

Handlebar Barista brings quality coffee to Barry railway station

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Independent Welsh coffee company Handlebar Barista is now serving at Barry railway station following a refurbishment of the station’s buildings by Transport for Wales.

As part of a TfW scheme to bring under-utilised or disused spaces at stations back into use for social and commercial purposes, one of the main buildings on platform 1 has been redeveloped for use as a café, complete with a new kitchen.

Mobile coffee and catering company Handlebar Barista have moved into the building, their first permanent premises, and have ambitious plans for the space.

Chris Garrett, owner of Handlebar Barista, explains: “It’s taken a while because of the pandemic but we’re pleased to finally be in. We’ve got a serving hatch to serve people from outside the station and a nice area inside.

“We’re going to be doing coffee, cold drinks, snacks and fresh bakes in the morning.

“It’s our first permanent location and it’s nice not to have to peddle around! It’s nice to have a place we can all our own and get creative with.

“We want to get the community involved and maybe get some local artists to show their work in the café.

“Hopefully numbers will start to go back up to pre-pandemic levels and it’s important we are here to make the most of it.”

Handlebar Barista have always been associated with railway stations, having started with one trike serving coffee outside Cardiff Central back in 2015. They have also previously transformed an old ticket booth at Taff’s Well station into serving hatch and hope to reopen that this year.

James Timber, Social Commercial Development Manager at TfW, commented: “We’re delighted to have the Handlebar Barista team in Barry station serving the local community and are really looking forward to seeing how they develop the space.

“This is part of our wider social and commercial development plan which will see buildings at stations across Wales transformed for the benefit of the local community.

“Investing in bringing disused spaces at stations back to community or commercial use is a key part of our strategy because we know stations are more than just somewhere you get on a train, they are community hubs.”

Handlebar Barista owner Chris says he would recommend working with TfW to other local businesses on projects such as Barry station.

“Transport for Wales have done loads of work and turned it into a really nice space for us,” added Chris. “It feels like a long time since we started this project but TfW have always been really accommodating.

“Too often you see large chains taking up the spaces in stations but it’s great that TfW have been keen to work with businesses like ours from the start.”

Photo credit: Transport for Wales