula Roth**

Sadly I have also heard from Wolfgang Roth that his wife Ursula passed away on 6<sup>th</sup> May. Jenny and I had always found them a friendly couple and we have spent many a happy hour in their company on numerous European Days events. In between, Wolfgang and I have maintained a lively correspondence which I hope we shall continue. I particularly remember the video they sent after our European Days in York. It was an eye-opener to see the city in which we had lived for several years from the perspective of a visitor from Germany.

Philip Worsfold

## †Josee Willems

Sadly as we go to press I have received the sad news of the death of the former President of the Belgian section and great friend of the British section. I hope to have more information for our next newsletter.

## TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL NEWS

### BATTERY-ELECTRIC MULTIPLE-UNITS ORDERED TO IMPROVE SERVICES AND CUT EMISSIONS

GERMANY: Niederbarnimer Eisenbahn has awarded Siemens Mobility a contract to supply a fleet of 31 battery-electric Mireo Plus B multiple-units for use on Netz Ostbrandenburg services northeast of Berlin.

The order announced on November 15 includes spare parts and 12 years of maintenance, with the manufacturer responsible for the availability of the trains from their introduction in December 2024 through to the end of the Netz Ostbrandenburg operating contract in 2036.

The BEMUs will be able to use 15 kV 16.7 Hz overhead electrification where available, with the lithium-ion batteries charged from the overhead and by regenerative braking and providing a range of more than 90 km on non-electrified tracks.

This is expected to reduce annual diesel consumption by around 4.4 million litres and eliminate local CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Depending on the electricity generating mix, the BEMUs could cut regional emissions by roughly 11 500 tonnes per year and also reduce particulates.

The two-car units will have three doors on each side, with easy boarding from low platforms for passengers with wheelchairs or pushchairs. There will be 128 seats, a family area and 12 spaces for bicycles, wheelchairs and pushchairs. Facilities will include free wi-fi, a real-time passenger information system and around 60 power sockets, as well as USB charging ports and locations for inductive charging. 'With the Mireo Plus B we have a high-performance, highly efficient and innovative train in terms of performance, range and equipment, and one that's especially suitable for the partially electrified regional lines', said NEB Managing Director Detlef Bröcker.

#### Multiple benefits

Following a competitive tender, in June Berlin-Brandenburg transport authority VBB awarded incumbent NEB the next contract to operate Netz Ostbrandenburg regional services.

The contract runs for 12 years from December 2024 and includes a 30% increase in services to 6.7 million train-km/year, as well as the operation of longer trains and the introduction of zero-emission rolling stock to replace current diesel multiple-units.

The initial plan was that 26 battery units would be ordered, along with a further five Pesa Link DMUs for use on route RB26 from Berlin to Müncheberg. However, it was determined that this service could be provided using five extra Mireo BEMUs units alongside the current fleet of 11 Pesa DMUs, eliminating the need to order more diesel trains.

NEB is the second customer for the battery version of Siemens Mobility's Mireo family, with Baden-Württemberg's rolling stock owning body SFBW having ordered 20 for use on for Netz 8 Ortenau services and three for Hermann-Hesse-Bahn services, with entry into service planned for 2023.

The *Land* of Brandenburg's Transport Minister Guido Beermann said 'the use of environmentally friendly propulsion systems in public transport marks a milestone in the technical transition taking place in the rail sector', and the BEMUs would provide 'real added value in terms of climate compatibility and economy' when compared to the current DMUs.

Berlin Senator for the Environment, Transport & Climate Protection Regine Günther said the combination of an increase in passenger services, a reduction in emissions and the specification of the new trains would make regional rail services 'more attractive for daily commuting and a real alternative to private cars'.



## **'QUANTUM LEAP' AS COMMUNICATIONS BASED TRAIN CONTROL (CBTC) GOES LIVE ON KØBENHAVN'S CROSS-CITY S-BANE CORE**

DENMARK: København's S-bane suburban trains have started using CBTC through the cross-city core, following the commissioning of the new signalling over the weekend of January 15-16.

The latest stage in Banedanmark's phased introduction of digital train control covered the dedicated S-bane tracks from Nordhavn in the north through København H to Carlsberg and Sydhavn in the south, replacing analogue signalling dating from the 1970s. The cross-city core is used by all of the capital's S-bane services apart from the orbital ring Line F.

As part of its national Signalling Programme, Banedanmark awarded a €252M contract to Siemens in July 2011 for resignalling the self-contained 170 route-km S-bane network, which is electrified at 1.5 kV DC. Siemens Mobility is supplying Trainguard MT CBTC, Sicas electronic interlockings and point machines, together with a new operations control centre.

A pilot section between Jægersborg and Hillerød went live in January 2016, at which stage the six-phase migration was expected to be completed in 2018.

Describing the changeover as 'a technological quantum leap', Banedanmark's Signalling Programme Director Thilde Restofte Pedersen said it had been 'a huge operation', but the commissioning had been completed successfully. 'Every day, many thousands of people travel by S-bane in and around København, and therefore we are completely in touch with the capital's beating traffic heart when we renew the signalling through the inner city.'

The cross-city core is the penultimate section of the resignalling to be completed. The final phase covering the southern and western routes from Sydhavn to Køge and from Carlsberg to Høje Taastrup and Frederikssund is now scheduled to be commissioned at the end of 2022. Completion of the CBTC rollout is expected to pave the way for a transition to fully-automated train operation when DSB procures its next generation of S-bane train sets.

'We have taken a big step into the decade of the railway', commented Minister of Transport Benny Engelbrecht. 'The new signalling system has been taken into use on more than half of the S-bane network, and this is truly good news for passengers in public transport. We can look forward to even better, more punctual and more timely train operation without unnecessary cancellations due to signal errors. In the coming years, we must take many more steps towards an attractive, well-functioning and green railway in Denmark.'

## **EUROSTAR AND THALYS TO MERGE.**

EUROPE: The European Commission has approved the planned merger of cross-border high speed train operators Thalys and Eurostar. SNCF Voyageurs told *Railway Gazette International* the merger 'should ensure the rebound and growth ambitions of Thalys and Eurostar.'

Announcing its decision on March 29 2022, the Commission said the merger would have a very limited impact on the structure of the market and thus would not raise any competition concerns.

The merger is to be undertaken through French national railway group SNCF's acquisition of Thalys parent company THIF Factory, which is based in Brussels and owned by SNCF (60%) and Belgian national operator SNCB (40%).

Eurostar International Ltd is owned by 55% by SNCF, 5% by SNCB and 40% by the Patina Rail joint venture of Caisse de Depot et Placement du Quebec and Hermes Infrastructure, who bought it from the U.K. government; with SNCF having operational control.

Under plans announced in October 2021, Eurostar and Thalys are to be transferred to a single holding company in which SNCF will have a 55.75% share and its passenger business SNCF Voyageurs will have exclusive management control, with SNCB having a 18.5% stake and Patina Rail 25.75%. The company will be based in Brussels and will use the Eurostar name for all services, with the Thalys brand to be phased out.

Being taken forward under a project branded Green Speed, the merger is intended to create a single high speed operator serving five countries: Belgium, France, the UK, Germany and the Netherlands. Progress was slowed by the coronavirus pandemic, but Eurostar confirmed when announcing its refinancing in August that its stakeholders were still focusing on completing the merger.

In May 2022, the holding company 'Eurostar Group' was formed to progress the merger, with the goal of achieving 39 million passengers per year within the next 10 years.

## **TRENITALIA LAUNCHES FRENCH DOMESTIC HIGH SPEED SERVICES**

6 April 2022

The Italian state-owned operator plans to run three trains each way per day, making one intermediate stop at Lyon Part-Dieu. However, the service has started with just one evening train each way, because of what Trenitalia France CEO Roberto Rinaudo described as 'technical constraints'. The remaining trains are expected to begin running from June 1.

From that date Trenitalia France will offer five trains each way per day between Paris and Lyon, of which two will continue to and from Milano.

Rinaudo insisted that Trenitalia France was providing 'additional' services to complement those run by SNCF Voyageurs, pointing out that the paths had been allocated by SNCF Réseau without the need to remove any TGV Inoui or Ouigo workings.

Marketing & Commercial Director Fabrice Toledano added that Trenitalia was not looking for hard competition with the national operator, but rather to increase the volume of passengers using rail. Trenitalia France was not looking to launch any other open access services for the time being, he said. The current focus is on consolidating the initial trains and improving the quality of service being offered to customers.

All services are operated using a sub-fleet of five ETR 1000 Frecciarossa trainsets built by Bombardier Transportation and Hitachi Rail Italia, offering 462 seats per train.

The five sets have been modified to run in France, being fitted with KVB train protection for use on conventional lines and TVM 300 and TVM 430 for the high speed lines. This has been supplied by Hitachi, along with ETCS Level 2 for use when the interoperable train control system is rolled out on the LGV Paris-Sud-Est.

The Zefiro trainsets are maintained in Italy, but with some cleaning and servicing undertaken in France.

### **Simple pricing, strong demand**

According to Rinaudo the international trains have been extremely successful, carrying 150 000 passengers since the December 18 launch with an average load factor of 87%. Around 75% of all users were making an international trip, he reported, notably Paris – Torino and Lyon – Milano. He added that around 60% of passengers travelling from Paris to Milano had bought their ticket a month before travelling.

Trenitalia France offers four classes on its services: Executive, Business, Standard and Sala Meetings. In order to provide an 'easy' pricing structure, without discount cards, it has adopted a yield management system, with *Serenità* tickets offer a starting price of €23 in Standard class and €29 for Business.

Toledano told *Railway Gazette International* that Executive class was appreciated by many French travellers. However, the Sala Meetings was only offered for shorter journeys, such as Paris – Lyon, Lyon - Torino or Lyon – Milano, but not for the entire Paris – Milano trip.

FS Group Chief International Officer Carlo Palasciano explained that the path allocation process was the same as in Italy, where operators put their bids in to infrastructure manager RFI and the paths are assigned according to demand.

Toledano commented that SNCF and FS had a similar organisational structure with a holding group, train operating company and infrastructure manager, but in France all three businesses carried the SNCF brand, whereas that was not the case in Italy.

## **HOW CAN THE EU HELP THOSE TOUCHED BY ENERGY POVERTY?**

In 2020, around 36 million people in Europe were unable to keep their homes adequately warm. However, the number of EU citizens that can be considered “energy poor” is much higher if all the different aspects around energy poverty are taken into account, such as being unable to cover basic housing costs or having inadequate comfort in the housing or work environments. All this can negatively affect people’s health. The recent surge in energy prices and the impact of the COVID-19 crisis are likely to have worsened the already difficult situation of vulnerable households.

### **What is ‘Energy Poverty’?**

Energy poverty results from a combination of low income, a high share of disposable income spent on energy and from poor energy efficiency, especially in buildings. It covers situations of economic difficulties like the incapacity to pay the energy bills, or insulation problems, such as the lack of access to materials that keep the household warm in winter or fresh in summer.

In most cases, energy poverty results of a combination of diverse factors with serious implications for the health, wellbeing, social inclusion and quality of life of affected citizens. Consequently, tackling energy poverty can significantly improve the lives of vulnerable consumers and benefit EU societies at large.

### **EU Policies to tackle Energy Poverty.**

While EU countries have their own approach to addressing poverty issues, the European Commission has increased the focus on the concept of energy poverty in the past decade. And reducing energy poverty has been given greater prominence in EU energy efficiency, decarbonisation and clean energy transition policies in recent years.

In the 2109 Clean energy for all Europeans package, the EU committed to protecting vulnerable consumers and made energy poverty a policy priority. The package also introduced the instrument of National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs), whereby all EU countries outline 10-year national plans to address the different energy and climate targets. This includes requirements to measure energy poverty and to tackle it wherever it is identified. This includes protecting vulnerable energy customers and proposing suitable measures to mitigate it in different contexts.

The European Green Deal, the EU’s overarching growth plan to reach climate neutrality by 2050, also stresses the need to integrate the goal of mitigating energy poverty and support a just energy transition for all (‘leaving no one behind’). Several EU countries have already integrated targeted measures in their national strategies and are developing their own definitions, measurement and monitoring methods and solutions to tackle energy poverty. In particular, the Renovation Wave strategy, presented in 2020, has tackling energy poverty and worst performing buildings amongst its 3 focus areas for action. The aim of doubling the rate of renovation is taken up in more concrete form in the Commission’s legislative proposals to revise the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and the broader Energy Efficiency Directive.

In October 2021, the European Commission published a toolbox of measures proposing actions that EU countries can take to tackle the rising energy prices and protect consumers and businesses. Some of these include measures to reduce energy costs for all energy end-users and to avoid disconnections from the energy grid, as well as state aids to companies or industries to weather the crisis.

### **Examples of EU support**

As part of the 2018 call for research projects on energy efficiency as part of the Horizon 2020 research framework programme, around €6 million were granted to 3 projects addressing energy poverty - namely STEP (Solutions to Tackle Energy Poverty), EmpowerMed and SocialWat. These projects aim to alleviate energy poverty working with key actors, including utilities, consumer organisations and consumers. They also share best practices at local level to replicate successful schemes and issue policy recommendations.

### **Data Collection and Monitoring.**

Addressing energy poverty has become a priority for public governments and the EU, and requires combined efforts in all echelons of governance – from the European to the local level – to be effective.

Data compiled at national level allows policy-makers to grasp the full dimension of the problem per EU country. It is often the central services that have the overview and access to the necessary tools for that purpose. However, analysis and assessments at regional and local level are equally important. They can provide more insightful perspectives and measures to unveil vulnerabilities and situations affecting specific parts of the population. For this reason, tailored local actions and national policy frameworks need to go hand in hand.

Local governments are putting great efforts into addressing the social, economic and institutional dimensions of energy poverty. This is a complex exercise as it poses a number of structural challenges, such as properly diagnosing the situation on the ground, planning the most effective response measures and implementing these through concrete actions.

Any sound policy-making needs to be based on facts. Measuring and monitoring are essential steps to understanding and assessing energy poverty and to developing efficient evidence-based policies to tackle it. Energy poverty poses multi-dimensional challenges due to its private nature – it mainly affects households – and its complexity, influenced by factors such as geographical location and time periods. For these reasons, experts have so far been divided on the identification of suitable indicators and metrics to measure energy poverty.

#### **The Energy Poverty Advisory Hub.**

The Energy Poverty Advisory Hub (EPAH) is the leading EU initiative to address the matter. It constitutes a collaborative network of stakeholders aiming to eradicate energy poverty and accelerate the just energy transition of European local governments.

Through a bottom-up approach, the EPAH provides assistance for the integration of the energy poverty perspective in urban spatial and energy planning, and contributes to mainstreaming local actions supported by national policy frameworks.

As a continuation of the work previously carried out by the Energy Poverty Observatory, the EPAH has brought its operational and practical expertise into practice through the development of local energy and climate plans to ensure a just energy transition.

Through its collaboration with the Covenant of Mayors, whose signatories have committed to act on energy poverty, the EPAH is actively supporting the Covenant's commitment to ensure affordable, secure and sustainable energy across their municipalities.

The EPAH provides several resources to guide stakeholders in the implementation of concrete actions to tackle energy poverty

- reports, practical step-by-step handbooks and practices and policies toolkit
- the EPAH ATLAS, an online interactive database that allows stakeholders to discover local and international projects and measures addressing energy poverty worldwide
- online courses to increase knowledge and build capacity on energy poverty
- calls for technical assistance to directly assist local governments in their steps to tackle energy poverty

## **EUROPEAN DAYS AND OTHER EVENTS**

**What appears below as proposed is all dependent on the progress made on defeating the Covid-19 virus and re-opening Europe to its citizens and visitors.**

### **Dates of European Events.**

**AEC European Days in Porto, Portugal 2023** is being organised by the Spanish section, replacing the earlier proposal for an event at Toledo, from 21<sup>st</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023. We hope that some of our British section members will be able to participate in this event. The full provisional programme is given below.

**The next year's AEC European Days should be in Lublin, Poland.** This postponed event has to be re-scheduled.

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME FOR AEC EUROPEAN DAYS -  
- In Porto (Portugal) 21/22 - 27 May 2023**

Organized: by the Spanish Section and Portuguese partners of AEC Spain

**Sunday: May 21-**

-08:00-23:00- Arrival of participants to the Administration Committee, and some participants to the European sessions. . Transfer from Sa Carneiro airport and Porto station to the hotel -----

19:00 to 23:00- Dinner at the hotel restaurant.

**Monday: May 22 – Administrative Council meeting and arrival of the rest of the participants.**

07:00 -08:30 -Breakfast at hotel

09:00- 13:00 -Meeting of the AEC Administrative Council in the hotel's conference room.

13:00-15:00 - Lunch at the hotel restaurant

15:30–18:00 -Continue the Council meeting and the rest free time

18:30 – 22:00 Official opening of the AEC European Days in Portugal, with a welcome dinner.

**Tuesday: May 23 PORTO –BRAGA – GUIMARAES - PORTO and VILANOVA DE GAIA**

07:00-08:30 – Hotel breakfast

08h 45 departure by bus

09:30-13:00 – Visit to Braga, Bom Jesus Sanctuary, water funicular, and Guimaraes la. city and castle

13:30 – 15:00 Lunch at a restaurant in the city

16:00- 19:00 - visit to the city of Porto and the wineries of Vilanova de Gaia.

19:30 – 21:30- Dinner at the hotel restaurant

**Wednesday: May 24. - NATIONAL MUSEUM of F.C. ENTROCAMENTO, BATTLE MONASTERY AND NAZARÉ**

07:00-08:30 – Breakfast at the hotel

08. 45 - Departure Bus to Station

09h 00--Travel by train to Entroncamento, and by bus to Battle Monastery and Nazaré.

14:00 lunch in -----

3:30 p.m.--Visit to the Entroncamento National Railway Museum.

18:00 return to Porto

**Thursday: May 25 - BOAT TRIP on the DUERO River from PORTO to REGUA and TRAIN to TÚA**

07:00-08:30 Hotel breakfast

08h 45- departure buses to the pier

09h 00- Boat trip on the Douro River to Régua, lunch on board

2:30 p.m.- Historic train ride from Régua to Túa

8:00 p.m.-Return conventional train to Porto.

**Friday: 26 - PORTO and VILANOVA DE GAIA**

07:00-08:30 Hotel breakfast

08h 45-departure bus visit city

09:00- 12:30 Visit to the Chamber of Commerce, Cathedral, San Bento Station and City Hall, Historic tram ride through the city.

13:30-15:00 Lunch. In a hotel.....

15:00 to 18:00 Free time for shopping and relaxation

6:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Official closing of the conference with music, dance at the Casino de Espiño or Pova de Varzin.

**Saturday 27- DEPARTURE**

07:00-09:00 Hotel breakfast. Departure of the participants. Transfer to the train station or the airport

### **The programme includes:**

- 3 \* hotel accommodation (to be determined).
- Full board that includes drinks for lunch and dinner on designated days
- Transportation by bus with accompanying guide.
- Entrance to museums and monuments.
- Transfer to and from the railway station or the airport.

### **Estimated Costs have yet to be decided.**

Double and single (with supplement) rooms will be available.'

### **British section reservations.**

**British section members are asked to register their interest to Philip Worsfold.**

### **RECENT EVENTS...**

As stated earlier, the Annual General Meeting and social weekend in Bournemouth, based at the Elstead Hotel, proved to be a great success. The meeting was positive and the trip to Swanage on a lovely sunny day was delightful.

### **...AND THINGS TO COME**

#### **Monthly Reunions.**

The great news was that at the AGM, we decided that it was now safe enough to resume our reunions, subject to a continued improvement in the Covid 19 situation.

We decided that we would endeavour to minimise travel on the London Underground by holding these meetings in the pub which forms part of Marylebone station the Sir John Balcombe. – I'd point out that this is the establishment on the station itself and not in the adjacent hotel formerly the headquarters of the British Railways Board!

The dates chosen are **Thursdays June 30<sup>th</sup>, July 28<sup>th</sup>, August 25<sup>th</sup>, October 6<sup>th</sup>, November 3<sup>rd</sup>**, all from 12 noon, for as long as you wish.

#### **Visits..**

Nigel is also looking into the possibility of a visit to Belgium, or Aachen, for a Christmas Market market and a visit to the Beer Festival on the North Norfolk Railway. Bob will look into the possibility of a longer visit to the Ffestiniog Railway to which we might invite overseas members.

### **ASSOCIATION TIES AND BADGES.**

In common with other sections, the British section of the Association has a necktie and a badge. Our particular items are common to both the British and Belgian sections. We have produced the ties and the Belgian section, the badges. We are looking into the possibility of having a unisex T-shirt or sweatshirt. What do you think?

Ties are available, at £4.50 plus postage, and badges are in stock in small numbers, at £1.50 each, including UK inland postage. These items are available from **Philip Worsfold**. Please contact him first by e-mail or phone to check availability (details at the top of page 2.)

### **CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORT (CILT)**

**Railway Study Forum:** The former Railway Study Association has merged with the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) as the Railway Study Forum. Subscription rates have changed and no longer include a subscription to 'Modern Railways'. Each annual session of lectures, is now on line and together with other details and activities can be found on the CILT website. <https://ciltuk.org.uk>

### **YOUNG BUFFERS ASSOCIATION.**

There is no subscription provided that you have an e-mail address; and no obligation to attend their events. If you would like further details, the Secretary is Larry Fullwood, tel. 01485 541599, e-mail [larry.fullwood@virgin.net](mailto:larry.fullwood@virgin.net) .

**REPTA.**

The long standing Railway Employees' and Public Transport Association offers bargain price insurance through offers including competitive insurances through their brokers the Alan Boswell Group; and concessions and discounts at stores and attractions throughout the country. The 'Yearbook' gives full details, including the invaluable guide to staff travel facilities throughout the world. For details contact our Asst Secretary, Peter Davies (see page 2), who is also General Secretary of REPTA; or visit: [www.repta.co.uk](http://www.repta.co.uk)

**FEANDC.**

FEANDC has similar social aims to AEC; and like AEC has sections in a number of European countries, including some which do not have AEC sections. More details and all other information about FEANDC are available from Peter Davies (address etc on Page 2).

**AND FOR THE FUTURE???**

We shall endeavour to continue the production of these newsletters. I use a variety of sources for news of international interest and thank those members who send me information – but I continue with my plea for more from you. I hope I shall be able to keep my promise of more articles. So please, put pen to paper yourselves so that I can build up a library of articles. Please keep in touch and let us have your information, your views and your ideas. The next issue will be published for 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022  
The copy deadline is **1<sup>st</sup> August 2022.**



## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monthly Reunions will recommence this month, at the Sir **John Balcombe.pub on Marylebone station**, London – I'd point out that this is the establishment on the station itself and not in the adjacent hotel formerly the headquarters of the British Railways Board!

The dates for the next few months are **Thursdays**:

**June 30<sup>th</sup>, July 28<sup>th</sup>, August 25<sup>th</sup>, October 6<sup>th</sup>, November 3<sup>rd</sup>**, from 12 noon, for as long as you wish..