House of Commons

Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

23 March 2026

Dear Heidi,

SUPERFAST WI-FI ON GWR FOR THE SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES

As South West and South Wales Members of Parliament we are writing to request the allocation of £12m from the Department for Transport to the roll out of next-generation superfast Wi-Fi across the Great Western Railway intercity fleet. This serves the routes between London Paddington and Penzance, Bristol and South Wales.

A pilot, run by Peninsula Transport, has combined existing mobile network signals with satellite connectivity and has been running successfully on a GWR Intercity Express Train since November 2025. Peninsula Transport has shared with us the results of the pilot, which are strong. The technology has provided near-constant Wi-Fi connectivity, fast download and upload speeds and data capacity to meet the needs of both of both business and leisure passengers on board intercity services. This has been supported by positive responses from the passenger surveys carried out on board.

We are wholly supportive of Government efforts to put passengers at the heart of every part of the rail industry. The 'Project Reach' deal signed last year to boost connectivity and remove mobile signal blackspots on the rail network was a strong statement of intent. We believe the Government should build on this and draw funding for this superfast Wi-Fi from the £57m allocated to this type of project.

As Secretary of State and a South West MP, you will know that rail services through our constituencies are set to slow down as a result of track realignment from HS2. We are, of course, keen to ensure the experience of passengers on these routes faces as little disruption as possible and believe that improved connectivity would be a positive step towards this.

With funding confirmed, Peninsula Transport would be able to take forward the results of the pilot into a Pathfinder Project on behalf of your Department. We have been informed that benefits to the GWR intercity network could come as soon as the end of the year.

We would appreciate a meeting to discuss next steps and ensure the opportunity to deliver a better service to our constituents and other passengers on the GWR intercity network.

Best wishes,

Steve Race MP
Labour Member of Parliament for Exeter

House of Commons

Sadik Al-Hassan MP
Labour Member for Parliament for North Somerset

Tonia Antoniazzi MP
Labour Member for Parliament for Gower

Anneliese Dodds MP
Labour Member for Parliament for Oxford East

Damien Egan MP
Labour Member for Parliament for Bristol North East

Jayne Kirkham MP
Labour Member for Parliament for Truro and Falmouth

Noah Law MP
Labour Member for Parliament for St Austell and Newquay

Kerry McCarthy MP
Labour Member for Parliament for Bristol East

Perran Moon MP
Labour Member for Parliament for Cambourne and Redruth

Simon Opher MP
Labour Member for Parliament for Stroud

Fred Thomas MP
Labour Member for Parliament for Plymouth Moor View

Henry Tufnell MP
Labour Member for Parliament for Mid and South Pembrokeshire