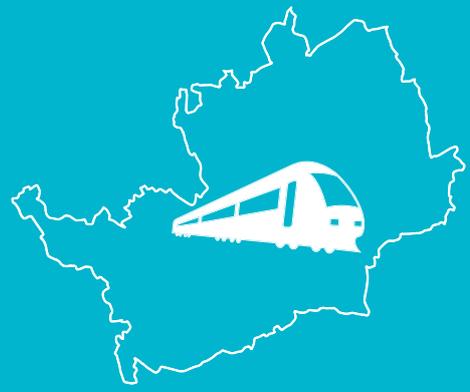


Hertfordshire's
Rail Strategy
December 2020



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Introduction

Transport, including rail, continues to play a key role in maintaining Hertfordshire as a place where people want to live and work. Recent and emerging national and local plans point to the continuation of growth in Hertfordshire and neighbouring areas, with ever increasing pressures on the county's transport system.

The Rail Strategy is therefore required to ensure that the railway in Hertfordshire can support economic growth and development. It sets the strategic framework against which decisions regarding future franchises and investment in key elements of infrastructure can be identified and prioritised



Role of the Rail Strategy

1.1 The role of the Rail Strategy

is to set out the county council's aspirations for the development of the rail network in Hertfordshire. It will form the basis of any dialogue between the county council and the train operating companies, Network Rail, Department for Transport and other organisations with an interest in rail matters. Specifically, the strategy will be used to influence the rail industry's strategy development process, such as Network Rail's Long Term Planning Process (LTPP) and feeds into key documents such as the Government's Initial Industry Plans and High Level Output Specifications (HLOS). It will also inform the specifications for the local rail franchises when they are retendered.

This strategy also sets out the county council's role, defining how it will engage with the rail industry and stakeholders to help ensure that the aspirations are met. In doing so it is hoped that partnership projects can be delivered to the benefit of all parties

This Rail Strategy is a supporting document to the Local Transport Plan that sets out the policies and measures required to improve transport across all modes.

The aim is to deliver the Rail policy which is as follows:

The county council will support and promote rail use in the county, especially in order to reduce car use. To do this it will:

- Work with the rail industry and other partners to seek improvements to train services, in regards, to capacity, journey times, frequency and range of destinations served.
- Work with the rail industry and other stakeholders to make rail travel more attractive through improved fares and ticketing, upgraded station facilities, and better access and interchange by sustainable modes of transport.
- Work with the rail industry and other stakeholders to ensure new rolling stock is comfortable and well equipped and fully accessible
- Support Community Rail Partnerships in the county

The Rail Strategy also supports elements of other Local Transport Plan policies including Travel Plans and Behaviour change, Accessibility, Freight and Logistics and Airports.



THERE WERE
72.5 million
HERTFORDSHIRE
JOURNEYS IN 2019

0.75% increase

↑
on the
previous
year

1.2 The Rail Context for Hertfordshire

The rail industry in Hertfordshire is complex. Routes are predominantly arranged to serve London, and therefore the system is more of a series of discrete lines rather than a joined-up countywide network. The rail industry is also set up to serve the radial routes and there are many different rail organisations and divisions of national organisations i.e. Network Rail, that cover Hertfordshire. Network Rail underwent a restructuring process in 2019 with the aim of devolving regions and becoming more accountable to customers. Although this should go some way to simplifying communications for Hertfordshire, the county's network falls into two regions and five separate routes

Eastern Region – Anglia Route, East Midlands Route and East Coast Route

North West and Central Region – Central Route and West Coast South Route

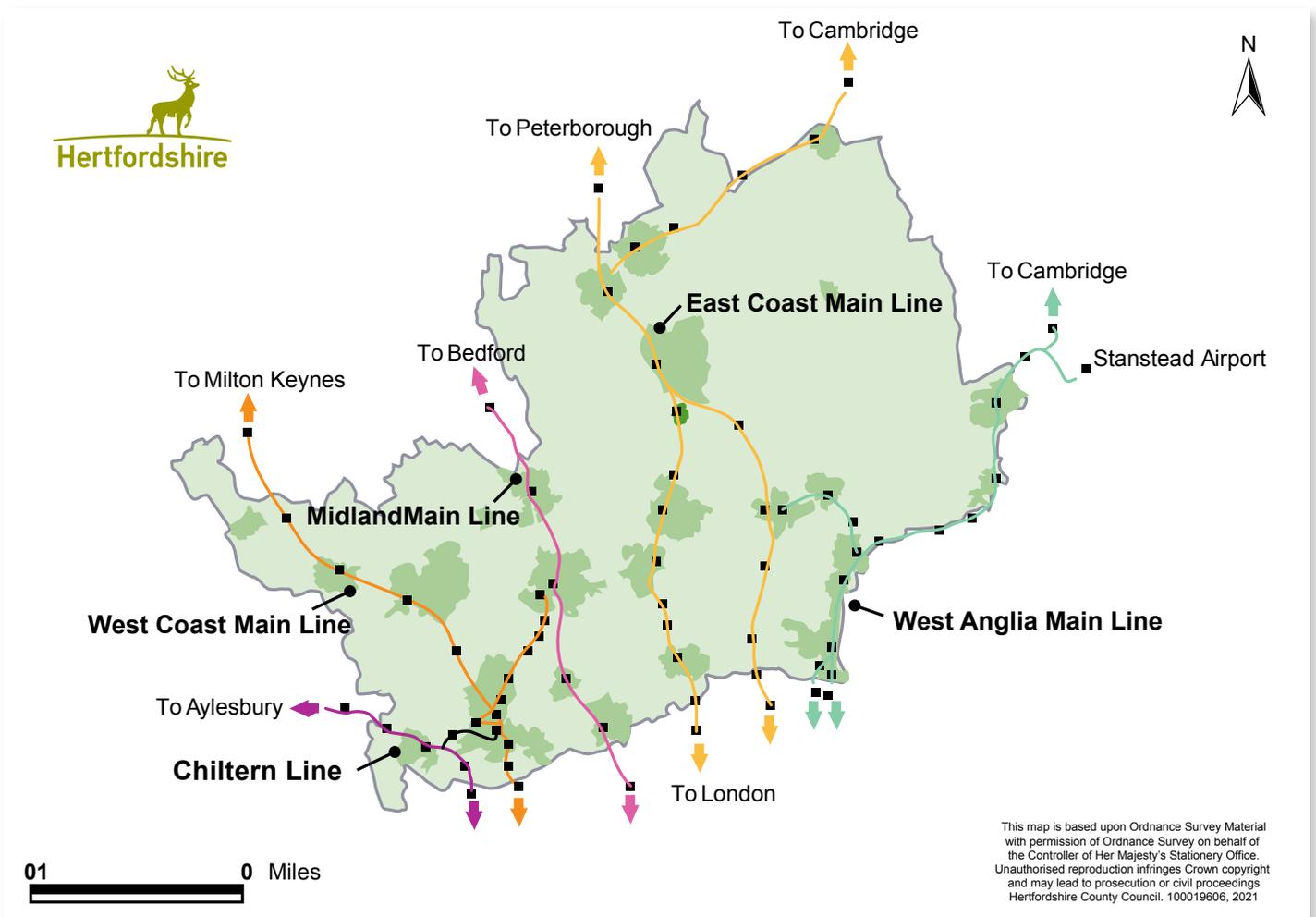
A total of 11 train operating companies (TOCs) provide services in Hertfordshire and are responsible for the management of 50 stations. The stations range in footfall from 20,000 passengers per year at Park Street to over 8 million at Watford, and 23 stations each handle over 1 million passengers per year.

The use of the rail network is heavily dominated by commuting trips, accounting for 76% of all rail journeys. The main destination for these trips is into Greater London.

Train use to work is significantly higher in Hertfordshire (13%) than the England average (9%). However, this differs considerably on a district level, ranging from 19% in St Albans to 7% in Stevenage.

There were 72.5 million Hertfordshire journeys in 2019, which is a 0.75 % increase on the previous year.

Figure 1 Hertfordshire Rail Network



1.3 Key Issues and Themes

- Rail plays a very important role in the Hertfordshire economy with over 60,000 people commuting out of the county every day, the majority (96%) into London. Rail also brings over 12,000 workers into the county, with about 75% of these coming from Greater London;
- A few key stations in the county are dominant, particularly for travel to London. Watford Junction, St Albans City, Stevenage, Harpenden and Hitchin account for 42% of all rail demand in Hertfordshire;
- There is a lack of good orbital (east-west) rail links in Hertfordshire and orbital road links (e.g M25, A414) are congested and forecast to get worse. The rail network is largely radial meaning there are connectivity gaps;
- There are issues with station and train facilities that affect the passenger experience of rail in the county. Satisfaction in London and the South East is in line with the national average at 80% in Autumn 2019, which is 2% higher than the previous year. However, West Midlands Trains which, under the brand London North Western, runs services on the West Coast Mainline between Euston and the West Midlands has seen an 11% drop in customer satisfaction to 73%.
- Congestion on the Hertfordshire road network is a significant issue, particularly on key corridors such as the A1M and many strategic roads are expected to be over capacity by 2031 causing longer and more unreliable journey times;
- Rail will need to accommodate increased travel demand in future. Hertfordshire's population is projected to grow by 18% to 2031 (an additional 203,000 people). Employment is expected to grow by 15% (over 80,000 new jobs). In addition, growth in neighbouring areas, particularly London, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, will increase demand for rail travel through Hertfordshire;
- Due to capacity concerns there is a tension between the demand for ever-faster long distance services and the need for an increase in capacity on commuter routes.
- A number of Hertfordshire's rail lines are forecast to be over capacity by 2031;
- The Thameslink Programme completed in 2019 has gone some way to address the capacity issues, and a number of rail projects are committed or planned that will transform rail travel in the region in the next 10-15 years. Major projects such as Crossrail, HS2 and potentially Crossrail 2, will provide significant changes to the capacity available and journey opportunities on key services to and from Hertfordshire;

Overarching themes that occur over a number of lines include:

- Capacity constraints and bottlenecks on lines
- Peak time overcrowding on key services
- Low frequencies and slow journey times from key stations



80%



PASSENGER SATISFACTION IN LONDON & THE SOUTH EAST IN AUTUMN 2019

1.4 Hertfordshire County Council's Role

The county council has no statutory powers or duties that are directly related to the provision of rail services. However, the county council, in partnership with the ten district councils, is keen to ensure that the rail needs of Hertfordshire are adequately served. Therefore, as well as seeking improvements from the rail industry the county council also undertakes the following activities to support rail growth:

- Regular liaison with train operating companies and Network Rail at both an operational and strategic level;
- Providing contributions to facilitate improvements to stations;
- Delivering interchange improvements; Promoting major schemes through the Local Transport Plan;
- Supporting Community Rail Partnerships;
- Delivering the Intalink Enhanced partnership to promote rail services and links with bus operations, and the development of PlusBus;

- Responding to DfT/Network Rail consultations to promote improvements for the benefit of Hertfordshire residents and businesses;
- Working with other authorities to seek improvements to rail services;
- Working with train operating companies on the development of Station Travel Plans and work with partners and stakeholders to promote and enable more sustainable modes of travel to stations;
- Maintain links with Rail User Groups (RUGs), commuter groups and other stakeholder organisations e.g. Rail Future and Transport Focus.

In order to deliver these activities, the county council will continue to strengthen its links with district councils, neighbouring authorities, England's Economic Heartland (EEH), train operating companies, Network Rail, the Department for Transport, Transport for London and other national and regional bodies e.g. ECMA, WCR250



2. Rail Strategy Development

The rail infrastructure within Hertfordshire consists of a number of independent rail corridors, generally running south-north through the county. There are different franchised operators for each of these routes and Network Rail treats each corridor as a discrete route with its own demand pressures and capacity and investment priorities, many of which are driven by considerations outside Hertfordshire. The Rail Strategy therefore deals with each corridor individually, while at the same time developing an overall coordinated strategy that addresses network-wide topics, such as east-west movement or station access.

2.1 Implementing the Strategy

The top priorities identified in this Strategy will be developed as a priority to feed into the main rail industry processes, such as Network Rail Route Study consultations. DfT's HLOS (Higher Level Output Specification) process, and franchise consultations and renewals. Alongside this process the remainder of the strategic priorities will also be progressed with relevant stakeholders.

There is excellent stakeholder interest and support for this strategy from both within the county and the rail industry, and this will be harnessed by the county council and its partners to deliver a successful rail strategy that delivers the development objectives for the county.

2.2 Rail Industry Timescales

A key element in developing the Rail Strategy is understanding the rail industry timescales for the development of initiatives. It is important to understand that rail industry planning timescales are long. Each Control Period (the period over which the Office of Rail and Road sets regulatory targets, income and costs for Network Rail) lasts five years. Whilst this is good for the industry, in that it can plan with some certainty of funding for that period, it has meant that new infrastructure schemes often have to be planned with more than five years lead in times. However, the system for funding enhancements was taken out of the Control Period 6 (2019-2024).

Network Rail now has to "bid" for enhancement projects and Department for Transport will decide which projects to fund.

The Department published its list of preferred projects in October 2019.

Schemes need to go through 4 Decision Gateways before funding is approved.

- **Decision to Initiate** – takes the scheme into the "Pipeline" and unlocks funding for a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC);
- **Decision to Develop** – builds on the SOBC and authorises development work towards a single viable option and to put together the Outline Business Case;
- **Decision to Design** - follows the Outline Business Case and permits technical development to ensure that the desired outputs can be delivered through the option being progressed;
- **Decision to Deliver** - passes the project over to Network Rail for implementation.

There are opportunities to progress smaller schemes and service improvements through the franchise renewal processes, of which a number have occurred during the previous Control Period, for example East Anglia and West Midlands.

The Network Rail Delivery Plans for the Regions in CP6 can be found here: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/who-we-are/publications-and-resources/our-delivery-plan-for-2019-2024/>

Major projects will also have significant impact on the county, particularly over the next 10 to 20 years, with schemes such as Crossrail 1 and HS2 and potentially Crossrail 2, all scheduled to be implemented in this timescale.

3. Overall Aspirations

This section sets out the overall standards that the county council wishes to see adopted across the rail network in Hertfordshire.

3.1 Franchises

In the past the county council has supported the principle of franchises as the basis for providing long-term stability for the rail user whilst encouraging the train operators to provide improvements to services and facilities. It also recognised the need for the franchisees to make a return on their investment and therefore wished to see franchise lengths of at least 10 years, but with appropriate break points if clearly defined performance levels were not met.

The long-awaited outcome of the Williams Review into the Rail Industry will make recommendations on how to improve the franchising system across the industry which will include greater participation by local stakeholders and regional transport authorities. The White Paper was due to have been published by the summer of 2020 but has been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic. At the start of the pandemic when the county went into lockdown the Department for Transport introduced Emergency Measures Agreements with all train operating companies and these were replaced in September 2020 with Emergency Recovery Measures Agreements which will be in place for between 12 and 18 months and are designed to bring the rail franchising system to an end, they contain provisions to bring the current franchises to an end when they expire.

The county council supports the move away from the franchising system towards a new forward-looking model which will allow for long-term planning, greater integration between the TOCs and Network Rail to improve reliability of services and which will offer a simpler and fairer ticketing structure. The county council would expect to retain a role in the process of awarding contracts under the new structure.

The county council would also welcome the involvement of Transport for London in influencing rail services beyond the Greater London boundary on the understanding that there would be no detrimental effect to any local service in Hertfordshire. To this end the county council will lobby the Department for Transport to establish a Capital Regional Transport Body which would ensure that the interests of Hertfordshire residents are represented and services to stations in the county are maintained or improved.

3.2 Service Levels

The county council wishes to see the following train service levels as the minimum across the county:

For local services:

- Minimum frequency of half-hourly from all stations (Mon-Sat) and at least hourly on Sundays but with the aspiration to see Sunday services increase to the same level as Saturdays.
- An increase in services on Boxing Day in line with current Sunday services.
- Aspiration of at least four trains per hour in each direction from all stations on all routes serving London;
- First arrivals in London before 06.00 (Mon-Sat) and 08.00 (Sun). All services to begin by 06.00 (Mon-Sat);
- Last trains no earlier than 01.00 from London termini;
- Clockface timetable to be maintained throughout the day, except for peak period services;
- Appropriate mix of semi-fast and all-stations services

For long-distance services to and from North of Hertfordshire:

- Incoming services should allow arrivals at Hertfordshire stations from all major routes between 08.00 and 10.00 for business travel, with corresponding return journeys between 16.00 and 19.00
- Outgoing services should provide departures from Hertfordshire stations to all major destinations between 06.00 and 09.00;
- Services provided to a wide range of destinations throughout the day
- Stevenage and Watford Junction to be maintained as InterCity rail heads, recognising their importance for Hertfordshire and the wider region

The county council also wishes to see sufficient capacity provided on all services and will continue to liaise with TOCs to ensure available rolling stock is configured in such a way to ensure this is possible.

3.3 Fares and Ticketing

The county council encourages train operators to adopt innovative approaches to fares and ticketing schemes, within the limits of franchise agreements. These include:

- Special fare packages and promotions for contra-peak and flexible business travel
- Concessionary fares for older and disabled passengers;
- The introduction of carnet tickets for frequent travel that does not justify a season ticket, but which offers the passenger equal value for money;
- Participation in *Intalink* sponsored ticketing schemes such as PlusBus and any future flexible multi-modal ticketing schemes
- Discounted season ticket options for school or college travel;
- Wide availability of ticket sales through TVMs, internet, mobile apps etc.;
- Increased availability of smart ticketing options that reflect the growing need for flexible travel options and allow those entitled to discounted fares to use them.

The Department for Transport announced in 2017 £80million investment in new ticketing technology and set the following objective:

“Every passenger will have the choice of travelling without a paper ticket by the end of 2018...”

The county council has welcomed roll out of contactless Pay as you Go to include more Hertfordshire stations during 2019. Stations to benefit to date are St Albans City, Harpenden, Radlett, Potter’s Bar, Hertford North, Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City. It is now our aspiration that passengers will be able to use contactless at all stations in Hertfordshire.

Although the increase in smart ticketing options is welcomed and should be developed further the county council would not want to see any reduction in the availability of paper tickets for passengers for whom the use of smart ticketing and contactless payments are not possible. Ticket offices remain a vital service which should, wherever possible, be retained.

3.4 Stations

The county council has carried out audits of all stations in Hertfordshire based on the “Better Rail Stations” work published by the Department for Transport in 2009. Although this guidance has not been updated in the intervening years and some of the stations in Hertfordshire are now incorrectly categorised it is a good starting point in assessing the standards stations should meet. The audit process is ongoing and will in future also reflect the Regenerating Britain’s Railways Stations document published by the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) in 2017 and the Design Standards for Accessible Stations Version 04 document published by DfT in 2015.

Where existing conditions fall short of the standards, the aspirations for improvements are set out throughout this document.

The county council will work with the train operating companies and Network Rail to seek these improvements.

3.5 Accessibility

The Department for Transport published the Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations in 2015. This is a comprehensive document setting out the European and National standards for the rail industry to ensure rail travel is accessible to all who wish to use it and covers the following:

- **Pre-travel information** – this must be kept up to date on the National Rail website and on the train operators’ media platforms. Information must also be available in a format which is accessible to those passengers who find online information challenging to access. All TOCs must have a Disabled Passengers Protection Policy (DPPP) which is a public document and produce a summary leaflet which can be made available to passengers.
- **Disabled parking** – this should be 5% of the total spaces in the car park and should be sited to allow level access free of obstacles into the station.
- **Signage** – including information on use of fonts, pictograms and tactile/braille signage
- **Announcements** – including the need for induction loops
- **Ticket Sales**- specifications for ticket office counters and TVMs
- **Ticket Barriers** – including the need for manned gates
- **Lifts, ramps and stairs**
- **Platforms**
- **Toilets**
- **Staff training**



In addition to ensuring stations are as accessible as possible TOCs should also offer assisted travel which can be booked in advance. It is an aspiration for disabled passengers to “turn up and go” and work is progressing on the development of technology such as phone apps to request assistance on the day of travel which will make this easier in the future.

The county council, through its involvement on TOCs’ Equalities forums will continue to encourage TOCs to continue to improve their offer for passengers including those with hidden disabilities such as autism, dementia and mental illness. It is important that staff are trained to be able assist passengers with a wide range of needs and stations are made as welcoming and unthreatening as possible.

The county council will work with the industry to ensure that stations in Hertfordshire which are not fully accessible are highlighted when Access for All funding rounds are announced, both for large schemes including the provision of lifts and for smaller schemes such as provision of ramps, handrails, disabled toilets etc, and will ensure TOCs include these stations in their bids.

Two stations, Hertford North and Kings Langley have received funding in CP6 to provide lifts

3.6 Passenger Information

Hertfordshire has a separate strategy for passenger information, based on the activities of the Intalink partnership. Most train operating companies have had an active role in the development of the partnership and the products and services it offers. Therefore, in order to ensure continuity and further development, the county council expects these train operating companies and their successors to remain partners. All train operating companies, including those providers of long distance services are encouraged to become full and active members of the partnership which is something the county council makes clear when in discussion with potential franchisees.

The principal elements of the Intalink Bus Strategy and Enhanced Partnership are:

- An integrated approach to delivery of passenger transport information based on the Intalink Bus Strategy and Enhanced Partnership;
- An increasing reliance on electronic information for journey planning and at all stages during the journey, in real-time;
- Wider use of the internet and mobile phone networks for information and product purchase, including smart ticketing;
- Development of integrated ticketing schemes and products to stimulate growth in patronage;

A stronger emphasis on strategic and tactical marketing for both the bus and rail networks, to increase patronage.

LTP4 Policy 6: Accessibility

The county council will seek to increase the ease with which people, particularly disadvantaged groups, can access key services, by:

- c) Promoting travel options and facilitating accessible travel information provision, including open data initiatives.**

The County Council will continue to work with TOCs to ensure that communication with passengers and stakeholders continues to improve. Particularly at times of disruption it is important that passengers are kept up to date with information about changes to services and the alternatives available to them.

TOCs are making better use of technology to ensure that station staff are well informed and able to communicate directly with passengers but there is still room for improvement. TOCs use social media to communicate directly with passengers and have phone apps which provide real time information for train arrivals and departures. However, there are still times when the messaging is not consistent causing unnecessary confusion and frustration for passengers.

The County Council welcomes the introduction of digital display screens across the network and will work with TOCs to ensure that these screens are provided at all stations in Hertfordshire.

All Train Operating companies have fully accessible websites which provide up to date information on services, ticketing and fares, planned engineering works and discounts and offers. The website text, although accessible is only available in English. The TOCs also have free smart phone apps which provide real-time travel information and ticket purchasing.

3.7 Freight

The County Council supports the transfer of more freight from road to rail, as set out in the Department for Transport Rail Freight Strategy 2016 and will give appropriate emphasis to freight in ongoing discussions relating to network capacity in Hertfordshire. However, this must not be at the expense of passenger services in the County.

The value of transit rail freight across the county is recognised in terms of its positive impact on congestion on the primary road network. The County Council also supports the improvement to freight corridors, such as Felixstowe to Nuneaton, outside the county if this would mean that freight movements would transfer from the county network, releasing capacity for passenger services.

Planning permission has been granted for the provision of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange on the former Radlett Aerodrome site in St Albans District.

LTP Policy 16: Freight and Logistics

The county council will seek to manage freight and logistics traffic, by:

- c) Encouraging a shift from road-borne freight to less environmentally damaging modes, including rail, water and pipelines.**

3.8 Engineering Works and Emergencies

It is recognised that from time to time the need for engineering works will require the use of replacement bus services. Where necessary, the County Council wishes to see that:

- The engineering works and replacement services are advertised widely and well in advance;
- The location of replacement bus stops is clearly marked and signposted from the station;
- The buses used are accessible to all users, including disabled passengers and those with luggage or cycles and those with buggies and prams;

Sufficient staff are available to guide and provide information to passengers. Wherever possible, passengers should be able to remain on trains without the need to transfer to buses, even where this means that journeys will take longer. However, where services are diverted onto alternative routes, the impact on local services should be minimised.

In instances of the need for long term rail replacement services being necessary as a last resort the county council would expect to be involved in discussions at the earliest possible stage to ensure arrangements meet the requirements of passengers.

3.8 Passenger Safety

Stations and trains should provide personal security for all passengers. The county council wishes to see a highly visible customer service staff presence at stations and on trains, particularly on the late night services, and will work with the British Transport Police to identify ways in which we can work together to improve security and provide reassurance to passengers. Help points should be prominently located on all platforms and be working at all times; this is of particular importance at unmanned stations. CCTV and good quality lighting should be provided on stations including forecourts and interchanges and in

car parks, and adequate lighting and visibility should be provided on routes to stations.

The county council will work closely with TOCs to address safety concerns raised by the traveling public such as:

- Poor or faded safety markings on platforms
- Poor or faded safety markings on footbridges
- Gaps between platforms and trains when boarding and alighting

The county council supports the collaboration between the rail industry, The Samaritans and stakeholders to address the issue of trespass and suicide on the railway through communication, staff training and the provision of suicide prevention fencing at stations.

Recent statistics have shown that there has been an increase in Hate Crime on the public transport network in Hertfordshire. Hate Crime is the term given to offences where the victim has been specifically targeted specifically due to 'who they are'. The county council will work with TOCs, Network Rail, British Transport Police and stakeholders to try and combat Hate Crime on the rail network.

Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commission has produced a Hertfordshire Hate Crime Strategy which can be accessed from <https://www.hertscommissioner.org/hate-crime>

**Don't ignore
HATE
REPORT IT**

4. The First and Last Mile

4.1 Access to Stations

The county council's strategy is that rail users should be encouraged, where feasible, to use sustainable transport modes for the "last mile" journey to access stations, principally bus, cycling and walking.

The county council will work in partnership with district and borough councils, TOCs, Network Rail and other stakeholders to improve infrastructure in and around stations to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists and interchange for bus services.

LTP4 Policy 6: Accessibility

The county council will seek to increase the ease with which people, particularly disadvantaged groups can access key services, by:

- a) Working in partnership with key stakeholders such as bus and rail operators, community transport operators, the voluntary sector and public service providers.
- b) Addressing the barriers to accessibility particularly regarding active travel modes and for people with impaired mobility

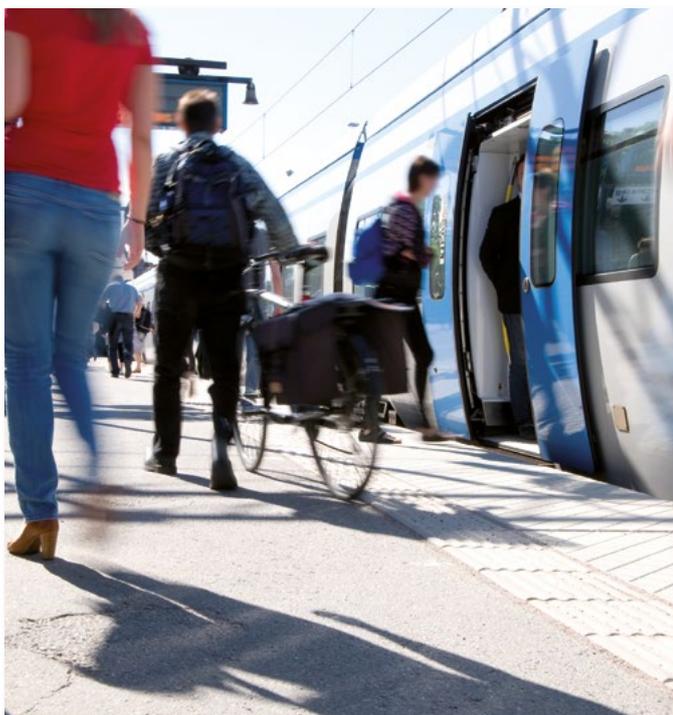
As the transport and highway authority, the county Council will prioritise those stations where access needs to be improved for sustainable transport modes, and will work with the train operator, Network Rail, bus operators and other relevant partners to identify an appropriate package of measures for each station.

Many of these issues will be identified through the Growth and Transport Plans currently being developed for the county. This will include ensuring wherever possible that bus interchange is given priority over other motor vehicle access to station forecourts.

4.2 Walking

Surveys show that walking has the highest mode share of travel to and from the majority of stations, particularly those in the larger towns. Through the audit process the county council will identify stations where the walking routes to, from and through stations are of an appropriate standard. This will include ensuring routes are DDA compliant wherever possible, safe crossing points are provided both on the highway and with the station boundaries and that walking routes are clearly waymarked either with signage or through use of materials.

The county council will work with district councils and other stakeholders to ensure that routes into town centres, local attractions and employment and residential area are well maintained and safe and to remove any barriers that may deter people from using them. This may include in some instances investigating the feasibility of opening new access into stations to reduce walking distances if significant modal change can be achieved by doing so.



4.3 Cycling

The county council will continue to work with TOCs, Network Rail and stakeholders to ensure high quality secure cycle storage is available at stations with sufficient capacity for all who wish to use it. With an increased usership of E-Bikes and E-Scooters security of cycle storage will become more important and cyclists will need to have confidence that their vehicles will be protected from theft or vandalism if they are to use them for the first and last miles of their journeys.

As a minimum HCC would expect that:

- There is sufficient cycle storage capacity for existing cyclists plus space for future increase in numbers;
- Wherever possible the storage is covered;
- The storage is well lit and covered by CCTV and is located such that it is clearly visible to station users and staff in order to deter theft;
- The storage is easily and safely accessed;
- Where possible a secure compound is available as an option;
- A pump and maintenance stand are available

The county council will liaise with TOCs on the design of new rolling stock to ensure that adequate provision is provided for cycles to be carried on off peak and Intercity services for non-folding bikes in line with the “Gear change” document published by the Government in 2020.

The county council will work with district councils and TOCs to ensure bike hire schemes include stations as hubs.

A joint funding approach will be required to deliver the packages, reflecting the objectives and responsibilities of each of the partners. Ideally the development and delivery of access improvements will be driven by Station Travel Plans jointly owned by the rail industry, local authorities and local transport providers.

LTP4 Policy 3 Travel Plans and Behaviour Change

The county council will encourage the widespread adoption of travel plans through:

- a) Working in partnership with large employers, businesses and other organisations to develop travel plans and implement Smarter Choices measures.

Figure 2 Secure Cycle storage





4.4 Taxis

In respect of taxis, the county council will expect the train operator to determine the requirements for taxi provision at each station, in consultation with the appropriate taxi licencing authority (usually the District or Borough Council), however, it needs to be recognised that the traditional taxi rank may need to be adapted to facilitate greater use of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) such as that provided by Uber. In the interests of improving air quality, particularly at the larger stations, the County Council will also support moves towards taxi services being provided by electric vehicles and work with TOCs and Network Rail to ensure that rapid charging facilities increasingly become available at stations. Facilities for taxis or private hire cars will be included in the specification for any station forecourt improvements.

4.5 Bus Services

4.5.1 Interchange

The county council actively seeks to enhance interchange facilities at railway stations to provide better connections with other transport (principally buses), to improve the environment for passengers waiting to transfer to other modes, and to ensure that the station is attractive for in-bound passengers. The county council will therefore work with train operating companies, Network Rail, local transport providers and the local community to develop schemes. However, it should be noted that ownership of land is often split between the rail industry and private landowners, and access is often a mixture of public highway and private roads, making project development more complex.

4.5.2 Intalink Enhanced Partnership

In 2020, the county council formed a new Intalink Enhanced Partnership which will see bus companies and local authorities working more closely together to improve the bus networks.

Key plans for the partnership include giving buses priority on congested roads and measures such as:

- Prioritising bus and coach services in traffic
- Improving the image of bus travel
- Upgrading bus infrastructure
- More closely integrating the bus network
- Smarter use of data and information

The new Enhanced Partnership will build on the work done by the previous Intalink Partnership, a unique collaboration between Hertfordshire County Council, bus and rail operators and local district councils.

The county council will continue to work towards a more integrated public transport network through:

- Working with industry partners to increase multi-operator ticketing schemes and continuing to support PlusBus
- Integrating RTPI for bus and rail services

Figure 3 RTPI at bus stops



The county council will also work with partners to investigate and pilot Demand Responsive Transport solutions for communities where traditional scheduled bus services are not commercially viable.

4.6 Car Parking

Car parking at stations is viewed as a commercial activity within the remit of the train operator. It is recognised that in many locations, provision of suitable car park capacity is an essential ingredient in the attractiveness of the rail service and that in itself it influences modal choice for the principal element of the journey. Lack of adequate car parking spaces at some stations can lead to rail heading which adds to road traffic congestion at peak times. However, there needs to be a dialogue between the TOC and the county, district, town and parish councils in each case to establish compatibility between capacity and charging policies in the station and on the surrounding streets and neighbouring car parks.

The county council has particular concerns where additional car parking capacity is built on railway land under permitted development rights. In these situations, the county council would welcome early dialogue with the rail industry to ensure that the additional traffic generated by the parking will not have an adverse impact on the immediate highway network or on access for buses, pedestrians and cyclists.

The county council also wishes to see a more flexible approach to car parking provision, especially within franchise agreements. Opportunities to replace parking spaces by bus interchanges or other sustainable transport provision such as cycle storage and safer access for pedestrians and cyclists should be allowed and encouraged where this will not have a negative impact on the overall numbers of passengers accessing the station.

The county council will work with district councils TOCs and other stakeholders to increase the provision of electric charging points available in station car parks.

LTP4 Policy 1: Transport User Hierarchy

To support the creation of built environments that encourage greater and safer use of sustainable transport modes, the county council will in the design of any scheme and development of any transport strategy consider in the following order:

- Opportunities to reduce travel demand and the need to travel
- Vulnerable road user needs (such as pedestrians and cyclists)
- Passenger transport user needs
- Powered two-wheeler (mopeds and motorbikes) user needs
- Other motor vehicle user needs



5. Decarbonisation of Transport – Zero net emissions by 2050

On 26 March 2020, the Department for Transport published Decarbonising Transport Setting the Challenge. The document sets out what will need to be done in order to achieve net zero emissions by all forms of transport by 2050.

In 2018 GHG emissions from rail made up just 1.4% of the UK's domestic transport emissions while 10% of passenger miles travelled in the UK were by rail.

The railway continues to become less carbon intensive as new electric and bi-mode trains come into service and the railway uses greener electricity.

The Government has challenged the rail industry to produce a vision for the removal of all diesel-only trains from the network by 2040. An industry task force has assessed the decarbonisation options available and made recommendations to organisations across the rail sector. This will require significant investment in rolling stock and infrastructure and the deployment of lower carbon technologies.

Network Rail is currently preparing a cross industry Traction Decarbonisation Network Strategy (TDNS) which will consider where overhead electrification, battery or hydrogen trains might be most effectively deployed. The TDNS will be completed during 2020.

In July 2019 Hertfordshire declared a climate emergency which committed the county council to the development of a Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy. Work on this strategy is underway and is looking at ways in which the county council can lead the way in reducing emissions, improving air quality, reducing waste, making better use of resources etc. This will include measures to make the transport infrastructure in the county more sustainable.

The county council has far more influence over highway infrastructure than it does over rail, however, the county council will work with partners and stakeholders to ensure the rail

industry continues to work to reduce carbon emissions in line with the government targets.

All of the railway lines in Hertfordshire are electrified and the majority of train services are operated by electric trains with zero carbon emissions at source. Some long-distance services running through Hertfordshire have been operated by diesel trains, but increasingly new rolling stock is being introduced which is eliminating this.

The services which are not currently operated by electric traction are:

- Chiltern services via Rickmansworth
- Some long-distance services on West Coast Main Line to Euston
- East Midlands Railway long distance services from St Pancras
- Grand Central services on the East Coast Mainline
- Freight services (through traffic and to local aggregate depots)

If the introduction of new rolling stock proceeds as planned by the end of 2022 the only carbon emitting service in Hertfordshire will be:

- Chiltern Line services
- Freight services

The county council will lobby for a decision to be taken by the rail industry on whether to electrify the whole of the Chiltern route or to introduce bi-mode trains in order to cut emissions.

There is no obvious solution yet to the decarbonisation of rail freight. However, moving freight by rail, albeit using diesel traction, is still a preferable option to moving freight by road.

6. Strategic Projects

The County Council supports strategic rail projects where they will benefit Hertfordshire residents or where any negative impacts for the county are outweighed by national benefits. Schemes promoted by third parties (principally DfT and Network Rail) are set out below, with schemes promoted by the County Council covered in Part 6.

6.1 1 High Speed 2

High Speed 2 (HS2) is a Department for Transport project to build a new high-speed line between London and Birmingham, with connections to North West England and Scotland (Phase 1) and then on to Manchester and Leeds with connections to North East England and Scotland (Phase 2).

Construction on Phase 1 commenced in 2017 with a planned completion date of 2026. Phase 2 has been given a planned completion date of 2033.

The scheme will remove many intercity services from the existing West Coast Main Line, thereby releasing capacity. The County Council wishes to see priority for capacity reallocation given to services at current intercity speeds but providing intermediate stops at Watford Junction and other similar stations that have seen reduced InterCity services in recent years.

Details of the project can be found at www.hs2.org.uk

6.2 East West Rail

East West Rail (EWR) is a project originally promoted by a consortium of local authorities and now adopted by DfT. The western section (Oxford to Bedford) is being implemented as an electrified 100 mph railway and will include a link to Aylesbury and is due to be completed in the early 2020s.

The Central Section corridor has been identified as a direct Bedford – Sandy – Cambridge line and a high-level study has also found that there is a strong economic and strategic case to improve the line from Cambridge to Norwich, Ipswich and beyond. Hertfordshire will not therefore be directly served by East West Rail, although it will improve connections from e.g. St Albans to Cambridge and will allow connections to Hertfordshire stations on the East Coast Main Line via interchange at Sandy. The County Council will press for all East West Rail services to stop at Sandy in order to maximise this connectivity.

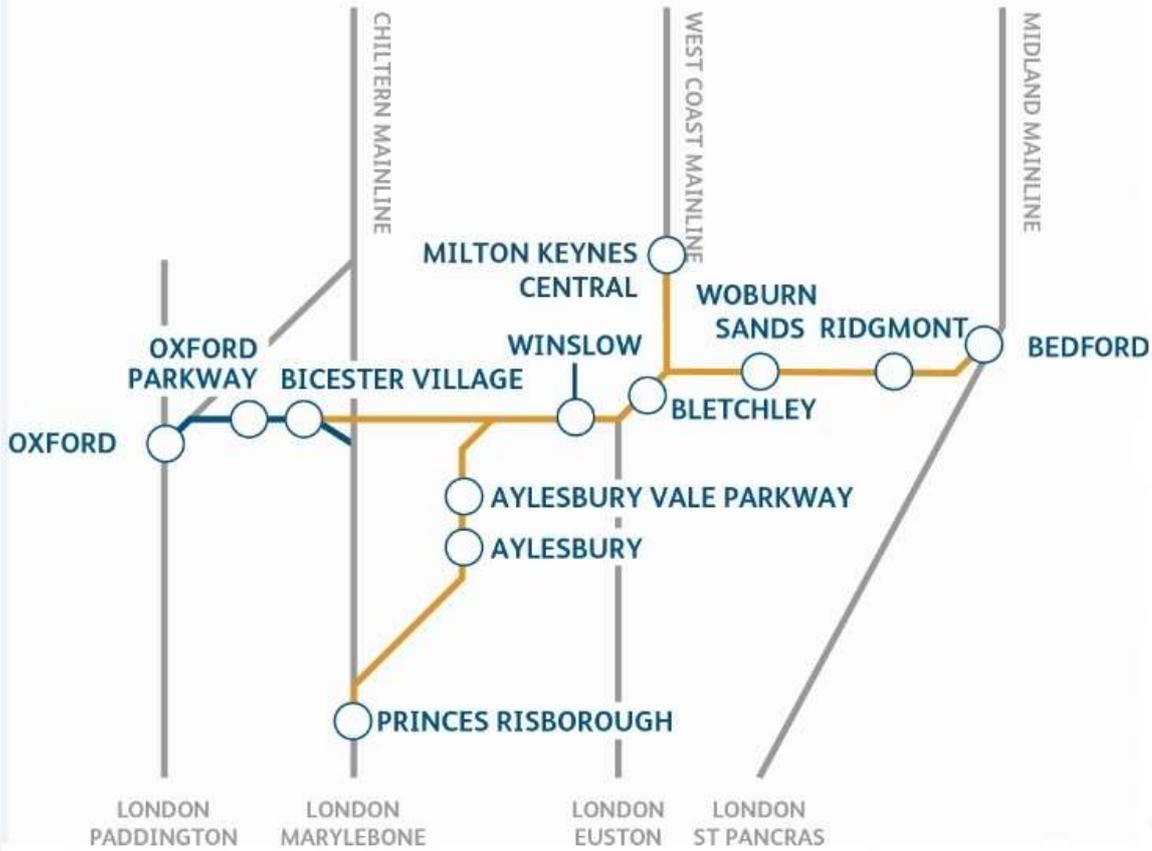
The County Council will also investigate and promote local passenger transport solutions to link towns in north Hertfordshire/Luton area.

Details of the project can be found at www.eastwestrail.org.uk

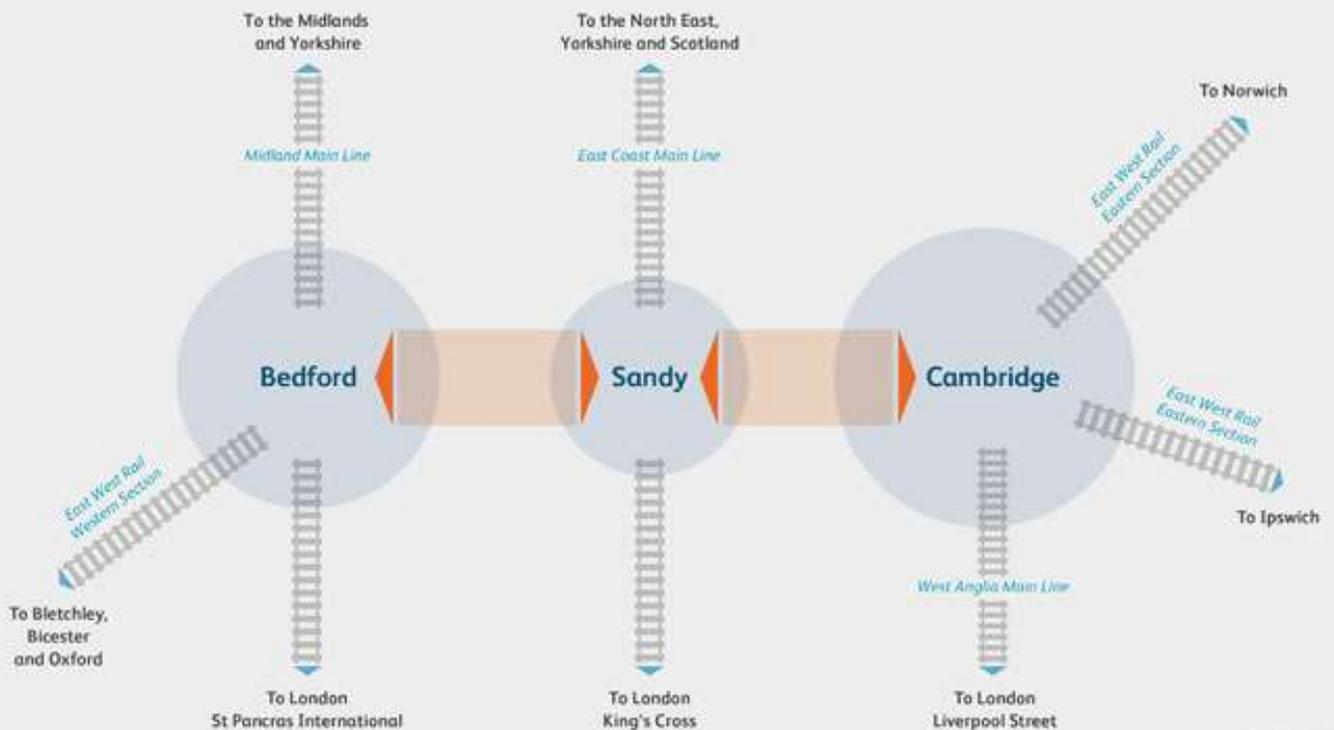


← PHASE 1 →

PHASE 2



East West Rail Central Section – Preferred Corridor



©Network Rail

6.3 Access to International Airports

Background

Access by rail from key centres in the county to the two airports closest to Hertfordshire (Stansted and Luton) is poor and uncompetitive when compared with car. This is because the airports are only accessible from one corridor (WAML for Stansted and Midland Main Line for Luton). In addition, Luton is only served from the station via a bus link at present, a major scheme to construct a light rail link (DART) has begun and is expected to be completed in 2021.

There are no direct services to Stansted from the WAML, other than from Bishop's Stortford. Stansted also suffers from there being only one access tunnel to the station imposing a single-track section on the layout. This is a significant capacity constraint. (Despite this constraint Stansted has the highest proportion of sustainable travel of all major UK airports.)

By contrast, access to Gatwick is particularly good and has been significantly enhanced by the Thameslink Programme being fully implemented with direct access from Stevenage and other stations on the ECML. However, access via the WCML and West London Line has been lost. Heathrow is well connected by heavy rail and underground services for passengers travelling from London but there is no direct service from Hertfordshire stations.

If the planned expansion of Heathrow goes ahead there will be a need for improved access due to the increase in the airport's capacity.

Strategic Priorities

Short term:

- Committed investment will lead to a step change for some corridors in connections to Heathrow (Crossrail 1) and Gatwick (Thameslink Programme providing additional capacity on MML and new direct connection from Great Northern), as well as improvements to Luton (Thameslink Programme) and Stansted (WAML new rolling stock and 2019 timetable).
- Additionally, there is a need to increase service frequencies and connectivity on the WAML to Stansted, in particular trains to coincide with early and late flights and employee shift patterns.

Long term:

- Investigate local rail-based solutions for improved connections to Luton Airport from north Hertfordshire towns.
- Provide a second tunnel into Stansted Airport station to enhance capacity. Provide stops at Broxbourne and/or Cheshunt on Stansted fast services. If no new direct services to Stansted can be provided, then the county council will press for improved connectivity between trains at interchanges with reduced waiting times.



7. Station and train facility upgrades

With regards to rolling stock, the County Council will lobby for upgrades where possible on all routes. This will lead to greater passenger satisfaction, increased reliability and potentially more train paths due to faster trains with improved braking.

The Siemens 700 series trains have been introduced on the MML Thameslink route and have provided greater capacity and are becoming increasingly reliable. The 717 trains have been introduced on the Great Northern Metro route into Moorgate. Greater Anglia began the renewal of their entire fleet during 2019 with the introduction of the Stadler Bi Mode trains on Intercity services. The Bombardier built Aventra trains which will service the network in Hertfordshire were due to enter service early in 2020 but due to delays in the manufacturing process this has now been pushed back to late 2020.

Prioritised station facility upgrades should also be carried out, above and beyond those recently completed at St Albans and Elstree and Borehamwood.

In 2018, following the disruption to passengers caused by the May timetable changes the DfT announced that a Passenger Benefit Fund would be made available by GTR for capital projects which would improve the passenger experience at stations managed by GTR. Hertfordshire stations were each allocated £80,000. After a period of stakeholder consultation, a list of schemes has been agreed for each station. HCC is working closely with GTR to ensure the schemes are delivered and where the proposed schemes improve access by walking and cycling or public transport HCC is providing additional funding to ensure the schemes can be delivered.

The county council supports the development, by TOCs, of Station Travel Plans at key stations across the network.



8. Community Rail

Community Rail Partnerships (CRP) bring together local groups and partners along railway lines to work with industry, delivering a wide range of engagement and promotional activities. It helps people to understand and enjoy rail travel, to get the most from their railways, and to play a part in rail's ongoing development.

The county council acts as the host organisation for the Abbey Line CRP and the New River Line CRP which involves the management of the budgets and CRP officer staff. However, the CRPs remain independent organisations with their own steering groups setting the direction of each one.

The county council will continue to support existing Community Rail Partnerships within Hertfordshire and will work with partners and stakeholders to establish new CRPs where there is community-led commitment to do so.

Abbey Line CRP

The Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership brings together the local community, businesses, local government and the railway industry to secure the long-term future of the Abbey Line railway between St Albans Abbey and Watford Junction.



The Abbey Line CRP seeks to make the line and the service more attractive to the local community, thereby increasing its use.

Activities include such things as:

- Marketing and promotion through leaflets, posters, events;
- Small-scale station enhancements such as installation of cycle racks, resurfacing of footpaths, dropped kerbs;
- Restoration of the redundant Bricket Wood station building for community use;
- Better signage to stations;
- Special themed trains;
- Recruitment of station adopters;
- Schools projects;

The addition of a passing loop would allow for a more frequent service on the line which would make it more attractive to passengers travelling for work, education and leisure.

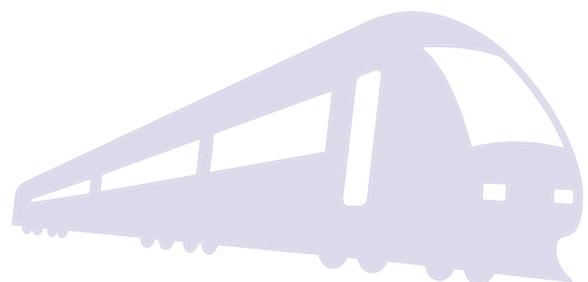
Hertford East CRP – The New River Line

The New River Line CRP was established on the Hertford East Branch Line between Hertford and Broxbourne in 2019 and is a partnership of local authorities, voluntary organisations, local business and Greater Anglia. The partnership will work to promote the line as a sustainable way for visitors to access the local heritage and leisure attractions along the line and will work with the community on projects that will both enhance the station and railway environment and break down barriers to rail travel that some members of the community may experience.



Bedford to St Albans CRP

A CRP was established on the MML between Bedford and St Albans at the end of 2018 and has begun to deliver small-scale projects at stations on the route such as book exchanges and new planters on platforms to enhance the station environments.

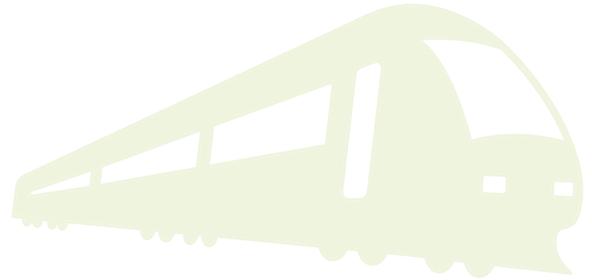


9. Joint Working

In order to promote its rail aspirations and to work collaboratively with other local authorities and relevant bodies, the county council is a member of the following organisations:

- West Coast Rail 250
- East West Rail Consortium
- MAG Stansted Rail Working Group
- WAML Action Group
- TLP Stakeholder Reference Group
- East Coast Mainline Authorities

The county council will also continue to work closely with local district, town and parish councils, Rail User Groups and commuter groups, TOCs, Network Rail, Community Rail Network and other stakeholders.



10. East Coast Main Line

Description of Route

The East Coast Main Line route in Hertfordshire covers the following elements:

- the East Coast Main Line itself between Potters Bar and Hitchin (four-track with the exception of a two mile two-track section between Welwyn Garden City and Knebworth);
- the Cambridge branch between Hitchin and Royston (two-track);
- the Hertford Loop from Stevenage to Cuffley (two-track)

In total the route covers 16 stations within Hertfordshire.

Figure 1 The East Coast Main Line Hertfordshire



Current Services

Intercity services are provided by the East Coast franchise (LNER). The basic pattern is two trains per hour, of which 1 tph is to Leeds/Harrogate and 1 tph to York or Lincoln (alternating).

There is a minimal service provided on Sundays by open access operator Hull Trains, serving Stevenage.

In addition, the open access operator Hull Trains has a limited number of services which call at Stevenage on Sundays only. Local services are provided by the TSGN franchise (GTR). This is a mixture of fast and semi-fast suburban services to either Kings Cross or through the Thameslink core, and inner suburban services from Welwyn Garden City and Stevenage (via Hertford) to Moorgate. Local freight services are provided to the aggregate sidings at Stevenage and Hitchin.

Planned Service Changes

The intercity operator LNER is planning a significant timetable change which may be beneficial to Stevenage. The timing of the changes is undergoing review due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

First Group is planning a new open access operator service from London to Edinburgh starting in October 2021. The details are still being developed, but the service is to call at Stevenage.

Current Issues

The intercity offer at Stevenage is limited in its offer of destinations, with no direct service to destinations north of York.

Despite recent capacity improvements delivered by the Thameslink Programme, there are still peak period overcrowding issues on local services, particularly on the inner suburban services to Moorgate. The inner suburban metro service also results in a slow journey to central London from places such as Hertford.

The two-track section between Welwyn Garden City and Knebworth is a significant pinch-point which has a significant adverse impact on the ability to meet peak-hour demands.

Planned Infrastructure Changes

The East Coast Digital Programme was announced in March 2020. This programme will provide a new electronic signalling system for the southern part of the East Coast Main Line.

Aspirations

Intercity Services - A key aspiration is to improve intercity services from Stevenage to enhance the station's role as a rail hub and to provide new connections for Hertfordshire residents and businesses.

The County Council's aspiration is to retain the hourly service to Leeds and to add an hourly service to Newcastle.

Inner Suburban Services - There is an urgent need to reduce overcrowding in the peak periods on the inner suburban services from Welwyn Garden City and Stevenage / Hertford to Moorgate. Although the trains are not overcrowded when they leave Hertfordshire stations they become so on the southern part of the journey into London.

Off-peak frequencies on these routes are generally good, but the three trains per hour service at Welham Green and Brookmans Park needs to be restored.

Stevenage Station - Stevenage station is an important interchange between intercity, outer suburban and inner suburban services, and is used by 4.8 million passengers a year. The station buildings date from 1973 and are now inadequate in terms of platform widths, staircase capacity and booking hall space. The overall operation and appearance of the station is substandard for a town which is home to international pharmaceutical and aerospace companies.

The station therefore requires a significant rebuild to provide safe circulation space and to create a welcoming gateway to the town.

Hitchin Station Eastern Access - Access to Hitchin station, which handles 3.2 million passengers per year, is via the western side only. Passengers from the east of the town need to pass under a narrow bridge, which is particularly unsuitable for pedestrians and cyclists. The local councils are currently working to develop plans for a new eastern entrance which would greatly improve accessibility for sustainable transport.

Redesign of Letchworth Station Forecourt - The forecourt requires redesigning to improve access via active and sustainable modes of transport and to make the station a gateway into the Garden City in keeping with its surroundings. Design work has begun, and the county council is working closely with the TOC and local stakeholders to ensure the design can be delivered.

New Infrastructure - A new rail link between Stevenage and Luton (a distance of only 15 miles by road) would provide a connection between the East Coast and Midland Main Lines, and could form part of a wider East West Rail network. As well as providing new rail opportunities across the two main lines, it would directly link the two towns with a

combined population of over 300,000 and Luton Airport.

Summary of Aspirations

- Improved intercity services from Stevenage.
- Additional capacity on local services.
- Major enhancements to Stevenage station.
- Eastern access to Hitchin station
- New line to be built between Stevenage and Luton.

Other Issues

Hertfordshire County Council supports TfL's aspirations for the transfer of the inner suburban services to Moorgate to TfL control as detailed in section 3.1.

The growth proposed in the Stevenage Local Plan and the modal shift sought by Stevenage's transport strategy Future Town, Future Transport and in line with LTP4 may in the future require a new Stevenage South station on the Hertford Loop. Hertfordshire County Council supports Stevenage Borough Council's aspirations for the new station.



11. Midland Main Line

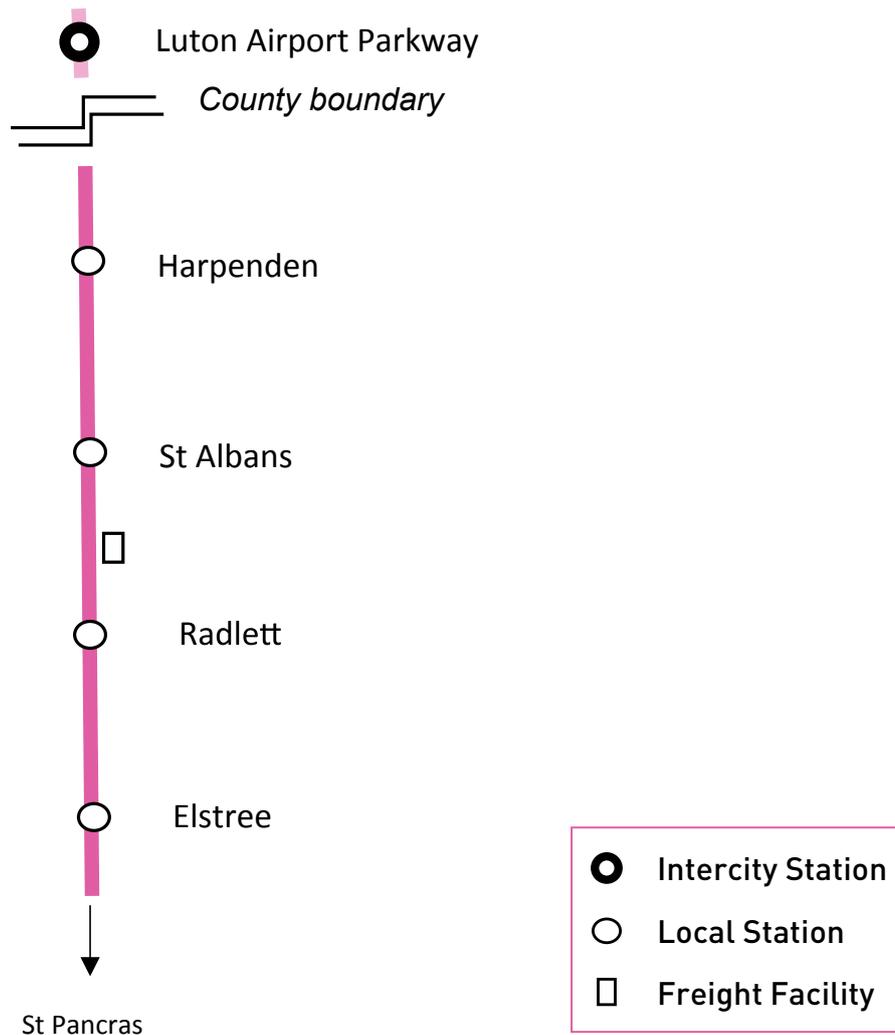
Description of Route

The Midland Main Line route in Hertfordshire covers the following elements:

- The Midland Main line between Elstree and Harpenden (four-track)

The route covers four stations within Hertfordshire.

Figure 2 Midland Main Line Hertfordshire



Current Services

There are no intercity services which stop within Hertfordshire, but the East Midlands franchise does serve Luton / Luton Airport Parkway just to the north of the county boundary. This provides connections to Leicester, Derby, Nottingham and Sheffield. The basic service is one train per hour from Luton Airport Parkway to Leicester / Nottingham. Access to Derby and Sheffield requires a further change.

Local services are provided by the TSGN franchise under the Thameslink brand, with fast and semi-fast services vis the central London core. Local freight services are provided to the aggregate sidings at Radlett. This route is supported by the Beds and Herts Community Rail Partnership as set out in section 8.

Planned Service Changes

Significant changes are expected to the East Midlands franchise services in the near future. There will be significant reductions in intercity services south of Kettering, which will have a major detrimental impact on Hertfordshire's long-distance connections.

These changes are also due to include the conversion of the Corby intercity services to a commuter service, although it is not planned to stop in Hertfordshire.

Current Issues

The intercity service is of low frequency and only serves a limited number of destinations directly.

Despite recent improvements delivered by the Thameslink programme, there are still peak period overcrowding issues on local trains. Overcrowding is also experienced on the stations, especially St Albans.

Planned Infrastructure Changes

Enhancements works are currently being carried out on the Midland Main Line to the north of Hertfordshire. When completed in December these works will provide additional capacity.

Aspirations

Intercity Services - It is essential that intercity services continue to call at Luton or Luton Airport Parkway in order to maintain long-distance connections for Hertfordshire.

The County Council's aspiration is for all intercity services to call at Luton Airport Parkway so that connections can be made to all the major East Midlands cities without the need to have a further change of trains.

Local Services - The Thameslink Programme has increased capacity on commuting services, but there is still overcrowding on trains and at stations during peak periods. Increased capacity is still required on these services. The new Corby service to be introduced within the East Midlands franchise should call at St

Albans. This would provide welcome additional capacity on commuting services to London but will also be essential to provide some level of long-distance connectivity if intercity services are withdrawn from Luton Airport Parkway.

St Albans City Station - The St Albans Station Capacity scheme to provide a second footbridge over the lines to address the issue of overcrowding on the island platform in the peak and at times of disruption is included in the "schemes with a decision to design" list within the Department for Transport's Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline list (Autumn 2019 Schemes Update) and funding for the construction of the bridge was confirmed in an announcement from DfT in August 2020.

Necessary works should be undertaken at St Albans to allow intercity trains to stop there during periods of disruption.

New Infrastructure - A new rail link between Stevenage and Luton (a distance of only 15 miles by road) would provide a connection between the East Coast and Midland Main Lines, and could form part of a wider east west rail network. As well as providing new rail opportunities across the two main lines, it would directly link the two towns with a combined population of over 300,000 and Luton Airport.

Summary of Aspirations

- Improved intercity services from Luton Airport Parkway;
- Increased capacity on peak commuting services.
- New line to be built between Luton and Stevenage.
- Improvements to capacity of St Albans City station, including a new footbridge.

Other Issues

Planning permission has been granted for a new rail freight interchange at Radlett, to be served from the Midland Main Line. Should the development proceed, there could be implications for overall capacity on the line.

12. West Anglia Main Line

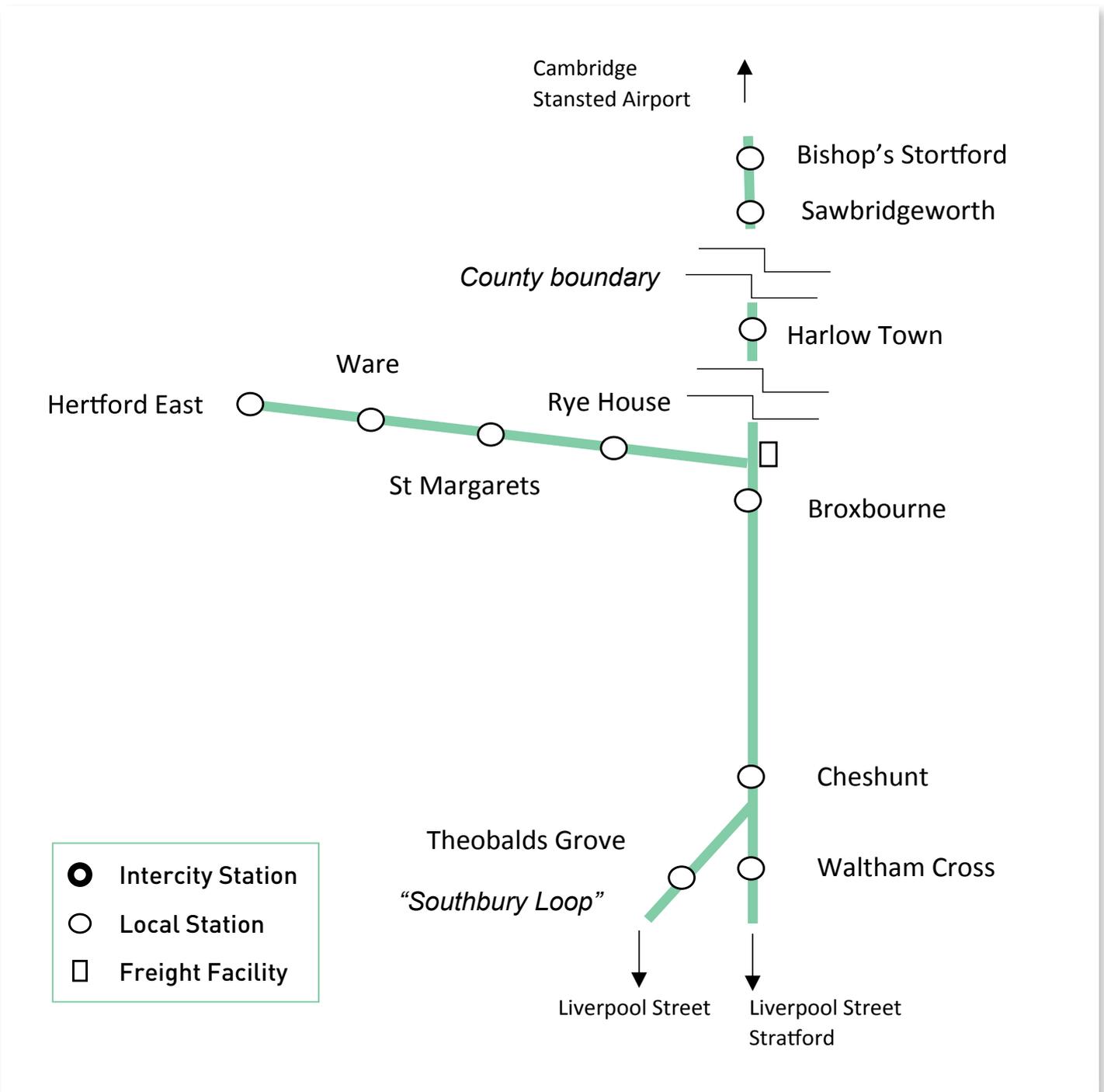
Description of Route

The West Anglia Main Line route in Hertfordshire covers the following elements:

- The West Anglia Main Line between Waltham Cross and Bishop’s Stortford (two-track);
- The Hertford East branch from Rye House to Hertford East (two-track, with the exception of a single-track section through Ware station);
- The Southbury loop serving Theobalds Grove (two-track).

In total the route serves 10 stations in Hertfordshire.

Figure 3 West Anglia Main Line Hertfordshire



Current Services

There are no intercity services on this route.

Local services are provided by Greater Anglia, with a mixture of fast and semi-fast services. Bishop's Stortford is also served by Stansted Express services.

London Overground provides a metro service from Cheshunt via the Southbury Loop.

Local freight services are provided to the aggregate sidings at Rye House.

The Hertford East branch line is supported by the New River Community Rail Partnership as set out in section 8.

Planned Service Changes

Some changes to services will be delivered when the new train fleet becomes operational in 2022. This includes an increase from 2 tph to 3 tph for off-peak services on the Hertford East branch.

Current Issues

The route suffers from under-capacity due to competing demands from local, regional, freight and Stansted Airport services. All the passenger services are experiencing significant growth, but any increase in services for one group would have negative implications for the others.

Planned Infrastructure Changes

Platform lengthening on the Hertford East branch is due to be delivered to enable operation of the new train fleet

Crossrail 2 is a major infrastructure project which will provide four-tracking on the main line as far north as Broxbourne. This will provide a significant enhancement to capacity and reliability. Development of the scheme has recently been put on hold, and therefore is unlikely to be delivered before the late 2030s. Shorter-term measures such as dynamic passing loops, limited four-tracking and digital signalling, are therefore required to meet the growing demand.

Aspirations

Local Services - The primary aspiration for this route is to provide a capacity increase on the mainline to allow an uplift in services. Hertfordshire County Council supports the delivery of Crossrail 2, but would support alternative four-tracking proposals if they also provided additional track capacity in central London to enable an increase in services.

The delivery of Crossrail 2 or other similar scheme would also help the aspirations of:

- Better local rail access to Stansted Airport. Bishop's Stortford is the only Hertfordshire station which has a direct link to the airport.
- Shorter journey times to central London from Bishop's Stortford.

New Stations - Hertfordshire County Council supports Broxbourne Borough Council's aspirations for new stations at Turnford, and at Park Plaza on the Southbury Loop to support new development. It is anticipated that access to the new stations will be provided by sustainable modes of transport, particularly by bus, cycle and on foot. As set out within the Broxbourne transport strategy, proposals for a new bus service to link major new developments and stations will be provided and station interchanges will reflect this provision.

The county council wishes to see a new northern access to Harlow Town station (in Essex) to support its aims for sustainable transport at the Gilston development.

Summary of Aspirations

- The delivery of Crossrail 2
- Improved capacity on the West Anglia Main Line through localised four-tracking or other infrastructure improvements in advance of Crossrail 2
- New stations at Turnford and Park Plaza
- A northern entrance to Harlow Town station
- Improved access to Stansted Airport from local stations
- An improved service on Hertford East branch line

13. West Coast Main Line

Description of Route

The West Coast Main Line route in Hertfordshire covers the following elements:

- The West Coast Main Line itself between Carpenders Park and Tring (four-track);
- The “DC” line into Euston between Watford Junction and Carpenders Park (two-track);
- The Abbey Line branch from Watford Junction to St Albans Abbey (single-track).

In total the route covers 15 stations in Hertfordshire.

Figure 4 The West Coast Main Line Hertfordshire



Current Services

Intercity services are provided by the West Coast Partnership franchise operating under the Avanti brand. The basic pattern is an hourly service to Birmingham New Street.

Caledonian Sleepers serve Watford Junction twice a day.

Local and regional services are provided London Northwestern Railway, both on the main line and the shuttle service on the Abbey Line.

Southern provides an hourly service via the West London Line from Milton Keynes to East Croydon. London Overground provides a metro service from Watford Junction to Euston.

Local freight services are provided to the aggregates siding at Watford Junction.

The Abbey Line is supported by the Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership as set out in section 8.

Planned Service Changes

There are currently no major planned changes to services. Proposals for long distance services in the new West Coast Partnership franchise are still awaited.



Current Issues

The intercity service at Watford Junction is very limited, with a basic pattern of an hourly train to Birmingham. Other than a few services in the peak, there are no direct services to other major cities.

Local services are generally good, although there are some overcrowding issues during the peaks. The main exceptions are the Southern services via the West London Line which are only hourly and do not extend to Gatwick Airport, and the Abbey Line which operates at a 45 minute frequency as the route is only single-track.

There are no connections to the west of Watford Junction stations. The Metropolitan Line Extension would have provided some of these connections by linking the London Overground Metropolitan Line services into Watford Junction, but this scheme was cancelled by Transport for London.

Watford Junction station itself is inadequate to cope with its 8.5 million annual passengers, both within the station and on the forecourt area. Local access to the station is compromised due to the lack of space to adequately accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, bus users and taxis.

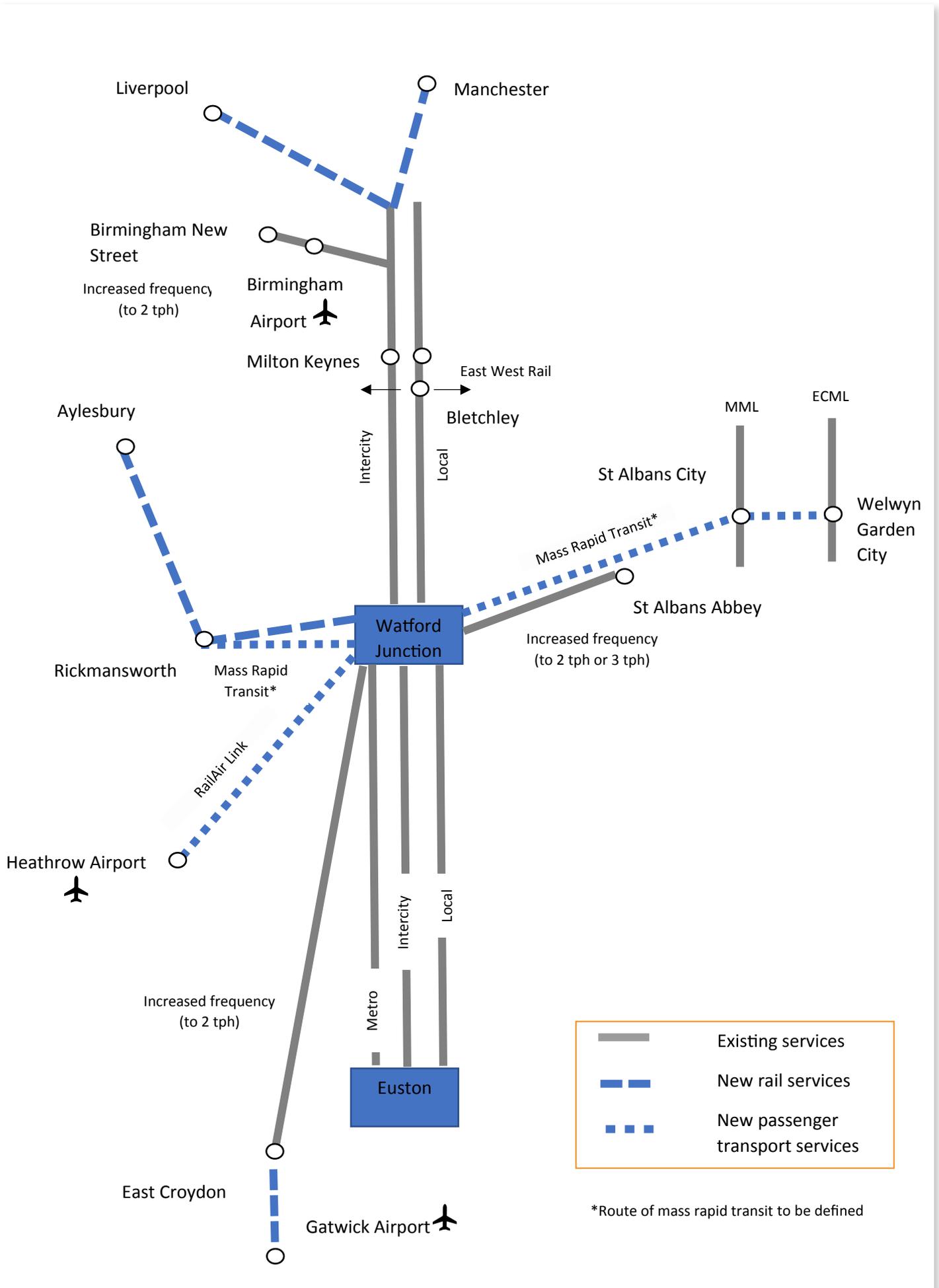
Planned Infrastructure Changes

The Watford Junction Capacity Upgrade (Watford Junction) scheme, (incorporating a new footbridge between platforms) is included in the “schemes with a decision to initiate” list within the Department for Transport’s Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline list (Autumn 2019 Schemes Update).

High Speed 2 Phase 1 began construction in 2020. It will construct a new line between London and Birmingham and hence will increase capacity on the existing West Coast Main Line through Hertfordshire.

An Access for All improvement is due to be delivered at Kings Langley.

Figure 5 Watford Junction Super-Hub



Aspirations

Watford Junction Hub

Watford Junction is already a major rail hub, providing interchange between intercity, fast and semi-fast local, London metro and branch line services. However, further upgrades to rail services and other passenger transport connections could greatly enhance the station as a regional hub, providing a boost to sustainable transport and congestion relief to lines into central London.

Figure 5 shows the current connections and the potential for enhancements. To deliver this vision of a super-hub, the following improvements are required:

- An increase in intercity services to provide 2 tph to Birmingham New Street (doubling the existing frequency) and new services to Liverpool (1 tph) and Manchester (1 tph);
- An upgrade to the Abbey Line to provide a frequency of at least 2 tph;
- A new connection to the Chiltern Line to provide direct services to Rickmansworth and Aylesbury;
- Direct connection to the County Council's proposed A414 Corridor mass rapid transit system;
- Increasing the frequency of the West London Line services to 2 tph, and extending them to Gatwick Airport;
- A new rail-air coach link to Heathrow Airport

The improvements should be dovetailed with the major mixed-use development around the station being promoted by Watford Borough Council.

The County Council wishes to work with partners to further develop the super-hub concept.

Abbey Line

The overall aspiration is to have a higher frequency 'clock-face' timetable operating on the route, but there is also a desire to have services running later in the evening.

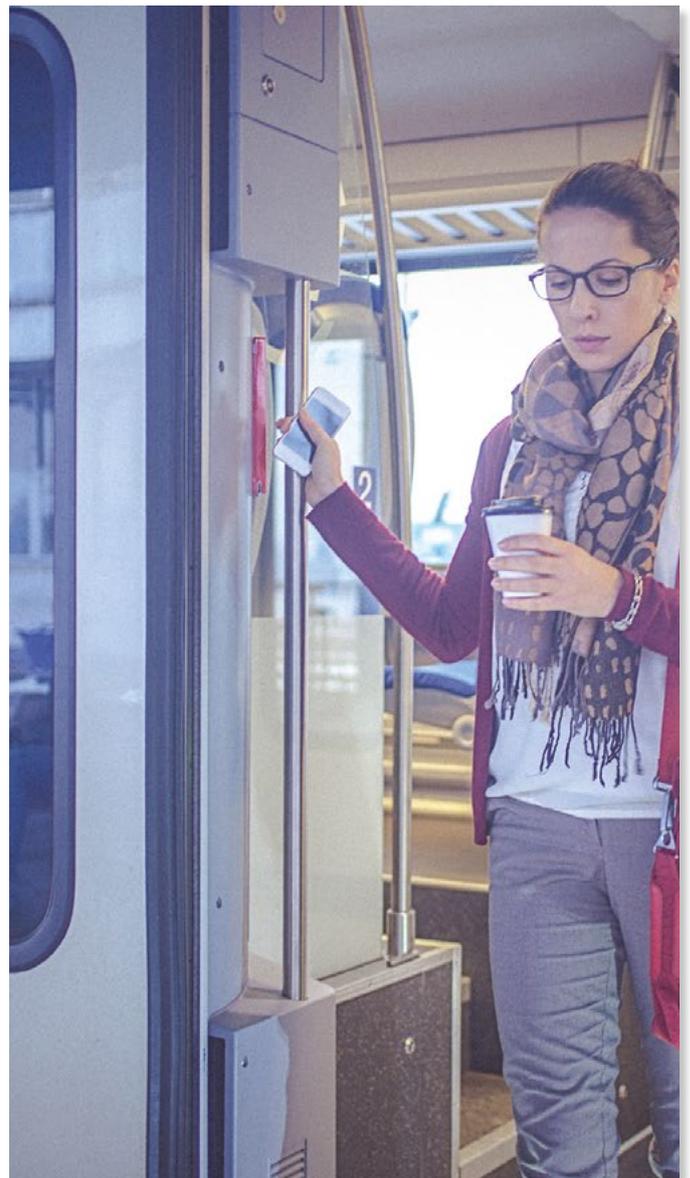
Summary of Aspirations

- The development of Watford Junction as a super-hub, including new services and major station improvements.
- Service frequency improvements on the Abbey Line.

Other Issues

The delivery of the High Speed 2 will free up capacity on the West Coast Mainline. Whilst this provides the opportunity to provide new services, there remains a concern that the quality of long-distance services from Watford Junction could deteriorate.

Direct links to Old Oak Common will need to be investigated if the High Speed 2 proposals are modified to move the London terminus (temporarily or permanently) to this location.



14. Chiltern Line

Description of Route

The Chiltern Line route in Hertfordshire covers the following elements:

- The Chiltern line itself through Rickmansworth and Chorleywood (two-track) serviced by both national rail and London Overground services
- The Metropolitan Line to Watford (two-track).

In total the route serves five stations in Hertfordshire.

Current Services

Local services are provided by Chiltern Trains. A metro service is provided by London Underground

Planned Service Changes

There are currently no major planned changes to services.

Planned Infrastructure Changes

There are currently no planned infrastructure changes.

Aspirations

Watford to Aylesbury

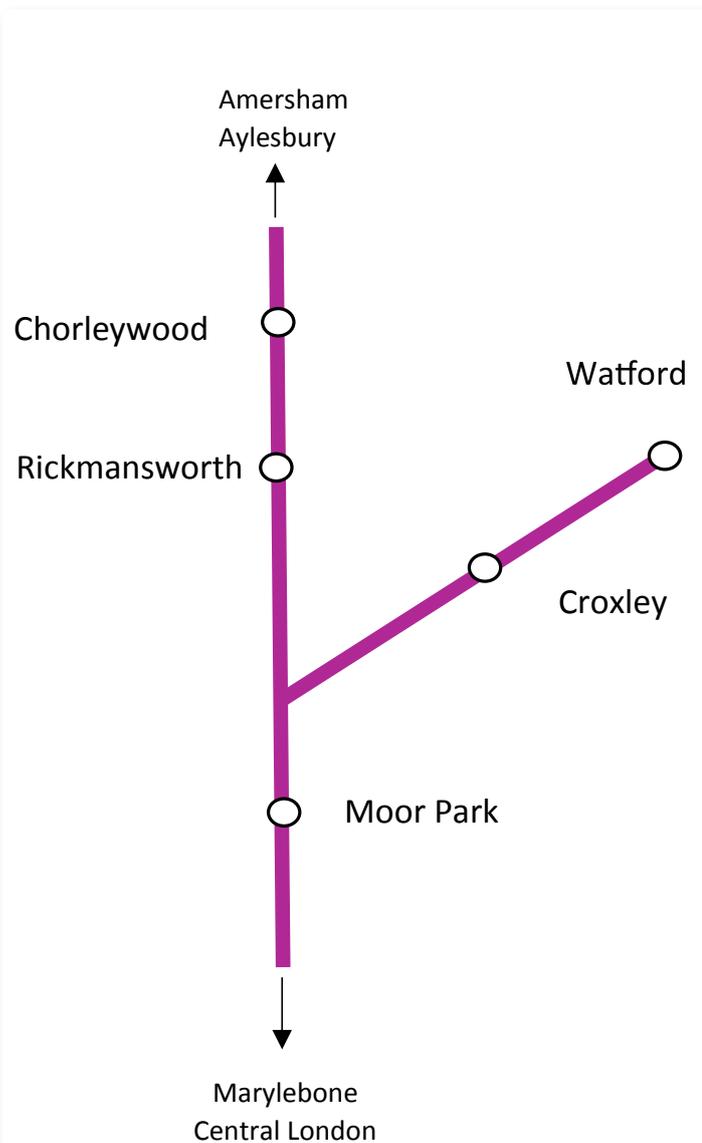
The County Council has aspirations for a new service from Watford Junction to Rickmansworth and Aylesbury. This would provide new connectivity with the South West Hertfordshire conurbation, and new regional links to Aylesbury and beyond.

Previous proposals for the scheme utilised the new viaduct that would have been constructed for the Metropolitan Line Extension. With the cancellation of this scheme, new infrastructure would have to be provided in the form of a new viaduct or a route via the old railway line to Rickmansworth.

Summary of Aspirations

New rail link from Watford Junction to Rickmansworth / Aylesbury.

Figure 4 The Chiltern Line in Hertfordshire



15. Summary of Key Aspirations

Detailed aspirations for improvements to Hertfordshire's rail network are included throughout this document, but the major ones are set out below.

Improved intercity services from:

- Stevenage
- Watford Junction
- Luton Airport Parkway (outside of county)

Major station enhancements at:

- Stevenage
- Hitchin
- St Albans
- Watford Junction
- Harlow (outside of county)

New stations at:

- Turnford
- Park Plaza
- Stevenage South

New or improved rail lines:

- Improved capacity on the West Anglia Main Line through localised fourtracking or other infrastructure improvements in advance of Crossrail 2.
- The delivery of Crossrail 2.
- New line to be built between Stevenage and Luton.
- Capacity enhancements to Abbey Line
- New line to link Watford Junction to Rickmansworth / Aylesbury

Better governance:

- The establishment of a Capital Region Transport Body



Glossary

BTP – British Transport Police

CRP- Community Rail Partnership

DfT – Department for Transport

ECMA – East Coast Mainline Authorities

ECML – East Coast Mainline

EEH – England’s Economic Heartland

HS2 – High Speed 2

LTP – Local Transport Plan

RTPI – Real Time Passenger Information,

RUG – Rail User Group

TfL – Transport for London

TOC – Train Operating Company

TVM – Ticket Vending Machine

WAML – West Anglia Mainline

WCML – West Coast Mainline

WCR 250 – West Coast Rail 250 (Association of Local Authorities)



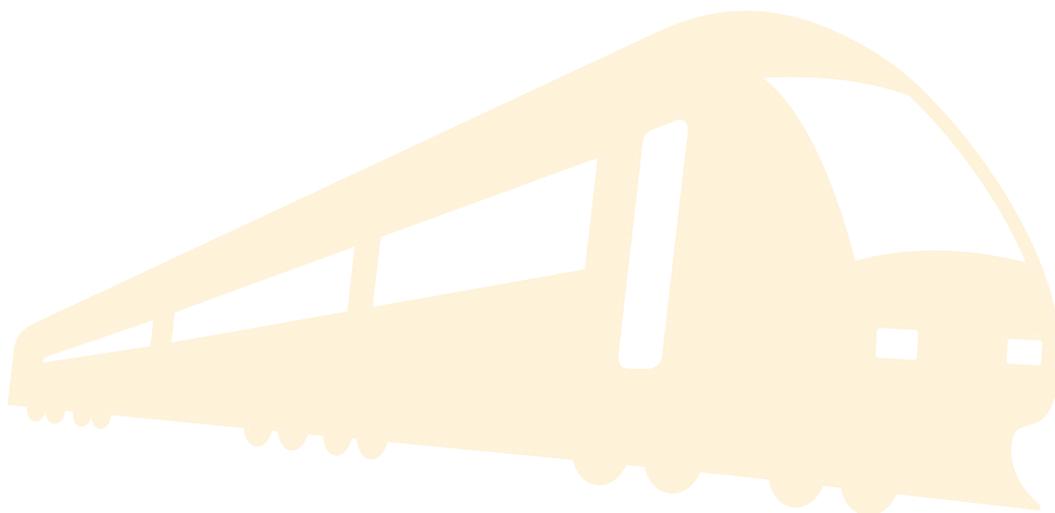
Appendix 1 Station Audits – Station improvements required

East Coast Mainline

Stations (+ estimated station usage figures 2018/19)	Issues and aspirations
Ashwell and Mordern	Awaiting audit
Baldock 637,664	<p>Significant house growth in the vicinity of the station will lead to an increase of usage. HCC will work with the developers to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is provided for sustainable journeys to the station</p> <p>There is no disabled access at this station. HCC will work with TOC to ensure that Baldock is considered for Access for All Funding in future funding rounds.</p>
Bayford 50,398	HCC would like to see a footway from the village centre to the station.
Brookmans Park 233,128	Access to this station needs to be improved for all users
Cuffley 680,484	Improved CCTV and a new waiting shelter have been identified as a priority for the use of the PBF.
Hatfield 2,359,990	<p>HCC is working with the RUG to ensure the TOC provide and promote the use of secure cycle storage at the station</p> <p>the use of 20-minute parking bays in the carpark rather than parking in the drop off zone</p> <p>Install Electric charging points in the carpark</p>
Hertford North 1,258,570	<p>There is no step free access on to platform 1 however Access for all funding has been secured and work should be completed by the end of CP6.</p> <p>The station building is cramped and crowded and in need of remodelling to make it fit for purpose</p>
Hitchin 3,265,142	<p>More cycle storage is needed</p> <p>The carpark markings are in need of refreshing and the pedestrian walkway needs to be wider.</p> <p>There is an aspiration to open a second access to the station for pedestrians and cyclists on the north eastern side of the railway. A study into the feasibility of such a scheme has been commissioned.</p>
Knebworth 561,724	The subway is in need of cleaning and the paintwork refreshing. This station is not fully accessible and will require Access for All funding.

Stations (+ estimated station usage figures 2018/19)	Issues and aspirations
Letchworth Garden City 1,915,332	The cycle storage is at capacity, so more storage is needed. The station forecourt would benefit from being redesigned to accommodate a drop off and pick up area and move underutilised staff car parking spaces. A study has been commissioned.
Potters Bar 2,043,070	Access onto the platforms need to be made easier for disabled and elderly passengers.
Royston 1,467,154	The access to the cycle parking needs to be made safer. Wheelchair users have to access the platforms via one of the 2 car parks. If for any reason the trains were to depart from a different platform, which is apparently the case on occasion, there would be no way for a wheelchair user or anyone with mobility problems to change platforms quickly. They would need to exit the station and re-enter from the opposite car park. Access for disabled passengers therefore needs to be improved.
Stevenage 4,794,974	The cycle storage is at capacity, so more storage is needed. However, there are constraints on where further storage could be sited at the station so a more innovative approach is needed to maximise the space available. All major stakeholders of the station are in agreement that the station is in need of redevelopment in order to create a transport hub and gateway to the town.
Watton at Stone 154,090	The car park and cycle storage is not covered by CCTV.
Welham Green 198,924	The ramp up to the station is quite steep so difficult for a wheelchair user to negotiate. Access to platform 2, the London bound platform is via a steep flight of steps, therefore there is no access for disabled passengers. It would also be difficult for other encumbered passengers. Therefore, access needs to be improved for all passengers. There are no AVMs at the entrance from the car park. Passengers wishing to travel north bound need to go up on to the road bridge to purchase a ticket. An additional AVM should be positioned at the carpark exit for use when the ticket office is closed Some of the internal signage is faded and in need of replacing.

Stations (+ estimated station usage figures 2018/19)	Issues and aspirations
Welwyn Garden City 2,867,810	<p>Better signage to the railway station is needed both from the highway and inside the Howard Centre.</p> <p>The footbridge linking the Hyde Way cycle storage and a popular pedestrian route into the station from Bridgewater Road is in urgent need of attention. It is a feature of the station and is currently very dilapidated.</p> <p>The cycle storage does not come under the station demise and is therefore the responsibility of HCC highways and Welwyn/Hatfield District Council. The storage in Hyde Way and in the front of the Howard Centre is at capacity. Additional storage is therefore needed. The existing storage is not sheltered or covered by CCTV.</p>
Welwyn North 587,312	<p>The footbridge, which is clearly visible on approach to the station is in need of maintenance. The paint is peeling and the overall impression is of being run down. This could be a nice characterful feature of the station.</p> <p>The pedestrian access to this station is very poor with no footways on the station side of the road in any direction. The only pedestrian access is into the main car park along narrow footpath from Woodside Road. The path is likely to be muddy in places after wet weather and is uneven.</p> <p>The station building is in need of refurbishment.</p>



Midland Mainline

Stations (+ estimated station usage figures 2018/29)	Issues and Aspirations
Elstree and Borehamwood 3,231,026	<p>The station was redeveloped in 2019 to improve passenger flow and provide better retail facilities. HCC have contributed £20,000 in match funding to provide improved cycle storage facilities at the station.</p>
Harpenden 3,373,086	<p>The station forecourt is in need of remodelling to make it more accessible on foot and by bike. A study has been commissioned by HCC.</p> <p>St Albans and District Council have plans to add a deck to the carpark which, if it goes ahead, will also involve the remodelling of the approach road and junction with Station Road to ease congestion at the junction and make the entrance wider to improve walking and cycling access.</p> <p>Opening a pedestrian and cycle access from Aysgarth Close into the car park from the south is a priority identified through the Passenger Benefit Fund consultation with RUGs. HCC are working with the TOC to move this piece of work forward.</p> <p>The station would benefit from more AVMs at the entrance to platform 1 from the carpark as there are always queues at peak times.</p> <p>There is an issue with thefts from the cycle storage which should be addressed with the funding secured from the cycle-rail grant in 2019 and £10,000 from HCC in match funding.</p>
Radlett 1,230,892	<p>Access for all is a priority for this station. HCC will continue to work with the TOC to ensure this station is put forward for any future access for all funding.</p> <p>There is no RTPI display in the ticket hall.</p>
St Albans City 7,560,310	<p>Work is currently underway to develop the station building to create more space for passenger flow and improved retail facilities</p> <p>The Ridgemont Road entrance will also be improved by the provision of a small building accommodating another retail opportunity and a wider gate-line. The entrance and carpark will also be improved to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists. It is hoped this can be done in conjunction with a highway scheme to improve pedestrian and cycle access along Victoria Street due to take place in 2020.</p> <p>The most pressing issue at this station is the overcrowding on the island platform caused by increasing numbers of passengers exiting via the footbridge. This project has funding and is going through the Network Rail design process and is due to be delivered by the end of 2021.</p>

West Anglia Mainline

Station (+ estimated station usage figures 2018/19)	Issues and Aspirations
Bishop's Stortford 3,259,594	<p>The secure cycle storage is under used due to a problem with the allocation of the fobs needed to access the area. GA need to look into this problem to allow greater access to the storage area.</p>
Broxbourne 1,915,332	<p>The station forecourt and interchange has been improved in recent years.</p> <p>Platform lengthening work needs to be completed to accommodate the new 10-car trains.</p> <p>The bridge waiting area will be improved during the life of the franchise</p> <p>The number of disabled car parking spaces will be increased.</p>
Cheshunt 2,514,920	<p>There is currently no bus service serving the station due to the difficulty in turning the vehicle around</p> <p>There is a need for more cycle parking spaces at the station and the TOC plans to move the storage from its current location on the platform where it is causing an obstruction. HCC are making a funding contribution to the increased storage provision in 2019/20.</p> <p>Lifts are required to provide access for all.</p>
Harlow Town	<p>Awaiting Audit</p>
Hertford East 1,313,442	<p>Awaiting information about highway scheme planned for the area around the station.</p>
Rye House 502,976	<p>Access for disabled passengers required for northbound platform. Poor pedestrian access to the two platforms is in need of improvement for all passengers.</p> <p>The steps leading from the platforms to the road are in a poor state of repair. Work to refurbish the bridge is due to be undertaken during 2020.</p> <p>A new waiting shelter and improved cycle storage, co-funded by HCC and GA are also due to be delivered in 2020.</p>
St Margaret's 365,922	<p>The old signal box is falling into disrepair. It has recently become apparent that it is not possible to bring this into community use. However, work needs to be done to the exterior of the building to ensure no further deterioration occurs. This may be a project for NRLCRP.</p> <p>The passenger toilet facilities should be reinstated</p>

Station (+ estimated station usage figures 2018/19)	Issues and Aspirations
Sawbridgeworth 556,586	The car parks are in need of resurfacing and marking and CCTV installed. Access onto the London bound platform is difficult for disabled or encumbered passengers.
Theobalds Grove 643,036	
Waltham Cross 1,208,212	More cycle storage needed Better walking and cycle links to the station are needed There is no bus stop serving the station at present
Ware 1,074,608	Disabled parking spaces are in need of remarking. Passengers would like to see the toilets brought back into use.



West Coast Mainline

Stations (+ estimated station usage figure 2018/19)	Issues and Aspirations
Apsley 667,192	<p>Cycle storage is at capacity. Additional storage should be provided.</p> <p>Access to platform 3 needs to be improved for disabled passengers.</p> <p>RTPI needed at bus stops.</p>
Berkhamsted 1,778,774	<p>An increase in cycle parking provision is due to be delivered in 2020.</p>
Bricket Wood 36,840	<p>Anti-social behaviour is an issue at this station so CCTV coverage should be extended.</p> <p>The Bricket Wood Station Heritage Trust have undertaken a project to restore and bring back into use the station building as a community space. This will significantly enhance the facilities at the station</p> <p>RTPI needed at bus stops.</p>
Bushey 1,520,068	<p>The cycle storage is near capacity so more will be needed in the near future.</p> <p>RTPI needed at bus stops.</p>
Carpenders Park 1,186,250	<p>RTPI needed at bus stops.</p>
Garston 80,724	<p>RTPI needed at bus stops.</p> <p>The access onto the platform is via a ramp which has a handrail but is still quite steep for wheelchair users. The footpath approaching the station from Garston Lane is also on quite a steep incline.</p>
Hemel Hempstead 2,008,894	<p>The cycle storage is in need of replacement and capacity should be increased.</p> <p>Access to the carpark for drivers is along a narrow access road which goes through a small industrial area. The access is needs to be more clearly signposted.</p> <p>The pedestrian access through the station is narrow and not sufficiently well segregated</p> <p>The route in from the car park could be challenging for wheelchair users and people with mobility problems due to the narrow footway and slight uphill slope</p> <p>The station is unattractive and not fit for purpose given the large usage numbers, so is in need of redevelopment.</p>

Stations (+ estimated station usage figure 2018/19)	Issues and Aspirations
How Wood 34,690	Cycle storage is needed at this station (minimum of four spaces)
Kings Langley 724,994	Cycle storage needs to be covered by CCTV This station has received Access for All funding so work to improve access should be completed in CP6
Park Street 22,074	New waiting shelters needed.
St Albans Abbey 166,758	Improved CCTV is needed to deter anti-social behaviour and security for cycle storage. An additional two tier cycle rack is due to be installed in 2019/20 and the provision of a secure cycle hub is being investigated.
Tring 876,526	The carpark is always full and there is a problem with on road parking around the station. Additional capacity is required. A station travel plan is being developed by local community groups, led by Tring Town Council in partnership with LNR. As part of this work a car share scheme is being piloted as a way of reducing pressure on the carpark. An Access for all funded project to install lifts at the station began in the Spring of 2019 and was completed in the summer of 2020. Plans have been drawn up for a new layout of the station forecourt which currently does not make the best use of the space available.
Watford High Street 1,325,826	RTPI needed at the station.
Watford Junction 8,460,154	Needs major improvements to access and interchange for all modes. There are plans to address this in the Watford Junction Masterplan and in the South West Herts GTP.
Watford North 106,268	

The Chiltern Line

Stations	Issues and aspirations
Chorleywood 553,382	Cycle storage is at capacity, so more storage is needed. AVMs are needed at the entrance to the station from the carpark.
Croxley	Cycle storage is at capacity, so more storage is needed. RTPI for bus services needed. Improved highway signage to the station car park needed. There is no step free access to the stations, so lifts are needed.
Moor Park	More cycle storage is needed.
Rickmansworth 1,171,036	The cycle storage is at capacity and bikes are being fly-parked, so more storage is needed Car parking requires clearer signage. TfL have committed funding to make the access to the station step free in 2018.

