

P-06-1179 Paint the trains on the mid Wales line to resemble caterpillars to encourage tourism

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 4 Hydref 2021
Petitions Committee | 4 October 2021

Reference: SR21/0740-1

Petition Number: P-06-1179

Petition title: Paint the trains on the mid Wales line to resemble caterpillars to encourage tourism.

Text of petition: To boost tourism in mid Wales have the two carriage trains painted to look like caterpillars. Children from Birmingham and the West Midlands would love to go on the caterpillar line to the coast. It would also bring a smile to everybody who saw them going down the track something much needed in these difficult times.

It's an easy win for tourism which could get national and international press coverage. You could have competitions to name the caterpillar on each train which could be different paint jobs.



Background

Rail services in Wales

The Welsh Government operates rail services across the Wales and Borders franchise through [Transport for Wales \(TfW\)](#).

TfW was established in 2015 as a wholly-Welsh Government owned subsidiary company. TfW is the overarching organisation, and its rail element, '[TfW Rail Services](#)' operates the Wales and Borders Rail Service.

TfW's initial purpose was to procure, develop and operate the new Welsh rail franchise and Metro services on the valley lines, following devolution of rail franchise procurement powers. In May 2018, [it was announced](#) that KeolisAmey had been awarded the franchise to run until October 2033.

Due to the impact of the pandemic on demand for rail services, in October 2020 the Welsh Government [announced a new delivery model for TfW Rail Services](#) and in February 2021 [rail operations were brought under direct public control](#).

Senedd Research [published an article](#) which provides more information.

The Cambrian line

The [Cambrian](#) main line runs from Birmingham across mid Wales to Aberystwyth via Machynlleth while the Cambrian coast line runs from Machynlleth to Pwllheli.

Following the award of the franchise in 2018, plans included a commitment to introduce new or refurbished rolling stock across the network. This included plans to [replace the entire fleet on the Cambrian line](#) during 2022 with new diesel multiple units (DMUs).

Following the announcement that rail operations would be brought under direct public control, [a November 2020 statement](#) outlined that the £800m commitment on new rolling stock remains.

Design requirements

Any plans to introduce a special design on trains across the network must comply with certain standards. Companies owning and operating trains must ensure that they are sufficiently visible for safety reasons.

A number of standards must be adhered to including [GMRT2131- Audibility and Visibility of Trains](#). Pre-2016 it was a requirement that the front end of trains be painted yellow. However this is no longer required so long as the train complies with certain head lamp requirements set out in [National Technical Specification Notices](#) (NTSNs).

Standard GMRT2131 also sets out a number of issues that have been identified for using different types of train front end colours as follows:

- a) Using colours which already have an operational meaning to drivers and track staff. These include: red and green which are associated with signal aspects...;
- b) Using colours and surface finishes which may impact on the visibility of the train headlight...; and
- c) Patterns and text (for example, logos) which may make the shape of the front end of the train difficult for trackside staff to identify when the train is approaching them...

Examples of specially commissioned designs

In 2020, Great Western Railway (GWR) [introduced a special train livery](#) to thank key workers for their efforts during the Covid-19 pandemic. The design incorporated ideas from a competition run through social media.

Funding for any special design would also need to be taken into account. The GWR livery was funded by the two private companies that own its rolling stock.

Other examples include the [Pride of ScotRail train](#) featuring the colours of the progress flag to represent the LGBTQ+ community, and a special livery introduced by [Nexus](#) to celebrate [40 years of the Tyne and Wear Metro](#).

Welsh Government response

The Deputy Minister for Climate Change has responded highlighting: cost and resource requirements; the need to remove the trains from service, the fact that trains are not dedicated to a specific line; and the fact that TFW has a contract

with Global Ltd which owns the rights to train exteriors for commercial advertising sales.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.