

***From Campaign for Better Transport
Bristol Bath Travel to Work Area***

***Henbury Station, Henbury Loop: is Greater Bristol going to miss out
again on the suburban rail that we absolutely need to support growth?***

The Henbury Loop is critical for the future of the rail network for Bristol. We are one of the very few cities of this size in Europe without a proper public transport system to match and we are about to grow substantially. The problem is that unless we are clear and decisive now, we are going to fail. We need to support the Henbury Loop as critical in getting the right transport for Greater Bristol, and ask that its re-instatement should coincide with the re-signalling of the Bristol area in 2014.

Further points:

- Decisions on the Bristol metro involve not only the four Bristol authorities, but also those in Wiltshire and Somerset. Large new housing estates are allocated to these areas as well of course to Bristol and Bath and people will be commuting all over the sub-region. A commuter rail network is badly needed that services everyone or the traffic jams will be completely impossible. Wiltshire and Somerset have anyway to be involved, the termini for many Bristol rail services are in their counties. We need to speak to them as soon as possible and get them on board. West Wiltshire and Mendip are both in the West of England Housing Market Area – they need to be in on the act.
- We have heard of concerns that stations to be opening are on curves and that this will present difficulty. However we have been assured by contacts in the rail industry that this is no problem at all and that many stations in the south west are curved, and yet function perfectly well.
- We have also heard suggestions that buses can do what trains do. Were it so! However buses get stuck in traffic and a rail journey that might take 17 minutes from Henbury to Temple Meads would take an hour even at peak times.
- The combination of the Henbury Loop, the Portishead Line and the Severn Beach line is stunning when it comes to delivering a proper rail network - or indeed light rail/ tram train network - to Bristol. What possible excuse is there to not pushing forward with the concept especially in the light of the major resignalling taking place in 2014? .

Are we about to throw away for the second time one of the most important opportunities to create a rail-based transport network for Greater Bristol? All authorities in the area – including West Wiltshire and Mendip, BANES, Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Nor Somerset, need to unite, work together and insists on delivery of what their people would so very much welcome.