

Annual Customer & Stakeholder Report 2024/25



View Report





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.



GWRHelp



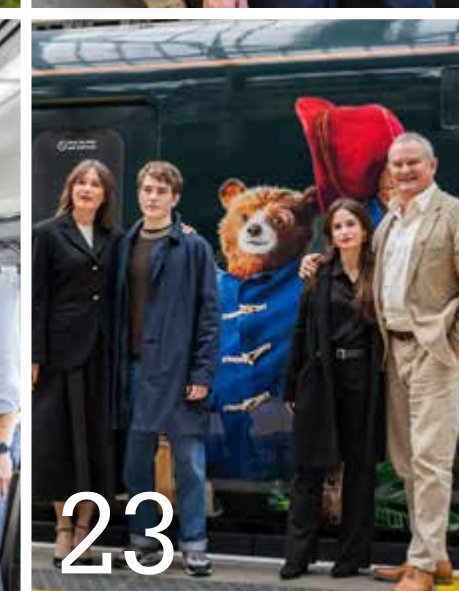
GWRUK



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1.0 Updates

Welcome to our Annual Customer and Stakeholder Report for 2024-25, a comprehensive look at a year of significant change and progress at GWR and in the rail industry more widely. This report is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to you, our customers and stakeholders, as we connect communities across the breadth of our network. Inside, you will find details on our key initiatives, operational improvements, and marketing successes. We are proud to highlight the tangible steps we are taking - from enhancing punctuality and customer satisfaction to strengthening community ties and investing in our fleet - to create a better railway for everyone.

Mark Hopwood, Managing Director, GWR



Marcus Jones, Route Director, Network Rail



Lord Faulkner, Chair of Advisory Board, GWR





Mark Hopwood CBE,
Managing Director, GWR

The last year has seen substantial change both for the rail industry as a whole and here at GWR. The new Government’s landmark manifesto promise to bring train companies back into public ownership – reversing decades of private ownership in the railways – became law in November 2024. While it will still be some time yet before Great British Railways (GBR) is set up in full, we know GWR will be renationalised at some point prior to our contract expiring in 2028.

Ahead of that transition, we continue to collaborate very closely with Marcus Jones and his team at Network Rail Western. Aligning our two organisations where possible is vital as we know bringing track and train together isn’t just lip service, but something that can deliver better performance and smoother journeys for our customers. Punctuality is our top priority, we have seen improvement over the last year as we set out in this report, and we collectively know there is more to do to ensure our

passengers get to where they need to be on time.

We have had a particular challenge with services on Sundays over the last year, especially in the run-up to Christmas, and we want to work closely with the Department for Transport (DfT), colleagues and trade unions to find a lasting resolution.

The Government’s focus rightly remains on reducing the level of taxpayer subsidy required for the industry at large, including for GWR. That means more collaboration as I mentioned above but also keeping costs as low as possible, and balancing spending and investment. However working with partners across our network we continue to see those improvements come to the fore – be that the new station at Ashley Down, new car parking at Castle Cary, or the new forecourt and underpass at Gloucester. These attract more people to rail, increase modal shift, and generate more revenue for the taxpayer.



Here at GWR I was very pleased that we were able to announce the addition of 26 Class 175 trains to our fleet, working with the DfT and Angel Trains. The 175s – most recently in service with our colleagues at Transport for Wales – will operate in Devon & Cornwall, which allows us to bring them into service as quickly as possible, and they will help to improve performance and resilience across our entire network. They will also ultimately enable us to phase out our Castle Class trains which have served the network brilliantly for nearly 50 years but are becoming ever more expensive to maintain and secure spare parts for.

The same thinking applies too to our regional diesel trains, though not quite as old as the Castle Class, and this year our work has really started in earnest as we think about what’s needed – both from an infrastructure point of view, but also the train itself – as those trains approach the end of usable life without requiring huge subsidy. This builds on the progress of our fast-charge battery train trial

on the Greenford branch in West London, and I’m pleased so many partners have had the opportunity to visit the train which really does stand out from an innovation point of view on the UK rail network.

I want to conclude by reaffirming our commitment to working in partnership with you – our stakeholders and representatives of the communities we serve. That includes open and honest conversations about the future, our challenges and exciting opportunities alike. I’ve very much enjoyed meeting many of you over the last 12 months and know I will see more of you out and about as we head towards 2026 too – thank you for your continued support, help, and advice.

Mark Hopwood



Marcus Jones, Route Director,
Network Rail – Western

As we look back on the first year of our five-year funding cycle, I'm so proud of what we've achieved across the Western route despite the challenges we've faced. We've opened new stations, made our stations more accessible to passengers, and put a plan in place to improve train performance that is already delivering. I'm pleased to say that as a result of our work, we've reduced year on year delay minutes across the route by 20%. You can read further about the plan on page 28.

In 2023, we opened the first new station in Bristol in a century at Portway Park and Ride as part of the MetroWest programme. Only a year later in September 2024, Ashley Down became the second new station in the city, in preparation for the reintroduction of passenger services to the Henbury line. We've also continued our wider regeneration in the Bristol area with the completion of the Eastern entrance at Temple Meads, ready for the new University of Bristol campus when it opens.

Working with Cornwall Council and GWR, we're now one step closer to the enhanced coast-to-coast benefits between Falmouth and Newquay, due to be delivered through the Mid Cornwall Metro. We've already restored the second platform at Newquay station and built a new passing loop for trains to pass each other at Goss Moor to accommodate the additional services. Our work will also improve train reliability across Cornwall.

We've continued to improve accessibility at our stations across the route, making Dawlish and Theale stations fully accessible for the first time. Work on St Erth and Tilehurst stations continue with both

stations due to benefit from new lifts this summer. We've also had to overcome some big challenges – in Oxford we're replacing the railway bridge over a key artery into the city which has been closed to allow us to complete our work. The Rail Minister came to Oxford earlier this year to hear about the impact of the road closure directly from residents and businesses. To focus on reopening the road as soon as possible we've brought in a new team and reviewed our programme of work. We're now holding monthly sessions to update residents and businesses on our progress. Once complete, passengers in Oxford will benefit from a bigger and better station, additional rail capacity with East West Rail, as well as an improved and safer road layout outside the station.

Looking forward to the next financial year, our work to build Old Oak Common station continues - a new transport superhub for the British rail network, linking HS2 services with the rest of London's transport network. Once operational, the station will offer a brand new interchange in west London allowing passengers to access services without travelling into central London.

With GBR around the corner, we're also looking at how we can work closer with our train operator colleagues to improve services for our passengers. We've recently put the control centre for GWR and Network Rail under combined leadership, helping us ensure the network is running smoothly. 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 our everyday lives.





Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Chair of GWR Advisory Board

The two hundredth anniversary of the opening of the world’s first passenger railway between Stockton and Darlington in 1825 is rightly being celebrated in 2025 throughout Great Britain and Northern Ireland under the Railway 200 brand. It allows us all to celebrate just how much railways have contributed to the nation’s happiness, health and prosperity.

Railways have long played a vital role in shaping regional economies and communities, bringing a sense of community cohesion as they transport people from A to B. They enable people to get to work, to school, to see friends and family, to go shopping, to go on holiday.

Just eight years after the start of services on the Stockton and Darlington railway the original Great Western Railway was founded. It received its enabling Act of Parliament 190 years ago in 1835, and ran its first services in 1838. For virtually the whole time since, the GWR has retained a distinct identity. It was the only major railway company that emerged largely unaltered following the creation of the “Big Four” companies established under the Railways Act 1921.

Even in the nationalised railway created in 1948, there remained a recognisable Great Western presence thanks to the ingenuity of successive general managers who oversaw the operation of distinctive “chocolate and cream” passenger coaches on BR’s Western Region.

The Great Western brand was revived following privatisation in 1995 and relaunched as GWR in 2015, with the reintroduction of the green liveries that had been in existence between 1835 and 1947. The switch from First Great Western to Great Western Railway in 2015 had an almost immediate and positive impact on customer perceptions of their railway.

The company has commendably striven to bring the railway close to the communities it serves and encouraged people to feel ownership of “their” railway, eliciting that sense of pride amongst customers and those who work on the railway, with a real stake in its future.

A local brand with a strong regional identity strengthens community ties, builds trust, and creates the environment for more third-party funding where there is trust that local investment will benefit those locally. When local authorities and regional partners feel a genuine stake in their railway, they are far more inclined to support services and projects rather than relying solely on central national government funding.

This helps to leverage more funding for the railway, reduce taxpayer subsidy and increase passenger numbers.

Promoting those links and relationships is a central role for the GWR stakeholder advisory board which I have had the honour to chair since 2014. We provide guidance and counsel to railway leaders, and free from statutory or regulatory requirements we can really focus on the day-to-day issues and be a voice for the communities and industries that our membership is derived from.

As we return to a nationalised railway under the leadership of GBR, a strong regionalised structure will be vital to champion local accountability. This approach will ensure GBR earns and maintains the confidence of the communities it serves.

For the new system to succeed, three things are needed:

First, the GBR Bill should explicitly support regional governance to maintain local accountability and prevent decision-making from becoming over-centralised and keep decision-making visibly close to passengers.

Secondly the Bill should directly recognise the value of independent advisory bodies, similar to the GWR Advisory Board, to provide expert guidance and ensure communities have a voice in railway decisions.

And thirdly, while supporting an umbrella national brand that offers clear direction, the GBR Bill should explicitly allow for a measured number of six or seven distinct regional identities – perhaps with a hybrid model similar to Manchester’s Bee Network and Liverpool’s Merseyrail - to enhance customer engagement, marketing effectiveness and better attract third party investment.

It would be prudent for Government and the leadership of GBR to give full thought to the value of regional identities so the value and allure of rail can best be maximised – both to reduce taxpayer subsidy and grow passenger numbers through inspiring the customers of tomorrow.

There will be no better moment than now for us to create a new railway age, looking back on the achievements of the last 200 years but at the same anticipating the huge opportunities that lie ahead.

2.0

Delighting
our customers

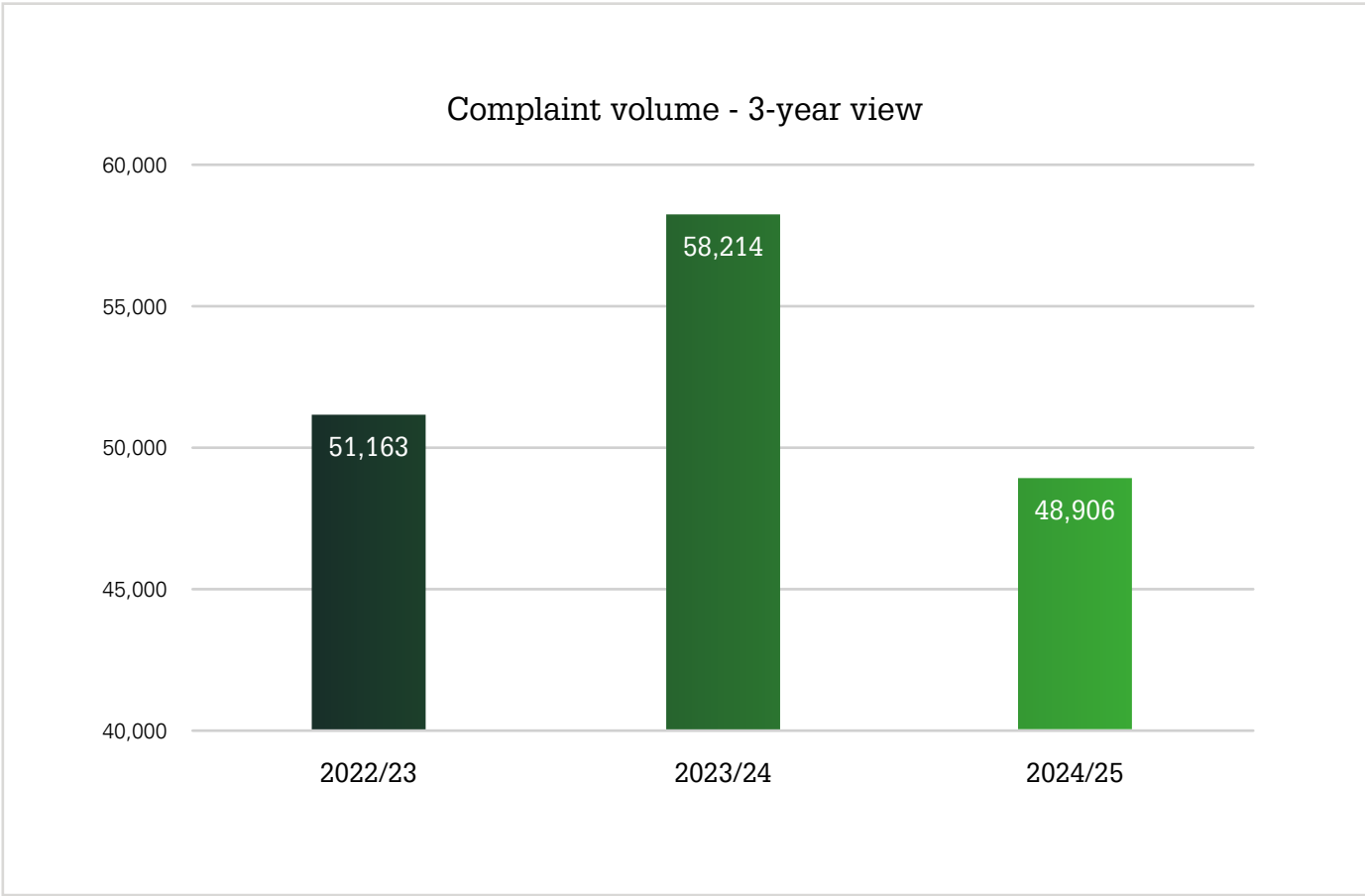
At GWR, our customers are at the heart of everything we do. We are deeply committed to delivering reliable, comfortable, and accessible journeys, continually striving to enhance every aspect of the travel experience. This section outlines our progress in understanding and responding to customer feedback, our efforts to ensure seamless travel for all, and our innovative approaches to marketing and engagement that bring the GWR brand to life. While we are proud of the significant strides made in reducing complaints and increasing satisfaction, we remain dedicated to continuous improvement, leveraging insights from direct feedback and strategic partnerships to ensure every journey with GWR is a smooth one.

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------|---|
| Customer correspondence | → | Marketing | → |
| What our customers said | → | Paddington in Peru | → |
| Progress in passenger assistance | → | GWR celebrates 175 years of Windsor & Eton Central | → |
| Ticket office opening hours | → | Poppies to Paddington | → |

Customer correspondence

Complaint Volume and Trends

In the 2024/25 financial year, we recorded 48,906 complaints, reflecting a significant 15.9% decrease from the previous year. This reduction indicates progress in addressing customer dissatisfaction across various categories.



Key Complaint Drivers

On-Board Capacity was the primary reason for complaints, with 15,247 cases (down by 2,017 from the prior year). This issue is often compounded by Train Service Performance (TSP) problems, such as cancellations leading to overcrowded subsequent services.

Train Service Performance (punctuality/reliability) ranked second with 7,705 complaints, showing a slight increase of 150 cases.

Most sub-categories saw a decline in complaint volumes, reflecting improved service delivery in several areas.

Top 5 Complaint Categories (Level 3)

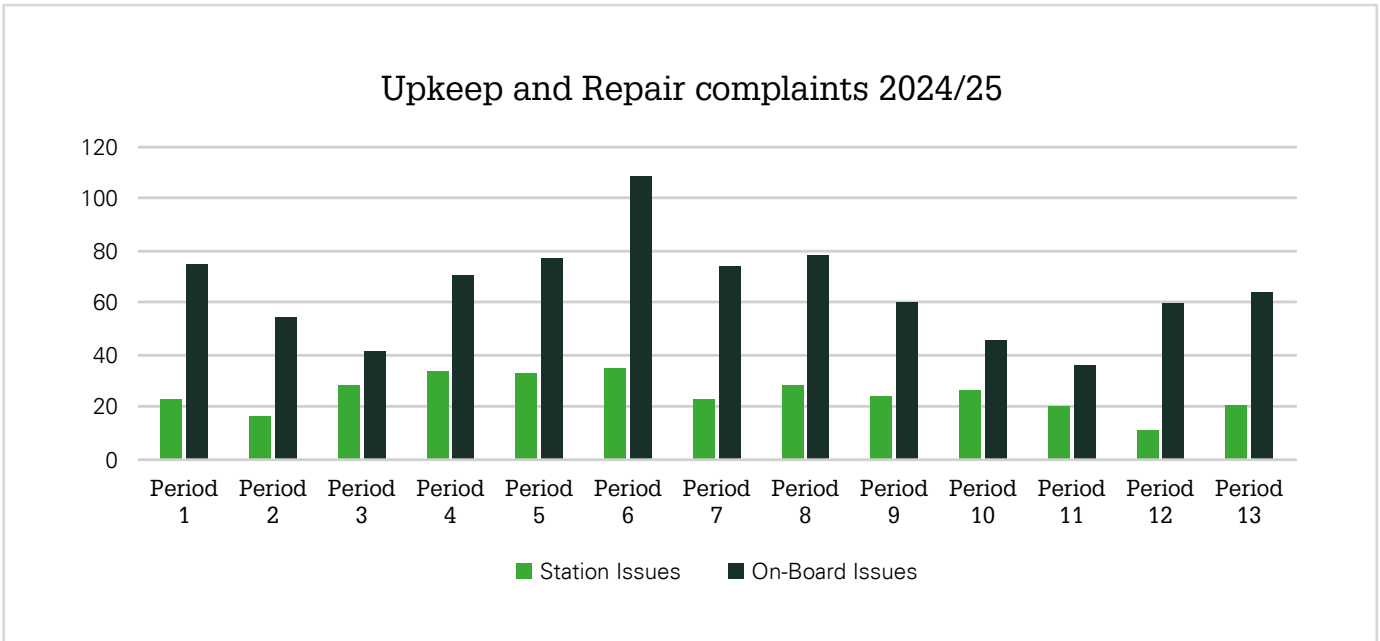
| | Top 5 - Level 3 categories | Total | change from previous year |
|---|------------------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|
| 1 | On Board - Capacity | 15,247 | -2,017 |
| 2 | On Board - Train Service Performance | 7,705 | +150 |
| 3 | Policy & Products - Delay Compensation schemes | 4,829 | -2137 |
| 4 | Policy & Products - Fares, Tickets & Refunds | 3,910 | -2,216 |
| 5 | At Station - Staff complaint | 2,017 | -280 |

Top 5 Detailed Complaint Categories (Level 4)

| | Top 5 - Level 4 categories | Total | change from previous year |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|
| 1 | On Board - Capacity - Reservations | 6,695 | -780 |
| 2 | On Board - Capacity - Crowded services | 6,655 | -268 |
| 3 | On Board - Train Service Performance - Cancelled Train | 4,974 | +695 |
| 4 | Policy & Products - Delay Compensation schemes - claim rejected | 2,008 | -1,446 |
| 5 | On Board - Train Service Performance - Repeat Poor Performance | 1,994 | -153 |

A total of 1,153 complaints were recorded under the Upkeep and Repair category:

- 73% (approximately 842 complaints) related to on-board issues, primarily:
 - ◇ Toilets (312 complaints)
 - ◇ Carriage Cleanliness (235 complaints)
 - ◇ Seats (165 complaints)
- 27% (approximately 311 complaints) related to station issues, primarily:
 - ◇ Toilets (140 complaints)
 - ◇ Lifts Not Working (80 complaints, up from previous years)
 - ◇ General Station Environment (53 complaints)



What our customers said

Despite challenges such as extreme weather (e.g., July heat and October/November storms), GWR maintained a stable Overall Customer Satisfaction score of 89%, fluctuating between 88% and 90% across rail periods.

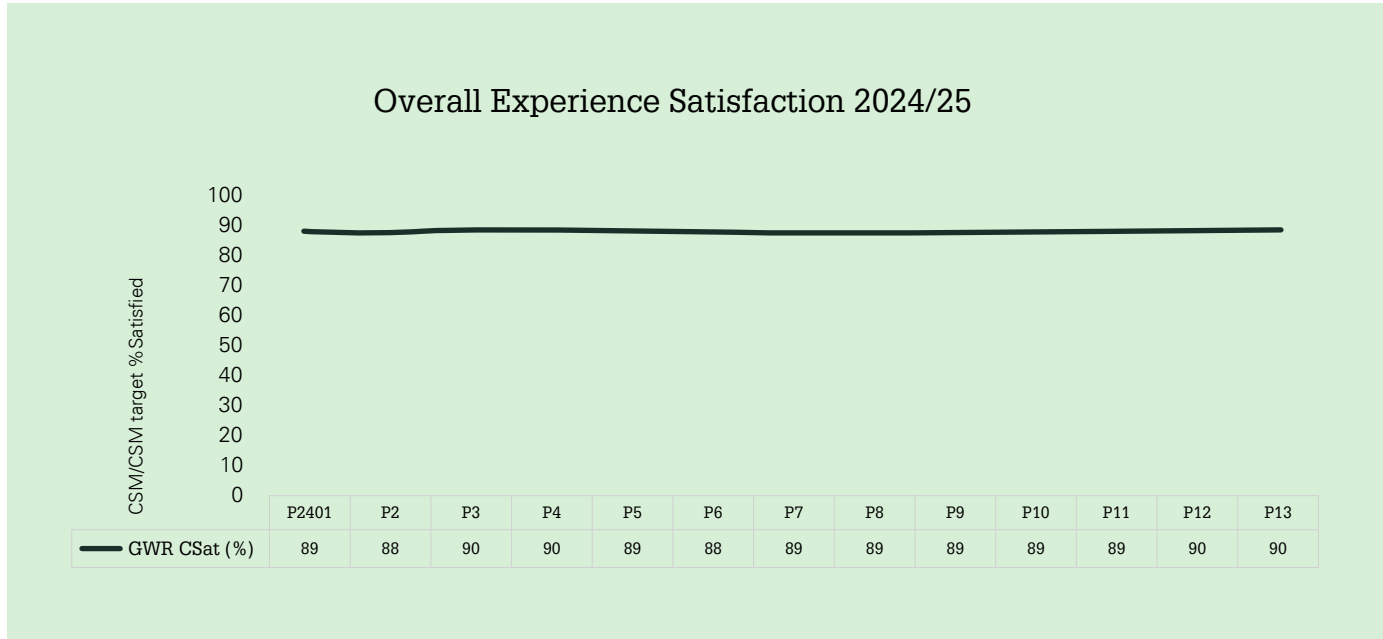
Key highlights:

- Customer Service Scores:
 - ◇ 91% satisfaction at stations
 - ◇ 94% satisfaction on-board
- Punctuality remains a critical factor, especially for the growing leisure travel market.

Infrastructure improvements under Network Rail’s Project Brunel - focusing on improving infrastructure in the Thames Valley – have driven a 6% year-on-year improvement in punctuality satisfaction in GWR’s East region, supporting broader network resilience.

With more and more customers travelling for leisure, our research analysis continues to show punctuality forms a major part of how our customers evaluate the service we provide. Over the last few years, we have also seen a rise in the importance of the onboard experience, unsurprising in some respects, as this is where our customers spend most of their time with us and where we have the opportunity to bring the GWR brand to life for our customers.

In the chart, the dark green line shows the Overall Customer Satisfaction score trend line for the year. This trend is echoed in the Rail Delivery Group’s Wavelength customer Satisfaction survey data.



Progress in passenger assistance

At GWR, we believe everyone deserves a seamless and confident travel experience. In 2024/25, our commitment to you saw us manage 312,795 assistance requests, a considerable increase that underscores the growing trust in our service. We're particularly focused on making unbooked requests as smooth as possible, with 106,280 handled last year.

Here's how we're making a difference for you:

- **High Satisfaction, Clear Insights:** We're proud of our 91% satisfaction rate for Passenger Assistance, which we consistently check through independent research, but know there is always more to do. Your feedback helps us to continually refine our service and pinpoint areas for improvement and we look forward to the ORR's industry-wide review.
- **Empowering Travel:** Our successful 'Try a Train' sessions welcomed 5,134 individuals, empowering them with the knowledge and confidence to navigate rail travel and Passenger Assist services. We're committed to continuing these valuable sessions.
- **Shaped by Your Experience:** Our Customer Accessibility Panel is at the heart of our inclusivity efforts. Meeting monthly, panel members provide vital advice on everything from new station designs to our upcoming disability awareness training program, ensuring your perspective guides our improvements.



Watch InFocus
College "Try a Train"

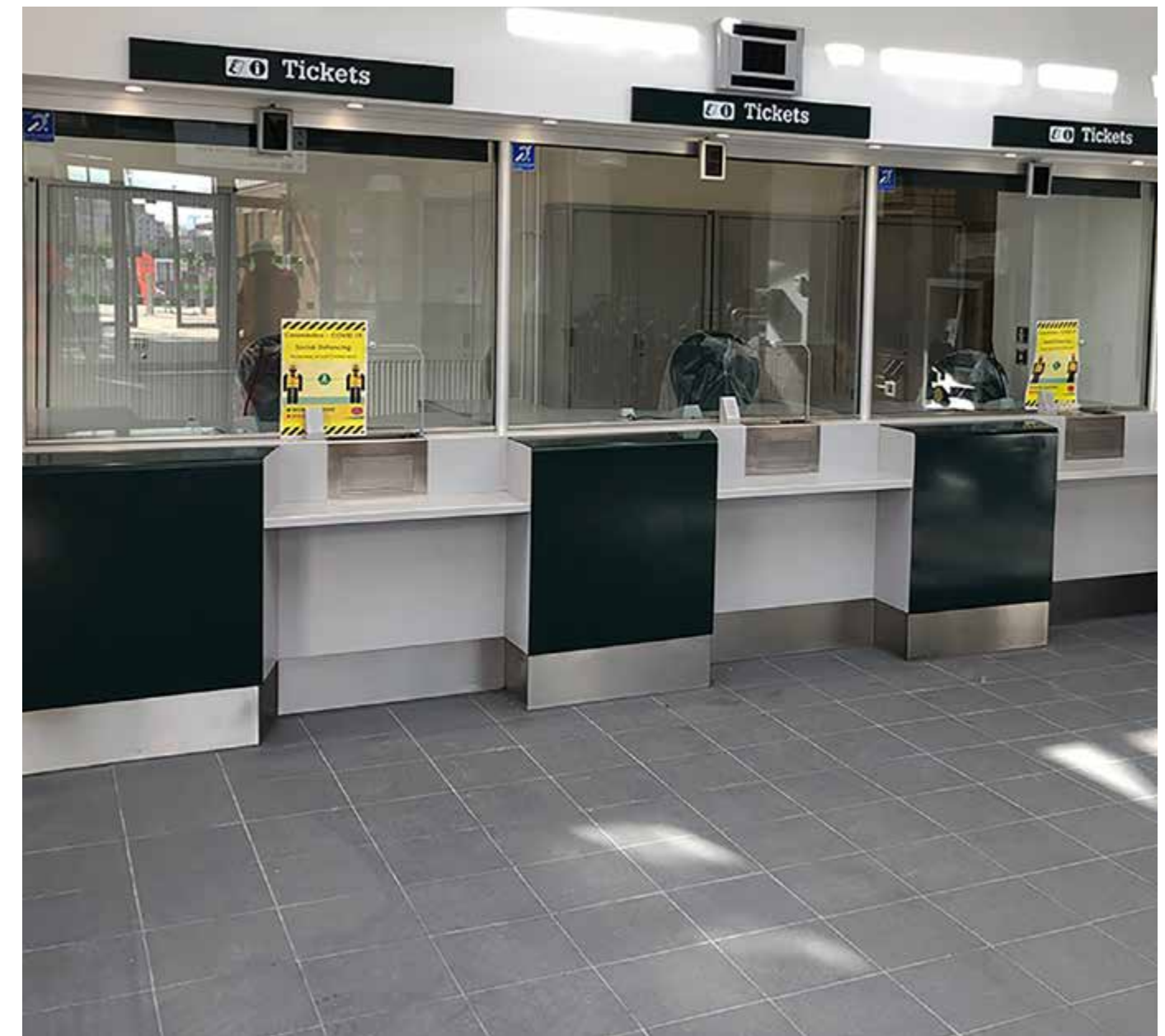


- **Investing in Your Stations:** We're continuously working to upgrade our infrastructure:
 - ◇ The new Ashley Down station is fully accessible.
 - ◇ Theale and Farnborough North now feature new lift bridges, opening up accessible travel for many more passengers.
 - ◇ We're trialling 'Welcome Points' across the industry, aiming to provide you with clearer, more convenient assistance upon arrival at our stations.

For the next 12 months, our priority is to strengthen our Passenger Assistance service, ensuring it remains highly reliable and ready to meet the increasing demand.

Ticket office opening hours

During the 2024/25 financial year, GWR Ticket Offices achieved a compliance measurement of 90.0%. This measurement, Moving Annual Average (MAA), reflects the performance across the thirteen four-week financial periods within that year. It represents the actual time spent open (measured in hours and minutes) compared to the scheduled opening hours across all stations.



Marketing

For 2024/25, our marketing strategy successfully strengthened the GWR brand and drove significant revenue growth. Through proven brand campaigns and strategic leisure activities, we inspired discretionary travellers and cultivated a highly positive view of rail travel.

The iconic Famous Five campaigns returned, motivating leisure travel and highlighting our diverse destinations. This was powerfully supported by key product initiatives like the Long Weekender and attractive off-peak fare promotions. Throughout the year, performance campaigns consistently converted interest into sales, encouraging more people to choose GWR for their journeys.

Brand Marketing

Throughout the year, marketing continued to build brand strength through emotive campaigns featuring The Famous Five. These campaigns delivered a strong performance across key metrics such as awareness and consideration, while also driving revenue generation to reduce net subsidy.

Summer 2024 saw one of the strongest summer brand campaign performances in recent years. The “Five Get There First” advertisement delivered a return on investment (ROI) of £3.50 for every pound spent, achieving some of the highest awareness levels ever seen. This included 99% prompted awareness and 77% spontaneous awareness of the GWR brand.

In March, we launched our latest brand leisure campaign, “Five and the Thrilling Engagement.” In this campaign, The Famous Five, along with GWR customer host Angie, race across the GWR network to return a lost engagement ring just in time for a big proposal!

The film, supported by illustrations on billboards and in newspapers, showcases some of the region’s most iconic and beautiful locations, from the Eden Project in Cornwall, to boating on the Thames, surfing on the Welsh coast, and the Royal Albert Hall in London. The campaign was planned to reach 98% of our ABC1 target audience (those in professional, managerial, or administrative roles) an average of 12 times across multiple channels throughout the campaign period, that’s over 10 million people!

Tactical and Product Marketing

Over the past year, GWR’s large-scale brand leisure campaigns have been supported by a variety of tactical and product marketing activities. These initiatives aim to leverage the awareness and excitement generated by the brand campaigns to drive incremental ticket sales and revenue growth.



Examples include:

The Great GWR Getaway Sale

Following the success of last year’s sale, GWR launched another 7-day Great Getaway Sale in January 2025 to promote leisure travel during a quieter time of year. This campaign performed well, achieving a ROI of 3.9:1 and generating over 47 million impressions among our ABC1 target audience throughout the sale period.

Long Weekender ticket

In the summer of 2024, the Long Weekender ticket expanded to include hundreds more route combinations. This allowed customers to maximise their long

weekends with flexible, anytime travel options outbound on a Friday or Saturday, returning on a Monday to many more destinations across the GWR network.

Pullman Dining

With fresh seasonal menus launched twice a year, we focused on an exciting and eye-catching approach to promote the menu and to increase awareness of our Pullman Dining offering; using video and image content to give audiences a real taste of the experience.



Pay-as-you-Go

GWR continued efforts to support and promote the ease and speed of the pay-as-you-go proposition in Bristol and Cornwall. In March, we introduced a 10% discount promotion to drive increased frequency and greater uptake of the PAYG product amongst customers in those regions.

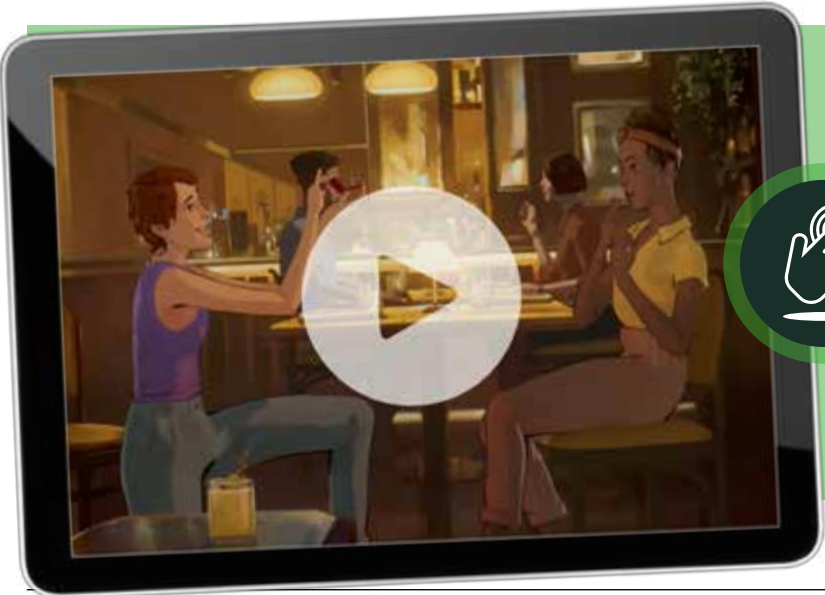
Regional Marketing


Regional marketing activities ran throughout the year, supporting broader awareness campaigns and stimulating travel at local and regional levels by collaborating with partners to maximise opportunities.

Through a seasonal “What’s On” campaign calendar across the regions, awareness of great value fares and offers was generated, working with tourism partners to highlight our unique destinations, events and attractions to customers.

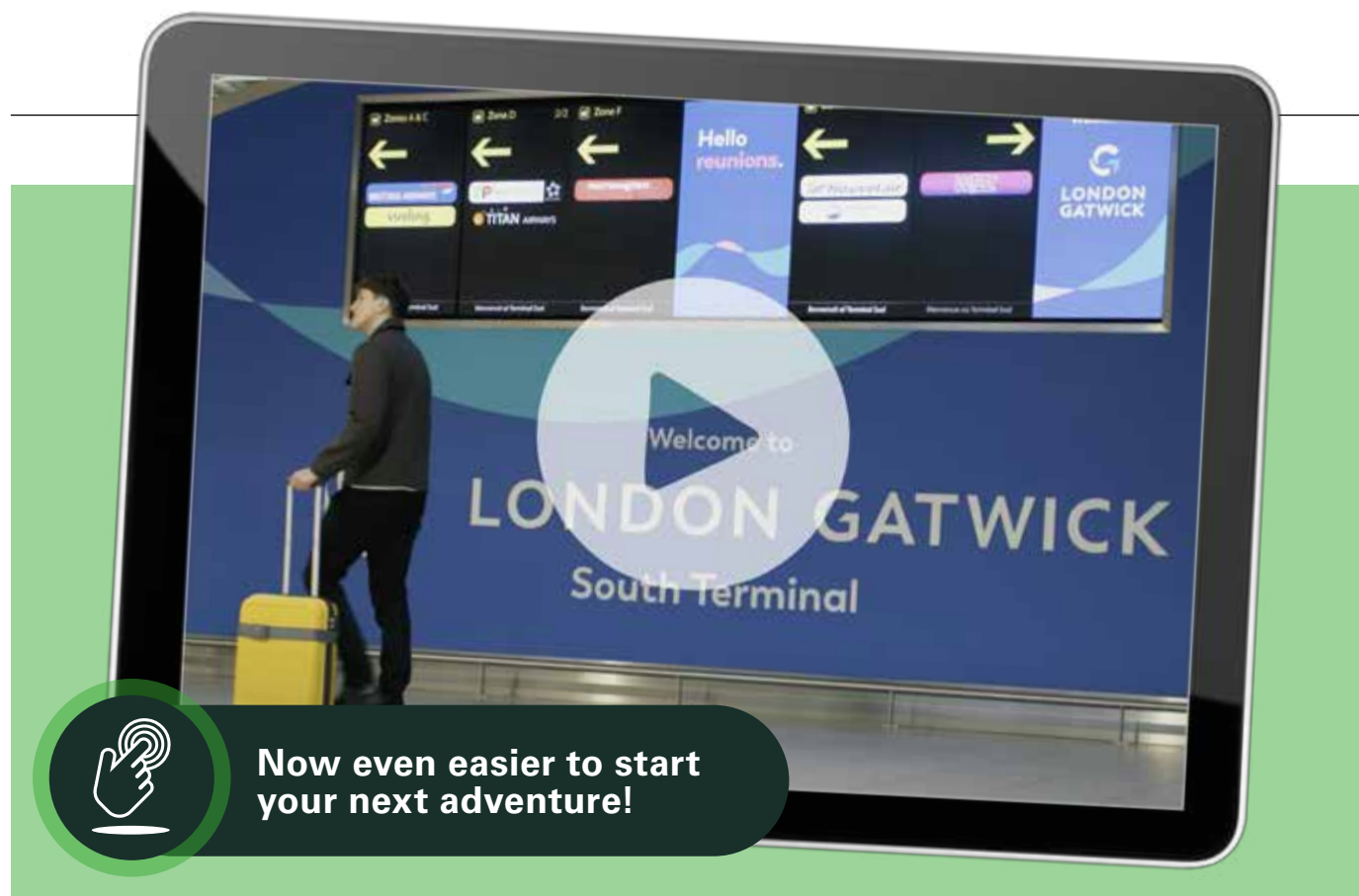
Close collaboration with our Destination Marketing Organisation partners led to the joint promotion of the benefits of travelling by train to and within those regions, raising awareness of our fares and products in a locally relevant way. Our partners included Visit West, Visit Wales, Visit Cornwall, Visit Oxfordshire, Visit Exeter and many more.







Watch Five and the Thrilling Engagement!



Paddington in Peru Express unveiled

Excitement filled London Paddington station in October 2025 as stars from the upcoming film, *Paddington in Peru*, unveiled a special GWR Intercity Express Train featuring new livery inspired by the eagerly awaited movie.

The Brown family themselves – Hugh Bonneville (Mr Brown), Emily Mortimer (Mrs Brown), Madeleine Harris (Judy Brown), and Samuel Joslin (Jonathan Brown) – stepped off the newly-decorated *Paddington in Peru Express* (IET 802106) for a special photo opportunity. Following the unveiling, the cast, joined by producer Rosie Alison and director Dougal Wilson, re-boarded the train for its inaugural journey to Newbury, the birthplace of *Paddington*'s beloved creator, Michael Bond.

Onboard, the stars enjoyed a special Pullman tea, complete with *Paddington*'s favourite marmalade sandwiches, mingling with guests and GWR staff who feature in the film.

Amanda Burns, GWR Sales and Marketing Director, expressed the company's pride: "We're incredibly proud of our long association with the world's most instantly-recognisable and adorable bear and we hope our customers will enjoy travelling on our new *Paddington in Peru Express*... We might not travel as far as Peru, but you might just find the *Paddington in Peru Express* travelling to the likes of Penzance, Plymouth and Pershore!"

The special Pullman tea served during the journey was crafted with the help of *The Newt* in Somerset, featuring their own delicious Strawberry and Rose Petal preserve alongside other sweet treats.

Integrated Transport Marketing

A dedicated integrated transport team focused on establishing key strategic partnerships with transport operators, spanning from bus services to airports. The opening of three new stations at Reading Green Park, Marsh Barton (Exeter) and Portway Park & Ride (Bristol) was promoted, and joint marketing campaigns were activated with both Bristol Airport and London Gatwick Airport.

Looking ahead to next year, our goal is to further enhance airport connections, particularly with Bristol, Gatwick, and Heathrow. By strengthening these connections, we aim to improve customer confidence and streamline the travel experience, making it more convenient and accessible for all.

Customer Relationship Management

The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategy focussed on deepening customer engagement and supporting revenue growth through more targeted, relevant communications. This included smarter segmentation and a stronger ability to anticipate behaviour.

For example, our campaigns aimed at lapsed customers now identify early shifts in booking habits, allowing us to re-engage customers before they have fully lapsed.

We have also introduced geo-targeted travel inspiration tailored to customers' locations and potential travel destinations, making our communications more personal and actionable.

During periods of disruption, particularly due to the HS2 construction works, we strengthened our service communications by providing timely advice and reassurance to support customer confidence.

This year marked the launch of GWR Rewards, our new loyalty programme. This programme rewards members based on frequency and value of travel, offering instant benefits such as savings on train tickets, complimentary travel perks, and exclusive food and drink discounts.

The programme is designed to grow our direct customer base, encourage repeat travel, and deliver long-term revenue growth while building stronger emotional connections with the GWR brand.



GWR celebrates 175 years of Windsor & Eton Central station with Royal flair

On 8 October 2024, GWR marked the 175th anniversary of Windsor & Eton Central station's opening with a vibrant celebration featuring lookalikes of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, and Victorian gentry. Joined by the Mayors of Slough and Windsor and Maidenhead, the event honoured the station's historic role in connecting the Royal town to the rail network.

In the 1840s, GWR outpaced rival London & South Western Railway to open Windsor's first station on 8 October 1849, securing Queen Victoria's patronage. The competing Windsor & Riverside station followed on 1 December 1849 after delays. Designed with input from Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the Slough-to-Windsor branch line transformed the town's accessibility and legacy.

GWR Sales & Marketing Director Amanda Burns said, "Windsor & Eton Central is an iconic station, and we're proud of its rich heritage. We owe much to Brunel and all who have maintained this vital line, shaping Windsor's Royal status."

Windsor and Maidenhead Mayor Cllr Simon Bond noted, "This route is crucial for commuters and offers stunning views of Windsor Castle." Slough Mayor Cllr Balwinder Dhillon added, "The branch line remains a vital link for Slough commuters, as important today as 175 years ago."

Visit Windsor's Julia White highlighted the station's role in supporting tourism, with over 12 million annual visitors contributing £485 million to the local economy, driven by attractions like Windsor Castle and LEGOLAND Windsor Resort.



Poppies to Paddington GWR honours D-Day and RNLI in poignant Remembrance Day tribute

On 11 November 2024, we hosted our fifth annual Poppies to Paddington operation, a moving Armistice Day tribute at London Paddington's Platform 1 war memorial. A stunning display of 22,442 cascading poppy petals - recycled from past ceremonies - adorned the station's balconies, symbolising the service personnel under British command who died during D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. The event, marking the 80th anniversary of D-Day, also celebrated GWR's partnership with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) on its 200th anniversary of saving lives at sea.

In collaboration with The Veterans Charity, we coordinated 10 services, including the Night Riviera sleeper from Penzance for the first time, to carry hundreds of wreaths from 90 stations across its network. These wreaths, laid at the war memorial during a Service of Remembrance, included a unique knitted poppy wreath crafted by RNLI volunteer Gaynor Williams and her knitathon team. RNLI volunteers, many former service personnel, participated, with military veterans Simon Jeffery and Tony Rendle attending the Paddington service.

A highlight was the presence of Margot Billinge, daughter of D-Day hero Harry Billinge MBE, who passed away in 2022. Margot travelled from St Austell, Cornwall, to reunite with GWR's Intercity Express Train 802006, named in her father's honour in 2020, as it arrived at Paddington.

GWR Operations Director Richard Rowland said, "Partnering with the RNLI, welcoming Margot Billinge, and incorporating our Night Riviera made last year's Poppies to Paddington profoundly special."

RNLI Chief Executive Peter Sparkes added, "Joining Poppies to Paddington is a fitting tribute to our volunteers and crew, many with military ties, who have saved lives through two world wars and beyond. Our wreaths honour the RNLI's 200-year legacy."



The RNLI's wartime contributions—saving 5,332 lives during World War I and 6,376 in World War II—underscored its role, with both GWR and the RNLI having signed the Armed Forces Covenant in 2022 and 2023, respectively. This poignant ceremony reinforced GWR's commitment to remembrance, community, and honouring the sacrifices of past and present heroes.

3.0

Disciplined operations

At GWR, disciplined operations form the bedrock of delivering a reliable and efficient service. In 2024/25, we continued our unwavering focus on enhancing every aspect of our operational performance, working in close collaboration with Network Rail and our industry partners. This section outlines the significant progress made in improving punctuality and reducing cancellations, highlights our proactive approach to infrastructure challenges and incident response, and details our ongoing commitment to fleet reliability and capacity. Despite the complexities of increased demand, infrastructure demands, and external factors, our 'whole system' approach ensures we are constantly striving for more resilient and customer-focused operations across the GWR network.

Enhancing your journey



Performance update



GWR completes £10m train refurbishment



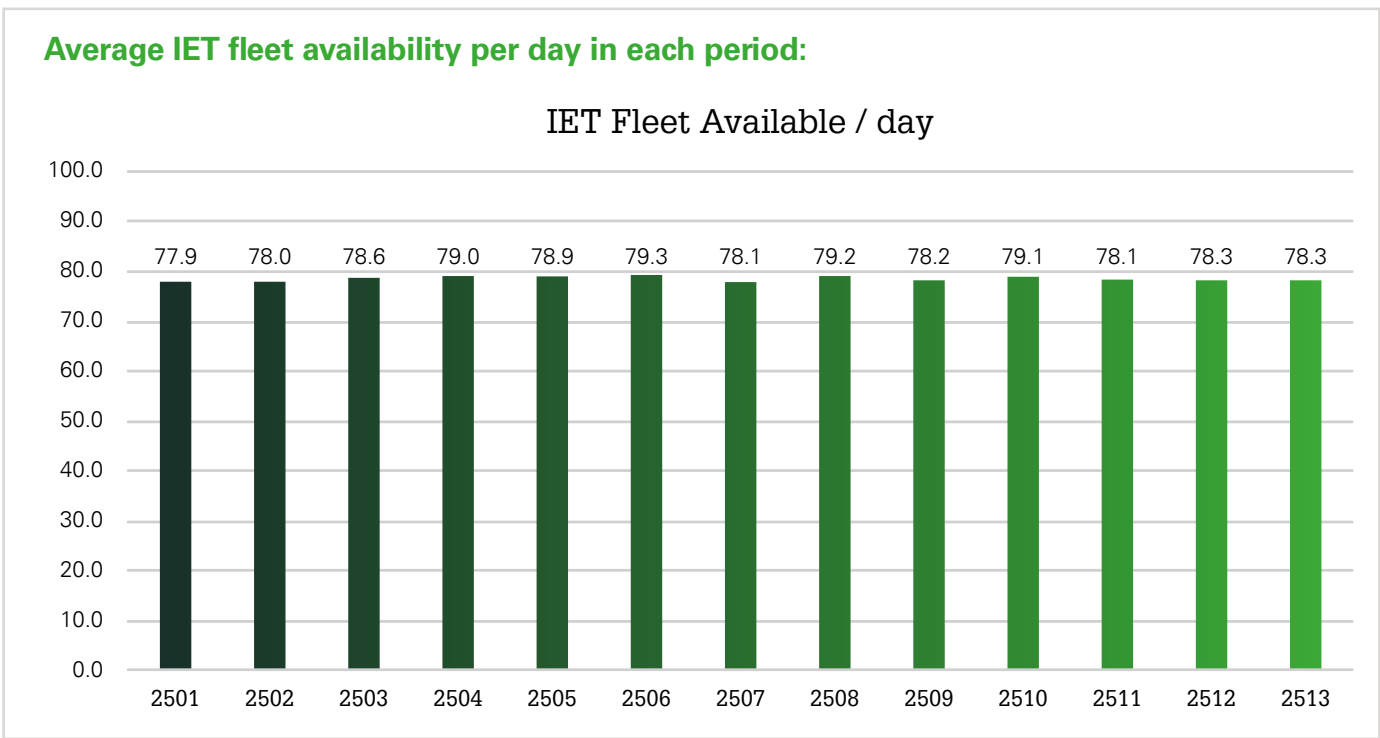
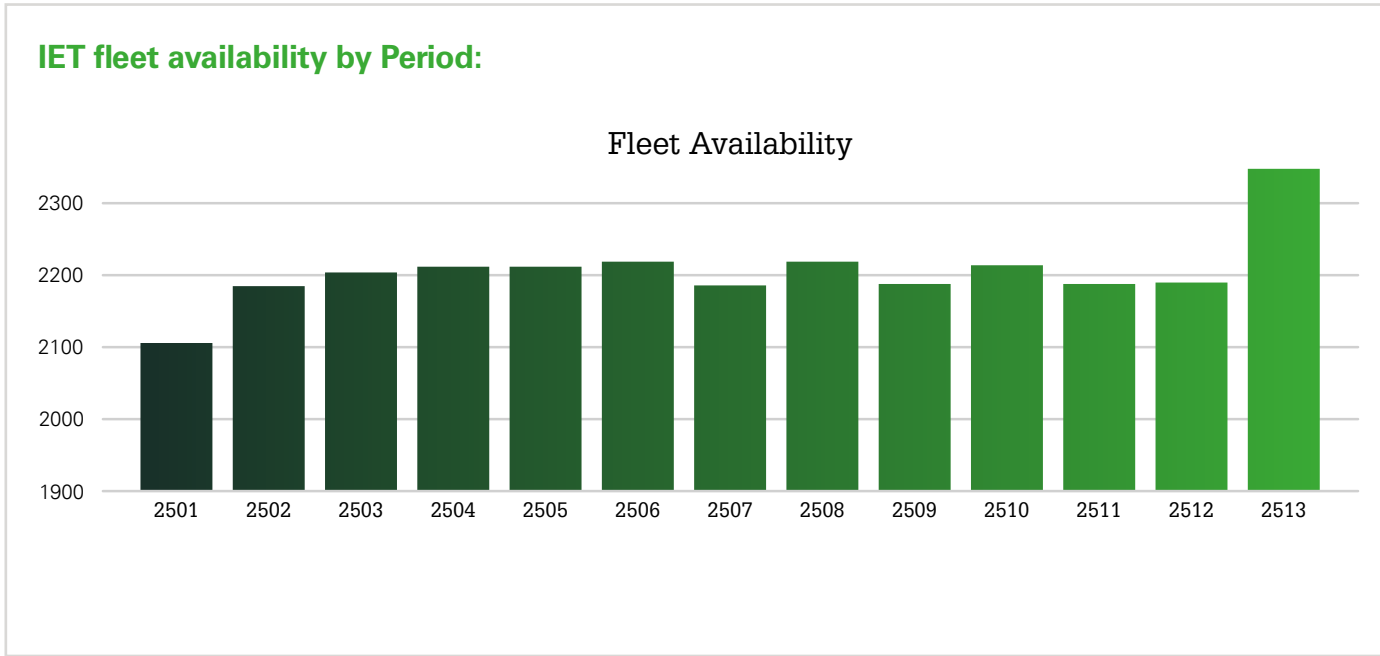
Enhancing your journey: GWR performance in 2024/25

2024/25 was a year of both progress and persistent effort across the GWR network, working closely with our partners at Network Rail. We saw the combined effects of increased train usage, infrastructure challenges, and severe weather impact journeys. Network Rail’s Project Brunel has helped stabilise performance in the Thames Valley, and we’ve significantly improved how we respond to incidents, working to get customers moving again faster.

Our focus remains firmly on a ‘whole system’ approach to performance. This means not just recovering quickly when things go wrong, but also tackling the root causes of delays and minimizing their ripple effect. We’re committed to delivering a reliable fleet, working hand-in-hand with our partners like Hitachi Rail to maximize the daily availability of our high-speed IET trains. Efforts are also underway to strengthen resilience in Devon

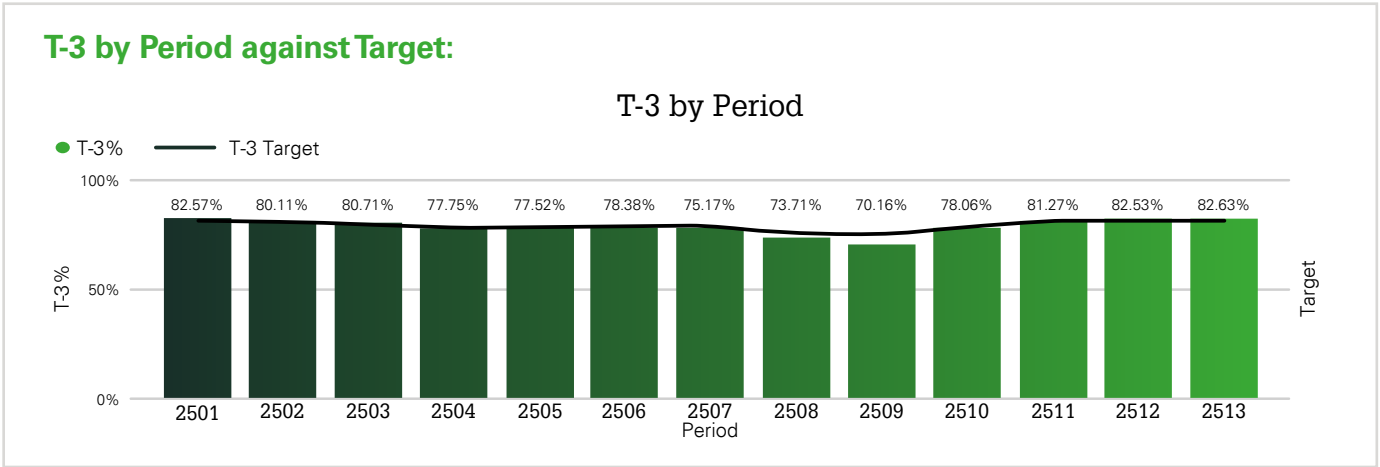
and Cornwall, which will benefit the entire network. We know train capacity is crucial to customers, and we’re actively working to improve this.

We’re also adapting to how customers travel. The shift to leisure travel after Covid has been maintained, and we continue to see steady growth in commuter journeys, especially from Tuesday to Thursday. Weekends also saw a strong upward trend in passenger numbers.



Performance Highlights

Punctuality Improved: In 2024/25, 78.56% of our services arrived within 3 minutes of schedule (at all stations), a 1.75% improvement on the previous year.



Reducing Cancellations: We cancelled 2.69% of services due to operator cause. Delivering consistent performance is vital to customer satisfaction. There’s always more to do, and we continue to collaborate closely with Network Rail and our industry partners to keep driving down delays and cancellations, ensuring customers experience the reliable service they rightly expect from GWR.



**Read the performance
improvement plan**



Performance Update from Marcus Jones, Route Director, Network Rail – Western

We've really started to see results over the course of the year and performance in the Thames Valley is improving. We've hit our targets, reducing our passenger delay by nearly 10 minutes for every 1000 miles.

As you might know, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) launched an investigation into the Wales & Western region as a result of poor performance in November 2023.

In February 2024, we launched our performance improvement plan with an aim to deliver lasting improvements in performance. Now one year on, I'm pleased to say we've made some real progress on getting more trains running on time whilst addressing infrastructure weaknesses in the Thames Valley.

We evaluated 18 months of data to identify key areas needing intervention when formulating the improvement plan and brought in additional resource to target the interventions need to turn things around. This has been at no additional cost to taxpayers, as we've redirected from our existing funding.

One of the areas we've been targeting is axle counters, which is the part of the signalling system used to detect where a train is on a section of track between two points. We brought in the original manufacturer and experts from across the country to get to the bottom of the issue. We've now got a retrofit which is improving their performance and we've installed 96% of the 777 axle counters on the approach to London Paddington, and removed 181 redundant insulated rail joints. We've also targeted priority vegetation sites, with 72% of them now cleared, meaning less encroachment onto the railway and less impact on our overhead wires.

Another key area we've been targeting is trespassing. We have to stop all trains in the vicinity when someone is trespassing on the railway, which can have a knock-on effect on trains across the network. We now have more welfare officers across 20 stations to try and reduce the number of trespass incidents.

Over Christmas, we delivered essential preparatory work for the new Old Oak Common station including drainage, track modification, and signalling work and installed new overhead power cable equipment. This work provided an immediate safety and reliability improvement in the Thames Valley.

This year, we'll be carrying out drainage refurbishment throughout Chipping Sodbury tunnel, located between Bristol Parkway and Swindon along the Great Western Main Line. We'll be lifting the track to prevent the pooling of water and moving signalling equipment out of the flood zone. We've already invested £5million in flood prevention at this location and this work will further improve resilience on this key route between London and South Wales and the South West. We're working closely with the Environment Agency, South Gloucestershire Council, and local farmers to develop a solution that fits the whole landscape.

Our region has seen some of the largest major network transformations in recent years, with even more change to come. Our work to improve performance continues and we'll be applying the lessons learnt to future projects such as the construction of Old Oak Common station.

GWR completes £10m train refurbishment to elevate customer experience

We completed a three-year, £10 million refurbishment of our Class 165 and 166 Turbo fleet, delivering a revitalized travel experience for customers across its regional and suburban network. The project, executed by Gemini Rail Services at Wolverton and involving 57 leased units from Angel Trains, was finalised in 2024.

The comprehensive interior overhaul included new flooring, repainted surfaces, repaired and reupholstered seating, and refreshed panels, luggage racks, and doors. Eight Class 166 units were also repainted in GWR's green livery, aligning them with the fleet's modern aesthetic. The refurbishment covered 20 two-car Class 165 trains, serving routes like Gloucester to Weymouth and Bristol local services, and 16 three-car Class 165 and 21 three-car Class 166 trains, operating on routes such as Cardiff to Portsmouth and Reading to Gatwick.

Starting in September 2021, each unit was refurbished over four to five weeks, ensuring minimal

disruption. GWR Engineering Director Dr Simon Green said, "This refresh demonstrates our commitment to enhancing customer journeys. We're thrilled with the results and grateful to Angel Trains and Gemini Rail Services for their collaborative efforts."

Gemini Rail Services' Sean Forster added, "This successful partnership with GWR and Angel Trains improves passenger experiences, and we look forward to future projects." Angel Trains' David Jordan noted, "These upgrades will make journeys more enjoyable, encouraging more people to choose rail in the South West."



4.0

Great people

At GWR, our greatest asset is our people. This section celebrates the dedication, talent, and community spirit of our colleagues, highlighting how their passion drives innovation, fosters inclusivity, and strengthens the bonds between GWR and the communities we serve. From nurturing the next generation of rail professionals to championing diversity, commemorating history, and partnering for social good, these stories showcase the extraordinary contributions of the individuals who make GWR a truly great place to work and travel.

GWR celebrates
triple milestone



Carnival Train



Metrowest wins
top regional prize



GWR named best
domestic train service



GWR and Meningitis Now
unite for Meningitis Day



A journey through time



GWR's 'Apprentice Train' celebrates triple milestone in style

In February 2024, we celebrated three milestones with our 'Apprentice Train,' the 10:35 service from London Paddington to Exeter St Davids, crewed by current and former apprentices. The event marked National Apprenticeship Week (10-16 February), a decade of partnership with The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), and Railway 200, reflecting on 200 years of rail history and its future.

Masterminded by Sophie Carter, a 21-year-old Aspire Driver Manager Apprentice and Gold DofE Award holder, the train showcased the diverse careers available in rail. Eleven apprentices performed various roles, distributed flyers, and engaged passengers about rail opportunities. DofE Youth Ambassadors joined the journey, stopping at 10 stations to symbolize the 10-year GWR-DofE partnership.

GWR Customer Services Director Rachel Geliamassi said, "The 'Apprentice Train' highlights our talented railway family and the diverse roles we offer. With new apprenticeship vacancies open for August, now's the time to explore a career with GWR."

Since 2015, over 80 GWR apprentices have earned Gold DofE Awards through the DofE Business programme, with 82 currently participating. DofE's Alex McDowell noted, "GWR's support has empowered young people to build skills and community ties, with apprentices excelling in leadership and volunteering."



The train concluded at Exeter St Davids, where Exeter College, GWR's apprenticeship delivery partner, welcomed it. College Principal John Laramy CBE said, "Our partnership with GWR creates sector-leading apprenticeships, and we were thrilled to celebrate with apprentices today."

The event coincided with Exeter College's Apprenticeship Expo, where GWR joined 50 employers to inspire young people about apprenticeship opportunities. This initiative underscores GWR's commitment to nurturing talent and shaping the future of rail.



Read about GWR's apprenticeship programmes here



Carnival Train brings vibrant celebration to Notting Hill

In August 2024, GWR transformed its 10:00 service from Bristol Temple Meads to London Paddington into a vibrant Carnival Train, celebrating the Notting Hill Carnival. Organised by GWR's REACH employee network (Recognising Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage), with support from Severnside and Reading Basingstoke Community Rail Partnerships, the initiative provided free travel for diverse community groups, including families experiencing their first train journey to London.

Two carriages were adorned with carnival logos, filled with music from the Plymouth-based Real Steel Band and guitarist Edson Burton MBE, performances by Hype Dance Company, and art workshops led by Carol Sherman. GWR collaborated with St Pauls Carnival, youth group ACE (Aspiration Creation Elevation), and Hype Dance Company Bristol to create a festive experience.

Carnival Train curator Mameri Eze said, "Celebrating inclusion and Caribbean culture through the Carnival Train is a perfect fit for GWR."

We were thrilled to bring it back for its second year, welcoming families new to rail travel."

The Carnival Train won Best Community Engagement at the 2024 Community Rail Awards. Severnside CRP Manager Heather Cullimore said, "Carnival is a vital part of our cultural heritage, and this train created lasting memories for families."

St Pauls Carnival's Julie Syer noted, "GWR's support enabled us to share this experience with our community partners, especially the ACE youth project, who brought their carnival spirit to Notting Hill."



MetroWest wins top regional prize at Rail Business Awards

MetroWest, a transformative rail project led by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority in partnership with GWR and Network Rail, has been named Regional Initiative of the Year at the prestigious Rail Business Awards.

Over the past 18 months, MetroWest has delivered significant improvements, including the opening of two new stations—Portway Park & Ride and Ashley Down—increased service frequencies for Bath, Bristol, Gloucester, and Westbury, and upgrades to existing stations. Future plans include new stations and the reopening of the Henbury and Portishead lines.

GWR Managing Director Mark Hopwood said, “MetroWest is transforming travel in the West of England, and this award recognises our commitment to customers and communities. With more exciting projects ahead, we look forward to continued collaboration.”

Network Rail’s Marcus Jones highlighted the project’s impact, noting, “MetroWest is enhancing connectivity, boosting capacity, and enabling over a million new rail journeys, benefiting passengers for years to come.”

Additionally, GWR, Network Rail, and the Emily Estate were highly commended for transforming Castle Cary station, improving access, parking, and the overall passenger experience. GWR’s David Bailey was shortlisted for the Richard Hope Award for his outstanding customer service, and Project Unity, a GWR-Hitachi Rail Europe collaboration, was recognised for enhancing fleet reliability.

MetroWest’s success underscores GWR’s dedication to innovative, customer-focused rail improvements across the region.

GWR named best UK domestic train service

GWR was also crowned Best UK Domestic Train Service at the Business Traveller Awards 2024, surpassing LNER, Avanti West Coast, and the Elizabeth line. Voted by Business Traveller magazine readers and authenticated by independent research, the awards are a benchmark for excellence in business travel.

The winners were announced at a prestigious ceremony at The Steel Yard, London, attended by over 200 industry leaders and presented by BBC Breakfast’s Ben Thompson.

Business Traveller editor Tamsin Cocks noted, “Our readers are discerning, so these results highlight the best in travel. Congratulations to GWR for their outstanding achievement.”



GWR and Meningitis Unite for World Meningitis Day 2024

In October 2024, we partnered with Meningitis Now, the UK’s leading meningitis charity, to mark World Meningitis Day on 5 October. The collaboration, part of the global campaign to raise awareness and defeat meningitis, aimed to “light the tracks ahead” for a future where no one in the UK dies from the disease and all affected receive vital support.

On 4 October, Meningitis Now supporters boarded a dedicated carriage on GWR’s 09:59 service from Cheltenham Spa to London Paddington, stopping at Stroud, the charity’s base. Passengers shared personal stories, highlighting the importance of World Meningitis Day in combating this deadly disease. At stations including Gloucester, Stroud, Swindon, and Reading, volunteers raised awareness about meningitis symptoms and the support Meningitis Now provides. Supporters signed a giant train-ticket-style pledge board, committing to the charity’s mission.

The train arrived at London Paddington, greeted by charity supporters and Meningitis Now president, TV presenter Lisa Snowdon. On World Meningitis Day, GWR and Network Rail illuminated Paddington Station in the charity’s orange colour at 20:30, joining a global movement to spotlight meningitis prevention and awareness.

GWR Customer Services Director Rachel Geliamassi said, “Keeping communities safe is central to GWR’s mission. We’re proud to support Meningitis Now, our Stroud-based neighbours, in raising awareness of this life-changing disease through this campaign.”

Meningitis Now’s chief executive Tom Nutt added, “GWR’s support, including lighting up Paddington Station, has been invaluable in educating the public. We’re confident that together, we can beat meningitis.”

With over 2.5 million annual cases worldwide, meningitis claims one in ten lives, disproportionately affecting children under five, and leaves one in five survivors with lifelong disabilities. This partnership underscores GWR’s commitment to community wellbeing, amplifying Meningitis Now’s work toward a meningitis-free future.



A journey through time at Kemble Station

At GWR, we believe our people are at the heart of our community, both past and present. In November 2024, an extraordinary exhibition at Kemble station began, weaving together history, community, and the passion of our colleagues.

Imagine stepping back in time to 1935. That’s exactly what happened metaphorically at Kemble station with the discovery of a time capsule hidden almost 90 years ago! Station Master Cyril Feldwick, a GWR predecessor, thoughtfully placed a postage stamp and a handwritten note inside an old tobacco tin, tucking it away between a wall and a window overlooking the station garden.

This precious piece of history was discovered ten years ago. It now belongs to Cyril’s granddaughter, Bronwen Dale, who generously loaned it for this special exhibition at the station.

This captivating exhibition, aptly named “Kemble Through The Ages,” offers a remarkable glimpse into the rich history of the railway and its surrounding community. It’s a true testament to the dedication of our GWR colleagues, Al Watkins, a Customer Sales Advisor at Kemble, and Sarah Bennet, a Customer Service Manager who masterminded the entire display.

Al shared his excitement about the find: “The time capsule really is quite something. The Station Master placed a simple note and a postage stamp commemorating King George V and Queen Mary’s 25th Jubilee inside the tobacco tin. He joked that he ‘couldn’t afford to put a £1 note in the tin but hoped the Jubilee stamp would be useful’”

Al also highlighted the broader collection: “There’s so much else to see here, too. Kemble is such a beautiful station and we’re such a close-knit community. There’s such a wonderful collection of historic photographs and artefacts and we wanted to put them on display.”

Bronwen Dale, Cyril Feldwick’s granddaughter, joined the celebration, sharing a touching personal connection: “My mum actually remembered her dad writing the note and placing it in the tin. When it was found 10 years ago it was handed to mum, and when she passed away, I took possession of it. Donating it to this wonderful exhibition seemed the perfect thing to do.”

The exhibition goes beyond the time capsule, featuring a heartfelt tribute to the Kemble Women’s Institute, photographs depicting vibrant village life from the 1940s to the 1960s, a vast collection of railway memorabilia, and a display honouring local war heroes.

This inspiring initiative showcases the deep connection between GWR, its stations, and the communities we serve. Our thanks go to all colleagues, local residents, and the Swindon and Cricklade Railway for their generous contributions, making “Kemble Through The Ages” a truly special celebration of shared history.

5.0

Engine for growth

At GWR, we understand that a thriving railway is a catalyst for economic growth and community prosperity across our diverse regions. This section highlights how we are acting as a key “Engine for Growth” through strategic investments in infrastructure, the pioneering of sustainable travel solutions, and the continuous enhancement of connectivity. From the East to the West, and through our vital Central and Welsh operations, discover how our collaborative partnerships and forward-thinking initiatives are expanding capacity, improving accessibility, and creating a more resilient and sustainable rail network for the millions of customers and businesses we serve.

East



West



Central



Wales



Integrated transport



Aoife Considine,
Heathrow Express



Taunton Station’s café



East

In the East region, GWR is actively working with our partners to deliver improved connectivity, invest in vital infrastructure, and pioneer sustainable travel solutions for our communities.



Strengthening the North Downs Line: Boosting Sustainable Access

In March 2025, we launched the North Downs Line Partnership in March 2025, bringing GWR, Network Rail, London Gatwick Airport, and Surrey County Council together. This partnership aims to promote and support wider enhancements to this crucial east-west link.

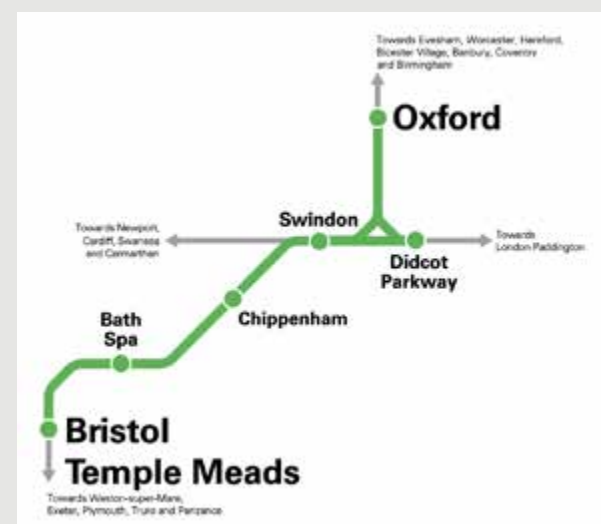
The partnership is already delivering tangible benefits. The December 2023 timetable change, which introduced two trains per hour between Reading and London Gatwick, resulted in nearly 100,000 new passenger journeys year-on-year. Further timetable improvements are currently in development. As London Gatwick's Chief Commercial Officer, Jonathan Pollard, stated, "GWR's additional later services to Reading will further support an already vital service, providing even better connectivity and sustainable options for passengers and staff."

Network Rail is committed to the partnership too, recognising the North Downs Line as a vital route connecting London Gatwick with the Thames Valley and the rest of the GWR network, bypassing central London. They continue to invest in line renewals and improvements, including the recent replacement of wheel timbers on the River Wey bridge and an upcoming re-signalling project between Guildford and Reigate later this year.

Supporting Regional Economic Growth: Oxford to Bristol Service Trial

In September 2024, GWR launched the trial of restored direct services between Bristol Temple Meads and Oxford, the first time these have run for over two decades. This trial assesses market demand for leisure and commuter travel linking Bristol, Bath, Chippenham, Swindon, and Oxford. The service offers highly competitive journey times: just under 1 hour 15 minutes between Bristol and Oxford, and just over 30 minutes between Swindon and Oxford, with any future permanent service requiring no additional capital funding.

Initial customer response has been positive, and stakeholder support remains strong. Councillor Jim Robbins, Leader of Swindon Borough Council, welcomed the trial, stating, "We are delighted that Great Western Railway is launching the new service as it will make it much easier for local residents to travel to Oxford and beyond... I hope the trial is a great success and it leads to permanent and more frequent services."



Investing in Station Improvements: Maidenhead's Enhanced Accessibility

September marked a significant milestone at Maidenhead station with the opening of a new lift and additional staircase serving platforms two and three. This £3.2 million investment, celebrated with Joshua Reynolds MP, Baroness May of Maidenhead, and Cllr Werner, Leader of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, has made the station fully accessible once again, improving safety and ease of use for its 3.2 million annual journeys.

The new lift replaced an older one, relocated to create space for the essential additional staircase. Maidenhead station remained open throughout the work, carried out by Network Rail's contractor, Morgan Sindall Infrastructure. Notably, timber removed during the work was donated to Braywick Plant Nurseries, a local non-profit supporting disabled employment, for repurposing by community volunteers. Upgrades also included new passenger information screens, a public address system, and CCTV, enhancing the overall station environment.

GWR's Customer Services Director, Rachel Geliamassi, highlighted the significance: "We're delighted to officially reopen these facilities... providing a more accessible, safer station environment for all who use it... We know that working together means we can deliver more and we are committed to a cooperative, collaborative approach with the communities we serve."

Promoting Stations as Community Hubs: Moreton-in-Marsh Transport Hub

In August 2024, GWR and Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council hosted a successful community engagement event, launching the design for a new transport hub at Moreton-in-Marsh station. Over 200 residents provided valuable feedback on the initial designs, which aim to transform the station into a modern hub enhancing facilities and onward travel connections.

This project will promote sustainable and active travel by improving links between rail, bus, cycling, and walking routes, boosting accessibility for all users. As a key gateway to the Cotswolds National Landscape, the upgraded station will play a pivotal role in welcoming visitors and supporting the region's economic and environmental goals, while accommodating increased local rail demand.

Following positive feedback, the planning application has now been submitted – a major milestone achieved through collaborative partnership, promising a lasting legacy for the town.





Pioneering Sustainable Technology: West Ealing Battery Train Trial

GWR continues its industry-leading trial of fast-charge battery train technology in West Ealing. We've welcomed stakeholders onboard the test train year-round, and in April, a special event saw 250 volunteers participate, providing valuable insights into the technology's performance under high passenger loads.

Over 900 return trips have been completed between West Ealing and Greenford, rigorously testing the technology across all weather conditions. The train can fast-charge in just 3.5 minutes at West Ealing before restarting its journey.

This groundbreaking work, conducted closely with the DfT, aims to pave the way for battery trains to enter passenger service. As GWR Engineering Director Dr. Simon Green noted, "This is the latest phase of our trial as we continue to work with the DfT to gain valuable insight into the operation of a pure battery train... The work has successfully raised the profile of fast-charge technology as part of the potential solution to decarbonisation of lines that are difficult or expensive to reach through traditional electrification."

West

In the West, GWR is committed to significant investment in infrastructure and rolling stock to better serve our communities, enhance connectivity, and deliver a more accessible and resilient rail network.



Expanding Our Network: Okehampton Interchange

Our success in the West continues to grow. Building on the popularity of the Dartmoor Line, work began on 20 January 2025, to construct Okehampton Interchange. This new out-of-town multi-modal hub, planned to open in Summer 2026, will feature up to 200 new parking spaces, a new bus interchange for key routes (e.g., Bude, Tavistock), and new walking/cycling paths to residential areas. Funded by £15 million from government and local councils, this new station will complement the existing Okehampton station, which has already seen over 1 million journeys since reopening in 2021.

Transforming Local Journeys: Mid Cornwall Metro

Further south, the Mid Cornwall Metro is a transformative £56.8 million project poised to revolutionise local journeys – connecting people with work, study, and leisure. This ambitious initiative will:

- Link 4 of Cornwall's top 5 most populated settlements.
- Place 50% of Cornwall's entire population within 10km of the route.
- Support significant housing growth, with 7,500 homes built on the route since 2010 and a further 10,000 proposed by 2031.
- Address local transport needs, noting that 22% of households on the route do not have a car.

Key infrastructure upgrades, including a new rail passing loop at Tregoss Moor and a second platform at Newquay station, will enable concurrent local and long-distance services to operate year-round. This will introduce a new hourly service between Newquay and Par, adding 700,000 seats annually, with plans to extend these services the following year to St Austell, Truro, Penryn, and Falmouth, providing a vital coast-to-coast connection through the heart of Cornwall.





Enhancing Accessibility: St Erth and Wider Station Improvements

Work continues on the new St Erth Access for All (AfA) lift bridge, which will provide step-free access across the entire Grade II listed station for the first time since its construction in 1852. This project, part of the Government's Access for All scheme, involves carefully dismantling the old Victorian footbridge, which will be rehomed at the East Somerset Railway. This marks the final step in the highly successful St Erth Multi Modal Hub expansion, which already includes a new bay platform and two new car parks accommodating over 500 vehicles, now handling up to 2,000 passengers per day during the summer peak for trips to St Ives.



Modernising Our Fleet: Introducing Class 175 Trains

To enhance resilience and capacity across the West, GWR is welcoming 26 new Class 175 trains to its fleet in 2025. These units, comprising 10 two-car and 16 three-car formations, are capable of 100mph and will be based solely in Devon & Cornwall. Their introduction will allow us to roll out services predominantly in 3, 4, and 5-car formations, providing much-needed resilience in the peninsula and across our network. These trains will primarily serve the Penzance to Exeter mainline and the Barnstaple and Okehampton branch lines, occasionally supporting routes like Newquay – Falmouth and Paignton – Exmouth. They will largely work alongside our existing Class 150 and Class 16x Turbo fleets to strengthen local services in the region, while also enabling the phased retirement of older HSTs and reallocation of some Class 802 IETs and Class 158s across the wider GWR network.



Central

In the Central region, GWR is committed to transforming rail services, driving significant station upgrades, and fostering innovative transport integration, all powered by strong partnerships.



MetroWest Progress: Expanding Our Network

MetroWest, the ambitious scheme spearheaded by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority in partnership with GWR and Network Rail, continues to deliver significant progress for the region. (As highlighted in the report's Great People section, MetroWest was celebrated as Regional Initiative of the Year at the 2025 Rail Business Awards, underscoring its impact.)

In the past 18 months, the project has seen the opening of two new stations – Portway Park & Ride and Ashley Down. It has also delivered increased service frequency for Bath, Bristol, Gloucester, and Westbury, enhanced existing stations, and progressed plans for more new stations and lines. We look forward to continuing our partnership to bring these vital projects to life for customers and communities.

Ashley Down Station: A New Gateway

As a key part of MetroWest, the UK's newest railway station, Ashley Down, officially opened on September 2024. This station, the second new opening in the last year, is part of a £300m+ investment by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, GWR, Network Rail, and Bristol City Council, bringing rail travel within easy reach of more residents than ever before.

The opening event, attended by local dignitaries, schoolchildren, and scout members, included the unveiling of PROGRESSION, a new community artwork created by local groups including 1st Bristol Muslim Scouts and Lockleaze Community Hub. Tom Pierpoint, GWR Business Development Portfolio Director, emphasised, "New stations such as this are vital in bringing the railway closer to people as we become mindful of the need to live and travel more sustainably... We are excited for the benefits this station will bring to the local economy, to residents, businesses and to leisure travellers alike."





Transforming Stations: Castle Cary and Gloucester

Our commitment to enhancing the customer experience extends across the region. At Castle Cary station, GWR, Network Rail, and the Emily Estate were highly commended in the Infrastructure Project & Station Excellence category at the Rail Business Awards. Their partnership successfully transformed the station, delivering better access, additional car parking, a new visitor attraction, and an enhanced forecourt. This has resulted in increased customer numbers and revenue, providing a better year-round experience for both regular users and visitors to Somerset and Glastonbury.

Similarly, the multi-million-pound investment in Gloucester station reached completion in March with the reopening of the subway. This essential upgrade, a joint effort by Gloucester City Council, GWR, Gloucestershire County Council, and Network Rail, has made the underpass step-free and fully accessible. Improvements include modern lighting and CCTV for enhanced security, creating a more welcoming environment. The subway reopening completes wider station enhancements, including forecourt improvements, integrated access for all transport modes (pedestrians, cyclists, buses), and an upgraded car park with better drainage, lighting, disabled bays, and taxi/cycle facilities. Crucially, the complex project also involved maintaining and investing in the track beds above and relocating a vital 11KV National Grid cable.

Gloucester MP Alex McIntyre, who officially reopened the subway, highlighted its importance: "It provides much needed connectivity between Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and the city centre... Providing a fully accessible route under the station, complete with safety upgrades, is really welcome."

Integrated Transport Solutions: Castle Cary Bus Service

GWR is proactively improving integrated transport links, particularly in rural areas. At Castle Cary Station, a new direct bus service now calls at the station site, significantly enhancing connectivity. A dedicated bus turning area was created in the main car park, allowing the Route 1 bus (connecting Castle Cary and Shepton Mallet) to directly serve the station for the first time.

Representatives from GWR, Somerset Council, and South West Coaches met in March 2025, to welcome the first direct service. GWR Transport Integration Manager Nick Reid underscored the value: "Good, efficient local transport links are vital in bringing the railway closer to people... Castle Cary is a really important station for the community of this part of Somerset." Somerset Council's Lead Member for Transport and Waste Services, Councillor Richard Wilkins, added, "This is excellent news and will be a vital part of improving connectivity across Somerset. We want to provide people with the option to leave their cars at home if they want to."

Wales

In Wales, GWR is more than just a train operator; we are a dedicated partner, deeply committed to celebrating Welsh heritage, enhancing vital connectivity, and promoting sustainable tourism. Our collaborative efforts and partnerships underscore the vibrant culture and significant economic potential of this crucial part of our network.



A Century of Scouting: GWR Names Train After Inspirational Leader

On February 2025, a truly special ceremony unfolded at Swansea station as we unveiled an Intercity Express Train (IET 800021) named in honour of Gill Clay, an inspirational Scout leader. This poignant event paid tribute to Gill's lifelong dedication to Scouting and marked 100 years of Scouting in Wales.

Gill Clay, 87, holds a unique connection to the movement as the granddaughter of its founder, Robert Baden-Powell. Last year, her extraordinary commitment was recognised with the Bronze Wolf Award, Scouting's highest honour. As Gill, a Beaver leader in Cowbridge, shared, "Having a train named after me and ScoutsCymru is an enormous honour... Being one of the Great Westerners named on the GWR fleet is a privilege that I am grateful for and feel very proud about."

Joe Graham, GWR Business Assurance and Strategy Director, emphasised the lasting tribute: "Gill has made an extraordinary contribution not only to local Scouts but also to the global Scouting community. Intercity Express Train 800021 will help to pay tribute to her commitment and celebrate 100 years of Scouting in Wales as it journeys through communities across the GWR network."

Following the ceremony, the newly named IET 800021 proudly formed the 13:22 service from Swansea to London Paddington, carrying Gill's legacy and the spirit of Scouting across the network. This 'Great Westerners' tribute underscores GWR's commitment to honouring past and present heroes from across our network, including figures like Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and NHS founder Aneurin Bevan.



Kicking Off Wales Week London: A Stirring Performance at Paddington

In February 2025, GWR proudly partnered with Wales Week London to launch its annual celebration of Welsh culture with an unforgettable event. The renowned Porthcawl Male Voice Choir transformed London Paddington station into an impromptu concert hall, captivating half-term travellers and commuters alike with their powerful harmonies. This stirring performance marked the official start of Wales Week London, which ran from February 20th to March 8th.

Passengers enjoyed complimentary Pembrokeshire Welsh cakes and learned about sustainable, car-free travel options in South Wales through the South West Wales Connected Community Rail Partnership. The event underscored GWR's strong ties to Wales, with our Welsh-speaking staff – identifiable by the iconic Draig Goch (Red Dragon) on their name badges – actively encouraged to use their language, especially leading up to St David's Day.

Dan Okey, GWR Head of Development, expressed the sentiment: "Welcoming the Porthcawl Male Voice Choir to perform at Paddington was a proud

moment. We cherish our Welsh heritage and our teams in Swansea and Cardiff, and we're thrilled to celebrate Wales across our network." Ian Williams of the choir added: "Singing at Paddington for Wales Week is a huge honour. Showcasing Welsh choral tradition to a diverse audience with a mix of traditional and modern pieces was truly exciting."

Eve Sherratt, Community Rail Officer for South West Wales Connected, noted the broader impact: "Celebrating Welsh culture at Paddington promotes sustainable tourism, supporting our local economy and showcasing South West Wales as a must-visit destination."

Wales Week London, now in its ninth year, hosted over 130 events, attracting more than 10,000 attendees to promote Welsh businesses and culture. Dan Langford, Chair of Wales Week London, acknowledged GWR's vital role: "GWR's support, from station advertising to distributing our event guides on trains, significantly boosts our outreach, connecting Wales with London audiences."

Driving Connectivity for Major Events and Sustainable Travel

GWR plays a crucial role in moving hundreds of thousands of customers for major events at the Principality Stadium in the heart of the Welsh capital. We regularly provide dozens of additional services for significant sport and music acts at the stadium. This year, our services supported attendees for high-profile events including Taylor Swift's record-breaking Eras Tour, Beyoncé's Renaissance Tour, P!nk, Foo Fighters, and even Billy Joel, who travelled with GWR to reach his Cardiff gig.

We are also proud to support the English Football League's (EFL) Sustainable Travel Charter, helping the football community reduce its carbon footprint. In a prime example of this commitment, Millwall Football Club travelled with GWR ahead of their 1-0 win at Swansea in the EFL Championship.

GWR Sales & Marketing Director, Amanda Burns, affirmed: "We firmly believe in the potential for change and are committed to offering a more sustainable alternative to short-haul flights for teams and fans alike... We have a specialist sales team ready to assist football clubs seeking to travel by train."

Millwall Managing Director, Mark Fairbrother, echoed this, stating, "This aligns with the principles we have set out within our own Lion Living commitment to environment and sustainability, and it's also a relaxing way for the players and staff to travel to these fixtures." GWR remains committed to providing sustainable travel solutions, having also worked with clubs like Plymouth, Queens Park Rangers, West Ham, and the Wales national team in recent seasons.

Beyond special events, GWR provides key daily connectivity in South and West Wales, as well as into England. We operate 30 daily trains each way from Cardiff Central and over 20 from Swansea to London Paddington. In May 2023, we introduced 65 additional weekly services in South Wales, extending connectivity to Carmarthen. Our premium Welsh Pullman dining experience, running weekdays between Swansea and Paddington, further enhances the travel offering with gourmet dining amidst stunning views.



Piano Man goes to Cardiff



Collaborative Partnerships for a Thriving Network

GWR continues to work closely with Transport for Wales (TfW) and Network Rail Wales to support a thriving rail network across the entire country. We jointly engage with partners through our Wales Transport Forum and regular Senedd drop-ins, ensuring a cohesive and integrated approach to rail development.



Read TfW's annual report here

Integrated transport: Enhancing seamless journeys across our network

GWR is committed to creating seamless multi-modal journeys, working closely with local authorities and bus operators to enhance connectivity between rail and other transport services. Our focus is on improving infrastructure, providing clear customer information, and fostering partnerships to deliver better integrated travel experiences.

Strengthening Rail Link Services and Bus Integration

We continued our close collaboration with Devon County Council to ensure the successful delivery of Rail Link services. Within the financial year, Stagecoach Devon secured the contract to operate Rail Link Services 309/10 (Barnstaple – Lynton/Lynmouth) and 118 (Okehampton – Tavistock). GWR worked closely with Stagecoach to apply distinctive Rail Link branding to these vehicles, ensuring continued visibility and promotion.

At Gloucester, a major forecourt scheme was completed, significantly upgrading provisions for local buses. Stagecoach Gloucester now directly serves the station forecourt with services 8 and 13, improving convenience for passengers.

Further enhancing the customer experience, GWR partnered with Devon County Council to install two new bus shelters at Totnes and Tiverton Parkway Stations. At Totnes, forecourt enhancements enabled the installation of a new shelter, while at Tiverton, we supported an upgrade to an existing shelter.

We continue to promote and support our core network of Rail Link services across the Great Western Network through various channels, including bus timetable information on our online retail systems, display on our CIS screens, and enabling through ticketing where possible. We also refreshed information across the network, including providing new vinyl Rail Link graphics for Tally Ho's fleet of new vehicles operating service 164, connecting Totnes to Salcombe.

At Bedwyn, collaboration with Wiltshire Council enabled the introduction of a community-funded bus shelter and cycle parking scheme. This enhancement provides improved waiting facilities for onward journeys by bus, complementing Wiltshire Council's 'Demand Responsive Transport' scheme.



Enhancing Customer Information and Wayfinding

Our programme of branding bus shelters with highly visible customer information continues. At Evesham, bus shelters near the station received an information upgrade with attractive details for onward connections, including services to Stratford-Upon-Avon. Updated information was also provided at Exeter Central, and at St Austell, we celebrated the connection to the Eden Project, complementing our recent Famous Five campaign.

We continued to actively support the Government's capped bus fare initiative, refreshing our marketing campaign at stations and on our social media platforms to promote affordable bus travel.

To improve seamless transitions between rail and bus, we installed enhanced wayfinding at Pewsey, Warminster, and Westbury Stations, in collaboration with Wiltshire Council's 'Connecting Wiltshire Campaign'. At North Camp, we added clear directional arrows to improve customer information for passengers connecting between GWR's station and SWR's North Camp (located just 800 meters apart).

Collaborative Partnerships for Improved Service

Strong partnerships are central to our integrated transport strategy. With Stagecoach in Devon, we celebrated service changes to Route 4 between Exeter and the University of Exeter. From September 2024, this service now operates via Exeter St Davids Station, providing a direct link for students and staff to work and education.

At Castle Cary, we worked with Somerset Council and bus operator South West Coaches to create a dedicated bus turning area on the station forecourt. This key improvement has enabled bus service 1 to call directly at the station, significantly enhancing connectivity to local towns and villages and providing a safe waiting area for passengers. This successful collaboration garnered positive local interest, helping to promote enhanced bus-rail connectivity.





Read more about the campaign



Aoife Considine,
Business Lead & Director,
Heathrow Express

Expanding Our Service to Meet Evolving Passenger Needs

I'm pleased to share that this year we introduced a brand-new early morning service on Heathrow Express, designed to better serve customers and colleagues travelling before sunrise.

From May 19th 2025, our first train of the day now departs London Paddington at 04:34, allowing passengers to make those early 6am flights. This change came in direct response to passenger feedback and reflects our continued effort to make Heathrow Express as convenient and reliable as possible. It also supports many of our colleagues working early shifts at the airport, giving them a dependable and comfortable way to start their day.

The earlier start integrates seamlessly into our existing timetable, with services continuing every 15 minutes from Platforms 6 and 7 at Paddington. As always, our goal is to deliver a high-quality, fast and stress-free dedicated airport connection between central London and Heathrow.

To help launch the new timetable, our PR campaign attracted strong national media coverage. It explored the lengths people go to in order to catch early flights, from skipping breakfast to forgetting to lock the front door. Created in collaboration with Quaker Oats and TV personality David Templer, the campaign offered passengers delicious, travel-inspired breakfasts. This helped raise awareness of our extended service while reinforcing our reputation as the smarter way to travel to the airport.

Introducing this earlier departure was an important step for Heathrow Express and I'm proud of the cross-team collaboration that made it happen.

It is another example of how we continue to evolve our service to meet changing passenger needs, while maintaining the standards our customers and colleagues trust us to deliver every day.

Community and Accessibility

This year, we continued to strengthen our long-standing collaboration with The Paddington Partnership. Together, we have supported a wide range of local projects focused on education, the environment, and community wellbeing. Our colleagues have taken part in mentoring programmes, travel training, school visits, and local clean-up efforts, all aimed at making Paddington and the surrounding areas better places to live and work.

As part of our wider commitment to accessibility and inclusion, we also continued our support of the London Marathon, a landmark moment in the city's calendar. We're proud that Heathrow Express plays a role behind the scenes, offering a smooth and comfortable journey for all participants. Our involvement highlights not only our operational reliability, but also our commitment to inclusive travel that meets the needs of a diverse range of passengers, from professional athletes and wheelchair users to families and international visitors.

It's a clear example of how our service supports wider city events while reinforcing our position as a trusted, premium gateway into London.

Supporting Heathrow's Sustainability Agenda

The Secretary of State's announcement in January backing airport expansion also solidifies the airport's need for a dedicated, direct, and fast rail connection to London, helping reach public transport modeshare goals and supporting the airport's wider sustainability agenda.

A sip through time: Taunton Station's café unlocks the golden age of rail

The air at Taunton station in December 2024 hummed with a different kind of energy, not just the usual bustle of arrivals and departures. On Platform 2, something truly special had arrived: the Centenary Lounge, a café that promised to whisk visitors back to the elegant 1930s, a golden era for Great Western Railway.

Founder Aasia Baig, with a keen eye for heritage and a passion for recreating history, had poured her vision into every detail. The light fittings gleamed with Art Deco flair, the flooring echoed classic designs, and warm wood panelling and sparkling glass mirrors reflected the station's own storied past. It was like stepping into a perfectly preserved piece of railway history.

"I wanted to come up with a design appropriate for the heyday of rail travel," Aasia shared, her excitement palpable. "Taunton and Leamington Spa boast similar architectural aesthetics, which provided wonderful inspiration." She dreamt of a place that would become

a destination, not just for passengers catching a train, but for the local community who, thanks to a multi-million-pound station regeneration over the past five years, had truly "fallen back in love with their station."

The grand opening was a joyful affair. A live 1930s-style band filled the concourse with swing tunes, as guests and commuters enjoyed canapés and refreshments. Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Chair of the GWR Advisory Board, spoke of how "railways are all about connecting people," and how refreshment rooms are a cherished part of that heritage. He delighted in Taunton joining the "GWR Centenary Lounge family."



6.0

Keeping our communities prospering

At GWR, our commitment extends far beyond the tracks. We believe in being an active and responsible partner in the communities we serve, fostering prosperity, enhancing social wellbeing, and ensuring our railway truly benefits everyone. This section showcases our dedication to impactful community engagement, highlighting how our partnerships and initiatives, from the transformative Customer and Community Improvement Fund to our proactive approach to accessibility and environmental stewardship, are helping to build stronger, more inclusive, and sustainable communities across our network.

Access for all



Customer and community improvement fund



Michelle Roles, Transport Focus



Environment and sustainability





Accessible rail for all

At GWR, we are committed to making rail travel truly accessible and welcoming for every customer. In 2024, as a testament to this commitment, we proudly achieved National Autistic Society (NAS) Autism Friendly Accreditation along our vital Plymouth to Penzance line. A cornerstone of this achievement, and a key innovation in enhancing passenger experience, has been the development of 360-degree virtual station tours. These immersive tours are specifically designed to empower neurodivergent individuals and others with disabilities by providing crucial pre-journey information, fostering confidence and independence.

A Collaborative Journey to Familiarity

The virtual tour project was initiated by selecting 10 key stations along the Plymouth-Penzance route, identified by their high volume of passenger assistance requests. To ensure genuine impact, we embarked on a collaborative journey, partnering with several charities and individuals with lived experience of disabilities. Their invaluable insights directly shaped the content, addressing real-world challenges faced by passengers.

Following a rigorous vendor review, Venue View was selected for their ability to deliver high-quality, immersive captures of our stations.

Building on this success, an additional 10 tours were later developed in collaboration with the Severnside Community Rail Partnership, targeting stations frequently used for railway safety and familiarisation sessions.

This brought our initial total to 20 virtual tours, each offering comprehensive audio, written, and visual walkthroughs highlighting essential station features such as ticket offices, platforms, and accessibility points.

Expanding Our Reach and Impact

We are continuously expanding the reach of this vital resource. Currently, we are scripting and filming an additional 12 videos, bringing the total to 32 virtual tours. These new tours will incorporate enhanced safety messages, including reminders about platform yellow lines and the importance of using stair handrails.

Our growing library of virtual tours now features a wide array of stations, including: Oxford (to be updated post-renovation), Didcot Parkway, Bristol Parkway, Swindon, Bath Spa, Taunton, Exeter St Davids, Plymouth, Penzance, Newton Abbot, Weston-super-Mare, Avonmouth, Severn Beach, Patchway, Keynsham, Bridgwater, Stapleton Road, Filton Abbey Wood, Clifton Down, and Yatton. Tours in progress include the IET interior, Gloucester, Cheltenham Spa, London Paddington, Reading, Newbury, Westbury, Worcestershire Parkway, Truro, St Austell, Chippenham, and Ashley Down.

The primary goal remains to empower passengers, especially those who are neurodivergent or disabled, by providing a detailed preview of station layouts and facilities. This comprehensive look at what to expect significantly reduces anxiety and enhances independence, making journey planning truly confident. Beyond individual travellers, these videos have proven invaluable for schools and community groups, supporting vital railway safety education for diverse audiences.

A Holistic Approach to Accessibility

The virtual tours are just one component of our comprehensive accessibility strategy. To complement them, we've introduced "soundbites" – a series of audio clips showcasing common railway sounds, from train announcements to platform bustle. These clips aim to desensitise passengers to potentially overwhelming noises, contributing to a more comfortable travel experience.

Our NAS accreditation efforts also encompass practical tools such as sensory packs, emergency ear defenders, a Travel with Confidence guide, and additional travel assistance cards. These resources, launched in conjunction with the tours, underscore our unwavering commitment to supporting all passengers with sensory or accessibility needs.

Sharing Our Progress

While our NAS accreditation garnered media attention in 2024, the virtual tours themselves are actively promoted via our social media channels and readily accessible through a dedicated link on the GWR website. As this transformative project continues to expand, we eagerly anticipate sharing its growing impact with both customers and stakeholders.

For GWR, these initiatives represent more than just projects; they are a fundamental step toward building a truly inclusive railway. We are immensely proud of the progress made and remain dedicated to continuously enhancing the travel experience for everyone who chooses to journey with us.



Customer and community improvement fund: Empowering communities across our network

GWR's Customer and Community Improvement Fund (CCIF), a cornerstone of our National Rail Contract with the DfT, continues to transform communities by supporting rail-related projects that address social needs, promote inclusivity, and enhance local wellbeing. The latest round of applications, which opened in January 2025 for projects to be delivered between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, closed on 31 January 2025.

This funding cycle prioritised initiatives celebrating the Railway 200 milestone, focusing on schemes that deliver clear benefits to customers and communities. We encouraged projects promoting inclusion and diversity, engaging youth, highlighting rail careers, and boosting rail travel. While bids of all sizes were welcomed, we committed the majority of funds to smaller and medium projects to ensure all areas of our network benefited.

The maximum bid amount was £50,000, with most 2024/25 awards averaging £12,500 and typically under £25,000.

The CCIF reflects GWR's commitment to fostering innovation and strengthening community ties. Below are highlights from the 2024/25 funding cycle, showcasing the fund's regional impact.



Preserving Devon's Railway Heritage

The Folklore Library and Archive received a £25,000 grant to preserve Devon's branch line railway history. The Devon Railway Heritage project captures personal stories, photos, and films, creating a publicly accessible archive. Project Manager Tracey Norman said, "This funding unlocks valuable heritage, ensuring stories endure." Until February 2025, the team collected oral histories and digitized materials, with contributors invited to contact folklorelibrary@gmail.com or visit www.folklorelibrary.com. GWR's David Whiteway noted, "We're thrilled to support this lasting archive of Devon's railway heritage."



Empowering Newport Youth Through Sport

County in the Community, a Newport-based initiative, secured a £20,000 grant to engage young people through football. The project delivers workshops in areas prone to youth crime near rail infrastructure, teaching railway safety. Community Development Manager Liam Jenkins said, "This funding expands our reach, creating safe spaces and reducing rail-related incidents." GWR's Emma Morris added, "We're proud to back this initiative promoting safety and community ties."

Enhancing Life Skills at Gloucester's SkillZONE

SkillZONE, an interactive life skills village in Gloucester, received £28,730 to educate young people, including those with special needs, on safe choices, including rail travel. The grant funded a new Gloucester station replica, a 16-foot mural, and interactive screens, benefiting 340 students from 12 schools. Project Lead Lewis Whitter said, "GWR's support helps us teach rail safety and life skills." Emma Morris noted, "We're excited to see SkillZONE's next phase unfold."

By investing in these impactful projects, GWR's CCIF is driving positive change, celebrating rail's legacy, and creating lasting benefits for our customers and communities.





Michelle Roles,
Engagement Manager,
Transport Focus

This has been without doubt another challenging year for the railway, and the impact on passengers has been reflected in our Rail User Survey and our new Rail Passenger Scorecard. Our survey shows that overall passenger satisfaction levels have declined including with punctuality and reliability, with both on a general downward trajectory. A whole industry approach is required to drive necessary improvements.

In particular, Sundays have proved problematic with crew availability impacting the ability to run a reliable and comfortable service for passengers. We have ensured that the passenger voice is at the front and centre of performance improvement plans and continue to strongly advocate transparency when things do not go to plan. Our drive for clear, quality and timely information to help passengers make informed decisions continued throughout this past year.

Despite this challenging environment, we have seen some real and tangible improvements for passengers. This will enable GWR to better match capacity to demand on specific routes and provide a much more consistent and reliable service than has been possible, thereby enhancing resilience across the network. There has been the opening of the new station at Ashley Down, and partnership working to improve connectivity between bus and

rail for passengers. The extension of the ‘pay as you go’ smart card continues to make the travel experience more seamless for passengers.

Collaborative working is important to deliver improvements for passengers, and we saw a great example of this during the preparations for the High Speed 2 (HS2) improvement works. The closure of the route into Paddington was a challenge, but the potential huge impact on passengers was reduced by industry and operators working together to successfully create a diversionary route into Euston - keeping passengers moving over the very busy Christmas period.

It is important that there is a focus on using lessons learnt into the planning of future line closures. The ongoing work for HS2 around Old Oak Common will continue to bring disruption for passengers in the coming years and again, minimising the impact is paramount.

Our evidence shows that passengers rate punctuality and reliability as key priorities. As we move forward, there needs to be an ongoing sustained focus on identifying root causes of issues and working together to put things right to improve the passenger experience.

Environment and sustainability

The rail industry has a significant opportunity to support the UK’s ambition to reduce the impact of climate change and achieve Net Zero by 2050. GWR is working closely with Network Rail and the Environment Agency to assess the effects of extreme weather events and develop both contingency and long-term risk management plans.

We continue to operate in line 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 supports improvements in waste, water, and energy consumption.

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 updating our decarbonisation roadmap to support the Government’s commitment to Net Zero and the phase-out of diesel-only traction by 2040. In FY 2024/25, traction accounted for 97.5% of our total energy consumption, and therefore our future fleet strategy (Project Churchward) is fundamental to decarbonisation. Once our fleet strategy has been finalised, we will review and publish the roadmap to our stakeholders.

Our investment in innovative battery-operated train technology supports this objective. In the short term, we are making good progress in implementing fuel additives for our existing diesel

engines, which will bring carbon and air quality benefits. Electric vehicle charge points have been installed at four of our engineering depots to support the transition of our road vehicles to electric.

In 2024/25, GWR achieved its non-hazardous recycling target, with an overall recycling rate of 76% – up from 64% over the past three years. We’ve worked closely with suppliers and vendors to improve on-site recycling and will continue to examine how best to capture recycling efforts across the network.

We continue to monitor water consumption across our portfolio and are installing water-saving taps across stations to reduce usage. We are also identifying further opportunities to improve water efficiency across the network.

Working closely with rail industry partners including the Rail Safety Standards Board and the DfT, we have finalised noise and air quality management plans that set out opportunities to reduce impacts both in the short and long term. An idling reduction plan has also been developed, and we look forward to delivering it in 2025/26.

