

The Railway Development Society Limited

Election of Directors for 2017/18

The Board of Directors is legally liable for the running of the company, The Railway Development Society Ltd, which is the legal name for Railfuture, and must abide by the Companies Act, Data Protection Act, Insurance Act, Health and Safety at Work Act, and many other pieces of legislation. It also has a legal duty to act in the best interests of the members, which primarily means ensuring that Railfuture is financially well-run and is not exposed to unnecessary risk. Every candidate must be committed to performing this role if elected.

Although Railfuture exists to campaign for a bigger and better railway, the responsibility of the Board of Directors is a managerial and strategic one. They manage the society to enable high-quality, modern, professional and effective campaigning work, where relevant to the aims of the society, to be done by Railfuture volunteers, and to make available funds to do so where appropriate and value-for-money. It is not the immediate responsibility of the directors to campaign, although many do so within their branch activities, and it is not necessary for every director to have a deep understanding of the railway.

The board needs a variety of knowledge, understanding and skills amongst the directors that include: company management, project management, finance/accountancy, corporate governance, data protection, legal, human resources, information technology (especially websites and databases), marketing as well as railway matters, both as rail users and professionals working within the rail industry.

In 2017 there are three vacancies for a three-year term and one vacancy for a one-year term. The fourth placed candidate will be elected for one-year.

More details can be found at www.railfuture.org.uk/Elections.

List of current directors (three-year terms with chair appointed from amongst the directors):

Chris Page – Chair

Jerry Alderson – Director of Finance & IT *

Roger Blake – Campaigns Director

Ian Brown – Director of Policy

Chris Hyomes – Communication Director

Allison Cosgrove – Vice Chair

Stewart Palmer – Director of Corporate Governance

Wendy Thorne – Deputy Dir. of Corporate Governance *

Charlene Wallace – Membership Director **

Those marked “*” are seeking re-election. Ian Brown is not seeking re-election. ** Following successful selection by an interview panel Charlene Wallace has been co-opted until the AGM.

Candidate Details and Election Addresses

All candidates were asked to answer questions 1 to 7 (maximum 100 words) and submit an election address of not more than 300 words.

- 1) Length of Membership of the Railway Development Society Ltd (Railfuture)
- 2) Current and Previous Railway Development Society Ltd (Railfuture) Branch Membership and Committee Service
- 3) Current and Previous Railway Development Society Ltd (Railfuture) National Committee Service
- 4) Relevant Qualifications and Work Experience
- 5) Current and Previous Membership of other relevant Organisations with details of positions held
- 6) Participation in other Organisations as Railway Development Society Ltd (Railfuture) Representative
- 7) Nature and Duration of any association with a Rail User Group (whether or not affiliated to Railway Development Society Ltd (Railfuture))
- 8) Election Address

JERRY ALDERSON – Proposed by Peter Wakefield; seconded by Nick Dibben

Personal Details

1. 17 years
2. Committee Member East Anglia Branch since 2002
3. Director since 2005. Vice-Chairman 2006-13. Now Director of Finance & IT. Former Chairman of Networks Group. Former Acting Chairman of West Midlands Branch.
4. Owner Director of small business consultancy company specialising in growing revenue in telecommunications, banking and retail sectors throughout Europe.
5. Founding CAST.IRON executive, attempting to reopen Cambridge to St. Ives railway. Grew membership of 1,150 in 12 months.
6. CBT until 2007.
7. Volunteer on Mid-Norfolk Railway. Member of Fen Line Users and other railway user/campaign groups. Shareholder in Wensleydale Railway amongst others.

Jerry Alderson - Election Address

Active rail campaigning (reopening the Cambridge-St Ives line, sadly now a guided busway) brought me to Railfuture. At national level I've tried to modernise and improve everything we do, largely through my business experience. Being a company director is a serious matter with legal responsibilities – not something to treat lightly – and ideally requires managerial experience.

Railfuture and the Board of Directors have become much more professional in my 12 years as a director. I have encouraged some high-calibre individuals to join the Board, which has evolved from, at times, a talking shop to one where every director has a specific, and essential, responsibility. My role is to manage our finances and IT systems.

I always strive to get value for your money and ensure we can justify how we spend it. Our reserves exceed £200,000 compared to just £50,000 in 2005, when we operated at a loss, but branches now have more money to spend on campaigns than ever before. I used my negotiating skills to reduce our insurance premium in 2016 saving Railfuture £1,300.

We have reversed our membership decline. Our focus on using websites better has helped us retain members and gain new (often younger) ones, as has our increasing use of social media. In 2016 I added Instagram to our presence. I look forward to working with, and supporting, my colleagues to achieve real growth.

Attracting members of working age with modern skills from many backgrounds (more women are needed) must become our priority for long-term survival. Our prominent campaigns must include passenger issues (value-for-money fares, less overcrowding, fast and frequent services, good station and train facilities) as well as reopening and electrification campaigns. Too much railway investment seems to be solely for operational benefit, making the industry's life easier, rather than improving the passenger experience.

TREVOR GARROD – Proposed by Simon Hope; seconded by Mike Taylor

Personal Details

1. Since 1978
2. East Anglia – Branch Secretary till 1986
3. National Executive, then Board till 2001, then 2005-2013; 2015-16. General Secretary 1986-2001. Passenger Group, previously International Group and other specialist committees which no longer exist.
4. In almost continuous full-time paid employment till retiring at 65. Commuted to work by train for a total of 24 years.
5. East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership (Line Group Treasurer)
6. European Passengers Federation. Chairman 2002-15, then President.
7. East Suffolk Travellers' Association, Chairman since 1997. Helped form many other local users' associations and reopening campaigns.

Trevor Garrod - Election Address

How do we gain and retain members?

Railfuture is a voluntary body and so must also be democratic.

That means being open with the membership, seeking advice from experts where appropriate but also basing policy decisions and actions on the actual experience of our members paying to travel by train.

From my experience, whether as a station adopter, activist in successful regional and local campaigns or in informed dialogue with professionals and elected representatives of nearly all parties at county, national and international level,

I am well aware of occasions when confidentiality may be needed. That is one reason why, when meeting such people, I always produce minutes and then seek their approval before going public.

I was acting Treasurer when our resources were much more modest than they are now. Railfuture can afford currently to pay reasonable expenses to members and indeed pay for certain tasks to be done. Even more money will be available for this if the Board does not spend it on disciplinary procedures or trying to change the statutes to stifle possible dissent.

New members may reasonably expect open debate and a contribution to their out-of-pocket expenses.

Electoral returning officer statement: Trevor Garrod was removed from the Board in 2016, by a vote of the Board, for a breach of the Code of Conduct for Directors. The details were set out in the insert sent with Railwatch 149 in October 2016. This can be read at: www.railfuture.org.uk/member/?file=1505.

WENDY THORNE – Proposed by Nigel Bray; Seconded by Bruce Williamson

Personal Details

1. 4 Years
2. None
3. Acted in an advisory capacity during 2013; subsequently elected in 2014 to the Railfuture National Board serving as Deputy Director of Corporate Governance. Also a serving member of the Governance Review Working Group
4. Fellow member of the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) and a Licensed Accountant providing accountancy, bookkeeping and payroll services to small businesses and sole traders. Currently sitting on Disciplinary Committees of a number of professional bodies.
5. Director and Trustee on the Governing Council of AAT. Chaired a number of Boards, panels and working parties with particular focus on disciplinary matters, regulation and compliance and continuing professional development (CPD) for members
6. None
7. Treasurer of Portishead Railway Group for the past six years

Wendy Thorne - Election Address

During my three year tenure on the Board ill-health prevented me from carrying out as much as I had originally hoped to achieve. However, if re-elected, I am willing to continue to work alongside the other Directors in striving for a more professionally run, respected and modern campaigning organisation. The membership can be assured that they are served by a team of dedicated, enthusiastic and committed individuals who it has been a pleasure to work with.

The skills I can continue to offer the Railfuture Board are those I gained from volunteering on the Governing Council of an international organisation; thinking strategically, listening and observing, effective chairing of meetings and questioning decisions where appropriate. I have used my experience in disciplinary matters during the last three years to try and help resolve issues that have arisen and have re-written a Code of Conduct for Board members so that everyone clearly knows what is expected of them in their duties as a company director.

Having spent many years chairing a local branch of my professional body, actively managing events and support for members, I know only too well the challenges of getting members to engage with an organisation they subscribe to and believe that effective communication and clear presentation are vital. If re-elected I would like to initiate a review of the format and content of the Annual General Meeting and Annual Conferences to help connect and grow our membership in conjunction with our membership director.

Railfuture is aptly named and should continue to strive to be at the forefront of campaigning for the future of Britain's railway. I would welcome the opportunity to maintain my involvement in that quest by serving the membership on the Board.

CHARLENE WALLACE – Proposed by Allison Cosgrave; Seconded by Chris Page

Personal Details

1. I am a new member of the Railway Development Society (Railfuture)
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. I have 18 years' experience within the rail industry operating as a senior manager and director. My qualifications include: BA (Hons), Post Graduate Degree in International Marketing, MBA
5. Member of Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport and Institute of Directors
6. N/A
7. I have previously been affiliated to many Community Rail Partnerships when employed by various Train Operating Companies and have been actively involved with Community Rail and Stakeholder Groups during rail franchise bids

Charlene Wallace - Election Address

Railfuture is a successful organisation but its membership is ageing by 11.5 months each year. Unless this is changed Railfuture will cease to exist in a decade. Many new younger members are needed and soon. The Board has recognised the problem. I hope that you will choose me to be part of the solution.

In late 2016 Railfuture advertised in a national newspaper, in Modern Railways and the website for a Membership Director to attract young people, women and ethnic minorities to join because it had no suitable internal candidates. I was one of 10 who applied and was among four shortlisted to be interviewed by Adrian Shooter, Stewart Palmer and Allison Cosgrove. I thank them for selecting me.

Railway is in my blood, my father was a railwayman and as career railway woman in my forties I have worked in senior positions with many of the Train Operating Companies in the UK and was appointed as non-executive director for Edinburgh Trams and Lothian Buses in 2015, so fully understand the importance of a good integrated public transport system. I also volunteer as member of the Children's Panel Scotland and have recently been appointed as an advisor to the Board of Tomorrows People a UK charity who provide support for young people to make a transition into the work place.

As more than an occasional rail user, I believe by joining Railfuture I can really help make a difference, I have knowledge and experience of how the rail industry works with the passion, drive and motivation to help make it better for everyone. I have lots of enthusiasm, an outgoing personality and an ability to persuade people. I intend to work hard to raise Railfuture's profile and recruit many new members.

WILLIAM WHITING – Proposed by Stewart Palmer; Seconded by Allison Cosgrove

Personal Details

1. 14 years
2. Member of West Midlands Branch since 2011 and Chair from 2014 to present time.
3. Secretary to Policy Directorate from 2013 to present time. Currently on Constitution Working Group appointed by Railfuture Board in 2015. Have attended Passenger Group as London Midland TOC Liaison representative
4. HND Public Administration – Bournemouth University (1978). Administration Assistant – Brent London Borough-Planning Department 1979-1986. Senior Legal Assistant – Sandwell MBC 1986-2012 work included compulsory purchase, highway law (rights of way road traffic regulation orders) housing, Council constitution, freedom of information requests. Also Lawyers in Schools programme delivered in Secondary School which I coordinated. Primary School Governor for two years (2000-2002) and Secondary School governor since 2002 holding the position of Chair of School Improvement Committee, chairing permanent pupil exclusion panels and assisting at interviews of senior posts including recent post of head teacher.
5. None
6. London Midland TOC representative, have attended LM Stakeholder conferences twice a year.
7. Joined Stourbridge Line User Group in May 2015 and owing to illness of current Chair have been appointed Acting Chair of Group until further notice

William Whiting - Election Address

During the 14 years I have been a member of Railfuture I have seen our membership decline and a failure to attract a younger and more diverse membership. An increasing number of younger people do not own a car including my son and daughter both in their early twenties. So one of my priorities is to find new ways of attracting people to join us.

Secondly I have experience of being on a board of secondary school Governors at a local school in Halesowen. I am therefore well aware of the need for collective responsibility and that decisions taken are in the best interests of the organisation.

I also have 26 years' experience of working in a large legal services department of a Metropolitan Borough Council in the West Midlands. An example of my work was to make and submit a compulsory purchase order for the removal of a level crossing at Tipton station by construction of an underpass. I co-ordinated a number of other regeneration projects in the borough.

Since becoming Chair of the West Midlands Branch I consider its profile has been raised with stakeholders in the region including London Midland, Virgin Trains and Transport for the West Midlands. Furthermore I have organised two conferences in Birmingham which have been successful and the one held in November 2016 attracted over 130 delegates. I wish to develop links with the University of Birmingham and Aston University in 2017.

I have taken an active role in the working group set up by the Board to examine governance including a code of practice and a members' handbook. This work is ongoing.

Finally I want to make Railfuture relevant to passengers and this means Branches raising their profile by taking a lead in organising or participating in events locally.