



**1. The case for an improved rail service to Pilning:** FOSBR reminds WEP that in their Great Western Franchise response they requested an improved service for Pilning, and would encourage WEP to request GWR to instate a trial commuter service in 2016 for both workers in Severnside and Thornbury residents wishing to commute to and from Bristol and Wales. FOSBR notes the continued economic development of Severnside with attendant increase in rail ridership; the continued opposition of the Port of Bristol to any improvement in the Severn Beach Station service frequency beyond hourly; the 21 minute journey time from Pilning to Temple Meads as compared with the 37 minute journey from Severn Beach; the possibility of the current half-hour services to Severn Tunnel Junction also stopping at Pilning; and the existing passing loop at Pilning Station allowing slow trains to be overtaken by fast ones. We would suggest that a trial daily commuter service into Bristol could be instigated immediately with an 08:32 stop at Pilning (as for the Saturday timetable), with a suitable return service in the evening. We have held meetings with Pilning residents where a preference was stated for a stop on the Cardiff to Portsmouth Harbour service at 07:52, and would welcome a comment from GWR on whether such an early morning stop on the CDF-PMH line could be accommodated with a slightly earlier start at Cardiff.

**2. Replacement of the footbridge at Pilning** – FOSBR notes that Network Rail cites a low footfall as the justification for the non-replacement of the footbridge, but warns that the removal of the footbridge would render impractical and therefore unsuccessful any trial commuter services as noted above. The provision of a 13:32 Bristol-bound Saturday service to replace the 15:42 Cardiff-bound Saturday service would necessitate a 45 minute wait at Severn Tunnel Junction and therefore cut short any Saturday outing by 3 hours. FOSBR also note that if the footbridge is not replaced now the island platform will degrade significantly with time and that replacing the footbridge later will be therefore much more costly. FOSBR therefore urge WEP strongly to press the Secretary of State to ensure that a footbridge is provided at Pilning within the budget and timescale of the electrification works, as not replacing the footbridge would degrade significantly the working of the station and would therefore not be simply a Network Change. Network Rail have therefore been disingenuous in treating the Pilning footbridge non-replacement as a Network Change only and should have carried out wider consultation in line with current statutory procedures for closing stations. FOSBR notes that Pilning is presumably not eligible for the New Stations Fund as it is an existing station, but would point out that replacing the footbridge at Pilning for £0.5m is cheaper than reopening any new station and should be prioritised now while the platforms are in a state of good repair.

**3. Access and New Stations fund:** FOSBR notes that St Anne's Park was not included in the current bid for the New Stations Fund, whereas Saltford, Portway Park and Ride and Ashton Gate were included, and would welcome clarification on the criteria for eligibility. FOSBR also notes the lack of clarification on Stapleton Rd, Lawrence Hill and Patchway disabled access due to the four-tracking and electrification works and would support a formal complaint to the relevant Equalities Boards on this issue. FOSBR would urge WEP to start to work up other business cases up to GRIP 3 for other stations highlighted in our MetroWest Phase 3 suggestions attached here.

**4. Bristol East Junction:** FOSBR notes that this capacity improvement is necessary for MetroWest Phase 2 (and desirable for Phase 1) and would encourage WELEP to write to the DfT in support of Network Rail's renewed request for this currently unfunded improvement so that it can be delivered in 2019 and avoid further slippage of the MetroWest programme. FOSBR also has suggested in the Devolution Consultation (attached) that the Secretary of State should devolve the capability to grant Development Consent Orders so as to facilitate the delivery of MetroWest Phase 1 and 2 as well as future phases of MetroWest.