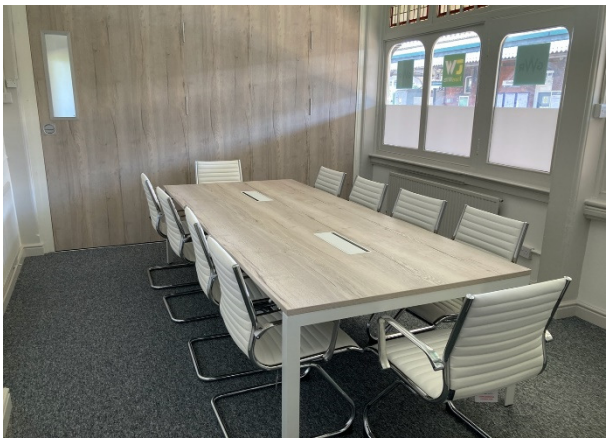
TransWilts — Connecting Wiltshire's Communities

incorporating TransWilts Community Rail Partnership

NEWSLETTER TWENTY EIGHT – JUNE 2020

White Horse Meeting room ready for use

The conversion of the disused room on platform 1 at Westbury Station into a meeting room has now been completed. Slightly delayed due to the need to recognise the restrictions in place due to the Coronavirus crisis, the space provides a meeting facility as well as office accommodation for the TransWilts Community Rail Officer Sophie Martin.



The work was made possible with grant funding from both ACoRP (now Community Rail Network) and GWR:

- £8,000 from ACoRP's Community Rail Development Fund to purchase furniture, office equipment and a moveable dividing wall.

- £18,000 from GWR for room refurbishment and renovation, with a £2,000 match from TransWilts for stained glass window repair and room design.

The opportunity was also taken to improve the external condition of the room and work has been carried out to compliment the internal features.

The meeting room is now available for hire by community organisations and rail groups. Contact sophie@transwilts.org for details.

A formal opening ceremony will be held later in the year when the lifting of restrictions allow.

(See back page for more photographs)

Flood prevention work to be carried out at Melksham

Train services through Melksham will be disrupted over three weekends in October while trackwork is carried out at Melksham station. Full details in the next newsletter.

GWR	**Please follow Government advice and only travel by train if it is essential until restrictions are lifted**	TransWilts

Melksham Station Set for Transformation

Melksham Station is set to be transformed thanks to a new deal secured by TransWilts. The three-year support package from Knorr-Bremse Rail Systems UK, based in Melksham, will help realise its ambitious improvement plans for the local station.
Master Plan.

Working with GWR and Wiltshire Council, TransWilts has developed an ambitious and detailed Master Plan for the Melksham station site. Phase 1 of the Plan has received planning permission and includes new platform signage, destination indicators, increased parking, electric vehicle charging, cycle storage and even a community café! Phase 2 would see further improvements in the layout at the station including northern pedestrian access.

The driving force behind the initiative and TransWilts Chair, Paul Johnson, commenting on the new Knorr-Bremse support package said, "I'm delighted to have secured this three-year stakeholder partnership with Knorr-Bremse Rail Systems UK. TransWilts and GWR can now work together with a major local employer to transform the Melksham Station facilities. The Knorr-Bremse involvement is a great example of a company taking an innovative approach in support of its local community. The funding from Knorr-Bremse will underpin the substantial commitment TransWilts is undertaking to deliver to the people of Melksham, and visitors to the growing town, a station they can really enjoy using."

The Managing Director of Knorr-Bremse Rail Systems UK, Paul Goodhand added, "We are proud to be associated with this local initiative and we believe it adds real value to the community and offers genuine potential for future growth."

Devizes Parkway backed by DfT Restoring Railways Fund

Plans to open a station for Devizes at Lydeway have been backed by the Department for Transport. Sixty projects were submitted to the department for consideration for funding for feasibility studies under its scheme to restore some of the Beeching Cuts of the 1960s and provide new travel opportunities.

TransWilts along with Wiltshire Council and other stakeholders have been examining the case for a station at Lydeway on the Berks & Hants Line next to the A342 south east of Devizes. Work can now progress to develop a business case for the scheme.

The Department is now looking at other projects which have been submitted and will make further announcements in due course.

2019 Annual Report published

The TransWilts Annual Report for 2019 is now available and has been circulated to members. You can also download it from the Latest News section of the website.

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GWR begins to increase services again

Following Government advice that people should return to work if they can and some schools beginning to re-open GWR has begun to increase the number of trains it operates. The TransWilts service on Monday to Saturdays was largely unchanged when the lockdown began but many long distance services were reduced. These are now being increased to around 70% of the usual timetable.

However GWR is reminding would-be passengers that with on-board distancing measures trains have only around 10% of their usual capacity and it is continuing to urge people to only travel by train if their journey is essential and they have no alternative means of transport.

They also suggest people but their tickets in advance on line to reduce queues and contact at railway stations.

There is currently no Sunday service between Swindon and Westbury but it is hoped it can be re-introduced soon.

Chippenham Station Weighbridge plan

TransWilts is working with GWR and Network Rail to bring the Grade II listed former weighbridge building at Chippenham Station back into community use.

The building, on the north side of the station, has been unused for a number of years and are falling into disrepair. The first step requires Network Rail to re-purchase the site which they sold off previously and then lease it to TransWilts. Talks are continuing.

The scheme would form part of the Northern redevelopment which would improve access to the station to compliment the work being carried out on the southern side.

June engineering work

Track renewal work on the first three Sundays of June mean services from Swindon to South Wales will be diverted and call at Patchway rather than Bristol Parkway. Additionally on the 21st June services from Swindon to Kemble, Stroud and Stonehouse will be replaced by road transport.

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