

Railfuture Limited - Election of Directors for 2019/20

The Board of Directors is legally liable for the running of the company. Railfuture Ltd must abide by the Companies Act, General Data Protection Regulation, Insurance Act, Health and Safety at Work Act, Lobbying Act and many other pieces of legislation. It also has a legal duty to act in the best interests of the members, which primarily means ensuring that Railfuture is financially well-run, is not exposed to unnecessary risk, and satisfies our insurers and banks. Candidates must be committed to performing this role if elected. Primarily, of course, they must work constructively and harmoniously as part of a team.

Although Railfuture exists to campaign for better services over a bigger railway, the directors' responsibility is managerial and strategic. They manage the company to enable high-quality, modern, professional and effective campaigning work, where relevant to the company's aims, to be done by Railfuture volunteers, and to make available funds where beneficial to members, properly focused/managed, and value-for-money. It is not the immediate responsibility of the directors to campaign, although many do so within their branch activities, and it is not necessary for every director to have a deep understanding of the railway.

The board needs a variety of knowledge, understanding and skills amongst the directors that include company management, project management, finance/accountancy, corporate governance, data protection, legal, human resources, information technology (especially websites and databases), marketing as well as railway matters, both as rail users and professionals working within the rail industry.

There are five vacancies: *three* for a three-year term and *two* for a for a one-year term. The fourth- and fifth-placed candidates will be elected for one year – a total of nine directors. See: www.railfuture.org.uk/Elections.

All candidates were asked to attend an informal meeting with two Vice Presidents to discuss what the role involves.

List of current directors (three-year terms with chair appointed from amongst the directors):

Chris Page – Chair	Allison Cosgrove – Vice Chair and Passenger Director *
Jerry Alderson – Finance & IT Director	Ian Brown CBE – Policy Director
Roger Blake – (Rail) Infrastructure Director *	Wendy Thorne – Membership (+ acting Corp Gov) Director
Chris Hyomes – Communications Director *	

Allison Cosgrove also has responsibility for supporting Railfuture's 14 branches, aiming to visit around half of them each year. Those marked "*" are seeking re-election. Two of the nine directors stepped down during the year.

Candidate Details and Election Addresses

All candidates were asked to answer questions 1 to 7 and submit an election address of not more than 300 words.

- 1) Length of membership the Railfuture Ltd
- 2) Current and previous Railfuture Ltd branch membership and committee Service
- 3) Current and Previous Railfuture Ltd national group service
- 4) Relevant qualifications and work experience
- 5) Current and previous membership of other relevant organisations with details of positions held
- 6) Participation in other organisations as Railfuture Ltd representative
- 7) Nature and Duration of any association with a rail user group (whether or not affiliated to Railfuture Ltd)
- 8) Election address

ROGER BLAKE – Proposed by Mark Douglas; seconded by Ray King

Personal Details

- Q1. c.30 years
- Q2. L&SE Committee since 2006, Vice-Chair since 2007
- Q3. Railwatch Editorial Board since 2010; Infrastructure & Networks Group since 2014; Passenger Group & TOC Liaison since 2014.
- Q4. Chartered Town Planner since 1973; Principal Transport Planner, Public Transport Liaison, Hackney Council 1997-2015.
- Q5. Railway Study Association; Transport Planning Society; CfBT, Spa Valley Railway, Lavender Line, Great Central Railway, North London Railway Historical Society, Brunel Museum Rotherhithe.
- Q6. Sussex Community Rail Partnership Strategic Advisory Board; Hastings & Rother Rail Users Alliance; Transport for the South East.
- Q7. Co-founder Cambridge Heath & London Fields RUG 1996 onwards; member Barking-Gospel Oak RUG 2007 onwards; MarshLink Action Group 2008 onwards; Chingford Line Users Association 2009 onwards; Bexhill Rail Action Group 2013 onwards.

Election Address

Railfuture's national Board of Directors: the leadership team for a Company with Objects in its Memorandum expressed as "encourage and promote", "support", "influence", "co-operate". Company Directors help ensure that national Board sustains and develops a sound organisational and financial framework for Railfuture, within which 'encouragement, promotion, support, influence, and co-operation' can be pursued, by national specialist groups, regional/national branches, affiliated groups, and individual members locally.

I offer knowledge and experience on two fronts: working life in public sector planning and transport policy and projects, especially public transport in general and rail development in particular, and a parallel lifetime of voluntarism in a variety of third sector organisations including amenity, transport and rail campaign groups, including 35 years as Trustee / Director, and interim Chair, of an international development charity. There are transferable lessons, and personal skills, in good governance for non-governmental voluntary organisations.

I shall contribute to enhancing the effectiveness, credibility and positive reputation of Railfuture as a challenging supporter of the rail industry at national and regional levels, and from that foundation to harnessing and supporting informed and constructive activism of our members regionally and locally.

As examples, I have organised seven annual Rail User Group Awards to affirm the value of local activism and afford local promotional opportunities, as the author of occasional 'consultations-a-plenty' emails across Railfuture I co-ordinate our responses to a variety of consultations, and as an ambassador for my branch I broker partnerships between individuals and organisations who share objectives, the most notable being through the new alliance of six local rail user groups in East Sussex.

In campaigning for a bigger better railway Railfuture and its members face strategic choices. I believe our most effective contribution is our power of persuasion, our informed and jealously-guarded independent influence.

ALLISON COSGRAVE – Proposed by Jane Ann Liston, seconded by Chris Page

Personal Details

Q1. 11 Years

Q2. Member of Scottish Branch – 11 years, Chair for 5 years

Q3. Chair of Passenger Group; Current Board member for 6 years

Q4. Secretary, East Lothian Community Rail Partnership; Secretary, Rail Action Group East of Scotland (RAGES)

Q5. Vice Chair & Transport Representative, Dunder Community Council

Q6. Board Liaison, Railfuture North East

Q7. Member, Friends of the Settle & Carlisle Line; Friends of the Far North Line; Friends of the West Highland Line; Capital Rail Action Group

Election Address

My aims as a Railfuture Board member are:

- to work to increase our membership so we are the definitive voice of the rail user
- to speak up for passengers so that their concerns are paramount
- to represent rail users at every opportunity to do so

In the past three years I have been able to travel to various Railfuture meetings and events around the country, listen to members' concerns and find out what I can do to help them. As well as recruiting new members, we need to retain our existing members who have experience and skills that we don't want to lose.

I also think it's important to support smaller branches and groups where possible.

With this in mind, the Scottish Branch organised a Rail User Group Day in a central Scotland venue, where user groups could get together, promote their groups and discuss topics of common interest. This was good publicity for Railfuture, helped small RUGs get a Scotland-wide audience, and a really useful day that other branches could copy.

I continue to help run the Railfuture stall at the Warley Model Rail Show in Birmingham every autumn where I've been able to meet hundreds of people who are interested in rail and who are potential members. This includes developing new materials to encourage membership and to look at new groups of people who could be interested in joining us. I think it is essential that we get out and about to promote Railfuture at every opportunity.

GRAHAM ELLIS – Proposed by Horace J Prickett, seconded by Bob Morrison

Personal Details

Q1. Over 12c years (Ely Conference 2007)

Q2. Member of Severnside Branch Committee

Q3. None

Q4. Sheila McKechnie Foundation National Transport Campaigner of the Year 2017; Career in Customer Service – IT Training & Development, and travel (inc business traveller) and tourism; Served 4 years as Community Rail Officer, TransWilts Community Rail Partnership (2 days per week)

Q5. Founding member, campaigner and blogger at "Save the Train" - 2005-2011 - which became TransWilts; Member of Melksham Rail User Group from 2005 and still there - currently vice chair; Member of West Wilts Rail User Group from 2006 to date; Founding member (2007) and webmaster of Great Western Coffee Shop forum; President of Melksham Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2009 to 2014; Board member of TransWilts from its foundation in 2011 until 2018, responsible for tactical promotion; Member of Bath Bus Customer User Panel (First Bus) from circa 2014 and current; Elected to board of TravelWatch Southwest, 2015, and remain on board as user group advocate

Q6. None

Q7. Member of Melksham Rail User Group from 2005 and still there - currently vice chair; Member of West Wilts Rail User Group from 2006 to date.

Election Address

Railfuture has a significant resource of wisdom and knowledge in current members. Current members are rare people who can look ahead to the future beyond just the next 10 years. They need to be nurtured, yet at the same time Railfuture should develop new members, new advocates, new campaigners. We need to use technology and methods not previously available, and fuse them in with the established.

I don't have a rail career background, except a career as a passenger. I got involved in rail campaigning in 2005, looking for an appropriate train service for my local station (Melksham, Wiltshire). I've learned a lot. I've learned how everything intermeshes and it's rarely one station or one line. About how everyone needs to agree (or compromise) and work together in partnership. About what a long game this is. And about how important it is not only to achieve tangible results, but also to provide them to endure.

I'm 'webmaster' at the Great Western Coffee Shop forum which was founded by myself and a fellow campaigner in 2007. 12 years on, we're still getting 2,000 messages a month and are looking forward to how we take it forward for the next 12 years. I'm also a board member of TravelWatch Southwest - interfacing user groups to each other, operators and local and central government. Twice yearly meetings with over 100 groups represented confirms the need for such co-ordination, and further confirms my involvement with bringing transport campaigners together.

Now semi-retired from my 'day job', I have the time, and I believe the experience, to help bring fresh vigour to Railfuture. I have the enthusiasm to help drive it forward as a long term strong active advocate for improved public transport in the UK.

TREVOR GARROD – Proposed by Peter Cannon; seconded by Mike Taylor

Personal Details

Q1. Since 1978

Q2. East Anglia. Branch Secretary till 1986. Currently Committee Member.

Q3. National Executive, then Board till 2001; then 2005-13; then 2015-16. General Secretary 1986- 2001. Have served on Passenger Group, International Group and various other specialist committees that no longer exist.

Q4. Commuted to work by train for a total of 24 years. Now work as volunteer in Visitor Information Point and open-air transport museum. Hold office in other voluntary bodies, not all transport-related.

Q5. East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership (Line Group Treasurer)

Q6. European Passengers' Federation (Chairman 2002-15, then President till 2017)

Q7. East Suffolk Travellers' Association, Chairman since 1997. Helped form many other local users' associations and reopening campaigns.

Election Address

I should like to thank the 144 members who voted for me last year - more than in the previous year.

Since then I have continued to campaign vigorously at local, regional and wider levels, my actions ranging from meetings with public transport managers and the Local Enterprise Partnership, correspondence, submissions and bulletins to face-to-face interviews with passengers and handing out leaflets against the fare increase.

My voluntary work for the Association of European Rail Agents also brings me into regular contact with other transport professionals.

It is important that Board members are involved in active campaigning at all levels, also establishing and maintaining potentially useful contacts.

We should seek advice from outside experts where appropriate, while retaining a democratic structure, free of control-freakery.

Our policies should address practical issues facing travellers as we work for a more attractive rail network gaining greater market share. My efforts on the East Anglian Branch committee over the past year have focussed on integration and station facilities, for example.

Railfuture can afford to reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses. In a democratic and inclusive organisation, active members should be able to claim these. Thanks to my efforts Railfuture received £2500 in 2018 from another organisation which disbanded.

Electoral returning officer statement: Trevor Garrod was removed from the Board in 2016, by a vote of the Board, for a breach of the Code of Conduct for Directors. The details were set out in the insert sent with Railwatch 149 in October 2016. This can be read at: www.railfuture.org.uk/member/?file=1505 (page 2 covers this).

This candidate did not take part in the informal meeting with two Vice Presidents to discuss the role of a director.

CHRISTOPHER HYOMES – Proposed by Ian Frederick Wood, seconded by Allison Cosgrave

Personal Details

- Q1. 36 Years
- Q2. Yorkshire Branch: Branch Membership Secretary 1985-1998; Branch Secretary 1998-2008; Branch Chairman 2008-2014; Branch Vice Chairman 2014 onwards; Branch Media Spokesperson 2008 onwards
- Q3. Railfuture Cycling Officer 1998-2016; Corporate Governance Review Group 2012; Railfuture Board Member 2013 onwards; Director responsible for Health & Safety, Head of Communications Group 2016-2019
- Q4. Qualified Automotive Engineer CAE, MIMI, Level 3 member of the Institute of Supply Chain Management MSCM, Health managing safely Health & Safety course.
- Q5/6. None.
- Q7. Long-term member of Furness Line Action Group, Lakes Line User Group.

Election Address

I have been an active pro rail campaigner since 1982, cutting my teeth with the Friends of the Settle & Carlisle Liner Association in their fight to keep the Settle & Carlisle line open. It was through my work with the Friends that I became a member in 1983 of Railfuture or the Railway Development Society as it was then known.

I became Yorkshire Branch Chairman and Media Spokesperson in 2008, stepping down as Chairman in 2014 to focus on my role as a Director. I still continue my work with the regional media and I am proud of the relationship I have built with a number of regional news reporters, to the extent that I am now often called up on to provide advice and background information before they decide to publish or broadcast a Rail based story.

On joining the Board six years ago I quickly learnt that as a Director you need to have both campaigning and business management skills. I am fortunate in having over 30 years' experience in both disciplines, from within my working life.

Three years ago in my election address, I wrote "One of the biggest issues facing Railfuture is how we grow our membership base, making it more representative of today's rail users". Membership is still a key issue and I still believe our Branches are the key to creating a larger more diverse membership. The Board must work with the Branches helping them to become more pro-active and high profile and as a Board member I will continue to ensure that the Board encourages and supports our Branches and specialist committees. The use of Social Media is growing all the time and this is one area I am particularly keen to help the Branches develop.

Electoral returning officer statement: This candidate did not take part in the informal meeting with two Vice Presidents to discuss the role of a director.

WILLIAM WHITING - Proposed by Wendy Thorne, seconded by Ian Brown CBE

Personal Details

- Q1. 18 years
- Q2. Chair of West Midlands Branch 2013-2018.
- Q3. Member of Governance Working Group, Member of Conference and AGM Working Group. Secretary to Policy Directorate 2013-2017. Board Member 2017-2018
- Q4. HND Public Administration. (Bournemouth University 1978). Employed in two local authorities (1) Brent LBC 1979-1986 (2) Sandwell MBC 1986-2012. School Governor at Earls High School, Halesowen 2002 to date. Chair of Governing Body September 2018- to date. Member of Halesowen University of the Third Age 2014 onwards and currently Chair.
- Q5. None
- Q6. West Midlands Railways Stakeholder Meetings, Meetings with Officers from the West Midlands Combined Authority. Attended Chase Line User Group for past 5 years.
- Q7. Stourbridge Line User Group Member and Acting Chair for past two years. Elected as Chair 2018-

Election Address

I am able to offer skills which I have acquired working in a large local authority legal department at Sandwell MBC for 26 years. This included high level legal work on regeneration schemes and delivering a "Lawyers in Schools" programme in a secondary school. I worked in a department of 60 people and had a lot of contact with other departments and external agencies. Furthermore I have experience of serving on and Chairing Committees/Boards. In particular I have been a secondary school governor for 16 years and therefore well aware of the requirement for a Board Member to have collective responsibility.

I have a good knowledge of the railway industry having attended many Stakeholder Meetings of London Midland (now West Midlands Trains). Worcestershire Rail User Groups, a sub group to consider forming a Worcestershire Community Rail Partnership and events arranged by the West Midlands Combined Authority. I have volunteered at Birmingham New Street Station to assist passengers when the new station opened and over the Christmas/New Year period 2017/18. I am therefore well aware of some of the issues facing the travelling public.

As a Branch Committee member I have been instrumental in organising two successful conferences in 2012 and 2016 when there were high attendances. I am on the Governance Working Group appointed by the Board to review the Articles of Association and I am currently assisting with a member's handbook.

If elected to the Board my priorities will be to increase and diversify our membership, examine the ways in which our conferences might attract a wider audience and making us relevant to the ordinary rail passenger. I would seek to develop links with colleges and universities as a way of engaging with young people.