



Cynulliad National
Cenedlaethol Assembly for
Cymru Wales

RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPROVED PASSENGER SERVICE COMMITTEE



FINAL REPORT

June 2006

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Chair's Foreword

We held our first meeting at the start of February and concluded our deliberations in June. Given the short time available in which to complete our inquiry, we decided to take a strategic overview of the railway system in Wales. The roles and responsibilities, legal framework and key issues to emerge from the evidence are set out in our interim report, published in March. This interim report should provide a convenient source for reference for all the various railway improvements that could be made in Wales.

Since then, we have drawn up a costed programme of achievable improvements in rail infrastructure and improved passenger services in Wales. The final report comprises this programme and should be read in conjunction with our interim report. We have selected eight items from the programme, which we consider merit immediate attention and these are listed in our report.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this inquiry by giving us their views. I am particularly grateful to those who made time available, often at short notice, to present evidence in person. I would also like to thank all committee members for their hard work and our secretariat for assistance in carrying out this inquiry.

I commend this report to the Welsh Assembly Government and look forward to the National Assembly receiving their response in due course.



Dr John Marek

Committee Chair

June 2006

Introduction

In accordance with the motion setting up the committee, we have drawn up the attached programme of achievable improvements in rail infrastructure and improved passenger services. The evidence is set out and discussed in our interim report, published in March 2006.

Our suggested improvements are intended to complement those already programmed by the Assembly Government and Network Rail.

Priority Schemes

We then reviewed the programme to select those items that we feel merit attention, to expedite delivery. We have selected the following eight items, in no particular order:

- A fast north to south train in the morning, returning from Cardiff in the late afternoon;
- Infrastructure works near Swansea, to remove the capacity constraint at Gowerton;
- Provision of enhanced services on the main line through west Wales, particularly west of Carmarthen;
- Enhancing the frequency of services on the Valley Lines at Rhymney (Phase 2 – including a new station at Energlyn), Pontypridd to Merthyr Tydfil, Ebbw Valley (Phase 2) and Cardiff to Treherbert;
- Enhancing capacity between Wrexham and Saltney by dualling most of the present single line;
- Electrification of the Borderlands Line between Wrexham Central and Bidston;
- Enhancing capacity on the Cambrian Main Line to allow hourly services between Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth;
- More and better quality rolling stock and timetable improvements on the Heart of Wales Line.

**Programme of costed achievable improvements in rail infrastructure and improved passenger services affecting Wales –
to be included in Final Report**

A. Rail infrastructure improvements

	Source	Status	Cost (capital)	Timescale
<i>SEWTA – region</i>				
Ebbw Valley Line reopening (Phase I)	Moving People – improving Rail, SEWTA	Committed with funding	£27.6m	2007
Maesteg Line platform extensions	Moving People – improving Rail, SEWTA	Committed with funding	£1m	2007
Llanharan station	Moving People – improving Rail, SEWTA	Committed with funding	£2.9m	2007
Pontypridd to Merthyr Tydfil frequency enhancements	Moving People – improving Rail, SEWTA	Committed with funding	£20.7m	2008
Treherbert to Cardiff Platform extensions	Moving People – improving Rail, SEWTA	Committed with funding	£3.3m	2008
Rhymney Line frequency enhancements (Phase 2 – including new station at Energlyn)	Moving People – improving Rail, SEWTA	Committed awaiting funding	£25.4m	2009
Ebbw Valley Line reopening (Phase II) – extension to Newport	SEWTA Rail Strategy study 2009-2018	Aspiration	£20m	2009
Newport station improvements	Network Rail evidence to committee, Moving People – improving Rail, SEWTA	Aspiration	Not known	2009 Scheme in development
Maesteg Line frequency enhancements (including new station at Brackla)	Moving People – improving Rail, SEWTA	Committed awaiting funding	£20.1m	2010

Queen Street - Cardiff Central capacity enhancements	Network Rail evidence to committee, SEWTA Rail Strategy study 2009-2018	Aspiration	£10m-£20m	2010-2012
<i>SWWITCH - region</i>				
Gowerton – Swansea capacity enhancements	Network Rail evidence to committee, SWWITCH evidence to committee	Aspiration	Consultancy study awaited	2012
<i>TRACC - region</i>				
Cambrian Main Line hourly enhancements (strategic passing loops)	Network Rail evidence to committee, TRACC evidence to committee	Aspiration	£5m-£10m	2008
<i>TAITH – region</i>				
Wrexham – Bidston (Borderlands Line): electrification and new station at Deeside Industrial Park	TAITH Draft Regional Rail Strategy	Aspiration	£60m (to be shared with English authorities)	2008-2010
Wrexham – Saltney capacity enhancements	Network Rail evidence to committee, TAITH Draft Regional Rail Strategy	Aspiration	Consultancy study in progress	2009-2010
Shotton station enhancement	Network Rail evidence to committee	Aspiration	Not known	Scheme in development
New rail curve linking Borderlands Line and North Wales Coast Line at Deeside		Aspiration	Not known	Not known
Connah’s Quay – new station		Aspiration	Not known	Not known
Broughton – new station		Aspiration	Not known	Not known

B. Improved passenger services

	Source	Status	Cost	Timescale
SEWTA – region				
Valley Lines: frequency enhancements (see A. above)	Moving People – improving Rail, SEWTA			
SWWITCH - region				
Heart of Wales Line: increased frequency	SWWITCH evidence to committee	WAG commitment (fifth train)	£0.5m per annum	2006
Swansea – Haverfordwest: enhanced service on main line, particularly west of Carmarthen	SWWITCH evidence to committee			
TRACC – region				
Cambrian Main Line: hourly service (see A. above)	TRACC evidence to committee			
TAITH - region				
A fast train from north to south Wales in the morning, returning in the late afternoon	TAITH Draft Regional Rail Strategy	WAG commitment (business case prepared)	£1m per annum	Not known
North Wales to Liverpool service	TAITH Draft Regional Rail Strategy	Aspiration (dependent on use of Halton Curve)	Not known (to be shared with English partners)	2012
Wrexham to Marylebone (via Shrewsbury): new service	Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railways Company	Waiting decision from Office of Rail Regulation	Not known	Not known

OTHER
◆ More rolling stock at peak periods on busy commuter lines
◆ Better quality rolling stock (new or refurbished)
◆ More frequent/late services (for example; on the Treherbert Line)
◆ More weekend services (for example; on the Treherbert Line)
◆ Bus and rail timetable integration, with better connections, integrated ticketing
◆ Improved facilities for bicycles on trains
◆ Faster journey times on longer distance routes, either by signalling/track improvements or by eliminating some stops
◆ Improved accuracy and presentation of passenger information at stations (both by electronic display screens and by staff)
◆ Better staff training in dealing with the public
◆ Better co-ordination of connecting services, including better communication between the various train operating companies
◆ Improved maintenance and cleaning of rolling stock, to improve reliability and to make journeys more enjoyable
◆ Improved cleaning and maintenance of toilets on trains and at stations
◆ Extend free concessionary travel for students and the elderly on the more rural services, where capacity is not a major problem
◆ More security (including CCTV and staff) on trains and at stations (for example; a member of British Transport Police to be stationed on the Borderlands Line, improved station security at Shotton, Hawarden, Hope, Buckley, Penyffordd, Caergwrle, Gwersyllt, Cefn-y-Bedd)
◆ Improved access to stations and trains for disabled passengers, including adjusting platform heights (eg: stations at Aberdyfi, Tywyn and Dyffryn Ardudwy have a 16" differential in height between the platform and the train)
◆ Improved facilities for interchange between rail and other modes of travel
◆ Innovative services (possibly with specially adapted rolling stock) at appropriate locations and times to encourage more tourists to travel by rail, either as a means of getting to their final destination, or for specific leisure-related activities; for example - walking, cycling or attending a particular event

Annex 1 – Schedule of Committee Papers

RIPS(2) 01-06 (p1)	Consultation Letter
RIPS(2) 02-06 (p1)	Arriva Trains Wales
RIPS(2) 02-06 (p2)	Network Rail
RIPS(2) 02-06 (p2a)	Network Rail – Briefing Background
RIPS(2) 02-06 (p3)	Transport Wales
RIPS(2) 02-06 (p4)	SEWTA - Moving People - Improving Rail (The Next Five Years) - July 2005
RIPS(2) 02-06 (p5)	SEWTA - Rail Strategy Study - Executive Summary - January 2006
RIPS(2) 02-06 (p6)	SEWTA - Rail Strategy Study - Draft Final Report - January 2006
RIPS(2) 02-06 (p7)	UK Department for Transport
RIPS(2) 03-06 (p1)	Transport Research Centre, University of Glamorgan
RIPS(2) 04-06 (p1)	TraCC
RIPS(2) 04-06 (p2)	SWWITCH
RIPS(2) 04-06 (p3)	Office of Rail Regulation
RIPS(2) 04-06 (p4)	TAITH Rail Strategy
RIPS(2) 04-06 (p4a)	TAITH - The Borderlands Rail Study Executive Summary

Annex 2 - Schedule of Organisations Consulted

Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council
Neath Port Talbot Council
Flintshire County Council
Powys County Council
Brecon Beacons National Park
The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority
Snowdonia National Park
Wales Tourist Board
Welsh Development Agency
Countryside Council for Wales
Commission for Integrated Transport
DPTAC
Institute of Welsh Affairs
National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers
ASLEF
TSSA
RoSPA
TUC Wales
PTI Cymru
Freight Transport Association
Association of Train Operating Companies
C/o Regional Development
Rail Passengers Council/Passenger Focus
Railfuture
Heart of Wales Line Travellers Association
Conwy Rail Forum
North Pembrokeshire Rail Forum
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
Wales Environment Link
Friends of the Earth Cymru
Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers
Disability Wales/Anabled Cymru
Heart of Wales Line Forum
Heart of Wales line Travellers Association
Shropshire and Mid Wales First
Chester & North Wales Rail users & Welsh Bus Users
Age Concern Cymru
Arriva Cymru Ltd
Arriva Trains Wales

Arriva Trains Wales
Central Trains
Chester & North Wales Rail Users' Association
Chester Area Rail Travellers' Federation
Chester/Shrewsbury Rail Partnership
Church Stretton & District Rail Users' Association
Commission for Racial Equality Wales
Craven Arms Rail Users' Association
Crewe & Shrewsbury Passengers' Association
Department for Transport
Disability Rights Commission
Disability Wales
EASTERN DOCKS FERRY TERMINAL
Equal Opportunities Commission
EWS
Freightliner
Great Western Trains Company Ltd
Heart of Wales Line Travellers's Association
Irish Ferries
Ludlow Rail Users' Group
Merched Y Wawr
Milford Haven Rail Passengers Association
National Assembly for Wales
National Federation of Women's Institutes-Wales
Network Rail
Network Rail
North Cheshire Rail Users' Group
Pembrokeshire Rail Travellers Association
Port of FISHGUARD
Port of Holyhead
Port of Mostyn
Port of Pembroke Dock
Port of Swansea
Railfuture (Midlands branch)
RNIB Cymru
RNID Cymru
RPCW
Shrewsbury-Aberystwyth Rail Passengers Assoc
Shrewsbury-Chester Rail Users' Association
Shrewsbury-Wolverhampton Rail Users' Association
Stena Line Limited

The Office of Rail Regulation
Townswomen's Guilds
Virgin Trains Customer Relations
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Wales Pensioners
Wales Trades Union Congress
Wessex Trains
Wrexham to Birkenhead Rail Users Association
CBI Wales
Confederation of Passenger Transport (Wales)
Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
Freight Transport Association
Friends of the Earth Cymru
Investment Delivery
National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers
Rail Passengers Council
Transport 2000
Wales Transport Research Centre
Welsh Transport Strategy Group
WLGA
Cardiff County Council
Carmarthenshire County Council
Ceredigion County Council
City and County of Swansea
Conwy County Borough Council
Denbighshire County Council
Flintshire County Council
Gwynedd County Council
Isle of Anglesey County Council
Merthyr Tydfil CBC
Monmouthshire County Council
Neath Port Talbot CBC
Newport City Council
Pembrokeshire County Council
Powys County Council
Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC
Torfaen County Council
Vale of Glamorgan Council
Wrexham CBC
Bus Users UK
SEWTA

SWWitch
TAITH
TraCC
Church Stretton & District Rail Users' Association
Commission for Racial Equality Wales
Craven Arms Rail Users' Association
Crewe & Shrewsbury Passengers' Association
Department for Transport
Disability Rights Commission
Disability Wales
Eastern Docks Ferry Terminal
Equal Opportunities Commission
EWS
Freightliner
Great Western Trains Company Ltd
Irish Ferries
Ludlow Rail Users' Group
Merched Y Wawr
Milford Haven Rail Passengers Association
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