

## Railfuture East Anglia branch secretary – role definition

*Railfuture is Britain's only national independent organisation campaigning for rail passengers and freight. The East Anglia branch, which was founded in 1972, has one of the largest memberships of the 16 branches. It is also one of the most active, producing four editions of the Rail East newsletters a year and holding four branch meetings for both members and the public. The branch also takes part in the significant national and regional consultations that Railfuture responds to each year.*

*The secretary is a key member of the branch committee, contributing to Rail East, attending committee and branch meetings, liaising with local authorities and other politicians, the rail industry and other stakeholders.*

The following is a description of the various core functions needed to keep the branch going. The branch does not do all of these tasks at present. They are normally shared between the Chairman and the Secretary by agreement, although other people can do certain tasks. Items and details may change as determined by the Committee.

### 1. Managing the Branch Meetings

The branch normally holds five meetings each year. They are the AGM (end of Feb in Bury St Edmunds), a committee only meeting in March, and three committee and public meetings (usually in June, September and December at Colchester/Ipswich, Norwich and Cambridge). The secretary will:

- Arrange and book venues
- Arrange speakers for the AGM and public meetings
- Issue a press release regarding public meeting and speaker
- Agree and send out agenda for meetings to committee members and adjacent branches
- Take notes at meetings
- Agree minutes with Chairman and then issue minutes to committee within a reasonable time (2-3 weeks)
- Send a copy of approved minutes to *Railfuture* Board
- Send a 'thank you' e-mail to guest speakers
- Present a secretary's report at the AGM.

### 2. Act as Branch Contact

The Secretary acts as main contact for the branch for both internal *Railfuture* and external matters. When dealing with outside bodies, for example local authorities, train operations and the media, views expressed should reflect those of Railfuture rather than personal views and opinions.

### 3. Internal Matters

The secretary will:

- Receive and distribute to committee e-mails from *Railfuture* Board regarding policy and other decisions
- Deal with information requests from the Board, other branches and specialist groups
- Respond to national consultations. Collect comments from committee and respond to person nominated by the Board
- Chairman and Secretary normally attend the annual Branches' and Groups' representatives meeting
- Ensure that a branch report is submitted to the *Railwatch* editor(s) for each issue
- Write a short branch report for the Annual Report that is sent to all *Railfuture* members.

#### 4. *External Matters*

The secretary will:

- Respond to local authority consultations after seeking views from Committee
- Arrange and attend meetings with local authorities several times a year (note: Norfolk and Suffolk have Rail Policy Group meetings which will cover this)
- Respond to rail industry consultations on specific local matters (note: national issues such as Network Rail and franchise documents are covered nationally and the Board appoints someone to co-ordinate responses; The Branch must not send in their own response)
- Attend events arranged by train operators
- Deal with requests from the media
- Deal with questions and comments from branch members and non-members
- Produce and deliver talks to local groups when required

#### 5. *Requirements for a candidate*

Legal requirements:

The branch secretary is an officer of the company and for insurance reasons must be a current member over 18. They must also sign any prevailing code of conduct for officers. They will be a member of the branch committee, which is elected each year at the AGM. They can be co-opted onto the committee during the year if necessary.

Practicalities:

It is not a requirement that the secretary is resident, or spends the majority of their time, within the precise branch area boundary, but their location must not prevent them undertaking the responsibilities of the role.

It is essential that they have regular access to e-mail. The secretary produces documents in Word (or compatible equivalent) and must have sufficient IT skills and software/equipment to do this professionally and efficiently.

Either a landline or mobile telephone is essential - having both is preferred.

The branch does not normally pay travel expenses within the branch area. Expenses may be available for travel substantially outside the branch area when representing the branch if approved in advance and the guidelines are followed. The branch does not normally pay towards day-to-day telephone, postage, printing or copying costs.

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Further information is available from Nick Dibben – [nick.dibben@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:nick.dibben@railfuture.org.uk) – Tel: 01480 495101.

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