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Dear Ms Taylor

The committee of Rail for Herefordshire are disturbed that the present election campaign contains no mention of public transport.

The present Government has been in power for eight years and seems to have made little headway into what is a major problem. Despite a large amount of talk about sustainable transport train and cycle remain add-ons to the car. Something that seems to our group entirely reprehensible is that rail demand is controlled by price and crowding, while road demand is catered for by increasing capacity, i.e. building roads, car parks and redesigning our towns. This at a time when global warming due to carbon dioxide is acknowledged as one of the major issues facing mankind and when all right thinking people admit we must limit our use of fossil fuels.

When motorists complain about traffic queues something is done, at huge cost to the public purse. The lack of capacity on rail on the other hand is allowed to reach a 'natural' level. Only hardy, determined and/or rich people use rail during commuter times, the rest drive, thereby adding to global warming, congestion and the gradual degradation of our towns and countryside.

Despite the unreliable and often uncomfortable service, rail use has just about doubled in twenty years and track is at maximum capacity. This is very evident in Hereford where with the single track, we suffer delays and cancellations almost every day due to the lack of a double track. It means the number of trains is limited and those we have are very unreliable, thus suppressing demand. The recently published Rail Utilisation Strategy for the West Midlands up to 2011 contains no plans at all to expand capacity.

What is your party planning to do about transport.

Yours sincerely

Jim Redshaw  
For Rail for Herefordshire