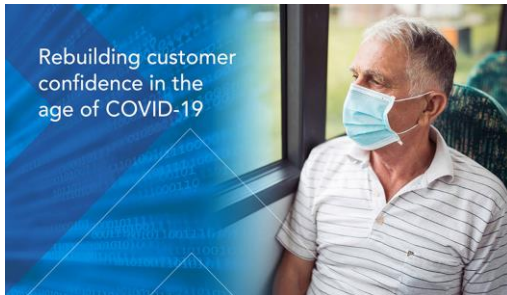


The **quarterly** branch newsletter of **railfuture** in London and the South East

Britain's leading *independent* campaign for a bigger better railway – for passengers and freight

## In confidence: it's time to return to rail



This newsletter is published officially on the day that all remaining pandemic-related restrictions are due to be lifted, but at the time of going to press there was doubt. The previous round of restriction-easing had gone ahead as planned on 17<sup>th</sup> May, the day after timetable changes were implemented across the rail network.



## Great Britain's Railways - 1947>2021

On the third anniversary of the start of the May 2018 timetable, which included the Railfuture-inspired and RUG Award-winning innovation for revamped Brighton-Ashford services, as well as difficulties on Thameslink which led to the Williams Review later that year, the Williams-Shapps Review was published. Our national [press release](#) welcomed the intent while questioning when passengers would notice any improvements.



(with acknowledgements to [crwflags.com](#))

By the time this newsletter appears, the only places to look for informed, independent analysis and comment will be your quarterly magazine Railwatch for July and our own "News and views" articles [online](#).

## Britain's leading, longest-established national independent rail campaign

We continue in this 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary year to celebrate our seven decades of rail campaigning successes!

With 19 new / re-opened stations and 10 new / re-opened rail links to our branch's credit, here are the second-quarter anniversaries of our local successes:

### April

~ in 2010: Dalston Junction, Haggerston, Hoxton, and Shoreditch High Street stations opened as 'preview' London Overground services began on the newly-opened East London Line northern extension from New Cross / New Cross Gate beyond Whitechapel.

### May

~ in 1979: West Ham Low Level station;  
Dalston<>Stratford (Camden Road<>North Woolwich).  
~ in 1980: Hackney Central, Hackney Wick, and Moulsecoomb stations; Kensington Olympia <> Willesden, and the Byfleet Curve.  
~ in 1982: Watton-at-Stone station.  
~ in 1983: Dalston Kingsland station (first opened 9 November 1850, closed 1 November 1865).  
~ in 1984: Bedford St. Johns station.  
~ in 1985: Homerton station.  
~ in 1988: Farringdon <> Blackfriars.  
~ in 1990: St. Paul's, later City, Thameslink station.  
~ in 1994: Mitre Bridge Curve (WLL <> NLL), Shepcote Lane Curve (SWML <> WLL), and Kensington Olympia <> Willesden Junction High Level.  
~ in 1995: Chafford Hundred station.  
~ in 1998: Heathrow Central and Heathrow T4 stations.  
~ in 1999: West Brompton and West Ham High Level stations.  
~ in 2010: New Cross Gate Down Junction (for full London Overground services on the East London Line through to Crystal Palace and West Croydon).  
~ in 2016: Lea Bridge station.

### June

~ in 1998: Heathrow Airport Junction <> Heathrow Terminal 4 station (via Heathrow Terminals 1, 2 & 3 station); Heathrow Terminals 1, 2 & 3 (later Terminals 2 & 3, now Heathrow Central) and Heathrow Terminal 4 stations.  
~ in 2008: Mitcham Eastfields station.  
~ in 2013: Hitchin ('Down Cambridge') flyover.  
~ in 2019: Meridian Water station.

***Our vision for rail:*** A railway system that provides services which travellers and freight forwarders want to use, and which offers more journey opportunities to more people and more freight.

## “100 more by ’24” – 3 years remain!

Railfuture’s national campaign – for Network Rail’s DfT / HMT-funded [Access for All](#) (A4A) programme to be expanded – has now been running for 21 months. Network Rail’s latest update was in early-April, [here](#).



Our national target needs funding for 15 more stations. March 2020’s Budget added 12 to the list of step-free stations, eight in our regional branch area, reported in [railse no.148](#) last June. We await more news for our 10 stations to benefit from February 2020’s Mid-Tier Programme fund, reported in [railse no.147](#) last March.

## On Southeastern, another one in ’21!

The Medway Towns’ Chatham station is now going step-free. This CP5 scheme, deferred by the Henty Review despite ORR-estimated usage of c.2.7 million in 2017/18, was reinstated to CP6 by the DfT in April 2019 when adding 73 stations to the A4A Programme to 2024, as reported in [railse no.144](#) for June 2019.



Out with the old at [Chatham](#) – completion due Spring ’22

## Vote 2021 – Thursday 6 May review

Below is a summary of the results of the contests across our regional branch area. In short, of the 35 bodies, just six witnessed any change of control, in **RED CAPS**; four were gains from No Overall Control.

Deferred from May 2020:

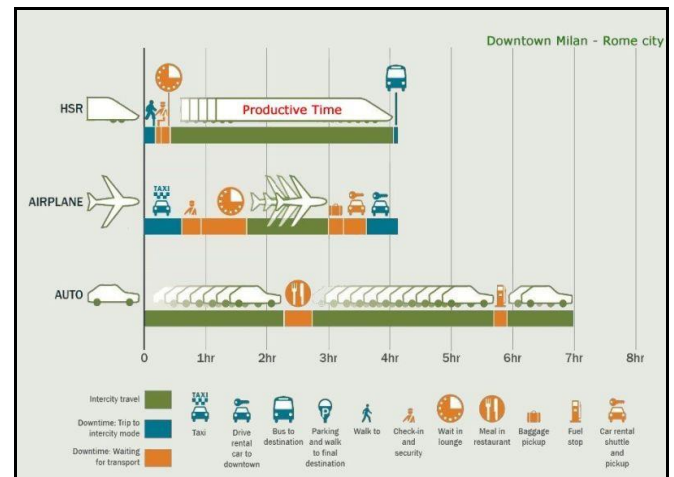
- ~ London Assembly – (all 25 seats: 14 constituency members, 11 London-wide) – **NO CHANGE (NOC)**
- ~ Mayor of London – **NO CHANGE**
- ~ Unitaries: (one third of seats) Southend and Thurrock – both **NO CHANGE**

In normal electoral cycle:

- ~ Counties: (all seats) East Sussex, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Surrey, West Sussex – all **NO CHANGE**
- ~ Districts: (one half of seats) Adur, Hastings – both **NO CHANGE**
- ~ Districts: (one third of seats): Basildon – **CON GAIN** from NOC; Brentwood, Broxbourne, Castle Point, Crawley, Elmbridge, Epping Forest – all **NO CHANGE**; Harlow – **CON GAIN** from LAB, Maidstone – **CON GAIN** from NOC; Mole Valley, North Hertfordshire, Reigate & Banstead, Rochford, Runnymede – all **NO CHANGE**; St. Albans – **LIB DEM GAIN** from NOC; Stevenage, Tandridge, Three Rivers – all **NO CHANGE**; Tunbridge Wells – **CON LOSE** to NOC; Watford – **NO CHANGE**; Welwyn Hatfield – **CON GAIN** from NOC; Woking, Worthing – both **NO CHANGE**.

## Decarbonisation means Mode Shift

Our regional branch is the only area of Britain with an international rail link, our part of the Channel Tunnel, and a high-speed railway which has won the contest with short-haul flights on the London-Paris route. In April France moved to favour rail over air for journeys by rail of up to 2.5 hours, a relatively low threshold.



Credit: [Roberto Mazzurco](#), Regional Manager, Stadler, Italy:  
“Railway is eco-friendly, productive, relaxing”

As shown above, a 4-hour journey by rail may be no quicker door-to-door than taking a flight but it comes with about 3 hours ‘productive time’ compared with little over 1 hour in the air. The car journey is just slow! Mapping illustrative 4-hour journeys across Britain by rail and air even now, never mind post-HS2, would be useful evidence to support policy development. Offers?

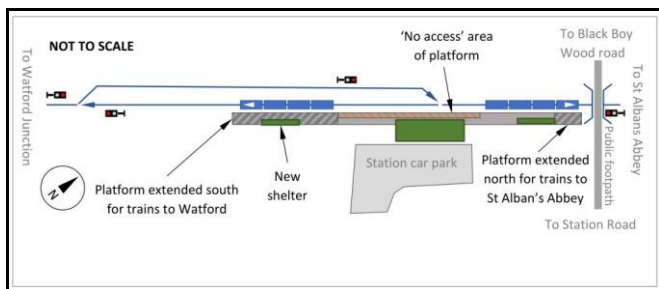
## Restoring Your Railway (mainline)

One of the 10 successful first-round bids to the DfT's Ideas Fund, the only one in our regional branch area (but in the DfT's East Region), was for the Abbey line.

### Abbey Line, and Bricket Wood station

Abbey Line (St. Albans Abbey <-> Watford Junction) passengers now enjoy a 21<sup>st</sup>-century class 350 unit on the line, displacing its many 20<sup>th</sup>-century predecessors.

The Ideas Fund-winning passing loop for Bricket Wood which was first featured in [railse no.145](#) for September 2019 and then in [railse no.148](#) for June 2020, makes steady progress through its development phases with Hertfordshire County Council acting as promoter.



© The Railway Consultancy

The Station Heritage Trust, to which Railfuture has made a modest contribution, featured in [railse no.141](#) for September 2018, since when they have applied for and in May 2020 were granted planning permission for "Change of use from storage room to Class A3 (cafe), reinstatement of existing windows and doors, insertion of two dummy chimneys and external repair works". The pandemic has, unsurprisingly, stalled progress.



### Waterside line (aka Fawley branch)

In neighbouring Wessex branch's – and Transport for the South East's – area, is another Ideas Fund round 1 winner announced by the DfT on 23 May 2020, as also reported in [railse no.148](#) for June 2020. A second class 159 diesel passenger test train visited the branch on [7 May 2021](#), the first having been on [28 July 2020](#) with Network Rail's Chairman Sir Peter Hendy CBE, SWR's then-MD Mark Hopwood and the Rail Minister.

### Island line / I.o.W. Steam Railway

Pictured most recently in [railse no.149](#) for September 2020, after a first report in [railse no.148](#) for June 2020, this Ideas Fund round 1 winner is a potential hybrid of extensions to both a mainline and a heritage operation. Isle of Wight Council commissioned a [research project](#) in January. Neighbouring Wessex branch [responded in March](#) to the draft Strategic Outline Business Case which was due to be submitted to government in May.

["Restoring Your Railway"](#) / Missing links / New stations

## Restoring Your Railway (heritage)

The Pre-Inquiry Meeting for the proposed **Rother Valley Railway** (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Transport & Works Act Order took place on 19 May.



Kent & East Sussex Railway's Bodiam station with route to Robertsbridge in distance

The main Public Inquiry is due to start on 6 July and is likely to run until at least the end of the month. Further details are in the [dedicated Inquiry website](#) including the Inspector's Note of the Pre-Inquiry Meeting.

### Community Rail: "Love the railway"

"Love the railway"? So says [Network Rail!](#)



A sign of the (older) times at [Eridge](#) station.

Essex and South Suffolk CRP pilot '[talking benches](#)'.

Hounslow and Richmond CRP have been recruiting a new Community Rail Development Officer.

How do your gardens glow, at [East Grinstead](#) station?



[Platform for art](#), 'sheltered accommodation', Penshurst

Click to subscribe to monthly "[Community Rail News](#)"

## Towards a Strategic Investment Plan for Transport in the South East



Pursuing our regional branch campaign theme which is **'better lives through better journeys'** Railfuture uses its representation on the Area Study Forums run by sub-national transport body Transport for the South East to advocate specific interventions for its draft Strategic Investment Plan, for consultation next year.

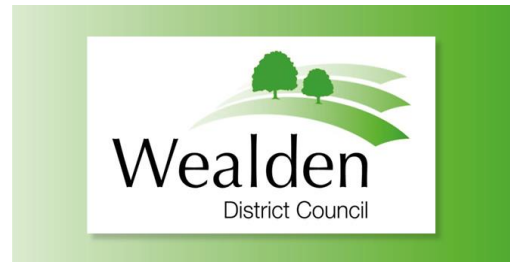
### TfSE rail – west of East Sussex: BTN-FMR-LWS-UCK-COH-ERI-TBW

For the 'South Central Radial Area', between south London and the south coast between Littlehampton and Eastbourne, and which includes the Brighton-Tunbridge Wells economic corridor – for us the **'R26'** corridor – we put forward just one intervention:



a new garden community, with a minimum of 6,000 preferably 8,000 new homes, for c.15,000 preferably c.20,000 people, probably in Lewes District somewhere between Uckfield and Lewes, to accommodate some of Brighton's unmet housing need and where a new mainline rail link can serve it to provide a sustainable mass-transit travel choice within the broader Brighton-Lewes-Uckfield-Tunbridge Wells economic corridor.

As one of the four local planning authorities in that economic corridor, Wealden District Council consulted on the *Direction of Travel* for their new Local Plan for 2018-38, as reported in [railse no.151](#) for March 2021. [Our response](#) in January is in our national website home page's library, in Submissions, and is reflected in the Council's [Consultation Summary report](#) published for the Local Plan Sub-Committee on 11 March.



The comments from Network Rail are in that report's Appendix B, on page 7 for Chapter 5 *"Ensure that growth and change is supported by infrastructure delivery to meet the needs of our communities"* and on page 48 for Chapter 14 *"Our growth options"*. The common thread is to co-locate developments for new homes with existing, and future, rail stations and lines.

The [Local Development Scheme](#) anticipates adoption of the new Wealden Local Plan in 'Winter 2023'.



The [Lewes Local Development Scheme](#) of July 2020 anticipates consultations, for a new Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy for 2018-38, on 'Issues and Options' this Spring and on 'Preferred Options' this Autumn, with adoption of the new Core Strategy by 'Winter 2023'.

In the [Quick Guide to the Lewes District Local Plan](#) a Briefing Note confirms that Lewes District has to plan for 782 new homes a year over the new 20-year period, instead of the previous 275. Half of that requirement in one 'critical mass' location to match the column at left?



Test train reported on Uckfield line at Cowden, early-April Thursday

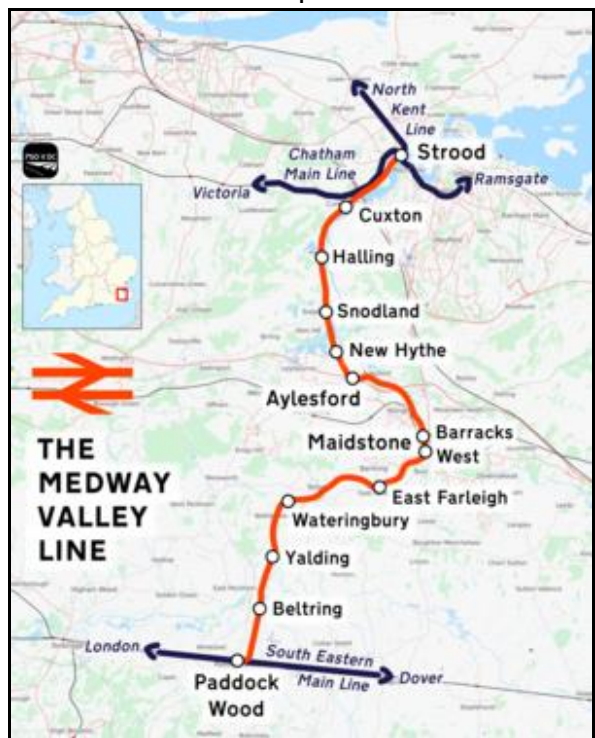
(Believed to be part of Rail Safety & Standards Board's current research project [DECARB: 21<sup>st</sup> Century DC electrification infill](#), reported on p.4 in [railse no.149](#) for September 2020, due to be completed this December.)

See more about [Railfuture's Uckfield-Lewes campaign](#)

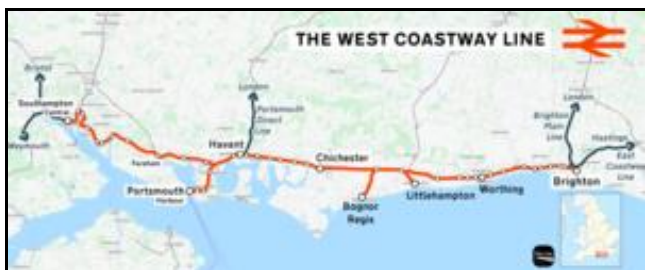
**TfSE rail – East Coastway:  
East Sussex - Kent  
EBN-BEX-SLQ-HGS-RYE-AFK-STP**



**TfSE rail – N. Downs Line east  
and Medway Valley line extension:  
Surrey - Kent  
SOO-MDB-PDW-TON-EBR-GDN-RDH**



**TfSE rail – West Coastway:  
West Sussex - Hampshire  
BTN-HOV-SSE-WRH-LIT-BOG-CCH**



**TfSE rail – N. Downs Line west:  
West Sussex - Surrey - Hampshire - Berkshire  
GTW-RDH-REI-DPD-GLD-WKM-RDG**

For the south coast 'Outer Orbital Area', between the Isle of Wight and the Isle of Thanet – for us the 'R259' corridor – we put forward three interventions:

- ~ The West Sussex Coastal Connectivity Programme, Network Rail's phased package of measures in their West Sussex Connectivity Modular Strategic Study of Spring 2020;
- ~ The Kent & East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Programme, Network Rail's package of options in their draft Strategic Outline Business Case including a HS1<>MarshLink connection and MarshLink upgrade;
- ~ The East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Link, a new direct rail link between the former Stonecross Junction and approximately the former Polegate junction. This is set in the long-term context of the 30-year planning horizon of TfSE's Transport Strategy, and is based on its 108% rail travel increase and mode shift targets.

Read more about [Railfuture's MarshLink campaigning](#)

For the 'Inner Orbital Area', between the Thames Valley and Medway Valley – for us the 'R25' corridor – we also put forward three interventions:

- ~ a new connecting 'Higham Chord' on the Hoo Peninsula to connect the restored passenger railway serving 10.6k new homes with the Medway Towns and / or county town of Maidstone;
- ~ a new 'Cuxton Chord' to link the Medway Valley and Chatham Main Lines, for new direct rail links between the Medway Towns / Maidstone and Gatwick Airport;
- ~ a new integrated Dorking Transport Hub, including a dedicated passenger interchange walkway direct between the nearby radial Dorking Main and orbital Dorking Deepdene stations.

Read [coverage in previous issues](#) of newsletter *raillse*

## Paint the town – with a mural!



["The most famous pleasure garden of the 19<sup>th</sup> century"](#)



[Mural honours area's Anglo-Saxon heritage](#)



[Luton Fort, Luton Valley - railway landmark / maritime history](#)



[Street artist's work spreads to Beckenham](#)

Network Rail's new [Southern Region](#), which includes the HS1, Kent, Sussex, and Wessex Routes, has a Community Engagement Manager hungry for ideas!

## East-West Rail – the London variant

Welcome additions to the network of step-free stations, albeit not part of the DfT's mainstream Access for All, or Mid-Tier, Programme so supplementary to it. Here are just three of the 30 newly-upgraded stations for the Elizabeth line's total of 41 stations (10 are newly-built).



*Acton stations! Acton Main Line - ORR usage 351k in 2019-20. One of 7 stations bearing the name 'Acton'!*

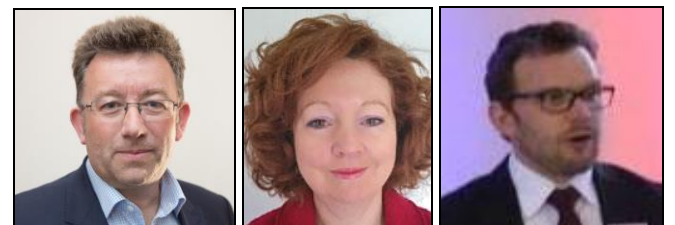


*West Ealing (L) - ORR usage 1.2m in 2019-20, and Ealing Broadway (R) - ORR usage 3.9m in 2019-20. Two of the 5 stations bearing the name 'Ealing'.*

All Elizabeth line stations will be step-free from street to platform, with level access from platform to trains at all of the new central London stations and at Heathrow and Abbey Wood. Elsewhere, staff-deployed ramps.

## Campaigns calendar, London & SE

**"Re-growing our railway"** – branch meeting report-back. On 17 April our regional branch held its first-ever branch-wide **virtual** event, attracting over 50 participants from around the branch and far beyond.



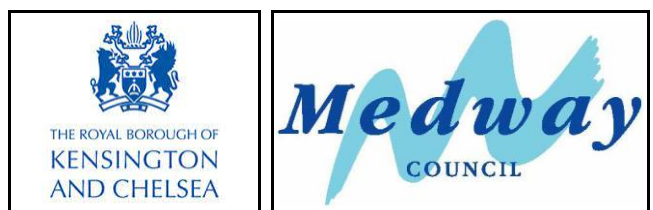
Our guest speakers were Steve White, GTR's Chief Operating Officer (L); Alex Hellier, Head of Strategic Planning for Kent & Sussex Routes in Network Rail's Southern Region (R) and Network Rail's Mike Smith now with DfT's 'Restoring Your Railway / Better Value Rail' team; and Linda McCord, Senior Passenger Manager from Transport Focus (C). A brief AGM followed. The branch web-page hosts [full details](#).

***Our vision for Railfuture:*** *An independent organisation whose views are respected by the rail industry, to which decision makers come for advice, and which rail users are proud to join and recommend.*

Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, before winding up on 31<sup>st</sup> March, [consulted](#) on “*Improving transport links between Abbey Wood and Ebbsfleet*” for a study into proposed transport enhancement options, to which we [responded](#). ‘Greater North Kent’ is the successor body and a further consultation is expected this summer. Originally branded [C2E, for ‘Crossrail to Ebbsfleet’](#) the study has a less solution-specific AW2E / ‘Abbey Wood to Ebbsfleet’ options approach to its current analysis.



Consultation on the [draft Hastings Local Plan](#) closed in late-March, when we submitted [our response](#).



In late-March we submitted a [follow-up representation](#) to Kensington and Chelsea Council, after our [original submission](#) in February, on the revised application for planning permission for a scheme at South Kensington station including some provision for step-free access for London Underground’s two sub-surface lines, originally reported in [railse no.150](#) for December 2020.

We [responded](#) in April to Medway Council’s “[Planning for Growth on the Hoo Peninsula](#)” consultation branded “[Future Hoo – New Routes to Good Growth](#)”.



In May the Examination by the Planning Inspectorate for London Resort was delayed. This is due to Natural England’s Notification of the Swanscombe Peninsula Site of Special Scientific Interest which includes a large part of the land within the Development Consent Order.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council: consultation on its [Pre-Submission Local Plan](#) closed 4 June.



East West Rail Company: [second informal consultation](#) closed 9 June (see report in next newsletter).

**Current consultations** of specific and general interest to our London and South East region are shown [here](#). *Your opportunity* to influence our policy development is by mailing [londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk) **Responses to all previous consultations** are [here](#).

## Forthcoming diary/calendar dates

**Wednesday 23 June** “*Encouraging and enabling modal shift through community engagement.*” **Online** morning Community Rail Network webinar.

**Saturday 26 June** Railfuture East Anglia branch afternoon meeting, Ipswich.

**Tuesday 29 June** “*Rail West to East*” conference.

**Wednesday 30 June** “*Summer Days Out are Better By Rail.*” Community Rail Network nationwide event.

**Saturday 10 July** Railfuture’s ‘*Bridge the gap*’ and ‘*Electrify Uckfield*’ stall at Uckfield Festival’s ‘Big Day’, on Luxford Field, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5AD.

**Wednesday 14 July** Eastern Division evening meeting, **online**. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Thursday 15 July** Sussex & Coastway Division evening meeting, **online**. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Saturday 17 July** Railfuture national Annual General Meeting, in Birmingham.

**Saturday 24 July** Herts & Beds Division morning meeting, maybe in St. Albans. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Saturday/Sunday 24/25 July, 31 July/1 August, 14-22 August** Arun Valley line services via Horsham amended/suspended, major route improvement works.

**Saturday 21 August** Kent Division afternoon meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Thursday 19 August** Rail Emissions data for 2020/21 due to be published by Office of Rail and Road.

**Friday 27 August** Copy date for your campaign news / reports for London & SE branch Local Action column in October’s **railwatch** no.169, and for September’s **railse** no.153, to [londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk)

**Monday 30 August** Copy date for your campaign news, letters, articles, photos to appear in October’s **railwatch** no.169. Send to [editor@railwatch.org.uk](mailto:editor@railwatch.org.uk)

**Thursday 2 September** Sussex & Coastway Division evening meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Wednesday 8 September** Eastern Division evening meeting. [Invite non-members!](#)

**Thursday 16 September** Passenger rail performance data for Q1 2021/22 (April-June) due to be published by Office of Rail and Road.

**Thursday 23 September** Freight rail usage and performance data for Q1 2021/22 (April-June) due to be published by Office of Rail and Road.

**Saturday 25 September** Railfuture East Midlands branch afternoon meeting, Derby.

**Saturday 25 September** Railfuture East Anglia branch afternoon meeting, Norwich.

Details of these and other important dates are in the Railfuture website’s [Events](#) and [Rail dates](#) pages.

## Your branch divisions' meetings – all members, and non-members, welcome

**Eastern [s. Essex and n. & e. London]** – meets second Wednesday of odd-numbered months, at 19.00 – next due on **14 July** then **8 September**. Division Convener is Howard Thomas (opposite). See [Eastern Division](#).

**Herts & Beds** – meets about monthly. Next meeting on **Saturday 24 July**. Division Convener is Neil Middleton (opposite). See [Herts & Beds Division](#).

**Kent** – meets quarterly on third Saturdays, at 14.00 – next due on **21 August**. Division Convener is Chris Fribbins at [chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk) See [Kent Division](#).

**London Metro** – a Division to cover all TfL rail modes: Underground, Overground, London Trams, DLR, and TfL Rail (becoming Elizabeth line). Contact Branch Vice-Chair Roger Blake (opposite). See [London Metro Division](#).

**Surrey** – meetings usually held jointly with Sussex & Coastway Division (below). Surrey Division Convener is Stephen Rolph at [stephen.rolph@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:stephen.rolph@railfuture.org.uk). See [Surrey Division](#).

**Sussex & Coastway** – meets monthly usually on first Thursdays, at 18.00. Next due on **15 July**, then **2 September**. Division Convener is John Black at [jcbblack@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jcbblack@yahoo.co.uk), Secretary is Trevor Davies at [trevor.d2016@outlook.com](mailto:trevor.d2016@outlook.com) See [Sussex & Coastway Division](#).

## Your branch committee's meetings

Officers and other committee members continue to meet, **online**, every 4 weeks on Wednesday evenings.

### **raise online**

Available in the 'Branch news' area of the branch's main web page. Here's a [link to the online pdf](#). The links in blue are clickable hyperlinks.

This branch newsletter is free, published quarterly and usually distributed with each edition of the national **railwatch**. The copy deadline for **raise** issue no.153, due to be published in September 2021, will be Friday 27 August 2021. Items for this newsletter and our branch Local Action column in **railwatch** to [londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk)



**Railfuture's mission: to be the number one advocate for Britain's railway and rail users**

Websites: [Welcome to Railfuture](#) [London and South East regional branch](#)  
[Railwatch](#) [Rail Action](#) [Rail User Express](#)

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## Railfuture campaigns (verb, and noun!)

Our five national **railfuture** policy priorities:  
# **Attracting passengers back to rail** – improving the travelling environment  
# **Climate change and modal shift** – how the railway can help reduce the carbon footprint of transport  
# **Restoring Your Railway** – restoring communities' rail connections by reopening lines and stations  
# **Fares and ticketing** – making the system easier and fairer  
# **Industry structure and Williams** – taking the opportunity to move to devolution and concessions.

## Railfuture 'news and views', and Railfuture 'in the news'

Stay abreast of Railfuture's and others' reports and thoughts published in our website [articles](#). Stay abreast of Railfuture members making, not just watching, things happen in our website [media extracts](#).

## Neighbouring and other branches

All 14 branch websites, including their **events** and **newsletters**, are **online** in '[Railfuture near you](#)'.

## London and SE Branch officers

**Branch Chairman, and Secretary:** both vacant.

**Vice-Chairman:** Roger Blake, 70 Dynevor Road, Stoke Newington, London, N16 0DX. Tel: 020 7254 1580; [roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk)

**Treasurer:** Howard Thomas. Tel: 01245 280503; [howard.thomas@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:howard.thomas@railfuture.org.uk)

**Membership Secretary:** Neil Middleton. [neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk)

### **inter-raise**

Our two-page monthly e-newsletter, by email (as [pdf or link](#)) on request from [roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk)