

English Regional Transport Association (ERTA)



Patrons: Sir Edmund Verney, The Rt Hon. the Lord Newby OBE + Others welcome of professional, business or other acumen and of good repute.

ERTA Chairman, Nationwide Coordinator, Membership, Great Central Project Coordinator, Media Spokesperson and Railfuture Liaisons, Campaigns Coordinator, Bedford Area Rep/Forum/Coordinator, Publications, Co-Conference Organiser and General Advisor: Mr Richard Pill, 24c St Michaels Road, Bedford, MK40 2LT
T. 01234 330090 E. richard.erta@gmail.com

Vice Chairman and Treasurer; Business and Hertfordshire Liaison Officer:
Mr Colin Crawford, 21 Clunbury Court, Manor Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 2FF T. 01442 870904 Mobile 07836-693977 E: colin.crawford1@btconnect.com

West London and Surrey Liaison Officer, Forums Convenor and General Assistant:
Mr David Ferguson, 25 Virginia House, 19 Kingston Lane, Teddington, TW11 9HL T. 0208 9774181 E. daferguson1212@gmail.com

<https://ertarail.co.uk/>

www.linkedin.com/in/richard-pill-erta

<https://ertarailvolunteer.blogspot.com/>

Newsletter No. 38

July-August 2021

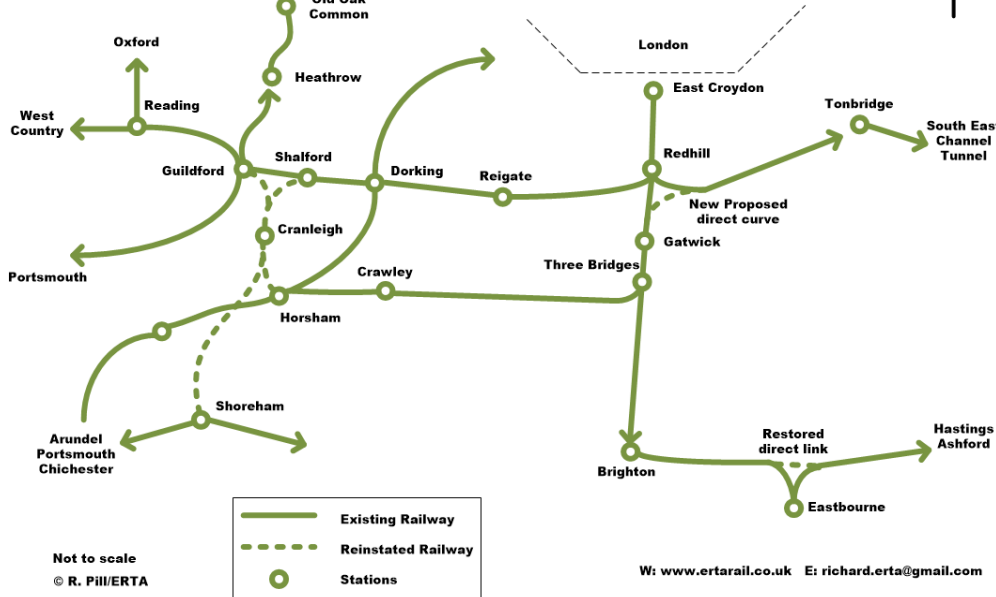
Price where sold £1.00

ERTA lays out its case for route protection, councils working together and Government playing a role to deliver/broker the strategic missing rail links we all wish for!

ERTA calls on people everywhere to wade in and support the campaign for reinstating the Guildford-Horsham-Shoreham Rail Link. It needs pro-active protection with Government having a role and responsibility but sadly not insisting it be done. The route is under pressure from various developments. Meanwhile Binsted* shows what you get without investment in the railway - more roads, bypasses and development with yet more traffic turning up at urban interfaces causing congestion and air pollution, but also land used for more parking is land which cannot be used for employment or housing for example. There's a sense these things are not being properly thought through. We need campaigners to join with us and urge councils to come together with resolve that 'the railway must be reopened'. The Wey and Arun Canal project does not have to assume the old railway trackbed, it has other options. Please join ERTA or at least our email loop for more information: richard.erta@gmail.com *See: <https://www.binsted.org/a27> for more background.

15-May-2021

Guildford Horsham Shoreham Reinstatement



Caption Left: Diagram and our diagrams generally, are not necessarily to give exact old or new representation of desired or actual outcomes. Rather they seek to give a visual idea and flavour along the lines we wish for and invite others to join that vision and help nurture towards making it real. Join us in the endeavour and together we can make a difference or at least have a go!

News and Notes:

<p>Devon Agenda – Any Takers? ERTA is only as comprehensive and effective as its members make it. We rely on willing people to join and get involved with us. We have a scheme whereby members can be Area Reps and help recruit others, form teams and table low-cost forums with the oversight of the ERTA Executive Committee and advocate more of what we wish for. That is NOT carte blanche reopen every inch of old railway per se, it is rather a strategic evaluation of what is missing, what could inform a useful role and nurturing thereof! Link to our Facebook Devon Page: https://www.facebook.com/ReRailDevon Okehampton reopening is good, but onwards to Tavistock and Plymouth also.</p>	<p>For more Woodhead and other advocacy – join up! ERTA is thin-on-the ground in the North of England. Whilst we work collaboratively with other organisations where suitable like MEMRAP https://www.memrap.org/ and Don Valley Railway http://donvalleyrailway.org/ However, we would welcome people in the North of England – anywhere north of Leicestershire (!) to join ERTA as members, be area reps, grow the membership and again, inform forums and groups of activists advocating more of what we wish for. We want some local rail links reopened and restored and that needs a pro-active advocacy of a persistent nature. You start where you are at, grow, multiply more and nurture as-you-go more.</p>
<p>Bedford Forum: Building a team and tackling key issues: Subject to Covid, I, Richard Pill, wish to table a Forum in Bedford to multi-task. 1. Organise and share out marketing and running an annual Green Fair in the town centre to put Bedford on the map more as a key and strategic place to go to, network and collaborate. 2. There are still local issues like Kempston Station/Retail Park on the Bedford–Bletchley Railway, Ampthill Parkway on Midland Main Line and Bedford end of Bedford-Northampton to address as well as integrated buses with rail more. Starts September, Covid Permitting!</p>	<p>London Issues: The ERTA London Pamphlet is available now by email. It is pdf with photos and text running to 8 pages. All requests via richard.erta@gmail.com Please recommend it to others, obtain a copy and forward on to your networks. The more focused advocacy of schemes, ideas and solutions to problems and rail alternatives to road intrusions the better surely? We are mindful that north-south and east-west orbitals for London are patchy and inadequate and so Surrey, Herts, Essex and Bucks are also over-lapping cordons with M25 which all need to be rail challenged. Only by doing our respective bits can the collage take shape in mosaic form!</p>
<p>Association Needs: We welcome new members whilst wanting to retain more long standing among us. We are thankful for all who make a contribution including Colin Crawford, Iain Sear and David Ferguson to name but a few. Always more need for reliable volunteers – please ask/offer. Growing a scattered team, taking responsibility is an on-going endeavour.</p>	<p>Great Central Update: Mr Richard Cooper a volunteer has progressively done a report on the state of the old Great Central Corridor trackbed and structures and these are in pdf format now. Hope to get on website in due course and can email on request: richard.erta@gmail.com The scheme needs professional and Government backing. It makes perfect sense with modifications.</p>

From the archives: Getting across Cardington Road, Bedford A603 Urban Road.



Above caption Left: Late 1980's A603 Cardington Road Bedford. Behind me and in front, the clearly discernible former Bedford-Sandy-Cambridge rail route and the intrusion of the then recently widened and dualled road-way slicing through the railway access. Rebuilding the railway requires the road to bridge the railway or a new level crossing. Either is not without problems.

Above Caption Right: Nothing so much visualises an idea for or against as a physical visit then and now! Same location, same place, but 2020. Looking eastwards from embankment of former bridge over the old Bedford-Cambridge Railway and the debate rages on whether or not re-bridging the railway could be done or indeed whether special dispensations for level crossings? Bridges get bashed by lorries and buses and most accidents happen due to carelessness on the roads, not railways. Can we consider a balance and some common sense?



Caption Left: Richard Pill circa 1992 mans the then Transport 2000 Bedfordshire Branch Stall at Bedford Midland Station. Slightly blurred, but gives a flavour of the corner we pitched our stalls pre-privatisation. It would be a decade before we got access again and post privatisation world introduced a lot more bureaucracy and ardour. Now, if we do a stall, it is paper only, no sales. Better representation at stations is a good goal to meet real rail users. Bring back the good times = open access to stations!

New Organisations advocating and making the case for more rail reopenings and schemes:



**Sustainable
Transport
Midlands**

Sustainable Transport Midlands

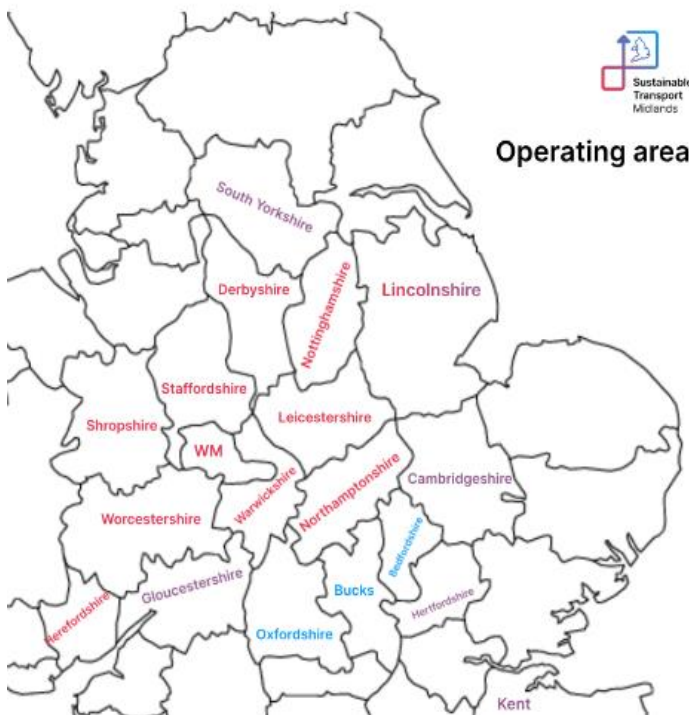
A new Northampton-based transport campaigning group

Sustainable Transport Midlands is a brand-new sustainable transport campaigning group, which replaced Sustainable Transport Northamptonshire in April. We are centrally campaigning for two proposals:

- **Daventry Parkway Project:** A new railway station to be implemented to serve Daventry (population; 25,000) located in Weedon Bec on the West Coast Main Line. Find out more about this project on weedonstation.site
- **South Northants Link:** A proposed new transport link connecting Northampton, Banbury, and Leamington Spa, via towns such as Daventry, Brackley, and Towcester. Find out more about the scheme at snlink.site

The organisation is led by me, Harry Burr, a 14-year-old transport campaigner. I used to live in Canterbury, Kent, but I moved to Northampton 7 years ago to find a rail and general public transport network in crucial support of development, which is why I formed Sustainable Transport Northamptonshire in 2020 (now Sustainable Transport Midlands)

-  Official Midlands County
-  Campaigns operate rarely
-  South East/East County



Although Sustainable Transport Northamptonshire was previously limited to campaigning within/near Northamptonshire, Sustainable Transport Midlands allows us to campaign across the East and West Midlands, as well as certain counties in the South East, West, and East Anglia. We have already introduced new campaigns under Sustainable Transport Midlands, such as “East West Northampton”, campaigning for East West Rail to introduce an extended Milton Keynes Central service to Northampton station.

Any questions?

Contact email: hey@transport-mids.com

Live chat: chat.transport.click

Website: <https://transport-mids.com>

The Lutterworth Line

Re-Connecting Northampton, Rugby, Lutterworth, and Leicester – by rail

The population of Lutterworth is set to increase from 10,000 to about 17,000 by 2040 if the approved sustainable urban extension to the east of the M1 is built as planned.

There is a planning proposal to build a huge new warehousing and rail freight interchange at Hinckley to provide 850,000 m² of road and rail served warehousing. This is in addition to the currently approved expansion of Magna Park which will see its size roughly double to 1.5 million m² of warehousing.

Transport is now the largest greenhouse gas emitting sector of activity in the country, with there being little reduction in emissions from it over the last decade when compared to the improvements made by other sectors.

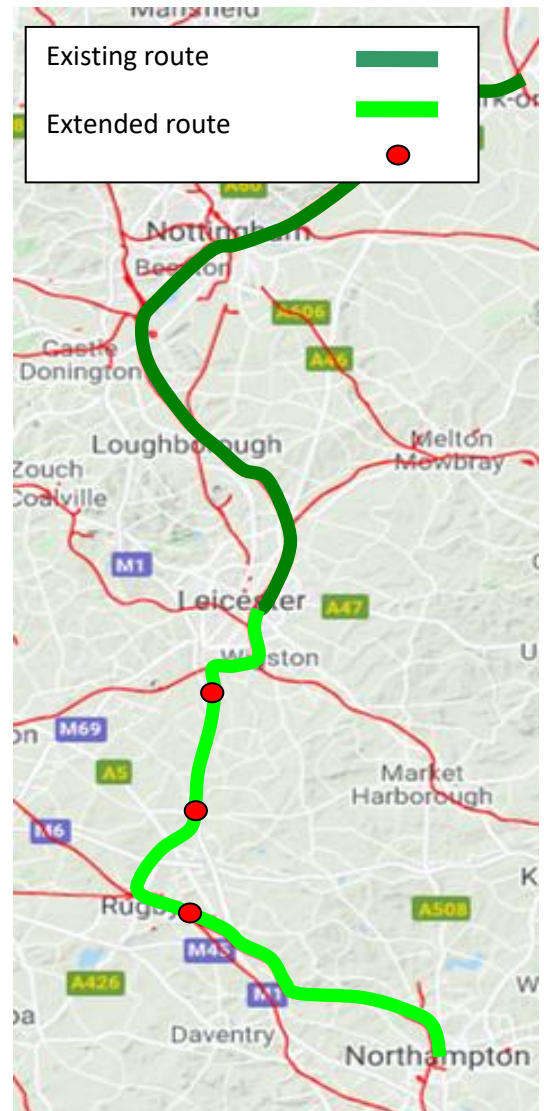
Are there ways we can make transport in our area more sustainable and accessible for everyone, and also reduce the huge numbers of HGVs on local roads? We have an idea that could be great for everyone, including the environment, and would like to get your thoughts on it.

The concept is simple, to reconnect Rugby and Leicester directly by rail, including a station at Lutterworth, and connect Magna Park directly to the rail network. This connection was lost during the 1960s, part of the Beeching era cuts.

Restoring this link would drastically improve local public transport options, and by taking a railway line to the existing huge sheds at Magna Park, reduce the number of HGVs that site spits out onto local roads.

There is an existing passenger service that could be extended, which would provide direct, fast services between Northampton, Rugby, Lutterworth, Leicester, Loughborough, and Nottingham.

- Lutterworth to Leicester would be less than 20 minutes.
- Lutterworth to Rugby would be less than 10 minutes by train.



Continued/...

Could this tempt you to catch the train instead of driving?

	Nottingham	Loughborough	Leicester	Lutterworth	Rugby	Rugby Parkway
Northampton	100	74	52	33	24	19
Rugby P/way	81	55	33	14	5	
Rugby	76	50	28	9		
Lutterworth	67	41	19			
Leicester	48	22				
Loughborough	26					

Estimated journey times. New journeys red. Existing journeys black.

We must stress this is purely an outline concept at this point in time. We have identified a possible

route that would minimise the environmental and social impact of the concept.

Between Lutterworth and Narborough there is part of the 'Great Central' railway alignment that is



almost on the hard shoulder of the M1 for 8 miles. Locating a railway immediately next to the motorway would minimise the incremental harm to the environment. This part of the M1 carries 90,000 vehicles a day.

This old route enters Rugby through a largely residential area, so we looked for another way into Rugby. Further West alongside a mostly industrial area is a section of the old 'Midland Counties' line that can get to Rugby station with much lower social impact.

Thanks to Bryan Jeyes for use of this photo (M1 alongside railway line)

To connect these two historic sections of route together a new section would be needed. This could be located close and parallel to the A426 (which has 12,000 vehicles a day along it). The diagram to the right shows one possible way in which these connections could be made.

Continued/...

To connect Magna Park would need a final short piece of line close by the A5.
(which has 17,000 vehicles / day on it)



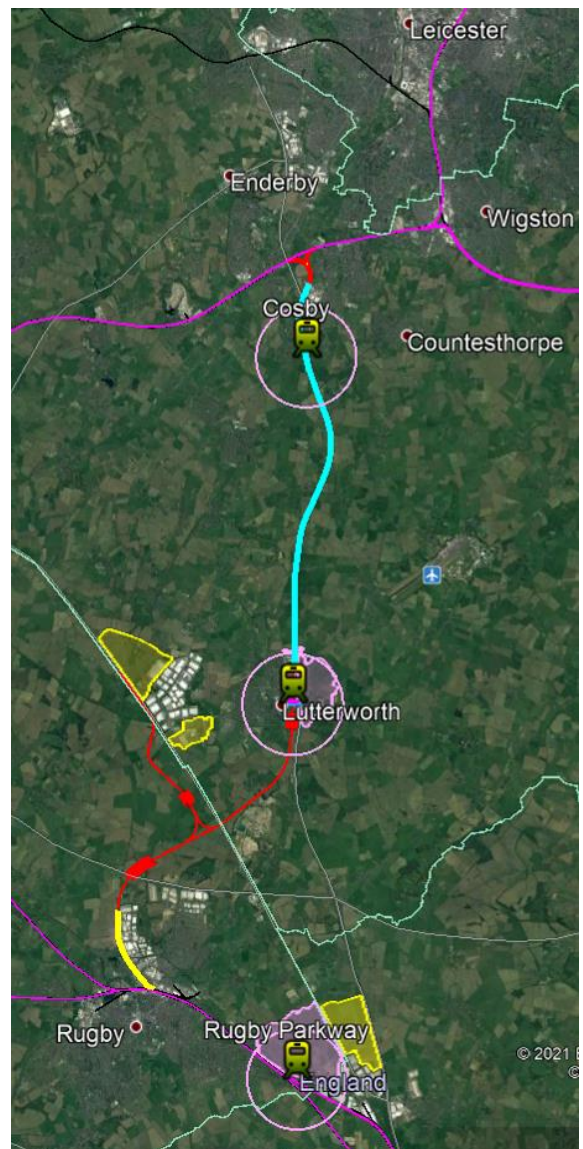
Thanks to Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland record office (Lutterworth Station)

The historic station site in Lutterworth now has homes and light industry on it, so a new station would have to be located elsewhere. There appears to be a suitable space available nearby for a small station that would still be close to the heart of Lutterworth, making most homes in Lutterworth no more than 15 minutes' walk from both the centre of Lutterworth and the station. There is potential for a further local station, south of Leicester at Cosby, and the same service could call at the proposed 'Rugby Parkway' station if / when that local station was built.

We would be really interested to know your thoughts about this concept, if you think it could be a way to improve the sustainability of transport in the local area, and reduce the impact felt by HGVs on the local roads. You can contact us via email at:

lutterworth@transport-northants.com

Our thanks to Mr Owen O'Neill for the production and submission to us of this article.



From the Chair: Different ways of working are not necessarily wrong-in-themselves.

An association such as ERTA is only as good as its members make and inform it to be. We do not work in a hierarchical fashion where like our British Government you have a Head of State, Lords, Commons and down to Joe Bloggs. Rather, ERTA has an Executive Committee at the centre and heart of the association which helps to manage day to day matters, administration, organisational structure and outputs like newsletter and keeping our social media platforms up-to-date. In short, we seek to recruit members and it is the membership who are tasked to be our front-line people, head up projects, ensure that the association is peopled and resourced and ultimately growing in such a manner as to do and be as good as we can. Gone are the days when the Chairman or other person was the sole bearer of responsibility, actioning and the fool-guy for blaming when things go wrong, don't live up to expectations or generally carry the can. We are a collective of friends working loosely and coherently together greater or lesser or we are nothing. Instead of phoning me or writing to me about short-comings of this or that, why not think a. what you can do, b. what gaps you could fill, c. how you can lend a hand/advocate more of what we wish for? It is a tricky situation trying to get physical meetings under way whilst maintaining the gains of on-line. It is more likely that things on-the-ground get done if local people, come together, plan and execute action. At Horsham before the pandemic, we had local people organising a meeting in a hall and was reasonably well attended. We want the same elsewhere, but Guildford needs a cluster of local people to work together, lay it on and we remote people just turn up, do the meeting and associated sales stall and go, leaving reliable, responsible people to lock up and return the property and keys safely. Often you start small, meeting in a local Wetherspoons, gel a bit and get organised and then invite outsiders to join in. As for 'professionals', given local lines closed over 50+ years ago, we may ask where are they then and now when in many cases reopening IS the answer needing a voice to many a conundrum? ERTA aims to facilitate that voice and reify it more widely. Together we are stronger. Never under-estimate what small beginnings can lead to if determined enough.

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://ertarail.co.uk/become-a-member/>

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

Membership of ERTA costs £15 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:

ERTA, 24c St Michael's Road, Bedford, MK40 2LT (01234 330090)

Join our free email loop: E. richard.erta@gmail.com