

Blackmore Vale Line Community Rail Partnership

PASSENGER SURVEY RESULTS

*Your Railway
Your Say*



ABOUT US:

The Blackmore Vale Line Community Rail Partnership is a DfT accredited rail partnership, covering the stations of Tisbury, Gillingham, Templecombe, Sherborne, Yeovil Junction, Crewkerne and Salisbury on the South Western Railway West of England London Waterloo to Exeter mainline.



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INTRODUCTION

About Blackmore Vale Line Community Rail Partnership.

Blackmore Vale Line Community Rail Partnership (BVCRP) launched in 2016 and covers the stations of Tisbury, Gillingham, Templecombe, Sherborne, Yeovil Junction, Crewkerne and recently Salisbury on the South Western Railway West of England London Waterloo to Exeter mainline. In 2021 the rail partnership achieved Department of Transport (DFT) accreditation status, endorsing high standards of governance, financial propriety, with objectives and activities supported by the Government. BVCRP is one of only a few rail partnerships on the South Western Railway network to have achieved this coveted status.

The area of benefit covers the three counties of Wiltshire, Dorset, and Somerset with a core area of towns and villages within South Somerset, North Dorset, West Dorset and South and West Wiltshire. More than 190 predominately rural settlements served by the City of Salisbury and the eleven major regional towns and villages of **Tisbury**, **Gillingham**, Shaftesbury, Mere, Wincanton, **Templecombe**, Stalbridge, Marnhull, Sturminster Newton, **Sherborne**, Yeovil, **Crewkerne** and Chard.

Working with local people, station groups, statutory and voluntary groups, and businesses, the rail partnership promotes the area to prospective rail passengers stimulating tourism and the local economy. The other core aims are working to increase community involvement in its award-winning stations and encourages residents and visitors to use the stations for a wide range of journeys. A core value is nurturing and celebrating the volunteering effort across the stations. The many facilities and extra enhancements provided by the Station Friends groups and BVCRP contribute to making attractive, welcoming stations for rail-users and visitors. The 'Go Green By Train' campaign highlights the train as a greener travel option, and BVCRP has taken up the baton to endorse this message. Encouraging sustainable onward connectivity by promoting local bus services, and electric car, scooter and bike hire.

Having a mainline railway and stations is a significant endowment for any area, and over thirty-five daily trains run in and out of the region. Opportunities exist to create and build joined-up thinking and initiatives when people recognise what a great asset they have in the station, and how it can play a major part in promoting the regions' towns and many villages. BVCRP is working with local people and town councils establishing 'Town Teams,' bringing together people interested in promoting their towns and stations as gateway visitor destinations. **Salisbury** is a main transport hub for the West Country and Wales. **Tisbury** is the only 'dark skies' friendly railway station in the UK and is the gateway to Cranborne Chase AONB international dark sky reserve. **Gillingham** Station is a walkers paradise and home to the medieval Royal Forest. It is also the gateway to North Dorset made famous by Victorian writer Thomas Hardy. Half hourly station bus service to the hill top town of Shaftesbury and iconic Gold Hill. **Templecombe** is one of Britain's Best Kept Stations and destination for the annual international medieval pageant. **Sherborne** is one of the most beautiful towns in the England, with a beautiful abbey, two castles, the best garden centre in Dorset and a superb selection of specialist shops. **Yeovil Junction** sits along the heritage steam centre and there is a regular bus service into Yeovil town, home of The Glovers Football team, Quedam shopping centre, multi-screen cinema and bowl plex, and award-winning country park. **Crewkerne** is a 15-minute walk from the station and is one of Somerset's most charming market towns with fine examples of Georgian architecture, antiques, shopping centre, a lovely church and beautiful surrounding countryside.

The rail partnership is non-profit-making with membership open to local people and representatives of commercial, statutory, and voluntary organisations who are interested in promoting its core aims. The work of the rail partnership is set out in the Line Activity Plan overseen by a 15-strong Board which meets quarterly to review the actions. Projects range from marketing campaigns and events encouraging potential rail-users to visit the beautiful Blackmore Vale through to publications such as line guides, town and walks guides and a First World War book. Volunteering is at the heart of the rail partnership and celebrating this gives rise to annual seasonal favourites of “*Community Rail at Christmas*” and “*Stations in Bloom*,” both are brimming with friendly inter-station rivalry and fun. In 2022 the ‘*Stations in Bloom*’ campaign attracted interest from across the South Western and Great Western Railway network in Southern and South West England. In a pioneering joint venture, the regional CRPs of Blackmore Vale Line, Devon and Cornwall, East Hampshire, Purbeck, South Wessex and Swanage Railway united to promote volunteering, the railways, routes and stations of the region. Led by BVCRP, the resultant campaign renamed ‘*Celebration Station*’ was a public acknowledgement of the wonderful efforts and initiatives of volunteers, railway staff and guards in creating welcoming spaces for rail-users and visitors.

The Passenger Survey

Background

The actions and projects in the first activity plan of the Blackmore Vale CRP for 2016/2019 were based upon informed research to identify needs, gaps and priorities for future actions. Of the original priorities, one remains firmly at the top of the agenda, a rover rail card for the Salisbury to Exeter line. The rail partnership required evidence based knowledge to reinforce this need to present a solid case to SWR. It has been a long term goal to do a reassessment of needs based on passenger requirements in order to reassess and set new goals for future work.

Then the pandemic hit and everything changed.

The London Waterloo to Exeter line is one of the most profitable in the UK. During the pandemic of 2020/21 the railway service operated under a reduced timetable, and significant infrastructure changes occurred, the railways were placed under emergency measures and the direction of the government and Department of Transport. Whilst normal timetabling was reintroduced, the overseeing arrangements continue as future plans develop to create a new public body, the Great British Railways.

As a result of the new arrangements certain essential services for rail users have been removed and not reinstated. During the pandemic the policy was to take out of service all paper timetables and the on train trolley service suspended. Neither have been replaced since. Blackmore Vale Line CRP board members consider it essential to be proactive as a result of the ongoing challenges to the line. The priority being to gain strong, informative evidence of passenger-based requirements for the line. The need for a body of measurable evidence, a collection of data in the form of a passenger survey. Aim to collect information from rail users and non rail users

Rationale and knowledge behind survey questions:

The aim of the survey was to collect a body of meaningful evidence to create a better understanding of rail users requirements and experiences at the six stations belonging to the rail partnership. Questions were designed to give knowledge about the importance of the railway in a predominantly rural area, to discover the geographical importance and range of locations of the rail users, where journeys started and ended, whether there was extensive use of the line, particularly the Salisbury to Exeter route. Their experiences at the stations, on the train and any improvements required. The rail partnership has a long-term aim to have a railcard for the Salisbury to Exeter route as well as encouraging more families to use the train. Specific section of questions devised to gain knowledge of this.

The rail partnership works closely with the Salisbury to Exeter rail users group, and an awareness exists in both organisations of basic requirements and of those not being met. The survey designed to assess and flush these out through a series of direct questions as well as open-ended questions giving respondents the opportunity to submit their own views.

Timetables

Buffet Service

Better Access to Yeovil Junction

Better Access to Gillingham Station Platform 2

Café at Yeovil Junction

Ongoing perceived anti-social behaviour by young people at Gillingham Station

Not ask the direct questions but let respondents tell us.

Agreed 8% return is good as a baseline for strong evidence.

Methodology

A quantitative data collection

Two-page survey

Target audience: Rail users at stations.

Using the cluster-sampling method

Paper survey

A mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions

Responses were going to be subjective - as users of the line and services respondents asked to grade these, give opinions and list improvements.

Gain evidence of the geographical locations of rail users by asking for first part of postcodes.

Format

The survey format is a two-page A4 document with a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions requiring tick boxes and written answers and asking for three recommended improvements. An awareness that it was a weighty survey requiring time and commitment from the respondent to fill it in, but end results had potential to give a substantial body of evidence confirming or disproving theories and insights.

The survey was aimed at rail users and non rail users and split into two parts. First wave aimed at rail users at the station. The second more targeted approach for future action to seek out non-rail users.

Side 1 is based on a successful survey model produced by Devon and Cornwall CRP in 2017 and reproduced with kind permission. Side 2 is made up of questions specific to the BVCRP and based on current underlying knowledge and perceived unmet needs. Paper copies of the survey to be distributed to six stations of Crewkerne, Yeovil Junction, Sherborne, Templecombe, Gillingham and Tisbury. The survey form was designed to be emailed if required and could be filled in manually using the tab key to move between the questions. The original intention to produce an online version to compliment the paper version was shelved due to time constraints.

Survey Questions

A mixture:

13 tick box questions with five possible answers ranging from *disappointing to exceptional*.

2 tick box question with five possible answers ranging from *easy to difficult*.

1 tick box question with five possible answers ranging from *low priority to high priority*.

5 tick box question with two possible answers *yes or no*.

1 tick box questions with 3 possible answers *yes or no* + option to add other answer.

1 tick questions with 6 suggested answers.

1 tick box questions with 6 suggested answers + option to add other answer.

1 tick box questions with 7 suggested answers + option to add other answer.

Section specifically for families with a mixture of questions, tick boxes and answers.

Selection of open-ended questions asking for opinions, experiences and recommendations and for reasons why gave particular ratings.

Distribution

Each one of the six stations had 150 copies each of the survey (900 in total). It was agreed to run between June – October 2022. Support from the ticket office staff was essential in making this work and all agreed to have surveys and a collection box for completed surveys in each station waiting room.

Surveys were promoted via contacts list, website and social media. Completed surveys could also be posted to Derek Beer, Chairman of the rail partnership.

Influencing factors to take into account during survey period which may skew results:

- Templecombe embankment works and rail replacement
- Extreme Summer heat, delays and cancellations Summer 2022
- Speed restrictions on the line between Gillingham and Tisbury.
- A series of rail action strikes throughout 2021/2022

Collection and Return Rate

Returned surveys 246/900 - 27.3 % return.

The response rate was well above the previously agreed baseline level to represent a significant and robust body of evidence which without a doubt accurately reflects and substantiates what was previously only working theories. This important knowledge can be used for future action and change.

Surveys collected from each station box as follows :

Crewkerne : 63

Sherborne : 56

Tisbury : 43

Gillingham : 21

Templecombe : 14

Yeovil Junction : 6

Amazing considering cost and effort to post a survey, 43 completed surveys were posted to Derek Beer.

Without a doubt enormous thanks are due to the proactive stance taken by Derek Beer, Gail Coleshill, Bruce Ducan and SERUG members, Tony Reese and the supportive railway staff of Anne Dibble at Sherborne, Sarah Jay at Tisbury, and Victoria Brennan-Laird at Crewkerne. The response rate and return far exceeded expectations.

Results

Survey results were tempered throughout by responses put forward by an overwhelming body of very regular rail users of the London Waterloo to Exeter line. Clearly demonstrating an understanding of the current challenges and conditions in operation at certain times and strove to respond both judiciously and fairly. Not all surveys were filled in completely and typically it was the open-ended questions which were left blank. The number of responses to each question is given in the summary below. Respondents often made more than one answer to some questions, adding extra boxes for their answers. and even added their own comments to the graded answer section. The section for families was also filled in by some single people.

Summary of Main Findings:

- 41% of respondents to the survey were very regular users (weekly) of the line. Increasing to 68.6% when adding those using the service on a monthly basis.
- 94.1% of all respondents used BVCRP 6 Stations, increasing to 97.6% using the station along the Salisbury to Exeter route.
- 58.7% or over half of the respondents cited the location of station to home address was the biggest influencing factor for choosing the particular station.
- 59.5% of respondents either walk or drive and park at the station.
- 62.8% of respondents graded 3 and below expressing disappointment with the frequency of trains as opposed to 36.8% who rated the service 4 and above.
- 50% of respondents graded station facilities above average towards exceptional. Disappointments in toilet facilities especially at Gillingham station.
- Ease of use of ticket machine if no staff present 40.1% gave a 4-5 difficulty rating. Rising to 69.1% is graded 3 and above.
- 80.4% have access to online timetables.
- 40.1% give access to online timetables 4-5 difficulty rating – adding in 3 rating and the figures is 70%.
- 81.9% of respondents want printed timetables.
- 86.4% of respondents want printed posters at stations.
- 80.7% of respondents rated having a buffet service 3-5 high priority.
- 88.2% respondents would recommend travelling on Exeter to London line.

One respondent was clearly away with the fairies. Arriving at Gillingham station on a magic carpet, wanted more drugs available and clearly so bemused as to what was going on when a train arrived, they write “Hey man, the guard just blew his whistle at me!”

Summary of Findings

Question 1: How often do you use the line?

6 possible answers + 2 extra*provided by the respondents.

Response rate 100% 246 answers given:

| Twice or More Per Week | Once a Week | Once a Month | Every 2/3 months | Once or Twice a Year | Less than once per Year | *Other 3 or 4 times per year | *Twice a month |
|------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| 20.3% | 21.1% | 27.2% | 17.8% | 10.1% | 2.3% | 0.4% | 0.4% |

Weekly Users = 41% Monthly Users = 68.6%

41% of respondents to the survey were very regular users (weekly) of the line.

Question 2: Which station do you usually start your journey?

6 suggested stations: Tisbury, Gillingham, Templecombe, Sherborne, Yeovil Junction & Crewkerne + other please specify.

Response rate 100% +. 253 answers.

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|---|
| Tisbury | 17.3% | London Waterloo | 1% | Shaftesbury bus connection 1 | 1 |
| Gillingham | 11.1% | Axminster 1 =0.39% | 0.39% | Staines 1 | 1 |
| Templecombe | 3.1% | Basingstoke/Henley on Thames 1 | 1 | Overton 1 | 1 |
| Sherborne | 28% | Cranbrook 1 | 0.39% | | |
| Yeovil Junction | 15% | Paignton 1 | 1 | | |
| Crewkerne | 19.7% | Plymouth 1 | 1 | | |
| <i>Exeter</i> | 1.58% | Newton Abbott 1 | 1 | | |
| Yeovil Pen Mill | 3 | Bristol 1 | 1 | | |
| <i>Salisbury</i> | 1.18% | | | | |

94.1% of all respondents used BVCRP 6 Stations. 97.6% Salisbury to Exeter.

Question 3: Why do you Choose this Station?

3 suggested answers + other please specify.

Response rate 100% +. 286 answers

| It's Nearest Me | Easy to Park | Best Option for Onward Travel of which <i>Good access by bus = 3.7%</i> | Other: Enforced change/no other option 2 | Other: Not easy to Park 6 |
|-----------------|--------------|---|--|---------------------------|
| 58.7% | 16% | 22.3% | 0.69% | 2.09% |

58.7% or over half of the respondents cited the location of station in relation to home address was the biggest influencing factor for choosing the particular station.

Question 4: How do you usually get to this station?

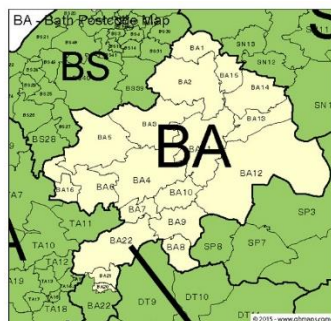
5 suggested answers + other please specify.

Response rate 100%+. 260 answers

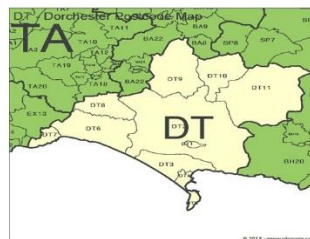
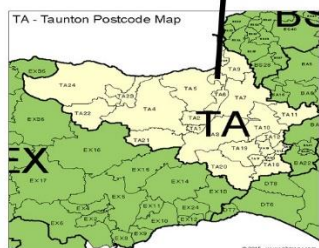
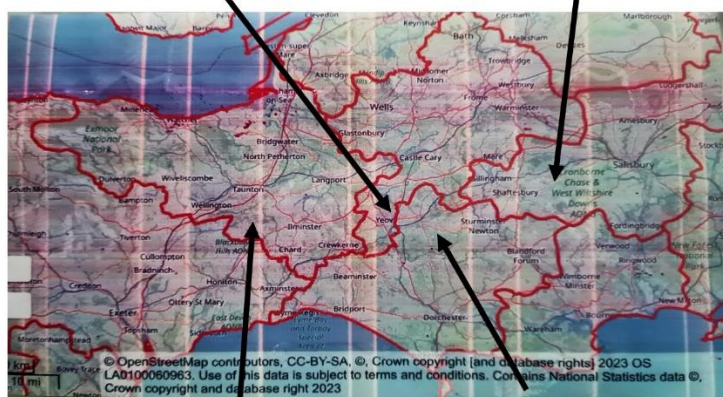
| Walk | Cycle/Bike on Train | Cycle/Bike @ Station | Drive & Park @ Station | Bus | Other: Train Connection | Other: Taxi | Other: Lift/drop off | Other: Drive & Park Elsewhere | Other: Mobility Scooter |
|-------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 28.8% | 0.76% | 1.53% | 30.7% | 15.3% | 2.69% | 6.53% | 7.69% | 5.38% | 0.38% |

59.5% of respondents either walk or drive and park at the station.

Question 5: please give your postcode E.G. BA8 – final two letters are not necessary.



98% responses in postcode districts highlighted in red



Question 6: Which Station do you usually finish your journey at?

387 responses – respondents gave more than one destination -scores below more than 1

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| London Waterloo 118 | Salisbury 50 | Exeter 46 | Sherborne 20 | Basingstoke 6 |
| London Clapham Junction. 19 | Southampton 7 | Woking 6 | Varies 17 | Gillingham 7 |
| Crewkerne 4 | Yeovil Junction 8 | Templecombe 3 | Tisbury 1 | Bristol 2 |
| Eastbourne 5 | London 2 | Waterloo/Salisbury 9 | Sittingbourne 2 | Reading 2 |
| Burgess Hill 2 | Surbiton 2 | Sussex 2 | Guildford 2 | Whitchurch 1 |
| Plymouth | Honiton | Axminster | Barnstaple | Devon Ranger Zone |
| Weymouth | New Milton | Pokesdown | Christchurch | Heathrow 1 |
| Gatwick 1 | Battle 1 | Cheltenham Spa 1 | Surrey 3 | Shoreham on sea 1 |
| Twickenham 1 | Worthing 1 | Oxford 1 | Polegate Sussex 1 | Manning Tree Essex 1 |
| Aldershot 1 | Rayne Park 1 | | | |
| | | | | |

Question 7: Access to Platform

Rate 1 -5 1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional

Response rate 100% . 246 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|---|
| 6.5% | 4.47% | 17% | 38.6% | 33.3% | <i>Return journey disappointing with steps across the level crossing (SHER) 5 comments praising help from staff at Yeovil Junction. Steps a problem at Gillingham Station</i> |

Grading scores of 1 & 2 relate mainly to Gillingham and Yeovil Junction.

Question 8 : Frequency of Trains

Rate 1 -5 1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional

Response rate 100% 246 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|--|
| 11.3% | 16.6% | 34.9% | 24.7% | 12.1% | <i>Templecombe since 5.9.2022 Recently with trains only going to Basingstoke. Cancellations at Yeovil Junction</i> |

62.8% of respondents graded 3 and below – disappointed with the frequency of trains as opposed to 36.8% who rated the service 4 and above.

Question 9: Reliability of Service

Rate 1 -5 1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional

Response rate 93.9% 231 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|----------------------------|

| | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-----|-------|-------|------------------|
| 10.8% | 16.4% | 35% | 27.2% | 10.3% | Trains cancelled |
|-------|-------|-----|-------|-------|------------------|

Question 10: Availability of Seats

Rate 1 -5 1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional

Response rate 96.7% 238 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|--------------------|-----|-------|-----|------------------|--|
| 10% | 13% | 24.3% | 39% | 13.4% | Seat availability varies depending on time of travel. Seats scored higher if first class. Very overcrowded beyond Basingstoke and cancellations. |

Question 11: Connections with other Trains

Rate 1 -5 1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional

Response rate 94.7% 233 responses with additional comments including N/A = 6

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|--------------------|------|-------|-----|------------------|--|
| 6.8% | 9.4% | 35.1% | 33% | 12.8% | Should connect with Bath/Bristol trains at Salisbury. Good at Exeter -Crossing London to Liverpool St or St Pancras is a pain. Why not connect at Salisbury with Bristol trains. Long wait. Low rating given for connection with Clapham Junction and Yeovil Junction. |

The above average satisfaction rate reflects 96.7% of travel starts at destinations on the Exeter to Waterloo line.

Question 12: Journey Time

Rate 1 -5 1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional

Response rate 100% 246 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|------------------|---|
| 10.5% | 11.7% | 32.1% | 32.5% | 13% | Lately from 3hrs 42 mins approx. in July. Now 4hrs 30 mins approx. September. |

Question 13: Value for Money

Rate 1 -5 1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional

Response rate 97.9% 241 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|------------------|--|
| 11.6% | 16.5% | 39.4% | 14.2% | 7.8% | Good value with a rail card. Not so! Even with a Senior railcard. Varies depending on route & availability of advance tickets. Less so for Waterloo East and getting into central London |

Question 14: Convenient to get to Destination **Rate 1 -5** **1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional**

Response rate 97.9% 241 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|---|
| 7% | 4.9% | 22.8% | 41.9% | 23.2% | Toilets at Axminster need to open when ticket office is shut. Just getting from Yeovil-to-Yeovil Junction without a car is a challenge. |

97.6 % journeys on the Exeter to Waterloo Line, of these 65.1 % of respondents rated 4 and above - Exceptional - for convenience to get to destination.

Question 15: Station Facilities

Rate 1 -5 **1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional**

Response rate 97.5% 240 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|--|
| 8.7% | 15.4% | 25% | 37% | 13.7% | Access better on outward journey buffet/toilet level. Axminster needs more shelter on Platform2. Waiting room locked on some stations when unstaffed. No buffet no easy access for less able (YJ). Sherborne Café scored exceptional rating 5. Facilities when open score 5. Rating depends on time of day. Fine as long as booking office is open. Should have booked thru SWR not Trainline to avoid 1 hr delay. |

For many respondents 'facilities' related to toilets. Main of rating of 1 & 2 relate to TOILETS at Gillingham and Yeovil Junction and being closed at other stations.

Overall more than 50% of respondents graded station facilities as above average towards exceptional.

Question 16: Shelter & Seating on the Station

Rate 1 -5 **1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional**

Response rate 95.1% 234 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|---|
| 4.7% | 10.6% | 26% | 41.4% | 17% | Sherborne could do with more seats. Temple- combe, Gillingham & Yeovil Junction also mentioned. |

Question 17: Feeling of Personal Safety

Rate 1 -5 **1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional**

232 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|--|
| 3% | 6% | 18.5% | 44.8% | 27.5% | Not normally travelling late at night. Not if the train is cancelled and stranded. |

Question 18 : Please rate the overall quality of your Journey Rate 1 -5

1 = Disappointing 5 = Exceptional

Response rate 96.3% 237 responses with additional comments

| 1 Disappointing | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Exceptional | Additional Comments |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|---|
| 7.5% | 8.4% | 29.5% | 44.7% | 9.7% | Frequent delays & cancellations. Train was unable to open door ended up at YJ. Being able to get to Sherborne quickly & easily. School holidays & short trains. Sometimes fine but delays caused by single track cause missed connections. Overcrowding. Usually get a table to work. Lack of catering facilities. Very good staff. Your man just blew his whistle at me! |

Question 19: Please tell us why you gave that rating.

In response to the overall rating of the journey, many scores graded 1-3 gave the reason because the ticket office/toilet/ is often closed.

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Question 20 : Would you recommend travelling on the Waterloo to Exeter Line Rate Yes or No

Response rate 80.8% 119 responses with additional comments

| YES | NO |
|------------|-----------|
| 88.2% | 14.2% |

Question 21 : Please tell us why you gave that rating.

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

For Families

Question 22 : Have you visited any of the towns & villages on BVCRP line with your family? Rate Yes or No

100 responses with additional comments. People also answered this question that were single.

| YES | NO |
|------------|-----------|
| 55% | 45% |

Question 23: If you went by car was there any reason for not using the train?

Question 24: Do you prefer to travel by car or train to the places with your family?

77 responses

| CAR | TRAIN | |
|-----|-------|--|
| 48% | 51.9% | |

Mistake with answer mechanism but respondents specified choice.

Question 25:

Please tell us why or why not?

Question 26 : Did you know Under 5's Travel Free? Rate Yes or No

92 responses with additional comments

| YES | NO |
|-----|-------|
| 63% | 36.9% |

Question 27 : Do you have a Family and Friends Railcard? Rate Yes or No

92 responses with additional comments including those who answered the question who had other railcards.

| YES | NO | Senior / Disabled Railcard |
|-----|----|----------------------------|
| 19 | 73 | 18 |
| 19 | 73 | |

Question 28: What would persuade you to use the train more often with your family?

Top Response: **Cheaper Fares**

Additional comments – most frequent type of 15 responses

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Special Offers | Summer Service to Weymouth and Corfe Castle | Free Parking | More seats with tables in carriages | Cheaper by car for the whole family |
| Over 18's Family tickets | I don't need persuading they do | More buses to Crewkerne Station | Fares too expensive for whole family | Better connections with other transport like buses |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| More carriage availability | Cheap family days out offers | Buying tickets at ticket office with staff | Better reliability & to be sure it wouldn't be cancelled. | Bigger discounts for adults and more cheap food! |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|--|

Question 29 : Do you have Access to Online Timetables? Rate Yes or No

Response rate 87.3% 215 responses with additional comments

| YES | NO | Additional Comments |
|-------|-------|---|
| 80.4% | 19.5% | Not accessible. Only on home computer not whilst travelling. No computer. Yes, but at home. No smart phone. |

Question 30: How easy is it to use Online Timetables when Travelling?

Rate 1 -5 1 = Easy 5 = Difficult

Response rate 82.9% 204 responses with additional comments.

| 1 Easy | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Difficult | Additional Comments |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|--|
| 18.6% | 11.2% | 29.4% | 14.7% | 25.9% | No electronic gadget. No smart phone. Never use. Depends on reception. Depends on connection. No access to a computer. Impossible can't access them. |

Q. 31: Would it help to have a printed timetable leaflet?

Response rate 94.7% 233 responses with additional comments

| YES | NO | Additional Comments |
|-------|-------|---------------------|
| 81.9% | 22.3% | |

Question 32 : Would it help you to have a Printed Timetables Poster at Stations? Rate Yes or No

Response rate 96.3% 237 responses with additional comments

| YES | NO | Additional Comments |
|-------|------|---|
| 86.4% | 9.2% | Yes it's called advertising. Sometimes no Wi-Fi. Very definitely, much handier. With individual timetables. Digital boards. |

Question 33: How easy is it to use the ticket Machines at the Station, if the Staff are not Present?

Rate 1 -5 1 = Easy 5 = Difficult

Response rate 91% 224 responses with additional comments

| 1 Easy | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Difficult | Additional Comments |
|-----------|-------|-----|-------|----------------|---|
| 16.9% | 13.8% | 29% | 20.5% | 19.6% | There isn't one! If it was working. Time Consuming. 4 except Trainline which is 5. Would not travel if no staff offices open. Many saying no Plus bus tickets available. Does not show all routes. Much prefer to talk to staff. Appalling! Time consuming and fiddley. Can't see and respond. I go to the ticket clerk. Sometimes confusing for cheaper travel. |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| | | | | | Requests to move machine @Sherborne as can't see screen when sun shining. |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|

Question 34 : Do you know how to use the Yellow HELP button at Stations? Rate Yes or No

Response rate 99.5% 245 responses with additional comments

| YES | NO | Additional Comments |
|-----|-------|---|
| 42% | 57.9% | When it works. Does not answer. Now! Yes but dislike. |

Question 35 : Do you require CYCLE or E-BIKE hire facilities at the Station? Rate Yes or No

Response rate 95.5% 235 responses with additional comments

| YES | NO | Additional Comments |
|------|-------|---|
| 6.3% | 93.6% | Not personally of use to some. Possibly |

Question 36: How important is access to a BUFFET SERVICE on the train? Rate 1 -5

1 = Low Priority 5 = High Priority

Response rate 93.4% 230 responses with additional comments

| 1 Low Priority | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 High Priority | Additional Comments |
|----------------------|-----|-------|-------|-----------------------|---|
| 9.1% | 10% | 16.5% | 24.7% | 39.5% | Especially on a cold morning instead of juggling with a takeaway. This is a big loss. It's a long journey and its part of the experience. Bring it back, especially on long journeys. |

Question 37: If you are a Non-Rail Users what changes would encourage you to travel by train?

Top Response: Cheaper Fares.

Next 12 most frequent responses

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|--|
| More trains | Free Parking | Printed Timetables | More Staff to help at stations and on trains |
| More Direct Services | More seats | Clean Toilets | Competitive price for long journeys |
| Buffet car should return | Price reduction | No changes at Basingstoke | Also travel with GWR, SWR not so good |

Question 38: What THREE improvements would you most like to see to the Line' Services, Stations and Facilities?

Top Responses: Refreshments/Buffer Service, longer opening hours for ticket offices, keep ticket offices staffed.

A flavour of the most frequent responses

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|
| Keep staff at ticket offices | Reliability | More carriages less overcrowding. | Printed timetables | Double track | USB/ phone charging points in all carriages. |
| Keep booking offices open all day | More seats. More luggage space. More trains. More staff . | Access to waiting room and toilets at all times | Better availability of disabled seating and access | More frequent information at Stations when disruptions cancellations | Clean toilets at stations & on trains. Toilets always available |
| Refreshments | | | | | Clearer announcements on trains |

Question 39: Please share any additional comments or suggestions.

In response to the overall rating of the journey, many scores graded 1-3 gave the reason because the ticket office/toilet/ is often closed. In response to the question about how easy is it to use the ticket machine if no staff are present, 40.1% graded it a 4-5 difficult to use, and 69.1% graded it a 3-5.

Please note there was NOT a question in the survey about ticket office or staff but 192 additional comments were received about this. The number of responses, received with no prompting what so ever in the survey demonstrates a clear and robust body of evidence confirming how important it is to rail users to have accessible staffed ticket offices with good opening hours.

Ticket Offices and Staff.

Ticket Office opened longer hours. loos and waiting room open longer. When ticket offices is closed the ticket machine is unclear and difficult to use. Welcoming and helpful staff at ticket office. a live person all day in case of being needed. Loss of staff at stations would be a huge mistake. Please do not get rid of staffed ticket offices this will render the train inaccessible to some elderly and disabled users. Keeping ticket offices open. Better ticket office opening hours. Service and advice at Sherborne ticket office always excellent! Lady in the ticket office is very helpful. We must keep offices open. Staff are helpful and not everyone is on the internet. Don't close the 'manned' sherborne ticket office womaned by the superb Anne. Value your staff more and appreciate them if they weren't here you would be bankrupt. Essential for Tisbury which is a busy station to have staff available. Access to waiting rooms, shut when unmanned. Warmer waiting rooms. Keep booking offices open. Waiting room and station master to be present for longer! Would love access to the waiting room for longer hours (TC) Waiting room too hot (GILL) More staff. Keep staff office open. Ticket office open more. Longer opening times at ticket offices. Keep ticket offices open. To keep the ticket office open, to keep the café open, to keep the toilets open. It is so important to have people working at the station for SAFETY and Help to obtain tickets and railcards. When the office is closed (Gill) no one to help me. Toilets closed. Service is appalling station facilities non-existent (YJ) Keep it staffed, keep it clean, keep it safe as it is now (YJ) More staff, more opening times, more comfort in waiting rooms, I am aged 92. I am half blind and need staff to help me at stations. Access to toilets when station is closed. Station should be a community hub (TIS). No problems when the ticket office is open. Keep the station manned. Keep staff and booking office open. Great staff and facilities (SHER) The staff are nearly always helpful and friendly (SHER) Manned station (SHER) Station facilities available all day. There is a pleasant and helpful station manager at Sherborne (Anne) Ticket office helpful staff. Waiting room should be open during daylight hours (SHER) Keep ticket office and person available. Keep guards.

A staffed booking office is top priority. More staff especially at Axminster. Make sure the ticket office is kept open. To be able to buy a parking ticket from staff. To remain as they are – very good staff. Train station facilities very good when open but less shelter when shut. Sherborne café is an excellent facility. Please keep our ticket offices. Longer opening hours ticket offices. I think it is important to have staff who can advise on the routes and prices. Station facilities open longer. Later service at Sherborne. To be able to buy a 3 yr. railcard at the station. Longer booking office opening hours. Ticket office open longer. The staff at YJ are exceptional. Difficult for older passengers if station not manned. Please consider more staff at stations and on trains. Toilets open on station platform earlier and later (SHER) the staff are all lovely and very understanding. They keep people happy. Keep our lovely Tisbury ticket woman. We really like having a managed ticket office at Tisbury. Sarah at Tisbury is a mazing, super helpful & friendly. Keep ticket offices open. Ticket office always open and at night when arriving at station at night if alone or elderly its dark and cold. staff always helpful both in station and on train. (TIS) Keep the ticket office open(TIS) Ticket office open longer I do not own a computer and the station should be a community centre (TIS). Ticket office hours longer (TIS) Tea/coffee facilities (TIS) Ticket officers to remain manned. Manned booking office personnel available. Staff on platform to help old and young people need to feel able to speak to staff on train and in station. Keep ticket office open. Staff available until later. A human being at all times. Toilets open. The lady at the booking office is excellent, always so helpful, pleasant and eager to please Always has time for passengers (TIS) Ticket office staffing is vital for obtaining best value, flexible tickets Toilets at Axminster need to be open when ticket office is closed. Some stations like Honiton are weak when unstaffed, though arriving at Waterloo is an experience, enhanced by staff., and there are food outlets. Helpful staff at station. Friendly, helpful and professional staff -thank you. Offices/toilets open all day. Longer opening of ticket offices. Open ticket office on Sunday. Kee staff at station. (CRW) Ticket office open every day. Please keep ticket offices open every day. Old and Young need verbal communication when enquiring. Staff to help on stations and on train. Keep ticket office. Buying tickers at ticket office with staff. Just wanted to say the staff at Crewkerne are friendly, polite and helpful. Open ticket office all day. (CREW) Toilets to be open (CREW) Templecombe has terrible waiting facilities outside. ticket office not open long enough. Toilets always available. Superb service from the lady in the ticket office at Tisbury. Toilets open more at Crewkerne. Station staff very good when available. Reassuring to see lots of staff I lost my husband recently so feel slightly vulnerable .

Staff Very polite and helpful staff, very good staff, 3 Anne in the sales offices is exceptionally helpful and considerate, staff as Sherborne are 5* helpful. Railway staff clearly have no sense of identifying with the train employers - this is a management problem. Visibility of station staff. The lady working in Sherborne is so, so good. Keep guards on trains. Some guards with a poor attitude, Better guards. The station staff are brilliant – keep them (YJ) Templecombe is a very pretty and friendly station . Staff are great. Staff do their best but no outward trains YJ. Clean and polite staff (GILL) Good staffing on trains - polite and available. At Gillingham Station Claire was so helpful. Lovely station with helpful staff (GILL) Keep guards to give people getting out off the train have enough time to do so. Staff at Exeter Central and Axminster, friendly, helpful + on the ball – always. Sherborne station staff are super. Train staff are polite and helpful. Staff on trins are very helpful and friendly. Pleasant, approachable staff (GILL) More help from the guard on train. A guard always on the train. Man opposite me feet on seat no guard to point out that is anti-social behaviour. Get rid of SWR, keep staff, sack managers. Staff are very helpful at YJ and Crewkerne stations. Trolley or buffet service. Buffet on trains. I fully support the call for increase in pay and guards and plenty of staff are essential for safety. Good luck! All railway staff have been excellent in these difficult situations. Great effort has been made to satisfy travellers (SHER) enthusiasm of staff on board my train. More staff. **Security** Security, train safe. As a woman travelling on my own I want guard on the train for safety and someone to ask about times and further connections etc. Stop extreme drinking/drugging. Keep the guards safety, help and quality of service. School children's' behaviour at Gillingham not case of see it, say it sort it! Visible guards. Train guard to monitor behaviour. Train guard or train police presence. Reassuring to see lots of staff I lost my husband recently so feel slightly vulnerable .

Ticket machines & Accessibility

Buying tickets from the machine is usually a nightmare. Please move the ticket machine at Sherborne, the sun shines on screen and makes it very difficult to see. There isn't one (YJ) Easier to Read Displays. Unclear if car park voucher has to be left in car or not after purchase from machine (GILL) Car Park machine no longer in use so no longer use

the car park do not like using ticket machine (GILL) Car park tickets (GILL) Easier to Read Displays, move ticket machine to platform at Tisbury, Better Wi-Fi. No Wi-Fi or phone signal at Templecombe, Because it is difficult to hear announcements depending on if person has patience to speak clearly. Never uses online timetables as no smart phone. The overbridge at YJ as at busy times the staff are not always available to see you across the crossing gate, Both of us find climbing stair hard due to age. *It look good but lack refreshment facilities and toilets are old, easier access - your disabled facilities are rubbish! Better seating, gardening, free parking, lovely little waiting room + toilet at Sherborne and fantastic café. List of local taxis at station. Toilets are poor quality (YJ) Better facilities at YJ. Wonderful station master at Templecombe. Your volunteer groups are very helpful when there (TC) Dreadful toilets at Gillingham. More seats, improve toilet facilities (GILL) None at Gillingham at present. Thanks and congratulations who do the floral arrangements at Gillingham Station. Less last-minute platform changes in Gillingham. The overhead info in the carriage was incorrect and I couldn't always hear the guard's voice. Better loos (GILL) A lift (GILL) Mend the Gents toilet at Gillingham it has been broken for months. Ease of access to toilets. Better taxi rank (TIS) Somewhere to sit when ticket office closed (SHER) plug sockets/charging stations. I think we are very lucky to have a mainline station so local to where I live. Roof at Tisbury station not to remove the wood pigeons nests at Tisbury. More seating at stations. A better SWR Trains(!) website Improved station, lift at Yeovil junction, buying tickets from the machine is usually a nightmare. Please move the ticket machine at Sherborne, the sun shines on screen and makes it very difficult to see. Improved access for those unable to use footbridge (YJ)*

Refreshments

Buffet service, buffet trolley, refreshments, it would be better to have comfy seats and snacks for a long wait if you're disabled. Catering, Catering outlet, reinstate buffet service, onboard refreshments, not always a refreshment trolley, no onboard catering, no food and drink, buffet service, food trolley on trains. Very poor service, no trolley service. Trolley service. GWR offer a much superior service. Food! Snack trolley, café at YJ, some availability of refreshments when trains re delayed at YJ not being able to get refreshments is an issue especially when delays are long, and weather is hot. No catering. Catering on every train. Better facilities with buffet on trains. Buffett. Bring it back! Refreshments. Onboard catering. No catering and high fares. No trolley service. Buffet service on train, Café at YJ. Hot drinks on trains. Catering on trains and stations. No food. On train buffet service Refreshments trolley. Café on platform YJ. Refreshments on trains. Very long journey with no refreshments. 7am-11pm buffet at all stations. No catering on trains or at YJ. Catering on existent on trains and stations. Drinks dispenser or preferably a pop-up café or other tea room facilities or refreshments. Self-service coffee machine. Would bring my family on the train if it had refreshments. Vending machine coffee. Onboard Catering. Every franchisee except SWR provide onboard catering. Expensive and no on bord catering. Buffet facilities on train. Trolley service. Trolley service on trains. Please re introduce trolley service. Trolley service. Refreshments franchises to open later, everything is dead at 5pm. Buffet facilities open longer. Buffet trolley on train. Lack of catering facilities. Refreshments buffet. Tea on the train would be nice. Buffet. Long journey as vending at Exeter broken. Catering returning. On a very hot day broken vending machines, no catering and inefficient air con made return journey very unpleasant. Buffet car or trolley please. No Trolley service. Trolley Buffet. On train buffet service. Vending machines. Buffet service to return. YJ - you cannot get coffee. Café and shop facility. Buffet at YJ. Café at YJ. Buffet at Yeovil. Food service on Waterloo Service. No drinks trolley. Trolley service. Buffet service to return. Buffet service on train. It would be good to have refreshments (TIS) bring back refreshments. Coffee at Tisbury Station. Buffet back for long journeys. Some refreshments. Coffee on trains. Tea/coffee facilities. Refreshments. Refreshments. refreshments. Sherborne station café is excellent. Café at YJ. Buffet services. No buffet services or electric plug-in. buffet car should return. Coffee machine at Crewkerne. Service trolley on train. Coffee Stall. A trolley service would be nice occasionally a toilet. Useless service – no catering. On train catering. Reintroduction of buffet service. Buffet service. I get the 05.37 train to Reading. It would be great to have a buffet service then. Buffet/trolley service. For a relatively long journey am disappointed at lack of trolley service now.

Station facilities

It look good but lack refreshment facilities and toilets are old, easier access - your disabled facilities are rubbish! Better seating, gardening, free parking, lovely little waiting room + toilet at Sherborne and fantastic café. List of local taxis at station. Toilets are poor quality (YJ) Better facilities at YJ. Wonderful station master at Templecombe. Your volunteer groups are very helpful when there (TC) Dreadful toilets at Gillingham. More seats, improve toilet facilities (GILL) None at Gillingham at present. Thanks and congratulations who do the floral arrangements at Gillingham Station. Less last-minute platform changes in Gillingham. The overhead info in the carriage was incorrect and I couldn't always hear the guard's voice. Better loos (GILL) A lift (GILL) Mend the Gents toilet at Gillingham it has been broken for months. Ease of access to toilets. Better taxi rank (TIS) Somewhere to sit when ticket office closed (SHER) plug sockets/charging stations. I think we are very lucky to have a mainline station so local to where I live. Roof at Tisbury station not to remove the wood pigeons nests at Tisbury. More seating at stations.