

# 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>	
<p>~ Contributing towards retention and improvement in better public transport. ~</p>		
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<p>Newsletter No: 25</p>	<p>May-June 2019</p>	<p>Price where sold £1.00</p>

## ERTA Conference Success! Everyone who was going to attend did and were satisfied.

### ERTA Transport and Environment Conference 2019 by Mr Simon Barber

This was held on Saturday, 27 April from 11am – 4pm at the Campanile Hotel, Milton Keynes and it was attended by 24 people, including the speakers.

The speakers comprised of Stephen Sleight (Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership); Cllr. Vanessa McPake-Milton Keynes Council (East-West Rail, MK buses); Geoff Bushell (Campaign to reopen Ivanhoe Line); Professor James Connelly (Minsters Rail Campaign); Colin Bricher (on Northampton Light Rapid Transit); and our member Leonard Lean on a brief talk 'Introduction to Electrification'.

Several ERTA members were among the attendees, and apart from Leonard Lean, these comprised Richard Pill (who chaired the event); Tony Bush (in charge of security); Clive Travis; Colin Crawford; David Ferguson and I - both David and I were manning the bookstall.

In my view the most interesting and best speakers were Stephen Sleight and Professor James Connelly.

Stephens' presentation on the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership highlighted the importance of local railway stations as part of local communities. Decent stations encourage more people to use trains whilst at the same time members of the community take part in improving and maintaining the station, including pedestrian and cycle access.

James' presentation on the Minsters Rail Campaign (reopening the railway between York and Beverley) highlighted the fact that this proposal is included in Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan, and that his group had suggested to Transport for the North that connectivity needs of the East Riding towns is a top priority. His group will also draw attention to serious long-term resilience issues affecting the main transport links between York and the East Riding/Hull such as high tides in the Humber estuary. Reopening that line will also bring extra capacity to the heavily-congested York-Beverley main road.

**Conference Pictures: ERTA seeks to bring people together, make common cause and work together.**



**ERTA grows and reaches out to a diverse and segregated world, but we're stronger together!**



**Caption Left:** From left to right, Simon Barber, Clive Travis and Richard Pill inform an august presence at the St Paul's Antiques and Collectors Fair, in central Bedford which we aim to man a stall to reach out to the public, inform opinion and debate working from grassroots/street level upwards not text book superimposition or elitism of professional herds who tend to end up speaking mainly to their own peers, whilst proverbial 'Rome' burns! Taken 26-01-2019 – we're stronger together!

## Bedford-Northampton Rail Link: A new railway is needed, but may never serve Olney again!

Everything is in an economy of scale. If a big enough backer/s or consortium decides it wants a new rail link between Bedford/Midland Main Line and Northampton/West Coast Main Line Loop then they will study the lie of the land, decide the best course of action and set about doing it. Thus, the obliterations at Olney including new encroachments at Lavendon Road are poised to offer two solutions either 1. "here's the cheque, move" or 2. bypass Olney. If the railway goes north of the sewage works it will have to clear for juggernauts crossing the A509 at height out of a cutting from the top of a hill. To then go across fields (current status) to swing towards joining the trackbed somewhere east of Clifton Reynes, more like Newton Blossomville has to be pitted with a go north easterly from Castle Ashby lands around Piddington and go north of Lavendon and Turvey to join the old formation west of the Stevington Walk? It is a new 10 mile stretch of railway out of 21.5 miles of reconstructed railway. East-West, if not using the old formation, will be up to 20+ miles of new railway and so this region is to become physically familiar with reconstruction and new construction of local rail and so the model is proven and can be adopted and cascaded elsewhere. The credentials for Bedford-Northampton are long proven, Brighton/Cambridge to Bedford and Northampton to Birmingham and WCML Networks, Bedford-Northampton is the given growth, these trends will exacerbate, so all should be committed to keeping their options open, even Milton Keynes Council and jurisdiction. Alas they seem to have a back door 'treat Bedford-Northampton as development expedient' and chuck every developers whim at blocking it, by default of course, deliberation the jury is out!

Feeds east-west rail and Midland Main Line, relieves north-south rails considerably and cuts cross country saving time and cost, cutting congestion (A14 Inc.) and ensuring good end to end joined up rail alternatives to car culture and drive everywhere with queues for parking price managed ratcheting up everywhere because demand outstrips supply/land use conflict - do we provide housing, employment or parking - a no brainer x 3 options for same spaces often in urban areas or on urban fringes. ERTA calls for people to join and offer to help out. We're into the business of spreading the load, taking responsibility collectively and sharedly and together we increase chances of success and contrast privatised, selfish individualism and arm chair critics pouring cold water, need to reconcile with the problems on the roads, the air pollution killing people and many an accident partly underscored by the stresses and tensions around driving these days. This, when for a small sum, the wear and tear costs saved through rail alternatives could inform a more generous rolling out of a bus and rail pass for off peak travel for under 65's which would ensure more off-peak services are used and more lifestyle greener choices become more readily available. This, especially for lower income brackets for whom a vehicle on the road is a labyrinth of cost and responsibility when they just wish to be more mobile within limited fiscal means. Oddly bus networks are being slashed due to inadequate funding and inability to subsidise them, usage falls are mooted still, but the humbug is £billions are found annually for more and larger roads with pedestrians, cyclists and slower movers being brushed aside at design and actuation of schemes designed for speed rather than inclusion. Join our free email loop: richard.erta@gmail.com or go to our website: <https://ertarail.com/> and have a perusal/make a contribution be it membership or a free-will donation. It all helps us help others. Thank you. Bedford-Northampton is not 'dead' it is sleeping and a new dawn awakens beckons with entrepreneurship, leadership, vision and a fresh start.



**Caption Above:** The traditional route of the Bedford-Cambridge railway entering Bedford. Looking east, it is now partly used as a car park for a local bus company. Whichever route the east-west rail takes, there will be protracted issues like this to negotiate. The prize here is that by entering St John's behind the picture to the west, you reverse into and out of Bedford off main lines and are inclusive. Bypassing Bedford centre and you disenfranchise a swathe of people – especially those without access to cars – and that should be unacceptable except the trend is bedded in with bypasses and out of town shopping.

**Editor's Whinge:** Sometimes I get telephone calls from disgruntled people that their voice is not listened to. I have felt the same at times over the last 3 decades. The professionals talk to their own circles and us lay people can feel expendable except we know the root and history that many a 'professional act' began with amateurs campaigning and raising an issue like East-West Rail. Some people think just because they have a good idea, the world will flock to them. Not reality I'm afraid. In this life adults relate and negotiate for what they want and that can involve you giving something and in exchange [it] is listed amongst our other schemes. So, if this disgruntled gentleman had offered to join ERTA, come on our Executive Committee (EC) which has vacancies and helped with ensuring the smooth and credible management of the association, I am quite sure his scheme would have been listed and entertained with sympathetic ears. Likewise, he said "no one was interested" and the extent to which he took it to the local council, Network Rail, East-West Rail and the media or not (!) comes back to the old adage that "you get out of something, what you are prepared to put into it". In 30 years around the block I'd never heard of him and the list goes on, shows why he got the results he did, unlucky maybe!

ERTA now has its 3 main publications for sale as either hard copy or pdf downloads on our excellent sales page on our website: <https://ertarail.com/sales/>

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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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