

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Hosted over two consecutive days via Zoom, the Regional Transport Conference brought together around 150 people to discuss the issues and opportunities relating to transport in South West Wales.

WHO WAS INVOLVED

This conference was a collaboration between Swansea Environmental Forum and 4theRegion. SEF identified Travel and Transport as a key priority within our Climate Action Programme 2020. It also seemed timely to organise a broad-based co-production event and some proactive community engagement to coincide with the publication of the Welsh Government's Draft Transport Strategy in late 2020.

The planning for the conference involved a broad group of colleagues from a range of organisations, including:

- Swansea Environmental Forum
- Low Carbon Swansea Bay
- Swansea University
- Wheelrights
- Public Health Wales
- Natural Resources Wales
- Vocaley
- 4theRegion
- South West Wales Connected
- Swansea Friends of the Earth

A number of thought leaders and experts were then invited to share perspectives and agree the key issues and themes as part of a roundtable discussion:

- Mark Barry, Professor of Practice in Connectivity
- Christine Boston, Sustrans
- Jayne Cornelius, Swansea University
- Mary Sherwood, Fairer Future
- Jeffrey Davies, DANSA
- Ben George, Transport for Wales
- Alan Kreppel, formerly Traveline Cymru
- Andrew Davies, former chair of ABMU health board
- Tom Porter, Public Health Wales
- *Co-hosted by Dawn Lyle (4theRegion) and Phil McDonnell (SEF)*

Funding for the event was provided by Natural Resources Wales and South West Wales Connected Community Rail Partnership.



A MAJOR REGIONAL CONVERSATION

We identified the following aims and outcomes for the event, which informed the design of the agenda and the focus of the discussions:

EVENT AIMS

- *Share and celebrate good practice in travel and transport*
- *Raise the profile of the transport agenda and influence decision-makers*
- *Widen engagement and strengthen collaboration on transport and travel*
- *Identify multiple benefits and business opportunities from improving sustainable transport*
- *Improve understanding of barriers and inequalities in access to travel options*

EVENT OUTCOMES

- *Co-create a positive people-led plan of action for travel and transport across the region*
- *Feedback on the draft Wales transport strategy with practical ideas for regional/local plans*
- *Establish a broad regional forum for transport and travel*

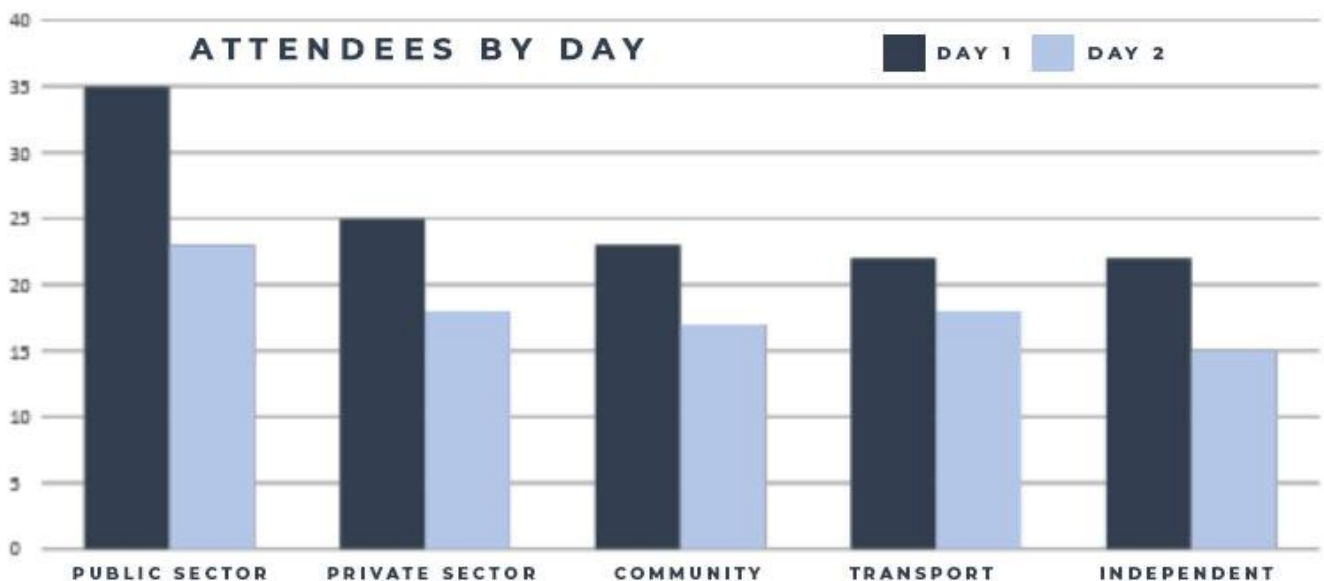
LONG TERM OUTCOMES

- *Effect modal shift in travel: reduced car use & increased use of public transport / active travel*
- *Support improvements to health and air quality in our urban areas*
- *Address inequalities in the impacts of air pollution and access to travel options*
- *Reduce emissions from transport and travel to support zero carbon targets*

The event was promoted via social media and email, with the intention of attracting a diverse mix of perspectives - specific wording in the invitation was designed to make the event as inclusive possible:

“This is an inclusive online event for car users, transport users, cyclists and pedestrians, even if you’ve never been involved in conversations about transport before. If you care about South West Wales and want to see our region flourish in the years to come, please get involved!”

215 individuals registered via Eventbrite, with 150 of those attending over the two day event. The following chart shows the mix of sectors that these individuals represented, which was an unusually good mix of public, private and community perspectives:



FORMAT OF THE EVENT

The event design and choreography was managed by 4theRegion, who have undertaken specialist training in the facilitation of large group discussions. The intention was to create a highly interactive event, with a minimum of “expert” presentations and a maximum amount of time for discussion.

ROUNDTABLE CONVERSATION

Expert testimony by transport thoughtleaders was convened two weeks prior to the conference in a separate roundtable discussion, recorded and released by 4theRegion as part of their podcast and Youtube series, attracting around 400 views across three platforms (Spotify, iTunes and Youtube). Event attendees were encouraged to listen to this discussion before the event in order to gain some context and insight from “experts”. Clips from this film were also used as promotional content for the event, and a 5-minute version of this discussion was screened at the start of the conference to capture the key points. This was an effective way to get a lot of expert insight across in a short space of time.

- [The full video of the Roundtable Discussion is available on Youtube here.](#)
- [The short video which was used to open the conference is available here.](#)

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

To ensure the event had the requisite stature and importance, we invited Deputy Minister for Economy & Transport, Lee Waters (MS), to give a short keynote presentation at the start of day 1.

SLIDESHOW

We shared a “whistlestop tour” of great transport initiatives as a slideshow to provide further context and inspiration for the discussion - which is available as a recording [here](#).

DAY ONE BREAKOUT ROOMS - SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

Breakout rooms enable smaller group conversations and create psychological safety, which is essential to ensure that everyone feels confident to share their opinions.

- Breakout 1 - Introductions and Connecting to Purpose - why is today important to you?
- Breakout 2 - Three Challenges - share your three challenges, frustrations or obstacles
- Breakout 3 - Three Wishes - what would success look like? What would you love to see?

ONLINE CHAT

We made extensive use of the Chat functionality in Zoom, expressly asking participants to share their responses, ideas and reflections with each other. This was a great way to capture input from a broad diversity of perspectives, and ensured everyone could contribute.

DAY TWO BREAKOUT ROOMS - THEMED DISCUSSIONS

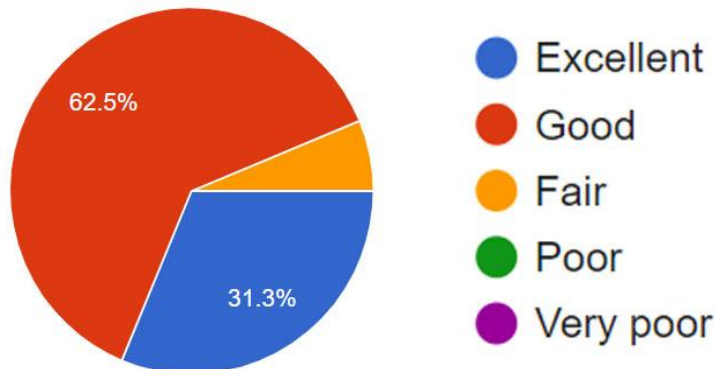
On Day Two of the conference, we wanted to enable more focussed discussion around key “opportunity areas” - which were themes agreed by the organising committee after the end of Day One (ie arising out of discussion and what we thought people were interested in). Participants had the opportunity to choose any two themes, and these conversations were facilitated by volunteers so that we could collect notes of everything that was said. The breakout rooms were organised around generative questions to promote focussed and productive discussion:

Rural Travel	<i>How might we improve travel for rural communities?</i>
Active Travel	<i>How might we encourage and enable more active travel - for everyone!</i>
Moving Things	<i>How might we reduce the impacts of transporting goods?</i>
Public Transport	<i>How might we boost numbers, quality, safety, and experience of using public transport?</i>
Controlling Cars	<i>How might we reduce car dependency and congestion?</i>
Access for All	<i>How might we ensure real access for everyone (young & old, excluded groups)?</i>

The full agenda and facilitation notes are available online [here](#).

EVENT FEEDBACK

“Overall, how would you rate the event?”



“What did you like about the event?”

- Ability to have a say
- Opportunity for everyone to share concerns and put forward ideas - a good mix of people from different places and, organisations and interests
- The breakout sessions were full of interesting information and ideas
- Wealth of ideas, appreciated and facilitated by the organisers
- The cross section of professions/perspectives represented at the forum
- Good level of discussion via break out rooms
- Plenty of positive interaction
- It was virtual and didn't involve lots of people driving to the venue
- The efficiency of break-out rooms, discussion and back into the main room was seamless
- That participants were able to contribute freely and there were lots of good ideas.
- The opportunity to exchange ideas with a wide range of individuals and organisations
- Lots of different representatives..... not just the usual suspects! Also very well run.
- Very well organised, with a good structure over the 2 days.
- I would like to be involved in helping with a car share group.
- Everyone was encouraged to contribute. Breakout rooms efficiently handled.
- Great atmosphere.
- Positive conversation amongst a wide range of people. Space for creativity.

“How do you feel about your opportunity to contribute your opinions at the event?”



EVENT OUTPUTS

CO-PRODUCTION

To capture the wisdom and insights shared during the 8 hours of discussion over the two days of the conference, we made extensive notes and recordings, which were later analysed and summarised into a concise list of recommendations, which have legitimacy owing to the fact that they have been co-produced by a broad and diverse range of organisations and people.

To ensure maximum engagement from policy makers, decision makers and other stakeholders, we have published this as a “Manifesto” - which is timely given the upcoming election. A key point to note is that our manifesto includes recommendations for all of us - not just for the politicians and council executives, but for businesses, employers, transport operators, communities and individuals. The document features actual quotes and comments made by participants to ensure we have captured the views and aspirations of real people.

Read the [REGIONAL TRANSPORT MANIFESTO - MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER](#)

All the outputs from the conference have been published online on 4theRegion’s website, so that they will be available for the long term. These outcomes provide a clear set of recommendations that event partners and participants will wish to campaign for and work towards over the coming months and years. This is just the start of what we hope will be an ongoing conversation leading to real change for good.

Visit the website to view and share the comprehensive [ONLINE EVENT REPORT](#)



This event was made possible with the financial and practical support of the above organisations. For more information, and to discuss ongoing opportunities and future work, please contact:
Dawn Lyle (dawn@4theregion.com) and Phil McDonnell (info@swanseaenvironmentalforum.net)

WHAT PEOPLE SAID



Everyone has a part to play in the transition to a greener, healthier, more equal, more integrated, more accessible and more affordable transport system for South West Wales. The SWWco Regional Transport Conference served as a wide-ranging yet highly focused “citizens assembly” to share knowledge, ideas, expertise and lived experience in pursuit of decarbonised travel and transport that is accessible for all, encompassing the diverse perspectives of both rural and urban communities - whose needs may be different but whose priorities and values are absolutely aligned.

Capturing the key messages from this two-day co-production event, this document sets out our draft Travel & Transport Manifesto for South West Wales, with recommendations and responsibilities for communities, businesses, organisations and individuals at every level.

Travel & Transport Manifesto for South West Wales

Local Authorities

- Co-production - talk to communities about sustainable transport solutions and active travel routes
- Prioritise investment in active travel routes
- Support active travel with Street lights, secure bike parks, gritted cycle paths, road cycle training
- Create bus lanes!
- Lead the way by switching to EV fleet (as in Swansea)
- Provide staff with access to pool cars, e-bikes and e-scooters to reduce private car ownership
- Re-establish the waterways - use local canals as sustainable travel corridors
- 20mph zones to improve cycling safety and deter cars - the biggest deterrent to cycling is safety

Planning Policy

- The planning system needs to catch up with transport needs and WBFGA goals
- Town Centre First - no more out of town developments
- Develop supplementary planning guidance to ensure only sustainable developments get planning
- Insist on active travel and public transport strategies for all new developments
- Don't permit new homes to be built that require car ownership
- Encourage community car-share schemes and renewable EV charging
- Insist on bike storage for every home
- Secure bike storage for every business / destination
- Stop allowing low density out-of-town developments
- Offer workshops and support for developers to promote best practice
- Promote the vision of the 5-minute town/city
- Encourage resources back into communities to reduce need to travel
- Stop building hospitals that can only be reached by car!
- Revise Local Development Plans to reflect the WBFGA

Destinations / Tourism Attractions

- Provide clear and current information on how to arrive by public transport
- Promote sustainable travel options on your website
- Run shuttle buses to meet the trains at busy times
- Provide free community transport for people in deprived communities nearby
- Offer incentives/rewards to people who don't bring their cars
- (Discounts if rail/bus ticket is produced)
- Make easy maps of local walks and things to do without a car
- Coordinate car sharing and staff transport (like Bluestone)
- Secure bike storage for staff and visitors and make e-bikes and e-scooters available to guests
- Get support to install EV charging points
- Talk to bus and train operators in advance of special events
- Consider a tourism tax to put money back into local communities / sustainable travel
- Collaborate as a sector to provide tourist buses (eg [Puffin Shuttle in Pembrokeshire](#))

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER | REGIONAL TRANSPORT CONFERENCE TUES 9th & WED 10th FEB 2021 | EVENT REPORT

Examples of attractions that would benefit from improved bus services from railway stations: National Botanic Garden of Wales (Llanarthne), Ffoslas Racecourse, Aberglasney Gardens, Pembrey Country Park, WWT Wetlands Llanelli, Oakwood, Folly Farm, Rhossili and Port Eynon.

Employers

- (Pay the real living wage)
- Talk to staff about how they could reduce car use and implement their ideas
- Make reducing car use / decarbonisation a KPI - measure and track progress
- Choose office locations in town centres / public transport hubs
- Ensure staff have other options - then charge for car parking
- Promote, coordinate and incentivise car sharing for staff living in rural areas
- Reward / incentivise active travel and public transport use
- Provide showers and changing facilities to support active travel
- Ditch the dress code - accept people in bike gear at work
- Support staff to buy bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters (eg Wheels to Work scheme)
- Consider setting up a [bike library](#)
- Be flexible about start and finish times to enable more public transport use
- Enable a mix of home working to reduce commuting
- Provide staff buses to and from nearby communities (eg DVLA, Amazon)
- Employers could collaborate and pool resources if they are on the same transport routes
- Get support to install EV charging points
- Set up an EV pool car scheme - staff don't need to own a car if they have access to one when needed
- Stop reimbursing car mileage - pay for public transport fares instead
- "40p per mile for cycling, not petrol!"
- Meet clients at sustainable travel hubs eg train stations and town centres
- Recommend sustainable travel options to clients and visitors
- Make international travel a rare exception - meet online
- Join the Swansea Bay Sustainable Travel Planning Forum (j.cornelius@swansea.ac.uk)
- Talk to local bus operators to make the case for new services (eg Swansea Uni)

Bus and Train Operators

Treat service users as the experts! We need to involve people who use public transport and those from seldom heard groups, at the start of transport design and ongoing. People who use the transport systems have got the answers, and sometimes these are cheap and simple things to implement.

- We must enable [bikes on buses](#) and trains as a priority
- Empower communities to design their own networks - listen to communities
- Involve young people in designing campaigns to promote public transport
- Create a youth projects fund for projects planned and implemented by young people
- Involve disabled communities in designing support for accessible travel
- Make public transport a viable option for disabled people
- [Accessible timetables](#) and information - make maps and timetables user friendly
- Tube-style bus route maps are easier to navigate; colour coding can help.
- Bus information is much harder to find than rail information - and this deters people from buses
- Promote Traveline Cymru - collaborate to offer the best user experience!
- Use technology to enable personalised travel plans

- Collaborate and integrate with each other and with community transport organisations
- Connect up transport modes - every bus should go to the train station!
- Increase the number of bus stops around town
- Make it clear people can flag down a bus anywhere in rural areas
- Plan a mix of express/direct and stopping / “round the houses” buses
- More space for wheelchairs on buses
- Proactively address isolation, depression and health inequality in poorer areas
- NPT, Swansea, LLanelli & Carmarthen are ideal regional hydrogen electric bus routes
- Improve the profile and promotion of public transport
- Make transport interchanges more welcoming and safer
- Safe waiting rooms at all stations - otherwise the weather and safety concerns deter travel
- Waiting rooms and toilets need to be open outside of ticket office hours
- Recruit local volunteers to support people with additional needs to use transport
- Involve communities around stations - eg community gardens, social enterprises
- Promote discounts such as My Travel Pass - <https://mytravelpass.gov.wales/> to schools and colleges and extend this scheme to include 25 year olds
- Public transport needs to be cheaper. Or free.

Schools & Colleges

- Colleges need to engage meaningfully with bus and train operators
- Promote public transport options to students
- Make cycling or walking to school the norm - work with schools, close streets to cars at key times
- School buses - make these available to all school children, not school-specific
- Involve young people in designing campaigns to promote public transport

Communities

- Create [mobility hubs](#) with shared ebikes, e-scooters, e-cargo bikes, bike storage
- Crowdfund for EV charging points and EV car share co-ops eg Co-cars (dan@awel.coop)
- Set up a [Bike Library](#) and provide road cycle training in the community
- Establish local groups (eg [Living Streets](#)) to create change locally (eg school streets)
- Keep it local: buy local and use local services
- Promote and coordinate lift sharing (eg through local Whatsapp groups)
- Withdraw mileage reimbursements for local councillors/officers - refund transport fares instead
- Make cycling or walking to school the norm - work with schools, close streets to cars at key times
- Find out about - and promote/support - community transport options that already exist
- Establish a community transport and taxi company to address local needs
- Recruit local volunteers as community drivers - provide shared vehicles
- Help people become confident public transport travellers - eg buddy schemes, group excursions
- Invite Transport for Wales to come and talk to your community about regional transport plans
- Encourage stories and visible representation in active travel so people can see “people like me”

Individuals

- Buy local and use local services - buy online from local businesses
- Plan ahead - reduce journeys and look up timetables etc
- Challenge yourself - which travel habits could you change?
- Volunteer to help with community transport schemes
- Offer lifts to your neighbours or offer to do their shopping for them

General Comments

- *Transport should be regarded as a universal basic service - like healthcare and education. Plus decarbonising transport is a priority to avert climate disaster. Lobby your politicians to make it so! Demand that governments stop spending money on new roads, and put that money into public transport services instead. Public transport needs to be cheaper. Or free.*
- *Investment in rail is welcomed, but buses carry more people and reach more communities, so we will get much more 'bang for the buck' by investing in bus services. If governments are going to bail out transport operators in hard times, and subsidise their operations (ie socialising the losses), it should be possible to make greater demands and re-regulate the transport industry to provide universal access to decent services.*
- *We need much more infrastructure for electric vehicle charging across the region, but private EV cars are not the answer and won't address the climate crisis or transport inequality. EV Car Share projects should be supported in communities and by employers - so that people can have access to a car without needing to own one.*
- *In towns and cities where sustainable travel options exist, and once governments have invested significantly in those options, we should support new legislation that makes car users pay the true cost of car use (eg congestion charging, parking charges, tolls). In rural areas, those same policies would be unfair and would worsen travel inequality.*
- *Planning policy is a key lever. We must stop allowing low density out-of-town development which makes people car-dependent, and embrace a "town centre first" approach for residential, commercial, leisure and health developments. Locating jobs, services and facilities in local communities will help make sustainable places where people don't need to own a car.*
- *Fair pay and conditions for delivery drivers and cyclists - which is a growing sector thanks to the growth of online ordering. Van delivery drivers are paid per parcel thereby incentivising drivers to drive fast and unsafely. We need a real living wage paid to all workers.*

What can SWWco and our partners do?

- Keep this conversation going - regular regional community-led transport forum through which people can engage meaningfully with decision-makers, transport operators etc.
- Map existing Community Transport provision and Active Travel across the region
- Engage with destinations, businesses and employers - support them to take action
- Empower communities - help establish local groups
- Amplify visible representation of diverse groups using active travel so people can see themselves
- Review the "Rapid Prototype" project ideas - what can we take forward?
- Support the Taith Coop for shared EV cars, charge points and bikes, funded via a share offer.