

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

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

May-be, maybe not

As this bulletin is being dispatched, many may be unaware that the City of London Corporation – the oldest continuously-running municipal democracy in the world – already held its elections, on 20th March. One hundred Commoners representing 25 wards are elected to the Court of Common Council, the main decision-making body. The Planning & Transportation Committee has the unenviable task of determining the recently-submitted Network Rail Property applications for planning permission and listed building consent for Liverpool Street station. We shall respond once they go live for consultation.



Across our regional branch area, the only other elections this year are in Hertfordshire and Kent, which are holding their final elections as County Councils. With their and their Districts' final proposals for local government reorganisation into unitary authorities due into The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by 28th November, elections for those new authorities in shadow form will be in May 2027, with full operations expected from 1st April 2028.

The government's Devolution Priority Programme means that elections due in East Sussex, Essex, Surrey, West Sussex, Thurrock (and in neighbouring Hampshire and Isle of Wight) are not until May 2026, with formalisation as new devolved strategic authorities – Mayoral Combined County Authorities for Greater Essex, Sussex and Brighton, and Hampshire and the Solent – and operations expected from 1st April 2027.

So what? Why does any of that matter to us as rail campaigners? If campaigning means influencing, and ultimately convincing, then knowing our audience is crucial – right down to the personal level of individuals such as Cabinet Members where we have specific local campaigns such as the Hoo Peninsula Railway and Uckfield–Ringmer–Lewes (aka 'URL'?)

What shall we be doing this month?

London and South East regional branch members, and / or committee members, will be:-

~ holding regular meetings of our Kent, London Metro, Herts & Beds, and Sussex & Coastway Divisions in-person, and Eastern Division **online** (five of the six in the same month – is this a record?)

~ participating in GTR's May 2025 timetable changes workshop **online**.

~ participating in 'Guildford 180' as the town's Rail 200 celebrations.

~ holding a regular monthly meeting of the L&SE regional branch committee, **online**.

Britain's Growing Railway in London and the South East: May birthdays

~ 12th, in 1980 - Hackney Central, Hackney Wick and Moulsecoomb stations.

~ 12th, in 1986 - passenger services resume between Kensington Olympia and the WCML via Willesden.

~ 13th, in 1985 - Homerton station.

~ 14th, in 1979 - passenger services resume between Camden Road and Stratford, to/from North Woolwich.

~ 14th, in 1979 - West Ham Low Level station.

~ 14th, in 1984 - Bedford St. Johns station.

~ 15th, in 2016 - Lea Bridge station.

~ 16th, in 1988 - through passenger services resume between Farringdon and Blackfriars stations.

~ 17th, in 1982 - Watton-at-Stone station.

~ 17th, in 1983 - Dalston Kingsland station.

~ 23rd, in 2010 - New Cross Gate Down Junction, for through Overground services between Dalston Junction and Crystal Palace / West Croydon stations.

~ 24th, in 2022 - Elizabeth Line's Abbey Wood, Canary Wharf, Custom House, Farringdon, Liverpool Street, Paddington, Tottenham Court Road, Whitechapel, Woolwich stations.

~ 25th, in 1998 - Heathrow Central and Heathrow T4 stations, and the link from Airport Junction.

~ 29th, in 1990 - St Paul's, now City, Thameslink station.

~ 29th, in 1994 - Mitre Bridge Curve (WLL<>NLL) and Sheepcote Lane Curve (SWML <> WLL).

~ 30th, in 1995 - Chafford Hundred station.

~ 30th, in 1999 - West Ham High Level station and West Brompton station mainline platforms.

~ 31st, in 1994 - passenger services resume between Kensington Olympia <> Willesden Junction High Level.

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.*

Calendar of forthcoming diary dates

Thursday 1 May Sussex & Coastway Division evening meeting, in-person. Guest speaker from Network Rail on their East Coastway and MarshLink Strategic Study. Venue: Haywards Heath Methodist Church, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3DN. [Invite non-members!](#)

Thursday 1 May Copy date for articles and letters for July issue no.184 of our house magazine Railwatch.

Saturday 3 – Monday 5 May Public holiday weekend.

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

Thursday 15 May Joint East Anglia / East Midlands / Lincolnshire regional branches afternoon conference, Peterborough.

Thursday 15 May London Metro Division evening meeting, in-person. [Invite non-members!](#)

Saturday 17 May Herts & Beds Division morning meeting, in-person in St. Albans. [Invite non-members!](#)



Saturday – Sunday 17-18 May Kent Division campaigns stall in Faversham Guildhall, Market Square, during annual Festival of Transport.

Saturday 24 May – Sunday 1 June Schools' half-term holiday.



Sunday 1 June Sussex & Coastway '[Bridge the gap](#)' campaign stall at Uckfield & District Lions Club Family Fun Day & Car Boot Sale on Luxford Field, off High Street via Civic Approach or Library Way, central Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 1AL.

Full details in our [Events](#) and [Rail dates](#) web pages.

This branch e-newsletter is free, published monthly and distributed to branch members with their GDPR consent items for our newsletters, and our branch Local Action column in *railwatch*, to londonandsoutheast@railfuture.org.uk

What has @RailfutureLSE been doing?

Since the early-April edition of *inter-railse* no.82, Railfuture's London and South East regional branch members, and / or committee members, have:

- ~ held our annual meeting, speakers on [Essex-Kent Superlinks](#) and [KenExTram](#). [L&SE AGM](#) elected Richard Bowry as Chair, and Neil Middleton as Vice-Chair to succeed Roger Blake after 18 years in post.
- ~ participated in the North Downs Line Steering Group.
- ~ visited a short-listed bidder for the Southeastern Networker fleet replacement contract.
- ~ participated in GTR's [online](#) forum for Community Partnerships.
- ~ participated in Greater Anglia's forum for RUGs.
- ~ held a meeting of our Herts & Beds Division [online](#).
- ~ held a regular monthly meeting of the L&SE regional branch committee, [online](#).
- ~ responded to the MHCLG on devolution proposals for Greater Essex and Sussex & Brighton.

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

Railfuture is 'in the news' / 'making the news' / sharing 'news and views'

- ~ Stay abreast of Railfuture members making, not just watching, things happen in our website [media extracts](#).
- ~ Stay abreast of Railfuture making, not just reporting, the news through our [press releases](#).
- ~ Stay abreast of Railfuture's and others' reports and thoughts published in our [website articles](#).
- ~ Railfuture is active on [Twitter](#) / [Facebook](#) / [LinkedIn](#).

Railfuture publications by email

- ~ All members – individual, joint, affiliated organisation eg rail user group or similar, or a business – are being encouraged to receive [Railwatch](#) direct to their Inbox immediately on publication by logging-in at [Member services](#); it's accompanied by branch newsletter [railse](#).
- ~ All members can receive Railfuture's regular monthly newsletter [Rail User Express](#) and occasional [Rail Action](#) bulletin direct to their Inbox upon publication.

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

Website: [Welcome to Railfuture](#) Twitter: [@RailfutureLSE](#)

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