

Annual Customer and Stakeholder Report 2022/23



GWR

Great
Western
Railway

List of Contributors

Lord Richard Faulkner, Chair of GWR Advisory Board

Nina Howe, Senior Stakeholder Manager, Transport Focus

Christopher Irwin, Chair TravelWatch SouthWest CIC

Throughout this report you will find images such as those below with click through buttons that will take you to short films, more information or additional reports.





Contents

1.0	Mark Hopwood, Managing Director, GWR	Pg. 05
2.0	Michelle Handforth, Managing Director, Wales & Western Region, Network Rail	Pg. 06
3.0	Delighting Our Customers	Pg. 07
4.0	Disciplined Operations	Pg. 28
5.0	Great People	Pg. 37
6.0	Keeping Our Communities Prospering	Pg. 46
7.0	Engine For Growth	Pg. 55





1.0 Mark Hopwood, Managing Director, GWR

Welcome to this our 2022/23 annual Customer and Stakeholder report.

You will know that this was a challenging year. Nationally and here at GWR we faced industrial action from ASLEF, the RMT and TSSA. Thankfully TSSA colleagues across the industry including GWR and all Network Rail RMT staff have reached an agreement. However, strike action continues across all English train operators with both ASLEF (train drivers) and the RMT (station and onboard crews) and there is no doubt that it is affecting our recovery.

It is also affecting how our stakeholders feel about GWR. You will see that we are this year reporting a fall in stakeholder satisfaction. We are going to do some further work on that, because we very much value our reputation as a trusted partner. Initial work seems to suggest that the combination of strikes and performance issues are the root cause. Nevertheless, we are also looking very carefully at our engagement to make sure we are doing the best we can for you. If you have thoughts on how we engage and communicate with you, please feel free to email me directly.

We are seeing fewer delays and cancellations caused by GWR issues such as train fleet and train crew, and we are also working very closely with Network Rail as they work through their performance improvement plans to try and achieve similar improvement. They know that more needs to be done to prevent infrastructure delays and to recover more quickly if there are problems, and we are looking forward to welcoming their new Western route Managing Director Marcus Jones.

This was of course also a challenging year financially. The huge taxpayer subsidy paid since the pandemic must reduce. Sadly, revenue is not yet back to where it needs to be and that means we must cut costs. Our challenge therefore is to find ways to maintain and improve services while managing with less.

That has not been easy. We have had to make hard choices, and there will need to be more. I am determined however that the choices we make support changes in customer habits and allow us to build back when the time is right.

We have to address all of this through a period of some uncertainty about the industry structure going forward and we very much hope that the work of the Great British Railways Transition team can be finalised quite quickly, so that both the industry and those who use the train service have clarity on how it will be structured and led in the future.

Throughout the changes we will continue to work with our customers, our communities and our stakeholders. We believe that we deliver far more by working together and I would like to thank you for your ongoing support as together we face the challenges ahead.

Mark



2.0 Michelle Handforth Regional Managing Director Wales & Western Network Rail

This year we've experienced some big challenges and significant changes. It has been a tough year for our industry, but we have much to look forward to and some exciting opportunities ahead.

Putting passengers and freight customers first has never been more important as our industry and service continues to recover from the last twelve months. Our customers want a reliable railway, that's value for money. Despite working very hard to deliver this, we haven't achieved the levels of reliability that our passengers and freight customers expect. We are focused on safely recovering and delivering consistent train service performance.

Industrial action has affected Network Rail and train operators, including GWR, diminishing the industry's ability to run a full and reliable train service. Earlier this year, members of the RMT union voted overwhelmingly to accept our pay offer, allowing us to continue with our planned improvements and modernisation of the railway.

Delivering our planned improvements in train performance and achieving our targets will be crucial to our passengers and freight customers. We can only achieve them by working together as one team across our industry along with our supply chain partners. Collaboration will be critical to our success.

We are focused on becoming a more intelligent client, a smaller organisation working in long-term partnerships with our supply chain partners to deliver the right schemes at the right speed and cost, becoming more efficient and better value for money.

We want to keep delivering our projects, renewals,

enhancements, and maintenance work. We need to ensure we deliver projects of strategic significance as fault free as we can to ensure business resilience.

The Elizabeth line opened in May last year, bringing 1.5 million more people within 45 minutes of central London. The smooth introduction of the latest stage in the Elizabeth line was a real cross-industry success story, offering passengers more travel options with the Elizabeth line now operating straight through from Reading and Heathrow to Canary Wharf and Abbey Wood without any need for passengers to change at Paddington. Indeed, more than 100 million passengers used the service within the first nine months of opening.

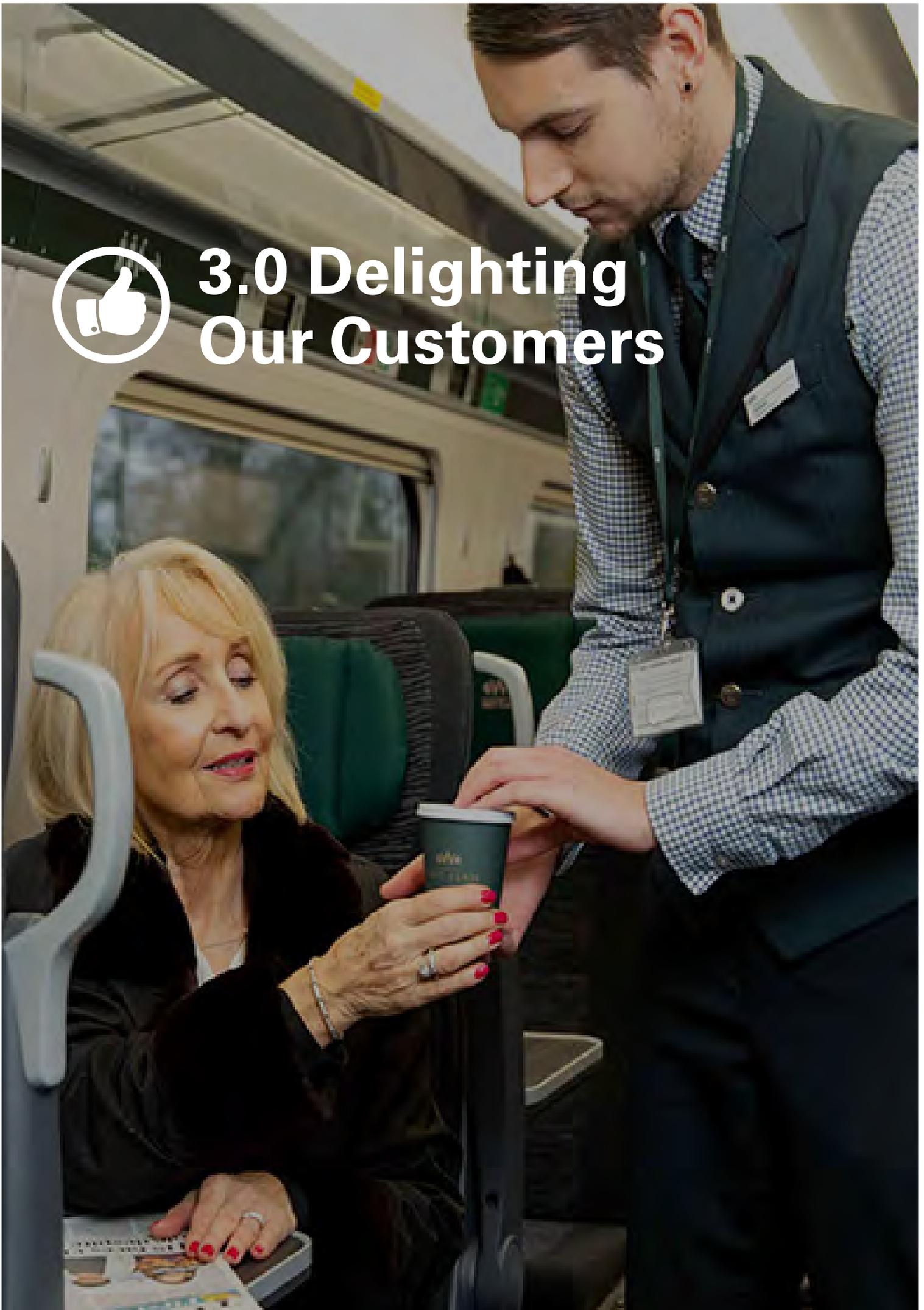
Wales & Western are transforming the way we work – we are leading the way in technology innovation and environmental sustainability. As we are moving closer to net zero, we need to ensure we are the greenest mode of transport for our passengers.

In our next Control Period, our ambition is to invest £73m in environmental sustainability in our total plan, and £40m on decarbonisation of our own activities, including moving to an electric vehicle road fleet for our operations and maintenance teams. As well as this, we need to ensure our infrastructure is resilient to extreme weather. We aim to invest a minimum of £27m on weather resilience and climate change adaptation by 2028.

By working collaboratively, I am confident we can make the changes needed to create a greater railway, fit for the future. We are all providing a vital public service to be proud of and a service that plays a massive part in the everyday life of this nation.



3.0 Delighting Our Customers

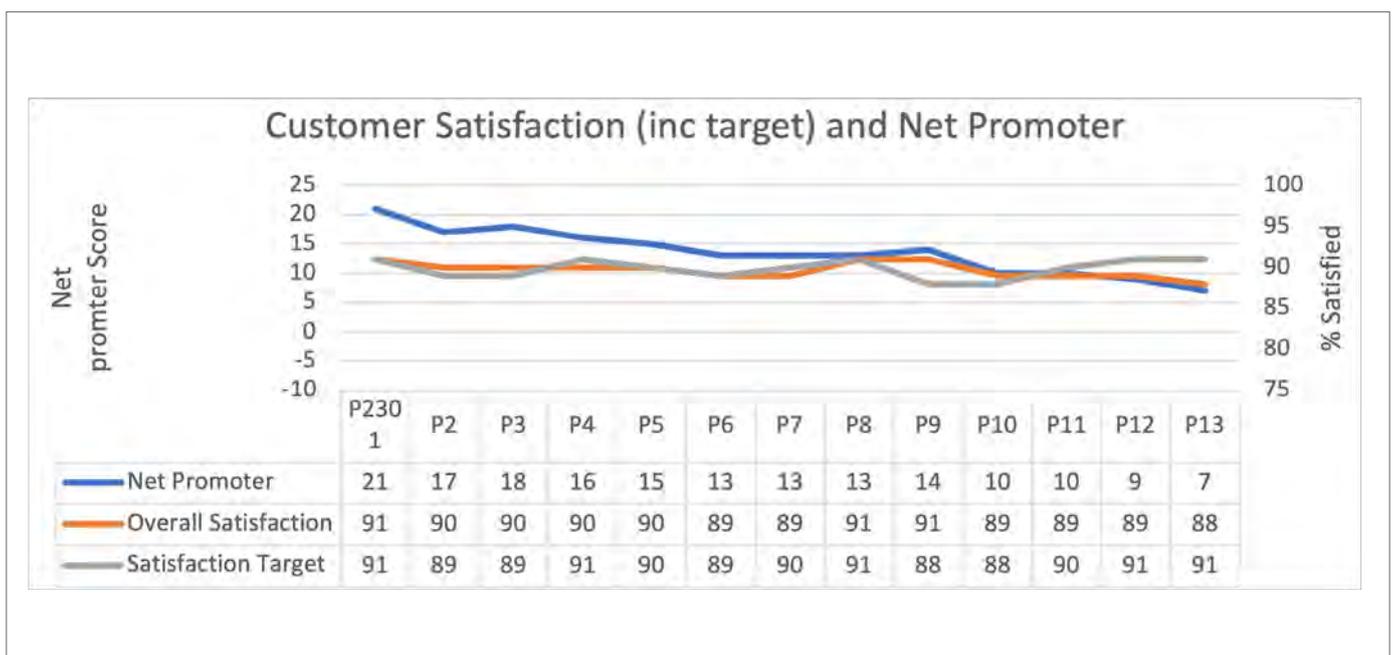
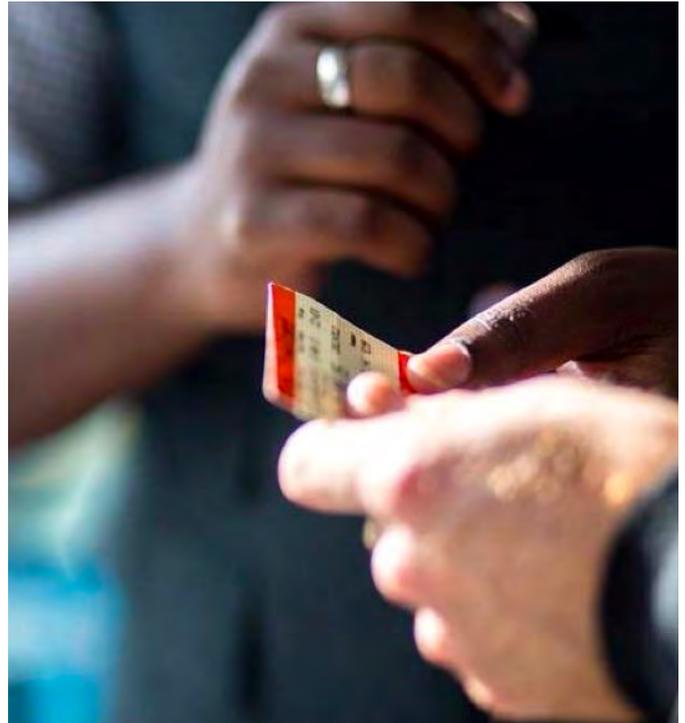


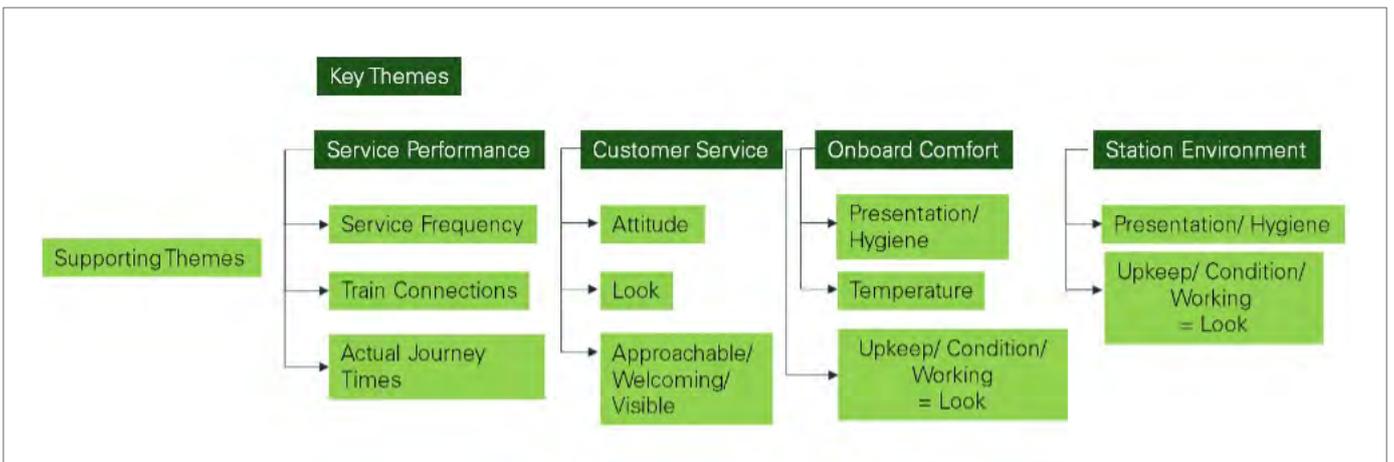
3.1 What our customers said

As customer volumes started to accelerate, Industrial Action and the ‘Cost of Living Crisis’ have driven uncertainty in the market.

Following the relaxation of Covid restrictions over Christmas 2021, 2022 was a going to be a year of ‘getting back to normal’ getting out and reconnecting with places and people. That optimism was short-lived as the impact of the Ukraine war began to bite on everyday living and then came the increases to home energy costs in April and October. On top of this mid-way through the calendar year the spectre of Industrial Action became a reality. This has caused a great deal of uncertainty in the market about booking rail trips and got very personal with the disruption it caused to being with family over Christmas 2022.

Service performance is the fundamental promise we make to our customers. When this is not up to standard it will have a strong impact on customer satisfaction. In the chart below, the red line shows how all these forces have contributed to the decline of overall customer satisfaction through the year. Net Promoter Score add (which measures willingness to recommend GWR services)





Amanda Burns (Sales and Marketing Director) said “As we began this business year our customer composition had changed, presenting a larger discretionary market that has been and continues to be exposed to some tough challenges. I’m optimistic that things will improve and we must be ready for this. We must stay focused on our customers; the way they use rail and how we can support our communities over the coming year as we rebuild the business.”

From analysing customer response data over the year the approach being taken to drive Customer experience improvement is articulated in Key Themes and Sub themes. These themes are the very essence of what our customers want us to get right consistently, providing them with certainty and a service they can depend on. Diagram above shows these themes and the critical sub parts that are the influencers of customer satisfaction.

“As we began this business year our customer composition had changed, presenting a larger discretionary market that has been and continues to be exposed to some tough challenges. I’m optimistic that things will improve and we must be ready for this. We must stay focused on our customers; the way they use rail and how we can support our communities over the coming year as we rebuild the business”

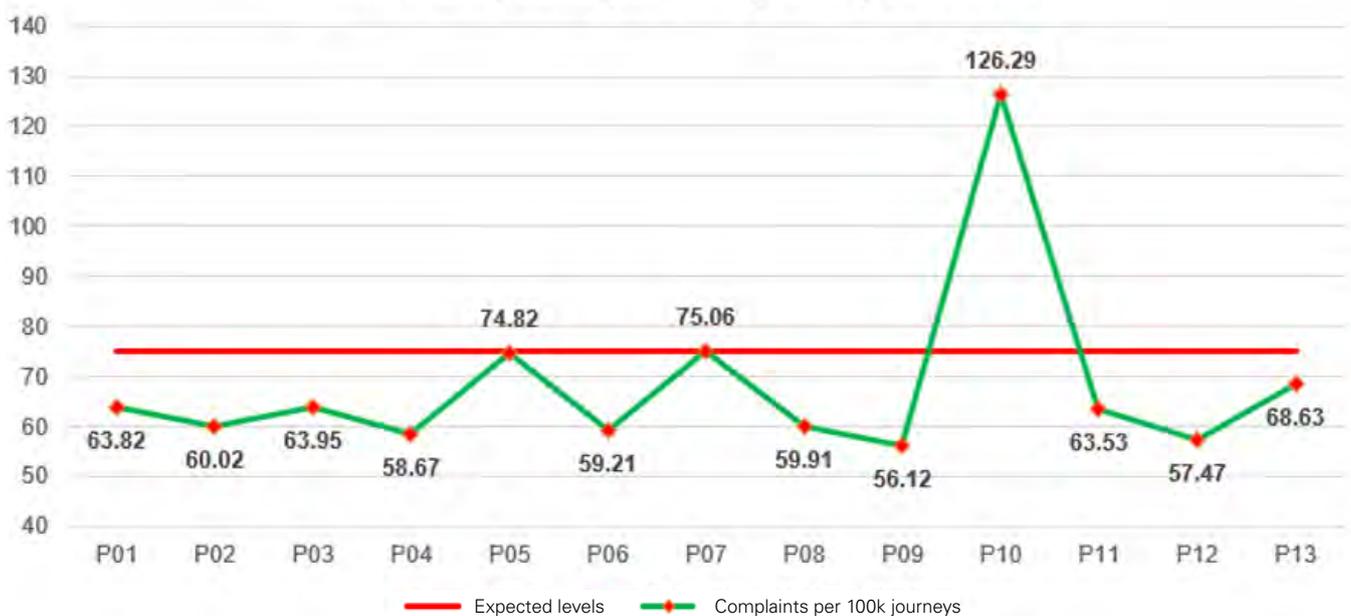
Amanda Burns



3.2 Customer correspondence, what our Customers Said

2022/23 saw the volume of complaints per 100k journeys consistently come in ahead of expected levels, aside from Period 10 (December/January) where the volume of passengers we carried fell sharply due to Industrial Action, and we closed a large number of outstanding complaints.

GWR complaints per 100k journeys 2022/23





We saw a challenging year for Delay Repay claim volumes, with just over 750,000 received throughout the year. Despite this response times remained good, with 91% of received claims being settled within 5 days of receipt.

GWR Delay Repay claims received - 22/23



3.3 Fares and Products

PAYG

22/23 saw the launch of GWR's Pay As You Go (PAYG) scheme in the Bristol area. An industry first interoperable PAYG scheme based on ITSO smartcard technology, giving customers a guarantee for the best value day fare. Upon registration a customer can travel anywhere within the scheme area without having to think or worry about the type of ticket they need to buy. GWR's PAYG scheme, based on all the journey combinations available, works out the best (cheapest) day fare combination to charge the customer. A weekly capping feature further ensures the customer would not pay anything more than a weekly fare based on the journeys travelled.

Starting out as an adult and Rail only scheme, plans are being drawn up to expand this scheme to include Child and multimodal ticketing. A similar scheme is also being planned in Cornwall in collaboration with Cornwall Council.

The scheme, still in its infancy, has continued to grow week on week and is providing GWR and Great British Railway Transition Team with invaluable insight on the implementation of other PAYG schemes.

Automated Delay Repay

We continued to enhance the customer proposition through the enablement of technology, this



time in the post purchase area through the introduction of Automated Delay Repay (ADR).

Customers using Pay As You Go, Advanced Purchase tickets and Smartcard tickets, now have the ability to register and opt-in for an ADR scheme. Once registered, GWR's ADR system sends automated email notifications to customers if their services are delayed allowing them to claim Delay Repay compensation with the click of a few buttons.

New Ticket Vending Machines at 19 new locations

19 stations on GWR that didn't have any ticket buying/ collection facilities received new Ticket Vending Machines during 2022/23 allowing customers to buy and collect pre-purchased tickets helping improve customer experience. In addition to the ticket vending facilities, GWR installed CCTV systems across all these 19 stations improving infrastructure facilities and helping facilitate improvement in safety.

3.4 Social Media 2022/23

Over the last year 96 million people have seen the content we have shared on our social media channels.



As well as sharing organic campaigns and competitions, we love sharing beautiful images of our trains and stations taken by our customers. Last year half a million people saw these posts!

We received 481,000 k messages from customers on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Instagram.



ABOVE:

We have been working closely with influencers this year and were delighted with this video of our sleeper service created by Steph and Pete!



LEFT:

Throughout the year we have run competitions and challenges to engage with our customers.



<https://www.facebook.com/gwruk/>



<https://www.twitter.com/GWRHelp>



<https://www.tiktok.com/@gwrailway>



<https://www.instagram.com/gwruk/?hl=en>

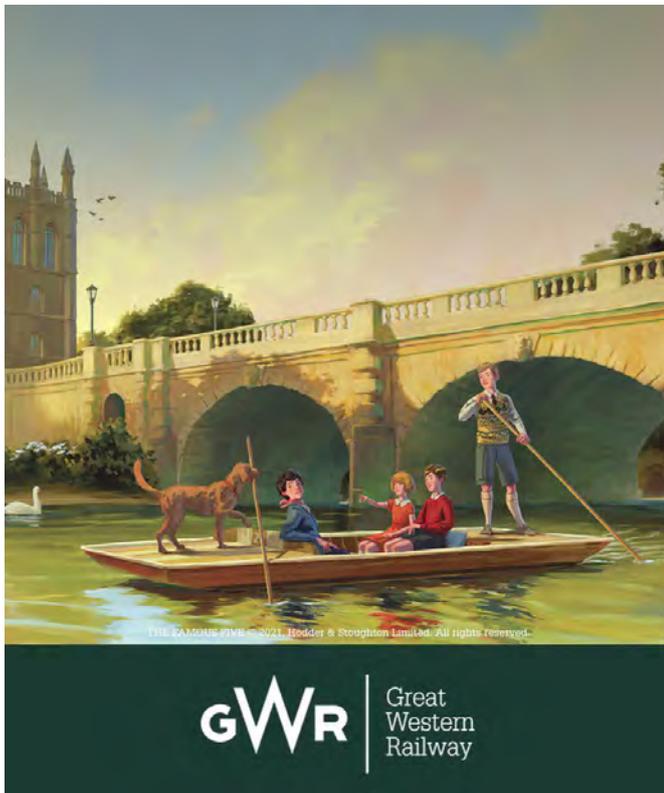
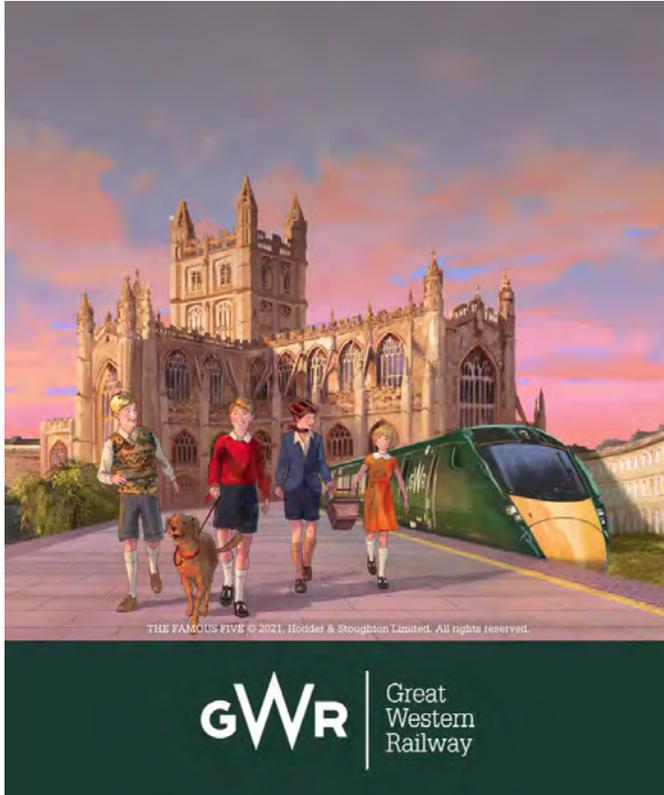
RIGHT:

Competitions are an excellent way to engage customers and promote our services and destinations



We love to celebrate Christmas on our social channels. Check out our collection of Advent posts

3.5 Marketing Promotions



With the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic receding, the impact of industrial action in 2022-23 meant the marketing team needed an agile approach to driving recovery, particularly amongst the discretionary leisure market.

Our advertising saw a shift to digital channels where marketing campaigns could be optimised around dates where travel by train was possible. Focus on leisure inspiration was at the core of our marketing and promotions activities, alongside the provision of relevant customer and product information.

Brand marketing

'Make this week an adventurous one'

Facing a summer of prolonged industrial action, the GWR marketing team wanted to find a way to stay relevant and engaged with our customers – even during difficult times of disruption. Even though industrial action brought with it severe disruption, we nevertheless saw customers returning to the railway in their droves once the disruption was over. With this in mind, we invited our audiences to “make this week an adventurous one”. Through this campaign, we challenged them to take spontaneous trips and make the most of what the railway can offer outside of service disruption, reminding them of the excellent service we run, and the wealth of exciting destinations we serve. The campaign generated over 5.5m impressions on ‘video on demand’ TV services, 2.1m impressions in out-of-home, and over 41m impressions on social media, reaching more than 10m unique users.

The Great GWR Getaway Sale

We were able to launch our first January Sale in three years in January 2023. The January Sale aims to further build on post-COVID recovery and encourage more users back to rail at a commercially relevant time of year, whilst showcasing great value fares. Keen to create cut-through in a busy sales period for brands, we re-named our campaign ‘the Great GWR Getaway Sale’, to carry the feeling of celebration and adventure, inspiring customers to take advantage of our discounted



fares. The campaign performed incredibly well, beating our previous sales' performance pre-pandemic, and despite only being live for a week. In media we saw over 1.3m impressions delivered in digital out-of-home, 3.1m impressions on digital audio with a listen rate of 98%, and 20m impressions on radio.

Elizabeth line – Closer than you think

The launch of the Elizabeth line in May 2022 represented a major opportunity for GWR to open up and promote our services to a large new audience out to the east of London and into Kent and Essex. GWR's Elizabeth line campaign 'Closer than you think' promoted the range of destinations such as Bath, Bristol and Oxford, now within easy reach thanks to the seamless connections provided by the Elizabeth line into Paddington. The campaign used a wide range of channels such as social, digital and radio, as well as high-impact out of home billboards in key stations across the Elizabeth line estate, including being the first brand to hold the 'Mega Wall' at Bond Street station. Audience insight also told a hugely positive story; before the campaign respondents thought that a journey to Bristol or Bath by train would take almost an hour longer than by car. After the campaign, that gap had narrowed to just under 35 minutes – showing that our campaign had a hugely positive impact on customers' perception of the ease and speed of the journey from east to west.



Value for money campaign

At the end of the financial year, hot on the heels of the success of our January Sale, GWR wanted to continue to highlight the many affordable fares to our fantastic



destinations across the network, such as Oxford, Bristol, Bath, London and Cardiff. Communicating our best fares and placing emphasis on value for money is more important than ever, and GWR wanted to demonstrate how we can help our customers save money on their train travel. We communicated the host of tools and products we offer to help customers save money such as Railcards, our cheapest fare finder, and no booking fees when you book direct at [GWR.com](https://www.gwr.com). The campaign went live across a host of different channels, such as out-of-home, social, digital display, radio and print. Looking at audience insight, we found that we had successfully shifted customers' perception of value for money, with scores for those aware of the campaign agreeing that we have 'good value fares'.

Regional Marketing

Over the last year, our Regional Marketing activity has been building on the Brand & Campaign work to generate excitement to travel with GWR, driving increased journeys. By running a seasonal "What's On" campaign calendar across the GWR regions, we're continuously promoting our great value fares and offers, working with tourism partners to highlight our unique destinations, events and attractions to customers. We also launched the new Long Weekender Ticket in response to changing leisure and work patterns, allowing travel out on a Friday or Saturday, returning at any time on a Monday priced at a heavy discount to a peak-time return. This was a trial ticket from London to Bath, Bristol and Cardiff with initial analysis showing potential. In addition, our marketing activity has also focussed GWR's products, such as Sleeper, Family Ticket, connected train and bus services, Heathrow Express, South West England and South Wales value advance fares, Bristol Clean Air Zone, Pay-as-you-go & contactless to name a few.

CRM

Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM) commitment focused on customer database growth, through targeted and key initiatives that compliment and support business objectives. Example such as Timetable Comparator, supporting Smarter Information, Smarter Journeys (SISJ) to deliver better and simpler customer information.



 A photograph of a train platform with a train. The text 'TAKE OFF FROM YOUR STATION, TOUCH DOWN AT HEATHROW' is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif letters across the top. Below the text, a green and yellow high-speed train is on the left, and a purple and yellow Heathrow Express train is on the right. The platform is covered by a large, arched glass and steel roof.

A seamless start to your journey all with one ticket
To book your journey today, simply visit [GWR.com](https://www.gwr.com)

Bath Spa to Heathrow
from **£27.00** one way

GWR Great Western Railway Heathrow Express



3.6 Penguin Books installs book vending machine at Exeter St Davids

A book vending machine has been installed at Exeter St Davids station thanks to a new partnership between Penguin Books, Exeter UNESCO City of Literature and GWR.

Supplied by Southwest-based vending machine company Graddon Vending, the machine sits in the entrance to Exeter St Davids, allowing passengers travelling through Exeter to purchase a wide range of Penguin Books, including contemporary and classic titles.

Titles will change on a regular basis, featuring new releases and perennial favourites, as well as marking key moments throughout the year, such as LGBTQIA+ History Month, Black History Month, COP28, and so on.

The simple act of walking through a train station and picking up a good book to enjoy on your journey forms the foundations of Penguin Books itself.





In 1934 Sir Allen Lane was waiting at Exeter St Davids train station and couldn't find a good book to read; only magazines or reprints of Victorian novels. Right there and then he decided that high quality, engaging and reasonably priced books should be available to everyone, anywhere. The following year saw history made with the birth of the paperback as Penguin Books released their first ten titles.

With the Penguin Books vending machine, commuters can easily pick up an affordable and high-quality book to enjoy on their journey, just as Allen Lane envisaged. It is a celebration of what is at the core of Penguin Books: engaging and absorbing books for anyone to read, wherever they go.

Profits from the vending machine will support Bookbag, a beloved local independent bookstore, and Exeter City of Literature, who promote literacy and celebrate books in the local area.

Anna Cohn Orchard, Executive Director of Exeter UNESCO City of Literature, knew of Penguin's history and approached the publisher in 2021 with the idea for a book vending machine at the site of Penguin's origin.

She says, "I grew up in Exeter, but didn't learn about Penguin's history until, ironically, I was working in publishing in New York. When I took on my current role, I knew I wanted to promote

"This incredible invention, made possible by Penguin's enthusiastic support and the work of a local vending machine company, will not only make reading more accessible to everyone who steps foot on to Exeter St Davids, but it will shine a light on how Devon has inspired so many great figures in the literary world."

Anna Cohn Orchard, Executive Director of Exeter UNESCO City of Literature

Exeter and Devon's interesting, and often hidden, literary history to a much wider audience.

"This incredible invention, made possible by Penguin's enthusiastic support and the work of a local vending machine company, will not only make reading more accessible to everyone who steps foot on to Exeter St Davids, but it will shine a light on how Devon has inspired so many great figures in the literary world."

3.7 Stakeholder Audit

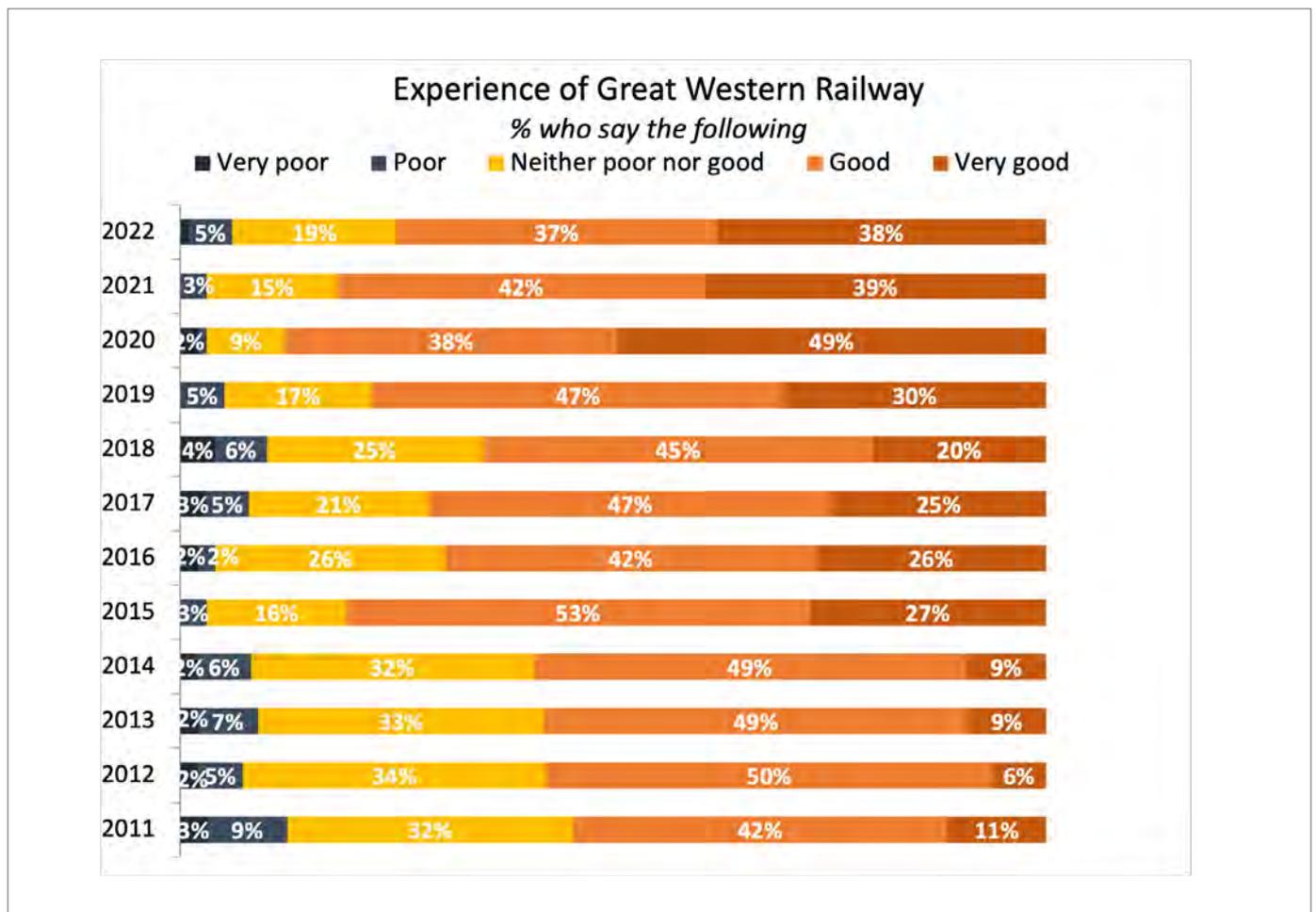
Results of the independent annual stakeholder audit 2022/23. Survey taken in November 2022. The following are extracts from the survey including the Executive Summary by Savanta.

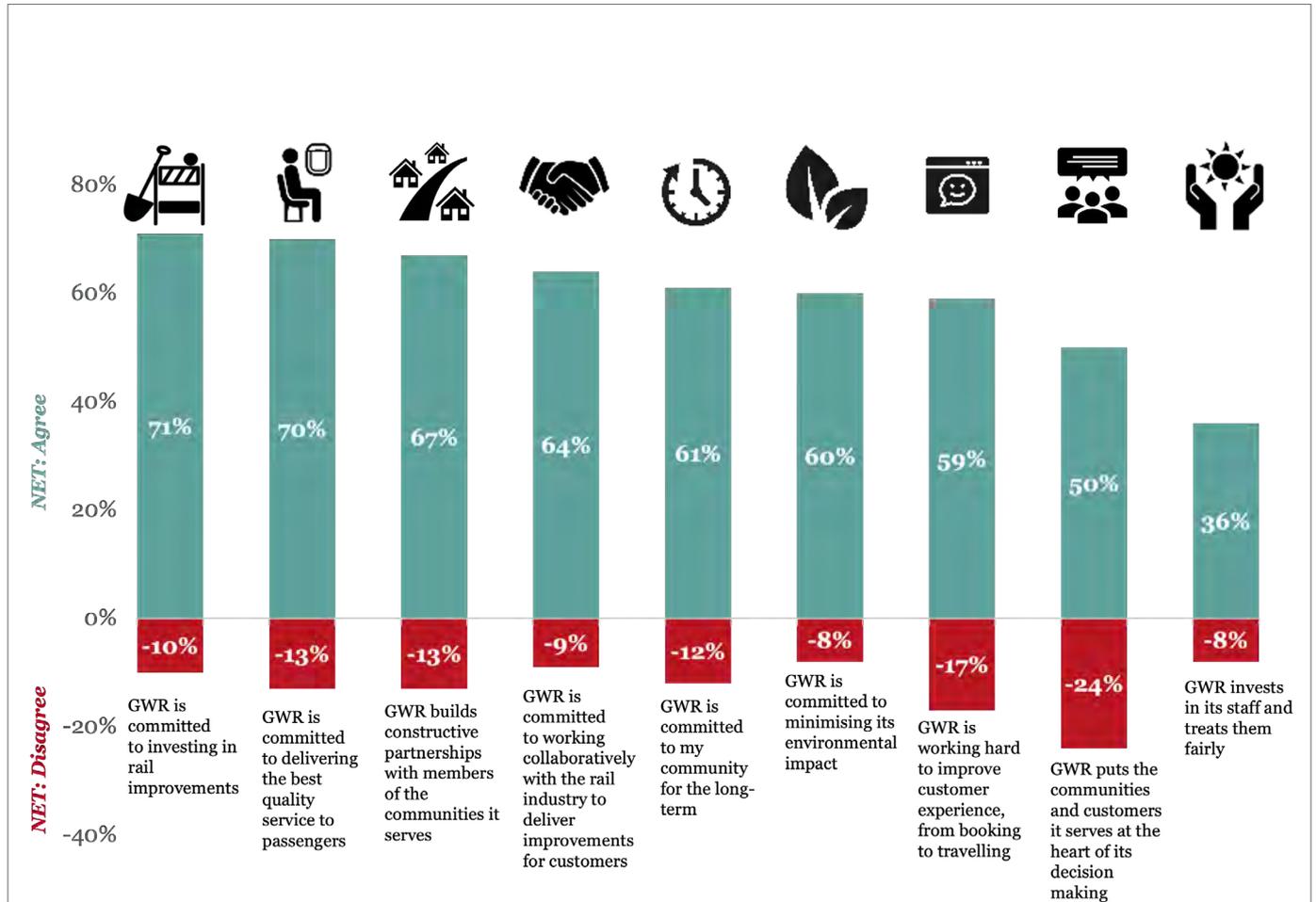
Overall feedback from stakeholders has been impacted significantly by the disruption of GWR’s services during the last year

Last year’s research was carried out at a time when Covid-19 was at the forefront of people’s minds, despite many safety measures having been recently being removed by the Government. This research instead took place in a year of significant disruption to services due to industrial action and major changes in the UK economy. Stakeholders were positive about GWR’s reaction to the Covid-19

pandemic, their reaction to the pressures of 2022 less so. Satisfaction with service provision, except for information provision, fell drastically for stakeholders during periods of industrial action.

Stakeholders’ confidence in GWR to provide the desired improvements to services in future has been badly affected by the disruption of GWR’s services with less than half of stakeholders feeling GWR is ‘well placed’ to deal with its priorities going forward.





To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Base:

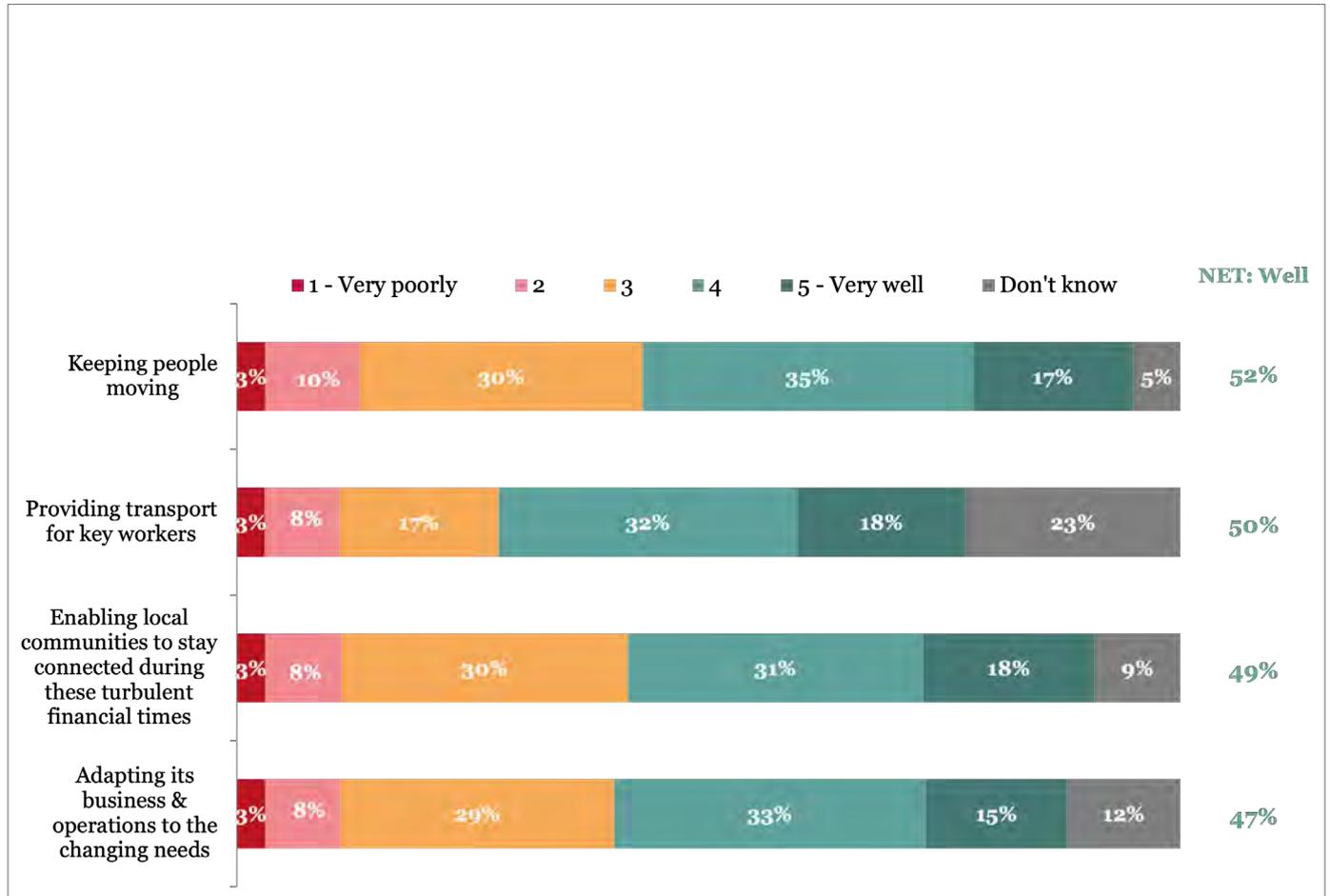
Disagreement is growing amongst stakeholders that GWR is committed to delivering the best quality service to passengers

The majority of stakeholders still agree with this statement (70%). But disagreement with this has increased by 3 percentage points to 13%. Agreement is down and disagreement is up for all areas asked.

Over two-thirds still agree that GWR is committed to investing in rail improvements (71%) and

builds constructive partnerships with members of the communities it serves (67%).

Similarly, to last year, stakeholders are least likely to agree that GWR invests in its staff and treats them fairly (36%), down significantly by 15 percentage points. Although, as in previous years, half (56%) say they do not know enough about this to have a view, disagreement with this has increased from 1% to 8% from last year. This may show changing sentiment amongst stakeholders following the strikes that have taken place in 2022.



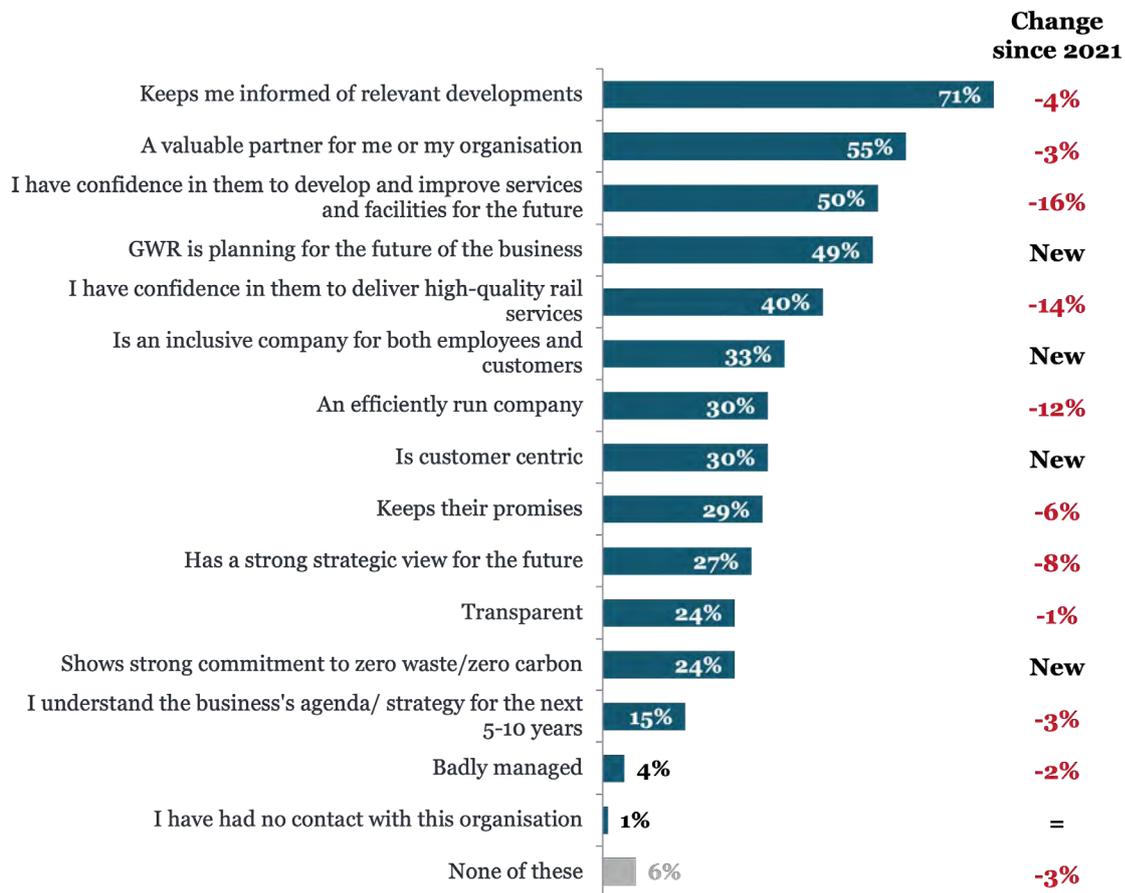
How well do you feel GWR has performed in each of the following areas during the last 12 months?

Stakeholder satisfaction of GWR’s performance has decreased significantly over the last 12 months when compared to performance during Covid-19

Stakeholders’ perceptions of how GWR have performed at keeping people moving, providing transport for key workers and adapting to changing needs over the last months have worsened significantly compared to when they were asked last year.

Stakeholders remain the most satisfied with GWR’s ability to keep people moving during the pandemic, with just over half (52)% saying that they have been doing this well but this has reduced significantly from last year, down 24 percentage points.

Half (49%) of stakeholders believe that GWR have been performing well at enabling communities to stay connected during turbulent financial times.



Which, if any, of the following phrases do you believe applies to Great Western Railway?

Confidence in GWR to deliver better services has fallen amongst stakeholders

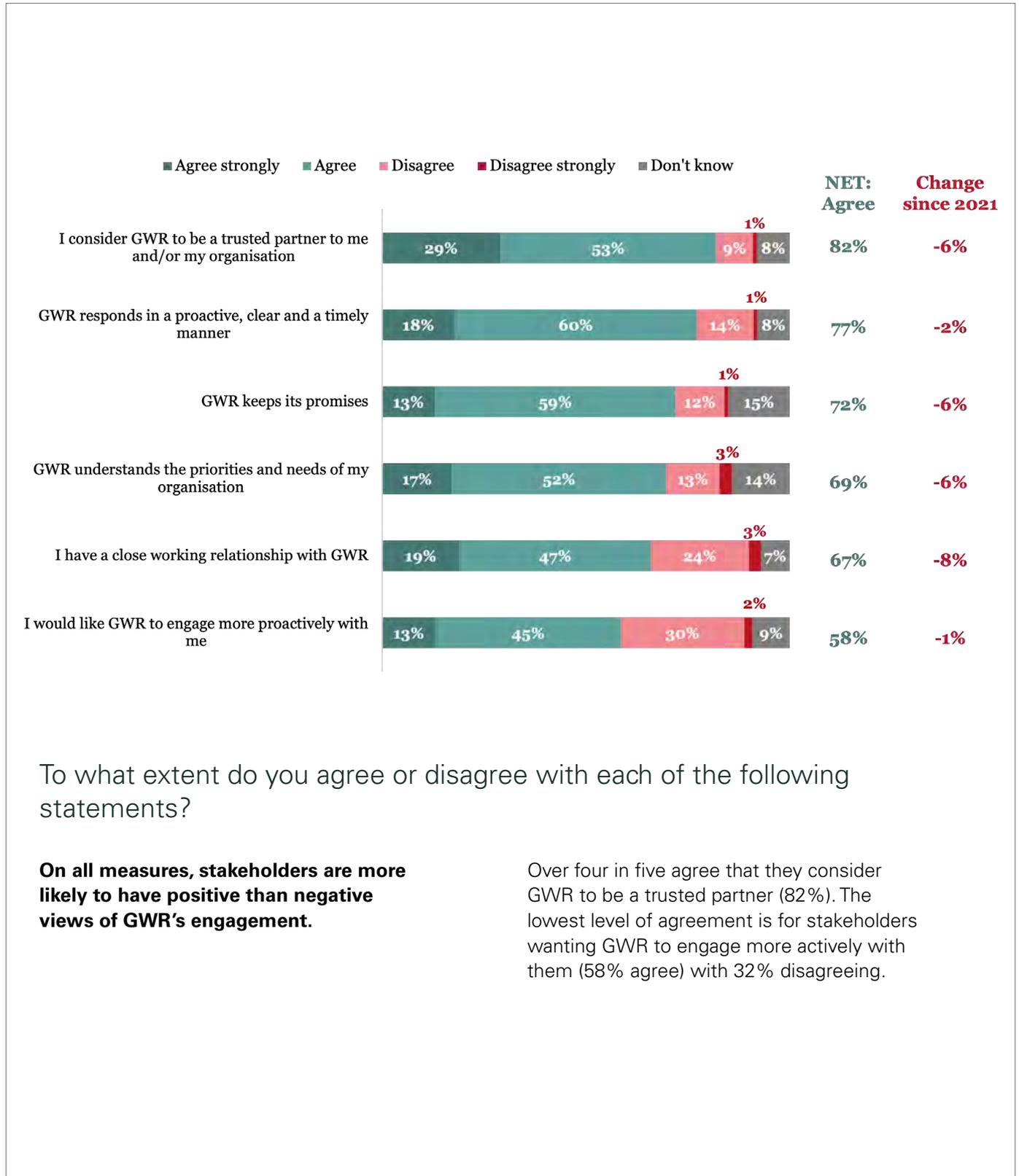
Though association has fallen compared to last year for most statements, most notably is the fall in the proportion who apply statements around GWR’s ability to deliver efficiently have fallen most.

Half (50%) have confidence in GWR to develop and improve facilities in the future, down 16 percentage points on last year. Only two-in-five have confidence in them to deliver high-quality rail

services, down 14 percentage points on last year.

Less than a third (30%) of stakeholders feel that GWR is an efficiently run company, down 12 percentage points on last year.

Of the new statements asked, a third (33%) think GWR is an inclusive company, less than a third (30%) think GWR is customer centric, and a quarter (24%) think GWR show strong commitment to zero waste/ zero carbon.



Key priority areas for GWR over the next five years



Reliability of services

Stakeholders want GWR to resolve the issues over the reliability of services over the next five years. This includes building passengers confidence in GWR to deliver reliable services.

“Providing a reliable and regular service for passengers” **MP**

“Rebuilding confidence in rail reliability post 2022 strikes.” **Councillor**

“Protecting core train services and ensuring regular, reliable service levels in light of the worsening economic situation.” **Councillor**



Environmental concerns

GWR needs to address the changes in demand for rail services seen after the pandemic. This includes increasing services at evening and on the weekends to accommodate greater leisure travel.

“rebalance its services to match the post-covid demands of travellers.” **Business**

“Move to the provision of reliable all day and evening services 7 days a week. Service should be at least hourly at every station serving a significant community, and should connect with each other and other public transport” **Rail Group**



Environmental concerns

Stakeholders want to see GWR making progress at making their services more environmentally friendly and reducing their carbon emissions.

“engaging with network rail to push for a rolling programme of electrification. there is no pathway to net zero without electrification.” **MP**

“To recognise the importance of rail travel in reducing carbon (etc) emissions to the atmosphere and so to give absolute priority to increasing passenger numbers.” **Rail Group**



Price

Stakeholders want GWR to continue to make their services affordable, if not more so. The acute context of the current context makes the desire amongst stakeholders greater.

“Value for money, reliability of services, minimise strike action” **MP**

“Keeping us moving and not increasing prices” **Peer**

“Providing affordable transport options which make the switch from car an easy choice to make” **Council Officer**



3.8 Lord Richard Faulkner Chair of GWR Advisory Board

The past year has been a difficult one for supporters of Britain's railways. Apart from the strikes which caused almost a complete shutdown on the days that they occurred, recovery from the Covid lockdown took longer than anticipated and government control of the industry took on new levels of intensity.

A number of train operators found life particularly hard, and it was only by the end of the year that passenger numbers had recovered significantly. On 15 March 2023 the DfT published figures showing that national rail passenger numbers reached over 100% of pre-Covid levels for the first time since March 2020.

This meant that passenger numbers had doubled in just over a year, with the DfT data showing that since the start of 2023 rail customers have been returning not just on weekends and the middle days of the working week, but also on Mondays and Fridays.

These are heartening figures, but the railways cannot complacently assume that whilst passengers seem to be returning for the moment, they will always be there in the future. Train companies must work extra hard to retain their loyalty.

The railways are not immune from political pressures and instability. In this year the UK has had three different prime ministers and three secretaries of state for transport. Uncertainty and delay have dogged the railways' recovery and the establishment of Great British Railways (about which I wrote in my commentary last year) still seems to be at least two years from coming fully into being, and there is still no sign of the Rail Networks Enhancements Pipeline. The RNEP was first introduced in 2019 with the promise that it would be updated every year – not one update has appeared since then.





To its credit GWR has redoubled its efforts to connect communities, deliver the best customer service, help the drive towards net zero, and put rail at the heart of our economy.

Highlights of the year included:

- The award of a National Rail Contract to GWR in June 2022 for three years with the prospect of three further years at the discretion of the Secretary of State
- The opening of the Elizabeth Line which has brought GWR closer to Central London, North Kent and South Essex, with Paddington to Bond Street journey times in around three minutes and 15 to Canary Wharf.
- Success at the National Rail Awards: the Dartmoor Line won awards for outstanding teamwork and outstanding contribution to society, and two colleagues won lifesaver awards for helping a customer who had gone into cardiac arrest.
- Purchase of Vivarail assets to resume a fast-charging battery trial on the Greenford branch line.
- The third Poppies to Paddington event took place as GWR signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant.
- In addition there was a series of train naming and livery events which demonstrated GWR's commitment to diversity and inclusion. Amongst many others these included Alan Turing and Trainbow power car namings.
- White Ribbon UK livery on a power car, marking GWR's accreditation to the organisation whose mission is to end male violence against women and girls.
- The adoption of Falklands livery on a Castle Class power car to mark 40 years since the conflict.
- Marking the triumph of the England women's football team in the European Championship a power car was decorated with the Lionesses' livery.

It is a privilege to chair the GWR Stakeholder Advisory Board. Our members bring a richness of knowledge and experience which they share with colleagues from the company and we all do our best to act as ambassadors for GWR in public and candid friends in private.





4.0 Disciplined Operations



BL
1909





4.1 Performance

The last year has seen train service performance improvements whilst passengers return in greater numbers. In common with most operators the last twelve months have presented a number of operational challenges, managing the impact of multiple periods of industrial action whilst managing a return to near pre-covid passenger numbers. During this time, we've worked proactively to understand underlying performance challenges and implement steps to deliver the high level of performance our customers rightfully expect.

We have worked closely with the Department for Transport keeping focussed on good and efficient operations and have seen improvements in both operational availability and fleet reliability. We've seen a number of temporary timetable changes to accommodate industrial action and action short of a strike, delivering one of the highest levels of service of any UK operator over the Christmas 2022 period. We continued to focus on delivering collaborative

improvements with supply chain partners, as well as focussing on our service proposition to meet the changing needs of our customers.

We have worked closely with Network Rail route colleagues during a challenging twelve months for infrastructure reliability, providing support and escalation where necessary to support improvements.

Over the course of the year 80.1% of services arrived within 3 mins of schedule (at all stations). Delivering high performance is critical as we continue to see passenger numbers grow, particularly to the many leisure destinations across our network.

There is always more to do, and we continue to work closely with Network Rail to keep driving down delays and service cancellations, delivering the service our customers expect.





4.2 Nina Howe, Senior Stakeholder Manager, Transport Focus

It has been another year of change and challenge on the railway. Nevertheless, it feels like work and leisure travel patterns are starting to take shape as passengers continue to return to the railway.

Despite the straightened economic times it's positive to see the level of ambition that remains in the GWR network. As I write new stations such as Reading Green Park, Portway Park & Ride and Marsh Barton are on the verge of opening with others in development and new services to meet passenger needs.

Over the years we have consistently pointed to the importance of understanding the needs and priorities of passengers. This is now critical as the industry needs to respond to a more discretionary nature of passenger journeys.

We recently undertook an extensive survey - Britain's railway: what matters to passengers (involving around 15,000 people nationally) looking to understand whether passenger priorities have changed. This reaffirmed that what matters most to passengers is a punctual and reliable railway that delivers on the timetable's promise at an acceptable price. The data showed GWR's passengers are no different – value for money and performance are by far and away the most important priorities. Getting a seat is more important to GWR passengers than the national average.

Looking at how the factors that are most important and score less well in terms of performance provides us with some key industry priorities. For GWR passengers as well as value for money and performance, frequency of the train and disruption information/management are crucial.

These should provide an important focus for GWR particularly as delivering a consistently good core product has been challenging over the past year. Problems with infrastructure, short formed trains, the effects of weather on the railway and industrial action have all impacted on passenger journeys. While it's clear that GWR and its partners are working hard to manage and mitigate the seemingly relentless challenges it's important that they don't lose sight of the elements that will deliver a consistently good journey experience for passengers. And, when things go wrong they respond and communicate well.

These priorities will also be the focus of my ongoing work with GWR over the coming year - challenging and supporting on the issues that matter most to passengers.

Nina Howe

4.3 Network Rail Infrastructure update



Severn Estuary Resilience Programme

We have developed a £25m plan to improve the resilience of the Newport-Gloucester line which connects South Wales with the West Country, Midlands and north of England. It also serves as the primary diversionary route for South Wales – London services when the Severn tunnel is undergoing maintenance or there is an incident.

The railway line running alongside the Severn Estuary is more exposed to extreme weather and in the last two years, has experienced five major landslips, leading to extended closures of and temporary speed restrictions, disrupting our passengers and impacting essential freight services.

Our work will reduce the pressure on this three-mile stretch by removing material from the lower slope and replacing the existing mesh in higher-risk areas.

The first intensive phase of the programme is now substantially complete. Teams on ropes installed a state-of-the-art mesh and bolt system on the slopes, stabilising the cliff face and preventing landslips from affecting the track below. We will be returning for a second intensive phase of work this year.

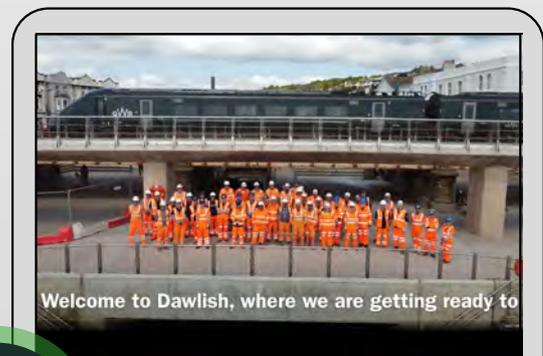
The South West Rail Resilience Programme

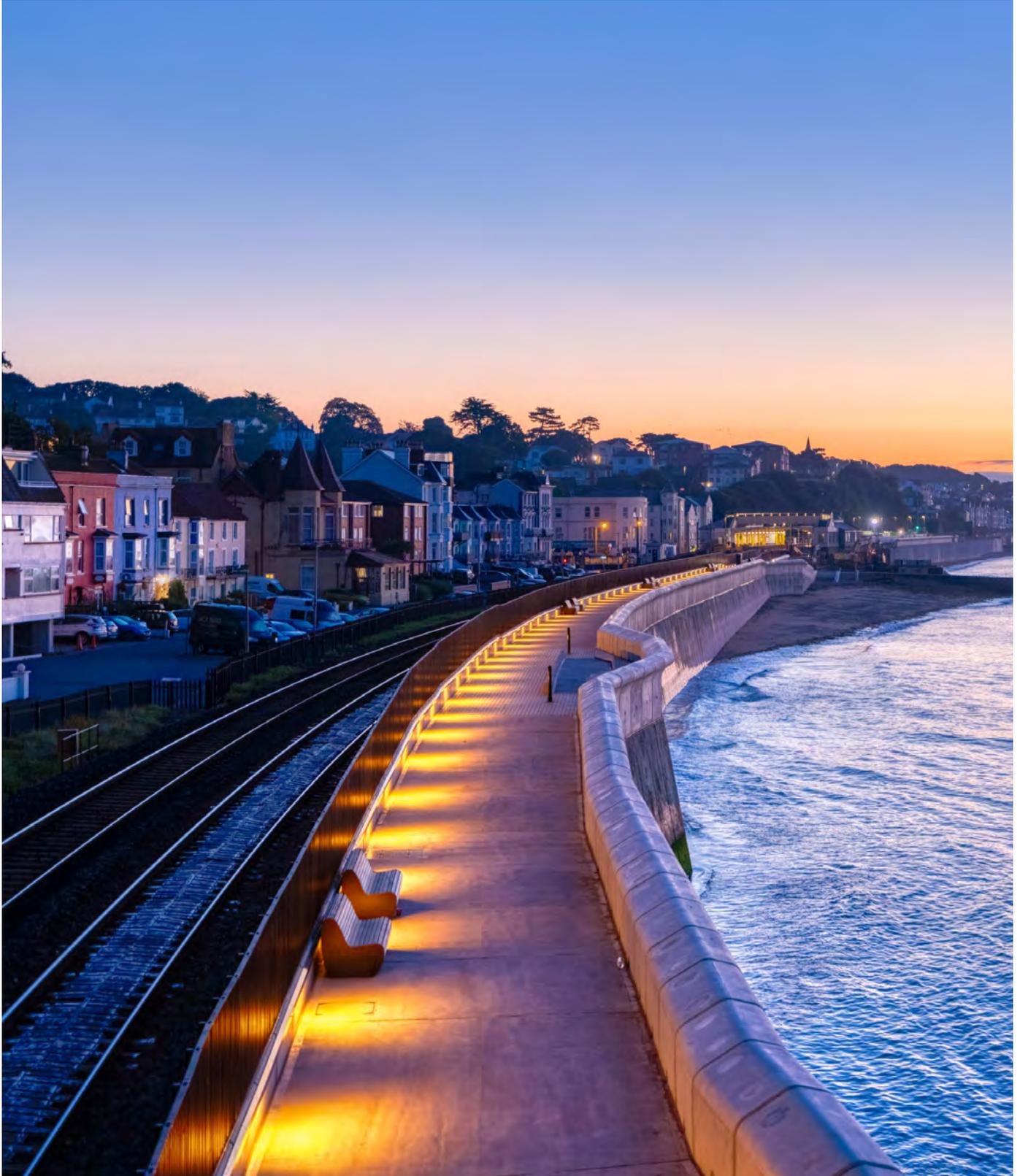
Since 2014, when images of the swing bridge of track at Dawlish were beamed around the world, we've been working continuously to improve resilience of the railway line to the South West, safeguarding this vital rail artery for passengers and freight customers.

In the last year we've been continuing work building the second phase of the Dawlish sea wall, a total of 415m including the main Dawlish station which has been battered by the weather in previous years.

The first phase of this new sea wall is already protecting the railway line and community, where we've seen significant reduction in weather-related incidents here. When the second phase completes this summer, it will provide a resilient railway through Dawlish for generations to come.

Alongside this we have been working on the third and fourth stages of our programme; which includes installing netting to prevent rockfall from the cliffs, and extending Parsons Tunnel (between Dawlish and Teignmouth) with a rockfall shelter to protect trains and our infrastructure.





Oxfordshire Connect

Oxford is strategically located at the heart of the British rail network, supporting key economic growth and transport initiatives across the UK, with a high volume of passenger and freight traffic. However, the rail infrastructure in the Oxford Station area is close to full capacity and currently wouldn't support the start of East West Rail services, due to begin from the end of 2024.

Through Oxfordshire Connect, the station is being expanded and the wider area upgraded, bringing a range of benefits to passengers and residents alike. These include a new western entrance and additional platform to the west of the station, more services with East West Rail and improved and safer road layout for buses, bikes, and pedestrians.

This investment paves the way for potential future growth, including stations and lines such as the Cowley branch line; as well as many stakeholders' aspirations around the Oxford station masterplan.



Bristol Temple Meads Audio Guide

Ahead of the International Day of Disabled Persons last December, we teamed up with Bristol Sight Loss Council to launch a first-of-its-kind audio guide for Bristol Temple Meads station, to assist blind and partially sighted people with wayfinding.

Navigating the station for blind and partially sighted people has become more challenging since the start of works to renovate the station's historic train shed roof. To create a more inclusive space, staff created a guide comprising of 12 audio files, housed on a dedicated page on our website and easily accessible from any personal device, such as a smartphone or tablet. Each file will guide the listener safely and effectively through a section of the station, making it a lot easier to navigate for blind and partially sighted people, a vital step in making our stations accessible to everyone.





4.4 Christopher Irwin Chair TravelWatch SouthWest CIC

First the pandemic, then the industrial disputes – it's been the third year of tough travel conditions for passengers. It has also hit TravelWatch SouthWest as service issues forced the costly cancellation of long-planned meetings or their replacement by inherently less satisfactory on-line gatherings.

But there have been some bright spots. TravelWatch SouthWest, a regionally-based community interest company, grew out of the need to find new ways of promoting the interests of public transport users, across all modes. GWR has since become a national exemplar in promoting bus-rail connectivity and in facilitating the growth of active travel. From its useful leaflet detailing many of the bus services operate from its rail stations linking with towns and villages away from the rail network, to its combined sub-regional rail-bus passes such as the Freedom Travelpasses serving the West of England Combined Authority area, the Cotswold Discover and the Ride Cornwall passes, or its ambitious and seemingly successful 'bus branch lines' such as the 118 route between Okehampton station and Tavistock it is pioneering more sustainable travel.

These reflect well on GWR's innovatory culture. But they also highlight the important part played by key GWR people a step back from the operational front line – people like GWR's transport integration manager, Luke Farley, and members of the company's Development teams who TravelWatch SouthWest invariably find constructive in their many meetings. GWR is now embedded in shaping transport strategy across the South West. It has become a valued member of the communities that it serves, to the credit of a far-sighted top management and to the undoubted long-term benefit of passengers and the region.

Less happy has been the way in which all parties involved, including their government paymaster, have failed to resolve fully the industrial disputes that blighted the recovery of rail travel. That being said, GWR should be commended on the proactive way in which it has endeavoured to keep passengers informed of impending disruptions.



Overhead power cable resilience

In September, damage to overhead power cables caused significant disruption to trains in and out of London Paddington, which led to services being suspended for 24 hours.

Following this, we brought all train operators together along with industry experts to carry out a series of in-depth reviews and we have already made some changes to how we operate, with immediate recommendations across operations, maintenance and engineering being implemented.

Thanks to working with stakeholders, we've secured funding from the Government to replace the older, less reliable overhead power cables between London Paddington and Heathrow Airport Junction with a newer design, much more reliable system in our next funding period (Control Period 7, 2024-2029).

Elizabeth line

Last year, HM Queen Elizabeth II officially opened the Elizabeth line. This was the culmination of 13 years of work, including Network Rail upgrading stations on the existing surface sections ready for the start of the Elizabeth line where all surface stations serving the Elizabeth line now have step-free access; as well as resignalling, the Great Western Electrification programme and the rebuild of Reading station.

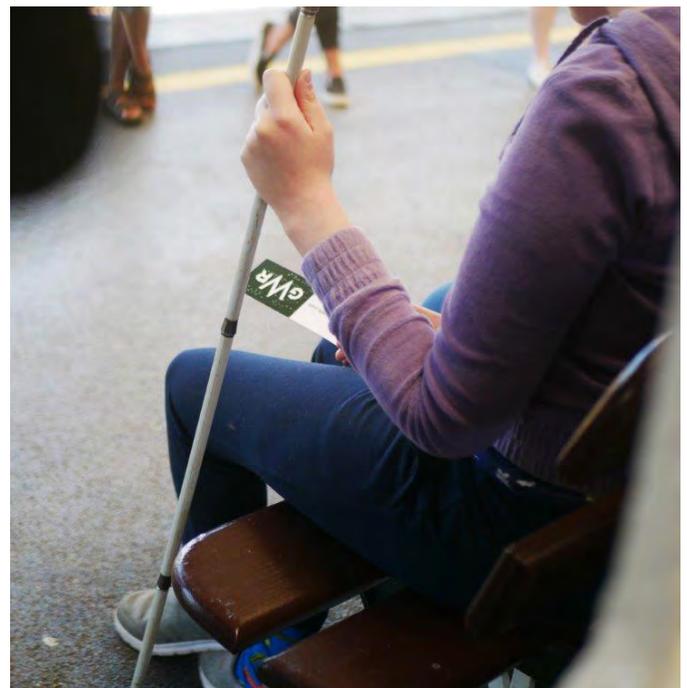
Passengers can now travel to new destinations in central and east London with changing, saving significant time.

Access for All

Our work on improving accessibility for our passengers continues through the Government's Access for All programme, which was first launched in 2006 and has delivered more than 200 accessible routes into selected stations nationally.

We have delivered vital accessibility improvements at stations across the region, including at Barry, for the first time. Along our Western route, construction began on a new bridge and lifts at Theale station (Berkshire) at the start of the year and we have recently announced funding to install new lifts and walkways at Tilehurst (Berkshire) and St Erth (Cornwall) stations.

We have submitted our joint Access for All list with GWR for Control Period 7 and look forward to hearing which stations will be chosen. Working together in partnership with GWR and the Department for Transport, we will continue to do everything we can to make our stations as accessible as possible.





5.0 Great People



5.1 New People and Transformation Director

Collaboration and evolving and adapting to be fit for the future is more important than ever. Over recent months, the Executive teams at Great Western Railway and Network Rail Wales and Western have been considering how we work better together as one industry, what this means, and the opportunities it presents.

Ruth Busby, our HR Director, has been working with the HR team at Network Rail Wales and Western on how we can be in a better position to collaborate so that we improve our offer for customers.

To drive this progress and to further explore what could be possible, Ruth's role with GWR has changed to a new industry role of People and Transformation Director, with responsibility for both our HR team, and the HR team at NR Wales and Western.

Ruth now reports jointly to Mark Hopwood and Michelle Handforth, Managing Director, NR Wales and Western, and will continue to work for GWR and be seconded to Network Rail for that element of the role.

We feel this strategic move, with a new joint role, will enable us to review, discuss and practically work through the opportunities to collaborate further, building on our successful alliance with Network Rail Wales and Western.

Colleagues across GWR will still get the HR services and support they need and will continue to have a highly experienced and knowledgeable HR team dedicated to GWR.

This is an exciting time for GWR and NR Wales and Western as we will be at the forefront of industry collaboration, leading the way for the rail industry in the UK.





5.2 Rising GWR star named Young Professional of the Year at Rail Business Awards

Daniel Golton has been named Young Professional of the Year at the Rail Business Awards, the industry's most recognised awards scheme.

Daniel, 28, from Gloucester, has made giant strides in his short career at GWR, playing a pivotal role in enhancing the operator's train service performance.

A citation at the 25th Rail Business Awards at Park Lane's London Hilton read:

"The judges were impressed by the 'exceptional progress' that Daniel had displayed during his 3½ years in the rail industry, and his achievements as Performance Manager which demonstrated a breadth of impact with a positive influence on the customer experience."

Daniel said: "To even make the shortlist of four in the Young Professional category was fantastic. To win it is completely surreal, but I'm absolutely stoked."

GWR's Sales & Marketing team was also shortlisted in the Marketing & Communications Excellence category for a 'blockbuster campaign that supercharged leisure rail recovery'. The campaign helped to promote leisure travel across the GWR network.

"To even make the shortlist of four in the Young Professional category was fantastic. To win it is completely surreal, but I'm absolutely stoked."

Daniel Golton



5.3 Golden recognition for GWR apprentice team at the start of National Apprenticeship Week

Our apprentice team celebrated golden recognition at the start of National Apprenticeship Week, while one of its shining stars has scooped a top accolade.

The team, which supervises 240 apprentices across the GWR network, received gold accreditation as part of the Investors in People 'We invest in apprentices' programme.

Meet Ekaterina and two of our other apprentices here:

Coach and mentor Ekaterina Cherkasenko also has plenty to celebrate after being named Higher Apprentice of the Year at Exeter College.

Ekaterina achieved a distinction in her Level 4 Coach and Assessor Quest apprenticeship, leading to her accolade at Exeter College.





GWR Learning and Development Manager Andrew Perry, pictured above centre, said: “To receive gold accreditation from Investors in People really is something to be celebrated. From my perspective it’s probably the highlight of my career. It’s recognition of so much hard work by the whole team.

“We deliver our apprenticeships across 2,000 miles of the network and are pushing the boundaries to ensure our provision is up to date, challenging and future proof.”

Working in partnership with Exeter College, the train operator launched a vocational apprenticeship programme 11 years ago.

Quest apprenticeships were also introduced in 2020, enabling GWR colleagues to gain formal qualifications alongside their day-to-day roles.

Investors in People conducted an extensive assessment of the apprenticeship programmes between 1 November and 22 December last year.

It conducted an online survey with apprentices, interviewed 34 of the apprentice workforce, quizzed members of the Learning and Development team, and reviewed written material.

“To receive gold accreditation from Investors in People really is something to be celebrated. From my perspective it’s probably the highlight of my career. It’s recognition of so much hard work by the whole team.”

Andrew Perry,
GWR Learning and Development Manager

Investors in People said:

“The overall conclusion of this assessment is that Great Western Railway meet the ‘We invest in apprentices’ at Gold level.

“Congratulations, this is an excellent achievement for any organisation, but given the challenges facing the sector through Covid, industrial action and political uncertainty, this is exceptional.”

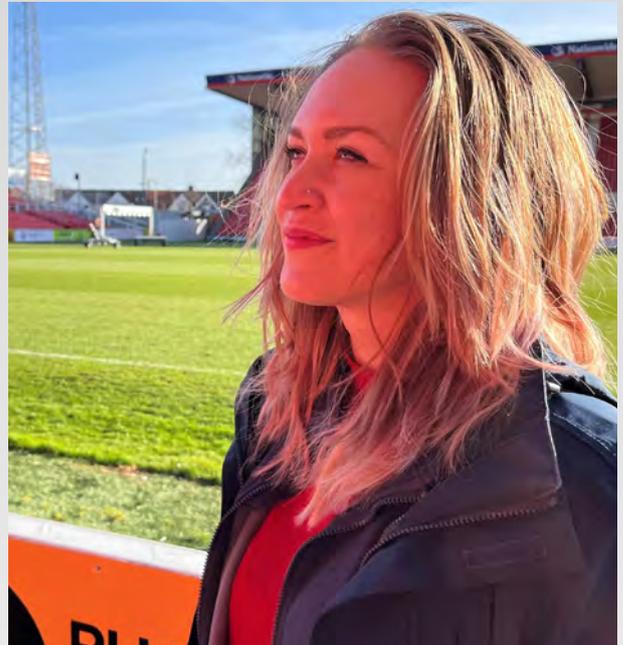
A citation at the awards ceremony read:

“Ekaterina worked incredibly hard on her apprenticeship evidence and pushed herself to the limits. She demonstrated outstanding resilience and dedication to her role as a Coach and Mentor.

“Ekaterina recently spoke at a wellbeing event about all things apprenticeships and has demonstrated that she is a true ambassador for work-based learning.”

Ekaterina said: “I am still in shock. I can’t believe I have gone and won Higher Apprentice of the Year! Yes, I have studied hard and some of the days were long and gloomy, but it feels great to share the news with my family, friends and most importantly my mentees and colleagues!”

During National Apprenticeship Week from Monday 6 to Sunday 12 February, GWR will be represented at the Apprenticeship Expo at Exeter College, while members of the apprentice team will attend stations across the network offering advice to customers and answering questions.



CASE STUDY ONE:

Coach and mentor Ekaterina Cherkasenko, 32, from Bristol, started her Quest apprenticeship in 2021

“I chose to do an apprenticeship as it’s an opportunity to develop myself personally for the things that I aspire to do as part of my job and hopefully help to better GWR in the future.

“It’s an opportunity to speak to some likeminded people at GWR. It’s an opportunity to prove so many people wrong and an opportunity to achieve something for yourself, rather than just as part of your job.

“There’s a lot of change happening and I want to be as equipped as I can to help people want to stay with GWR. Embrace the change and embrace the opportunity.”





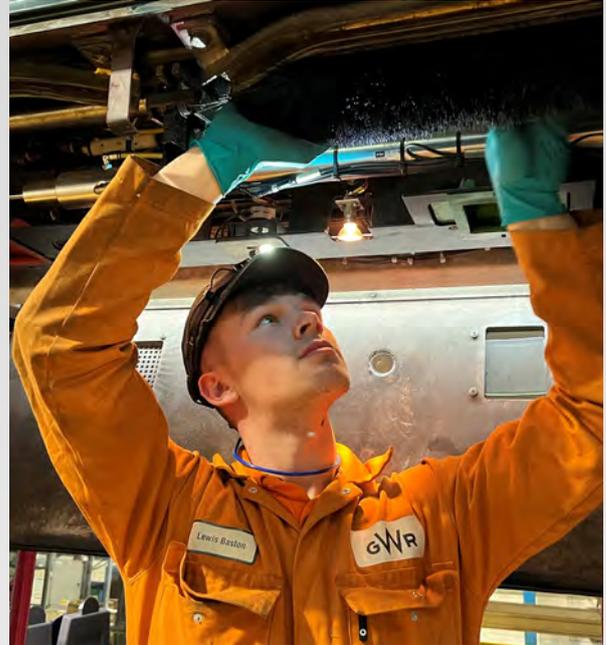
CASE STUDY TWO:

Customer service apprentice Sami Ahmed, 19, from Reading, started at GWR in August last year

“In the apprenticeship you’re interacting with customers and therefore you’re improving your skills. You meet new people, apprentices, the mentors, line managers – they are all fun to work with and meet.

“The best thing I’ve done so far is most definitely the residential course. It improved my confidence with interacting with new people, facing my fears, like heights, for example. Before I was saying I don’t want to go but now that I’ve done it I’m very proud of myself

“What I would say to someone who wants to do an apprenticeship with GWR is don’t be nervous. It’s not as hard as you think, it’s not that nerve-racking because there’s lots of people to help you... the mentors... the other apprentices.”



CASE STUDY THREE:

Engineering apprentice Lewis Baston, 21, from Swindon, started at GWR in 2021

“I’ve always wanted an apprenticeship since leaving school and I knew an office job wasn’t really for me – I wanted it to be a lot more hands-on.

“Some days I’m in college doing my level 2 and level 3 engineering operative and the other days I’m in the depot learning. Every day is different, so we might have a failure with the doors or we might have an engine change. If there’s a new job I’ve not done before I’ll go on that and learn from someone else.

“The best thing about the apprenticeship is the support you get. There’s always a lot of people who really want to help you to learn. And there’s a lot of opportunities beyond the apprenticeship as well.

“If someone was thinking about applying for an apprenticeship here I would definitely push them to do it, 100%.”

5.4 GWR and Samaritans encourage people to become lifesavers with the power of small talk

In February, we joined up with the Samaritans Small Talk Saves Lives campaign to remind people that we all have the potential to be lifesavers by striking up a conversation.

Research reveals that only 50% of UK adults said they would feel confident approaching and speaking to someone they don't know if they were concerned about them in public. The campaign aims to empower the public to trust their instincts and start a conversation if they think someone needs help.

As part of the launch, a new film reassures the public that a little small talk like 'where can I get a coffee?' can be all it takes to interrupt someone's suicidal thoughts and help set them on a path to recovery.

GWR Train Managers – mother and daughter Carol and Kim Hellyer – are helping to front the campaign, sharing their experiences about how they intervened to save lives. See their stories below.

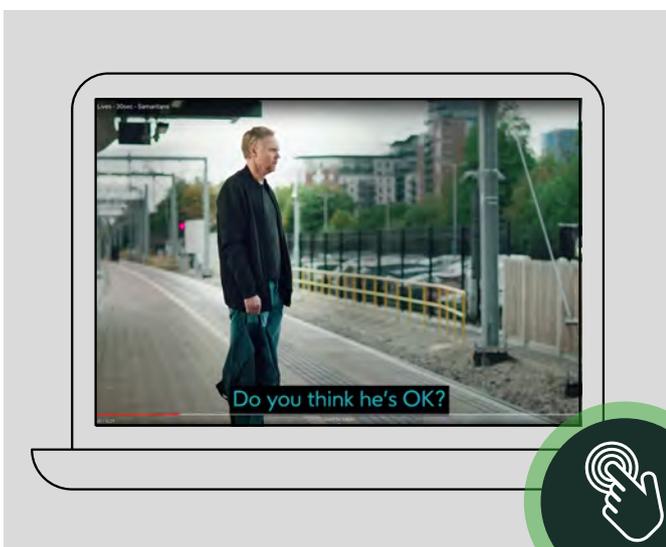
Samaritans is working in partnership with Network Rail, British Transport Police and the wider rail industry to promote Small Talk Saves Lives, with volunteers heading

to stations across the GWR network to highlighting the power of talking and providing myth-busting leaflets.

Kim Hellyer, 25 "As a train manager, my main role is the safety of the train. I'm always moving through the train checking if everyone is OK.

"I was at work, and I saw a young woman who looked really upset. I asked her if she had a ticket, but she ignored me. So I asked her where she was travelling to. She told me she was going away because she wanted to end her life. I knew I had to keep talking to her and keep her with me, so she was safe. I asked her name and we talked about her job. She told me it wasn't the first time that week that she'd tried to do this.

"When we reached the next station, I needed to open and close the doors to let customers on and off the train. At that point I called control. They arranged for the British Transport Police to come. I





continued to chat to her and didn't leave her side.

"I feel so strongly about encouraging other train crews to learn and do Samaritans' 'Managing Suicidal Contacts' training. I want to raise awareness for others who need support too.

"GWR gave me a Gold Award in September last year for this, which I was really proud of."

Carol Hellyer, 51 "I've worked on the railway for 23 years. I've been with GWR as a Train Manager for my entire career.

"We do an introduction to suicide prevention as part of our GWR safety training. So I know to look out for certain behaviours. The main message I remember is 'if you're not sure, go and ask anyway', which is exactly what came to mind when it happened to me, and I saw someone I thought needed help.

"It was early in the morning, and I was driving to work. The strange thing is that I chose to go a different route to work. I caught something out the corner of my eye, who looked like a person who was going to take their life.

"I said, 'please talk to me for a bit'. I told them I was going to come closer so I didn't have to

talk so loudly but that I wouldn't touch them. I just kept asking them if that was alright.

"Whilst we waited for the police to arrive, I kept talking and asked them if they'd come and sit with me. After about 45 minutes, they did. I just kept asking questions, trying to distract them.

"About six weeks later, I met with the person I had helped. There were so many reasons I shouldn't have been there that day. I feel so proud and happy they're okay."





6.0 Keep Our Communities Prospering







6.1 Travel training and 'Try a Train' trips

Our journey to trying something new started in 2021. We employed a team of three Accessibility Mentors to run travel training for people with disabilities to help build their confidence in travelling by train. In our first year we saw over 450 people for these sessions.

Moving into 2022/23 this had seen huge growth with more than 1,700 people seen with over a month of this financial year left to run. The reach of these sessions has been incredible and the impact on the wider community has been immense. The number of educational establishments reaching out for this travel training has grown significantly, as we run sessions as part of their life skills learning. We have also seen a large increase in organisations supporting older adults, through dementia cafes or brain injury charities.

Our ambition is to provide an experience of what train travel is like in the hope that it stimulates a desire to explore, be independent, or achieve something new. We have seen that for many people, the unknown is a major barrier to travel, and by providing these experiences, in which we explain safe ways to travel, the assistance that's available and what is required may help ease those fears.

"Just wanted to let you know that it was absolutely fabulous, the children loved it! So much so that we have booked another day."
 "I have to say our children LOVED yesterday."
School for children who are hard of hearing

"It was amazing! We had 4 severely disabled children that had never been on a train come as well as two terrified of trains. By the end they have all planned trips with their families as they love the train now especially the accordion connection bit. Everyone did amazing, it was very good training for the dogs as we managed the exchanges and even changed a train time. Our level of disability can be quite severe so the achievement for all involved was phenomenal, your staff and personnel were amazing throughout with our wheelchairs and special needs...We are so grateful, I cannot thank you enough the GWR staff were outstanding. WOW, thank you!" **Assistance Dogs Cornwall**

For more information on what GWR are doing to make our network more accessible, take a look below



**GWR Accessibility News
2021-22 Look Back**

6.2 Meeting our Commitment to Sustainability

There is significant opportunity for the rail industry to contribute towards reducing the impact of climate change and achieving Net Zero by 2050. GWR is working with Network Rail and the Environment Agency to review the impact of extreme weather events and develop contingency and long-term risk management plans.

We continue to operate in accordance with the prestigious international standards for environmental and energy management, maintaining our ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 50001:2018 certifications across the business. The environmental and energy management system is allowing us to drive improvements in waste, water, and energy consumption and a successful external audit by Lloyds in early 2023 found our management system to be continuously improving and fully supporting the GWR sustainability agenda.

Measuring and managing our environmental impact is key to the success of our business. We continue to run trains on electricity wherever possible, and are finalising a decarbonisation road map to support the Government's commitment to net zero and to phase out all diesel-only traction by 2040. Our investment in innovative technology for battery operated trains is very much in support of this objective.

In 2022/23 GWR achieved its non-hazardous recycling target with overall recycling figure at 73%. This is an increase from 64% in FY21-22. We've worked closely with both suppliers and vendors to improve our recycling on site and will continue to examine how to best capture the recycling efforts across the network and how. *Waste data is difficult to capture and not exact.

Through the installation of automated water meters, we continue to closely monitor water consumption across our portfolio. Real-time data is allowing us to see peaks and troughs in consumption, enabling us to rapidly identify and repair any leaks. After a trial of reduced water flow taps, GWR are now installing water-saving taps across our stations to reduce consumption. Based on a similar project by FirstGroup, this could reduce total station water consumption by up to 30%. These reductions will have a significant impact on the carbon emissions associated with our water usage



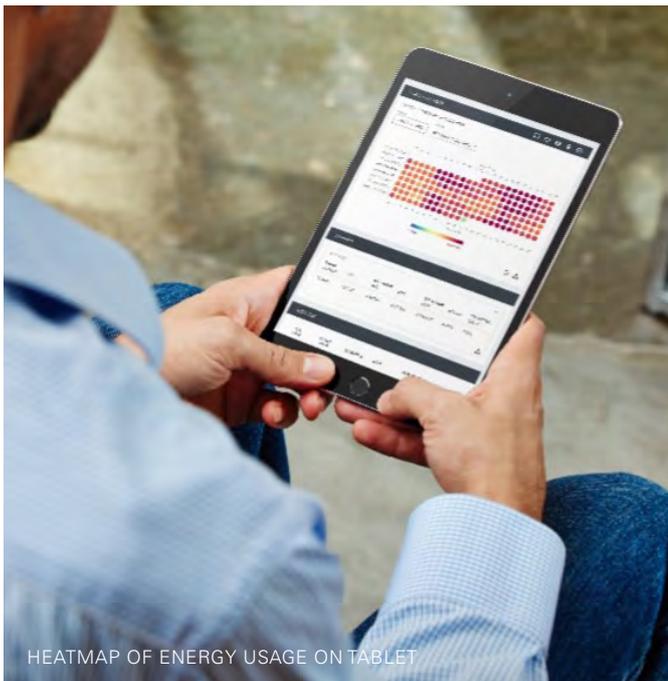
Smart Energy Management

Data insights to cut carbon and drive down electricity consumption. GWR have installed a Shield Building Management System (BMS) at all GWR operated stations, allowing remote control and detailed analysis of all energy systems. Lighting is now controlled by ambient sensors, ensuring lights are only switched on when needed. This has allowed GWR to identify energy wastage and leakage, meaning different solutions can be implemented to reduce consumption. During the forthcoming year we plan to continue to develop heating and lighting controls to minimise energy usage across our portfolio.

The impact

Smart metering allows us to accurately measure our energy usage (and our tenants' usage) in real time and identify hot spots to reduce consumption. This has already helped us to identify energy wastage and leakage within our energy system and informed our energy reduction interventions.

To reduce our energy demand from lighting, energy-efficient LED lighting has been installed at 70% of our stations' customer-facing areas and 80% in our



“This work is a key part of our commitment to reduce the carbon emissions of our train fleet with a view to removing all diesel-only traction from the network by 2040, in line with the Government’s Transport Decarbonisation Plan.”

Simon Green, Engineering Director, GWR

back of house facilities, with the remaining LED lighting installations underway. This system alerts maintenance staff of any lighting failures, allowing our staff to resolve many lighting issues remotely and so reducing emissions from maintenance staff travelling to sites to fix systems. Since starting these collective measures in 2014, we have achieved a 63% total reduction in lighting energy use across our stations.

GWR has also enhanced Exeter depot with photovoltaic panels. The expectation is a return in energy and cost savings over time. These benefits will be measured by the depot's BMS.

GWR makes purchase of Vivarail assets: Fast-charging battery trial

In February 2023 GWR purchased assets from emissions-free and hybrid trains manufacturer Vivarail, demonstrating a continued commitment to decarbonization. This enables GWR to trial high-performance battery and FastCharge technology on our Greenford Line and is designed to support the wider introduction of battery-powered trains on the UK's rail network. Nine former Vivarail staff have joined the GWR team.

“This work is a key part of our commitment to reduce the carbon emissions of our train fleet with a view to removing all diesel-only traction from the network by 2040, in line with the Government’s Transport Decarbonisation Plan.”

Simon Green, Engineering Director, GWR

6.3 Community Rail Partnerships

Over the past year, we have seen some tremendous work from GWR's 10 amazing community rail partnerships (CRPS), to find out more you can access their annual report below.





6.4 Community Fund

Following the success of last year's scheme, in which GWR supported 83 projects totalling £1m, we were delighted to announce our second round of funding bids for customer and community projects,

In 2022-23, we supported 131 projects across the GWR network, supporting customers, charities, community groups and voluntary organisations to deliver benefit in the communities we serve.

As part of its National Rail Contract with the Department for Transport, GWR is committed to supporting schools, colleges, councils, community and other not-for-profit organisations by aiding a number of initiatives.

RC Vision, which promotes Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education, and diversity and inclusion through radio control car racing, used a grant of nearly £25,000 to give 80 young people from Hillingdon an introduction to race engineering.

Working alongside young professional engineers from the rail industry, the young people will learn about vehicle dynamics and race car set-up and the similarity between the skills required and jobs in engineering.

A grant for £18,600 enabled Buckinghamshire Council to explore ways of improving access for those walking, wheeling, cycling or taking the bus to Bourne End railway station.

A feasibility study commissioned by the council will consider the provision of a new safe crossing to the station, improved accessibility and the creation of a new bus interchange.

In Reading, the Greater Change Foundation used a grant of £21,400 to support a multi-agency project designed to reduce homelessness.

Contactless devices have been placed in and around the city centre to divert funds away from individuals into the charities actively working to end homelessness, helping those most entrenched rough sleepers to move forward.





6.5 Chinese New Year

We got hopping into the year of the Rabbit with a special Chinese New Year celebration at Reading Station.

Passengers at Reading were treated to a flash mob of 30 dancers from South Gloucestershire Chinese Association (SGCA) taking part in a traditional Chinese dragon dance in January.

The dance, celebrating the start of the Chinese New Year, has a history of more than 2,000 years and is believed to bring good fortune.

SGCA has received support through GWR's Community budget, which supports under-represented groups across the Great Western network. The £965 which SGCA received from the train operating company has helped to fund dance teaching and provide a space for the group to meet.

SGCA Secretary Rong Yang came up with the idea as a way of showcasing Chinese culture in the region. She said: "With the great support from GWR and Network Rail, members of South Gloucestershire Chinese Association headed to Reading station to perform in a fantastic flash mob. There was also a mix of traditional and modern dances, Tai Chi demonstrations, and above all, a mighty dragon dance show.

"If you were in Reading we hoped you enjoyed a truly unforgettable cultural experience."



"If you were in Reading we hoped you enjoyed a truly unforgettable cultural experience."

Rong Yang, SGCA Secretary



7.0 Engine for Growth



7.1 East Region



Reading Green Park

Working in collaboration with Network Rail and Reading Borough Council, Reading's new £20 million station, 'Reading Green Park' has entered passenger service. The station is the first new station in Reading in over 100 years, and significantly improves the sustainable transport offering for residents as well as the nearby Green Park business area and Reading football club.

The station is fully accessible, with cycle parking facilities, as well as a bus interchange and two car parks. The new station saw its first train enter into operational service on the 27th June 2023.

Reading West

We are delivering in partnership with Reading Borough Council a significant upgrade to Reading West station including a new station building with gate lines, toilets and a retail unit as part of a £4.1m scheme, which has progressed at pace over the past year.

In the summer of 2022 work started on site to deliver the transformation of the station, and over the course of the rest of the year has seen the erection of new station buildings at both the Tilehurst Road and Oxford Road entrances, as well as ongoing associated highways works. The facilities are due to be open for customer use later in 2023.





Newbury station development

Work nears completion on the transformation of Newbury station, enhancing the station buildings and interchange facilities at Newbury alongside a major housing-led scheme known as the Market Street development, and a West Berkshire scheme to improve the South side access to the station. The overall scheme improves customer experience with buildings remodelled to house ticket gate lines inside for the first time and increase capacity for car and cycle parking including the two new secure cycle hubs. We will also deliver three business growth units to provide additional employment space adjacent to the station.

Following on from our previous completion of the cycle hubs and car park, in 2022 we formally completed the internal station refurbishment, doubling throughput and bringing this activity inside along with ticket sales and waiting areas. The main entrance has been moved to the west end of the existing buildings to reflect the shift in the station's centre of gravity, following the new footbridge installation in 2017 and the MSCP.

On the south side we have seen our three new business growth units take shape, retaining employment use on the site. We expect to complete this final part of the scheme in 2023.

The scheme is promoted jointly by West Berkshire Council and Great Western Railway and supported by Thames Valley Berkshire LEP through the Local Growth Fund.

Oxford Phase 2

We continue to support Network Rail in the delivery of the Oxford Phase 2 project, which will provide significant benefits to customers in Oxford as well as the wider network. The improvements include, a new station entrance on the West side, a new platform with passenger facilities to significantly improve the customer experience. As well as this Botley Road bridge will be replaced, improving the experience for cycles and pedestrians under the bridge. There will also be level crossing closures and the creation of high-speed crossovers improving the operational performance of the highly important Oxford area.

The scheme started on site delivery in early 2023 and we have continued to work to ensure Oxford station continues to operate for our customers and the local community whilst this exciting scheme takes shape. The scheme is due for completion in time for the introduction of East West Rail services in Dec 2024.



Slough

We have been working in partnership with Network Rail and Slough Borough Council to transform Slough Station including the installation of new safety fencing along the fast platforms, reconfiguration of the ticket hall and relocation of all ticket barriers within the station building. In addition, Slough Borough Council have been leading a scheme to significantly improve the public realm and access to the North side of the station. Both schemes are due for completion in the summer of 2023 with the safety fencing brought in use into full operational use in time for the May 23 timetable change.



Maidenhead Silco Drive Car Park

In February 2023 we reopened Silco Drive car park for our customers. Silco Drive car park was taken out of use six years ago to allow for the construction of a depot and sidings as part of the Elizabeth line project.

Following the completion of these works, Network Rail has funded the £600,000 restoration of the car park. The car park has been resurfaced and relined to bring 141 spaces back into use, along with CCTV and a Customer Information Screen showing real-time train information.



Tilehurst

In March 2023 Network Rail announced that Tilehurst station will benefit from £4 million of investment to make all platforms fully accessible for the first time. We continue to work in collaboration with our partners at Network Rail to ensure the scheme is successful and delivers significant benefit to customers along the Great Western main line.

7.2 West Region



IMAGE CREDIT: ANTONY CHRISTIE

Ponsandane Sidings

GWR and Network Rail are currently constructing three new sidings at Long Rock Depot in Penzance. This will allow us to stable 9-car IET trains overnight for light maintenance at Long Rock Depot, as all the current sidings are slightly too short for these trains. At the moment we only diagram 5-car IETs into Penzance each evening, despite it being one of our busiest passenger flows into Cornwall. Once the work is complete, we will be doubling the number of seats we offer into Cornwall each evening as we can switch to stabling the 9-car train formations. The project is also working with Cornwall Council to install a small public car park for Long Rock Beach and SW Coast Path to improve visitor access to the area.

Exeter St Davids Platform 2

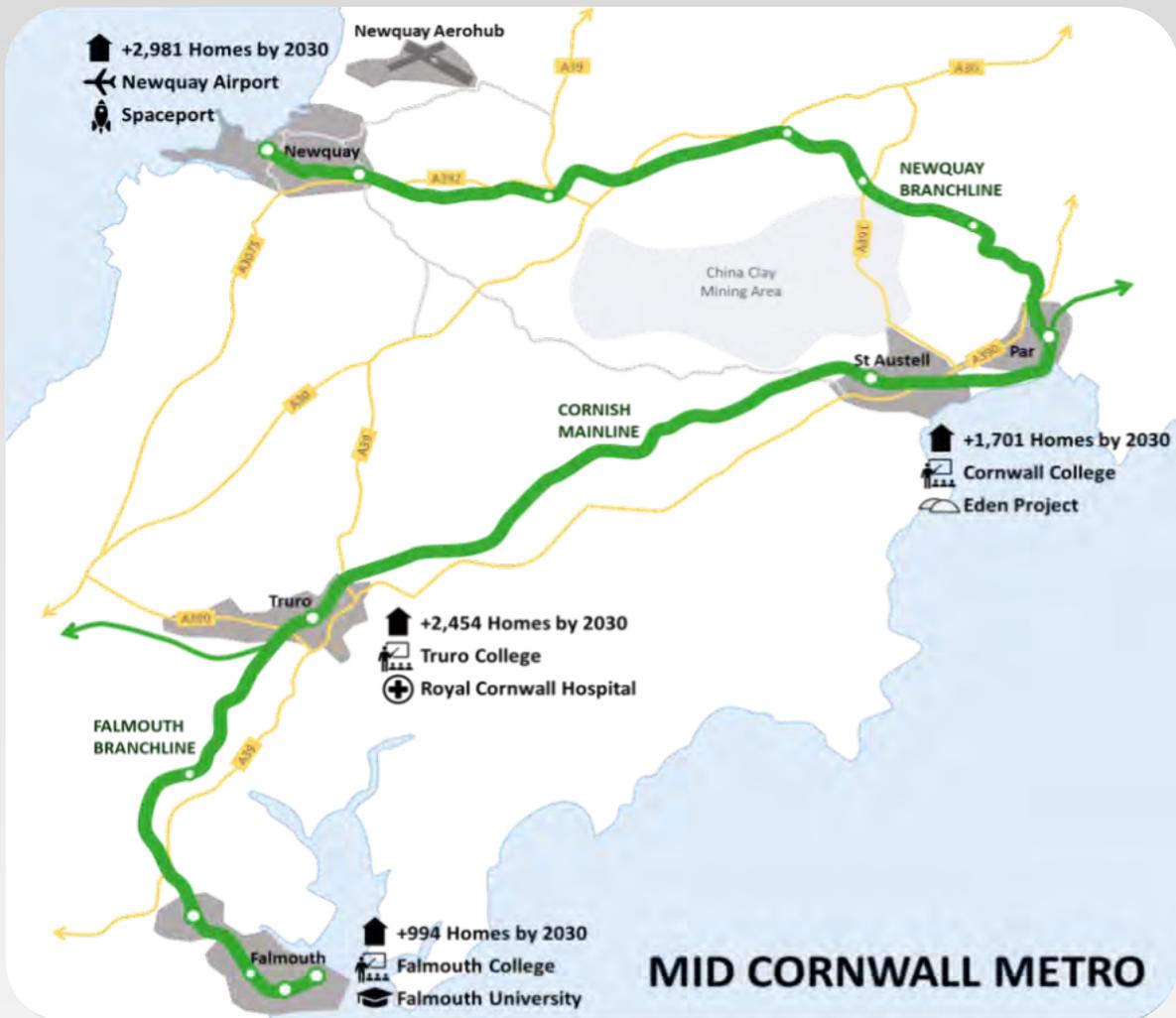
Work is underway to extend the Bay Platform at St Davids Station, following removal of the old crew mess room. GWR colleagues moved over to the newly expanded Exeter Traincare Depot in 2021 and this has left space for the platform to be extended for use from 4-car to 5-car length trains, giving greater flexibility and capacity for services which terminate at the station from the London direction.



West Devon Transport Hub

Also announced through Levelling Up, is the news that West Devon District Council have been successful in a £13.4m bid to create a new railway station and integrated transport hub on the eastern side of Okehampton, which will be easily accessible from the A30. This will build on the success of the newly reopened Dartmoor Line, which has seen over 250,000 passengers use the service in the first year.





Mid Cornwall Metro

Cornwall Council have been successful in their Levelling Up grant application to Government to deliver a package of measures, which includes infrastructure improvements to connect up two Cornish branchlines with an hourly through service from Newquay to Falmouth.

Improvements on the railway include:

- New second platform at Newquay, with associated track and signalling, and regeneration plans
- New passing loop at Goss Moor and signalling upgrades for the Newquay branch
- Lift bridge at Par to improve access to the island platform
- Pay As You Go ticketing in Cornwall
- Other Council led improvements and initiatives

7.3 Central Region

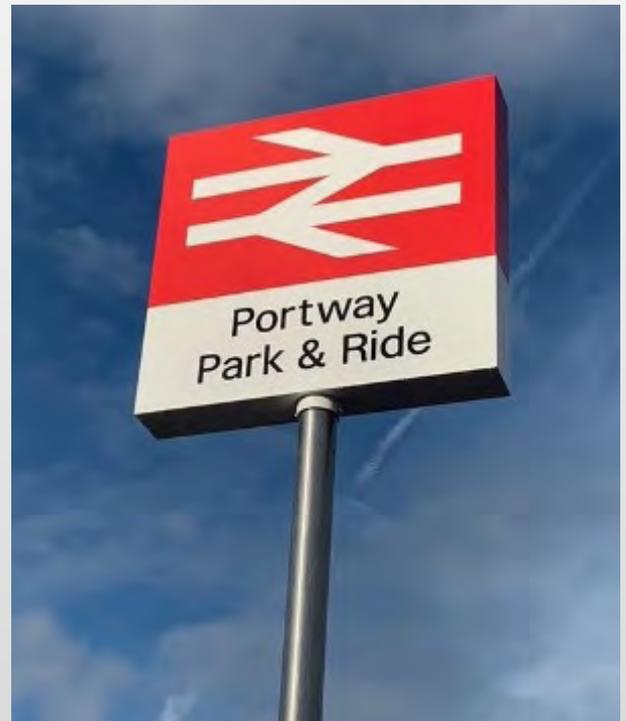


Metro West

Following the start of extra services on the Severn Beach line in December 2021, additional Bristol – Gloucester and Bristol – Bath – Westbury services commenced in May 2023, funded by the West of England Combined Authority. These services, launched by Mayor Dan Norris, represent the first stages of the exciting Metro West plan, also benefitting those in Keynsham, Yate and other West of England communities. Metro West represents a significant investment in local railways, which includes line re-openings to Filton and Henbury and to Portishead. Plans for new stations are advancing, with works to construct a new station at Ashley on Down on Filton Bank already underway, promoted by Bristol City Council.

Portway Park & Ride

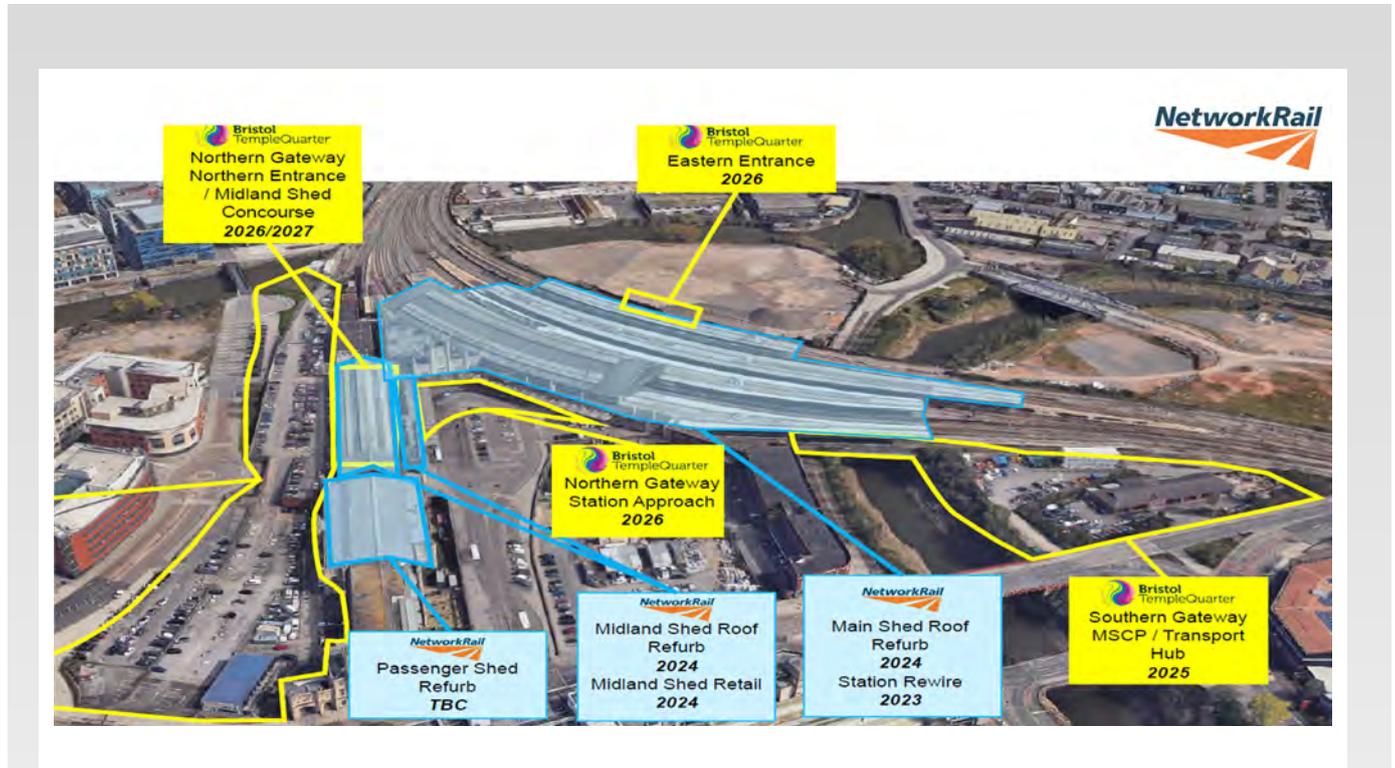
The construction of the new station, between Avonmouth and Shirehampton on the Severn Beach line, has been completed. GWR is working with promoter Bristol City Council and Network Rail to finalise the entry into service plan. The new station is expected to open this summer, extending the benefits of extra services on the Severn Beach line and, in combination with local bus services, providing a compelling alternative to users of the A4 travelling into Bristol City Centre.



WESTERN-SUPER-MARE

Access for All

Network Rail is bringing forward new step free footbridges for Western-super-Mare and Cheltenham Spa. At Weston-super-Mare design work is underway. Opportunities to align installation with bridge refurbishment and maintenance work are currently being explored. At Cheltenham Spa Network Rail anticipate being on site later this year, for completion Spring 2024.



Bristol Temple Meads

Network Rail secured £95m of funding to deliver new eastern, northern and southern entrances to the station, as part of the Bristol Temple Quarter masterplan. Bristol Temple Meads lies at the heart of the Metro West network. Funding for the upgrade to customer facilities and access complements current work to renew the roof (due 2025/26) and undertake repairs and enhancements to the Midland Shed. GWR is working closely with Network Rail to deliver these important enhancements whilst keeping customers moving.





TRACK TRAYS BEFORE



TRACK TRAYS AFTER



ARTISTS IMPRESSION

SUBWAY PLANS

Gloucester

GWR is working with Gloucester City Council, GFirst LEP, Gloucestershire County Council and Network Rail to bring forward improvements to the forecourt and underpass. Works started in the underpass earlier this year, undertaken by Network Rail. The underpass forms a part of a vital cross city link, as well as a route to the station, and the improvements will benefit ambiance and safety, as well as ensuring step free access for the first time. These works will be followed by improvements to the forecourt an interchange. Vehicular access is already benefitting from junction improvements undertaken by Gloucestershire County Council last winter, which included the opening of a new access onto Metz Way, easing traffic flows during busy periods.

Castle Cary

GWR is proud to be working with Network Rail and The Emily Estate on a number of improvements in and around the station. Works to the car park are nearing completion, alongside the Emily Estate works to enhance the station forecourt and provide step free access between the forecourt area and new car park (as part of its Creamery development, expected soon). The Glastonbury Festival is a significant event for the station each year, and GWR is working in partnership with Network Rail and The Emily Estate to ensure the station is ready to receive the thousands of visitors expected to pass through. If that wasn't enough, Network Rail is leading design work for a new step free footbridge which all partners hope to secure funding for delivery from 2024.





NEW CYCLE PARKING AT AVONMOUTH



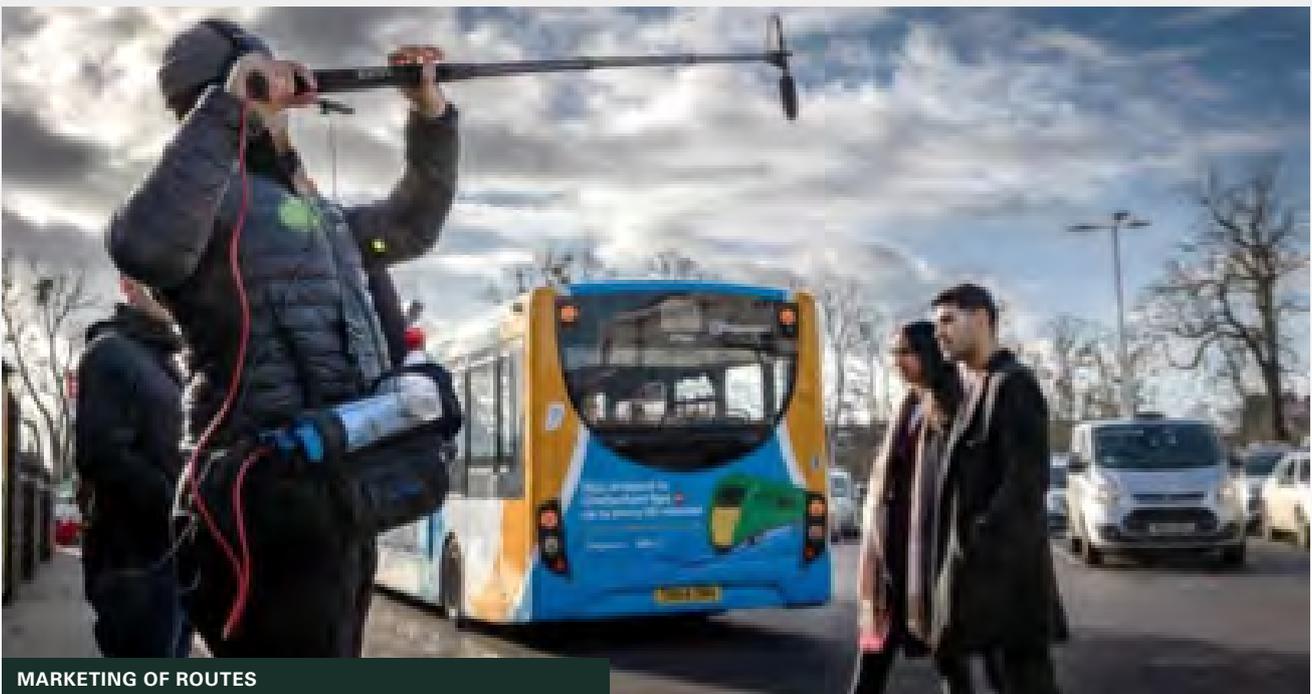
BUS BRANCH LINES ESTABLISHED

Transport integration

New cycle parking was installed at Avonmouth and Severn Beach, supporting customers with bikes on the Severn Beach line.

Bus branch lines have been established from Chippenham (link to Castle Combe with Faresaver) and Cheltenham (link to Town Centre with Stagecoach), delivering a package of timetabling improvements alongside marketing and branding of routes.

More of these are planned. We are working closely with Wiltshire Council to provide better connections to bus services at a number of stations in Wiltshire, including Bedwyn and Pewsey where Wiltshire Council are trialling an innovative Demand Responsive bus service.



MARKETING OF ROUTES

7.4 Wales



GREEN MAN TRUST/OASIS CARDIFF, REFUGEE INTEGRATION PROJECT

Community Fund Projects

In 2022-23, GWR supported projects to deliver community benefit across our network; in Wales this included 9 projects with over £100,000 of funding.

Mullany e-Mentoring – Bilingual online mentoring programme for 14-19 year olds from communities in the lowest 20% of WIMD, supporting aspiration & progression to STEM careers

Weather the Weather – Development funding for immersive art/science engagement project on Climate Change & citizen action

Green Man Trust/Oasis Cardiff – Refugee Integration Project – 25 refugees from Cardiff build skills and confidence at Green Man Festival, delivering workshops & engagement on their experiences & culture

Social Business Wales Awards – Promoting the work of Social Businesses to support Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Hip Hop at 50 – Collecting aural histories & 3 day graffiti workshop to support an exhibition at the National Museum on 50 years of Hip Hop in Wales

BAME Mental Health Awareness – Mental Health Awareness & First Aider courses for BAME communities in Swansea & Neath Port Talbot

Chwarae Teg – Speak up, Step up, Shape up – Amplifying Women & Girls lived experiences of using public transport to co-produce training & resources to improve safety on board: Carmarthen, Swansea & Cardiff

Making Age Friendly Railways – research at the Centre for Ageing & Dementia Research at Aberystwyth University supporting accessibility improvements at stations and on board

Urban Eco-literacy for Nature Recovery – Cynnal Cymru – Development of NatureWise citizen engagement course with a focus on urban environments, including delivery for Community Groups & volunteers in Cardiff & Newport

The fund will open again in 22-23, with a revised name as Customer & Community Improvement Fund and a renewed focus on projects which deliver community benefit with a connection to the railway.

Swansea Pride 2022

GWR sponsored Swansea Pride on Saturday 20th April 2022, a volunteer-led celebration of LGBT+ communities across Swansea & its neighbours. We're pleased to support Pride events across the network and Swansea was a fantastic event, well supported by the community and our colleagues in Swansea.



Rich Middleton Growth Manager in Post

22-23 was the first year GWR have had a Growth Manager for Wales in post for the full year. Joining us just before the start of the year, in March 2022, Rich Middleton's role with GWR is to support the strategic development of the railway in Wales. This involves working with partners inside the industry as well as Developers, Local Authorities and Welsh Government to make sure GWR plays its part in the railway family in Wales.

In the last year, Rich has been supporting the service development planning in Wales, looking at how our service can encourage more people to travel by train in Wales as well as support more leisure journeys to the destinations we serve.

GWR has also introduced its Long Weekender ticket with a trial to Cardiff, Newport & Bristol. This ticket allows travel during the evening peak on Friday as well as Monday morning peak, as long as customers do not travel on Sunday. This helps us to manage demand on busy Sundays – but also supports longer stays in destinations – it's only available for travel to Cardiff, not travel to London.



7.5 Elizabeth line update

The Elizabeth line has had a transformational impact for London and the south east, with the line now carrying a large proportion of rail journeys within the United Kingdom with around 3.5 million journeys per week.

For the Thames Valley, the Elizabeth line has brought direct services right into the heart of central London and London's east.

May opening

The May 2022 opening of the Central Operating Section of the Elizabeth line, linking Paddington with Abbey Wood, was a key moment for the Crossrail Project.

The 42km of new track underneath central London enables up to 24 trains per hour in each direction, with a top speed of 62 miles per hour in the tunnels.

The vast, cathedral-like new stations have been built to handle large volumes of passengers, and they have been praised for their.

Likewise, the upgrade of most stations between Paddington and Reading has enabled step-free access

from street to platform, as well as creating safer and more visually appealing station environments.

November through running

November 2022 saw the first stage of 'through running', with trains from Reading and Heathrow directly running through to Abbey Wood in London's south east, via central London.

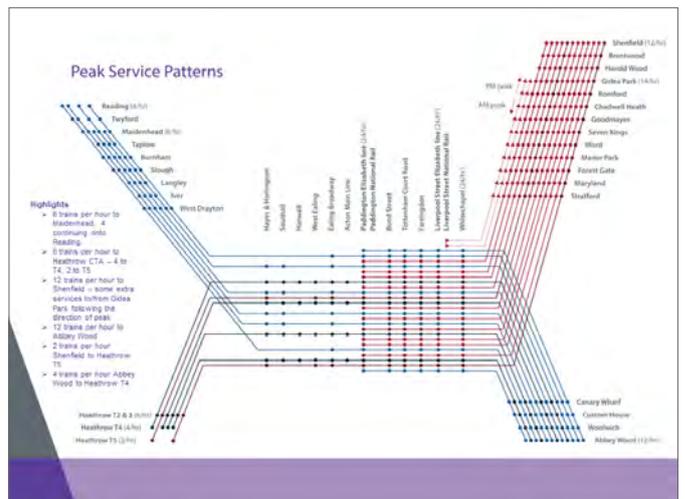
Already, this has had the effect of shrinking the south-east, offering the Thames Valley fast, direct services between destinations such as Heathrow and Canary Wharf, and Twyford and Liverpool Street. Through running has also created faster airport connections with direct access to Thameslink services from Farringdon to Gatwick and Luton Airports.



May timetable and the Thames Valley

The May 2023 is the last significant milestone in the Crossrail Project, and sees substantial service increases in the Thames Valley, including:

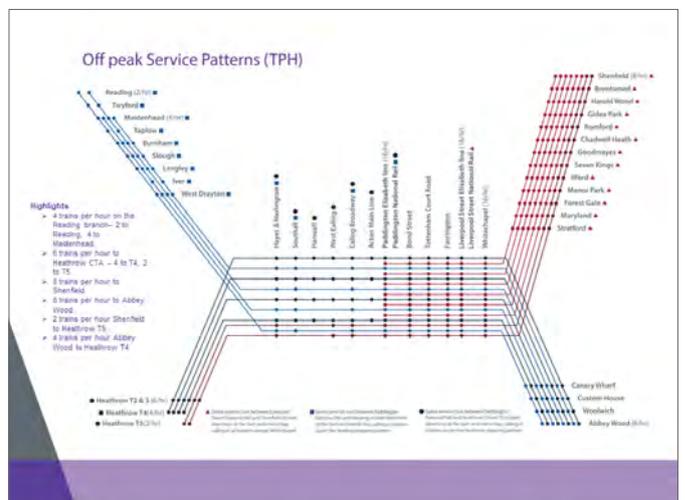
- Direct service between Heathrow and Shenfield, Essex.
- Six trains per hour between central London and Heathrow, all day long.
- Up to six trains per hour to Maidenhead in the peaks, with four extending to Reading.
- Reduced journey times with faster services into London.



The Elizabeth line and Great Western Railway

Since operating services on the west from 2017, TfL and MTR Elizabeth line have built strong links with Great Western Railway, which has offered a seamless customer journey, whether it be changing between services or using stations managed by either operator.

We’ve also worked closely on developing customer information, and our recent advertising campaign on exploring the west country using the Elizabeth line and Great Western Railway has been greatly received by customers. We look forward to continuing this strong partnership.



7.6 Transport for Wales Update



TfW passengers are starting to see real transformation with the largest investment in rail fleet in the history of the Wales and Borders network since its creation, resulting in the introduction of brand-new, modern trains. Significant milestones in 2023 have already been achieved, with some of our CAF Class 197 trains entering into service on the network, followed by the Stadler Class 231 train in south Wales and the Class 230 train on the borderlands line. We are progressively replacing our existing fleet with new, more modern trains as part of an £800m investment, with much improved passenger facilities and our new MkIV trains are also providing a step-change in capacity and quality on inter-city journeys between Cardiff -Holyhead and South Wales – Manchester.

Transport for Wales (TfW) continues to work closely with GWR, collaborating and attending our Regional Stakeholder Forums, Transport Liaison Group Meetings and the Joint Communications Board. These are key opportunities to share information, provide discussion and identify further ways of working closely together. Attendees at the TfW Regional Stakeholder

Forums and the Joint Communications Board include representatives of many organisations which are also strategic partners of GWR.

The TfW/GWR Stakeholder Collaboration Group, established last year, focuses on shared network growth opportunities, best practice and developing new ideas where TfW and GWR share routes and assets. We have been working closely in addressing the ongoing industrial action, major events and keeping stakeholders and elected representatives informed. This has included jointly hosting and presented drop-in sessions for MS and MPs at the Welsh Parliament and Westminster. TfW sponsored and attended the Swansea Pride Event 2022, alongside GWR, who also supported this event.

Collaboration has also been key when implementing rail replacement arrangements during blockades on shared routes. In early 2023 TfW and GWR showcased marketing destinations on platforms at Paddington, Cardiff, and Swansea, promoting tourism destinations along the South Wales Mainline from London.





7.7 Heathrow Express

Since 2018 GWR have run the operational aspects of Heathrow Express (HEX) under a management contract with Heathrow Airport. In June 2023 HEX will celebrate 25 years of service.

Operational fleet reliability has continued to see improvements throughout 2022 with gains centred on delivering upgraded versions of the European Train Control System (ETCS) software. Both GWR and HEX teams are successfully working collaboratively to implement further software upgrades to drive fleet reliability improvements that will eliminate 90% of the ETCS software faults that will in turn positively impact HEX's fleet performance

HEX meanwhile continue to manage the marketing, customer service and ticketing. Again, new digital partnerships are transforming the distribution pipeline into a global reach. Most significantly, the customer demographic has changed since the pandemic with leisure and family bookings overtaking the traditional business passengers, which is a trend set to continue throughout 2023.

Since the start of 2023, passenger numbers have surged to a daily peak at 19,000 during the

Easter 2023 period as wider Heathrow Airport traffic continues to increase. New and innovative features were launched, such as Fast Track security for departing Business First passengers, further enhancing the 'Paddington to Plane' departure journey.

Meanwhile, a HEX carriage has been wrapped with a 25 years celebration design, ready for June when the operator reaches 25 years of service. The customer journey is being further enhanced starting with Paddington Station. HEX ticket vending machines will undergo a vibrant refurbishment, while the signage and wayfinding will be more visible.

The brand continues to position itself as a premium experience offering 'speed, ease and comfort'. Finally, HEX has made further strategic collaborations with GWR around joint ticketing, with plans to roll this out to both rail and airline partners in the coming year.





7.9 Integrated Travel

Throughout 2022/23, we have worked to grow the agenda of integrating GWR's rail services with those of neighbouring modes including bus, walking and cycling. We work closely with local authorities, community rail partnerships, transport operators including bus operators and bike hire schemes and other key stakeholders to improve sustainable access to and from the railway.

Buses

We are working closely with a number of local authorities to develop and promote 'Bus Branch Lines'. This ensures a packaged approach in integrating buses and trains including timetables designed to connect, joint marketing strategies, 'Rail Link' branding on buses and bus stops, better announcements on trains and stations and ensuring those bus services are shown in the National Rail Journey planner. This year, new routes to Lynton & Lynmouth, Bude and Launceston were launched, capitalising on funding commitment by Devon County Council. Previously launched routes are showing promising signs of growth – for example the Totnes to Salcombe service has seen growth of 35% since the relaunched timetable and marketing campaign took effect. Since it started serving the railway station, the Okehampton to Tavistock bus has seen ridership increase by 68%.

Partnership working with Cornwall Council has seen pedestrian wayfinding improved at many stations, showing customers the way between railway platforms and bus stops. We will continue to expand this work next year. GWR is proud to be part of the Transport for Cornwall revolution and we are looking forward to expanding the 'Bus Branch Line' package to several routes in the Duchy.

Our relationship with Stagecoach has strengthened with developments in several areas of the GWR network this year. A close partnership with Stagecoach West has seen jointly branded buses and bus stops launched in Cheltenham advertising service D which links the railway station with the town centre and racecourse. In Devon, we are jointly developing plans to better market the Okehampton to Bude 'Rail Link' service, Exeter cross-city 4/4A service and unveil branded buses on the Barnstaple to

Combe Martin 'Rail Link' service. In addition, we are working together on how to provide better bus connections at Ivybridge station and promote onward buses in Torbay using Paignton as the railhead.

During October, we held our annual Regional Bus Forums, which brought together rail operators, bus operators and local authorities. The forums allow us to jointly share frustration, best practice and insight to drive future improvements. We are looking forward to similar events this year. Severnside Community Rail Partnership took a lead in organising their own monthly forum which has really helped to solve challenges and develop integration for which we're very grateful.

In Wiltshire, the local authority's innovative 'Demand Response' bus service will soon be serving Bedwyn, Pewsey and Hungerford stations. We have been working as one to ensure these services are promoted at the stations. Vehicles are also wearing the 'Rail Link' branding successfully re-introduced by GWR as a neutral railway identity since 2021. Our relationship with Wiltshire Council has enabled a raft of 'on the ground' improvements to be delivered, including wayfinding between bus and rail at 6 locations, new drop-kerbs on roads near stations to improve access and development work on a 'Bus Branch Line' between Chippenham and Castle Combe.

The DfT's £2 bus fare initiative has been well-received across our network. GWR responded by advertising the scheme on social media channels and at stations, extolling the virtues of how cheap it was to get to and from the station. We have responded to the various extensions of the schemes by updating marketing as required.

The foundations of a new partnership with First Bus were also set this year which will start to bear fruit in the coming months. Look out for partnership working in Cornwall, Dorset and Berkshire in particular.

We've been pleased to support a number of improvements through our Community Fund – including new bus shelters with real time information screens, delivered by local authorities, at a number of our stations.



JOINTLY BRANDED STAGECOACH BUSES IN CHELTENHAM, WITH FILMING TAKING PLACE FOR A SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERT.



BETTER ADVERTISING OF THE CHIPPENHAM TO CASTLE COMBE SERVICE AS PART OF AN ONGOING PROJECT TO IMPROVE THE LINK.



NEW WAYFINDING SIGNAGE INSTALLED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CORNWALL COUNCIL



THE LAUNCH OF THE DEVON & CORNWALL RAIL PARTNERSHIPS VIDEO SERIES, SHOWCASING DAYS OUT BY TRAIN AND BUS ACROSS THE TWO COUNTIES.



Days out by bus and train videos

A suite of 'days out by bus and train' videos have been developed by the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership and meet our strategic objective to encourage multi-modal leisure journeys. You can watch the videos by clicking above

Over the winter months, we partnered with local charities to hold a number of 'Chatty Bus' events. These were multi-faceted events where we engaged with local communities to understand some of the issues faced around transport access and how using local transport networks can be a good way of tackling social issues such as loneliness. The events also enabled GWR to promote multi-modal days out as a cheap way of getting out and improving mental health.



'CHATTY BUS' OUTSIDE BARNSTAPLE LIBRARY

Cycling

With the ongoing challenge of meeting customer expectations for on-board bike storage, we have worked hard to improve the offer of 'turn up and go' bike hire at our stations.

In Exeter, a new partnership with Co-Bikes has seen e-Bike hire promoted across the city, with a fleet of branded bikes pedalling across the city selling the prospect of cycling to the station and catching a train. We are working with Co-Bikes to further expand the network to other areas of Devon.

We have also teamed up with Beryl Bikes who operate a similar scheme in Plymouth and Cornwall to support the addition of hire docks near our stations. The coming year will see joint promotional activity to encourage passengers to hire a bike rather than bring their own.

Collaboration with South Western Railway to undertake similar development at our jointly-served stations including Salisbury, Southampton and Portsmouth will begin to provide for customers as the next year progresses.



LAUNCH OF OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH CO-BIKES

Schemes to improve the cycle parking at Severn Beach, Avonmouth and Truro were completed, funded by the DfT's 'Cycle Rail' fund. These were enabled by previous improvements to station CCTV which were funded jointly by GWR, Community Rail Partnerships and relevant local authorities. We have also improved cycle parking at Bristol Parkway and added accessible facilities for non-standard cycles at Cheltenham Spa.

Walking & Wayfinding

Close working with the Thames Path National Trail and Visit Thames began to improve visibility of the Thames Path to rail passengers. GWR has sponsored improved wayfinding between the path and Marlow station and has updated on-train announcements to advise passengers of the interchange. We have also wrapped a bus shelter in Henley-on-Thames to point the way and we are about to release our promotional video showing a fun-packed family day out to the path, reached by GWR.

We teamed up with Wiltshire Council to improve wayfinding signage in many locations, in particular those locations where railway station and buses weren't close together. Similar schemes were also delivered in Cornwall and North Somerset.

A number of GWR Community Fund grants brought forward community-led improvements to wayfinding from our stations.

We have been seeking the inclusion of sustainable onward travel as a 'hygiene factor' in our station wayfinding. Developments have seen the inclusion of bike hire as a given travel option on our information along with the use of QR codes to provide sign posting to up to date and accurate public transport information on wayfinding signs.



A GWR ADVENTURE TO THE THAMES PATH NATIONAL TRAIL



E-BIKE HIRE INCLUDED AS STANDARD ON STATION WAYFINDING SIGNS



WE WERE PLEASED TO VISIT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND THE VISIT EXMOOR EVENT TO HELP PROMOTE THE 'BUS BRANCH LINE'

