



British Regional Transport Association

(BRTA)

Main Postal Address: 2 Leigh Road, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 9AB

Patrons: Sir Edmund Verney, The Rt Hon. the Lord Newby OBE, Mr George Bathurst, Professor Andrew N Williams BA, BM BCh, MSc, PhD, MRCP, FRCPCH, FRHistS, Mr Trevor Garrod, Mr Colin Crawford, Mr Leonard Lean + others welcome of professional, business, or other acumen and of good repute.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Media and Newsletter Coordinator, Campaigns Coordinator, Bedfordshire Area Rep, Delegation, Volunteering Liaison Officer, Select Marketing and General Advisor: Mr Richard Pill: T: 07752 096392 E: richard.erta@gmail.com

Treasurer, Membership, Grants and Westminster Team Coordinator:

Mr David J. Start T: 07535 641055 E: davidjstart63@gmail.com

Northampton Area Rep., and Northampton to Market Harborough (N2MH) Rail Link Liaison Officer:

Professor Andrew N. Williams

T: 07923489254 E: anw@doctors.org.uk

BRTA Northern/Yorkshire Area Rep:

Mr Chris Hyomes

10 Tythe Barn Road, Knottingley,

West Yorkshire, WF11 9BU

T: 07971 766207 E: chris.hyomes@hotmail.co.uk

Always welcome offers to help, assist, volunteer and be an area rep where you live to help recruit new members and support to BRTA and its causes. Please contact Richard Pill, BRTA CEO using contact details above.

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

<https://linkedin.com/in/richard-pill-brta>

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

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£1.50 where sold/Donations Welcome

If we are to de-clutter our roads, we need politicians of all shades and the country, to agree 'local rail solutions and re-railing' makes a load of common sense and should be a priority in joined-up-thinking precluding actions in a timely manner!

re: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/crg66p74e62o>

The demand by Government for feasibility studies upwards of £100, 000 to get started and demands for expensive and excruciating business cases at cost, delays, deters and defers all lay people and campaigners and unless someone somewhere find money in a cost-of-living crisis and austerity, these projects never see the light of day.

We do need local rail solutions. We do need local rail reopenings as a catalyst to modal shift back from road to rail for more people and goods by rail, with multiple benefits like cutting congestion, freeing up parking spaces, cutting air pollution, and improving and empowering the public with more choice, options, and enablement.

So, what can give, what can take? We need a nationwide programme, region by region of local rail line reopenings. Devon has Bude, Tavistock, Bideford and Ilfracombe in the line-up, and Government, bearing in mind the savings of road wear

and tear maintenance and greater efficiency of time-energy usage, let alone climate change issues, should be incentivising such local rail schemes and incentivising parcels companies like UPS, Royal Mail, FedEx, DPD, DHL to mention just a few - all need to be engaging with a nationwide switch policy and facilitation from road to rail, yet apart from the grand success of Varamis Rail: <https://www.varamis.co.uk/> we are decades behind where we need to be in terms of infrastructure restoration, incentives, costs and enablement. Switching to rail means capital expenditure and the Government is treating it as a 'free market/laissez-faire' matter, not the public, environmental and general leadership matter. Would Opposition Parties be any better? Alas, from observing Labour responses to 'bads', that opposition is failing to show what it would do differently. To renationalise or not to renationalise and who pays, remain academic and media points of underlying debate, when like other aspects of life, we need bringing more to the forefront with 'this is what we will do...', rather than he said, she said and this is the result - chaos, mayhem, rising costs and barriers!

Hope of interest. Our projects from a Northampton-Market Harborough rail link and that of Guildford-Horsham, along with Derby-Manchester via Matlock, Bakewell and Buxton/Chinley, need Government of any shade support and that absence and long-grassing into quangos who tell us PFI is the way to go (whenceforth does it come?), remains the 'devil in the detail' (Leviathan!)! We are going round and round, time is slipping by and resolution by default is roads and negativity, blight and unsustainable development without services and infrastructure.

BRTA, with your support, will continue to work to get progress, improvement and chip-by-chip keep all our wheels moving!

Some useful websites you may wish to explore:

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4243514/>
2. <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/243333/prioritise-tackling-toxic-emissions-from-tyres/#:~:text=Tyre%20wear%20particles,-We%20are%20growing&text=They%20are%20small%20enough%20to,metals%20like%20zinc%20and%20lead.>
3. <https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/people/as-many-as-1700-deaths-in-northamptonshire-could-be-down-to-air-pollution-in-the-next-decade-charity-warns-1364685>

If you want to see improvements, do not blame hapless motorists, rather the lack of modal and affordable choice. From the closures of local rail to BRTA's reopening efforts, from Government refusal of 18+ bus and rail passes, choice is locked-in to roads for people and good majoritively. BRTA calls for change, add your voice and wallet too!

Write to your 'new' MP – they need to be told too of whatever shade!

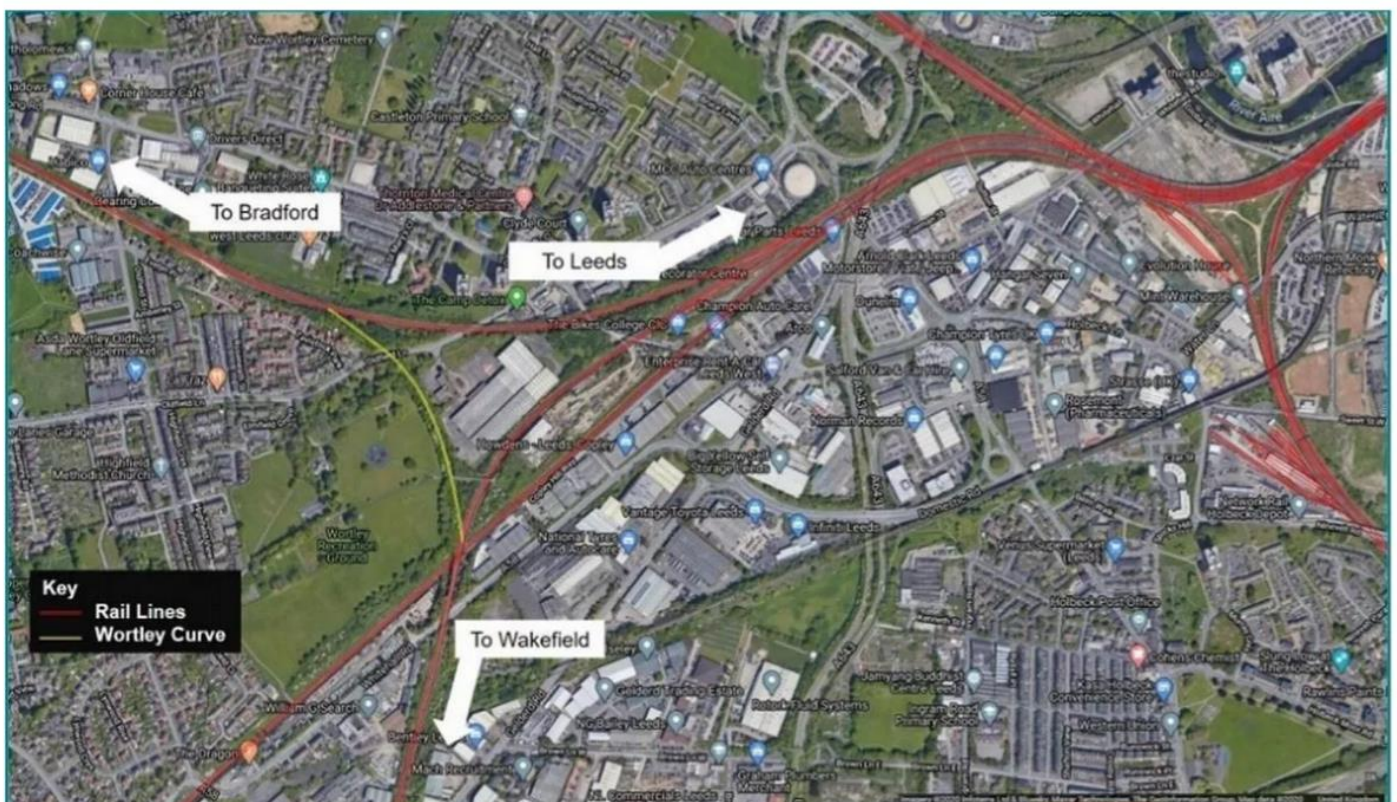


Photo above: M1 has about a 55%-45% ratio of juggernaut lorries to domestic vehicle usage. This is a huge tonnage and waste in numerous ways. Meanwhile, the Great Central was trashed for motorways and latterly by HS2, but latter will not apparently handle freight for any reason and none! A14 the same, no rail means no competition! Locked-in roads only solutions backfire and we desperately need rail links to interrupt rail deserts and glaring gaps alongside these roads on options, top of them to de-clutter, reduce fossil fuel consumption, cut congestion and save pollution and water run-offs to streams and rivers for example. Help be part of the solution, join BRTA today and get involved, be non-judgmental and let us work as a growing team and association to keep Britain moving sustainably. It does make social, economic, environmental and moral sense!

A Blast from the North! Wortley Curve is saved!

The Wortley Curve is an overgrown half-mile section of railway that connected Bradford to the Wakefield to Leeds line by-passing Leeds City Station. It was closed in 1985, much to the annoyance of Bradford politicians, and nature has since taken over much of the route. Over the Christmas period the British Regional Transport Association were made aware the land which belonged to Railway Paths Ltd was due to be auctioned in January with a guide price of £15,000.

We quickly acted sending out a press release to the local media which gained good coverage and writing to the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, the Mayor of West Yorkshire, leaders of both Bradford and Leeds councils and local MP Rachael Reeves, all, with the exception of the PM all replied positively. While the BRTA are under no illusion that there is no immediate hope of the line reopening, we believed in the long term the route was worth more to the local than £15,000. Late in the day of the auction we learnt the line had been sold to an unknown buyer for £47,000. The following day we learnt the mystery buyer was Network Rail, in a statement to the BRTA, said: "We can confirm that Network Rail has purchased the land at the former Wortley Curve. Plans for the future usage of the site continue to be discussed internally and with stakeholders."



Brigg Line Update:

The Brigg Line, formally part of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway, which ran from Manchester to Cleethorpes via the now closed Woodhead Route. To say that the Brigg line has fallen on hard times is probably under estimated. From October 1993 until May 2023 the communities of Brigg and Kirton-in-Lindsey in North Lincolnshire received a three round trip Saturday only service, on the Sheffield to Cleethorpes passenger working.

The service was then suspended for 54 weeks until January 2023 due to issues with lack of train crew, with the operator refusing to put even a replacement bus service in place.

Due to the government asking the train operator for a 10% cut and still issues with train crew, in May 2023 the service was cut to a one round trip Monday to Friday operation. The Independent Brigg Line Rail Group, who were founded in 2012, and are made up of volunteers from a transport background, many of which do not actually live on this line, sadly predicted that this would obliterate passenger numbers built up over several years especially for the communities of Brigg and Kirton-in-Lindsey.

This became true especially for the market town of Brigg who had an acceptance good football coming from the Cleethorpes and Grimsby areas but due to the new timetable customers would have to wait during the week 22 hours for their return train back. IBLRG have put forward a sensible and realistic proposal that the train operating company provides a second-round trip, this would involve one unit and two train crew who are based at Sheffield Midland.

This would mean that footfall would return between Worksop Retford and Cleethorpes as customers would have extra time at the seaside, and Brigg would see a return of an increase footfall for visitors to the popular market town.

All eyes are now on the June timetable to see if there is an improvement but is literally make or break for the Brigg line.

Despite the poor passenger service there is still an effort to bring people to Brigg from the Sheffield direction, as they will still have two and a half hours in the market town, an online guide has been published which has become very popular.

tinyurl.com/briggtrainguide

Thanks

Paul

The Independent Brigg Line Rail Group



**About Rail Central – Northampton’s newest rail development.
(above shows new tracks).**

Rail Central is an emerging plan for a new strategic rail freight interchange (SRFI) where the West Coast main line meets the Northampton Loop Line to the south-west of Northampton.

It would see the creation of a UK leading logistics and distribution capability on a site between Milton Malsor and Blisworth.

The rationale for this site is driven entirely by its strategic location and direct connections to key rail and road networks – Rail Central would connect into the West Coast main line and the Northampton Loop Line as well as into the A43 trunk route within approximately 2 miles of the M1 motorway.

In addition to supporting the national policy move for freight on rail and creating a world-class logistics and distribution facility in South Northamptonshire, Rail Central would:

- Create circa 8,000 new jobs
- Channel significant and long-term investment into South Northamptonshire
- Attract businesses for which effective supply chain management is critical to competitiveness
- Reduce overall CO2 emissions by shifting more freight from road to rail
- Underpin Northamptonshire’s position as the UK hub for logistics and support local jobs and the county’s economy

<http://railcentral.com/>

Rail Central Consultation feedback – now logged (15 June 2018)

**Alex Verbeek (Gazeley) Andrew Fisher (Ashfied Land). By Simon Barber T: 0208 940 4399
E: simon4barber@gmail.com Ed. Rebuilding Northampton-Market Harborough rail link would complement this and Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT).**

Guildford-Cranleigh-Horsham-Shoreham

On Saturday 27th April BRTA held its public meeting in Horsham. Disappointingly not many from the public turned out despite marketing. However, we were treated to good talks by Rob Whitehead from Thameslink/Southern and that of Tiffany Lynch a professional transport planner. **Right:** The panel chaired by Colin Crawford. **Below:** The audience. **Below Right:** Peter Travaskis, hands over old maps showing the original railway between Guildford, Cranleigh and Horsham/Shoreham too!



AGM and Public Meeting Saturday, 13 July at The Court House, Church Lane, Berkhamsted HP4 2AX for 2-3pm AGM and 3pm onwards business. Phone: 01442-878227 <https://www.stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk/courthouse/>

12 Noon Wetherspoons lunch (BRTA)/13.00 Set Up.

Guest Speaker: Karl Watts, a director at Railmotive Ltd.

All welcome/admission free. Please bring cash with you to peruse our second-hand book and rail magazine stall, donate or join.

Note: If you join as a new member on an old form, it will be honoured for the first year! For all other dates, please see our excellent web page: <https://ertarail.co.uk/events/> or contact

Mr Simon Barber T: 0208 940 4399 E: simon4barber@gmail.com

Tracks North of Bedford with or without East-West Rail



Top Photo: Taken between 2007 and 2015 sort of period, looking south from the old then pre-electrified Lines. 8-coach siding on left, other side of the station concourse is Platform 1A bay or Bletchley terminating trains. Our suggestion at the time was to move the concourse to another spot (old site or nearer Ashburnham Road and join these single tracks up for a through link onto the slows south of A4280 Bromham Road Bridge prior to crossovers. It could be used for freight or new passenger flows.



Same era. Looking south from A4280 Bridge western side fast lines and loads of spare land for a Platform 5 new siding for Thameslink terminals. However, looking north, whilst we do not rule out a loop, some demolition would be required. Moreover, south of River Great Ouse or north of it, an on-coming set of points for 100 mph trains probably would be hazardous and ruled out by the Office for Road and Rail (ORR)? By all means write to them and ascertain their views and evaluation. But the extra capacity could be useful if feasible.



Photo Left: Same era, looking north of A4280 Bromham Road Bridge, left shows flats which may need some demolition and on the far right, how some land-take may be required if a single line went beyond the road bridge to the slows north of Bedford. However, East-West Rail Northern Route E wants double-tracks in addition to what is there and so what East-West Rail reckons and those who take the idea but tout that existing tracks are adequate, are either misleading, playing politics or pig-ignorant on railways? East of Bedford via St John's please! It frees up and gives more options.

PRESS RELEASE

7th March 2024 @ 17:00 Jane Wood: SELRAP Media Officer.

Contact jvwood@hotmail.com or 01282 815787

Marginal Constituencies in East Lancashire ignored in the Budget.

Accrington, in the heart of East Lancashire, was where the Prime Minister and Chancellor relaunched the Conservative Party's election manifesto commitment for Levelling Up.

The Skipton to Colne rail project runs through key "Red Wall" constituencies.

Yet, over a year after those promises to Level Up were made, not a penny promised for new transport project has been delivered anywhere in this region in this week's budget.

Monies released by the recent cancellation of part of HS2 were supposed to be spent on transformational transport projects across "The North".

However East Lancashire, including Accrington, has once again been ignored by the Chancellor and PM in this week's budget.

East Lancashire is one of the most deprived places in England. Thus, SELRAP has been working with Government Ministers, civil servants, and Network Rail to reinstate the strategic trans-Pennine Skipton to Colne railway. It would reconnect long-marginalised east Lancashire to numerous employment opportunities in Yorkshire. This transformation project has an excellent business case!

SELRAP's chair Peter Bryson said:

- "All Members of Parliament along the route all fully support this vital project and they all want it delivered quickly. This truly-transformation project requires just a tiny fraction of the funding released by the cancellation of HS2. To deliver on its election manifesto promises to Level Up, this Government needs to put its money where its mouth is."



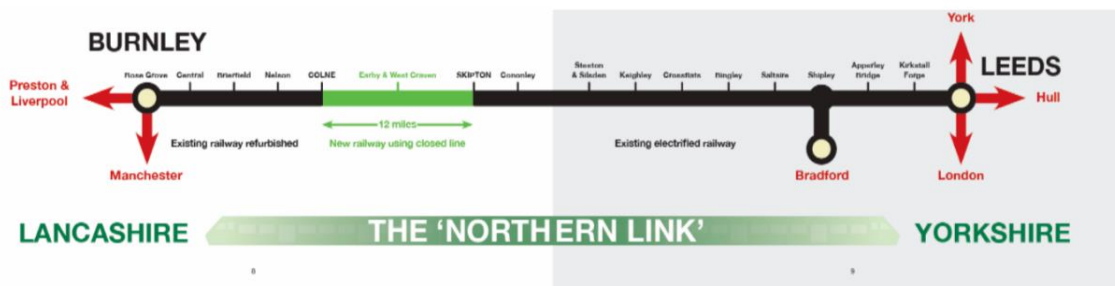
Prime Minister Rushi Sunak and Chancellor Jeremy Hunt outside Accrington Market Hall on 19th January 2023; Photo Courtesy of Sara Britcliffe, the MP for Hyndburn (who is on the left)

Notes to Editors

1. SELRAP is a campaign group: the Skipton and East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership.
2. SELRAP has about 500 members and enjoys wide support from politicians and key businesses.
3. SELRAP is campaigning to restore the 12-mile-long Skipton to Colne railway.
4. This project will give several very large communities transformational transport links; in particular by providing fast links to the northern powerhouse cities of Leeds and Bradford for education and employment opportunities.
5. The new route would serve Accrington, Burnley and Pendle; three large towns with a combined population of over quarter of a million people.
6. Journey times into Leeds and Bradford would be transformed: down to little over an hour.
7. The Department for Transport and Network Rail have already developed a sound business case for the Skipton to Colne project. This would cost £300million (i.e. approx. 1% of the government's planned spending of Northern Powerhouse Rail).
8. The project is across a green-field site; so it is both low risk and can be quickly delivered.
9. Of over 300+ councils in England, four of the five council areas along the route are in the most deprived 10%, with three out of the five being in the most deprived 5%.
10. These towns relative deprivation has worsened markedly in recent years. All towns along the route continue to fall further behind the rest of the North.
11. The project runs through the town centres of many marginal Red Wall constituencies:
 - a) Philip Davies – Conservative MP for Shipley.
 - b) Robbie Moore – Conservative MP for Keighley and Ilkley.
 - c) Julian Smith – Conservative MP for Skipton and Ripon (Note. Neighbouring the PM).
 - d) Andrew Stephenson – Conservative MP for Pendle (Note. Former HS2 Minister).
 - e) Anthony Higginbotham – Conservative MP for Burnley.
 - f) Sara Britcliffe – Conservative MP for Hyndburn (in photo above).

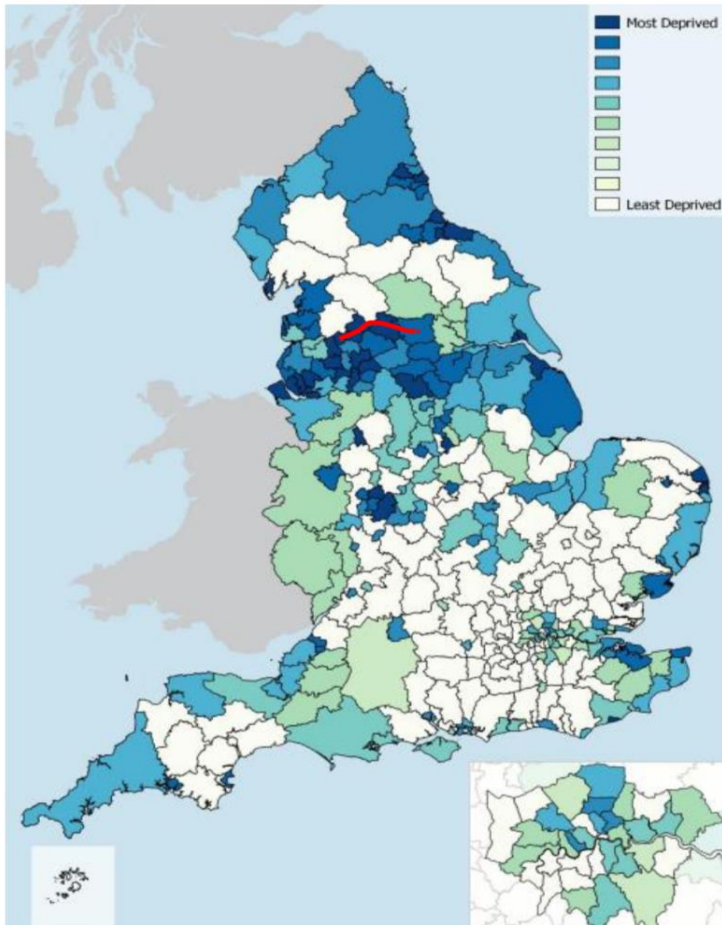
See the SELRAP Website for more details: <https://www.selrap.org.uk/>

Following consideration and review, the BRTA Executive Committee has decided to reduce Corporate Membership to just £50 per year not the floated £100 which given a cost-of-living crisis and other inflationary factors, was too steep. Please ask around and recommend people and organisations join as that enables more.



INDEX

1. Route Map of Skipton to Colne.
2. Buffers at Colne station (in Pendle).
3. Deprivation map of the UK
4. Pendle MP's Andrew Stephenson's most recent newsletter.
5. Map of "Red Wall" Constituencies.



BRTA Membership Form 2024 Onwards – Join or Renew
Official annual renewal date is circa 31st January in any given year.



Tear Off and Send with Your Subscription.

Please help us recruit more members!

Tick if a New Member: _____

Tick if renewing as an existing member: _____

I/we would like more information about volunteering
opportunities with BRTA _____

Membership of BRTA is as follows:

Ordinary Member/Family £20 _____

Corporate Members (Business/Organisations) £50 _____

Concessionary Membership

(Students or on any kind of welfare/disability) £10 _____

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 BRTA and its purposes compliant with
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) _____**

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____

**Please send completed forms, payments and donations to
BRTA Membership and Finance:**

BRTA, Mr David J. Start, 2 Leigh Road, Hildenborough,
Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 9AB

Membership Payment can also be done on-line via our website:

<https://ERTArail.co.uk/become-a-member/>

Bank Details are Sort Code: 40-45-27 Account Number: 92086808

~ HSBC have now accepted our new name, so payments to 'BRTA' now! ~