

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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Chauffeurs/I.T. Aids: Seeking reliable and enthusiastic volunteers. Likewise, we need a **Bedford-Northampton Rail Link Coordinator** to help generate support for the reopening, produce power point talks to audiences and find means and ways to get the line on the current agenda. Please contact Mr Simon Barber: T. 0208 940 4399, E. simon4barber@gmail.com

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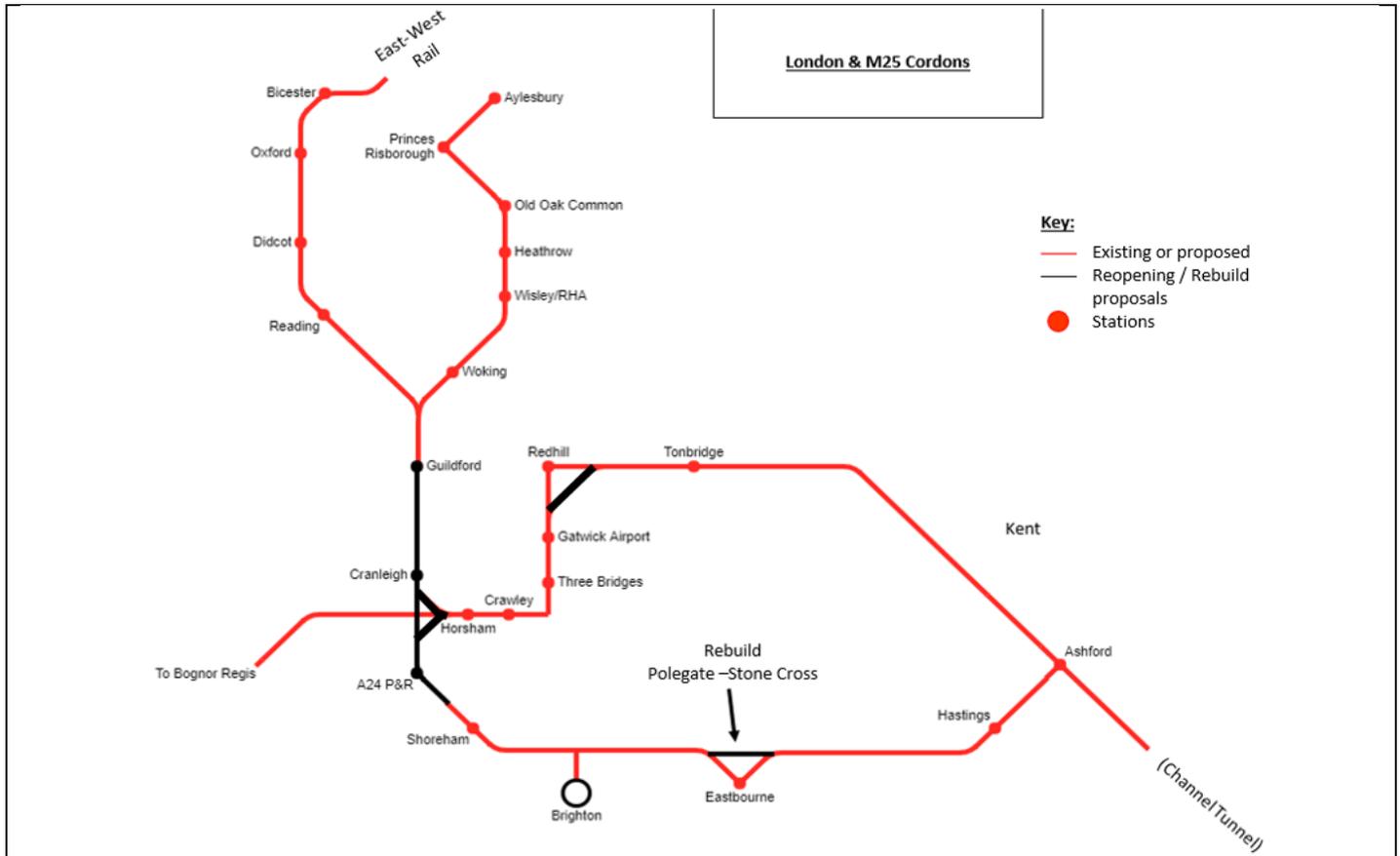
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2019 New Year Prospects – Striking the balance between Resources and Priorities

The turbulence of Brexit clearly drowned out the agenda for progress on the rails beyond mere maintenance and cream cherry-picked projects like HS2 and Crossrail. The publication of the Transport and Works Act for Oxford-Bedford section of East-West Rail was a step in the right direction and now we enter the new year with the Inquiry to follow, after which, totting up the costs and any recommendations, proceeding to delivery seems a logical outcome. Bedford-Cambridge section we are told, a final route specification for consultation will be launched Spring of 2019 but could again be drowned out by Brexit, May local elections and possibly a General Election notwithstanding the aftermath of Brexit which carries a degree and indeed a base note all along of uncertainty. Can Government listen? Can Local Government Lead? Both are necessary.

ERTA for its part has sought to be realistic and match our available human and other resources and what we can reasonably do with the plethora of projects needing stimulus and advocacy. Clearly, we cannot do it all, and on the one hand are cheered others are growing groups to fill in gaps whilst the national bodies seem wedded to big projects and lack-lustre in grassroot upwards endeavours or at least not as comprehensively on the reopenings front as we would like. There should be a rolling programme of reopenings across the English Regions akin to modernisation, electrification and station upgrades for example, alas this component isn't happening and the queue grows amidst locked-in congestion and associated issues. Bedford-Cambridge, Great Central, Guildford-Horsham and Rail Links to Northampton are among our top priorities and our call is for others to join, join in and be part of the solution, not just a consumer bewailing the problems!

ERTA News and Notes



Above: Thanks to our new webmaster Mr Samiur Chowdhury both our website and working up of rough drafted diagrams have taken a turn for the better for which we are grateful. Being able to show pictorially what we advocate is important to show relevance and fit in the scheme with current networks.

Right: The X5 Coach operated by Stagecoach passes the Fox and Hounds Pub in Goldington Road Bedford coming from Cambridge into Bedford. For over 25 years this has been a principal east-west public transport service linking Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge. Together with a railway, a challenge to road dependency can finally be delivered. The coach is subject to congestion but on a 7 day a week, all year round and half hourly frequency between 8am and 7pm, it is both popular and a mainstay for leisure and employment access.



Great Central: We continue to consolidate our foothold in Rugby with appointment of Mr Stephen Byatt as one of the area reps for the location and hope to appoint others as well. Our report is selling and we invite you to give yourself or a friend a late Christmas present and procure a copy. It is a main tool and we need it to be recommended to professionals to turn heads and get common consent that a. the reopening is necessary and b. studied further and c. remaining route protected and problems seen in overcoming manner not defeatism. Apologies for delay but can be pdf downloaded now via <https://ertarail.com/sales/>

Bottom Left: A freight train crawls through Rugby West Coast Station heading south. Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) generates significant traffic to rail and other depots rail connected are being proposed in numerous locations across the East and West Midlands.



ERTA Transport and Environment Conference
 A key date for everyone's diary will be Saturday 27th April at the Campanile Hotel, 40 Penn Road, off Watling Street, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK2 2AU between 11am-4pm. For what promises to be a lively and entertaining day, for just £20 a variety of good speakers are being lined up, am/pm tea and coffee and lunch are provided. We very much hope you will join us. It is £50 for a group of 5 people. So please book the date in your diary.

Great Central Rail Link Committee		
<i>~ Seeking the rebuilding/reopening/new build of the Great Central corridor as a railway from off the Leicester-Nuneaton Lines to Rugby, Calvert with links to Aylesbury, Heathrow, Oxford and Reading for passenger and freight traffic. Also, capacity and relief creation off of the existing north-south main lines and the M1/M40 corridors. Part of the English Regional Transport Association (ERTA) a voluntary membership based pro-public transport organisation. ~</i>		
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Summary Report of the case of the English Regional Transport Association's Views on matters pertaining to reopening part of the former Great Central Main Line Railway or use of the corridor thereof for re-railing purposes.



Compiled by Richard Pill

£3.50 where sold

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Everyone is treated on a first come, first served basis. Please invite friends and colleagues to make a bee-line for the event and if successful we hope to pioneer future such, bringing people together and highlighting better public transport for all. Join with us and help be the answer to whether things happen or not. Please see our website for more details as they happen: <https://ertarail.com/events/> in due course. If successful, we may do more!

Simon Barber's Column

AYLESBURY FORUM. This took place during the afternoon on Saturday, 24 November at the Bell Inn, Aylesbury which is in the town's Market Square and also 5 minutes' walk away from the main railway station. Four members came – David Ferguson, Colin Crawford, Leonard lean and I. We hoped that some outsiders would also come but unfortunately that did not occur this time, compared with some of our other public meetings. There seemed to be much enthusiasm for a new station in Calvert, which is a new town proposed in the Oxford-MK-Cambridge Growth Corridor. This would be second stage after East-West Rail west of Bletchley is completed. It was felt that it could be possible to have the Great Central rebuild to Narborough area. HS2 will take up part of the old route north of Calvert. Aylesbury's rail services are generally satisfactory but its bus services are suffering many cutbacks.

DELEGATION WITH GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

David Ferguson and I had led a delegation with Guildford Borough Council in late November, when we both met two officials from the Council's Planning Department. The meeting went well and it was timely, since in early 2019 the Council will be consulting on their new recently-approved Borough Plan which is expected to be finally adopted in May 2020. The trackbed between Guildford and Cranleigh is effectively protected by Surrey County Council since the Downs link walking route uses this track-bed; the two officials we met stated that restoring a railway is 'not out of the question' and we insisted that the walkway could run parallel to the railway being separated by appropriate fencing or hedging to keep out trespassers etc. The trackbed south of Cranleigh is largely intact, and meanwhile the two officials stated that there are no development threats anywhere along the route (although at Cranleigh the trackbed had already been built on which would have taken place some time ago). **Ed.** We need to accept railway bypassing perimeters of new development sometimes is the only solution bar compulsory purchase and re-railing; meanwhile completely new builds cost more and do not guarantee there's not something in the way surely? Brackley and Cranleigh are cases for studies.

ERTA now has it's 2 main publications for sale as either hard copy of pdf downloads on our excellent sales page on our website: <https://ertarail.com/sales/>

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Please send completed form and payment to ERTA Membership:

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