TransWilts — Connecting Wiltshire's Communities

incorporating TransWilts Community Rail Partnership

NEWSLETTER SIXTY TWO – FEBRUARY 2026

We have been shortlisted!

Transwilts is celebrating being nominated in two categories of the 2026 Community Rail Network awards.

Each year the CRN invites Community Rail Partnerships and Station adoption groups to enter details of projects they have been involved in over the last 12 months with a choice of 14 categories. TransWilts has been shortlisted in two.

Small projects under £500

This project saw us take a party of children from Brimble Hill School in Swindon to Westbury and back while learning about rail safety, confidence when travelling and an added bonus of games of bingo.

Photography

Of the photos we submitted, the judges chose to shortlist "Picture Power at Pewsey" featuring children displaying their artwork which has been put on display at Pewsey Station.

The winners will be announced at a gala ceremony in Derby in March.

Passenger numbers published

The Office of Rail and Road has published its annual report on station footfall, based on ticket sales between April 2024 and March 2025.

In Wiltshire average numbers have risen by 7.6% – slightly ahead of the national trend. Users at Swindon have broken the 3 million mark while Salisbury is the next busiest at just over 2 million.

For the second year running Melksham has seen a fall. This time it dropped by just under 4% – nearly 2,500 passengers. Numbers were no doubt supressed by the four week closure of Westbury at the turn of the year as well as the continuing reliability problems. Westbury itself saw a small rise of just over 1%.

	2024-25	2023-24	% Rise
Avoncliff	**25,078**	**24,136**	**3.90**
Bedwyn	**99,948**	**93,570**	**6.82**
Bradford-on-Avon	**533,216**	**486,806**	**9.53**
Chippenham	**1,713,674**	**1,578,070**	**8.59**
Dilton Marsh	**21,574**	**19,300**	**11.78**
Melksham	**60,930**	**63,350**	**-3.82**
Pewsey	**209,098**	**187,072**	**11.77**
Salisbury	**2,004,688**	**1,812,122**	**10.63**
Swindon	**3,150,912**	**2,831,130**	**11.30**
Tisbury	**191,224**	**170,286**	**12.30**
Trowbridge	**904,324**	**840,926**	**7.54**
Warminster	**355,954**	**331,932**	**7.24**
Westbury	**543,050**	**535,644**	**1.38**

Bus shelters set for a revamp

Wiltshire's 800 bus shelters are set to benefit in a five year programme of improvements costing up to £8 million. The funding, from central government, will allow existing shelters to be upgraded, new ones provided as well as additional bus stop poles and timetable cases.

Cllr Martin Smith, Cabinet Member for Highways, said: "Buses are a lifeline for many people in Wiltshire. By committing to this investment, we are delivering on our promise to provide high-quality, accessible bus shelters that meet the needs of local people and encourage greater use of public transport. High-quality, well-designed shelters will offer better protection from the elements, improved seating, and clear travel information, making the experience of waiting for a bus safer and more pleasant. Encouraging more people to choose public transport is vital for reducing congestion, cutting carbon emissions, and connecting communities - and investing in infrastructure is a key part of that strategy."

Health Hydro reopens

The historic Swindon swimming pool designed and built by the Great Western Railway in the 1860s has partially re-opened after nearly three years of refurbishment. The Grade II* listed Health Hydro building in Milton Road has seen £8.5 million spent on new energy efficient equipment, a new entrance and improved changing rooms. Funding is now being sought to carry out more improvements in the near future.

November Passenger figures

Swindon - Westbury

19,839	12.9%	-11.5%
Journeys	on Last Year	on pre-COVID

Planned engineering work

Work by Network Rail will mean the first round trip on the TransWilts on Sunday the 1st March will be replaced by road transport between Westbury and Chippenham. Then on the 15th March the road replacement will run from Trowbridge to Chippenham, meaning passengers from Warminster and Dilton Marsh will need to make an additional change at Westbury.

Elsewhere on the 1st, 7th and 8th of February the line between Salisbury and Southampton Central will be closed with buses running instead. Looking further ahead the line will be closed between Bath Spa and both Westbury and Chippenham over the Bank Holiday weekend at the beginning of May. More details in the next newsletter.

New members strengthen TransWilts Board

Last month's board meeting saw two new directors join the TransWilts CIC. Catharine Symington from Devizes rejoins the group after previously being a member during the previous chair's tenure. Joining her is chartered civil engineer Alan Cudlipp from Corsham. He has nearly half a century's experience in the rail industry and will work with TransWilts in its discussions for the infrastructure improvements necessary to improve the local service. In welcoming both to the board, Chair Paddy Bradley said "We look forward to working with both Catharine and Alan as we continue our mission to bring new expertise to our meetings and drive on our plans for better transport integration and community engagement."

Siemens unveil new electric train

Chippenham based Siemens mobility has announced plans to build a new electrical multiple unit (EMU) which will also have a battery version. The Desiro Verve trains come initially as three or five car sets but longer ones may be built. They will have a top speed of 110mph. Siemens hope the units will prove attractive to a number of operating companies, including GWR, who are looking to replace their ageing diesel fleets.

Judges pouring over photo entries

The TransWilts/Arts Society photography competition attracted 200 entries with a wide variety of subjects. The judges are now working on an initial shortlist with the aim of whittling it down to the final 50 prize winners. The images will then be specially printed on weatherproof board and displayed at our seven local stations. The successful winners will be contacted in early March. It is planned the displays will be in place on the platforms by Easter.