

# Dragons' Den star Deborah Meaden lends her voice to station announcements as South Western Railway backs the Save Our Wild Isles campaign

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Dragons' Den star Deborah Meaden will be heard in [South Western Railway](#) (SWR) station announcements throughout June as the investor and environmental campaigner teams up with the train operator to back the Save Our Wild Isles campaign.

The campaign, launched by the RSPB, WWF and the National Trust this year, calls for an immediate halt to the destruction of UK nature and urgent action for nature recovery, while urging companies to commit to plans to become 'nature positive'.

To be nature positive means halting and reversing nature decline by restoring wildlife and having an overall positive impact on nature. Not only does SWR support the Save Our Wild Isles campaign, it is also the first train operator in the UK to sign the Nature Positive Business Pledge.

As one of the country's largest train operating companies, serving customers across South West London, Surrey, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Berkshire, Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset and Devon, the SWR network is home to a wide range of animal and plant species which it aims to protect and help flourish.

During the last 12 months alone, SWR has converted the equivalent of three football pitches into biodiversity gardens with the RSPB. It has also planted 15 wildflower meadows and introduced over 40 homes for insects and birds.

As part of the pledge, SWR will map the biodiverse habitats of its network, baseline its total impact on nature – including through its value chain – and create a Nature Positive Framework and Action Plan, to deliver a positive contribution to the regeneration and restoration of nature. This work will be completed with the support of the Nature Services team at management, engineering and development consultancy Mott MacDonald.

Recognising SWR's backing for the Save Our Wild Isles campaign and commitment to biodiversity, Deborah Meaden has voiced the announcements which customers will hear at stations across the SWR network, encouraging them to play their part in creating habitats for nature and increasing biodiversity.

The clips originally featured in a series of short films created for businesses as part of the Save Our Wild Isles campaign. To view the films and find out how everyone can play a part in tackling the nature and climate crisis, please visit [www.saveourwildisles.org.uk](http://www.saveourwildisles.org.uk).

Deborah Meaden, business leader and investor, said: "Supporting the Save Our Wild Isles campaign is so important which is why I am pleased to see that South Western Railway is leading the way for rail in supporting nature and responding to the biodiversity crisis by pledging to become Biodiversity Net Positive by 2030 and also the first rail operator in the UK to sign the Nature Positive Business Pledge."

Amy Dickinson, SWR's head of sustainability, said: "Save Our Wild Isles is a fantastic campaign and offers simple steps we can all make both at home or at work to help the wildlife on our doorstep. It's a campaign that SWR is proud to support, as we want our network to be a place where nature can thrive, whether in our stations and depots, by the trackside or in our community gardens.

"We all benefit from biodiversity. That's why we'll continue to engage with our colleagues, customers and partners to support the unique habitats across the region we serve. Signing up to the Nature Positive Business Pledge means that our processes will be robust and we can learn together with others who are on a similar journey."

Julia Baker, head of nature services at Mott MacDonald, said: "Becoming nature positive starts with an understanding of how a company's activities (and all activities from office stationery, to transport fleet, to site maintenance) affect nature, and then developing an action plan to address negative impacts and have an overall positive impact on nature.

"Nature positive is a fast-emerging field, and it's incredibly exciting to work with SWR as it takes a leading position in, not just nature positive, but how becoming nature positive can help to tackle climate change."

The RSPB, WWF and National Trust said: “The state of biodiversity in the UK is critical and nature is in crisis with more than 40% of species populations declining since 1970 and the UK in the bottom 10% of countries worldwide for the nature we have left.

“Addressing this urgent issue is one of the defining challenges of our time, and businesses have a crucial role to play in reversing this trend by adopting sustainable practices and supporting conservation efforts.

“It’s heartening to see industry leaders such as SWR committing to becoming nature positive. – only with this kind of action can we hope to save our wild isles.”

*Photo credit: South Western Railway*