



Bedford

The East West Rail Connection

The government and East-West Rail Company are planning new rail services linking Oxford and Cambridge to improve connections between East Anglia and central, southern and western England. Bedford lies at the heart of this route.



This leaflet explains the case for east-west rail to directly serve Bedford. We are keen to keep you informed about these plans and hear your views.

[Find out more over the page](#)

East-west rail presents a once in a life time opportunity to locate Bedford at the centre of an international and national transport hub. Achieving this will re-establish Bedford on the inter-city network, reversing recent changes and optimizing travel north, south, east and west of Bedford. As a council we recognise the importance of rail and how it can boost the local economy and are calling on the government to support plans for east-west rail through Bedford.

The case for east-west rail through central Bedford focuses on three key benefits:

1. Excellent connectivity - locally, nationally and internationally
2. Creating an international business hub
3. Regeneration - boosting jobs and the local economy

East-West Rail Company is currently consulting on the future route of the central section of the east-west rail line. Securing east-west rail through Bedford is vital to creating opportunities not only as a key transport hub for both Bedford and the wider national transport network but also in providing key growth and vitality.

East-West Rail and International Connectivity

East-west rail plans present an excellent opportunity to not only connect the centre of Bedford with Oxford and Cambridge, but also enhance our international connectivity. The east-west rail investment delivers infrastructure that could enable direct rail services from Bedford Midland to Heathrow and Stansted Airports, linking Bedford with the global economy and international business. With Bedford's strategic location on the rail network, it will have fast and frequent services linking regional, national and international economies. It could also have direct rail links to the UK's two largest airports, and three other international airports. As such, no other town will be better connected to UK airports and international businesses.

East-west rail journey times from Bedford (Midland Main Line Station)



Times shown in brackets indicate current travel times

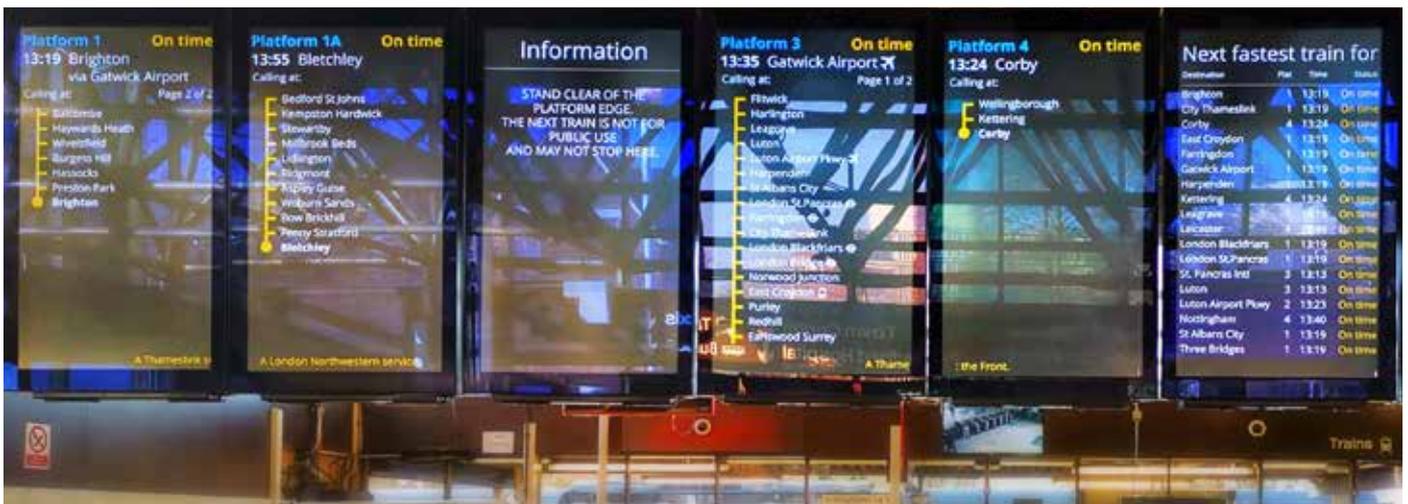
**Dependent on the outcome of the East Midlands Franchise*

Bedford Midland 'International Business Hub'

Bedford Midland station is perfectly placed to become a transformative rail hub, central to the success of east-west rail. New services to Oxford and Cambridge, with the potential to extend these East and West to Heathrow and Stansted Airports, will deliver greater access to highly skilled jobs in the research, engineering, education, health and technology sectors.

Bedford's rail hub can connect businesses and attract inward investment to the town as well as supporting the growth of neighbouring towns and cities, through transforming rail travel. New journey opportunities will be possible, and the east-west rail route can provide a realistic alternative to car travel, reducing carbon emissions.

With the work proposed as part of the 'One Public Estate' programme, Bedford Midland will see investment in new car parking and better access. East-west rail provides the opportunity to create the station as a 'rail hub', due to its close proximity to the historic town centre and its integrated transport connectivity. The station is centrally located, serving end to end journeys, whatever the preferred mode of transport, with rail, taxis, buses, cycling and walking and of course car parking being catered for. Improved transport connectivity, stimulated by the east-west rail project, will support the regeneration of Bedford town centre, boosting jobs and the local economy and create a 'Place' for people to meet, relax, do business and thrive.



Ambitious for Bedford

Rail connectivity is important to the economic growth of the borough. It provides businesses with connections to a larger network and allows local people to access jobs. Recent studies have shown how important rail connections are for local growth and are a key consideration for business investment. Studies have shown that an hourly service between Oxford and Cambridge, stopping in Bedford, would provide £10m per year to the economy and create 220 new jobs.





“ We're urging you to join us in backing the call for east-west rail to connect with central Bedford.”

Bedford has the opportunity to be an international hub for business with rail connectivity being the key to unlocking future potential and prosperity.

We want to hear your views so that we can show the East-West Rail Company and the government this is an opportunity that cannot be missed. ”

Joint Statement by the Mayor and Group Leaders
Bedford Borough Council

How you can get involved



Visit our website to see the latest east-west rail proposals:
www.bedford.gov.uk/eastwestrailconsultation

We want to hear your views on the east-west rail proposals to connect the centre of Bedford to the new route between Oxford and Cambridge.



Contact us - To have your say please contact us at:

@ rail@bedford.gov.uk

🌐 www.bedford.gov.uk/eastwestrailconsultation

✉ **Transport Policy, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP**

You can also visit our website www.bedford.gov.uk/stayconnected and sign up for regular email updates on this and a range of news, events and council services.