

English Regional Transport Association (ERTA)

~ ERTA, starting in Bedfordshire and now continuing across the regions, advocating the advancement of select public transport solutions! ~

	<p>Chairman, Local Government Transport Liaison, Co-London and Great Central Coordinator and Stations Officer: Mr David Ferguson, 12 MacDougall Court, North Road, Kew, Surrey, TW9 4EH T. 020-8876-3340</p>	
<p>Secretary, Campaigns Coordinator, Media and Bedfordshire Area Rep.: Mr Richard Pill, 24c St Michael's Road, Bedford, MK40 2LT T. 01234 330090 E. erta.9rails@yahoo.co.uk</p>	<p>Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Administrator: Mr Simon Barber, 20 Fitzherbert House, Kingsmead, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 6HT T. 0208 940 4399 E. simong4barber@gmail.com</p>	
<p>Hertfordshire Area Rep: Mr Michael Hustwait, 52 Eastfield Avenue, Watford, WD24 4HJ T. 01923 350726</p>		
<p>Twitter: @ERTAVoluntary @ERTACampaigns @ReopenAmphill @ERTACobblerLine @ERTAG8Central ERTA on Google Plus/ERTA Voluntary Organisation: https://plus.google.com/u/0/112439282775857662175/posts/http://ertarailvolunteer.blogspot.co.uk http://erta.uk.com/</p>		
<p>ERTA... the voluntary association which likes to help others, as well as <u>just</u> ourselves!</p>		
<p>ERTA Newsletter No. 8</p>	<p>July – August 2016</p>	<p>Price where sold 90p</p>

ERTA Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Thursday 21st July

19:30-21:30pm

**The Upstairs Room,
The Calthorpe Arms
252 Grays Inn Road, London,
WC1X 8JR**

Following the business part of the meeting, we may be joined by some people to give vent in a discussion on the rights and wrongs around HS2.

All welcome, admission free on a first come, first served basis.

Contact: Mr David Ferguson, 12 MacDougall Court, North Road, KEW, Surrey, TW9 4EH T. 020-8876-3340 for further information.

ERTA National Reopenings Forum

Thursday 6th October

19:30-21:30pm

**The Upstairs Room,
The Calthorpe Arms
252 Grays Inn Road, London,
WC1X 8JR**

Speaker Nick Bethune on the Campaign for Borders Rail (CBR) and the success of the reopening.

<http://www.campaignforbordersrail.org/>

All welcome, admission free on a first come, first served basis.

Meeting will then go into committee style to discuss reopenings generally and revise lists to whittle down to a top 100 in the English Regions. Offers to help coordinate these lists are welcome to contact us. You must be email contactable.

<p style="text-align: center;">Bedford</p> <p>The new Western A428-A6 Bypass has opened and is being used. Prime difference seems to be the increase of both cars and the spread of congestion in terms of sudden hot spots than before with predictable hot spots of congestion. Moreover the 'wait and see' approach saves money when economically speaking we should be pedestrianising the High Street and telling motorists to use their bypass!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Olney and A428</p> <p>We sent written representations to The Planning Inspectorate, Room 3/13, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN Ref: APP/Y0435/W/16/3147906 to express that we want the lands of former Sainsbury's field, Lavendon Road and associated for a railway, an all day commuter station and car park and object to piecemeal development which just generates traffic and queues without any new railway infrastructure to mop its wider aggregate impact up. We seek leafleting volunteers for A428 and Olney please. Offers please email erta.rails6@yahoo.co.uk</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Roade</p> <p>On Saturday 18th June 1pm, The Cock Inn, 1 High Street, Roade, Northampton NN7 2NW we tabled a Forum. 8 people were present, 4 members of ERTA, 2 from the Parish Council and one district councillor and one other parish representative from Blisworth. Roade Parish Council seemed dismissive that we had leafleted the village and got only 25 in favour of the station further to the south of the village and a bypass, but at least we bothered to ask!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Diary</p> <p>Front cover gives details of two important meetings for us in London. Please try and make an effort to attend them and consider what contribution you can make. It is your association and membership informed, driven and improved. The executive seek to hold things together and keep a heartbeat to the association, the rest is up to the members.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Saturday 10th September 1pm Costa Coffee (upstairs) Abingdon Street, Northampton: Northampton Area Forum. Open to all. Contact 0208 940 4399 to let us know you wish to attend for numbers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday 14th September 1pm The Swan, Flitwick, adjacent to rail station: Amptill Station Forum. Open to all. Contact 0208 940 4399 to let us know you wish to attend for numbers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Saturday 24th September 1pm Green Man (Annex if possible) Cobbler Line Forum -- open to all. High Street, Lavendon, Buckinghamshire MK46 4HA https://www.oldenglishinns.co.uk/our-locations/the-green-man-lavendon</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">London</p> <p>We continue to flag up the fact that more services and seats could be released if the Dudding Hill Lines are reopened. Currently freight only, they would enable Luton Airport to Windsor and Eton direct plane-train-leisure and tourism. Govia Thameslink has been embattled with many rail users calling for their Franchise Agreement to be withdrawn as they preside over unacceptable delays, cancellations and shoddy service at cost to passengers. See article below (P. 3)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Association News</p> <p>Since the autumn I had made four Grant applications with the assistance of the Richmond Volunteer Bureau plus fellow members David Ferguson and Titi Ohn but unfortunately all these applications were unsuccessful. I had applied to the following Trusts - Wixamtree Trust, Steel Charitable Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund, and the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation; both the Wixamtree and the Steel Charitable Trusts are Bedfordshire-based.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Ferguson followed up the Wolverton Works initiative and contacted St. Modwen, the developers for that project. St. Modwen later replied and will soon be in contact offering possible dates for a delegation. • The new IT assistant (Alan Walton) has now started working on diagrams which Richard Pill had originally drawn up in rough; these diagrams predominantly show rail layouts. • We have now affiliated to Railfuture • The new webmaster (Curtis Ellmer) has now started our new web-site and some of the pages have now been completed. Richard Pill and I met up with him in May to discuss progress and make any other suggestions; at that time he was in process of setting up PayPal links for membership and donations. By Simon Barber.
<p>For a good read, please see our Blogspot: http://ertarailvolunteer.blogspot.co.uk/ Our website is also gradually developing: http://erta.uk.com/Index.html The website is being done by the kindness of a local college arrangement to enable new students to practise skills in website design. It costs us nothing and we are grateful. Thank you.</p>		

The Government has responded to the petition you signed –

[“A Petition for Southern Rail \(Govia Thameslink Railway\) Franchise Review.”](#). **Government responded:**

Govia Thameslink Railway are delivering plans to reverse decades of under-investment on the rail network. A further review into GTR will not address the challenges that their plans intend to overcome.

The challenges of this part of the network are not new. The industry and Government are addressing the long-standing, historic problems, including driver shortages, rolling stock and network capacity. By 2018 we expect to return the network to the performance that all passengers deserve, and we will do it with increased capacity, renewed facilities and robust, durable infrastructure.

This part of the network is extremely complex; indeed it is one of the busiest in Europe. Punctuality on this part of the network has always proven challenging due to the complexity of the infrastructure and the volume of services that operate on it. However, we know that passengers are very frustrated about performance and the service they receive.

The Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) franchise incorporates an unprecedented level of investment in the network. The introduction of new trains, new infrastructure and new ways of working is intended to reverse decades of under-investment on this part of the network and provide passengers with more capacity on more reliable services. Given the recent growth in passenger demand, maintaining the status quo is not an option. But the transformation cannot occur overnight. It will take time and close management across the industry to ensure improvements are delivered to passengers.

Using the contractual mechanisms available, the Secretary of State served a Remedial Plan notice to GTR last year. In response, GTR have developed a Remedial Plan in response which includes obligations for GTR to recruit and train sufficient drivers to operate current and future timetables, improve reliability of rolling stock and provide better customer information. Passengers are still likely to see disruption occurring in the short term as these plans take time to implement, however taking the franchise away from GTR will not help resolve the issues. This would only create a period of uncertainty for passengers and staff alike. While there are plans in place that are addressing the situation, it is right to allow the current operator the time to address and work through the issues.

The Franchise Agreement sets out the steps the Secretary of State must take should GTR not meet its contractual performance benchmarks. There are further actions available to the Secretary of State should GTR not meet their obligations and be in breach of its Franchise Agreement. At that point the Department will follow its published enforcement process.

Whilst we understand the frustration felt by passengers affected by disruption, we would like to assure you that the Department for Transport is determined to see further improvements and for GTR to provide the service that passengers expect. Department for Transport Click this link to view the response online:

https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/113871?reveal_response=yes

The Petitions Committee will take a look at this petition and its response. They can press the government for action and gather evidence. If this petition reaches 100,000 signatures, the Committee will consider it for a debate. The Committee is made up of 11 MPs, from political parties in government and in opposition. It is entirely independent of the Government. Find out more about the Committee: <https://petition.parliament.uk/help#petitions-committee>

Thanks, The Petitions team
UK Government and Parliament

A Layman's Response

Whilst one may accept at face value the premise, the argument goes to the kind of railway people want contrast the railway focus and what people will be given. Diversion routes to inform other commuting patterns like Bedford-Cambridge hold one answer - it has to be a main centre for jobs - East Beds looks to places like Bedford for school, study and choice. However, off peak the ORR could allow more flexibility and encourage innovative thinking:

a. a tea trolley selling line guides (a window for local promotions) - see MK Pulse (<http://www.mkpulse.co.uk/>) for an example. Maybe an A5 version would be easier and maybe an i-phone icon could be buzzed/flagged to draw attention to travellers for hand-held versions when they sign in to travel? Surely not beyond wit of realms of possibility?

b. dual franchise operation of Marston Vale Trains and electrification for integrative workings e.g. Bedford-Watford

c. rolling stock designed for more than 2 bikes per train allocation-wise and designed in a Guards Van for more-than just people to be carried. Small loads, consignments, parcels and post. Yes there's always a security risk, but modern methods of checks and controls should screen out most if not any bogus items - it is a matter of faith.

d. peak time we seem consigned to standing room only for the foreseeable future. HS2 will not help Bedford line commuters and there's limited capacity. However opening the Dudding Hill Lines and a generous Open Access approach to the Midland Main Line 'not via terminus' then North of Bedford to West London, North London and Southern and Thames Valley could be allowed to develop. Guildford, Reading, Acton, Windsor and Eton (tourist terminal from Luton Airport and vice versa) - these could be licensed by Government now and 'let the market decide' - a window for an operator to have a shot at. Government is conservative to allow innovation citing Anglia Railways Ipswich-Basingstoke failure as a reason to disallow orbital long distance operations. Join our email loop: richard.erta@gmail.com



Caption left: Bedford Midland Main Line has Flying Scotsman calling and steaming! Other services and operations have to carry on but it was a day when flocks of people crowded every bridge and caveat to get a glimpse of this famous locomotive.

Caption Below: Flying Scotsman steams out of Bedford Midland Station, Saturday 4th June heading north wards. We thank Mrs Sue Allen for taking these pictures and allowing us to use them.

Bottom left: The old Bedford shelter at Blunham Station 1988 amidst new housing going in on the former trackbed and station yard site.



Treasurer and Membership Secretary:

**Mr Simon Barber, 20 Fitzherbert House, Kingsmead, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 6HT
T. 0208 940 4399 E. simong4barber@gmail.com**

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ERTA, come to our local Forums and offer time and talent as you may?

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel/Mobile: _____

If you wish to renew your membership, please indicate category:

New Member: £5 for the first year _____

Business/Corporate/Sponsor/Benefactor: £20.00 _____

Fully Waged Adult/Family/Individual £10.00 _____

Concessions: £5.00* _____

(*Students, Low Income Households, or on any kind of Benefit/Pension or Disability)

Signed: _____ Dated: _____