

Press release: Welsh stations in line for £300m funding boost to improve disabled access

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Statement to parliament: Access for All: 73 stations set to benefit from additional funding

Improving access to Great Britain's railway stations is a key priority for this government and we want all passengers to be able to travel easily and confidently. The Department's [Access for All programme](#) is critical to delivering this; the programme has already delivered an accessible, step free route at more than 200 stations, as well as smaller scale accessibility improvements at more than 1,500 others.

The [Inclusive Transport Strategy](#), published on 25 July 2018, included a commitment to extend the Access for All programme, announcing an additional £300 million of funding from the public purse.

Our approach is to work with transport operators and partners to target investments where they are needed most and where they can deliver the greatest impact. This funding will enable us to [deliver accessibility improvements at more stations across the rail network](#), and allow us to proceed with the station enhancements that were deferred from Control Period 5.

In total 73 stations are set to benefit from this funding. This is in addition to the 24 station projects that are ongoing. The selected stations will, subject to a feasible design being possible, receive an accessible route into the station, as well as to and between every platform.

The new stations due to be upgraded from this funding are listed below. They have been selected following nominations from the rail industry, which engaged with local authorities and other stakeholders. We then assessed them against annual footfall, weighted by the incidence of disability in the area, and also took account of local factors such as nearby hospitals and the availability of third party funding. Due consideration was also given to the preferences of the train operating companies and, finally, a number were chosen to ensure a fair geographical spread across the country.

- Abergavenny
- Anniesland
- Beaconsfield Station
- Biggleswade
- Birkenhead Park
- Bridlington
- Broad green *Caerphilly
- Catford
- Chalkwell
- Chorley
- Cricklewood
- Crowborough
- Croy
- Cwmbran
- Daisy Hill
- Dumfries
- Flint
- Hackney Downs
- Handforth
- Herne Bay
- Hertford North
- Hillside
- Hunt's Cross
- Irlam
- Isleworth
- Johnstone
- Kings Langley
- Leatherhead
- Ludlow
- Menston
- Mill Hill Broadway
- Port Glasgow
- Retford
- Selby
- Shotton
- Smethwick Rolfe Street
- St Erth

- St Michaels
- Stoneleigh
- Stowmarket
- Tenby
- Todmorden
- Uddingston
- Wandsworth Town
- Wellington

The stations deferred from Control Period 5, which will now be progressed are:

- Alfreton (Parkway)
- Barnes
- Barry (Town)
- Battersea Park
- Cathays
- Chatham
- Garforth
- Grays
- Hither Green
- Liverpool Central
- Llanelli
- Luton
- Market Harborough
- Northallerton
- Peckham Rye
- Petts Wood
- Queen's Park
- Seven Sisters
- Southend East
- St Mary Cray
- Streatham
- Theale
- Trefforest
- Walton-on-Thames
- Warwick
- Weston-Super-Mare
- Worcester Shrub Hill

All work at the stations is due to be completed by the end of March 2024.

In addition to these significant upgrades, we intend to use £20 million of the funding to re-launch the Mid-Tier Access for All programme. This will be focused on stations where accessibility improvements can be delivered with between £250,000 and £1 million of government support.

We will be seeking nominations for this funding in due course.

All of the work carried out by Access for All comes in addition to access improvements that the industry is required to deliver as part of other projects or renewals of station infrastructure.

Together these measures will make a real difference to people's lives, opening up access to leisure and employment for disabled rail passengers as well as making it easier for those with heavy luggage or children in buggies to use the network.

News story: Professor Keith Bell appointed to Committee on Climate Change

Professor Keith Bell has been appointed to the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) by the Minister for Energy and Clean Growth, Claire Perry MP, and the devolved administrations.

Professor Bell is a professor of electronic and electrical engineering at the [University of Strathclyde](#). He takes up the position of power sector specialist on the Committee for a 5 year term.

Keith Bell is a co-director of the [UK Energy Research Centre \(UKERC\)](#) and a Chartered Engineer. In addition to teaching and being involved with energy system research in collaboration with various academic and industrial partners, he has a number of additional roles including with the [Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult](#), [The IET Power Academy](#), the Conseil International des Grands Réseaux Electriques (CIGRE), the European Energy Research Alliance and as ScottishPower chair in Smart Grids at the University of Strathclyde. In recent years, he has given advice on electricity system issues to the Scottish government, Ofgem, BEIS and the government of Ireland, amongst others.

Commenting on his appointment, Professor Bell said:

The science is clear: man-made climate change represents a significant threat to the environment, lifestyles and economies of the world. As one of the world's leading economies, the UK has a responsibility to play its part in tackling this challenge. Real progress is being made around the world in decarbonising electricity; that journey is not yet complete with some serious issues to tackle, but an even greater challenge in the energy sector now is decarbonising transport and heat.

It's a privilege to become a member of the CCC but also a big responsibility in light of the importance of the issues that it is addressing. I look forward to working with the other members of the

Committee and bringing my experience in energy systems, specifically electricity systems, and my knowledge of the energy landscape in Scotland to help advise the UK government and devolved administrations on how best to meet our commitment to reducing carbon emissions.

Keith Bell replaces Professor Jim Skea who stepped down in December 2018 after more than a decade of service.

Commenting on Keith Bell's appointment and Professor Skea's contribution, CCC Chairman Lord Deben, said:

I am thrilled to welcome Professor Keith Bell to the Committee on Climate Change. Keith brings extensive experience from his work within the power sector and his expertise will be vital as we look to the solutions for decarbonising transport and heat.

I'd also like to express my sincere thanks to Professor Jim Skea. As a founding CCC member, Jim has been instrumental in the Committee's work and subsequent success over the last 10 years. The Committee has truly benefitted from Jim's insight and knowledge, which in turn has helped to ensure our recommendations to government and Parliament have been firmly rooted in the science.

Press release: Lease-based providers of specialised supported housing

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has published an addendum to its October 2018 'Sector risk profile' outlining its views on the sustainability of some registered providers of specialised supported housing who tend to lease most of their property portfolio from property funds and other private investors.

The publication, 'Lease-based providers of specialised supported housing' looks at the recurring factors that have led to a number of providers of this type of accommodation with similar business models being assessed by RSH as non-compliant with its Governance and Financial Viability Standard.

The main five themes are:

- the concentration risk that comes from having long-term, low margin, inflation-linked leases as a single source of finance

- the thin capitalisation of some of the RPs
- poor risk management and contingency planning
- inappropriate governance practises that have led to poor decision making
- a lack of assurance about whether appropriate rents are being charged.

Fiona MacGregor, Chief Executive of RSH, said:

Specialised supported housing should provide accommodation and care for some of the most vulnerable people in society, enabling them to live independently. Recently we have seen rapid expansion in providers of this type of accommodation, enabled by long term, index-linked lease financing at tight margins for the provider. Substantial reliance on this type of financing creates significant risk exposures, and we are concerned that a number of these providers do not have the resources and skills needed to appraise and manage them. We have also identified cases of poor quality service to tenants and failure to maintain properties to required standards.

We intend to work with the boards of these registered providers to establish whether they can develop a long-term business model that demonstrates they can manage these risks, is sustainable and compliant with our regulatory standards. Where an organisation falls into financial difficulty and tenants are at risk, our priority will be to seek to achieve the best outcome for tenants and to protect their interests. We will be unable to guarantee the position of creditors and investors.

[Lease-based providers of specialised supported housing](#) is available on the RSH website.

Additional information

1. [The Sector Risk Profile 2018](#) and [Governance and Financial Viability Standard](#) is available on the [RSH website](#).
2. RSH promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. It does this by undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.
3. For press office contact details, see our Media enquiries page. For general queries, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.