

RAILFUTURE 2020 AGM BIRMINGHAM CANCELLED BECAUSE OF CORONAVIRUS

Railfuture way to reverse Beeching



Picture: PAUL ABELL

OPPORTUNITY: This is one of the two Chee Tor tunnels, near Buxton, which were once part of the Midland Railway's main line to Manchester. Now the tunnels are used by walkers and cyclists on the Monsal Trail in the Peak District National Park. If reopened from Matlock northwards, the line has the potential to be used by inter-city trains, 2,000 tonne freight trains and local trains which could bring visitors to the national park and reduce polluting road traffic in Derbyshire

Railfuture was invited into the inner sanctum of the Department for Transport in February to help the Government put meat on its pre-election pledge to reverse some of the Beeching cuts through its £500 million *Restoring Your Railway* fund announced earlier in the month.

Railfuture's Roger Blake took in a six-page list of 80 line and station reopening schemes which had been put together with help from independent professional transport consultant Jonathan Roberts after input from 13 Railfuture branches.

The DfT set three scheme categories: new ideas, accelerating existing proposals, and new stations, explained Roger, who is Railfuture's infrastructure and networks director. He said £20 million for a third new stations fund was announced later.

Railfuture is also looking forward to having some input into a second stage of "new ideas" which will concentrate on ideas from individual MPs for reopening stations.

One of the goals for the Government will be to select projects which can be completed and opened before the next general election, expected in 2024, said Roger. Railfuture member Chris Austin, who was author of *Connecting Communities*

Railfuture AGM cancelled

Railfuture's virtual board meeting in March agreed that the 2020 AGM should not take place because it was unclear how long the coronavirus lockdown will continue.

railaction

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in 2009 and joint author of Railfuture's 2017 guide *Expanding the Railways – How to develop and deliver a proposal*, is also producing material for the DfT on behalf of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail.

More information on Railfuture's campaigns for new lines and stations can be found here:

- <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display2308>
- <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/Missing+Links>
- <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/New+stations>

Electrification of rail is key component of DfT's decarbonising plan

It was "music to the ears" according to campaigners for walking, cycling and public transport when the Department for Transport published its *Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge* policy paper in March.

Roger Geffen of Cycling UK described it as a "plan for making a plan", but it was also a hugely significant step by Transport Secretary Grant Shapps in setting "a vision for how a net zero transport system will benefit us all". He said Mr Shapps was the first Government minister to talk about traffic reduction since John Prescott, who in the late 1990s said: "I will have failed if in five years time there are not many more people using public transport and far fewer journeys by car. It's a tall order, but I urge you to hold me to it."

Mr Shapps will have to persuade the Treasury to rethink the country's transport spending plans. Earlier in March the Government said it planned to spend £27.4 billion on motorways and trunk roads over the next five years.

The Government's full decarbonising plan is expected to be published later this year but the policy paper recognised rail as already a low-carbon form of transport which will become even better with new trains being delivered. Greenhouse gas emissions from passenger and freight rail services were only 1.4% of transport emissions in 2018, while 10% of passenger kilometres were by rail.

Welcoming the paper, Railway Industry Association chief executive Darren Caplan said: "The Government recognises that electrifying more of the railway is likely to be necessary."

He urged the Government to accelerate electrification schemes before existing projects are completed to avoid losing valuable expertise and skills.

The DfT paper admits that alternatives to overhead electrification, such as hydrogen and battery, do not have sufficient power to pull heavy freight trains. The main way to achieve rail freight decarbonisation is to stop using diesel traction, through direct government intervention to roll out further electrification.

Electric trains start test running to Corby this month

Although the Government scrapped plans to electrify the Midland main line to Sheffield in 2017, work is continuing on bringing electric trains to Corby, which will extend the existing 50-mile electrified route from London St Pancras to Bedford by a further 36 miles. The line is being energised this month and trial running is expected to begin. Work has also continued on electrifying the Midland main line for another 12 miles from Kettering to Market Harborough.

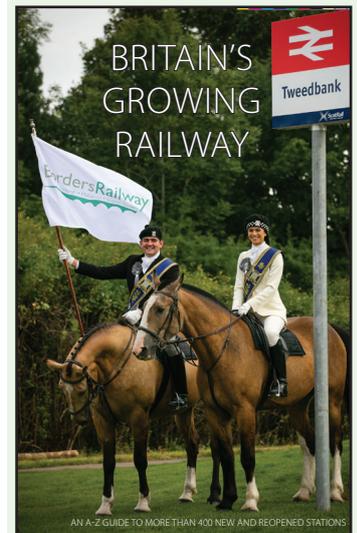
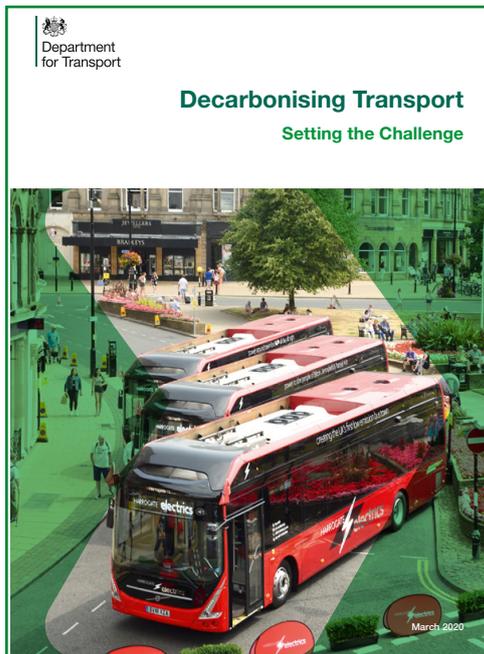
Railfuture press releases

Railfuture press releases can be read in full at

[Railfuture press releases](#)

A review of other Railfuture appearances in print and broadcast media can be seen at

[Railfuture in the news](#)



Railfuture's book gives details of the 400 stations and over 950km of new routes which have opened to passengers since 1960.

£9.95 including postage.

You can order your copy at:

[www.railfuture.org.uk/
shop/books.php](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/shop/books.php)

£5 billion needed for rail – £27 billion given to road building

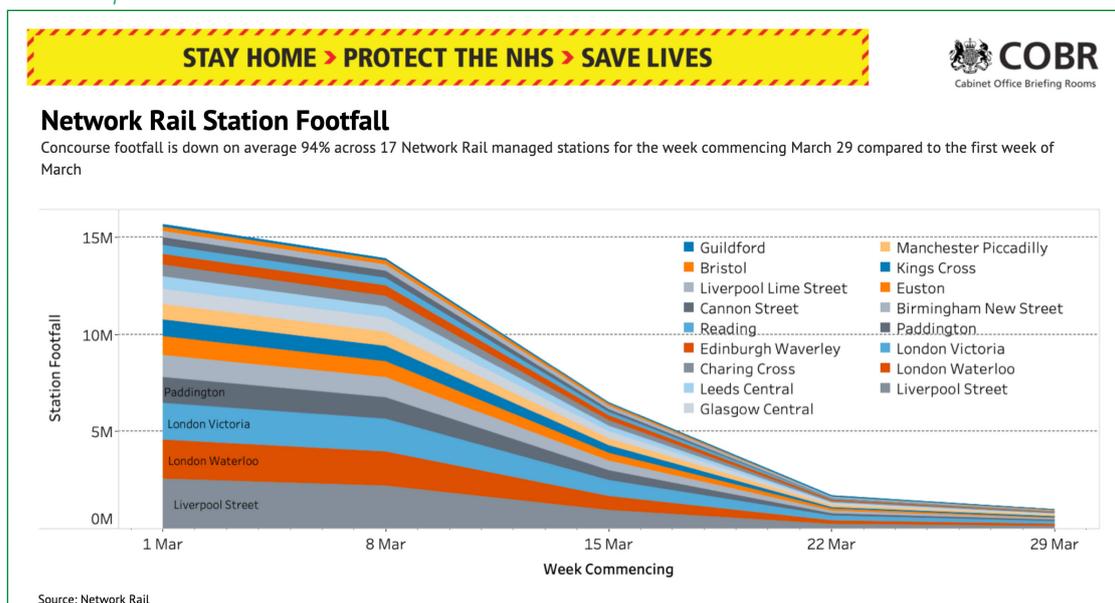
Reopening a disused North Wales railway line could bring more than 7,000 people within walking distance of a main line station according to a new report.

Reinstating the seven-mile Caernarfon-Bangor line would cost £16 million and provide a key rail link in north Wales. It is one of 33 sections of line recommended for reopening by the Campaign for Better Transport in a report last year. The CBT said the total cost for the 33 projects would be £4.8 billion – a fraction of the £27 billion for road building announced in the budget in March this year.

The 2020 planned road building is incompatible with the Government’s climate commitments, said Professor Greg Marsden of the Institute for Transport studies at Leeds University. He told the *Guardian* that there should be a moratorium on new roads.

CBT’s *The case for expanding the rail network* can be found here:

<https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/research-files/case-for-expanding-rail-network.pdf>



Rail services restricted by Government order to essential only

The number of people travelling by rail has plummeted, following the Government’s instruction to stay at home because of coronavirus. The dramatic reductions can be seen in the chart released by the Government on 8 April 2020.

Under emergency measures announced by the Department for Transport, train operators were allowed to transfer “all revenue and cost risk” to the Government and be paid a management fee to continue running services. Although temporary, commentators predict it will spell the end for the present franchising system.

Coventry prepares to pay drivers to give up their cars

A project to persuade car drivers to switch to public transport is to be trialled in Coventry next year. The Transport for West Midlands scheme will give car drivers up to £3,000 worth of credits to spend, using a smartphone app or Swift travel card, on public transport, taxis, bike share or a car club.

TfWM is working with Coventry City Council and later this year will invite people who are willing to give up their cars to apply for the two-year pilot project.

The Institution of Civil Engineers has urged the Government to introduce road pricing in England as a replacement for vehicle excise duty and fuel tax.

In its policy paper *Pay As You Go – Achieving Sustainable Roads Funding in England*, the ICE called on the Government to implement a “pay-as-you-go” roads model.

<https://www.ice.org.uk/ICEDevelopmentWebPortal/media/Documents/Media/Policy/ice-payg-policy-report.pdf>



Moscow Metro

There are 23 tunnel-boring machines simultaneously working in Moscow, says map designer Jug Cerovic who is trying to keep up. You can see the latest maps at:

<http://www.inat.fr/metro/moscow/>



Europe rail guide

How to get to Georgia by Train is just one of the articles available at:

<https://railguideeurope.com>

Flight shame

Green campaigner Kirsten de Keyser who lives in Camden, London, refuses to fly to Copenhagen.

She points out:

By air=£70+300 kg CO²

By rail=£150+30 kg CO²

She said: “The Government should reverse air and rail fare prices.”

London's ultra-low emission zone has led to a reduction of 36% in roadside nitrogen dioxide pollution since it was introduced last year. The zone will be extended next year as far as the north and south circular roads.

Urals high speed line from Chelyabinsk to Ekaterinburg

Russia is planning to build a new 185 mph high speed railway east of the Urals. The 136-mile long line between Chelyabinsk and Ekaterinburg will be started next year as a joint £3.5 billion project with Siemens. It should be completed in 2025.



The latest version of JR Central LO maglev test train at Hitachi's Kasado works.

Hitachi reveals its new-look 300mph Maglev train

Hitachi has unveiled a streamlined Maglev test train which it is building for JR Central, reports the *International Rail Journal*. The new test train is expected to start trials in May. JR Central plans to spend £22 million this year developing a maintenance system for commercial operation and devising ways to cut costs. The Chuo Shinkansen Maglev line is scheduled to open between Tokyo Shinagawa and Nagoya by 2027.

Farewell to world-travelling Welsh rail fan Rowland Pittard

Lifelong rail campaigner Rowland Pittard died on 7 April 2020. He had been suffering a progressive illness which affects lung function for several years but remained active within Railfuture until his last few days. His last contributions for *Rail Wales* and *Railwatch* were written just a few weeks ago.

Peter Kingsbury of Railfuture Wales said: "His contribution to Railfuture in Wales and beyond over many years was very extensive and I am pleased that the Wales branch took the recent decision to recognise this by making him vice-president."

Rowland's grandfather worked on the footplate and his father was a goods guard. As a child his bedroom window overlooked Tondu Ogmores Junction sidings (near Bridgend) where he delighted in the railway activity on view. Rowland remained committed to railways throughout his life.

He was a life member of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society and was awarded the G M Trevelyan Medal for his voluntary work for the Youth Hostels Association. He contributed to *Branch Line News*, *Today's Railways* and *Railway World* and wrote regular articles for *Rail Wales* and *Railwatch* as well as the 2019 *Railways and Industry in the Tondu Valleys* book published by Pen and Sword. He collected railway literature, including working timetables, and travelled the world to

What's on

Many rail-related events are listed on Railfuture's website:

<http://railfuture.org.uk/events>

Many will not now take place because of the coronavirus lockdown.

Railfuture conferences

The next Railfuture conference is likely to be online only.

www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences

Leeds conference

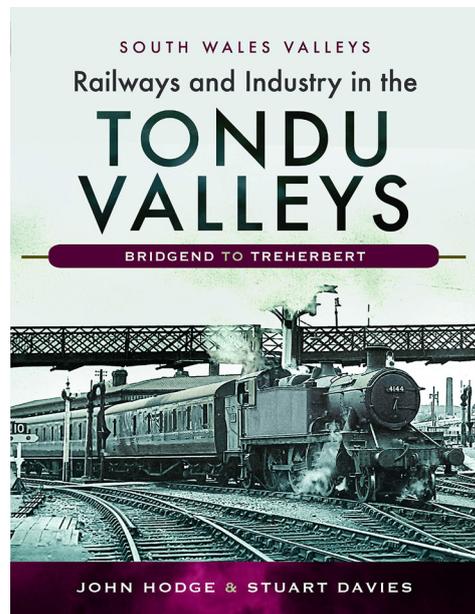
Because of the difficulty of organising a conference with the uncertainty over the coronavirus restrictions, the Railfuture board has decided not to go ahead with the national conference which had been planned to take place in Leeds on 3 October 2020.

It was agreed that Railfuture would organise a "virtual conference" on the same date.

Chairman Chris Page and director Jerry Alderson are exploring what technological options are available and at what cost.

record the final days of steam, including to Guatemala and Uganda and 101 other countries, travelling by train in 88 of them.

He qualified with a BSc in geography and geology at the University of Wales Aberystwyth and this was followed by a teaching diploma at the University of Wales Swansea. He was a teacher until he retired.



Rowland contributed material for the 2019 Railways and Industry in the Tondy Valleys book published by Pen and Sword

between Tondy and Porthcawl. My mother would be one of a convoy pushing prams to Tondy station for a visit to Porthcawl. The afternoon train usually started from Tondy's bay platform and had a milk wagon to convey the prams. I was told that for my first birthday I had a ride on the steam locomotive between Tondy and Pyle."

Some of his records have been presented to the Glamorgan Archives and the Bus Archive, the Kithead Trust and the Bluebell Trust. He collected yard logbooks, signal box registers, train crew notebooks and colliery despatch lists which he donated to the Engine Shed Society. Rowland was a regular visitor to Tondy signal box where two of his relatives worked. He also travelled on every passenger train service in Great Britain and Ireland and also many freight lines on special trains.

Rowland will be greatly missed by his many friends in Railfuture and by all who believe, like him, in the provision of high-quality rail services in Wales.

'We want our sleeper trains back': Can it ever be done?

A teacher at the College of Europe, Jon Worth, was prompted into action by the Europe-wide demands to bring back sleeper trains as a way to reduce the number of flights. Austrian railways launched its Nightjet train between Brussels and Vienna in January but Jon decided to illustrate the difficult problems faced by planners who wanted to accede to public demands for sleeper trains. The College of Europe is based in Bruges and "offers postgraduate education in an international environment".

You can see his flow chart online at

<https://twitter.com/search?q=%23NightTrainDiagram&src=hash>

Or on the next page:

He worked in London for seven years, acquiring a Certificate in Transport Studies and a Diploma in Transport Studies at London University.

Rowland joined the Railway Invigoration Society which subsequently became the Railway Development Society, and is now Railfuture. He was the secretary of Railfuture Wales and also served a term as a national director. He was a member of the Royal Geographic Society's Ordnance Survey Education Consultative Committee and helped to vet new maps and examine the need for updates of existing maps. He built up a collection of over 700 maps, many of them rail-oriented, which he recently bequeathed to the National Library of Wales. He was a lifelong member of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales and helped found the Gwili Railway over 40 years ago on the trackbed of the Carmarthen-Aberystwyth line.

Rowland said: "My early rail travels were

Deadly pollution

Air pollution is the single largest environmental health risk in Europe, causing around 400,000 premature deaths per year, according to the European Cyclists Federation.

Diesel ban

Rome banned diesel vehicles as an emergency measure after 10 days of smog in January.

Bus block

Bus firms in northern England have refused to take part in a regional smart ticketing system, like London's Oyster card, according to a *Yorkshire Post* report in January.

Flying alternative

Trafikverket, Sweden's rail infrastructure manager, wants to run sleeper trains from Malmö to Cologne.

The planned service, which is set to start in 2022 or 2023, is part of an expansion of night trains proposed by the Swedish government to provide a practical alternative to short-haul flights – which contribute to climate change.

Fare cuts

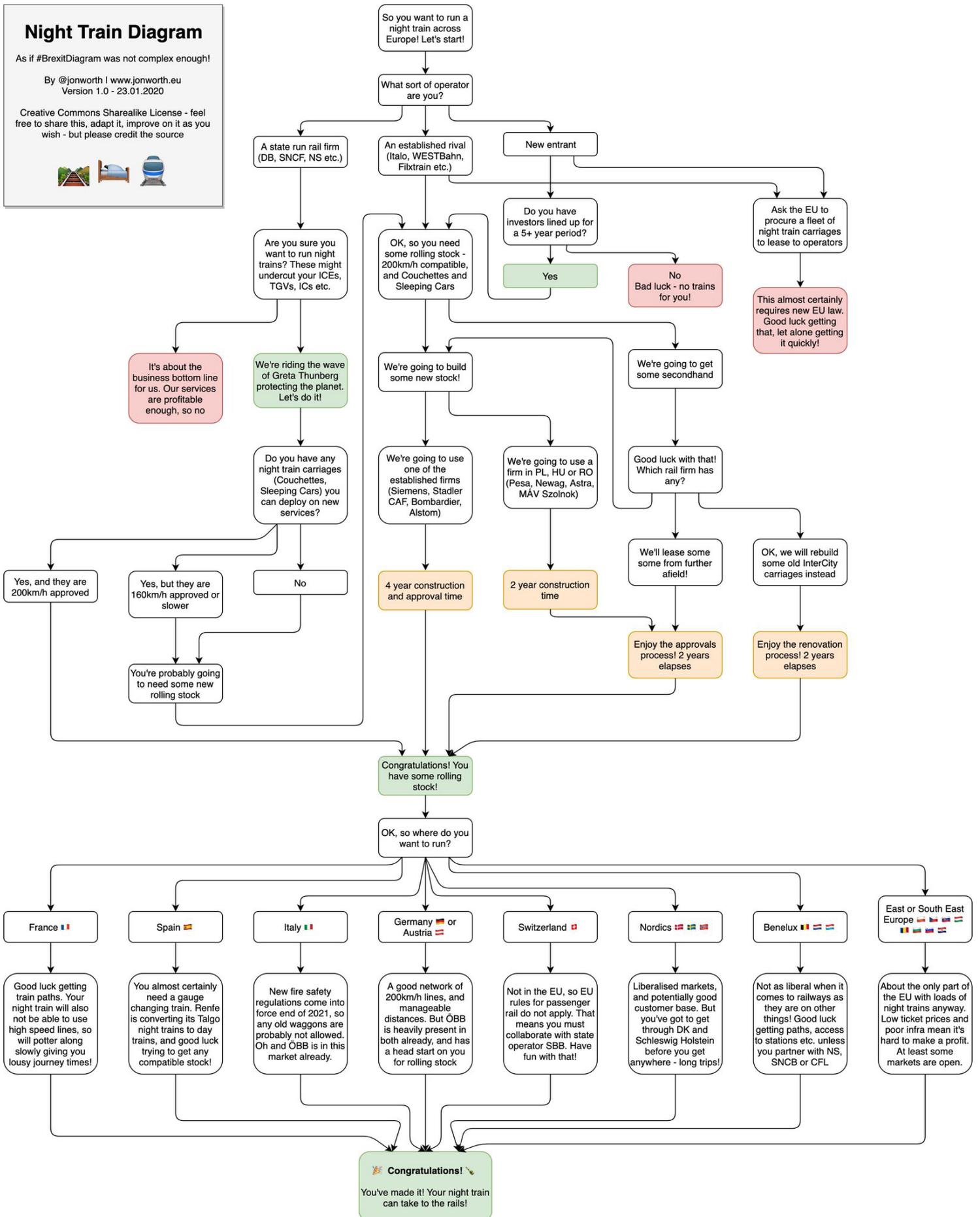
Germany cut rail fares for long-distance rail travel in January in response to the climate crisis.

Night Train Diagram

As if #BrexitDiagram was not complex enough!

By @jonworth | www.jonworth.eu
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