

Railfuture in London and the South East

quarterly branch newsletter

Campaigning by the Railway Development Society in London and the Home Counties - Kent, Surrey, Sussex, south Hertfordshire, south Essex, Bedfordshire, and Greater London

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

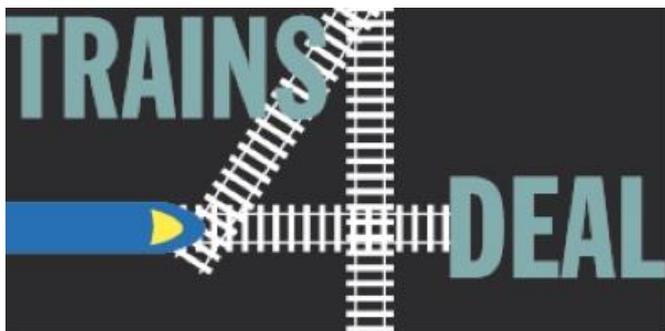
Campaigns calendar

We begin with our quarterly review of some of our key campaign activities, since the September newsletter. More details are in the London and South East branch area of www.railfuture.org.uk/Local+action

The success of the widespread campaigning for electrification of the **Gospel Oak-Barking Line** was reflected at our national Rail Users conference in Oxford, Railfuture's Gold Award for Best Campaign going to the line's rail user group.

Sussex & Coastway Division have taken our campaign messages around the county, meeting in Hampden Park, Newhaven and Worthing. Read more at www.railfuture.org.uk/Sussex+and+Coastway

We took our **Bridge the gap: connect East Sussex** and other national Railfuture campaigns to the annual national rail exhibition in November at Birmingham's NEC. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Uckfield+Lewes



We are working with **Trains for Deal** to support their campaign for peak Javelin trains to continue to serve Deal and Sandwich between the end of the current Southeastern franchise and the start of the Direct Award contract in 2014. See www.trains4deal.com

'**Shaping Rail in East Sussex**' was launched in draft in August and discussed at a stakeholders' Symposium in September. Our consultation response can be seen at www.railfuture.org.uk/Submissions The County Council's new Rail Strategy and Action Plan were adopted in November; see www.eastsussex.gov.uk

We participated in the **Stakeholder Forums** and **Passenger Groups** run by London Overground, Southern, and Southeastern.

See www.railfuture.org.uk/Welcome+to+Railfuture

Next, some **forthcoming dates for your calendars and diaries**. Further details can be found later in this newsletter or at www.railfuture.org.uk/events

Thursday 5 December Sussex & Coastway Division.

Saturday 7 December Surrey Division, Guildford.

Saturday 7 December THWART/MLAG event, Winchelsea station. See p.3 and www.mlag.org.uk

Sunday 8 December National rail timetable changes.

Tuesday 17 December Jim Steer on 'High Speed Rail', Redhill. See www.ciltuk.org.uk/AboutUs/Events

Thursday 26 December some Boxing Day services on eg Chiltern, Southeastern, Southern.

Wednesday 8 January 2014 Eastern Division.

Thursday 9 January Sussex & Coastway Division.

Monday 20 January Copy date for your letters and articles to appear in April's Railwatch 139. Send them to editor@railwatch.org.uk

Saturday 25 January Closing date for nominations to branch committee, and for Motions to branch AGM.

Tuesday 28 January L&SE branch committee

Friday 31 January Copy date for *railse* 123, and London & SE branch Local Action in Railwatch 139.

Thursday 6 February Sussex & Coastway Division.

Monday 10 February 'Chiltern Railways', Croydon. See www.rcts.org.uk/branches/croydon

Saturday 15 February Kent Division.

Thursday 6 March Sussex & Coastway Division.

Wednesday 12 March Eastern Division.

Saturday 26 April London & South East branch AGM.

Saturday 10 May Railfuture national AGM, Sheffield.

Further details are always available in the London and South East pages of www.railfuture.org.uk/branches

Rail infrastructure investment: Final determination > delivery

The near three-year long Periodic Review for Network Rail's next **Control Period 5**, from 2014-19, which is overseen by the Office of Rail Regulation and known as PR13 for the year it ends, reached another key milestone on 31 October. That was when the ORR published their 'Final determination' on Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan, published in January at www.networkrail.co.uk/publications/strategic-business-plan-for-cp5 and left Network Rail with five months to finalise their CP5 Delivery Plan. See www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.11287

The ORR's 'Draft determination' published in June, and to which Railfuture responded in September, introduced an extra requirement in view of the many enhancement projects, such as the Wealden line and West Anglia main line capacity upgrades, which are still at early stages of scheme development. Network Rail will now produce in December a draft CP5 Delivery Plan for consultation. This should reflect those enhancement projects at more advanced stages in their eight-stage 'GRIP' [Governance for Railway Investment Projects] process – you too can get a grip of it at www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/4171.aspx

In just 30 months' time PR18 starts, leading to CP6 from 2019-24. If the same process is followed an Initial Industry Plan from Network Rail in September 2016 will be followed by a DfT High Level Output Specification in mid-2017, then from Network Rail a Strategic Business Plan in January 2018 and a CP6 Delivery Plan in early-2019. The foundations for 2019-24 are being laid now. As the final touches are made to the picture for 2014-19, what we cannot see there must even now be getting ready for the ORR CP6 workshops in July 2016.

Network Rail's Long-Term Planning Process – LTPP

The foundation for CP6 investments is the new LTPP, successor to the Route Utilisation Strategies. See www.networkrail.co.uk/Long-Term-Planning-Process for vital background. Consultations in March at www.networkrail.co.uk/improvements/planning-policies-and-plans/long-term-planning-process/market-studies closed in July, and involved us in leading the Railfuture response to the draft London and South East Passenger Market Study. Three other Studies covered the Long Distance and Regional Urban Passenger, and Freight, Markets. Our submissions can be read at www.railfuture.org.uk/submissions

The final studies were published at the end of October. www.networkrail.co.uk/improvements/planning-policies-and-plans/long-term-planning-process/market-studies/london-and-south-east is where to see ours.

Ten Route Studies are the next elements in the LTPP – see www.networkrail.co.uk/long-term-planning-process/faq We await some drafts. Eight Routes interface with our regional branch area; all will be of interest to us, and generate considered responses.

Refranchising – extensions, direct awards, and concessions

How did we get to where we are? The Transport Secretary's '**Fresh start for franchising**' was signalled with oral and written statements to Parliament and the DfT press release in late-March. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/rail-franchising> for the series of government documents published since 26 March.

The new language of franchise extensions and Direct Award contracts is supplemented in London with TfL concessions. Key markers over the past nine months are these:

26 March – new Rail Franchising Schedule, and invitation to interested bidders.

24 April – high-level Franchise Procurement Process map [think electrical wiring diagram!] and narrative.

25 April – four members of Franchise Advisory Panel appointed, under Chair Richard Brown.

17 May – first 'Direct Award' contract to National Express operator c2c Rail Ltd to continue running **Essex Thameside** services from 26 May for at least 16 months [with extension option of up to eight four-week periods] until start of new franchise in September 2014.

22 May – UK Rail Opportunities Day for prospective bidders [speech by Transport Secretary and presentations published on 4 June].

25 June – Franchising Competition Process Guide.

10 July – government response to the Brown Review of the Rail Franchising Programme.

July – the Rail Franchise Overview, anticipated in March, did not appear and is delayed until 'the autumn'.

26 September – revised Invitation To Tender [ITT] for new 15-year **Essex Thameside** franchise issued to four existing short-listed bidders [Abellio, First, MTR, National Express] for franchise contract award expected May 2014 for start on 14 September 2014.

26 September – extension of **Thameslink** franchise, and Direct Award contract to First Group to start of new franchise on 14 September 2014. ITT for **Combined Thameslink** [with Southern and Great Northern] issued to five short-listed bidders [Abellio, First, Govia, MTR, Stagecoach] for management contract award in May 2014. Existing Govia South Central franchise operator Southern Railway Ltd merges-in on 26 July 2015.

3 October – extension of current **Great Western** franchise and Direct Award contract to First Group until September 2015; start of new franchise in July 2016.

25 October – start to re-franchising of **East Coast**. Expressions of Interest by December, short-listed bidders in January 2014, ITT in February, BAFOs in May, contract award in October, start February 2015.

For the remainder of 2013 the sequence is simply:

? **November** - ITT for **Crossrail** concession issued.

2 December - submission of Expressions of Interest from potential bidders for **East Coast** franchise.

24 December - submission of bidders' Best And Final Offers [BAFOs] for **Essex Thameside** and Combined **Thameslink/Southern/Great Northern** franchises.

Subsequently the picture for other franchises of interest to our London and South East area looks like this:

South Eastern – extension of current franchise from April 2014 to November 2014, then Direct Award contract to Govia until start of new franchise, in June 2018! Unlike Greater Anglia below, Metro services will not be devolved to Transport for London.

Greater Anglia – extension of current franchise from July 2014, then Direct Award contract to Abellio until start of new franchise in October 2016.



image: Crossrail

May 2015 will meanwhile see the start of TfL's **Crossrail** operating concession, with the transfer of Greater Anglia's Metro services between Liverpool Street and Shenfield. In March TfL invited expressions of interest from potential bidders by late-April. In late-June TfL announced the four short-listed bidders as Arriva Crossrail Ltd, Keolis/Go-Ahead, MTR Corporation (Crossrail) Ltd, and National Express Group PLC. The ITT was due in September, with contract award by the end of 2014.

West Anglia inner services will follow into the TfL orbit by the end of 2015, following the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer during his Comprehensive Spending Review statement in late-June. Services currently operated by Greater Anglia between Liverpool Street and Enfield Town/Cheshunt and Chingford will transfer, but not Lea Valley services in an out of Stratford via the December 2014 reopened Lea Bridge.

London Overground – extension to November 2016.

London Midland – extension of current franchise from September 2015, then Direct Award contract to GoVia until start of new franchise in June 2017.

South Western – extension of current franchise from February 2017, then Direct Award contract to Stagecoach until start of new franchise in April 2019.

Chiltern – current franchise runs to December 2021!

Minor stations THWART-ed

The previous newsletter highlighted the service improvements coming this month to Great Northern services, following completion of infrastructure upgrades on the route out of King's Cross. The report concluded with a reference to the imminent completion of signalling improvements on the East Coastway-Marshlink route, raising similar prospects for services.

Three years ago, in response to sustained pressure by Railfuture-affiliated MarshLink Action Group [MLAG] www.mlag.org.uk and Three Oaks and Winchelsea Action for Rail Transport [THWART], all-day Monday-Saturday services were restored to two of the four intermediate stations south of Rye on Marshlink, on an alternate-hourly basis. Ever since then local campaigners have wanted the same level of service at Winchelsea and Three Oaks on Sundays, instead of the tokenistic first and last trains only, to support the area's visitor economy; see www.winchelsea.net. They also want a similar level of Marshlink service at Ore [actually east Hastings] to complement the East Coastway services west of that station, thereby improving rail access for students and staff at the nearby Ore Valley campus of Sussex Coast College.

Far from improving the service, the recently-published Invitation To Tender for the Combined Thameslink franchise requires a minimum of one train less every day across the timetable for these stations. Instead of equalising Sunday service levels with Saturdays, the present three could decline to just one Sunday train - meaning none at all towards Ashford!

THWART members and other campaigners are planning some local activity on **Saturday 7 December**, the day before the next timetable change - or in this case no change - to mobilise wider support for reversing this no-rail future. Meet at Winchelsea station for the 13.50 from Brighton and the 13.59 from Ashford International.

Surrey's Strategy in September

The County Council now has an adopted Rail Strategy. Our Surrey Division has been closely engaged in contributing to it, with a meeting in Redhill a year ago when the draft was in preparation. Our response to the consultation is at www.railfuture.org.uk/submissions. SCC's Assistant Director for Economy, Transport and Planning Iain Reeve returns on **Saturday 7 December**, to our morning meeting in Guildford, to explain and discuss the Strategy formally agreed in September.

The main Rail Strategy, plus four background papers on Issues and Options, can be found here: www.surreycc.gov.uk/environment-housing-and-planning/development-in-surrey/surrey-future/the-surrey-rail-strategy. Meanwhile Network Rail's appetite for infill electrification schemes was confirmed at October's joint annual meeting of the Sussex CRP lines for East Grinstead/Uckfield and for Tonbridge-Reigate. The Route Enhancements Manager confirmed the two diesel-only gaps between Reading and Reigate as strong candidates for CP6 investment.

Bridge the gap: connect East Sussex

INSPIRE is this campaign's watchword, and acronym.

I is our Incremental approach to the long-term project
N is for making and spreading News of our progress
S is to Socialise, engaging local communities
P is for building Partnerships with stakeholders
I also stands for making full use of the Internet
R is for developing working Relationships
E is about showing why, with a solid Evidence base

In short, to inspire people – be they individuals, community leaders, business leaders, education leaders, political leaders – to believe that together they can make this happen, not just wait for it to happen.

We pick up where we left off in the previous newsletter three months ago, after the County Council's new Lead Member for Economy had in mid-August approved a draft Rail Strategy for public consultation, seen here: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/about/committees/meetingpapers/cabineteconomy/2013/14august.htm

'Shaping Rail in East Sussex' was then the subject of a half-day Rail Symposium for stakeholders in mid-September. The presentations can be received by emailing us at bridgethegap@railfuture.org.uk

The public consultation closed in early-October; our response is here: www.railfuture.org.uk/submissions

As this newsletter was closing for press the next step was publication of the Agenda and papers for the mid-November meeting of the Lead Member for Economy, to formally approve the Rail Strategy and Action Plan.

The County Council's Director of Communities, Economy and Transport opens his report covering the **Rail Strategy and Rail Action Plan for East Sussex** with an acknowledgement that, in terms, the Council will have to put some of its money where its mouth is. "There are future financial implications arising from the Rail Strategy and priorities identified in the Rail Strategy Action Plan ['RSAP']. These costs relate to any study work which may come forward or be required to support the priorities for rail investment in East Sussex as identified in the RSAP." We welcome this commitment to will the means for promoting priorities.

"The County Council has developed a Rail Strategy, 'Shaping Rail in East Sussex', and a supporting RSAP which identifies the County Council's priorities for improving rail infrastructure and services in the County that improve connections to employment, education and training, and thereby support economic growth in the County." We welcome this recognition of, and commitment to developing, the role of rail in the County Council's drive to enable growth in economic activity.

"The potential improvement schemes have been appraised in relation to:
+ their contribution towards the South East LEP and Local Transport Plan objectives,
+ the economic case in terms of the delivery of jobs and housing, reductions in end-to-end journey-times and costs, social impacts, carbon emissions and environmental impacts, and
+ acceptability and deliverability of the scheme, including risks, scheme costs and benefits."

"The outcomes of the scheme assessment, the consultation and the views of businesses on the rail priorities for the County have then been used to identify the rail infrastructure improvement priorities to create jobs and deliver economic growth in East Sussex."

East Sussex Rail Strategy – 'Shaping Rail in East Sussex' and Action Plan

The Director's report continues: "The highest priority from the appraisal and consultation process is the improvement of the East Coastway route between Hastings and Ashford. This will deliver improvements to journey time and reliability by enabling an electrified service to be run along the whole of the East Coastway." "The electrification and then dual-tracking of the line between Uckfield-Hurst Green has been identified as the County's second priority for delivery."

With these two established as the County Council's immediate priorities for delivery, attention will turn to implanting them in the rail industry's plans and delivery programmes. Opportunities for influence which we with the County Council will seek to exploit will include Network Rail's forthcoming Route Study for Sussex for CP6 investment post-2019, now that the final Passenger Market Study for London and the South East has been published [see p.2, col.1]. Together with continued engagement through the refranchising process for Greater Thameslink and the operator to be announced next May, we shall also be looking very closely at Network Rail's draft CP5 Delivery Plan to be published for consultation this month, following publication by the ORR of their Final Determination.

Following our response to the ORR's consultation on their Draft Determination, in which we advocated electrification of Hurst Green-Uckfield in CP5 as a better alternative to platform lengthening to deliver the capacity requirement for train lengthening, the Final Determination devotes five paragraphs to the subject. While partly mis-representing our proposition and declining to accommodate it, the door appears ajar so with the County Council and others we shall continue our advocacy of this CP5, not CP6, investment.

The illustration at the foot of this centre-fold is our banner attached, with Network Rail consent, to the High Street frontage of the fence currently securing the old Uckfield station site, directly opposite and in full view of the present-day station. It heralds the approach of one element of the town centre package agreed earlier this year, a new car park for commuters.

The Uckfield Transport Hub Working Group which is facilitating that project, and others in the town centre package, was set up at Railfuture's suggestion. The alliance of ten key stakeholders, plus two MPs, which backed our 'electrifying proposition' for the Uckfield line to the ORR was also a Railfuture initiative.

It is this partnership working, with all who share and support our vision, which will underpin our 10-year programme to reopen to Lewes and beyond. Network Rail's Sussex Route Study must be the precursor:
+ establish the line reinstatement project in Network Rail's Initial Industry Plan in autumn 2016;
+ secure the project's place in the DfT's High Level Output Specification [HLOS] in summer 2017;
+ secure it again in Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan in early-2018;
+ ensure its embedding in the ORR's Draft and Final Determinations in summer and autumn 2018;
+ see its inclusion in Network Rail's CP6 Delivery Plan.

The continually-evolving strategy and tactical interventions in this campaign can be viewed at www.railfuture.org.uk/Uckfield+Lewes. The campaign email address is bridgethegap@railfuture.org.uk and the campaign is on **Twitter** @Uckfield_Lewes

Finally, just as this newsletter was being finalised, so too was a six-page illustrated article entitled 'Uckfield-Lewes: 2022 is reopening target' due to appear in the December issue of a quality monthly magazine!

Uckfield Transport Hub

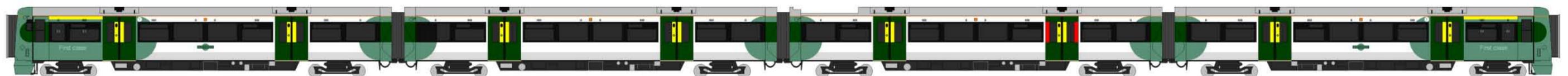
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Supported by:
Wealden District Council
Uckfield Town Council
Network Rail
Southern Railway
Sussex Community Rail Partnership
Stagecoach
Brighton & Hove Buses
and
railfuture



Station
car park
opening
Spring
2014



Hackney Interchange

Regular readers will be familiar with the story so far; newcomers can refer to *railse* no.118 for December 2012 and *railse* no.120 for June 2013, both available here: www.railfuture.org.uk/Branch+news

The basic concept is to restore, in modern accessible form, a direct passenger link between the orbital London Overground route at Hackney Central station and the radial West Anglia routes at Hackney Downs station. Each station can be seen close by from passing trains on the other line, yet the official interchange time between the two stations, via the nearest streets, is given as a full quarter-hour! The new direct link should easily knock ten minutes off that.

Since a 2012 planning application was approved by Hackney Council on 2 January 2013, the full funding package was secured with a £5million budget after contributions from Network Rail's Discretionary Fund, Transport for London and Hackney Council.



Looking south-west, Hackney Central station to the left

A subsequent design review concluded that the 2012 scheme, along the south side of the North London Line and then a bridge across it to link with Hackney Downs, posed serious risks to the budget and the programme. This has resulted in a new application for a simpler link illustrated here. Full details can be found under ref.no.2013/3334 in Planning at www.hackney.gov.uk



Looking east, Hackney Downs station just to the left

Officially closed on 14 May 1944, the former Broad Street-Poplar passenger service saw the last use of the previous interchange, subsequently demolished. Seven decades later its successor should be under construction and all being well completed by the end of the year. As can be seen in the above images, the new structure will have a strong visual impact on the amenity of nearby residents. Close liaison with them is the key to mitigating short-term construction impacts [loss of car park and playground] and securing long-term legacy benefits [eg new playground equipment].

Chiltern to Chinnor

Continuing a theme which is developing nationwide, the Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway has recently celebrated the restoration of some trial through services between the mainline at Princes Risborough and the preserved heritage branch line to Chinnor.

Chiltern Railways ran some October weekend services between Aylesbury and Chinnor, the first time since almost six decades ago. Opened in 1872, the line carried its last public passenger service in 1957 – another example of a pre-Beeching closure. Freight continued until 1989, after which the line transferred to the Chinnor and Princes Railway Railway Association.

Within two decades of reinstating passenger-carrying trains on the line in 1994, the C&PRR has passed another significant milestone. Some readers will recall that Chiltern Railways, aka M40 Trains Ltd, had themselves explored the possibility of using the former Watlington branch line as a commuter route based on a park-and-ride station near junction 6 of the M40.

See www.chinnorrailway.co.uk for full details. Try here www.youtube.com/watch?v=2u-yXMdS9Bg for a full 25 minutes on 'The Watlington Flyer' on 5 October 2013, or here www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2p25WBMeAA for 'just a minute' at Chinnor. Enjoy!

The Value of Heritage Railways

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail, formed in 2011, has recently published a valuable report highlighting the economic contribution of the 108 railways which are members of the Heritage Railway Association. They operate just over 400 stations and well over 500 route miles. To quote from the report's Executive Summary "Heritage railways make a major contribution to the economies of the areas they serve both in terms of attracting tourism and of substantial spending on local services." "..... a mean benefit to the local economy of around 2.7 times the railway's turnover would suggest that the economic benefit nationally is just under £250m."

Advocating the development of 'public tourist transport' the APPG report notes that, excluding museum sites and miniature railways, 37% of heritage lines already have links to Network Rail lines and 52% will have "when present extension plans come to fruition."

Read the report in the Media and Research section at www.heritagerailways.com Read about such railways and their mainline links in our area in the London and South East section of www.railfuture.org.uk/branches We already have nine preserved/heritage lines in and around our region which are developing their links with the classic network. The most recent, the Bluebell Railway's northern extension into East Grinstead, has quickly demonstrated the power of such attractions for the local visitor economy. Further afield the Swanage Railway is pioneering integration with the mainline. See here www.heritagerailways.com/Visits_Map.php and here www.heritage-railways.com/map.php to find the preserved railways expanding their catchments.

Community Rail Awards 2013

At this time of year we recognise the achievements of Community Rail Partnerships in and around our regional branch area. They again achieved a strong showing this year – details at www.acorp.uk.com

Involving Young People, sponsored by Network Rail, 1st prize awarded to Kent CRP for their Young People's guide to travelling by train. 2nd prize went to Greater Anglia and Essex CRP for Use Your Brain Think Train project. Sussex CRP's Pene Mather was short-listed for a variety of initiatives involving young people.

Community Art Schemes - Permanent Art Projects, sponsored by First Great Western, 1st prize awarded to Sussex CRP and Southern for Horsham Station Schools' Community Art Gallery. Kent CRP and partners were short-listed for the Watlington Station Mural.

Community Art Schemes - Renewable and Smaller Art Projects, also sponsored by First Great Western, 3rd prize awarded to Sussex CRP and Southern for the Barnham School Station Partnership Windows.

Best Use for Station Buildings, sponsored by the Railway Heritage Trust, highly commended Southern and partners for the renovation of Horsham station and provision of a café.



Horsham station photo: Bryen & Langley Infrastructure

Small Projects Award, sponsored by Community Rail Lancashire, had short-listed Sussex CRP and Southern for the Barnham School Station Partnership Windows.

Best Innovative use of Information Technology in the Promotion of Community Rail, sponsored by Go-Ahead, 2nd prize awarded to Marston Vale CRP for 'The Marston Vale Gets Social'.

Best Innovative use of Traditional Methods in the Promotion of Community Rail, sponsored by Arriva Trains Wales, 2nd prize awarded to Kent CRP for their Young People's guide to travelling by train booklet and school visits.

The **Overall Winner 2013** was train operator Abellio, operator of Greater Anglia, Merseyrail and Northern.

Branch AGM 2014 – Notice 1 of 2

The next **Annual General Meeting** of the London and South East Branch of Railfuture will be held in **London on Saturday 26 April 2014** at 14.00. A morning members' meeting with speakers is planned. The venue and other details including the Agenda for the meeting will be published in the March newsletter.

Nominations are now invited for Branch Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer, and no more than six other branch committee members. Nomination forms are available from the branch's Hon. Secretary Chris Fribbins – see contacts on back page. Candidates must be proposed and seconded, with their nominations signed by both, and sent with signed confirmation of acceptance by the nominee. All three [proposer, seconder, nominee] must be currently paid-up Railfuture members and must state their membership numbers; Hon. Membership Secretary Chris Page can confirm those numbers – see contacts on back page. When accepting nomination for any of the four elected officer posts, all candidates must declare whether or not they would accept a non-officer position on the branch committee, in case they are not successful in a ballot for that officer post. Nominations must be accompanied by a candidate CV and Election Statement, of no more than 100 words each, and sent to branch Electoral Returning Officer Paul Krebs at 24 Bartok House, 30 Lansdowne Walk, London, W11 3LT, to arrive no later than **Saturday 25 January 2014**.

Motions for debate, and possible amendment, at the AGM are also invited now. This arrangement is intended to enable the whole branch membership to be aware of Motions for debate at their AGM in advance of the meeting, so widening the opportunity for participation. This provision will not prevent the acceptance of emergency Motions by those present at the AGM, and at the discretion of the Chairman, in circumstances judged not reasonably foreseeable at the time of the deadline for the receipt of conventional Motions, which is also **Saturday 25 January 2014**.

Motions, to be on Branch organisation, policy or strategy, should be brief and to the point, indicate to whom each is addressed for action, and must be proposed, seconded and signed by both, who must be paid-up members of Railfuture [quoting membership numbers] and sent to Branch Secretary Chris Fribbins.

The next issue of the branch newsletter no.123 will, in the event of a ballot, include a numbered ballot paper together with voting instructions [which will include provision for supplying your membership number as well as postcode, which only the Electoral Returning Officer will see], together with the candidate CVs and their Election Statements. The ballot paper must then be returned to the Electoral Returning Officer, to be received by him no later than a stipulated date, likely to be in early-April 2014. The next branch newsletter will also include details of submitted Motions duly proposed and seconded. Any proposed amendments should then be notified to Branch Chairman Keith Dyal at least ten clear working days before the AGM ie no later than **Saturday 12 April**.

Branch divisions' meetings – open to all members of our regional branch

Eastern [s. Essex and n. & e. London] – usually meet bi-monthly on the second Wednesday of odd-numbered months, at 18.30 in **Stratford** – next on **8 January** then **12 March**. Contact Division Convener Howard Thomas at howard.thomas@railfuture.org.uk or 24 South Primrose Hill, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RG, or phone 01245 280503 before 21.00 hrs. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Eastern

Herts & Beds – next meeting, probably St. Albans, to be notified direct to local members, on the website or/and in the next newsletter. Contact Branch Chairman Keith Dyal [opposite] for details. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Herts+and+Beds

Kent – usually meet quarterly on the third Saturday, each in a different venue – next on **15 February** maybe in **Rye**. Contact joint Division Conveners Chris Fribbins at chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk or 5 Englefield Crescent, Cliffe Woods, Rochester, Kent, ME3 8HB, or tel: 01634 566256; and Ian Killbery at ian.killbery@railfuture.org.uk or 11 Western Road, Deal, Kent, CT14 6RX, or tel: 01304 362569. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Kent

Surrey – next meeting on **Saturday 7 December** in **Guildford**, 10.30 at the United Reformed Church, 83 Portsmouth Road, GU2 4BS. Contact Division Convener Chris Page at chris.page@railfuture.org.uk or 'Clara Vale', Thibet Road, Sandhurst, Berkshire, GU47 9AR, or phone 01344 778643. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Surrey

Sussex & Coastway – usually meet monthly on the first Thursday at 18.00. Next on **5 December** in Lewes, then on **9 January**, **6 February** and **6 March**. Contact Division Convener Dick Tyler at richard.tyler@railfuture.org.uk or 27 Windsor Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN39 3PB, or phone 01424 211500. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Sussex+and+Coastway

Branch committee meetings

Open to members, held from 18.00 on fourth Tuesday of the odd-numbered months, so next on **28 January** then **25 March**. Contact Hon. Secretary, opposite.

This branch newsletter is free, published quarterly and usually distributed with each edition of the national *railwatch*. The copy deadline for *railse* issue 123, due to be published in March 2014, will be Friday 31 January 2014. All items for this newsletter and the branch Local Action column in *railwatch* to be sent to branch Chair Keith Dyal

the Railfuture mission: to be the number one advocate for the railway and rail users

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

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Our neighbouring branches

These and all other branches' websites can be seen 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 Page [below].

and finally, are you getting it?

Rail User Express is emailed monthly to individual subscribers and to around 60 of the 80 or so known Rail User Groups in our branch area. Just email ruglink@railfuture.org.uk to get on the distribution list. One feature is Railfuture's annual **RUG Awards**, a new winner being the RUG for the Gospel Oak-Barking line.

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