

Date issued: 16 June 2021

Freedom of Information Request

We are writing in response to your Freedom of Information request. Your request has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and our information access policy.

Your Questions Answered

FOI request for the following information in respect of the Conwy Valley Line (Llandudno Junction to Blaenau Ffestiniog):

(a) The total expenditure spent on rail replacement bus services in each of the following three financial years: 2018/19; 2019/20; 2020/21

In order to explain why some of the information requested is unavailable, first it is necessary to explain the relationship between Arriva Trains Wales, KeolisAmey (trading as Transport for Wales Rail Services), Transport for Wales and Welsh Government.

Arriva Trains Wales operated the Wales and Borders franchise from December 2003 – October 2018, when the franchise was awarded to KeolisAmey Operations Ltd (trading as Transport for Wales Rail Services). A Grant Agreement was put in place between KeolisAmey and the Welsh Ministers, outlining their obligations as operators of the franchise. Transport for Wales is a not-for-profit subsidiary company wholly owned by Welsh Government and prior to February 2021, a key part of our remit was to manage the Grant Agreement with KeolisAmey on behalf of the Welsh Ministers.

Notably, Transport for Wales is a public sector organisation that is subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act; whilst as a private sector company, KeolisAmey were not. However, where KeolisAmey were holding information on behalf of Transport for Wales in respect to fulfilling its obligations under the Grant Agreement, that information was shared with Transport for Wales in order to answer a request made under the FOI Act.

KeolisAmey is no longer the operator of the Wales and Borders franchise. On 7 February 2021, the Welsh Government's operator of last resort (OLR), Transport for Wales Rail Ltd (a subsidiary of Transport for Wales) were given the day-to-day management of the franchise following a collapse in revenues and significant reduction in passenger numbers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data prior to October 2018, when Arriva Trains Wales operated the Wales and Borders franchise, is not available to TfW. As such, we can only provide data from October 2018 onwards.

Data relating to October 2018 – January 2021 is not subject to FOI as the rail-replacement bus service was not a specific obligation under the Grant Agreement. This means that the information held by Keolis Amey Wales Cymru Ltd in relation to the rail-replacement bus service does not meet the criteria for information being held on behalf of Transport for Wales, as the service was operated by KeolisAmey Wales Cymru Ltd in their capacity as a private company. As such, Transport for Wales is unable to provide this information under FOI. If you do wish to obtain this information, we recommend that you approach Keolis UK, although it should be noted that they are not subject to the FOI Act as a private sector company.

Total expenditure on rail replacement bus services from 7 February 2021 to date is £29,233.75.

(b) The number of days rail replacement bus services were in operation in each of the following three financial years: 2018/19; 2019/20; 2020/21

2018/19: Data relating to October – December 2018 is unavailable due to the transition of franchise ownership from Arriva Trains Wales to KeolisAmey. For the period January – April 2019: 15

2019/20: 202

2020/21: 279

Please note that these figures relate to every **instance** whereby a rail replacement bus service was used and is not necessarily an indicator of the whole service being cancelled and replaced by busses for the full day.

(c) The average number of daily passengers who used the Conwy Valley Line in each of the following three financial years: 2018/19; 2019/20; 2020/21.

See table below. Please note, this data reflects the number of passenger journeys and not the average number of daily passengers. The number of daily passengers is not data that we hold and would require us to make assumptions on the number of trips/journeys made by a customer in different market segments.

The figures below represent passenger journeys allocated to TfW Rail on the Llandudno-Blaenau Ffestiniog Route for the three years in question.

RSP Year	Total Journeys	Number of Days	Daily Average Journeys
2019	155,774	365	427
2020	130,770	366	357
2021	30,796	365	84

(d) The average number of daily services operated by Transport for Wales on the Conwy Valley Line in each of the following three financial years: 2018/19; 2019/20; 2020/21.

The below table shows the number of services booked over each year on the line between Llandudno Town and Blaenau. Note however that this will include any services booked to run between Llandudno Town and Llandudno Junction.

Year	Total Trains Booked
2018/19:	10,210
2019/20:	9,579
2020/21:	9,911

The specific number of services booked to arrive at and depart from Blaenau station are shown in the table below:

Year	Total Trains Booked
2018/19:	3,088
2019/20:	1,887
2020/21:	624

As you can see this line has been severely affected by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We hope this information is of use to you.

Yours sincerely,

Transport for Wales

Appeal Rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, please write to the Head of Freedom of Information at either Transport for Wales, 3 Llys Cdwyn, Pontypridd, CF37 4TH or freedomofinformation@tfw.wales. Your request must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt of this letter. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision.

The Information Commissioner (ICO) can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or you can contact the ICO through the 'Make a Complaint' section of their website on this link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

The relevant section to select will be "Official or Public Information".