Letter of support: Tavistock to Plymouth Rail Link

Transition Tavistock welcomes the proposal brought forward by Devon County Council in partnership with Network Rail and GWR for reopening of a rail link between Tavistock and Bere Alston and the introduction of an hourly through service to Plymouth. This would be an important step in improving public transport for Tavistock, the Bere Peninsula, and indeed Plymouth.

Transition Tavistock is a community group connecting people in Tavistock and surrounding villages in local action to tackle climate change and protect nature. One aspect of our work is carried out through our Travel Action Group, which encourages use of low carbon ways to travel. This is motivated by our concerns about the high proportion of carbon emissions in West Devon attributable to road transport, and about the health impacts of traffic. However, we recognise that people's choices are limited without the best infrastructure. We are aware of wide support within the community for restoration of a rail link, evidenced, for example, in the recent findings of the initial survey for Tavistock Neighbourhood Development Plan.

We anticipate that the new rail link would, as for Okehampton to Exeter, prove popular with both residents and visitors, and have some impact in reducing traffic on the A386 between Tavistock and Plymouth. We think it important in implementation of the project that well designed pedestrian and cycle routes are created between residential areas and the station, and that bus provision is increased to enable car-free journeys from start to finish. These factors support the project's aims of enabling people to reach education and healthcare and improving public transport access to Dartmoor.

Transition Tavistock committee, August 2022

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