

[Inquiry into the future of the Wales and Borders Rail](#)

Evidence from Nathan Hazlehurst – WBF 36

The future of the Wales and Borders Rail Franchise

1. As an Aberystwyth University student, who relies on the Cambrian line for getting to and from university, I would like to give my suggestions on the future of the Wales and Borders Rail Franchise.
2. Arriva Trains Wales have shown consistently in the time I have been using their trains that their primary focus has always been on the Cardiff and Swansea lines. Whereas friends who study at Cardiff University get new rolling stock and efficient service, those studying in mid-wales and the many locals who rely on the train to get around are lumbered with old and unpleasant rolling stock, poor service and indifference from ATW head office when complaints are made. ATW are also appalling at keeping passengers apprised of issues on the line, and their staff are highly unhelpful. They are a disgrace, and the worst franchise I have travelled on anywhere in the United Kingdom.
3. Trains on the Cambrian Line are often overcrowded and late, with ATW's response being that priority has been given to busy services. This is contrary to personal experience. During the start and end of university terms, it has not been unknown for Arriva to send a 2 carriage service to Aberystwyth, despite the fact that for the majority of students, the train is the only way to get home. This has resulted on several occasions with the train's on-board team building barricades of bags at the end of a carriage, stopping passengers reaching toilets and the overpriced trolley service, in the name of safety.
4. Whoever takes over the franchise, in the hopefully likely case that Arriva do not win a renewal, will need to update the rolling stock so that all parts of the franchise, and not just the Cardiff and Swansea routes, can travel in comfort. They should also increase their rolling stock so that every route can be a minimum of a four-carriage service at all times, and not the two carriage service that currently occurs.

5. If at all possible, an hourly service on the Cambrian Line, which has been promised for many years, would be excellent for locals and students alike. However, a four carriage service is the absolute priority, so that everyone can actually get on and sit, rather than be stood up for large portions of the journey, or in my case sat in the luggage rack for well over an hour.

Nathan Hazlehurst