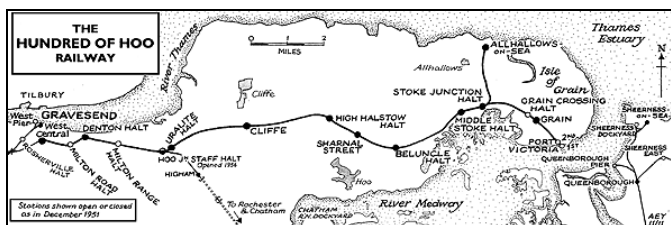


The *independent* campaign for a bigger better British passenger and freight rail network

Hoo Peninsula and Isle of Grain

Situated between the Thames and Medway rivers, there's a **freight-only branch line** off the London-facing Hoo Junction which is between Gravesend and Higham. Historically, Hoo meant spur of land, and Grain meant gravel, while the Isle (like Thanet) is no longer an island. Administratively, most of the Peninsula is within the unitary authority of Medway, with the Gravesham District of Kent County to the west. Formerly, the line was opened as The Hundred of Hoo Railway, a 'hundred' being an administrative division.



In our response a year ago to the consultation on **Network Rail's draft Kent Area Route Study** we said "This branch may be a solution to major housing development proposals on the Hoo Peninsula in the Medway Local Plan – there is only one road on and off the peninsula and existing traffic volumes are already high. A spur from the branch towards Strood would also be extremely useful for freight to avoid Gravesend/Dartford and Lewisham – without the need to reverse the train at Hoo Junction. This spur could also be used by a future Hoo Peninsula passenger service to access the spare capacity at Strood (to a shared platform 3)".

Medway Council's Local Plan to 2035 assesses a need for about an additional 30,000 new homes, but central government appears to want that to be about 38,000. Whatever the figure, it's around 100,000 extra people, and while not all would or could be accommodated on the peninsula a significant proportion would have to be, with all the travel needs and transport infrastructure which that inevitably implies.

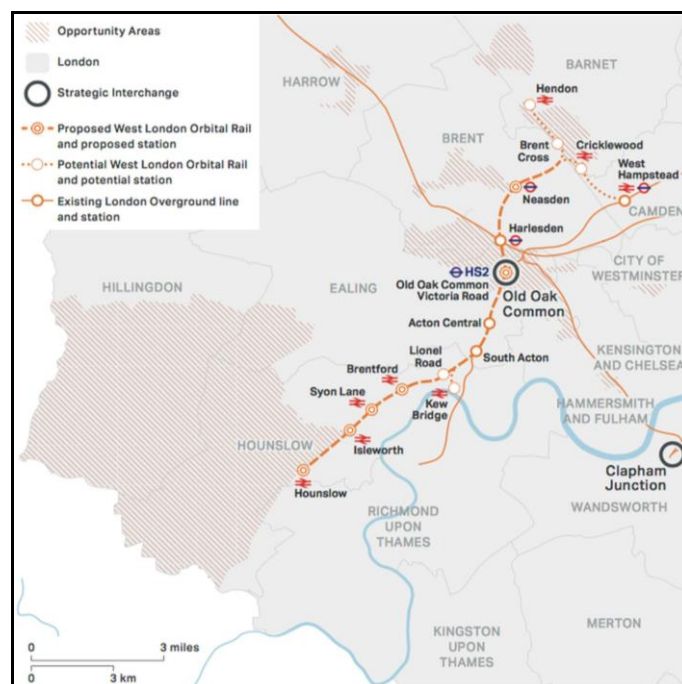
If 2035 sounds far away, it's only as far ahead as the Millennium is behind us! While we await (still!) the final Kent Area Route Study, the new shadow sub-national devolved transport body Transport for the South East, which includes Medway and Kent, has been consulting to mid-June on its draft Economic Connectivity Review <https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/strategy/ecr/> At its launch on 8 May TfSE was awarded £1million by the DfT for a transport strategy "to improve connectivity and drive economic growth." Railfuture will argue for new Hoo housing to have a Hoo passenger railway.

London's next orbital rail link

Another, lightly-used, **freight line** with potential for regular passenger services traverses inner north-west London. The 4-mile/6.4-km Dudding Hill line, between Acton Wells on the North London Line's Richmond route and a delta junction on the Midland Main Line just north of Cricklewood, is now the subject of a proposal in the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy 2018, on pages 230-231. It would be a '5-4-3-2' route for the Zones it would pass through, and serve the emerging strategic interchange at Old Oak Common, mirrored by those at Stratford, Lewisham and Clapham Junction.

Don't drop your Hs! **Hounslow-West Hampstead/Hendon** (and **Harlesden**) are the ones to remember for stations served, and **Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, and Hounslow** are among the seven London Boroughs connected which include Barnet, Brent and Ealing – coming together in the West London Alliance.

The London Plan's designation of Opportunity Areas, areas with particular development potential at Old Oak Common, Park Royal and Cricklewood/Brent Cross, make the compelling case for this link left hibernating to awake and provide the scale (8tph on completion) of public transport the scale of new development requires. Railfuture supports this project for creating new travel choices to improve connectivity and adding capacity to enable sustainable growth, both supporting mode shift.



Proposal 88 / Fig. 41, Mayor's Transport Strategy 2018

Rail enhancements – new route

By now we're aware that Network Rail's Delivery Plan for 2019-24 (Control Period 6) will primarily be about Operations, Maintenance and Renewals (OMR), with enhancements likely to be limited to little more than schemes carried over from CP5. Last October's DfT Statement of Funds Available for CP6 (£48bn, of which £35bn is direct grant) put heavy emphasis on renewals.

Network Rail's regulator the ORR has noted that CP6 will see a major change in the funding of rail projects, as access to the Regulatory Asset Base will no longer be available for either Network Rail, now a government agency, or investors; government-funded investment will in future be via HM Treasury grant. Third-party funding, private or public, will be crucial, and investors will now need to either fund their projects themselves (raising their own money or accessing their own finance) or explore alternatives with the DfT.

In March the Office of Rail and Road published "*Facilitating new investment in the rail network*": <http://orr.gov.uk/news-and-media/orr-blog/2018/orr-is-open-for-business-facilitating-new-investment-in-the-rail-network> At the same time the DfT launched "*Rail network enhancements pipeline – a new approach*" <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-network-enhancements-pipeline> for proposals that require government funding, and issued guidance for "*Rail market-led proposals*" – enhancement proposals that are financially credible without government support <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-market-led-proposals> Our regional branch area is expected to see the 'pilot' scheme – a Heathrow airport rail link from the south. Following March's Call for Ideas and two Rail Investment Opportunity Days, the DfT requires submission of initial proposals by 31 July.

On 12 June the ORR began consultation, to 31 August, on its draft determination on the Strategic Business Plans for CP6 which Network Rail had published in February. On 31 October the ORR will publish its Final Determination to Network Rail, who in December will then consult on their draft Delivery Plan for CP6.

Just when we thought we'd all got a 'GRIP' along come the Ds! From Develop-Design-Deliver have emerged two more – Determine to start and Deploy to conclude! Needless to say, the 8-stage Governance for Railway Investment Projects process and the 5 Ds don't align! See <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/article1783-Market-led-proposals> where we try to make sense of it all.

A Network Development Fund

In May Railfuture, with Campaign for Better Transport, submitted a 4000-name letter to the DfT asking for a new fund to support early stages of network expansion schemes. This follows DfT's 'Strategic Vision for Rail' in November and July's "*Expanding the Railways*". See www.railfuture.org.uk/article1781-Rail-reopening-fund It mirrors the DfT's New Stations Fund, now in its second round. In both cases schemes have to bring demonstrable economic, as well as environmental and social, benefits to the communities they plan to serve.

Read more in www.railfuture.org.uk/Missing+Links

Rail franchises, direct awards, concessions, management contracts – now partnerships!

And that's not to mention the 'open access' operators, or the DfT's 'Operator of Last Resort' – a consortium of three private sector companies. This bewildering array of models for running Britain's passenger rail services does indeed tax powers of comprehension.

The DfT's current July 2017 **Rail Franchise Schedule** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-franchise-schedule> is due for replacement, and not just because it's now an annual publication. The **InterCity East Coast** operation has just changed, with effect from Sunday 24 June, from Virgin/Stagecoach to the DfT's Operator of Last Resort's London North Eastern Railway. This precedes the establishment of a new East Coast Partnership, in which our regional branch will have an interest in the pattern of services calling at Stevenage station, marking its 45th birthday on 25 July.

When "*Connecting people: a strategic vision for rail*" was launched a week after last November's Budget, the Transport Secretary confirmed the splitting of the **Thameslink/Southern/Great Northern** management contract from its currently-planned conclusion in September 2021. Formal processes are currently not due to start until November 2019 but the contract does include an option for extension by up to 26 (4-week) 'reporting periods' so may run on as long as to 2023. However, the advent of the East Coast Partnership has reopened the devolution debate, with the prospect of Great Northern 'metro' services transferring to the Mayor of London/TfL, and others into the new LNER.

The three short-listed bidders for the new **West Coast Partnership** received their Invitations To Tender (ITT) in March. Submission of their Best and Final Offers (BaFOs) is due by 13 July, contract award is due next May and the new franchise starts in September 2019. Will our regional branch be able to look forward to more InterCity-style services using Watford Junction?

The ITT for the new **East Midlands** franchise was published in early-June. Bidders' BaFOs must be submitted by 5 September. Contract award is now planned for March/April next year. The new franchise will start on 18 August 2019. First/Trenitalia have withdrawn their bid, leaving Abellio, Arriva and the incumbent operator Stagecoach in the contest.

The next **Great Western** franchise is already assumed to have a year's extension of the current Direct Award, expiring March 2019, until April 2020, and now with a new negotiated two-year Direct Award planned to 2022. More immediately, in August the **Heathrow Express** becomes part of Great Western's operations, with a modified sub-fleet of new GWR Electrostars replacing the now 20-years old CAF/Siemens class 332 trains.

BaFOs for the **South Eastern** franchise submitted by the three short-listed bidders in mid-March now see a quiet time until contract award in November. The new franchise is planned to start at 02.00 on 1 April 2019.

Franchise dates in www.railfuture.org.uk/Rail+dates

Expanding Community Railways

ACoRP, (Association of Community Rail Partnerships) has a new website: <https://communityrail.org.uk/>



Meanwhile the Sussex Community Rail Partnership <http://www.sussexcrp.org/> continues to go from strength to strength. One additional and one extended community rail line were announced in March.

The additional line is West Coastway in West Sussex, to be launched formally soon. The extended line is the recently-formed North Downs line CRP, already covering Reigate-Guildford in Surrey and now to cover Guildford-Reading too. It will be launched in Guildford in July and traverses parts of Surrey, Hampshire and three unitary authorities of the former Berkshire – Bracknell Forest, Wokingham, and Reading.

West Coastway stations and their 2016/17 usage are:

Hove	2,043,206
Portslade	950,808
Fishersgate	92,456
Southwick	261,172
Shoreham-by-Sea	1,138,952
Lancing	751,372
East Worthing	345,484
Worthing	2,104,272
West Worthing	620,736
Durrington-on-Sea	541,740
Goring-by-Sea	469,302
Angmering	699,978

All stations are served by Southern, and Hove, Shoreham-by-Sea and Worthing by the occasional Great Western Railway trains. The Arun Valley line CRP covers Ford, Barnham, Chichester, Fishbourne, Bosham, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton stations.

North Downs line stations and their 2016/17 usage are:

Wanborough	106,690
Ash	279,244
North Camp	394,970
Farnborough North	657,353
Blackwater	526,282
Sandhurst	155,948
Crowthorne	301,880
Wokingham	2,444,566
Winnersh	522,978
Winnersh Triangle	469,354
Earley	614,532

All but two stations (Winnersh Triangle and Earley) are served by Great Western Railway trains, and Wanborough and Winnersh only have limited GWR services. Wanborough, Ash, Wokingham, Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle, and Earley are served by trains from South Western Railway. And CrossCountry run a Mondays-Saturdays Guildford-Newcastle and return!

Sussex CRP's 2017 Review "Working in partnership to connect communities with places and opportunities" is viewable here: <http://www.sussexcrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CRP-final-webpdf.pdf>

Latest links from ACoRP's monthly "Train on Line":

<https://communityrail.org.uk/east-grinstead-station-visitors-to-receive-a-pictorial-welcome/> East Grinstead.

<https://communityrail.org.uk/new-blue-plaque-unveiled-at-sussex-station/> Seaford station gets a blue plaque.

<https://communityrail.org.uk/rayleigh-hockley/> Southend Victoria line stations host three-way team-building.

<https://communityrail.org.uk/borehamwood-all-change/> 'All change!' exhibition at station for Elstree film studios

<https://communityrail.org.uk/redhill-ymca/> Redhill waiting room photography project with partner YMCA.

<https://communityrail.org.uk/abbey-line-schools/> Abbey line stations adopted by local schools.

<https://communityrail.org.uk/critic18/> Community Rail in the city day saw CRPs from across England in London.



See latest report 'Community Rail and Social Inclusion':

<https://communityrail.org.uk/resources-ideas/reports-resources-tools/>

Tap <https://communityrail.org.uk/news/train-online-sign> to get "Train on Line" direct to your Inbox each month.

A Gatwick – Oxford service?



Ex-Thameslink trains to return to Brighton Main Line!

Great Western Railway have announced tri-mode trains for their Reading-Oxford and Reading-Gatwick services. Railfuture advocates joining up some! GWR has a franchise commitment to run 3tph on the North Downs line; an hourly through service could be one.

TfSE rail: Brighton-Falmer-Lewes-Uckfield-Crowborough-Tunbridge W



In early-May **Transport for the South East** launched a draft **Economic Connectivity Review** for comment: <https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/strategy/ecr/> This has been the first step in developing a 30-year Transport Strategy to 2050 for the new, devolved sub-national transport body, currently in shadow mode and expected to become formally established in 2020.

The core building-block identified is strategic corridors; the Review lists 22 across the sub-region stretching between Berkshire and Kent. While they focus on established transport corridors eg A23-M23/Brighton Mainline, A22/Brighton Mainline and East Coastway Line, they have omitted what we consider to be potential economic growth corridors such as Gatwick Airport-Medway Towns via Tonbridge and Maidstone, and Brighton-Tunbridge Wells via Falmer, Lewes, Uckfield, and Crowborough.

The final version of the Review is expected to be agreed by the TfSE Board this July, with the final Strategy completed at the end of 2019. Railfuture will be seeking to exert its independent influence on both!

Ahead of the May launch event, a local MP on the Commons Transport Committee, Bexhill & Battle's Huw Merriman, secured a debate in Westminster Hall in April to raise the profile of TfSE. In preparation, the House of Commons Library had produced this <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CDP-2018-0100> as a body of evidence.

Also in April, Railfuture was invited to make a presentation to and have a discussion with Lewes District Council's Scrutiny Committee on the Lewes-Uckfield rail link. Taking our cue from last year's London and South Coast Rail Corridor Study and its suggested '*new approach to Lewes-Uckfield*', we drew attention to the opportunity presented by the need to accommodate significant additional – and currently-unplanned – housing growth, in need of sustainable transport infrastructure, to contribute to the case for reinstating a rail link between the two existing towns. Clearly, to lend the strongest support to the case for reinstatement, the scale and location of such new housing growth would have to be such that when tested against all of the potentially-available options for meeting its strategic transport needs, and in the most sustainable way, the new rail link would emerge from that assessment as the best. Put another way, this points to the need for new housing growth between Lewes and Uckfield, and on a scale and in a location that a new rail link can justifiably be aligned to serve it. This is not necessarily reinstating all of a former route!

See more at www.railfuture.org.uk/Uckfield+Lewes

New approach to rail enhancements

Two local MPs introduced the Transport Secretary to **London & Southern Counties Railways Consortium** 18 months ago now; see <http://www.londonscr.co.uk/> We have welcomed this initiative as bringing significant additional resources to bear on developing the concept of additional connectivity and capacity between the capital city and a coastal city, including corridors north and east of the capital. For those reasons Railfuture's chosen working title is **Thameslink 2** as it conveys the core message about cross-London links; by contrast the Brighton Main Line terminates at buffer stops in London Victoria and London Bridge stations, which unavoidably requires interchange onto other networks. We look forward to news from the Consortium on their work and its alignment with the DfT's new Market-Led Proposals, including submission of any initial proposals by 31 July, and now with TfSE's Economic Connectivity Review. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Thameslink+2

Meanwhile, the traditional way of enhancing services saw the May timetable changes unable to deliver the full offer seen in earlier drafts, reported in December's *railse* no.138. In direct responses to consultations, the early first weekday 'up' service has been retained, and the hour-earlier first Sunday services introduced. The trio of small stations – Ashurst, Cowden, Hever – are the beneficiaries of additional services resulting from the new all-trains/all-stations stopping pattern. An anomaly is their omission from the last 'down' weekday service, unlike their Saturday and Sunday equivalents! Uckfield and Buxted users continue to be exasperated by terminations at Crowborough during perturbations, wishing East Croydon to be the substitute in 'up' trains.

Loadings counted in-train by a Railfuture member on the very first new Sunday service from Uckfield were 12 on board from Uckfield, 25 on board leaving Buxted, 43 on board leaving Crowborough, 48 on board leaving Eridge, and 61 on board leaving Edenbridge Town. For the first new train that's considered by rail user groups to be a highly-respectable result, even though any abstraction from the next service is unknown.



Sundays from 20 May, new 1hr-earlier service at 09.34

The first Local Plan for **South Downs National Park** was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government in May. See <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/national-park-local-plan/> Final adoption is expected this autumn.

Read coverage in previous issues of newsletter *railse* in www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East

TfSE rail: Eastbourne-Bexhill-Hastings-Rye-London St.Pancras Int

TfSE's draft **Economic Connectivity Review**

<https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/strategy/ecr/> includes reference to the A259/East Coastway Line, and to the A21/Hastings Line, as two of its 22 strategic corridors. It is noteworthy that both, which converge on Hastings, and also the A22/Brighton Mainline and East Coastway Line corridor with apparent reference to the Eastbourne area, are all singled out as 'corridors supporting deprived communities' in a separate Review chapter 8 on Coastal Communities. This reflects the work of the South East Local Economic Partnership (SELEP) <http://www.southeastlep.com/activities/coastal> which is one of five in the TfSE area. (Believe it or not, the Terms of Reference for the Coastal Communities Working Group carry an important 'small is beautiful' intervention by Railfuture, in its Aims and Objectives!)

The two pages of text in that Chapter 8 give further valuable argument in support of our strategic objective of improving connectivity by reducing journey times between the east of East Sussex and the capital city through rail transport investment. While Hastings, and Eastbourne, are identified as key labour markets both are indicated as having high levels of self-containment. This can be an indicator of low levels of productivity, and prosperity, arising from poor connectivity.



"The MarshLink/HS1 link is there, Transport Secretary"

Last November Network Rail's Andrew Wood showed the Transport Secretary where, just west of Ashford station, new crossovers could be incorporated in planned track renewals to connect HS1 with platform 2, which like platform 1 already connects with MarshLink. The profile and level of commitment to this work, which could be completed over the Christmas 2020/New Year 2021 holidays, indicates an unstoppable momentum. The new South Eastern franchise operator would be grateful for the ability to run Javelins from Folkestone to London via platform 2 rather than the congested platform 5, which will give MarshLink passengers a quick and easy cross-platform interchange.

That second step in improving coastal-capital links will follow the first taken this May with the new Southern timetable giving reduced connection times at Ashford, improving the reality and perception of shorter journey times. The new South Eastern franchise operator will introduce their own new timetable in December 2022.

Find out more at www.railfuture.org.uk/Marshlink

The third and probably most expensive next step will be to upgrade, in various ways and stages, the route between Ashford and Eastbourne. The specification must achieve capability for 2tph each way all-day and reduced journey times with line-speeds of up to 90mph.



Above, Star (l) and East Guldeford (r) level crossings on the A259 – with four trains to cross every hour of every day from before 6am to after midnight. This contrasts with the planned level crossing on the A21 near Roberstbridge. The Kent & East Sussex Railway, planning to extend to Robertsbridge, currently operates usually 10, occasionally 16, trains per day, during some days of the year, mostly during school holidays, starting after the morning peak period and finishing by 6pm. For MarshLink the challenge is to make the compelling economic case for the scale of track upgrade required.

Talk of trains and their traction, rather than tracks and the transactions needed to secure them, is premature.

Ashford has earned its spurs



"This is going into Europe - why? Haven't they heard?"

Amidst considerable fanfare on 3 April the first 200mph Eurostar e320 service called at Ashford International. The tracks connecting platforms 3 and 4 with HS1 (the spurs) had received a signalling modification to make them compatible with the second-generation class 374 trains, not equipped to use any off-HS1 lines in Kent as their predecessor class 373 had been for access to London Waterloo International. The delight has been brief as a technical hitch, not apparent on test, required the temporary reinstatement of class 373 operation.

Although still limited in number the full Eurostar service to and from Paris and Brussels is back in operation, a valuable selling-point for potential new businesses and residents along the MarshLink-East Coastway corridor.

On 4 April the first direct London-Amsterdam service ran, but as that is in toe-to-toe competition with airlines there is no realistic prospect of it calling at Ashford.

Read coverage in previous issues of newsletter *raillse* in www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East

Angel Road > Meridian Water

Despite the Greenwich Meridian lying to the east of the Lea Valley and closely following the Chingford branch line north from Wood Street via Highams Park, a new development on the Valley's west side borrows its name. Next May it will bestow the name on London's next new station, the first in our regional branch area since Southend Airport opened seven years ago.

Early days of the Stratford-Tottenham Hale-Angel Road (STAR) project, to deliver up to 4tph all-day/every-day services to support the new development and inspired by Railfuture's Fighting Fund-supported 2012 report **Lea Valley Rail**, assumed Angel Road station would be retained and reconfigured with improved access. Evolution of the project has concluded that a new station on a nearby site is much to be preferred. We shall therefore find ourselves in the unusual position of supporting a station closure! Angel Road station's highest usage since 1997/98, when current records began, was 85,770 in 2013/14, slipping to just 33,544 in ORR's estimates for 2016/17, then London's lowest. See www.railfuture.org.uk/CLUA-JRC+Report



In May the two-year reopened, New Station Fund-supported, Lea Bridge was a backdrop to help make our case for a **Network Development Fund**. See www.railfuture.org.uk/article1781-Rail-reopening-fund

Panting by numbers, says WHO

Fine particles are among the latest manifestations of dangerously dirty air to be put under the microscope. The WHO's latest **State of Global Air Report 2018** <https://www.stateofglobalair.org/report> shows that our regional branch area had five of the 'Dirty Thirty', the British built-up areas identified as exceeding the dangerous 10 micrograms per cubic metre, in 2015. They are Gillingham at 13, Grays at 12, and London, Southend-on-Sea, and Storrington (between Horsham and Worthing) all at 11. Also Brighton, Eastbourne, Harlington (neighbour, Heathrow Airport) and Stanford-le-Hope are our four of the 'Filthy Fifteen' on 10 µg/m³.

Railfuture's response? The biggest single contribution to be made by rail towards achieving environmental improvements, of all types, is to enable ever more passenger journeys, and more freight, to travel by rail. It matters less what the means of propulsion of the trains is. Investment in capacity and connectivity will deliver more environmental benefit than electrification!

See <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/clean-air-strategy-consultation/>

Developing preserved lines/ heritage rail - tale of two valleys

Spa Valley Railway services are now running through to Eridge on Southern's London Bridge-Uckfield line on every day of its heritage operation, and on many mid-week days during June, July and August as well as at weekends: <http://www.heritage-railways.com/spa.php>

Rother Valley Railway's Robertsbridge Junction-Bodiam extension, the subject of a current application which Railfuture is supporting, will give the Kent and East Sussex Railway to and from Tenterden a mainline interchange: <http://www.heritage-railways.com/rvr.php> and <http://www.heritage-railways.com/kesr.php>

The Purbeck Line has some through South Western Railway trains to Corfe Castle every Saturday this summer: <http://www.heritage-railways.com/swan.php>

Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway reopen their link to be able to interchange with the Chiltern line, 15 August: <http://www.heritage-railways.com/cprp.php>

Local election results from May

Of the 150 national contests, 56 were in our regional branch area, as identified in the previous newsletter. There were changes of overall control in just six: four London Boroughs – Barnet, Kingston-upon-Thames, Richmond-upon-Thames, and Tower Hamlets – plus Basildon and Mole Valley.

Branch AGM 2018 – report-back

The formal business of the AGM was preceded by three presentations on this year's theme of **Light Rail**. **KenEx Thames Transit** – a Lower Thames Crossing – and an East Anglian example – **Cambridge Connect** – were followed by an energetic round-up from the Chair of **UK Tram's** Promotions Group. The presentations, and the full Agenda and all reports for the AGM, can all be found on our branch page of the Railfuture website.

At the first meeting of our new branch committee, just days before the General Data Protection Regulation took effect on 25 May, Neil Middleton stepped up to be the branch Data Controller. Other '**situations vacant**' are a Membership Co-ordinator/'welcome host' for new members, a Media Co-ordinator, and branch Secretary. Now don't be shy! This could be your chance to shine!

Our rail development campaigning for 2018/19 will mainly be through our Divisions. Each has at least one: **Eastern** – new Essex County Rail Strategy
Herts & Beds - Midland Main Line timetable, next East Midlands franchise
Kent - Hoo Peninsula railway, KenEx Thames Transit
London Metro - West London Line service frequency
Surrey - North Downs line, Heathrow Southern Railway
Sussex & Coastway - MarshLink/East Coastway, Uckfield line upgrade/extension, Thameslink 2.

www.railfuture.org.uk/Current+London+and+South+East+campaigns

London & SE Campaigns Calendar

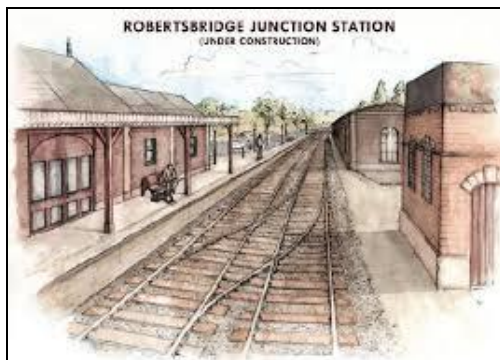
This www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East includes **current consultations** of specific and general interest to our London and South East region.

This www.railfuture.org.uk/Consultation+responses features our various submissions.

The **DfT's** consultation on **Future of Community Rail Strategy** closed on 28 January. On 5 April the DfT published a summary of responses received. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-community-rail-strategy>

The **ORR's** consultation **Improving Assisted Travel** closed on 2 February. On 30 April the ORR published a consultation summary and next steps and announced the creation of an assisted travel advisory group. See <http://orr.gov.uk/news-and-media/press-releases/2018/assisted-travel-advisory-group-created-by-rail-regulator> Railfuture has been invited to meet!

Network Rail's draft **East Coast Main Line Route Study** closed on 16 March. See 'LNE & EM planning' in <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/long-term-planning/>



Rother Valley Railway's application to the DfT for an Order under the Transport & Works Act to construct, operate and maintain a new railway between **Bodiam and Robertsbridge** was published on 20 April. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bodiam-to-robertsbridge-junction-order-transport-and-works-act-order> Comments closed on 31 May.

Transport for the South East's draft **Economic Connectivity Review** was published at the launch of TfSE on 8 May. Comments closed on 19 June. See <https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/strategy/ect/>

Network Rail's final round of consultation on **Western Rail Access to Heathrow (WRATH)** started on 11 May and closed on 22 June. See <https://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news/have-your-say-on-improving-rail-links-to-heathrow-from-the-west-1>

DEFRA's Air quality: draft Clean Air strategy 2018 was published on 22 May, and closes on 14 August. See <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/clean-air-strategy-consultation/>

See www.railfuture.org.uk/Consultation+responses

Forthcoming calendar/diary dates

Check out these two: www.railfuture.org.uk/events and www.railfuture.org.uk/Rail+dates - all you need to know

Saturday 23 June Our national conference in Carlisle.

Tuesday 26 June Free evening Railway Quiz 2018, in London.

Saturday 30 June Herts & Beds Division, St. Albans.

Thursday 5 July Campaign for Better Transport, London group.

Saturday 7 July Railfuture's *Bridge the gap* stall at Uckfield Festival's annual Big Day at Luxford Field, off Civic Approach, High Street, Uckfield TN22 1QX.

Saturday 7 July Free morning visit to Crossrail's Whitechapel station.

Wednesday 11 July Eastern Division, Stratford.

Tuesday 17 July Free evening talk in London on The impact of metros in the world's great cities.

Thursday 19 July Sussex & Coastway Division.

Friday 27 July Free evening Rail Trail 2018, London.

Monday 30 July Final copy date for *raise* 141, and London & SE branch Local Action in *railwatch* 157. Send news to londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk

Saturday 18 August Kent Division.

Saturday 25 August Final copy date for your letters, articles, pictures to appear in October's *railwatch* 157. Send them direct to editor@railwatch.org.uk

Friday 30 August Final date for members-only 'early-bird' bookings for Reading conference, 10 November. Book online at www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences

Saturday 1 September Closing date for entries to Railfuture's annual Rail User Group Awards. See www.railfuture.org.uk/RUG+awards

Thursday 6 September Sussex & Coastway Division.

Tuesday 11 September London group of Campaign for Better Transport.

Wednesday 12 September Eastern Division.

Saturday 29 September Railfuture East Anglia branch open meeting, Norwich.

Thursday 4 October Sussex & Coastway Division.

Saturday 10 November Railfuture's annual national autumn conference, in Reading, with presentation of RUG Awards. See www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences

Up-to-date details in www.railfuture.org.uk/events

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

Eastern [s. Essex and n. & e. London] – meets second Wednesday of odd-numbered months, at 18.30 in **Stratford**, E15 4PH – next on **11 July**, then **12 September**. Division Convener is Howard Thomas (opposite). See www.railfuture.org.uk/Eastern

Herts & Beds – meets on Saturdays at 10.45 in **St.Albans**, next on **30 June**, then **20 October**. 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 **18 August**. Contact Division Convener Chris Fribbins at chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk or at 42 Quickrells Avenue, Cliffe, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7RB, or tel: 01634 566256. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Kent

London Metro – a new Division to cover all TfL rail modes: Underground, Overground, London Trams, DLR, and TfL Rail (becoming Crossrail/Elizabeth line). Contact Branch Chairman and Vice-Chairman (opposite). See www.railfuture.org.uk/London+Metro

Surrey – next on **27 November**. Convener Chris Page (opposite). See www.railfuture.org.uk/Surrey

Sussex & Coastway – meets monthly, except August, usually on first Thursdays at 18.00, in varying Sussex venues. Next on **19 July**, then **6 September**, **4 October**. Convener is Nigel Denton at nigeldenton@talktalk.net or at 18 Southway, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 6QW, or tel. 01903 722622. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Sussex+and+Coastway

Autumn conference on our doorstep

Reading will be the place – Saturday 10 November. “*Rail driving growth in the Thames Valley*” Book here: <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences> Special ‘book and join’ discount package for non-members; existing Railfuture members’ discount until 31 August.

This branch newsletter is free, published quarterly and usually distributed with each edition of the national **railwatch**. The copy deadline for **railse** issue 141, due to be published in October 2018, will be Monday 30 July 2018. Items for this newsletter and our branch Local Action column in **railwatch** to londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk

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www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk www.railwatch.org.uk

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Our four branch neighbours

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

East Anglia – contact is Secretary Paul Hollinghurst – eastanglia@railfuture.org.uk
Board liaison with branch via Director Jerry Alderson.

East Midlands – contact is Secretary Steve Jones – 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 with branch via Director Roger Blake.

Wessex – contact is Branch Secretary Tony Smale – wessex@railfuture.org.uk
Board liaison with branch via Director Stewart Palmer.

Branch committee meetings

Open for any of our members to attend, as observers, usually held on alternate fourth Tuesdays in London. Next on **24 July**, then **25 September**. Please give advance notice to our Chairman, 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: Vacant.

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