

## Railfuture in London and the South East

quarterly branch newsletter

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

### Rail devolution? No Khan do!

It is now exactly five years since the DfT published “*Reforming our Railways: Putting the Customer First*” and began a public consultation “*Rail Decentralisation: Devolving decision-making on passenger rail services in England*”. Railfuture responded in June 2012; see under ‘DfT’ in <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Submissions>

In November 2012 the DfT published “*Consultation Responses*”, and specifically responded to the ‘Expressions of Interest’ its consultation had invited, and were received from TfL amongst others. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/rail-decentralisation-devolving-decision-making-on-passenger-rail-services-in-england> for the full details.

A year ago the DfT, TfL and the Mayor of London issued a joint public consultation “*A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the south east*” and again Railfuture responded, in March 2016. How telling is it, and disappointing, that a year later the DfT website still says “We are analysing your feedback”!

It is also now exactly 20 years since National Express Group began to operate the North London Railways franchise, and approaching 10 years since the Mayor of London and TfL took on the Silverlink Metro network. As the Number One Advocate for the railway and rail users, Railfuture has consistently supported this model of rail decentralisation because of the clear benefits to passengers using what’s become London Overground and to the communities and businesses served by it.

The latest National Rail Passenger Survey results for autumn 2016, from Transport Focus, bear witness. Here’s how London Overground overall, and its Inner West Anglia routes taken over in May 2015, compare on the six key indicators with Southeastern overall, and its Metro routes which will not now transfer to the Mayor of London and TfL in 2018, following the Transport Secretary’s recent decision to refuse it:-

- ~ Overall satisfaction with the journey:  
LO 90%, IWA 90%; SE 77%, SEM 75%
- ~ Overall satisfaction with the station:  
LO 85%, IWA 86%; SE 78%, SEM 79%
- ~ Punctuality/reliability (train arriving/departing on time):  
LO 82%, IWA 76%; SE 68%, SEM 68%
- ~ Value for money of the price of the ticket:  
LO 54%, IWA 51%; SE 36%, SEM 37%
- ~ Sufficient room for all passengers to sit/stand:  
LO 68%, IWA 69%; SE 62%, SEM 60%
- ~ How well train company deals with delays:  
LO 37%; SE 29% (samples too small for IWA, SEM)

Our responses: [www.railfuture.org.uk/Submissions](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Submissions)

### “Go east, young people!”

Redundant industrial sites from the 20<sup>th</sup> century are giving way to new residential sites for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in London Riverside – and they’re rail-connected.

On the site of the former Ford stamping plant at Dagenham 3000 homes, and a new station on the Fenchurch Street-Rainham-Tilbury line, are to be built at **Beam Park**: <https://www.beamparklondon.co.uk/>



New c2c Beam Park station, between Rainham (Essex) and Dagenham Dock.

On the site of the former Barking power station 10,800 homes, and an eastwards extension of the Gospel Oak-Barking line, are to be built at **Barking Riverside**: <http://barkingriverside.co.uk/> See also: <https://tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/improvements-and-projects/barking-riverside-extension>



New London Overground Barking Riverside station

While DfT’s decision on TfL’s application for a Works Order is awaited, a short-list of three bidders was announced in mid-December: <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2016/december/shortlist-of-bidders-to-build-barking-riverside-extension>

See ‘News and Views’ [www.railfuture.org.uk/articles](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/articles)

## Investment in rail infrastructure

The Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement announced funding for some rail transport projects: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-statement-2016-transport-announcements/autumn-statement-2016-transport-projects> Transport Secretary then "put passengers at the heart of the railway": <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/transport-secretary-puts-passengers-at-the-heart-of-the-railway> and announced "*Rail reform: future of the rail network*" with 'vertical integration-lite' – new franchises such as South Eastern having responsibilities for infrastructure maintenance – and East West Rail established as a new, separate organisation. Network Rail responded: <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/news/2016/dec/response-uk-government-re-reform-rail/>

## ORR lead-in to CP6, 2019-24

The industry regulator issued another revised timetable for PR18, V1.3, in January; see <http://orr.gov.uk> – 'Periodic Review 2018, Timetable and process'. In February it issued *Guidance on Network Rail's strategic business plans* for CP6, due this December: see <http://orr.gov.uk/consultations/pr18-consultations>

## National Infrastructure Commission

November's NIC interim report on the **Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor** was followed by <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-east-west-transport-links-could-provide-a-once-in-a-generation-opportunity-for-britains-silicon-valley-armitt> funding in the Autumn Statement of £100 million to accelerate construction of the western section of East West Rail by 2024, to synchronise with HS2 construction, and £10 million development funding for the central section.

South East England Councils called for a national study on transport infrastructure in their evidence to the NIC: <http://www.secouncils.gov.uk/2016/11/seec-november-2016-newsletter/#4> Their 'headline five' include North Downs Rail – Oxford-Reading-Gatwick Airport-Ashford.

While we await the results of the Call for Evidence to shape development of the first National Infrastructure Assessment with evidence, ideas and solutions – see <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-infrastructure-commission> we can expect a summer consultation on the NIC's 'Vision and Priorities', with the full National Infrastructure Assessment in 2018.

## STAR rises, Eurostar spurs

The **Stratford-Tottenham Hale-Angel Road** third track, for an extra 2tph to serve Meridian Water, inched forward in February with DfT approval to closure of the level crossing and footbridge at Northumberland Park station, to be replaced by a step-free footbridge.

Signalling works have begun which will enable the new Eurostar trains to serve Ashford International station. The project is expected to complete in March 2018.

Our feedback: [www.railfuture.org.uk/Submissions](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Submissions)

## Latest rail franchising schedule

The DfT published a new Rail Franchise Schedule in early-December, updating/revising from May 2016. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-franchise-schedule>

**South Western** has slipped a couple of months, to be awarded in April and start this August. **West Midlands** is on target for award this June, to start this October. The new Transport Secretary has however rejected the draft collaboration agreement with the West Midlands Combined Authority for a separable business unit within the new franchise for West Midlands Metro services, ahead of devolution to West Midlands Rail after the end of the next franchise.

Just a fortnight after the revised Franchise Schedule, Expressions of Interest for **East Midlands** were invited from potential bidders, but to a delayed timetable with its Invitation to Tender to be issued this June, contract award a whole year later and the new franchise not starting now until November 2018; public consultation is expected imminently. **South Eastern** has also slipped, by six months to start in December 2018, with Expressions of Interest invited at the end of February and public consultation due. A combination of changes to the Mayor of London, Transport Secretary and Rail Minister since the joint consultation a year ago has though been the undoing of more decentralisation. Instead, a TfL representative was invited to join the DfT franchise specification team, which the Mayor rejected. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/rail-reform-future-of-the-rail-network> for the Transport Secretary's Written Statement. The Mayor of London responded thus: <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/statement-from-the-mayor-of-london> The next day the London Assembly weighed in too, demanding a re-think <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/assembly/assembly-wants-rethink-of-rail-devolution-decision> Transport Focus reserved judgement and stressed the importance of outcomes for passengers: <http://www.transportfocus.org.uk/news-events-media/news/future-rail-network-transport-focus-response/> A widespread sense of disappointment and frustration about an opportunity lost seemed to prevail.

The new **West Coast Partnership** has been deferred by a whole year, the next major step being issue of the Invitation to Tender this November. Also deferred by a year is **Great Western**, now due to start in April 2020.

The **House of Commons Transport Committee** is running a series of five inter-related inquiries in the 'Future of Rail' series. *Rail franchising* is their most recent report, following *Rail technology* and *Improving the rail passenger experience* (in which Railfuture's former Head of Passenger Group Chris Fribbins appeared as a witness) published last October. See: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/news-parliament-2015/rail-franchising-report-published-16-17/> The Committee is currently taking evidence on *Rail safety*; the final inquiry, on *Rail governance and finance* will be completed later this year.

Find franchise dates in [www.railfuture.org.uk/Events](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Events)

## Official usage data less dodgy?

December's publication by the Office of Rail and Road of their estimates of station usage in 2015/16 saw a new column in the spreadsheet: "Estimated absolute change due to 2015/16 London Travelcard Methodology". This saw 329 stations with positive changes, ranging between 1 and 9,841,765 (Canada Water) and 764 stations with negative changes, ranging between -1 and -5,680,010 (Charing Cross). 1460 of Britain's 2553 stations were unaffected.

Time will tell whether this change in methodology will more truly reflect actual station patronage. The RUG Award-winning Cambridge Heath and London Fields Rail User Group reckons the new estimates better reflect theirs based on 'on-the-doors' observations.

See <http://orr.gov.uk/statistics/published-stats/station-usage-estimates>

## Which passenger survey to trust?

In mid-January a subscription-based consumer magazine published the results of their annual poll, of just over 8,000 passengers, against eight indices.

In late-January Transport Focus published results of their Autumn 2016 **National Rail Passenger Survey** of 29,000 passengers against 30 satisfaction indices.

Comparing national/London & SE with Autumn 2015:

**Overall satisfaction** – national 81%, **down** 2%;

London & South East 80%, **down** 2%.

**Overall satisfaction with station** – national 81%,

no change; London & South East 81%, **up** 2%.

**Punctuality/reliability** – national 73%, **down** 5%;

London & South East 69%, **down** 6%.

**Value for money for price of ticket** – national 47%,

**down** 1%; London & South East 43%, no change.

**Sufficient room for all to sit/stand** – national 66%,

**up** 1%; London & South East 65%, **up** 3%.

**Dealing with delays** – national 35%, **down** 4%;

London & South East 33%, **down** 2%.

Next to our L & SE TOCs, with their national scores for overall satisfaction, and national rankings [out of 26 operators, franchised and open access] and / for L&SE [out of 15, likewise]. [Note: Govia Thameslink Railway shows its four routes and TfL Rail is pre-Elizabeth line]:

**Greater Anglia** 79%, **down** 2%; 22<sup>nd</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>

**c2c** 87%, **down** 2%; 9<sup>th</sup>=/4<sup>th</sup>=

**Chiltern Railways** 91%, no change; 4<sup>th</sup>=/2<sup>nd</sup>

**Gatwick Express** 82%, **up** 2%; 17<sup>th</sup>=/8<sup>th</sup>=

**Great Northern** 78%, **down** 6%; 23<sup>rd</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>

**Great Western Railway** 82%, **down** 2%; 17<sup>th</sup>=/8<sup>th</sup>=

**Heathrow Connect** 87%, **down** 2%; 9<sup>th</sup>=/4<sup>th</sup>=

**Heathrow Express** 96%, **up** 1%; 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup>

**London Midland** 85%, **down** 1%; 11<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>

**London Overground** 90%, **up** 2%; 7<sup>th</sup>=/3<sup>rd</sup>

**South West Trains** 83%, **up** 2%; 14<sup>th</sup>=/7<sup>th</sup>

**Southeastern** 77%, **up** 2%; 24<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>

**Southern** 65%, **down** 13%; 26<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>

**TfL Rail** 80%, **down** 5%; 21<sup>st</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>

**Thameslink** 73%, no change; 25<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>

Read our [www.railfuture.org.uk/Press+releases](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Press+releases)

## Airport surface access – by rail

With October's government announcement favouring an additional runway at Heathrow, two rail projects aim to improve access by rail. Western Rail Access to Heathrow (WRAtH) is under active development; see <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/our-railway-upgrade-plan/key-projects/heathrow-rail-link/> Meanwhile Heathrow Southern Railway is a new venture, aiming to overcome the problems with BAA's Heathrow AirTrack and London Borough of Wandsworth's AirTrack-Lite; see <http://www.heathrowrail.com/>

Gatwick shows signs of pressing on undeterred, with the appointment of a new Chief Planning Officer; see [http://www.mediacentre.gatwickairport.com/press-releases/2017/2017\\_01\\_13\\_tim\\_norwood.aspx](http://www.mediacentre.gatwickairport.com/press-releases/2017/2017_01_13_tim_norwood.aspx)

The arrival of 2017 also reminds that international rail travel as an attractive alternative to short-haul air to and from near-continental Europe should be getting a boost from this December. Eurostar services are then due to start between London and Amsterdam, via Brussels, Antwerp, Rotterdam, and Schiphol Airport.

## Overground regeneration – renaissance at Hackney Wick

In the last full Silverlink Metro/pre-London Overground year, the year after London won the 2012 bid, station footfall at Hackney Wick in 2006/07 was 367k; in 2015/16 it was up six-fold to 2,104k! The station is now on the western edge of Queen Elizabeth II Park.



*New step-free gated access and connecting underpass*

See: <http://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news/hackney-wick-overground-station-set-for-transformation>

## More tunnel vision in London

Following the Mayor of London's instruction to TfL last October to press on with a **DLR extension** under the Thames from Gallions Reach to Thamesmead, news that tunnelling work for the **Northern line extension** to Battersea Power Station via Nine Elms is starting. See: <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/nle-tunnelling-to-start-in-march> More about the project at: <https://tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/improvements-and-projects/northern-line-extension> Opening is in 2020.

The **Bakerloo line extension** project moves forward with consultation on details of two new stations on Old Kent Road en route to New Cross Gate and Lewisham. <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/tube/bakerloo-extension/> Opening is currently anticipated by 2030.

See [www.railfuture.org.uk/Railfuture+in+the+news](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Railfuture+in+the+news)

## London and South Coast Rail Corridor Study > London and Southern Counties Railways?

Despite a succession of questions from local MPs to DfT Ministers the L&SCRC study, first announced by the previous Chancellor of the Exchequer two whole years ago and known to have been completed by the consultants many months ago, remains unpublished.

Meanwhile, their websites heralded a meeting with the Transport Secretary, which took place in late-January.



Outside the DfT, left to right: Nus Ghani MP (Wealden), two London & Southern Counties Railways Consortium representatives, Maria Caulfield MP (Lewes), and Simon Kirby MP (Brighton Kemptown & Peacehaven).

Simon said “I was pleased to arrange today’s meeting and feel that it is definitely a step in the right direction. This project would bring significant advantages and benefits to Brighton and the surrounding area. It would ease pressure on the congested Brighton to London commuter line, would boost tourism and visitor numbers to the area and would bring more jobs and economic opportunity. I also welcome the prospect of direct train services between London and the AMEX Stadium.”

Maria said “While the whole constituency would benefit from a second rail main line, for too long rail users in my towns of Seaford and Newhaven have been treated as the poor relations, with their stations being on a Branch Line. This project has the potential to put them onto a Main Line, making their journeys faster and more reliable. The meeting with the Secretary of State was positive and as a result detailed work is now being undertaken which if successful could see work on the line starting in the near future.”

Nus said “I am grateful to the Secretary of State for his time this afternoon. As my constituents well know, rail services currently serving the local area fall seriously short of expectations. BML2 is one possible option which could lead to a long-term improvement, and I am optimistic about the course of today’s discussions.”

There are about 40 MPs across the potential network.

Read more at [www.railfuture.org.uk/Thameslink+2](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Thameslink+2)

Since December’s newsletter went to press we’ve had announcements in the Chancellor’s Autumn Statement and from the Transport Secretary. Relevant here are those on East West Rail as indicators of government’s approach to the future expansion of the rail network.

Referring to the creation of a new ‘special purpose vehicle’, Chris Grayling said “I also want to bring new skills into the challenge of upgrading our railways. I am going to establish East West Rail as a new and separate organisation, to accelerate the permissions needed to reopen the route, and to secure private sector involvement to design, build and operate the route as an integrated organisation.”

Read more at <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/article1732-Never-never-railways>

With Treasury funding commitments to development of East West Rail, the first of the four key project risks has been overcome. That political risk will be followed by challenges to the new organisation to meet the specification, delivery, and revenue risks of the project.

Informed observers of all the twists and turns of the Varsity Line over the past half-century since it closed appreciate that the numerous studies and discussions across recent decades, ostensibly about different ‘solutions’, have actually been a reflection of differing policy objectives and priorities over time. Unless and until promoters and stakeholders coalesce around a shared vision of what the project is really for then the specification – single or double track, electrified from the outset or later, 90 or 125 mph line-speed, service pattern (in old money, Regional Railways or InterCity) – cannot be defined and that and other risks managed.

There is a clear read-across to the London and South Coast/Southern Counties proposition. The Uckfield line has recently shown the primary need to define objectives before solutions. Faced with the objective of increasing capacity there were two broad options, for a rolling stock-led or an infrastructure-led solution – more diesel trains for increased frequency or increased train length, or route electrification for a homogenous fleet. The ‘input’ to meet the capacity ‘output’ is now in place.

The welcome interest of a private sector consortium to develop the London and South Coast Rail Corridor will need to reflect the different objectives for a new route north of Croydon and a re-instated route to its south. A definition of benefits to deliver, agreed by stakeholders, is a key next step before any solutions are prescribed.



Let’s ‘Bridge the gaps’ between Uckfield and Lewes!

 @Uckfield\_Lewes

See more at [www.railfuture.org.uk/Uckfield+Lewes](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Uckfield+Lewes)

# A defining year for MarshLink

As 2017 begins the line, and more importantly the local communities and businesses which it serves, together face a trio of short-term challenges, and opportunities for the longer-term which we must influence.

~ One is the continuing process of consultation by operator GTR on their proposed timetable changes for 2018, with implications for the demise or continuation of the through service to Brighton, and train capacity.

~ Two is the planning by Network Rail and the DfT for infrastructure enhancements during 2019-24, Control Period 6, and the imminent consultation by Network Rail on their draft Kent Area Route Study with its likely 'options for funders' such as a link with HS1 at Ashford.

~ Three is the planning by the DfT for the next South Eastern franchise, due to start in December 2018, which will need an expanded fleet for growth on HS1 services in Kent – and to Rye, Hastings and Bexhill.

The shape of things to come for Ashford-Brighton?



*Dual-voltage Southern Class 319 on third rail power*

After speculation in the technical press the rolling stock leasing company which owns most of GTR's Southern trains confirmed late last year that they are developing an electro-diesel variant of cascaded ex-Thameslink Class 319s for some Northern services on routes where electrification is delayed or even deferred. See: <https://www.porterbrook.co.uk/news/post.php?s=2016-12-22-porterbrook-and-northern-to-introduce-bi-mode-class-319-flex-trains>

The infill Windermere branch electrification is deferred. Sound familiar? Network Rail have said there is no rail business case to electrify MarshLink, by any method. Railfuture is clear: with no more suitable diesel trains or route electrification in prospect then, as mentioned in Rye in November 2015 by Southern's then Passenger Services Director and by local MP Amber Rudd, some electro-diesel 'bi-mode' trains – whether converted Class 377 or Class 319 – are a credible option for both maintaining the through service and increasing train capacity throughout it. Railfuture has prioritised this project in a submission to Rail Minister Paul Maynard.

Bi-modes are of course nothing new on the Southern network – we've had Class 73 (still in service with more powerful diesel engines) and Class 74 locomotives.

Find out more at [www.railfuture.org.uk/Marshlink](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Marshlink)

The extension of electrification off the East Coast Main Line from Selby to Hull has also been deferred, despite it being privately financed by First Group as operator of the open access Hull Trains. Again, sound familiar?

The shape of things to come for St. Pancras-Bexhill?



*Hitachi's AT300 electro-diesel bi-mode for Hull Trains*

Their response has been to order, in our South East parlance, 'Javelins with a diesel', as also ordered by Great Western Railway and TransPennine Express. Much as we would prefer to have MarshLink electrified by one means or another – as too the North Downs Line and the Uckfield branch – present reality indicates otherwise. The pragmatic approach is to ensure that the specification for the next South Eastern franchise requires sufficient rolling stock appropriate to operating hourly services between St. Pancras and Bexhill via Ashford, Rye, and Hastings. It will then be for bidders to meet the specification – which may mean bi-modes.

## Ham Street accessibility works start

From under 50,000 15 years ago to over 100,000 last year, usage of Ham Street reflects growth of the area just six miles south of Ashford (Kent, not Middlesex!) After incidents with the foot crossing over the tracks between the staggered platforms it was closed after a temporary footbridge was installed. A fully-accessible bridge should be ready soon – and in plenty of time for new HS1 services to pass through safely at 90 mph! <http://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news/work-to-improve-access-for-all-at-ham-street-station-in-kent-gets-under-way>



Ham Street, Appledore and Rye saw usage growth of near 5% for the year to 2015/16. Winchelsea saw 11% Three Oaks 13.5% and Ore 11.7%. The next annual data will include the first full year of all-day Sunday services at Winchelsea and Three Oaks since 2015.

Read coverage in previous issues of newsletter *raise*: [www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East+branch+news](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East+branch+news)

## Branch AGM 2017 – Notice 2 of 2

The next **Annual General Meeting** of the London and South East Branch of Railfuture will be held in **London** on **Saturday 29 April 2017** starting at 14.00.

As is now customary, an **open morning meeting**, with speakers, is also planned for members and guests. This year's main theme will be '**Heathrow expansion – implications for surface access by rail**' in light of the government announcement last October and the current consultation on a draft Airports National Policy Statement. Speakers on **Western Rail Access to Heathrow** and **Heathrow Southern Railway** will give presentations. The branch page of our website (below) will carry the most up-to-date information available on our speakers as we approach Saturday 29 April.

This year's **venue** will be University of Westminster's Cavendish Campus, 115 New Cavendish Street, Fitzrovia, London, W1W 6UW – on the west side of the BT Tower. Five Tube stations on seven different lines nearby are Goodge Street, Great Portland Street, Oxford Circus, Regent's Park, and Warren Street.

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

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

The elected branch committee officers for 2017 are:  
**Chairman:** Keith Dyall – proposed by Howard Thomas, seconded by Norman Bradbury;  
**Vice-Chairman:** Roger Blake – proposed by Michael Davies, seconded by Roger Goring;  
**Secretary:** no nomination received;  
**Treasurer:** Howard Thomas – proposed by Keith Dyall, seconded by Norman Bradbury;  
**Membership Secretary:** Chris Page – proposed by Roger Goring, seconded by John Fowden.

The other elected branch committee members are:  
\* Norman Bradbury – proposed by Keith Dyall, seconded by Howard Thomas;  
\* John Fowden – proposed by Nigel Denton, seconded by Chris Page;  
\* Charles King – proposed by Chris Page, seconded by Roger Blake;  
\* Neil Middleton – proposed by Keith Dyall, seconded by Howard Thomas.

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

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

[www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/London+and+South+East)

## Two new candidates elected to branch committee

### John Fowden

CV – Retired local government officer, from East Sussex County Council (still with some energy left!). MA in social and public policy.

Regular attender of Sussex and Coastway Divisional meetings since joining Railfuture in 2014.

Represent Railfuture on Sussex CRP's Uckfield and East Grinstead lines steering group and on the Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee.

Co-opted on to London and South East Branch committee in 2016.

Have an understanding wife ('off to another of your train meetings, are you?').

Election statement – I was drawn to joining Railfuture by its campaign to restore the line between Uckfield and Lewes, having lived in the Uckfield area for many years and being well aware of the social and economic benefits that 'bridging the gap' would bring to a significant part of East Sussex.

Since then, through involvement with Railfuture, my understanding of the railway system, particularly that of Southern, and the challenges it faces, has widened considerably and I am keen to contribute to Railfuture's work at branch level.

### Neil Middleton

CV – Has commuted on Thameslink since 1987 and been Chairman of APTU (one of two Rail User Groups on Thameslink North) for almost 10 years. Has campaigned for improvements with successive franchisees, Network Rail and the Government throughout this time. Is a member of the Rail Industry's Thameslink Programme Stakeholder Reference Group and has appeared before the House of Commons Transport Select Committee to talk about 'Improving the Rail Passenger Experience'. A qualified Chartered Accountant, most recently he was worked for a number of banks as an Operational Risk Senior Manager.

Election statement - I believe I offer a complementary set of skills – knowledge of the Rail Industry, gained over 11 years involvement with RUGs, involving understanding and working with Train Operating Companies, Network Rail and the DfT, and also through my employment – this requires me to understand an issue quickly, probe to ensure I have a complete understanding and to negotiate improvements (to risk management). I am used to negotiating within large organisations – a recent employer had 250,000 staff. I believe these skills can be used to advance the objectives of Railfuture in London and the South East.

## National Railway Heritage Awards 2016



London Underground – Tottenham Court Road mosaic

## London & SE Campaigns Calendar

We close with a review of some campaigning activities since December's newsletter. Our consultation responses are in [www.railfuture.org.uk/submissions](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/submissions)

In early-December LondonTravelWatch published the report of their review of **Tube ticket office closures**, with an online survey to which we had responded, at <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/ticketofficereview>; the Mayor of London who requested it responded at <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/news/view?id=624>

Kent County Council consulted from mid-January to mid-March on their **Freight Action Plan for Kent**: <http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/freightactionplan/consultationHome> Railfuture's Freight Group replied



After October's announcement of official preference for Heathrow over Gatwick, DfT published in February their consultation "**Heathrow expansion: draft National Airports Policy Statement**" closing 25 May. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/heathrow-expansion-draft-airports-national-policy-statement> This regional branch will be contributing to the national Railfuture response, on surface access issues.

In February TfL launched further consultation on the **Bakerloo line extension**, closing 21 April. See <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/tube/bakerloo-extension/>

Network Rail's draft South East Route: **Kent Area Route Study** is due out for 90-day consultation, and the DfT's consultation on the next **South Eastern franchise** was also expected, as we closed for press.

## Watford Junction-St. Albans Abbey gets later last services

The Railfuture-affiliated, RUG Award-winning **Abbey Flyer Users' Group** <http://www.abfly.org.uk/> have scored two victories! For the 16-minute journey from Watford Junction extra last services have been, since 11 December, at 22.21 (21.31 previously) Mondays-Saturdays, and 23.04 (22.07) Sundays; returning from St. Albans Abbey at 22.42 (21.52) Mondays-Saturdays, and 23.26 (22.28) Sundays. See: <https://www.londonmidland.com/travel-information/live-information/december-timetable-change>

The Abbey Flyer also has a new bus link – the Abbey Shuttle – connecting with St. Albans City station via the town centre <http://www.abfly.org.uk/2017/01/new-shuttle-bus-service-begins/> from Monday 30 January.

See 'News and Views' [www.railfuture.org.uk/articles](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/articles)

## Forthcoming diary/calendar dates

Find further details: [www.railfuture.org.uk/events](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/events)

**Saturday 25-Sunday 26 March** Railfuture stall at London rail festival, Alexandra Palace, London.

**Saturday 25 March** Herts & Beds Division.

**Tuesday 28 March** London & SE Branch committee.

**Saturday 1 April** East Midlands Branch AGM, Loughborough; Wessex Branch AGM, Brockenhurst.

**Thursday 6 April** Sussex & Coastway Division.

**Monday 10 April** Evening talk in Croydon – "Elizabeth line (Crossrail) progress".

**Tuesday 18 April** Free evening talk in Redhill – "Best Impressions: public transport by design".

**Saturday 22 April** Thames Valley Branch AGM, High Wycombe.

**Wednesday 26 April** Free evening talk in Maidstone – "Railway overhead line electrification: the practicalities".

**Saturday 29 April** L & SE Branch AGM, London.

**Sunday 30 April** Final copy date for *raise* 136, and London & SE branch Local Action in *railwatch* 152. Send campaign news to [rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk)

**Thursday 4 May** Sussex & Coastway Division.

**Monday 8 May** Final copy date for your letters, articles and pictures to appear in July's *railwatch* 152. Send them direct to [editor@railwatch.org.uk](mailto:editor@railwatch.org.uk)

**Monday 8 May** Evening talk in London – "Crossrail".

**Tuesday 9 May** Free evening talk in Lewes – "London Overground's new operator: Arriva Rail London".

**Wednesday 10 May** Eastern Division.

**Wednesday 17 May** Free evening talk in Redhill – "Govia Thameslink Railway *omnia uno tempore agenda*".

**Saturday 20 May** Railfuture AGM, Peterborough.

**Tuesday 23 May** London & SE Branch committee.

**Thursday 1 June** Sussex & Coastway Division.

**Tuesday 6 June** Evening talk in London – "Waterloo".

**Thursday 8 June** Free evening talk in London – "Cooling the Tube".

**Saturday 17 June** Railfuture conference, Leeds.

**Monday 26 June** Evening talk in Brighton – "The Mid-Hants – its history and operation".

**Wednesday 5 July** Free evening talk in Lewes – "Lower Thames Crossing Project – an update".

**Saturday 8 July** Railfuture stall at Uckfield Festival.

Full details always in [www.railfuture.org.uk/events](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/events)

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

**Eastern [s. Essex and n. & e. London]** – meets second Wednesday of odd-numbered months, at 18.00 in **Stratford**, E15 1NG – next on **8 March** then **10 May, 12 July**. Division Convener is Howard Thomas (opposite). See [www.railfuture.org.uk/Eastern](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Eastern)

**Herts & Beds** – next on **25 March** in **St.Albans**. Division Convener is Keith Dyall (opposite). See [www.railfuture.org.uk/Herts+and+Beds](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Herts+and+Beds)

**Kent** – meets quarterly on the third Saturday, in varying Kent venues – next meeting due in **May**. Contact Division co-Conveners Chris Fribbins at [chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto:ian.killbery@railfuture.org.uk) or at 11 Western Road, Deal, Kent, CT14 6RX, or tel: 01304 362569. See [www.railfuture.org.uk/Kent](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Kent)

**Surrey** – meets twice-yearly. Division Convener Chris Page (opposite). See [www.railfuture.org.uk/Surrey](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Surrey)

**Sussex & Coastway** – meets monthly, usually on the first Thursday at 18.00, in varying Sussex venues. Next on **6 April** then **4 May, 1 June, 20 July**. Division Convener is Nigel Denton at [nigeldenton@talktalk.net](mailto:nigeldenton@talktalk.net) or at 18 Southway, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 6QW, or tel. 01903 722622. See [www.railfuture.org.uk/Sussex+and+Coastway](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Sussex+and+Coastway)



The 2016 **National Railway Heritage Award**-winning signal box at Kingscote on the Bluebell Railway.

This branch newsletter is free, published quarterly and usually distributed with each edition of the national **railwatch**. The copy deadline for **raise** issue 136, due to be published in June 2017, will be Sunday 30 April 2017. Items for this newsletter and our branch Local Action column in **railwatch** to be sent to [rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:rf-southeast@railfuture.org.uk)

# railfuture

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

**Websites:** [www.railfuture.org.uk](http://www.railfuture.org.uk) [www.railfuturescotland.org.uk](http://www.railfuturescotland.org.uk) [www.railfuturewales.org.uk](http://www.railfuturewales.org.uk)  
[www.railwatch.org.uk](http://www.railwatch.org.uk)

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## Our four branch neighbours

These and other branches' websites, with their **events** and **newsletters**, in [www.railfuture.org.uk/branches](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/branches)

**East Anglia** – contact Secretary Paul Hollinghurst – [eastanglia@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:eastanglia@railfuture.org.uk)  
Board liaison is via Director Jerry Alderson.  
**East Midlands** – contact is Secretary Roger Bacon – [eastmidlands@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:eastmidlands@railfuture.org.uk)  
Board liaison via national Finance Officer David Harby.  
**Thames Valley** – contact is Branch Secretary Andrew McCallum – [thamesvalley@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:thamesvalley@railfuture.org.uk)  
Board liaison is via Director Roger Blake (below).  
**Wessex** – contact is Branch Secretary Tony Smale – [wessex@railfuture.org.uk](mailto: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 one will be **28 March** then **23 May, 25 July**. Please give advance notice to our Secretary, below.

## London and SE Branch officers

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

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

**Treasurer:** Howard Thomas, 24 South Primrose Hill, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2RG.  
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**Membership Secretary:** Chris Page, 'Clara Vale', Thibet Road, Sandhurst, Berkshire, GU47 9AR.  
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