



First of all, well done to Okehampton, by the time you are reading this, a regular GWR service for every two hours is now fully operational! The first in the governments 'Restoring your railway' programme. By next year the Exeter to Okehampton Dartmoor line will move to an hourly service, I look forward to catching a Barnstaple to Exeter train changing at Crediton for my first ride to see the beautiful hills, streams and walkways of Dartmoor.

During the unveiling of our Bideford nameplate at the Burton art gallery, our town mayor gave a speech saying that he would like to see the real railway return to Bideford. I remember seeing our chairman's eyes looking over to me...

I have become a member of Railfuture, an organisation responsible for helping communities across the UK with gaining them a better service and or reopening their railway. Railfuture invited me to a director's meeting and to give a presentation, they already had tried in the past to reopen the Barnstaple to Bideford line and they were keen to get me going. Tarka Rail Association is an organisation that supports the interests of the passengers and service on the Barnstaple to Exeter line. They support our aspirations to extend the line to Bideford. I was honoured to join their committee and talk with Network Rail and GWR.

Restoring Your Railway is the name for the current government's £500 million programme that lets communities bid to get their railways reinstated; the director of Railfuture would like to see Bideford added to that programme. North Devon District Council have now asked me to make a presentation, as well as Bideford Town Council who would also like to see a Barnstaple to Bideford railway committee formed by January. If all goes well we will have a Barnstaple to Bideford railway added to the new North Devon and Torridge Local Plan (a mainline service separate to BRHC). The good news is likeminded councillors are present in Barnstaple and they want to bring down the traffic congestion from private car usage.

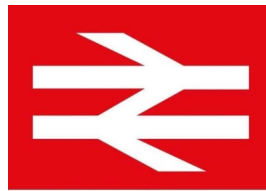
Barnstaple Bypass - the main line rail link from Barnstaple to Bideford



Okehampton's OkeRail group and I have been in talks, in December, they would like to meet on Bideford station. At the same time, the director of Railfuture would like to meet me. This then brings me on to say that the Bideford to Barnstaple railway working party will be holding its press release at BRHC!



Bideford Town



Greater Bideford Parkway

Many questions are still to be answered; will it be a through service to Exeter and beyond? Will the railway need a new alignment and possibly go through new cuttings and embankments? What stations will it serve? Can we have a faster service than ever before? I have thought through catchment areas and why people would need to board or step off from Barnstaple to Bideford. The true scale of housing development has made me realise that Yelland has a need for a parkway, Instow has a need for a station to serve tourism and Greater Bideford has a need to serve thousands of residents and tourists.

ACE Rail's sustainable transport solution

The area of Instow has a pinch Point. The train must continue through the cutting. The Tarka Trail could be improved by re-routing it through Instow seafront.

- Benefits include
- Better scenery for Tarka trail
 - Excellent rest point
 - Increased revenue for Instow businesses
 - More public using railway instead of cars along seafront



Proposed stations

Bideford Town Station

- Walking distance to town.
- Cycling route to Barnstaple or Meeth

Instow

- Walking distance to beach
- Tourist destination

Greater Bideford Parkway

- Park and ride servicing Bideford, Appledore, Westward Ho! & Northam

Yelland Parkway

- Park and ride servicing Fremington and Yelland
- Solves relief road issue

What we will need to form is a Strategic Outline Business case and that would include a signed letter from DCC's official officer in charge of Restoring your railway, a feasibility study, a commercial study and a wider economic study for starters (I hope to get some more people to help me by then).

But what is the name of the group? 'ACE Rail' will be the committee's working name. We will aim to provide a heavy rail, mainline service to Exeter.

First steps



- Add Bideford railway to the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan
 - Add the Bideford railway to ND 2025 vision
- Define and protect a route for the new railway line within the Barnstaple-Bideford corridor; a defined and safeguarded engineering alignment requires more detailed assessment.

Ways to travel to Bideford from Barnstaple

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|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| • <u>Sustainable</u> | • <u>Unsustainable</u> |
| • Cycle 36 min | • Bus 29 min |
| • Walk 2h 25m | • Private car 17 min |
| | • Taxi 17 min |
| • <u>Routes available</u> | • <u>Routes available</u> |
| • <u>Tarka Trail</u> | • B3233 |
| • B3233 | • A39 |

The figures for Greater Bideford (Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho!) are very interesting, only the regular bus route along the B3233, the number 21 bus takes 29 minutes to service 40,000 people while a private car user can be in Barnstaple in 17 minutes. We need a public transport service that is better at providing faster transport. Car is king in North Devon but not that the entire world has to produce less carbon emissions, are we going to continue to have no thought on climate change?

<u>Tarka Line</u>	<u>Approximate populations</u>	<u>Proposed ACE Rail line</u>
Exeter	129,800	Yelland Parkway 6,310
Newton St Cyres	562	<i>Amalgamation of Fremington and <u>Yelland</u></i>
Crediton	6,837	
Yeoford	1,324	
Copplestone	1,253	Instow 1,501
Morchart Road	975	<i>Small residential parish yet very popular summer destination</i>
Lapford	867	
Eggesford	70	Greater Bideford parkway 40,000
Kings Nympton	410	<i>Amalgamation of Bideford, Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho!</i>
Portsmouth Arms	169	
Umberleigh	2,255	Bideford Town Station 40,000
Chapelton	30	<i>The same as above but used for those who shop/work/live closer to the town.</i>
Barnstaple	20,724	