

# English Regional Transport Association (ERTA)

	<p><b>Patron:</b> Sir Edmund Verney + Others welcome of professional, business or other acumen and of good standing.</p>	
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**From the Chair:** As we start a new year, we have on transport and the environmental arcing links, a chance for some optimism at last. It is slowly sinking in that status quo paradigm legacy of a mainly roads only solution to transport policy dependent upon fossil fuels has run its course and switch to more rail and renewable powered transport is now vital. Clearly the idea of stuffing more stations onto the existing network, lengthening trains and expecting things to speed up only takes us so far. Terminal capacity and baying is scant and London is just the tip of the iceberg for that problem of where to put all the trains which wish to access it. Clearly new lines have to be built but High Speed versus capacity and cost variations and the extent or not conventional rail candidacy for reopenings, rebuilds and select new builds needs a look-in contrast to all eggs in one basket, High Speed or bust. We need a trickle of progressive steps to more reopenings, the nationwide calls for such has grown and the queue gets longer. People and places want re-railing, relinking and our call on Government is to start the ball rolling with a few per region per year and capital funds to be made available for starting up schemes but also working up schemes from scratch. Studies cost money, involve complicated maths and working up feasibility studies to required levels is a specialist job demanding resources campaigners just do not possess. East-West Rail doubtless progresses and a 10-year span should be a norm from call to working up to delivery. Models or cost ratios are variable. We need all weather-proof commitment that a. yes, it is a good thing b. the closures of the 1960's went too far/were short sighted and c. moral justice demands action is swift, forth-coming and robust. ERTA on all fronts continues to work at this coalface. We need others to translate Facebook likes and other social media to hard cash via membership and volunteering.

## News and Notes

<p><b>Didcot-Southampton Revival?</b> Our member and Area Rep for Berks and Oxon Mr Rex Hora has tabled the reconstruction of part of the old Didcot-Newbury-Southampton line. It would go down as far as Whitchurch and then join rails to Salisbury with a new curve onto the lines to Southampton. Another alternative which others have suggested is that given south and east of Winchester is blocked, could the line extend beyond Whitchurch to join the Basingstoke-Southampton lines north of Winchester? This would be a more direct link. A new build alignment would be required in any case and a Park and Ride for Newbury alongside the bypass could offer new travel opportunities. But the real gem of the concept and idea, whichever route comes to the fore is that it offers relief and capacity to Reading which has huge amounts of passenger and freight volumes and the freight needs a quicker end to end route option, timing and efficiency to being stuck at red signals because it can't access a path going north or south of Reading. Route protection and further studies are called for.</p>	<p><b>Great Central – What needs to be done?</b> Our Blogspot contains a wealth of articles and information on the Great Central and associated issues: <a href="https://ertarailvolunteer.blogspot.com/">https://ertarailvolunteer.blogspot.com/</a> Have a perusal and email any feedback or support. We have tabled numerous forums around the parts we wish to see re-railed and now are forming a Great Central Group which will focus on advancing our proposals and demands. What it needs is for business, industry, local councils and quangos to come together and pool resources to study further 'what can be done' and protect the corridor at one and the same time. We start where it is at today, not nostalgia of 50 years ago or wishful thinking. But unless action is taken today the chance to salvage this corridor could be completely squandered to piecemeal development which just throws all associated onto roads which like existing rails are at capacity. It is much nearer the M1, West Coast Main Line and Milton Keynes than HS2 and would engage with these and other strategic transport links and arteries far more south of Leicester to and from the East Midlands and South Coast portals. Contact Mr Simon Barber for details of the next meeting and tap in to get involved.</p>
<p><b>Conference Notice and poster:</b> With this newsletter you should have a conference poster and booking form. Further copies by email or post are available on request. Our conferences are usually good days whereby as well as enjoying good food and company, you hear interesting talks and have a chance to ask the burning question you always want to ask but dare not! Please book and support this venture and your association and encourage friends and family to also join in.</p> <p>Berkhamsted is on the regular London Euston-Watford-Milton Keynes local rail services and easy to access. Our line up of speakers is not exhaustive and there will be local information and book stall available on the day.</p> <p>You can take advantage of our '5 at £50' special offer and all bookings are on a first come, first served basis. This is an opportunity for our far-flung membership to come together, make common cause and build networking alliances which can translate to more support for all.</p>	<p><b>Horsham Corner Notes:</b> ERTA continues to seek to grow grassroots support for rebuilding the strategic missing rail link between Guildford-Horsham and Shoreham for a variety of on and off the rail purposes. Beit Reading-Brighton, Heathrow-Gatwick or just a local commute from outlying places such as Cranleigh to nearby urban centres without having to use the car, the railway could be a key local asset helping to underpin a green corridor and land use conservation rather than growing ribbon development without rail choice infrastructure heaping loads of capacity problems and making a current footpath/cycleway an oasis in a desert of development than a pinnacle of green power earthed in something multi-functional.</p> <p>Our Horsham Area Rep Mr Mike Cockerill tables regular meetings and is open to do more providing he has a suitable team of helpers, skills and resources to make it meaningful and pithily productive in terms of courting MP's, Local Councils and Public-at-large to get the vision, see the big picture and regard re-railing as a friend not foe! Join up for more.</p>

**Photo Reflection**



The M1 often comes to a gridlock standstill as the volume of traffic exceeds capacity. We can't go on expanding roads to pander for more of the same, we have got to switch and build railways for modal shift for more passenger and freight by rail.



ERTA has produced a paper calling for a reappraisal of the former Bedford-Sandy-Cambridge rail route as we believe the blockages are surmountable and other routes will cost more, deliver less and are a great way around. Email [richard.erta@gmail.com](mailto:richard.erta@gmail.com) to request copy. Trumpington Park and Ride August 2019.



1981 The old St John's remnant station at Bedford. The route to the East ERTA believes should go this way. Rebuilding the old station would be questionable if it prohibited linking round to Bedford Midland from the East as well as the West!



Taken in the mid 1990's Peak Rails efforts to re-link Matlock with Buxton have been brave-hearted but now a new campaign group for regular passenger and freight has emerged and deserves support. See <http://railusergroups.net/MEMRAP/index.htm>

## Simon Barber's Column

I attended the Highways UK Exhibition at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in Birmingham, which ran for two days in November. Although the event was primarily concerned with roads, there were exhibitors who were also involved with rail projects such as Transport Consultants, Construction Companies and Strategic Transport Bodies.

On the day I went I had heard two presentations from two of the Strategic Transport Bodies. The first one was from Transport for the South-East (TfSE) on Freight, and they stated that freight is vital for the economy but also a 'Cinderella' sector which is due to problems with deliveries; lack of data; lack of local authority freight planning and the lack of distribution centres/lorry parking. More significantly the Transport Body's territory is an international gateway for the UK with several ports and airports and includes key arterial routes such as the M20, A2 and A34 which suffer from congestion which in turn causes knock-on impacts. Meanwhile TfSE aim to decarbonise fast freight by 2050, and also to collaborate with the freight sector and other Strategic Transport Bodies. I had distributed a few ERTA flyers to them which should encourage them more to obtain this decarbonisation target, plus some other attendees of that presentation.

I then attended the presentation from England's Economic Heartlands (EEH) on Delivery Infrastructure. Its territory has great economic potential and includes major innovation centres such as Oxford and Cambridge. East-West connectivity has long been difficult, and traffic congestion is a major problem causing increased CO2 emissions and air pollution. It is therefore essential to de-carbonise the transport network in the light of a major climate emergency. The territory also includes a high prevalence of young families in newer communities, resulting in a focus of people, places and connectivity. Again, I had distributed a few ERTA flyers at that presentation.

**Use form below. Please Join or Renew your Membership of ERTA and help us help you!**



**Tear Off and Send with Your Subscription or Renewal or go to on-line:**

<https://www.ertarail.com/become-a-member-or-donate>

Tick if a New Member:  Tick if renewing as an existing member:

Membership of ERTA costs £12 per annum. I/We wish to join

**Name (Please Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel/Mobile:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

I/We hereby give consent to our data being used and stored for the purposes of communication with ERTA and its purposes compliant with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send completed form and payment to ERTA Membership:**

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