

Railfuture in London and the South East

quarterly branch newsletter

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

More orange – less squash!

Centre for London published a report in mid-January advocating 'reform of suburban rail to support London's next wave of growth'. It has examined a large segment of south London (shown below) and seeks to make the case for 'upgrading its rail network into the Overground and devolving rail services to Transport for London'.



Within about the same length of time into the future as the millennium is now in the past, the Tube network will have been upgraded to reach the physically-practical limits of its capacity. Meanwhile London's population shows every sign of continued growth – with appetite for travel by rail of all types as part of lifestyle choices. Within the lifespan of a new train now entering service, demand for rail services in south London could double.

The capital's suburban rail network has long been seen as an under-achiever, in terms of both service quality and capacity, as evidenced for example in persistently low customer satisfaction scores. With very little of the Tube network, south London's best hope for Tube-style services is seen as devolution to Transport for London when current franchises come round for renewal, with infrastructure investment to increase capacity and frequency, to provide routinely attractive rail journeys.

See www.railfuture.org.uk/article1643-Southern-orange

“Rail passenger services in London and the south east: a new approach” (discuss)

A week after “*Turning south London orange*” was published by Centre for London, the Mayor of London and the Transport Secretary launched ‘proposals for a new era of rail travel for London and the south east’.

This will widely be seen as the latest iteration in the developing story of rail devolution, which has featured regularly in these columns. The proposals are set out as a prospectus, for consultation until mid-March. The language is of partnership, agreement, commitment, and principles, so outlining a framework. This is timely as London faces the coincidence of a new Mayor, and Assembly, elected for a period when six of our region's franchises will be taking first steps to new contracts.

Key to the success of ‘London Suburban Metro’ is the transfer to TfL of responsibility for inner suburban rail services, outer suburban remaining with the DfT. Any transfer will have to ensure “No detrimental effect on fares” and “No adverse impacts on frequency, journey times or stopping patterns of longer-distance services.” The new partnership defines a role for Local Enterprise Partnerships, local authorities and other organisations.

Railfuture has been and remains a consistent advocate of rail devolution, and not just for London. National Rail Passenger Surveys from Transport Focus report above-average passenger satisfaction scores from other, regional, devolved operators ScotRail and Merseyrail, as well as from London Overground.

Read more: www.gov.uk/government/news/transport-secretary-and-mayor-set-out-vision-for-rail-travel-across-london-and-the-south-east



Bigger better railway? www.railfuture.org.uk/join !

Infrastructure enhancements delivery – review and re-plan

The present Secretary of State for Transport might be forgiven for wondering what he has done to deserve our rail industry. As if the collapse, then subsequent rescue, of the franchising process in late-2012 wasn't enough for him, he has since had to save Network Rail from itself less than a year after it became his responsibility with nationalisation in September 2014.

Since last June we've had a schemes pause, a new Chairman of Network Rail Sir Peter Hendy with a CP5 re-plan published in November [with an interim un-pause of some major schemes in September] out for consultation until late-March, a review of Network Rail's planning processes by Dame Bowe out last November, a DfT review of rail regulation coupled with only interim appointments of new ORR Chair and Chief Executive, and the Shaw review of Network Rail's structure and financing due to report before Budget Day, 16 March. Wherever there is any opportunity Railfuture seeks to inform and influence, through submissions which can be read here: www.railfuture.org.uk/About+Railfuture

Outside that activity Railfuture also made a submission to the new National Infrastructure Commission in response to its call for evidence on 'Large-scale transport infrastructure improvements in London'.

One London scheme unaffected by the above events is the DfT/TfL-funded electrification of the **Gospel Oak-Barking line**. On 1 February Network Rail confirmed their works programme, due to complete in June 2017. A four-month part-closure then four-month full closure will at last enable an all-electric London Overground. Read the details at www.networkrail.co.uk/gobe



Sparks will fly - but eight months of pain before the gain

Schemes in our region which are proposed by the Hendy Review for deferral to CP6 completion are Gatwick Airport station concourse redevelopment, Victoria station concourse decongestion, Bow Junction (Stratford) remodelling for two extra peak hour trains from Southend Victoria, the Western Rail Link to Heathrow, Queenstown Road Battersea extra platform, South London High Voltage (Wimbledon Grid), Waterloo suburban lines stations capacity increase, Stevenage turn-back facility, and Acton-Willesden and Reading-Basingstoke electrification.

DfT refranchising reschedule, TfL devolution developing

Last November saw the DfT publish the latest variant of its Rail Franchise Schedule, vital for Railfuture's Passenger Group, TOC liaison representatives, branch members, Rail User Groups and others to keep abreast of when and where to seek to bring influence on the specifications for direct awards and franchises. February saw the latest Franchise Competition Guide.

A notable procedural change is the introduction of passports for franchise bidders! This includes the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) and clears the way to respond in the next stage, the issue of franchise Expressions of Interest (EoI) invitations, throughout the lifetime of the passport. In December the Rail Minister confirmed 11 owning groups have passports to bid: Abellio, Arriva, First, Go-Ahead, Govia, Keolis, MTR, National Express, Stagecoach, Trenitalia, and Virgin.

Bids for the new **East Anglia** franchise were submitted before Christmas and in June Abellio, First or National Express will be awarded the nine-year contract (with one-year extension option) which starts this October.

Consultation for the next **South West Trains** franchise closed in early-February. The DfT has announced only two groups short-listed for the contract starting in June 2017, Stagecoach and First. The Invitation to Tender (ITT) is expected this April. The South Western Franchise Competition Prospectus published by the DfT last November and January's 'new approach' prospectus from the DfT/TfL/Mayor of London refer to the creation of a separable business unit for inner London services, clearly indicating intent and a plan to transfer to TfL in 2020 once capacity works at Waterloo are complete. Hampton Court, Shepperton, Windsor & Eton Riverside are likely to be outer boundary stations.

Consultation for the next **West Midlands** franchise closes in late-March. The ITT is expected this July.

In a change to the advertised programme, the re-franchising process for the next **West Coast** contract, due to start in April 2018, has now been deferred to this March for non-passport holders, with the EoI in June and the ITT this November. Note the next franchise will be having to operate through building sites as HS2 construction works will impact the route to Birmingham.

The next **South Eastern** franchise is now firmly in the sights of TfL for expansion of London Overground. The Metro network is the likely focus with Dartford, Swanley and Sevenoaks as the outer boundary points. The two-year process to start a new franchise, and TfL concession, in June 2018 is due to begin this August.

The 'new approach' prospectus also includes the inner suburban services of the DfT's present **Thameslink-Southern-Great Northern** management contract as candidates for devolution, come contract renewal in September 2021 for which the process is due to begin in November 2019. Caterham, Tattenham Corner, Epsom/Epsom Downs, St. Albans, Welwyn Garden City, and Hertford North are likely boundary stations.

Passengers a bit more satisfied

The Autumn 2015 **National Rail Passenger Survey** published in January by Transport Focus recorded a welcome recovery when compared with Autumn 2014. Punctuality is the biggest influence on satisfaction, how delays are handled is biggest for dissatisfaction. See www.transportfocus.org.uk/research/rail-research

First the national/London and South East comparisons:

Overall satisfaction – national 83%, up 2%;

London & South East 82%, up 2%.

Overall satisfaction with station – national 81%, up 2%; London & South East 79%, up 1%.

Punctuality/reliability – national 78%, up 1%; London & South East 75%, no change.

Value for money for price of ticket – national 48%, up 2%; London & South East 43%, up 2%.

Sufficient room for all to sit/stand – national 65%, up 1%; London & South East 62%, no change.

Dealing with delays – national 39%, up 1%; London & South East 35%, up 1%.

Next, to our L&SE TOCs, with their national scores for overall satisfaction and national rankings [out of 26 operators, franchised and open access] and / for L&SE [out of 15, likewise]. [Note: Govia Thameslink Railway shown as four routes, and the addition of TfL Rail]:

Abellio Greater Anglia 81%, up 2%; 21st=/10th=
c2c 89%, no change; 8th=/3rd=

Chiltern Railways 91%, no change; 5th/2nd

Gatwick Express 80%, down 8%; 23rd/12th

Great Northern 84%, up 3%; 15th=/8th=

Great Western Railway 84%, up 3%; 15th=/8th=

Heathrow Connect 89%, up 4%; 8th=/3rd=

Heathrow Express 95%, up 1%; 2nd/1st

London Midland 86%, up 3%; 13th/6th

London Overground 88%, no change; 11th/5th

South West Trains 81%, up 2%; 21st=/10th=

Southeastern 75%, up 2%; 25th/14th

Southern 78%, no change; 24th/13th

TfL Rail 85%, up 9%; 14th/7th

Thameslink 73%, no change; 26th/15th



Familiar? 6-car Thameslink variant for Great Northern

A subscription-based consumer magazine also does a rail satisfaction survey. Published annually, it covers just 8 indicators and had a national sample size of only 6,986 in February 2016. The NRPS covers 36 indicators and is published twice a year, with a national sample size of 28,072 for the most recent Autumn 2015 survey. We follow the larger survey as having more comprehensive and representative results.

London chooses for 2016-20

As this newsletter is published so the pre-election 'purdah' period begins. Thursday 5 May 2016 will see local elections for the **Mayor of London**, and for the 25 Members of the **Greater London Assembly** who represent 14 constituencies, plus the 11 elected on a London-wide percentage basis. A once every two-decades event, the next London elections in 2020 will coincide with the next General Election.

There will be elections in May for 125 English Councils too, including a few unitary authorities and a number of District Councils in our regional branch area. All represent opportunities for members, strictly in their capacity as individual private citizens, to raise local rail matters with their local candidates. Railfuture's name will only appear with our 'official' publications and pronouncements, which members are encouraged to refer their local candidates to.

Our '**Rail Manifesto for London**' has 10 policy themes

- services the Mayor/TfL should take over
- improved service frequencies
- missing links, new stations and services
- improved stations and staffing
- accessibility
- fares, ticketing and ticket retailing
- visitors to London
- information
- punctuality/performance and compensation
- governance

The Manifesto can be found on our branch web page at www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East



London TravelWatch (the voice of London's transport users) has published its ten '*Transport users' priorities*' for the next mayoral term which are:

- 1 – sustained investment to meet London's ever-growing transport needs
- 2 – a road network that makes the best use of scarce capacity
- 3 – as many of London's rail services as possible co-ordinated by the Mayor
- 4 – reliable bus services that keep up with the pace of change
- 5 – simpler fares, better value for money and a fairer deal when things go wrong
- 6 – a co-ordinated approach to transport interchanges
- 7 – transport networks accessible to all
- 8 – reliable, accessible and timely information
- 9 – everyone able to travel without fear of crime or anti-social behaviour
- 10 – disruption effectively managed.

For much more, and to sign up for their e-newsletter, see www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/home

The London and South Coast Rail Corridor – one year later

As we start a new year, a quick review. It was the previous coalition government's final Budget last March in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer said this: "Lewes to Uckfield rail line study – The government will provide £100,000 for a further study into reopening the Lewes to Uckfield rail line." Then in his July Budget he said **"The government will extend the scope of the Lewes-Uckfield study to look at improving rail links between London and the south coast, including upgrades to existing routes, consideration of the Brighton Main Line corridor, and re-examination of the DfT's feasibility study on BML2."** (bold type as original) In the autumn consultants WSP|Parsons Brinckerhoff were appointed to carry out the study, and results are anticipated imminently (as we go to print).

What comes next?

- ~ the next step in our reinstatement journey begins when the transport study from WSP|PB is published, together with any recommendations and DfT decisions
- ~ the investment case will need strong justification
- ~ a broad partnership of stakeholders must identify the wider economic benefits to be unlocked by the transport infrastructure investment
- ~ a business case must be defined before this September for initial options to be included in Network Rail's Initial Industry Plan for Control Period 6, 2019-24

This approach is already familiar in East Sussex. It is in principle similar to the work being done to justify the upgrade of MarshLink to enable HS1 services from St. Pancras International to extend through Ashford International to Rye, Hastings and Bexhill. In that case Network Rail, under instruction from the Chancellor, are developing the transport case through the Kent Area Route Study; the County and two District Councils co-funded last October's report on the economic case.

Deliverable within a decade? 3 vital years ahead!

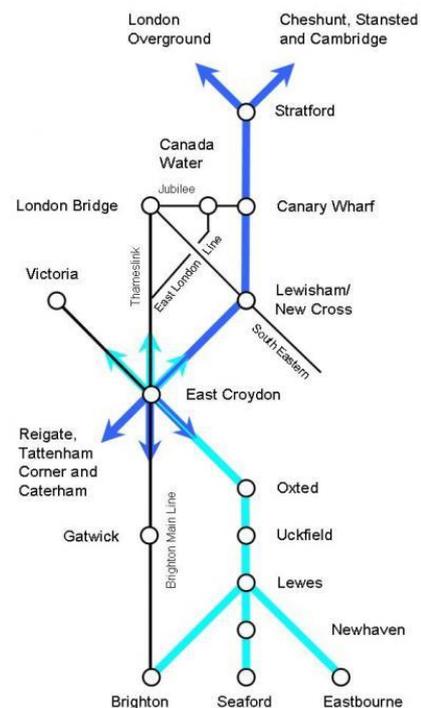
- ~ May '16 – Office of Rail and Road (ORR) hold first stakeholder consultation for CP6
- ~ July '16 – ORR stakeholder workshops
- ~ September '16 – Network Rail (NR) publish their CP6 Initial Industry Plan (IIP) for consultation
- ~ February '17 – ORR give advice to Ministers, and requirements for NR's Strategic Business Plan (SBP)
- ~ July '17 – DfT publishes High Level Output Specification (HLOS) and Statement of Funds Available (SoFA) for CP6
- ~ January '18 – NR publishes SBP, ORR consults on it
- ~ February '18 – ORR stakeholders' workshop on NR's SBP
- ~ June '18 – ORR publishes 'draft determination' on NR's SBP for consultation
- ~ October '18 – ORR publishes final determination
- ~ December '18 – NR publishes draft Delivery Plan for CP6, for consultation
- ~ March '19 – NR publishes final Delivery Plan, including Enhancements Delivery Plan, for CP6.

This timetable is based on the ORR's 'Periodic Review' for Control Period 5 and charts the key gateways **any** CP6 project will have to clear – IIP, HLOS, SBP, EDP.

Deliverable within a decade – with a new franchise

- ~ April '19 – implementation of CP6 Enhancements Delivery Plan begins
- ~ November '19 – Pre-Qualification Questionnaire for train operating bidders for the post-GTR franchise
- ~ February '20 – DfT invites Expressions of Interest for the post-GTR franchise
- ~ July '20 – DfT issues Invitation To Tender (ITT) to short-listed bidders
- ~ May '21 – DfT awards contract for post-GTR franchise (probably excluding Southern Metro and Great Northern Metro services devolved to TfL)
- ~ September '21 – GTR management contract due to expire (but extendable up to two years), new franchise due to begin
- ~ September '23 – latest possible end of GTR management contract and start of new franchise
- ~ March '24 – end of CP6 Enhancements Delivery
- ~ May '24 – start of new services on second main line!

These timetables chart alignments between timelines for the critical reinstatement of infrastructure between Uckfield and Lewes – as the first, or part of the first, incremental step towards Thameslink 2 – and the post-GTR franchise which would operate services using it.



The seductive attractions of a *grand projet* can all-too-easily distract from the practical realities of delivering it. The two timetables given are a pragmatic recognition of some of the stages to be completed. There will be many, many others, such as Network Rail's standard Governance for Railway Investment Projects, and local authorities' (including the South Downs National Park Authority) planning requirements. There has also to be recognition that human and material resources are no less important for project delivery than funding. Control Period 5 is now two years in, and already carries some 'overhang' from CP4. CP6 will be even more heavily populated with CP5 schemes, so competition for new schemes will be tighter than ever – even IF funding will not be an issue, Network Rail's capabilities for putting 'the pounds in the ground' clearly will continue to be.

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

This is the year for MarshLink!

A quick review to start the new year. In last July's Budget the Chancellor included these two paragraphs: 1.326 "... Critical to supporting the South East and the South Coast is investment in infrastructure.

1.327 "... **The Department for Transport has asked the rail industry to include extending High Speed 1 services to Hastings and Rye in the forthcoming Kent Route Study.** The outputs from this study will be presented to the government for consideration in 2016, with a view to this work being an option for funding after 2019." (bold as in original).

Then in October the report "*Economic Case: High Speed Rail to Hastings and Bexhill*" was given its public launch, and Network Rail held their first 'wider stakeholders' workshop for the draft Kent Area Route Study. Now the same 'three vital years' timetable (opposite page) applies to the MarshLink route enhancement as it does to the Uckfield-Lewes route reinstatement. Although the draft Kent Area Route Study is not expected to be published for consultation until September Network Rail expect to have their 'wish-list' ready for the ORR, and their own IIP (also due in September) before then. Kent County Council's 8th Rail Summit in mid-May will be expecting to hear!

Similar to but sooner than the 'new franchise' timetable opposite, the schedule for the new 'Integrated Kent' aka South Eastern franchise is due to start this year. The new franchise will run Javelins to Bexhill in CP6.

- ~ August '16 – Pre-Qualification Questionnaire for train operating bidders
- ~ November '16 – DfT invites Expressions of Interest (EoI) for the post-Southeastern franchise
- ~ April '17 – DfT issues Invitation To Tender (ITT) to short-listed bidders
- ~ February '18 – DfT awards contract for new franchise
- ~ June '18 – Southeastern franchise (extendable up to six months) due to expire, new franchise due to begin
- ~ December '18 – latest possible end of Southeastern franchise and start of new franchise.



3-car Turbostar at Brighton - future bimode to Ashford?

In November MarshLink Community Rail Partnership heard that Electrostar bimode trains, with a diesel engine under the centre carriage, could be delivered 14 months after a decision to go ahead. They would add capacity pending electrification of the line for Javelins.

How fitting that 2019 will be both the start of the Network Rail Control Period and franchise renewal process which should bring us Javelins across Romney Marsh, and the 50th anniversary of the year a Richard Marsh approved the closure of the line!

As Network Rail grapple with the technical options it's worth rehearsing the key outputs to be delivered:

- ~ a connection at Ashford International, with resignalling, between HS1 and MarshLink
- ~ line-speed improvements, from 60mph to 90mph between Ashford and Doleham, from 40mph to 60mph between Ore and Doleham, with re-signalling
- ~ safety measures at 9 road level crossings between Winchelsea and Ham Street and 26 foot crossings (eg divert the A259 to avoid two road level crossings)
- ~ an extended Rye passing loop, either west towards Winchelsea or east to Appledore to improve its junction
- ~ electrification (unless high-speed service is operated by a small sub-fleet of bimode trains!) Network Rail's national Electrification Strategy refresh is still awaited
- ~ acquisition of additional high-speed trains (for inclusion in the new franchise ITT for bidders)

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

THWART persistence pays!

The December 2015 timetable change marked the successful conclusion of a decade-long campaign by **Three Oaks & Winchelsea Action for Rail Transport** for the restoration of all-day services on Sundays.



Winchelsea station, 11.42 Sunday 13 December 2015

Since the December 2010 timetable's restoration of all-day Monday-Saturday services usage had recovered to 6912 at Three Oaks and 6640 at Winchelsea in 2013/14. The ORR's 2014/15 usage estimates came out just after December's timetable change, with good news as each station showed further growth – up to 8462 at Three Oaks and to 6846 at Winchelsea.

A next target will be all-day and every-day MarshLink services for Ore, a growing area of north-east Hastings which includes Ore Valley Sussex Coast College. This should be possible after the Ore-Doleham line-speed rises from the present 40mph to 60mph by 2019, re-investing the time saving in a station call. At present the links towards Rye and Ashford are tokenistic first and last trains, plus a handful of odd weekday peak fill-ins as the 'Rye shuttle' runs in and out of service.

PPM we know, but DPI, MTIN?

Public Performance Measure (PPM) is familiar as a measure of train service performance for punctuality and reliability, and the subject of much target-setting and monitoring. Network Rail's dedicated web page www.networkrail.co.uk/about/performance has a wealth of data, and also covers other measures such as Cancellation and significant lateness (CaSL), Average lateness, Right-time performance and Delay split (attribution). All fascinating and important stuff.

What of the reliability of the trains themselves, though? The former National Fleet Reliability Improvement Programme is now the ReFocus programme, run by ATOC (Association of Train Operating Companies). As Industry and Technology Editor for a professional monthly journal, Roger Ford (a Vice-President of ours) makes annual awards supporting the aim of ReFocus, the spread of best practice in train maintenance.

Why should this matter to us? Simply, train operators with well-maintained trains are less likely to suffer from poor PPM reports. As campaigners on behalf of rail users, we attend train operators' stakeholder meetings and Meet the Manager events for example, and so a knowledge and understanding of train fleet reliability can inform concerns about train service performance, especially around apportionment of 'delay split'.

The 'Golden Spanners' awards are based on technical incidents causing trains to be stopped for more than three minutes. High Miles per Technical Incident (MTIN) and low Delay minutes Per Incident (DPI) are the targets. So how did our operators' fleets perform?



Two of our region's five 'Golden Spanner' 2015 winners

South West Trains are star performers with high, and still improving, fleet reliability. **Southeastern** have all their train types improving, except a minor decline with Javelins. **Chiltern's** older Turbostars improved, but the loco-hauled sets had abysmally poor MTIN. **TfL Rail** vastly improved, in contrast to **LOROL's** share of the same formerly common fleet! Indeed **LOROL** suffered badly with other inherited trains too, their dual-voltage Capitalstars improved but the 3rd-rail sub-fleet slumped badly, as did their (and Chiltern) Class 172s. All **Great Western Railway** trains in our region were very poor, and declining. **c2c's** single fleet although good had dipped. **Abellio Greater Anglia's** loco-hauled sets had high and improving MTIN, as did the Stansted Express trains; their other electrics were poor and/or declining. **London Midland** had high MTIN. **Govia Thameslink Railway's** very mixed fleet turned out a very mixed performance of good and poor, rises and falls.

Branch AGM 2016 – Notice 2 of 2

The next **Annual General Meeting** of the London and South East Branch of Railfuture will be held in **London** on **Saturday 23 April 2016** at 14.00.

As is now customary, an **open morning meeting**, with speakers, is also planned for members and guests. This year's themes will include our '**Rail Manifesto for London**' as we have a once-in-four-years opportunity to influence the candidates for Mayor of London, who is Chair of the TfL Board, and for the London Assembly whose Transport Committee plays a key role in holding both the Mayor and Transport for London to account.

As featured in the previous newsletter, the four candidates for the parties currently represented on the Assembly – Zac Goldsmith, Sean Berry, Sadiq Khan, and Caroline Pidgeon, have been invited to address and discuss with us. The branch page of our website will carry the most up-to-date information available on our speakers as we approach Saturday 23 April.

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

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

In the **elections** for officers and other members of the coming year's branch committee, Electoral Returning Officer Dick Tyler received single nominations for three of the four principal officer posts and three nominations for the six others (Membership Secretary is unofficial).

The elected branch committee officers for 2016 are:
Chairman: Keith Dyall – proposed by Norman Bradbury, seconded by Howard Thomas;
Vice-Chairman: Roger Blake – proposed by Mike Turner, seconded by John Fowden;
Secretary: no nomination received;
Treasurer: Howard Thomas – proposed by Keith Dyall, seconded by Norman Bradbury;
Membership Secretary: Chris Page – proposed by Nigel Denton, seconded by Mike Turner.

The other elected branch committee members are:
* Norman Bradbury – proposed by Keith Dyall, seconded by Howard Thomas;
* Charles King – proposed by Chris Page, seconded by Graham Larkbey.

Other members are Division Conveners not already elected, namely Chris Fribbins and Ian Killbery for Kent and Nigel Denton for Sussex and Coastway, plus the editor of Railwatch Ray King.

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

L and SE Campaigns Calendar

We close with a review of our Branch's key campaign activities, since December's newsletter, plus a preview of some interesting/important events. Details of our consultation responses in www.railfuture.org.uk/submissions

In November we addressed **Uckfield and District Chamber of Commerce** on our 'Bridge the gap'/Thameslink 2 campaign, and we responded to **Hertfordshire County Council's** consultation on their **Transport Vision 2050**.

In December we responded to the **TfL** consultation on proposals for a major capacity upgrade of the Northern line's **Camden Town tube station**, and also to **East Sussex County Council's** consultation on the draft **Implementation Plan 2016/17-2020/21** for their **Local Transport Plan**. We also gave a presentation to the **Brighton Transport Partnership** on our 'Bridge the gap'/Thameslink 2 campaign, and responded to **Wealden District Council's** consultation on their **Local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations**.

In January Railfuture's Director of Policy Ian Brown submitted comments to the **National Infrastructure Commission** headed by Lord Adonis on **London's Transport System**. We responded to TfL's third consultations on **Crossrail 2** and **Barking Riverside** <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/rail/barking-riverside-extension-consult> We also presented to the Board of **Surrey and Sussex Association of Local Councils** on our 'Bridge the gap'/Thameslink 2 campaign.

In February Railfuture's Head of Passenger Group Chris Fribbins submitted comments to the **DfT** on the next **South Western franchise**. We responded to **Lewes District Council's** consultation on their **Council Plan for 2016-20** and we responded to TfL's consultation on **new river crossings in east and south-east London** - at Gallions Reach and Belvedere https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/rivercrossings/east-of-silvertown/consult_view

By mid-March we shall have responded to the joint **DfT/TfL** consultation **New approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East** <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/rail-passenger-services-in-london-and-the-south-east-a-new-approach> and contributed to the Railfuture response on the next **West Midlands franchise** <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/passengers-asked-for-views-on-next-west-midlands-rail-franchise> while Head of Infrastructure & Networks Group Chris Austin will respond to the **DfT** on the **Hendy Report** <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/sir-peter-hendy-report-re-planning-of-network-rails-investment-programme>

In April Chris Austin will respond to **Network Rail's** latest consultation on **Western Rail Link to Heathrow** <http://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news/communities-views-sought-as-plans-for-a-new-rail-link-to-london-heathrow-progress>

Penny for **your** thoughts? Let a branch officer know!

Forthcoming dates for your diaries and calendars

Find further details in www.railfuture.org.uk/events

Saturday/Sunday 19/20 March Railfuture stall 69 at Alexandra Palace rail festival.

Monday 21 March Free evening talk in Maidenhead – "Extensions to the Underground – past, present and proposed".

Tuesday 22 March L and SE Branch committee.

Saturday 2 April Herts and Beds Division.

Monday 4 April Western Rail Link to Heathrow consultation closes.

Thursday 7 April Sussex and Coastway Division.

Saturday 16 April Thames Valley branch AGM in Oxford with guest speaker Chris Austin OBE.

Monday 18 April Final copy date for your letters and articles to appear in April's *railwatch* 148. Send them direct to editor@railwatch.org.uk

Saturday 23 April L & SE Branch members' meeting (morning) and Annual General Meeting (afternoon).

Saturday 30 April Final copy date for *railse* 132, and for London & SE branch Local Action in *railwatch* 148. Send campaign news to rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk

Saturday 30 April Final date for members-only discount for summer conference on Borders Railway.

Thursday 5 May Sussex and Coastway Division.

Wednesday 11 May Eastern Division.

Sunday 15 May National Rail timetable change.

Saturday 21 May National AGM, Milton Keynes.

Saturday 14 May Kent Division.

Tuesday 24 May London and SE Branch committee.

Thursday 2 June Sussex and Coastway Division.

Saturday 18 June Summer conference, Scotland

late-June Transport Focus publishes results of Spring 2016 National Rail Passenger Survey.

Tuesday 5 July Free evening talk in Lewes – "Crossrail – moving towards the operational railway".

Saturday 9 July Uckfield Festival's Big Day, with Railfuture stall in Luxford Field, Town Hall Approach.

Wednesday 13 July Eastern Division.

Thursday 21 July Sussex and Coastway Division.

Full details always in www.railfuture.org.uk/events

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

Eastern [s. Essex and n. & e. London] – meets on the second Wednesday of odd-numbered months, at 18.30 in **Stratford**, E15 4PH – next on **11 May** and **13 July**. Division Convener is Howard Thomas (opposite). See www.railfuture.org.uk/Eastern

Herts & Beds – next meet **Saturday 2 April**, in **St.Albans**, AL1 4JP. Division Convener is Keith Dyall (opposite). See www.railfuture.org.uk/Herts+and+Beds

Kent – meets quarterly on the third Saturday, in varying Kent venues – next at 14.00 on **14 May** in **Faversham**. Contact Division co-Conveners Chris Fribbins at chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk or at 42 Quickrells Avenue, Cliffe, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7RB, or tel: 01634 566256; and Ian Killbery at ian.killbery@railfuture.org.uk or at 11 Western Road, Deal, Kent, CT14 6RX, or tel: 01304 362569. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Kent



Surrey – meets twice-yearly, recently with Sussex & Coastway. Division Convener is Chris Page (opposite). See www.railfuture.org.uk/Surrey

Sussex & Coastway – meets monthly, usually on the first Thursday at 18.00, in varying Sussex venues. Next on **7 April**, then **5 May**, **2 June**, **21 July**. Contact our Minutes Secretary Michael Davies at michael.j.davies21@btinternet.com or at 17 Linden Grove, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2EE, or tel. 01444 482024. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Sussex+and+Coastway

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

The copy deadline for **railse** issue 132, due to be published in June 2016, will be Saturday 30 April 2016
Items for this newsletter and our branch Local Action column in **railwatch** to be sent to rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk



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Four neighbouring branches

These and other branches' websites, with their **events** and **newsletters**, in www.railfuture.org.uk/branches

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

Board liaison is via Director Jerry Alderson.

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

Board liaison via national Finance Officer David Harby.

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

Board liaison is via Director Roger Blake (below).

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

Board liaison is via Director Stewart Palmer.

Branch committee meetings

Open for any of our members to attend, as observers, held at 14.00 on alternate fourth Tuesdays in London. The next will be on **22 March**, **24 May** and **26 July**. Please give advance notice to our Secretary, below.

London and SE Branch officers

Branch Chairman: Keith Dyall, 26 Millway, Mill Hill, London, NW7 3RB.
tel: 020 8959 7147; keith.dyall@railfuture.org.uk

Vice-Chairman: Roger Blake, 70 Dynevor Road, Stoke Newington, London, N16 0DX.
tel: 020 7254 1580; roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk

Secretary: Graham Morrison, 13 Listria Park, Stoke Newington, London, N16 5SW.
tel: 020 7502 1062; graham.morrison@railfuture.org.uk

Treasurer: Howard Thomas, 24 South Primrose Hill, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RG.
tel: 01245 280503; howard.thomas@railfuture.org.uk

Membership Secretary: Chris Page, 'Clara Vale', Thibet Road, Sandhurst, Berkshire, GU47 9AR.
tel: 01344 778643; chris.page@railfuture.org.uk