

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

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



“Rail Transport for New Homes”

Railfuture has a strong interest in both the location and the connectivity of new development in general and of new homes in particular, with the DfT’s ‘Restoring Your Railway’ fund targeting places which are either not connected to the passenger rail network at all or where rail access can support new / expanding communities. Previous issues of *railse* have been putting growing emphasis on this as a vital aspect of our campaigning for our cause: “a bigger better railway that people are proud and pleased to use and recommend”.

Government proposals on Planning Reform published in August would replace the Standard Method for Local Housing Need with a nationally-set [method for setting local housing requirements](#). Nationally this raises housing targets, while our regional branch area has nine of the “[Top 10 increases by housing market area](#) between proposed new method and recent delivery.” Is this a problem, or another opportunity for us?

Nationally, **railfuture** has 5 policy priorities:

- # **Attracting passengers back to rail** – improving the travelling environment
- # **Climate change and modal shift** – how the railway can reduce the carbon footprint of transport
- # **Restoring Your Railway** – reopening lines and stations
- # **Fares and ticketing** – making the system easier and fairer
- # **Industry structure and Williams** – taking the opportunity to move to devolution and concessions.

Transport Focus is publishing weekly research, its [Travel during Covid-19 survey](#). A clear and consistent conclusion of its tracking survey is that apprehension about the safety of train travel is low (c.10%) among those who have done so compared with c.50% among those who have yet to do so. “Come on in, it’s fine!”



Whether it’s new stations (Beaulieu Park, Beam Park), new lines (Uckfield-Lewes), both (Barking Riverside, Hoo Peninsula), more services (Godstone), it’s homes!



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



From Network Rail Kent and Sussex: @NetworkRailSE

See “[Welcome back to our trains](#)” + @RailfuturePsngr

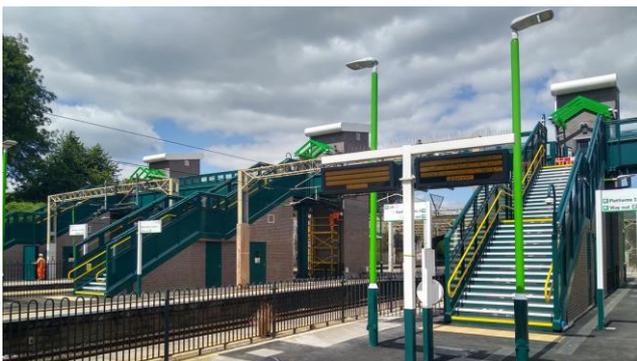
“100 more by ’24”: are we nearly there yet?



A national Railfuture campaign for the [Access for All](#) programme in Control Period 6 to be expanded. The Chancellor’s March Budget added 12 stations to the 2019-24 programme. This Autumn’s Budget needs to fund another 15 to reach our target of 100 more by ’24!



[Coulsdon South station is now step-free](#)



[Tring station is now step-free](#)



[Crawley station is going step-free](#)

Franchising, like a flailing fish, flounders

It is now over three years since the DfT last published a Rail Franchise Schedule worthy of the name which tabulated the status of each of the 15 then-franchised train operating contracts and their progress through a re-franchising process from 2017 until 2025 (and in three cases, beyond that). The most recent update, if such it can be called, was two years later and simply announced “a root and branch review of the railway” under the independent chairmanship of Keith Williams.



Notwithstanding the current Emergency Management Agreements, the management contract for **Thameslink / Southern / Great Northern** is due to expire in September 2021, although it has an extension option for anything up to September 2023. That July 2017 Rail Franchise Schedule anticipated that the DfT would this July have already issued the Invitation To Tender (ITT) to the short-listed bidders!



Similarly, as all good things have to come to an end, even the **Chiltern Railways** franchise is due to expire, in December 2021, and the ITT would be issued this October although there is an extension option, in that case for any number of 4-week periods up to mid-2022.

What does this mean for Railfuture? What it means is that we too anticipate, and prepare a ‘wish-list’, a draft Prospectus of aspirations for new operating contracts ready for the expected preceding public consultations.

Work on a draft “*Prospectus for the post-TSGN / GTR era*” has been ongoing for several months and is spreading across all affected branch Divisions, and East Anglia, Wessex and East Midlands branches too.

If you have not seen the latest iteration of the evolving post-TSGN document and wish to contribute, contact Herts & Beds Division Convener Neil Middleton (p.8).

To the Island line: one previous careful owner, high mileage, now fully-refurbished



Coming soon to a (to be extended) island railway near you: part 2 – a Tube replacement train service

“100 more by ’24”: continued



[Eridge is going step-free](#), one of the March Budget's 12



Further good news for Eridge is that [Railway Heritage Trust](#) has shown interest in grant-aiding restoration of vacant space in the building on the Southern platform.

See NRES interactive [National Rail Accessibility Map](#) and DfT's map of [station accessibility improvements](#).

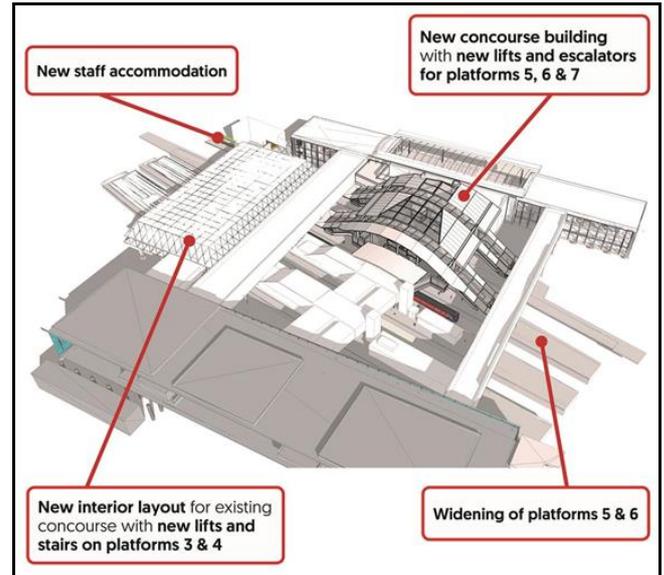


[Newhaven Marine station to close](#), DB Cargo runs in *first freight train in c.25 years* to Brett Aggregates at East Quay.

The mid-June inaugural train of 18 80t bogie wagons into a revived rail freight terminal at Newhaven Marine was the equivalent of between 50-70 HGVs at 20-25t! In mid-September Network Rail and Brett Aggregates were named as joint winners for Rail Freight Project of the Year at the Rail Freight Group's annual Awards (DCRail2018 and VTG Rail as the other joint winners).

Station upgrade – with improved accessibility

Gatwick Airport station remains a significant transport hub needing capacity and accessibility improvements.



The four principal features of the Gatwick Airport station upgrade



Gatwick Airport station looking north: works in progress Spring 2020



As it opened, in May 1958!



On 7th July DfT announced [funding for cycle parking at stations](#), 31 nationally with 10 in our regional branch area in the latest Tranche 6: Cheshunt, Harlow Town, Kidbrooke, Paddock Wood, Rye House, Sidcup, Slade Green, Thorpe Bay, Welling, Whitstable; in neighbour branches, for Banbury, Cambridge North and Ipswich.

Electrification? Decarbonisation!



This theme applies strongly to our regional branch area – four of our five campaigns involve unelectrified route – and a Rail Safety & Standards Board research project “[DECARB: 21st century DC electrification infill](#)” is now underway, after a ‘pre-tender suppliers meeting’ in mid-June, with due completion by December 2021.

The project aims, in summary, to:

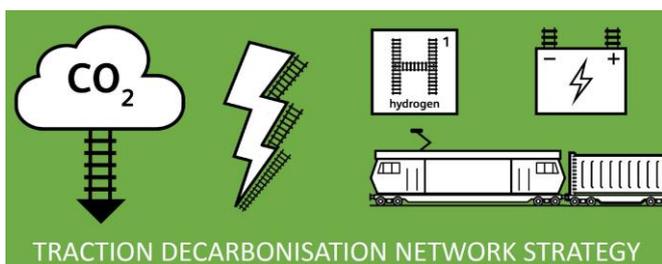
- Support the decarbonisation of traction in regions with a predominant 750V DC top contact third rail system by identifying the potential to remove diesel services by either enabling extensions to the existing electric network or appropriate alternatives;
- Identify options to reduce the safety risk of 750V DC top contact third rail systems;
- Support decision-making on extensions to the 750V DC top contact third rail Network.

It is worth quoting this particular piece of background: “There are four lines in the South East, where services are currently operated by diesel rolling stock: the Uckfield Line, the Marshlink Line, the North Downs Line and the West of England Line. Electrification with 750V DC top contact third rail would provide a range of strategic, economic and environmental benefits and would integrate with the existing electrified network and fleets. There are also several reopening candidates where electrification would be valuable and potentially an essential enabling factor, including the Isle of Grain (Hoo Peninsula) Branch in Medway, the Fawley Branch in Hampshire and Headbolt Lane / Skelmersdale in Merseyside.”

Finally, note two of the four areas out of project scope:
~ Third rail as an option for extensive new electrification schemes;
~ New third rail solutions which cannot integrate with the current third rail network.

It’s now five years since the Office of Rail Regulation’s “[Policy on Third Rail DC Electrification Systems](#)” was published, and it remains the policy of the Office of Rail and Road. The September 2015 issue of [railse no.129](#) p.5 covered it, six months after the policy’s publication.

Traction Decarbonisation Network Strategy

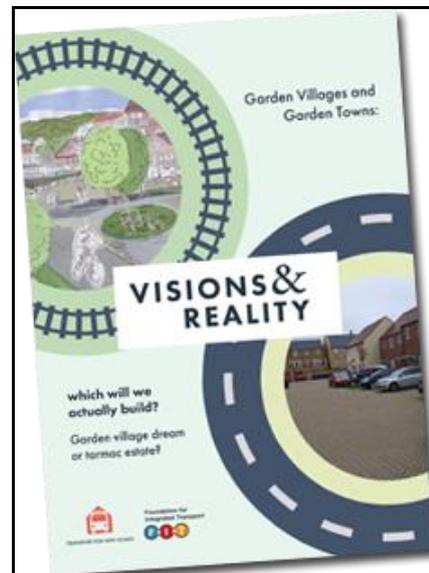


[Network Rail](#) published an Executive Summary and an Interim Programmes Business Case in mid-September.

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

As introduced in our front-page item, the forthcoming change to the national methodology for setting targets for new homes, for which local planning authorities such as Lewes and Wealden will be expected to make plan provision, will further raise targets beyond recent levels of delivery. For [Sussex](#) it can be seen that the new standard method requires a near-trebling of recent delivery rates in Lewes, a near-doubling in Wealden, and for Brighton & Hove – located between the sea and the South Downs – it’s nearly four-fold, which will largely be met in neighbouring districts such as Lewes.

Meanwhile [Transport for New Homes](#), a charity funded by the [Foundation for Integrated Transport](#), published a report “[Visions & Reality](#)” decrying the literally built-in car-dependency of so much new housing development.



Railfuture’s approach – amidst the clarion calls for ‘joined-up planning’ and ‘integrated transport’ – is to draw these together in a creative response to what has been described as an ‘avalanche’, with developers seen as vultures now picking at the carcass of Wealden’s dead Local Plan with speculative proposals adding to pressures on existing community infrastructure. The alternative is a planned development of one new self-contained, rail-served, garden community of at least 6,000 new homes (about the same size as Uckfield or Lewes), fully provided with its own new infrastructure, at a location somewhere between Uckfield and Lewes.

The primary purpose of a new rail link between Lewes and Uckfield is to be the catalyst to channel otherwise-dispersed housing pressures into a single location and deliver sustainable transport, not more car-dependency.

On 8 September the DfT published the [list of all bids](#) to its *Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund*. One of the four in the South East was “To re-open the Lewis [sic] to Uckfield & Tunbridge Wells to Eridge / Ashurst - Brighton Main Line.” On 23 May DfT had announced [10 bids which will receive 75% of costs up to £50,000](#) to help fund transport and economic studies and create a business case. Two are in the South East, in Wessex.

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

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

Network Rail's Strategic Outline Business Case for the "Kent & East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Programme" due to be completed later this year is expected to have examined two options for improved services in east Kent and two options for increasing services on an upgraded MarshLink including an hourly direct link with London St. Pancras International, with or without route electrification (see p.4). Shorter journey-times to / from London and twice-hourly opportunities for rail travel between Eastbourne / Bexhill / Hastings / Rye and Ashford International are seen as fundamental to help attract investment and aspirational people to drive revival of economic fortunes in the coastal communities.



The listed [Observer Building](#), Hastings - from [shame to pride?](#)

Meanwhile public investment comes via the South East LEP (right) to enhance two important local landmarks.



[Winter Gardens](#), key part of Devonshire Quarter, Eastbourne

Delivery of [new homes will be expected to rise](#) two-fold in Hastings, three-fold Eastbourne, five-fold in Rother!

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

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

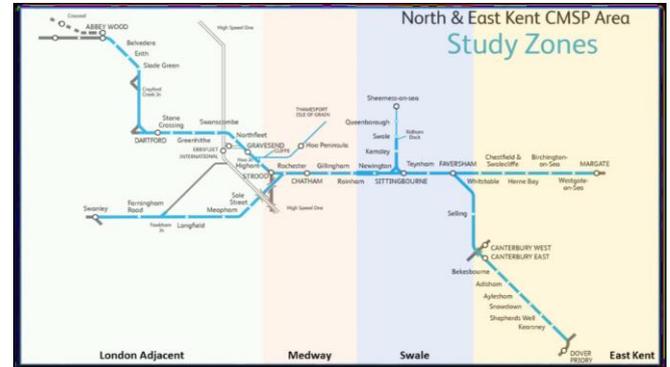
"How to improve West Coastway rail services" is the chosen theme of our [Sussex & Coastway](#) division.



With our input, Network Rail have published their final [West Sussex Connectivity Modular Strategic Study](#).

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

Network Rail's North & East Kent Connectivity Study interfaces at Strood, and Railfuture has taken part in the first workshops. The area east of Abbey Wood and Swanley includes Grain branch. More in [Kent Division](#).



North and East Kent Connectivity CMSP Study area

Kent County Council's next Rail Summit in October will include presentation of Kent's new Rail Strategy 2021.

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

Great Western Railway have confirmed that since mid-September the franchise-committed three trains per hour runs initially between Reading and Redhill on Saturdays and in some off-peak weekday hours.

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



MHCLG's '[Getting Building Fund](#)' has awarded £85 million, the largest grant to any of the country's 38 LEPs, to the main one in our regional branch area. [First announced](#) in early-July, details of the 34 projects in SELEP to benefit were [confirmed in early-August](#).



Kent's new Thanet Parkway station (£12m), above, near Manston airport, is included as is East Sussex's Riding Sunbeams Solar Railways (£2.5m).

Paint the town – with a mural!



Latest [mural](#) by Lionel Stanhope (r) in [Burbage Road, Dulwich](#)



Network Rail's new [Southern Region](#), which includes the HS1, Kent, Sussex, and Wessex Routes, has a Community Engagement Manager hungry for ideas! So let's **ask the Raifuture audience** – send us (p.8) your photos of bridges which we can suggest to him.

Campaigns calendar, London & SE

Current consultations of specific and general interest to our London and South East region are shown [here](#).

Norwood Junction station – Selhurst Triangle – East Croydon station – Reigate station. That's the totality of the [Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme \(CARS\)](#), which is focussed on the [East Croydon to Selhurst Junction Capacity Enhancement Scheme](#).

Network Rail's second round of public consultation closed on 20 September and you can see Raifuture's response [here](#), under 'Other consultations'. Not only did we respond to the first round, in December 2018, but also to Network Rail's two later and separate consultations on the Norwood Junction (July 2019) and Reigate (April 2020) elements of CARS too. They then published responses to each in [January](#) and [July 2020](#).



The Swanscombe Peninsula, north Kent was subject to a statutory consultation about an entertainment resort, prior to an application for a Development Consent Order. Consultation closed on 21 September and Raifuture's response can be viewed in [here](#).



Shadow Sub-National Transport Body England's Economic Heartland is consulting on its draft [Transport Strategy](#) until 6 October. We responded last October to the consultation on an [Outline Transport Strategy](#).



Homes England is consulting until 1 December on a Garden Town of 10k+ new homes [West of Ifield](#).

National consultations include the House of Commons Transport Committee's Call for Evidence: "*Reforming public transport after the pandemic*" and HM Treasury consultations on the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review and a proposed Carbon Emissions Tax.

In the absence this year of branch and national AGMs, *your opportunity* to influence our policy development is by mailing londonandsoutheast@raifuture.org.uk

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

Community rail round-up - briefly!

[Southeastern confirm £400k for new community rail](#) in East Sussex as well as Kent: Tonbridge-Hastings line.

Click to subscribe to monthly "[Community Rail News](#)"

Forthcoming diary/calendar dates

Friday 25 September "The HydroFLEX Project." Free lunchtime [webinar](#).

Friday 25 September "Rail Broadcast Week: Focusing on the future." Free afternoon [interactive broadcast](#).

Friday 25 September "The road to zero carbon: making London – and the South East – electric vehicle ready." Free (post-lunch) afternoon lecture in London.

Friday 25 September "Rail Broadcast Week: Paving the way to Future Railway Mobile Communication System (FRMCS)." Free afternoon [interactive broadcast](#).

Saturday 26 September Herts & Beds Division [online](#) morning meeting.

Monday 28 September "Effective negotiation." Afternoon [e-class](#).

Monday 28 September "Promoting sustainable tourism to build back better." Free afternoon [webinar](#).

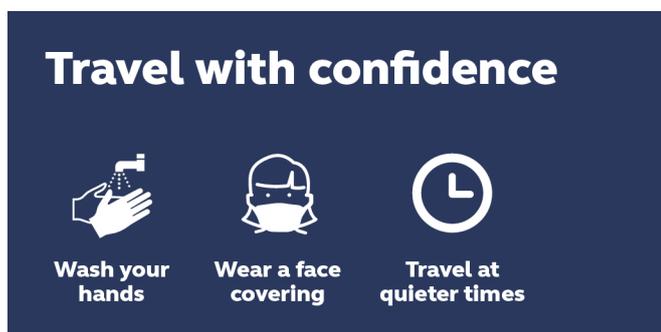
Tuesday 29 September Close of HM Treasury consultation on Carbon Emissions Tax.

Wednesday 30 September "Update of Tyne & Wear Metro new fleet and expansion plans." Free evening [webinar](#).

Thursday 1 October Sussex & Coastway Division – [online](#).

#ReturnToRail

Saturday 3 October "Attracting passengers back to rail" - Railfuture's first national [webinar](#) - free, morning.



Monday 5 – Sunday 11 October "Rail Week 2020." **Monday 5 October** "ConnectedCities – Metroisation of the railways." Full [online](#) conference in London.

Tuesday 6 October Close of consultation on draft England's Economic Heartland Transport Strategy.

Wednesday 7 October "Kent's railways look to the future." Guest speaker: James Abbott, consultant editor for Modern Railways. Evening [webinar](#).

Thursday 8 October ORR publishes passenger rail usage data for Q1 2020/21, April-June 2020.

Thursday 8 October "Automated railways." Morning [webinar](#).

Thursday 8 October "Zero carbon and infrastructure." Free evening [webinar](#).

Thursday 8 October "Electrification or bust: the challenge for Britain's railways." Free evening [webinar](#).

Friday 9 October "Fundamentals of project management." Morning [e-class](#).

Monday 12 October "Merseyrail's new trains and platform-train interface (PTI)." Free evening [webinar](#).

Thursday 15 October "Hybrid diesel and battery-powered trains." Free evening [webinar](#).

Monday 19 October "Unlocking innovation – routes to zero carbon rail: driving electrification." Afternoon [webinar](#).

Tuesday 20 October "Unlocking innovation – routes to zero carbon rail: decarbonising self-powered rolling stock." Afternoon [webinar](#).

Wednesday 21 October "Unlocking innovation – routes to zero carbon rail: zero carbon operations, maintenance and renewal." Afternoon [webinar](#).

Thursday 22 October "Unlocking innovation – routes to zero carbon rail: generation decarbonisation." Afternoon [webinar](#).

Friday 23 October Copy date for your campaign news, letters, articles, photos to appear in December's [railwatch](#) no.166. Send to editor@railwatch.org.uk

Sunday 25 October Copy date for your campaign news / reports for London & SE branch Local Action column in December's [railwatch](#) no.166, and for December's [railise](#) no.150, to londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk

Tuesday 27 October Herts & Beds Division – [online](#).

Thursday 29 October "Decarbonising long-haul freight: opportunities and challenges." Evening [webinar](#).

Tuesday 3 November "Porterbrook – investing in rail's future." Free evening [webinar](#).

Thursday 5 November ORR publishes data for 2019/20 Rail Emissions.

Thursday 5 November Sussex & Coastway Division – [online](#).

Wednesday 11 November Eastern Division – [online](#).

Tuesday 17 November "The Light Rail Safety and Standards Board." Free evening [webinar](#).

Saturday 21 November Kent Division – [online](#).

Thursday 26 November "Light Rail and what it does for the UK." Free evening [webinar](#).

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

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 19.00 and still **online** not in Stratford, E15 1NG. Next on **11 November**. Division Convener is Howard Thomas (opposite). See [Eastern Division](#).

Herts & Beds – meets monthly for an hour **online**. Next on Saturday **26 September**, morning, then Tuesday **27 October**, evening. Division Convener is Neil Middleton at neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk See [Herts & Beds Division](#).

Kent – meets quarterly on third Saturdays **online** at 14.00. Next on **21 November**. Division Convener is Chris Fribbins at chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk or at 42 Quickrells Avenue, Cliffe, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7RB, or on tel: 01634 566256. See [Kent Division](#).

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

Surrey – meetings, probably **online**, subject to confirmation on **15 October** and on **21 January**, otherwise usually held jointly with Sussex & Coastway Division. Surrey Division Convener is Stephen Rolph at stephen.rolph@railfuture.org.uk. See [Surrey Division](#).

Sussex & Coastway – meets monthly on first Thursdays **online** at 18.00. Next due on **1 October**, then **5 November** with 3 December tba. Division Convener is John Black at jcbblack@yahoo.co.uk. See [Sussex & Coastway Division](#).

inter-railse

Our two-page monthly branch e-newsletter is available to all members on email (as a [pdf or link](#)) by requesting it via roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk

This branch newsletter is free, published quarterly and usually distributed with each edition of the national **railwatch**. The copy deadline for **railse** issue no.150, due to be published in December 2020, will be Sunday 25 October 2020. Items for this newsletter and our branch Local Action column in **railwatch** to londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk



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

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

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

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Our four branch neighbours

These and other branch websites, with their **events** and **newsletters**, are all in '[Railfuture near you](#)'.

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

East Midlands – contact is Branch Secretary Steve Jones – eastmidlands@railfuture.org.uk Branch-Board liaison via Director Jerry Alderson.

Thames Valley – contact is Branch Secretary Andrew McCallum – thamesvalley@railfuture.org.uk Branch-Board liaison via Director Roger Blake.

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

London and SE Branch officers

Branch Chairman: Vacant.

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

Secretary: Vacant.

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

Branch committee meetings

Branch officers and other committee members have met, and for the foreseeable future will continue to meet, **online**, on alternate Wednesday evenings.

railse online

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