

MELKSHAM 2026

# Prospectus

*Customer and Community Infrastructure Fund*



**information**  
at the **Station**

# information at the Station

## InformationStation

A volunteer-run and staffed facility at Melksham Railway Station, providing support for rail passengers and others.

Warmth, a loo, someone to help, travel information, a cup of coffee, a friendly chat, a local liaison point for GBR staff, some help in looking after the station, and a social opportunity for the volunteers.

InformationStation has widespread local support and experienced backing volunteers and organisations. This ensures it will work in the short, medium and longer term. It aligns for public transport users, for Neighbourhood, Unitary, railway, and National planning and development policies, and with the team bidding.

### In this document:

1. Introduction and Management Overview
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### Followed by Support Correspondence:

- Letter from Melksham and Devizes MP Brian Mathew
- Email from Mayor Saffi Rabey

This document is downloadable at  
[https://www.mtug.org.uk/mtug\\_ccif\\_2026.pdf](https://www.mtug.org.uk/mtug_ccif_2026.pdf)



## Introduction and Management Overview

### Melksham

Melksham is a town with an urban area population of around 25,000, growing and planned to grow further. It shares and uses many facilities with neighbouring towns, such as Trowbridge and Chippenham, with significant daily flows of people both out and in.

### Transport Journeys in 2024/25

Passengers travelled by train to 539 different destinations from Melksham station last year, according to ticket statistics. An average of over 180 journeys were made every day that the train service was running.

### Growth

Melksham's future is growth. And much of the travel needs to be sustainable, for trains and buses. A concept, such as Information at the Station, is at the heart of future connections. It is protected and reserved under Melksham's Neighbourhood Plan for the purpose. The plans for an Information Station at Melksham do not rely on this growth, but they do service it.



## Melksham Station

There is one railway station in Melksham, and it is unstaffed.

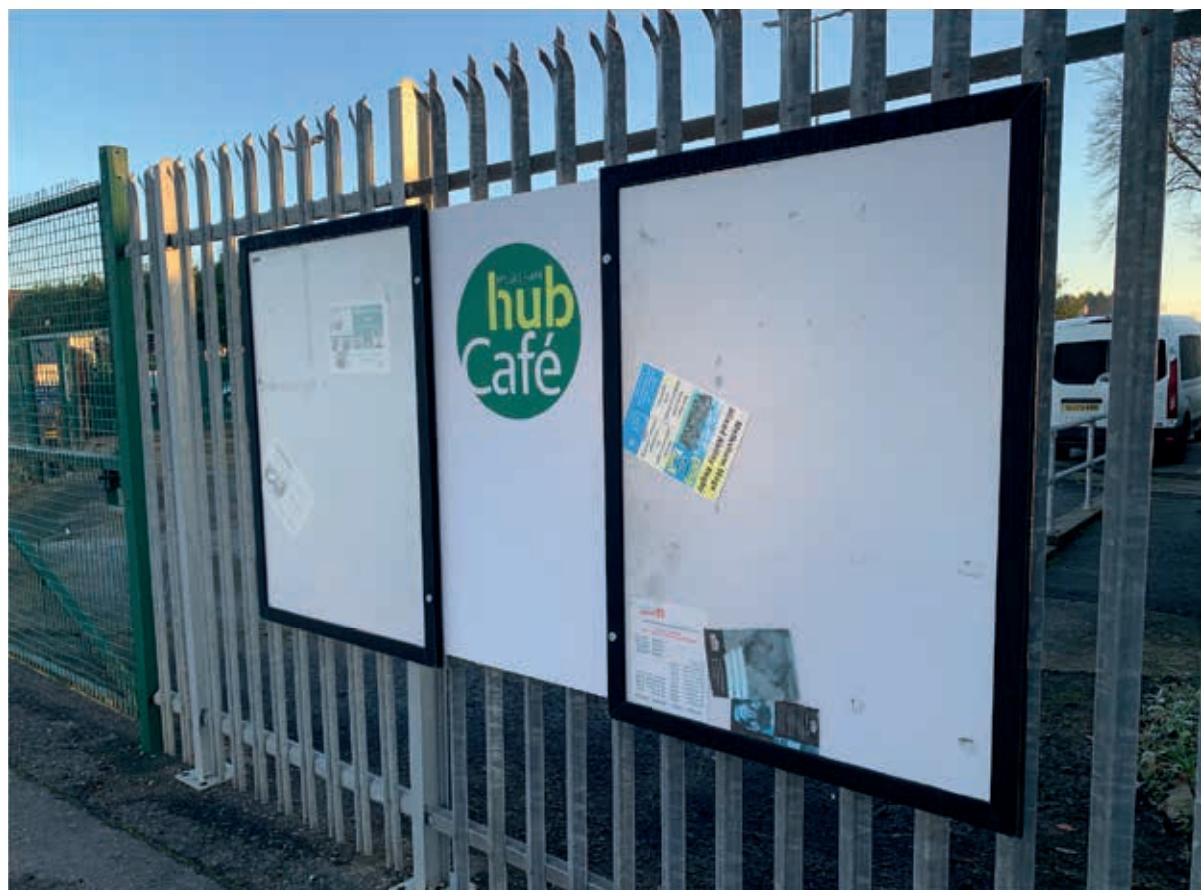
Melksham Station is just a 10-minute walk from the town bridge. It is set in the back of a sparse industrial estate, interspersed with a copious array of notices with regulations that read more like threats mixed in with some useful information. It's tolerated by the regular passenger, but is off-putting to the newcomer and occasional user.

## Train Service Advice

Melksham's train service is thin but usable. There are long gaps between train calls, which means if anything goes wrong and a train is not running or very late, there's a need for someone to help, advise, and know who to contact, so as to reassure nervous passengers.

## Volunteer Rail Advocates

There are people who would love to pop in to help in a social setting, chat and be occasionally useful, or hot-desk in a warm, dry, and welcoming alternative space. There's a rail and public transport-aware community that, if appreciated, are only too willing to help and offer advice. What's far harder to find is the more formal admin folks and people to help the volunteers co-ordinate, learn and find direction.



## Support and Skills to Deliver

This proposal was written in January 2026 to support a Great Western Railway (GWR) Customer and Community Infrastructure Fund (CCIF) bid. It has a strong business case, and addresses many goals for customers and the community in line with strategic objectives. Advice has been sought, proposals fine-tuned based on inputs we have, risks noted and addressed, and alternative options considered, with some final decisions remaining open for best success as the project proceeds.



**MELKSHAM  
TRANSPORT  
USER GROUP**



**Correlated by Graham Ellis, Chair of Melksham Transport User Group**

*With help and support from many, including:*

- Brian Mathew, MP for Melksham and Devizes
- Saffi Rabey, Melksham Town Mayor
- Melksham Town Representative for MTUG
- Melksham Without Parish Council
- Melksham Without Representative for MTUG
- Two Wiltshire Councillors
- Great Western Railway (First Group)
- Chair of TransWilts Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Melksham Environment Group
- Melksham Neighbourhood Plan
- Treasurer of MTUG
- West Wiltshire Rail User Group (WWRUG)
- Friends of Chippenham Station
- Businesses on Station Approach
- Management team and rail user vote at the Coffee Shop Passenger forum
- Previous hub staff with 2021 management, and 2022 operating experience
- Several other very well informed sources / experts, current and retired

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## Project Details and Timeline

### Information at the Station

This is a proposal for a volunteer-staffed information point by Melksham Station called “InformationStation”, using the Wiltshire Council building beside the station car park on Station Approach.

This proposal aligns with many short- and medium-term aspirations, and is being suggested as a project and bid for CCIF funds for a seeding year.

### Thought Through

In the planning for a number of years, this concept has been thoroughly vetted amongst organisations and potential volunteers. We have learned from the experience of the former occupant, a cafe managed by TransWilts CIC called “The Hub” when their operations came to a halt during the height of covid.



Our concept of an “InformationStation” awaited Wiltshire Council decisions because they had taken over the adjacent car parking area, and the building remained unoccupied. We were assured our aims were safeguarded in the Neighbourhood Plan.

In short, we are looking to ensure this will work in the medium term as well as the long term. The Neighbourhood Plan runs to 2038. Wiltshire Council and Network Rail have plans to increase the rail capacity and service through Melksham. When this happens, we would expect the 180 journeys per day to increase as the train service increases to more than 900 journeys per day, and probably well in excess of that. InformationStation does not need that increase for its business case, yet would be ready and in place for the growth as it happens.



## CCIF Funding

CCIF is typically oversubscribed. However, in preparing this document we are struck by just how well this project meets the criteria. Some of the items to be provided are outside the remit, but capital and match funding from other sources is also listed and to be applied for, with different criteria. After initial stocking costs, operational cash flow will quickly be positive and the need for ongoing grants will be minimal if there is any such requirement at all. In practise, the big question at this stage is what lease or rental charge will Wiltshire Council require for the building? The question has been asked but not addressed in the short timescale from CCIF scheme announcement to bid closure. In our judgement, external options for Wiltshire Council to charge money for the lease are limited and they should welcome an income and people looking after the building day-to-day. An educated estimate for a sensible amount has been included on the spread sheet in Part 5 of this document, and includes a contingency. We can change the model if we need; if the quote is an order of magnitude higher, and not negotiable, we can walk away.

## Information That's Deliverable

It is our view that this is a deliverable with huge benefits for Melksham, not only in terms of rail passengers, but also for the community by supporting short- and medium-term residents and visitors. It also aligns with plans such as the Neighbourhood Plan and Transport Strategy. This will provide an improved environment for public transport use and development in line with Melksham's growth.

## InformationStation – Bullet Points for the Project

- We plan to provide:
  - ✓ Information and assistance
  - ✓ Volunteer chat and companionship
  - ✓ Station adoption including help
  - ✓ Sales of coffees, teas, soft drinks
  - ✓ Sales of locally sourced packet snacks (for eat in or take away)
  - ✓ Free drinking water
  - ✓ Safety and safeguarding
  - ✓ Loo for rail and InformationStation users
  - ✓ Free WiFi
  - ✓ Warm waiting
  - ✓ Feedback and feedforward point to operators
  - ✓ Help with onward journeys
- We do not plan to provide or sell:
  - ☒ Alcoholic beverages
  - ☒ Other products, including tobacco



SANDRIDGE BROWNIES AND CAKES

- ❑ Cooked food
- ❑ Music, live, live stream or recorded
- ❑ Charity collections
- ❑ Outdoor seating and service
- ❑ Ticket or other third party sales
- ❑ Support for net-negative volunteers
- ❑ Car parking
- ❑ Car boot sales
- ❑ Drive-in cinema
- ❑ Bicycle hire



## Projected Timeline

Currently we have a dozen supporters, a small handful of concerns that we need to address, and the risks already identified. However, there is a single major elephant remaining in the room. Wiltshire Council who, in spite of the Neighbourhood Plan, may now want the property for an internal service use, contrary to the plan to which they are a partner. It's not necessarily a show-stopper; it could be an approval delay though. We have a business plan, wide consultation feedback that we have addressed, including risk reductions and mitigations. Our initial data confirms our strong belief that this will work.

## Deadline for CCIF Bid – 2nd February 2026

- Late March 2026 – result of CCIF bid

And if successful:

- Late July 2026 – formal opening and volunteer training, including manuals to keep on site
- Soon After – Limited summer days and daily hours
- From 1st September 2026 – daily hours

## About the Building

- External approx 7.5m x 5.5m
- Single-storey building with significant curtilage, renovated 2021
- Disabled access and loo
- Electricity, water, phone line from before
- Previously had solar panels and defibrillator (probably won't be reinstalled)
- Security door, and security gates on vehicular entrance to yard
- Poster Boards



## **Customers and beneficiaries would most likely include:**

- Rail Users and enquirers
- Customers stopping in while they get their car serviced nearby
- Van drivers and minibus drivers
- Volunteers for their social life
- Subway painters
- Upside yard work team, etc.
- Other businesses

## **Support-in-kind possibilities**

- Wiltshire Council - assistant parking and rental
- Graphic arts, design and marketing

## **Admin tasks**

- Rotas
- Training
- Safeguarding
- Equality and Diversity and other policies – customers and volunteers
- Miscellaneous paperwork and accounting

*I drive to Chippenham or Westbury to catch the train. There are people around and it's safer.*

## **Skills and support available by volunteers**

- Distribution of brochures – up to 10 people consistently volunteer
- Previous experience in business management
- Running volunteer projects for more than 20 years
- Managing a community hall
- Rail and public transport knowledge

## **Hours – initially from Summer Holiday opening**

- Open for service 06:40 - 10:30, 07:40 - 11:30 weekend

## **Jobs to be done and not forgotten**

- Gardening maintenance
- Cleaning
- Stock management
- Supply purchase
- Station platform tidy

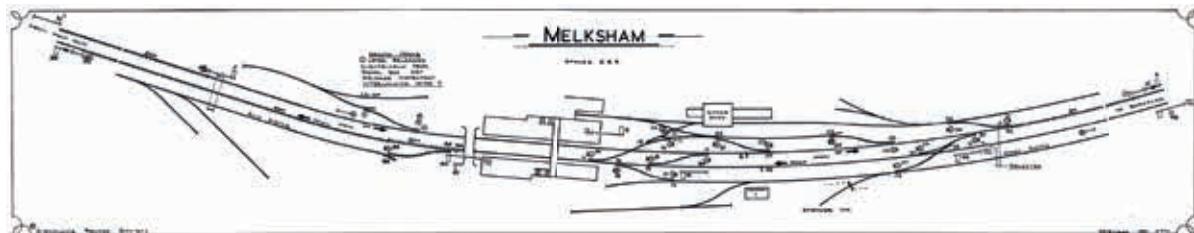


# 4

## Wider Picture: How InformationStation Fits In

### History

Melksham is a town of around 25,000 residents in the urban area, and a further 5,000 in the surrounding rural area. About 6,000 are younger people (under 18) and 6,500 are older (over 65). It shares many facilities with nearby Wiltshire towns, such as Chippenham and Trowbridge, and a little further afield, with Bath and Swindon. The town is growing, with a further 2,000 to 4,000 homes planned for the next 12 years (adding 4,500 to 9,000 to the



population).

Melksham Station was on the Great Western main line from London to Weymouth, but as part of the “Beeching Axe” cuts, passenger trains were withdrawn, the station closed, and the line reduced to a single track without even passing loops. It only just survived for freight and diversionary purposes. The station buildings were demolished, and station site sold off. An industrial estate grew up there.



But the Beeching Axe went too far, and of around 170 of 2,500 stations have re-opened. Melksham re-opened in 1985 on the cheap – a bare platform that could accommodate a single carriage, a bus shelter, and a commuter train each morning to Swindon and back in the early evening. There were various experiments with a few extra trains but none tipped the balance into making it a generally useful service until 2014, with a trial service which



*I don't use Melksham station because there's no one there to help.*

has now become permanent and indeed has been enhanced further in more recent years. The single carriage train was outgrown, and the platform extended to take up to three carriages, though recent enhancements allow longer modern trains to stop with selective door opening. However, the track capacity remains limited, the station squeezed into the areas that were not sold off to the private sector, and passenger numbers, whilst up from 3,000 to 60,000 journeys a year, remain disappointing.

## Limited Information is a Problem

A part, but only a part, of the low numbers relate to the station being unfriendly. There is limited positive information, a complex ticketing process, and no help with local knowledge available, such as helping tourists find the town centre, or if a passenger becomes stranded. Those are issues to be addressed by the InformationStation project.

## Future Enhancements

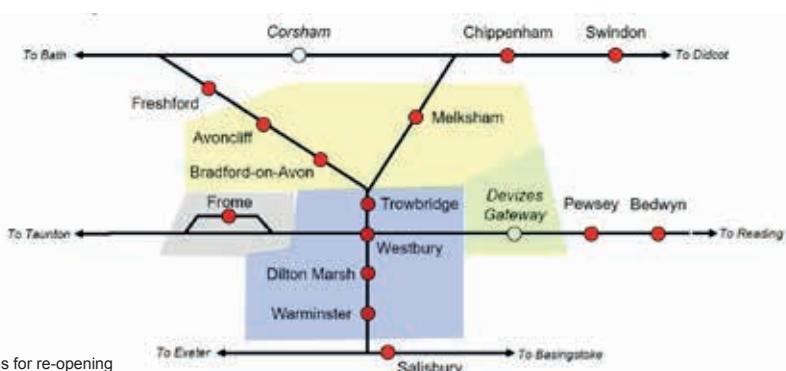
In parallel with InformationStation, Network Rail, Great Western and others have on their radar the enhancement of the line through Melksham – perhaps with a loop – as their top Wiltshire priority. This will allow for the train service to be enhanced to at least hourly, and also increase reliability. Analysis suggests that passenger journey numbers will increase to in excess of 250,000 per year. This upgrade is physically separate from the InformationStation and unlikely to be detrimental.

## Improving Train/Bus Connectivity

Also in parallel, Melksham's public transport plans and Neighbourhood Plan are working toward a bus service to the station. A bus service to the station when there were no trains would have been pointless, but plans now are for a town bus service that connects with trains, and the Town Centre, the outer newer residential areas, the sports facilities, medical facilities cluster and main industrial areas, including Bowerhill and Hampton Park West. With bus services terminating at the station, InformationStation will be available to bus staff for their breaks. Not part of InformationStation but the charging point in the Wiltshire Council car park should be considered for the bus. (We note modern fast charge technology, with which GWR have experience at West Ealing.)

## Looking Further Ahead

The Bath and Wiltshire Metro proposals for the next decade suggest further public transport enhancement with Melksham Railway Station being a key interchange. And redevelopment of the former Cooper Tires site, just five minutes' walk from the station, with perhaps around 150 homes for town living, further boost the potential for the InformationStation, while the project does not in any way depend on these enhancements going ahead.



## 5

## Business Case, Capital and Revenue Finance

RUNNING COSTS – InformationStation (all prices rounded up)			
annual/running (estimated)		one-off purchase	
item	cost	item	cost
water cooler rental	£75.00	coffee machine	£216.00
WiFi	£360.00	kettle	£21.00
water/sewerage	£500.00	security camera (WiFi)	£270.00
electricity/heating	£600.00	television (web enabled)	£180.00
building lease, 2 car parking spaces	£1,000.00	labour - wiring, installation	£500.00
rates	£500.00	decorating supplies	£500.00
waste	£200.00	labour - decorating	£500.00
credit card reader/charges	£150.00	cash box	£20.00
advertising/marketing	£250.00	vaccum cleaner	£50.00
administration	£250.00	floor mop	£30.00
volunteer expenses	£250.00	keys	£10.00
web cam monitoring	£120.00	set-up credit card reader	£25.00
insurance/liability	£550.00	under-counter refrigerator	£200.00
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,805.00</b>	<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,522.00</b>

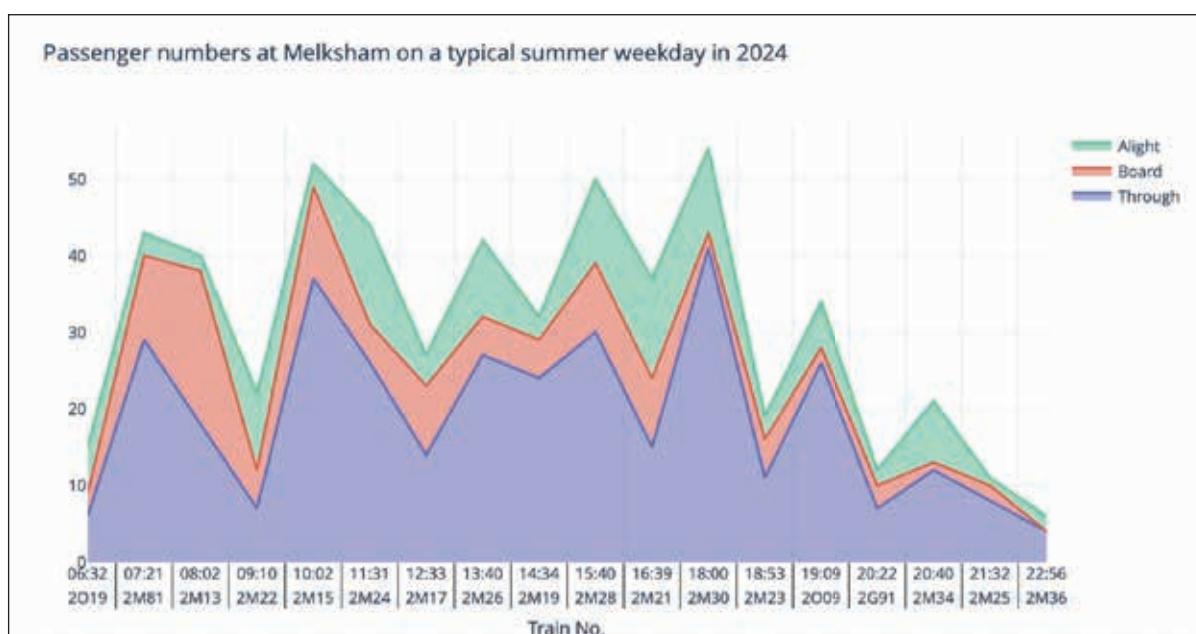
consumables (based on 2nd year onwards)		wholesale consumables (supplied by others)		
item	cost	item	retail (each)	profit (each)
coffee - regular and decaf	£300.00	Coffee	£3.00	£2.78
tea	£150.00	Tea	£2.00	£1.94
sugar	£60.00	Soft Drink	£1.50	£0.80
artificial sweetener	£30.00	Brownie	£2.80	£0.11
semi-skimmed milk	£100.00	Shortbread	£3.00	£0.12
soft drinks - canned	£500.00	Cookie bar	£3.00	£0.12
water (5 litre bottled)	£150.00	School Loaf Cake	£3.00	£0.12
plastic cups/water	£30.00	Lemon Drizzle	£3.00	£0.12
paper cups/hot beverages	£150.00	Butter Cream Cake	£3.00	£0.12
toilet paper	£100.00	Salted Caramel Cake	£3.00	£0.12
hand soap and incidentals	£130.00	Chocolate Cake	£3.00	£0.12
paper towels	£50.00	Scone	£1.00	£0.14
cleaning supplies	£100.00	Cookie	£2.00	£0.08
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,880.00</b>	Based on a theory, if, on a typical day, 5 coffees, 3 teas, 4 soft drinks and 4 cakes were purchased, the annual profit would be £7,020.00		

Potential Income Sources	Year 1	Year 2 on
Customer and Community Infrastructure Fund *	£3,500.00	
Community Rail Network *	£2,000.00	
Operational Income	£2,340.00	£7,020.00
Melksham Area Board *	£2,000.00	
Melksham Town Council *	£2,000.00	
Melksham Transport User Group *	£1,500.00	
Sponsorships and Bequests *	£1,000.00	£500.00
Melksham Without Parish Council *	£500.00	
Almshouses *	£500.00	
Section 106 (potential) *	£5,128.00	
<b>SUB TOTAL (*40% probability factor applied)</b>	<b>£7,251.00</b>	<b>£6,500.00</b>

SUMMARY	Year 1	Year 2 on
Annual Running Costs (10% contingency added)	£5,285.10	£5,285.10
Capital Set-up Costs (25% contingency added)	£3,152.50	
Cost of Consumables (10% contingency added)	£689.33	£2,068.00
Profit on Consumables	£2,340.00	£7,020.00
Anticipated Other Income Sources	£7,251.00	£500.00
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>£464.07</b>	<b>£166.90</b>

Any excess of income over expenditure will go to Melksham Transport User Group funds to support the ongoing support marketing of public transport services by the group.

Diagram below shows the number of passengers arriving and departing Melksham on each train on a typical weekday, which helps inform us as we set opening hours.



# 6

## Plans for the Building Itself

### Interior

InformationStation will be provided with a simple beverage corner for hot drinks with a refrigerator for cold drinks and a water cooler. A sink is already there.

A handful of chairs and a couple of tables will be available. There are already high-bench shelves in the building and those will both house the compact range of leaflets we have available and provide extra seating should that be practical. Limited displays of useful information and atmospheric picture will be provided, and we have been asked by the Town Council to provide a “What’s on in Melksham” board which we would be happy to do while it is populated and maintained by the wider community.

The toilet and wash room, which is access-for-all will be available to all comers without charge while the InformationStation is open. This is a modern toilet provided already through grants from the local council. Should regular users of the car park, such as drivers of vehicle operating public, school or other services from a base in the car park, wish to use the facilities, they will be welcome and we would be happy to make arrangements for them to have access at times we are not open to the public if appropriate. We would also be open to housing some staff lockers, and for staff to use the public WiFi to sign in and out if appropriate for them.



Screens will provide real-time train information. Run through a WiFi-enabled, computer-connected television screen, the resolution would be higher than available at the platform and allow open access feeds of more thorough data. A second screen will help volunteers advise and research with customers, and be available to customers for their own bookings should they wish, and to join MTUG. Volunteers will not be travel agents. As and when bus service start to the station we will be able to provide a third screen to track buses. The industries are not sufficiently integrated as yet for it to be done locally on a single screen without losing clarity.

### Exterior

InformationStation is fronted by a concreted yard separated from the Wiltshire Council station car park by robust bollards, and from station approach by a high fence with, however, a gap to allow pedestrians to pass; they are even encouraged by zebra crossing markings on Station Approach lacking, however, the flashing beacons and zigzag lines of a real zebra.

The high fence is off-putting (“prison-like” has been used) and we’ll be limited in what we can do. Gates will be open when InformationStation is open, and poster and panel boards, some of which are already there and empty, will be used both to inform and to encourage. The

concreted yard will allow up to two volunteer cars at a time to park while on duty, and the yard will be looked after by volunteers. The outside of the building to be brightly decorated with street art, of which examples from Melksham and also from Stations on the Severn Beach line are shown as examples. The artwork subject would make it plainly obvious the function of this building, as the proximity of it to the area where people wait for the train, and the fencing that surround the building makes it difficult for people to realise this building is there for them.

From Spring 2027, one of our options would be offer outdoor seating in good weather, and the security-fenced small area behind the Information Station, which is part of the property, could house some plastic chairs for the purpose. We do not anticipate providing additional sheltered accommodation, nor hosting events which would require extra space. The Information Station team will keep the security area tidy.



STREET ART ON THE SEVERN BEACH LINE



STREET ART IN THE MELKSHAM SUBWAY



# 7

## Issues to be Addressed

### Availability of the Building

Wiltshire Council have indicated that they have been considering use of the building for an internal service's purpose. Unless that includes improved railway connection facilities, they need to move on if they don't want to contradict the made Neighbourhood Plan, the emerging Local Plan and the overwhelming will of the community. We are confident that this matter will become much clearer as to how Wiltshire Council will be respecting Melksham's Joint Neighbourhood Plan, Wiltshire Council's Local Plan, community development and aligned aspirations over coming weeks. However, there is only one month between the timing of the CCIF announcement on 2nd January and the application deadline of 2nd February.

At this stage, no lease cost estimate has been proposed. We would hope that Wiltshire Council will price with a thought to provide the facility for the community's sake. For our own estimation purposes, we have looked at the market rate for other unfurnished space nearby, added a 25% contingency, and feel that would be affordable. Should Wiltshire Council set a very high price, very much like a "ransom strip", the scheme would not be able to proceed, but we think this scenario is improbable.

### Staffing

Although we aren't a charity, none of the people helping at InformationStation will be paid. Over the past two decades, we have cultivated a list of rail advocates, and many have expressed an interest in volunteering their time at the InformationStation. We have compiled a list of 25 people who are willing and able, and a further 16 that are supportive. Many of these are community contacts from the 763 followers of MTUG. More than 100 log in daily to our GWR-focused *passenger.chat* group where around 1,100 others remain active, and these include current and retired people in the rail industry, and frequent train users who have an interest in a robust service.

Our web-based groups have become quite a source of shared information for those wanting information about train travel, locations, rail disruptions, fare advice, or simple friendship, and is a natural segue into providing this same



information to people in a physical location by those who have extensive knowledge. In many ways, the help and advice given out is also mental help received back.

We've had a lot of experience with volunteers over the years. Because of this, we are mindful there is a tendency to take volunteers for granted. Our own ethos of motivation, camaraderie, enjoyment, respect, acknowledging results and appreciating what they do, has made their experience an enjoyable part of their daily life.

## Answers to Wiltshire Council's Questions

During the preparation of this prospectus, we were in touch with various people who asked questions about our intent. As we align with Wiltshire Council in wanting this to work out for everyone, we do not want to waste time and effort, or block other opportunities.

The preliminary management overview addressed just about everything raised in email correspondence, but in a short-hand, bullet-point format. Let me go a little further on key items:

### Business Plan

We have a skeleton business plan looking at first, second and forward to 5th year. It is in the form of a working spread sheet including on the financial side capital and revenue streams, contingency factors and so forth. It will be shareable once we have final inputs in place. Most notable is what Wiltshire Council might be able to offer in terms of any lease costs and responsibilities. These will make a huge difference, and I would commend you to offering us a "community" price. Surely any income for WC is going to be better than having the building lay idle or be an internal service expense. If we were to pay the cost for the building at the pro-rata rates that are being offered for space at the old Cooper Tires site, it's affordable. If the cost is based on the whole curtilage area at plush office rates, it would be quite another matter.

### Previous Venture Failed

Indeed, but comparing our proposal to it is rather like comparing a cup of tea to a Sunday lunch. There certainly are lessons to be learned, but the only similarity is that a rail-focused organisation used the building. The focus was on it being a cafe, and it just happened to be near a railway station. Our goal is to provide information to passengers and encourage public transportation use. Another element of concern is reputation, but this is a whole different (and Melksham-based) team.



Please look and listen to our own track record, and also the depth of our support and experience. I would not personally be backing this if I wasn't pretty darned sure we can deliver, as we have delivered so much in the past. We are not the same outfit. We are not looking to open at post-apocalyptic recovery time. We are not proposing to take on elements with significant risks beyond the business basics.

#### Our Own Experience and Background

MTUG are well placed to set up and operate the InformationStation. As the Melksham Railway Development Group, we were founded 30 years ago, and since then passenger numbers have risen from 3,000 to 65,000 per annum. Using the projection of an improved offering including an hourly train service and connecting busses, usage will rise to four to six times that number. Wiltshire's local rail plan has the service improvement as its Number One priority, and this is not cheap due to line capacity issues. Various planning applications are coming through to seed-fund a town bus service. This includes connecting with trains from the day the first new home in a new development is occupied. But even so, MTUG does not have an exclusive right to set up and operate, even after making our case. If your own Wiltshire Council plans to do so instead, we would love to support and partner if we are re-assured that it's feasible. There may be other options being explored. We are not aware of any of them; if they were out there, I'm sure with all the contacts we have we would at least have wind of them.

#### Uses For the Currently Unoccupied Building

The building in question is specifically listed in the Neighbourhood Plan. This was developed and updated with Wiltshire Council's involvement through 2024, and through inspection to referendum in Summer 2025. The Wiltshire Council representative on the steering group, and other officers at Wiltshire Council, made suggestions of changes across the plan to iron out any areas of concern. To my knowledge there was no such arrangement with regards the station building; however, although I was on the committee, I was not the transport representative on the plan. Melksham's Neighbourhood Plan was under a lot of scrutiny and was accepted on behalf of Wiltshire Council. It would be perverse, and contrary to the plan that Wiltshire Council endorsed, to block the provision of an improved station offering needed as the town grows.

#### Failure to Reach Targets

The targets are low hurdles and the ongoing running costs even of a "zero income" operation could be met from MTUG funds for 18 months. Sponsorships and other sources of income will be investigated and are approachable should the social and public transport element of the project blossom but the user income stream not do so.

#### **Stock Aging and Stock Security**

Something to be aware of, but stock held will be limited and with few exceptions, such as milk, will be longer life. We will not have fresh daily for things like sandwiches.

#### **Competition Once Link to Foundry Close is Opened**

We look forward to the station being reachable on foot or by cycle from Foundry Close. That will be a benefit by cutting pedestrian and cycling distance from up to 800 metres and by two major road crossings, with a big increase to the normal sustainable travel of rail passengers

to and from the station. The McDonalds restaurant on Foundry Close, and the convenience store, fish and chip shop, etc., that are a little further away, will undoubtedly benefit from the link, but none of these will offer waiting at the station, loo use or rail information. They are simply too far away to be at the station and would be a stopping point on the way.

While offering a minimum amount of advice on Melksham Town itself, we do not see ourselves as being a Tourist Information Centre (TIC). We would almost certainly carry a “Welcome to Melksham” trifold and public transport information, and offer direction to Melksham’s TIC or Town Hall or other points of interest in the town.

### **Shorter Time to Visit InformationStation**

The extra footfall at Melksham Station from a connecting town bus to and from the residential area, business parks, sports facilities, town centre and medical facilities will have only a short time to visit the InformationStation, because the connecting time will need to be timetabled to be generous in view of the importance of late-arriving trains and buses still needing to connect, without holding up departures from Melksham Station or connections failing.

### **Unexpected expenses**

By definition hard to forecast. We have included 10-25% contingency factors, and talked widely around to help ensure we have as full a picture as possible, so, we anticipate a few surprises, and have a flexibilty should we need them.

Our train service at Melksham would not be what it is today without the past support of a number of people who are no longer with us, including Peter and Margaret Blackburn, Gordon Dodge and John Money, all of whom were officers of Melksham Railway Development Group (MRDG). They loved to stop and chat, and in doing so promoted informed use and building of the train service, partnering with the train operators and others to improve the service and passenger numbers. Dedicated in 2024, the “Happy to Chat” bench in the King George V Playing Field in Melksham celebrates Peter and Margaret, and reminds us of the social life and benefit for volunteers and other community members that community spaces and interactions like the InformationStation will bring in addition to the transport passenger benefits. Whilst the primary intent is not to provide a public transport advocate’s social club,

the effect of doing so helps get knowledgeable people to gift substantial time to promoting trains and buses, whilst providing those individuals with activities to help them remain within the community.

**Picture is copyright Bob Morrison  
(Friends secretary of TransWilts CRP)  
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## Contact Details and References

This application has been correlated and edited by Graham Ellis, chair of MTUG, to whom enquiries should be addressed. Please feel free to phone or email me.

Graham Ellis  
48 Spa Road, Melksham SN12 7NY  
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[graham@sn12.net](mailto:graham@sn12.net)  
07974 925 928  
01225 708225

Our Treasurer is Kevin Davis and our Membership Secretary is Mark Harris.  
Our committee meets next on 12th February 2026, and we hold our AGM on 12th March.

<https://www.mtug.org.uk>  
<https://www.facebook.com/MelkshamTUG>

The Melksham Transport User Group (MTUG) was founded in 1995 as the Melksham Railway Development Group. At the time, the train service comprised just a train to Swindon in the morning and one back in the evening. Development work with Wales and West, Wessex Trains, First Great Western and Great Western Railway has brought services up to between seven and nine trains each way per day, and the group has rebranded to the Melksham Rail User Group, then further to the Melksham Transport User Group, taking into consideration also bus and multi-mode journeys.

MTUG is the official Station Friends group registered with the Community Rail Network (formerly ACoRP) and a member of the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership.

We bank with the Coventry, which is a Treasurer's Trust account. We are sufficiently in credit to meet obligations that would come from the InformationStation project without giving cause for concern over other ongoing projects.

Melksham Railway Development Group  
sort code 40-63-01  
account number 74111099

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See <https://www.wellho.info/pix>

Design by Lisa Ellia

## References

- Local government / strategic planning and studies:

[https://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org/\\_files/ugd/fcc864\\_8e0805bb7449447eb5991b01a4b5fa74.pdf](https://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org/_files/ugd/fcc864_8e0805bb7449447eb5991b01a4b5fa74.pdf)

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review>

[https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/14237/Wiltshire-Rail-Strategic-Study/pdf/Wiltshire\\_Rail\\_Strategic\\_Study.pdf?m=1729761350220](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/14237/Wiltshire-Rail-Strategic-Study/pdf/Wiltshire_Rail_Strategic_Study.pdf?m=1729761350220)

- Passenger and community comments and feedback:

<https://www.mtug.org.uk/Community-Vision-Survey-2025-Report-3.pdf>

[https://www.mtug.org.uk/pfp\\_20200914.pdf](https://www.mtug.org.uk/pfp_20200914.pdf)

[https://www.mtug.org.uk/mtug\\_dbn\\_report\\_v1.pdf](https://www.mtug.org.uk/mtug_dbn_report_v1.pdf)

- Passenger usage data, loadings, and futures:

<https://www.passenger.chat/bmmp20251007.pdf>

<https://www.railwaydata.co.uk/loadings/gbr/?TLC=MKM>

[https://www.mtug.org.uk/bstrat\\_1.0.pdf](https://www.mtug.org.uk/bstrat_1.0.pdf)

<https://raildata.org.uk> (“ODM” sections) <https://www.passenger.chat/MKM.html>

<https://integratedtransport.org.uk/project/metrowest-bath-wiltshire>

- MTUG / current passenger public transport timetable brochure:

[https://www.mtug.org.uk/MKM\\_TransportBrochure25-26\\_web.pdf](https://www.mtug.org.uk/MKM_TransportBrochure25-26_web.pdf)

Some of these references are to mirror copies of documents to help us ensure they remain available for the duration of this project. Some may be firewalled from general public access due to a lack of clarity on their copyright status. Please ask the author of this report for details of how to access.

**E&OE** *Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of this document, the authors cannot accept responsibility for any errors therein nor their consequences.*



Customer and Community Improvement Fund  
Great Western Railway  
Milford House, 1 Milford Street  
Swindon  
SN1 1HL

Our Ref: BM13386

29 January 2026

To whom it may concern:

I am writing as the local MP to offer my support for the Customer and Community Improvement Fund (CCIF) bid from Melksham Transport User Group (MTUG) for its proposed “InfoStation” at the railway station.

Melksham Station has a huge potential for regeneration. The site is currently underutilised and lacks many of the facilities that could attract new passengers and revenue for the railway, namely a toilet, a café and a human presence to assist passengers.

The new facility promises to be a functional community asset and focal point that would promote increased rail usage, community cohesion and placemaking.

The InfoStation aligns closely with the core criteria for a successful CCIF application:

- **Improved accessibility to the railway** – the building is fully accessible and includes a toilet for wheelchair users. The presence of trained volunteers during the morning peak would provide advice and reassurance to new and less confident rail users who may be reluctant to use the station with its current limited facilities.
- **Community engagement and support** – the proposal has the backing of Melksham Town and Melksham Without Parish Councils who together represent over 25,000 residents. The building has been identified and designated in the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan, adopted in 2025, as a suitable café and station facility, demonstrating strong local support and strategic alignment.
- **Clear and deliverable plan** – MTUG has developed a realistic and well-considered plan to bring the InfoStation into use during 2026. At the core of the plan are a team of committed and appropriately skilled volunteers ready to step up and devote their time to this community facility. Revenue projections from the café element indicate the potential for long-term financial sustainability.
- **Appropriate use of CCIF** – MTUG seeks initial funding from CCIF to combine with contributions from community groups, the local councils and private individuals for base equipment and promotion within the community. This blended funding approach represents good value for money and reduces reliance on ongoing grant support.

Melksham Station previously hosted a community café in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic. Since then, train ridership has picked up and has potential to grow significantly. The InfoStation’s operating model is different – led by a team of volunteers experienced in hospitality and offering a rationalised range of refreshments – reducing overheads and helping ensure success.

The InfoStation represents an exciting and deliverable first step in reimagining the station as a welcoming public transport gateway to the town. As a project run by volunteers for the benefit of the community and rail users, it has my full support.

Yours

*Brian Mathew MP*

**Brian Mathew MP for Melksham and Devizes**

**From:** Saffi Rabey <saffi.rabey@melksham-tc.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Request for comment by 23.1.2026 - "Information at the Station" - GWR Customer  
and Community Infrastructure Fund  
**Date:** 22 January 2026 at 14:07:14 GMT  
**To:** Graham Ellis <graham@sn12.net>

Hi Graham,

Many thanks for the nudge on this, it has been a crazy few days with work and of course the appeal hearing. I personally fully support applying for a CCIF grant and think what has been outlined in the plan would be a great use of this space at the station. Do you think there would be the opportunity to have a 'What's on in Melksham' board that community groups etc could use?

I will say again I thoroughly enjoyed being with you at Leekes and the huge amount of work MTUG do.

Saffi



**Saffi Rabey**  
Mayor of Melksham

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[www.melksham-tc.gov.uk](http://www.melksham-tc.gov.uk)

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