

## MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER NOVEMBER FOLLOW UP

Back in February 2021, in partnership with Swansea Environmental Forum and Natural Resources Wales, we held a major transport conference for South West Wales, bringing together diverse voices from across all sectors of business and community.

Nine months later, we asked the big question: “How have things been moving forward in South West Wales?” Hosted in partnership with Swansea Environmental Forum, who supported the main conference back in February, we brought together over 60 participants to explore this question together.

In order to set discussion themes surrounding this question, we noted a few announcements:

- The [South West Wales Metro](#) proposals are advancing, and Transport for Wales will provide an update.
- The Welsh Government has launched an [EV Charging Action Plan](#) to install more charging points.
- Seven new community-owned car clubs in rural Wales [have secured lottery funding](#).
- The direct bus from Swansea to Cardiff has stopped running! We'd love to know why!
- Local Authorities have been mapping their [Active Travel networks](#).
- Swansea CVS has secured CRF funding for a Community Led Transport Initiative!
- Carmarthenshire Council have had Levelling Up funding for the Tywi Cycle Path
- South West Wales Connected Community Rail Partnership has a new Community Rail Officer in place, and a [funding pot for community projects](#).



## CATCH UP ON THE PREVIOUS EVENT

Following the previous conference, we compiled all the notes from 8 hours of discussion to produce a Transport Manifesto for South West Wales. This document has been an exercise in co-production, reflecting the priorities and perspectives of a huge diversity of conference participants, and provides key actions that all of us can take forward, from Local Authorities to individuals, from businesses to community groups.



Catch up on all the videos and notes in our [full conference report on our website](#), or skip straight to the manifesto: [REGIONAL TRANSPORT MANIFESTO FOR SOUTH WEST WALES](#)

## **FORMAT OF THE EVENT**

### **PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT**

We invited participants to engage in smaller, 5 minute breakout rooms to establish key speaking points for the event and to allow shared perspectives of what they would like to see happen in the transport sector.

Throughout the event, participants were encouraged to make use of Zoom's online chat function to engage in discussion and ask questions. Participants were also invited to speak and share their perspectives following each key speaker presentation.

### **KEY SPEAKERS - TRANSPORT UPDATES ACROSS THE REGION**

We invited a number of key speakers, thought-leaders and changemakers from transport providers across the region to provide updates on progress in the transport sector since the conference in February. Click on the headings to jump to the section:

#### **COMMUNITY ENERGY FOR EVS**

*Neil Lewis, Manager, Ynni Sir Gar*

#### **ELECTRIC VEHICLES & CAR SHARE PROJECTS**

*Antonia Roberts, Deputy Chief Executive, COMO UK*

#### **SOUTH WEST WALES METRO UPDATE**

*Ben George, Strategic Development Programme Manager, Transport for Wales*

#### **CHANGEMAKERS FUNDING**

*Ashley Morgan, Community Rail Officer, South West Wales Connected*

#### **COMMUNITY-LED TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS**

*Dawn Lyle, Co-founder, 4theRegion CIC*

**SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS — WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU?**

- Improved connections to rural areas are vital.
- We need to explore more options that help people get transport solutions.
- Expand and optimise community-led and publicly owned solutions.
- Could a regional alternative to Uber be developed? EV and ethically owned/managed.
- Public transport services need to be improved.
- A more ambitious plan to develop existing transport routes.
- Bus routes are different from routes for commuters with private transport.
- Public transport providers aren't taking full advantage of existing opportunities.
- There are concerns with safety and cleanliness on public transport.
- We need to change the mindset and stigma surrounding public transport.
- Reduce our reliance on private transport.
- People use their own cars because there aren't better options available.
- Discouraging usage of private vehicles, especially in larger urban areas.
- Be cautious that electric vehicles still contribute to emissions.
- Learning to ride ebikes can be a fun activity.
- Electric bikes for disabled people would be excellent
- Active Travel proposals are dropped early in rural areas due to low population density and are not seen as a sustainable development.
- Move to decarbonisation of all methods of transport.
- Encourage development of hydrogen fuels as a replacement for fossil fuels.
- A far more invested solution from Swansea to Cardiff.
- Improved integration with other forms of public transport.
- The tram should make a return to Swansea.
- Swansea's biggest issue is its topography and existing geography of railway/road links.
- Follow examples from other countries, such as the Netherlands.
- Make parking free for disabled people.
- Improved accessibility for all and a more diverse choice of options.

**PERSONAL REFLECTIONS**

- *I'd like to see an affordable hop-on, hop-off public transport system similar to the Netherlands.*
- *"As a wheelchair user, I found that the bus service to Cardiff wasn't accessible."*
- *"We should be putting things in place to discourage cars, especially in cities, but new road layouts in Swansea mean a walking person may take nearly 5 minutes to cross the road as cars continue to have priority. The park & ride stopped being a great service and became a nightmare to use as it changed routes and stopped along the way."*
- *"While we look at sustainability, there are huge issues growing for transport that meets the needs of commercial industries and farmers in rural areas. There are little affordable alternatives available to diesel; How do you tow equipment without diesel power?"*
- *"I loved the transport manifesto - clear, concise and a great piece of work. Social inclusion is important to me. Hyperlocal community transport solutions have a role to play in helping with isolation. Some of these small, invaluable community schemes are vital to people."*
- *"I would say that cost is what puts me off public transport the most. As you often have to pay crazy amounts to park your car in the train station car park too. It makes me just want to take my car!"*
- *"Although this is a silly perspective, in regards to buses; I am aware that most young people don't want to take a bus as it's not "cool" but a train/metro/tram is... this could be a factor as to why young people use their cars instead."*
- *"There is a real issue on commuting transport costs as a proportion of earned wage, especially for lower earners. I fear that net income could drop below the living wage in extreme circumstances"*
- *"About 30% of people in Wales are in poverty, i.e. with incomes below the living wage, and transport costs are often cited as a barrier to them accessing training and employment to improve their situations. Take the transport cost of the pay they're being offered for a job and they'd be left with even less to live on if they took it."*

## **COMMUNITY ENERGY & ELECTRIC VEHICLES**

**Neil Lewis**  
Manager  
Ynni Sir Gar



### **COMMUNITY ENERGY FOR EVS**

***Neil Lewis, Manager, Ynni Sir Gar & Director, TrydaNi***

[TrydaNi: Charge Place Wales](#) is a locally owned EV charging network serving Wales. Charge Place Wales aims to use locally generated renewable energy to power zero carbon miles. Profits will be re-invested in improving the charging network and decarbonizing transport.

Charge Place Wales has been successful in securing funding for a 3 year pilot project in at least 7 locations. One or two shared electric vehicles. It will provide a starting point to realise Welsh Government ambitions for more shared ownership models and an opportunity to prove its efficacy and commercial viability.

Organisations involved in the project are Collaborative Mobility UK (CoMoUK), The Green Valleys, Community Energy Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire Energy, Datblygiadau Egni Gwledig, Awel Aman Tawe, Cwm Arian Renewables, CTA Cymru and TrydaNi.

According to Neil, 40% of people in Wales do not have off road parking, the funds to buy or the infrastructure to install EV charging points, which raises issues with equity in Wales' goal to move away from relying on fossil fuel powered vehicles.

Affordability of electric vehicles is also an issue, not everybody can move towards owning an electric vehicle due to the cost of ownership and EV charging costs, so shared car clubs can offer people access to a car when they need it to be able to access services that they may not have been able to in an affordable way.

According to CoWheels and CoMoUK, in order to make the shared ownership scheme commercially viable these vehicles need to be used 25% of a 24 hour day. Using a shared electric vehicle could take up to 18 vehicles off the road.

**GENERAL COMMENTS AND REFLECTIONS**

- *“The Welsh Government wants a public electric vehicle charging point every 20 miles on the strategic route network of Wales by 2025, how do you think they are going to achieve this?”*
- *It's not a huge challenge, but the issues with social equity are a concern. Unless everyone has the opportunity to access electric vehicles, from an air quality and transport point of view, we're not really achieving anything. We need to try and reduce the number of vehicles on the road. It's an exciting possible new solution for Wales and we need to ensure that it succeeds.*
- *“One of the messages that came through strongly in the conference earlier this year is that it's not realistic to think that everyone who owns a combustion engine car will be able to switch to electric vehicles. There are many reasons why the whole model of private car ownership needs to change.”*
- *“I'm a bit disappointed to hear that the cost involved in accessible community and EV vehicles is high. I wonder whether the funding should have been accounted for when securing funding.”*
- *“We'd love to get involved with the project in Pembrokeshire - PACTO Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations”*
- *“Electric cars also contribute to congestion, leading to more demands for road building projects that result in trees being felled and huge amounts of CO2 released from construction vehicles and new tarmac.”*
- *“There are those of us in Community Transport schemes using electric vehicles with some electric bikes, who saw car sharing as a way to enable sustainability for our essential schemes for those that can't afford car share and can not drive. I am pleased to see that the scheme is supposed to work with Community transport but that is not what it feels like in the areas where it has been funded. We worked with renewable community schemes to discuss and develop. However, the current scheme feels like cherry picking by renewable enthusiasts leaving community transport to deal with the need-end of the spectrum. I realise this is not intentional but it is a little disconcerting. It would be great if fully integrated schemes were required if publicly funded or charity funded. Working together is the only way forward to meet needs.”*

## **ELECTRIC VEHICLES & CAR SHARE PROJECTS**

**Antonia Roberts**  
Deputy Chief Exec  
COMO UK



### **ELECTRIC VEHICLES & CAR SHARE PROJECTS**

***Antonia Roberts, Deputy Chief Executive, COMO UK***

[COMOUK](#) has played a leading role in the UK's transition to integrated mobility solutions designed for the public good for the last 20 years. CoMoUK supports the development of shared modes and alternatives to private vehicles.

Developing shared systems can be challenging, and for startups it quite often relies on a partnership between private organizations, public land and community groups involved with different stakeholder groups. Bringing all those different partners together can be quite complex; COMOUK aims to provide guidance to each partner, bring together different perspectives, create best practice and ensure that shared models are remembered and considered as viable alternatives.

It's important to break the dependency on private cars. While the private car is sitting on your drive, where you've already invested in it through purchasing it, paying the insurance, road tax, using private vehicles becomes a very easy default option. We should be comparing it with other options: "How much would this journey cost? Is this an ideal method for this particular journey and are there any viable alternatives?" Considering these questions will start to make us think more actively about which other modes to use.

It's not just about reducing miles driven, it's about thinking about issues in our communities by having the car so dominant on the streets. Even if all of those cars were electric, it would still cause issues with congestion and road safety, the latter often puts people off walking or cycling. There's many ways that car clubs can help to address these issues at a local level and globally in terms of emissions reduction.

To join the COMOUK forum or for any questions, email Antonia at [Antonia@como.org.uk](mailto:Antonia@como.org.uk)

**GENERAL COMMENTS AND REFLECTIONS**

- *“Typically car clubs have to be located close to people where they can either walk, cycle to or occasionally people get public transport down to, to pick up a car, and it doesn't tend to have situations where cars are delivered. I think when you're working in a community, anything's possible, so you can start to blend things with community transport services so that if there was somebody that wanted to be linked in and had a barrier, I'm sure there are creative ways of creating solutions. Community transport has quite a strong history of being linked to community car clubs.”*
- *“We need greater integration of the various community-led transport schemes and indeed wider transport infrastructure”*
- *“My disabled son goes to school 5 miles away - I take him by car - with my husband mainly working from home now I could envisage that we could reduce to just having one car if I was to need to catch public transport occasionally - the bus service is really bad and not on time. I need to catch at least 2 buses to get there, this car sharing scheme might help?”*
- *“Fossil fuel cars are too well subsidised and they get too much of the road. We have to do something about leveling up the transport system and addressing the need for more electric public transport solutions.”*
- *“Sustrans Wales have been given funding by the Welsh Government to offer free trials of electric bikes to businesses and community organisations in Swansea and Aberystwyth for up to 3 months. The aim of the project is to gather data on the positives and negatives of e-cargo bikes to give feedback to the Welsh Government. Another aim is to give current and new businesses the opportunity to see if a more environmentally friendly method of transport could work for their business.”*

## **SOUTH WEST WALES METRO UPDATE**

**Ben George**  
Strategic Development  
Programme Manager  
Transport for Wales



### **SOUTH WEST WALES METRO UPDATE**

***Ben George, Strategic Development Programme Manager, Transport for Wales***

The Welsh Government has given Transport for Wales (TfW) the role of developing three metro concepts: Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro, North Wales Metro and South Wales Metro, with improvements to the South Wales Main Line also proposed. [View the future developments here.](#)

#### **SWANSEA BAY AREA**

The Swansea Bay area includes new stations proposed for Penllergaer, Felindre, Morryston, Llandarcy, Winch Wen, Landore and Cockett. Integration with strategic bus routes will seek to provide better levels of connectivity, with TfW working with local governments to look into implementation of integrated ticketing and timetabling.

#### **WEST WALES AREA**

From 2022, TfW will be introducing new trains on services through the Swansea Bay area, increasing capacity on services to West Wales and between South West Wales and Manchester. Speed and capacity enhancements are also proposed between Milford Haven and Haverfordwest. St Clears railway station is currently being prepared for reopening in 2024, previously being closed in 1964.

#### **BUS INTEGRATION PROPOSALS**

TfW are tentatively working with local governments to step into strategic projects that deal with bus corridors and interchange enhancements. The TrawsCymru T1 service from Carmarthen to Aberystwyth is in the process of being upgraded to an all-electric fleet.

TfW are in the early stages of discussion with local government and public transport operators to understand what it takes to run hydrogen fuel cell buses, which may be trialled in the Swansea Bay and Haven Waterway areas.

As an emerging field, the vehicles and supporting infrastructure such as hydrogen refuelers and procurement of resilient hydrogen supplies can be costly barriers. The Welsh Government has a policy ambition of decarbonizing the bus industry by 2028.

**RAIL RECOVERY**

Rail transport is heading towards a position of recovery, with daily footfall numbers increasing across the TfW network. There has been a shift from people travelling to work on weekdays, with a shift away from people commuting by rail on a weekday. The growth spike in the number of weekend journeys, indicating a move towards increased leisure travel on the rail network.

Anyone wishing to attend the South West Wales Regional Rail Forum should make contact with the Stakeholder Manager for South West Wales: [alexander.bryant-evans@tfw.wales](mailto:alexander.bryant-evans@tfw.wales)

**GENERAL COMMENTS AND REFLECTIONS**

- *“Welsh Government have got quite significant ambitions to try and reform the way that bus is provided in Wales, at the moment is largely a commercial proposition and so whilst public sector can coerce private operators to run buses in different fashions and subsidize them in some cases, those bus operators will run the routes that they feel, bringing the best return. Transport for Wales’ ability to affect those commercial routes are pretty much non-existent.”*
- *“There is discussion going on with the local government and the private operators presently about how to reform the bus network, and they're also looking at legislative reform, which will come in the first half of this decade.”*
- *“Transport for Wales has undertaken a comprehensive review of the bus network over the past six months using mobile phone data across the south and midwest. This looks at all of those movements where people travel to and from, and then sought to establish a proposed change to the bus network to cater for those observed trips, there's an awful lot of work to be done with local government.”*
- *“There are proposals being made for trialling bike storage carriages on the Heart of Wales line to see how effective accommodation of bikes is.”*
- *“Bikes on buses are a no-no because bus design is still the responsibility of the UK government, who say it is too dangerous for pedestrians if there was a crash. There needs to be a devolution of transport powers.”*
- *“We start to see that transport providers need to listen more to their customers, respond to their issues and make their services more accessible and appealing, if certain groups are to be supported to make different choices. It isn't just about "expecting" or "hoping" that people will change their minds while the provision remains the same.”*
- *“We are involved with the Fflecsi demand responsible bus service in Northwest Pembrokeshire run by Pembrokeshire Voluntary Transport. The schedule is very flexible - people can go from/to anywhere within the service area - it is very interesting to see actual travel patterns developing which are unlike anything we would have predicted - e.g. travel for work in the opposite direction of what we would have expected”*

**CHANGEMAKERS  
FUNDING**

**Ashley Morgan**  
Community Rail Officer  
South West Wales  
Connected



**CHANGEMAKERS FUNDING**

*Ashley Morgan, Community Rail Officer, South West Wales Connected*



After a successful first round, South West Wales Connected Community Rail Partnership has re-launched a community grant fund to support communities along the railway line to make change happen in their local places. South West Wales Connected are passionate about supporting local people to improve their communities in innovative ways – small interventions that help create pride of place and promote well-being in the community.

The Community Changemakers fund will directly support groups and organisations who want to drive positive local change, with a minimum of bureaucracy so groups can get on with making change happen.

The fund will offer grants of £300 to £1000 to benefit communities within Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire.

[Click here to find out more and apply](#)

Applications close at 5PM on Thursday 23rd December.

## **COMMUNITY-LED TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS**

**Dawn Lyle**  
Co-Founder  
4theRegion



### **COMMUNITY-LED TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS**

*Dawn Lyle, Co-founder, 4theRegion CIC*

In partnership with SCVS and Swansea Environmental Forum, and supported by the Community Renewal Fund, 4theRegion is involved in a programme of activities to strengthen sustainable transport and active travel in Swansea, with a focus on what communities can do for themselves to solve their own travel and transport challenges, for example car- and bike-share schemes, community transport initiatives, localised delivery services, lift-sharing and support for active travel.

This project will address social isolation, promote community cohesion, enable better access to services and employment, improve health and wellbeing, and tackle the decarbonisation imperative.

Our activities will include a comprehensive assessment of transport and travel needs and opportunities within urban and rural communities; bringing stakeholders together to co-produce a plan of action for scaling up and spreading community-led initiatives; and developing a portfolio of support materials to assist communities to share learning and take projects forward.

### **RESOURCES & REFERENCES**

- [4theRegion | Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro: what you need to know](#)
- [Bikeability Wales | Cycle Hire](#)
- [Business News Wales | Major Funding Boost for Green Car Clubs Across Rural Wales](#)
- [Charge Place Wales](#)
- [Co Cars: Car hire example in Exeter](#)
- [COMOUK | What are Mobility Hubs?](#)
- [Friends of the Earth Cymru | A Wales Transport Policy fit for the Climate Emergency](#)
- [FWI | JCB's hydrogen-fuelled combustion engine examined](#)
- [GOV.WALES | Swansea Bay and west Wales Metro](#)
- [Mount Pleasant Community eBikes](#)
- [Mount Pleasant Community eBikes on Facebook](#)
- [SACT Car Club – Car Club Vehicle Hire](#)
- [South West Wales Connected | Community Changemakers Fund](#)
- [Spacehive | Bike shelter and ebikes for Mount Pleasant](#)
- [Transport for Wales | Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro: Future developments](#)
- [Transport for Wales | Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro](#)
- [Transport Xtra | Discovering the triple access planning 'sweet spot'](#)