

Transport for Wales welcomes new Community Rail Partnership for South West Wales

August 24, 2020



Transport for Wales welcomes the launch of the new Community Rail Partnership for the South West Wales region, which is designed to help communities get the most benefit from their rail services.

The new Community Rail Partnership, South West Wales Connected (SWW Connected), will engage with communities across Swansea, Neath, Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire to maximise the role the railway can play in fulfilling the goals of the Welsh Government's Well-Being of Future Generations Act.

SWW Connected has been established by Transport for Wales and is hosted by 4theRegion, a membership alliance working to bring about positive change across the region. It is based in a dedicated community facility at Swansea railway station in a previously empty area that has been redeveloped as part of

Transport for Wales' Station Improvement Vision.

The overall aim of SWW Connected is to connect local communities with their railway, delivering social and economic benefit and increasing rail use within the region. Among other things it will promote rail as a sustainable, accessible and healthy means of travel, encourage rail use by locals and tourists, and help local communities and businesses engage with the rail network.

James Price, Transport for Wales CEO, said: "I'm delighted to welcome the launch of South West Wales Connected. Community Rail Partnerships are a key part of our wider Community Rail Vision, and this is the first of several new partnerships that will be launched in the coming years to better support local communities around the Wales and Borders community.

"It's essential that we value the contribution communities can bring to our network and fully maximise the contribution that our services can bring to communities. I look forward to working collaboratively with SWW Connected and helping them deliver their exciting plans and ambitions for working with communities throughout South West Wales."

Jennifer Barfoot, South West Wales Connected's Community Rail Partnership Officer, said: "We are distinctly aware of the challenges that Covid-19 has brought to our communities and we have the opportunity to help communities overcome those challenges. By connecting and encouraging collaboration among businesses and organisations in local communities, we can empower those communities to work better together on a whole range of social, economic, cultural and environmental issues. I am very much looking forward to working with communities across South West Wales."

Dawn Lyle, 4theRegion founder and chair, said: "South West Wales Connected will play an important part in helping 4theRegion achieve its aims of creating positive change in the region in areas such as wellbeing, sustainability, tourism and economic development. Our rail network is a hugely valuable resource that connects and unites the region, and we want to help people get the most out of it. We very much look forward to working with Jennifer and SWW Connected on this project."

Jools Townsend, Community Rail Network Chief Executive, said: "As the umbrella body representing community rail partnerships and groups across Wales and beyond, we're thrilled to welcome South West Wales Connected on board. Community rail plays an incredibly important role in helping communities get the most benefit from their local railways, including promoting sustainable travel and tourism by rail, and developing accessibility and inclusion. They also help local people to have a voice in rail development, making the railway more inclusive, community-minded and future-focused.

"This is doubly important right now in helping our communities and railways recover and build back better from Covid-19. We're looking forward to supporting South West Wales Connected to engage and empower their local communities, connecting them with their railways."

Transport for Wales is part-funding South West Wales Connected to deliver its wider vision for community rail. South West Wales Connected will work collaboratively with Transport for Wales and other local partners to identify and develop opportunities to help individuals, groups and communities make the most of the advantages the rail network can deliver.

Transport for Wales also works with five other community rail partnerships around its network. Its wider Community Rail Vision also includes an active and successful station adoption scheme. The eventual aim is to have Community Rail Partnerships to cover its entire network of 247 stations across almost 30 local authority areas.

Photo credit: Transport for Wales

For today's rail news from railbusinessdaily.com [click here](#).