

# *raillfuture south-east*

newsletter of the London & South East Branch of *raillfuture* - no.108 July '10

campaigning by the Railway Development Society Limited in Kent, Surrey, Sussex, south Herts, south Essex, Bedfordshire, and Greater London

Welcome to a re-branded newsletter for our regional branch. The format, even the name, is 'experimental'! We kick off with feedback from the Branch AGM on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April.

The keynote speaker was Steve Leyland from London Overground Rail Operations Ltd who gave a well-illustrated presentation about the extensions to London Underground's East London line, at that time soon to re-open as the new [or actually re-born] East London Railway. Due to open its full service on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May between Dalston Junction and New Cross, Crystal Palace and West Croydon, a reduced-frequency 'preview' weekdays-only service between Dalston Junction and New Cross-New Cross Gate began on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April.

The formal AGM saw all four Branch officers returned unopposed - Keith Dyall as Chairman, Roger Blake as Vice-Chairman, Ian McDonald as Honorary Secretary, and Trevor Jones as Honorary Treasurer. The six other Committee places are currently filled by five also returned unopposed from the previous year - David Berman, Norman Bradbury, Graham Morrison, Martin Parker, and Peter Woodrow - Laurence Fryer having stood down.

One of the main business discussions was about amendments to Branch Standing Orders, first adopted at last year's AGM, proposed by the Branch Committee. The AGM's decisions were to adopt the amendments except for those proposed for S.O.10, which refers to our Divisions, and after further consultations within the Branch to hold an Extraordinary General Meeting on that one matter in September. **Notice is hereby given** that the Branch EGM will be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2010, at the Calthorpe Arms on Gray's Inn Road, London WC1 - business will start after lunch, at 14.00; we plan to have a speaker on a topical regional subject, such as from the Wealden Line Campaign, from 11.30-13.00 [the premises open at 11.00].

**A Branch members' meeting** was held one week later, in Guildford. On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April we heard about the local campaign to re-open the northern part of the former Guildford-Horsham line, as far south as Cranleigh. Guildford and Waveney Friends of the Earth, through Chris Meeks their transport campaigner and Kathy Smyth, are supporting the local community at Cranleigh and co-sponsoring an

on-line petition with the Cranleigh Chamber of Commerce - you can see it at <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/raillink4cranleigh/> Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June marked the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the closure in 1965. In the same month as the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary the Association of Train Operating Companies [ATOC] published their report 'Connecting Communities' in which re-connecting Cranleigh with Guildford by rail stood out as one scoring a positive benefit-cost ratio. For a Society with a long and successful history of campaigning for line and station re-openings, this is one of very few within our Branch area. Have you bought your copy of 'Britain's Growing Railway' yet? Published in March, it's Raillfuture's A-Z guide to half a century of re-opening railway lines and stations.

**Branch Divisions' members' meetings** - we have three sub-regional Divisions, whose meetings are open to all Branch members.

**Coastway** - usually meet monthly in Lewes on the first Thursday at 18.00 - the next one will be 15<sup>th</sup> July in the Lewes Arms, then on 9<sup>th</sup> September and probably on 7<sup>th</sup> October. Contact Dick Tyler at [tyler@bexhill27.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:tyler@bexhill27.fsnet.co.uk) or 27 Windsor Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN39 3PB or phone 01424 211500.

**Eastern** - usually meet bi-monthly in Stratford on the second Wednesday at 18.30 - the next one will be on 14<sup>th</sup> July, then 8<sup>th</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> November. Contact Howard Thomas at [hft30stogs938@talktalk.net](mailto:hft30stogs938@talktalk.net) or 24 South Primrose Hill, Chelmsford, CM1 2RG or phone 01245 496439, before 21.00.

**Kent** - usually meet quarterly on a Saturday afternoon in a different venue around Kent - the next one will be at 14.00 on 21<sup>st</sup> August in Broadstairs, in the Olde Crown, 23 High Street, which is down the hill from the station. Divisional Organiser is Peter Collingborn at 82 Burnham Walk, Parkwood, Rainham, Kent, ME8 8RX or phone 01634 364744; email contact is John Pitcher at [john@ramblingrumbler.plus.com](mailto:john@ramblingrumbler.plus.com)

**National events** – the AGM was held in Wrexham this year; Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2011 it might well be a venue within our Branch area!

The next national conference will be in Taunton on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July, under the theme 'Rail Development'. Speakers will address topics including the Southampton-West Midlands freight upgrade and loading gauge enhancement, freight terminal development, rail-freight campaigning, major projects on the Great Western, and the Devon & Cornwall and Severnside Community Rail Partnerships. It is not too late to book – send a cheque for £20, payable to Railfuture, to Railfuture, 24 Chedworth Place, Tattingstone, Suffolk, IP9 2ND – the Albemarle Centre is only a 5-minute walk from the station.

As you will see from the flyer enclosed with the July *railwatch*, on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November it's the turn of London & South East Branch to host the annual national Rail Re-Openings conference, under the theme 'Britain's Growing Railway'. The venue will be Hackney's Shoreditch Town Hall, midway between the new Shoreditch High Street and Hoxton stations on the re-opened and extended East London Railway. Our new Vice-President Chris Austin has agreed to chair the morning session.

The Association of Community Rail Partnerships [ACoRP], often perhaps more associated with northern England, this year holds its annual Gala Dinner at which it makes its Community Rail Awards at Westcliff-on-Sea, Southend, Essex on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September. ACoRP members in our Branch area include:

Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership  
Arun Valley Rail Partnership  
Kent & Medway Rural Transport Partnership  
Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership  
Sussex Community Rail Partnership  
SwaleRail Community Partnership  
and not forgetting the Friends of Homerton Station in Hackney who boast London's first wildflower meadow - on the station embankments!

To find out more visit the ACoRP website at <http://www.acorp.uk.com/> or write to them at Rail & River Centre, Canal Side, Civic Hall, 15a New Street, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, HD7 5AB and explore how to work with the Community Rail Partnership nearest you.

Now back to Branch AGM business and our **Chairman's Annual Report for 2009** tabled then, and brought here at no extra charge to the whole Branch membership.

2009 has been a year of consolidation and continuity for the unchanged Branch Committee, and a lot of hard work

not only for the Committee but the Branch membership at large as well, especially in our three sub-regional Divisions. Last year's Branch AGM brought in updated rules [Standing Orders] and these have on the whole worked reasonably well although they are yet to be properly tested in a Branch Committee election. The Committee have felt it necessary to ask this year's AGM to approve amendments in order to clarify last year's adopted rules. A significant change over the year is that Branch officers and some other Committee members have attended all of the Divisional sub-committee meetings, seeking to improve intra-Branch liaison. In previous years the Divisions have valiantly beavered away but too often devoid of the support of the rest of the organisation. We have started the first steps to correct this but there is still some way to go and we continue to listen and learn. Indeed we are asked questions that we are not yet able to give a clear answer to although we have thoughts on the way to go.

It is essential that Railfuture talks with a unified voice, which our Branch has been very keen on. We started some years ago with our response to Network Rail's East Coast Main Line RUS [Route Utilisation Strategy] where although several interested Branches had put in their own submissions they had all been tied up so that there were no contradictions and they were all compatible. This year we have progressed and for the East Midlands RUS there was one submission put in on behalf of all three affected Branches, and very successful it was to. Before that the Branch representatives had met Network Rail, and while we thought that we were meeting for a presentation we instead met a senior line manager who showed interest in our views and gave us 2½ hrs of her time. We also responded to the Sussex RUS, the Kent RUS, the Great Western RUS, and prepared for the Greater Anglia and Essex Thameside franchise consultations. Southern's original East Coastway timetable consultation proposals have since been abandoned, opening up fresh opportunities for more joint work on next steps involving our local Division. The Mayor of London's transport strategy also received our input.

Each of these consultations poses different types of question and seeks specific responses to each, and the membership generally has not always been very good at this either as individuals or as Branches or Divisions. We as a regional Branch have to put our hands up at this although we are improving. At a recent Kent Division meeting the Chairman of our Eastern Division, and Chair of the national Passenger Committee, Howard Thomas said that giving answers however brilliant to an un-asked question still scored no marks!

We responded to Network Rail's electrification proposals, to the DfT ticketing consultation and to the proposals for light rail conversion of the Watford Junction to St Albans Abbey line. We have taken up with TfL matters regarding changes in the Underground map, and with perceived problems and improvements to Oyster. We have also taken

up some of these latter with the Association of Train Operating Companies [ATOC].

We have attended stakeholders meetings with London Overground, First Capital Connect, Stagecoach, Airtrack and also with the British Transport Police (North Thames Division). We also attended the annual meeting of the Thameslink Consortium, at which we expressed our concerns about 12 car fixed formation trains. We again attended the annual Passenger Focus conference. We have attended 3 meetings in connection with the West Coast Main Line RUS and we also attended a meeting about the forthcoming London and South East RUS which it is intended should have a 30 year perspective. This will involve us in consulting all our Divisions, and our four neighbouring Branches as well. We are in for a busy year.

We held members' meetings in the Divisions, such as in May at Bricket Wood for a potential new Northern Division, with further developments awaited, and with Coastway at Lewes in October.

On the national scene Branch members have represented the Society at meetings with the opposition parties and have been included in the delegation to meet the Transport Minister. Within Railfuture our contributions to the national organisation are substantial, as perhaps they should be with almost 25% of its membership. In 2009 we had our Vice-Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer on the national Board; your Chairman, another Branch Committee member and another Branch member [the Railwatch Editor] on the Finance and Internal Affairs Committee; our Hon. Secretary, Eastern Division Chairman and a Branch member in Eastern Division are on the International and EU Committee, with our Hon. Treasurer and another Branch member in Kent Division as corresponding members; our Hon. Secretary chairs the Network Development Committee; the Passenger Committee is chaired by our Eastern Division chairman, with a Branch Committee member, and our Hon. Treasurer as a corresponding member; the Policy Lobbying & Campaigns Committee is endowed with no less than seven Branch members - a Branch Committee member as its secretary, together with your Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Eastern Division Chairman plus two other Branch members namely the editors of Railwatch and Railondon plus a corresponding member from Kent Division; the small Railwatch editorial board includes six Branch members - its two co-editors, the Railondon editor, two Branch Committee members [one of whom is its secretary], and an Eastern Division member. We also have a Branch member on the Freight Service & Development Committee. The only national Committee in which we are not active is the Publicity team. We are affiliated, with Thames Valley Branch, to SEFS (South East Forum for Sustainability) and our nominated Branch representative is our Hon. Secretary.

I would like to thank all members of the Branch Committee, and those active at Divisional level, for all the hard work they put in bearing in mind that we are all

volunteers and most of us have other interests and activities in which we take part. None of the work of the Branch could take place without all of this voluntary work for which we should all be grateful. Whilst it is not my normal practice to single out individuals I would like to thank Laurence Fryer for all that he has done for the Branch during his years of office as a Committee member and acting as our Branch membership secretary, recognising that pressure of work has caused him to stand down and that the website for members will be a tribute to his work for us.

## And on to the **Divisions' Annual Reports for 2009**

### **Coastway**

The main feature of our work since our report a year ago at this meeting has been our involvement in the consultation processes for Network Rail's Sussex Route Utilisation Study and Southern's December 2010 timetable change.

We made our deposition for the Sussex RUS last summer and their full strategy document was published in January 2010. There isn't much in it for Coastway except:-

A] An acknowledgement of the need to make provision for extra trains and speed up the whole route between Keymer Junction and Ashford:-

1] By resignalling between Lewes and Polegate and in the Bexhill area, to allow shorter headways

2] Track improvement work throughout to increase line-speeds through permanent speed restrictions. (Total savings 15mins). The 40mph speed restriction at Beddingham Crossing, under the new A27 bridge, was lifted last month [March 2010].

3] But these will only be financed by NRDF (Network Rail Discretionary Fund) which could easily fail, by their own admission, at the last hurdle! (para 10.5.2.3)

B] A business case could not be proven for speeding-up of services by the provision of a new Willingdon Chord to avoid time consuming reversal at Eastbourne.

C] Recommendation for train lengthening on West Coastway to relieve overcrowding, particularly between Shoreham and Brighton.

D] Introduction of a fast West Coastway service to Southampton was not recommended on the grounds that current demand does not justify it. (They don't seem to allow for suppressed demand!)

E] Removing splitting/joining at Haywards Heath to improve journey times for London to East & West Coastway was deemed operationally unviable, but may be possible in the Thameslink Programme KO2 timetable. If the Thameslink services shown for both Eastbourne and Littlehampton go ahead the fixed formation trains would not be able to split anyway.

Southern went to consultation on their December 2010 proposed timetable for East Coastway only, as part of their undertaking in retaining the South Central franchise in June 2009.

They recently announced the result after receiving 164 responses. To their credit they obviously listened, because they found the majority disagreed or had strong reservations (including Railfuture), on the proposals, and they were abandoned.

This leaves a quandary because all that has come out of it is an undertaking by Southern to add some stops for Winchelsea and Three Oaks to the Brighton-Ashford service.

We do not know for instance if we will be getting 75mph Class 313 EMUs on a partly 90mph railway, or will lose Class 171 DMUs to strengthen the Uckfield service as recommended in the Sussex RUS!

I have circulated a document with a possible solution to this, and have further copies with me, and would be seeking this meeting's approval to have this adopted by the Branch and taken forward.

As Chairman of Coastway Division I also attended a meeting convened by East Sussex County Council on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2009 to discuss the Sussex RUS. This was notable, above all, in an apparent about-turn by ESCC in their attitude towards rail. (Up until now they have seemed very pro-road). This amazingly enough includes the Lewes-Uckfield reinstatement which we all felt they were mainly responsible for sabotaging at the last inquiry.

On a sadder note we have to report the death of one of our regular members, Peris Coventry, on February 18<sup>th</sup> this year. He was in his 80<sup>th</sup> year, but you wouldn't have known it from his always considered contributions and that he motorcycled to our meetings from his country home, unable to use the train because of the cutting of the Lewes-Uckfield line.

## Eastern

During 2009, the Eastern Division met four times to discuss a range of issues. It continued to look at developments surrounding the Olympics, London Overground (LO), and Docklands Light Railway (DLR). It also kept a watching brief on issues such as: reliability problems on National Express East Anglia (NEXEA) lines, especially on the Great Eastern Main Line; NEXEA's new fare restrictions, and other local issues, including the Chingford Line, the Lea Valley Line, Hall Farm Curve and the possible reinstatement of Lea Bridge Station.

Internally, the Division has been looking at ways of reinvigorating itself, and attracting new and active membership.

The Division kept a watching brief on developments surrounding the Olympics. It continues to be concerned that the volume of passengers predicted for the event may have been underestimated, notwithstanding the current economic recession. The planned relocation of LO Richmond/Clapham Junction services to new platforms 1 and 2 in Stratford Station has now taken place, and the proposals for reconfiguring the track layout between Dalston and Camden Road are now in hand. These LO services are now in the hands of class 378 EMUs. These trains give a very good ride and performance, and their ability to handle large numbers of people is generally appreciated.

In its 2008 Report, the Division felt that the relocation of LO services at Stratford could lead to serious overcrowding in the central subway there. As things have turned out, the Division's concerns were justified during 2009, and in an incident since the year end involving the suspension of LUL Central Line services at the height of the evening peak. The Division is keeping a watching brief on crowd management at Stratford station, and will include this on the agenda for the next meeting with NXEA.

It also reported its concern about the banning of Day Returns and Travelcards from out-bound evening peak trains leaving Liverpool Street, Stratford and Tottenham Hale between 16:29 and 18:34 for passengers going beyond the GLA boundary. This move triggered quite a lot of negative correspondence in the local press in Essex. The Division notes that, with effect from the summer holidays of 2009, this ban has been regularly suspended during Essex school holidays ever since. This raises the question of why NXEA have this ban in the first place!

Reliability was less of a problem for NXEA in 2009 than it had been in 2008. However, there has been an increase of incidents related to signalling and the overhead line equipment (OHLE), particularly on the East Anglia Main Line west of Colchester. New signalling had been installed in the early 1990s. At first, it worked well. In fact it did so over a number of years. Recent signalling problems suggest that the 1990s installation is now life-expired, and may possibly have been 'done on the cheap'. In the case of OHLE, this is now being replaced, at least as far as Chelmsford, over the next couple of years.

Membership and other human resource problems continued to hamper the Division's ability to do much constructive work or campaigning. Once again, there have been no meetings with TOCs and others in the railway industry, or with other organisations with a common interest in rail provision in the area. Although the Division made strenuous efforts to engage with one of the most active and important rail user groups in the area, it is sad to report that the group in question appears to be moribund.

The Division did, however, start to take steps to improve on the membership and personnel situation. By the end of the year, new members were putting in a regular appearance. 2010 promises to be a very much more active and effective year.

And finally, the **DfT consultations on new Greater Anglia and Essex Thameside franchises** generated the following two Branch responses:

## Comments and Aspirations for the Greater Anglia Franchise

### Introduction

Railfuture is the UK's leading independent organisation campaigning for better rail services for both passenger and freight. Our local branches and volunteers campaign to get stations and lines reopened, for the benefit of the community, economy and environment. We have played a

major part in getting 300 new and reopened stations to join the network since 1960. This document details comments and aspirations of Railfuture for the new Greater Anglia Franchise and has been put together by the East Anglia and London & South East Branches, and therefore represents a consolidated response.

#### Franchise length

Railfuture supports longer franchises, of up to 20 years, as a way of encouraging longer term investment and stability. We accept that franchises should be terminated due to poor performance or lack of progress on franchise commitments. As a general statement of policy, we think that future franchises should require franchisees to invest in infrastructure, new and improved rolling stock and service improvements during the life of the franchise. Specifically, we recommend the following:-

- Stations should be leased to the franchisee on a repairing lease.
- Investment in schemes similar to the highly successful Chiltern Evergreen 1 and 2 should be given greater priority than premium payments to the DfT. Capacity enhancements such as quadrupling, dynamic loops and platform lengthening could be financed in this way.
- Energy saving schemes such as regenerative braking and solar power for station lighting.
- The ability for TOCs to enter in to agreements with ROSCOs for new rolling stock, as this would be at no cost to the DfT.
- Binding agreements so that travel restrictions are consistent nationally
- Work with other public transport organisations to obtain the maximum interchangeability.

Longer franchises are essential for these changes to take place. Reduction of overcrowding and standing should also be a key part of the franchise commitment.

#### Service Improvements

Bidders should be expected to commit themselves to fulfilling the National Express Service Improvement Plan, providing more and longer trains, and also the NXEA plans to improve the London – Norwich service, involving both new Inter City style EMUs and infrastructure improvements, with the overall objective of a fast, 90-minute journey time. Generally, we expect a new franchisee to maintain and improve upon the current standard of service. Train service levels have increased on many routes in recent years; there is scope for further enhancements to services to match increased demand and new development in the region.

In the short to medium term we would like to see:

- Mix of fast and semi-fast services between London and Norwich to get a balance of fast journey times and connections to other routes.
- Consideration to extend the existing London–Ipswich service to Norwich to give 3 trains per

hour on the route, to allow speeding up of the Inter-City service whilst still providing direct services to intermediate stations.

- A 20-minute frequency on the Romford to Upminster service. This could be achieved by quicker turn round times.
- A minimum 30-minute frequency of trains calling at Hatfield Peverel, consistent with all other stations between Shenfield and Ipswich.
- Half-hourly frequency on the Colchester to Clacton route to provide better access to jobs and to relieve traffic congestion around Colchester. .
- Hourly service between Ipswich and Lowestoft (planned by NXEA)
- Hourly limited-stop service between Ipswich and Peterborough.
- Review of stops at minor stations on regional routes to ensure a service suitable for workers and shoppers.
- 2-hourly all-stations service between Norwich and Thetford to allow speeding up of Cambridge–Norwich services
- Additional services from Stratford along the Lea Valley line to Hertford and Cambridge to provide better access to Stratford City and other new developments in East London and Docklands, acknowledging that additional capacity is needed on this route. Related to this, stopping patterns on this line need to be reviewed so as to provide a regular through service from Stratford to all local stations between Tottenham Hale and Enfield Lock, and also faster trains connecting Broxbourne and Harlow with Cambridge.
- Introduction of an hourly service from Stratford to Enfield Town and Cheshunt via Seven Sisters. Some of these trains could be extended to run to and from Liverpool Street outside the peaks.

In the longer term we would like to see the railway network expanded and additional services provided as follows:

- Through route from Stansted Airport to Braintree
- Re-opened line from Saxmundham to Leiston and Aldeburgh
- Reopening of the Hall Farm curve, reopening of Lea Bridge station and the diversion of some Chingford services via Stratford.
- Cambridge to Wisbech service. Refer to the 2009 ATOC report ‘Connecting Communities’.
- East-West Rail between Cambridge and Oxford.

The new franchise holder must be required to contribute to the development of these new services.

#### Service patterns and Connections

The new franchise holder must commit to develop the timetable into a Swiss style ‘Taktfahrplan’ with regular clock-face departures throughout the day and good connections at key nodes such as Colchester, Ipswich, Norwich, Cambridge and Peterborough. Sunday services

should run to the same times as weekdays to ensure that connections are maintained. At present some routes operate different departure times on Sundays which results in missed connections. Bank holidays are popular travelling days so services on these days including Boxing Day should operate to a Saturday rather than a Sunday timetable.

### Working with Network Rail

The new franchise holder must be required to work with Network Rail to deliver the following improvements:

- Track improvements to increase line speeds on routes to achieve faster journey times in order to reduce turn-round times and improve connections at key transport nodes
- Infrastructure improvements required to deliver a 90-minute journey time for fast London– Norwich trains
- Delivery of the new station at Beaulieu Park, north of Chelmsford, to serve new development.
- Four-tracking of the Lea Valley line between Coppermill Junction and Broxbourne to facilitate service improvements on this route
- Delivery of the new island platform at Cambridge.
- Delivery of a new station at Chesterton, north of Cambridge, to serve the Science Park.
- Infrastructure improvements and electrification of the lines between Ipswich and Felixstowe, Stowmarket and Cambridge/Ely and between Ely and Peterborough. This would create an upgraded cross-country freight route from the East Coast ports to the North, with the attendant benefits of more frequent passenger services on these routes and of freeing-up capacity for improved passenger services in the London area.

### Project Management of Crossrail

The new franchisee should be required to work proactively with Crossrail Ltd., Network Rail and TfL to ensure that:-

- The construction of Crossrail does not cause disruption to existing services.
- A smooth transition to the new service pattern and timetable.
- Integration between Crossrail and other GEML services is effective in timetable and station interchange terms. Crossrail must complement the other GEML services, not conflict with them.

### Station Improvements

The new franchisee must continue to improve facilities at stations to provide a consistent level of service across the network. Possible areas for improvement include:

- Ensure all stations have real time information, CCTV, help points and long line public address.
- Ensure that London inner suburban stations have adequate lighting, covered shelters on platforms and that exposed staircases are well lit and

covered to provide protection from the elements. Ticket machines should also be located under covered areas.

- All stations to have local area maps and information on local buses, taxis etc.
- Extra platform shelters and covered waiting areas at: Cambridge, Lowestoft, Newmarket and Great Yarmouth.
- Enlarge the booking hall at Cambridge station. It is often crowded, especially at weekends.
- The development of Station Travel Plans must continue
- Station Car Park Charges must be regulated with a range of charges depending on the station type. At some stations, the parking charge is higher than the fare for some local train journeys!
- Working with Network Rail and TfL, introduce measures to better control passenger flows during peak periods at Stratford station to avoid potentially hazardous ‘crush’ scenarios at this increasingly busy and congested station.

### Ticketing

The existing complex fare structure, especially on the Great Eastern Main line, must be simplified. At present, many good value fares are not available at ticket machines or it is difficult for passengers to find them. A move should be made to zonal ticketing and the new franchise holder be required to introduce ITSO based smart ticketing within 24 months of the commencement of the new franchise. Integration with Oyster (ITSO on Prestige) should also be a requirement to facilitate full inter-ticketing.

Working with TfL, extra London Travelcard zones should be added to cover all London suburban services, out to Bishops Stortford, Hertford and Shenfield. This could be achieved by a re-working of the existing TfL zones 7-9, plus possibly a new zone 10, to cover appropriate stations. This would be combined with Oyster PAYG. Railfuture has already suggested this to the Mayor of London and it was included in discussions at the recent summit between the Mayor, ATOC and the London TOCs.

New radial fare zones should be created around the regional centres, for example Cambridge, Chelmsford, Colchester, Ipswich, and Norwich. Apart from some local fares between adjacent stations, single, PAYG and multiple zone tickets should become the norm. The scope of Anglia Day Ranger tickets should be extended so as to cover all stations from the boundary of the London Oyster and Travelcard zones. We would like bidders to make provision for the sale and top-up of Oyster cards at rail stations within the London area, as suggested in the consultation document.

### Bus replacement services

The new franchise holder should be required to run bus replacement services as a last resort only and must work with Network Rail and other train operators to minimise the use of buses by use of diversion routes or single line working. For example if there is work on the Great Eastern

Main Line, passengers between London and Norwich could travel via Cambridge with local services strengthened as required. When replacement buses are unavoidable, train operator staff must be present on buses to provide advice and to issue/check tickets. Consideration should be given to offering cheaper fares to passengers when replacement buses are in use.

### Rolling stock

Improved standards of interior and exterior cleaning must be put in place. For a 20-year franchise, replacement of the rolling stock used on London-Norwich services would be expected, in the form of electric multiple units with an 'Inter-City' feel, including air-conditioning and appropriate catering facilities. The Class 315 rolling stock is now 31 years old and we look to its replacement within the first 6 years of a new franchise. The new stock should be air-conditioned and articulated within unit, as with the new Class 378 units, but with a mixture of longitudinal and transverse seating. The new franchisee should procure some additional DMU vehicles for rural routes. This is to relieve overcrowding on some services, and have spares available to cover failures and service disruption and to cater for special events such as racing at Newmarket and air days at Lowestoft.

We would also look to the procurement of additional Class 379 units to further strengthen services on the London-Stansted and Cambridge route and to allow for the replacement of older Class 317 and 321 units during the life of the franchise.

## **Comments and Aspirations for the Essex Thameside Franchise**

### Introduction

Railfuture is the UK's leading independent organisation campaigning for better rail services for both passenger and freight. Our local branches and volunteers campaign to get stations and lines reopened, for the benefit of the community, economy and environment. We have played a major part in getting 300 new and reopened stations to join the network since 1960. This document details comments and aspirations of Railfuture for the new Essex Thameside Franchise.

### Franchise length

Railfuture supports longer franchises, of up to 20 years, as a way of encouraging longer term investment and stability. We accept that franchises should be terminated due to poor performance or lack of progress on franchise commitments. As a general statement of policy, we think that future franchises should require franchisees to invest in infrastructure, new and improved rolling stock and service improvements during the life of the franchise. Specifically, we recommend the following:-

- Stations should be leased to the franchisee on a repairing lease.
- Investment in schemes similar to the highly successful Chiltern Evergreen 1 and 2 should be

given greater priority than premium payments to the DfT. Capacity enhancements such as quadrupling, dynamic loops and platform lengthening could be financed in this way.

- Energy saving schemes such as regenerative braking and solar power for station lighting.
- The ability for TOCs to enter in to agreements with ROSCOs for new rolling stock, as this would be at no cost to the DfT.
- Binding agreements so that travel restrictions are consistent nationally
- Work with other public transport organisations to obtain the maximum interchangeability.

Longer franchises are essential for these changes to take place. Reduction of overcrowding and standing should also be a key part of the franchise commitment.

Franchise Type - Railfuture considers that the specification for services should be broadly similar to that specified by Transport for London for London Overground services. However it is important also that a longer length of franchise should be offered with a condition that improvements should be carried out similar in principle to those carried out by Chiltern Railways in schemes such as Evergreen 1, 2, & 3 which we consider are more beneficial than Premium Payments, and that Risk is taken by the franchisee. This we believe would give a virtuous circle of benefits to users.

Economies of scale could be a possibility if the franchise were merged with East Anglia; alternatively it might be considered viable for the franchise to be administered by Transport for London but neither of these should be at the expense of the ideas above.

### Service Improvements

Bidders should be expected to commit themselves to procuring more EMUs, with the objective of running all peak hour services as 12-car trains. We expect a new franchisee to maintain and improve upon the current high standard of service on this franchise.

In line with TfL's aspirations for a 15-minute off-peak frequency on all London suburban services, we would like an additional 2 trains per hour on the Fenchurch Street-Grays route, with the extra trains being routed via the Gas Factory Curve to Stratford and serving Maryland, Forest Gate and Woodgrange Park. This would provide a direct rail service between Stratford and Barking and also create improved links between the Thameside and Great Eastern lines. For Thameside residents, it would also provide direct access to the new Stratford City shopping centre and onward travel connections to North London, Stansted Airport and East Anglia, as well as to Paris, Brussels and other continental destinations via Stratford International.

Railfuture also has a medium-term desire to see improved frequencies via the mostly single-track Ockendon branch to better serve the Lakeside shopping complex and further housing developments at Chafford Hundred. At present,

services are mostly limited to a 2tph 30-minute frequency in either direction. Short of the expensive option of complete doubling of the Ockendon branch, we would wish to see consideration given to the provision of a passing loop and additional platform at Chafford Hundred. This development, linked to signalling improvements, would be to provide a 3 tph 20-minute service frequency in either direction.

There may be merit in running services from Essex Thameside Stations over the Gospel Oak-Barking Line in order to relieve Fenchurch Street and to offer new travel options. This was done previously by Railway Companies and there might be latent potential to reintroduce such a service again.

#### Service patterns and Connections

Sunday services should run to the same times as weekdays to ensure that connections are maintained. Bank holidays are popular travelling days so services on these days including Boxing Day should operate to a Saturday timetable rather than a Sunday timetable.

#### Working with Network Rail

The new franchise holder must be required to work with Network Rail to deliver the new station at Beam Park, between Dagenham Dock and Rainham, to serve the proposed new development, as and when it takes place.

#### Station Improvements

The new franchisee must continue to improve facilities at stations to provide a consistent level of service across the network. Possible areas for improvement include:

- Ensure all stations have real time information, CCTV, help points and long line public address.
- Ensure that London inner suburban stations have adequate lighting, covered shelters on platforms and that exposed staircases are well lit and covered to provide protection from the elements. Ticket machines should also be located under covered areas.
- All stations to have local area maps and information on local buses, taxis etc.
- The development of Station Travel Plans must continue
- Station Car Park Charges must be regulated with a range of charges depending on the station type.

We would also suggest that, as a minimum, the SFO responsibility for Barking and Upminster stations be vested with TfL as the majority service user for both stations.

#### Ticketing

A move should be made to zonal ticketing and the new franchise holder be required to introduce ITSO based smart ticketing within 24 months of the commencement of the new franchise. Integration with Oyster (ITSO on Prestige) should also be a requirement to facilitate full inter-ticketing. All but two East Thameside stations are gated, therefore ITSO card readers would be required at Southend

East and Purfleet (where one platform is ungated), unless a business case can be made for the necessary alterations to facilitate gating.

Working with TfL, and building on the recent extension of the London Travelcard zones to Grays, we would like further extensions out to Basildon and Stanford-le-Hope. This could be achieved by a re-working of the existing TfL zones 7-9, plus possibly a new zone 10, to cover appropriate stations. This would be combined with Oyster PAYG. Railfuture has already suggested this to the Mayor of London and it was included in discussions at the recent summit between the Mayor, ATOC and the London TOCs.

Apart from some local fares between adjacent stations, single, PAYG and multiple zone tickets should become the norm. We would like bidders to make provision for the sale and top-up of Oyster cards at rail stations within the London area, as suggested in the consultation document.

#### Bus replacement services

The new franchise holder should be required to run bus replacement services as a last resort only and must work with Network Rail and other train operators to minimise the use of buses by use of diversion routes or single-line working. When replacement buses are unavoidable, train operator staff must be present on buses to provide advice and to issue/check tickets. Consideration should be given to offering cheaper fares to passengers when replacement buses are in use.

#### Rolling stock

Improved standards of interior and exterior cleaning must be put in place. For a 20 year franchise, additional rolling stock, compatible with the existing Class 357 electric multiple units, is required in order to upgrade all peak hour services to 12-car trains, so as to relieve overcrowding and make good use of the new platform extensions.

**BRANCH CHAIRMAN:** Keith Dyll, 26 Millway, Mill Hill, London NW7 3RB; tel: 020 8959 7147; keith.dyll@railfuture.org.uk

**BRANCH SECRETARY:** Ian McDonald, 10 Douglas Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8ES; tel: 01622 203751; ianfsmcdonald@blueyonder.co.uk

**Spread the word** - Railfuture envelope re-use labels are available at £3.50 for 1 pack/£6 for two packs, inclusive of post and packing, from Membership Secretary David Harby at 6 Carral Close, Brant Road, Lincoln, LN5 9BD - cheques only please, payable to Railfuture.

This Branch Newsletter is published quarterly and is usually distributed with each edition of *railwatch*. The copy deadline for issue 109 will be 28<sup>th</sup> August. Please submit material through Branch Chairman Keith Dyll.

The Society's Registered Office address changes with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010 to 24 Chedworth Place, Tattlingstone, Suffolk, IP9 2ND