

Sustrans' concern for south east Wales rail station plans

Plans for 20 new railway stations across south Wales have been criticised as failing to look at how passengers will get to their nearest station.

South East Wales Transport Alliance (Sewta) has written a [report](#) for the Welsh government recommending improvements to rail facilities.

Although broadly supportive, transport group Sustrans said "journeys don't start and end at a station".

A consultation on the report is due to end on Monday.

In its report, Sewta said services in the south Wales valleys had already seen an 80% growth in passengers since 2000 and it fears overcrowding after electrification.

The London-Swansea line is expected to be electrified by 2018 with the valleys network by 2024.

It is scheduled for completion by 2018 with the Cardiff and valleys network to follow at a cost of £350m between 2019 and 2024.

Sewta which is made up of 10 local councils and rail organisations said electrification "strengthens the case for a host of further enhancements" to the network.

'Improve access'

But Sustrans said more needed to be done to help people get to their nearest station.

The charity's Wales policy advisor Matthew Hemsley said: "We need to look at the journey from where people live. Where they go to school, where they work, to that station."

They called for better links and improvements to encourage more cycle use.

In response, a Sewta spokesperson said: "We commissioned Sustrans a few years ago to identify what could be done to improve access to stations.

"Although this most recent study doesn't explicitly mention it in detail, we've identified the importance of improving access and nearly every station has been audited.

"Improvements have already been made in places like Pencoed, Ninian Park and elsewhere."