

Government protects vital Dawlish coastal rail route with a further £32 million

- Rail Minister announces another £32 million of funding to install new netting and fencing along the crucial Dawlish rail link
- works will give passengers safer, more reliable journeys and will future-proof the line and protect the local community following the severe storms in 2014
- new funding is part of government's £155 million investment to level up connections between communities in the South West

A further £32 million of funding to add vital netting and fencing along the iconic Dawlish and Holcombe route, protecting passengers and safeguarding access to the network for local residents, has today (1 April 2022) been announced by Rail Minister Wendy Morton.

This latest round of funding, which follows on from 3 earlier phases of work and takes the total to more than £150 million, will prevent storm debris from reaching the railway, creating strong resilient transport links to the area and giving passengers safer and more reliable journeys.

Following the devastating storms of 2014, which saw the railway damaged beyond use for 8 weeks, the government intervened to prevent this from happening again by launching the [South West Rail Resilience Programme \(SWRRP\)](#).

SWRRP is a £155 million commitment to create a more resilient railway, protect the safety of Dawlish's passengers and ensure that local communities are no longer at risk from being disconnected from the network for long periods of time.

Through this funding, the government has successfully rebuilt the sea wall along the Marine Parade, added further cliff protection measures and implemented accessibility improvements.

Rail Minister Wendy Morton said:

Devon's iconic sea wall and the picturesque towns surrounding it are jewels in the British crown, and we're committed to protecting this vital line and the communities it serves.

Through our wider £155 million investment, we're also working to boost connectivity and support the thriving local economy and tourism.

The new funding is part of the SWRRP £155 million government investment to level up connections in the South West and deliver reliable and punctual journeys across Devon and Cornwall, boosting the local economy and tourism in the process. This includes:

- a £53 million complete upgrade to the train care depot in Exeter, improving service reliability and capacity for passengers across the region
- £80 million of funding to deliver a new sea wall at Dawlish, between Colonnades Bridge and Kennaway Tunnel, which opened in 2020, with the next phase of work to the east currently under construction

Mike Gallop, Network Rail's Western route director, said:

We are delighted to once again receive the support from government, which enables us to carry out the next phase of our resilience work between Dawlish and Teignmouth.

This will mean that passengers using GWR and CrossCountry services on this vital rail link to and from the South West will have more reliable journeys, as the railway along the Devon coast will be better protected from rising sea levels, extreme weather, landslips and rockfalls for the next 100 years.