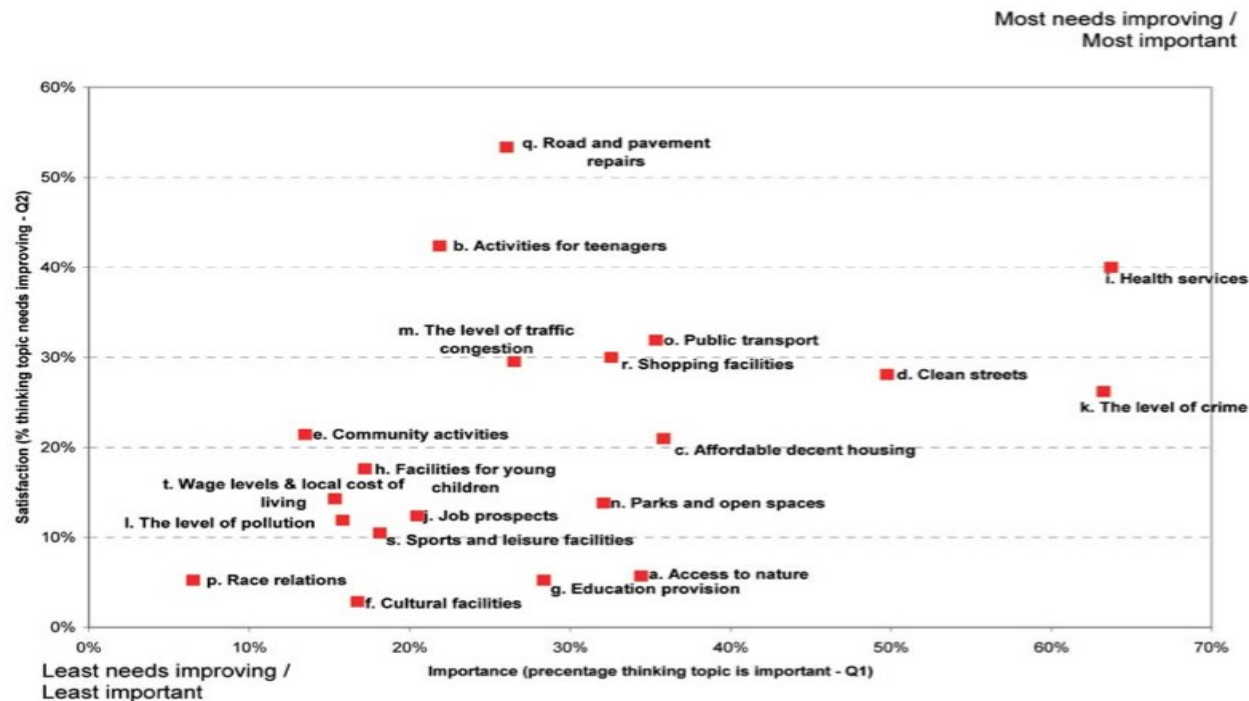


Importance of public transport to the people of Wiltshire

Melksham Board presentation so Melksham area data.

- * 4th out of 20 "most important" for the Unitary Council
- * 4th out of 20 "needs most attention" by Unitary Council.
- * Only "Health" is higher on both scales in Melksham.



Other areas in Wiltshire show Public Transport almost as high.

Not everyone can drive or has access to a car

- * One in 7 households in Melksham does not have a car or van at all.
- * Goodness knows how many households have multiple adults and just one car.
- * Young, Old, disabled / health issues cannot drive.

Residents seeking employment need transport to get to their place of work

- * Melksham has one of the highest job seeker figures in Wiltshire
- * Without cars, people are limited where they can carefully - place and job hours

Businesses need good public transport to tempt people to them & them to the area.

Businesses need good public transport to widen the pool of potential employees

How much difference can this make? Micro-example – Well House Consultants:

- * 4% of our customers arrive in Melksham by train
- * Would be 50% if there were an appropriate train service (ask for details)

“One of the fastest ways to grow out of a recession is tourism” ... and tourists need transport!

Geography and a bit of history

The "TransWilts" rail line from Swindon via Chippenham / Melksham / Trowbridge to Westbury and on to Dilton Marsh, Warminster and Salisbury is in excellent condition throughout.



Trains run every 30 minutes Swindon to Chippenham, and at least every hour Trowbridge to Salisbury.

In the middle section of the line (Chippenham - Melksham - Trowbridge) there are just 2 trains each way per day:

From Chippenham at 06:30 and 19:01.
From Trowbridge at 07:07 and 19:42.

North to South connectivity is dire; major roads run East – West and the North – South A350 trunk road is congested and slow.

Current timings meet the specification of the Department for Transport for the current franchise. (Also 2 each way Saturday, 2 northbound only on Sunday)

The stated intent was to provide a commuter service from Westbury / Trowbridge / Melksham to Swindon, but as timetabled commuters have 11 hours in Swindon (07:48 to 18:44) - greatly in excess of a working day and this makes the line impractical for commuting. *The lack of additional trains and non-connecting buses in the evening also renders the service unsuitable for people who may need to work late!*

Operationally the timings cannot easily be changed, as the train used also provides the true peak commuter service from Swindon to Gloucester and Cheltenham (am) and back (pm).

The Department for Transport's own consultants - recommended a service every 2 hours through the day for the current franchise (Jacobs 2004), but (unique to the whole SW area consultants report) the DfT included a much lower service level within the specification.

Growth of the area

Salisbury, Trowbridge, Chippenham, Melksham, Swindon, Warminster & Westbury ...
... are all growing rapidly.



Same field, Melksham, 2009 and 2011

Traffic flows for commuters, business, education, personal and leisure are strong between Wiltshire towns.

Not all services are offered in all towns, and these towns are pulled ever closer by the unitary authority, the LEP, etc. The A350 road is busy / bottlenecked and likely to become **more so with housing growth and the heavy lorries diverted away from Bath / A36 Cleveland Bridge weight restrictions.**

Rail traffic grew from 2001 to 2006 (compound 10% to 35% per annum, depending on measure examined) under a previous franchise, but is currently insignificant. It has been hypothesized that this is due to the absence of trains *at appropriate times.*



Background to current request for improved rail service

Request from local residents, businesses, visitors to area (see "support" later) is for an APPROPRIATE service.

That refines to:

- * Services at times / providing for many flows such that people will use them.
- * Services for the economic, environmental and life quality improvement
- * Services affordable by the user that can be provided at affordable cost
- * Services that do not require major capital investment to work.

Preliminary research indicated that a service to run hourly is appropriate. However, the need for freight paths on the line indicates that an initial service level of hourly in peaks and 2 hours out of 3 offpeak would be a better business case and would avoid the need for major capital investment.

First Great Western - current train operating Company - drew up a draft timetable showing trains that they could potentially run ...

We are aware that an adjustment is needed to these timetables for both of the extra units to run at the same time; that is dealt with in the Network Rail report which is covered later.

From / plat		2 x units	2	2			2	2	GMV		2	
Swindon	d	-	0618	0736	0852	-	-	1035	1236	-	-	1443
Chippenham	d	-	0634	0752	0908	-	-	1051	1252	-	-	1459
Melksham	d	-	0643	0801	0918	-	-	1101	1301	-	-	1508
Trowbridge	d	-	0653	0811	0932	-	-	1110	1311	1318	-	1518
Westbury	a	-	0701	0818	0939	-	-	1117	1318	1325	-	1525
	d	0526	0704	0819	0943	1008	1107	1119	1319	1327	1508	1526
Dilton Marsh	d	-	0706	0822	0946	1010	1109	1122	1322	-	1510	1529
Warminster	d	0534	0713	0828	0953	1019	1116	1128	1328	1336	1519	1535
Salisbury	a	05D58	0735	0852	1020	-	1138	1152	1352	1358	-	1558
Salisbury	d	-	0736	-	-	-	1139	-	-	1359	-	-
Romsey	a	-	0756	-	-	-	1158	-	-	1418	-	-
Southampton	a	-	0809	-	-	-	1219	-	-	1432	-	-

Also note that if the High Summer 1436 PAD-EXE runs, then 1527 SWI-SAL must run in an alternative path, and potentially run as an ECS for 10 days per year.

From / plat		3*	3	2	1**		
Swindon	d	1527	-	1735	1819	1852	2207
Chippenham	d	1543	-	1751	1835	1909	2223
Melksham	d	1552	-	1800	1844	1919	2232
Trowbridge	d	1602	-	1810	1858	1933	2244
Westbury	a	1610	-	1817	1905	1939	2251
	d	1611	1708	1818	-	1940	-
Dilton Marsh	d	1614	1711	1821	-	1942	-
Warminster	d	1620	1718	1827	-	1949	-
Salisbury	a	1647	-	1851	-	2012	-
Salisbury	d	-	-	-	-	2013	-
Romsey	a	-	-	-	-	2035	-
Southampton	a	-	-	-	-	2045	-

Timetable		New services	Retimed services	=Removed services									
Southampton	d	-	-	-	-	-	0823	0823	-	-	1042	1226	1226
Romsey	d	-	-	-	-	-	0835	0835	-	-	1054	1239	1239
Salisbury	a	-	-	-	-	-	0902	0902	-	-	1113	1304	1304
	d	-	0612	-	0655	-	0903	0908	1105	-	1114	1305	1310
Warminster	d	-	0632	-	0716	0723	0923	0928	1125	1025	1133	1325	1335
Dilton Marsh	d	-	0636	-	0721	0727	0928	-	1130	1029	-	1330	-
Westbury	a	-	0640	-	0724	0732	0932	0936	1134	1033	1138	1334	1342
	d	0615	0642	0702	0733	0738	0933	0938	1135	-	1138	1349	1342
Trowbridge	d	0621	0648	0708	0739	0744	0939	0944	1141	-	1144	1355	1351
Melksham	d	0630	-	0717	0750	-	0948	-	1151	-	-	1404	-
Chippenham	d	0641	-	0730	0801	-	1001	-	1201	-	-	1414	-
Swindon	a	0702	-	0748	0818	-	1018	-	1218	-	-	1431	-
To / plat		2	GCR	2	GMV	2	GMV	3	GMV	2	GMV	2	WO F

Timetable													
Southampton	d	-	-	-	-	-	-	1842	-	2120			
Romsey	d	-	-	-	-	-	-	1854	-	2131			
Salisbury	a	-	-	-	-	-	-	1912	-	2152			
	d	1405	-	1605	1655	-	1903	1913	-	2153			
Warminster	d	1425	1528	1625	1716	1728	1923	1932	-	2215			
Dilton Marsh	d	1430	1532	1630	1721	1732	1928	-	-	2220			
Westbury	a	1434	1536	1634	1723	1736	1932	1940	-	2225			
	d	1435	1538	1635	1724	1738	1933	1941	2100	-			
Trowbridge	d	1441	1544	1641	1730	1744	1939	1947	2106	-			
Melksham	d	1451	-	1651	1739	-	1949	-	2115	-			
Chippenham	d	1500	-	1701	1750	-	2002	-	2126	-			
Swindon	a	1517	-	1718	1807	-	2019	-	2143	-			
To / plat		GMV	3	2	GMV		WO S	1*					

Needed Actions

Department for Transport asked for following to confirm viability of proposed service:

- * Economic Case report (*to DfT standards*)
- * Operational Case report (*to DfT standards*)
- * Business Survey
- * Public Survey
- * AND also - proof of figures in surveys

DfT Standards means reports written by one of a small number of authorised consultants (economic) and by Network Rail (Operational).

Each of these is an excellent step – not only to convince the DfT but also to ensure we have – as far as possible – a tested and proven case to ensure that a TransWilts service would repeat the success of rail improvements that have gone before such as the lines to Clitheroe (pop 15,000), Ebbw Vale (24,000) and Alloa (19,000)

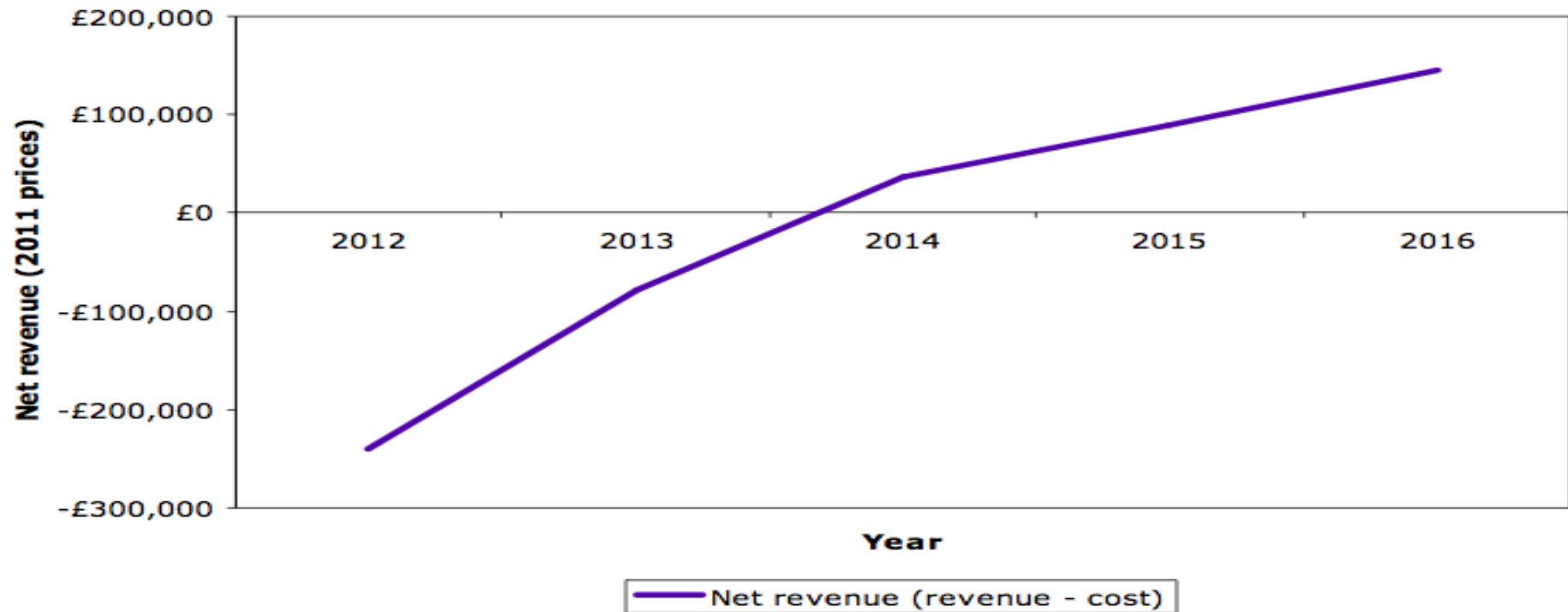
How have we done on those? **Thanks to the Performance Reward Grant approved by this area board**, we have the reports / that work done.

Economic Case

By the MVA Consultancy (*out of area - unlikely to be biased*)

Concluded there is a 2.74 Benefit to cost ratio for the proposed service (1.5+ needed)

Also reported that existing service evidence is so different that BCR is likely to be much better.



Cost and revenue – into profit after a ramp up period of 2 years

Operational Case

By Network Rail

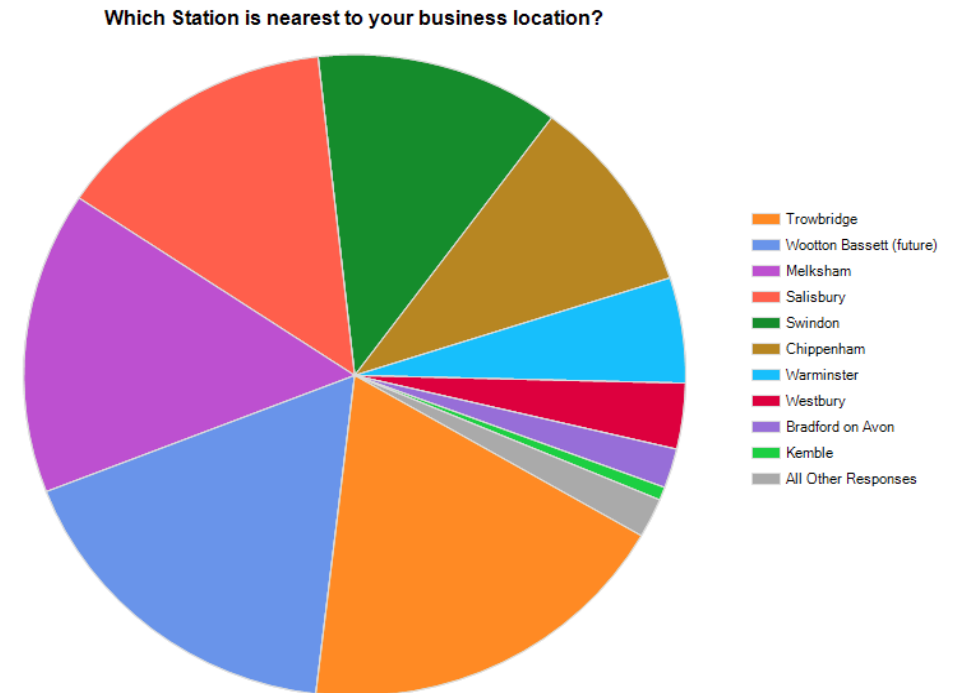
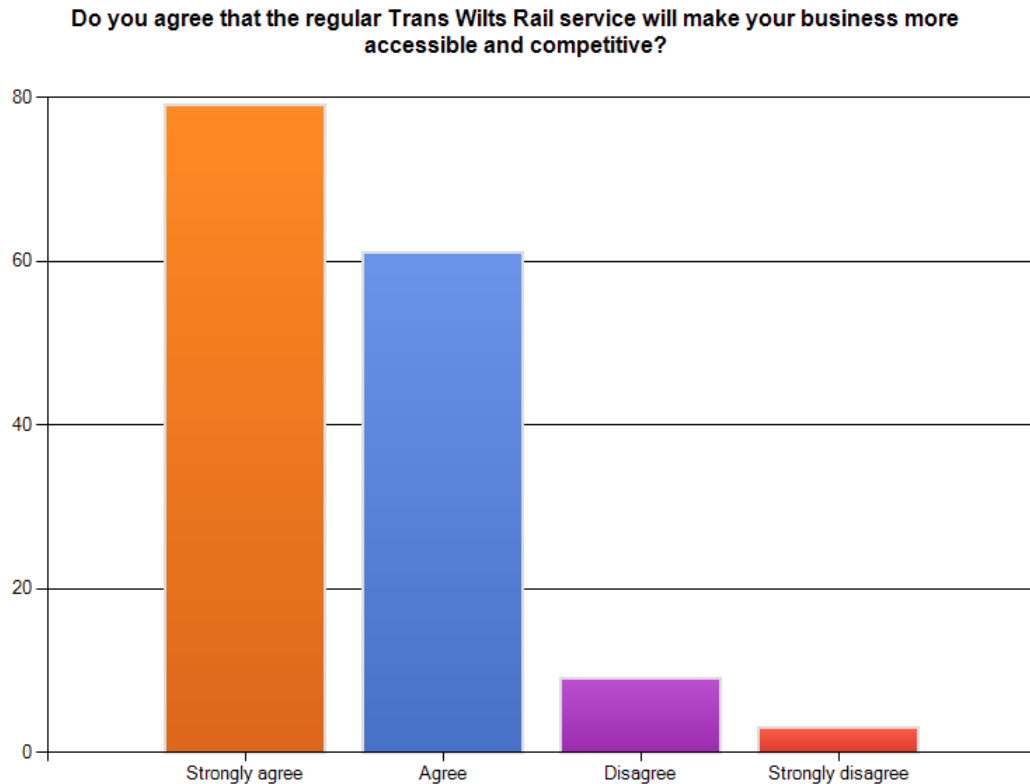
- * Services as drawn up by FGW can operate without capacity improvements. (minor timetable tweaks needed)
- * Line capacity is sufficient for an extra station stop at Royal Wootton Bassett (on the Chippenham line)
 - * Line capacity is sufficient for an extra station stop at Staverton between Trowbridge and Melksham

(NB - economic case is NOT dependent on these extra stops)

Line capacity remains sufficient even when extra trains are running post 2016 Swindon Electrification, and has been calculated assuming worst case (slowest acceleration) trains, even HST / 125s performance after the line is electrified.

Business Survey

Run by Wessex Association of Chambers of Commerce
Responses from 160 businesses representing 11,000 employees.



And what comments did businesses make? I'll add them unfiltered to give whole picture:

Main advantage is that we have offices in Trowbridge and Swindon which could be better linked.

Lots of clients from London and Bristol.

Easier for freelancers to visit us.

[Wootton Bassett (future)] We would be able to better complete with clients from neighbouring cities.

We all operate from home but I do many client visits and as often as I can I use the train - it may not always be quicker but unless the train is crowded I can usually get some work done.

I would use it for trips to the Swindon Area which now I always do by car

We frequently have meetings with other employees who work in Trowbridge. We are often invited to seminars and courses in Chippenham. It would be cheaper, quicker and less stressful to use the train from Melksham to these towns

Warminster station is too far. If say Codford station was to reopen, it would be a great help.

[From Salisbury] Strongly Agree - Trips to Head Office in Swindon

[From Salisbury] The benefit to my business would not be for employees commuting in but for travel out to Chippenham and Swindon.

The rail links would help companies meet future environmental targets regarding green commutes and help employees themselves find greener ways to commute to work

Quite a few employees would use the Wootton Bassett Station and other stations along the Wiltshire route to commute to the workplace

A more frequent rail service would be beneficial for our staff as there would be less of a reliance on the use of cars and of course the dreading cost of parking.

Not on our commuting routes. Although for occasional head office meetings in Swindon it would be a great help.

Benefit from attracting customers.

Need to travel to London weekly, so a service from Trowbridge to Swindon/Chippenham would be very useful. More trains than from westbury.

Trowbridge is too far from the M4 corridor to significantly benefit from inward investment opportunities in that area. This locational disadvantage could be offset by a substantially improved rail service across Wiltshire and serving Trowbridge. This would also open up a much larger hinterland for the town in terms of an employee and shopping catchment.

This could be further enhanced by the development of a genuine transport interchange based around Trowbridge railway station.

We are being asked more frequently re reducing carbon footprint and help reduce cars being parked at Hospitals,

[Over 500 employees, Trowbridge, on commuting staff] I think it could be, but you'd have to get over the perception of late trains, cancellations and industrial action. Also need to consider the times and price.

[Melksham] We do not need to attract employees but we do need to attract customers

[Melksham] To be closer to a functioning train station would help our business

Our employees are all local, but we would attract customers as our business brings clients to the area and many come by train

It's not our employees, but our customers that need the service and often have to drive because of poor connections

[Westbury] My business requires work at home or travel to London and the North. A direct train to Chippenham or Swindon will reduce travel time (and costs?) and make road travel a less valuable option.

bring customers to us by train and bus

We are an employment Agency and people are limited in the area if they don't drive and the public transport links in this area are very poor. It would be candidates a much wider search for role in the area and also help each town, by giving better public access

We're an unusual business in that most of our staff need to be available to start very early / finish very late, and most are within walking distance.

Not for working at our main base, but several of our staff work away regularly and use the train whenever possible. That's rare at present, but could become regular.

I think the TWR proposal is ill thought out and short sighted. It will only make sense if the service incorporates the existing Salisbury to Romsey service.

We have visitors almost every week who travel far and wide to reach us. When there was a better train service to our local station, about a half of them used to

arrive by train; it's now only a tiny proportion of that, and they'll usually drive, or occasionally catch a taxi / getting a lift from another station which has a service that meets their needs.

[Salisbury] Use of Melksham station would be invaluable

It would be beneficial if the Wootton Bassett station was open both for staff coming to work and for travelling on business.

[Dilton Marsh / employee use] more than 50%

In relation to the Town attracting employees it would be a benefit but our staff are all local and this does not cause us a problem.

A regular service for staff to reach other businesses in the town must be an incentive.

My business would benefit more by bringing more customers. All my employees are Trowbridge based.

[Salisbury] We run training courses and often attend meetings in Swindon and Chippenham. This link would be very beneficial to both our employees and clients.

All our employees live locally but would use the route to attend meetings. But if this service existed new positions might be more attractive to people living further afield.

[no response to other questions except hourly commuter service] Would only be an advantage if the rolling stock used was obtained from outside the existing FGW franchise rather than robbing existing FGW rolling stock fleet which is already under strength for existing services.

[warminster - making business more accessible and competitive] Strongly agree - Easier for guests to arrive [We are a Bed & Breakfast business; High end of market]

[warminster] Especially if the trains could be timed to arrive between trains arriving on the Bristol Salisbury line.

We would encourage our clients to consider using this train to visit us in Warminster.

The Salisbury, Chippenham, Trowbridge link up with regular trains during the day would be an attractive alternative to driving

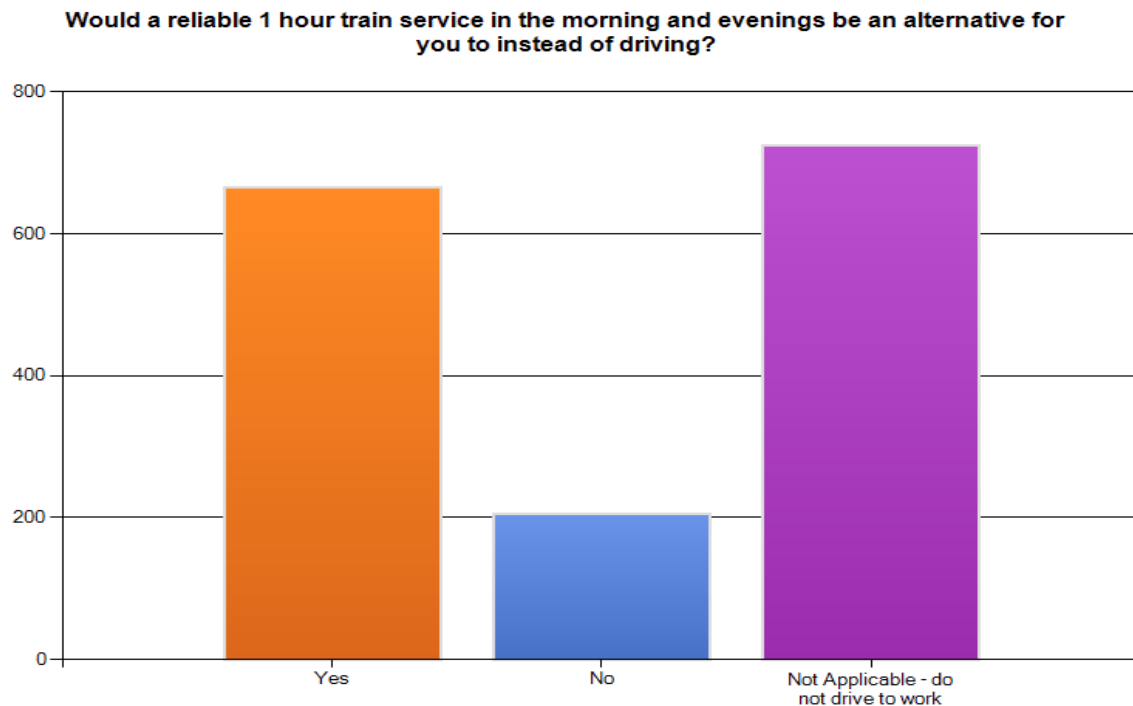
timing and reliability and rail cost have to be considered here. We are 1 mile from the proposed WB station so in the main we would strongly agree.

We want to employ graduates/school leavers but if they don't drive, they can't get to us, therefore we cannot employ them

Public Survey

- Run by Wessex Association of Chambers of Commerce
- 1600 individual replies

Commuting:

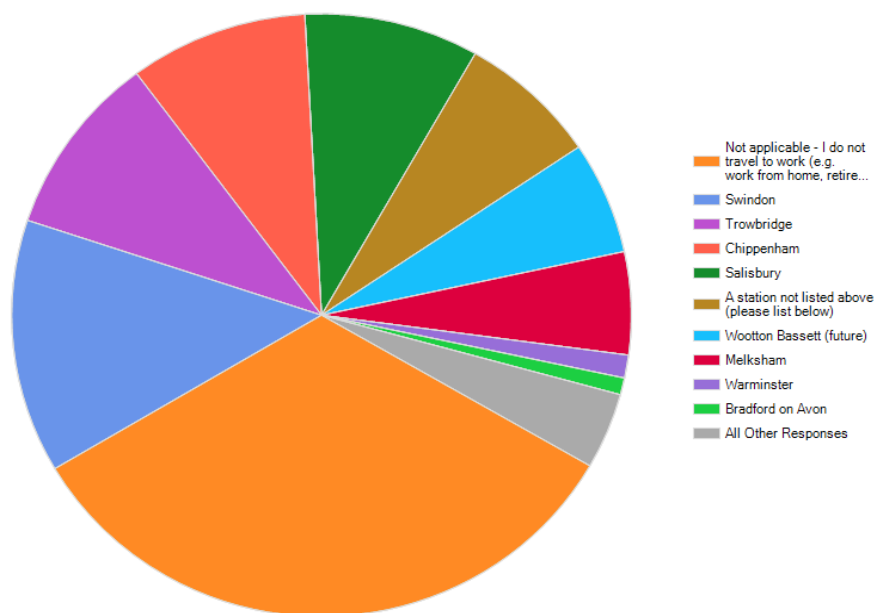


And note that over 600 commuters a day from within just our sample would fill the trains.

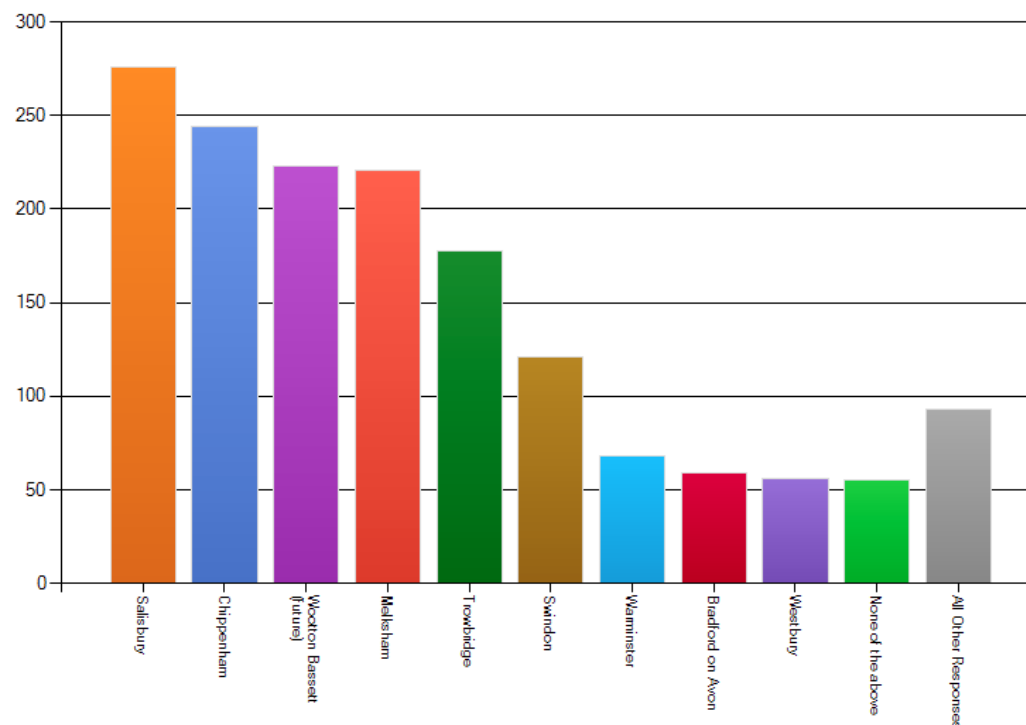
We reached 1600 out of tens of thousands of commuters.

Commuting on the TransWilts would be in BOTH directions ... so higher BCR

Which is your closest station to your work?



What is your closest station to your home?

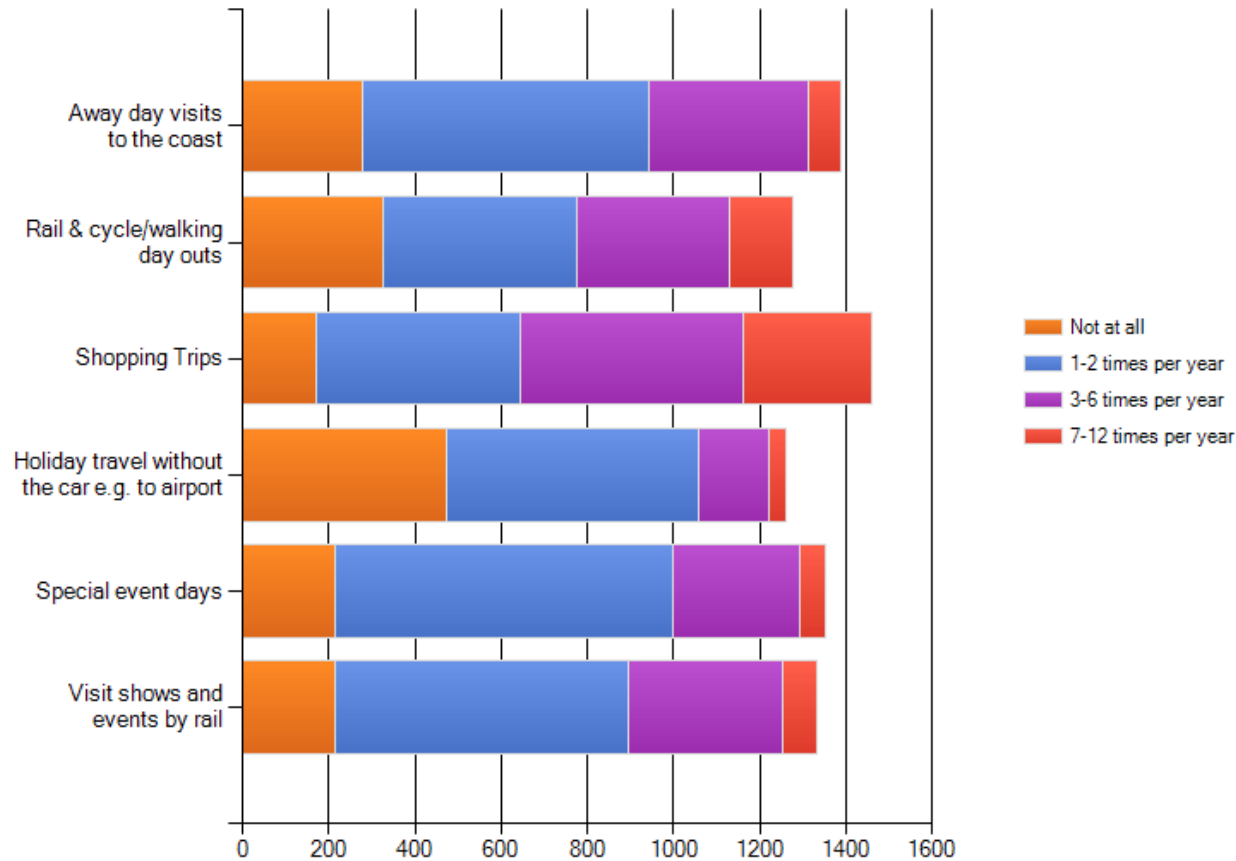


Commuting to: Swindon – Trowbridge – Chippenham – Salisbury – RWB – Melksham

Commuting from: Salisbury– Chippenham – RWB – Melksham – Trowbridge - Swindon

The survey also asked about leisure use of the service:

The TWR service will operate at weekends. How likely are you to use the following community services?



Taking a pessimistic view (1-2 means "once", 3-6 times means "4 times" and 7-12 times means "9 times"), that gives over 18,000 journeys per annum - split over 100 weekend days, that's 180 round trips (**360 journeys) per day**. It should be noted that this is only data from the people who responded - the line / service needs marketing [planned!] and will cause numbers to rise.

Furthermore, commuters tend to travel alone but leisure travellers go in groups, so with services that meet the leisure market's need, numbers should be considerably in excess of those extracted from the survey.

But how do we “prove” that ... and the case that are figures are valid?

We ran an extra trial Service this summer on 8 high summer Sunday mornings.

It gave people the opportunity of a day out.

It gave people the opportunity to use rail (as opposed to road or air) for some very long distance Sunday journeys – and people did that!



Detail

This Summer, First Great Western (sponsored by local businesses and Chambers of Commerce) ran an extra train from Westbury to Swindon at 07:30 on 8 high summer sundays, and a return train at 08:20 from Swindon to Westbury which then formed the 09:12 train to Weymouth. This latter allowed day trips to Weymouth.

The Weymouth trip was well patronised. A 4 carriage (300 seat) train ran from Swindon, and was fully loaded after the second week. At that point, advertising was cut to ensure the service did not overload. However, on 31st July the return train was so packed that people complained in the local newspaper. Plans were revised upwards, twice, and by the final day the passenger count had risen to 500 to Weymouth. These results were somewhat better than our public survey would have predicted, probably because our survey only reached a small audience. [[The Weymouth arrival - from Westbury - had just 25 people on board the week after our trial service finished. The return 19:37 Westbury to Swindon consistently carried over 200 people during a trial service, with some Chippenham / Swindon people using alternative services via Bath to avoid the crush. On the first Sunday after it conveyed 14.]]

We were also pleasantly surprised by the 07:30 from Westbury to Swindon which was regarded as an unlikely time to run a train - there's nothing else from Westbury to anywhere until after 09:00. We counted up to 68 passengers on this train. Journeys were being made far afield. Many people had found the train on the National Rail timetable system. Most were NOT seasonal. And disappointed that it was only high summer. *Pictures....*



Check, check, check, check, check, five out of five. Where now?

Case made in each of the requested areas. But not all plain sailing ...

- First Great Western have withdrawn from the final 3 franchise years (so now on short-termism); First Great Western in "Cap and Collar" which means they pay around 75% of any extra revenue to the government; New Franchise process underway.
- TransWilts Community Rail Partnership was refused membership of the "Association of Community Rail Partnerships" [spring] as that organisation exists primarily to help make better use of existing services rather than add new ones. This may not be all that significant, and in any case we have now proven our ability to bring in passengers on existing services
- GoCo - a co-operative Open Access Operator - are working towards the provision of a service from Westbury to Birmingham Moor Street with brand new stock. At its best, this could mesh with the Swindon - Salisbury service to provide a truly appropriate mix over the line. At its worst, the attraction of this potential (excellent but longer-odds) solution could lead to a complacency in driving the Swindon - Salisbury proposals - for which all the work has been done - forward.

More (sorry!) ...

- Rail use in the UK has been growing 10% per annum compound for the last decade. This is a much higher growth than has predicted (0.8%) and has led to a shortage of carriages - so even with a good case we are in competition for stock. The railway industry structure is not conducive to speculative building of trains to lease to train operators / it's not really a free market.
- Philip Hammond has been replaced as the Minister of Transport by Justine Greening (but she has already said "Short-termism became the British disease. Well, no longer." - 19th October, speech to London Chamber of Commerce Transport Dinner, 10 October). So our long term goals should be up her street.

<http://www.goco.coop/train/>

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/news/speeches/greening-20011019>

But challenges can be opportunities – we have an opportunity to ask for the full appropriate service in the new franchise, rapid rail growth helps our case for a service, and the new minister is already thinking along longer time lines that we would like to thing along too. **We want to gain AND RETAIN the appropriate service.**

Support – we have:

MP Support
Wiltshire Council Support
Chambers of Commerce support
TOC and NR Support
Government Policy Support (strategically at least)
LEP Support
Local Councils Support
MoD Support
Campaign / specialist group Support
Traveller and passenger Support
Public Support

And we have already shown what can be achieved. The current franchise spec says that 2 trains a day should pass through and call at Melksham on a Sunday. We have got that up to 3 all year, and 5 on Summer Sundays ... and there are many people who said “you can't influence the railways in England”. Oh yes you can – we have proof. With a good case, enthusiasm, and confidence to show that the local community and local authorities are there to support services for the long haul, with everyone working together.

How do we get the service running for which the case is made?

- The new franchise is a golden opportunity to get the right service. We are perhaps the best prepared line in the South West with all the reports, and a line which needs no infrastructure work to run the trains.
- Electrification of the main line from London via Swindon and Chippenham will provide extra capacity, an extra draw of traffic from Trowbridge / Melksham, and an opportunity for small infrastructure and signalling measures to be included.
- As the suggestion of Phillip Hammond to 7 local MPs who went to see him, WC are preparing a 5m pound LSTF (Local Sustainability Transport Fund) bid to fill the gap in revenue for the first two years of the service and provide capital improvements such as the station at Wootton Bassett, Park and Ride, bus and cycle interchange at Melksham.
- TransWilts Rail and the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership will continue to liaise with both the rail industry and with local communities and operators of other transport (buses, cars, etc) for a truly integrated door to door / linked multimode system.

And looking at the immediate future



Ann-Marie, Bob, David, Dominic, John, Lisa, Lee, Paul, Peter, Roger, Sion, Victoria and other who had helped with the extra summer service took a well earned week's break ... but back to work with a TwCRP meeting on 10th September, meeting the new area manager (FGW) for our area on 14th, talking to Wootton Bassett Town Council on 15th, TravelWatch SouthWest meeting on 1st October and getting an official safety briefing on 8th (pictured) to be able to work on and help care for the non-operational side of Melksham station, supporting the WWRUG rail ramble on 22nd, and preparing for this presentation for 26th.

Truly there is a lot happening, and it's hard for us to find the time and make daytime meetings – so we will be looking for help to keep the ball rolling.

4th November – MRDG Meeting

22nd November – Phil Dominey, South West Trains at WWRUG

29th November – MRDG Meeting

4th December – Santa will be on the 17:15 from Trowbridge / 17:25 from Melksham

20th December – Santa will be on the 19:42 from Trowbridge to Swindon

Next Summer (everyone's been asking!) ... we'll be looking to extend the trial service from this summer to start in May and run to mid September ... in fact we're asking for it to carry on all through the year.

We are in for a changing political scene with a redrawing of constituency boundaries by the boundaries commission. Changes of minister. Changes of franchise.

From the reports that we've generated, the surveys undertaken and the extra evidence gathered I believe that TransWilts Rail is now in a position to take service improvement forward for the good of all who use it – and for the wider economy of the area too. Better access to to work and businesses. Congestion relief. And to help us bring people into the town to make use of the new canal, the new campus, follow the blue plaque trail being set up, and really enjoy our lovely area and help it prosper.



Prepare by Graham Ellis on behalf of the TransWilts Rail Team – E & O E
24th October 2011. <http://www.transwiltsrail.org.uk> 0845 459 0153
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