



**TRAFNIDIAETH
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Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith /
Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee
Blaenoriaethau ar gyfer y Chweched Senedd / Priorities for the Sixth
Senedd
PR114
Ymateb gan Trafnidiaeth Cymru / Evidence from Transport for Wales

Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair of Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

16 September 2021

Dear Llyr

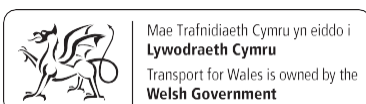
Congratulations on your appointment as Chair of the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee. This is an area of critical importance – and a broad remit with which to make change – and I look forward to working with you on this.

At Transport for Wales (TfW), we want to make transport truly sustainable and fit for future generations. We're most well-known for operating the Wales & Borders Rail Service (under TfW Rail Limited), where we're transforming rail travel with modern trains, increased capacity, and better connectivity. However, our remit is broadening and so too is our role in helping Wales to meet its climate change responsibilities. While the Committee is setting its priorities for the Sixth Senedd, I wanted to take the opportunity to draw your attention to some of our activities, opportunities, and challenges.

The Covid pandemic has undoubtedly impacted upon transport services and operations. It's led to public transport in general – and rail travel in particular – being hit by an unprecedented drop in passenger numbers, and brought changes to the way people live their lives and conduct business. However, it's also caused **positive behaviour changes** which we're determined to support the continuation of.

We're looking towards **the future of sustainable travel**; bringing together local and regional stakeholders, and industry experts, to better understand the current and future impact of climate change on the transport network. We're also consulting with passengers, user groups and local communities to build an integrated transport network that is **safe and accessible** – one that people want to use and can use. This includes for the first and last mile of their journey, and for passengers in rural, urban and suburban locales.

We know that **collaboration is key to delivering change** in the fight against climate change, and a collaborative approach is very much at the heart of our delivery. Through managing our rail delivery, for example, we've led the way in bringing track and train closer together – to ensure effective decision making, ultimately in support of delivery in line with climate change and related policy.



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We took over ownership of the Core Valleys Lines in March 2020, and we work collaboratively across the rail industry – including with Network Rail, which owns most of the rail infrastructure in Wales – on extreme weather plans for the continuity of safe rail service delivery across Wales and the borders. Managing our **rail infrastructure** requires understanding and mitigating the impact of climate change. We're already taking significant steps on decarbonisation through electrification of the Core Valleys Lines, and we're giving careful consideration to the adaptation requirements to ensure the resilience of our infrastructure. We're using modelling to understand where our next areas of concern are likely to be and to forecast adaptation needs, and we're developing a '**green infrastructure toolkit**' which will become embedded in the delivery of new stations, as well as in the management and operation of our existing infrastructure assets. We're also in discussion with organisations, such as Natural Resources Wales and Dwr Cymru about collaborative working, setting up a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance understanding of assets and promote a joint approach to understanding and implementing resilience.

Beyond our own transport infrastructure, **enhancing grid capacity** in Wales will be key to enabling electrification across all modes of transport, from e-bikes and scooters to HGVs and rail. It's also crucial that the resilience of the electricity and **digital connectivity networks** are ensured so the network can cope with increased capacity constraints, to ensure our transport network, and wider community dependence on these services, is safeguarded.

We're working on behalf of the Welsh Government to develop the **National Transport Delivery Plan (NTDP)**, a detailed five-year plan which sets out specific transport interventions – financed by the Welsh Government, the UK government and third parties – to be sustainably delivered, based on the priorities in Llwybr Newydd. The NTDP will support the implementation of Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 – and be aligned with the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan. It will need to take account of both the movement of people and goods, and will include schemes that are already underway.

We strongly agree with integrating public transport and active travel and we see significant opportunity to **enhance active travel schemes** through the inclusion of green infrastructure that supports other priorities in relation to nature, biodiversity and tree planting. We're delivering a range of active travel projects on behalf of the Welsh Government and we continue to work closely with officials to support Welsh Government in the delivery its active travel functions, including administration of the Active Travel Fund programme.

On behalf of the Welsh Government, we're delivering a rapid charge-point network for **electric vehicles** across the strategic roads in Wales. We're engaging with the Welsh



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Government on future networks of charge points that range from fast to rapid and possibly ultra-rapid, supporting their work to ensure sustainable infrastructure meets the needs of electric vehicle drivers and road users.

We're proud to adopt the **Circular Economy** approach – which is critical to decarbonisation – into our corporate delivery as well as into our transport delivery. We recently saved over 93,000kgs of carbon by utilising a circular economy approach to fit out our new headquarters in Pontypridd. Increasing recycling and further reducing waste will remain essential and links strongly to the circular economy, and we know we need to look at how we keep materials within Wales to lower our use of natural resources. We're working with our **supply chain** to embed our sustainable approach across all aspects of our delivery. This has led to the use of solar energy at our construction site in Taff's Well, where the use of hybrid cameras and lighting has helped keep around 400kg of CO2 a week out of the atmosphere.

We're reviewing our **Low Carbon Impact Strategy** (originally published in 2019) in response to an update to our Remit from the Welsh Government. The updated strategy, to be published later this year, will set out in detail our strategic approach and targets to reach net-zero by 2030.

Through our **Biodiversity Action Plan** we're working hard to ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to protect against biodiversity loss, secure enhancement opportunities and promote the resilience of ecosystems in our operations. Our aspiration is - and always will be - that sustainable transport can positively contribute to the protection and enhancement of our wildlife. We've set a No Net Loss of biodiversity target by 2024 and a Net Gain target of 2035.

I hope that this gives you useful insight into our activities and our approach. TfW has a strong and committed team – as well as a robust and supportive Board – to help us meet the remarkable challenge and opportunities ahead of us in the fight against climate change. We've benefitted from feedback and challenge through engagement with previous Committees, including the Economy Infrastructure & Skills Committee, and we hope to work with you in a similar vein in future.

Yours sincerely,

James Price
Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive