

PARTNER UPDATES

1.0 ARRIVA TRAINS WALES

1.1 Performance

In terms of Public Performance Measure, ATW dropped into sixth position of the 19 UK Train operating companies but remains in second position in our “class”. Overall PPM was 87.1% in period 12 and 89.3% in period 13 below the Group target of 93.5%. The previous year, the figure was 92.3% and 91.5% respectively.

These were a challenging two periods with leaf fall, freight trains and bad weather all contributing to the drop in PPM. Severe storms in North Wales on December 5 caused the collapse of the sea wall in Mostyn, leading to lines being 550 delay minutes and 39 cancellations of services in North Wales. In period 13, there were 50 direct flooding incidents, the biggest being at Mountain Ash and also a number of line blockages caused by fallen trees. A major incident occurred on 3 January 2014 where many services were seriously disrupted by flooding causing 89 cancellations and 762 delay minutes. Flood water washed away the line between Llanelli and Carmarthen, along the Cambrian Coast line and Blaenau Ffestiniog line.

Network Rail are currently working hard to rebuild sections of infrastructure affected by the severe storms, it is expected that work to rebuild badly damaged parts of the line between Barmouth and Pwllheli will be completed by mid-May.

1.2 Welsh Government’s Sustainability Charter

Arriva Trains Wales has publically signed up to the Welsh Government’s Sustainability Charter, Wales’ highest profile commitment to sustainable development. Signing the Charter is a voluntary commitment aimed at improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales.

Arriva joins a network of over 150 other organisations from across Wales in making sustainability central to all they do. Rail plays a central role in a sustainable transport system for Wales and the Border Regions. To deliver this, we have to make sustainability a central role in our company too. This is key to ensuring we meet the needs of our passengers, local communities, employees and other stakeholders, now and for the future. By signing up to the Charter we are demonstrating our commitment to putting sustainability at the core of our organisation. Signing up to the Charter coincides with us setting out our Sustainability Strategy for the next five years to 2018.

The Arriva Trains Wales Sustainability Strategy includes targets such as: delivering best in class customer satisfaction scores, being an employer of choice and reducing our relative carbon emissions by five percent.

1.3 10 Year Anniversary

Arriva Trains Wales started a year of celebrations on Sunday 8th December 2013 with a number of activities for our staff and customers. This was the same day as the franchise was first awarded back in 2003. Over the past decade, passengers have seen some important changes to their services, including:

- £30 million of investment by Arriva Trains Wales - improving trains, stations and customer service. We are proud to have delivered these customer benefits, working with the support of key partners such as the Welsh Government
- High levels of customer satisfaction - 86% 'satisfied' (January 2014), up 7% since 2003
- We are one of the top 'right-time' performing operators in the UK and are working closely with Network Rail to continue to improve punctuality and reliability
- We are one of the largest private sector employers in Wales, employing more than 2,000 people, with 300 new jobs created since 2003.

To coincide with this anniversary, we have been offering some of our most loyal customers a special £10 ticket. This special £10 return ticket can be purchased from any rail station ticket office and on-board our trains until 29th March 2014 and allows you to travel on any Arriva Trains Wales service for only £10 return.

To qualify, you need to be the holder of an adult monthly or longer season ticket, valid for travel within the period 5th January to 29th March 2014 between any two stations on the Arriva Trains Wales network.

Qualifying customers can also buy this special ticket for family and friends at £10.00 per adult or £5.00 per child (aged 15 years or under). This means that, if you are a qualifying season ticket holder, you and your family (up to two adults including the season ticket holder and up to 3 children) could travel together to great destinations including, Manchester, Cardiff, Chester, North Wales and Swansea for a total of only £35 return.

1.4 Arriva Trains Wales Apprenticeship Programme

Arriva Trains Wales as one of the largest employers in Wales is doing its bit to help young people to enter the world of work, and as a result, we have created a brand new apprenticeship scheme. We have recruited two engineering apprentices, who will be equipped with the skills to maintain its fleet of trains and a further six to deliver excellent customer service at stations around the network. We think it's important that big organisations such as Arriva Trains Wales do their bit to help young people access employment and training.

The rail industry is renowned for providing high quality skilled jobs in communities all across Wales, and we want to provide entry ways for young people to access this type of high-value, high-skill job. We're certain that the energy and new ideas these apprentices will bring will add real value to our existing work force, already comprised of highly skilled and experienced engineers and customer facing professionals. For the Engineering Apprentices, following their initial twelve to eighteen month training period, they will go on to become fully qualified technicians, working on maintenance and engineering projects on Arriva Trains Wales's fleet of trains. They will eventually go on to complete HNC level qualifications in engineering after four years.

Four stations apprentices have been appointed to work in the Cardiff area, and two to work in the Chester area. They will be completing a Foundation Apprenticeship in Customer Service as part of their initial twelve to eighteen month apprenticeship programme.

1.5 National Passenger Survey

The results of the Autumn wave of the Passenger Focus National Passenger Survey have been published. Arriva Trains Wales scored an overall satisfaction rate of 86%, above the regional average of 83%.

1.6 Station Improvements

The Welsh Government has launched the £24m European Regional Development Fund backed programme to improve customer facilities, access, capacity and park and ride spaces at Aberystwyth, Pontypridd, Port Talbot, Rhyl and Ystrad Mynach stations. Arriva Trains Wales has committed £400,000 towards this project and is working closely with partners to help to deliver the projects successfully.

1.7 Senior Management Changes

Following the end of a successful 12 month secondment to the Arriva bid team, Tim Bell has now returned as Managing Director. Ian Bullock has now been appointed to the newly created role of Special Projects Director due to the large number of exciting projects currently being delivered on the Arriva Trains Wales network. Claire Mann has also joined Arriva Trains Wales as the new Operations and Safety Director.

2.0 WELSH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (WLGA)

2.1 Changes to RTC

In response to the WG announcement on 17th January 2014, the WLGA has been involved in discussions with the four RTC regarding changes to regional working and how to ensure a continued regional approach to transportation matters.

A report was prepared for WLGA Council on 28th February setting out the changes to RTC and making members aware of the issues particularly in relation to future Transport Plans and LAs statutory duty to produce a Local Transport Plan. Welsh Government will shortly be issuing guidance on preparing a local transport plan which WLGA understands will call for local authorities to produce something short and basic, to ensure there is compliance with requirements of the Act. If the recommendation is for a short and simple document to be produced by each local authority it is important to be aware of the risks associated with such an approach. The Transport Plans, as a statutory document, have to be robust enough to be relied upon in a variety of settings – not least in the preparation of Local Development Plans and when planning applications for major developments are being considered (or challenged).

2.2 Active Travel

The WLGA is represented on the Steering Group tasked with drafting the Design Guidance and through CSS has circulated an early draft. We have also responded to Active Travel settlement consultation calling for discretion for local authorities in designating Active Travel settlements.

2.3 PTI Traveline Cymru

At the WLGA Council on 28th February, the changes to the governance arrangements resulting in a reduction of local government representation from

four members to one member was agreed. Discussions are currently ongoing regarding future member attendance and officer support together with a process for ensuring that all LAs have sight of Board papers and opportunity to input into the meetings via the LA representative.

2.4 Learner Travel

Welsh Government recently consulted on a specific issue in relation to Learner Travel. This is a revision to the risk assessment for walked routes to school which proposes increased liaison with stakeholders including children when undertaking a risk assessment. In our response we highlighted that the new proposals would be more resource intensive and that potential control measures to mitigate the risks would require capital funding.

2.5 Salt Stocks

As we move into Spring, the winter has proved to be a relatively mild one and stock levels have held up well. The latest stock-take showed that around 175,000 tonnes remain in stores across Wales (including Welsh Government stock). That compares with around 213,000 tonnes in November as we went into winter. However, deliveries have been taking place continually over this period so it would be highly misleading to conclude that only 38,000 tonnes have been used. It will be important that LAs continue to build stocks back up now despite the mild winter and not see this as an area for short term cost cutting.

3.0 **BUS USERS CYMRU**

3.1 Activities

In conjunction with the Welsh Government, Bus Users Cymru held surgeries in Aberystwyth, Lampeter, Carmarthen, Llangollen, Corwen, Bala, Barmouth, Dolgellau, Cardigan, Abergele, Rhyl and Holywell. These sessions were designed to provide passenger and potential passenger thoughts on what the services should like and what to include in the tender documents and SQPs for the new TrawsCymru networks.

3.2 For the year April 2013 to March 2014 the Bus Users Cymru Bus Compliance Officers reported to the Consortia for the mileage reimbursement element of RTSG (previously BSOG) but as from 1 April 2014 this will change. Bus Users awaits advice on new arrangements.

3.3 Issues

Bus Users UK is still waiting to hear about their grant funding for 2014/15

3.4 The Passenger Transport User Committee is to be disbanded in its present form from 31st March 2014. A new body called Public Transport Users Advisory Panel is to be set up in its place and Bus Users Cymru is one of seven bodies represented on this new group.

This Ministerial advisory group will be meeting after 1st April 2014 and the following have been invited to sit on the group: ATOC; Bus Users Cymru; CTA Cymru; CPT Cymru; Disability Wales; Passenger Focus; Citizens Advice Cymru.

- 3.5 Bus Users Cymru anticipates a rise in the number of complaints as the network changes start to make an impact. In addition the EU Passenger Rights Directive stipulates Bus Users UK as the body that will handle complaints on services of 250km and over. Although not many bus services in Wales reach the mileage stated, it is envisaged there will be an uplift in numbers of complaints as a result of the higher profile of our name.

4.0 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION

4.1 Policy and Public Affairs

With change underway again to the way bus and CT services are planned and funded in Wales, CTA Cymru has been liaising with the current RTCs and individual LAs to ensure that capital bids for the sector were included amongst those submitted to Welsh Government last month. However, it is another matter whether these bids will be prioritised. Additionally, although guidance on the new BSSG grant has yet to be issued at the time of writing, the draft that we have seen indicates that the minimum percentage to be spent on CT has been reduced from 10 to 5%, which is a cause for concern for the sector.

The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport has asked CTA Cymru to be part of the new Passenger Transport Users Advisory Panel which takes over from the disbanded Passenger Transport Users Group in April.

CTA worked with the office of The Older People's Commissioner for Wales to contribute material to her recent report on 'The Importance and Impact of Community Services within Wales' which includes transport. The report can be found at

http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/Libraries/Community_Services/The_Importance_and_Impact_of_Community_Services_within_Wales.sflb.ashx

CTA continues to contribute to the Welsh Government's three 'Transport to Health' working groups in North, South West and South East Wales, which are looking at access issues arising from the reconfiguration of local health board services.

The work of the NEPT National Implementation Board, of which CTA Cymru is a member, comes to an end in March after 4 years during which time the original 4 pilot schemes have expanded to 9. CTA Cymru has also been working with the Wales Renal Network during this financial year to look at how some journeys could be provided by CT operators.

The next meeting of The National Assembly for Wales Cross-Party Group on CT will take place in early April, prior to recess. Health transport was the main topic at the previous meeting.

4.2 Membership Support and Projects

Training programmes for members are underway in both South East Wales and North Wales, covering areas such as strategic and business planning, financial management, service route development and data gathering. These are being delivered free of charge to members thanks to financial support by the current

Regional Transport Consortia in those areas.

Work is on-going to develop a CT scheme to meet unmet transport needs identified by CTA Cymru in Llanelli. We are working with the Local Authority, town council, members and a range of third sector umbrella groups for elderly and disabled people in the area.

CTA is working with Swansea University, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and our members on the provision of accessible transport for athletes and team supports to and from points of entry, and within Swansea itself during the European Paralympic Championships in August 2014.

The Welsh Government funded Deep Rural Areas project, which we have been managing, ends on 31 March, as does the Strategic Regeneration Area project for the Western Valleys.

CTA is holding a round of regional CT forums across Wales during March to discuss the new bus funding grant regime with members and other partners.

In North Wales, CTA is working with Local Authority colleagues and car schemes on Anglesey, and in rural Conway and Denbighshire to achieve greater collaboration and co-ordination of service delivery, including the development of common criteria and policies.

4.3 Staff Changes

Following the departure of Kerry Lane, Senior Development Officer, in October 2013, we have been operating with a smaller staff resource over the last 6 months which has been difficult. Following a restructuring in South Wales, David Brooks has been appointed as the new development officer for South West and Mid Wales and will take up his post on 1 April. A similar post for South East Wales has had to be re-advertised, together with the Director's post, as Betsan Caldwell is leaving CTA Cymru in late April.

5.0 **PASSENGER FOCUS**

5.1 National Rail Passenger Survey

Results of the autumn 2013 wave have been published. In South Wales, results are down slightly against the previous wave. In particular, for overall satisfaction with the station and its environment, car parking and transport connections, as well as punctuality, value for money and the upkeep of trains. Other aspects went up such as train comfort, personal security on-board and connections with other trains. See Table One overleaf

5.2 Personal Security

Looking at National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) results for Arriva Trains Wales and taking the breakdown for personal security, this shows a reduction at stations and on-board in North Wales and the Valleys, although South Wales has gone up slightly on-board. See Table Two overleaf

Table One - National Rail Passenger Survey: South Wales

% satisfied/good

Factor	Autumn 2013	Autumn 2012	Autumn 2011
Overall satisfaction	88	87	83
Overall satisfaction with station	75	79	64
Ticket buying facilities	80	81	76
Upkeep/repair of station buildings/platforms	69	69	56
Connections with other forms of public transport	62	65	55
Facilities for car parking	66	70	64
Overall station environment	67	70	55
Personal security whilst using the station	68	70	64
Provision of shelter facilities	73	72	-
Overall satisfaction with the train	86	86	-
Frequency of trains on that route	74	72	70
Punctuality/reliability	85	90	81
Connections with other train services	79	76	70
Length of time the journey was scheduled to take	84	86	78
Value for money for the price of your ticket	55	59	56
Upkeep and repair of the train	76	80	73
Sufficient room for passengers to sit/stand	77	76	74
Comfort of the seating area	79	77	77
Personal security whilst on board	85	82	82
How well train company dealt with delays	53	55	47

Table Two - NRPS Personal Security - Arriva Trains Wales

% satisfaction	Spring 2010	Autumn 2010	Spring 2011	Autumn 2011	Spring 2012	Autumn 2012	Spring 2013	Autumn 2013
Personal Security at Stations								
North Wales	68	66	72	68	70	68	73	72
South Wales	57	59	66	64	69	70	72	68
Valleys	63	56	55	68	65	63	68	65
Personal Security on Board								
North Wales	80	81	84	85	85	85	86	82
South Wales	85	81	80	82	84	82	84	85
Valleys	76	82	82	80	81	79	86	84

5.3 National Assembly for Wales: consultation work

One of the ways we are making sure that passengers are at the heart of franchising decisions, is our recent work with the National Assembly for Wales. We have been assisting the Assembly's enterprise and business committee inquiry ahead of the new Wales and Borders rail franchise, which is due to start in 2018. Work included inviting rail user groups and other stakeholders to an event

in Cardiff on 3 October 2013 to discuss policies and priorities for the next franchise, helping to inform the inquiry. We also gave oral evidence to the committee, following our written evidence that we had already submitted.

The Welsh Government response has accepted (or accepted in principle) all the recommendations made in the Enterprise and Business Committee's report and this was also debated by the Assembly on Wednesday 19th February. Key points made were:

- Rolling stock strategy is the single most important aspect, together with links into electrification
- Welsh Government is working to negotiate devolution of the necessary powers and funding to be in a position to specify and procure the next franchise
- Ensuring that the opportunity is used to get considerable improvements for users – it is important that the franchise is designed to meet the expectations of the travelling public
- Reliability, punctuality and accessibility of services; along with emphasis on a timetable that is integrated with public transport

The Assembly's Petitions Committee have also launched an inquiry into funding of local bus services, following a number of petitions received. We are assisting in alerting organisations and stakeholder groups to the survey, to encourage a range of views to give a broad picture of passenger experience. The links are here:

Welsh: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bysiau-a-thrafnidiaeth-gymunedol-yng-nghymru>

English: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bus-and-community-transport-in-wales>

5.4 Delays and Disruptions

Recently many parts of the country have faced unprecedented weather which has disrupted some rail services in a major way. No one predicted the impact of this level of disruption and the way it has been handled by the rail industry will be a key factor in determining passenger satisfaction during this period.

Our latest National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS), published last month, found that nationally, only 40 per cent of passengers were happy with the way their train company dealt with delays. The research, carried out between September and November, showed that there was also a great deal of variation between the train companies that got the highest and lowest scores for dealing with delays. The top company, East Coast, scored 65 per cent, while the bottom, London Overground, scored 30. First Great Western and CrossCountry, the train companies currently bearing the brunt of February's extreme weather, scored 40 and 44 per cent respectively, with Arriva Trains Wales also scoring 44 per cent.

We are pleased to see the industry reacting positively, with train companies accepting each other's tickets and lifting time restrictions on tickets where there is major disruption. Bus companies have also been helping out and extra long-distance coaches have been laid on where rail services are affected. These alternatives have been a great help to passengers planning journeys. However, passengers wanting to travel to and from Devon and Cornwall are facing a double disadvantage. Not only do they face the delay itself, but in some cases they are paying more to travel than they usually would.

Passenger Focus has been monitoring the quality of online information provided by the rail industry to passengers and there is a lot of good practice. But the rail industry continues to struggle with information. For instance, journey planners on 25 February were still showing some trains running via Dawlish – 21 days after the sea wall was destroyed. The immediate focus has rightly been on restoring services as quickly as is safe to do so. But important questions do need to be asked about passenger information accuracy and whether the level of investment in weatherproofing the railway should go beyond what has already been announced for the 2014 to 2019 Control Period.

6.0 FIRST CYMRU

7.0 SUSTRANS

8.0 FIRST GREAT WESTERN