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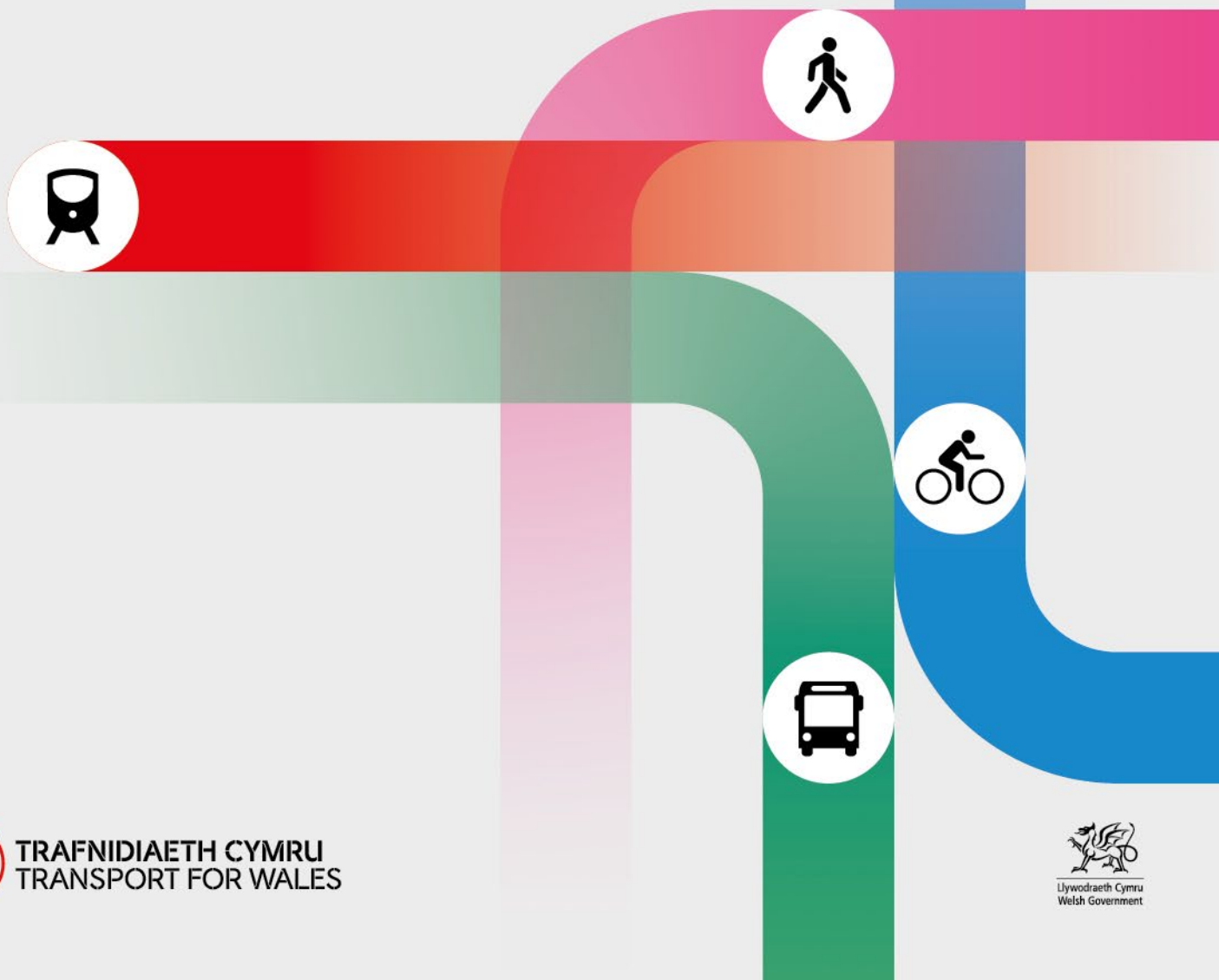
Quality management approach

Wales National Travel Survey



TRAFNIDIAETH CYMRU
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Quality is defined by the Code of Practice for Statistics as using suitable data and appropriate methods to produce reliable statistics that meet user needs. Quality is not limited to the final outputs, but instead an essential part of the whole production process.

This document describes how quality is managed in the production of statistics from the Wales National Travel Survey (WNTS). It outlines how we have prioritised quality throughout survey development, statistics production and the communication of results.

The WNTS was developed through an extensive programme of research, survey development and pilot testing. Findings from this work informed the survey's design, questionnaire content and data collection methods before full implementation. Reports documenting the survey's development and testing are published alongside the survey, providing a transparent account of how methods were refined and decisions were made.

Quality considerations are built into the survey design. The WNTS is a web-first survey and employs the innovative use of an interactive map within the travel diary. This allows respondents to record precise information about their journeys without undue burden. Alongside web completes, allow for face-to-face interviews and telephone completions to ensure that respondents can complete the survey in a way that they prefer.

The sample is designed to produce robust estimates of travel attitudes and behaviours across Wales at a national and regional level. Mid Wales is disproportionately sampled to support robust regional analysis, with survey weights applied to ensure the results are representative of the Welsh population.

We recognise that quality is not fixed, and the survey continues to evolve as user needs and evidence requirements change. Before changes are introduced, we consider whether they will improve the survey's ability to meet user needs and how they may affect existing outputs. Question changes may be cognitively tested with respondents, and we consider the impact of changes on respondent burden, the flow of the survey and the comparability of results over time.

Responsibility for delivering the survey is shared between Transport for Wales and our survey contractor. Throughout data collection, we monitor fieldwork progress, response rates and the profile of responding households. This allows us to identify and respond to issues that may affect data quality during the collection period.

Quality assurance continues after data collection has been completed. Data are reviewed using a range of checks to identify unexpected values, inconsistencies and potential quality issues. Statistical outputs are reviewed by other analysts before publication. Checks include reviewing calculations, assessing consistency across outputs and, where methods have changed, undertaking parallel runs of existing and revised approaches. Methods, analytical decisions and quality issues are documented throughout the process.

We place a high priority on the quality of the survey and published statistics. Where quality concerns are identified, additional investigation and assurance work may be undertaken before results are published. This was demonstrated when publication of the six-month preliminary

results was delayed following the identification of quality concerns within the dataset. The additional time allowed further investigation and quality assurance work to be completed before publication.

Information about survey methods, data quality and limitations is published alongside the WNTS results. This includes a Technical Report and Quality Report, which explain how the statistics have been produced and describe the strengths and limitations of the survey. Measures of uncertainty, including confidence intervals, are published alongside survey estimates within statistical outputs and data tables.

The WNTS is currently published as statistics in development, reflecting our ongoing work to refine and improve the survey. We are open about changes to the survey, methods and published statistics, and explain the impact of methodological changes, revisions and corrections. This helps users understand how the survey is evolving and how changes may affect the interpretation of the results.