

## The 3-Point Plan for a great South West Peninsula railway

The South West Peninsula has a bigger economy than Merseyside, Leeds, Sheffield, South Wales or Greater Bristol, yet investment in our vital transport networks has not kept pace.

Government investment into SW transport is the lowest of any region in the UK at £182 /head compared to £545 in London, and just £41/head for railways. The increasing disruption and frequency of severe weather incidents has exposed this under-investment and highlighted the fragility of the Peninsula's rail links with the rest of the UK. There are no significant enhancements to the rail network planned by Network Rail for the south west over the next five years.

Our passenger numbers have rocketed by 123% in the last decade, twice the national average of 61% and far outstripping industry forecasts, so the case for Government to make big, decisive investments is compelling. Investment into the package of measures below will add £1bn every year to the Peninsula economy. Crucially, it will enable far greater connectivity to national and international markets, create opportunity and foster ambition, boosting growth from areas of overheating, allowing us to reach our potential.

And whilst we recognise this will take time, **the need is now**. We urge the Government to put the South West Peninsula at the top of the transport agenda and start to bridge the gap from today. That's why the Peninsula Rail Task Force is calling on the Government to back our 3-point plan for a great South West Peninsula railway - one that is:

- **Resilient and reliable**
- **With faster journey times, and better connectivity**
- **And sufficient capacity and comfort.**

### 1) A resilient and reliable railway – getting to the starting line

#### Dawlish - OUR LIFELINE

**WHAT:** Enhance resilience of the existing coastal route

**WHY:** Network Rail is obliged under the terms of its licence to maintain or renew old assets to a modern replacement standard capable of doing the same or better job. Dawlish is essential for our rail network to survive; however **we cannot wait until 2034 for the route to be safeguarded**. We need this as an absolute minimum.

**COST:** estimated £398 - £659m

#### East of Exeter Resilience

**WHAT:** Lengthen loops on the Waterloo line between Exeter, Yeovil and Castle Cary and a longer term solution for resilience for Bridgwater – Taunton by fully implementing the Levels and Moors Flood Action Plan.

**WHY:** This will create greater resilience, providing a diversionary route to the mainline to London, and protect the line across the Somerset Levels

**COST:** estimated £100m

### 2) Faster journey times and better connectivity - upgrading performance

#### Improving our existing network and rolling stock

**WHAT:** Through modern rolling stock with greater acceleration and automatic doors, enhanced signalling and track improvements in Exeter, Westbury, Reading – London areas

**WHY:** Improved journey time, performance and timetabling capacity for faster and more frequent trains between London and the South West – Somerset, Devon, Torbay, Plymouth and Cornwall

**COST:** estimated £1bn

#### Electrification – futureproofing

**WHAT :** Continue the planned programme of electrification from Newbury to Paignton, Plymouth and Penzance and the cross country route through Bristol to Birmingham

**WHY:** As the last **and only region** without plans for electrification, no new diesel rolling stock will be procured, so we will be running on obsolete stock by 2043 and losing £73m a year through GVA

**COST:** estimated £2bn (plus 66% contingency)

### **3) Sufficient capacity and quality – meeting passenger needs, growing expectations**

#### **West of Exeter - Exeter to Newton Abbot**

**WHAT:** An additional line between Exeter and Newton Abbot

**WHY:** As shown by Network Rail's Western Route Study, the mix of different speed trains on this section means it cannot accommodate sufficient services to meet demand, so four tracks between Exeter and Newton Abbot are required to meet capacity and reducing journey time

**COST:** estimated £1.49bn - £3.1bn

#### **West of Exeter – Northern Route**

**WHAT:** Implementation of a northern route via Okehampton

**WHY:** Expand the Devon Metro network to provide new local rail connections to Exeter and Plymouth for communities in West Devon and North Cornwall, providing a diversionary route.

**COST:** estimated £350m - £750m

**For more detail about our solutions please see the accompanying proposed programme of improvements. You can also find more information at: [www.resiliencesouthwest.co.uk](http://www.resiliencesouthwest.co.uk) or by contacting Coast Communications on 01579 352 600 / [info@resiliencesouthwest.co.uk](mailto:info@resiliencesouthwest.co.uk)**

**The Peninsula Rail Task Force is a rail improvement campaign group comprising Cornwall Council, Cornwall and Scillies LEP, Devon County Council, Heart of the South West LEP, Plymouth City Council, Somerset County Council and Torbay Council.**