

# English Regional Transport Association (ERTA)



**Patron:** Sir Edmund Verney +  
Others welcome of professional,  
business or other acumen and of  
good standing.

~ Contributing towards retention  
and improvement in better public  
transport. ~



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ERTA has a variety of volunteer opportunities, chances to gain experience and help advance the causes of better public transport and projects. If interested see our volunteer page on our website:  
<https://ertarail.com/get-involved-volunteering/>

W. <https://ertarail.com/>

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<https://twitter.com/ERTACampaigns>

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£1.00 where sold

**ERTA AGM: The Signs are telling, that we're expanding and it is a balance between enough volunteers and resources and having core focuses whilst keeping an open door for more.**

**AGM in brief:** Over half a dozen people gathered on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July for the Annual General Meeting (AGM). If you want a full set of papers including our financial breakdown and membership report please contact Mr Simon Barber (details above). Year 2018-2019 had been a year of a lot of activity with forums, delegated meetings, meetings generally, the conference and stalls mainly. We continue to leaflet areas we are focusing on and this is an on-going thing. Spreading our wings to focus on Westminster and the rolling out of our national rail reopenings pamphlet had been well received. Richard Pill was elected unanimously as Association Chairman. Growing the membership, is a key goal for the coming year.

**Expanded Picture:** The way it works is that we are a nationwide organisation, yes smaller than Railfuture and Campaign for Better Transport, but punching above our weight to highlight and champion at best, the fact that the 1960's closures of local and regional rail links was short-sighted, ill-judged and went too far and that in this modern context there is a need to reopen, rebuild and select conventional new build some of these closed lines. This would enable linking growing populations and glaring gaps which exist. That vision needs a steady stream of volunteers to join and help act locally to determine chances of success. You can be part of the answer!

## **Guildford-Horsham Local, Conventional Rail Rebuild Link Please!**

On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2019 some 12 people came together at the local Wetherspoons in Horsham to discuss the prospect of rebuilding a Guildford-Horsham Rail Link. Whilst many have varying views and ideas of preference, the ERTA line is and must be to plum for a conventional railway rebuild with deviations where blockages exist such as Cranleigh for example. The process requires on the one hand a dedicated trackbed watch and orchestration to protect the route with access at both ends to existing lines and lands to ensure deviation where blockages may exist are kept clear.

The rail link could offer the following (by no means exhaustive list!):

- A quick and handy local connection between two large and developing towns and intermediate expanding populations.
- Local commuting for work, school, shopping and wide travel by rail
- Access between Reading/Guildford and Horsham/Crawley and approach Gatwick from the south
- Access for the Horsham and connections lines to Guildford and Heathrow for example, with or without an extra runway!
- A fast, flexible choice to car reliance and contributor to free up parking spaces for others, reduce congestion and associated air pollution
- Horsham – Shoreham ‘South Downs’ Link giving direct access from points north, east and west of Guildford to Brighton et al and vice versa
- It would relieve the Brighton main line and free up capacity/reduce overcrowding.

### **Our basic aims are:**

- Build local support and consensus that the rebuild is a good thing and grow support for it to be done sooner than later.
- Appoint Local Area Reps. To cover both the Guildford and Horsham ends of the line and interim (ideally someone for Cranleigh or group) who attend the various Forums and meetings and liaise with ERTA core team.
- Get local MP’s and Councils on board to form consortia and pool resources/apply with other agencies for study funds to tick all required boxes!

### **Horsham Public Meeting –**

The meeting is open to all and the Forum is to be known as ‘**Guildford-Horsham-Shoreham Rail Re-opening Group**’ Please Give Support and help build the consensus for the rebuild of the local, conventional rail link to serve and link communities together for the benefit of all.

**Day/Date: Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September**

**Time: 2pm-4pm**

**Place: Horsham Unitarian Church,  
Worthing Road, Horsham RH12 1S**

### **Purpose:**

- To bring people together
- To grow support and recruit members to ERTA for wider good
- To allocate roles and responsibility for covering the various facets the project presents
- To appoint volunteers as helpers to act as local coordinators to ensure the smooth, principled and consistent goals are adhered to.

A mini outline report may be produced in due course as a sales/introductory tool. Clearly any volunteers or contributors welcome to entertain. Will be forum style/around a table.

## ERTA Gets Out and About and invites YOU to join with us!



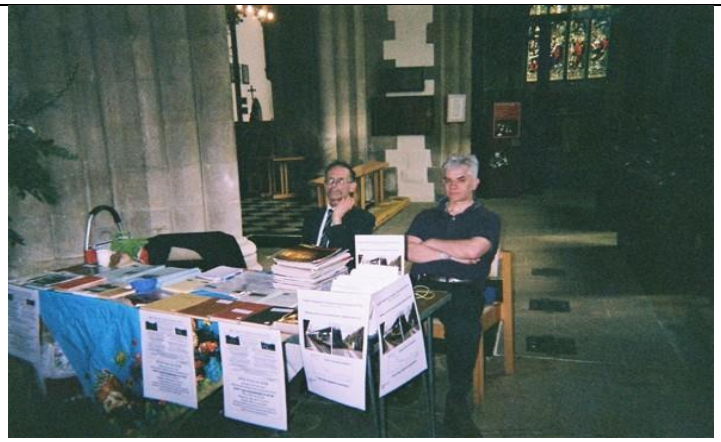
**Caption left:** ERTA held a Forum at Spalding and issued a report in time for it to bring people together and discuss the reopening of March-Spalding, long neglected but a strategic missing link. Things move on contrast the status quo of road, oil and cheap fuel and associated interests cannot be sustained and so modal shift back to rail is vital to be addressed at this time. Spalding train stands at Platform 1 at Peterborough April 2019.

**Caption Right:** ERTA holds many forums around the regions we focus on to give members a chance to meet and tap into a local issue. We may not agree on every minutia but want to build a general consensus and cooperation to move the agenda along from dormancy and losses to protection and nurturing the case and getting Local Councils on board. Forum in full swing at Northampton earlier this year.



**Caption left:** One of the sorts of local green buses which used to serve Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire in the days of nationalised bus services. Sporting 'Northampton' on the front, we do seek to highlight some issues around buses and believe they should be complimenting rail and not in competition whilst rail routes are lost and congestion on the roads... delays buses too! It takes 1.5 hours by bus between Bedford and Northampton, 21.5 miles. Rail would take 35 minutes end-to-end.

**Caption Right:** ERTA Volunteers man a stall on a regular basis at the St Paul's Church Antiques and Collectors Fair in Central Bedford. We would like to do more stalls but need people to chauffer and share the task of securing them, negotiating a realistic cost or freebie for helping publicise the event via our website. In other areas, people can collaborate in holding stock or acquiring suitable stock and liaising with us for positive outcomes.



**Simon Barber's Column and General News: Climate Change Lobby at the House of Commons 26 June 2019**

- I had a successful meeting with my MP (Zac Goldsmith - Richmond Park) at that event, where I was one of about 30 constituents. He was very supportive of tackling Climate Change, including such measures to stop Heathrow expansion, developing solar power, and opposing practices such as fracking and rainforest destruction. In particular, I had provided him with a copy of the recent Press Release in regard to the ERTA response to the Government's Climate Change targets which he welcomed; he also is keen for more rail links to Heathrow.

I had also distributed copies of that Press Release to quite a few of the other lobbyists, particularly those who live close to some of the ERTA's top rail re-opening priorities. I also tried to sell a few copies of the ERTA publications but to no avail - very few people at the event carried cash with them.

Altogether there were apparently over 300 MPs who were lobbied directly as thousands of us from every corner of Britain took our message straight to Parliament. It was the biggest lobby the UK has ever seen, with around 12,000 people gathering enmasse to tell their MP's **The Time Is Now** to end our contribution to climate change and restore our natural environment, according to organisers the Climate Coalition and Greener UK. Members of the lobby's organising bodies include aid agencies, social groups and conservation organisations. Former climate change secretary and Liberal Democrat MP Sir Ed Davey was among the first to turn up to meet constituents and said "it's absolutely clear that the British public are saying to politicians get tough on climate". He accused the Government of "putting the brakes on" climate action since 2015.

At 2pm, campaigners rang thousands of alarm clocks, mobile phone alarms and sirens, and cheered loudly, as part of a move to symbolise "the time is now" to act. Campaigners had come dressed as pandas, Wombles and even condoms, and people were able to leave messages for politicians about protecting the natural world by making a call in a "rewilded" phone box covered in flowers. There is a need for "unprecedented action" to curb dangerous climate change following increasing environmental protests and warnings.'

**Our 5 main railways rebuild focuses currently are:**

- a. Bedford-Cambridge (part of East-West Rail)
- b. Bedford-Northampton (a compliment to East-West Rail as well as a strategic missing link in its own right.
- c. March-Spalding (South Lincolnshire with Cambridgeshire) as well as East Anglia with Doncaster.
- d. Great Central (Calvert-Rugby and connections with the West Coast Main Line and second Phase Rugby-Narborough for Leicester/M1 corridor rail parallel
- e. Guildford-Horsham (Phase 1) with Horsham-Shoreham (Phase 2). Links Brighton with Reading direct and outlying areas with Heathrow and Old Oak Common as well as Brighton Main Line relief/more capacity and local linkages. All others are to be found in our Reopenings Pamphlet.

**So, what about the 33 listings in the ERTA Reopenings Pamphlet?**

As per our website pages, we highlight but rely on recruiting volunteers to appraise schemes as to do-ability and work up the case merits and examine the practical considerations like at Cranleigh where the old line is blocked by development requiring a deviation and yet a station is vital with parking too. This in a context on the one hand of Climate and Air Pollution recognition as real issues local rail revival can address (choices) and on the other the theatre of demand and supply of housing and other development and protecting corridors. Government coherence and collaboration required too. We need a national rolling programme of reopenings and rebuilds across the English Regions now! Please add your voice calling for such.