



Melksham
Report on 2019
rail user group



Melksham
Plans for 2020
rail user group

Melksham Rail User Group

Report on 2019 & Plans for 2020

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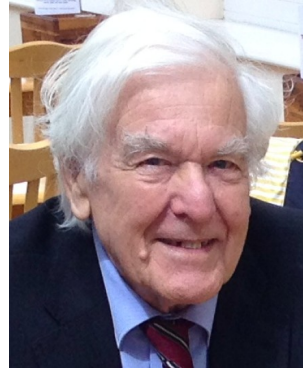


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Chair - Peter Blackburn
Secretary - John Hamley
Treasurer - Judith Gradwell
Vice Chair - Graham Ellis

V1.1 / 01.01.20 / GE

2019 has been a busy year for the Melksham Rail User Group and for users and supporters of public transport in Melksham. Activities through the year have promoted the use of the station and its trains. In spite of reliability issues on a thin service, passenger numbers have grown. Local sentiment remains positive.



Our regular meetings have moved to a new venue in a larger room - just in time to accommodate everyone. Our officers now meet monthly, and we have attended more promotional events than ever before. Our team of volunteers welcomed Santa on the train in mid December, and a new extended day train timetable for 2020.

2020 promises to be another exciting year for Melksham's train and bus services. The Melksham Rail User Group is in place and ready to help. This booklet covers what we have done in the last year and what we plan to do in the next.

We wouldn't continue to be the successful group we are without the help and support of so many ... GWR, Councils, Volunteers, Community, John, Judith, Graham. We are proud to be the station friends group, and members of TransWilts who we work with on the wider service issues and longer term development.

We thank you all for your help and support and look forward to working with and seeing you on our Melksham public transport in 2020.

Peter Blackburn - 30th December 2019 - Chair - MRUG

Melksham Rail User Group - 2020 Prospectus

Melksham Rail User Group is a "Station Friends" group, with other public transport (buses) also within our remit.

Set up in 1995 as the "Melksham Railway Development Group", we've promoted and nurtured the station within the community for nearly 25 years. We spun off the TransWilts CRP in 2013, and rebranded from the DEVELOPMENT group to the USER group in 2016 when the trial service that had been running for three years was adjudged a success, and became permanent.

Without traffic passing through Melksham (journeys from Swindon and Chippenham to Trowbridge, Westbury, Warminster and Salisbury) the business case for the line would be much less clear, and these days the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership looks after the wider area and the medium and long term development, while "MRUG" as we're known actively nurtures and promotes the station within the Melksham area.

MRUG is a member of TransWilts, we share a head in Peter Blackburn (who's president of TransWilts and chair of MRUG), and our volunteers often help out at TransWilts events outside Melksham.



Geography

Melksham is a town with around 26,000 residents in West Wiltshire, roughly in the middle of a triangle of Bath, Swindon and Salisbury. Neighbouring towns of Chippenham and Trowbridge are larger, Calne and Bradford-on-Avon somewhat smaller. The town has thriving business and light industry areas, though many people head out to work in Bath or Bristol, in Swindon, in Chippenham or Trowbridge or in other towns around.

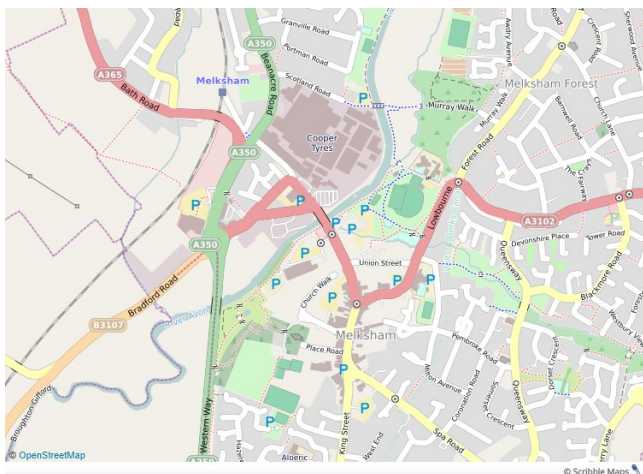
Main railway lines from London pass through Swindon and Chippenham to the north on their way to Bristol, and through Westbury to the south on the way to the West of England. Melksham is on a "crossover" line from Swindon via Chippenham to Trowbridge and Westbury.



Green Square Stations have step free access to all platforms

The line through Melksham (and station) was closed to regular passenger trains in 1966 under the "Beeching Axe" but retained for freight, and reopened in 1985 with a bus shelter on what remained of the old platform. A limited daily commuter service ran for people who worked in Swindon. Fast forward to 2013, when the service was stepped up from 2 to 8 return trips each day with Wiltshire Council, TransWilts, GWR ... and MRUG ... working hand in hand to promote the appropriate use of the line and its new services. People voted with their feet - the trains have been doubled in length to cope with the numbers wanting to travel, and the platform has been lengthened.

We have moved forward since the dismal days of a decade ago when the Melksham Railway Group kept knowledge of the line alive in the community through the annual Santa trip, and when a the daily commuter train to Swindon picked up 2 or 3 passengers. We now have hundreds per day and we're very proud of what we have achieved - but we still have a long way to go. We've moved from a useless service to one that's still poor and infrequent. We still have a station which is less than welcoming, set obscure in an industrial area, without a bus connection, a toilet, or a loudspeaker for on-platform announcements.



Public Meetings

Six public meetings are scheduled through 2020 - on the third Wednesday of January then every alternate month.

Historically, these meetings have covered purely the general business of events and promotion of the station, train services, snagging thereof and improvements thereto. That has filled the 90 minutes we had available at the Town Hall venue prior to its closing at 9 p.m.

With our move to the new, larger room at the United Church, we have the opportunity to run a little longer, and on 22nd January we'll be pleased to welcome Guy Watts of GWR to talk a little and answer questions on fares, which many of the people we speak with (and sometimes ourselves too) find over-complex and confusing.



Membership of MRUG

We have a fabulous team of supporters and volunteers and are rarely short of people to willingly help - just take a look at some of the events listed and pictures in this booklet. However, we have no formal MRUG membership at the moment - come along to a meeting, and you're a member at that point.

In order to help invoke a pride in the group, the officers will be proposing a more formal membership - free of any charge - to help increase our community's ownership of the group.



We are also planning a Melksham Public Transport User's guide available to all of our members including information on getting to the station and facilities there, fares and railcards, how to buy tickets, how to find out if your train is on time, train accessibility, what you can take with you and more.

Safety at the Station

Four of our volunteers are being briefed / signed off officially by GWR on 14th January - renewing old briefings from a number of years ago.

The refreshed briefing will not only enable us to look after the station planters, but also help us be eyes and ears at the station when we're there. We can keep an eye out for anything from safety and security issues through people putting themselves or others in danger to being minded of vulnerable people who may be at the station.



Spreading the word through the community

Melksham station remains unknown to many in our community. It is a work in progress in terms of promotion. Each year we reach and refresh more people in knowing about local rail and the opportunities it offers them.

Our 2019 program of spring and early summer events - fetes, fairs and carnivals - will be repeated. Our major December 2019 promotion was a "one-off", triggered by significant train timetable changes. It's to be repeated at that level in December 2020 only if there are further significant changes.





Station clean and tidy

We plan as the station friends group to assist in keeping the station "ship shape" and to this end four of our members are going to be safety briefed on 14th January by our GWR Station manager.

We'll continue to keep the station surround clean and tidy too - the public owned areas outside the station, and up station approach as far as the pedestrian and cycle underpass towards the town.



Station Garden

During station upgrades in recent years, MRUG stepped back from investing effort in developing planters and other soft fittings to keep the station welcoming; there was little point in efforts which would simply vanish within a short while.

For 2020 and working in conjunction with Melksham in Bloom, we plan to be have the station's flower bed reflect the town, which is a repeated award winner in floral competitions. At the same time, we are aware of practicalities such as watering, maintenance, security, safety and vandal proofing which have different metrics at the station



Co-operations

We are really fortunate in having a strong team of volunteers and are delighted to assist as appropriate (either as a group or individually) beyond our specific local area. The existence of the current service is justified on through traffic as well as passenger to and from Melksham. Working with others is very much to our mutual benefit.

The later final departure from Melksham to Trowbridge and Westbury, with connections onward to Warminster and Bradford-on-Avon, means that train users in other West Wilts towns can now get home by train after meetings in Melksham, and we expect discussions underway to help publicise and co-ordinate our lecture / talk meeting with those of others such as the West Wilts Rail User Group. In turn, we will inform MRUG members of their meetings, and probably ride share (sadly no late train to Melksham yet) to get home.



Station signage



Melksham Rail User Group looks after a sign board at the station and two in Market Place bus stops. Lighting is barely adequate after dark, and TransWilts are replacing the station panels with solar lit ones under a GWR CCIF grant. We look forward to continuing to update the information and promotion poster.

Graphic artwork for posters, literature, printed adverts and our web site is provided by a volunteer, who donates image licenses for us where appropriate.

Awards

We'll probably enter a very limited number of industry / community rail award competitions. Our objective is to use the platform that entries provide to check our own direction against that of our peers, and to get a feel for what independent informed adjudicators think. Awards also allow us to recognise and thank volunteers who might otherwise go unnoticed and unappreciated outside our immediate group - a "Thank You" to them too, and a token of our appreciation.

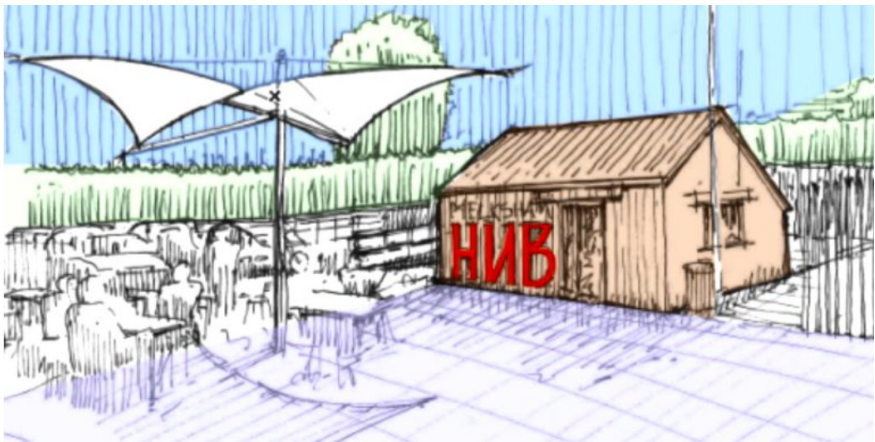
A big THANK YOU to GWR and the Rail Delivery Group for providing travel and accommodation last year to Telford. The 2020 ACoRP awards are closer to home in Southampton.



Melksham Masterplan

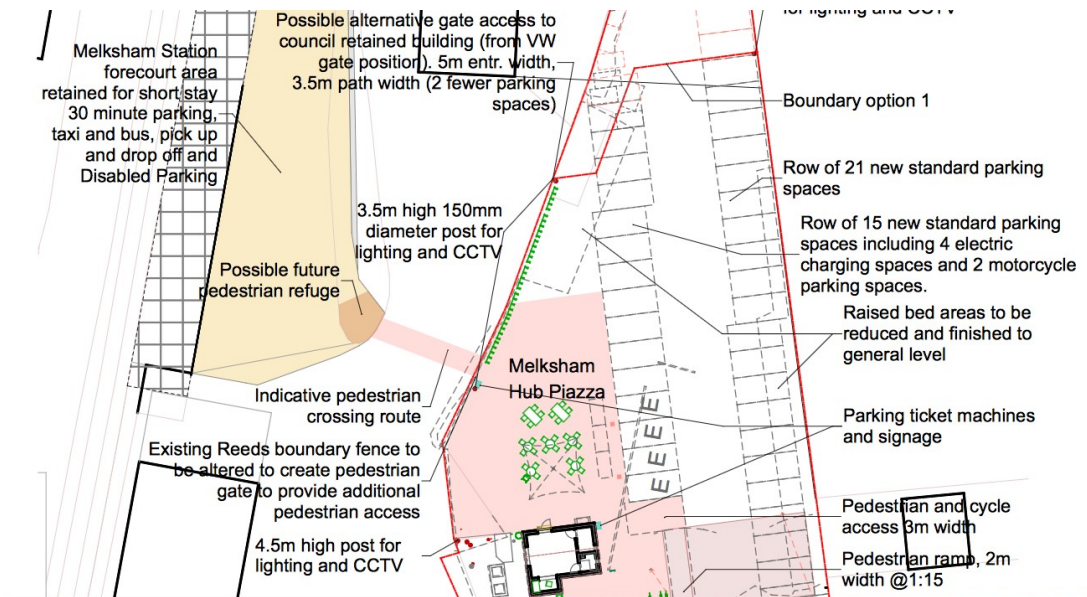
Melksham's current station started off as a re-opening on the cheap in 1985 and although progress has been made since then - longer platform, some extra car parking, extra sign boards, bigger shelter, cycle shelter, information point - there remains a lot to be done. Passenger numbers have stepped up from 3,000 to 75,000 per annum and facilities cope at present, but with a reliable and hourly train service (compared to unreliable every 2 hours as it has been recently) those numbers should increase to around 300,000 to 350,000 journeys - more as environmental issues come more to the forefront and public transport again becomes the mode of choice for long distance and congested journeys. The facilities simply wouldn't cope.

Big "THANK YOU" to the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership, who are now a DfT accredited organisation with paid professional staff and a board comprising councillors (current and present) and ex LEP chair and who are progressing the "Melksham Master Plan".



The Mastepplan includes extended (paid) parking with some electric charging, a community building / cafe including toilets and information point, re-engineering of the area in front of the station to allow for better separation of cars, buses and pedestrians, and new pedestrian and cycle accesses to Foundry Close to the north, and up to the A365 bridge to reduce the walk to the Shurnhold area. All elements that MRUG as a community group of volunteers couldn't hope to negotiate and implement.

Melksham Rail User Group will continue to be updated by TransWilts from time to time. As the cafe comes on stream (the latest schedule we have seen is late Spring) we stand ready to provide wide volunteer and local support.



Santa Train





The Melksham Rail User Group will organise a Santa trip – as it's done all years except one for the last 25 years. Santa will join us on the train and we'll be joined by around 50 children and their parents / guardians.

As well as Santa, lots of volunteers are involved; tickets are sold by the Melksham Tourist Information Centre, presents obtained from the Melksham Toy Shop, and mince pies and soft drinks sourced from a local store.

A great deal of organisation is done behind the scenes too. One of the pictures shows a rare glimpse into Santa's factory as the presents are checked, sorted and wrapped.

Other Events (2019 examples shown)

Imber bus running – by train from Melksham

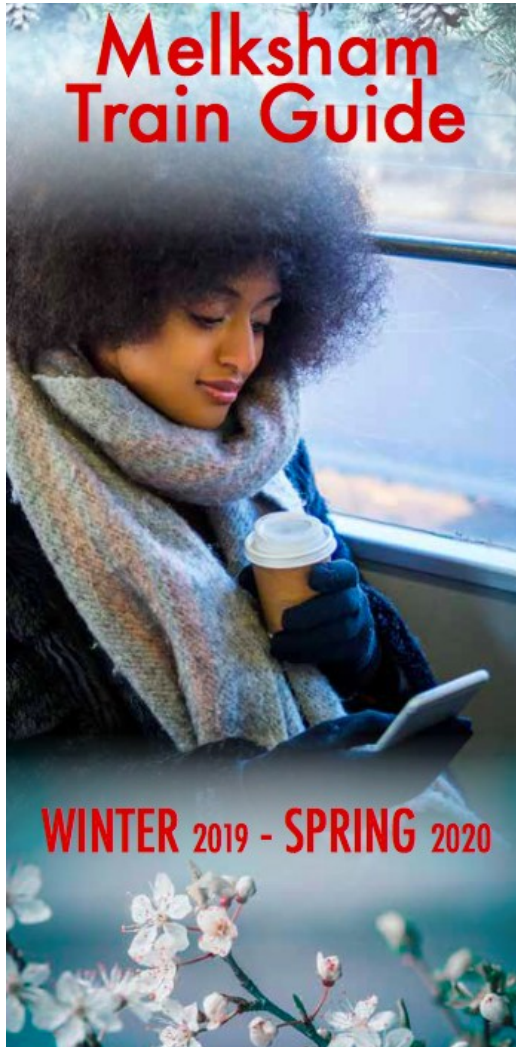


Seaside – a trip by train from Melksham to Wemouth



Rail use promotion

We plan a summer promotion series – the Melksam Carnival, fetes, parties and fairs similar to 2019. Our Melksham specific timetable will be available once again in outlets such as the Tourist Information Centre, Library and Town Hall.



If there are major timetable changes in May or December 2020, we will increase our print run significantly and distribute via the Melksham Independent News too. Not something we budget for every little change.

Join us in building for the future

Taking the train is climate-friendly because it leaves a much smaller CO₂ footprint. Trains have some cycle spaces too.

Over the last ten years, passenger trains calling at Melksham have risen from 4 to 17 per day. Passenger growth has been better than predicted, and the Melksham Rail User Group is working in partnership with industry and government bodies for further improvements.

We expect to see additional services and more destinations directly available in the next decade. These expanded routes include: Salisbury, Southampton and Oxford.



Support of TransWilts medium and long term plans

Through 2019 we supported TransWilts at planning applications for the hub and in talking with organisations such as the Bowerhill Villager to help them raise money. There are likely to be other times we can help in 2020.

The train service at one every 2 hours for a short journey is poor but useable; a service increase to an hourly train, and better connections or continuation south of Westbury, would rocket passenger numbers. Melksham RUG is happy to support TransWilts in working towards this appropriate and sustainable service and in helping it work once it arrives.



Bus

MRUG is a public transport rather than just a rail advocate. 2020 is likely to be the “year of the bus”.

Melksham’s Town Bus contract includes the ability to change their timetable but Wiltshire Council (and we have not dissuaded them) have held back prior to the major December timetable 2019 train changes, and major roadworks.

MRUG has access to a number of bus technical people who can assist in working out the best effective, reliable and customer-considerate service. Co-ordination work is also needed between supported and commercial bus services which are headed for major change.



We can do better than “sillies” like bus races!

(Re)Joining ACoRP

The Melksham Railway Development Group was a longstanding "Station Friends" member of ACoRP, but that membership lapsed. Our activities, however, never ceased and have increased in recent years and we believe that it's now time to rejoin.

MRUG supports the aims and objectives of ACoRP - including their new "4 pillar" approach:

- * Providing a Voice for the Community
- * Promoting Sustainable and Healthy Travel
- * Bringing communities together and supporting diversity and inclusion
- * Supporting Social and Economic Development

Benefits to MRUG and Melksham

- * Learning from other communities with opportunities offered by ACoRP
- * Providing information and contacts and updates
- * Helping to define the group to new contacts and to the rail community
- * Confirming us a partners within the system, including confirming objectives
- * Providing some marketing and publicity opportunities

Melksham Rail User Group - 2019 report

2019 - General (public) meetings held as follows:

23 January 2019 (Melksham Town Hall)

20 March 2019 (Melksham Town Hall)

22 May 2019 (Melksham Town Hall) - also our AGM

24 July 2019 (Melksham Town Hall)

16 October 2019 (Whitley Methodist Chapel)

27 November 2019 (United Church)

Numbers attending the meetings have steadily grown, and our future default venue is the United Church, which is booked for six meetings for 2020. This allows for further expansion during what we expect to be a very busy year.

Minutes for all available via

<http://www.mrug.org.uk/meetings.html>

Officer's meetings monthly, alternating between the Toast Office in Whitely and Well House Manor on Spa Road.

2019 Transport Meetings at which the Melksham Rail User Group was represented have included

TravelWatch SouthWest - Taunton, March
TravelWatch SouthWest - Taunton, October
SWLEP Transport meeting - Swindon
TransWilts Stakeholder and Member meeting - Trowbridge
GW Community Rail Conference - Bristol
GW Stakeholder Meeting - London
GW Timetable technical meeting - Bristol
ACoRP Annual awards and Gala Dinner - Telford

General purpose - learning, informing, networking.



A TravelWatch SouthWest meeting

2019 Station Friends – some public events

Illustrations of events are in the 2020 proposal pages.

5 February 2019

- survey including Melksham station car park count

13 April 2019

- Melksham Station Approach Spring Clean

28 April 2019

- Trip to Seaton Tramway in memory of John Money

22 June 2019

- Shaw and Whitley Fete

13 July 2019

- Bowerhill Barkers

14 July 2019

- Trip for newcomers to rail, Melksham – Weymouth

17 August 2019

- Melksham to Imber by train and bus

29 June 2019

- Melksham Carnival

20 July 2019

- Melksham Party in the Park

31 August and 1 September 2019

- Melksham Food and River Festival

27 July 2019

- Melksham Maker's Market

6 July 2019

- Semington Fete

29, 30 November and 1 December 2019

- Timetable distribution at station

15 December 2019

- Santa on the train

16 December 2019

- Trip on new early morning service

2019 Web and social media report

The web site was refreshed at the very start of 2019 with new style to ensure responsive rendering across devices and easy updating by webmasters John Hamley and Graham Ellis.

The web site is designed to provide public transport information – timetables, fares, current running – as well as rail user group meetings and other news.

In 2019, 2783 users visited the site's pages (2184 in UK) over 5583 sessions. A total of 11050 pages were viewed.

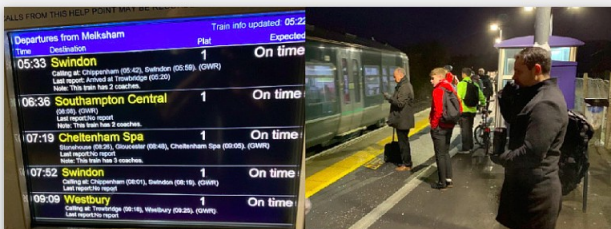
The summer timetable has been downloaded 255 times and the new timetable from December 224 times so far.

for Melksham's public transport users

Trains ... Swindon - Chippenham - **Melksham** - Trowbridge - Westbury and connections to over 2,500 stations in Great Britain

[Home](#) • [Live train departures](#) • [Timetable](#) • [Station Location](#) • [Fares, local](#) • [Fares, Bath & Bristol](#) • [Fares, London](#) • [Other Fare Information](#)
[Bus departures \(Melksham town centre\)](#) • [Bus and train departures \(at and near station\)](#) • [Buses serving Melksham](#)

[About Melksham](#) • [2019 Vision](#) • [News](#) • [Meetings](#) • [Pictures](#) • [Old Pictures](#) • [Volunteers](#) • [Know your Melksham quiz](#) • [Campaigning tips](#) • [Contact](#)



Melksham Rail User Group

For 2019, we have had an exciting program of meetings and events ... with a new longer platform, longer trains and engineering works completed we are set for the service use to grow again - for the benefit of Melksham residents, businesses and visitors. 2019 train departures from Melksham are available [\[here\]](#)

For 2020, we'll have a significantly amended timetable, which started on 15th December 2019. We'll complement this with a program to continue the success of the line and the group. First 2020 public meeting - **22nd January 2020, a "Fares Special"**. 19:30, United Reform Church just off the Market Place (note new

Melksham rail user group

New and Upcoming

New Year

Trains run every day.
Some changes on 31 Dec and 1 Jan - see [\[here\]](#)

Timetables - current (start of 2020)

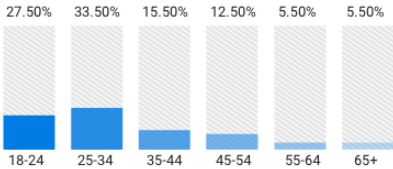
Train times [\[here\]](#)
Most bus times [Faresaver](#)
Bus times [\[First D3\]](#) - [\[here\]](#)
Other bus times [Swindon's Bus Co.](#)
Other bus times [Town Bus](#)
Long distance coach [National Express](#)

Rail Fare changes

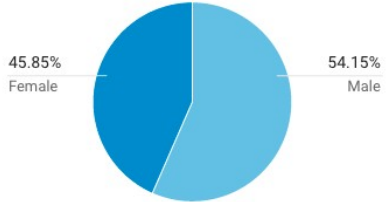
2nd Jan 2020 - early data [\[here\]](#)

We have 114 page likes on Facebook. Posts reached 2988, with 357 engagements (during the 28 days to 28th Dec 19)

Age 100% of total sessions



Gender 100% of total sessions



Melksham RUG
Published by Graham Ellis · July 31 ·

Sunday, 4th August 2019. Day trip by train from Swindon, Chippenham and Melksham to Weymouth.

Swindon - 09:25, Chippenham 09:40, Melksham 09:50. Change at Westbury, by train to Weymouth arrive 11:54. Return train at 17:56, change at Westbury, Melksham at 19:56, Chippenham at 20:06 and Swindon at 20:25.

Adult fare - £18.60 day return from Swindon, Chippenham or Melksham. Groups of 3 or more adults, or on railcards, £12.30 each. Children £9.30. Buy on the day. ... See More

Melksham RUG
Published by Graham Ellis · August 24 ·

07:49 from Melksham ... 09:08 to Bristol Parkway, return train at 17:20, return fare £14.10 before any railcard reductions. If you have an interest in better rail services - not just for Melksham - you should find this fascinating.

railfuture
EVERY PASSENGER MATTERS
Inclusion and accessibility on the rail network

Saturday 21 September 2019
Conference at St Michael's Church Centre, Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS34 9PD
Five minutes walk from Bristol Parkway station
10.00 to 16.30
Registration from 09.30

452 followers on Twitter. Sample impressions of a recent tweet - 623. Engagements 43 over last 3 days.

wiltpensionista @wiltpensionist3 · 3h

Replying to @MelkshamRUG @YoungMelksham and 3 others

Used the train from Melksham to distant station this year. Linked with special assistance it has helped tremendously to improve the quality of life of us old codgers

1

2019 Finance report

Annual Income - around £1300.

One quarter each

- Melksham Town and Melksham Without Councils

One half from Santa trip

Also - donation of travel for the Santa trip and other events by GWR and Rail Delivery Group

Not to forget - volunteer's time – as none of us are paid

Annual Expenditure - also around £1300.

Membership fees for TransWilts

Insurance

Room hire for general meetings

Some travel expenses for out-of-town meetings

The four items above total around £400.

Around £300 on costs of running the Santa trip

Remaining expenditure: publicity / events / print materials

- * We have around 1 year of "funds in hand"
- * We do not charge membership, nor meeting fees
- * We have not sought donations / other incomes in 2019.
- * We plan to have an independent party look over our accounts and comment prior to the 2020 AGM

We were delighted to welcome Judith Gradwell as our new treasurer at the May 2019 AGM. During the latter part of 2019, Judith has been updating our signatories and records with the building society, and there are now four active members named on the account, with two signatures required for access to any funds.

2019 Train services

All services that have run have been safe and with sufficient capacity, and we would like to thank all train crew who have without exception been helpful, polite and professional - at times over and above the call of duty.



However, in 2019 there have been far too many "last minute" cancellations and a noticeable number of delays resulting in missed connections. There have also been engineering works for which substitute buses have run.

When these disruptions happen, information is often poor, and alternative arrangement often non-existent or impractical to use. To give an idea of the scale of the problems ... cancellation rates have risen at times to 15% in a week, against a worst-case target of 2%. Official advice from GWRHelp has been as impractical – for example instructing passengers to wait 5 hours for the next train, and it has taken up to 90 minutes for an alternative (taxi) to be provided when the last train of the day fails to properly connect. During engineering, a trip from Melksham to Swindon (25 minutes by train) can take up over 2 hours on the rail replacement bus, with a change of bus at Chippenham and a wait of an hour there, with the bus arriving from Melksham passing the departing hourly onward bus to Swindon on Station Hill.

The Melksham lines' problems have not been unique - problems which are (primarily) a lack of train crew have also affected other lines - to Weymouth, the Cotswold line and the Severn Beach line have also been mentioned. However, most of these have much more frequent service so the effect is less. Great Western's Managing Director (Mark Hopwood) has committed to giving our line special attention to sort out these issues, and the matter has also been raised by both MRUG and the TransWilts CIC with Great Western, including with Matthew Golton who'll be acting Managing Director in the early months of 2020.



Joe Graham (Business Assurance Director at GWR) passed round mince pies on the Melksham Rail User Group Santa train, 15 December 2019

2019 Timetable changes

The timetable until 14th December comprised 119 services scheduled to call at Melksham per week. As part of the recast of all timetables across GWR lines, this dropped to 115 services per week.

Timetable changes were required because more (and faster) trains now run west from London, and these interface with ours at Swindon, at Chippenham and at Westbury, often passing through those points at times when our train previously ran.

A big "thank you" to GWR for involving our community's more technical people in tuning the new Monday to Friday timetable to best suit everyone. We have lost a round trip from Westbury to Swindon that called in the middle of the day on Mondays to Fridays) so that is 10 trains down, but gained 5 extra early morning trains (05:33 to Swindon) and a new Sunday evening train from Swindon to Westbury. The last train from Swindon on Monday to Friday has also been moved later by 40 minutes - a welcome step towards an evening of services and extending the day, but not yet an answer to calls for a late service.

Saturday and Sunday service times have changed significantly in some cases, and were not consulted on. There is a concern that two major weekend flows - to Swindon for football on Saturday and to Weymouth on Sunday for a day out - and now less attractive to the extent that we will lose much of this traffic - a task for 2020 is to evaluate this and if appropriate recommend

tuning to GWR. The final Saturday train at 18:35 from Westbury remains far too early.

In the week before Christmas, significant teething troubles (well, we hope they are teething troubles) lead to a very high service cancellation rate even on the new reduced timetable.

New train times departing from Melksham

valid from 15 December 2019

| Melksham Station | | | | | | until 16th May 2020 | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| Monday to Friday | | | Saturdays | | | Sundays | | | | | |
| TRAVELLING TO | | LEAVES MELKSHAM AT | TRAVELLING TO | | LEAVES MELKSHAM AT | TRAVELLING TO | | LEAVES MELKSHAM AT | | | |
| Chippenham and Swindon | <i>new!</i> | 05:33 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 07:52 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 08:37 | | | |
| Trowbridge and Westbury | ¹ | 06:36 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 08:50 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 09:36 | | | |
| Chippenham and Swindon | ² | 07:19 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 09:10 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 11:00 | | | |
| Chippenham and Swindon | | 07:52 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 10:20 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 12:05 | | | |
| Trowbridge and Westbury | | 09:09 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 11:29 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 12:56 | | | |
| Chippenham and Swindon | | 10:01 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 12:20 | Trowbridge and Westbury | ³ | 14:04 | | | |
| Trowbridge and Westbury | | 11:30 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 13:29 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 15:06 | | | |
| Chippenham and Swindon | | 12:32 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 14:22 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 16:10 | | | |
| Trowbridge and Westbury | | 13:39 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 15:15 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 17:06 | | | |
| Chippenham and Swindon | | 14:32 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 15:33 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 18:08 | | | |
| Trowbridge and Westbury | | 15:39 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 16:26 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 18:51 | | | |
| Chippenham and Swindon | | 16:41 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 16:47 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 19:51 | | | |
| Trowbridge and Westbury | | 18:01 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 17:58 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 20:34 | | | |
| Chippenham and Swindon | | 18:55 | Chippenham and Swindon | | 18:50 | Trowbridge and Westbury | <i>new!</i> | 21:34 | | | |
| Trowbridge and Westbury | ¹ | 19:16 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 19:58 | | | | | | |
| Chippenham and Swindon | ² | 20:22 | Trowbridge and Westbury | | 21:32 | | | | | | |
| Trowbridge and Westbury | <i>later time!</i> | 21:10 | | | | | | | | | |

¹ Train continues to Southampton Central
² Train continues to Cheltenham Spa
³ Train continues to Weymouth

Trains Returning to Melksham Station

Train departures from Swindon for Melksham

(all these trains leave Chippenham about 16 minutes later)

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Monday to Friday | 06:11, 08:44, 11:05, 13:14, 15:14, 17:36, 18:51 and 20:45 |
| Saturdays | 08:45, 11:04, 13:04, 15:04, 16:01, 17:33, 19:33 and 21:07 |
| Sundays | 09:12, 11:41, 13:41, 15:46, 17:44, 19:27 and 21:10 |

Train departures from Westbury for Melksham

(all these trains leave Trowbridge about 6 minutes later)

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Monday to Friday | 05:17, 07:03, 07:36, 09:45, 12:16, 14:16, 16:25, 18:39 and 20:06 |
| Saturdays | 07:37, 08:35, 10:05, 12:05, 14:07, 15:00, 16:32, and 18:35 |
| Sundays | 08:20, 10:44, 12:39, 14:05, 16:50, 18:35 and 20:18 |

Train times may be amended at weekend/holiday times. Check with www.gwr.com or on boards at stations before travelling.

All trains are wheelchair-accessible. Parking is available for rail users at Melksham Station.

Please purchase your train ticket at the station ticket machine before you join the train.

See www.mrug.org.uk/fares.html for details of rail fares from Melksham. Train travel may be less expensive than you think, especially with the wide range of rail cards, off-peak fares and groupsave discounts.

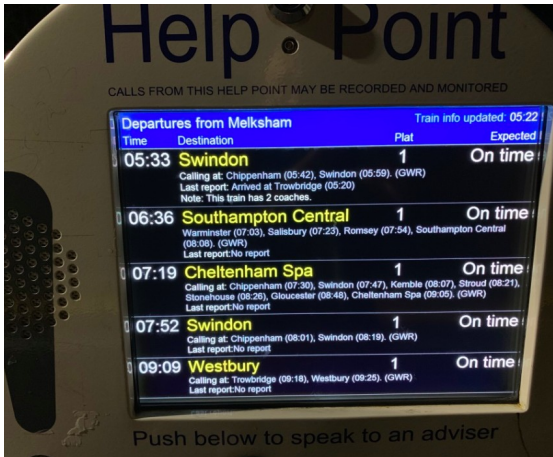
2019 Passenger performance

The latest published figures for ticket sales to / from Melksham published by the Office of Rail and Road are for the 2017/18 year - 74,220 journeys which was virtually unchanged from the previous year; at that time, further growth was impractical because the single coach train was already full to bursting in the peaks. Figures for the 2018/19 year have been delayed and are expected to be published in mid January 2020. With 50 days of almost total service suspension due to engineering work in that year, even a similar figure of around 75,000 would be a good result. With the severe reliability issues of the last 9 months, a similar figure might be expected for the current year too. However, GWR report a 4.9% traffic growth and on that basis a figure of 80,000 published late in 2020 seems achievable. Much depends on how well the trains run through this winter.

Our MRUG volunteers have noticed a significant drop in the number of vehicles parked during the day in the station car park, and conversations with rail users who live in Melksham suggest that some now drive to Chippenham and park there due to train service reliability issues. We also note many people being dropped off at the station and far more drivers waiting for the train to appear before they leave than was previously the case. This lack of parking is compensated by additional passengers arriving at Melksham station on foot.

For specific trains, the 07:20 and 07:50 to Swindon and the 17:36 back from Swindon remain the busiest in the day. The 15:19 return from Swindon has also grown much busier, and the 10:02 to Swindon has also been building

traffic. The Sunday morning train at around 08:40 to Swindon developed a good traffic of shift work staff but this has slipped back badly based on reliability issues, and impractical rail replacement schedules on some engineering work days.



The first run of the 05:33 Melksham to Swindon on 16th December was virtually empty.

The first run of the 21:10 (Sunday) Swindon to Melksham carried 15 passengers – and some will be regular users.



Further desirable enhancements that passengers (actual and potential) tell us would increase their use are:

- * Later train (22:00 ex Westbury, 22:45 ex Swindon daily)
- * Hourly service (including 07:30 & 16:30 ex Swindon)
- * Through / linked Spa service to Salisbury and Southampton

Bibliography and other useful links

AcoRP Community Rail Strategy:

<https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/DfT-Community-Rail-Strategy-and-Accreditation-ACoRP-Members-Seminars.pdf>

Melksham Winter and Spring Timetable:

<http://www.mrug.org.uk/Winter2019Spring2020.pdf>

Melksham Summer 2019 event program review

http://www.mrug.org.uk/sc2019_thankyou2.pdf

Suggestions on reducing station dwell time at Melksham

http://www.mrug.org.uk/mkm_faster_load.pdf

Tribute to class 153 trains – Melksham’s saviours

<http://www.mrug.org.uk/tribute153.html>

Live train departures from Melksham

<http://iris2.rail.co.uk/tiger/rendercis.asp?file=303426.xml>

Train fares – Melksham to London

<http://www.brfares.com/#!fares?orig=MKM&dest=PAD>

Links to further sites and resources

<http://www.mrug.org.uk/links>

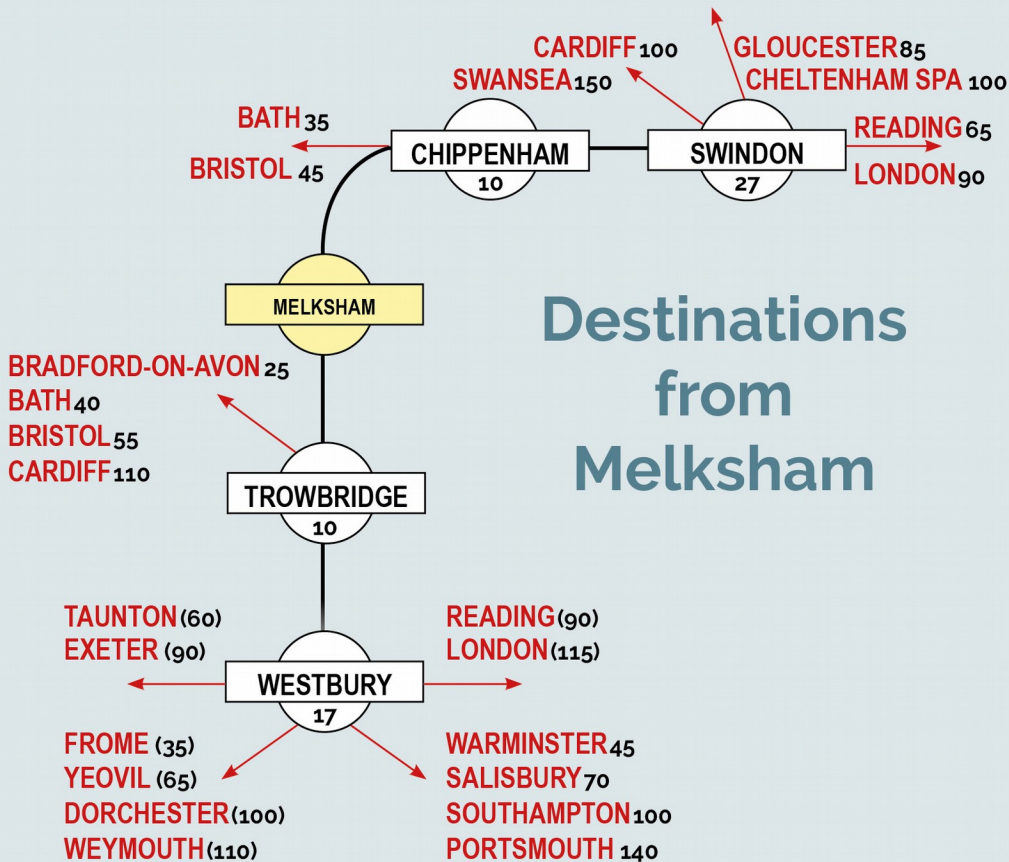
Melksham Rail User Group <http://www.mrug.org.uk>

GWR (our train operator) <https://www.gwr.com>

Coffee Shop (forum) <http://www.passenger.chat>

WWRUG (West Wilts) <http://www.wwrug.org.uk>

TransWilts (CRP) <https://transwilts.org>



Numbers shown on this diagram are typical journey minutes from leaving Melksham to arriving at each destination. Where a change of trains is required on the way, the journey time quoted includes the time taken by that change.

Note that some journeys may take longer than stated if you leave Melksham

on a train that does not make a good connection; in particular, times shown in parentheses, for example (60), are connections into services that run less than once an hour and we advise you to check ahead of time if there is a suitable connection from the train you choose from Melksham.

Contact details

Web - <http://www.mrug.org.uk>

Facebook - [Melkshamrug](#)

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Twitter - [@MelkshamRUG](#)

Melksham
rail user group