

railfuture



NEW TRAINS FOR LONDON: The British-designed Bombardier Avenra, left, to be built for London's Crossrail and, on the right, the new German-built Desiro City train being constructed by Siemens for Thameslink

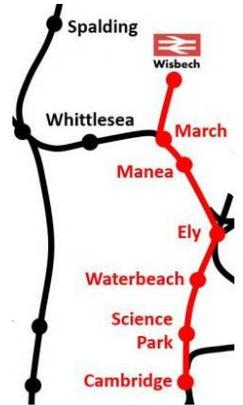


*CAMPAIGN SUCCESS: Work began in 2013 on Canal Tunnels, near London's King's Cross, which will expand Thameslink as part of a £3.5 billion project. Canal Tunnels run between the East Coast main line and the Thameslink route at St Pancras station and will link local and regional services from Cambridge and Peterborough with the route to Gatwick and Brighton. The original Thameslink route was created in 1988 by reopening just 1.5 miles of a closed line from Blackfriars to Farringdon, as advocated by Railfuture. Read on to find what **Railfuture** was doing in 2013.*

Annual report for 2013

Another year has passed and this is my second report as chairman. We have had another busy year responding to consultations, although not as frantic as the previous year! 2013 has been an overall good year for the railways. At last, a government is taking seriously the need for a comprehensive electrification programme. However, many of the rather curious omissions in the electrification programme as described in the High Level Output Specification for Network Rail's control period 5 (2014-19) remain and we are pressing hard for their inclusion. The society intends to continue making clear our overall priorities for the rail network and we will also work closely with others to achieve common objectives.

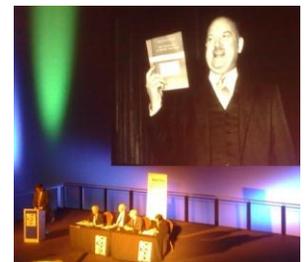
The franchising programme continues to grind forward with direct awards and short-term extensions. In the north of England, we look forward to the establishment of Rail North and a true local say in rail service provision. We still wait for the Department for Transport to get a grip on the strategy for smart ticketing in England, which continues to lag way behind the decisive efforts in that sphere being made by the governments in Scotland and Wales. High Speed Two has now entered a fascinating stage of development. The enabling legislation has passed into law and the Hybrid Bill for Phase 1 is making its way through Parliament. At the same time the Phase 2 route consultation has taken place. Enough said! East-West Rail is progressing, developments in Scotland are forging ahead, the Northern Hub will become reality and major progress has been made towards Uckfield-Lewes and Wisbech (see route map on right) reopening campaigns. In London, Thameslink and Crossrail have both reached key stages. This year we also welcomed two new **Railfuture** vice presidents, Alan Williams and Stewart Palmer. In conclusion, I would like to thank all the members of the society for the hard work they do and for all of the effort they put in to supporting our objectives.



The policy group met twice in London and once in Birmingham during the year. We responded to eight consultations during the year; six were completed by Chris Page, for which our grateful thanks, and two by myself. Perhaps the most significant consultations were those on the NR Strategic Business Plan and the ORR Draft Determination for Control Period 5 (2014-19); our responses provided constructive criticism based on feedback from the branches. One of our main points was the need to maintain a rolling electrification programme continuing from Control Period 5 into Control Period 6. A lobby meeting with Lilian Greenwood MP, Shadow Rail Minister, was held on 23 April. This worthwhile meeting lasted about one hour. Among issues discussed were fares and rail industry costs, investment in Control Period 5 (2014-19) and beyond, franchise reform, HS2, and the Labour Party view on the future of the railways.

I represented the group at the *Campaign for Better Transport* Beeching 50th event at the Science Museum on 11 March, and Ian McDonald addressed a Campaign to Protect Rural England meeting held in Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, to talk about alternative routes for HS2, also in March. I also attended two CBT transport taxation meetings during the year.

The group was represented at the Improving Rail conference on 25 June. Ian Magrath attended the Liberal Democrats' autumn conference and I attended the Westminster Forum for Environment conference on Next Steps for Rail on 12 December. At our October meeting a Budget of £1,000 for attendance at conferences should be requested for future years.



At the October meeting the Policy Group was replaced by the Policy Directorate and William Whiting took over as secretary. For personal health and domestic reasons, I had already announced my intention to retire from head of policy group as from the October meeting and Andrew Millward would then take over as director of policy. However, Andrew was unable to take up the post and our national chairman, David Berman, took over the lead for the interim. Meanwhile, I have agreed to act as deputy director of policy from the end of the year.

There were three meetings of the international group in 2013, in Birmingham, Peterborough and London. **Railfuture** continues to be a member of the European Passengers' Federation and we have doubled our annual financial contribution to EPF so as to provide additional help with its important work. Three members of the international group attended the EPF AGM in Basle, Switzerland in March 2013. The EPF report *The Final Mile*, to which members of the group contributed, was published during the year. This details EU-wide experience of local public transport connections and add-on ticketing from inter-city railheads into town and city centres, and highlights good practice where it exists.

The group actively lobbied the main political parties during the year to attempt to have them include our policies in their respective manifestos for the 2014 European elections. The suggestions we made included encouraging rail travel through the Channel Tunnel (for example, by reducing or eliminating the 30-minute check-in time for passport control, baggage and personal body scans of passengers so as to facilitate the introduction of new through services via the tunnel), common rights for passengers across public transport modes, not allowing megatrucks, which could seriously damage rail freight, and the taxing of aviation fuel to create a more level playing field between rail and aviation.



The group circulated last year's *Airport Links* report and received some useful responses. We also conducted a survey on ferry links from the UK during the summer and were encouraged by the level of response (mainly from **Railfuture** members) with 150 replies received covering over 60 different ferry routes. The ferries survey was the first we had done on line as well as on paper and useful lessons have been learned. We will be publishing a report of our findings highlighting good and bad practice in terms of public transport links to and from ferries in the early part of 2014. I would like to thank group members for their hard work on this survey and report. The group also started work on our new leaflet/PDF on international rail travel. Most of the work was done in 2013 and we hope it will be published by Easter 2014. A meeting with the Association of Train Operating Companies on 13 August paved the way to this project. We also had a meeting with Irish Rail (resulting in an article and a competition in *Railwatch*) and the group has maintained its links with the Association of European Rail Agents. We may conduct another survey of Eurostar services, including through ticketing and onward connections, during 2014.

Networks Group

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Ian McDonald

The Networks Group met twice in 2013, in June and December. We had our second volume of *Britain's Growing Railway* ready for publishing in January 2013 and currently assessing the potential demand for the book so that we can decide how it should be produced, perhaps only in e-book format, to save printing costs, and avoid potential losses if demand for a printed volume is low. A draft paper updating our electrification policy, produced jointly with members of the policy group, was also ready for publishing, but the Government kept adding new schemes to their proposed list, which of course we are pleased about, but which meant at any given moment such a paper would have been out of date by the time it was published. It has been agreed by the policy directorate that this paper should be updated finally, and produced in spring 2014, after the publication of Network Rail's rail utilisation strategy on electrification

At both meetings, and in extensive email exchanges, we produced a draft response to the Government's HS2 Stage 2 consultation. After lengthy discussion on variations, this has since been substantively agreed at a policy directorate meeting in January 2014, and a final version was ready for submission at the time of the production of this report, to meet the Government's consultation deadline of 31 January 2014.

We supported several worthwhile schemes seeking **Railfuture** Fighting Fund support, particularly the reopening of the Uckfield-Lewes line, which has received considerable coverage in the railway press, and reopening the Wisbech-March line, strongly supported by the local authorities also. We were pleased to note the Government and other political support for line reopenings we have advocated strongly in the past such as the East-West Rail scheme, and for route widening and improvement of services in the Lea Valley between Stratford and Cheshunt in east London, for which previous Fighting Fund contributions were granted. We hope branches' good work will continue. From January 2014 the group will be replaced by the new infrastructure and networks group under the leadership of Chris Austin. We wish it well, and hope branches and individual members will provide useful local information on rail developments so the group can be fully effective.

Passenger Group

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Chris Fribbins

The group was formed on 1 January 2013 from the former passenger committee. It has an objective of encouraging more campaigning activity and outputs for the rail industry and **Railfuture** itself. It met in London and Birmingham in March, June, September and December, although it is now structured to encourage activity between meetings via the train operating company liaisons. At the December meeting we confirmed our membership for 2014 with all members having specific responsibilities within the group. It is not expected that all will be able to attend the meetings, but reports should be provided.

Railcards remain a policy issue for us and there was concern about an ATOC trial of a two for one railcard, limited to part of the West Midlands, that was scrapped with no feedback. Initiated by reports from the CrossCountry liaison, there has been a lot of heated discussion about XC's 10-minute reservation trial and the disruption this could cause to passengers. Feedback was provided. There has been a low take-up to date and XC continues to monitor the trial. TOC liaisons are in place. The role is still bedding in, although there has already been good experience in some areas, such as West and East Midlands, with others establishing contacts with their TOCs. Overcrowding continued to be a major issue. Although national media focus had been on London and other major cities, areas such as Lincoln were not mentioned. Action is being taken by that branch with other stakeholders in the area. Chris Page organised the update of passenger information for the **Railfuture** website and the group will ensure this is maintained and updated. **Railfuture's** rolling stock design panel has been active in liaising with the DfT, train builders, rolling stock companies and train operators regarding new train build and refurbishments. We still need to resolve how *Access for All* and cycling issues are going to be addressed within the group. A bulletin was issued after each meeting, except December, and circulated widely on key issues discussed, requests for feedback and/or activity in those areas. Feedback has been very low.

Cycling sub group

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Chris Hyomes

2013 has been another quiet year for the cycling sub group of the passenger group. We have maintained our contact with cycling and green groups throughout the country and are slowly building up a list of good contacts.

Of particular interest to the cycling sub group this year is the bike & go project now



operating from a number of stations within Northern Rail's network. We will be closely monitoring the success of this venture in the hope it can be replicated in other parts of the country.

Freight group

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Gary Tinsey

The Freight Group met on three occasions in London, Birmingham and Sheffield. The third meeting, in particular, was well attended, including guests from the North West and Yorkshire branches. Our agendas have been diverse and interesting. Discussions have covered topics such as planning and interchange developments, the strategic freight network and the continued threat of longer and heavier lorries.

Communications with outside bodies continued throughout the year with regular dialogue maintained with the leading trade organisation, the Rail Freight Group. This was supplemented with correspondence from Freight on Rail, Newcastle University and a leading freight-transport author, among others. We responded to industry consultations which contained central or secondary freight elements as requested by **Railfuture's** Policy Group.

Our head of group visited a multimodal exhibition in Birmingham, presentations on the important East West Rail project and a specialist rail freight and logistics conference in the capital. In addition, other members undertook fact finding at the construction site of the new London Gateway super port on the Thames Estuary. This facility has now opened in part, with rail intermodal services being developed to inland terminals.

In general terms, rail freight traffic remains fluid with gains and losses. Positive is the development of biomass, and a surprise rebound in coal despite the closure of older coal-fired power stations. Maritime and domestic container flows, cited as leading the way, did see some volatility. On the down side, losses were seen in diesel fuel deliveries to rail depots, steel, scrap metal and timber, some of which were the result of events beyond operators' control, such as route blockages and diversions and the ending of seasonal contracts. There remains strong road transport competition. In future, our group would like to strengthen its voluntary base with additional members who have an understanding or interest in rail freight, supply-chains, shipping and ports, and other relevant disciplines.

Finance & Corporate Governance Directorate

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Jerry Alderson

In 2013 the **Railfuture** board (as part of the modernisation both David Berman and I are spearheading) decided to delegate almost all administrative matters and minor financial decision making (such as awarding Fighting Fund grants) to the enlarged Finance & Corporate Governance Group. It made no sense for directors to travel from Scotland or the South West to discuss in a board meeting whether a conference fee should be £25 or £27.

We now ensure that **Railfuture** delivers everything it is required to do at national level (such as producing the accounts, holding the AGM, staging conferences and membership renewals) and increase openness. All directors' expenses are now published in detail at www.railfuture.org.uk/expenses.

We produced amendments to the Memorandum and Articles that were needed to introduce online voting and electronic communication, which in the next few years could save £5,000 that we can use on rail campaigning instead. I am greatly indebted to David Harby for his tireless work as both finance officer and dealing with new memberships – jobs which have got harder with the website expansion that allowed new membership and discounted book offers that were immediately successful.

We now meet three weeks before each board meeting in order to fully brief directors (for example, preparing the annual budget, which are now based on 'demand responsive' value-for-money funding requests from branches and national groups) so that their meetings concentrate on the strategic direction of **Railfuture**.

Sadly we lost Chris Precey during the year. I am grateful to Chris Bates for stepping in to run the annual draw (which helps fund our campaigns) and becoming the new election returning officer. I am also grateful to Wendy Thorne (an experienced accountant and business adviser) for her advice, and I look forward to her taking a bigger role providing go-ahead, business-orientated ideas to help **Railfuture** grow. We need more women and younger members to be active in everything we do.

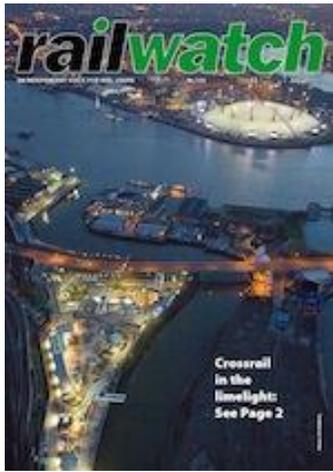
Railwatch

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Ray King

Railwatch continues to benefit from **Railfuture** members who provide letters, articles, reports and pictures. *Railwatch* aims to disseminate news of **Railfuture's** campaigning activities to a wider audience and we depend on you to tell us about your good work. Please tell us about your achievements as well as problems. If it is published in *Railwatch*, it can be followed up by other media outlets. Please send your press releases to Railwatch and persuade other groups you are involved with to send them too. Railwatch also aims to provide a platform for discussion about Railfuture itself, while not undermining the agreed policy of the organisation.

Our overall production costs have been held steady during 2013 and Print-Out of Histon, Cambridge, continued to print all copies of *Railwatch* during the year. Distribution was carried out by Mailhandlers of London E2. Printing and despatch costs have varied but have remained roughly the same over a two-year period, despite a general 40% rise in postal charges in April 2012. Following the privatisation of Royal Mail, we are concerned that costs could rise again 2014. Several hundred copies of Railwatch continue to be sent free as part of our campaign to keep opinion formers properly informed on rail issues. The list of those who receive Railwatch free is maintained by Lloyd Butler.



The editorial group comprises Jerry Alderson, David Berman, Roger Blake, Lloyd Butler, Alan Cocker, John Barfield, John Davison, Laurence Fryer, Ray King, Graham Morrison (secretary), John Stanford and Robert Stevens. The editorial group meets four times a year in London to review the latest issue and plan material for future issues.

Marketing, Media & Communications Group chris.page@railfuture.org.uk

Chris Page

During 2013 we have put a lot of effort into improving the content of the **Railfuture** website to make it more relevant to rail users, attractive to potential new members and impressive to the stakeholders we wish to influence. There is a new online guide www.railfuture.org.uk/Rail+User+Help to help rail users find the cheapest train tickets, enjoy their journey, and deal with any problems which might arise. The campaign pages now focus on the key issues and schemes that we are promoting, and our Twitter feed has been integrated on to each page on the website. Every branch has its own page – or pages which it can maintain itself.

Our presence on social media has greatly expanded. Individual Twitter accounts have been set up for each branch, in addition to the national @Railfuture and the @Uckfield_Lewes campaign Twitter feeds. We also have national Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube accounts.

Training in creating pages for the website and the use of Twitter was provided at the branches and groups day in Manchester to nominated media representatives from the branches. The *Have Your Say* survey, open to both members and non-members, was launched online in October, and a paper questionnaire was enclosed with *Railwatch* in November, to collect your views on the issues which the railways face, what changes or developments are needed to resolve them, and how **Railfuture** can help. The survey has now closed and the responses are being analysed. The results are being published in *Railwatch* and online.

We are raising our game by giving the reports that we publish a professional appearance. The *Wales Development Plan* and the results of the recent Ferries questionnaire have been prepared and will be published early in 2014. We are also working to build an archive of documents from our inception to date.

National Media Spokesman media@railfuture.org.uk

Bruce Williamson

2013 got off to a fantastic start with our press release about rail fare increases being picked up by the *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, *The Guardian*, *Metro*, *Financial Times*, hundreds of local papers as well as the websites of BBC, ITV and Sky news. I was interviewed on BBC Radio 4, Five Live, Radio Bristol and BBC Three Counties.

Overall in 2013 there were 154 events where **Railfuture** appeared in the media, and these are listed on our website at www.railfuture.org.uk/railfuture+in+the+news.

Of course, these are only the ones that we actually know about, there are inevitably more which have slipped through the net, but even on that count **Railfuture** is mentioned somewhere approximately every two and half days. The aforementioned web page is now also being updated with audio clips of radio interviews. I also issued 20 press releases on national and local issues, in addition to those released by the branches, as well as a paid-for article in *The House* magazine.

Membership membership@railfuture.org.uk renewals@railfuture.org.uk

David Harby
Lloyd Butler

Our membership grew by 2% during the year, the first time since 2005 where our membership has shown an increase and reversing a downward trend since 1998. The number of new members and supporters in 2013 was 20% higher year on year and well over double the number who joined in 2010.

Our website and PayPal facilities have obviously helped us a great deal, especially with over 220 renewals being made by PayPal during the year, but we must continue to look for ways to increase our membership, particularly among the younger generations

In terms of new member distribution, Thames Valley, West Midlands and Yorkshire all showed large increases over the 12 months, while Lincolnshire and the North East branch should also be commended for big increases after a moribund 2012. Branch events, particularly the Grantham Rail Fair and Oxford Green Fair, have also been a source of new members, with some who live in other branch areas joining at these events.

railfuture

Branch reports

Devon & Cornwall

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Peter Mulley

Disruption to rail services in the West Country has drawn attention to the need for major improvements, named locally as GW2, requiring top priority from Network Rail and the Government. It has been stated that all options for an inland route will be considered, which could include the Okehampton-Tavistock route to Plymouth which would involve rebuilding Meldon Viaduct, or routes to Newton Abbot to maintain a service to Torbay such as the Powderham one, already with Parliamentary Powers started in 1938, or perhaps the one from Marsh Barton which formed the Heathfield branch, or maybe a more ambitious one from the Taunton side of Exeter around Stoke Canon to resolve flooding problems at Cowley Bridge and the Red Cow level crossing at St Davids.

Plymouth City Council has for some time now been demanding a regular fast train service from Paddington with a journey time of two hours 45 minutes, 15 minutes faster than the three fastest per day at present, and this still compares poorly with hourly timings from London to Lancaster or Darlington, each with three stops on a similar distance, and which are 35 minutes faster, taking around two hours 25 minutes.

Meanwhile the second priority is to establish robust diversionary routes throughout the country, but so far as the South West is concerned, the Exeter-Salisbury line needs to be re-doubled to enable a regular half-hourly Waterloo service plus diversions as necessary. While one third of Whiteball Tunnel was relined with concrete, the line was blocked for three weeks during which Paddington trains were diverted via Yeovil and restricted to a two-hourly frequency which was quite inadequate, with no CrossCountry services at all other than by bus.

Finally, successes have been achieved where service frequencies have been raised from hourly to half hourly, resulting in greatly increased popularity and number of passengers carried. This improved the Torbay main line, and the Exmouth, Falmouth, and St Ives branch lines. The one crying out for attention is the Barnstaple branch line which is now almost hourly, but the frequency needs to be doubled.

East Anglia

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Peter Wakefield

The **Railfuture** East Anglia branch has finished a busy year of campaigning, starting off with an urgent and ambitious Wisbech Rail Reopening Campaign, setting up a petition website and volunteers distributing 12,000 leaflets to households in Wisbech and the surrounding area including March and Manea. The petition calls for the reopening of the seven-mile Wisbech-March line to allow a Wisbech to Cambridge service. The petition gathered 3,874 supporters, with the 2,907 signatures from Cambridgeshire being presented to the county council in July. Council leader Martin Curtis has since praised us for promoting better transport links to Wisbech and announced that the council has commissioned a feasibility study. There was concern about the lack of protection for possible East West Rail Link route alignments through Cambridgeshire, so the branch produced a 10-page *East West Rail Briefing for Cambridgeshire* distributing over 150 copies by email to local media and politicians. This resulted in huge press interest with radio and television interviews for the branch chairman, followed a short while later with the Government's announcement that it was pressing ahead with a study to identify routes. Responses were supplied to a number of local transport plan consultations including the South Cambridgeshire Transport Strategy.



During 2013, our three public meetings and AGM included guest speakers Geraint Hughes, the partnership manager at Greater Anglia talking about developments at Cambridge Station, David Reed, the managing director of Track Access Services Limited and Derek Haynes from the Norfolk Orbital Railway scheme. In addition the branch has been organising, in conjunction with the railway industry, a memorial to our late member Clara Zilahi at her home station of Downham Market. This is still on-going.

Local developments including Manea's transformed service, the start of work on further expansion of Cambridge station and the go-ahead for the new Cambridge Science Park Station were welcomed. The branch continues to publish a 16 page quarterly newsletter *RailEast* and has moved its website to a new home as part of **Railfuture's** national website, and includes news, events, campaigns and newsletters at www.railfuture.org.uk/East+Anglia and now has an active presence on Twitter @RailfutureEA.

East Midlands

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Terry Holt

After many years of infrastructure under-investment, the East Midlands region is at last seeing the start of construction projects relating to transport, both road and rail. The main railway stations of Derby, Leicester, and Nottingham have been subject to major upgrade which, when completed, should significantly improve the passenger travelling experience. The December 2013 timetable for East Midlands Trains to St Pancras from Sheffield and the region at last acknowledges the higher line speed, now 125mph, thus approaching the long-held ambition of Nottingham to London in 90 minutes. All credit is due to EMT and Network Rail.

The electrification project is still subject to detailed technical evaluation, and a consultation process has now started between Network Rail and local councils. We remain very disappointed that, as yet, funding for an upgrade of track and station at Market Harborough has yet to be sanctioned, despite an overwhelming case made by both **Railfuture** and local politicians. Improved direct services between Melton Mowbray and Oakham to London via Corby and a half-hourly service from Kettering to the north remain branch aspirations. We have also supported our colleagues in Lincolnshire with their campaign for improved services between Nottingham and Lincoln. The Nottingham Tram extensions are currently under construction with a planned commissioning target of end 2014.

Although supporting HS2 and the chosen route through the East Midlands, the branch committee has been totally opposed to the choice of Toton as the station site. We are however very supportive of the station location to be at East Midlands Parkway as it provides better interchange potential with the existing main line network, roads, and East Midlands Airport.

Our branch AGM has been scheduled for Saturday March 29 at 13.00, at Lovatt House on the Great Central Railway, where our guest speakers will be David Horne, managing director of East Midlands Trains, and Spencer Gibbens, route enhancement manager, Network Rail, who will talk about the Midland main line electrification. The annual prize draw, held in memory of our branch treasurer Chris Precey who died in September 2013, will be drawn at this event. The branch continues to have excellent relations with EMT, Network Rail and other stakeholders, but CrossCountry Trains has, as yet, proved to be unresponsive.

Lincolnshire

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David Harby

The major branch event for 2013 was our special AGM and conference to celebrate *Cleethorpes 150*. As our large number of branch members who attended will, I hope, agree this was very successful. Some thought-provoking opening remarks were made by Martin Vickers, MP for Cleethorpes and chairman of the all-party parliamentary rail group, then excellent contributions came from our speakers, Dr Alan Dowling, Stephen Hind from Network Rail, Robin Smith from the Rail Freight Group and Nick Donovan, MD of TransPennine Express.

The branch had our usual stand at the Grantham Rail Show in September. This year, with the Mallard Festival of Speed on at the same time, the Rail Show was incredibly successful both for the Grantham Railway Society and us. To finish I would like to express my thanks to the committee for their work during the year. As has been my practice since I was first elected chairman, the workload has been spread among the committee with most committee members representing the branch at some time during 2013. Alan Gouldthorpe has liaised with Northern Rail, Mike Savage with First TPE, Colin Lingard with the Barton Line community rail partnership, Paul Jowett with the North Kesteven better transport committee and I have attended meetings with EMT and East Coast. In addition Don Peacock serves at national level on our passenger group, Chris Brown on our international group and I continue as national finance officer.

London & South East

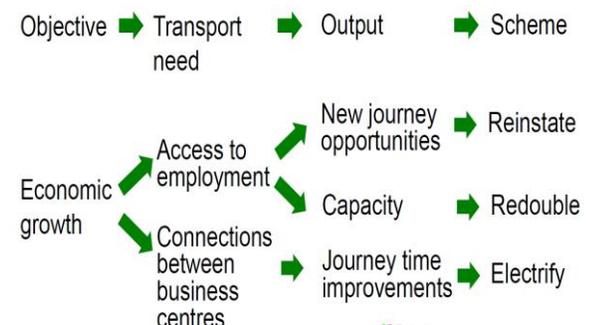
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Keith Dyal

The year 2013 has been a good year in many respects. The highlight of the year has been the campaign for the reinstatement for the Uckfield-Lewes railway which is looking at its brightest for many years. A team led by the vice chair working in conjunction with the Sussex and Coastway divisional committee has encouraged the formation of a group of stakeholders and local authorities including East Sussex County Council. This group, working collaboratively with our consultant, has identified positive benefits across the whole county which has enabled a much wider spread of support for the scheme. **Railfuture** has obtained a wide amount of publicity with a seven-page article in *Modern Railways* and many columns in *RAIL* and also the local press. A first stage has brought hope in that Network Rail will do another investigation into the business case using the latest information available. Other branch campaigns have included the continuance of high speed services to Deal, improvements to the infrastructure of the West Anglia route and also improvements to the Reading Redhill and Gatwick line, and the Abbey line to St Albans. The year also saw the successful culmination of our campaigns for a new station at Lea Bridge Road, the Croxley Link and electrification of the Gospel Oak-Barking line with all schemes either happening or about to proceed.

We have met with nine of the operators in our area plus Transport for London. We have also met with the operators of three heritage railways in the area. We also contacted all the operators bidding for the Thameslink Great Northern and Southern franchise. We have also met with neighbouring branches and held 21 members meetings around the branch area. We have

It's the economy, stupid



railfuture UCKFIELD - LEWES CAMPAIGN

attended stakeholders' meetings where invited. We have widened our contacts with rail user groups within the branch, both affiliated and non-affiliated groups. We have also been in contact with three county councils regarding their transport plans.

North East

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Trevor Watson

The highlight for the branch this year was the preparation for and the hosting of the **Railfuture** national AGM in Durham town hall on Saturday 11 May. The committee worked tirelessly to make this event the success it was. Favourable comments were made about the venue and the organisation. MEP Fiona Hall opened the AGM setting the north-east scene in her remarks. The three morning speakers kept the audience of 100 people informed and entertained with their respective topics.

Alex Nelson of Chester-le-Track told everyone about his enterprise, some local history and ticketing anomalies. Andy Rogers of Hitachi described the next generation of inter-city passenger trains which are to be built in our region at a new factory in Newton Aycliffe. Dennis Fancett gave an upbeat presentation on the campaign to restore passenger services to Ashington and south-east Northumberland, some 49 years (and counting) since they were axed by Beeching. We had hoped to inject some youthfulness into the AGM, by inviting sixth-form pupils from local schools, but did not gain a favourable reaction from those schools asked. It may have been an exam clash issue. If we are going to survive as an organisation we need to recruit younger members. With this in mind, I attended a rail-networking day at Newcastle University in July. This was a presentation of rail-related projects that European students had been working on in their groups while spending three weeks at summer school at the university. Three meetings were held at Newcastle for our members and these were better attended than last year. We were given an update on East Coast matters and particularly work to be carried out at Newcastle Central station by Neal Smith. This year the committee met five times at Durham.

North West

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Trevor Bishop

Railfuture North West has continued to make campaigns a central part of our focus for the year, and has continued to apply pressure to Virgin through letter writing re both its fares policy and ticket availability. We have continued to send a delegate to attend the regular regional TravelWatch conferences across the year. As these are events at which many from the industry attend, this gives us a chance to speak with them, both formally and informally.

The pressure we have exerted on Metrolink through letter writing seems to be paying off at last. We can report some improvement over the past year, particularly on the issues of reliability and punctuality, though we still feel that there is some way to go in other areas such as management of incidents and customer service. We have noted that although the sections of the North West electrification programme planned to date have been completed on time, it has been very close to the wire. Also the class 350s that were meant to be operating Manchester-Scotland services, were not brought into service with the December timetable change. We plan to keep a close eye on the programme as it progresses with a particular view to keeping all parties on their toes.

We have made our contributions to consultations affecting our area, such as the plans for a single 'local' Rail North local authority body, HS2 and the final version of Network Rail's CP5 delivery plans. Key issues have been retaining and improving connectivity for passengers.

Sevenside

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Nigel Bray

The branch held four meetings in 2013. Our Bristol meeting in February heard guest speaker Martin Garrett on *why moving to Bristol made me a transport campaigner*. In September we met at Bridgwater to hear Glen Burrows from our corporate member Friends of Bridgwater station. In addition to the four meetings we ran a coach outing in October from Taunton station to the Seaton Tramway, where we had a conducted tour of the tram depot.

We took part in two events hosted by our corporate member Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways. In March, a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Beeching Report took place with guest speakers from rail campaigns. In May a high-profile signing of a petition at Stapleton Road station called on the Government to fund four-tracking of Filton Bank in north Bristol, which is essential for the Metro West scheme.

In June the branch hosted the **Railfuture** summer conference at Taunton, where we had a very successful sales stand. The family of Eric Barbery, our first branch secretary, who died in June, made a generous bequest to the branch as well as donating his collection of books and models, which has been sold at events such as the Cotswold Model Railway Show. In July we had a useful meeting at Westminster with Adrian Sanders MP, who is a member of the House of Commons select committee on transport. We have also participated in meetings convened by Network Rail, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset County Council and Gloucestershire Local Transport Board. For the latter we briefed Cheltenham Development Task Force and Stonehouse Town Council in support of their rail schemes. We contributed to the cost of a planning application by Friends of Radstock Railway Land.

Two major victories in the year were the start of work on Swindon-Kemble redoubling and, since December 2013, the greatly enhanced train service between Swindon and Westbury via Melksham.

Thames Valley

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Andrew McCallum

The year opened with an excellent presentation at our AGM, by Richard Harper of Chiltern Railways, stressing the incremental growth the company achieves. However the expensive judicial review of the company's scheme to link Oxford and Marylebone could have halted everything. Fortunately in May the High Court announced the judicial review's failure. The branch's summer

trip was to First Great Western's control office at Swindon with members attending impressed by how the operator copes with growing traffic with limited resources.

Much time was spent preparing for the National Rail Users Conference in Oxford Town Hall. We had excellent speakers and a positive message about rail growth in the Thames Valley. Lord Faulkner reminded us how close we came to having no railways in the Thames Valley, Lord Berkeley drew our attention to the growth in freight, particularly containers, Chris Aldridge of Network Rail described progress on western access to Heathrow which was endorsed by Martin Tugwell for Oxfordshire County Council. Patrick O'Sullivan updated us on progress on East West Rail and the branch is now focused on campaigning to reach Cambridge with our East Anglian colleagues. The branch has been working on new campaigns and was instrumental in launching Witney Oxford Transport, a pressure group promoting options to relieve this bottleneck. We have cooperated with Bus Users UK in objecting to bus cuts which damage rail connectivity. The branch exhibited at the Oxford Green Fair and continued to promote the case for rail with numerous press releases and media appearances.

Wessex david.brace@railfuture.org.uk **David Brace**

Branch membership remains broadly constant. The AGM was held in Bournemouth on 1 June. The guest speaker was Stewart Palmer who explained the financial difficulties being faced in the future concerning the Island Line from Ryde to Shanklin. Mike Southgate was re-elected chairman and David Brace secretary but, during July, Mike stood down from the committee and David took his place as chairman. Following other retirements, we are looking to recruit members to the committee.

Two committee members attended a South West Trains stakeholders' conference and learnt about future plans, particularly the plans for Waterloo International. A further committee member attended a SWT stakeholders' conference on the Isle of Wight. This was held to identify issues concerning the Island Line and its future.

The chairman offered branch support for the planned reopening of Wilton station, west of Salisbury. Despite being a high priority for our branch, there seems little local authority interest in reopening the Waterside Line (Hythe and Marchwood to Southampton) for passenger trains, with transport authorities supporting existing bus and ferry services. The branch line is currently capable of carrying only freight.

West Midlands william.whiting@railfuture.org.uk **William Whiting**

The branch has continued to hold monthly meetings in the Meeting Room of Chiltern Railways at Moor Street Station free of charge. We have attended quarterly meetings with *Centro* and discussed a number of issues including through ticketing when Midland Metro is extended to Birmingham New Street station, more Sunday trains and Boxing Day services.

Members of the branch were at the opening of the first phase of Birmingham New Street Station on 28 April 2013 and a subsequent meeting was held with representatives of Network Rail explaining some of our concerns about the new concourse. Members of the branch committee were invited to meet Michelle Thurgood of Birmingham Airport in August 2013. We had a good discussion about rail links to the airport and we were canvassed on the airport's plans for the 'Whitacre link' rail project.

The branch was invited to join West Coast Rail 250, a consortium of West Coast main line local authorities and train operators. Our representative has attended a number of meetings subsequently. The branch has also been represented at stakeholder meetings of London Midland and the Chase Line User Group. Two members of the branch met Richard Gibson of CrossCountry Trains in November to discuss ticketing, the timetable and the reservations system whereby passengers are able to reserve seats immediately before travel. A face-to-face discussion proved most useful. Birmingham City Council has produced a Mobility Action Plan *Delivering a Journey for the Future*. The branch has registered its interest as a stakeholder and we hope to have a speaker from the city council at our AGM on 12 April.

Yorkshire chris.hyomes@railfuture.org.uk **Chris Hyomes**

Last year, 2013, was a busy year for the Yorkshire branch. Our first meeting of the year was held in Harrogate where we played host to the Harrogate Rail Users' group, supporting its campaign to get the Leeds-Harrogate-York rail line electrified, and despite the heavy snow fall we had an excellent turn-out. March saw the branch take its AGM to Skipton. The meeting was timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Beeching Report with Skipton being chosen as the branch felt it was the ideal location to celebrate 50 years of railway development. Guest speakers came from the Embsay and Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, which is hoping to extend into Skipton in the very near future, the Lancaster and Skipton Rail User Group and the Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership. Unfortunately this time the heavy snow closed a number of local roads, preventing some members and two guest speakers from attending. However, members present were treated to an excellent presentation from SELRAP on its campaign for the reopening of the Skipton-Colne railway line.

The summer months saw branch members working on **Railfuture's** response to Rail North's consultation document, *A Long-Term Rail Strategy for the North of England*. September's branch meeting was held in Halifax where the guest speaker was Stephen Waring, chair of Halifax and District Rail Action Group, speaking on the long-term prospects for the Caldervale line.



The branch has been involved in a number of other activities including organising a public meeting in Haxby on the outskirts of York, to campaign for the reopening of the local station and, of course, has been heavily involved with HS2.

railfuture Scotland



REOPENING PROGRESS: Work was under way in 2013 and continues in 2014 on reopening the Borders Railway in Scotland. The picture shows the trackbed at Eskdale, after the original railway was removed. It was turned into a footpath which became very popular. The reopened railway will follow the path of the old line, while new walking and cycling routes have been created through Eskbank.

Railfuture Scotland

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Jane Ann Liston

Railfuture Scotland has held two meetings for members, in April and November. The first had as speaker Professor George Hazel on the subject of using the increase in the value of nearby developments to fund transport infrastructure, such as railways, and the second was addressed by Michael Connelly of Abellio, one of the companies bidding for the ScotRail franchise. The committee consists of 10 members and met four times in Edinburgh.

Railfuture Scotland continuously campaigns for improvements to the rail network including new stations, services, branch lines, timetabling and rolling stock. Our particular activities during the past year have been support for new stations at Abbeyhill, Abronhill, Allander, Beattock, Dunragit, Eastriggs, East Linton, Reston, Robroyston, Thornhill, Westerhill, Winchburgh and Woodilee, as well as support for new branch lines to St Andrews, Glasgow Airport, Levenmouth and South Kilmarnock, and support for electrification of the City- Union line in Glasgow (Glasgow Crossrail) to allow new direct services from Edinburgh to the Ayrshire Coast. We are also leading the campaign for the Almond chord to be built, before the planned blockade of the Winchburgh tunnel, to minimise inconvenience to users of the Edinburgh-Glasgow service. Of particular note this year has been the formation of a cross-party group on rail in the Scottish Parliament. There were five Railfuture Scotland committee members (in various guises) present at the inaugural meeting, all of whom indicated that they would wish to have continuing membership of the group. This group gives us direct access to interested members of the Parliament and hopefully a chance to influence Government thinking. We hope that this proves to be a worthwhile forum in which to discuss the case for rail with key decision makers in the Scottish Parliament, the rail industry, local authorities, business groups and rail campaigners.

The branch is enjoying the unusual experience of being courted by bidders for the ScotRail and East Coast franchises, and are endeavouring to meet as many of the bidders as possible to ensure they know something about us and what we wish to see on Scotland's railways.

raillfuture Wales Cymru



BRAVE NEW WORLD: A crucial bottleneck on the main line from Swansea to west Wales was removed in 2013 at a cost of around £60 million, with £48 million coming from the Welsh Government. The line had to be closed for two weeks between Swansea and Llandeilo Junction but overall works spread over several months. The 18-span timber trestle viaduct over the river Loughor, dating back to 1909, was replaced by a new steel bridge. The scheme was a significant landmark for Wales. It was the first major rail reinstatement in the country and followed the installation of loops on the Merthyr Tydfil and Ebbw Vale lines

Cambrian Y Cambrian

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Dylan Lewis

The Cambrian **Raillfuture** branch spent 2013 campaigning on issues that directly affect rail users on the Cambrian lines of mid and north-west Wales. In particular we continue to press the Welsh Government to facilitate the badly needed upgrade to an hourly service between Aberystwyth and Shrewsbury. At present trains between the two towns run every two hours creating capacity problems and overcrowding, especially at peak times. During the autumn of 2013, the Welsh Government transport minister commissioned the Shrewsbury-Aberystwyth Rail Liaison Committee to undertake a survey of rail use on the Cambrian Lines and the Cambrian **Raillfuture** Branch played its part in promoting and encouraging passengers and the public of Mid Wales to complete the survey. This collective public response was far in excess of initial expectations, with a total of 6,570 survey forms completed, 2,564 of which were online submissions. This response was overwhelmingly in favour of establishing an hourly service between Aberystwyth and Shrewsbury, and provides solid evidence of how rail use on the Cambrian Lines

could be increased significantly with an hourly service, given the right investment. To support the findings of this survey the branch provided a letter, which was added to the findings of the final survey report. As a branch we continue to work in partnership with other key groups and stakeholders to develop the provision of integrated community focused services along the Cambrian lines, between Shrewsbury-Aberystwyth and Machynlleth-Pwllheli, highlighting in particular the potential of rail to increase tourism and its positive impact on the local economies along the route of the line. We continue to work in close cooperation with the other Welsh branches, with the South Wales branch taking a lead role on behalf of ourselves in direct policy discussions with the Welsh Government.

North Wales Gogledd Cymru

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David Mawdsley

The North Wales branch continues to meet on an irregular basis, but the wide geographic spread of members, coupled with the lack of public transport in the evenings, means that meetings are rarely attended by more than the faithful few. We have a good working relationship with Arriva Trains Wales, who provide facilities for our meetings and keep us advised of developments affecting the North Wales area. We maintain contact with the South Wales branch, and are seeking to establish a dialogue with the North West (England) branch, given that the main transport links from North Wales are to Chester, Liverpool and Manchester, rather than to the rest of Wales.

South Wales De Cymru

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John Rogers

The full committee met five times during 2013 and, after the April AGM, the only changes to the committee were the addition at last of a vice-chairman plus the election of a welcome additional member, Peter Kingsbury of Cardiff. The year was dominated by two subjects, the next edition of our influential *Development Plan for Welsh Railways* and the continuing debate involving government and interested parties as to what will happen after the ATW franchise expires in 2018.

The 142-page development plan was formatted to the corporate Railfuture standard, created a more influential product.

It appears that our **Railfuture Cymru** plan for a government-owned, arm's length, not-for-dividend Rail Wales (or whatever name) has borne fruit – as it is now the favoured option of our Labour government. Published four years ago, the principle of our plan is now widely accepted by a wide spectrum of the rail industry in Wales and most Welsh politicians.

On behalf of the Welsh members of **Railfuture**, we submitted our comments and recommendations to the Government Business & Enterprise Committee which had the task of seeking opinions as to what the Government should do about 2018 and after. This led to David Mawdsley of the north branch of **Railfuture Cymru** and I appearing before the Senedd committee and answering questions, David covering a wide variety of topics while I restricted myself to expounding on the not-for-dividend plan. The committee report was launched in the unusual location of Hereford station waiting-room – to underline the importance to Wales of the border line and its passengers in England. A key recommendation is that the current Welsh Government discussions with Westminster on the future of transport are concluded speedily and lead to the devolution of the remaining transport powers to Cardiff.

Railfuture Cymru's heightened image in rail matters has been reflected by media attention with radio, TV interviews and press coverage becoming more frequent over the past 12 months. We are also grateful to Peter Clark of Abergavenny who is acting editor of our *RAIL WALES* magazine which goes to all Welsh members and is on our website twice a year.

As chairman, a huge thank you to committee members for their hard work, including attending many meetings on behalf of **Railfuture**: our local authority transport consortia, Welsh government consultative meetings, the Passenger Focus conference, Sustainable Transport Cymru, train operators and action groups for various lines and, of course, **Railfuture** UK conferences and meetings. Cerddwn ymlaen!

railfuture Northern Ireland

Railfuture Northern Ireland

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Michael Stevenson

Translink now has more passenger stock than has been available at any time since the 1960s. This has enabled more trains to be six-car rather than three-car units. Consequently the growth in passenger journeys from 2012 to 2013 was 14% (from 11.3 million journeys to 12.9 million journeys). This is impressive but sadly there is still no movement on reopening of lines or new stations. Growth in passenger numbers has been particularly impressive on the Belfast-Derry/Londonderry line where an hourly service between Belfast and Coleraine is now operational. This increases to half-hourly Monday to Friday during peak hours, yet I can bear witness that by Mossley West a Belfast-bound six-car train can be standing-room only. The refurbished Coleraine to Derry section – reopened a couple of weeks earlier than expected at the end of March 2013 for the City of Culture celebrations – provides the smoothest run ever experienced along this scenic line. A consultation on the shape of the future terminus at Londonderry Waterside has been undertaken.

The Enterprise Belfast-Dublin service is still experiencing too many failures. I suspect it is only a matter of time before this reverts to a more frequent CAF- built diesel unit service. Certainly the latter have been spotted recently on test runs at Belfast Great Victoria Street.

HOW MEMBERS CAN HELP Railfuture

Almost all **Railfuture** campaigning is funded by our members. As well as making a donation with your subscription there are other ways of helping **Railfuture**.

Can you recruit a new member? Online enrolment is available or a membership leaflet can be downloaded from www.railfuture.org.uk/join, or by contacting the Membership Secretary, 6 Carral Close, Brant Road, Lincoln LN5 9BD. membership@railfuture.org.uk

Why not volunteer to take an active role in national or local branch activities?

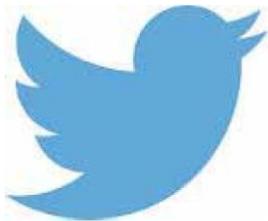
Try to attend one of **Railfuture**'s national events. Full details (and online booking) available at www.railfuture.org.uk/conferences.

Join the **Railfuture** Lottery. 50% of the net receipts are paid out as prizes each month, with the remainder allocated to our Fighting Fund. Details can be obtained from the Railfuture Lottery Organiser, 24 Chedworth Place, Tattingsstone, Suffolk IP9 2ND or visit www.railfuture.org.uk/lottery.

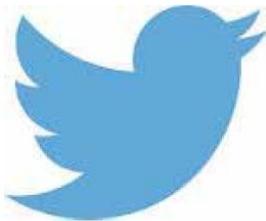
Consider making the **Railway Development Society** a beneficiary of your will. Please consult your solicitor for advice on how to do this.

Railfuture's MISSION STATEMENT

To be the number one advocate for the railway and rail users



Railfuture on Twitter



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You can also follow **Railfuture** branches: @RailfutureDC, @RailfutureEA, @RailfutureEMids, @RailfutureLincs, @RailfutureLSE, @RailfutureNEast, @RailfutureNWest, @RailfutureSSide, @RailfutureTV, @RailfutureWessx, @RailfutureWMids, @RailfutureYorks, @RailfutureScot, @RailfutureWales

President: Christian Wolmar

Senior Vice-President: Mike Crowhurst

The president and vice-presidents are appointed annually by the membership at the annual general meeting. The chairman is elected annually by the membership. The directors appoint the vice-chairman annually from within their number. Directors are elected by the membership to serve for a period of three years.

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