

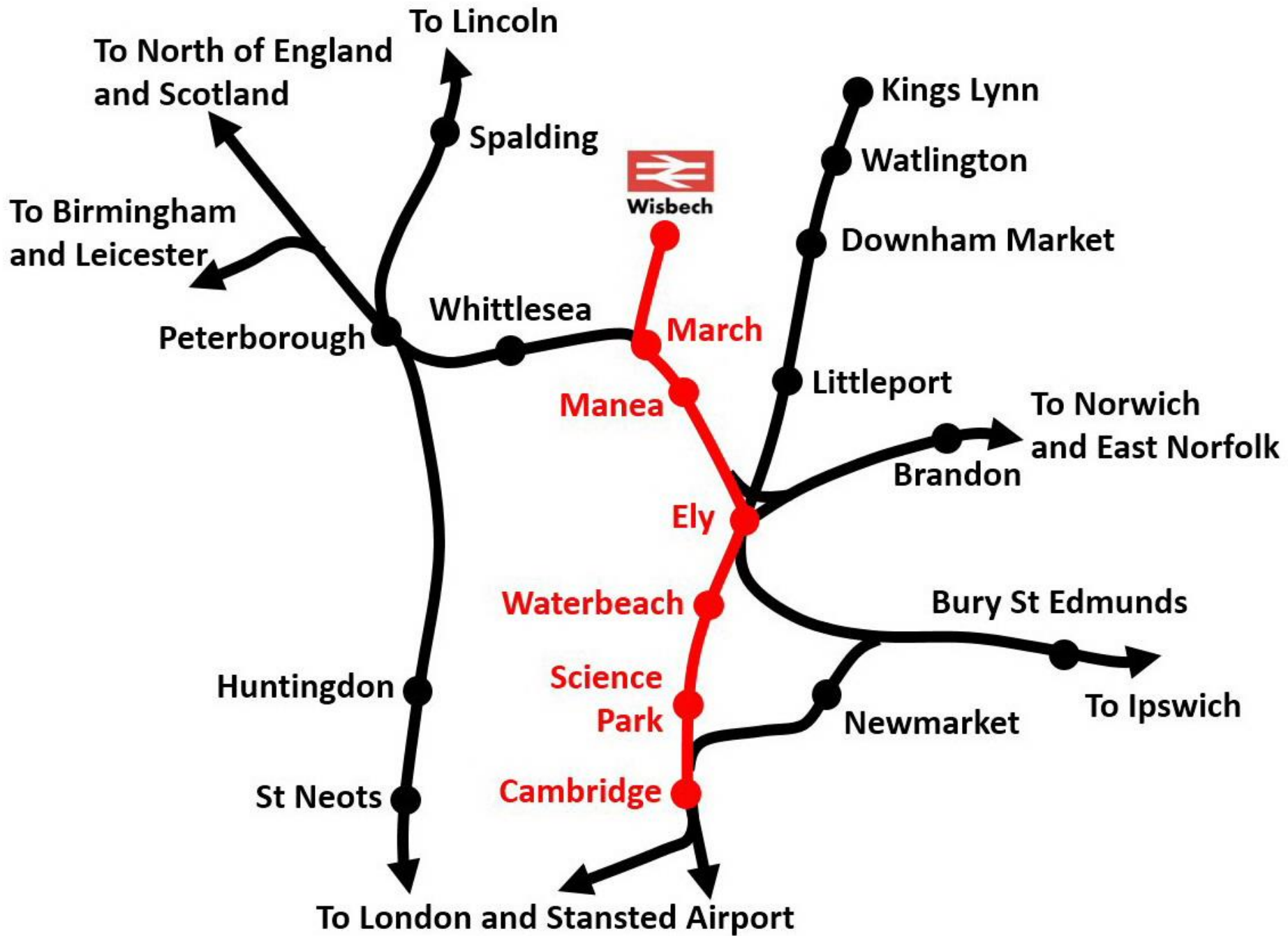


Wisbech Rail Reopening Campaign



Topics

- The Wisbech to March Railway
- History of the Campaign
- Cambridgeshire - North South divide
- “The Wisbech Rail Reopening Campaign”
- Petition presentation and future









History of the Campaign

- 1970 to present - WAMRAC through to Bramley via Eurostar
- ATOC Connecting Communities Report
- Local Transport Plan 3 success
- Meetings with Wisbech Town Council and Network Rail
- Mothballed or closed?
- Local MP fully on-board
- Railfuture EA informally agrees to leaflet the town

Cambridgeshire - North South divide

- Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire
- Wisbech - Fenland and Norfolk Marshland

Wisbech Rail Reopening Campaign

- Gather positive public support
- Demonstrate the strength of local feeling
- Change attitudes from “they’ve been talking about this forever” to “it can be done”
- Support the democratic process
- Inform councillors and officials of possibilities

Leaflets

10000

One per household for Wisbech

2000

Covering Greater Wisbech

2000

Manea and March

Wisbech Rail Reopening Campaign



Reopening the seven miles of railway line between Wisbech and March will create an economic stimulus, encourage new development and improve transport links between Wisbech and the surrounding towns and cities.

Please sign the petition at wisbechrail.org.uk

Wisbech and surrounding area is relatively impoverished. Unemployment is high compared with the south of Cambridgeshire. Services such as health and education have below average outcomes. The perception is that the town has visibly stagnated both socially and economically since the railway closed in 1968. The town and surrounding area have a population of around 31,000, one of the largest in the country without local access to a railway station.

Why build a new rail link?

The number of passengers travelling by train has increased continuously over the last 15 years, and is now at its highest level since 1920. In some parts of the country former railway lines have been reopened and have been a great success, both in terms of the numbers using the new services and also in the economic stimulus they have provided to the local area. An example is Alton in Clackmannanshire which has a population 19,000 and route length from Stirling of seven miles. It reopened in 2008 and the numbers of people using the hourly train service is already 394,000 per year. There are other equally successful reopenings and we believe Wisbech would soon achieve similar figures.

Although using the old railway as a heritage route has been suggested, a proper railway as part of the national network will bring far wider benefits in terms of jobs and access to the region.

Could Wisbech be next?

The line to Wisbech was used by freight services until 2000. The majority of the track is still in place, although it would need to be replaced to allow new trains to run. Existing level crossings would need to be upgraded to modern standards.

A direct train service to Cambridge is proposed with a journey time of around 40 minutes, much faster than a car journey or existing bus service. Trains would call at March, Manea, Ely and the new station at the Cambridge Science Park. Such a service would improve access to jobs and education and help connect Fenland with the rest of Cambridgeshire. Passengers would be able to connect with other train services to London, other centres in East Anglia, the Midlands and the North West.

What is happening now?

Wisbech Town Council supports the rail reopening. Cambridgeshire County Council is carrying out feasibility studies into the rail scheme. The first part of the study, looking at operating costs and likely usage, will report early in 2013. A second item of work will look at the costs of reopening including the location of the new station in Wisbech and how to cross the A47. This will report later in 2013.

If there is a good business case, it is possible that the rail reopening could be included within the one of the new rail franchises serving the area when this is let in a few years' time.

Leaflet Logistics

- 14000 all need folding
- Delivered by volunteers
- 2 local members
- 6 Railfuture EA volunteers
- 1 progress map
- One pair - 1000 houses in a long day

Petition Website

Standalone wisbechrail.org.uk with strong local focus

- Petition
- News and Press
- Learn More and Publications
- Photographs
- Links
- Resources
- FAQ
- Contact

Wisbech Rail Reopening Campaign



Please Sign the Petition

The petition was handed to Cambridgeshire County Council on Tuesday 16th July 2013, with a total of 3784 supporters, 2907 from Cambridgeshire.

However we are still gathering support so please [sign the petition](#) where you can also request updates on the campaign by email, and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

[Sign the Wisbech Rail Reopening petition](#)

This entry was posted in [Uncategorized](#) on [August 17, 2013](#).

railfuture
Leading the Wisbech Rail
Reopening Campaign

RECENT POSTS

[Please Sign the Petition Response to the Petition from the Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council](#)
[Wisbech Rail Reopening Petition Presentation](#)

Petition

- Name
- Email
- Postcode
- Send me updates by email

**"I support the reopening of the
railway line to Wisbech"**

Name (required)

Email

Postcode (required)

Send me updates by email

Submit >

Individual Response

- Printed on the back of the petition leaflets
- Revealed a very strong desire to show support

Please sign the
petition at
wisbechrail.org.uk



to urge the County Council to
get the line open soon.

A through service to Cambridge would give
Wisbech, March and Manea improved access
to jobs and education and help connect
Fenland with the rest of Cambridgeshire.

Or sign the petition below and post it to:
Wisbechrail, 7 Hollymount, Cambridge CB1 1QD

Name:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Signature:	

Petition forms can be requested from the above address.

Social Media

- Facebook - 538 followers
- Twitter – 169 followers
 - Press
 - Councillors
- 1200 wanting updates by email

The image shows a screenshot of the Facebook page for the 'Wisbech Rail Reopening Campaign'. The page header includes the campaign's logo, name, and a cover photo. Below the header, there is a 'Community' section with a description of the campaign and a link to the website. The page also displays the number of likes (538) and a Twitter icon. The main content area features a status update from the campaign dated 17 August, which mentions a positive response from the Cambridgeshire County Council. Below the status update is a photo of a group of men holding a large sign that reads 'Wisbech 3784 March Cambridge'. To the right of the main content, there is a 'Recent Posts by Others' section with several posts from users expressing support for the campaign. The page also has a 'Highlights' section and a 'What have you been up to?' prompt.

Media Coverage

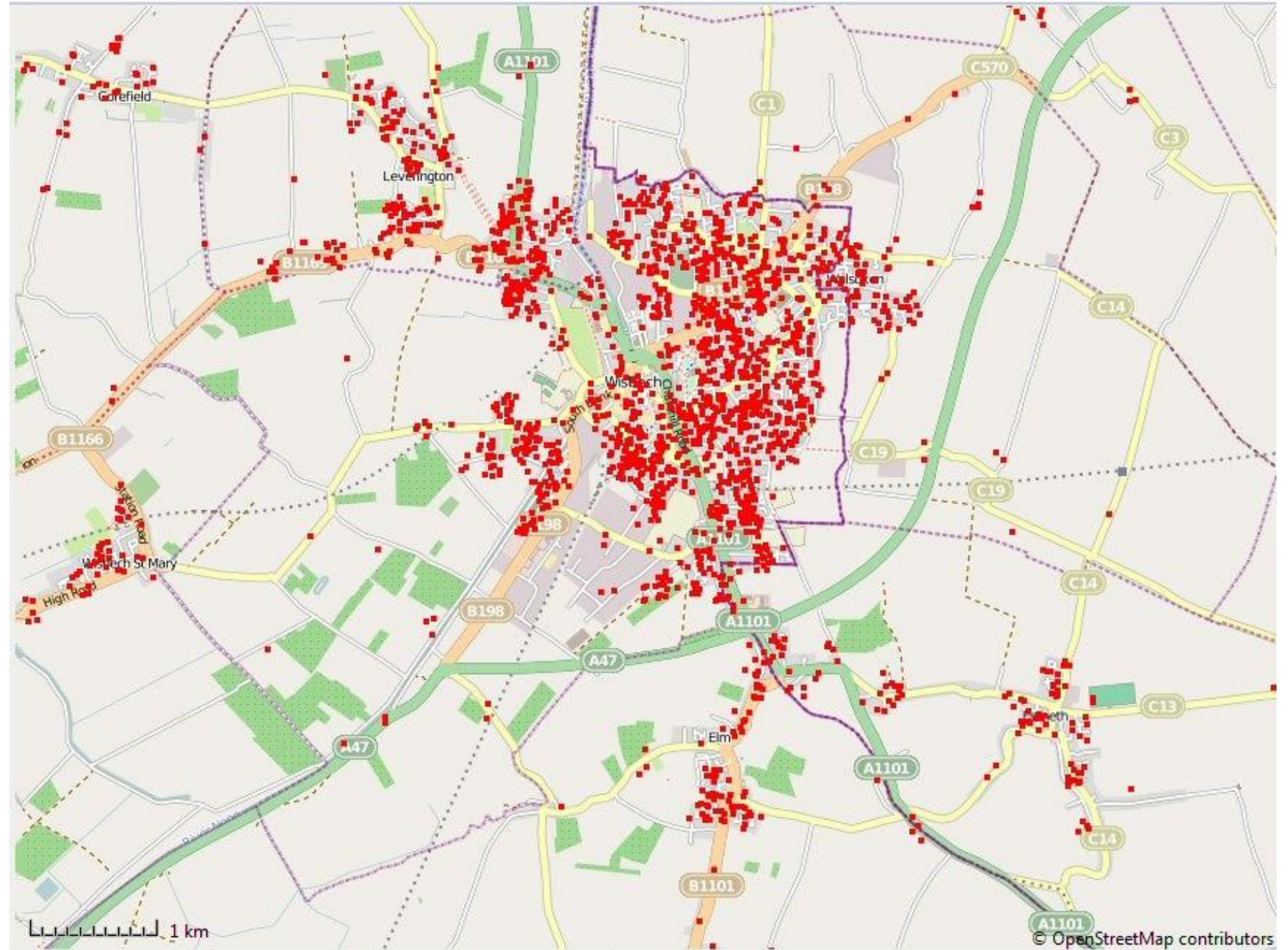
- Fenland Citizen
- Wisbech Standard
- Ely Standard
- Cambs Times
- Local Secrets
- Heart Radio
- BBC Cambridgeshire News
- ITV Anglia

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Wisbech Standard 24 website. The main navigation bar includes links for Home, News, Sport, What's on, Buy and sell, Wisbech life, Contact us, and My24. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with categories like Latest News, Business News, Education, Building Design Awards, King's Lynn news, Agriculture, Fenland Business Awards, and Weather. The main content area features a large article titled "On the right track: Hundreds back campaign to reconnect Wisbech to the rail network" by Rob Setchell, dated Thursday, February 21, 2013. The article includes a photo of the overgrown Bramley Line and a call to action for a petition. To the right of the article is a "More news" section with several short news items, including a video about a cyclist, a fire crew, a theatre performance, a caravan, and a charity event. The website also features various sidebars and widgets, such as "Letters", "What's On", "Cambs Times", and "local search 24".

Petition Numbers

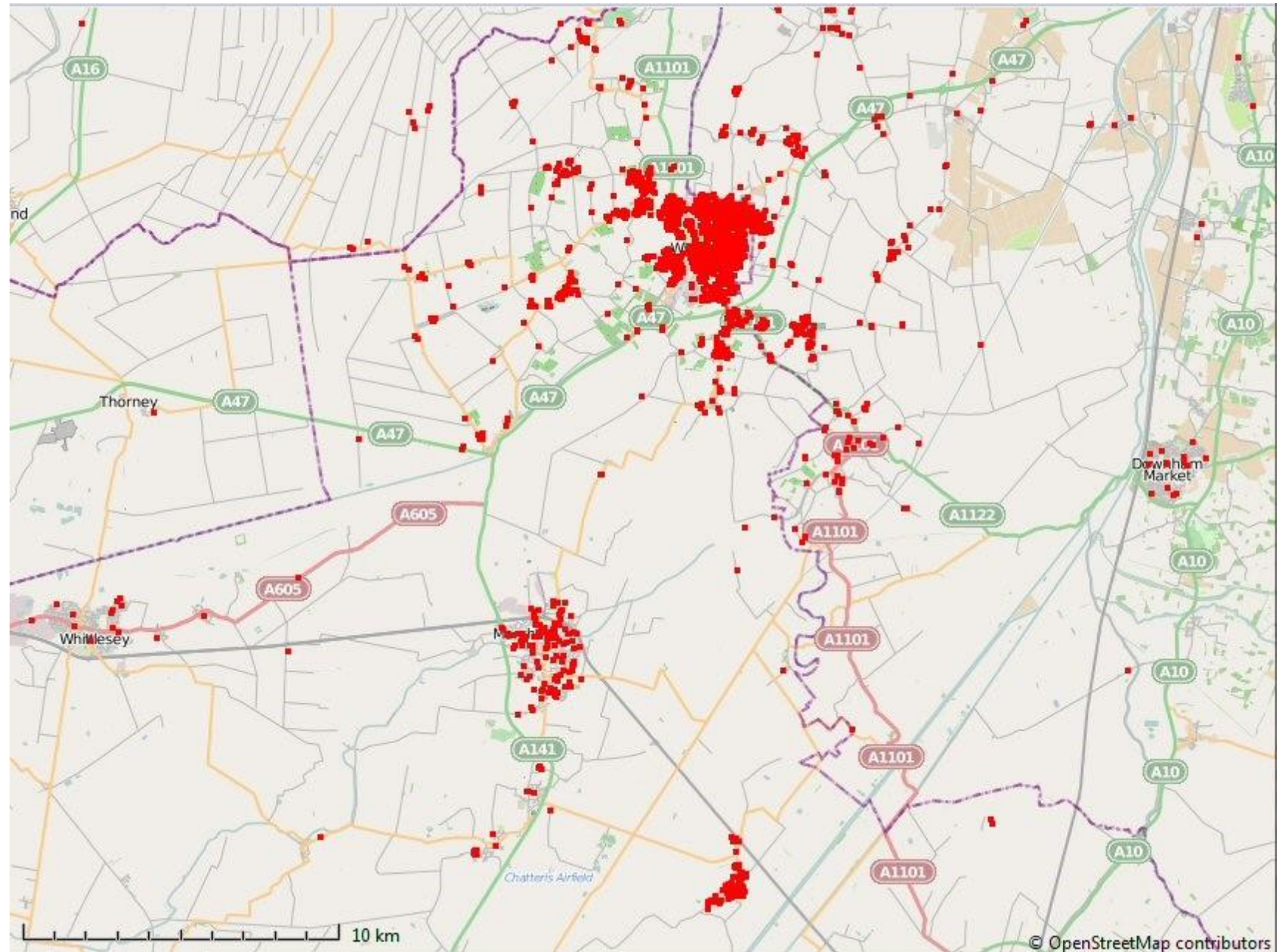
- 3784 signatures
 - 2907 from Cambridgeshire
 - 493 from Norfolk
 - 384 from the rest of the country
- How did they sign up
 - 3205 on-line petition
 - 537 paper petition
 - 42 individual responses
- Postcodes allowed analysis by county and ward

Map of Wisbech



Map of
Fenland

Wisbech
March
Manea



Presentation Day - 16th July 2013

First post election full Cambridgeshire County Council meeting



Response from the Leader of the Council

- “We welcome this petition and all the work you and the Campaign have put into promoting better transport links for Wisbech. This is an important part of demonstrating the strength of feeling locally and in time, of improving provision.”
- “ We are now carrying out detailed works into the proposals so that we can understand the scale of costs involved and how they may be addressed and, subject to the outcome, we would hope then to be in a position to identify potential solutions.”
- “As we move this work forward, I will ensure that my officers keep the campaign and Railfuture informed of progress, and hope that a positive outcome for Wisbech can be achieved as soon as possible.”

Cambridgeshire County Council Local Transport Plan

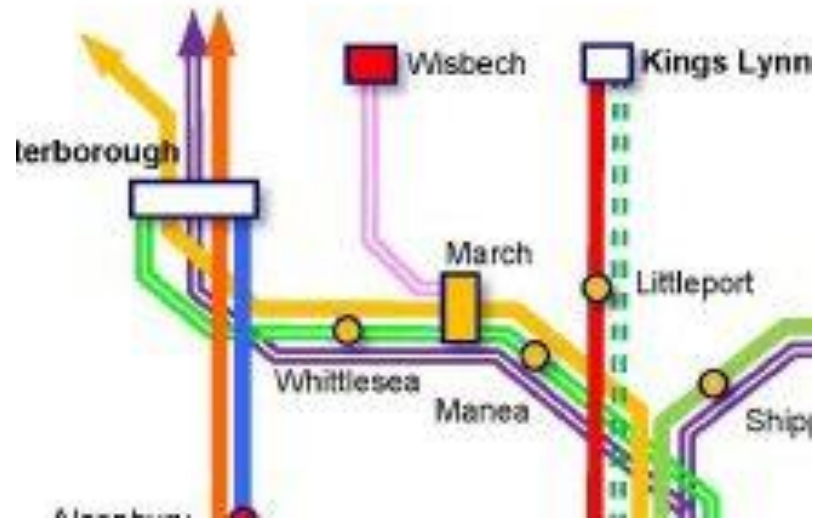
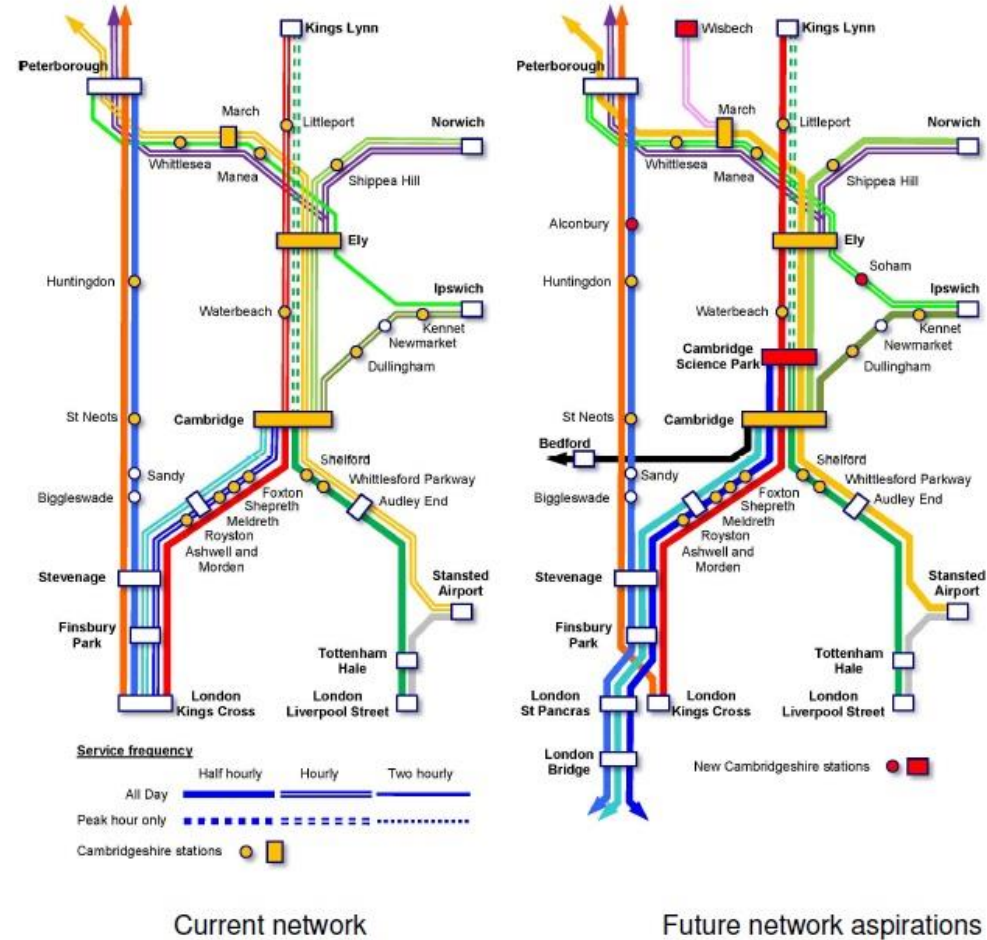


Figure 12: The current rail network and future aspirations to 2024



Current network

Future network aspirations

Feasibility Study

- Stage 1 - potential revenue and patronage

Railfuture EA meet CCC

CCC, Steve Barclay MP and Atkins launch Stage 2

- Stage 2 – capital costs
- Stage 3 – business case

Meeting CCC to launch second phase of plans for Wisbech Rail service

April 29, 2013 Local



This week in parliament I met representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council and train consultancy Atkins in Parliament this week to discuss the next phase of exciting plans to re-open the railway line from Wisbech to March.

I enjoyed a really productive meeting the house of commons with Jeremy Smith, Transport and Infrastructure Manager for Cambridgeshire County Council and Adil Chaudhery, a senior consultant working on a study of plans to re-instate the rail line and open a new station in Wisbech.

The second phase of the study into regenerating the line is due to start in a matter of weeks and consultancy firm Atkins plan to report their findings into the cost implications of the project by the summer.

The building of a new station at Cambridge Science Park, coupled with the massive increase nationally in rail usage in recent years, as well as significant population growth in Fenland, all mean the business case for reopening the line to Wisbech has improved significantly from when this issue was last looked at. Opening up the rail line and developing commuter travel and freight usage would bring great economic benefits to our area.

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RECENT POSTS

Agreement reached for 80 extra spaces at Littleport Station
Uncovering £4m of secret NHS Payoffs to gag potential

Lessons

- Logistics of delivery
- Very successful – MPs and Councillors supporting an ongoing process
- Keep it non-political
- Local project to gather local support – Cambs CC only count
Cambridgeshire signatures
- Provide a means for people to sign up (post a form back); few will do this but it is important to be inclusive and Councillors supporting an ongoing process