

TransWilts Railway Community Rail Partnership given the green light

Long-held ambitions for a Community Rail Partnership (CRP) for the Trans-Wilts Railway between Westbury and Swindon were confirmed by Rail Minister Paul Maynard on September 29.

Great Western Railway (GWR) will work with the CRP - which comprises local organisations, train operators, Wiltshire Council, rail users and other groups - to develop and improve services and facilities on the 32-mile route.

Chippenham and Melksham stations will also come under the CRP's remit.

"I am delighted that the TransWilts route between Westbury and Swindon is being recognised in this way," said GWR Managing Director Mark Hopwood.

"Community rail provides some of our fastest-growing and most reliable services, and customer growth on our TransWilts services has been exceptional.

"Building on the six new TransWilts services launched in

December 2013, we were very pleased to introduce a further two services in May, working in partnership with Wiltshire Council and the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership. I know they will continue to go from strength to strength following the decision to designate the line, and I offer my sincere congratulations to all involved."

TransWilts Chairman Paul Johnson said: "The designation is important because it formalises the status of TransWilts and gives us access to some additional support, including funding. An early priority for us will be to see how our designation can help us improve the co-ordination between local bus and rail services along our route."

The Government has decided to incorporate additional services on the route initially funded by Wiltshire County Council since December 2013 into the GWR franchise.