

Route Prospectus

For the line between Narrowways Hill Junction and Severn Beach, and the train service between Bristol Temple Meads and Severn Beach

The line between Narrowways Hill Junction and Severn Beach is one of the routes listed in the Department for Transport Community Rail Development Strategy. This document sets out ideas for development of the line subsequent to the proposed formal designation as a Community Rail line during 2007.

The designation covers the line between Narrowways Hill Junction and Severn Beach and the service from Bristol Temple Meads to Severn Beach (The Severn Beach Branch) giving more freedom to the operator and the community in running the service and the stations.

The key measures of success will be

- The contribution of Community Rail Development in achieving locally set objectives.
- Reducing the call on taxpayers' funds for the service.
- Establishing the effectiveness of different methods for reducing the net financial loss of Community Rail lines by increasing revenue and reducing costs where practicable.
- Enabling local rail to play a larger role in the economic and social regeneration of the area.

This Prospectus has been discussed with the Severnside Community Rail Partnership, which presently consists of Bath and North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, Business West, First Great Western, North Somerset Council, Somerset County Council, and the West of England Partnership. The Prospectus has also been discussed with the Severn Beach Line Working Group which presently consists of Bristol City Council, South Gloucestershire Council, Bristol East Side Traders, First Great Western, Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways, Network Rail, Passenger Focus, Sustrans, West of England Partnership: the Group is chaired and serviced by the Severnside Community Rail Partnership.

Designation of the line between Narrowways Hill Junction and Severn Beach along with the service between Bristol Temple Meads and Severn Beach will greatly assist implementation of the Severn Beach Line Development Plan prepared jointly by First Great Western and the Severnside Community Rail Partnership. This Plan sets out what can be done to improve the line, in partnership with the local authorities and local communities and organisations, by way of small-scale initiatives and quick wins which can be delivered over the next three years.

The designation will in particular facilitate the following tasks:

- Developing a better understanding of the costs of operating the Severn Beach Branch and the passenger revenue attributable to the line;
- Showing how Train Operating Company costs might be reduced on the service by changes to franchise management (including the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement arrangements), working practices and operation;
- Evaluation of cost effective methods of delivering improvements to Severn Beach services looking at all aspects of the current operation;
- Identification of the most cost effective way of introducing additional services on all or part of the route;
- Development of an alternative simplified local fares structure for the route which is appropriate to the local market whilst ensuring the line is allocated a fair contribution of all through rail fares;
- Consideration and implementation of innovative ticketing and marketing schemes with the aim of making it easier to buy tickets away from staffed stations, effective collection of revenue and higher service awareness;
- Making stations along the route safer and more welcoming places for passengers;
- Working with Local Councils to develop integrated transport initiatives to improve accessibility to and from the area served by the line.

It is intended to build on the work already undertaken on the route by the Community Rail Partnership, First Great Western, the local authorities and other local stakeholders in developing this service.

Designation of the Severn Beach Line also includes the following stations :-
Lawrence Hill, Stapleton Road, Montpelier, Redland, Clifton Down, Sea Mills, Shirehampton, Avonmouth, St Andrews Road, Severn Beach.

Designation is not intended to inhibit the operation of the line as an occasional diversionary route, nor will it affect the operation of freight services from the Avonmouth bulk handling depot.

Designation is intended to be a permanent arrangement, but it can be reviewed periodically to assess whether the designation is still appropriate.

Community Rail Development
DfT Rail Group
76 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DR

July 2007