

**2 April 2008****Press Release****New direct rail service launches this April**

Wrexham & Shropshire's new direct train service to London will start on Monday 28 April, offering passengers five trains a day in each direction between stations from Wrexham, through Shropshire and on to London Marylebone.

The announcement comes after the company received its safety certificate and formal operating licence from the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR).

Andy Hamilton, Managing Director at Wrexham & Shropshire, said: "We're delighted to announce that we will be running trains from the end of this month and look forward to welcoming passengers on board."

Wrexham & Shropshire's trains are currently being refitted to exacting standards by a specialist firm in Stoke-on-Trent. The refurbished trains will offer passengers a modern, comfortable travelling environment once completed this summer. In the meantime, to allow leisure and business travellers to take advantage of the new service as soon as possible, the company is hiring trains for use from 28 April for the first few months of operation.

Andy Hamilton continues: "We've had tremendous support for our new rail service and have been working non-stop to get ready for the launch. I'm sure people will support our decision to use good quality hire trains until our own ones are ready – especially as it means we can launch the service earlier."

Wrexham & Shropshire will announce details of its range of value-for-money fares – and how and where people can buy tickets – in the next couple of weeks.

**Ends**

**Press enquiries:**

**For further information or photography please contact the Wrexham & Shropshire press office on 020 7025 7522 or [press@wrexhamandshropshire.co.uk](mailto:press@wrexhamandshropshire.co.uk)**

**NOTES FOR EDITORS**

1. For further information on Wrexham & Shropshire, including a route map and a timetable, visit: [www.wrexhamandshropshire.co.uk](http://www.wrexhamandshropshire.co.uk)
2. Wrexham & Shropshire is also known as 'The Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway Company' or 'WSMR'
3. Wrexham & Shropshire will run five trains a day on weekdays, four on Saturdays and three on Sundays. The 100mph trains are currently being refurbished to a high standard and the company will offer passengers a range of value-for-money fares. Work is ongoing to complete a new depot at Wrexham General Station, that will provide overnight accommodation, storage for on-board catering and office space
4. Wrexham & Shropshire is a joint venture between the shareholders of Renaissance Trains Limited and Deutsche Bahn Regio
5. The shareholders of Renaissance Trains Limited are Mike Jones (a management consultant in railways, a Director of Hull Trains and formerly a senior director within British Rail), John Nelson (a director of several rail companies and a former Managing Director of British Rail's Network South East), Peter Wilkinson (Managing Director of the railway consultancy, First Class Partnerships) and Mary Bonar, a leading railway lawyer
6. Deutsche Bahn Regio, a subsidiary of the German Company Deutsche Bahn, recently bought Laing Rail, one of Wrexham & Shropshire's parent companies. In addition to a 50% share in Wrexham & Shropshire, Deutsche Bahn Regio also acquired the acclaimed Chiltern Railways franchise and a 50% share in the new London Overground Concession.