

The *independent* campaign for a better passenger and freight rail network

HS1 – vision 2014

One year ago Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin attended the first Hastings Rail Summit organised by local MP Amber Rudd. Railfuture was there too and she presented him with a framed copy of this painting 'Shock and Ore' commissioned from our local member Mike Turner, a member of the Guild of Railway Artists. The **East Sussex Javelin** was conceived!



Fine art print copies from: www.railfuture.org.uk/shop

Rail Minister Claire Perry attended the second Hastings Rail Summit in January 2015 to re-emphasise the case to be made for the MarshLink upgrade, for St. Pancras-Ashford-Rye-Hastings-Bexhill Javelin services. She was presented with a 12":1ft scale working version! Guests travelled on a test run between Hastings and Eastbourne, calling at Bexhill on return. Full story at www.railfuture.org.uk/article1544-First-Hastings-Javelin

HS1 – vision 2015



The first East Sussex Javelin is born! Friday 30-01-15. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpO8-eg_c70

HS1 – vision 2016

The 20th anniversary of Eurostar services, started at Waterloo International on 14 November 1994, was celebrated at St. Pancras International. Services had been transferred from the South Western to the Midland Main Line terminus seven years earlier. Marking the historic occasion was the arrival into Barlow's renowned train shed of the first of Eurostar's next-generation e320 trains, shown below. Capable of 320 kph [200 mph in England] compares with 300 kph, or 186 mph, for the original 1994 class 373 trains.

Friday 1 May this year will see the next development of the Eurostar network when regular services to/from the south of France commence. Marseille, Avignon and Lyon will be added to Eurostar's list of destinations.

Another Friday, 8 January 2016, will then mark another 20th anniversary – the start of Eurostar services at Ashford International. It's probably less of a cause for a celebration now, since international services have been reduced from 12 a day [seven Paris/five Brussels] prior to the completion of HS1 and the opening of Ebbsfleet International in 2007. Now just five Eurostars use Ashford International daily, with the only one for Brussels reinstated in 2009 after protests.



2015 and 1994 trains

Image courtesy Eurostar

Calls by Railfuture, rail user groups and many other organisations in Kent and East Sussex for additional Eurostar services to use Ashford International continue unabated. Meanwhile Kent County Council with the South East LEP have championed a project dubbed the 'Ashford spurs' to enable the new e320 trains to access the station from and to HS1. DfT confirmed in January a Local Growth Fund grant towards signalling upgrades for compatibility with the new trains in 2016.

In **December 2016** the Eurostar network will expand again, and this time into a new country when direct services to and from **Amsterdam** commence, using new e320s. The twice-a-day city centre-to-city centre service, with a journey time of about four hours via Brussels, Antwerp, Rotterdam, and Schiphol Airport, will challenge airlines with a very attractive alternative.

Investing in rail infrastructure: preparing for CP6 [2019-24]

Network Rail's new Long-Term Planning Process [LTTP], successor to the Route Utilisation Strategies of old, began with the first-phase Market Studies – for us the London and South East Passenger Market Study – published in late-2013. Their website gives full details of all four of the Market Studies and the various Route Studies [together with a Route Study programme] at www.networkrail.co.uk/Long-Term-Planning-Process

A general concern has been the translation of the four strategic goals and nine themes in the L&SE PMS into conditional outputs in the Route Studies, when Network Rail are not incentivised by their funder or regulator to deliver growth outside their own institutional boundaries. Will there be an emerging disconnect between the aspirations of stakeholders and funders and Network Rail's own options for funders?

Consultation drafts of the Route Studies for **Western** and **South East Route: Sussex area** were followed by **Anglia** and **Wessex**, with **East Midlands** the most recent, all for 90-day consultations. Our responses to each of them, drawn from input by branches and rail user groups and overseen by Chris Austin as Chair of our national Infrastructure and Networks Group, can now be found under 'Network Rail' in our main website at www.raifuture.org.uk/Submissions

The two remaining Route Studies of direct interest to our regional branch are **West Midlands and Chilterns** [West Coast Main Line is separate] due in draft for consultation later this year, and **Kent** which is due early next year. All seven should therefore be completed by the time the next key stage in the investment planning process for 2019-24 funding starts in September 2016.

That next key stage is the first formal step in what the Office of Rail Regulation, which oversees the whole process, will refer to as Periodic Review 2018 [the year its work for CP6 concludes with its 'final determination'] known as PR18. In Summer 2016 the ORR will hold a series of stakeholder workshops, before publication for consultation of Network Rail's draft Initial Industry Plan for CP6 in September 2016.

Investment Framework funding

Little known outside the rail industry, another funding mechanism is available in addition to the ORR Periodic Review/Control Period processes. It can be used by anyone for investment in track, stations and depots. In CP4 it amounted to £2.4 billion, when projects ranged from large, Government-promoted enhancements such as the Edinburgh-Glasgow Improvement Project to third-party [usually TOC] schemes such as ticket gates [N.B. not barriers!], station car parks and platform lengthening. The ORR's guidance can be found here: orr.gov.uk/what-and-how-we-regulate/investments

A work in progress is the ORR and Network Rail aligning their guidance on this little-known additional funding source – leading one way to suggest a new title for the joint publications: 'What IF?'

Refranchising: DfT pace eases as TfL concessions spread

As December's *railse* 126 was being published the three short-listed bidders for the **InterCity East Coast** franchise heard in late-November that DfT intended to award the contract to the joint Stagecoach/Virgin bid **Inter City Railways**. Following a standstill period the deal was signed in early-December, disappointing First Group and Keolis/Eurostar. The eight-plus-one-optional year contract started on Sunday 1 March. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-east-coast-mainline-franchise-confirmed> for full details.

Transport for London concessions will extract three routes from the Greater Anglia franchise area with geographic extensions of London rail devolution, long-supported by Railfuture, starting on Sunday 31 May. The new concession for **Crossrail**, to be operated by MTR Corporation, will take over the Metro services to Shenfield, bringing TfL standards to inner east London. New trains are due in service from May 2017.

The extension of LOROL's existing operation to inner West Anglia routes will bring **London Overground** standards to inner north London – and not overlooking Romford-Upminster – R2U? You read it here first! Although LOROL will only run inner West Anglia and R2U until the end of their current concession in November 2016, when a new concession will be awarded, they have set out their and TfL's detailed plans for three years. From Day 0 all stations will be staffed during all service hours every day, with turn-up-and-go ramp assistance for step-free access between trains and platforms. New trains are due in 2018.

Abellio Greater Anglia's current Direct Award runs to the start of a new East Anglia franchise in October 2016. A month earlier than expected and while their franchise public consultation was still running, in mid-February DfT kicked-off the procurement process for the replacement, and presumably long, franchise with publication of a Prior Information Notice [PIN] in the Official Journal of the EU and a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire [PQQ] for return by mid-April. Short-listed bidders will be announced in June, the Invitation To Tender [ITT] then being issued in August for return with bids in December. The franchise will be awarded in June 2016, and start in October. Railfuture's response to the DfT consultation is under 'Department for Transport' at www.raifuture.org.uk/Submissions.

With the new Essex Thameside franchise now running to November 2029, might we see the new, smaller East Anglia franchise running for 13 years and then offer the DfT the opportunity for what it euphemistically terms 'franchise re-mapping'?

The **West Midlands** franchise [aka London Midland] does not expire until April 2016, when a Direct Award is expected until a new and competitively-bid franchise starts in June 2017. There was a recent but short-notice and little-publicised DfT consultation inviting aspirations for the Direct Award franchise period. An OJEU notice to start the refranchising process is expected to be published this November.

Rail User Group Awards 2015

There are **two innovations** this year. One will be an additional award for the **best Social Media** entry. The other is the potential for groups to receive a Railfuture **Vice-Presidential visit** during their travels. It's for the group to decide what use to make of this, for example to attend a meeting, visit a project, introduce them to local stakeholders, do a talk, be photographed, etc etc.



Passengers' satisfaction down

The Autumn 2014 **National Rail Passenger Survey** published in January by Passenger Focus recorded widespread falls when compared with Autumn 2013. Differences from Spring 2014 were sometimes less.

First the national/London and South East comparisons:

Overall satisfaction – national 81%, down 2%;

London & South East 80%, down 2%.

Overall satisfaction with station – national 79%;

up 1%; London & South East 78%, up 1%.

Punctuality/reliability – national 77%, down 3%;

London & South East 75%, down 3%.

Value for money for price of ticket – national 46%;

up 1%; London & South East 41%, no change.

Sufficient room for all to sit/stand – national 64%;

down 2%; London & South East 62%, down 2%.

Dealing with delays – national 38%, down 2%;

London & South East 35%, down 4%.

Next to our L&SE TOCs, with their national [out of 23, franchised and open access] and then L&SE [out of 12, likewise] rankings and scores for overall satisfaction:

Abellio Greater Anglia 18th=/8th= – 80%, no change;

c2c 7th=/3rd – 89%, down 2%;

Chiltern Railways 3rd/2nd – 91%, no change;

First Great Western 17th/7th – 81%, up 1%;

Govia Thameslink Railway 21st=/10th= – 77%, dn 2%;

Heathrow Connect 12th/5th – 85%, down 3%;

Heathrow Express 1st=/1st – 94%, down 1%;

London Midland 15th=/6th – 82%, down 1%;

London Overground 9th=/4th – 88%, no change;

South West Trains 18th=/8th= – 80%, down 2%;

Southeastern 23rd/12th – 74%, down 11%;

Southern 21st=/11th= – 77%, down 1%.

Note that some % figures do not compare precisely with Autumn 2013 data, owing to rounding.

Disappointing as these latest scores are, they reflect the pressures of ever-growing numbers of people choosing to travel by train, the lag in provision of track and train capacity, and rising consumer expectations.

Two new surveys recorded satisfaction, by usefulness of time on the train, with Mobile Phone Reception and Mobile Data Coverage. Phone reception performed better with 49% satisfied/32% dissatisfied, whereas data coverage saw 40% satisfied/42% dissatisfied.

The Value of Community Rail Partnerships, and Volunteering

The **Association of Community Rail Partnerships** [ACoRP] is promoting the recently-published report with the above title, commissioned by the snappily-named National Community Rail Development Implementation Steering Group. Official recognition of the value of the report comes through a Foreword by Peter Wilkinson, Managing Director in the DfT's Rail Executive – Passenger Services: "*CRPs have helped to shine a light on a neglected part of the network*".

Some key findings identified are:

- ~ Passenger use of lines served by CRPs has shown greater percentage growth than the national rail network or regional services – 45% compared with the regional sector's 23% over six years;
- ~ CRPs create more income than they cost to run, such that they add economic, social and environmental value to their lines;
- ~ over 3000 volunteers contribute a quarter-million hours annually with a value of £3.4 million;
- ~ station adoption is an outstanding low-cost/high-benefit measure.

Factors for success and challenges facing CRPs:

- ~ a CRP officer working at least three days a week;
- ~ continuity and certainty of funding;
- ~ CRP engagement with LEPs, and outreach to the 42% of people not using rail;
- ~ growth may be constrained by shortage of rolling stock and infrastructure.



Edenbridge Town – Chamber of Commerce to secure lease on old station building for a community resource? Edenbridge group/Network Rail - courtesy Sussex CRP

Rail development campaigners note this paragraph: "Community rail organisations can be distinguished from pressure groups by their 'hands-on' practical role in improving local rail. CRPs actively work on the ground in partnership to deliver change, whilst pressure groups lobby for others to change things". We have five CRPs in our branch area, listed on our website with links to theirs, and through our county-based divisional structure we have close and mutually-supportive links with them. Not as sharply differentiated as suggested.

See www.acorp.uk.com/values2015.html for the report.

Bridge the gap: connect Sussex!

Network Rail's draft **Route Study for the Sussex area** of their South East Route has been a strong focus of our attention since its publication for consultation last October. In the context of our 'deliverable within a decade' proposition for an initial stage of an additional Brighton/Sussex coast-London main line, it represents a vital opportunity to begin the process of embedding an enhancement project into Network Rail's final Delivery Plan in 2019 for Control Period 6, 2019-24.

Rallying support for the strategic case for investment to create a bigger better Wealden Line is also vital, and to that end we have continued discussions with a range of interested parties including some local prospective Parliamentary candidates, from which six agreed priorities for the Uckfield line have been set out:

- 1 – longer trains for more capacity
- 2 – fill timetable gaps eg earlier Sunday morning services
- 3 – improve journey times and reliability eg electrification, new signalling
- 4 – improve connectivity ie extend Uckfield line through Lewes to Sussex coast
- 5 – increase service frequency ie re-doubling track
- 6 – strategic solution for long-term Brighton main line capacity growth

We also took part in an event at Crowborough station in mid-January on the final day for responses to be submitted to Network Rail's 3-month consultation. See www.railfuture.org.uk/article1539-Wealden-Rail-Rally which includes a link to our response to Network Rail.

With publication of the final Route Study expected sometime this Spring, we specifically proposed an addition to the draft's Appendix 'Operational Planning Work' which identified 'Next Steps'. The task to be added is to evaluate the combined, wider benefits case for a phased Wealden Line Extension (based on the range of possible re-opening schemes including through links with Brighton such as the Lewes horseshoe Loop) including diversionary and additional peak capacity between London and the Sussex coast, local traffic between the Weald/Tunbridge Wells and Brighton and Sussex coast centres, and the wider economic benefits of every-day rail access to Brighton for jobs, education and the visitor economy.

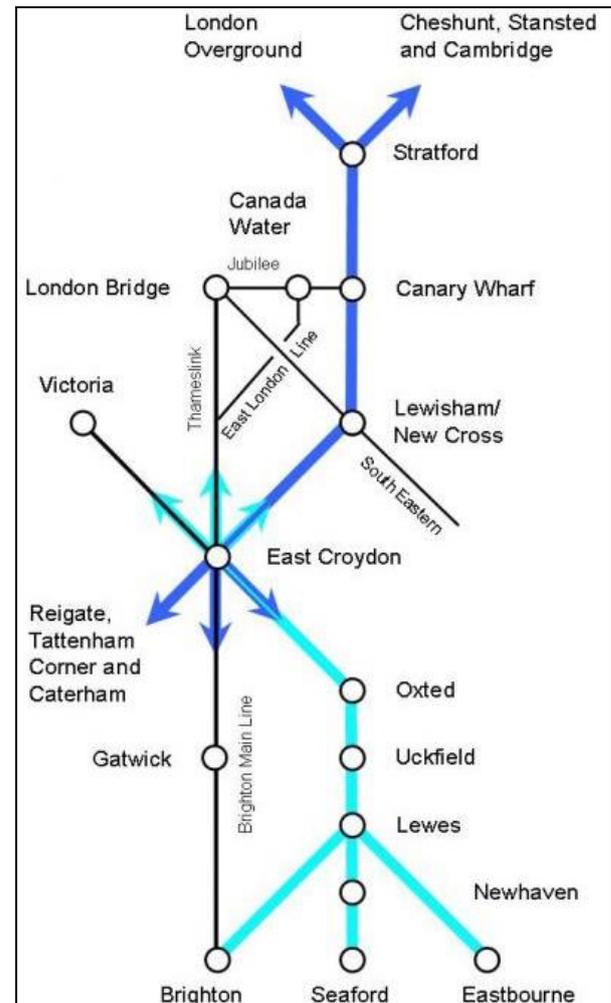
We went on to say that this work needs to be undertaken over the coming year or so, so that a first incremental phase of the Wealden Line Extension can appear as a proposed CP6 Enhancement in next year's Initial Industry Plan [IIP], due out for consultation in September 2016, and later inform the specification for the post-GTR franchise due sometime during CP6.

Implanting a Wealden Line Extension Project into Network Rail's IIP then becomes part of the Office of Rail Regulation's 'Advice to Ministers' in February 2017, leading to the DfT's High Level Output Specification [HLOS] for CP6 in July 2017. While these and subsequent key dates recede into the future, they are the key building-blocks of an established rail infrastructure investment planning process which we must be a part of if 'within a decade' is to become real.

Thameslink 2

Railfuture has never seen re-opening the missing rail link between two already rail-served and modestly-populated East Sussex communities as an end in itself. Adding to network connectivity, capacity and resilience are among the strategic transport ambitions, and with mounting evidence of a growing official appetite for visionary infrastructure we have developed our concept of what an initial Wealden Line Extension should become – to spread sustainable economic prosperity.

The Vision of **Thameslink 2** is to connect expanding economic and population centres in London and the South East with a new electrified double-track rail link, bringing businesses and communities closer together to drive sustained economic growth.



As we said in our response to the Sussex area Route Study, with its 30-year horizon, a significant and increasing proportion of the demand between East Croydon and London Bridge is passengers travelling between East Croydon and Docklands who continue their journey via the Jubilee line – a symptom of the continuing expansion of London's economic centre eastwards. The capacity of this additional route TL-2, whatever its final detailed alignment, will be necessary before, not after, 2043 to achieve a journey experience acceptable to passengers, and to meet the 407% growth prediction using the parallel East London Line with its tightly-constrained Canada Water interchange.

Read more at www.railfuture.org.uk/Thameslink+2

Electrify Uckfield!

Any day now Network Rail's draft 'refresh' of their October 2009 Network RUS for Electrification is to be published for consultation. We shall of course continue to advocate the case for Hurst Green-Uckfield e-power.

But is this a sign of campaign success? Photographic evidence that Network Rail have already decided to do the right thing, and by probably the right method too!



Uckfield northbound platform, soon to be 48m longer

In December's issue of a widely-respected professional rail journal a regular columnist noted, apropos the new Abellio franchise for ScotRail which starts on 1 April, "there is real anger that the Class 170s displaced by these new trains [27 shortened/refurbished HSTs, to link Scotland's seven cities] are destined not to relieve overcrowding anywhere in the north of England but yet again to strengthen services in the south east, to 10 cars on the Uckfield line." The transfer of initially four ScotRail 3-car 170s to Southern follows the transfer of nine 2-car 170s from TransPennine to Chiltern.

The columnist fulminated "It is frankly absurd that Southern, with so many new electric units in the pipeline, is not only having to contemplate maintaining the diesel 'islands' that are the 25-mile Uckfield branch and the Hastings-Ashford line of similar length, but also increasing the number of diesel units required to run them. If the Uckfield line now requires 10-car trains in the peak, surely it must also now justify electrification? Energising Uckfield, plus the Hastings-Ashford and Reading-Redhill lines, would release the entire fleet of Southern Turbostar units plus quite a few 165s for use elsewhere."

"With problems both financial and physical mounting on 25kV schemes elsewhere, few ... believe that work on converting the existing Southern dc system to 25kV overhead will start anytime in the next two decades – if ever." "So what contractor will be sufficiently entrepreneurial to set up a small team to offer the DfT a design and install contract to electrify all three remaining lines on the third rail system within five years?"

Network Rail, DfT, ORR – you know it makes sense!

Add your support NOW to 'Electrify Uckfield!' at www.railfuture.org.uk/article1495-Electrify-Uckfield

Electrify MarshLink!

As reported on our front page, Hastings has now had two Rail Summits in the space of just 10 months! See our on-the-day news coverage of 31 March 2014 here: www.railfuture.org.uk/article1456-High-Speed-Hastings

You can also read our initial coverage of the case for upgrading Marshlink, including electrification, for HS1 services to Bexhill via Rye and Hastings in the centre-fold of our quarterly *raipse* no.124 for June 2014 here: www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East+branch+news Coverage continued in the September issue.

Just 10 months later the second Hastings Rail Summit was held, not only with the Rail Minister but with a real Javelin train! See coverage of 30 January 2015 here: www.railfuture.org.uk/article1544-First-Hastings-Javelin

While Network Rail and DfT Ministers are clearly persuaded of the strong transport case for reducing journey times between Bexhill/Hastings and the capital, a robust socio-economic regeneration case has to reinforce that, in order to convince the purse-string holders, ultimately HM Treasury, of the soundness of the c.£150m infrastructure investment.

A joint exercise by East Sussex CC, Rother DC, and Hastings BC will soon report on the strategic economic case for 'the East Sussex Javelin'. Railfuture's response to a background questionnaire concluded "Good rail access works for everyone – it sells places."

While Network Rail develop options for eg linking HS1 with MarshLink at Ashford, dealing with level crossings, even for electrification, they also work on the draft Kent Route Study to be published for consultation in a year's time. We shall continue to champion the benefits of the upgrade, leaving the technical means of delivering it to the rail industry, while remaining watchful for the interests of the line's smaller stations and communities.



Hastings 2020? Ashford Electrostar with Bexhill Javelin

The next opportunity to learn, and contribute, more on the development of the MarshLink upgrade will be the AGM of Railfuture-affiliated **MarshLink Action Group** [MLAG] on Friday 20 March at 19.15 in Rye Town Hall. Network Rail's Senior Development Manager for the project will present to the meeting and take questions.

Read more at www.railfuture.org.uk/Marshlink

...and [station usage] statistics!

The Office of Rail Regulation publishes annual estimates of station usage, most recently in December for 2013-14: <http://orr.gov.uk/statistics/published-stats/station-usage-estimates> A welcome innovation was an additional 'time series' spreadsheet giving the summary estimates of total entries and exits for each year for 2607 stations across the period from 1997-98 [except 2003-04 when no data was produced]. The stations listed naturally include those closed as well as opened on the national rail network during that period.

The CRP report mentioned earlier on page 3 repeats the widely-held belief that usage is often under-stated because the estimates, based on ticket sales, cannot capture journeys undertaken without one! Whether ticketless travel is intentional or not – through inability to buy one owing to lack of a station vending machine or conductor who can't get through a crowded train while operating doors – the effects are the same. Loss of revenue to the operator and, potentially worse, lack of official appreciation of the value of stations to their local communities, and of the potential revenue stream to underpin investment cases for enhancements, can mask and stunt the potential for growth.

Abbey Flyer Users' Group www.abfly.org.uk want some market research to assess latent demand in their line's catchment area. They are a key part of the Watford - St. Albans Abbey line's CRP www.abbeyline.org.uk which is a frequent winner of Community Rail Awards.

Branch Committee 2014 social

All work and no play? The Mid-Hants Railway aka The Watercress Line played host to last New Year's outing.



Traction out from Alton > return from lunch in Alresford

R.I.P.

Ian Crighton was a member of the former Railway Development Association (London) committee, and a founder member of the Railway Development Society. He and wife Jean were both active members until recently. For many years Ian was Treasurer of the London and Home Counties branch and an active participant in the affairs of the Northern Division. An unassuming man, Ian was extremely popular within the branch and across the Society nationally.

Carl Newton had been a valued member of our Sussex and Coastway Division. A retired archivist, he had done valuable work on our archives including our original predecessor SRUBLUK – the Society for the Reinvigoration of Unremunerative Branch Lines UK.

Branch AGM 2015 – Notice 2 of 2

The next **Annual General Meeting** of the London and South East Branch of Railfuture will be held in **London** on **Saturday 25 April 2015** at 14.00.

As is now customary, an **open morning meeting**, with speaker/s, is also planned for members and visitors. This year's themes will include **electrification**. As we go to print, Network Rail are due to publish their draft 'refresh' of the Network RUS on the subject for consultation within days. Of our four diesel islands, or peninsula in the case of Hurst Green-Uckfield, only north London's GOBLIN has committed funding, MarshLink is proposed as part of the route upgrade for East Sussex Javelin services in CP6, the North Downs Line has some official prominence, and Uckfield still beckons. Meanwhile and elsewhere, the Great Western Main Line project is happening, and the Windermere branch has secured funding. All are topics to be covered in the morning's open session.

This year's **venue** will be the University of London's International Hall, Lansdowne Terrace, Bloomsbury, London, WC1N 1AS. The location is about 150m east from the Piccadilly line's **Russell Square station** [turn right on leaving the station along Bernard Street].

Doors open 10.30 for 11.00–12.30 morning session. Refreshments will be available; voluntary contributions are strongly encouraged, please, to help us defray costs. Lunch is at members' own arrangements this year, hence the generous time for our lunch-break.

In the **elections** for officers and other members of the coming year's branch committee, Electoral Returning Officer Paul Krebs received one nomination for each officer post and three nominations for the five others.

The elected branch committee officers for 2015 are:

Chairman: Keith Dyall – proposed by Norman Bradbury, seconded by Graham Morrison;
Vice-Chairman: Roger Blake – proposed by Roger Goring, seconded by Michael Davies;
Secretary: Graham Morrison – proposed by Keith Dyall, seconded by Norman Bradbury;
Treasurer: Howard Thomas – proposed by Ian McDonald, seconded by Chris Fribbins;
Membership Secretary: Chris Page – proposed by Dick Tyler, seconded by Roger Goring.

The other elected branch committee members are:

- * Norman Bradbury – proposed by Keith Dyall, seconded by Graham Morrison;
- * Chris Fribbins – proposed by Keith Dyall, seconded by Roger Blake;
- * Graham Larkbey – proposed by Ray King, seconded by Maggie King.

Other members are Division Conveners not already elected, namely Ian Killbery for Kent and Nigel Denton for Sussex and Coastway, plus the co-editors of Railwatch and Rail Action Ray King and John Stanford.

By the same closing date as for branch committee nominations, no **Motions** had been received for debate at the AGM on branch organisation, policy or strategy.

Our Campaigns Calendar

We close with a quarterly review of some of our Branch's campaign activities since December's newsletter, and a look-ahead to forthcoming events. Further details always available in our branch website at www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East

The branch Vice-Chair took the 'Highspeed Hastings' campaign message to the county town of Lewes in an evening talk to the Sussex Group of CILT (UK).

We responded to Transport for London's consultation on **extending the Bakerloo line** into south-east London, suggesting it should go no further than the Peckham Rye hub, not Lewisham or Hayes. See under TfL in www.railfuture.org.uk/Submissions

We contributed to Railfuture's national Infrastructure and Networks Group's responses to Network Rail's **draft Route Studies** for the Sussex Area of the South East Route, and for the Western, Wessex, and Anglia Routes. See under Network Rail - Route Studies in www.railfuture.org.uk/Submissions

We contributed to Railfuture's national Passenger Group responses to consultations by c2c and Govia Thameslink Railway on their **proposed December 2015 timetables**. See under Train Operating Companies in www.railfuture.org.uk/Submissions

Having reported in the previous newsletter that we had responded to Transport for London's consultation on extending Gospel Oak-Barking to **Barking Riverside**, we noted January's report on consultation results here: <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/london-overground/gobe>

We responded to Transport for London's consultation on options for a new **Overground station at Old Oak**, to interchange with HS2, National Rail and Crossrail. The consultation report was published in January here: <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/london-overground/old-oak-common>

We have continued our engagement with the Brighton Transport Partnership, Wealden Strategic Partnership, Uckfield Transport Hub Working Group, Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee, Tunbridge Wells Public Transport Forum, the MarshLink CRP Steering Group and Stakeholder AGM, the Brighton-Seaford CRP Steering Group and Stakeholder AGM, and other Sussex and Kent CRP line groups.

We participated in a Govia Thameslink Railway Stakeholder Forum [Northern and Thameslink routes], a GTR briefing on their planned new trains for Moorgate services, a Hertfordshire CC workshop on their revised rail strategy, a Network Rail briefing workshop on the Anglia Route Study, a DfT briefing on the new East Anglia franchise, Southeastern Stakeholder Forums, and an East Sussex CC Rail Strategy review with local RUGs. We have also taken a stall at the annual Lewes Enterprise Expo.

We have sought to maintain close liaison with our neighbouring branches, with East Anglia and Thames Valley receiving visits from some committee members.

Forthcoming dates for your diaries and calendars
Further details always in www.railfuture.org.uk/events

Monday 16 March Close of DfT consultation on new East Anglia franchise, starting October 2016.

Friday 27 March Close of Kent County Council consultation on planned Thanet Parkway station.

Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 March Railfuture stall at London Festival of Railway Modelling, Alexandra Palace, N22 7AY. 09.30-16.30. Volunteers please.

Wednesday 1 April Close of Network Rail consultation on Heathrow Western Access.

Tuesday 7 April Talk in Watford - "Crossrail: moving London forward".

Thursday 9 April Sussex & Coastway Division.

Monday 13 April Talk in Ashford - "The London Bridge station redevelopment".

Tuesday 14 April Talk in West Drayton - "Railfreight: a UK success story".

Friday 17 April Final copy date for your letters and articles to appear in July's **Railwatch** 144. Send them direct to editor@railwatch.org.uk

Saturday 18 April Thames Valley branch AGM, Oxford. Speaker: Adrian Shooter CBE.

Saturday 25 April London & South East Branch AGM, with open morning meeting. International Hall, University of London, near Russell Square. 11.00.

Thursday 30 April Final copy date for **raise** 128, and London & SE branch Local Action in **Railwatch** 144. Send campaign news to rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk

Thursday 30 April Final day of members' discount for Railfuture Summer conference in Newark.

Thursday 7 May Sussex & Coastway Division.

Wednesday 13 May Eastern Division.

Saturday 16 May Railfuture national AGM, Blackpool.

Saturday 23 May Kent Division, Faversham.

Thursday 4 June Sussex & Coastway Division.

Monday 8 June Talk in Ashford - "Southeastern railways update".

Saturday 20 June Summer conference, Newark.

Saturday 11 July Uckfield Festival's 'Big Day'. Support Railfuture stall, Luxford Field, central Uckfield.

Tuesday 1 September Closing date for RUG Awards.

Saturday 7 November Rail User Group Awards presentation at Railfuture Autumn conference, Bristol.

Branch divisions' meetings – open to all branch members, visitors welcome

Eastern [s. Essex and n. & e. London] – meets on the second Wednesday of odd-numbered months, at 18.30 in **Stratford** – next on **13 May**, then on **8 July**. Division Convener is Howard Thomas [opposite]. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Eastern

Herts & Beds – next meeting tba, probably in **St.Albans**. Division Convener is Keith Dyal [opposite]. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Herts+and+Beds

Kent – meets quarterly, usually on third Saturday, in varying Kent venues – next at 14.00 on **23 May** in **Faversham**. Contact joint Division Conveners Chris Fribbins at chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk or at 42 Quickrells Avenue, Cliffe, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7RB, or tel: 01634 566256; and Ian Killbery at ian.killbery@railfuture.org.uk or at 11 Western Road, Deal, Kent, CT14 6RX, or tel: 01304 362569. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Kent

Surrey – meets twice-yearly, next tba in Guildford or Staines. Division Convener is Chris Page [opposite]. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Surrey

Sussex & Coastway – meets monthly [except August] on the first Thursday at 18.00, in varying Sussex venues. Next on **9 April**, then **7 May**, **4 June**, then **16 July**. Contact our Minutes Secretary Rev. Michael Davies at michael.j.davies21@btinternet.com or at 13 Savill Road, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2NY, or phone 01444 482024. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Sussex+and+Coastway

Other Railfuture publications

Our **Annual Review 2014** is recently-published. In between **Railwatch** magazines, published four times a year, there is **Rail Action** now in its third year, while there is also the monthly **Rail User Express** with news from and about Rail User Groups. All can be found for view/download in our main website, and on request the latter two can be emailed direct to your Inbox.

This branch newsletter is free, published quarterly and usually distributed with each edition of the national **railwatch**

The copy deadline for **raile** issue 128, due to be published in June 2015, will be Thursday 30 April 2015

Items for this newsletter and the branch Local Action column in **railwatch** to be sent to rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk



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Websites: www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk
www.railwatch.org.uk

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Four neighbouring branches

See these, and all other branches' websites, including their newsletters, in www.railfuture.org.uk/branches

East Anglia – contact Secretary Paul Hollinghurst – eastanglia@railfuture.org.uk

Board liaison is via Director Jerry Alderson.

East Midlands – contact is Secretary Roger Bacon – eastmidlands@railfuture.org.uk

Board liaison via national Finance Officer David Harby.

Thames Valley – contact is Branch Secretary Andrew McCallum – thamesvalley@railfuture.org.uk

Board liaison is via Director Roger Blake [below].

Wessex – contact is Branch Secretary Charles Burns – wessex@railfuture.org.uk

Board liaison is via Director Chris Fribbins [opposite].

Branch committee meetings

Open for any of our members to attend as observers, they are held at 14.00 on alternate fourth Tuesdays in London. The next will be on **26 May** and **28 July**. Please give advance notice to our Secretary, below.

London and SE Branch officers

Branch Chairman: Keith Dyal, 26 Millway, Mill Hill, London, NW7 3RB.

tel: 020 8959 7147; keith.dyal@railfuture.org.uk

Vice-Chairman: Roger Blake, 70 Dynevor Road, Stoke Newington, London, N16 0DX.

tel: 020 7254 1580; roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk

Secretary: Graham Morrison, 13 Listria Park, Stoke Newington, London, N16 5SW.

tel: 020 7502 1062; graham.morrison@railfuture.org.uk

Treasurer: Howard Thomas, 24 South Primrose Hill, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RG.

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Membership Secretary: Chris Page, 'Clara Vale', Thibet Road, Sandhurst, Berkshire, GU47 9AR.

tel: 01344 778643; chris.page@railfuture.org.uk