

Railfuture Limited - Election of Directors for 2021/22

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. They receive no remuneration.

Although Railfuture exists to campaign for a bigger and better 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 (including exploiting social media) as well as railway matters, both as rail users and professionals working within the rail industry.

There are three vacancies for a full three-year term, which members are asked to vote on. These vacancies arise from the end of term for three directors (Chris Page, Ian Brown and Wendy Thorne). The fourth-placed candidate will receive a two-year term (following William Whiting's resignation in 2020) and the fifth a one-year term (following Chris Hyomes' resignation in 2020). Two directors, Neil Middleton and Mike Rose, were co-opted in November 2020 to boost the board. Terms of co-opted directors only last until the next AGM. They are standing for election.

The directors express their disappointment that no new candidates decided to stand and urge suitably qualified members to consider doing so in 2022. Please contact Chris Page, national chair, to find out more about taking part.

Details of the election process can be read at www.railfuture.org.uk/Elections.

Candidates have an opportunity to an informal meeting with impartial representatives to discuss the role of director.

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

Chris Page – Chair *

Jerry Alderson – Finance & IT Director

Roger Blake – (Rail) Infrastructure Director

Mike Rose – Freight Director **

Wendy Thorne – Membership Director *

Allison Cosgrove – Vice Chair and Passenger Director

Ian Brown CBE – Policy Director *

Neil Middleton – Communications Director **

Stewart Palmer – Governance Director

Allison Cosgrove has responsibility for supporting Railfuture's 14 branches, aiming to visit around half of them each year. Those marked '*' have completed their term and seek re-election; '**' are co-opted directors who seek election.

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 of 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

IAN BROWN – Proposed by Jerry Alderson; seconded by Chris Page

Personal Details

Q1. 7 years (joined 2014)

Q2. London and South East Branch Member, Board Liaison Officer; West Midlands Branch, Board Liaison Officer, Wales Branch, Board Liaison Officer North West Branch

Q3. Railfuture Vice President since 2011. Railfuture Board Member 2014-7, 2018-21. Railfuture Policy Director 2017-Date. Chair, Railfuture European Passenger Group. Regular contributor to Railwatch and Railfuture website articles

- Q4. A career in the railway industry (BR, TfL, Network Rail, Crossrail. Awarded a CBE for “Services to the Rail Industry” by HM Queen Elizabeth II in 2011 New Year’s Honours list. Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport. National Rail and Light Rail Awards judge (2012 – Date)
- Q5. Not a member of, and no conflicts of interest with other rail campaigning groups
- Q6. Participation in various ad hoc external and DfT meetings on behalf of Railfuture
- Q7. Not a member of and no conflicts of interest with RUGs. Member of Railfuture RUG Award judging panel, visiting and encouraging RUGs

Election Address

I retired in 2014 following a career with British Rail, Transport for London and Crossrail.

At TfL as MD London Rail, was responsible for rail operation of the DLR, Tramlink, the London Overground and Crossrail sponsorship and the interface with National Rail.

I was elected to the Railfuture Board in 2014 to support the drive to ensure Railfuture connects with stakeholders and industry players. The principal aim is to get Railfuture respected so that our campaigning is listened to by government and the rail industry.

Railfuture is increasingly becoming a force to be reckoned with by stakeholders, and members are becoming increasingly informed on effective campaigning for sustainable rail developments. This makes it all worthwhile. If elected to the Board, the aim is to maintain these Railfuture activities, but also contribute to Board discussions on how the industry works, maintaining contacts with government, TOC owning groups, Network Rail and TfL, and supporting the branches. This includes contributing to good governance ensuring that what Railfuture does is effective and relevant to Railfuture members.

We have our work cut out in a post-Covid world.

NEIL MIDDLETON – Proposed by Chris Fribbins; seconded by Roger Blake

Personal Details

- Q1. Since January 2017
- Q2. London & South East Committee member since January 2017 & Herts & Beds Division Convenor since May 2019
- Q3. TOC Liaison for GTR since July 2019
- Q4. FCA (Fellow of Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales) and MBCI (Member of Business Continuity Institute). Latter part of career spent working in operational risk management in banks, including Barclays, HSBC and Mizuho; earlier part working for what is now PricewaterhouseCoopers (Chartered Accountants)
- Q5. Current member of Steering Group of Beds & Herts Community Rail Partnership
- Q6. None
- Q7. Chair of APTU, a Rail User Groups on Thameslink North since 2007; member since 1994

Election Address

To me, the railway is both a great way to get from A to B and something that fascinates me – Thus, I have been involved in lobbying for a better railway, for many years, initially through my local RUG, and more recently through Railfuture.

I was invited to join Railfuture’s Board in November 2020 as a co-opted member and am now standing for a first election. I believe my prior experience, both through work and RUG activity means I can effectively contribute to the Board’s activities and to Railfuture generally. My time within a RUG has equipped me with sufficient knowledge of the industry, including the contacts challenges of effective operation and my time at work has required – and taught me – how to assemble and critique large volumes of information and data and to apply the best influencing skills for the circumstances.

The Railway, and thus, Railfuture, face a very different world as the end of Covid-19 restrictions are, hopefully, in sight. A life in many parts of the country driven by commuter demand has disappeared and the railway will need to compete for both passengers and a sensible share of the green / carbon reduction evolution through best exploiting mass transit’s carbon use efficiency and demonstrating it can meet the needs of the travelling public.

In seeking to influence this, Railfuture needs to be seen as a credible and highly respected campaigning organisation that understands the context in which it operates. I want to see Railfuture as relevant to rail users, and an informed constructive, and positive force for change. Over the next few years, we need to focus on both that and ensuring that we remain a member led organisation, supporting those who want to spend time creating a better railway for all of us.

CHRIS PAGE – Proposed by Richard Tyler; seconded by John Fowden

Personal Details

- Q1. 10 years (joined 2010)
- Q2. Member of London and South East committee since 2011. Started L&SE Surrey Division in 2012
- Q3. National Chair since 2016, National Vice Chairman 2013 - 2016
Director since 2012
Member of Finance and Internal Affairs Committee 2012 - 2013
Member of Finance and Corporate Governance Group 2013 - 2016
Head of Marketing Media and Communication Group 2012 - 2016
Corresponding Member of Policy Group 2011 - 2013
- Q4. BSc (Hons) Physics
ACCA Certified Diploma in Accounting and Finance
2011-2012 IT Project Manager, Centrica Internet-based home security service.
1999-2010 IT Programme Manager, Dell Global Online store, with teams in US, Europe & Asia
1994-1999 Head of IT, Mid-Kent Water Responsible to CEO for IT projects & systems
1992-1993 Project Manager, Kvaerner Asset Management System for Piccadilly Line fleet
1985-1992 Project Manager, Ferranti Computer systems for defence applications.
1972-1985 Technical Author, Ferranti
- Q5. None
- Q6. Observer on Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee
Uckfield Transport Hub Working Group
- Q7. None

Election Address

I want a successful rail industry which grows sustainably. I support initiatives which make rail more attractive for passengers and freight, including value fares, clear ticket choices, improved connectivity, better reliability, quicker journeys and efficient customer service. I campaign for changes which enable modal shift to sustainable rail transport, including electrification, improving competitiveness, identifying suppressed demand, and developing the network.

I joined Railfuture so that I could work with like-minded people to achieve these goals. In my branch area I campaign actively for high-speed services to Hastings and reopening Uckfield – Lewes with the aim of promoting economic growth and sustainable transport, by building relationships with politicians and stakeholders and engaging public support.

I contribute to Railfuture responses to consultations and encourage members to write fresh website content to attract rail users and new members, thus promoting a professional appearance to the stakeholders we wish to influence.

I have represented Railfuture at meetings in Westminster and presented at industry conferences. During five years as chair I have gained the respect of my fellow directors. Each director now has a specific role as part of our strategy to move Railfuture forward.

As chair, it takes a lot of time and effort to reach consensus on key issues. I am happy to devote that time to include members in agreeing a realistic position on key issues, promote our position professionally, and improve our internal communication to make Railfuture more successful. I organise the annual Branches and Groups Day, which encourages members to work together.

If elected I can continue using skills which I gained as a senior programme manager to encourage the Board and members to work together to develop Railfuture as an effective campaigning organisation which is respected by governments, rail industry and public, so that it will survive and grow.

MIKE ROSE – Proposed by Nina Smith, seconded by Andrew Dyson

Personal Details

- Q1. 7 years
- Q2. Vice Chair Yorkshire Branch
- Q3. None
- Q4. Chartered Engineer, Partnership Officer High Peak & Hope Valley Community Rail Partnership
- Q5. Committee Member Derbyshire Transport Action (formerly Campaign for Better Transport (Derbyshire & Peak District). Director MEMRAP Ltd (Manchester & East Midlands Rail Action Partnership) 2019 to 2020
- Q6. None
- Q7. Worked closely with Hope Valley Rail User Group

Election Address

I am a rail campaigner based in Sheffield. I joined the Yorkshire Branch committee in 2019 and was elected joint Vice-Chair of Yorkshire Branch at their AGM in 2020. I actively campaign for better rail infrastructure and services particularly for South Yorkshire but also for Yorkshire and the country as a whole. I am keen to improve rail services in South Yorkshire, which has a particularly poor service from Sheffield to Manchester, and on the Midland Main Line which is still not electrified north of Kettering. I have set up regular contacts with transport planners in South Yorkshire.

I have had letters and articles printed in RAIL Magazine and contributed to Railfuture publications.

I spent five years as Partnership Officer for the High Peak and Hope Valley Community Rail Partnership, working closely with the local community and Northern Rail to improve infrastructure and services. While there, I improved three railway stations, and worked with a team to improve the local train services on the Hope Valley, adding in particular an 1814 departure from Sheffield. The Partnership won an award for the works to Glossop station at the Community Rail awards.

I have attended many conferences and meetings with Transport for the North and will continue to work with them.

I have also been building links with MPs in the area.

I am keen to see rail play its part in combatting climate change. To achieve this, we need better rail infrastructure and services. As the sole North of England member on the current board, I take an interest in north of England rail issues.

I was co-opted to the Railfuture Board at their meeting on 28th November. My lead responsibilities are for Freight, and for working with other branches.

WENDY THORNE- Proposed by Stewart Palmer, seconded by Trevor Davies

Personal Details

Q1. Member since 2013

Q2. None

Q3. Acted in an advisory capacity to the Board during 2013; subsequently elected to the Board in 2014, 2017 and 2018; Served as Deputy Director of Corporate Governance and currently Membership Director. Also a serving member of the Governance Working Group, the Editorial Group and previously the Communications Group

Q4. Fellow member of the international professional body the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT); a Licensed Accountant running my own business; a member of the Disciplinary Committee for my professional body

Q5. Previously a Director and Trustee on the Governing Council of AAT. Chaired a number of Boards, panels and working parties with particular focus on disciplinary matters, regulation and compliance and member services' Also held positions of Secretary and Chair of the local Bristol Branch of AAT

Q6. None

Q7. Treasurer of Portishead Railway Group for the past ten years

Election Address

Since joining Railfuture I have never failed to be amazed at how much enthusiasm, experience and knowledge there is within our active membership. I have worked hard, along with others, in meeting the challenges to ensure Railfuture is fit for purpose and following best practice in areas such as Governance and members' services. If re-elected I would like to work alongside other members of the Governance Working Group to review our Articles of Association bringing a streamlined, modern version back to members, in line with current requirements. I have carried out my previous election promises to assess the strengths and weaknesses of our publication, Railwatch and to review the format and content of our Annual General Meetings and conferences. This review led to a refreshed AGM in 2019, the creation of our Annual National Conference, the first of which was held in Bristol, also in 2019, and sourcing a range of merchandise to help us reach out to prospective members.

In recognition of the dedication, skills and enthusiasm of all our volunteers I set up the 'Railfuture Campaigner of the Year Award'.

Being re-elected would enable me to continue my quest to find the best ways of invigorating and growing our membership base. We need to recruit young, active campaigners and supporters. It is no easy task and in these challenging times, with the rail industry taking an unprecedented hit, now more than ever we need our informed opinions to be heard and acted upon to restore confidence. Railfuture must continue to strive to be at the forefront of campaigning for the future of Britain's railway and with that we need to enthuse and encourage people to join us.

There is still much to be done and I am prepared to continue working hard to achieve these aims.