

**"With the support of the Department for Transport, Network Rail, East Sussex County Council, Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council, Ashford Borough Council, Kent County Council, Damian Green, MP for Ashford as well as the local Chamber of Commerce and my constituents, it is clear that all relevant bodies want this to happen."** - Amber Rudd, MP for Hastings and Rye, 2 May 2014

The project is also supported by the train operators (South Eastern and Southern) and East Sussex County Council has made electrifying and redoubling the Marshlink line one of its top priorities in the final version of its Rail Strategy and Action Plan.

**"Improvements to the journey time between Hastings and London would .... confidently be expected to have a significant impact on the economy of the town - the prosperity of its residents and businesses - and attract more commuters to rail."** - Railfuture, in response to the Network Rail Market Study for London and South East

Indeed, the effect would be to:

- encourage businesses and commuters to relocate to Hastings, Bexhill and St Leonards;
- boost the local economy, particularly housing, retail and leisure;
- encourage inward commuting to a re-energized Hastings conurbation.

The project does not have to be one single exercise: incremental development of the Marshlink line could realise some benefits earlier. This includes increasing the linespeed, electrification and redoubling the track where necessary. By contrast, it would be almost impossible to significantly increase speeds and capacity on the Tunbridge Wells route.

It is worth noting that passengers from York can access London by rail in about the same time as those from Bexhill .....

Let us know what you think, by email to: [bridgethegap@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:bridgethegap@railfuture.org.uk)

[www.railfuture.org.uk/Marshlink](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/Marshlink)

Railfuture is the only independent national campaign for better rail passenger and freight services over a bigger network. We look out for the interests of rail users, who want less-crowded trains, fairer fares, quicker journeys, efficient customer service, new stations and lines, and to shift freight from road to rail.

We work with local authorities, MPs, the Local Enterprise Partnerships, rail user groups, and community rail partnerships to build support for developing rail services and the network. Through our contacts with Network Rail and the train operators, we argue the case for service and network enhancements. Railfuture welcomes new members to share practical ideas.

**Yes!** I want to join Railfuture!

The more members we have, the stronger our voice will be. You can choose to play an active role in our campaigns, meet fellow campaigners at your local branch or our national conferences; locally, we meet monthly in various venues across Sussex. You will also receive the quarterly magazine Railwatch free. Subscriptions start from as little as £14 per year.

Join online at: [www.railfuture.org.uk/join](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/join)

or contact Railfuture Membership at:  
Post: 6 Carral Close, Lincoln LN5 9DB.  
E-mail: [membership@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:membership@railfuture.org.uk)

## High Speed Hastings! Faster route to London on the way!

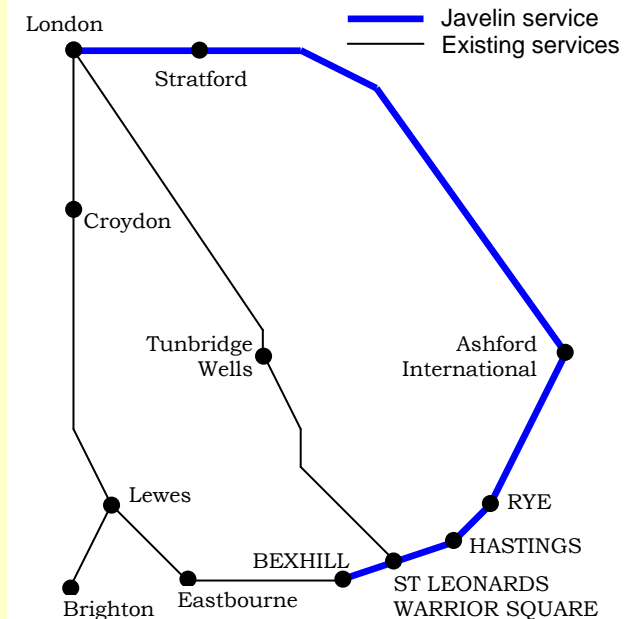


**Rye to London 55 mins!** (currently 72-85 mins)

**Hastings to London 68 mins!** (91-100 mins)

**Bexhill to London 78 mins!** (101-112 mins)

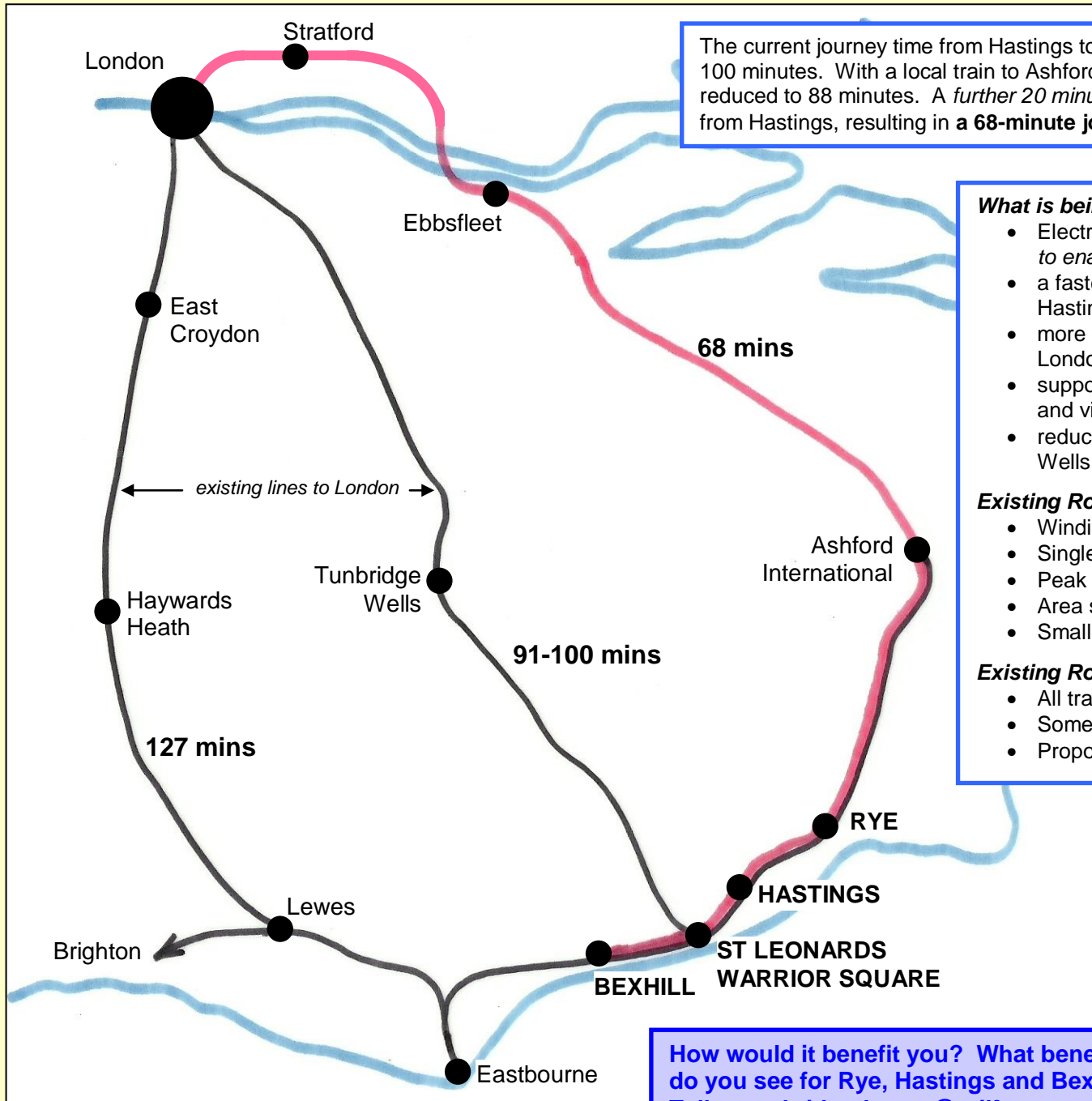
*Figures from Network Rail, March 2014*



**Javelin trains could be running over a newly electrified line to Ashford in as little as five years' time.** *more inside.....*

**railfuture**

# Fast trains between London and Rye, Hastings and Bexhill by extending the existing HS1 Javelin service via an upgraded Marshlink line



The current journey time from Hastings to London via the most direct route (Tunbridge Wells) can be over 100 minutes. With a local train to Ashford and then changing on to a Javelin, the journey time can be reduced to 88 minutes. A *further 20 minutes* could be shaved off that were Javelins to operate direct from Hastings, resulting in a **68-minute journey time to London**.

- What is being proposed and why**
- Electrification of the Marshlink line between Hastings and Ashford *to enable*
  - a faster regular all-day through service between London and Rye, Hastings, St Leonards and Bexhill *and*
  - more frequent services and shorter travel times to Brighton and London *which will*
  - support regeneration of Hastings and improve access to towns and villages along the route *and*
  - reduce crowding for passengers on the line through Tunbridge Wells.
- Existing Route via Tunbridge Wells to London**
- Winding route and steep gradients prevent fast speeds
  - Single-track tunnels can cause delays
  - Peak trains running at full capacity
  - Area subject to landslip
  - Small improvements would cost big money
- Existing Route via Lewes to London and Brighton**
- All trains must call at Eastbourne to reverse
  - Some peak over-crowding of fast services to / from Brighton
  - Proposal permits longer, faster electric Ashford - Brighton trains

How would it benefit you? What benefits do you see for Rye, Hastings and Bexhill? Tell us at [bridgethegap@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:bridgethegap@railfuture.org.uk)

