

Railfuture Limited - Election of Directors for 2026/27

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 collectively, 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 funds available 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. These vacancies arise from the end of term for three directors (Jerry Alderson [not standing for re-election], Pete Myers [also not standing for re-election] and Owen O'Neill [standing for re-election]). In addition, Mike Southgate was co-opted in 2025 until the AGM in 2026 to fill a vacancy and he is standing for election. A new candidate, Kevin Swift, has been nominated. With only three candidates for three full-term places and no-one for the fourth vacancy, there will be no election ballot in 2026. However, for openness and providing members with information about the directors, their election statements are shown in full below.

The directors express their disappointment that only one new candidate decided to stand. There will now be a spare place on the Board of Directors. This presents an opportunity for a member to be co-opted. Although there would normally be only nine directors, the Articles of Association allow several additional directors to be co-opted to fill a skills or knowledge gap. The national chair, currently Chris Page, would be pleased to hear from any member (or prospective member) who believes they are suitably qualified to become a Railfuture director, or merely to find out what the role entails and what they could contribute. Please contact him to find out more — see Who's Who contact details on the website at <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display626>.

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

Pete Myers – currently without portfolio **

Mike Southgate – membership growth *

Allison Cosgrove – Passenger Director

Ian Brown CBE – Policy Director

Neil Middleton – Vice Chair and Communications Director

Owen O'Neill – Freight Director *

Those marked "*" have completed their term or were co-opted and are standing for election. Those marked "***" have decided not to stand again. In the case of Jerry Alderson, this is after serving for 21 years.

The candidates standing are not under obligation to serve for three years.

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

Personal Details

- Q1. Member for six years
- Q2. Current West Midlands branch committee member
- Q3. Sit on Infrastructure & Networks Group
- Q4. MEng in software engineering
- Q5. Welland Valley Railway Development CIC – director; CRIL - Campaign to Reopen the Ivanhoe Line - ordinary member
- Q6. N/A
- Q7. Stourbridge Line User Group (2 years) (ordinary member) Lichfield Rail Promotion Group (2 years) (ordinary member).

Election Address

I'm currently based in Birmingham. My interest in public transport developed four years ago via a local campaign group. This switched me on to the fact that transport is our biggest CO₂-emitter. This led me to rail since it's one of the most efficient ways to move people and goods.

The mission of Railfuture matched my goals, and with the help of people I've met via Railfuture led me to create and promote a RYR (Restoring Your Railway) project in the East Midlands (Welland Valley Rail). My criterion was to create a project that connected the largest population with the smallest amount of infrastructure. Although not successful in securing funding, it has attracted considerable support among local MPs & LAs, and good engagement with the SNTB, which we hope to progress.

I have a professional engineering background and now have a reasonable grasp of engineering design of infrastructure and operations.

Some people get excited by rolling stock and the colour of paint on the outside of it. It interests me to the extent that it is a key part of the system and customer experience. My questions about it tend towards 'does it have level boarding?', 'is it reliable?', and 'is it electric?' i.e., how does the vehicle improve the customer experience, accessibility being a key part, and through improved experience promote modal shift.

Key areas of interest for me are achieving modal shift, so to that end 'Railfuture' is not 'HeavyRailFuture'. Trams are an important part of the mix, as is integration with other modes providing the 'final mile' (including active travel). A negligible number of journeys start and end at a station.

The other area of interest for me is freight, since there are many benefits to be had from moving freight off road onto rail.

Personal Details

- Q1. Since 19th January 2009. I had previously been a member of the Railway Development Society
- Q2. Railfuture Wessex Committee 2010 to 22/07/2013 Chair from 17/3/2012, second term 15/06/19 to date as Chair
- Q3. Co-opted Director since March 2025
- Q4. Retired CEO and ex Company Director of many commercial companies and charities
- Q5. Current Chair of the Friends of London Transport Museum
- Q6. None — only representing my RUG
- Q7. Founder member and Chair Shawford Rail User Group 2003 until 2018, when dissolved.

Election Address

I offered to be co-opted to the board in March 2025 after being part of the team responsible for the membership report.

The board needed additional help and experience, which I hoped I could offer. My career has been about organisational change, and I believe Railfuture can benefit from that experience and my passion for a better railway. Bigger can follow, let's get the basics right first. My focus has been on getting passengers who have deserted the railway including my own family back to rail.

I live in Winchester and in 2003 created the Shawford Rail User Group when SWT were considering reducing the service. Our efforts paid off, passenger entries and exits grew from 60k to 210k. I co-chaired with SWT the regular Rail User Group meetings and worked closely with Passenger Focus.

I have always had a keen interest in public transport and happily refer to myself as a transport anorak. I have forty years of commuting experience to London and have used rail extensively for business and pleasure. I believe rail has an important role to play in society, to the economy and to the environment.

My career was in Television Production as a CEO, Chair and Consultant specialising in leading business turnarounds.

I was elected as a Winchester City Councillor in 2012 with cabinet responsibilities for transport! I have been involved in setting up and become a trustee, sometimes chair of several charities. These included health, social action, woodlands, heritage museums and art venues. I have led director, trustee and staff recruitment processes, aiming to create a diverse board and workforce.

Personal Details

- Q1. Over 10 years membership of Railfuture, including four years' service on the Railfuture Yorkshire Branch committee
- Q2. Following Articled Pupillage I passed the Final Examinations of the Royal Town Planning Institute and have worked as a Planning Officer in the North West, East Midlands and Yorkshire & Humber Regions of England. My working life has primarily focussed on the interface(s) between Planning and Economic Development/Regeneration, commonly at the Regional and Sub Regional level
- Q3. As a Wakefield District Councillor I represented Wakefield on the West Yorkshire Transport Committee. I was Yorkshire Regional Secretary of the Coalfield Communities Campaign and in my earlier career was a member of the National Executive Council of NALGO
- Q4. I have chaired the Governing Body of a large school and am/have been Trustee of two Charities
- Q5. None
- Q6. None
- Q7. None.

Election Address

Needless to say, I've long been interested in railways, originally kindled by daily school journeys, and later on London work trips, by ECML Deltics and then HSTs.

Like many others I was dismayed by the progressive run-down of the local and regional systems, reaching their early 1980s nadir when I regularly experienced the delights of Sunday connections on five-hour plus (end to end) TransPennine journeys.

Encouraged by the seeds of recovery, starting with Inter-City in the 60s and gathering pace in the in the latter period of British Rail, and at the same time disappointed by the many missed opportunities then and since.

I remain optimistic and enthusiastic for the future of our railways.

On its own regaining public ownership is only half the story, but overcoming the continuing fragmentation (unbelievably they're still ordering their own trains separately for delivery in the 2030s!) is essential if we are to meet the fundamentally simple needs of the current passengers and attract some of the huge potential market that's out there.

So, what skills do I bring to the job?

- Lots of experience of joint and co-operative working in membership organisations.
- Good public speaking and media skills (working with print and broadcast journalists over many years)
- Policy/Report Drafting (and amendment!)
- Responding to Consultations (and then publicising what we've said)
- Design and Drafting of Publicity Materials/Newsletters/Leaflets etc
- Campaign Organisation (including parliamentary level)
- Familiarity with the financial and governmental mechanisms relating to the operation and development of the railways

IN CONCLUSION, an outward looking Railfuture, responsive both to the aspirations of its membership and the needs of the travelling public, has a great part to play in the practical achievements necessary to help reach our ambitions for the Railway of the Future.



Railfuture – run by volunteers to benefit rail users – Campaigning for a bigger better railway in Britain

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