British Regional Transport Association

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Other Area Reps can be found on our website contact's page: https://brtarail.com/team-contact/ Our Blogspot is a wealth of information too**:**
https://brtarailvolunteer.blogspot.com/

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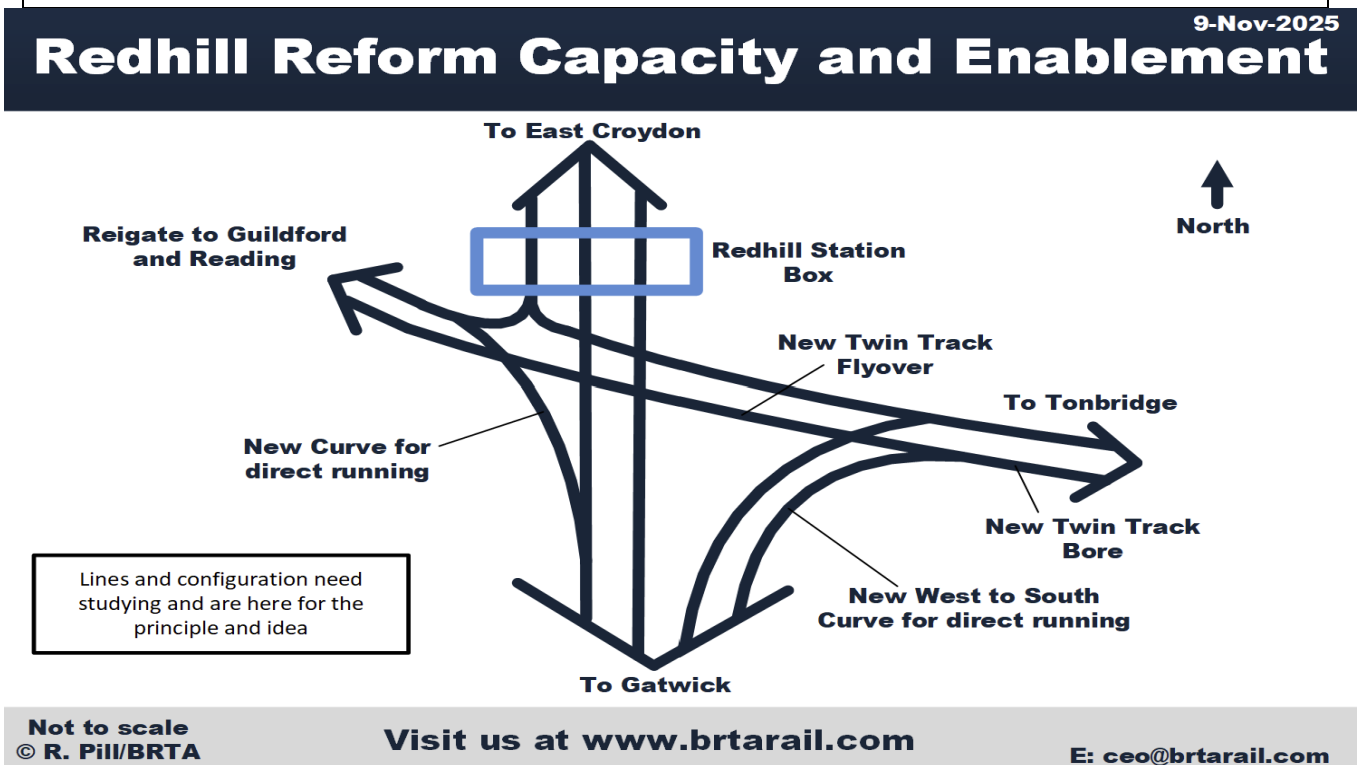
Photo cover © David J Start, Redhill May 2027. If BRTA's calls for Redhill Rail Reforms and electrification (third-rail) of the North Downs Railway was given the go-ahead, then diesels like these Turbos could be deployed elsewhere, including for potential reopenings, Cranleigh or Tavistock indeed! There is currently a chronic shortage of suitable rolling stock for branch and secondary lines and inadequate supply compounds overcrowding on trains too, eroding the quality experience people pay for and expect from the railways.



The British Regional Transport Association (BRTA) is voluntary and we rely on the generosity of the wider public to join and help with reliable volunteer assistance to enable more and better.

Key roles we need now are:

1. Marketing Officer to help get turn out for forums and meetings.
2. Sales Officer to grow a team and have stalls at Model Railway Exhibitions and other outlets to sell and raise much needed funds and recruitment for us.
3. Area Reps for the North West, East Anglia and East Midlands.
   If at all interested, please email Richard Pill, CEO at ceo@brtarail.com to take it further. It is all voluntary and flexible. Reliability is a key ingredient BRTA seeks most of all.

Hunstanton: If re-railing can't be done here… what hope for our ailing seaside resorts denied rail access due to the 1960's closures?

Population: 4, 370 (2021 Census according to AI Overview) but 10, 494, 000 trips and 509, 000 overnight stays (West Norfolk) source AI Overview. From the south, people come by the A149 trunk road which serves Heacham (population 4, 605 source AI overview)

And apart from the attraction of Sandringham, Snettisham area comes in at (population 2, 583) and that of Dersingham (population 4, 700 2021 Census). These are mainly growing places, but are they of themselves enough to sustain an all-year-round rail link?

The influx of visitorship and stay-over is huge though and that puts a strain on land-use capacity for demand for ever more parking allocations and that is land which cannot be used for other purposes, like housing and employment where all-year-round supply is required to sustain the local economy.

What a rail link offers is as follows:

1. Another modal choice of a sustainable type to access the west coastal side of West Norfolk.
2. The railway offers commuting to King Lynn, a principal and ancient portal town as well as integration with commuting services to Ely (for Norwich, Ipswich and Peterborough), Cambridge (including East-West Rail to the Oxford Corridor), Stansted Airport and London and all these audiences to the Kings Lynn-Hunstanton corridors and destinations in a sustainable fashion. Trains from London are quick and the reopening could demand that investment in upgrading the Ely-Kings Lynn main line is done with twin-tracks and possibly a

direct south-west curve for direct running and integration with further-afield services including the North and Leicester/Birmingham corridors.

Station design: Both Hunstanton and Wisbech share this, the old station sites are built on so any new station would need to be south of built town perimeter. This is not a problem, because improved access from such a Parkway station to the town centre can be done including better pedestrian access, cycling lanes and bus links for example. The railway feeds them the town and resort and balances the transport impact whilst sustainably boosting the economy.

Support: There was a campaign to reopen the railway as part of the Restoring Your Railway Fund, which was terribly inadequate, but hugely symbolic that reopenings need to be tabled, taken seriously and funded towards reopening in actuality. Rachel Reeves MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer on elected to office cut that budget and slowed the reopenings agenda down, even as most reopenings in modern Britain have surpass predicted usage and flourished bringing on/off-line benefits and regeneration in such reopening wakes. What or whom is to say Hunstanton would not be equally as well patronised and regenerative?

A study should be done to bring together, update hitherto analysis and make the new case based on where things are at now. Likewise protecting the route and any deviation lands. Some relocation may be required as in many other cases, but seaside resorts need tracks and trains back now! If the government is serious on growth where it counts and keeping a modicum of green credentials, then Hunstanton is one case it should take seriously as it could underscore revitalisation of the

West Norfolk area medium to long-term or if no railway, underscore a failure to apprehend the benefits and must-have case.

Further Reading:

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lynn_and_Hunstanton_Railway
2. https://democracy.west-norfolk.gov.uk/documents/s31943/190311%20Hunstanton%20Railway%20LR%201.pdf

Marchwood Hampshire and Leicester-Burton on Trent, the antithesis of what we want! We want reopenings, a system which fosters and welcomes them and takes the hint to optimise accommodation of more trains, tracks and capacity, not constrictions and losses!

re: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c202n2zlz85o

The rejection of reopening a railway on mothballed rail lines, should be a warning to us all who aspire for local rail reopenings. Renationalisation is not absorbing it, the rejection seems once and for all and leaves open taking up track and selling the land - a pattern all too familiar with closures.

The grounds for ORR's rejection are interesting:

" Network capacity, the firm's future performance, the need for infrastructure and the scheme's financial viability.":

1. Network capacity - not hint of where exactly but all radial routes to, across and out of London have acute problems holding back rails potential and terminals are struggling with plethora aspirations "direct trains to London" It cannot be done until and unless orbital rails (M25 or outer) are progressed and again the joined-up agenda has slipped in planning them.

a. Heathrow/Old Oak Common arcs, not redeemable, but links are still not given the go-ahead and a lack of consultation on how different operators or one nationalised operator can share the same platforms and tracks for example.

b. Lower Thames Crossing, £11billion found for it, but a road rather than a rail, what a missed opportunity?!

c. Our North Downs to Tonbridge Lines viaduct and rail reforms at Redhill, would enable Channel Tunnel to Didcot and beyond London orbitals for passenger and freight. Yes, some pain but loads of gain, needs a study at least.

d. Then there is the northern arc of outer M25 linking ECML, MML and WCML with Underground extensions to Parkway Stations. Again, long floated idea, no take up by any quarter and you probably start with the Croxley Link

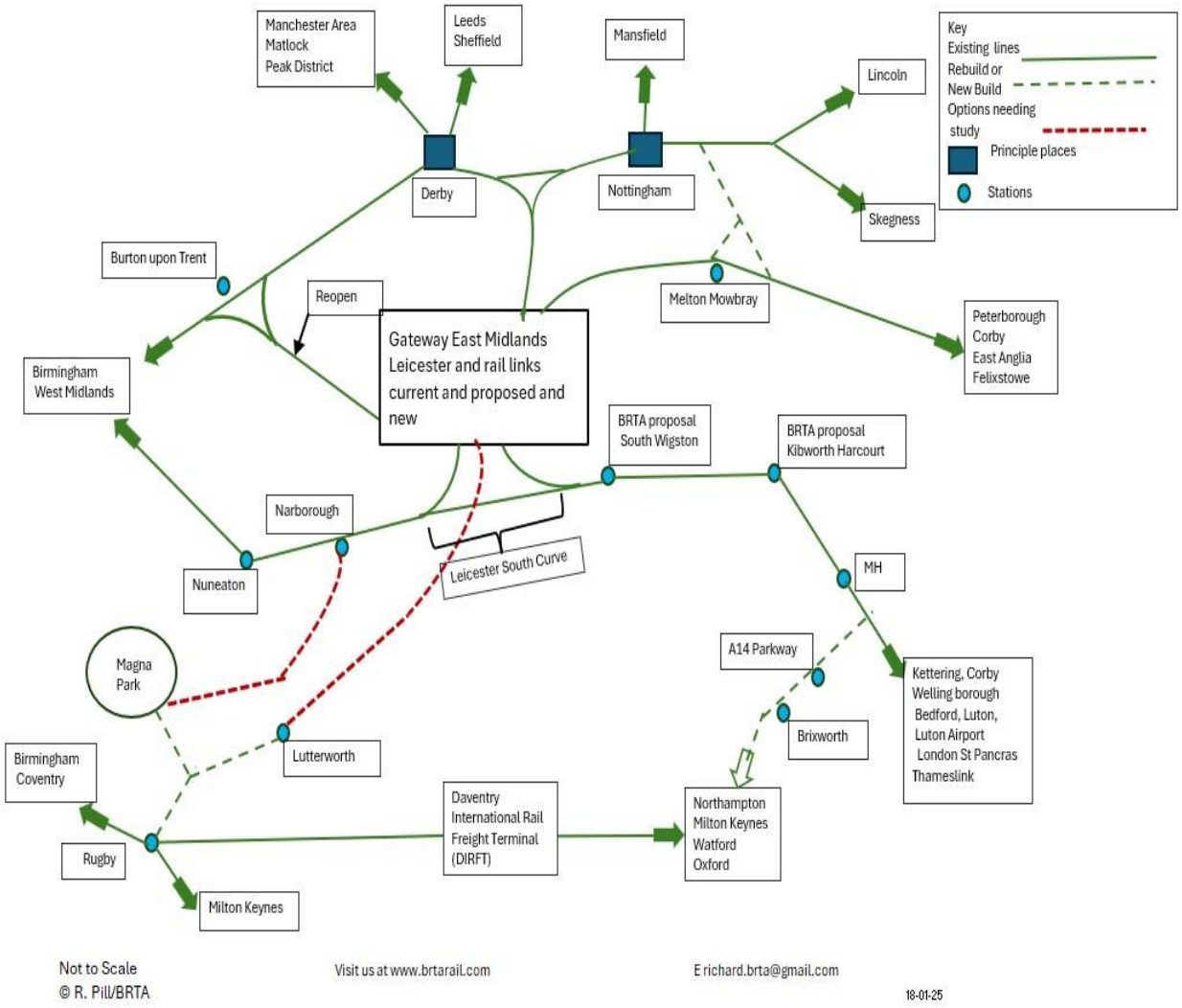
at Watford for example, Herts has no government will or support, TFL not interested as out of London.

2. The firm's future performance, they are agency to get it started, but ORR could say they will keep it under review and absorb into Great British Railways as a work in hand, but zero support despite a good case serving a population off the rails currently. ORR is acting as a gate keeper but is liberal on roads than rail aspirations, which face many bureaucratic hurdles and costs to get even to this stage, which does not serve the nation's interests, beit people, places, land use and the environment for example. In Leicestershire the Knighton-Burton-upon-Trent rail link faces possible closure and removal and land sold escalators, when it could be serving to clear paths through Leicester by diverting freight via Burton and Derby/Nottingham links and vice versa to south of Leicester. Then there is the regenerational commute to gain access directly into Leicester and vice versa (footfall on a sustainable basis) to the heartlands around Coalville for example and historic Ashby de la Zouch!

3. Performance, future viability and maintenance costs: Absorbed into GBR over all, keep the gain of the reopening. But because of a lack of capacity elsewhere, which should not be the promoters cost or concerns, rather creating capacity - run to Old Oak Common instead via Heathrow Southern Rails (?) or even shuttle to the nearest large rail-served town and receive inwards benefits on the back of a service? Yet none of this is considered; it is a straight rejection and it is a railway! We, as a nation can't

keep doing this, we are cutting our nose to spite our proverbial 'face'.

Please email your MP: https://members.parliament.uk/members/commons?sort=1 It should be a concern to us all, the issues need working on and government should see the wider interest, not just models on a broken system not going very fast any time soon?



The national rail reopenings agenda – is the government playing fair?

re: https://www.derbyshiretimes.co.uk/news/politics/council/derbyshire-council-backs-peak-district-railway-plan-despite-fears-for-monsal-trail-8646444

This rail reopening would link East Midlands and North-West (Derby and Manchester) and vice versa. That is sustainable footfall, spend and regeneration. It has been a long running campaign which BRTA supported before, during and now going forward too.

The main driving force is: https://www.peaksanddalesrailway.com/

Please email your MP in support: https://members.parliament.uk/members/commons?sort=1

Some may ask why? This railway, like Colne-Skipton: https://www.selrap.org.uk/ has turned a corner whereby they have successfully courted local authority support and a study has been done showing the case to be robust for reopenings.

These two are candidates along with Witney in Oxfordshire and one or two others for government consideration.

In Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire, we have not been so lucky. Even if you get as far as the Peak Rail Project has to restore the through rail line, objections to possible re-routing of the Monsal Trail to accommodate a railway and government which can turn around as per Witney and say "no money"; means the queue of qualifiers grows, whilst lesser successes are subject to attack of cynical dismissal, no case jibes and other development agendas which are not being made to consider protecting rail corridors let alone including rail to reduce the impact of sprawling developments on the road system,

neighbourhoods, pollution and deteriorating public health and environmental effects.

BRTA plays a role and we are growing. But the wider public need to tell politicians that in many cases we want our tracks and trains back and that it makes sense for modal shift planning back from a roads-based economy to rail, or at least a level playing field and a robust rail network for people and goods than we currently have and which these local-regional reopenings can engender.

The Peak District National Park would be served by this rail artery, cutting encroachments on grass verges and the sheer intrusion on the environment mass motoring and traffic/tourism and over-kill can inform.

Someone has to clean up and the land used for parking spaces is land which cannot be used for other things like employment, social housing and conservation for example.

The government says it has no money; it is busy renationalising the railways, but privatising the roads it seems? It is prioritising HS2 as 'part of the railway' to the tune of £1 billion per mile and delivery 2039.

BRTA also notes the government is spending £billions on new and upgraded roads, whilst saying no money for local-regional rail reopenings. It cancelled the Restore Your Railway Fund, specific funding for reopenings, now the agenda is being suffocated amidst many other demands and what would it take for a specific fund for reopenings to be brought back in some shape for form? £500 million for the whole nation is inadequate, but the principle of a specific, targeted fund, is a much needed one to help usher schemes along towards approval.

East-West Rail (Oxford-Bedford-Cambridge) celebrates the 40th anniversary of the launch of a public meeting to get Oxford-Milton Keynes reopened (December 1986), when the tracks just needed upgrading and progressively as more services and freight used it. Alas it was mothballed and allowed to rot, decades demanding continuous studies and under Labour and Tory, not delivery! Now at £billions Bicester-Bletchley is 'open' as a spankingly brand-new built railway, but no passenger services. There seems no rush for the Secretary of State for Transport to wade in and try and reach a deal between management and unions. This, unlike the NHS Doctors Striking and Government engaging to try and stop them?!

The danger is that 'stable government', can also need speeding up, a failure to deliver, can mean drift and paralysis and there are urgent needs including lowering emissions and providing cleaner public transport choices at affordable prices. Whether public or private delivers, the jury may be out, but meanwhile we need a pragmatic system and lead from governments of all tiers to move towards more rail reopenings and reinstatements the length and breadth of Britain.

It is no use complaining and providing jobs, if the transport is not there at accessible rates, to enable young people to engage. Local rail enables more and reduces the effects of congestion, delays and spiralling costs of wasted time and delusions. The railways were a bedrock of employment on and off the rails and informs skills which can be used in a variety of fields.

Conductors on trains (formerly Guards) are not a 'waste' they can provide information, sell tickets, ensure the smooth operation of the services provided and act as front-line people to deter problems or raise the alarm when something is awry.

BRTA Membership Form 2026-2027: Join or Renew
Official annual renewal date may vary 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:

Family Membership £26 ☐ _____

Ordinary Member (Individual) £16 ☐ _____

Corporate Members (Business/Organisations) £51 ☐ _____

Concessionary Membership
(Any kind of Welfare/Disability/Students)
£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
Mr David J. Start T: 07535 641055
E: davidjstart63@gmail.com
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