TransWilts

Connecting Wiltshire's Communities

incorporating TransWilts Community Rail Partnership

NEWSLETTER THIRTY SIX – OCTOBER 2021

December timetable brings new later weekend train for Chippenham and Swindon

GWR has announced plans for its December timetable. Among the highlights are a new later train from Bristol Temple Meads on Saturday nights. It will depart at 23:30, 50 minutes later than the current last train, and call at Chippenham at 00:03 and Swindon at 00:24.

With the Bristol East works completed there will also be a return to an earlier start-up on Sunday mornings. The first train to London from Temple Meads will now be at 09:00

On the TransWilts the only major change is with the weekday 18:52 southbound service. From December it will terminate at Warminster rather than continuing to Southampton Central. A connection will be available at Westbury, or on the same platform at either Trowbridge or Warminster.

Looking ahead to May 2022 and GWR plan to resume their high summer services to both Newquay and Pembroke Dock and add greater capacity to Saturday services to Weymouth.

October sees work on the Severn Tunnel

Work in the Severn Tunnel means trains between Swindon and South Wales will be diverted via Gloucester on the weekends of the 9/10th, 16/17th and 23/24th October adding around an hour to the journey. The same will happen on Sunday 31st October. A normal service will run on Saturday 30th due to the Wales v New Zealand rugby match in Cardiff.

On the TransWilts the first train on Sunday 10th October is delayed until 09:21 from Westbury and terminates at Chippenham. On the 31st October, and every Sunday until early December, the first train will be replaced by a bus from Warminster to Swindon via Westbury and Melksham and arriving at 09:51.

Christmas engineering work

As usual there will be no GWR services on Christmas Day or Sunday 26th December but from the 27th to the 30th work will be taking place around Bristol Parkway. Trains from Swindon to South Wales will be diverted and call at Patchway rather than Bristol Parkway. Also due to bridge replacement near Cam & Dursley there will be changes to services between Cheltenham Spa and Bristol.

New menu for the Melksham Café

With the new VAT rate for hospitality coming in on 1st October, the opportunity has been taken to update the Melksham Hub Café menu for winter. The popular all day breakfast comes in three appetite sizes – five, eight or a belt straining 11 items ranging from £5 to £9. There also jacket potatoes, burgers and sandwiches available together with cakes and pastries for the sweeter tooth along with hot and cold drinks.

With the colder weather and the relaxation of restrictions in mind the interior layout of the café has been re-arranged to give some internal seating, while the external covered space has been fitted with lighting and heating.

Opening hours have also been extended until 4.30pm Monday to Friday and 2.30pm on Saturdays. As new staff and volunteers are recruited and trained it is hoped to open earlier in the morning as the commuter traffic at the station starts to return.