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PRESS RELEASE

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RAIL CAMPAIGNERS CHEER NEW EUROSTAR SERVICE

The re-launch of Eurostar's direct Ashford - Brussels train service in December has been welcomed by rail campaign group Railfuture. The national independent voluntary body for rail users has been pushing for reinstatement of the service ever since it was drastically cut in November last year.

Railfuture board member Trevor Garrod said: "The new service will be especially useful for business travellers, and it's a small but significant step in the right direction. We hope that it will be sufficiently successful to be followed by one or two further stops in Ashford during 2009."

Trevor has written to Eurostar saying that Railfuture will also promote the new service via its journal Railwatch and its website.

The new service gives opportunities to people in East Kent and East Sussex to visit Belgium and Germany, but consists of only one direct train per day in each direction. "While this is great for British business travellers to the continent, it's not much good in the other direction. This is one of the reasons why we're still campaigning to improve services at Ashford" he added.

"Passengers can travel onward from Brussels to other European destinations, which makes it so useful, but many of the Ashford services have been transferred to Ebbsfleet, which doesn't have the rail connections that Ashford has."

Notes for editors:

Railfuture is the campaigning name of the Railway Development Society Ltd (a not for profit) Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in

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Railfuture is Britain's only completely independent voice on railway development. We are not affiliated to or sponsored by any political party, trade union, or private industry. We are funded almost entirely by our members.

Rail is a vital part of an integrated efficient transport system serving a modern, vibrant, environmentally sustainable economy. We are pro-rail but not anti-road. Railfuture maintains that investment in rail travel and rail freight is vital to the future of the UK economy and environment.

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