

= Nailsea and Backwell railway station =

Nailsea and Backwell railway station , on the Bristol to Exeter Line , is in the village of Backwell , close to the town of Nailsea in North Somerset , England . It is 8 miles (13 km) west of Bristol Temple Meads railway station , and 126 miles (203 km) from London Paddington . Its three letter station code is NLS . The station , opened in 1841 by the Bristol and Exeter Railway , has two platforms but little in the way of facilities . It is managed by Great Western Railway , the seventh company to be responsible for the station , and the third franchise since privatisation in 1997 . They provide all train services at the station , mainly hourly services between Bristol Parkway and Weston super Mare , and between Cardiff Central and Taunton .

= = Description = =

The station sits atop an embankment about 40 feet (12 m) high , and spans the main road between Nailsea and Backwell , which narrows to a signal controlled single lane to go under the railway . The station is on the Bristol to Exeter Line , 126 miles 34 chains (203 @. 46 km) from London Paddington and 8 miles 1 chain (12 @. 89 km) from Bristol Temple Meads . It the third station along the line from Bristol . Nailsea is a short distance to the north , while the outskirts of Backwell are right against the south side of the station . The two settlements are primarily residential , and are , for large proportions of their residents , dormitory towns for Bristol .

The station has two platforms , separated by two running lines . The line runs on a slight curve through the station , at an angle of roughly 067 degrees , and has a linespeed of 100 miles per hour (160 km / h) . The northern platform , platform 2 , is 121 metres (132 yd) long and serves eastbound trains ; the southern platform , platform 1 , is 122 metres (133 yd) and serves westbound trains . Access to the two platforms is by steps from the road on either side . There is a ramp to the eastbound platform , but it has a gradient greater than 1 in 12 , and there is no ramp access to trains . There is no ramp access to the westbound platform . Access between the platforms is either by a footbridge , or by walking along the main road under the line . There are metal and glass waiting shelters on both platforms ? three on the eastbound platform , one on the westbound . Two ticket machines are situated on the north side of the station , but they cannot be used to collect pre @-@ bought tickets . These are supplemented by a small ticket kiosk on the eastbound platform which is open during the morning peak . " Next train " dot @-@ matrix displays and an automated public @-@ address system announce approaching services .

To the north of the station is a pay and display car park with 285 car parking spaces , six motorcycle spaces and a number of cycle racks. cycle storage is also available . There is a bus stop adjacent to the car park , with services between Bristol and Clevedon .

= = Services = =

The station is managed by Great Western Railway , which also operates all rail services from the station . As of the December 2011 timetable , the basic service from Monday to Saturday consists of two trains in each direction per hour . One is the Bristol Parkway to Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare service , calling at all stations ; the second is the faster Cardiff Central to Taunton service , non @-@ stop between Bristol Temple Meads and Nailsea & Backwell . All trains call at Yatton , the next station westwards . A greater proportion of services continue beyond Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare in the evening , but fewer services continue to Cardiff . There is one evening service to Avonmouth via the Severn Beach Line . Sunday sees roughly one train per hour , with services again alternating between Bristol Parkway to Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare and Cardiff to Taunton , with two services to and from the Severn Beach Line : during summer months these terminate at Severn Beach ; the rest of the year only one does , the other terminating at Avonmouth . The typical journey time to Bristol Temple Meads is 11 minutes .

The local services described above are formed using Class 150 , 153 and 158 diesel multiple @-@ unit trains . Until 2012 , Class 143 Pacer units were a regular sight , but these have been moved

south to work in Devon and Cornwall following a cascade of Class 150 / 1 units from London Midland and London Overground .

Services between London Paddington and Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare call at Nailsea and Backwell in the early morning and evening , running non @-@ stop between Bristol Temple Meads and Nailsea and Backwell , also stopping at Yatton , but not always at Worle or Weston Milton . From Monday to Friday there are five morning services and one evening service to London , with seven services from London , all in the evening . Saturday sees three services to London , all in the morning , and four services from London , all in the evening . There are seven services to and six from London on Sundays , spread throughout the day . These intercity services are formed of High Speed Train sets , which are longer than the station , so passengers in the front carriage have to move to a different carriage to get out . Passengers are prevented from getting out onto the tracks by a selective door @-@ opening system . The typical journey time to London is roughly two hours .

In 2008 , one morning northbound CrossCountry service would make a stop at Nailsea and Backwell to serve as a morning peak service , but this operation has ceased . CrossCountry services still pass through the station , but do not stop . Occasional Great Western Railway intercity services between London and Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare or Taunton and Exeter also pass through non @-@ stop .

The station has an adjacent bus stop , served by the First Somerset & Avon number 362 and 363 buses between Bristol and Clevedon , with an hourly service in each direction providing a public transport link to Nailsea town centre , Tickenham , Flax Bourton and Long Ashton . In addition , a school day only service operated by North Somerset Coaches runs between the station , Nailsea School and Backwell School at the start and end of the school day . The North Somerset Coaches daytime service between Nailsea and Backwell via the station was withdrawn in November 2012 .

= = History = =

The first section of the Bristol and Exeter Railway 's (B & ER) main line opened on 14 June 1841 between Bristol and Bridgwater . Opened as " Nailsea " , it was for a while the first station on the line west of Bristol , the next being Clevedon Road (which was renamed Yatton in 1847) . The line , engineered by Isambard Kingdom Brunel , was built as 7 ft (2 @,@ 134 mm) broad @-@ gauge but it had been reconstructed as a mixed @-@ gauge line to accommodate local 4 ft 8 1 ? 2 in (1 @,@ 435 mm) -gauge traffic by 1 June 1875 . Services were operated by the Great Western Railway (GWR) on behalf of the B & ER until 1 May 1849 . The B & ER then took over its own workings until the company was amalgamated into the GWR on 1 January 1876 . Broad @-@ gauge trains ceased operation on 20 May 1892 .

Due to its being built on an embankment , lightweight building materials were used for the station : the platforms originally rested on timber supports for most of their length . Station buildings , including a goods shed and a combined ticket office and waiting room , were built on the eastbound platform in the 1860s . There was a signal box on the eastbound platform by the 1880s which controlled a crossover between the two tracks ; sidings at the west end of the station were controlled by a second signal box , and had a connection to the Nailsea Colliery . A footbridge , built by E. Finch and Co. of Chepstow , was erected in 1907 ; until then access between the two platforms was by a track @-@ level crossing . The station was renamed " Nailsea and Backwell " on 1 May 1905 .

When the railways were nationalised in 1948 , the GWR became the Western Region of British Railways . Goods traffic from the station ceased on 1 June 1964 . The main station buildings had been demolished by the 1980s but their foundations can still be seen behind the shelters on the eastbound platform . The shelter on the westbound platform was still present in 1986 . In the 1980s the car park was expanded , and new metal and glass shelters were provided . The station reverted to the name " Nailsea " on 6 May 1974 , and was still known by that name at the end of 1994 .

British Rail was split into business @-@ led sectors in the 1980s , at which time operations at Nailsea and Backwell passed to Regional Railways . Local services were franchised to Wales & West when the railway was privatised in 1997 , which was in turn succeeded by Wessex Trains , an arm of National Express , in 2001 . The Wessex franchise was amalgamated with the Great Western

franchise into the Greater Western franchise from 2006 , and responsibility passed to First Great Western , a subsidiary company of FirstGroup . The franchise was rebranded as Great Western Railway in 2015 .

Extra seating was provided in 2006 following action by the Severnside Community Rail Partnership , and in 2008 overgrown foliage was cleared from the car park to improve sightlines and help with security . The station was repainted at the same time , and decorated with silhouettes of students from Backwell School . The embankment suffered subsidence in 2013 .

In 2012 , the station had a free car park with 120 spaces , but this was frequently full by 7 : 30am on weekdays , leading commuters to park on local roads , prompting complaints from Backwell residents . Plans to extend the car park by 200 spaces were drawn up in 2009 , with North Somerset Council describing the scheme as " necessary " , as the lack of spaces limited the number of people who could feasibly use the station for commuting due to Nailsea being too far from the station to be an easy walk , causing people to drive to the station . That peak passengers filled the car park then meant there are no spaces for offpeak users , limiting leisure travel . North Somerset Council approved the construction of the extension on 17 April 2012 , and further approved the car park becoming pay and display - all car parks in Nailsea had previously been free . Work began in January 2014 , and was completed in June the same year - 162 additional car parking spaces were created , drainage was improved and CCTV was installed . The scheme , which cost £ 700 @ , @ 000 , came in £ 50 @ , @ 000 under budget and was paid for using money from the Local Transport Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy .

There is no wheelchair access to the southbound platform , the ramp to the northbound platform is steeper than 1 in 12 , making it unsuitable for wheelchair users , and there is a large height difference from the train doors to the platform . In 2011 the government announced a £ 37 @ . @ 5 million scheme to improve stations under an " Access For All Mid @ - @ Tier programme " , of which £ 1 @ , @ 023 @ , @ 000 was to go towards building new ramps at Nailsea and Backwell . The works were due to start in 2013 , but were delayed until 2014 due to a need to repair subsidence on the embankment and wait for works on the car park to be completed . However , due to the delays the funding was withdrawn .

= = Future = =

First Great Western declined a contractual option to continue the Greater Western passenger franchise (of which services at Nailsea and Backwell are a part) beyond 2013 , citing a desire for a longer @ - @ term contract due to the impending upgrade to the Great Western Main Line . The franchise was put out to tender , but the process was halted and later scrapped due to the fallout from the collapse of the InterCity West Coast franchise competition . A two @ - @ year franchise extension until September 2015 was agreed in October 2013 , and subsequently extended until March 2019 . The coming years will see the introduction of new Intercity Express Trains , capacity enhancements and smart ticketing .

With the coming upgrade to the Great Western Main Line , the main line from London to Bristol is due to be electrified . However , the electrification will not extend beyond Bristol to Weston @ - @ super @ - @ Mare , so Nailsea and Backwell will continue to be served by diesel trains . This could entail the removal of direct London services , as electric trains would not be able to operate beyond Bristol . Services could however continue using bi @ - @ mode trains , which have electric engines that can be powered by either electrified tracks , or by on @ - @ board diesel generators . The group Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways supports the electrification continuing to Weston , as does MP for Weston @ - @ super @ - @ Mare John Penrose . Local services will still be diesel @ - @ operated , with " Sprinter " units expected to be replaced by Class 165 and 166 " Turbo " units .

Nailsea and Backwell is on the Weston @ - @ super @ - @ Mare / Yate corridor , one of the main axes of the Greater Bristol Metro , a rail transport plan which aims to enhance transport capacity in the Bristol area . Railfuture in the South West has called for the station to be used to serve Bristol Airport via a bus link .

= = Incidents = =

There have been several railway incidents in the Backwell area . On 20 September 2002 , the 19 : 40 First Great Western service from Plymouth to Gloucester was delayed at Nailsea & Backwell at around 22 : 00 after the British Transport Police were called to deal with two men who assaulted a guard following an altercation about smoking in a non @-@ smoking area . Several passengers were treated for the inhalation of CS gas . Another assault on a guard occurred on 9 October 2009 , when three youths verbally abused and spat at the guard after boarding a train at Parson Street without tickets and refusing to pay for them . A 17 @-@ year @-@ old from Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare was due in court on 23 December 2009 in connection with the incident , having been identified by the use of DNA swab kits , which are available to all Great Western Railway staff .

A serious incident occurred on 17 October 2004 , when Wessex Trains Class 143 Pacer DMU 143613 , forming the 20 : 06 2W63 service from Bristol Temple Meads to Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare with 143621 , caught fire between the site of the former station at Flax Bourton and Nailsea and Backwell . Fire services took two hours to get the blaze under control . None of the 23 passengers and crew were killed , but three were treated on @-@ site for the effects of smoke inhalation . One carriage was completely burnt out , and the other was badly damaged , causing the train to be written off . The line through Nailsea was closed until 03 : 30 the following morning , when the train was hauled to St Philips Marsh Traction and Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot for examination . The unit was later taken to Crewe Works , where it was stored , then to Cardiff Canton TMD where it was scrapped . The Rail Safety and Standards Board issued a report into the incident , concluding that the fire was caused by electrical arcing between the live starter motor cable (which had damaged insulation) and the unit 's underframe , causing accumulated oily residues to ignite .