

# Bws Cymru

Connecting People with Places



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



# Hello

**Buses matter** – lots of people rely on them to get to work, school, take part in activities and connect to people.



## Involving people



Over the last few years, we held consultations, ran online surveys and met with groups across Wales to ask about transport and bus services. This helped us find out what mattered to people and what issues there are with bus services.

In 2021, we met again with groups who had a particular interest in bus services.

The feedback helped us work out the areas we need to focus on and develop this plan.

It's important to keep bus services running, easy to use and reliable. But, some communities don't have bus services they can trust:

- people don't feel they can rely on the bus to get them where they need to go
- the number of people using buses is going down
- the cost of fares has gone up.

**The Welsh Government wants this to change.** We want every area in Wales to have stable, affordable, easy-to-use bus services.

**This is our plan to improve the bus system across Wales.**



## Some facts



**1 in 4** people in Wales don't have a car

**25%** of bus users are disabled or have a long-term illness.



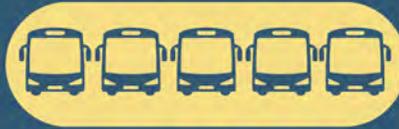
Lots of **young people** rely on them for school or college

### Good practice

Switzerland has a 'One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket' public transport system. This helps tackle climate change by getting people out of their cars.



**100 Million** bus journeys in Wales.



**80+** operators

**Passenger numbers** are going down



**Fares** are going up



**47%** of journeys use a bus card



**2,400** locally operated buses in Wales

**4,800** total staff



**3,700** bus drivers

## Bus operators

Bus operators run bus services to make money and have to decide what to charge people and how to cover their costs of staff, fuel and other expenses.

They also get money from the Welsh Government and local authorities to support running buses in their communities.

Each operator gets different payments depending on their contracts and the routes they cover. They are free to change services or stop a route by giving 56 days' notice. This can be difficult for people to plan journeys. It can also mean that people in one part of Wales have a better, fairer bus service than others.

More than **£90 million** a year goes to local authorities to deliver bus services.

Bus operators prioritise routes that will give them more profit.

This means some smaller communities don't have the services they need.



## Our vision

We want a stable, easy-to-use network of bus services that fully connects to other public transport. We want it to be reliable, affordable, flexible, low-carbon and support more people to use the bus and not their cars.



## Bws Cymru links to other plans and strategies in Wales including:

### Llwybr Newydd

The Wales Transport Strategy. It aims to give people better options and encourage people out of their cars and onto more sustainable transport. Buses are a big part of that.

### Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2

This aims to reduce emissions from passenger transport. This means we need more people to use public transport.

### Programme for Government 2021 to 2026

This is our priorities for this 5 year term. They include improving public transport, investing in zero-carbon infrastructure and making public transport easier to use.

## What we want to see

We want to improve bus services so that:

- People are happy with their bus services because they are reliable.
- Everyone can use bus services because they are easy to use and affordable.
- Buses are modern, sustainable and environmentally friendly low carbon vehicles.
- Bus services connect to other public transport.
- Bus services are simple to use, easy to understand and safe.
- Bus service information is accurate and up-to-date, so people can plan their journeys.
- Careers in bus services become more attractive, so more people want to work in the service.
- Local authorities, Transport for Wales and others have the support they need to improve bus services.

## How we'll do this

This plan focuses on 4 themes and the actions we want to take.



# Theme 1: Delivering Together

## What are we trying to achieve?

We want people to be happy and trust their bus services. We want to grow the Welsh bus network so it reaches more communities, runs often and is one of the best in Europe.



## Actions



1. We will develop, publish and consult on a new Bus White Paper to introduce new laws on how bus services are delivered across Wales.
2. To improve bus services before there is a Buses Act, we will put in place a new operating system of working. This will help everyone understand their role and responsibility. This may change the way services are planned, funded and operated.
3. We will look at how the Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) is working and if it needs to change. We will make sure these payments improve local services.
4. We will look at how well the Local Transport Fund is helping us to reach our goals for Sustainable Transport and increase the number of low carbon vehicles.
5. We will support Bus Action Plans that improve local bus services. All local authorities will have to develop a Bus Action Plan and set out how they will improve bus services to get funding.
6. We will support local authorities and other partners to work together. Working together means they can share resources and improve services better.
7. We will make it possible for more people to use bus services. To do this we will listen to the challenges people face and find ways to improve services.

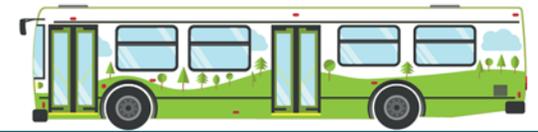
## Theme 2: Better connections

### What are we trying to achieve?

We want to make sure bus services are well planned and connect better. We want people to have public transport with affordable fares, simple ticketing, timetables that connect and safe buses.



### Actions



8. We will produce guidance and a set of rules on planning and delivering public transport interchanges (where different public transport services connect). We will work with local authorities and Transport for Wales to write this.
9. We will fund bus infrastructure projects that help transport connect, improve ticketing and make it easier for passengers. This includes projects that connect to the new Metro Networks.
10. We will look at ways to improve ticketing options so they're easier to use, connect between public transport better and affordable.
11. We will continue to look at ways to improve how bus networks are designed and planned across Wales. This includes testing a new set of planning design principles for bus infrastructure.
12. We will look at ways to deliver better, reliable services in rural areas and communities. To do this, we will create Rural/Community Hubs and develop a new set of standards.
13. We will improve bus information so it's reliable and easy to understand.
14. We will grow the TrawsCymru bus network across Wales. We want to work with local authorities, look at ways to increase routes and make sure it has zero emission buses by 2026.
15. We will learn from **Fflecsi** and demand responsive bus projects where people book a bus using an App or a contact centre. This has been tried in some areas and we could use it in other areas across Wales.
16. We will look at ways to grow and support community transport, and volunteer transport organisations.

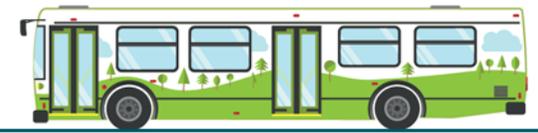
## Theme 3: Buses for Everyone

### What are we trying to achieve?

We want everyone to have the confidence to travel by bus and not be stopped because of physical or other barriers. Everyone, regardless of their background or needs should feel welcome aboard buses.



### Actions



17. We will produce guidance to make sure bus stops are easy to access and safe for everyone.
18. We will work with the bus industry, communities and groups to spot issues that stop people from using services. We'll look at ways to reduce these barriers like training bus staff better, schemes and using new technology.
19. We will work on measures to make bus fares more affordable.
20. We will work with local authorities and carry out a review of the buses children and young people use to get to school and improve the service.
21. We will work with bus operators to develop Welsh Language Standards so passengers have services in Welsh.
22. We will develop a Bus Passenger Charter, that puts passengers first, makes sure they are listened to and involved in planning services. The Charter will also set a process for dealing with passenger issues and complaints.

## Theme 4: Long Term Planning

### What are we trying to achieve?

We want bus services that are fit for the future. Excellent bus services can play an important part in dealing with the climate emergency by encouraging people out of their cars.



### Actions



23. We will set up a Public/Private Partnership that can lease low emission buses to operators.
24. We will continue to fund the decarbonisation of the TrawsCymru service by funding electric buses.
25. We will make sure that bus services are part of local planning because they have an important role in achieving healthy, thriving communities.
26. We will produce new Bus Infrastructure and Planning Practice Guidance.
27. We will encourage people to use public transport through advertising. This includes a new Public Transport Recovery Campaign.
28. We will create a Task Force for Professional Development. This group will look at ways to make the bus sector a more attractive career, increase recruitment and improve training.
29. We will ask the Department for Transport, and work with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) to improve Bus Driver Training.
30. We will work with Careers Wales to develop training programmes. This will help train people as engineers to work on decarbonised bus fleets and other vehicles.
31. We will increase the opportunities for people to have professional careers in transport.

# Thanks for reading this

You can read the full plan here:

 [gov.wales/public-transport](https://gov.wales/public-transport)

