

= Lawrence Hill railway station =

Lawrence Hill railway station is on the Severn Beach Line and Cross Country Route , serving the inner @-@ city districts of Easton and Lawrence Hill in Bristol , England . It is 1 @.@ 0 mile ( 1 @.@ 6 km ) from Bristol Temple Meads . Its three letter station code is LWH . As of 2015 , the station has two platforms , two running lines and minimal 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 , the standard service being a train every 40 minutes along the Severn Beach Line , an hourly service to Bristol Parkway and another hourly service to Westbury .

The station was opened in 1863 by the Bristol and South Wales Union Railway , with a single track and platform . The line was doubled in 1874 when the Clifton Extension Railway opened , then expanded to four tracks and platforms in 1891 . There were buildings on all platforms and a goods yard to the west . Service levels reduced significantly over the second half of the twentieth century . The goods facilities were closed in 1965 , staff were withdrawn in 1967 and the eastern two platforms were taken out of service by 1974 .

The line is due to be electrified as part of the 21st @-@ century modernisation of the Great Western Main Line , which will also see the addition of two new running lines to increase capacity . Service frequency will be improved as part of the Greater Bristol Metro scheme .

= = Description = =

Lawrence Hill railway station serves the Lawrence Hill and Easton areas of Bristol . The surrounding area is primarily residential , with the City Academy school to the east and a First Bristol bus depot to the north @-@ west . A supermarket and industrial estate occupy the old goods yard directly west of the station . The station is on the Cross Country Route between Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway , and on the Severn Beach Line from Bristol Temple Meads to Severn Beach , 1 mile 4 chains ( 1 @.@ 7 km ) from Bristol Temple Meads . The next station north is Stapleton Road , the next station south is Bristol Temple Meads .

The station is on an alignment of 012 degrees , curving towards the east . There are two sets of tracks through the station , and two platforms : the western platform , platform 1 , serves northbound trains ; the eastern platform , platform 2 , serves southbound trains . Platform 1 is 228 metres ( 249 yd ) long , platform 2 is 234 metres ( 256 yd ) long , however both have the northern ends of the platform fenced off , giving operational platform lengths of 116 metres ( 127 yd ) and 114 metres ( 125 yd ) respectively . Platform 2 was part of an " island " platform which , along with a further platform to the east , served the northbound " up fast " southbound " down fast " lines . These platforms were removed around 1970 , the fast lines were removed in 1984 . Directly to the south of the station , the A420 Church Road crosses the railway on a bridge . The main access to the station is using steps from Church Road , however the northbound platform can be accessed step @-@ free from the adjacent supermarket car park . There is no step @-@ free access to the southbound platform . To the north is a bridge carrying the Bristol and Bath Railway Path , a cycle path built on the trackbed of the Midland Railway Bristol to Gloucester line . Just north of this bridge is Lawrence Hill Junction , where a goods line diverges to the west , serving a waste terminal . To the south there are crossover points , and the line widens to four tracks .

As of 2013 facilities at the station are minimal . The station is unstaffed and there are no facilities for buying tickets . There are metal and glass shelters and seating on each of the two platforms , as well as customer help points which give next train information and allow the user to contact a helpdesk . The station is covered by CCTV . There is no car park or taxi rank , but there are 12 bicycle stands on the platform . The nearest bus stop is directly outside the station on the A420 Church Road .

The line through Lawrence Hill has a speed limit of 60 miles per hour ( 97 km / h ) northbound and 75 miles per hour ( 121 km / h ) southbound . The loading gauge is W8 , and the line handles over 15 million train tonnes per year . It is not electrified , though it is planned that it will be electrified by

2017 as part of the 21st @-@ century modernisation of the Great Western Main Line .

= = Services = =

Services at Lawrence Hill are all operated by Great Western Railway . As of the December 2013 timetable , Monday to Friday , three trains every two hours run along the Severn Beach Line from Bristol Temple Meads to Avonmouth via Clifton Down , with one extended to St Andrew 's Road and Severn Beach . Most services start at Bristol , but one evening service to Avonmouth begins at Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare . On Saturdays only two trains per hour each direction call . Sunday sees an hourly service to and from Bristol , with only two services extending to Severn Beach , except during the May ? September timetable period when all services are extended . The first and last Sunday trains towards Bristol are extended to Taunton via Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare , and there are similar workings in the other direction . In 2012 , the single fare to Clifton Down or Bristol was £ 1 @. @ 50 , and £ 3 return for the whole line .

Southbound services from Great Malvern and Gloucester to Westbury and Weymouth call at Lawrence Hill , with one train per hour . Hourly northbound services from Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare to Bristol Parkway also call , as do some peak northbound services from Taunton to Cardiff Central and two late night southbound services from Cardiff to Bristol . All trains northbound call at Stapleton Road , and all trains southbound call at Bristol Temple Meads , although this requires Gloucester @-@ Westbury trains to reverse . CrossCountry trains pass Lawrence Hill non @-@ stop throughout the day , operating two trains per hour each direction between the South West , Bristol , Manchester and Scotland . Many Great Western Railway services also pass through non @-@ stop , including the hourly Cardiff @-@ Taunton service , southbound Bristol Parkway to Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare services and northbound Westbury to Gloucester services .

Services from Lawrence Hill are operated using a mix of Class 150 Sprinter , Class 153 Super Sprinter and Class 158 Express Sprinter diesel multiple units . Until 2012 , Class 143 Pacer units were a regular sight , but these have mostly been moved south to work in Devon and Cornwall following a cascade of Class 150 / 1 units from London Midland and London Overground .

As of the December 2013 timetable , the standard journey time to Bristol Temple Meads is 7 minutes , to Bristol Parkway 15 minutes , and to Avonmouth 25 minutes .

= = History = =

Lawrence Hill opened on 8 September 1863 when services began on the Bristol and South Wales Union Railway ( BSWUR ) , which ran from Bristol Temple Meads to New Passage Pier , north of the city on the banks of the River Severn . At New Passage , passengers were transferred to a ferry to cross the Severn to continue on in to Wales . In 1874 , the Clifton Extension Railway opened , connecting the Bristol Port Railway and Pier to the Great Western Railway at Narrowways Hill Junction , north of Stapleton Road . To cope with the expected increase in traffic , the line was doubled , and a second platform was added to the east of the two tracks . Two more tracks were added in 1891 , giving a layout of two sets of two tracks , with platforms on the outside and on an island in the middle . Trains to and from Clifton Down and Avonmouth used the western platforms while trains to and from South Wales used the eastern platforms . There were buildings on all the platforms , which were linked by a large covered footbridge . There was a goods yard to the west of the station and a signal box on the central platform .

In 1886 , the daily Great Western service along the Clifton Extension Railway was 6 trains each way between Avonmouth and Temple Meads , 24 trains from Clifton Down to Temple Meads and 26 the other direction . By 1910 there were 17 services daily from Avonmouth to Temple Meads and 15 the other way , a further 20 trains each day operating between Clifton Down and Temple Meads . From 1924 , many trains to Avonmouth were extended to Severn Beach , a growing seaside resort , and some on to Pilning , then back to Temple Meads via Patchway . Circular trips via Henbury were also common . The station was also used by excursion trains , and by trains of evacuees during the Second World War . By 1947 , just before the start of the British Rail era , there were 33 daily

services each direction between Avonmouth and Temple Meads , and 18 on Sundays . Many trains would pass through Lawrence Hill non stop - in 1930 , 350 trains would pass the station each day , of which roughly 40 % would stop .

When the railways were nationalised in 1948 , Lawrence Hill came under the control of the Western Region of British Railways , which oversaw a gradual decline of services at Lawrence Hill . Passenger numbers along the Clifton Extension Railway , now known as the Severn Beach Line , also dropped , and in 1963 the Beeching report suggested that all services along the line be withdrawn . In the end , services continued to Severn Beach but were discontinued via Henbury and Pilning . Staff were withdrawn from the station from 17 July 1967 as a cost saving measure . The footbridge was demolished by 1970 , forcing passengers to change platform via the steps to Church Road at the south end of the station . Most of the station buildings were demolished in August 1970 , but there were still some on the westernmost platform in 1979 . By 1974 the platforms serving the eastern tracks had been removed , with the tracks themselves removed in 1984 . Plans to use the disused trackbed as part of a light rail scheme linking the city centre to the northern suburbs were formed in the late 1990s , with the aim of an operational scheme by 2008 , but the plans had been shelved by 2004 . It was suggested in 2008 that the trackbed could be used as a cycle path to join together communities which had been separated by the construction of the M32 motorway , however this was dropped due to Network Rail asserting that the trackbed might be necessary for future rail expansion .

British Rail was split into business led sectors in the 1980s , at which time operations at Stapleton Road passed to Regional Railways . All trains along the Severn Beach Line ran to Severn Beach , but the service pattern was irregular . This was changed in the mid 1990s , with a more frequent service to Avonmouth but very few on to Severn Beach and no Sunday services . When the railway was privatised in 1997 , local services were franchised to Wales & West , which was succeeded by Wessex Trains , an arm of National Express , in 2001 . Services along the Severn Beach Line were increased to 10 per day in each direction by 2005 , with Bristol City Council providing a subsidy to Wessex Trains . 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 , which was rebranded in 2015 as Great Western Railway . A minimum service requirement was written into the franchise agreement , ensuring an hourly service along the Severn Beach Line . Passenger traffic increased significantly , and in 2010 , Sunday services to Severn Beach were restored .

= = Future = =

First Great Western declined a contractual option to continue the Greater Western passenger franchise 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 line through Lawrence Hill is due to be electrified by 2017 as part of the Great Western Main Line electrification project . However , the Severn Beach Line will not be electrified , so services at Lawrence Hill will still be provided by diesel trains , with " Sprinter " units expected to be replaced by Class 165 and 166 " Turbo " units . The group Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways supports the electrification continuing beyond the main lines , as does MP for Weston super Mare John Penrose . The electrification scheme also includes the four track of Filton Bank , including the reinstatement of the disused trackbed at Lawrence Hill , to allow more services between Parkway and Bristol Temple Meads and separate fast inter city services from local stopping services . Enhancement works to allow disabled access to both platforms will be carried out at the same time .

Lawrence Hill 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 , including half @-@ hourly services along the Severn Beach Line . The scheme could see the reopening of the Henbury Loop Line to passengers , with the possibility of services from Bristol Temple Meads to Bristol Parkway via Clifton Down and Henbury . Plans for a loop were rejected by the West of England Joint Transport Board , however Bristol City Councillors voted to send the decision back to the board for further discussion .

= = Incidents = =

A collision occurred near Lawrence hill on 8 January 1930 , approximately 500 yards ( 460 m ) north of the station . At 5 : 41am , an express train from Shrewsbury to Penzance ran into the back of a minerals train which had stopped to pick up the brakes after descending Filton Bank . The express locomotive , GWR 4000 Class number 4063 " Bath Abbey " , was derailed and badly damaged , with several coaches also being damaged . The incident was blamed on signalman A. H. Toop of the Lawrence Hill signal box , with contributing factors including lax working standards and the driver of the goods train , W. G. Atkins , failing to pull up to the signal box as required .

A similar crash occurred at Lawrence Hill on 1 November 2000 , when a Royal Mail train passed two red signals and ran into the back of a coal train at around 3 : 30am . The mail train , hauled by English Welsh & Scottish Class 67 diesel locomotive number 67002 " Special Delivery " , with 67012 at the rear , was travelling at 50 mph when the incident occurred . The locomotive climbed over the back of the coal train , coming to rest 40 yards ( 37 m ) later on top of a coal wagon and against the A420 Church Road bridge . The driver of the mail train suffered a broken arm and cuts to the face and chest , but there were no other injuries . The incident was initially suspected to be caused by faulty brakes , but was later found to be caused by misunderstanding and incorrect use of the locomotive 's BPPCUIC cock by railway staff .

Lawrence Hill is considered a blackspot for railway trespass and vandalism .

= Ælfheah of Canterbury =

Ælfheah ( Old English : Ælfh?ah , " elf @-@ high " ; c . 953 ? 19 April 1012 ) , officially remembered as Saint Alphege within some churches , and also called Elphege , Alfege , or Godwine , was an Anglo @-@ Saxon Bishop of Winchester , later Archbishop of Canterbury . He became an anchorite before being elected abbot of Bath Abbey . His reputation for piety and sanctity led to his promotion to the episcopate , and eventually , to his becoming archbishop . Ælfheah furthered the cult of Dunstan and also encouraged learning . He was captured by Viking raiders in 1011 and killed by them the following year after refusing to allow himself to be ransomed . Ælfheah was canonised as a saint in 1078 . Thomas Becket , a later Archbishop of Canterbury , prayed to him just before his own murder in Canterbury Cathedral .

= = Life = =

Purportedly born in Weston on the outskirts of Bath , Ælfheah became a monk early in life . His birth took place around 953 . He first entered the monastery of Deerhurst , but then moved to Bath , where he became an anchorite . He was noted for his piety and austerity , and rose to become abbot of Bath Abbey . The 12th century chronicler William of Malmesbury recorded that Ælfheah was a monk and prior at Glastonbury Abbey , but this is not accepted by all historians . Indications are that Ælfheah became abbot at Bath by 982 , perhaps as early as around 977 . He perhaps shared authority with his predecessor Æscwig after 968 .

Probably due to the influence of Dunstan , the Archbishop of Canterbury ( 959 ? 988 ) , Ælfheah was elected Bishop of Winchester in 984 , and was consecrated on 19 October that year . While bishop he was largely responsible for the construction of a large organ in the cathedral , audible from over a mile ( 1600 m ) away and said to require more than 24 men to operate . He also built and enlarged the city 's churches , and promoted the cult of Swithun and his own predecessor ,

Æthelwold of Winchester . One act promoting Æthelwold 's cult was the translation of Æthelwold 's body to a new tomb in the cathedral at Winchester , which Ælfheah presided over on 10 September 996 .

Following a Viking raid in 994 , a peace treaty was agreed with one of the raiders , Olaf Tryggvason . Besides receiving danegeld , Olaf converted to Christianity and undertook never to raid or fight the English again . Ælfheah may have played a part in the treaty negotiations , and it is certain that he confirmed Olaf in his new faith .

In 1006 Ælfheah succeeded Ælfric as Archbishop of Canterbury , taking Swithun 's head with him as a relic for the new location . He went to Rome in 1007 to receive his pallium ? symbol of his status as an archbishop ? from Pope John XVIII , but was robbed during his journey . While at Canterbury he promoted the cult of Dunstan , ordering the writing of the second Life of Dunstan , which Adelard of Ghent composed between 1006 and 1011 . He also introduced new practices into the liturgy , and was instrumental in the Witenagemot 's recognition of Wulfsize of Sherborne as a saint in about 1012 .

Ælfheah sent Ælfric of Eynsham to Cerne Abbey to take charge of its monastic school . He was present at the council of May 1008 at which Wulfstan II , Archbishop of York , preached his Sermo Lupi ad Anglos ( The Sermon of the Wolf to the English ) , castigating the English for their moral failings and blaming the latter for the tribulations afflicting the country .

In 1011 the Danes again raided England , and from 8 ? 29 September they laid siege to Canterbury . Aided by the treachery of Ælfmaer , whose life Ælfheah had once saved , the raiders succeeded in sacking the city . Ælfheah was taken prisoner and held captive for seven months . Godwine ( Bishop of Rochester ) , Leofrun ( abbess of St Mildrith 's ) , and the king 's reeve , Ælfweard were captured also , but the abbot of St Augustine 's Abbey , Ælfmaer , managed to escape . Canterbury Cathedral was plundered and burned by the Danes following Ælfheah 's capture .

= = Death = =

Ælfheah refused to allow a ransom to be paid for his freedom , and as a result was killed on 19 April 1012 at Greenwich ( then in Kent , now part of London ) , reputedly on the site of St Alfege 's Church . The account of Ælfheah 's death appears in the E version of the Anglo @-@ Saxon Chronicle :

... the raiding @-@ army became much stirred up against the bishop , because he did not want to offer them any money , and forbade that anything might be granted in return for him . Also they were very drunk , because there was wine brought from the south . Then they seized the bishop , led him to their " hustings " on the Saturday in the octave of Easter , and then pelted him there with bones and the heads of cattle ; and one of them struck him on the head with the butt of an axe , so that with the blow he sank down and his holy blood fell on the earth , and sent forth his holy soul to God 's kingdom .

Ælfheah was the first Archbishop of Canterbury to die a violent death . A contemporary report tells that Thorkell the Tall attempted to save Ælfheah from the mob about to kill him by offering everything he owned except for his ship , in exchange for Ælfheah 's life ; Thorkell 's presence is not mentioned in the Anglo @-@ Saxon Chronicle , however . Some sources record that the final blow , with the back of an axe , was delivered as an act of kindness by a Christian convert known as " Thrum . " Ælfheah was buried in St Paul 's Cathedral . In 1023 his body was moved by King Cnut to Canterbury , with great ceremony . Thorkell the Tall was appalled at the brutality of his fellow raiders , and switched sides to the English king Æthelred the Unready following Ælfheah 's death .

= = Veneration = =

Pope Gregory VII canonised Ælfheah in 1078 , with a feast day of 19 April . Lanfranc , the first post @-@ Conquest archbishop , was dubious about some of the saints venerated at Canterbury . He was persuaded of Ælfheah 's sanctity , but Ælfheah and Augustine of Canterbury were the only pre @-@ conquest Anglo @-@ Saxon archbishops kept on Canterbury 's calendar of saints . Ælfheah 's shrine , which had become neglected , was rebuilt and expanded in the early 12th century under

Anselm of Canterbury , who was instrumental in retaining Ælfheah 's name in the church calendar . After the 1174 fire in Canterbury Cathedral , Ælfheah 's remains together with those of Dunstan were placed around the high altar , at which Thomas Becket is said to have commended his life into Ælfheah 's care shortly before his martyrdom during the Becket controversy . The new shrine was sealed in lead , and was north of the high altar , sharing the honour with Dunstan 's shrine , which was located south of the high altar . A Life of Saint Ælfheah in prose and verse was written by a Canterbury monk named Osbern , at Lanfranc 's request . The prose version has survived , but the Life is very much a hagiography : many of the stories it contains have obvious Biblical parallels , making them suspect as a historical record .

In the late medieval period , Ælfheah 's feast day was celebrated in Scandinavia , perhaps because of the saint 's connection with Cnut . Few church dedications to him are known , with most of them occurring in Kent and one each in London and Winchester ; as well as St Alfege 's Church in Greenwich , a nearby hospital ( 1931 @-@ 1968 ) was named after him . In 1929 a new church in Bath was dedicated to Ælfheah , under the name Alphege , designed by Giles Gilbert Scott in homage to the ancient Roman church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin .