

# English Regional Transport Association (ERTA)

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## ERTA Rail Rebuild, Reopening and select conventional, local new build rail pamphlet.

**The English Regional Transport Association (ERTA)** founded circa 2013 is a pro-rail voluntary membership-based association. We advocate and support select local, conventional rail reopenings, rebuilds or in some cases new builds. People and places need local, accessible, affordable and inclusive rail-based transport for passengers and sending more freight by rail. This can only happen if we address the legacy of glaring gaps in the rail network thanks to the over-zealous closures of the 1960's and pockets afterwards, which decimated and disenfranchised communities, regions and generations whilst £billions have been spent on new roads which serve up huge volumes of congestion to urban areas demanding parking and where accommodation cannot be serviced.



**Caption Above:** Traffic along the Bedford Road/A428 during normal peak time. This traffic coming off the A45 and out of Northampton Town Centre at rush hour is symptomatic of a nationwide problem, wasting time, emitting exhaust, going nowhere fast and holding up deliveries and road-based public transport. ERTA believes local rail alternatives can make a difference, if given a chance.

- 1. Arundel Chord:** This short curve west of the Brighton and Worthing conurbations would enable an alternative route to and from Brighton for more people to use and commute to and from. [https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/11022034. /](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/11022034./)
- 2. Banbury-Northampton via Daventry with Great Central linkage:** ERTA supports re-railing Daventry (population 25, 026/source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daventry>) and as a new build, could extend along the A425 corridor to link with our Great Central rebuild enabling with Northampton-Peterborough, Northamptonshire full county spinal east-west re-railing.
- 3. Bedford-Northampton rebuild/new build:** Strategic missing link could be modern railway linking Brighton, Gatwick and Luton Airports, St Pancras with Eurostar and direct links with North Kent to Bedford onwards via Northampton to Rugby, Coventry and Birmingham and vice versa. It would also give a rail parallel between Luton and Northampton to the congested M1, saving time and money. New route rebuilds needed in some places.
- 4. Bridport by Rail rebuild:** Rebuilding the direct link from Maiden Newton would allow Westbury direct trains into this popular area, boosting the economy, reducing land use for parking demand and

giving employment commute opportunities and regular trade all year round.  
<https://www.bridportnews.co.uk/leisure/bestofbridport/19009071.community-railway-plan-bridport/>

**5. Cambridge-Colchester via Haverhill rebuild/new build:** Haverhill (population 27, 041, source [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haverhill,\\_Suffolk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haverhill,_Suffolk)) was an expanded town coinciding with closure of its local railway! Population has expanded and the need for better commuting options to centres like Cambridge means the reopening/rebuild should be a top priority in transport terms. See: <http://www.railhaverhill.co.uk/>

**6. Canterbury Curves new build:** Network Southeast in the 1980's proposed linking the 2 lines at Canterbury with curves to allow more journey options and operational flexibility to this international ecclesiastical pilgrimage centre, place of work, living and study. Time to revisit the idea.

**7. Carlisle-Edinburgh Waverley Railway rebuild/new build:** The Borders Railway has achieved great success, with 4 million plus carried since partial reopening a few years ago. It is mainly a rural location with intermittent towns, but has brought flows of footfall and spend revitalising the areas it serves. See: <http://www.bordersrailway.co.uk/>

**8. Colne-Skipton rebuild:** This campaign has been something of a pioneer template for good planning and execution of a much deserving to succeed campaign to see approximately 10 miles rebuilt to link these northern Yorkshire and Lancashire towns for through passenger and freight options and capacity. See: <http://www.selrap.org.uk/>

**9. East-West Rail rebuild/new build:** This campaign now with Consortium and Company to rebuild Bicester-Bletchley and Bedford-Cambridge for a full Oxford-Milton Keynes-Bedford-Cambridge east-west rail link has taken 30 years from conception and is now making some progress. See: <https://www.eastwestrail.org.uk/>

**10. Give Devon back its rail net-work:** We welcome the reopening of passenger services to Okehampton (2021) on existing tracks upgraded. However, it makes positive sense to re-rail to Tavistock, Bere Alston and Plymouth as well as Bude. Likewise, Ilfracombe and Bideford with a new build direct Barnstaple-Taunton rail link to enable quick and direct commutes to Bristol and London. These links would enable more by rail and relieve the local roads, reduce congestion, land use parking issues, but also enable all-year-round footfall and spend, sustaining local resorts and economies. <https://www.facebook.com/ReRailDevon>

**11. Gloucester-Ross-on-Wye area-Hereford:** ERTA supports investment to study, make a case and rebuild/new build a direct link to enable passenger and freight by rail to an area devoid of such, whilst roads are being progressively upgraded and volume of traffic to road space and parking demand is disproportionate. ERTA calls for change and re-railing to a popular area: <https://www.facebook.com/Gloucester2Hereford>

**12. Great Central (Calvert/Banbury-Rugby and Rugby-Lutterworth-Narborough for Leicester/East Midlands):** ERTA supports the rebuilding with a new connection off the Leicester-Nuneaton lines near Narborough to rebuild the Great Central Main Line to Calvert with select realignments where blockages exist to enable East Midlands-Heathrow, Oxford, Guildford and Southampton 'not via London' links and vice versa. We support new reopening configuration to serve Magna Park. Could help declutter M1 as well as giving more rail options for passenger and freight by rail: <https://transport-northants.com/>

**13. Guildford-Cranleigh-Horsham-Shoreham:** The scope of reopening is both local and regional. Reading/Heathrow-Guildford-Horsham and Gatwick from the south, Guildford-Brighton via Shoreham offers Brighton Main Line relief and alternative route options. At a local level, cutting congestion, parking demand, speeding and filling a missing corridor with a rail facility is much needed: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Brighton2Guildford>

- 14. Harrogate-Ripon-Northallerton rebuild/new build:** This would provide a direct spinal link between the East Coast Main Line and the Midland Main Line for north-south freight and other passenger movements including local and regional commuter services. See: <https://www.facebook.com/ReopenHarrogate2Northallerton>
- 15. Hull-Beverley-York rebuild/new build:** This strategic link would be good for both locations and all in between with more sustainable footfall and spend, visitors and resuscitation of local economies. See: [Minsters Rail Campaign](#)
- 16. Kings Lynn-Hunstanton rebuild:** ERTA supports this rebuild. Hunstanton is a popular seaside resort and the railway would bring footfall and spend minus the land use demand for parking and give all year-round options including commuting to places like Cambridge and London. See: <http://www.hunstantonrail.org.uk/>
- 17. Leicester-Burton upon Trent reopen:** Knighton Junction south of Leicester needs its triangle restored and the line would not only give commuting options into Leicester cutting congestion, but enable more passenger and freight to go by rail giving wider flexibility and benefits. [https://www.facebook.com/CRIL123/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/CRIL123/?ref=page_internal)
- 18. Lewes-Uckfield rebuild/new build:** ERTA supports the rebuilding of a new link from Uckfield to the South Coast Lines making strategic sense and enabling rail to deliver more for the places it can reasonably serve. See: <https://www.wealdenline.org.uk/rebuilding-uckfield-to-brighton-lewes.html>
- 19. March-Deeping St Nicholas for Spalding rebuild/new build:** A line which survived until 1981 needs reopening with new build where blockages exist to allow more freight by rail (currently sent via Peterborough) and commuting from South Lincolnshire to Cambridge, Norwich and Stansted Airport. <https://www.facebook.com/ReopenMarch2Spalding>
- 20. Norfolk Orbital Rail Project:** Rebuild seeking to reconnect outlying areas of Norfolk with a view to offering sustainable transport choice, spreading the volume of visitors, footfall and spend. <https://norfolk-orbital-railway.co.uk/>
- 21. Oxford-Cowley-Thame-Princes Risborough:** Wheatley and crossing the M40 needs a rail deviation but would enable Marylebone and Paddington-Bicester-Oxford and back running through Oxford and enable more. Controversial in some places and a new build between Cowley and Thame would need to be built.
- 22. Peak Rail rebuild/new build for Derby/East Midlands – Manchester/North West axis direct:** Linking airports, linking vast conurbations and enabling better rail access to the Southern Peak District areas, making visitorship more sustainable. <https://www.memrap.org/>
- 23. Penrith-Keswick rebuild:** Long standing campaign to reopen this link by rail to an area of popular tourist and visitor destination with environmental and economic benefits for all. See: <http://www.keswickrailway.com/>
- 24. Polegate-Stone Cross realigned direct curve to allow more for more new build:** This link would enable Brighton-Ashford quicker transit times for links with wider Kent, the Channel Tunnel and vice versa and free up paths into Eastbourne making a win, win opportunity with more London-Gatwick capacity.
- 25. Stansted Airport-Braintree via Great Dunmow/A120 new build:** Linking east and west Essex, better access to and from the Airport, cutting traffic and air pollution is what this rail link offers.
- 26. Watford-Bricket Wood-St Albans Abbey Extension to Napsbury and Hatfield:** A new station south of St Albans City on the Midland Main Line and rebuilding back to Hatfield would make this a more vibrant rail served corridor. A new Bricket Wood – Napsbury Parkway Station could junction with

extensions of the tube from Barnet and serve London Colney. Other options exist now, but land use needs to keep options open.

**27. Woodhead for North Sea/Hull-Atlantic/Liverpool via Sheffield and Manchester rebuild/new build:** Rebuilding the Woodhead rail route is not just a local matter; it is a strategic missing link offering great dividends if delivered in a timely manner. Roads deliver congestion and air pollution. See: <https://www.facebook.com/ERTAnorthernraillinks>

**Conclusion:** ERTA supports all these reopenings, rebuilds and new builds. Join us and help usher them towards delivery. We are delighted that Okehampton, Stratford upon Avon-Long Marston and Wisbech are being reopened. Leverage for more from the Government's Rail Restoration Funding: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/restoring-your-railway-fund> However, we note that £27 billion was allocated to new roads whereas only £500 million to the fund. Given a Climate Emergency and a dire need for choice and modal shift back to rail based operational platforms for passenger and freight; parity or favouring towards rail should be a logical consequence. You can write to your local MP pointing out this discrepancy and maybe cite reopenings of stations, lines and select new builds near where you live: Your MP, c/o House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA. <https://members.parliament.uk/> We call on the Government to inform a policy of deliberate protection of former rail routes, formations and deviation lands where blockages exist, to keep options for rebuild open and proper incentives and sanctions to encourage councils and developers to work with informing rail rather than ignoring or countermanding it in some cases. Rail can cater for passenger and freight unlike some other road-based transport options. Freight by rail need not be big trains always, a click, collect and send parcels unit per station of 10, 000 population or above catchment, could be very handy and rolling stock should reflect adaptability for rail to do more, from perishables, to pallets to post. Passenger stock needs to reinvent the Guard's Van for bikes, luggage and capacity. Likewise, decently lit, manned stations with accessible food, drink and toilets should be fostered, signalling a civilised society and transport experience. We can only export best practise if we lead and do it diligently ourselves.

**Disclaimer:** ERTA calls on the British Government to inform a rolling programme of local, conventional rail reopenings, informing more choice, modal shift from road to rail and cutting emissions, congestion and associated public health issues. This list is not exhaustive; reopenings and rebuild suggestions are arising all the time now. ERTA relies on willing members of the public to join and offer time and talent to help progress these schemes. We at ERTA work on a modest few projects currently, and rely on the generosity of the public to inform more. However, we are open to look at ideas and suggestions and give support where appropriate.



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<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](mailto:richard.erta@gmail.com)