

Find out more about plans to protect vital railway artery to the South West

Network Rail is holding a series of community drop-in sessions this autumn to update residents and the local community on its ongoing work to improve resilience of the railway between Dawlish and Teignmouth in Devon.

Three community drop-in events will be held in Dawlish, Holcombe and Teignmouth on the following dates:

- Tuesday 30 October - Dawlish Methodist Church, Dawlish, EX7 9PB from 14.30-17.30
- Wednesday 7 November - Teignmouth Library - 19A Fore St, Teignmouth TQ14 8DY from 16.00-19.00
- Thursday 15 November - Holcombe Village Hall, Holcombe from 16.00-19.00

Representatives from Network Rail along with world leading engineers in coastal, tunnel, cliff and railway engineering will provide an update on the detailed studies that they have been conducting along the railway line between Teignmouth and Dawlish this year.

These studies ensure the challenging and complex mix of terrain and engineering involved are fully assessed, and help inform the detailed design for any recommendations to make this vital artery for the South West more resilient to extreme weather.

Such is the scale and importance of the challenge that Network Rail has now established a dedicated South West Rail Resilience Programme to identify and implement the best options to improve rail resilience of this iconic stretch of railway. This is to avoid a repetition of the events of 2014 when the line was closed for eight weeks after extreme weather washed away the seawall and a massive landslide blocked the railway with 20,000 tonnes of material.

The South West Rail Resilience Programme's work is being funded by £15 million of government funding from the Department for Transport, which has seen world-leading engineers in coastal, tunnel, cliff and railway engineering conducting detailed studies along the route between Teignmouth and Dawlish.

These studies are helping to determine what is happening to the cliffs and coastline, in order that the viability of a number of alternative solutions can be established. These options will help to secure the long-term future of this vital rail artery, which serves communities and businesses in South Devon and Cornwall, and connects the region to the rest of the UK.

Mark Langman, managing director for Network Rail's western route said: "It is not only vital for us to identify the most effective engineering solutions to protect this iconic stretch of railway, but also to



consider any environmental implications and engage with local communities on the details of any potential schemes.

“Getting this right for everyone is absolutely at the forefront of our minds as our world leading engineers continue their investigations into 2019. We are looking forward to speaking to local people at our events this autumn”.

Longer-term options for making the railway more resilient in this region will be presented to the public, local councils and government in spring/summer 2019 once analysis of the engineering studies has been completed.

Anyone who is unable to attend can contact the national helpline on 03457 11 41 41 or can follow @SouthWestRRP on Twitter or Facebook.

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