

TramForward

Campaigning for Light Rail

PRESS RELEASE FROM *TramForward*

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Trams can provide fast connections between Blackpool and Lytham Station

***Tram Forward* welcomes the petition to Lancashire County Council by the "Trams to Lytham" Group**

TramForward applauds the moves by "Trams to Lytham" which wants to restore rail services from Squires Gate to Lytham Station and has launched an on-line petition to Lancashire County Council (LCC) to extend the recently-upgraded Blackpool tram service.

The group's support of last November's announcement of a £160,000 joint project between LCC and "Sintropher", a European Union project to improve local and regional transport in a number of areas, to investigate extending the tramway will be crucial. Expanding the existing Blackpool tram system as a light rail link to Lytham using the railway infrastructure will be beneficial for residents, businesses and organisations of all types.

The "Sintropher" study had noted that the South Fylde railway line had become mediocre in recent years, and there is recognition that its services must be improved. The EU-sponsored study envisages full or partial conversion of the line for use by Blackpool's tram fleet between Squires Gate and Lytham Station, involving a link between Starr Gate and the rail line."

International and UK tram expert Jim Harkins, Secretary of the All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group, said "I'm pleased that this group has been formed. It is always key in studies such as "Sintropher" that there is a strong functioning local group to campaign for and assist the project, and the APPLRG, *TramForward* and the light rail's industry's trade organisation UKTram will be happy to assist Fylde Council".

TramForward is pleased that Fylde Council and Lancashire County Council are supportive of the project and that Fylde recognises that a multi-million pound investment project such as this will take some time to come to fruition but it could be a catalyst for growth.

Light Rail Transit Association Chairman Andrew Braddock said "I look forward to the results of the study when they are released in early autumn and I'm hopeful that in the not too-distant future St Annes and Lytham will be once again linked to the tram network in Blackpool and this will provide opportunities for economic growth, particularly by improving people's access to job opportunities."

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. *TramForward* is the campaigning arm of the Light Rail Transit Association.
2. The Light Rail Transit Association is the world's leading organisation campaigning for better public transport through light rail, tramway and metro systems in our towns and cities for 75 years. It also supports the revitalisation of suburban and rural transport through the application of light rail.
3. The LRTA acts through its network of local branches, which campaign for better transport in their localities.
4. Membership of the LRTA costs under 14p a day. To join, visit www.lrta.org or write to the Membership Secretary, LRTA, 38 Wolseley Road, Sale, Greater Manchester, M33 7AU. Members of the LRTA receive the monthly magazine *Tramways & Urban Transit* - written and read by experts in the field - and gain other benefits including discounts on videos and books, tours of transport systems and cut-price admission to selected transport sites.
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