

The **quarterly** branch newsletter of **railfuture** in London and the South East

Britain's leading *independent* campaign for a bigger better railway – for passengers and freight

## Britain's leading, longest-established national independent rail campaign



We celebrate seven decades of rail campaigning successes this year! Today's Railfuture has its origins in the days of the post-war governments of Attlee, with Alfred Barnes as Minister of Transport and James (Jim) Callaghan his Parliamentary Secretary when the 1947 Transport Act nationalised the railways in 1948, and then of Churchill from October 1951, Lord Leathers his Minister for Co-ordination of Transport, Fuel and Power.

In November 1951 the **Society for the Reinvigoration of Unremunerative Branch Lines (UK)** had its first public meeting; influenced by John Betjeman, it then changed to the simpler **Railway Invigoration Society**. The **Railway Development Association** also formed that year, and the two organisations came together in 1978 as the **Railway Development Society**. In 2021 we also celebrate the 21<sup>st</sup> birthday of **Railfuture** as first the campaigning, then successor, name for RDS.

With over 40 new/reopened stations and over a dozen new/reopened rail links to our branch's credit, here are the first-quarter anniversaries of our local successes:

### January

- ~ Gospel Oak again became the terminus for Barking services, rather than Kentish Town, in 1981 – 40<sup>th</sup>!
- ~ Ashford International Eurostar platforms opened in 1996 - 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary marked by service suspension.

### February

- ~ Garston, Herts station opened in 1966 – 55<sup>th</sup>!
- ~ Dalston Junction <> Highbury & Islington London Overground services opened in 2011 - 10<sup>th</sup>!

### March

- ~ Heathrow Airport Terminal 5 station, and its link from Terminals 1, 2 & 3, (Heathrow Central) opened in 2008.

## Return to rail (but please not just yet)



For key workers and others making 'essential' journeys.



For non-key workers and others making non-essential journeys! Being Railfuture we look ahead, making the case for “**A flexible season ticket for 2021**” via our [website article](#) and a [press release](#) (see web 'News').

## “When shall we, free, meet again?”



## “100 more by ’24” – the final 15?

Railfuture’s national campaign for the [Access for All](#) programme to be expanded has now been running under that strapline for 18 months. The Chancellor of the Exchequer’s Spending Review announcement last November did not take the opportunity to fund another 15 stations, to reach our target of “100 more by ’24”!



His 2021 Budget in early-March was to be the next such opportunity, as we recall that it was the 2020 Budget last March which added 12 more stations to the growing list of step-free stations, eight in our regional branch area, as reported in [railse no.148](#) last June. Network Rail’s latest update was last December, [here](#).

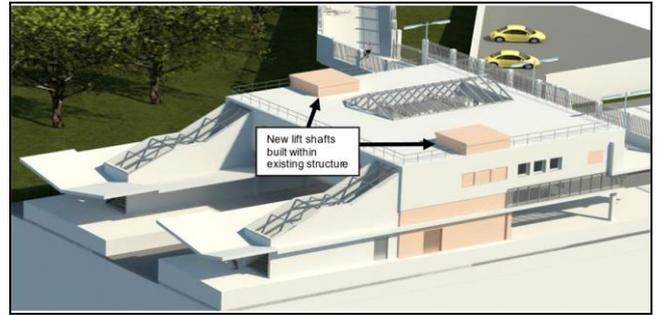
One of last year’s extra eight added to the DfT’s Access for All programme is the Uckfield line’s Eridge. It’s also been the southern terminus of the Spa Valley Railway for the decade since March 2011, reported in [railse no.112](#) in June 2011. A subdued 10<sup>th</sup> birthday!



For a station of such relatively low usage – not quite 130k in the most recent ORR estimates, for 2019/20 – it’s already been doing very well out of some [substantial Network Rail investment](#). The Railway Heritage Trust is also grant-aiding the restoration of a waiting room. Installation of the 16-person lift for the Uckfield line’s bi-directional platform, via its opposite face and standing in the redundant track-bed, is due to commence in May for expected completion in October. Designated Blue Badge parking bays directly outside the station entrance may still be an unresolved issue.

**Our vision for rail:** *A railway system that provides services which travellers and freight forwarders want to use, and which offers more journey opportunities to more people and more freight.*

## And another one in ’21!

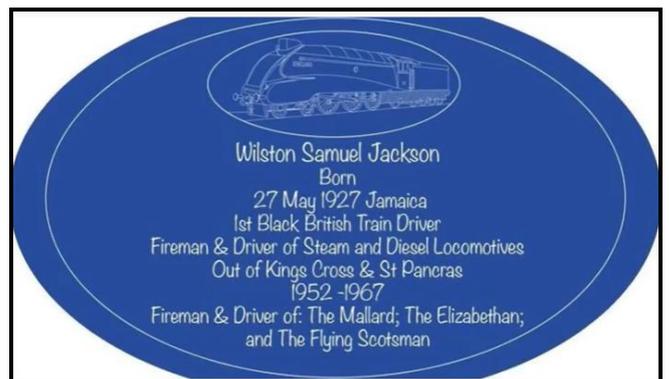


From Southern to Southeastern, [St. Mary Cray station](#) in the London Borough of Bromley is also getting the step-free treatment. ORR-estimated usage in 2019/20 of c.1.7million ensured that this originally CP5 scheme, deferred by the Hendy Review, was reinstated to CP6 in the DfT’s April 2019 announcement of 73 stations in the Access for All Programme to 2024, as reported in some detail in [railse no.144](#) for June 2019.

## Unsung heroes: gone, not forgotten



Enjoy the [18-minute film](#) from October 2018. Extracts: “*Wilston Samuel Jackson R.I.P. Whilst in England he achieved the feat of becoming the first black British train driver, overcoming racism, society and attempts on his life to name but a few. My grandad had the prestigious honour of driving the Elizabethan, The Mallard and The Flying Scotsman, although these achievements have been overlooked over the years. Last year my grandad received the recognition he deserved, and was celebrated at the House of Lords for his achievement of being 'The First Black British Train Driver'. The moral of the story is, never give up, believe in yourself, when life get hard you become stronger, anything is achievable.*”



Next time you are at King’s Cross station please look out for his plaque.”

## Vote 2021 – Thursday 6 May

Pandemic lockdown is expected to relax sufficiently, and the uptake of postal voting is expected to increase, to enable this year's local elections to go ahead.

Below is a summary of contests which offer Railfuture members, as individual private citizens, opportunities to raise rail matters with their own local candidates.



*Once a station, always a station*

Deferred from May 2020:

- ~ London Assembly – (all seats: 14 constituency members and 11 London-wide)
- ~ Mayor of London
- ~ Unitaries: (one third of seats) Southend, Thurrock

In normal electoral cycle:

- ~ Counties: (all seats) East Sussex, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Surrey, West Sussex
- ~ Districts: (one half of seats) Adur, Hastings
- ~ Districts: (one third of seats): Basildon, Brentwood, Broxbourne, Castle Point, Crawley, Elmbridge, Epping Forest, Harlow, Maidstone, Mole Valley, North Hertfordshire, Reigate & Banstead, Rochford, Runnymede, St. Albans, Stevenage, Tandridge, Three Rivers, Tunbridge Wells, Watford, Welwyn Hatfield, Woking, Worthing

## Rother Valley Railway

The DfT's Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit has advised us of the second revision to the timetable for the Public Inquiry primarily to hear unresolved objections to the application for the proposed Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Transport & Works Act Order. [What we said](#) in 2018.



The Pre-Inquiry Meeting is planned to be on 12 May, ahead of the main Public Inquiry due to start on 6 July. Further details in the [dedicated Inquiry website](#).

## New rail stations for London

~ Barking Riverside – supported by Railfuture through the Transport & Works Act Order application process for the London Overground extension, and new station opening 'autumn 2022' (probably December timetable).



~ Battersea Power Station – opening 'autumn' this year



~ Brent Cross West – opening 'next year' (December?)



~ Nine Elms – opening 'autumn' this year



See all the new Railfuture stations on our website, [here](#).

# TfSE rail – east of East Sussex: EBN-BEX-SLQ-HGS-RYE-AFK-STP

Railfuture calls for new highway improvement scheme! Did you read that here first? On Highways England's A259 north-east of Rye a [very close shave](#) highlighted the safety risk of main roads having level crossings.



A new 3km NE-SW bypass would avoid level crossings at Star (above incident highlighted) and East Guldeford, as reported on page 5 in [railse no.140](#) for June 2018. It would support raising the line-speed from 60mph to 90mph, part of a MarshLink upgrade for HS1 services.



The [Transport Strategy](#) adopted by Transport for the South East looks forward to a 108% rise in rail travel within the next 30 years (1991 is not that long ago!) The Railfuture-inspired, and Hastings and Rother Rail Users Alliance / local MPs-supported, new Eastbourne - Ashford International service is showing the way. The first year of the recast timetable from May 2018 generated a 10% jump in station usage, setting nine **new records** shown in the table below, followed by a further 2% growth in the pandemic-affected second year which still set another eight **new all-time highs!**

17 stations	2018/19	2019/20
Ham Street	98590	92812
Appledore	42792	40656
Rye	480322	474036
Winchelsea	9048	9688
Doleham	2842	3074
Three Oaks	11534	12672
Ore	240652	277174
Hastings	2382998	2413544
St. Leonards Warrior Square	820252	823284
Bexhill	1448466	1502382
Collington	191418	208058
Cooden Beach	108300	109526
Normans Bay	13512	15236
Pevensy Bay	9270	9132
Pevensy & Westham	163808	172144
Hampden Park	633538	671586
Hampden Park interchanges	165266	164113
Eastbourne	3580630	3604628
<b>TOTALS</b>	10,237,972	10,439,632

Whatever happened elsewhere on the GTR network in May 2018, for which the Passenger Benefit Fund is the fine returned to passengers as station improvements, East Coastway / MarshLink was a beacon of success!

As trailed in the previous [railse no.150](#), Network Rail's 'Kent & East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Programme' is imminent. Kent County Council has published its report on the consultation responses to its draft, now revised, [Kent Rail Strategy 2021](#), including support for new HS1 services for the east of East Sussex coast.



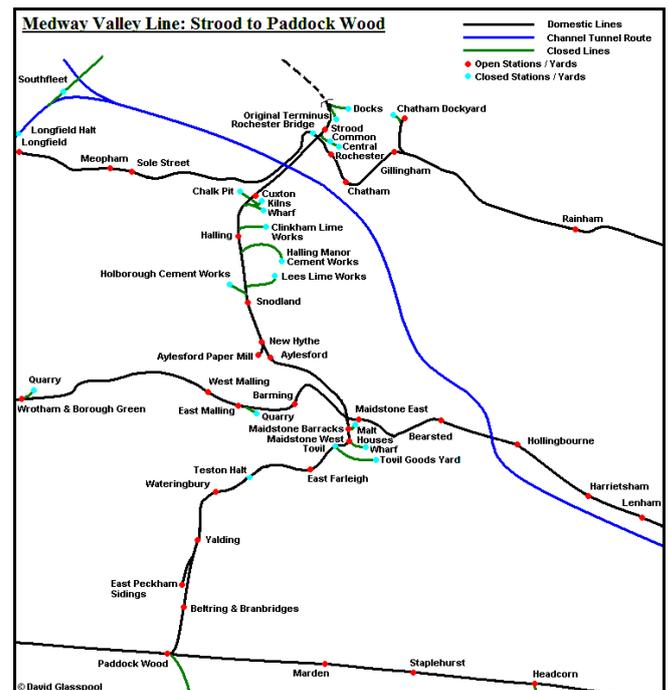
Consultation on the [draft Hastings Local Plan](#) closes on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March.

Closing on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March is the opportunity to make representations to the Planning Inspectorate on the application by London Resort for a Development Consent Order for a leisure and entertainment resort on Kent's Swanscombe Peninsula. Our response to the pre-application consultation last year is [here](#). The employment opportunities for, and incomes brought back to, Hastings will be attractive with Ebbsfleet and Ashford International stations only 20 minutes apart – Hastings and Ashford in future only 30 minutes apart!

Read more about [Railfuture's MarshLink campaigning](#)

# TfSE rail – N. Downs Line east and Medway Valley line extension: Surrey - Kent SOO-MDB-PDW-TON-EBR-GDN-RDH

In [our response](#) last year to Kent County Council's consultation on their draft Kent Rail Strategy 2021 we advocated a Cuxton Chord to link the Medway Valley line and the Chatham Main Line. Recognising the engineering challenges to be overcome, this would enable direct orbital rail links for the Medway Towns.

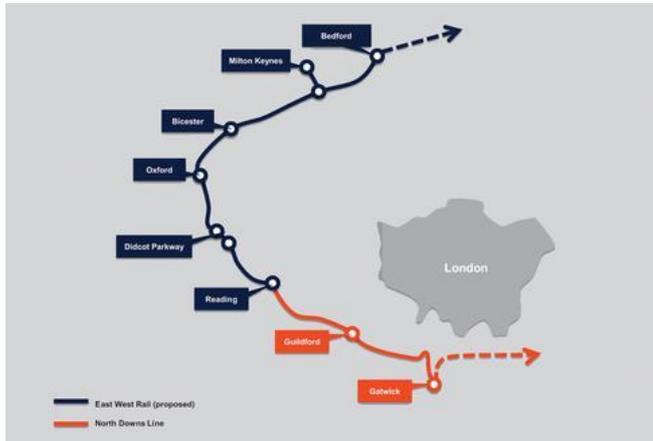


While not an action in the new [Kent Rail Strategy 2021](#) the TfSE Inner Orbital Area Study can take it forward.

Read [coverage in previous issues](#) of newsletter [railse](#)

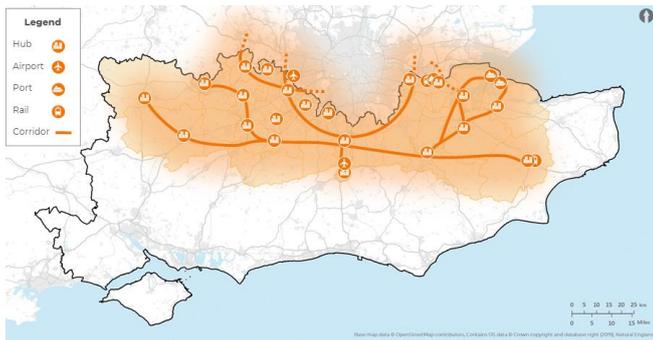
## TfSE rail – N. Downs Line west: West Sussex - Surrey - Hampshire - Berkshire GTW-RDH-REI-DPD-GLD-WKM-RDG

“Councils and TfL draw up plans for a rail M25” – that was a headline in 2013! Surrey County Council was raising the idea in its then-new county rail strategy.



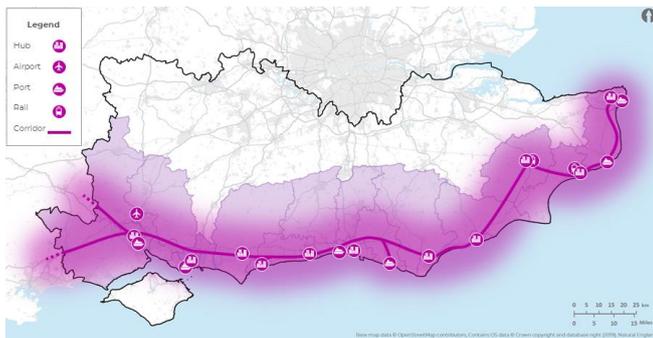
If imitation is the best form of flattery then along comes Railfuture with our Thames Valley-Medway Valley **R25**.

Complementing ‘North Downs Line east’ (opposite left) both are shown below in the context of TfSE’s Study for the Inner Orbital Area.



## TfSE rail – West Coastway: West Sussex - Hampshire BTN-HOV-SSE-WRH-LIT-BOG-CCH

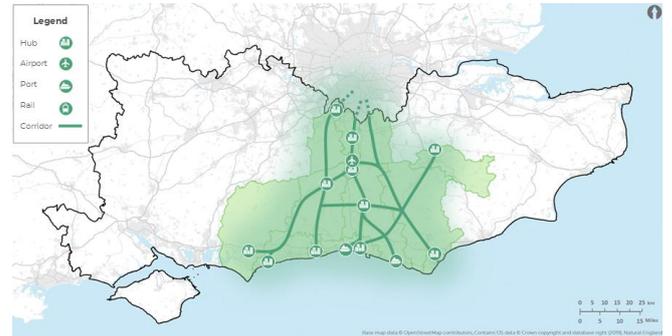
Complementing ‘east of East Sussex’ (opposite left) both are shown below in the context of TfSE’s Study for the Outer Orbital Area; it also overlaps with ‘west of East Sussex’ (right) in the South Central Radial Area.



Railfuture is represented in the ‘task and finish’ Forum for each Area Study, to identify shortlists of priority interventions for next year’s Strategic Investment Plan.

## TfSE rail – west of East Sussex: BTN-FMR-LWS-UCK-COH-ERI-TBW

TfSE’s South Central Radial Area includes a newly-recognised economic corridor, between Brighton and Tunbridge Wells. Will this become our future **R22**?



Each area study’s geography is based round the most important economic corridors in the region. These ‘corridors of opportunity’ connect the biggest towns, cities and international gateways and include the greatest opportunities for sustainable economic growth.

Coincident with TfSE’s work, Wealden District Council embark on their new Local Plan; a *Direction of Travel* consultation attracted [our response](#) in January. The District, however, has limited options for planning its required housing growth based on rail, existing or proposed: the East Coastway between Pevensey Bay and Berwick, the Uckfield line up to Ashurst (Kent), the Hastings line between Stonegate and Tunbridge Wells.



For Railfuture, sustainable communities must mean rail-connected communities; new homes must mean [#RailTransportForNewHomes](#), not car-dependency.

Underlying is the principle of ‘Place-making’, simply expressed as the processes of creating quality places in which people want to live, work, play, and learn. As an economic development strategy, it is the practice of using a community’s public amenities to make economic progress. Transformative place-making aims to nurture an economic ecosystem which is regionally connected, innovative, and rooted in the assets of its local residents and businesses.

That is the fundamental challenge, as we see it, for TfSE – transport, like place-making, is a means to an end; as we say: “*Better lives through better journeys.*”

See more about [Railfuture’s Uckfield-Lewes campaign](#)

## Community Rail – Awards for L&SE

~ **Involving children and young people:** WINNER – Kent CRP and Sheppey College - “A chance to shine”.  
 ~ **Involving diverse groups:** THIRD – Southeast CRP, GTR, County Care, Aldingbourne Trust - “Good to talk, even better to share”.  
 ~ **Most enhanced station:** WINNER – Haslemere Arts Society, Museum, Town Council, Surrey CC, SWR - Haslemere Community Station; SECOND – Friends of Gipsy Hill – rejuvenation of Gipsy Hill (opposite right!)  
 ~ **Tourism & Heritage:** THIRD – Abbey Line CRP - “Christmas in St. Albans by Community Rail”.  
 ~ **Photo competition:** SECOND – Kent CRP - “Snodland Garden - Growing Together”;  
THIRD – Bedford-St. Albans CRP - “It seems they enjoyed their Visit”.

A shortlisted but unsuccessful entry from north-east London, by Arriva Rail London / London Overground, for Best Community Engagement Project: “Putting the community at the heart of our stations.”



Artyface – making public art work by Maud Milton

## Community Rail round-up in L&SE

Community Rail in the City is being planned to return in 2021, provisionally on either 12<sup>th</sup> May or 30<sup>th</sup> June.

Bee friendly at London Bridge in 2021! Sculpture competition closed 1<sup>st</sup> February.

Railway Heritage Trust adds guidance useful for CRPs.

North Downs Line CRP (west ie SWR stations) helps prepare rail users for a brighter return.

Jessops Farm Studios at Edenbridge have worked with SCRP on a ‘Platform Gallery’ in the waiting room at Penshurst station (pictured below, credit Nigel Thompson).



Click to subscribe to monthly “Community Rail News”

## Paint a new part of town with a mural!



Network Rail’s new Southern Region, which includes the HS1, Kent, Sussex, and Wessex Routes, has a Community Engagement Manager hungry for ideas!

## Your (post-pandemic) ticket to ride

Railfuture leads thinking on one aspect of the future of ticketing: “Creating a flexible season ticket for 2021”

**Secure**  
Never lose a ticket again, with replaceable tickets stored safely and digitally.

**Manageable**  
Manage your own tickets: buy, change, distribute and cancel tickets online, track your spending and store receipts.

**Access Easily**  
Easily access tickets online and on the go, from anywhere, at any time.

**Rewarding**  
Be connected: smart tickets enable customer notifications, personalisation and easy compensation for delayed journeys.

**Time Saving**  
Skip the queues, save time and head straight to your train.

**Travel smart and get more for your journey**

While we still have cheques (and pints as well as litres and miles as well as kilometres), we’ve long had the ubiquitous ‘credit-card-sized’ plastic card for so many other things, eg Pay-As-You-Go stored-value Oyster and direct payment contactless debit and credit cards.



**STILL GOT A PAPER TICKET?**  
Give your paper ticket the Swan Song it deserves.

Available on: Apple App Store, Google Play, Microsoft Store

Issues around the topic of ticketing are of course not to be confused with issues around the topic of fares, which will have had their deferred 2021 increases two days before Budget Day. On that day, or soon after, might we have hailed Keith ‘Williams the Conqueror’ of at least some of the rail industry’s long-standing challenges such as an obsolescing ticketing system?

## Exactly how reliable is your train?



Our Vice-President Cap’n Deltic aka ‘Informed Sources’ with the Golden Spanners Awards for 2020; 15 winners of the 28 prizes in the ten categories serve our region.

## Campaigns calendar, London & SE

**Current consultations** of specific and general interest to our London and South East region are shown [here](#). *Your opportunity* to influence our policy development is by mailing [londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk)

The [draft Hastings Local Plan](#) consultation closes on Wednesday 24 March.



Responses to all previous consultations are [here](#).

**Our vision for Railfuture:** *An independent organisation whose views are respected by the rail industry, to which decision makers come for advice, and which rail users are proud to join and recommend.*

### Forthcoming diary/calendar dates

**Monday 15 March** “On-track machines for infrastructure maintenance.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Wednesday 17 March** “The history of Continuously Welded Rail and hot weather management or derailment risk and switches and crossings.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Saturday 20 / Sunday 21 March** Railfuture London & South East regional branch stall at annual rail festival, Alexandra Palace, London N22 7AY – POSTPONED.  
**Sunday 21 March** National Census.

**Tuesday 23 March** Railfuture East Midlands **online** Spring evening railway conversation.

**Thursday 25 March** “Building Garden Communities.” **Online** morning conference.

**Thursday 25 March** “Sustainability in the rail industry.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Thursday 25 March** “The future of public transport: a view from the House.” Guest speaker Chris Loder MP, member of the Commons Transport Committee. Free **online** evening webinar.

**Monday 29 March** Herts & Beds Division **online** evening meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Wednesday 31 March** “New trains in a franchise that’s not used to it!” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Thursday 8 April** Sussex & Coastway Division **online** evening meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Monday 12 April** “Drainage at Cowley Bridge junction, Exeter.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Tuesday 13 April** “Japan v UK Rail Model.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Wednesday 14 April** “Developments and opportunities in traction technology – decarbonisation and air quality.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Thursday 15 April** “The outlook for Tram-Train schemes in the UK and lessons learned from Sheffield Supertram.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Thursday 15 April** “Introducing the Azuma.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Saturday 17 April** “Rolling stock for non-rolling stock professionals.” Free **online** morning webinar.

**Saturday 17 April** Railfuture London and South East branch **online** Annual General Meeting + speaker/s.

**Monday 19 April** “Introduction of the Crossrail fleet.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Tuesday 20 April** “Future on-board power.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Wednesday 21 April** “Carriage design 1950-2020.” Free **online** evening webinar.

**Saturday 24 April** Herts & Beds Division **online** morning meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Saturday 24 April** Railfuture East Midlands **online** afternoon open meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Monday 26 April** “Rail freight during and since the Covid crisis.” **Online** evening webinar.

**Saturday 1 May** Copy date for your campaign news, letters, articles, photos to appear in July’s **railwatch** no.168. Send to [editor@railwatch.org.uk](mailto:editor@railwatch.org.uk)

**Saturday 1 May** Copy date for your campaign news / reports for London & SE branch Local Action column in July’s **railwatch** no.168, and for June’s **raise** no.152, to [londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk)

**Thursday 6 May** Elections across Britain.

**Thursday 6 May** Sussex & Coastway Division **online** evening meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Tuesday 11 May** “Network Rail Measurement Train.” **Online** evening webinar.

**Wednesday 12 May** Eastern Division **online** evening meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Saturday 15 May** Kent Division **online** afternoon meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Sunday 30 May-Saturday 5 June** Bike Week.

**Thursday 3 June** Sussex & Coastway Division **online** evening meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Tuesday 29 June** “Rail West to East” conference.

**Saturday 10 July** Railfuture’s ‘Bridge the gap’ stall at Uckfield Festival’s Big Day, on Luxford Field, Uckfield.

**Wednesday 14 July** Eastern Division evening meeting, maybe not **online**. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Saturday 17 July** Railfuture national Annual General Meeting, whether physical venue or **online**.

Details of these and other important dates are in the Railfuture website’s [Events](#) and [Rail dates](#) pages.

## Your branch divisions' meetings –

**Eastern [s. Essex and n. & e. London]** – meets second Wednesday of odd-numbered months, **online** at 19.00 – next due on **12 May** then **14 July**. Division Convener is Howard Thomas (opposite). See [Eastern Division](#).

**Herts & Beds** – meets monthly for about an hour **online**. Next evening meeting on **Monday 29 March**, next **Saturday** morning meeting on **24 April**, then Thursday 27 or Saturday 29 May. Division Convener is Neil Middleton at [neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk) See [Herts & Beds Division](#).

**Kent** – meets quarterly on third Saturdays, **online** at 14.00 – next due on **16 May**. Division Convener is Chris Fribbins at [chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk) See [Kent Division](#).

**London Metro** – a Division to cover all TfL rail modes: Underground, Overground, London Trams, DLR, and TfL Rail (becoming Elizabeth line). Contact Branch Vice-Chair Roger Blake (opposite). See [London Metro Division](#).

**Surrey** – meetings usually held jointly with Sussex & Coastway Division (below). Surrey Division Convener is Stephen Rolph at [stephen.rolph@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:stephen.rolph@railfuture.org.uk). See [Surrey Division](#).

**Sussex & Coastway** – meets monthly usually on first Thursdays, **online** at 18.00. Next due on **8 April**, **6 May**, **3 June**, then mid-July. Division Convener is John Black at [jcbblack@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jcbblack@yahoo.co.uk), Secretary is Trevor Davies at [trevor.d2016@outlook.com](mailto:trevor.d2016@outlook.com) See [Sussex & Coastway Division](#).

## Your branch committee's meetings

Officers and other committee members continue to meet, **online**, every 3/4 weeks, Wednesday evenings.

## inter-railse

Our two-page monthly e-newsletter, by email (as [pdf or link](#)) on request from [roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk)

This branch newsletter is free, published quarterly and usually distributed with each edition of the national **railwatch**. The copy deadline for **railse** issue no.152, due to be published in June 2021, will be Saturday 1 May 2021. Items for this newsletter and our branch Local Action column in **railwatch** to [londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk)

# railfuture

**Railfuture's mission: to be the number one advocate for Britain's railway and rail users**

Websites: [Welcome to Railfuture](#) [London and South East regional branch](#)  
[Railwatch](#) [Rail Action](#) [Rail User Express](#)

Follow us on  [twitter](#) @Railfuture and @RailfutureLSE and @Railwatch

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## Railfuture campaigns (verb, and noun!)

Our five national **railfuture** policy priorities:  
# **Attracting passengers back to rail** – improving the travelling environment  
# **Climate change and modal shift** – how the railway can help reduce the carbon footprint of transport  
# **Restoring Your Railway** – restoring communities' rail connections by reopening lines and stations  
# **Fares and ticketing** – making the system easier and fairer  
# **Industry structure and Williams** – taking the opportunity to move to devolution and concessions.

See "[Attracting passengers back](#)" + [@RailfuturePsng](#)

## Railfuture 'news and views'

Stay abreast of Railfuture's and others' reports and thoughts published in our website [articles](#).

## Railfuture 'in the news'

Stay abreast of Railfuture members making, not just watching, things happen in our website [media extracts](#).

## Neighbouring and other branches

All 14 branch websites, including their **events** and **newsletters**, are in '[Railfuture near you](#)'.

## London and SE Branch officers

**Branch Chairman, and Secretary:** both vacant.

**Vice-Chairman:** Roger Blake, 70 Dynevor Road, Stoke Newington, London, N16 0DX.  
Tel: 020 7254 1580; [roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk)

**Treasurer:** Howard Thomas, 24 South Primrose Hill, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RG.  
Tel: 01245 280503; [howard.thomas@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:howard.thomas@railfuture.org.uk)

## railse online

Here's a [link to the online pdf](#). The links in blue are clickable hyperlinks to something always interesting!