

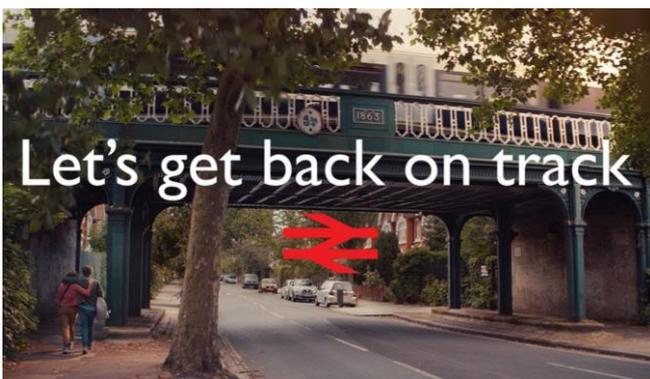
The **quarterly** branch newsletter of **railfuture** in London and the South East

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

“Let’s get back on track”



This campaign, with 40-second [video](#), was launched in mid-August by the Rail Delivery Group, while Network Rail advocated “[Summer by rail](#) – boosting economy and environment” and “[The seaside by rail](#)” including a 3-minute film.



Great Britain’s Railways – 2021 >

Is this a glimpse of the future, and will it work?



By the time this newsletter appears, the only places where you need to look for informed, independent analysis and comment will be your quarterly magazine Railwatch for October and our own “News and views” [articles](#) and [press releases](#), and [Twitter](#) output.

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.

Britain’s leading, longest-established national independent rail campaign

With seven new / re-opened stations, one re-opened interchange and one new rail link in our branch area, the third-quarter anniversaries of our local successes:

July

~ King’s Cross Midland City re-opened on the 15th, in 1983 (opened 1863, closed in 1979, re-named King’s Cross Thameslink in 1988, closed 9th December 2007).

~ Southend Airport opened on the 18th, in 2011.

~ Stevenage’s second station opened on the 23rd, in 1973 (a mile south of the original, opened in 1850 and closed to coincide with its successor’s opening).

~ new Hackney Interchange had a ‘soft opening’ for London Overground passengers on the 25th in 2015.



The original, pictured below in 1928, closed with the suspension of Poplar-Broad Street services in 1944.



August

~ Hackney Interchange official opening the 12th, 2015.

Britain's Growing Railway in London & SE: summer birthdays - continued

September

~ London Fields and Welham Green both opened on the 29th in 1986, the former after a November 1981 fire.

~ Imperial Wharf opened on the 27th in 2009.

~ the Channel Tunnel Rail Link phase one route to Waterloo International (via Fawkham Junction and Southfleet Junction) opened on the 28th in 2003.

~ Shepherd's Bush opened on the 28th in 2008.

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.

"100 more by '24": < 3 years remain!

The two-year-long national Railfuture campaign for Network Rail's [Access for All](#) (A4A) programme to be expanded looks forward to this autumn's statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer due on 27 October for the next injection of funds for the final 15 stations needed to be in with a chance of securing our target!



Another one in '21 for Southeastern

Canterbury East (ORR usage 1.1m) lifts completed and opened for the August bank holiday weekend.



Chatham and St. Mary Cray are in construction stage, while Bexley, Herne Bay, Hither Green, Petts Wood, Plumstead, and Shortlands are all in the design stage.

For Thameslink / Great Northern, too

Britain's 63rd-busiest station (in 2019-20) with an ORR-estimated 7.67m entries and exits + 3.8m interchanges – excluding the two Tube lines. Works have started to install the last two lifts, for platforms 4 and 7/8, to make the multi-modal interchange fully step-free between street-level and all platforms, mainline and Tubes.



ECML bridge over the adjacent Seven Sisters Road

And another one in '21 for Southern

Back to East Sussex, where Eridge continues in the spotlight, with its new 16-person lift – and disabled parking spaces in front of the station – due in October.



Upstairs - downstairs

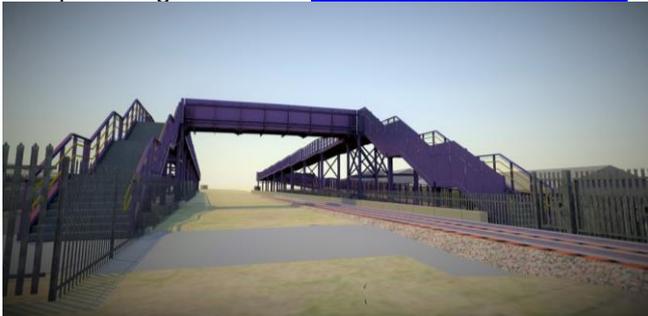


Step-free bridges of the future?



How a flat-pack bridge means better connections across Britain

Ramped bridges look like [Suggits Lane, Cleethorpes...](#)



...and [Mexborough, Doncaster](#)



Go with the F.L.O.W. (Fibre reinforced polymer, Low-cost/Light-weight, Optimised design, 'Working' bridge)
[Read more and watch the 65-second time-lapse video](#)

Decarbonisation means Mode Shift

It's still **'freight'**, folks – but not necessarily as we've grown used to knowing it, re-using passenger trains!

There are currently three such operators, to the best of our knowledge (so immediate apologies to any others):



~ InterCity RailFreight -

<https://www.intercityrailfreight.com/> and [@ICRFControl](#)



Daily departures to Central London († electric services)	Trains per day each way	First departure	Last departure	Distance miles	Average transit time	Fastest transit time	Average speed mph	% arriving within 15 minutes (ORR data)
Derby	33	05:02	21:22	128	01:41	01:27	76	97.36%
Nottingham	33	05:32	21:29	126	01:50	01:38	69	97.36%
Leicester	69	04:18	21:57	98	01:19	01:05	74	97.36%
Cardiff †	33	05:07	21:20	145	01:51	01:47	78	98.13%
Bristol †	49	04:53	22:40	117	01:36	01:20	73	98.13%
Oxford	43	00:11	23:05	63	00:55	00:47	69	98.13%
Swindon †	90	05:27	23:22	77	00:56	00:49	63	98.13%

~ Orion High Speed Logistics -

<https://orion.railopsgroup.co.uk/> and on Twitter

[@SpeedOrion](#). Watch their 1:44 video here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hh35nD7XreY> and the [Network Rail story with 1:29 video](#).



~ Varamis Rail - <https://varamis.co.uk/> and on Twitter [@RailVaramis](#)

Railfuture's national Freight Group is fully engaged with these operators. Find out more by contacting the Group's Head peter.wakefield@railfuture.org.uk and follow the group on Twitter [@RailfutureFret](#)

“Supporting Sustainable Tourism”

Under the auspices of Heritage Railway Association,



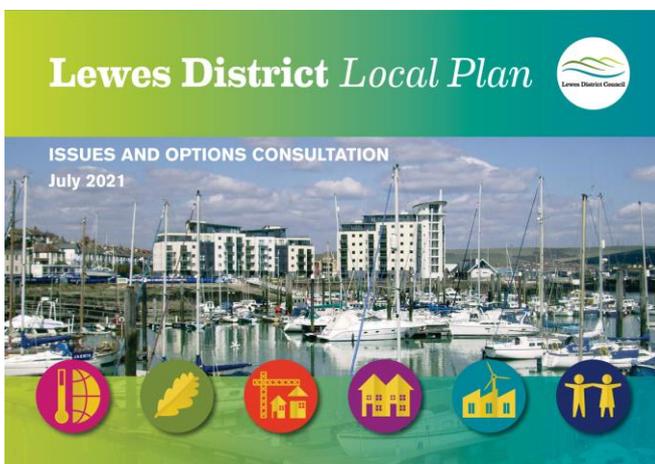
the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail in July published “Public Transport on Heritage Railways”. It can be found in the HRA website or by clicking [here](#).

Towards a Strategic Investment Plan for Transport in the South East

Regular readers will be familiar with the building-blocks which TfSE has been assembling as it develops its draft Strategic Investment Plan for public consultation in 2022. Five Area Studies, plus themed studies on Freight, logistics and international gateways, and on Future mobility have, with stakeholder engagement which has included Railfuture, been contributing ideas for specific interventions as detailed in the centre-pages of the previous [railse no.152 in June](#). More detail of Transport for the South East's work is [here](#).

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

That branch newsletter also signalled consultations by Lewes District for a new Local Plan Core Strategy for 2018-38, first on 'Issues and Options' and then this Autumn on 'Preferred Options', with the new Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy adopted by Winter 2023.



The first consultation over summer was on six topics:

- ~ Tackling Climate Change
- ~ Protecting and Enhancing the Quality of the Environment
- ~ Accommodating and Delivering Growth
- ~ Improving Access to Housing
- ~ Promoting a Prosperous Economy and Building Community Wealth
- ~ Creating Healthy Sustainable Communities with Infrastructure

and our response is in the website's Uckfield-Lewes campaign page and [here](#).

In the previous branch newsletter this question was posed: "Half of that requirement (for new homes over the 20-year period of the new Local Plan) in one 'critical mass' location (to match the column at left)?" The question stands, but a number given then must be corrected as Lewes District includes the South Downs National Park as a planning authority in its own right. The topic paper for 'Accommodating and Delivering Growth' gives the locally-derived housing requirement figure for the non-National Park area of Lewes District as 602 per annum / 12,040 for 2020-40. Our core proposition remains: a minimum of half up to two-thirds of that number in a single location between Lewes and Uckfield would make the case for a rail link and reduce housing pressures elsewhere across Lewes District.

In the meantime, interest from housing developers continues unabated. Railfuture responded [here](#) to a survey by [Croudace Homes](#) seeking views on



"Delivering new community facilities and homes in Ringmer" for a gap site at Broyle Gate Farm on which an application by Croudace Homes for outline planning permission for 70 homes had been refused by the District Council in December 2015 and dismissed on appeal to the Secretary of State in September 2016. On an adjacent site between Ringmer and Broyle Side a current application for outline planning permission for c.100 homes – to which [Railfuture has objected](#) – awaits decision, and Eton College are known to be proposing significant development of c.3000 homes around Plumpton, South Chailey and East Chilmington.

The Uckfield Festival and its Big Day returned in July, and once again Railfuture took its campaign messages to the annual (except 2020) event. "Bridge the gap" (between Uckfield and Lewes), Thameslink-2, and "Electrify Uckfield" all attracted keen local interest.



A recent pressure to electrify the Uckfield line, the need to transfer the Class 171 Turbostar diesel trains to another operator, has evaporated as that operator will be receiving similar Class 170s from elsewhere.

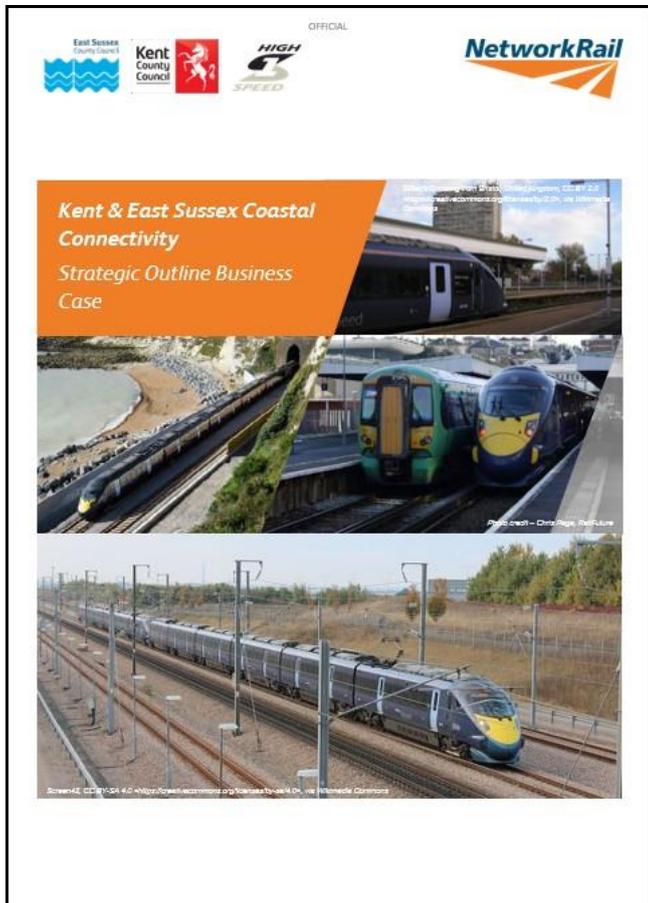


Nevertheless, the rail industry recognises that other reasons for electrification - a homogenous electric fleet operating all London routes and the case for improving air quality particularly in London - remain strong factors.

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

TfSE rail – East Coastway: East Sussex - Kent EBN-BEX-SLQ-HGS-RYE-AFK-STP

The Strategic Outline Business Case for the Kent and East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Programme has been completed by Network Rail and awaits a decision by the DfT on next steps to be taken by Network Rail.



Note centre-right image from Railfuture

The SOBC offers the DfT four options – two each for east Kent and East Sussex. Both East Sussex options (as does one for east Kent) confirm a new platform 2A in Ashford International station and as a consequence a new direct MarshLink-HS1 connection. This was first signalled at the Hastings Summit in October 2019 and reported in [railse no.146](#) for December 2019.

The two options for East Sussex, detailing different levels of intervention, and associated cost, to upgrade MarshLink itself both include line-speed increases and some track re-doubling, the most notable difference being the extra c.£200million for adding electrification (assumed to be third rail). One possibility however is that the DfT might be tempted to ‘cherry-pick’ and authorise progress only with the new platform 2A, in place of one of the two through lines between domestic platform 2 and Eurostar platform 3, for its operational capacity and domestic platform decongestion benefits.

Network Rail is clear that their case to government is aligned to the current ‘levelling-up’ agenda, applicable in particular to Hastings. Railfuture’s approach seeks to strengthen that ‘ask’ with a complementary ‘offer’, to lobby around a ‘creating competitive places’ agenda.

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

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



Infrastructure improvements to enable hourly all-day every day Great Western Railway services to and from Brighton are an aspiration of stakeholders and users, backed by Railfuture, awaiting progress into the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline overseen by the DfT.

As for our other TfSE rail campaigns – **N. Downs Line east and Medway Valley line extension: Surrey - Kent – SOO-MDB-PDW-TON-EBR-GDN-RDH** and **N. Downs Line west: West Sussex - Surrey - Hants – Berks – GTW-RDH-REI-DPD-GLD-WKM-RDG** the endorsement of TfSE’s draft Strategic Investment Plan for the rail infrastructure necessary to deliver vital socio-economic and environmental as well as transport capacity and connectivity benefits will be fundamental.

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

Other Sub-National Transport Bodies

While some of our key rail development campaigns are within the area of Transport for the South East, we must not overlook the two other SNTBs which include large parts of our regional branch area to the north.

One is [Transport East](#) which includes the county of Essex and the unitaries of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock; the other is [England’s Economic Heartland](#) which includes the three unitaries of the former county of Bedfordshire – Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton – and the county of Hertfordshire.



With that in mind it’s worth noting that Transport East, established in 2018, is due to hold a formal public consultation on its draft Transport Strategy in the near future, following an ‘initial engagement’ survey between 4 December 2020 and 17 January 2021, including a mid-December workshop on “*The role of transport in economic growth and recovery.*” Their most recent annual summit was on 9 March 2021, and Railfuture L & SE members are liaising closely with colleagues in neighbouring East Anglia branch.

England’s Economic Heartland had launched its Transport Strategy with a webinar back in February 2021 and will hold a conference on 20 October themed “*Delivering a World-Class Heartland.*”

East-West Rail – the London variant

Two more welcome additions to the network of step-free stations, among the 30 newly-upgraded for the Elizabeth line's total of 41 stations (10 are newly-built).



West Drayton – ORR-estimated 2.4m entries and exits in 2019-20



Southall – ORR-estimated 3.5m entries and exits in 2019-20

Hayes & Harlington is coming next so that all Elizabeth line stations will be step-free from street to platform.

Community Rail Network: L&SE news

[The World Cup of Stations](#) returns – closing 3 October.

South Western Railway says "[Try the train.](#)"

SCRP's [Eridge station](#) had a 153rd birthday party!

[Value of rail to local economies](#), Rail Delivery Group.

[Back to rail](#), with encouragement from GTR.

First [Social Value](#) report by South Western Railway.

[Sustainability policy](#) way forward for SCRCP.

[Network Rail staff volunteer](#) for community rail.

SCRCP's [Uckfield station](#) helps fight food waste.

New [White Cliffs CRP](#) launched in east Kent.

[Surrey Hills to South Downs CRP](#) have a new website.

Rail users take notice at [Crowborough](#) station.

CRN's [Covid guidance](#) for CRPs and station adopters.

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

Campaigns calendar, London & SE

As signalled in the June newsletter, we contributed to Railfuture's full, 18-page response in early-June to the second informal East West Rail Company consultation. We also responded to Calls for Evidence from the sub-national transport body England's Economic Heartland on two corridor studies related to East West Rail.



During August we contributed to the cross-branch responses on the proposed timetables of six operators for the East Coast Main Line from May 2022, including Great Northern, London North Eastern Railway and Thameslink – all since withdrawn.



The House of Lords new Built Environment Committee asked Railfuture to give evidence in July for its Inquiry on the Williams Shapps plan for rail: fare reform.



Our TOC liaison for GTR, Neil Middleton, both gave oral evidence then and further written submissions in August, on the costs of rail ticketing and on tactical improvements to the new flexi-season tickets.

In August we responded to a Croudace Homes survey on a site in Ringmer, East Sussex, and a stakeholder survey by Transport for the South East on its role.



By the end of September we shall have responded to consultations by South Western Railway on their proposed December 2022 timetable, to Lewes District Council on their '*Issues & Options*' for the next Local Plan, to Thames Gateway Kent Partnership's successor 'Greater North Kent' on "*Improving transport links between Abbey Wood and Ebbsfleet*", and again to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee, its Call for Evidence for its Inquiry on "*Meeting the UK's housing demand: housing demand in the UK and how barriers to meeting this demand can be overcome.*"



By the end of October we shall have responded to the consultations by West Sussex County Council on its draft Transport Plan 2022-36, and by Surrey County Council on its next Local Transport Plan, LTP4.



After the previous newsletter's update on proposals around South Kensington station, the applicants requested withdrawal from the agenda for the June meeting of the Borough Planning Committee, and further changes, open for consultation, were proposed.



Railfuture made no further comment; the changes do not affect our interest in making provision for step-free access for London Underground's sub-surface lines, as first reported in December 2020's [railse no.150](#). The Planning Committee is now expected to consider the proposed development in November or December.

In July the branch lodged a formal objection to Lewes District Council on an application ref. LW/21/0302 for outline planning permission on a key gap site between Ringmer and Broyle Side. The proposal is for a mixed-use scheme comprising up to 97 residential units and community / commercial space. Submitted in April, it has yet to appear on an agenda for a meeting of the District Council's Planning Applications Committee.

Current consultations of specific and general interest to our London and South East region are shown [here](#). *Your opportunity* to influence our policy development is by mailing londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk

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

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

Wednesday 29 September Herts & Beds Division evening meeting, [online](#). [Invite non-members!](#)

Thursday 30 September "East West Main Line 2021." Conference in Oxford, postponed from June.

Thursday 30 September ORR publishes Rail Safety Statistics for 2020-21.

Thursday 30 September "How do you decarbonise the transport sector?" First of four weekly late-morning [webinars](#): "Setting the scene."

Thursday 30 September "Network Rail's Environmental Sustainability Strategy." Free lunchtime [webinar](#).

Saturday 2 / Sunday 3 October Northern City Line services suspended for East Coast Digital Programme.

Sunday 3 October Arun Valley line services via Horsham amended / suspended for completion of major route improvement works.

Wednesday 6 October "Building back better?" Guest speaker: Norman Baker, former MP. Evening [webinar](#).

Thursday 7 October ORR publishes Passenger Rail Usage for Q1 (April-June) 2021-22.

Thursday 7 October "How do you decarbonise the transport sector?" Second of four weekly late-morning [webinars](#): "Short – medium term up to 2035."

Thursday 7 October Sussex & Coastway Division evening meeting, [online](#). [Invite non-members!](#)

Tuesday 12 October "Engaging communities through story-telling and creative projects." Community Rail Network morning [webinar](#).

Tuesday 12 October "Hertfordshire-Essex Rapid Transit." Evening [webinar](#). See [HERT](#).

Wednesday 13 October "COP26 – is the transport industry accelerating fast enough to address the climate emergency?" Late-afternoon [webinar](#).

Thursday 14 October "How do you decarbonise the transport sector?" Third of four weekly late-morning [webinars](#): "Medium – long term up to 2050."

Monday 18-Sunday 24 October "Go Green by Rail" – Community Rail Week nationwide event.

Tuesday 19 October "Grid Stability: Maintaining grid stability with changes in electricity generation and usage." Free evening [webinar](#).

Thursday 21 October "How do you decarbonise the transport sector?" Fourth of four weekly late-morning [webinars](#): "Infrastructure."

Friday 22 October Copy date for your campaign news / reports for the London & South East branch Local Action column in December's [railwatch](#) no.170, and for December's [railse](#) no.154. Send to londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk

Saturday 23 October Copy date for your campaign news, letters, articles, photos to appear in December's [railwatch](#) no.170. Send to editor@railwatch.org.uk

Sunday 31 October-Friday 12 November "COP26" – UN Climate Change conference in Glasgow.

Wednesday 3 November "Abbey Wood to Ebbsfleet Connectivity Study – how should we invest in transport to deliver the government's vision for this part of the Thames Estuary?" Evening [webinar](#).

Thursday 4 November Sussex & Coastway Division evening meeting, [online](#). [Invite non-members!](#)

Monday 8 November "Class 69 – from the ashes a Phoenix arises." Free evening [webinar](#).

Tuesday 9 November "Crossrail trains – test and service experience." Free evening [webinar](#).

Wednesday 10 November Eastern Division evening meeting, maybe [online](#). [Invite non-members!](#)

Wednesday 10 November "Decarbonising diesel – the class 170 Eminox project." Free evening [webinar](#).

Thursday 11 November "Innovative Network Rail FLOW footbridge." Free evening [webinar](#).

Saturday 20 November Kent Division afternoon meeting, maybe [online](#). [Invite non-members!](#)

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

Your branch divisions' meetings – all members, and non-members, welcome

Eastern [s. Essex and n. & e. London] – meets second Wednesday of odd-numbered months, at 19.00 – next due on **10 November**.
Division Convener is Howard Thomas (opposite).
See [Eastern Division](#).

Herts & Beds – meets about monthly. Next meeting **29 September**. Division Convener is Neil Middleton (opposite). See [Herts & Beds Division](#).

Kent – meets quarterly on third Saturdays, at 14.00 – next due on **20 November**. Division Convener is Chris Fribbins at chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk
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 usually held jointly with Sussex & Coastway Division (below). Surrey Division Convener is Stephen Rolph at stephen.rolph@railfuture.org.uk.
See [Surrey Division](#).

Sussex & Coastway – meets monthly on first Thursdays, at 18.00. Next due on **7 October**, then **4 November**. Division Convener is John Black at jcbblack@yahoo.co.uk, Division Secretary is Trevor Davies at trevor.d2016@outlook.com
See [Sussex & Coastway Division](#).

Your branch committee's meetings

Officers and other committee members continue to meet, **online**, every 4 weeks on Wednesday evenings.

raise online

Available in the 'Branch news' area of the branch's main web page. Here's a link to the [online pdf](#). The links in blue are clickable hyperlinks.

This branch newsletter is free, published quarterly and usually distributed with each edition of the national **railwatch**. The copy deadline for **raise** issue no.154, due to be published in December 2021, will be Friday 22 October 2021. 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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Railfuture campaigns (noun, and verb!)

Our five national **railfuture** policy priorities:
Attracting passengers back to rail – improving the travelling environment
Climate change and modal shift – how the railway can help reduce the carbon footprint of transport
Restoring Your Railway – restoring communities' rail connections by reopening lines and stations
Fares and ticketing – making the system easier and fairer
Industry structure and Williams / Shapps – taking the opportunity to move to devolution and concessions.

Railfuture 'news and views', and Railfuture 'in the news'

Stay abreast of Railfuture's and others' reports and thoughts published in our website [articles](#).
Stay abreast of Railfuture members making, not just watching, things happen in our website [media extracts](#).

Neighbouring and other branches

All 14 branch websites, including their **events** and **newsletters**, are **online** in 'Railfuture near you'.

London and SE Branch officers

Branch Chairman, and Secretary: both vacant.

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

Treasurer: Howard Thomas.
Tel: 01245 280503; howard.thomas@railfuture.org.uk

Membership Secretary: Neil Middleton.
neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk

inter-raise

Our two-page monthly e-newsletter, by email (as a [pdf or link](#)) on request from roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk