

London and South East regional branch

Annual Meeting 2023

Saturday 22 April 2023

Agenda

11.00-12.30:

"Transport planning at the sub-national level – from Transport Strategy to Strategic Investment Plan, now Delivery Action Plan – update and next steps"

Guest speakers:

Mark Vallely, Head of Strategy, Transport for the South East



Ian Brown CBE, Policy Director, Railfuture



Introductory presentations followed by moderated Q&A. If joining virtually – see details on page 2 – then <u>please</u> use 'Chat' function to alert event moderator to your question.

14.00: formal Annual General Meeting for members

Agenda

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We shall provide a simple hybrid set up for anyone who can't make it in person, but that will definitely be a second class experience. The Zoom link for the morning session is: AM - https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcsduGppzsiGtOTF9ex6oSJxaHFVMpcFXTg

In the case of the afternoon session, there is an approval step, so if possible please complete registration by Friday evening; do also note that, for the afternoon session, you will not be considered to be officially in attendance, nor will you be able to vote (but we do expect to support remote speaking). The Zoom link is: PM - https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAocuirgzgiGdXxpEAJ4 hWpFuSVGtp-h3A

1. Apologies for absence

Minutes of Annual General Meeting 30 April 2022 2.

See Appendix A below, pages 11-15.

Matters Arising from Minutes of 2022 AGM 3.

If any not being covered in the agenda for the 2023 AGM.

Results of elections to branch committee 2023-24 4.

The following were duly nominated and elected unopposed:

Chairman no nominations

Vice-Chairman Roger Blake

Secretary no nominations

Treasurer Howard Thomas

The other branch committee members duly nominated and also elected unopposed are:

Charles King, Neil Middleton and Chris Page. There were insufficient nominations to fill the other three vacancies. Only half of the 10 committee places have received nominations.

The divisional representatives on branch committee are: Howard Thomas (Eastern), Neil Middleton (Herts & Beds), Chris Fribbins (Kent), Charles King (Metro), Stephen Rolph (Surrey) and John Black (Sussex & Coastway).

Railfuture's Company Secretary Trevor Davies (also Sussex & Coastway Division), and the branch's Independent Examiner Gordon Pratt (also Kent Division), also attend.

Reports on 2022

5. Vice Chairman – Roger Blake

The Vice Chairman notes, as previously, that the London & South East regional branch still has c.25% of the entire - albeit diminishing - national membership of Railfuture, and London postcodes alone still have c.25% of that regional branch total (although, ironically perhaps, our Metro Division is among our least active). Owing to our numeric size and geographic spread we remain unique among Railfuture branches in having an informal sub-structure of essentially county-based Divisions, and it is at that level that much of the engagement with members, rail user groups and other organisations and our campaigning activities takes place. It is gratifying therefore to report that after the inevitable period of adjustment at the start of the pandemic three years ago, and since, the branch quickly regained and has continued to retain much of its rhythm, with regular committee and most Division meetings held online. One of the few side-effects of the pandemic, not being able to travel for meetings in venues, which has been beneficial has been increased levels of participation in our online meetings; while Herts & Beds and Sussex & Coastway Divisions had been particular examples of this, the trend in 2022 was for a more mixed menu, of mostly online interspersed meetings with occasional in-person gatherings.

Although still lacking a Chair and a Secretary, the branch has committee member Neil Middleton fulfilling the role of membership secretary and so this important aspect of our work, not just monitoring but actively welcoming and seeking out potential new members, is receiving more of the attention which it requires.

We do need as ever to continue to raise our profile by being seen to be active and campaigning, especially in the increasingly-important social media sphere, maximising opportunities for publicity and telling others about Railfuture, so that we can attract more active members and continue to grow our activities and, through them, our influence.

Although numerically the largest, the branch as one of Railfuture's 14 could be considered to be overrepresented on the national Board of Directors, with four of the nine (not to mention the Company Secretary, and national house magazine editor!). National Chairman, Policy Director, Infrastructure & Networks Director, and Communications Director who is significantly increasing our social media output at branch and national levels. In this 24/7 information age Railfuture volunteers, as all members including Directors are, aim to keep Railfuture's independent and informed analysis in the public eye via press releases, website articles, various Twitter accounts, Facebook, LinkedIn – <u>all</u> linked off the website.

6. Treasurer – Howard Thomas

The activities of the London & South East Branch were still limited following the aftermath of the Covid pandemic in 2022. For the first time in four years, the Branch received some national funding. The amount was £1,063.70. All cost centres were underspent against the 2022 budget.

The main features of the year were:

Income: Allocation from the National Budget: £1,063.70.

Expenditure

- ~ Branch newsletter: £950.00 (£1,010.00 in 2021)
- ~ Campaigns and lobbying: £53.50 (£15.00 in 2021)
- ~ AGM: £175.00

Our bank balance was £382.26 at 31 December 2022.

Railfuture's policy is to provide for 20% depreciation on cost in each of the first four accounting years of use, and to write down the value of non-current (fixed) assets to £1.00 in the fifth year. Thereafter, the noncurrent assets remain at £1.00 until they are disposed of. Following this policy, I have charged £114.16 for depreciation in 2022 (see: Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2022). Following this, the net values of the Gazebo, the 1st Projector, the two Leaflet Stands, the Thameslink 2 Banner, the Trestle Table, the 2nd Projector and the Table Cover are now down to £1.00.

Three Financial Statements – of Comprehensive Income, Financial Position, and Cash Flow, all as at the year ending 31 December 2022 – are set out in Appendix B to this document on pages 16-18.

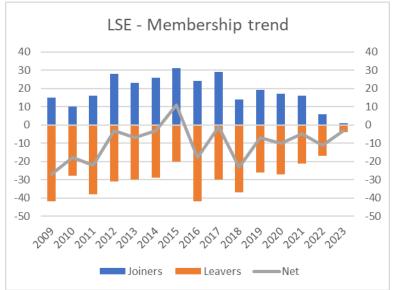
7. Membership – Neil Middleton

Data

Membership numbers for 2022 show a continuation of previous years, that is a gentle decline, being a 3% decline over the previous year to a year-end total of 362. Key elements of the 362 are:

- National numbers declined similarly (2.9%).
- Individual = 332, of which Under 26 = 1, Joint = 12, Rail User Group = 15 (#).
- Median age of Individuals = 75-79 (for the 206 where age is recorded); see appendix page 5 for detail (#).
- Retention of joiners 2016-2021 = 58%, for 2016-2018 = 48%; see appendix page 6 for detail (#).

(All data marked # is as at 11 April 2023, rather than 31 December 2022).



Conclusions

- The overall number decline is, in isolation, not a disaster.
- However, the age profile of current members is much more worrying. Whilst there are, and could be further, exceptions, the more mature of our members are less likely to be active campaigners, so our realistic pool of future campaigners is much smaller.
- Our retention of new members is tolerable but could be better.
- Whilst more members would certainly be good, more active members is much more important.

I see this as a common issue amongst charities and campaigning groups – for instance it is equally applicable to a Church I am involved with.

So, what might we do about it?

I believe that within the constraints of available resource we are effective in:

- Seeking actual change.
- Assessing some changes and concluding they are the "least worst" choice available (eg a shortage
 of funding means some reduction in train mileage the TOC choice is reasonable in the
 circumstances).

* Note: this is separate from campaigning for the reduction in funding to be reversed / a better understanding of revenue vs cost etc.

• Showing to Government and Industry stakeholders that we are credible, and it is sensible to spend time understanding and considering our views and opinions.

However, I suspect that we do not spend enough time demonstrating the above to both potential and inactive members (and the public in general ~ to 'recruit' them as supports and that it makes sense to switch a portion of our available time to demonstrate this with the goal of both increasing membership generally and increasing active membership specifically (and being able to show more supporters).

There are, I think three key strands to initiatives in this area:

- A national initiative (already a recognised need) to improve our ability to communicate with members and stakeholders. This requires both technology improvements and better quality data – in part for members (more email addresses, and a switch to informed consent ¹) and better data for stakeholders such as MPs, Local Authority Councillors with Transport portfolios).
- 2. Divisions need to communicate more consistently.
- 3. A greater presence on social media, most notably in the short term a Facebook page for updating / informing the wider community. Content would be created by those who are permissioned to do this, and all would be able to comment.

¹ Members joined a campaigning organisation, so being updated about those campaigns is implicitly given (but, of course, an easy way to actively opt out is essential).

• I am not proposing a Facebook Group – for those already active in campaigning to exchange news and gossip.

Inner London

Current activities are mainly mainline TOC centric – our biggest engagement is probably with GTR, through a combination of affiliated RUGs and our own endeavours – this covers all the Brands (and in the case of Southern, both Metro and Long distance services), but to some degree I believe we are in contact with all TOCs in the Branch's boundary except C2C.

But our contact with TfL's Rail activities is non-existent, other than responding to specific relevant consultations. We have been active in two areas:

- 1. On the future of the London Travelcard, but even there, our message is really about the National Rail add-on, rather than on behalf of users of only TfL services (since they often already use contactless).
- 2. On Digital Exclusion (ie the need for some to be able to purchase tickets / top up contactless without either a bank account or use of a PC, smartphone etc). But again, this is a national activity, with London / TfL 'just another area'.

TfL Rail and C2C are, by and large, "it just happens" services. There are more strategic challenges, most notably the portion of costs to be supported by the farebox vs the taxpayer (national and local) and the degree of taxpayer funding, but on the day to day we haven't campaigned in recent years, and the AGM is a chance to consider whether there are other topics, particularly service level and coverage centred, that justify campaigning and if so how we might resource them.

A reminder: keeping you up to date

Our ability to communicate effectively with some members is restricted by missing email addresses and permissions. If you are fully opted into to communications, you will be receiving the following:

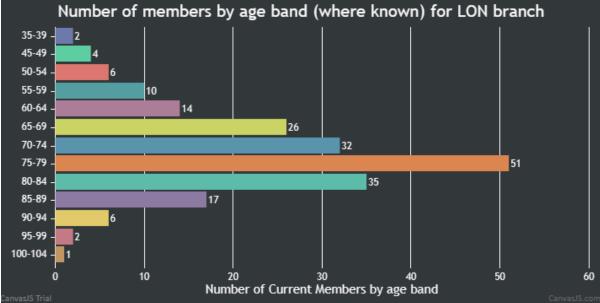
- Railwatch by post or email, including the Branch quarterly newsletter railse.
- The branch monthly news update inter-railse by email (just two pages).
- Updates from at least one Division by email.
- Occasional other emails on national and local matters.

There are three ways to update your preferences:

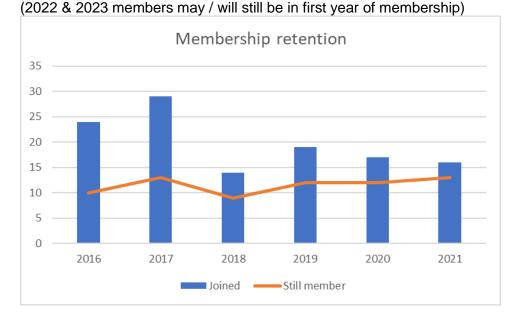
- 1. By self-care on the website: <u>https://www.railfuture.org.uk/member/</u> (recommended, but if struggling, do switch to choice 2 or 3)
- 2. Email Lloyd Butler at renewals@railfuture.org.uk
- 3. Email me neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk

Your email address will not be passed outside Railfuture and will be used in accordance with the permissions you give us in accordance with GDPR requirements.

Membership age profile (for current members) for LON branch



Membership retention



8. Divisions

a Eastern – Howard Thomas

Eastern Division's activities were again curtailed by the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic during 2022. The Division met every two months by Zoom and were attended by typically 5 people.

During the year, the Division has kept an overview of how the railway reacted to the pandemic – the level and quality of service provided – and various developments. In particular, the Division has been impressed by how Greater Anglia has recovered its service level and quality. The service provided on Greater Anglia routes had recovered to more-or-less pre-Covid levels. Generally, reliability and punctuality have been very good. It seems that Greater Anglia has had a much more positive and constructive approach to timetable recovery than some other TOCs serving the Greater London area, and other parts of Great Britain.

The continued introduction of new rolling stock on Greater Anglia services has meant that there are now relatively few services operating with rolling stock over five years old. Great Eastern outer suburban services still see the occasional use of Class 321s (nicknamed 'Dusty Bins' after the TV programme) which are now about 33 years old, and now used only in emergencies. Likewise, Elizabeth Line services between Shenfield and London Liverpool Street are now mostly provided by new Class 345 emus. The big 'game changer' during the year has been the opening of CrossRail through from Shenfield/Stratford, and Abbey Wood, to London Paddington and beyond. It has become possible, for example, to reach Farringdon from Chelmsford in just under 45 minutes, including change of trains at Stratford.

During the year we saw the opening of the London Overground Barking Riverside service. Other developments have included work that has now started on the new station east of Chelmsford at Beaulieu Park. The Division has been keeping a watching brief on developments such as Hall Farm Curve for direct Chingford-Stratford services, KenEx (Thames Gateway Tramlink), and the New River Line Community Rail Partnership.

For the future, the Division will continue to meet on the second Wednesday of the odd-numbered months, either by Zoom (at 19:00hrs) or face-to-face, probably at St John's Church, Stratford, at 18:30hrs when circumstances permit.

b Herts and Beds – Neil Middleton

The Division met twelve times in 2022 – ten times on Zoom and two times in person. Attendance at our regular meetings has been around 10 to 18 – with post Covid competing activities restarting, numbers have tailed off slightly; we met on a mix of Saturday mornings (always for in-person) and mid-week evenings, which allows those with regular scheduling conflicts to come to at least some of our meetings.

During the year "headline" topics included:

~ HERT: The Division made a submission to the Hertfordshire Essex Rapid Transit (HERT)

Consultation undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council); we involved Railfuture East Anglia in view of the Essex element (<u>https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display2929</u>).

~ Future LuToN Statutory Consultation – this was on the future of the airport. We responded:

https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display2994, limiting our comments to the ground transport portion.

~ Lack of service on the Marston Vale line following Vivarail's Administration (we issued a Press Release in 2023: <u>https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Press-release-16th-February-2023</u>).

- ~ An update from GTR on their Operational Improvement Programme.
- ~ Timetables and performance, including contrast & amp; compare between the TOCs.
- ~ East Coast Mainline Timetables.
- ~ Performance measures.
- ~ Fares & Ticketing priorities.
- ~ London Travelcards.
- ~ Ticket Offices.
- ~ Access for All.

Looking ahead, the general view of participants is still that Zoom will be the dominant choice for our meetings in the future. Since the year end we have firmed up on a revised meeting schedule – continue to meet monthly, and in each year have eight Zoom sessions, two in person meetings in Hertfordshire or Bedfordshire and two in person meetings in central London near Kings Cross or Euston (ie two Zoom and one in-person per quarter). Our topic list will react to what is happening with Britain's railways. Performance, digitalisation, and making best use of resources will undoubtedly feature. If you live in Hertfordshire or Bedfordshire, use the trains in the area, or just have an interest, we hope to see you at our future meetings. The first meeting after publication of the 2023 AGM paperwork will be on Wednesday 9 May at 19:30 on Zoom. Keep an eye on both the Rail Events (https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Events) and the Division's web pages (https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Herts-and-Beds).

c Kent – Chris Fribbins

During 2022 the effects of COVID and strike action on the railway has impacted the Kent Division. There have been attempts to hold quarterly online ZOOM meetings and to combine the Faversham Transport Festival, in May, with a face to face meeting. There has been little interest from local members, or response for feedback - we need to agree how the division can move forward.

On the positive side, attendance at the Faversham Transport Festival was a new initiative for both Railfuture and a 'rail presence' at the festival for the first time. Lessons were learnt and attendance at the 2023 festival has been planned (20th and 21st May), along with the Kent Community Rail Partnership. The main council chamber will host model railway exhibits and the mayor's chamber will be available to us.

There has been direct involvement in three Network Rail studies, affecting North & East Kent Connectivity Study (draft published, but not finalised at present and published on Network Rail's website) and the start of studies for the Medway Valley Line and Kent-Gatwick Rail Connectivity.

In Medway the £170m Housing Infrastructure Fund grant (including £63m for a rail connection to a new station on the Hoo Peninsula) continued to be delayed and costs significantly increased following COVID. Local residents were very negative in local consultations about the HIF proposals, feeling that this would drive local housing development (12,000 houses), but would not understand that the developments would still happen (with very limited additional infrastructure). There were predicted technical issues with the rail proposals. Although a third-rail solution was agreed in principle, it meant that any 'informal' pedestrian or vehicle crossing would need diversion and bridging over the railway. A possible non-HIF solution may be possible when Southeastern replace the expired Networker fleet in 2027 - a battery solution may be specified that could easily handle the branch to Hoo, leaving the new station at Hoo St. Werburgh as the main cost.

d London Metro – Charlie King

The year was one of mixed fortunes for the London Metro area. Covid travel restrictions were lifted at the early part of the year. The metro area was one of the areas that had the highest recovery rates. This is mainly due to the people living in these areas being less likely to be able to work from home and need to travel to work most days.

However, restorations of services in these areas have been mixed. TfL Overground and C2C metro services were restored to pre-covid levels. Whereas the three south London train operating companies reduced their metro services during the course of the year. This was mainly due to the relationship with the DfT and a side effect of the ongoing dispute with the Mayor of London over funding of TFL services.

Being direct awards the DfT took the view that it had to recover some of the money that it had given the rail industry over covid. As a result, it provided the three South London train operating companies a financial settlement and told to cut their services to match. This resulted in cuts to many metro services reducing many metro services from 4tph to 2tph. A number of these examples are in the case of Epsom both SW Railway and Southern cut their London, Clapham Junction to Epsom services from 4 tph to 2 tph. Southern withdrew their services from Annerley and Penge West completely leaving them serviced by London Overground only. Sutton lost its semi-fast service to Victoria. SW Railways also cut the Hounslow loop service from 4tph to 2tph, while Southern has cut the peaks service on the Caterham and Tattenham Corner lines from 4tph to 2tph and on Sundays the Tattenham Corner service has been reduced to an hourly shuttle.

This was followed in December when Southeastern (operator of last resort) made further changes by reducing the number of services which had services from both Charing Cross and Cannon Street to services from one or the other terminal. This has resulted in many journeys requiring a change of train at London Bridge. This with the reduction of frequency has added anything from 10 to 15 minutes on journey times. This has made the south London metro area less attractive to casual passengers especially when compared with services operated by TfL in other parts of London.

On the positive side there were a number of new TfL services. The first being the Northern line extension to Nine Elms and Battersea Power Station which opened in May 2021 and reached over 5m journeys in its first year. The new improved and wider southbound platform on the Northern line opened in May 2022. The TfL extension of the Overground to Barking Riverside opened in July 2022. This is to serve a new housing development for c.27,000 in 10,800 new homes, and 4,600 new jobs. The planning permission associated with this development restricted delivery to 1,500 homes until the Transport & Works Act Order and planning direction for the scheme had been secured (in August 2017) and to 4,000 homes until the scheme was operational. Therein lies what town planners know as a 'Grampian condition.' It is nice to see the transport infrastructure in place before the development is completed.

The Elizabeth Line opened in May 2022 in three separate sections due to different signalling systems on the different parts of the railway and getting this to work with the train software on the trains. Bond Street station also remained closed and services did not operate on Sundays. The full through services and the opening of Bond Street opened in November 2022. This usage by December had reached over 70m journeys some 20m above the revised predictions and making it the busiest line in Britain.

TfL settlement the ongoing discussions between the Government, DfT and the London Mayor was finally resolved in August 2022. This resulted in a number of changes to ticketing in London. These included that the mayor would have to raise fares by the same rate as National Rail fares in March 2023. The Elizabeth line would have a supplement for fares from zone 1 to Heathrow. This is applied by not having an off-peak fare and applying the peak fare all day, although the daily cap will still apply. This was later applied to the Piccadilly line. The temporary Freedom Pass restriction of 09.00 for TfL and 09.30 on National Rail has been made permanent (although the 60plus Oyster remains).

Ticketing one of the results of these discussion is that there is a difference between the two sides on what return they each get from the existing integrated ticketing in London. TfL are of the view that they get insufficient revenue from Travelcards that are sold from outside zone 6. While the DfT is of the view that National rail receives insufficient revenue for Oyster for its services in the zones. This is one of the reasons for the reduction in south London Metro service Railfuture have raised concerns over the potential loss of Travelcard and the consequences of paying separately for all parts of a journey and the loss of flexibility. See https://railfuture.org.uk/article1890-The-Travelcard-Add-on

Rolling Stock there have been a number of changes to rolling stock in South London. SW Railways decommissioned their 2-car 456 stock reducing most metro trains from 10 to 8 cars. They have yet to introduce into service the Alterio trains although driver training is taking place, this has resulted in them not sending all the Desiro 707 units to Southeastern. Southern decommissioned all their 455 stock as a result all metro trains are now either 377 or 379 stock with toilets. Southeastern renamed the Desiro 707s City Beamer. They have also announced they want to replace the existing Networker units.

e Surrey – Stephen Rolph

This last Railfuture year here in Surrey has been a very low-key time with no formal meetings being held, though Surrey members through the various Railfuture publications are encouraged to join Sussex & Coastway Division for their, often lively, meetings.

On the Surrey front the two major and much-anticipated rail developments, in the east of the County, which would benefit rail users are still 'paused' though it is anticipated that the re-signalling work along the North Downs line will proceed eastwards and embrace Reigate and Redhill. Perhaps Network Rail might include some preparatory signalling work to prepare the way for Reigate station's proposed third platform project. The DfT-imposed financial savings on railways and lower passenger numbers, reducing ticket revenue, might be putting the proposed expansion at East Croydon station and the Selhurst Triangle even further into Control Period 7 or even CP 8.

This division is regularly represented at the London & South East Railfuture meetings - these review and campaign on London and the South East rail issues. Your Surrey Division convenor is involved in meetings of the two steering groups of the Southeast Communities Rail Partnership which cover the Tonbridge to Redhill route and the North Downs Line route from Reading to Gatwick via Reigate and Redhill, and attends Gatwick Airport's periodic Public Transport forums.

f Sussex & Coastway – John Black

Sussex and Coastway Division met mostly on the first Thursday of each month except August and generally via Zoom. It is appropriate to thank Neil Middleton (Railfuture director with Communications in his portfolio!) for his assistance and helpful contributions to the debates. We met face to face in November and held our Christmas meal in December. I would observe that some folk only join us via Zoom whilst others have expressed a preference for "face to face". Those present agreed a process to increase the number of "f2f" during 2023. This will probably result in a two plus one balance (Zoom against f2f) in the coming years when you include our traditional Christmas get together.

My experience of the year was that many industry representatives were less available for guest appearances. I personally believe the way the DfT and the coming of GBR were being conducted had a bearing on this. As a division we continue to follow, respond and contribute to the debates and planning documents which we hope will lead to filling the gap created by the withdrawal of rail services beyond Uckfield towards Lewes / Brighton. This included attending July's Uckfield Big Day and June's Uckfield Lions Jubilee Picnic to represent Railfuture and discuss the issues with local people; always good days out.

The Kent and East Sussex Coastal Connectivity proposal to electrify from Ashford to Ore plus some track and other works to enable a connection to HS1 with through services to London St. Pancras has appeared on our agenda from time to time through the year. Another topic which took up our interest during the year was a proposal to redevelop South Kensington around the Transport for London provision there. Not in our immediate geographical area but clearly an important destination for travellers from the coast for all sorts of business and leisure reasons.

It has been good to have members from Wessex Branch join us via Zoom to discuss and highlight the current termination of both West Coastway and Arun Valley services short at Portsmouth and Southsea which means they do not reach Portsmouth Harbour to connect easily with services across the water to Ryde (Isle of Wight). Again, important to the coastal economy with travellers from within the division and beyond. We have maintained an interest in the Bluebell Railway's plans for its link with Ardingly and occasional outputs from those who would reconnect other lines here in the area we cover.

"Bubbling Under" all of this has been the development progress of Transport for the South East. This is of interest to a number of divisions both within and beyond the London and South East Branch as the area which TfSE will serve is not exactly co-terminus with our arrangements. In addition, I have represented the division at various levels both within Railfuture and beyond aiming to promote our strapline "Campaigning for a bigger, better railway".

9. Branch campaigns – Roger Blake

On the national stage Railfuture continues to occupy the unique, valued, and increasingly-respected position of being Britain's leading, longest-established, independent, voluntary, and exclusively pro-rail lobby group. Our campaigning for expansion and improvement to develop a bigger, better railway in Britain for passengers and freight users, to support economic (housing and productivity) growth, environmental improvement and better-connected communities, continually seeks to inform and to influence, to promote and persuade at all levels - local-regional-national - and across all sectors and agencies.

On the regional stage our particular commitment to support the Kent and East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Programme developed by Network Rail led to an evolution of our distinctive justification for the infrastructure investment required. In that sense there are similarities with our unique proposition for what we refer to as the Wealden Line Extension, more popularly known as Uckfield-Lewes. Planning for sustainable local growth and regeneration are vital to establishing a strategic socio-economic case for any specific transport intervention. A broader series of conversations has continued to develop with key economic and other stakeholders such as the new All-Party Parliamentary Group for the South East, chaired by Hastings & Rye MP Sally-Ann Hart, under the auspices of South East Councils, and its independent research arm the thinktank Localis.

As 2022 (and early-2023) saw the culmination of the public processes in the development of Transport for the South East's Transport Strategy and then its Strategic Investment Plan, with close Railfuture engagement throughout, our narrative has developed some key themes, which may at the risk of over-simplification be summarised in these ways:

- ~ differentiate between means and ends, expressed as 'better lives through better journeys'
- ~ transport as a necessary but insufficient pre-condition for community regeneration
- ~ creating competitive places which are visionary and outward-looking

~ making 'levelling-up' work: empowering communities to become winners – through greater selfgovernance with restored local capabilities to generate and retain revenues based on existing accountabilities to local communities.

Details of the various campaigns undertaken within the regional branch area can be found on the Railfuture website – find the branch page in 'Railfuture near you' on the home page of the national website. As well as our continuing efforts to justify restoration of a rail link between Uckfield and Lewes, and to extend Southeastern HS1 services into the east of East Sussex mentioned above, we have variously supported, for example, the restoration of passenger services to the Hoo Peninsula for the 12k new homes planned there, the Bakerloo line extension to support regeneration in inner south-east London, and the West London Outer Orbital for improved connectivity.

Our other principal campaigning activity has been responding to the steady flow of consultations and calls for evidence throughout the year. For our branch, 21 are listed in the Railfuture library of Submissions for 2022, some unique to our branch while others included our branch's contribution to a broader submission. These responses and submissions can be viewed at or downloaded from 'Consultations responses' under 'Campaigns' on the home page of the national website. Experience in our Branch and others is that evidence of active campaigning is one of the surest ways of attracting new members.

10. Branch newsletters and bulletins: quarterly *railse* and monthly *inter-railse* – Roger Blake Four eight-page colour issues of the quarterly newsletter *railse* were published during 2022 as in previous years, and were as usual distributed with each quarterly *Railwatch*. Members may now opt to receive their Railwatch and *railse* direct by email upon publication, in pdf format and also linked to the website; use the 'Member services' section of the website, under 'About us' on the home page of the national website, using your membership number and 6-digit PIN.

Twelve two-page colour issues of the monthly e-bulletin *inter-railse* were published, at the start of each month during 2022 and, like the longer-established national monthly Rail User Express and the occasional Rail Action, is available by email at the time of publication, hitherto on request. In future and as indicated in the Membership Secretary's report on page 4, the principle of informed consent is likely to be applied so that members with email addresses will receive *inter-railse* at the change of each month, unless a specific request to opt out is notified. Views / downloads of Railwatch, *railse* and *inter-railse* are always additionally available from the branch web page at 'Branch news' or in the branch dashboard of all documents. While very little comment on the now-familiar formats, or material considered suitable for publication, has been received such anecdotal feedback as there is has remained positive and encouraging.

11. 2023-24?

Priorities for the year ahead, for discussion with regional branch members at their annual meeting.

P.S. – some Railfuture officers are now adding this footnote to their email signatures: "*How we spell Railfuture – singular, one word, one capital letter (can be abbreviated to Rf)*" Feel free to do likewise!

Appendix A – Minutes of Annual General Meeting 30 April 2022

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Trevor Davies, Chris Heaps, Graham Larkbey, Peter Hillier-Palmer.

2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 17 April 2021.

Agreed.

3. Matters Arising from Minutes of 2021 AGM

If any not being covered in the agenda for the 2022 AGM - none.

4. Results of elections to branch committee 2022-23

The following were duly nominated and elected unopposed:Chairmanno nominationsVice-ChairmanRoger BlakeSecretaryno nominationsTreasurerHoward Thomas

The other branch committee members duly nominated and also elected unopposed are:

Charles King, Neil Middleton and Chris Page. There were insufficient nominations to fill the other three vacancies. Only half of the 10 committee places have received nominations.

The divisional representatives on branch committee are:

Howard Thomas (Eastern), Neil Middleton (Herts & Beds), Chris Fribbins (Kent), Charles King (Metro), Stephen Rolph (Surrey) and John Black (Sussex & Coastway).

Railfuture's Company Secretary / Accountant and Sussex & Coastway Division's Secretary Trevor Davies, and the branch's Independent Examiner Gordon Pratt, also attend.

Reports on 2021

5. Vice Chairman

The Vice Chairman notes as before that the London & South East regional branch still has c.25% of the entire - albeit diminishing - national membership of Railfuture, and London postcodes alone have c.25% of that regional branch total (although, ironically perhaps, our Metro Division is among our least active). Owing to our numeric size and geographic spread we remain unique among Railfuture branches in having an informal sub-structure of essentially county-based Divisions, and it is at that level that much of the engagement with members, rail user groups and other organisations and our campaigning activities takes place. It is gratifying therefore to report that after the inevitable period of adjustment at the start of the pandemic two years ago, and since, the branch quickly regained and has retained much of its rhythm with regular committee and Division meetings held online. One of the few side-effects of the pandemic, not being able to travel for meetings in venues, which has been beneficial has been increased levels of participation in our online meetings; Herts & Beds and Sussex & Coastway Divisions have been particular examples of this.

Although still lacking a Chair and a Secretary, the branch now has committee member Neil Middleton fulfilling the role of membership secretary and so this important aspect of our work, not just monitoring but actively welcoming and seeking out potential new members, is again receiving the attention which it requires.

We do need to continue to raise our profile by being seen to be active and campaigning, especially in the increasinglyimportant social media sphere, maximising opportunities for publicity and telling others about Railfuture, so that we can attract more active members and continue to grow our activities and our influence.

Although numerically the largest, the branch as one of Railfuture's 14 could be considered to be over-represented on the national Board of Directors, with four of the nine (not to mention the Company Secretary / Accountant, and national house magazine editor!). National Chairman, Policy Director, Infrastructure & Networks Director, and Communications Director who is significantly increasing our social media output at branch and national levels. In this 24/7 information age Railfuture volunteers, as all members including Directors are, aim to keep Railfuture's independent and informed analysis in the public eye via press releases, website articles, various Twitter accounts, Facebook, LinkedIn – all linked off the website.

6. Treasurer

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to severely curtail the activities of the London & South East Branch in 2021. For the third consecutive year, the Branch did not take up financial support from national funds, hence the deficit in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. With the exception of the production and distribution of the Branch newsletter, all cost centres were underspent against the 2021 budget. The main features of the year were expenditure of £1,010 on the quarterly Branch newsletter and £15.00 on Campaigns & lobbying. The Branch did not take up its allocation from the national budget for 2021. Our bank balance was £506.30 at 31 December 2021.

The Statements of Comprehensive Income, Financial Position, and Cash Flow for 2021 are set out in Appendix A to this document.

Railfuture's policy is to provide for 20% depreciation on cost in each of the first four accounting years of use, and to write down the value of non-current (fixed) assets to £1.00 in the fifth year. Thereafter, the non-current assets remain at £1.00 until they are disposed of. Following this policy, I have charged £120.43 for depreciation in 2021 (see: Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2021). Following this, the net values of the Gazebo, the first Projector, the two Leaflet Stands, the Thameslink 2 Banner, and the Trestle Table are now down to £1.00.

Branch proposals for the 2022 budget have been approved by the Railfuture Board of Directors. The branch accounts are examined by co-opted committee member Gordon Pratt, who has no financial role in the branch, and then passed to the national accountant. The national company's accounts are examined in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act. As the branch has its own bank account, Board requires that it must have three current signatories, one of whom must be a current Railfuture director (not necessarily a branch member). Each transaction must be signed by two signatories. The third signatory is required for business continuity if either of the other signatories is unavailable. Branches are responsible for ensuring that all signatories and Branch officers are current members.

7. Membership

Membership numbers at the start and end of 2021 were static: both were 381. We gained 16 members and lost 16 members; this is slightly better than the national trend (a loss of 2.8%). Included in membership are 18 affiliated Rail User Groups and 22 members who have expressed an interest in L&SE who primarily belong to other branches. As regards Railfuture 'Supporters' (broadly, non-members who have expressed an interest in being kept up to date by Railfuture), those tagged as being interested in L&SE amount to 26, and we have a further 781 on our Uckfield / Lewes 'Bridge the gap' campaign list.

The pandemic has shown that we can operate effectively online with virtual meetings, social media and e-mail (indeed your Membership Secretary's local Division has been able to meet more regularly, with more attendees via Zoom).

Our ability to communicate effectively with some members is restricted by missing email addresses and permissions. If you are fully opted into communications, you will receive:

- ~ Railwatch by post or email, including the 8-page quarterly branch newsletter 'railse'
- ~ the branch monthly news update 'inter-railse' by email (just two pages)
- ~ updates from at least one Division by email
- ~ occasional other emails on national and local matters.
- There are three ways to update your preferences:

by self-care on the website: <u>https://www.railfuture.org.uk/member/</u> (recommended, but if struggling, do switch to choice 2 or 3)

email Lloyd Butler at renewals@railfuture.org.uk

email me neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk

Your email address will not be passed outside Railfuture and will be used in accordance with the permissions you give us in accordance with GDPR requirements.

8. Divisions

a Eastern

Eastern Division's activities were again severely curtailed by the Covid-19 pandemic during 2021. The Division met every two months by Zoom on dates normally scheduled for face-to-face meetings. Zoom meetings have been attended by typically 6 people.

During the year, the Division has kept an overview of how the railway reacted to the pandemic – the level and quality of service provided – and various developments.

The continued introduction of new rolling stock on Greater Anglia services has meant that there are now relatively few services operating with rolling stock over five years old. Great Eastern outer suburban services still see the use of Class 321s (nicknamed 'Dusty Bins' after the TV programme) which are now about 33 years old. Likewise, TfL Rail / Elizabeth Line services between Shenfield and London Liverpool Street are now mostly provided by new Class 345 emus. A few Class 315s are still in use. The introduction of new trains on the London–Norwich 'inter-city' service was completed by December 2020.

Other developments have included progress on proposals for a new station east of Chelmsford at Beaulieu Park. The Division has noted an increase in interest on the part of some local authorities in the possible reinstatement of the Hall Farm Curve.

During the year, the service provided on Greater Anglia routes had recovered to more-or-less pre-Covid levels, although there was some (short-term) reduction in frequency towards the end of the year. Generally, reliability and punctuality have been very good. It seems that Greater Anglia has had a much more positive and constructive approach to timetable recovery than some other TOCs serving the Greater London area.

For the future, the Division will continue to meet on the second Wednesday of the odd months, either by Zoom (at 19:00hrs) or face-to-face, probably at St John's Church, Stratford, at 18:30hrs when circumstances permit.

b Herts and Beds

The Division met 12 times in 2021 - 11 times as our (approximately monthly) regular meeting on Zoom and once for an in-person social. Attendance at our regular meetings has been around 15 - 20; we met on a mix of Saturday mornings and mid-week evenings, which allows those with regular scheduling conflicts to come to at least some of our meetings.

The general view of participants is that Zoom will be the dominant choice for our meetings in the future, given the difficulties with east west public transport in our area north of London (although submitted in 2022, see our submission to Hertfordshire County Council's HERT Mass Rapid Transport Proposal: <u>https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display2929</u>). Indeed, we held our social in central London for ease of transport.

During the year "headline" topics included:

~ Timetables and performance, including contrast and compare between the TOCs;

~ Lack of service on both the Abbey Line and the Marston Vale line was a regular dissatisfaction;

~ East Coast Mainline Timetable consultation – the Division supplied the content for south of Peterborough: https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display2742;

~ The East West Rail Second Statutory consultation (in conjunction with Thames Valley, East Anglia, and Infrastructure & Networks): <u>https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display2717;</u>

~ An update from GTR on the challenges they face with driver availability;

~ HERT (see above).

Looking ahead:

The Division will continue to meet approximately monthly for the foreseeable future – a combination of mostly Zoom and occasionally in-person meetings.

In one sense, 2022 will be an important flex point as we return more to the focus we had pre-pandemic of more traditional rail campaigning content. By this I mean that 2021 was dominated by a combination of immediate Covid pandemic issues (eg lack of drivers) and what portion of the December 2019 timetable could/should be run. We are moving to a world in which we will have a timetable (eg GTR for May 2022, LNWR outline for December 2022) and are again focusing on seeking improvements based on gaps between supply and expected future demand.

If you live in Hertfordshire or Bedfordshire, use the trains in the area, or just have an interest, we hope to see you at our next meeting. At the moment this is written, the plan is to meet in person in central London, during the morning of Saturday 14 May. More on both Rail Events (<u>https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Events</u>) and the Division page (<u>https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Herts-and-Beds</u>).

c Kent

Meetings have been held on Zoom; an attempt to meet in person at Tonbridge failed at the last minute when there was an outbreak within the church which we had booked.

The COVID restrictions were compounded with issues regarding the main train operator in Kent (Southeastern) and the denial of a further extension to their contract and it being taken in-house by the Department for Transport.

There have been a number of online meetings with Network Rail regarding their "North and East Kent Connectivity study" which is aimed at identifying the barriers to rail travel in that corridor, and use of cars to travel to locations such as Ebbsfleet International to pick up trains there. The detailed study identified many issues that could be addressed, given priority and funding - including removal of a number of minor speed restrictions which would add up to make a significant change.

The progress of the Medway Council Local Plan is being monitored (c. 30,000 homes), with an associated Housing Infrastructure Fund for £170m that includes restoring passenger services on the Hundred of Hoo freight-only branch to a new station / transport interchange near Hoo St. Werburgh (Sharnal Street) - working with Medway Council officers. A way forward was identified by using an extension to the third rail supply to allow existing trains to extend from Gravesend to the new station, but it appears a connection at Hoo Junction towards Strood, the Medway Towns and Maidstone / Paddock Wood is not possible. Further consultation has been carried out on just running a battery-powered service to a new platform at Northfleet to connect to existing services has been explored. This project is not making the progress expected and Medway Council have had to request an extension to the deadlines - there is a great deal of opposition from some local residents as they feel that the railway will bring more housing development, although that will happen anyway - and with minimal infrastructure provision and most of the £170m funding could be lost.

Plans for involvement in the Faversham Transport Festival weekend had stalled due to Railfuture commitments elsewhere and COVID, but is now set for 14th & 15th May 2022 - in the historic Faversham Guildhall. We continue to work with the Kent Community Rail Partnership and monitor activities on other Kent CRPs.

d London Metro

The Covid pandemic continued to cause problems with train services in the London area. The continuous changes of government policy often resulting in reduction in usage and a

timetable change every few weeks. In discussion with train operators Railfuture was keen to promote a return to rail. It was interesting to note that Stratford overtook Waterloo as the busiest station in Britain.

We supported GTR in withdrawing the Gatwick Express and the supplementary fare. We did an analysis of the different fares from Gatwick and concluded that the Gatwick Express brand was a valuable brand for promoting rail services, but the supplement was no longer value for money. We supported the interim service using Gatwick Airport stock being extended to Brighton. We lobbied for the interim service between Victoria and Brighton to call at Clapham Junction rather than East Croydon which has four other trains per hour to Brighton. This was not accepted by the DfT. At present there is no longer a direct service from Clapham Junction the busiest interchange station in Britain is the Brighton is the busiest station on the south coast. We will continue to lobby for the restoration of a through service.

In December we made representation to South Western Railway about the reduction of metro services, where many routes with 4 trains per hour were reduced to 3 trains per hour and in outer London and the surrounding are area from 4 trains per hour to 2 trains per hour, and in the worst-case London to Guildford via Epsom from 2 trains per hour to 1 train per hour. We also expressed concerns about reducing the number of long-distance trains stopping at Clapham Junction. We joined with our colleagues in the South West to lobby against the withdrawal of the Waterloo and Clapham Junction trains to Bath and Bristol via Salisbury. Similar reductions are foreseen in the May 2022 GTR timetable.

It was pleasing in to see the opening of the Northern Line extension to Battersea Power station and Nine Elms, although the opening of the Elizabeth line (Crossrail) continued to be put back. We have expressed concerns over the discussion between TfL and the DFT over future long-term funding of TfL.

We are very concerned that there is pressure to undo the present integrated ticketing between National Rail and TfL that has been with us for more than 40 years. This could affect the ability to buy a London Travelcard ticket at national rail stations (See Railfuture survey). Passenger numbers are starting to recover and at present are strongest in the London on the Underground, Overground and Metro area.

e Surrey

This has been a quiet year caused by COVID lockdown and fewer members using rail to become motivated by travel difficulties but Surrey members have been made aware of other Divisions' activities through branch Vice-Chair Roger Blake's excellent publicity through the Railfuture publications and web pages.

Looking ahead, this Division has plans for future meetings; these include an update on the Croydon CARS scheme to expand East Croydon station plus the Selhurst Triangle and the 3rd platform project at Reigate. But we are aware that any positive action by the CARS team is very dependent on budgetary matters currently under review by the DfT being concluded and their views on priority work for Network Rail to develop. Also, of interest will be any moves to 3rd rail electrification of the gaps in the North Downs Line between Redhill and Reading. Another potential meeting, either virtual or face to face, will be Accessibility matters with updates from the TOCs in Surrey on their Accessibility support services. This may be organised with the involvement of the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People.

f Sussex & Coastway

Sussex and Coastway have been meeting regularly through the year via Zoom. We also managed to have a Christmas face to face meeting at The John Harvey Tavern in Lewes when permitted. It was good to meet with fellow members of all ages and remind each other that we still had arms and legs etc attached to the heads and shoulders seen (or not) on screen. We have been joined by members from Wessex as we discussed services along West Coastway and also through the Arun Valley to destinations such as Portsmouth - and beyond! Both Southern and Great Western provide these services so there has been plenty to be shared. A special thanks to those who represented Railfuture at public events once lockdown started to be eased.

Much of this would not have been possible without the technical input supplied by Neil Middleton so I need to say how much this is appreciated. It has also been good to have Chris Page join us. I am particularly pleased that Zoom has enabled Branch and Divisional representatives to meet most months to plan ahead with the AGM and other events being discussed and deadlines for Railfuture responses to Public Consultations and even appropriate Planning Documents being on our agenda.

9. Branch campaigns

Railfuture continues to occupy the unique, valued, and increasingly-respected position of being Britain's leading, longest-established, national, independent, voluntary, and exclusively pro-rail lobby group. Our campaigning for expansion and improvement to develop a bigger, better railway in Britain for passengers and freight users, to support economic (housing and productivity) growth, environmental improvement and better-connected communities, continually seeks to inform and to influence, to promote and persuade at all levels, local-regional-national, and across all sectors and agencies.

Our particular commitment to support the Kent and East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Programme developed by Network Rail has led to an evolution of our distinctive justification for the infrastructure investment required. In that sense there are similarities with our unique proposition for what we refer to as the Wealden Line Extension, more popularly known as Uckfield-Lewes. Planning for sustainable local growth and regeneration are vital to establishing a strategic socio-economic case for any specific transport intervention. A broader series of conversations has developed with key economic and other stakeholders such as the new All-Party Parliamentary Group for the South East, chaired by Hastings & Rye MP Sally-Ann Hart, and its independent research arm the thinktank Localis. As 2022 sees the culmination of the public processes in the development of Transport for the South East's Transport Strategy with consultation on their draft Strategic Investment Plan, with close Railfuture engagement throughout, our narrative has developed some key themes, which may at the risk of over-simplification be summarised in these ways:

- differentiate between means and ends, expressed as 'better lives through better journeys'
 transport as a necessary but insufficient pre-condition for community regeneration
- ~ transport as a necessary but insufficient pre-condition for community regenerati
- \sim creating competitive places which are visionary and outward-looking

~ making 'levelling-up' work: empowering communities to become winners – through greater self-governance with restored local capabilities to generate and retain revenues based on existing accountabilities to local communities.

Details of the various campaigns undertaken within the regional branch area can be found on the Railfuture website – find the branch page in 'Railfuture near you'. As well as our continuing efforts to justify restoration of a rail link between Uckfield and Lewes, and to extend Southeastern HS1 services into the east of East Sussex mentioned above, we have variously supported, for example, the restoration of passenger services to the Hoo Peninsula for the 12k new homes planned there, the Bakerloo line extension to support regeneration in inner south-east London, and the West London Outer Orbital for improved connectivity.

Our other principal campaigning activity has been responding to the steady flow of consultations and calls for evidence throughout the year. For our branch 27 are listed in the Railfuture library for 2021, some unique to our branch while others included our branch's contribution to a broader submission. These responses and submissions can be viewed at or downloaded from 'Consultations responses' under '<u>Campaigns</u>'. Experience in our Branch and others is that evidence of active campaigning is one of the surest ways of attracting new members.

10. Branch newsletters and bulletins: quarterly railse and monthly inter-railse

Four eight-page colour issues of the quarterly newsletter *railse* were published during 2021 as in previous years, and were as usual distributed with each *Railwatch*. December 2020 marked the 150th edition.

Twelve two-page colour issues of the monthly e-bulletin *inter-railse* were published for the start of each month during 2021 and, like the longer-established monthly Rail User Express, is available by email at the time of publication on request. In addition, views / downloads are always available from the branch web page at <u>Branch news</u>. While very little comment on the now-familiar formats, or material considered suitable for publication, has been received such anecdotal feedback as there is has remained positive and encouraging.

11. 2022-23?

Priorities for the year ahead, for discussion with regional branch members at their annual meeting.

Railfuture Ltd London & South East Branch Statement of Comprehensive Income (Trading, Income and Expenditure Account) for the year ended 31 December 2022					
TRADING INCOME				Year to	31/12/21
			£		£
Sales				_	
<u>less</u> Cost of sale		£		£	
	Inventory (pens) @ 01/01/22 Purchases	14.25		14.25	
		14.25		14.25	
	<u>less</u> Inventory (pens) @			44.95	
	31/12/22	14.25	0.00	14.25	0.00
		_	0.00	-	
TRADING PROFIT/L	OSS FOR YEAR		0.00		0.00
NON TRADING INC	OME				
		£		£	
Funding		1,063.70			
Budget (excludir Campaigning	ng campaigning)	,			
Donations		10.00			
Other		20.76			
			1,094.46		0.00
		—	1,094.46	-	0.00
EXPENDITURE					
		£		£	
2022 AGM		175.00			
Branch meeting					
Division meeting		40.00			
Campaigning &		53.50		15.00	
Liaison with oth	er branches				
Newsletter		950.00		1,010.00	
	tion & advertising				
Donations		4 242 52		4.025.00	
Demostation		1,218.50		1,025.00	
Depreciation of	non-current assets	114.16	1 222 66	120.42	1 1AE AD
DEFICIT FOR YEAR TO 31/12/22		1,332.66	-	1,145.42	
DEFICIT FOR YEAR	10 31/12/22	=	-238.20	=	-1,145.42

Railfuture Ltd						
London & South East Branch Statement of Financial Position						
						(Balance Sheet)
as at 31 December 2022						
NON CURRENT ASSETS	Cost	Depreciation	Net	as at	31/12/21	
	£	£	£		£	
Gazebo	189.97	188.97	1.00		1.00	
Projector 1	329.54	328.54	1.00		1.00	
Leaflet stands	55.98	54.98	1.00		1.00	
Thameslink 2 banner	75.00	74.00	1.00		1.00	
Trestle table	32.99	31.99	1.00		1.00	
Projector 2	369.99	368.99	1.00		74.79	
Table cloth	173.42	172.42	1.00		35.50	
HDMI cable	16.99	12.80	4.19		7.39	
Tool box	14.33	10.68	10.68		6.32	
	1,258.21	1,243.37	14.84	-	129.00	
CURRENT ASSETS						
Inventory (pens)		14.25		14.25		
Trade receivables (pre-booked roo	m hire)	14.25		14.25		
Cash at Bank	in nic,	382.26		506.30		
Cush ut buik	-	396.51	1	520.55		
<u>less</u> CURRENT LIABILITIES						
Trade payables (newsletter)						
	-		396.51		520.55	
				_		
NET TOTAL ASSETS			411.35	=	649.55	
Financed by:						
ACCUMULATED FUND (CURRENT						
ACCOUNT)						
Balance b/f at 01/01/22			649.55		1,794.97	
<u>less</u> Deficit for year			-238.20		-1,145.42	
Balance c/f at 31/12/22			411.35	-	649.55	

Railfuture Ltd London & South East Branch Statement of Cash Flow as at 31 December 2022			
		as at	31/12/21
	£		£
Deficit from operating			
activities	-238.20		-1,145.42
Adjustment for depreciation Adjustment for decrease in inventories	114.16		120.42
Adjustment for decrease in receivables (debtors)			
Adjustment for decrease in payables (creditors)			
Net cash from operating			
activities	-124.04		-1,025.00
Cash used in investing			
activities			
Purchase of non			
current assets			
Net decrease in cash and cash	40.00		
equivalents	-124.04		-1,025.00
Cash and cash equivalents at 1	F0C 20		1 521 20
January 2022	506.30		1,531.30
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2022	382.26		506.30