

Battle lines redrawn

By David Harby

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Since rail privatisation we have seen many changes to train service patterns. At the same time the Railfuture branch structure has remained unchanged.

In some areas this has meant that three branches are sometimes giving varying views to the same train operator about the same short distance service.

In the near future government regional offices will also have a greater say in the destination of government transport funding and we need to approach them with a consistent voice.

Because of this the Railfuture board decided earlier this year to look at our branch structure and see if any changes were needed to enable us to campaign more effectively.

In most instances East and North Midlands branches are both dealing with the same train operators on identical issues.

After discussion with both branches it was therefore decided that the branches should merge with effect from 1 January 2006.

At the same time the opportunity is also being taken to change the allocation of a few postcode areas so as to better reflect branch responsibilities.

Bedfordshire (postcodes MK40-45) is mainly served by Thameslink and will therefore transfer to London and South East branch.

Three postcodes in Bedfordshire (SG15-17) near to East Coast main line stations will move to East Anglia.

Glossop and Buxton (SK13 and 17) are both on routes looked after by North West branch and will transfer to that branch.

Stamford (PE9) is on the Leicester-Peterborough route and will therefore move to East Midlands branch.

East Midlands branch are to take the lead on the Lincoln-Leicester service, and Lincolnshire branch on East Coast main line services from Grantham, Newark and Retford. It is appreciated that some members will prefer to be affiliated to a branch other than as allocated above.

If so please contact David Harby (details on page 2) who will transfer you to your desired branch.

As branch allocation is done on a geographical basis there will undoubtedly always be members who have a special interest in routes outside of their allocated area. We are always happy at any time to change branch allocations for individual members if they so desire.

Annual general meeting

The annual general meeting of Railway Development Society Ltd will be held on Saturday 6 May 2005 at Swindon STEAM, the Museum of



STOP THE TRAFFIC: Train operator Midland Mainline which runs through Railfuture's former north and east Midlands branch areas braved the traffic outside its main stations in Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield in August to promote its cheap summer fares to London. Jacqui Cameron, head of marketing at Midland Mainline, said: "This was one of the biggest ticket offers we have ever launched, both in terms of the exceptional value for money and the number of tickets that were up for grabs."

Picture: Midland Mainline

Railfuture elections

By Chris Precey
Returning Officer

Nominations are required now for people to run Railfuture next year. Posts which are up for election are chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer, membership secretary, sales officer and 10 directors.

Although Railfuture is a voluntary organisation, it should be borne in mind that directors of the Railway Development Society Ltd have specific duties and responsibilities under the Companies Act. In brief, these duties are:

- Ensuring that all documents are completed and filed at the correct times
- Ensuring that the company's finances are in good order
- Ensuring that the company acts in accordance with all relevant legislation, including the Companies Act, as well as health and safety and equal opportunities laws.
- Ensuring that the organisation is run in accordance with the memorandum and articles of as-

sociation and any accompanying standing orders.

Railfuture also expects directors – who take up their duties after the annual general meeting in May – to help out with various duties and on Railfuture committees, details of which can be found in the Who's Who leaflet or on the Railfuture website.

Please also bear in mind that the board is currently reviewing the whole question of travel expenses because of the high cost.

Nomination forms can be obtained from Returning Officer, PO Box 7690, Hinckley, LE10 9WJ. Please enclose an SAE. Nomination forms can also be downloaded from the Railfuture website. www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=elections

Please return nomination forms as soon as possible but, at the latest, by 1 February to Returning Officer, PO Box 7690, Hinckley, LE10 9WJ. If you require an acknowledgement, please send an SAE.

the Great Western Railway. Doors open at 10.00 with the meeting taking place from 11.00 to 17.00.

STEAM has been voted family attraction of the year, telling the story of the people who built, operated and travelled on the Great Western Railway. Reconstructions, locomotives, videos and hands-on displays bring the story of "God's Wonderful Railway" to life. A representative from the successful bidder for the Greater Western franchise is expected to be guest speaker at the

AGM. For more details see <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=Annual+General+Meeting>

Annual report

The Railfuture annual report is in the process of being compiled. Committees should send a report of not more than 250 words to Trevor Garrod, 15 Clapham Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 1RQ by 31 December 2005. You can email it to trevorgarrod2000@yahoo.co.uk

Volunteer needed

Railfuture is still seeking a volunteer to help the board deal with administration. If you can help please contact chairman Mike Crowhurst, 33 Station Court, Aberford Road, Garforth, Leeds LS25 2QQ. Tel: 0113 286 4844

We need YOU

Do you have skills, experience or qualifications? asks Trevor Garrod. If so, you can help Railfuture (and perhaps the European Passengers' Federation) by completing the form enclosed with this *Railwatch*.

From time to time it is helpful for us to have a member with engineering, legal, financial or other knowledge or experience to advise us – perhaps when we are commenting on a consultation paper or involved in a local, national or international campaign.

All information will be treated in strictest confidence and no information will be disclosed without your permission. Thank you to new members who completed this pro forma during the summer and early autumn. We have revised it slightly in view of what you told us and hope, as a result, to have up-to-date information from all our existing members as well.

Coastlink correction

Train operator Southern has contacted Railfuture to correct a report in *Railwatch* 105 Local Action.

Southern said: "London-Hastings through services via Eastbourne do not disappear in December 2005. There is no loss of service along the coast, which remains three trains per hour. These will depart Eastbourne at xx09, xx19 & xx40, with the xx09 being the diesel which is fast to Bexhill. This is a slight change in timings from present.

"I think these comments are confusing the changes in December with proposals under the rail utilisation strategy which are still with the Secretary of State and have not yet been approved."

Face to face

Railfuture chairman Mike Crowhurst was due to meet transport minister Derek Twigg on 29 November 2005, along with a Railfuture delegation. A meeting is also planned for 21 December 2005 with the Rail Passengers Council.

Travel costs

Railfuture board members will have to bear the first £10 of their travel expenses as well as making every effort to buy the cheapest rail ticket, following a decision by the Railfuture board on 12 November 2005. In special personal circumstances, chairman Mike Crowhurst will have discretion to allow the full travel cost.