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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**22 September 2008**

### **MONEY TO REOPEN THE PORTISHEAD LINE IS THERE FOR THE ASKING**

Local rail campaigners are pushing for a share of Government funding to be spent on rail projects, including reopening the Portishead line. Local authorities in the South West will shortly be bidding for money under the Regional Funding Allocation, and

Railfuture Severnside would like to see Bristol's suburban rail network get a share.

"This money could transform the rail system in the Bristol area, raising it to the standard of those in other major cities in the UK" said Branch Secretary Nigel Bray.

"Portishead has grown massively since its station closed in 1964, when the roads were less congested and there was little concern about the effects of traffic growth on the environment".

Reopening of the Portishead branch and the Henbury line to passenger trains could become a reality if the South West Regional Assembly agrees to bid for funds under the RFA 2 programme.

New stations and a restored passenger service over the Henbury line would enable people to reach Airbus and Cribbs Causeway by train, providing a fast alternative to car travel.

Rail travel in the UK reached a record level of 49 billion passenger kilometres in 2007/08\* and Railfuture points out that in South Wales the recently reopened Ebbw Vale line is carrying double the number of passengers which had been

forecast.\*\* "There is every reason to believe that the Portishead and Henbury lines would be well supported." said Nigel.

**Notes for editors:**

**Railfuture is the campaigning name of the Railway Development Society Ltd (a not for profit) Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No. 5011634. Reg. Office: 24 Chedworth Place, Tattingstone, Suffolk IP9 2ND**

Railfuture is Britain's only completely independent voice on railway development. We are not affiliated to or sponsored by any political party, trade union, or private industry. We are funded almost entirely by our members.

Rail is a vital part of an integrated efficient transport system serving a modern, vibrant, environmentally sustainable economy. We are pro-rail but not anti-road. Railfuture maintains that investment in rail travel and rail freight is vital to the future of the UK economy and environment.

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**\* Figures taken from National Rail Trends yearbook, Office of Rail Regulation.**

**\*\* Figures for the Ebbw Vale line taken from *Today's Railways UK* magazine, October 2008.**

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