



## What do we do?

Railfuture works with all levels of government, train operators and likeminded voluntary bodies to promote the interests of rail users and secure improvements to rail services. We are independent of political parties, trade unions and railway management.

- We monitor the activities of the rail industry.
- We campaign for better and more reliable passenger services. Good connections between services and better integration with buses, ferries and trams.
- We campaign for better facilities on stations and improved security, especially on unstaffed stations and stations that are only staffed during the morning peak.
- We campaign for more freight to go by rail to increase the viability of rail freight services and reduce the environmental damage caused by heavy lorries.
- We lobby politicians throughout Great Britain. During 2010 Railfuture delegations met with the Secretary of State for Transport, Conservative and Liberal Democrat Shadow Ministers and with Welsh Assembly Ministers.
- We respond to consultation papers, particularly those issued by the Department for Transport, the House of Commons Transport Committee and rail industry bodies.
- We have campaigned to point out the benefits rail can play in Regional and Local Plans especially by helping to meet targets for sustainability and carbon emissions.
- Railfuture was a founder member of the European Passengers Federation with a Railfuture director, Trevor Garrod, serving as its first chairman.
- We hold regular meetings with other bodies representing rail interests

such as with Passenger Focus and the Association of Train Operating Companies.

- We campaign for the protection of disused rail routes that could be reopened in the future and against their conversion into busways or roads.
- We support the construction of light rail and tram systems.
- We campaign for more and better cycle storage facilities at stations and carriage of cycles on as many trains as possible.
- We campaign for a rolling programme of rail electrification.
- We campaign for a simpler fares system with all tickets available as singles at half the price of the equivalent return ticket.
- We usually organise two conferences every year. Our 2010 Summer Conference in Taunton looked at rail development. Topics included the Southampton to West Midlands freight upgrade and loading gauge enhancement, freight terminal development, Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership, Severnside Community Rail Partnership. The second is usually a Rail Users' Group Conference with high profile speakers on issues affecting passenger interests. In 2010 our Autumn Conference in Shoreditch, London examined rail re-openings and prospects for the future.
- We publish books and pamphlets targeting where the rail network can be improved and supporting the transfer of freight to rail. Our latest publication is *Britain's Growing Railway Vol. 1* with details of many reopened stations, and in early 2011 we will publish *Vol. 2*, looking forward to future developments.

Reporting to our board of directors we have five specialist committees, International and EU; Policy, Lobbying and Campaigns; Network Development; Passenger (including a cycling sub-committee); Freight, and Finance and Internal Affairs. In addition we have a multi-disciplinary Information, Publishing & Communications Group.

We also have officers who look after the interests of disabled passengers and liaise with heritage railways and our rail user group members.

Each year members who feel they can make a positive contribution to the work of any of these committees are given the opportunity to put themselves forward for committee membership.

## A Brief History

The Railway Development Society (RDS) has its roots in the campaigns against rail closures in the 1950s and 1960s. Campaigners fighting for rail came together to form two pressure groups – the Railway Invigoration Society and the Railway Development Association. These groups saw the need for a stronger pro-rail lobby and on 1 October 1978 merged to form the Railway Development Society which in 2001 chose Railfuture as its campaigning name.

Initially in 1978 the key points of campaigning were:

- More investment in railways, especially in new rolling stock for routes being operated by ageing diesel multiple units (DMUs) or railcars.
- A rolling programme of railway electrification to provide cleaner, faster and more frequent trains, less dependent on one energy source.
- The transfer of freight from road to rail.
- Re-commencement of the Channel Tunnel, making the fullest possible use of rail.

Since 1978 we have seen many successes. New units have now replaced old DMUs, although introduction of these was at a slower rate than we would have liked and the ride quality and internal ambience of some left a lot to be desired. By the early 1990's electrification had reached Norwich, King's Lynn and Edinburgh although rationalisation of trackwork at the same time, especially on the East Coast Main line, means that capacity is now at full stretch. The Channel Tunnel has been built, but we did have to wait until 2007 for the high-speed line from the coast to reach London.

In 1981 we lost the fight against closure of the March – Spalding line, but experience gained was to help us campaign effectively against other closure threats such as Huddersfield – Penistone – Sheffield, Goole – Gilberdyke and the greatest of all, Settle – Carlisle which has in recent years become a vital freight route that no-one would suggest closing now.

Since inception Railfuture has campaigned for the reopening of closed stations and the building of new stations to serve new communities. More than 300 stations have opened or reopened since 1978. Passenger services have been restored to some lines such as Edinburgh – Bathgate, the Vale of Glamorgan line, the Robin Hood Line (Nottingham to Worksop) and Ebbw Vale branch.

We have encouraged the formation of user groups for individual lines or groups of stations and in 1980 Railfuture organised the first ever National Conference of Rail Users' Groups. In the latest Rail Passenger Council Directory of Rail User Groups nearly 200 groups were listed, many of them Railfuture members.

## What's in it for me?

- Join Railfuture and you will receive four issues a year of our national magazine *Railwatch*.
- You will also become a member of one of our 16 local branches which publish local newsletters and organise local meetings.
- We have a rail users' group liaison officer who sends regular news updates to rail users' group members.
- A digest of campaigning news is emailed around 12 times a year to officers, branch contacts, activists and any other member who wishes to be on the distribution list.
- Railfuture has a website at [www.railfuture.org.uk](http://www.railfuture.org.uk) where you can find briefings and news.
- You will receive invitations to Railfuture events where you will have the opportunity to meet rail industry representatives.
- You will be helping to protect our environment. Did you know a twin-track railway can equal the capacity of six motorway lanes while using only a quarter of the space?

Finally, and most importantly, you will become a member of the only national independent voice for rail users and will have the opportunity to join in our campaign for a modern rail network that puts the needs of passenger and freight users first.

Applications for membership should be sent to:

**Railfuture Membership, 6 Carral Close, Lincoln LN5 9BD**  
**Tel: 01522 874513 email: [membership@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:membership@railfuture.org.uk)**

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