



***Torrige and North Devon Connectivity Programme***

# *ACE Rail presentation*

## *Atlantic Coast Exeter Railway*

*Presentation on behalf of Tarka Rail Association*

Made for



## The last train 1982

The regular passenger service became a part of the draconian Beeching axe in October 1965, however the line remained open for freight.

Many special well-used chartered passenger trains would use the Bideford line throughout the years. It was closed in 1982 and the track was lifted in 1985.

The last train had over 800 passengers!



Monthly average of Tarka line journey figures are over 50,000 users.

2022 is set to break 650,000 journeys!

Simply adding Bideford station's catchment would overload the existing service and be slow.



**ACE Rail's** additional hourly limited-stop faster service compared to the existing slow most-stations service.



*Modal shift to more sustainable transport means journey time competitive with road and doubled service frequency with more capacity for growth.*

# Restoring Your Railway

*Government's stated objectives:*

- The Department for Transport programme works with councils to help support left-behind communities.
  - Supporting new housing developments and boosting tourism.
  - Opening up jobs and education opportunities.
  - Investment targeted at regenerating local economies.
  - Cut down on car emissions and ease local road congestion.
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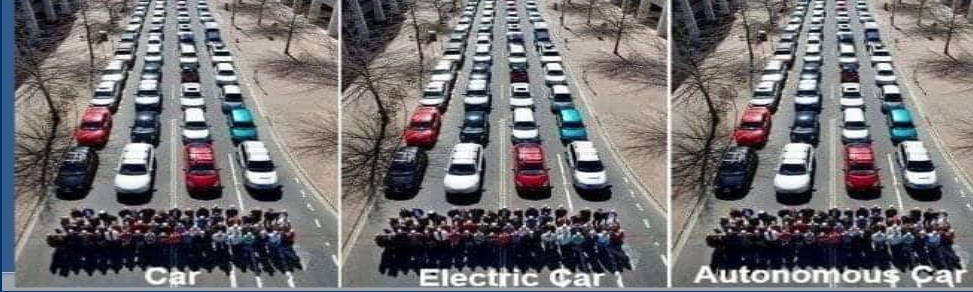
# Why Bideford?

- A 'Greater Bideford' resident population of over 30k, growing recently by 3k per decade, the largest shortfall in rail connectivity in all Devon.
  - That number doubles up to 60,000 people in the summertime!
  - Sustainable access.
  - A and B Roads: often slow and unpredictable journeys whether by car or bus.
  - In line with central government's carbon neutral targets.
  - Access for all further and higher education students.
  - Tremendous employment opportunities.
  - Fremington Parish has over 12,000 parishioners - enough to justify a railway station.
  - local transport network now: congested, no realistic prospect of capacity growth.
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Space Required To Transport 48 People



If you are in traffic



You are traffic

We Mean Green.  
A single train  
removes up  
to 500 cars  
off our roads.  
Get on board.

~~500~~  
Cars





## *Devon County Council's Bideford to Barnstaple railway safeguarding*

In 1999 DCC, TDC and NDDC paid a team to carry out a feasibility study (the Maunsell Report).

The report stated that the Barnstaple A361 bypass was to be constructed with enough height clearance for a future railway.





# Barnstaple bypass

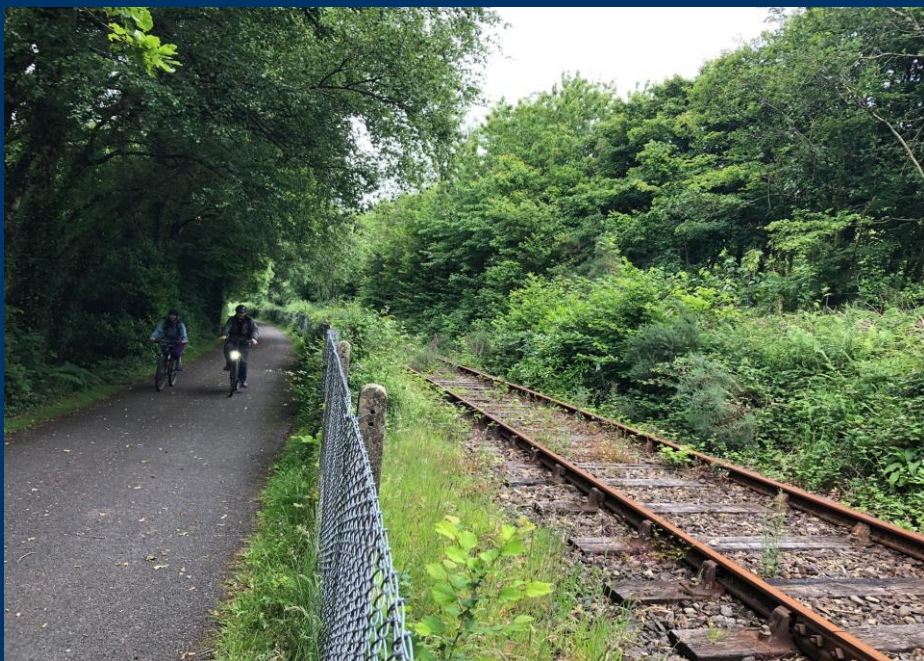
The main line rail link from Barnstaple to Bideford





***Defining and protecting a route –  
Two multi-modal sustainable transport choices co-existing  
in harmony.***

Granite Way, Okehampton



Exe Trail, Exmouth



**Bideford, the largest town without a railway station in the whole of Devon!**

**Bideford and Fremington, reliant on a passenger bus service.**

**Journey times unpredictable in reaching Barnstaple!**

**Devon County Council's Local Transport Plan 3, 2011-26  
the 28 market (19) and coastal (9) towns in Devon**

	Pop'n 2020	Station	Usage 2019/20
<b>Market Towns</b>			
Ashburton/Buckfastleigh	6867		
<u>Axminster</u>	<u>6896</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>382,884</u>
<u>Barnstaple</u>	<u>32,948</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>435,360</u>
<b>Bideford</b>	<b>31,014</b>		tbc
<b>Cullompton</b>	<b>8495</b>	<b>(Y)</b>	tbc
<u>Crediton</u>	<u>8322</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>67,956</u>
Great Torrington	6053		
Holsworthy	3312		
<u>Honiton</u>	<u>11,499</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>340,700</u>
<u>Ivybridge</u>	<u>11,820</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>56,188</u>
Kingsteignton	11,551		
Moretonhamsstead	1388		
<u>Newton Abbot</u>	<u>27,187</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>1,234,750</u>
<u>Okehampton</u>	<u>8831</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>6,434</u>
Ottery St Mary	5764		
South Molton	5892		
<b>Tavistock</b>	<b>12,627</b>	<b>(Y)</b>	tbc
<u>Tiverton</u>	<u>20,829</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>525,252</u>
<u>Totnes</u>	<u>8924</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>743,212</u>
<b>Coastal Towns</b>			
Dartmouth	4906		
<u>Dawlish</u>	<u>13,493</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>533,116</u>
<u>Exmouth</u>	<u>35,825</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>924,758</u>
Ilfracombe	10,960		
Kingsbridge	6123		
Lynton/Lynmouth	2039		
Seaton	8882		
Sidmouth	13,121		
<u>Teignmouth</u>	<u>15,688</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>706,234</u>

tbc = towns with proposed stations in varying stages of development:

(Y) = stations funded for further project development;

Bideford not yet funded for project development.

Usage is for pre-pandemic 12 months Mar'19-Feb'20.

Tarka line stations	Approximate populations	Station usage March 2019–February 2020
Exeter Central	133,333	<b>2,599,540</b>
Exeter St Davids	133,333	<b>2,768, 878</b>
Newton St Cyres	672	2,814
Crediton	8,322	<b>67,956</b>
Yeoford	1,324	17,844
Copplestone	1,278	<b>19,666</b>
Morchard Road	1,291	14,116
Lapford	1,047	1,906
Eggesford	145	<b>32,376</b>
Kings Nympton	413	5,782
Portsmouth Arms	514	496
Umberleigh	1,191	<b>32,926</b>
Chapelton	300	194
Barnstaple	32,948	<b>435,360</b>



# ACE Rail

Area	Population	
• Exeter	133,333	• GWR has agreements to always stop at all Tarka Line stations, to serve their catchment areas.
• Crediton	8,322	
• Eggesford	145	• Transport hub serving Chulmleigh, Winkleigh, Chawleigh
• Umberleigh	1,191	• Transport hub serving South Molton, Great Torrington, High Bickington
• Barnstaple	32,948	
• Greater Bideford	31,014	• The catchment area would be massive!

## Gross Domestic Product per head by Devon's 10 District and Unitary councils 2019

Torrige is ranked in the lowest 4% of GDP per capita in the whole of the UK!

A restored railway service would bring economic prosperity for the entire area.

Bideford residents would gain (much-needed) employment opportunities without the need to own a private vehicle.

Districts alphabetical		Districts numeric		National rank out of 375 UK LAs
<u>UK</u>	<u>£32,876</u>	Exeter	£47,259	35
<u>England</u>	<u>£33,809</u>	<u>England</u>	<u>£33,809</u>	[92]
<u>South West</u>	<u>£29,147</u>	<u>UK</u>	<u>£32,876</u>	[105]
<u>Devon CC</u>	<u>£24,403</u>	<u>South West</u>	<u>£29,147</u>	[149]
East Devon	£22,480	South Hams	£27,025	177
Exeter	£47,259	North Devon	£26,765	183
Mid-Devon	£20,429	Plymouth	£25,236	223
North Devon	£26,765	<u>Devon CC</u>	<u>£24,403</u>	[241]
Plymouth	£25,236	East Devon	£22,480	278
South Hams	£27,025	Teignbridge	£22,044	286
Teignbridge	£22,044	Mid-Devon	£20,429	313
Torbay	£17,671	Torbay	£17,671	358
Torrige	£17,493	West Devon	£17,631	360
West Devon	£17,631 →	Torrige	£17,493	362

North Devon ranked in the lowest 15%

Torrige ranked in the lowest 5%!

Districts alphabetical	Weekly wages		Districts numeric	Weekly wages	National rank out of 362 GB LAs
East Devon	£574.90		Exeter	£597	146
Exeter	£596.80		East Devon	£575	189
Mid-Devon	£565.80		Mid-Devon	£566	214
North Devon	£527.00		South Hams	£564	221
Plymouth	£542.40		Plymouth	£542	274
South Hams	£563.70		Torbay	£529	303
Teignbridge	£522.60		North Devon	£527	306
Torbay	£528.70		Teignbridge	£523	313
Torrige	£485.70		Torrige	£486	355
West Devon	£464.70		West Devon	£465	359

Housing affordability in Torridge and North Devon is 15% worse than the average for England, putting Torridge and North Devon in the top 40% of least affordable districts in England.

A new railway service will at least help make those new homes more sustainable for some of their travel needs.

### Housing affordability in Devon's 10 District & Unitary Councils, March 2021

Ratio of median house prices to median workplace-based annual earnings by LA district, England and Wales, 2021

Devon Districts, alphabetical

Districts, numeric + national rank of 331 LAs in England & Wales

East Devon	10.88	South Hams	12.56	62
Exeter	9.22	West Devon	11.96	77
Mid-Devon	9.29	Teignbridge	11.4	91
North Devon	10.46	East Devon	10.88	104
Plymouth	7.27	North Devon	10.46	121
South Hams	12.56	Torridge	10.34	128
Teignbridge	11.4	Mid-Devon	9.29	162
Torbay	8.9	Exeter	9.22	166
Torridge	10.34	<b>ENGLAND</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>170</b>
West Devon	11.96	Torbay	8.9	180
<b>ENGLAND</b>	<b>9.1</b>	Plymouth	7.27	230

Of historic Devon County's 10 LAs, 8 have housing which is **less** affordable than the English average  
Divergence in house prices compared to earnings in local authorities are becoming larger over time

Source: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/housingaffordabilityinenglandandwales/2021>



**people and place**  
Planning for our future together

“People and Place” project, the new joint Local Plan.

- 1. North Devon and Torridge District Councils now support the Bideford railway and await the Initial Business Case findings.
- 2. As well as a new rail link, where will the line run?  
For Bideford to re-join the national rail network, the new joint Local Plan for Torridge and North Devon needs to have a policy commitment to define and protect a route.
- 3. It will then become a matter for future public and stakeholder consultations, and can gather more widespread support.



## *Next steps*

We have secured the funding for an independent specialist advisor to produce an Initial Business Case for the project.

Great Western Railway, Railfuture and Tarka Rail Association have now part funded the IBC.

The Initial Business Case is expected to be published in March 2023.

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Thank you for listening.

**ACE Rail** is a campaign of **Tarka Rail Association**,

Supported by:

North Devon and Torridge District Councils.

Bideford, Barnstaple and Crediton Town Councils,

Fremington Parish Council (provisional), Tawstock Parish Council.

Torridge & West Devon and North Devon MPs.

Devon County Council's Cabinet member for  
Climate Change, Environment and Transport  
(who is also Chair of Peninsula Transport).

OkeRail, Railfuture and Great Western Railway.

Presentation by Tim Steer

Tarka Rail Association Committee and ACE Rail lead  
Director of Bideford Railway Heritage Centre

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