

DRIVING FORWARD

Your quarterly update from the TrawsCymru team



Croeso and welcome to the Autumn edition of Driving Forward – your quarterly update from the TrawsCymru team.

It's been an exciting few months with lots of engagement events and new developments that we can't wait to share with you. Thank you to all drivers and operators for all your hard work in keeping the network running.



Our First Operator Day

In September, our first TrawsCymru Operator Day took place in Llandrindod Wells, bringing together operators and key stakeholders from all over Wales. The event provided a valuable opportunity to share insights, updates, and future opportunities for service improvement.

The day kicked off with a networking session before a series of presentations. Topics ranged from operational updates to marketing campaigns and strategies for fostering a customer-centric culture. We then went through an update on the development of the TrawsCymru website and app, as well as advancements in driver and passenger safety. The event then wrapped up with a Q&A.

Feedback from the event has been extremely positive with attendees commenting that it was useful to hear from an external viewpoint and learn about app development. The CPT training has also been positively received and the main area for improvement was a desire for even more engagement. The feedback collected has already been useful and will be used to plan future operator days.

We are currently planning the next event, so watch this space and if you have any suggestions please let us know.



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Share your thoughts with us!



Want to feature in our next edition, or is there something you'd like us to cover?

Why not email us at: trawscymru@tfw.wales



Three generations driving forward at Lloyds Coaches

There's been some heart-warming news at Lloyds Coaches with Eirion, Melanie, and Lotus who are three generations of bus drivers from the same family, all working for Lloyds Coaches and with a combined 18 years of service between them!

Eirion began his career 12 years ago and is known for his friendly rapport with passengers and his professionalism on the road. Following in his footsteps, his daughter Melanie joined the team six years ago, bringing a fresh energy to the role. And now, Lotus, the third generation, has taken the wheel, continuing the family tradition and providing exceptional service to the community.

This story highlights just how personally connected to the community our drivers can be - a massive thank you to Eirion, Melanie, and Lotus and Lloyds Coaches for sharing this story.



Engagement Events

Recently, we held some engagement events for our T5 and T8 Traws services in various communities along the routes. We were eager to hear from passengers about what's working well, what needs improvement, and how we can better meet their transport needs as we plan for retendering these routes.

At the T5 event we had attendees from a wide range of frequency users, from daily to monthly. The majority of the users used the service solely for leisure. The feedback was positive on the service as a whole, however issues surrounding overcrowding were highlighted. A desire was also expressed for the service to increase the services frequency.

These engagement events have been useful in helping us understand customer and stakeholder needs and concerns. We're working to address issues that arose from these discussions, as well as planning future engagement events along other routes.



FACTS AND FIGURES: September 2024

210,030

Passengers

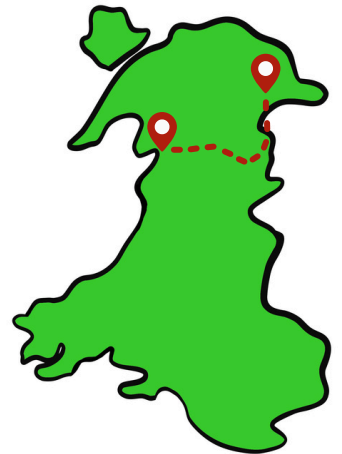


Top Digital Ticket Sales



42%

increase in patronage when compared to last September on the T12



T7

T5

T11

Top Group Ticket Sales

T6

T1

T10



92%

and...

increase in patronage between Barmouth - Dolgellau this year when compared with 2023



TfW launches new marketing campaign - We'll do what it takes

Transport for Wales has launched a new integrated brand campaign, 'We'll do what it takes,' This campaign, which began on September 23rd, showcases TfW's commitment to building a reliable multimodal transport network for everyone in Wales.

The campaign focuses on being open and honest about the challenges faced by public transport users while celebrating the progress made. Through TV ads, social media, and digital billboards, the goal is to encourage people to choose public transport as their first option, helping reach the ambitious goal of 45% of journeys being made by sustainable transport by 2040.

A special focus of the campaign is on frontline colleagues, whose dedication keeps Wales moving. The commitment and tenacity of drivers and staff are what make services reliable, and this campaign celebrates that effort.



Doing what it takes...

Speaking of 'doing what it takes', a recent journey on the Aberystwyth to Cardiff T1C service via Carmarthen showed the dedication of going the extra mile for passengers.

During the journey, a passenger stepped off the coach at Carmarthen for a quick break but accidentally left her phone and wallet on the seat. Unfortunately, the coach departed without realising she had not got back on board or that she had left her belongings behind.

Thanks to some quick-thinking from the owner of Mid Wales Transport, the situation was swiftly resolved. He contacted his daughter in Carmarthen who met the lady and gave her £20 to cover the cost of a train ticket. She was then able to meet the bus in Cardiff and reclaim her lost possessions.

This is a great example of the commitment shown by our delivery partners and drivers in ensuring that passengers feel supported and taken care of throughout their journeys.



Update on accessibility regs

We are in the process of updating our services to be in line with new regulations on accessibility. Around 16 million disabled people in the UK rely heavily on local bus and coach services. The new Public Service Vehicles (Accessible Information) Regulations 2023 will require most services to provide audible and visible route and stop information by 2026, improving accessibility and the journey experience for all passengers.

Newer vehicles (from 1 October 2019 onwards) must comply with the regulations by 1 October 2024, while vehicles from 2014–2019 must comply by 2025, and older vehicles (1973–2014) by 2026. Partially compliant vehicles have until 2031 to fully comply.

The T6 route will be the first to implement the changes, with recordings and programming complete. Other routes including T2, T28, T22, T3, and T10 are in progress, and updates for T1 and T7 are ongoing to meet the new standards.

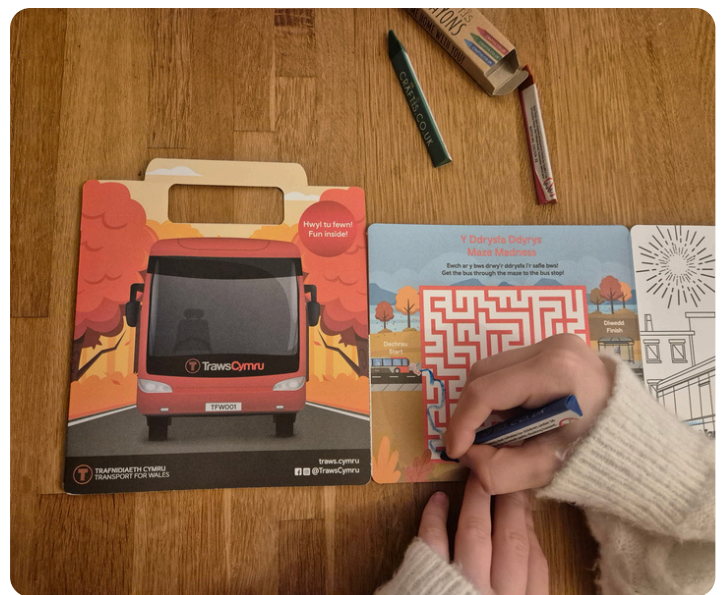


New Autumnal Activity Packs

Have you received the new children’s activity packs?

These lovely packs are designed to entertain the children on board the bus, featuring autumn-themed fun and activities. They include colouring-in and triangular crayons (to prevent them rolling off the tables!), fun quizzes, games and interesting facts about routes.

We’re thrilled to offer these to children on services and we hope that you’ll receive some positive feedback from our young passengers.





Watch your speed!

Our top priority is the safety of our passengers and our drivers. We know that as drivers you are aware of the importance of safety on our roads. However, recent incidents have highlighted the need for all drivers to be vigilant about their speed - not just in 20mph zones.

We recently introduced telematics on buses to help monitor and enhance driver performance. Telematics does not track every minor action but focuses on repeated behaviours or specific areas of concern. It sends alerts to drivers only when necessary, offering timely reminders to stay within legal speed limits and ensure smoother journeys.

By using this system, we aim to create safer travel experiences for everyone.

Speeding can have serious consequences not only for passengers and other road users but also for the environment. Excessive speeds can lead to accidents, injuries, and even fatalities. The production of greenhouse gases from vehicles contributes significantly to climate change. By driving more efficiently and avoiding unnecessary speeding, we can reduce our carbon footprint.

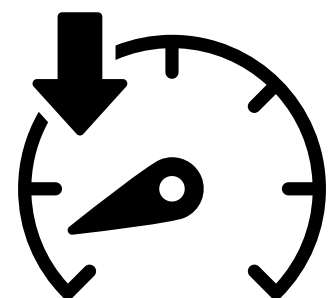
While it's true that schools, residential areas, and other low-speed zones require special attention when it comes to speed limits, excessive speeding is a problem on all types of roads. Drivers should prioritise safety over meeting schedules. If it means taking a few extra minutes to navigate a corner more slowly or avoid another vehicle, that's okay!

We're working together to create a safer, more responsible transport system that balances schedules with safety above all else.

Mark Jacobs, Senior Planning and Development Manager, has provided the guidelines below which outline the actions that will be taken against drivers with a vocational licence.



| | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Exceeding statutory speed limit | Speeding in a commercial vehicle (SP10 or SP40) | Can be dealt with 'in office' | DVLA staff to issue warning letter |
| Exceeding statutory speed limit - 2nd offence | Speeding in a commercial vehicle (SP10 or SP40) | Call to a hearing | 6-week suspension |
| One CU80 (type of vehicle not known) and one speeding offence in a commercial vehicle | No previous adverse conduct history for either offence | Call to a hearing | 6-week suspension |





T10 patronage growth

We're thrilled to report a significant increase in patronage on the T10 TrawsCymru service, with an impressive 86% surge in passengers in August, compared to the same period in 2023. Overall, from April 1st to August 31st, 2024, the service has seen a 58% rise in passengers compared to last year.

This growth reflects the success of the new summer timetable, which was introduced to offer an hourly service between Bangor and Betws-y-Coed on weekends and school holidays. This timetable will be in place until October half term.

Lee Robinson, Executive Director for Regional Transport and Integration at TfW said:

"More people are now using this service as it offers passengers the opportunity to sit back, relax, and take in the spectacular views of Eryri. We've run a more frequent summer service this year and made travelling during the school holiday season even easier with great value fares, including our summer group ticket."



Winter and PTI Alerts

As we head into the winter months, it's essential that we all work together to ensure safe and efficient operations on our services. If bad weather events like snow, ice, or flooding impact your route, please don't hesitate to let us know.

We rely on real-time information from operators and drivers to make informed decisions about service scheduling and adjustments. By keeping us informed of any disruptions or diversions due to winter weather, you can help us minimise the impact on passengers and keep them safe.

Please continue to email ptialerts@tfw.wales with any information about service disruptions or alterations caused by bad weather. This ensures that we update our systems and can provide the best possible support.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Christmas is getting closer every day!

Please make sure you let our team know about any festive timetable changes well in advance so we can ensure the website, app and contact team are up to date.



Here's what passengers are saying:

"I wanted to congratulate you on behalf of your driver of the T2 service from Bangor to Aberystwyth on the morning service. The driver was helpful courteous and considerate and a credit to your company."

"This is just a quick message to let you know of a particularly lovely experience I had on one of your buses today. I took the T2 bus from Aberystwyth Bust station at 11.35am on 06/08/24. The driver of the bus was beyond lovely. I was having an awful morning, and my mood was turned around by his politeness and friendliness. We only shared a few words before I got off at the university, but they really made my day! If it's possible, could you please pass on how much the kindness was appreciated? "

"As a regular passenger on Traws Cymru, I use the T10 several times a week between Bangor and Corwen. As a supporter of public transport concerned about the deteriorating public transport network, I would like to congratulate you the excellent T10 service. Clean, comfortable buses, friendly and helpful drivers and always on time. "



Diolch yn Fawr iawn

Thank you very much for reading this quarters issue of Driving Forward. We are grateful for the fantastic work of our drivers, operators and partners. It would be great if you could share this issue around with colleagues and anyone interested.

If you have any stories or thoughts that you would like shared in our next Issue, please email: rhys.rowlands@tfw.wales