

Railfuture in London and the South East

quarterly branch newsletter

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

Are you sitting comfortably?

In mid-October Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin officially opened Siemens' new Traincare Facility at Three Bridges, on the Brighton main line, ready for the new Thameslink fleet of 8- and 12-car class 700 trains.



Inside new Thameslink train in Three Bridges depot

Above: coffee-cups shelf centrally under window? USB charge points/power sockets under centre-front of seat pair? 3+2 seating without the third one of the three.

Longer, more frequent trains will add capacity, the new network will enhance connectivity, but in more comfort?

Below: fold-down seat-back tables? In need of more leg-room, Lofty? Prefer a flat seat cushion? Side floor duct below window nearly half a window seat's width.



Inside new Thameslink train in Three Bridges depot

Crossrail 2 consultation, again

The Mayor of London, Network Rail and Transport for London launched a third public consultation at the end of October, which runs to 8 January 2016. It follows consultations in 2013 on the principle of the north-east-south-west project, resulting in the decision to develop 'regional' options with mainline services across central London linking West Anglia and South Western routes, and in 2014 on detailed changes in three local areas.

The DfT then issued formal 'safeguarding' directions to local planning authorities along the route earlier this year, after statutory consultation, mainly to protect the tunnelled route from incompatible development above.

Transport for London are now seeking comments on proposals for station locations and entrances/exits, on locations of tunnel ventilation/emergency access shafts and other construction sites, and on service patterns.

One route change excludes Tooting Broadway owing to construction challenges, and substitutes Balham (with Southern link) with similar benefits and less risk of disruption. There is also a choice between routes via Turnpike Lane/Alexandra Palace, or via Wood Green. An East London Riverside Route via Hackney Central, Stratford and Barking is still a 'potential future' option.



See <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/crossrail2/october2015>

Railfuture has consistently championed the former Chelsea-Hackney line, and subsequently Crossrail 2 as its 21st-century successor. It re-applies the logic of both Crossrail 1 and Thameslink 1 by adopting use of higher-capacity mainline trains and running them across the central area rather than into Zone 1 buffer stops. They are wasteful operationally and create added pressure on the sub-surface distribution network a.k.a. the Tube. (Pity this lesson has been lost on HS2, which should always have been seen as the next extension of HS1 albeit with a large spur into Euston.)

While the South Western branches are all about taking pressure off Waterloo the West Anglia route is about supporting regeneration and accommodating long-term growth in housing and jobs. The proposed service patterns mention 30 tph through the core yet 12 tph on each of the two routes north of Dalston. The case for the East London Riverside Route will be based on housing London's long-term growth in the Thames Gateway and relieving the Essex Thameside route with its finite-capacity, Tubeless Fenchurch Street terminus.

Infrastructure enhancements: CP5 Plan collapsed, CP6 now?

When is a pause not a pause? When HM Treasury sinks its claws in to it, perhaps? Barely was the ink dry with assessments of the fall-out from late-June's announcement, than along came another one at the end of September, announcing an un-pause! For us, Midland Main Line electrification north of Bedford going ahead, albeit to an extended timescale, would see electric trains in and out of St. Pancras International's platforms 1-4 from and to Corby via Kettering by 2019 – and an all-electric, cleaner London terminus by 2023.

On 28 September it was reported that a London-based contractor had secured the work to electrify GOBLIN.



Orbital interchange – wires over platform 3 due in 2017

The £56.9 million contract is however less than half the £115 million agreed funding package. Even if the costs of links to adjoining freight routes, not in this contract, are added back in they could not account for all of the £58.1 million difference. That leaves the question of whether this is only a preliminary civil engineering contract for enabling works such as raising bridges, lowering track, strengthening viaducts etc, with another electrification works contract still to come. Absence of any announcement from Network Rail fuels that belief.

Porterbrook Leasing announced in early-November an order for 80 more class 387 Electrostars, for delivery from October next year to June 2017. A vital stop-gap until TfL's new Overground Aventura's arrive in 2018?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer launched the **National Infrastructure Commission** on 30 October, with Railfuture Vice-President Lord Andrew Adonis as its interim Chair. On 13 November he issued a Call for Evidence on three challenges, including 'Large-scale transport infrastructure improvements in London'. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-infrastructure-commission> We must not disappoint him!

In late-October the DfT published reports on 'Transport appraisal in investment decisions: Understanding and valuing the impacts of transport investment', and on 'Values of travel savings and reliability'. Then in mid-November DfT published changes to WebTAG (web-based Transport Analysis Guidance) including car costs for rail demand forecasting. Level playing field?

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

DfT refranchising, TfL devolving

The Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the new **East Anglia** franchise, to start in October 2016, was published in mid-September with bids due back by mid-December. With so much of the current Greater Anglia franchise in our branch area devolved to TfL since 31 May, the Lea Valley line remains a focus of our attention.

Regular readers will recall that three years ago, after they had affiliated to Railfuture, Chingford Line Users' Association used a successful to our Fighting Fund to commission Jonathan Roberts Consulting to examine the case for re-opening Lea Bridge station and for increasing service frequency on the Lea Valley line to an all-day/every-day regular 4tph. The station will re-open next Spring, and Network Rail are committed to complete the infrastructure for **STAR** (a third track for Stratford-Tottenham Hale-Angel Road) before 2019.

Imagine the consternation when stakeholders in the Lea Valley saw that the ITT omitted any requirement for bidders to provide the matching 4tph service! Not a good start for Rail Executive's new Director-General!

On the other side of the capital the **South West Trains** re-franchising process started on 12 November with a stakeholder/passenger consultation closing 9 February. The Invitation to Tender (ITT) is then expected in April.

Notices in the Official Journal of the European Union for new **West Coast** and **West Midlands** franchises are due this month (December).

Devolution developments

The Greater London Assembly's Transport Committee have been investigating the scope and implications of further devolution to TfL, looking at South London.



A logical beyond-London London Overground terminus

"*Devolving Rail Services to London: Towards a South London Metro*" was published in mid-October. An accompanying press release revealed that 68% of London rail passengers who responded were in favour. See www.london.gov.uk/media/assembly-press-releases/2015/10/should-tfl-run-our-rails Top priorities for improvement were price and performance, followed by capacity and frequency. As expected the report recommends steps to devolving suburban routes of the South Eastern franchise. It recommends likewise for the suburban routes of the South Western franchise.

Build it and they will come!

Hackney Interchange usage reached its first-year forecast almost as soon as it opened in July, as reported in September's newsletter. Within two months usage had already reached TfL's two-year forecast! The figures, for comparison with usage of stations, are for the first year comparable with Blake Street (*I kid you not!* - Ed) which is busier than 58% of Britain's stations, for the second year with Merstham which is busier than 74%, and for the fourth year with Brookwood which is busier than 78% of Britain's stations. In other words really quite soon – not four years after opening – usage of just that connecting walkway between two London Overground stations and the routes they serve, one orbital and the other radial, will be greater than four-fifths of the country's stations!



Hackney Interchange – low-level secure walkway from Hackney Central to stairs and lift up to Hackney Downs

Two usage characteristics are of particular interest. As the already step-free Hackney Central station is in the heart of the town centre it is being used as a preferred means of secure access, via the new and accessible walkway, for the more remote Hackney Downs station. As many as 25% of interchange users are actually using the new, direct link for that purpose rather than interchanging between the lines and services it connects. In that context the other characteristic may not be so surprising, with 13% of users taking the lift in the link compared with the average 5% of rail journeys made by disabled or encumbered passengers. One of TfL's many next projects is to make Hackney Downs station fully accessible – subject, as ever, to funding.

Open it and they will come?

Sunday 13 December sees the start of a new timetable with new and other improved services. The London Overground train in the picture above is on the busiest section of the North London Line, heading towards Highbury and Islington. That station is also served by Great Northern and very soon will see all-day every-day trains between Moorgate and Finsbury Park, via Old Street. For far too long the Northern City Line as it's known has had no late-evening or weekend services. In three years' time Crossrail will also serve Moorgate!

A Sussex Community Rail Partnership line will see a more modest improvement, with last Saturday trains calling at Southease, south of Lewes, an hour later. The MarshLink stations of Three Oaks and Winchelsea will celebrate the return of all-day Sunday services after a decade's absence, and campaign. See story on p. 5. No improvements at our other 'limited service' stations.

A London Manifesto for 2016-20

Thursday 5 May 2016 will see local elections for the **Mayor of London**, and for the 25 Members of the **Greater London Assembly** who represent 14 constituencies plus the 11 elected on a London-wide percentage basis. A once every two-decades event, the London elections will coincide with the next General Election. The next time that London Mayoral/Greater London Assembly elections and a General Election coincide will be 2040 – in Network Rail's CP10! There will be elections next May for 128 English Councils too.

For the May 2015 General Election Railfuture published "**2020 Vision**" which can be downloaded from www.railfuture.org.uk/Briefings The five-page document identified 10 key policy areas for government and the rail industry to deliver. That said, in London we must remember that 'rail' includes London Trams, Docklands Light Railway and London Underground.

The 10 key themes developed in the briefing are:-

- ~ A coherent revitalised national railway system;
- ~ A railway as an agent for city economic growth;
- ~ An intermodal railway working with other transport providers;
- ~ A freight logistics railway serving a developing UK industrial base;
- ~ A resilient railway, not attracting negative headlines;
- ~ A professional, cost-efficient, safe railway;
- ~ A sustainable railway, with increased mode share;
- ~ A growing railway with investment in infrastructure and skills;
- ~ A 'fare' railway;
- ~ An accountable railway, one that meets the needs of its customers.

Mayoral candidates for the four parties currently on the GLA are, in party alphabetical order and pictured l-to-r:



Zac Goldsmith MP (Conservative), Sian Berry (Green); Sadiq Khan (Labour), and Caroline Pidgeon (Lib-Dem).

As we develop our Manifesto for London we hope to have the chance to learn how the candidates develop these themes and interpret them in the London context.

Bridge the gap: London and South Coast Rail Corridor

The DfT published the terms of reference for the 'London and South Coast Rail Corridor Study' in mid-October. This coincided with the official opening by the Transport Secretary of the Thameslink Traincare Facility astride the Brighton main line, at Three Bridges. www.railfuture.org.uk/article1619-London-south-coast-study is our response to the Study's terms of reference.



The South Coast – Brighton i360, opening in 2016

Brighton is beyond doubt the capital city of the Sussex, if not the south, coast. Far more than just a dormitory which exports commuters northbound towards and into London, it is a major regional centre second only to Milton Keynes in the south-east outside London. It has its own growth needs, which owing to constraints such as the South Downs and National Park can only be met sustainably by expanding its rail catchment inland.

London's Docklands, epitomised by Canary Wharf, is home for the national capital's still-growing centre of economic gravity vying with The City for pre-eminence. It needs greater connectivity also through an expanded rail transport catchment. In three years' time the start of Crossrail 1 services between Paddington and Abbey Wood will highlight the absence of north-south mainline railway links serving Docklands. Our **Thameslink 2** concept offers that strategic vision with a creative alternative to conventional Zone 1 terminal thinking.



London's 21st-century Docklands, with Canary Wharf

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

What is rail development for?

Historically, no different from the development of any other form of transport, from the prehistoric moment someone discovered you could go places on water by getting into a hollowed-out tree-trunk, since the wheel was invented about 5,500 years ago, immigrants called Romans built our first roads, road-pricing began c.500 years ago when it was called a turnpike, our canal network took forward the principle of the tree-trunk by putting a horse in front of it, the Wright brothers briefly left terra firma a century ago resulting in mass inter-continental air travel, and over the past 50 years the Preston by-pass has evolved into a motorway network.

The bigger better railway we advocate seeks to apply those general lessons, and especially the experience of our 200-year old mode, that people and places thrive through being better connected and better able to transact. Some call this economic growth; we prefer to call it opening-up opportunity and spreading prosperity.

Applied to 'the London and South Coast Rail Corridor' this translates into improving access to and between centres of population and economic activity, be they major and growing urban agglomerations such as the international capital at one end of the corridor and the coastal capital at the other, an international airport in between, and elsewhere ranging from market towns to, yes, the Medway towns! Highways England cannot cope, housing growth of the magnitude required only becomes palatable if rail-connected, rail treads lightly on the planet and its resources, and expands as well as consolidates connectivity with usable time in transit.



The voice which articulates and advocates the link between sustainable growth and sustainable travel is the Local Enterprise Partnership, with the name to suit. It gets the message that the study corridor requires growth-enabling transport capacity, connectivity and resilience which only rail development can supply and for which post-Sussex Area Route Study planning for CP6 and beyond must be renewed in earnest. Rail development along and beyond this corridor has the potential, and need, to be an agent for sustainable change in its economic and urban geography.

The London end will generate the greatest benefits, yet it has the greatest complexity, costs and timescales. The 'coast and country' end has the least of all those three, to kick-start the bigger project. Local MPs will recognise the alignment between their own electoral cycle and that of Network Rail's Control Periods.

Focussing on deliverability, we responded to the South Downs National Park Authority's recent consultation on their Local Plan Preferred Options, noting that while it is important to safeguard the former railway route from incompatible development, it will also be vital to do so for other land in the Park in and around Lewes for it to be a properly-connected and fully-operational rail link.

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

MarshLink upgrade update

"*Economic Case: High Speed Rail to Hastings and Bexhill*" was given its public launch in early-October. New MP for Bexhill and Battle Huw Merriman led the presentation of the consultants' report commissioned jointly by East Sussex County, Rother District and Hastings Borough Councils. The report analyses the economic benefits generated by being on HS1's map.

Later that month Network Rail held their first 'wider stakeholders' workshop for the draft Kent Area Route Study which will include options for the infrastructure investment needed to enable HS1 services to join MarshLink at Ashford and cut journey times to Hastings and Bexhill. Consultation is expected next September. Railfuture participated in both of those October events.

Meanwhile Southern are investigating conversion of some of their three-car Electrostars to bi-mode operation. It might take a couple of years yet but as well as a 50% capacity increase such trains would only use diesel power across MarshLink, and then existing third rail between Hastings and Brighton. Let's hope!



Javelin foretaste: Poppy Train Express for East Sussex

The East Sussex coastal communities of Hastings and Bexhill, which expect to be served by trains using HS1, and Eastbourne which can not, savoured the first visit by a Javelin train earlier this year as part of Hastings & Rye MP Amber Rudd's second Hastings Rail Summit. Ahead of Remembrance Day, Southeastern with UK Railtours then ran 'Operation Javelin' with a pair of the six-car trains, including tickets for local return journeys between Hastings and Eastbourne calling at Bexhill.

Electrify Uckfield!

An ever-prolonged pregnant pause still awaits the birth of Network Rail's consultation draft of the 'refresh' of their October 2009 Network RUS for Electrification. The Transport Secretary's June announcement 'pausing' two major electrification schemes elsewhere in the country, and then 'un-pausing' them just three months later, is no doubt part of the reason behind the delay. We now understand publication is anticipated by or around the turn of this year.

Add your support NOW to 'Electrify Uckfield!' at www.railfuture.org.uk/article1495-Electrify-Uckfield

THWART-ED no longer!

Sunday 13 December 2015 will mark the successful conclusion of a decade-long campaign by redoubtable residents of **Winchelsea** and **Three Oaks**, and in the surrounding areas, for the restoration of all-day services on Sundays. Ever since the December 2005 timetable change, mere token 'Parliamentary'-style services have operated, at the very beginning and very end of Sundays. Instead there will now be alternating two-hourly services at each station – eight trains each way at each station. Doleham and Ore are unaffected.

Two years ago local rail campaign group **Three Oaks and Winchelsea Action for Rail Transport** held a well-supported event at Winchelsea station – reported in *raipse* nos.122 for December 2013, and in nos.123 March and 126 December 2014 – to publicise their campaign. All issues of *raipse* from July 2010 are at www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East+branch+news

This latest triumph builds on the success of THWART's previous campaign to restore all-day weekday and Saturday services, achieved in December 2010 when similar alternating two-hourly services were introduced.

The effect of these changes on patronage has been dramatic, if the ORR's station usage estimates are any guide. In the last full year before the December 2005 timetable's service cuts, in 2004/05 Three Oaks had 8574 users and Winchelsea 7728. Annual usage at each station then slumped to barely 500! Since the December 2010 timetable's restoration of all-day Monday-Saturday services usage has recovered, to 6912 at Three Oaks and 6640 at Winchelsea in 2013/14. The ORR's 2014/15 estimates are due out around the time of this December's timetable change.

Now residents of, and visitors to, those two centres and their surrounding Brede Valley will be able to make rail-based weekend as well as Sunday return journeys.

A next target will be all-day and every-day MarshLink services for Ore, a growing area of north-east Hastings which includes Ore Valley Sussex Coast College.

There are some understandable concerns developing about the impact of the new Javelin HS1 services on the local services at the smaller stations. It is currently anticipated that the new Bexhill-St. Leonards Warrior Square-Hastings-Rye-Ashford International, and on to St. Pancras International, services will be hourly and run all-day and every day. Many local stakeholders are also expecting that the upgraded and new MarshLink infrastructure should then be able to support another hourly, literally all-stations, all-day and every-day local service. It will be crucially important for this local need to be articulated very clearly during Network Rail's development of their draft Kent Area Route Study, as the desired service pattern will define the upgraded infrastructure to be built. Early in 2016 there will be two public opportunities: at MarshLink Action Group's AGM and Hasting & Rye MP Amber Rudd's Rail Summit. The email is KentRouteStudy@networkrail.co.uk and Network Rail are already asking for local aspirations!

Always read more at www.railfuture.org.uk/Marshlink

Rail User Group Award winners

The **Abbey Flyer Users' Group ('ABFLY')** and the Dartford Rail Travellers' Association were the two RUGs from our regional branch area which entered.



ABFLY went home from Bristol with two certificates, a Gold Award for Best Website and one for Dave Horton their General Secretary with a Commendation in the category for Best Campaigner. See www.abfly.org.uk

Community Rail Award winners

The seven winning entries from Community Rail Partnerships and others in our region were two for the Abbey Line CRP [it's that line again!], two for the Kent CRP, and three for Southern, as follows:

Community Art Schemes – permanent projects

[sponsored by TransPennine Express]:

SECOND: **Abbey Line CRP** and partners – St. Albans Abbey station gateway artwork

Community Art Schemes – Renewable and Smaller Projects

[sponsored by Stagecoach]:

SECOND: **Southern** and school – Purley station subway art mural.

Most Enhanced Station Buildings

[sponsored by Railway Heritage Trust]:

SECOND: **Southern**, Network Rail and the **Hassocks Rail Group** – Development of Hassocks station.

Small Projects (under £500)

[sponsored by Community Rail Lancashire]:

SECOND: **Kent CRP** and partners – 'Champion Action Day'.

Best Marketing Campaign

[sponsored by Rail Media]:
THIRD: **Abbey Line CRP** and partners – Abbey Line Trail promotion.



Outstanding Volunteer Contribution

[sponsored by Grand Central Railway]:

THIRD: Mike Fitzgerald, **Kent CRP**.

Passengers Matter

[sponsored by Abellio]:

THIRD: **Southern** – 'This is me' campaign.

Community Rail Partnership and other websites:

Abbey Line CRP www.abbeyline.org.uk

Hassocks Rail Group www.hassocksamenity.org.uk

Kent CRP www.kentcrp.org.uk

Southern www.southernrailway.com/southern/news/two-silvers-and-a-bronze-for-southern-at-national-community-rail-awards

Rail User Express www.railfuture.org.uk/Rail+User+Express

Branch AGM 2016 – Notice 1 of 2

The next **Annual General Meeting** of the London and South East Branch of Railfuture will be held in **London** on **Saturday 23 April 2015** at 14.00. There will be an **open meeting with guest speakers** in the morning. Venue, speakers and Agenda for the AGM will be published in your March newsletter.

Nominations are now invited for Branch Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer, and up to six other members for the Branch committee. Nomination forms are available from the Branch's Hon. Secretary Graham Morrison – see contacts on back page. Candidates must be proposed and seconded, with their nominations signed by both, and sent with signed confirmation of acceptance by the nominee. All three [proposer, seconder, nominee] must be currently paid-up Railfuture members and must state their membership numbers; Hon. Membership Secretary Chris Page can confirm those numbers – see contacts on back page. When accepting nomination for any of the four elected officer posts, all candidates must declare whether or not they would accept a non-officer position on the Branch committee, in case they are not successful in a ballot for that officer post. Nominations must be accompanied by a candidate CV and Election Statement, of no more than 100 words each, and sent to new Branch Electoral Returning Officer Dick Tyler, 27 Windsor Road, Bexhill, East Sussex, TN39 3PB, to arrive no later than **Saturday 23 January 2016**.

Motions for debate, and possible amendment, at the AGM are also invited now. This arrangement is intended to enable the whole Branch membership to be aware of Motions for debate at their AGM in advance of the meeting, so widening the opportunity for participation. This provision will not prevent the acceptance of emergency Motions at the discretion of the Chairman, and by those present at the AGM, in circumstances judged not reasonably foreseeable at the time of the deadline for the receipt of conventional Motions, which is also **Saturday 23 January 2016**.

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

The next issue of Branch newsletter *railse* no.131 in March will, in the event of a ballot, include a numbered ballot paper together with voting instructions [which will include provision for supplying your membership number as well as postcode, which only the Electoral Returning Officer will see], together with the candidate CVs and their Election Statements. The ballot paper must then be returned to the Electoral Returning Officer, to be received by him no later than the stipulated date which is likely to be by early-April 2016. The next Branch newsletter will also include details of submitted Motions duly proposed and seconded. Any proposed amendments should then be notified in writing to Branch Chairman Keith Dyal to arrive no later than ten clear working days before the AGM i.e. no later than **Saturday 9 April 2016**.

L&SE Campaigns Calendar

We close with a review of our Branch's key campaign activities, since September's newsletter, plus a preview of some interesting/important events. More details in www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East

In early-October a two-month 'Transport Vision Engagement Event' was opened for **Hertfordshire County Council's Transport Vision 2050**. Responses had to be in before the end of November.

In mid-October **Transport for London** launched a consultation on proposals for a major capacity upgrade of the Northern line's **Camden Town tube station** <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/tube/camden-town-station-upgrade?cid=camden-town-upgrade> with responses due back by 11 December.

In late-October **Transport for London** opened another, more site-specific, consultation on **Crossrail 2** <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/crossrail2/october2015> which will close on 8 January 2016.

In early-November **East Sussex County Council** opened consultation on the draft **Implementation Plan 2016/17-2020/21** for their **Local Transport Plan** <https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/economy-transport-environment/local-transport-plan-implementation-plan-2016-17-2> closing 21 December.

In mid-November the **DfT** launched a consultation on the next **South Western franchise** starting June 2017 <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/south-western-rail-franchise> which will close on 9 February.

From mid-November the new National Infrastructure Commission consulted on London's Transport System <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/infrastructure-commission-invites-submissions-on-critical-infrastructure-challenges> closing on 8 January.

Campaigners' Corner

Bill Measure, RIP

Bill had at one time been Vice-Chairman of the Barking-Gospel Oak Line User Group [since when changed from Line to Rail User Group]. As a former member of the Railway Development Association, he was a founder member of the Railway Development Society which was formed in October 1978 through merging the RDA and the Railway Invigoration Society.

Brian Hord MEP, RIP

Although not a Railfuture member Brian was closely involved with a number of organisations and campaigns dear to our hearts too. "In 1997 he was appointed to the watchdog London Regional Passengers' Committee; he then chaired the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers' Association and Bexhill Rail Action Group. His campaigning helped to kill a Strategic Rail Authority plan for Bexhill to lose its all-day service to London, and brought extra carriages for the crowded line from Brighton to Ashford." Obituary at www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/11861817/Brian-Hord-MEP-obituary.html

Forthcoming dates for your diaries and calendars

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

early/mid-December ORR publishes estimates of station usage for 2014-15. See <http://orr.gov.uk/>

Tuesday 1 December Free evening talk in Lewes – "Rail Freight Group: influencing policy within Government and the rail industry", by Maggie Simpson.

Monday 7 December Free evening talk in Ashford – "Network Rail up to date", by former South East Route Director Dave Ward.

Thursday 10 December Surrey Division, Guildford.

Sunday 13 December National timetable change.

late-January Transport Focus publishes results of Autumn 2015 National Rail Passenger Survey.

Wednesday 6 January Eastern Division.

Friday 8 January Consultations close on proposals for Crossrail 2, and by the Infrastructure Commission.

Thursday 14 January Sussex & Coastway Division.

Saturday 23 January Final date for nominations to branch committee, and Motions to branch AGM.

Monday 25 January Final copy date for your letters and articles to appear in April's *railwatch* 147. Send them direct to editor@railwatch.org.uk

Tuesday 26 January L&SE Branch committee.

Friday 30 January Final copy date for *railse* 131, and for London & SE branch Local Action in *railwatch* 147. Send campaign news to rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk

Thursday 4 February Free evening talk in Ashford – "London Paramount: wide smiles or queues for miles?"

Tuesday 9 February Consultation closes on passenger comments for South Western franchise.

Thursday 11 February Sussex & Coastway Division.

Tuesday 16 February Free evening talk in Redhill – "Hitachi Rail in the UK".

Saturday 20 February Kent Division.

Tuesday 1 March Free evening talk in Watford – "The West Midlands franchise".

Wednesday 9 March Eastern Division.

Thursday 10 March Sussex & Coastway Division.

Tuesday 22 March L&SE Branch committee.

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

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

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

Eastern [s. Essex and n. & e. London] – meets on the second Wednesday of odd-numbered months, at 18.30 in **Stratford**, E15 4PH – next on **6 January** and **9 March**. Division Convener is Howard Thomas (opposite). See www.railfuture.org.uk/Eastern

Herts & Beds – next meet **Saturday 28 November**, in **St.Albans**. Division Convener is Keith Dyll (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 **20 February**. Contact Division co-Conveners Chris Fribbins at chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk or at 42 Quickrells Avenue, Cliffe, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7RB, or tel: 01634 566256; and Ian Killbery at ian.killbery@railfuture.org.uk or at 11 Western Road, Deal, Kent, CT14 6RX, or tel: 01304 362569. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Kent

Surrey – meets twice-yearly, next on **10 December**, at 18.00, in United Reformed Church, 83 Portsmouth Road, **Guildford**, GU2 4BS. Division Convener is Chris Page (opposite). See www.railfuture.org.uk/Surrey

Sussex & Coastway – meets monthly, usually on the first Thursday at 18.00, in varying Sussex venues. Next on **3 December**, then **14 January**, **11 February**, **10 March**, **7 April**. Contact our Minutes Secretary Michael Davies at michael.j.davies21@btinternet.com or at 17 Linden Grove, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2EE, or tel. 01444 482024. See www.railfuture.org.uk/Sussex+and+Coastway

Gift ideas at Railfuture's shop

Some ideas for presents at this particular season of the year can be found in our very own grotto. From branded pens to cufflinks to a range of books at discounted prices, Railfuture's shop can help you. Pay a visit to www.railfuture.org.uk/shop to explore our offers. Topical: David Spaven's 'Waverley Route'.

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

The copy deadline for **raillse** issue 131, due to be published in March 2016, will be Saturday 30 January 2016
Items for this newsletter and our branch Local Action column in **railwatch** to be sent to rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk



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

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

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Our neighbouring branches

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

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

Board liaison is via Director Jerry Alderson.

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

Board liaison via national Finance Officer David Harby.

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

Board liaison is via Director Roger Blake (below).

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

Board liaison is via Director Stewart Palmer.

Branch committee meetings

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

London and SE Branch officers

Branch Chairman: Keith Dyll, 26 Millway, Mill Hill, London, NW7 3RB.

tel: 020 8959 7147; keith.dyll@railfuture.org.uk

Vice-Chairman: Roger Blake, 70 Dynevor Road, Stoke Newington, London, N16 0DX.

tel: 020 7254 1580; roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk

Secretary: Graham Morrison, 13 Listria Park, Stoke Newington, London, N16 5SW.

tel: 020 7502 1062; graham.morrison@railfuture.org.uk

Treasurer: Howard Thomas, 24 South Primrose Hill, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RG.

tel: 01245 280503; howard.thomas@railfuture.org.uk

Membership Secretary: Chris Page, 'Clara Vale', Thibet Road, Sandhurst, Berkshire, GU47 9AR.

tel: 01344 778643; chris.page@railfuture.org.uk