

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

“Restoring Your Railway”/“Levelling up”/“Lifting the lockdown” – choose.

Railfuture might contend that there is in fact no choice, as all three straplines in the changed circumstances since the previous newsletter are now equally relevant.

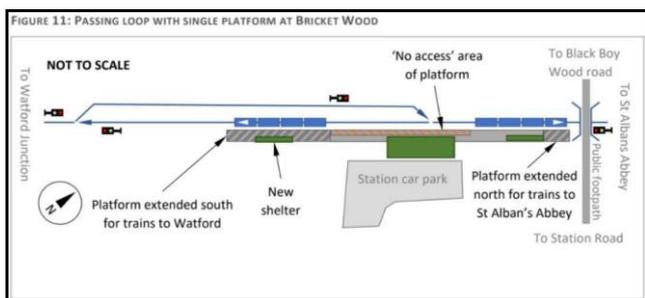
To the Abbey line, from the Maritime line

On Bank Holiday Saturday 23 May Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announced [the first 10 winners](#) in round one of the 'Ideas Fund' in **Restoring Your Railway**. Our London and South East regional branch area has one, to help reinstate the passing loop at Bricket Wood station at the mid-point in the electrified branch line between St. Albans Abbey and Watford Junction.

Currently one train makes a return journey every 45 minutes, hourly at less-busy times. The loop would enable a regular two trains per hour each way, three in the peak periods to maximise use of the second train while enabling any timetable recovery in the inter-peak.

The key word above is “*help*” as the £50k funding is, in the words of the DfT guidance, to “*help fund transport and economic studies and create a business case. Future funding to develop projects would be subject to agreement of the business case.*” One step at a time!

The idea was shown last September in [railse no.145](#). This diagram is from the [ABFLY](#) consultant's study, Cornwall's *Maritime Line* prototype at Penryn below.



Two of GTR's NHS-branded trains, 700111 and 377111



Joining the ‘**Restoring / Levelling / Lifting**’ narrative, our neighbouring Wessex branch did even better from that round of Restoring Your Railway's Ideas Fund, with two of the 10 winners – and three sections of line!

On the mainland, the now freight-only *Waterside line* between Totton and Fawley via Hythe is to receive Ideas Fund help to fund studies and creation of a business case to restore passenger services to the existing line, having last run in February 1966.



Some can't wait for passenger trains, others don't want to!

On the Isle of Wight, reinstatements of two branch lines are to receive similar support. Extending from Shanklin to Ventnor (closed April 1966 and with a census population of just 6,000, way below the 15,000 threshold advised in ‘[Connecting Communities](#)’) and from Wootton – on the *Isle of Wight Steam Railway* – to Newport (closed February 1966, census population 25,000 so well in excess of that threshold) are the pair.

Coming soon to an (extended) island railway near you:



“100 more by ’24” – a partial success!

A national Railfuture campaign since last autumn has been a call to the new government for more step-free stations, through a supplementary £200million Access for All (A4A) fund for Control Period 6 (CP6) 2019-24, additional to the April 2019 £300m which was analysed in last June’s [railse no.144](#). Railfuture has estimated that an extra £200million would fund another c.50 stations, on top of the 46 new to the A4A programme since April last year (27 were reinstated deferrals).



In his mid-March Budget the Chancellor announced that 12 stations would be added to the main A4A CP6 programme. The full list, in alphabetical order, with the local authority / Parliamentary constituency and the latest ORR estimated usage statistics, is:

- **Beeston** in *Broxtowe, Nottinghamshire* 566,094
- **Apsley** in *Dacorum / Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire* 667,192
- **Eaglescliffe** in *Stockton-on-Tees / Stockton South, County Durham* 202,222
- **East Grinstead** in *Mid-Sussex, West Sussex* 1,586,800
- **Eridge** in *Wealden, East Sussex* 117,648
- **Flitwick** in *Central Beds, Mid-Bedfordshire* 1,630,520
- **Ockendon** in *Thurrock, Essex* 1,160,354
- **Newtown** in *Powys, Montgomeryshire, Mid Wales* 184,576
- **Walkden** in *Salford, Worsley & Eccles South, Greater Manchester* 301,570
- **Motspur Park** in *Merton / Wimbledon* 1,112,130
- **South Croydon** in *Croydon / Croydon Central* 1,168,752
- **Tooting** in *Merton / Mitcham & Morden* 942,892

That eight of the 12 should be in our regional branch area – **highlighted** – is of course welcome news, but apart from Eridge none have estimated usage of less than 2/3rds of a million and five are well over a million.

East Grinstead and **Flitwick** were among the glaring omissions from the April 2019 announcement, and Flitwick had then featured on the front cover of the October 2019 [Railwatch no.161](#). Walkden featured as recently as this April’s [Railwatch no.163](#), sent to be printed just a week before the Budget announcement!

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.

Franchising finally falls foul of ill-fortune

The DfT’s Williams Rail Review, launched under a different Transport Secretary and in entirely different circumstances 21 months ago in September 2018, has in all probability bitten the dust even before publication.

The pandemic which struck earlier in 2020 has forced the DfT to put all except the open access operators (owned by franchise-operating groups Arriva and First) into [Emergency Measures Agreements](#), (EMAs) which are in effect GTR-style management contracts.

Even the new Direct Awards for [Southeastern and Great Western Railway](#) – announced by the DfT at the 11th hour on Monday 30 March – less than two months later were switched to EMAs, on 23 May.

Govia will continue to operate [Southeastern](#) until at least 16 October 2021 and potentially, with provision for a near six-month extension, until 31 March 2022. Three weeks after the new Direct Award had been confirmed, it was revealed that the operator would receive 30 ‘limited mileage, one previous careful owner’ five-car class 707 Siemens Desiro trains. It was however neither clear when their new class 701 Bombardier Avenra replacement trains would be delivered, nor when the Desiros would be released.

FirstGroup will continue to operate Great Western Railway for a further three years, four if extended.

The long-planned **May timetable change** went ahead from Monday 18 May, including unsplit 8-car trains on East Coastway and calling at [Cooksbridge](#) on Sundays for the first time in over 50 years on Sunday 17 May.



A near-complete extension of the up platform at Cooksbridge, to avoid 8-car trains fouling the A275 level crossing



08.26 on 17-05-20: the first Sunday train at Cooksbridge in 55 years!

The new platform 5 at [Stevenage](#) was not however available for passenger services, due to recent restrictive working practices. Better than a photo of a construction site, a 7-minute [film of the first test train!](#)

Community rail round-up

May was an excellent month for two of the eight Community Rail Partnerships in our branch area.

[Kent CRP](#) were encouraging bids to Southeastern's new £400k [fund for community rail projects](#), launched on the 19th; bids are due as this newsletter is published.



[Sussex CRP](#) had a major publicity boost on 21st May:

Improving local lines

JAMES ABBOTT reports on the work of the Sussex Community Rail Partnership

One thing the Covid crisis has underlined is the value of community spirit. Hopefully that will stand the community rail movement in good stead as it seeks to chart a way forward in the post-Covid world. The Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP) has rebranded itself as Community Rail Network (CRN, March issue) and the new name should help to underline the approach. As with other members of the Community Rail Network, the Sussex Community Rail Partnership (SCRP) has been building on the foundations of local support for the railway for some years. In contrast to CRPs in some other parts of the country, where building traffic on traditional country branches and saving them from closure has been the order of the day, SCRP covers a variety of routes, from busy London commuter lines to orbital routes linking coastal communities with high levels of social deprivation. The Uckfield and East Grinstead lines were some of the first to be covered by the nascent CRP. Around the turn of the century, Tim Sparrow, a small farmer in the Ashdown Forest, and Philip Ayers, a local representative of the bus industry, were involved with a community group, Action in Rural Sussex. Mr Ayers, now Finance Director of SCRP, recalls: 'One of the East Sussex County Council officials connected to the Uckfield line had attended an ACoRP seminar, got interested in the idea of community rail and suggested we do something about it. We made contact with Southern and persuaded them to come up with some funding'. In 2003 we were able to set up the CRP and employ a line officer - says Mr Sparrow, founder of SCRP. An early initiative was a programme of bus connections to facilitate access to the Ashdown Forest for rambling; emphasis has been laid on multi-modal public transport connections ever since. The connection with the Marshlink, from Ashford to Hastings, came about as there was some European funding available' chips in Mr Ayers. 'Under the "Leader Plus" programme administered by the Wealden and Rural Railway Partnership, we were able to access £250,000 to be spent over a period of years. This paid for a line officer, based at South Downs backdrop: the impressive junction station of Lewes, the county town of East Sussex, on 9 August 2017. No 313220 (left) on a Brighton to Seaford service passes with No 377124 on an Ove to Brighton run. John Vaughan

The first in a six-page [article in June's Modern Railways](#)

Our six other Community Rail Partnerships are: [Abbey Line CRP](#) (Watford - St. Albans Abbey), [Bedford - St. Albans City CRP](#), [Darent Valley CRP](#) (Swanley - Sevenoaks), [Essex and South Suffolk CRP](#), (three of their six lines) [Marston Vale CRP](#) (Bedford - Bletchley), and [West Anglia CRP](#) (London Overground).

Community Rail Network

As foreshadowed in the previous newsletter, ACoRP is no more. The 'four pillars' in the DfT's November 2018 [Community Rail Development Strategy](#) now underpin the work of the national [Community Rail Network](#).



SWR CRPs do it virtually, brighten [Guildford station](#).

Kent CRP [gets quizzical](#), launches [virtual book club](#).

Sussex CRP runs [VE Day photo competition](#), [misses the train, not the beat](#), shows off ["Get into trains"](#), and [partners with Eden Valley Museum](#).

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



Kent CRP's [Five Acre Wood project at Snodland station](#) helped secure 'accredited' status from the DfT in March

And now for something completely different! An opportunity to support a too-often overlooked heritage railway in our area. Isfield station, south of Uckfield, needs some roof repairs and you can show your support here: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/station-roof>

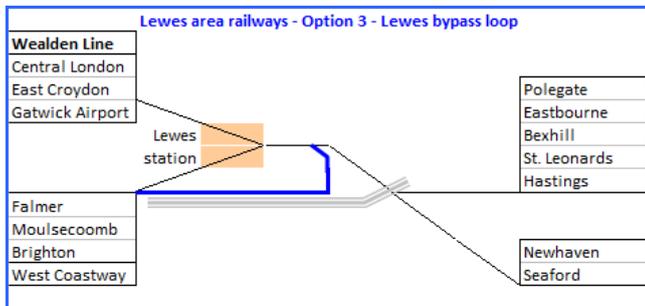


Cinders buffet, Isfield station, [Lavender line](#)

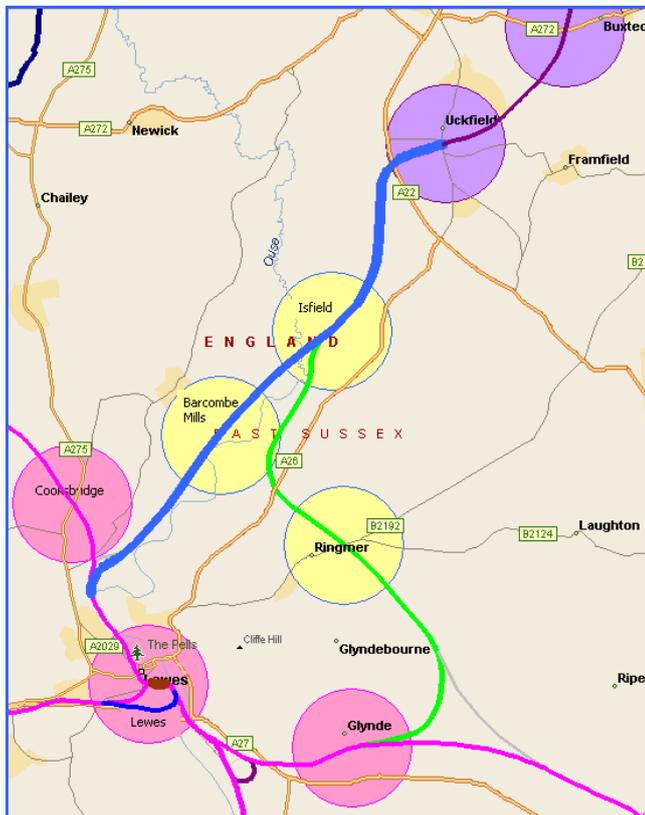
TfSE rail – west of East Sussex: BTN-FMR-LWS-UCK-COH-ERI-TBW

In the previous issue of [railse no.147](#) we reported that the MP for Lewes had sponsored a bid to the DfT's new £500k Ideas Fund for an Uckfield-Lewes rail link, based on its guidance also reported. It was however not among the first 10 winners announced on 23 May, although the same announcement confirmed not only a second round closing on 19 June but the prospect of a third round in November. Unsuccessful first round bids can, we understand, re-submit for June or November.

Meanwhile new sub-national transport body Transport for the South East will adopt its [Transport Strategy](#) in mid-July, moving on to detailed Area Studies to inform its Strategic Investment Plan. A 'South Central Radial' Area Study will encompass [the area](#) between London and Brighton and between Eastbourne and Chichester. Railfuture will be advocating its approach to the case for a Wealden-Brighton link, a case based in part on "[Access and Connections: East Sussex – opportunities to align railway investment to the economic growth requirements of East Sussex](#)" – our independent report published July 2013. Route options include these two:



Option 3 – if via Hamsey and the Lewes-Wivelsfield route



Option 4 – if via Ringmer and the Lewes-Eastbourne route

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

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

"Improving our rail services, investing in the future"



New Hastings & Rye MP Sally-Ann Hart (front left) with others at the Hastings & Rother Rail Users Alliance working lunch in Rye. Head of Strategic Planning for GTR Phil Hutchinson (rear) addresses the gathering, which included Network Rail's Investment Director for their Southern Region Paul Harwood (front right)

This was the second of a two-part event run by the Hastings & Rother Rail Users Alliance on 28 February; it was first reported in the previous [railse no.147](#). This table shows the record-breaking rises in station usage since the Railfuture-inspired May '18 timetable change:

Appledore	7.9	Three Oaks	42.5
Hampden Park	16.7	Ore	38.4
Hastings	9.7	Normans Bay	27.3
Normans Bay	27.3	Pevensy Bay	25.0
Ore	38.4	Cooden Beach	19.4
Rye	11.5	Hampden Park	16.7
St. Leonards Warrior Sq	10.7	Pevensy & Westham	15.8
Three Oaks	42.5	Collington	13.7
		Ham Street	12.3
		Rye	11.5

l: alphabetical list of 8 record-setters / % increase 2017/18 > 2018/19
r: ranked list of top 10 stations / highest % increases post-May 2018

See also the [letter in June's Modern Railways](#).



Appledore is one of the MarshLink stations with record usage



FRIENDS OF
APPLEDORE STATION



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

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

The preview third train per hour between Reading and Redhill, marking [the Leap Year's Day anniversary](#) of a death in the railway family, and his daughter-in-law Jessie's part in a [lineside feature](#) planted in his memory, has yet to see one in scheduled passenger service. GWR's new Direct Award may give them time to fulfil the franchise commitment. Some platform extensions for the 4-car trains have been completed in anticipation.



Mole Valley Council's 'Future Mole Valley' Local Plan consultation gave opportunity to reiterate in March our advocacy for a [Dorking Transport Hub](#), as reported in *railese* [no.142](#) December 2018 and [no.143](#) March 2019. TfSE's planned '[Inner Orbital Area Study](#)' will be a next chance to press the case. The veracity of the official estimates for usage of Dorking's three stations was a national *cause celebre*, but has settled in recent years!

Dorking's stns	ORR 2016/17	ORR 2017/18	ORR 2018/19
Deepdene	398,912	442,197	441,182
Main / North	1,161,477	1,287,506	1,284,546
West	55,995	62,071	61,928

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

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



Same line, different train – on test at Worthing, January 2020

Next steps include incorporating a West Coastway upgrade programme in TfSE's forthcoming '[Outer Orbital Area Study](#)' and Strategic Investment Plan. The same applies for East Coastway / Marshlink too.

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

Hoo Peninsula Railway must be in [RNEP](#) and/or [RYR](#)!



The definition of 'economic infrastructure' in this recent report may not have included transport but the underlying message is the same: "Infrastructure can take longer to deliver than housing, so usually it's necessary to invest in it at an earlier stage in the process."

Decarbonisation? Electrification!

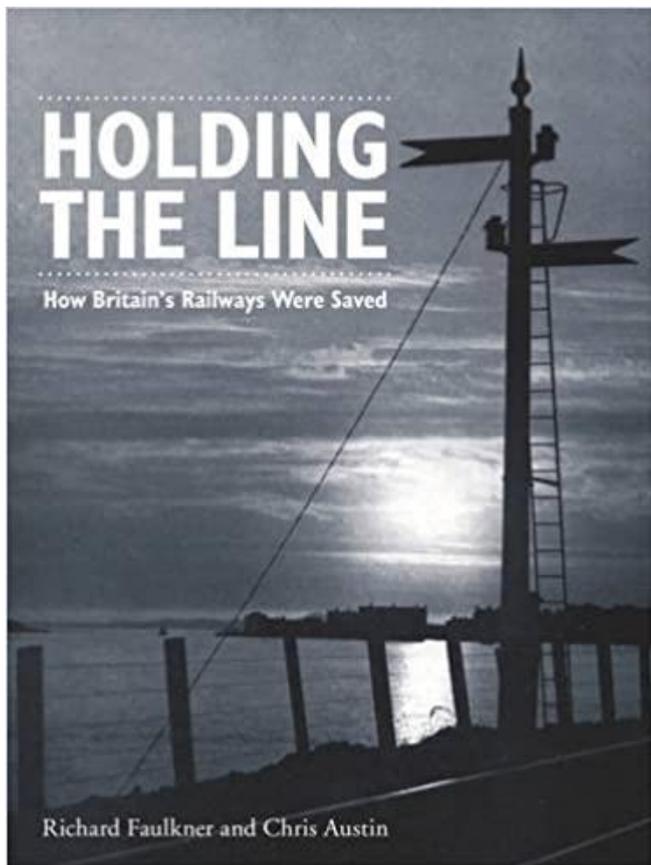
Four of our five campaigns on these two pages involve unelectrified route. Five years after it was published, it's now worth re-visiting the Office of Rail Regulation's "[Policy on Third Rail DC Electrification Systems](#)" since it remains the policy of the Office of Rail and Road. The September 2015 issue of *railese* [no.129](#) covered it, on p.5, six months after the policy's original publication.



First built 1962, Southern Region bi-mode propulsion

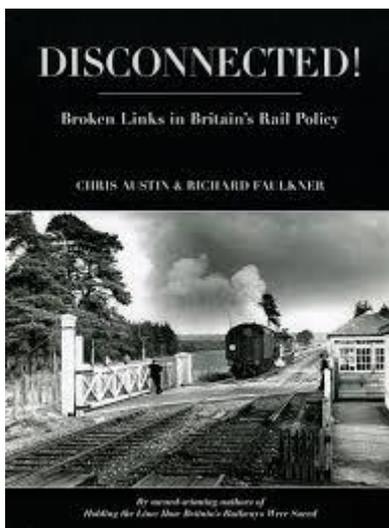
Read [coverage in previous issues](#) of newsletter *railese*

Restoring Your Railway: the prequel



First published in 2012, now available in paperback.

“How did we get to where we are?” Learning lessons, moving forward. Treat every proposition like an exam: do the homework, read the guidance, understand the question, then answer the question asked. To Restore Your Railway (line or station), follow our [Expanding the Railways](#), DfT [guidance](#), and Network Rail’s [guidance](#).



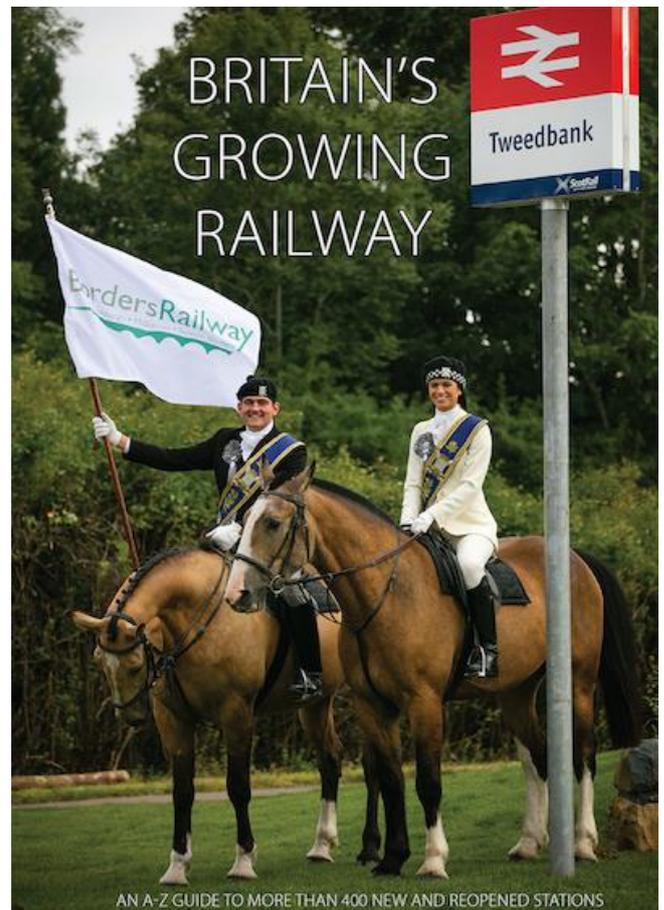
Published in 2015.

Support Railfuture [and](#) save £5 off the RRP! Buy [here](#).

Rother Valley <> Kent & East Sussex

As first reported in [railse no.140 June 2018](#), again in [railse no.143 March 2019](#) and [railse no.147 March 2020](#), Rother Valley Railway’s re-started Public Inquiry had an informal pre-Inquiry meeting on 24 February. The main [Inquiry](#) however, due to start on 26 May, has had to be deferred indefinitely due to the pandemic.

Your (Scottish) Railway Restored!



A-Z of re-openings, sixth edition, published in 2017. Copies still available, less than £10. Buy [here](#) post-free.

All you need is a conventional telephone!

The current inability to travel to our Divisional meetings is proving for some to be a blessing in disguise. Any concerns about the technology involved in our **virtual** meetings have been dispelled by participants using nothing more than their domestic landline to join in the conversations. No visuals but no travel or fares either! We’re seeing members who seldom if ever manage a physical meeting as well as regulars so please join us!

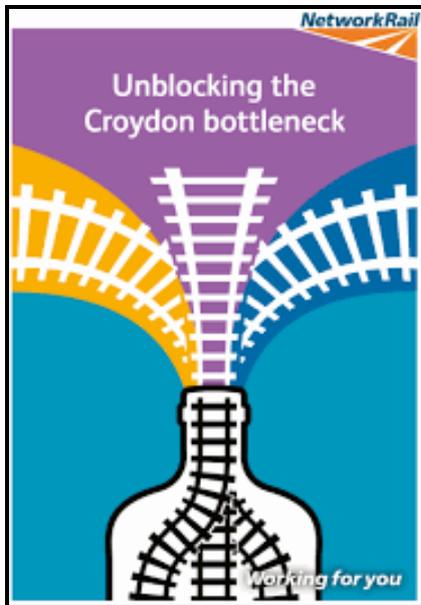


One of a selection of [video-conference backgrounds](#) from TfL

Campaigns calendar, London & SE

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

Of immediate interest to our regional branch now is the second round of consultation on the [Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme](#) (CARS) launched **online** by Network Rail on 1 June and running to 20 September.



Click on this [December 2018](#) date to see what we said in response to the first round of consultation, or check 'Our cause / Consultation responses' on the website.

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

Worthy of note are our submissions between March and May to:

- ~ Mole Valley District Council's *Future Mole Valley*, the draft Local Plan 2018-33
- ~ Hertfordshire County Council's draft Rail Strategy
- ~ Network Rail's Reigate station upgrade
- ~ the DfT's Newhaven Marine station closure
- ~ Medway Council's *Hoo Peninsula Growth*.

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

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

- # *Attracting the passenger 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* – line and station reopening
- # *Fares and ticketing* – making the system easier and fairer
- # *Industry structure and Williams* – taking the opportunity to move to devolution and concessions.

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

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

Forthcoming diary/calendar dates

Monday 1 June - Sunday 20 September Network Rail's second round of consultation on Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme (CARS) – **online**.

Monday 1 - Friday 26 June **Online chat**, weekdays only, about CARS with Network Rail.

Monday 1 - Friday 17 July CARS consultation phone hotline, weekdays and Saturdays, to Network Rail.

Saturday 20-Sunday 21 June NO services in or out of London King's Cross station.

Thursday 25 June "Docklands light railway." Free evening talk **online**.

Saturday 27 June Herts & Beds Division – **online**.

Saturday 27 June Railfuture national AGM, including presentation of Rail User Group Awards and Railfuture Campaigner of the Year 2020 award – CANCELLED.

Tuesday 30 June "Engaging local media."

Community Rail Network talk **online**.

Tuesday 30 June "The next generation of railway workers" with Andrew Haines OBE, Chief Executive of Network Rail, **online**.

Wednesday 8 July Eastern Division – **online**.

Saturday 11 July Railfuture's 'Bridge the gap' stall at the annual Uckfield Festival's Big Day - CANCELLED.

Monday 13 July Bexhill Rail Action Group – **online**.

Wednesday 15 July "Harnessing social media."

Community Rail Network talk **online**.

Thursday 23 July Sussex & Coastway Division – **online**. Guest speaker: Transport for the South East.

Friday 31 July Copy date for your campaign news / reports for London & SE branch Local Action column in October's *railwatch* no.165, and for September's *raise* no.149, to londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk

Monday 10 August Bexhill Rail Action Group – **online**.

Saturday 15 August Kent Division – **online**.

Saturday 22 - Sunday 23 August Railfuture stall at London Rail Festival, Alexandra Palace, London N22.

Monday 31 August Copy date for your campaign news, letters, articles, photos to appear in October's *railwatch* no.165. Send to editor@railwatch.org.uk

Thursday 3 September Sussex & Coastway Division.

Saturday 5 - Sunday 13 September Limited services in and out of London King's Cross station.

Wednesday 9 September Eastern Division.

Monday 14 September Bexhill Rail Action Group.

Sunday 20 September Close of Network Rail's second round of consultation on the Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme.

Details of these and other dates are in Railfuture's national 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 18.30 in **Stratford**, E15 1NG – next due on **8 July** maybe **online**, then 9 September. Division Convener is Howard Thomas (opposite). See [Eastern Division](#).

Herts & Beds – currently meeting monthly **online** on Saturday mornings, for an hour from 10.30. Next on **27 June**, then 25 July. 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 due on **15 August**. 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 – next may be on Thursday **3 September** in Redhill. Division Convener is Stephen Rolph at stephen.rolph@railfuture.org.uk. See [Surrey Division](#).

Sussex & Coastway – still meets monthly, **online**, on first Thursdays, in varying Sussex venues, at 18.00. Next due on **23 July**, then 3 September. Division Convener is John Black at jcbblack@yahoo.co.uk. See [Sussex & Coastway Division](#).

inter-railse

Our 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 **Note:** members with hotmail.com, hotmail.co.uk, outlook.com, live.co.uk, msn.com, and icloud.com addresses may not always receive the email; check in [Branch News](#) instead.

This branch newsletter is free, published quarterly and usually distributed with each edition of the national **railwatch**. The copy deadline for **railse** issue no.149, due to be published in September 2020, will be Friday 31 July 2020. Items for this newsletter and our branch Local Action column in **railwatch** to londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk

railfuture

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

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

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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 William Whiting.

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 interesting!