

Meeting

**NORTH WALES CJC STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE**

Date and Time

**2.00 pm, MONDAY, 16TH DECEMBER, 2024**

Location

**Virtual Meeting**

**(For public access to the meeting, please contact us)**

Contact Point

**Rhodri Jones**

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## **NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE**

### **Voting Members**

#### **Councillors**

Dafydd Rhys Thomas  
Craig ab Iago  
Goronwy Edwards  
Barry Mellor  
Glyn Banks  
David Bithell

Isle of Anglesey County Council  
Cyngor Gwynedd  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Denbighshire County Council  
Flintshire County Council  
Wrexham County Borough Council

### **Co-optee Members – Non Voting**

Angela Jones  
Vacant Seat

Eryri National Park  
Transport For Wales

### **Chief Officers**

Huw Percy  
Dafydd Wyn Williams  
Geraint Edwards  
Emlyn Jones  
Katie Wilby  
Darren Williams

Isle of Anglesey County Council  
Cyngor Gwynedd  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Denbighshire County Council  
Flintshire County Council  
Wrexham County Borough Council

### **Officers in Attendance**

Alwen Williams  
Iwan Evans  
Claire Incledon  
Dewi Morgan  
David Hole

Chief Executive of the Corporate Joint Committee  
Monitoring Officer  
Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Chief Finance Officer  
Corporate Joint Committee

# **A G E N D A**

**1. VICE-CHAIR**

To appoint a Vice-chair for 2024/25.

**2. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of personal interest.

**4. URGENT BUSINESS**

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chair for consideration.

**5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

4 - 9

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2024 be signed as a true record.

**6. THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PLAN**

10 - 13

Claire Incedon (Deputy Monitoring Officer) to present the report.

**7. REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN FOR NORTH WALES - CASE FOR CHANGE AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

14 - 130

David Hole (Corporate Joint Committee Implementation Programme Manager) to present the report.

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## NWCJC STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE 01/10/2024

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### Present:

**Voting Members** - The Councillors:- Dafydd Rhys Thomas (Anglesey County Council), Dafydd Meurig (Cyngor Gwynedd), Goronwy Edwards (Conwy County Borough Council), Dave Hughes (Flintshire County Council) and David Bithell (Wrexham County Borough Council).

**Chief Officers** – Huw Percy (Anglesey County Council), Gerwyn Jones (Cyngor Gwynedd), Geraint Edwards (Conwy County Borough Council), Emlyn Jones (Denbighshire County Council), Darren Williams and Gwen Thomas (Wrexham County Borough Council).

**Officers in attendance** - Alwen Williams (Chief Executive of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee), David Hole (North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Action Programme Manager), Claire Incedon (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Jack Latkovic (North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Democracy Officer) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

**Also in attendance** – Allan Pitt (ARUP), Ruth Wotjan and Adam Graham (Transport for Wales).

### 1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

**RESOLVED** To elect Cllr Goronwy Edwards as Chair of the Sub-committee for 2024/25.

### 2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

**RESOLVED** To elect Councillor Dave Hughes as Vice-chair of the Sub-committee for 2024/25.

Councillor Dave Hughes was congratulated on his recent election as Leader of Flintshire County Council. It was considered whether it was appropriate for him to be elected Vice Chair, in light of his leadership appointment he would not be the relevant Cabinet Member with responsibility for transport matters within that Authority to take his seat on this Sub-committee

It was confirmed that the Deputy Monitoring Officer would investigate the matter further and hold further discussions with the Councillor to resolve the position.

### 3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from: -

- Councillor Barry Mellor (Denbighshire County Council)
- Katie Wilby (Flintshire County Council's Chief Officer)
- Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer)
- Dafydd Wyn Williams (Chief Officer of Cyngor Gwynedd) with Gerwyn Jones deputising.

### 4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

## **5. URGENT ITEMS**

No urgent matters were raised.

## **6. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE**

The report was -presented by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

### **RESOLVED**

**To adopt the Terms of Reference.**

### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

The Sub-committee must implement those rules and procedures as adopted by the CJC and set out in the Terms of Reference - these were the powers delegated to the Sub-committee. Any amendment to these terms must be approved by the CJC.

### **DISCUSSION**

It was reported that the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee established the Strategic Transport Sub-committee to carry out the function of developing and producing a Regional Transport Plan and related policies.

It was confirmed that the role of this Sub-committee was to develop regional policies in collaboration with Local Authorities and partners. It was noted that this Sub-Committee provided strategic advice to the Corporate Joint Committee in the development and adoption of a Regional Transport Plan.

Members were guided through the Terms of Reference and the relevant legislation was referred to such as Section 109 of the Transport Act 2000, the Corporate Joint Committee (Transport Functions) (Wales) Regulations and Part 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

It was explained that there were nine main aspects to the role of this Sub-committee, and details of the key roles were given, namely:

- To make recommendations to the Corporate Joint Committee on the approval and review of a Regional Transport Plan and submit this to the Welsh Ministers for approval.
- To make recommendations to the Corporate Joint Committee on the policies to be implemented by the local transport authorities in their area regarding the Transport Strategy for Wales.
- Give advice and make recommendations on an integrated and connected strategic transport service in the North, by monitoring and reviewing a Regional Transport Plan.

It was emphasised that the role of the Sub-committee was strategic in nature, as it co-ordinated the activity of Local Authorities and other partners so that a strategic regional approach would be in place in the relevant policy area.

It was noted that the Sub-committee had responsibilities to manage projects and programmes. It was explained that this role would be achieved by co-ordinating, planning and developing the relevant project Programmes and making recommendations to the Corporate Joint Committee. The responsibility to monitor and review the level and use of resources including staff was explained and any recommendations would be referred to the Corporate Joint Committee.

It was advised that the Strategic Transport Sub-committee would prepare a quarterly report on its work to the Corporate Joint Committee. It was explained that these reports needed to include:

- Progress on the implementation of the RTP including individual Programmes and Projects.
- Financial Performance of the Committee
- Upcoming developments

## **7. CO-OPTION ONTO THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE**

The report was presented by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

### **RESOLVED**

- **To co-opt Members (without a vote) onto the Sub-committee to support its functions and responsibilities.**
- **To ask the following for a representative as Co-opted Members:**
  - **Eryri National Park (individuals responsible for the transport portfolio)**
  - **Transport for Wales (individual responsible for the Northern region)**

### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

To strengthen the Sub-committee's Membership by increasing its membership to include representation of Members with specific experience and skills, and expertise on transport from a regional and national perspective.

### **DISCUSSION**

It was advised that the Sub-committee had the right to elect two Co-opted Members (without a vote) in order to support their work. The final decision on co-opting those Members was the responsibility of the Corporate Joint Committee.

It was explained that Co-opted Members were appointed as Members to support the function of the CJC rather than to represent any organisation or employer. It was confirmed that the terms of co-option would be set out in the co-option agreement and would only apply to those transport functions delegated to the Sub-committee..

Guidance was given on the type and range of skills and experience that would benefit the sub-committee and that it was a decision for Members whether they wanted to co-opt two Members (non-voting) onto this Sub-committee.

The recommendation to co-opt Members (without a vote) was supported. It was confirmed that it would be the responsibility of Eryri National Park and Transport for Wales to confirm the suitable individuals to attend meetings of the Sub-committee.

## **8. REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN: PROGRESS UPDATE AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The report was submitted by the Chief Executive of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. It was recommended to submit a 'North Wales Regional Transport Plan vision statement', 'SMART Objectives' and 'Cross-cutting themes' to North Wales CJC for adoption and inclusion in the 'Case for Change of the Regional Transport Plan' and the draft North Wales 'Regional Transport Plan'.**
- 2. The main milestone dates for the delivery of the RTP were noted and the further work directed to achieve the key milestones in line with Welsh Government guidance.**
- 3. A draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan was noted which must be prepared to support the Regional Transport Plan, and to recommend any additional considerations that should be included.**
- 4. It was noted that the lead officer would be a senior officer with responsibility for transport in whichever Authority represented through the elected Chair. It was confirmed that this lead officer would act as a liaison between the Advisory Transport Group and this Sub-committee.**

## **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

North Wales CJC is required to produce a Regional Transport Plan (RTP) and Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) in accordance with Welsh Government guidance. To achieve this, the Transport Sub-committee should consider the developing components of the draft RTP and guide the work for final approval including agreeing on the required steps and documents for public consultation.

Work was ongoing with the support of ARUP consultants, who had created a roadmap in relation to critical delivery actions, which will be developed to ensure that issues are properly addressed through the Sub-committee and referred to the CJC in a timely manner for approval.

## **DISCUSSION**

It was announced that the RTP's future vision was that 'North Wales will have a safe, sustainable, affordable, resilient, and effective integrated transport network that supports economic growth, prosperity and well-being'. The aim was to support a thriving economy, improve connectivity, enrich quality of life, improve access to services, establish a more resilient transport system and reduce reliance on private cars and promote more environmentally friendly travel options.

The Plan emphasised the need to reduce negative environmental impact whilst encouraging regional sustainability and mitigating climate change. It was explained that the hope was to achieve this by prioritising investments in public transport, active travel infrastructure and delivering innovative solutions to mobility challenges.

It was explained that 15 priorities had originally been identified for the Regional Transport Plan. However, collaboration with Transport for Wales and ARUP had led to the development of four SMART objectives that encompassed the original recommendations in a clearer way. It was confirmed that those four objectives were:

1. Improving digital connectivity and local services
2. Improved accessibility and transport choice
3. Enabling decarbonisation by transitioning to a zero emission fleet
4. Enabling sustainable economic growth.

It was also noted that five themes had been identified to run parallel with the SMART objectives. It was explained that these included 'Social Value', 'Equity', 'Led by the Community', 'Integration' and 'Affordability'.

Members were guided through the timetable to develop the RTP with details given of the key dates. It was explained that the Chief Officer with responsibility for transport from the Local Authority would be expected to work with the Chair and the Vice-chair to support the Strategic Transport Sub-Committee and the North Wales CJC to make this timetable a reality

The Chief Executive of the North Wales CJC and all support staff were thanked for their work in developing the Regional Transport Plan by the Chair.

## **9. REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN: INTEGRATED WELL-BEING APPRAISAL SCOPING REPORT**

The report was submitted by the Chief Executive of the North Wales CJC with the assistance of an ARUP representative.

### **RESOLVED**

**To recommend that the Integrated Well-being Appraisal Scoping Report (IWBA), including its Appendices be adopted by the Sub-committee as they must be prepared to support the Regional Transport Plan.**

### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

North Wales CJC is required to produce a Regional Transport Plan (RTP) and Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) in accordance with Welsh Government guidance. The second element of the RTP includes the IWBA. To achieve this, the Strategic Transport Sub-committee are asked to consider the developing components of the draft RTP, and guide the work for final approval including agreeing the required steps and documents for public consultation.

The IWBA is an essential step in the roadmap plan, which ensures that issues are properly addressed through the Sub-committee and referred to the CJC for approval in a timely manner.

### **DISCUSSION**

It was explained that this technical report had been developed by ARUP in order to deliver the work to develop an Integrated Well-being Appraisal Scoping Report (IWBA).



It was reported that the IWBA was a key step of the RTP and was developed to incorporate well-being in all aspects of the Plan. It was noted that consideration was being given to other strategies to demonstrate that sustainable development principles were being applied to satisfy legislative requirements. It was noted that some of these relevant considerations included:

- The Plans and Programmes Environmental Assessment Regulations (SI 2004/1656) (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations)
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards
- Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA), as required by the Children and Young People's Rights (Wales) Measure 2011.
- Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) and Natural Resources Policy (NRP) as required by the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- Habitat Regulations Assessment, as required by the Habitat and Species Protection Regulations 2017 as amended (known as the Habitats Regulations 2017)

It was confirmed that it was intended to share the draft RTP with non-statutory bodies as well as North Wales Local Authorities, the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales, to provide the opportunity for feedback during the consultation period. . It was noted that this public consultation would be held for a period of 12 weeks early in 2025.

The meeting commenced at 15:00 and concluded at 15:45.

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Chair



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REPORT TO THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE

16th December, 2024

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**TITLE:** The Strategic Transport Sub-Committee Forward Work Plan

**AUTHOR:** Claire Incedon, Deputy Monitoring Officer

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1. To consider the Forward Work Plan.

**2. DECISION SOUGHT**

2.1. To agree the Forward Work Plan.

2.2. That the Chair may amend the Plan to take account of variations in work scheduling subject to the Plan being brought to the following meeting of the sub-committee for agreement.

**3. REASON FOR THE DECISION**

3.1. The Forward Work Plan sets out a calendar of meetings for the period up to December 2025, and aligns with Welsh Government timetabling as necessary, and with the meeting dates of the CJC.

**4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1. The Forward Work Plan sets out the calendar of meetings, and in addition outlines the work to be undertaken by the sub-committee further to its delegated functions, and those functions retained by the CJC of approval and revision of a transport policy pursuant to the Transport Act 2000.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1. There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. The legal and governance implications are addressed in the body of the report.

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**APPENDICES:**

**Appendix 1:** The Strategic Transport Sub-Committee Forward Work Plan:  
December 2024– October 2025

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**STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:**

**i. Monitoring Officer:**

“The democratic process of the sub-committee is properly addressed through an agreed work programme, which is set out in this Forward Work Plan.”

**ii. Statutory Finance Officer:**

“No comments from the perspective of financial propriety.”

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB COMMITTEE

**FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (December 2024 – October 2025)**

Meeting Date	Suggested agenda items
<p>2pm 16 December 2024</p>	<p><b>Elect Vice Chair</b></p> <p><b>Adoption of sub-committee forward plan</b></p> <p><b>Case for Change and Stakeholder Engagement Plan</b> – evidence to inform the RTP and set pathway for consultation. To come to the sub-committee for noting, prior to publication.</p> <p><b>Strategic Briefing Session (Informal) – RTP including M&amp;E plan, RTDP including prioritisation tool, IWBA pre consultation</b></p>
<p>2pm 31 March 2025</p>	<p><b>Quarterly report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Progress on implementation of RTP/update</li> <li>- Update on programme of work and projects</li> <li>- Performance management</li> <li>- Financial performance</li> <li>- Strategic developments</li> </ul>
<p>w/c 26 May 2025 TBC</p>	<p><b>Strategic Briefing Session (Informal) – RTP, RTDP, IWBA post consultation</b></p>
	<p><i>Post consultation review of final draft – CJC 16/6 agree final RTP to submit to WG</i></p>
<p>TBC – (July 2025)</p>	<p>(Final adoption by CJC following WG approval - subject to no material changes)</p>
<p>TBC (Oct 2025)</p>	<p><b>Annual Self Assessment</b> -report to CJC</p> <p><b>AGM</b> -review TORs -appoint Chair/Vice Chair</p> <p><b>Quarterly Report</b></p> <p><b>Delivery Progress report of schemes</b></p> <p><b>Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Quarterly update</b></p>

<p><b>General: Sub-committee responsibilities</b></p>	<p>Any directions from CJC/WG?</p> <p><b>Regional policies</b> -Keep under review</p> <p><b>Deliverables</b> -Undertake directions/tasks as set by CJC  -Provide strategic advice/updates to CJC  -Provide responses to WG on public transport requirements</p> <p><b>monitor &amp; review transportation policies (to make recs to CJC as necessary)</b></p> <p><b>Co-opted Members (voting)</b> – to be kept under review</p> <p><b>Co-optees (non-voting)</b> appointed to 31/3/26 – will require a report to co-opt representative stakeholders March 2026.</p> <p>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Plan review July 2026 (and 3 year review July 2028)</p>
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**NORTH WALES STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE**

**16 December, 2024**

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**TITLE:** Regional Transport Plan for North Wales – Case for Change and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

**AUTHOR:** David Hole, Corporate Joint Committee Implementation Programme Manager

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the North Wales Regional Transport Plan Case for Change and Stakeholder Engagement Plan for North Wales.

**2. DECISION SOUGHT**

- 2.1. To approve both the Case for Change including the Stakeholder Engagement Plan as part of the North Wales Regional Transport Plan.

**3. REASON FOR THE DECISION**

- 3.1. Further to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 transfers the function of developing transport policies in respect of the area of each of its constituent councils on the CJC. The development and implementation of a Regional Transport Plan is a statutory function exercised by the CJC through its sub-committee, supported by the Guidance to Corporate Joint Committees on Regional Transport Plans (Version 2) 2023. The Case for Change including the Stakeholder Engagement Plan are a key part of the process to develop a Regional Transport Plan for the North Wales region.

**4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1. Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) have been formed to promote regional collaboration through a consistent and democratically controlled framework. CJCs are required to comply with all public body duties and have specific statutory duties including carrying out the function of the preparation of Regional Transport Plans (RTPs)<sup>1</sup>. For North Wales, the CJC must develop transport policies to implement the Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021<sup>2</sup>, providing a long-term vision for the next 25 years. This work is being carried out collaboratively across the six local authorities that make up the Membership of the North Wales CJC, and representatives from the Eryri National Park Authority and Transport for Wales.
- 4.2. Members were presented with the policy context for the case for change at the meeting on 1 October. Work has been carried out to encompass the vision statement, SMART objectives and cross cutting themes into the case for change, which sets out the aim of the RTP. It draws on the Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) and other current strategic plans, as well as on existing

knowledge of issues and opportunities including previous plans. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan as part of the Case for Change shows who will be involved in developing the RTP and how they will be involved, including details of the consultation process and other engagement mechanisms.

- 4.3. The draft Case for Change for the Regional Transport Plan, including the draft vision and objectives, was presented to the CJC on 22nd March 2024. These objectives have since been refined and strengthened to four specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound (SMART) objectives with five cross cutting themes which are considered critical for helping to achieve the vision and objectives.
- 4.4. The Strategic Transport Sub-Committee on 1st October recommended the CJC adopt North Wales Regional Transport Plan Vision statement, SMART objectives, and Cross-cutting themes for inclusion in the presented draft Case for Change and for the draft to be updated and presented to sub-committee at its next meeting. The sub-committee was also requested to note the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan presented, which must be prepared in support of the RTP, and to recommend any additional considerations that should be included.
- 4.5. Both documents have been produced in partnership with Transport for Wales (Case for Change) and ARUP (Stakeholder Engagement Plan). At this stage we are seeking approval of both documents as the programme completes the development of the draft RTP, RTDP, IWBA and its supporting evidence base to move towards public consultation with a commencement target of January 2025. There may be minor technical amendments to these plans as part of the completion of the work, and anything that materially changes the strategic direction or content of what is being agreed will be brought back before Members.

## 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Costs will be drawn from existing North Wales CJC budgets with the necessary support from Cyngor Gwynedd's Legal and Finance teams.

## 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 sets out the duty on the CJC to develop policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport. In exercising this function, they are tasked to develop and implement transport policies for their area of the Wales Transport Strategy. The development and implementation of a Regional Transport Plan is a statutory function exercised by the CJC through its sub-committee.

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### APPENDICES:

**Appendix 1:** Case for Change including Annex 1 Policy Context

**Appendix 2:** Stakeholder Engagement Plan

*[Technical appendices available on request – Annex 2 Background Data & Research]*

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**STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:**

**i. Monitoring Officer.**

“The report has been the subject of legal input. I am satisfied with its propriety.”

**ii. Statutory Finance Officer:**

“I have no objections to the decision sought from the perspective of financial propriety. I expect the work of developing the plan to be completed within the budget of the CJC.”





# North Wales Regional Transport Plan

## Case for Change

(Draft)





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Regional Transport Plan (RTP) for North Wales is being developed by the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC). This Case for Change sets out the aims and objectives of the RTP and identifies the key issues, challenges and opportunities the plan should consider in order to guide the development of an integrated transport network for North Wales.

It considers the evidence and recommendations of the North Wales Transport Commission whilst also considering how North Wales can support the delivery of Llwybr Newydd - the Wales Transport Strategy, and local policies and strategies.

### Urban and Rural

The varied nature of settlements and communities in North Wales means that the RTP needs to consider the needs of residents in urban centres and rural communities. It is vital that the RTP recognises that, whilst modal shift may, and should, be facilitated through enhanced public transport and active travel in and between our towns and cities, reducing car use in rural communities is more challenging.


It is vital that the RTP proposes improvements to active travel, public transport, and other sustainable mobility options in the rural areas of North Wales. This will provide more options for sustainable travel in communities that are often currently poorly served. The RTP should consider integrated, frequent and high-quality rural transport services, and include enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure connecting rural communities. However, it is vital that the RTP acknowledges private car use is considered crucial for many rural residents should consider how to facilitate the switch to Electric Vehicles for those in rural areas who are more dependent on private car use.

### Supporting Economic Development

The RTP must include plans for supporting the growth of the economy across North Wales in urban and rural areas. The transport system should be planned in a way that provides people with access to good quality jobs, regardless of where they live.

The RTP should support the continued economic development of North Wales by considering enhancing access to employment sites in the region for both current and future employees and, where applicable, customers. The requirements of the transport network vary across North Wales. In rural areas, employment may be seasonal and remote. In areas where tourism is significant, there is increased demand on the transport network in summer season. Where manufacturing and storage are key sectors, the considerations are the volume of trips to large employment sites, shift patterns, and the requirement for higher levels of HGV movements.

The Anglesey Freeport and the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone create significant opportunities for North Wales, and it is vital that our transport network is suitable for maximising these opportunities. The RTP should seek to support the success of Holyhead and Mostyn ports and facilitate their future growth but set out a plan for ensuring the impacts of good movements is minimised. It should consider the role of rail freight and also how to encourage hauliers to switch to cleaner fuels. The RTP should also identify measures for reducing the environmental impact of local deliveries.



The importance of cross-border commuting means that the RTP must consider supporting further partnership working with authorities in north-west England and set out proposals for improvements to public transport and active travel that facilitate sustainable cross-border commuting.

## The Visitor Economy

The visitor economy is hugely important for many areas of North Wales so the RTP must include plans for supporting the growth of the visitor economy in North Wales, ensuring that we are planning a transport system that provides sustainable access to the many attractors across the region.

The RTP should consider facilitating reducing car use and minimising the impact of visitor car parking in Eryri. It should also acknowledge the proposed changes to the Clwydian Range through Welsh Government's manifesto commitment for a second National Park in North Wales.

## Active Travel

The RTP should outline proposals for further expansion and improvement of the active travel network in North Wales to encourage an increase in the number of people choosing to walk or cycle. This should focus on connections to key attractors such as employment and education sites, healthcare, railway stations and tourist attractions.

## Bus Services

The RTP should consider proposals for further review and improvement of bus services and measures to encourage an increase in bus use. Bus services should focus on improving access to services from communities. They should connect to key attractors such as employment and education sites, healthcare, railway stations and tourist attractions. Bus has an even more important role to play in the many towns and villages in North Wales that are not served by rail services.

## Rail


Whilst rail is not directly influenced locally, it is important that the RTP acknowledges measures to enhance the rail offer in North Wales. To enhance services, the key priorities for improvements are the Borderlands Line, increasing capacity at Chester Station, and increased service levels on the North Wales Main Line. Other important rail enhancements include the Chester to Wrexham, Conwy Valley Line, and Cambrian Coastline.

The RTP should consider the importance of connections to key centres such as London, Cardiff, Manchester (including the airport), Liverpool, Crewe, and Warrington (for Northern Powerhouse Rail). The Plan should consider sustainable travel links to interchange facilities at rail stations.

Through the RTP we should seek opportunities to increase rail freight in North Wales.

## Modal Shift

The RTP guidance requires that the plan has a focus on modal shift (reducing car use through the increase in the use of more sustainable modes). It is vital that we focus on this in urban areas through the provision of high-quality sustainable alternatives. In many rural areas we need to acknowledge



that this shift is more challenging and recognise that a shift to zero emission vehicles is a more effective way of decarbonising travel, whilst seeking opportunities to enhance active travel and public transport provision.

## The Role of the Private Car

Whilst seeking opportunities to encourage more people to travel by active travel and public transport, the RTP should acknowledge the importance of the road network to free movement around North Wales for those with access to a car, and seek to improve the resilience of this network. This is particularly important for crossings of the Menai, where incidents on the road network can isolate communities.

The RTP needs to consider options for improving the reliability and resilience of the Menai crossing. This should include improving the resilience of the road bridges and enhanced sustainable transport options.

## Infrastructure Management and Maintenance

A network of well-maintained transport infrastructure is key to supporting travel around North Wales, both for private car journeys but also for bus services and active travel journeys. All bus journeys and a large proportion of active travel trips take place on the highway. Highway defects such as potholes can be a more significant hazard for cyclists than other highway users.

Therefore, the RTP needs to acknowledge the importance of maintaining and improving existing infrastructure.

## Vision Statement

The Vision for the North Wales RTP is:

**North Wales will have a safe, sustainable, affordable, resilient, and effective integrated transport network that supports economic growth, prosperity and well-being.**

Our vision statement is underpinned by a set of 15 Ambitions.

Through the RTP we will:

1. Develop a resilient, well-maintained, and efficient transport network that supports economic growth
2. Develop the infrastructure and services that provide people with a choice about how they travel for each journey
3. Improve sustainable access to employment and educational sites and tourist attractions
4. Improve access to key services
5. Encourage decarbonisation to be a cultural change that highlights the choice to travel by means other than the private car
6. Improve access to town and city centres for all sustainable modes
7. Reduce both exhaust and non-exhaust emissions from transport
8. Improve safety for all highway users
9. Reduce the need to travel

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10. Develop a transport network that provides social value for communities
  11. Make wellbeing a core consideration across all transport projects and programmes in North Wales
  12. Prioritise the Welsh language and culture
  13. Integrate equalities into all aspects of transport planning
  14. Integrate Investment Zone and the Freeport as regional considerations
  15. Identify synergies between the Regional Transport Plan and the Strategic Development Plan


The vision is supported by a set of four SMART Objectives, against which we can assess the impact of future transport policies and schemes and their role in delivering the vision for transport in North Wales. These SMART Objectives are:

1. **Improve digital connectivity and local services**
2. **Improved accessibility and transport choice**
3. **Enable decarbonisation through transition to a zero-emission fleet**
4. **Enable Sustainable Economic Growth**



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

### 1.1.1 The Regional Transport Plan

Welsh Government has tasked Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) in Wales with developing Regional Transport Plans for the region that they cover. The Regional Transport Plan for North Wales is, therefore, being developed by the North Wales CJC.

The CJCs across Wales are being empowered (and supported) to plan for services at a regional level, aligned with other regional and local planning priorities.

In the Guidance provided to the CJC, Welsh Government have set out ten key points for the development of the Regional Transport Plan, as set out in Appendix 1. The list can be summarised as:

Regional Transport Plans should:

- focus on achieving modal shift
- be brief
- Be developed in a co-productive and consultative way
- Closely aligned with Llwybr Newydd: the Wales transport strategy 2021
- be outcome-focused
- Where possible, supporting Welsh Government's aim to achieve net zero carbon status by 2050
- use innovative approaches and technology
- utilise existing analysis and plans
- be developed in partnership across the CJC region
- be developed following the five ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- consider creative ways to engage people to achieve modal shift
- include disincentives for car use and incentives for more sustainable travel
- be developed alongside the Strategic Development Plan

The RTP will be developed in line with the Welsh Government Guidance, and in line with the other statutory duties of the CJC, including the Strategic Development Plan (SDP).

Before starting work on the RTP itself, we are setting out the Case for Change. This will:


- Set out the aim of the RTP
- Set out core SMART objectives that align with Llwybr Newydd
- Draw on the Wales Transport Strategy and other national, regional and local strategies including the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act (Wales) 2015
- Take into account the findings of the North Wales Transport Commission
- Draw on existing knowledge of issues and opportunities for transport in North Wales.

### 1.1.2 Wellbeing

Llwybr Newydd (see Annex 1) refers to the importance of wellbeing within a travel context. The way we travel supports improved wellbeing, with health considerations including:

- improving air quality;
- reducing noise; and
- a more active lifestyle





The Clean Air Plan for Wales: Health Air, Healthy Wales states that 'Transport is now the largest source of NOx in Wales, predominantly due to emissions from road transport, accounting for approximately one third of emissions'. The strategy also describes how fundamentally, the health of the people of Wales depends on the quality of the environment in which we all live.

The wellbeing context around our transport requirements are significant and must be fully factored into any project or programme in North Wales. WelTAG assessments will be used, where appropriate, to make sure that transport investment decisions take well-being goals into account. We know that transportation underpins and supports the premise of the 7 Wellbeing Goals, and for any future travel related project or programme, due regard must be paid to the principles and aim of the Wellbeing Goals:

- A prosperous Wales – a transport system that provides strong and reliable routes to places of work and study
- A resilient Wales – a North Wales transport system that can maintain a high standard under challenging circumstances
- A healthier Wales – through moving towards a transport system that promotes Active Travel, adopts a modal shift approach and provides facilities that reduces reliance on the combustion engine – focus will be to improve air quality, reduces noise
- A more equal Wales – a transport system that's open and accessible to all.
- A Wales of more cohesive communities – that Integrated travel plans in North Wales are tailored to the needs of different communities and focus on connectivity and accessibility
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language – places of learning, culture and leisure are accessible via routes that don't promote reliance on the car
- A globally responsible Wales – with North Wales playing its part in achieving Net Zero through well thought through plans for decarbonisation


The importance of the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector needs to be recognised, particularly in the more rural areas where community-based minibuses provide a lifeline to those residents who do not have regular access to cars and in areas where public transport has reduced or is unavailable. For elderly people, community-based transport offers a lifeline to socialising, shopping, maintaining health and accessing healthcare.

Llwybr Newydd states that we must think differently about the way we travel. Referring to climate change it says that the 'climate emergency is one of the biggest defining issues of our time. If we are going to protect the lives of our children, we need to achieve net zero by 2050' This RTP needs to articulate how North Wales will move to a position where it has fewer cars on the road, with more people using public transport, walking or cycling – to do this will require a shift in thinking about how we approach our daily journeys – the journey from home to work, to visit friends and how do we travel to places of leisure and entertainment. The following Case for Change articulates how we start the journey.

## 1.2 Case for Change Structure

The remainder of this document sets out the Case for Change for the North Wales RTP. We start with the aim and objectives of the plan in Section Two. Sections Three, Four and Five demonstrate how we identified those objectives for the RTP by considering North Wales as a place (Section 3), how we travel (Section 4), and the Issues and Opportunities (Section 5).

Section Six sets out our Engagement Strategy, and Section Seven considers roles, responsibilities, and funding for the development and delivery of the RTP.



The national, regional, and local policies that are influencing the development of the RTP are considered in Annex 1: “Strategy and Policy Context”.

This Case for Change considers the evidence available at the time of RTP development. It is acknowledged that new and updated statistics and evidence relating to transport will emerge after the publication of the Case for Change. These will be considered in future iterations of the RTP and supporting documents.

Supporting evidence is included in Annex 2: “North Wales RTP Background and data and evidence paper”.

## 2. Identification of Objectives

### 2.1 Vision

It is intended that the vision for the RTP is an evolution of the strong vision statement that was included on the 2015 Joint Local Transport Plan<sup>1</sup>.

The Vision is also intended to support the delivery of Llwybr Newydd<sup>2</sup> in North Wales and progress the recommendations of the North Wales Transport Commission<sup>3</sup>. More details on those documents can be found in Annex 1.

The Vision for the North Wales RTP is:

**North Wales will have a safe, sustainable, affordable, resilient, and effective integrated transport network that supports economic growth, prosperity and well-being.**

This is a vision, and therefore by its nature is aspirational. It is intended that the vision statement is something that all authorities, partners and stakeholders in North Wales can work towards and contribute to.

The degree to which the Vision can become reality will depend on the level of investment available in transport from all sources in the coming years. Working closely together as the CJC alongside Welsh Government, with local authorities and Government across the border, other transport stakeholders, transport users, voluntary sector organisations, developers, and businesses, provides the best circumstances in which to achieve this vision.

### 2.2 Ambitions

Our vision statement is underpinned by a set of Objectives against which projects/ programmes will be assessed. These ambitions have been identified to align with the priorities of Llwybr Newydd, shown in Figure 2.1.

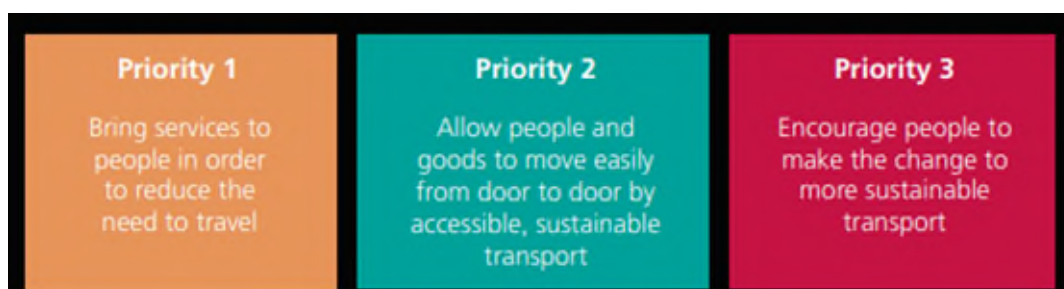


Figure 2.1 - Llwybr Newydd Priorities

The RTP ambitions are shown in Table 2.1.

<sup>1</sup> [North Wales Joint Local Transport Plan 2015 \(flintshire.gov.uk\)](http://flintshire.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> [Llwybr Newydd: the Wales transport strategy 2021 | GOV.WALES](http://gov.wales)

<sup>3</sup> [North Wales Transport Commission | GOV.WALES](http://gov.wales)



Ambition Through the RTP, we will:		Why this is important for North Wales	Alignment with Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021.
1	<b>Develop a resilient, well-maintained, and efficient transport network that supports economic growth</b>	A reliable and efficient transport system facilitates the movement of goods, access to tourist locations and people's access to jobs, education and services.	Aligns and supports Llwybr Newydd through the provision of a transport system that 'contributes to our wider economic ambitions, and help local communities'
2	<b>Develop the infrastructure and services that provide people with a choice about how they travel for each journey</b>	Too many journeys in North Wales require people to have access to a private car. This limits options for people who do not have a car and leads to an increase in congestion and emissions. By providing options for travel we create a more equitable network that serves all residents.	Objective aligns with Llwybr Newydd through preventing 'future problems by reducing congestion in order to drive modal shift to active travel and public transport.'
3	<b>Improve sustainable access to employment and educational sites and tourist attractions</b>	A successful regional economy requires residents to be able to access employment and training opportunities. This includes cross-border opportunities. Continued growth of the tourism sector is dependent on visitors being able to access attractions.	Objective aligns with the Strategy's drive to be 'Good for the economy and places in Wales'
4	<b>Improve access to key services</b>	It is vital that all North Wales residents can access services such as hospitals, dentists, GP practices, banks, shops etc. This is particularly prevalent for Anglesey residents who may need to cross the Menai to access such services.	Objective aligns with Priority 2 by improving the reliability, safety and frequency of public transport and working to extend the 'geographical reach' of public transport in a creative way.



Ambition Through the RTP, we will:		Why this is important for North Wales	Alignment with Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021.
5	<b>Encourage decarbonisation and a culture change that sees people who have a choice travelling by means other than the private car</b>	<p>It is vital that we reduce emissions from transport, and an increase in EV use will support this, but it is only through reducing car use that we will reduce local environmental impacts of traffic, congestion, and parking, and improve health.</p> <p>In some locations, this culture change can be encouraged by stimulating the community to identify local solutions.</p>	<p>Objective aligns with Priority 3 through encouraging people in North Wales to make the change to more sustainable modes of transport through a modal shift approach. Through encouraging behaviour change, exploring car-share options and options exploring digital opportunities to look at effective journey planning and booking.</p> <p>Welsh Government's target of 45% of journeys to be made by public transport, walking and cycling by 2040 will be a key consideration in transport planning and within the North Wales SDP.</p>
6	<b>Improve access to town and city centres for all sustainable modes</b>	<p>Town and city centres are at the heart of North Wales communities, and their continued success and regeneration will be supported by ensuring that residents and visitors can travel to them via a choice of modes.</p>	<p>This objective aligns with Welsh Government priorities through alignment with a Town Centre First approach through, where possible, locating new public services close to where people live leading to reduced travel and where possible, linking in to existing routes. This must also take into consideration the needs of those living in more rural and remote areas and a key consideration within the SDP.</p>



Ambition Through the RTP, we will:		Why this is important for North Wales	Alignment with Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021.
7	<b>Reduce both exhaust and non-exhaust emissions from transport</b>	<p>Reducing CO2 emissions will help us address the global climate emergency. Other pollutants, such as NO2 and particulate matter, impact on local air quality and are associated with a number of adverse health impacts.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that private cars will continue to play an important role for journeys, especially in rural areas, so a switch to zero emission vehicles should be facilitated.</p>	<p>Objective aligns with Well-being ambitions through the drive to improve air quality and reduce environmental noise associated with transport – these factors will be considered within the North Wales Strategic Development Plan.</p> <p>This objective aligns with the drive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport – the RTP will be mindful of UK Climate Change Committee’s carbon reduction pathway for surface transport.</p>
8	<b>Improve safety for all highway users</b>	<p>Our highway network should be considered safe for all, particularly more vulnerable road users.</p>	<p>Alignment with Llwybr Newydd can be identified through ensuring identified/priority projects and programme across North Wales address congestion pinch points, invest in schemes that support road safety, journey reliability, resilience, modal shift and provide safety for all highway users.</p>
9	<b>Reduce the need to travel</b>	<p>Changes in culture since the COVID-19 pandemic, and improvements in technology have seen a reduction in the need for travel. Working from home for example or in a more hybrid way. This has a positive impact on reducing parking pressure, traffic congestion, peak travel time pressures and pollution.</p>	<p>Objective aligns with Llwybr Newydd through supporting and encouraging digital and other innovations that reduce reliance on the car contributing to decreasing congestion, reducing carbon emissions specifically at peak hours.</p>



Ambition Through the RTP, we will:		Why this is important for North Wales	Alignment with Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021.
10	<b>Develop a transport network that provides social value for communities</b>	It is important that our transport network reflects the needs of residents and communities. A transport network that recognises social value supports the delivery of other strategic aims and aspirations set at a local, regional and national level.	Through supporting Connected Communities, WG's strategy for tackling loneliness and social isolation will be supported through implementing this objective. Transport is one of the 8 pillars of an age-friendly community, and this will be demonstrated through local/community-based projects and programmes including the fflecsi bus and working with 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector partners.
11	<b>Make wellbeing a core consideration across all transport projects and programmes in North Wales</b>	The wellbeing of all residents across North Wales must be a core consideration of all transport related projects and programmes	Objective aligns with the principles outlined in Llwybr Newydd by; Equality – with inclusivity and reducing barriers to economic activity and leisure opportunities being key to projects and programmes Health – Through focussing on a modal shift, reduce air pollution supporting cleaner air Confidence & Safety – Prioritising safety, strengthening communities through effective transport, supporting social connections – e.g. the fflecsi bus. Environmental – through reducing emissions and reducing the local environmental impact of traffic



Ambition Through the RTP, we will:		Why this is important for North Wales	Alignment with Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021.
12	<b>Prioritise the Welsh language and culture</b>	Our transport system should provide sustainable access to cultural and Welsh language activities and events. It is important that the provision of information, including bookings and digital information/systems, is provided in both Welsh and English.	Alignment is through underpinning the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and contributing towards the achievement of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.
13	<b>Integrate equalities into all aspects of transport planning</b>	Equalities is a key consideration for North Wales - with a wide and diverse demography living in rural, semi-rural and urban localities and communities - ensuring parity of access is key to a successfully delivered RTP. We will make transport services and infrastructure accessible and inclusive by aiming to remove the physical, attitudinal, environmental, systemic, linguistic and economic barriers that prevent people from using sustainable transport We will aim to remove the physical, attitudinal, environmental, systemic, linguistic and economic barriers that prevent people from using sustainable transport, including walking, cycling and public transport.	This objective will support the Equality pathway through ensuring transport accessibility and identifying areas requiring strengthening. It will also promote inclusivity and identify where things aren't working in the way they should be. A key area for consultation will be prioritising embedding equality and accessibility into transport planning across North Wales





Ambition Through the RTP, we will:		Why this is important for North Wales	Alignment with Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021.
14	<b>Integrate Investment Zone and the Freeport as regional considerations.</b>	<p>The Freeport in Holyhead, Ynys Mon will operate as a hub for global trade, innovation and investment, supporting local talent and embracing new employment opportunities. Therefore, reliable and frequent transport links will be critical to its success and designed with a carbon neutral approach as well as active travel considerations where possible.</p> <p>With Wrexham and Flintshire identified as areas for investment through a financial allocation by UK Government, transport links and considerations will be key in terms of making the area attractive for investment and for high calibre workforce.</p>	<p>This objective is supported by working towards a more strategic approach to Welsh ports, potentially recognising their role as a catalyst for co-location of manufacturing, energy, distribution, and leisure. Transport will be a key consideration here specifically a low carbon approach.</p>
15	<b>Identify synergies between the RTP and the SDP</b>	<p>Though the timescales for SDP and the RTP don't align, priority will be given to cross referencing, identifying dependencies/synergies, mutual benefits must be continuous.</p>	<p>Both the planning process and the transport planning process should support and encourage the use of sustainable transport.</p>

Table 2.1 - RTP Ambitions



### 2.3 SMART Objectives

Alongside the Regional Transport Plan, we are developing a Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) that will set out the schemes and programmes that we intend to deliver over the next five years to achieve our vision. To prioritise the list of schemes and programmes in the RTDP we will be assessing them against a set of SMART objectives. These objectives have been identified to support the delivery of national policy and our regional ambitions, as shown in Figure 2.2.

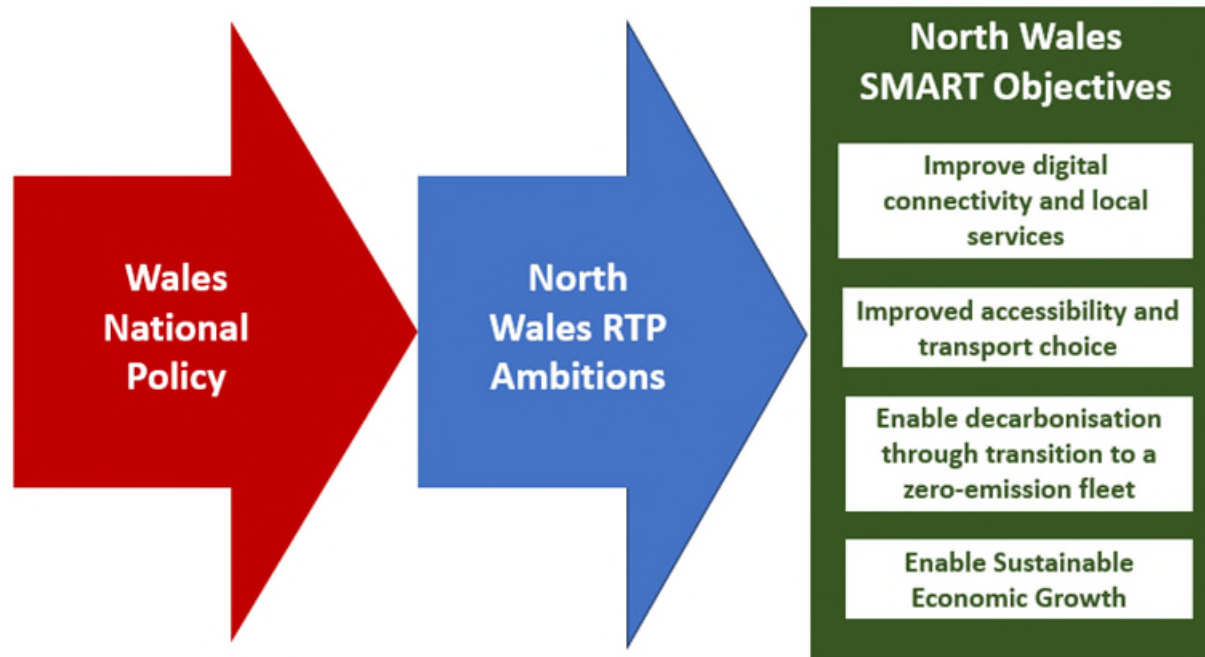


Figure 2.2 - Developing SMART Objectives



The SMART objectives that we have used to assess and prioritise schemes are:

## Regional Transport Plan SMART Objectives

### 1. Improve digital connectivity and local services:

We will enable 30% or more of people in North Wales to work remotely by 2030 through better land use planning and improved digital connectivity, which should reduce the overall need to travel and enable shorter trips better suited to sustainable modes.

### 2. Improved accessibility and transport choice:

We will develop infrastructure and services that provide people with a choice about how they travel for each journey, and support sustainable economic growth through improved access to key settlements, employment, educational sites and tourist attractions. The accessibility of each key trip attractor should be improved, supporting the national mode share target of 45% of journeys to be undertaken by walking, cycling and public transport by 2040.

### 3. Enable decarbonisation through transition to a zero-emission fleet:

We will develop supporting infrastructure and support incentives to enable at least 50% of motor vehicles and all public buses operating in North Wales to be zero emission by 2035.

### 4. Enable Sustainable Economic Growth:

We will develop a resilient, safe, well-maintained, and efficient transport network that delivers sustainable economic growth by improving accessibility to existing and planned employment areas. At least 50% of households in North Wales will have an increased range of travel within 1 hour by public transport, supporting access to key employment sites and regional centres.

## 3. North Wales

### 3.1 North Wales – A Great Place to Live, Work and Visit

The North Wales region comprises the local authorities of Isle of Anglesey, Wrexham, Conwy, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Gwynedd, as shown in Figure 3.1.

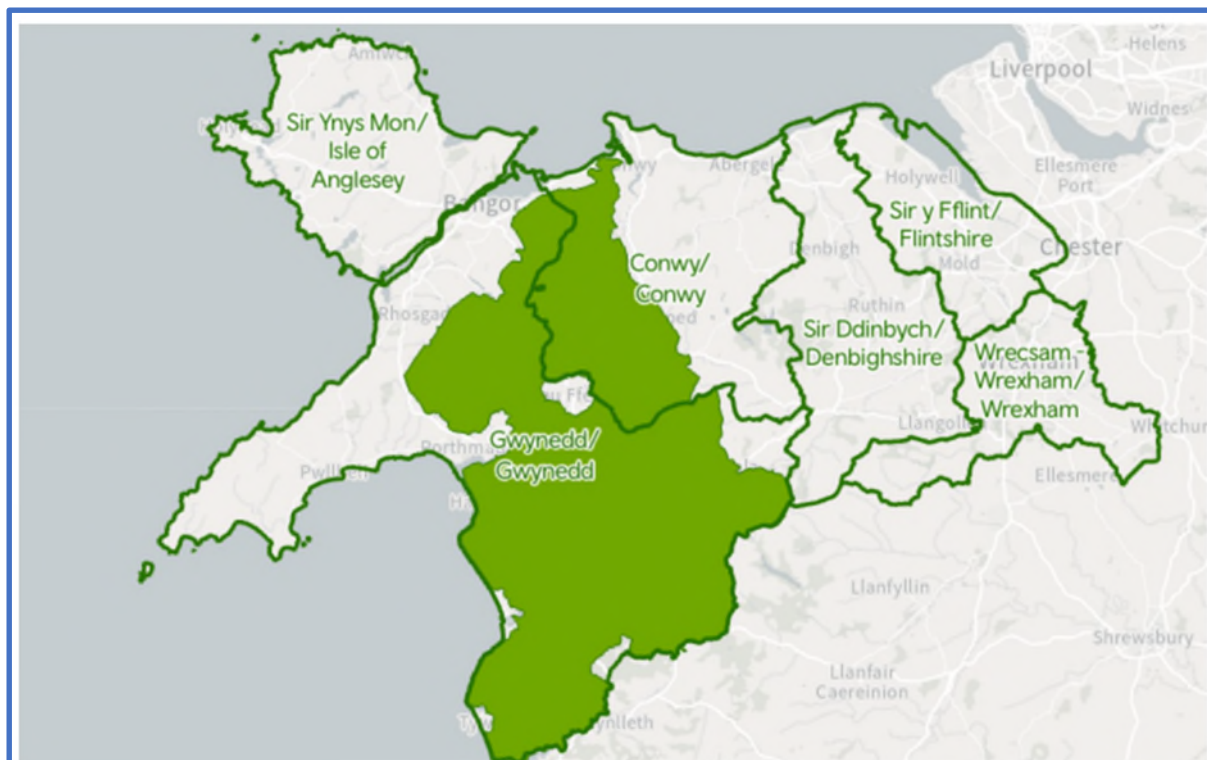


Figure 3.1 – Local Authorities in North Wales, with Eryri National Park in Green

Welsh Government and Ambition North Wales's Regional Economic Framework describes North Wales as a 'region with a wealth of attributes' and is clearly evidenced through the rich and unique nature of the area. From the more industrial and populous conurbations in the East to the more rural and less densely populated communities in the West, we can see the diverse nature of North Wales with its rich and diverse offer to both residents and its many visitors and tourists.

Educationally, North Wales offers two Higher Education Institutes (HEI's), Prifysgol Bangor University in West and Wrexham University in the East, both with a wide draw from all over the UK as well as overseas. Two Further Education Institutes (FEI's), Grwp Llandrillo Menai and Coleg Cambria provide strategically situated main sites serving both the urban and rural communities and are supported by conveniently located satellite colleges.

Culturally, North Wales offers brilliantly located theatres and cinemas offering many exciting productions which draw in audiences from far and wide catering for both younger and older audiences and all in between. Towards the West, Eryri and the surrounding area has so much to offer through an exciting range of outdoor activities including cycling, mountaineering, the creativity of Zip World and the adrenaline inducing experience of the National White-Water Centre in Bala.

Travelling by road from east to west via the A55, using the coastal train line or by bus, we travel through popular seaside communities, skirting an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and castles which attract so many visitors to the area. With Welsh Government now exploring options

around a second National Park through a Northeast Wales National Park designation project, incorporating lessons learnt from other localities at an early stage will enhance planning around any future transport/accessibility strategy.

North Wales is famous for its quartet of UNESCO listed castles as well as a range of beautiful National Trust properties and other homes and monuments of interest. Wales' most recent addition to the World Heritage list, The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales consists of six separate sites around the Gwynedd area including areas of interest of the Welsh slate industry. There are also many Cadw sites and other historic buildings and museums that attract a large number of visitors. Effective accessibility to these sites using methods other than the car will be explored.

The more urban Northeast region boasts a rich cultural heritage including an 11-mile-long UNESCO World Heritage Site and a site that hosts the annual international Eisteddfod in Llangollen. In 2022, we saw Wrexham successfully achieve city status in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee City Status competition. It was also a finalist for UK City of Culture in 2025.

From an economic perspective, North Wales contributes £14.2 billion to the UK economy each year. Recent economic performance has been resilient but there remains a persistent and growing productivity gap resulting in some variations in productivity within the area. The economy is diverse with key sectors being manufacturing, energy and tourism as well as public sector jobs. Some of the productivity gap is accounted for by the sectoral structure of North Wales but there are areas of significant and growing strengths and opportunity, particularly in advanced manufacturing, low carbon energy, agri-food & tourism and the digital sectors. Significant opportunities for Wrexham and Flintshire can be identified through UK Government's 10-year £160m Investment Zone (IZ) in Wrexham and Flintshire. Announced in the Autumn Statement in 2023, Investment Zones provide an opportunity to embed innovation throughout the economy. They support the growth of priority sectors, leveraging existing strengths to drive rapid expansion - it is anticipated that IZ will not only benefit Wrexham and Flintshire but across North Wales too. Moving towards the West, Cyngor Ynys Mon and Stena Line successfully bid for Holyhead to secure Freeport status, this investment has the potential to deliver real, transformational change in communities across Anglesey and the wider North Wales region.

## 3.2 Population

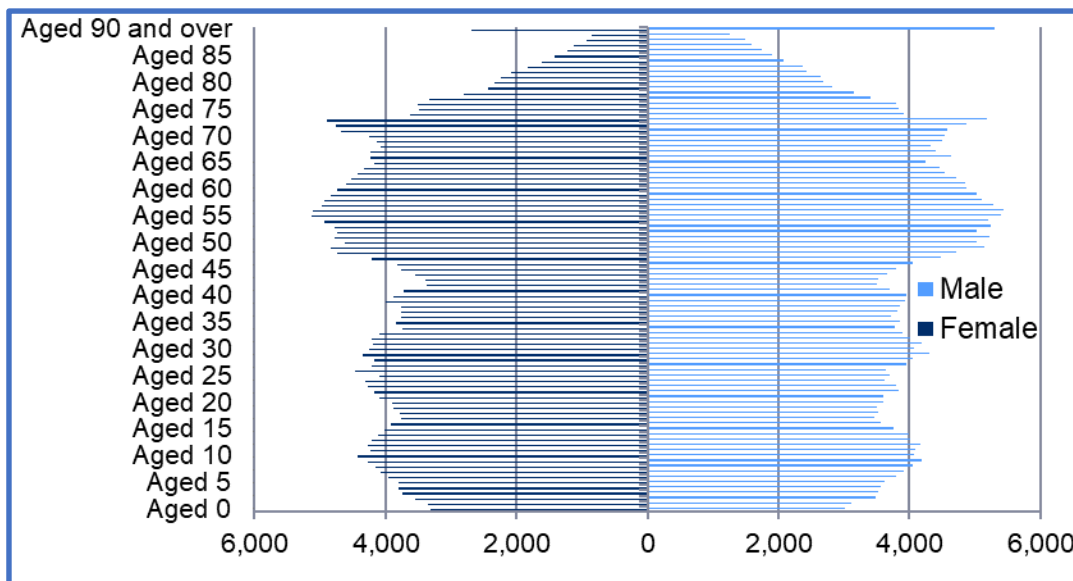
Based on population estimates for mid-year 2021, Wales is home to over 3,105,000 residents. North Wales has an estimated population of nearly 700,000. The most populous local authority in North Wales is Flintshire with over 150,000 people. The least populated is the Isle of Anglesey with just under 70,000 people, making it the third smallest local authority in Wales by population. The population of each local authority area is shown in Table 3.1.

Area	Mid-year 2020 Population
Wales	3,105,000
North Wales	687,098
Isle of Anglesey	68,944
Gwynedd	117,072
Conwy	114,828
Denbighshire	96,046
Flintshire	155,076
Wrexham	135,132

**Table 3.1 - Population estimates by local authority and year<sup>4</sup>**

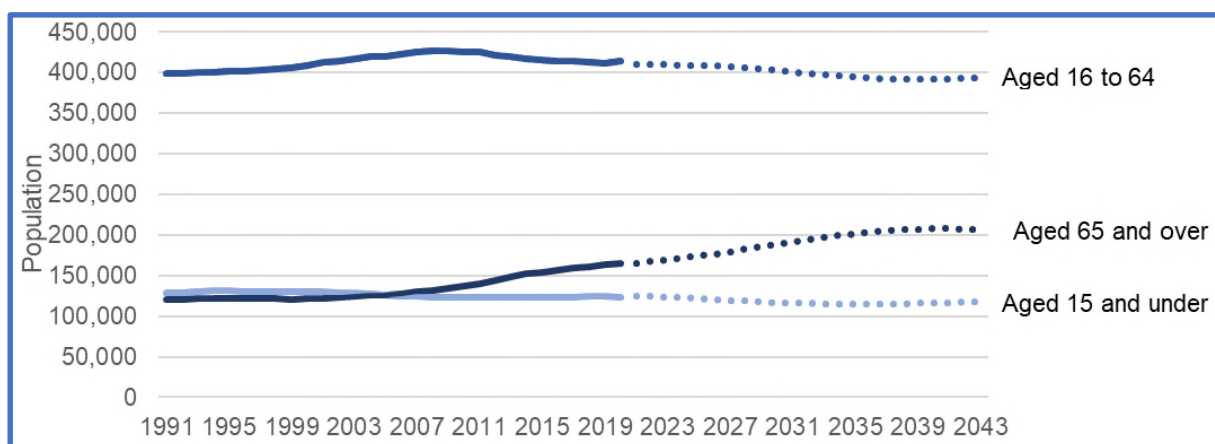
The population of Wales is ageing; this means that there is a greater proportion of older people as a share of the total population. This is projected to continue as people live longer and the number of births remains low. Factoring this change in demography into the way we plan transport in North Wales needs to be reflected in the RTP.

The estimated percentage of the population aged 65 and older in Wales was 21% in 2020. For North Wales it was over 23% or almost 1 in 4 people. In Conwy 28% of the population was aged 65 and older, the highest percentage of all local authorities in Wales. The population of North Wales by age and gender is shown in Figure 3.2.



**Figure 3.2 - Estimated population of North Wales by age and sex, mid-2020<sup>5</sup>**

The projected increase in population aged over 65 is shown in Figure 3.3. By 2040 it is projected that around 29% of the population of North Wales will be aged 65 or over.



**Figure 3.3 - Population estimates and projections for North Wales by broad age group and year, 1991 to 2043<sup>6</sup>**

<sup>4</sup> [Population estimates by local authority and year \(StatsWales\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Population estimates by local authority and year \(StatsWales\)](#)

It should be noted that the projection figures are based on trends from 2018 and do not take into account the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic or Brexit.

2.5% of the population of North Wales described themselves as Black, Asian or minority ethnic in 2018-20 compared to 5.0% of the Welsh population as a whole (Annual Population Survey), as shown in Table 3.2

Area	White	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	Asian	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Other ethnic groups
Wales	95.0%	0.9%	2.3%	0.9%	0.8%
North Wales	97.5%	0.7%	0.9%	0.3%	0.6%

**Table 3.2 - Percentage of population by ethnic group, Annual Population Survey, 2018-20**

Across Wales, North Wales had the lowest proportion of people identifying as disabled (20.1%) in 2018-20, while Southeast Wales and Mid and Southwest Wales had similar proportions (22.6% and 23.0% respectively) (Annual Population Survey).

### What this means for the RTP

As part of the RTP development, an Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken to ensure appropriate consideration is given to people in North Wales with protected characteristics.

### 3.3 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the Welsh Government's official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales. It is designed to identify those small areas where there are the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation.

Deprivation is the lack of access to opportunities and resources which we might expect in our society. This can be in terms of material goods or the ability of an individual to participate in the normal social life of the community. There are 1,909 Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Wales, with 22% of these in North Wales. Considering the 191 most deprived LSOAs across all of Wales in 2019 (i.e. the 10 per cent most deprived), 12% are in North Wales.

In WIMD 2019, there were pockets of high relative deprivation in some North Wales coastal and border towns. This is shown in Figure 3.4.

<sup>6</sup> Population estimates by local authority and year (StatsWales)

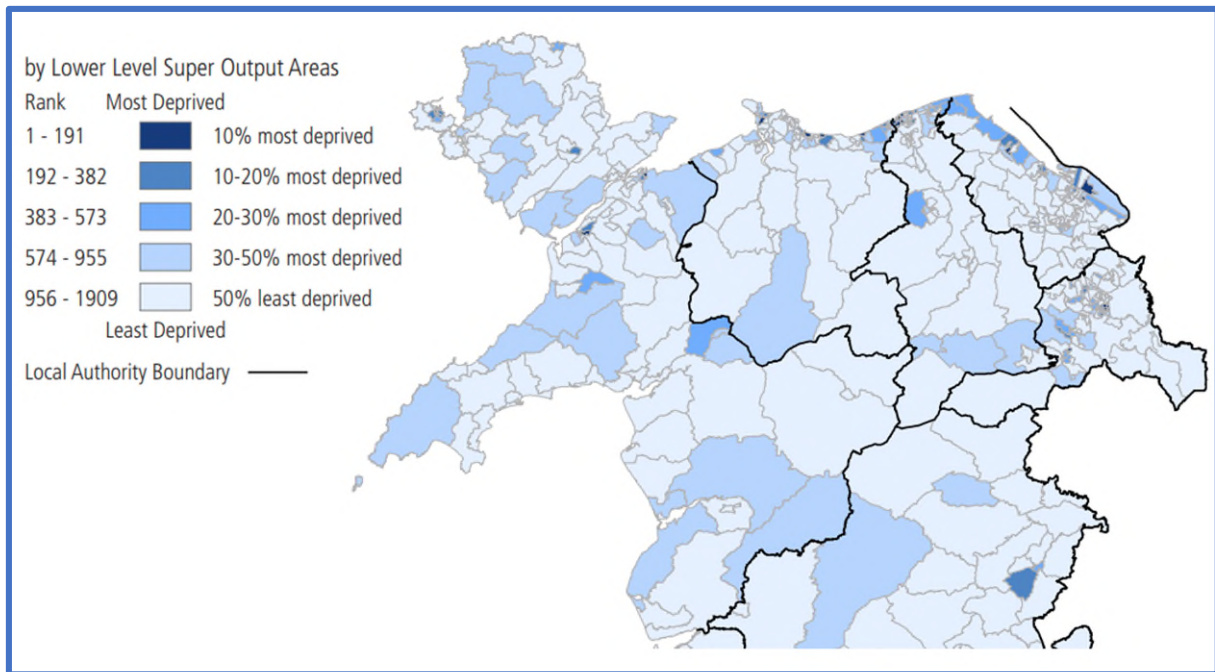


Figure 3.4 - Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation<sup>7</sup>

### What this means for the RTP

Attractive, efficient transport links can play a vital role in reducing deprivation by providing access to jobs, training, health/wellbeing opportunities and education.

### 3.4 Population Density

In 2021, Wales had an average population density of 149.8 persons per square kilometre. This is an increase of approximately 8% in the two decades since 1991, but a decline of approximately 2% year on year compared to 2021. Wales has a relatively low population density, compared to the UK as a whole, where the equivalent figures is 276 people per square kilometre.

North Wales is less densely populated than Wales as a whole. The population density of each of the six local authority areas in the region is shown in Table 3.3. Population density varies considerably across North Wales, with Flintshire and Wrexham more densely populated than other local authorities in North Wales. Gwynedd is estimated to have less than 50 people per square kilometre making it the third least densely populated local authority in Wales.

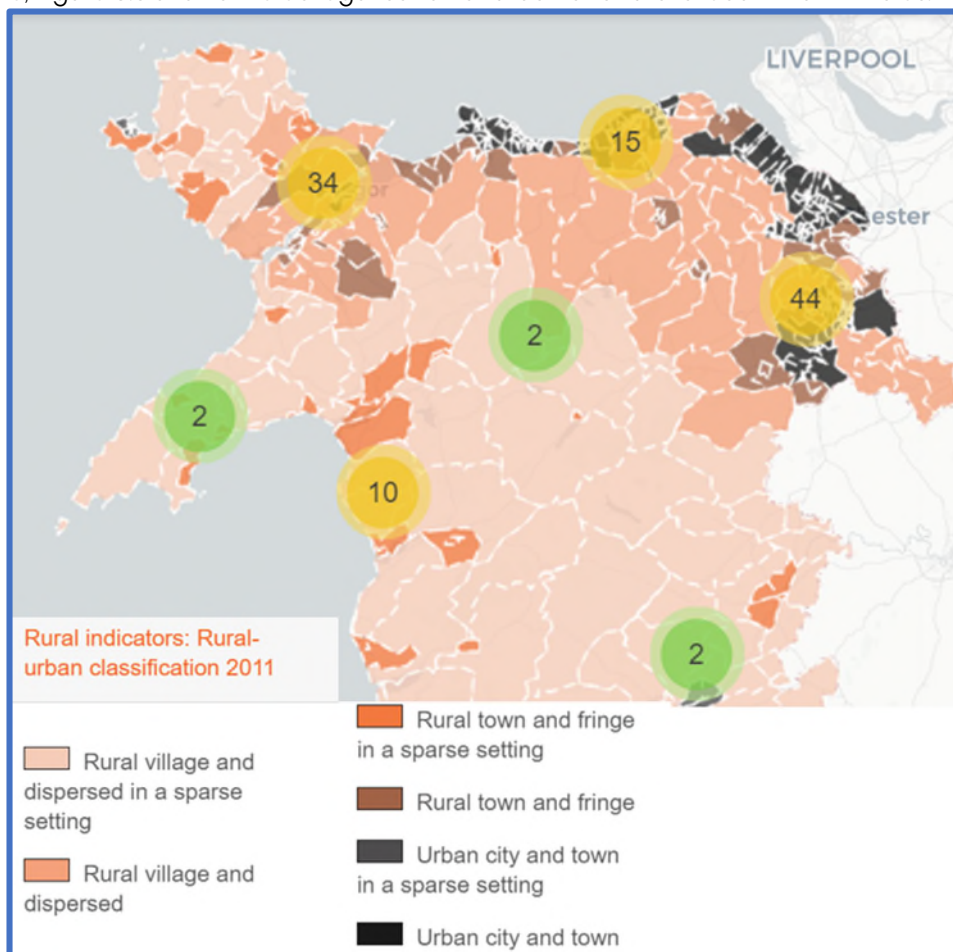
Area	Mid-year 2020
Wales	149.8
Isle of Anglesey	96.8
Gwynedd	46.2
Conwy	102.0
Denbighshire	114.8
Flintshire	352.6
Wrexham	268.2

<sup>7</sup> [WIMD - Home Page \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/wimd)



**Table 3.3 - Population density (persons per square kilometre) by local authority<sup>8</sup>**

2011 Census data has been used to inform the data on the 'Understanding Welsh Places' website<sup>9</sup>. From this website, Figure 3.5 shows the categorisation of urban and rural areas in North Wales.



**Figure 3.5 - Rural-Urban Classification in North Wales**  
(Note: Numbers on the map refer to more detailed information available from the source)

Figure 3.5 demonstrates a stark contrast between the urban areas of the east of the region and along the north coast, and the more rural areas comprising much of the rest of the region.

It can often be more difficult for people living in rural communities to access services that may be more accessible in urban areas. Poor access to services is a factor which can compound other types of deprivation that exist in an area. The WIMD Access to Services data demonstrates deprivation as a result of a household's inability to access a range of services that are considered necessary for day-to-day living, both physically and online. It considers average travel times to a range of services by private and public transport. The services considered are:

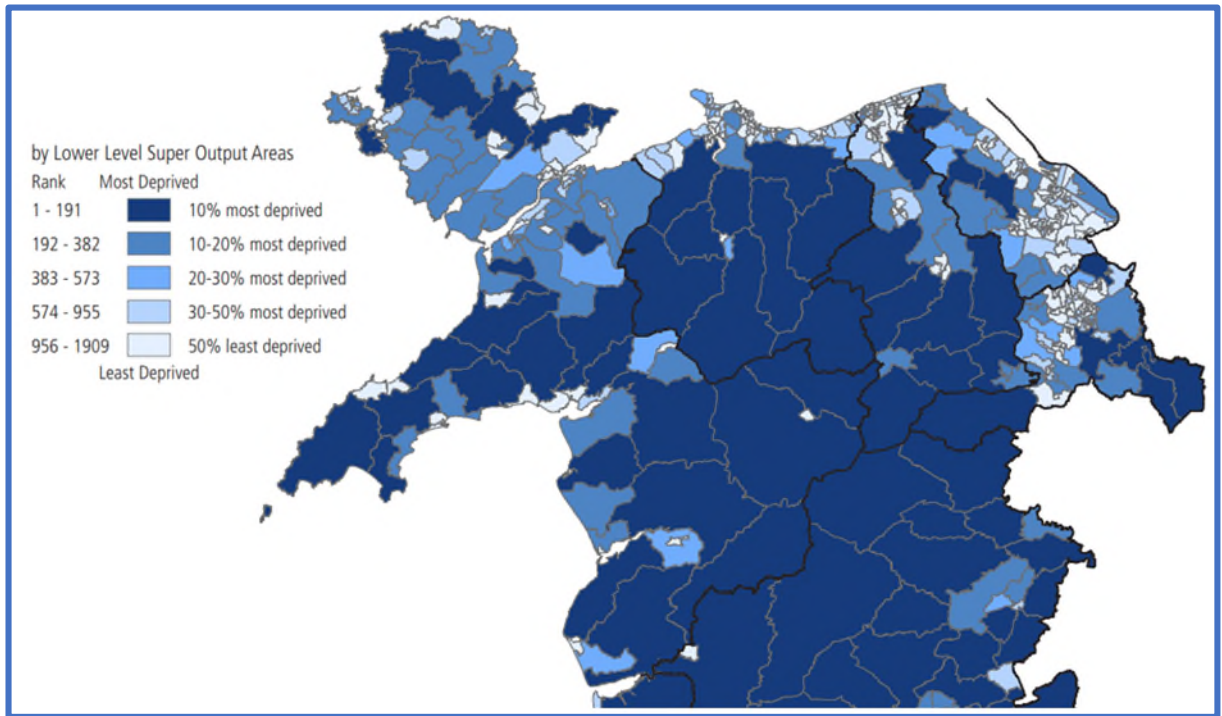
- Pharmacy,
- Food shop,
- General Practitioner (GP),
- Post office,
- Primary school,

<sup>8</sup> [Population density \(persons per square kilometre\) by local authority and year \(StatsWales\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Home | Understanding Welsh Places 0.1](#)

- Public library,
- Sports Facility,
- Secondary school and
- Petrol station (private transport only)

In this context, high deprivation is widespread across rural areas of Wales, as shown in Figure 3.6. This is a scenario that is becoming more challenging at time when local authorities are in position where they need to make cuts to subsidised bus budgets.



**Figure 3.6 - WIMD Access To Services**

The concentration of services and populations is in North-East Wales, cross-border, and along the North Wales coast. This reflects the less sparsely populated areas shown in Figure 3.5. Further evidence of the impact of rurality in North Wales can be seen in Transport for Wales analysis of journey time to access a key town or city centre using public transport, which can be seen in Figure 3.7.

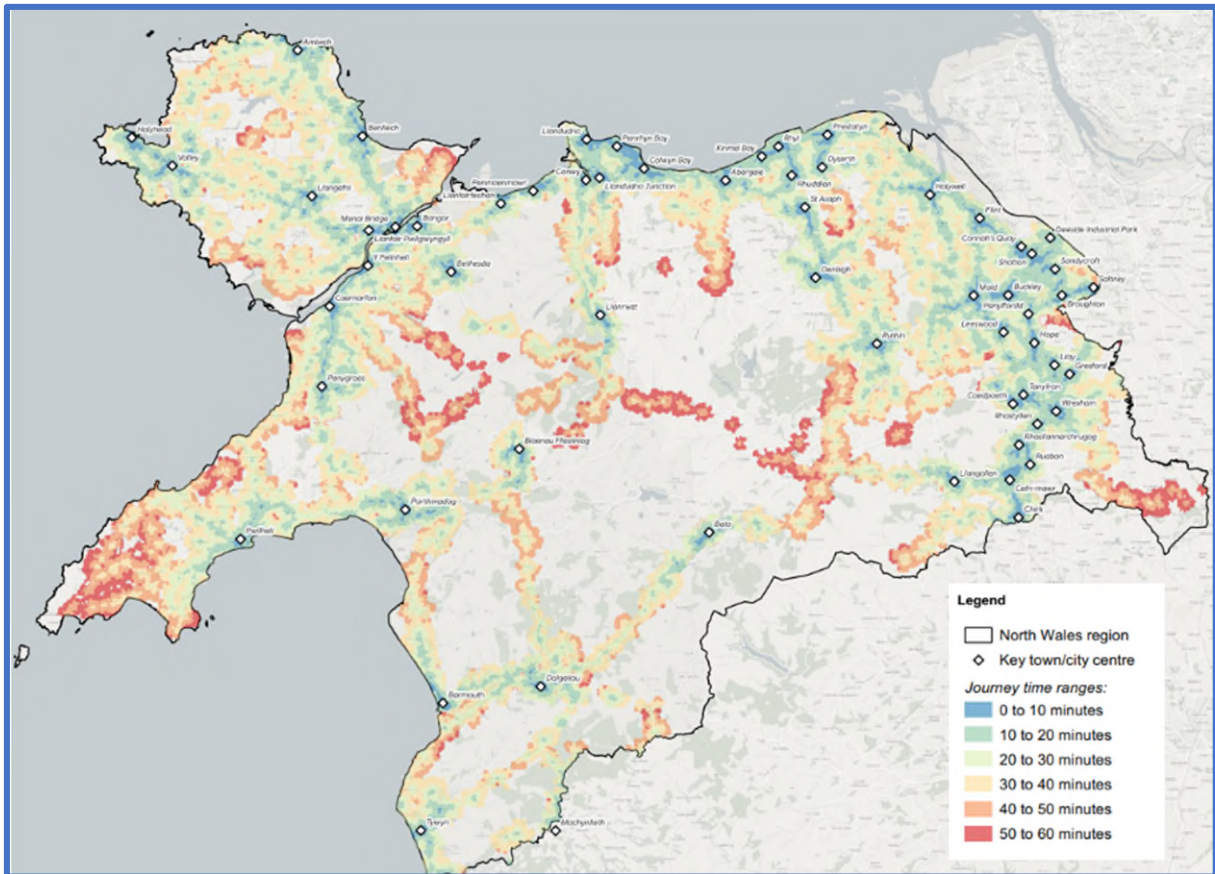


Figure 3.7 - Public Transport Journey Time to Key Town or City (Tuesday 07:00 - 19:00)

There are a large number of communities in rural areas who, if travelling by public transport, are required to travel for more than 50 minutes to access a key town or city.

The North Wales Transport Commission noted that *“Replacing car journeys with public transport and active travel in rural areas is challenging. We recognise that the private car will continue to be the main way many journeys are made by many people. North Wales includes large areas that are rural or semi-rural.”*

### What this means for the RTP

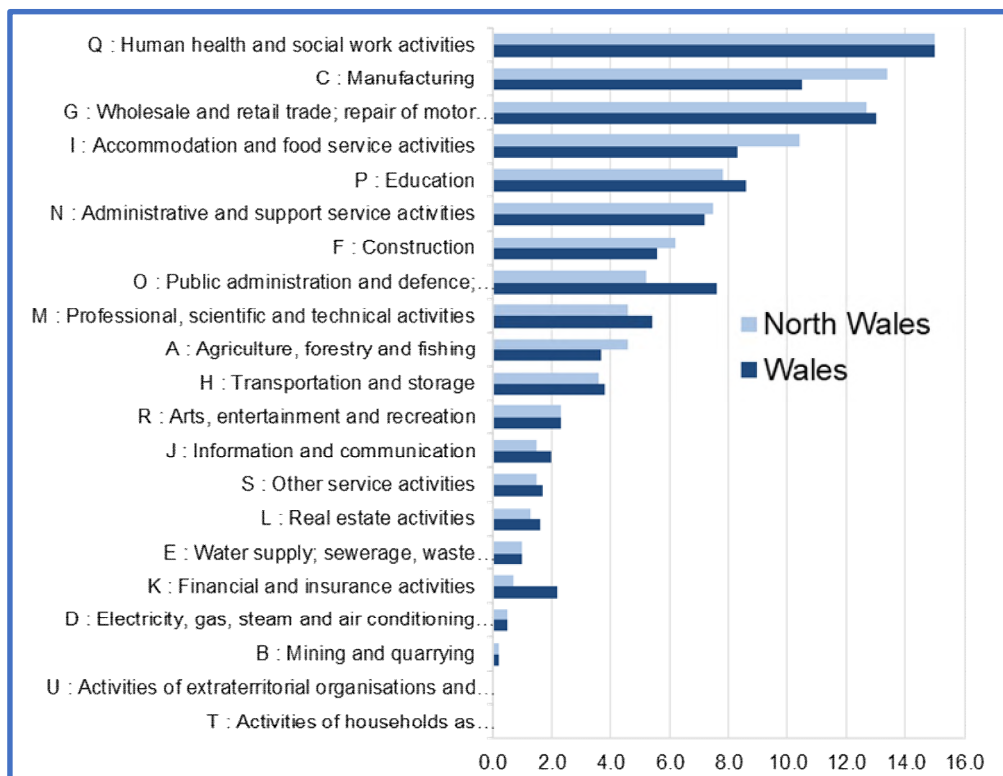
For the RTP to identify a wholly integrated and transformative network of sustainable transport in North Wales, a consideration of both the needs of residents of urban centres and rural communities is required. The RTP should recognise that whilst modal shift may be facilitated through enhanced public transport and active travel in and between our towns and cities, reducing car use in rural communities is more challenging. Facilitating a shift to low emission vehicles for residents of rural communities is therefore vital.

### 3.5 Employment in North Wales

The largest employment sector across Wales and in North Wales is ‘Human health and social work’. As can be seen in Figure 3.8, North Wales has a higher employment percentage than Wales in the following industries:

- Manufacturing,
- Accommodation and food service activities,
- Administrative and support service activities,

- Construction and
- Agriculture, forestry, and fishing.

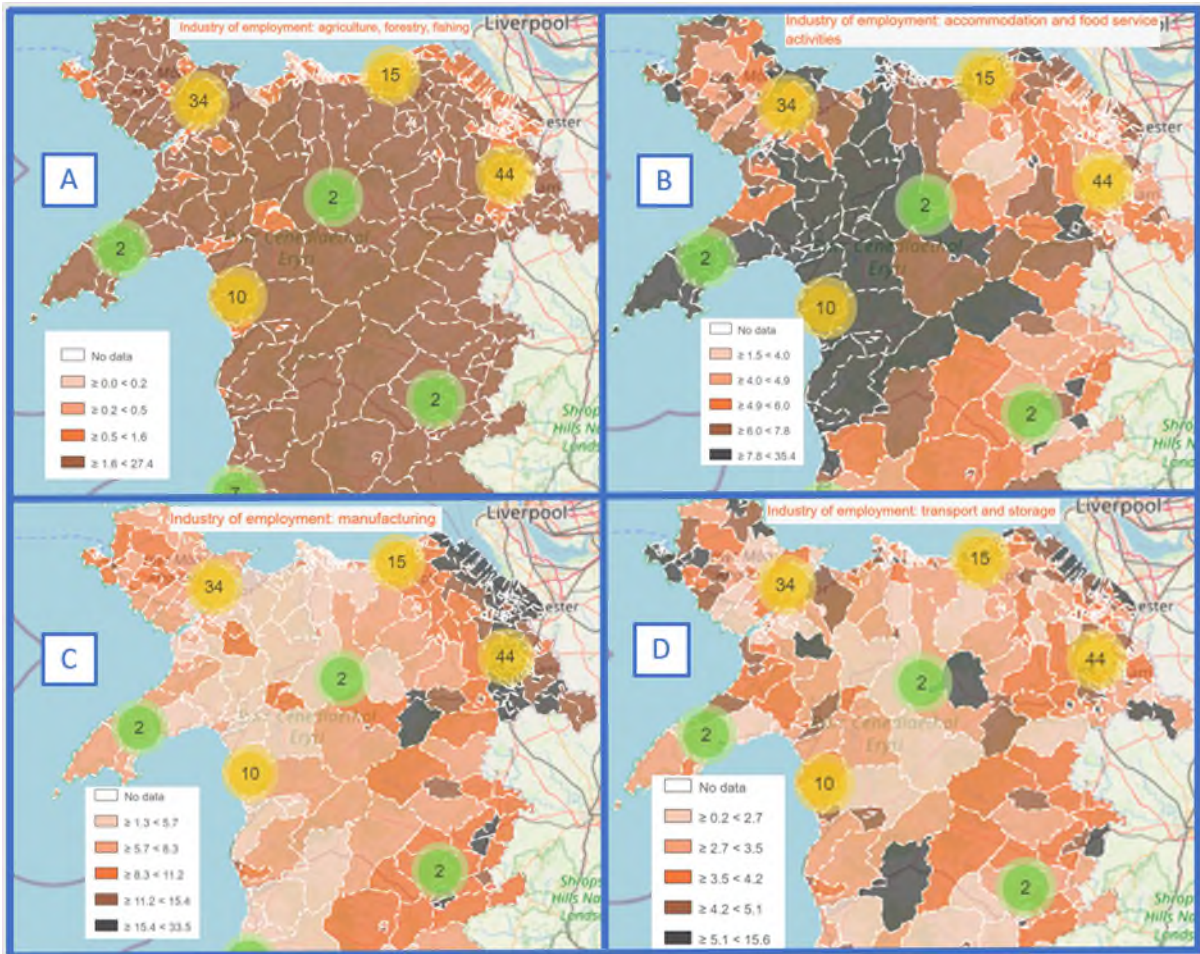


**Figure 3.8 - Percentage of total employment by Industry, North Wales and Wales**

Source: Welsh Government analysis of Business Register and Employment Survey, ONS

The importance of different employment sectors varies across North Wales. Figure 3.9 considers the percentage of resident population aged 16-74 who are employed in selected industry sectors. This shows that:

- The agriculture, forestry and fishing sector is unsurprisingly far more prominent in rural areas of North Wales, where up to 27.4% of people in this age bracket work in these sectors. This compares to less than 1% in the more urban areas.
- The accommodation and food services sector is far more prominent in Eryri, Llyn Peninsula and coastal areas of Denbighshire, Conwy and Anglesey, with up to 35.4% of people in this age bracket employed in this sector.
- The manufacturing sector is important in the east of North Wales, where areas of Wrexham and Flintshire have up to 33.5% of residents aged 16-74 employed in this sector.
- The transport and storage sector is far more prominent in parts of Flintshire and Wrexham, reflecting the areas where manufacturing is important. Transport and storage is also significant in parts of Anglesey, close to the port of Holyhead.



**Figure 3.9 - Prominence of different employment sectors in North Wales**  
 ('Understanding Welsh Places' website<sup>10</sup> - Note: Numbers on the map refer to more detailed information available from the source)

## What this means for the RTP

The RTP should support the continued economic development of North Wales by considering enhancing access to employment sites in the region for both current and future employees and, where applicable, customers. The requirements of the transport network vary across North Wales. In rural areas, employment may be seasonal and remote. In areas where tourism is significant, there is increased demand on the transport network in summer season. Where manufacturing and storage are key sectors, the considerations are the volume of trips to large employment sites, shift patterns, and the requirement for higher levels of HGV movements.

<sup>10</sup> [Home | Understanding Welsh Places O.1](#)

## 4. How We Travel

The dominant mode of transport in Wales, for both the number of journeys undertaken and distances travelled, continues to be the private car. The Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) target for 2040 is 45% sustainable modes and 55% car, so car will still dominate in 2040 even if that target is reached.

### 4.1 Active Travel

Local authorities in North Wales have a duty, under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, to map existing and future active travel routes and related facilities, with an aim to lead to an integrated network for active travel use, and thus achieve modal shift for walking and cycling modes.

The Active Travel Network Map is available from [View map | DataMapWales \(gov.wales\)](#). Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show the comparison between the current on-ground active travel network shown on the Active Travel Network Map for the northeast of our region (Figure 4.1), and the future scheme aspirations (Figure 4.2) for the same area.

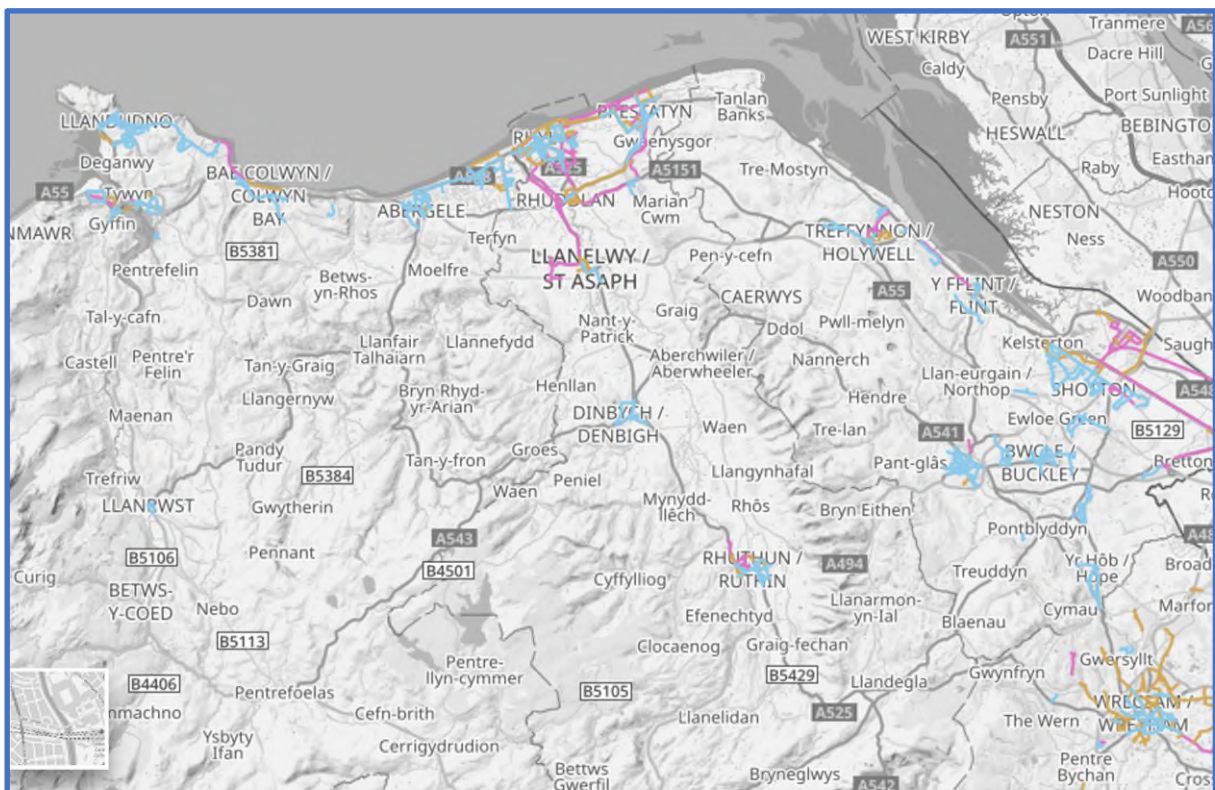


Figure 4.1 - Existing Walking and Cycling Routes on the Active Travel Network Map

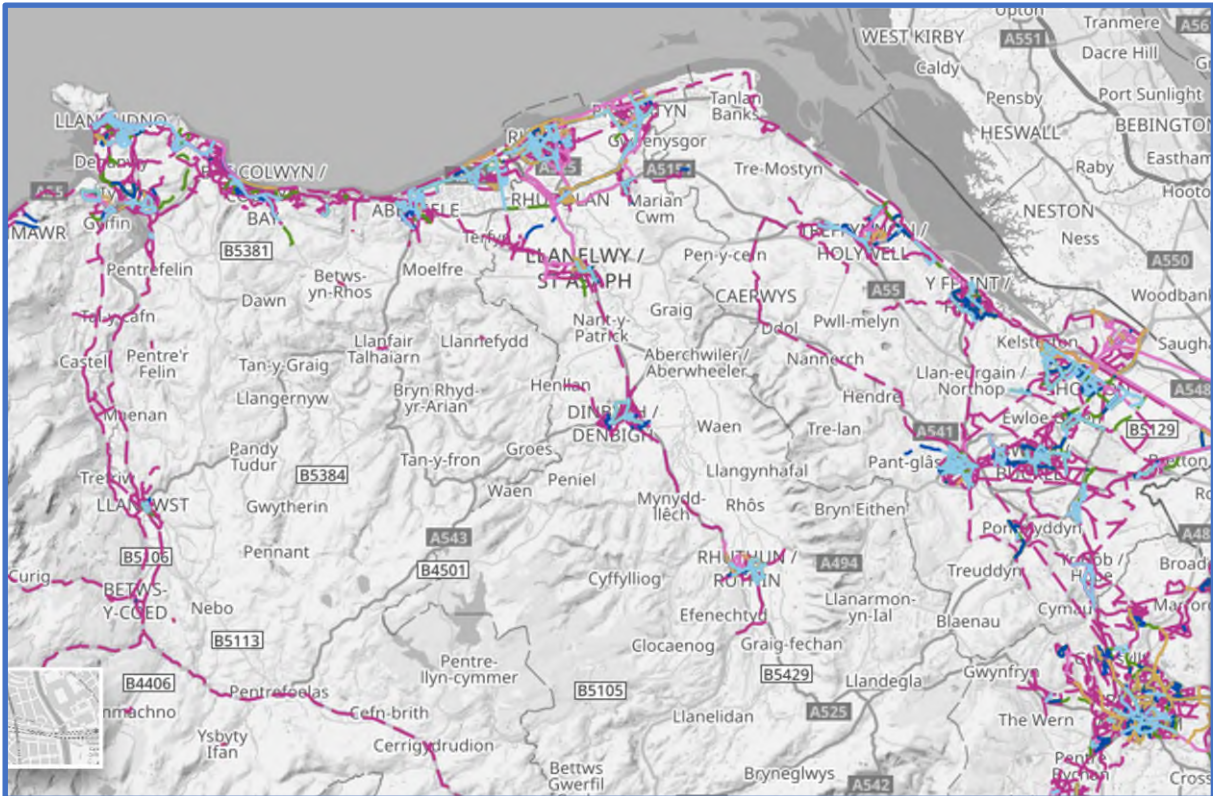


Figure 4.2 - Future Walking and Cycling Routes on the Active Travel Network Map

## What this means for the RTP

The RTP should outline proposals for further expansion and improvement of the active travel network in North Wales to encourage an increase in the number of people choosing to walk or cycle. This should focus on connections to key attractors such as employment and education sites, railway stations, bus stops, and tourist attractions.

### 4.2 Bus

Bus has the biggest public transport modal share in Wales. In 2018/19 a total of 101.87 million journeys were made by bus in Wales. Analysis undertaken by Transport for Wales' (TfW) Analytical Unit shows that 68% of the North Wales population live within a quarter of a mile (or 400 metre) walking route of a bus stop where services run at least once per hour.

Welsh Government and Transport for Wales have set out a Roadmap to Bus Reform that provides an outline to the approach to franchising in Wales. Bus franchising means that decisions about bus services in Wales (including routes, timetables, fares, hours of operation and service quality standards) will be made by Welsh Government and Transport for Wales. Decisions will be made in partnership with Corporate Joint Committees. Bus operators can bid for contracts to run services to these specifications. It is currently expected that franchising will be rolled out in North Wales in 2028.

A number of recent improvements have been made in collaboration between TfW, local authorities, and bus operators that have made bus travel more attractive in North Wales:

- The rollout of the 1bus ticket (one ticket across the vast majority of bus services in North Wales),
- T19/Conwy Valley Line return ticket agreements
- Continuous review of the Sherpa Network in Eryri

- Launch of the Traws Cymru T8 service between Corwen and Chester
- Launch of fflecsi demand responsive services, including the zero-emission electric service in Ruthin.

Further work is in development to address long-standing barriers to the uptake of bus travel, such as a Bus Network review and development of a pilot scheme underway between TrawsCymru and Rail to enable use of one ticket for journeys that involve a leg by rail and bus.

fflecsi is a demand responsive bus service that can be booked by passengers in advance of travel. fflecsi buses can pick passengers up and drop off in a service area and not just at a bus stop. Locations in North Wales where fflecsi services operate in 2024 are:

- Buckley
- Conwy Valley
- Denbigh
- Holywell
- Llyn Peninsula
- Prestatyn
- Rhuthin

The Snowdon Sherpa is a network of bus services that travel around Yr Wyddfa. It has been developed in by a partnership comprising Transport for Wales, Cyngor Gwynedd, the National Park Authority, and Gwynfor Coaches. The creation of the Sherpa network saw the merger of local bus services into one simplified brand and a coordinated network and fare structure. In August 2024 72,296 people used the Sherpa service, a 79 per cent increase on August 2023 and it was the first-time passenger numbers exceeded 70,000 in a month.

TrawsCymru longer distance bus services are an important part of the integrated public transport network in Wales. Funded by the Welsh Government, the buses provide vital public transport links for many communities across Wales, integrating with rail journeys and also giving visitors an accessible, affordable and environmentally friendly option for exploring Wales.

## What this means for the RTP

The RTP should consider proposals for further review and improvement of bus services and measures to encourage an increase in bus use. Bus services should focus on improving access to services from communities. They should connect to key attractors such as education and employment sites, railway stations and tourist attractions.

### 4.3 Rail

The national rail network in the region is managed and maintained by Network Rail, with passenger services operated by Transport for Wales and Avanti West Coast via the Wales and Borders and West Coast Partnership franchises. The rail network is reflective of the main population centres. There are 66 rail stations in North Wales. These are located on the following five lines:

- the North Wales Coastline,
- the Shrewsbury–Chester Line,
- the Conwy Valley Line,
- the Borderlands Line, and
- the Cambrian Line.

Data from the Office of Road and Rail is collected for estimates of station usage at each station on the network. Figures for the most and least used stations in North Wales are shown in Table 4.1.



Figures used in the table are for 2019-20 as this is the last full year not affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. Whilst not in Wales, Chester station is considered the most important station on the North Wales rail network due to its roles as both an attractor, and key interchange location.

Station name	2019-20 highest number of entries and exits	Station name	2019-20 lowest number of entries and exits
Chester	5,093,756		
Bangor (Gwynedd)	624,926	Dolgarrog	362
Rhyl	504,244	Pont-y-Pant	498
Wrexham General	501,800	Roman Bridge	720
Prestatyn	324,634	Tal-y-Cafn	812
Llandudno Junction	301,418	Tywyn	1,062

**Table 4.1 - The stations with the highest and lowest number of entries and exits**

Analysis undertaken by TfW's Analytical Unit shows that only 9% of the North Wales population lives within a half a mile walk (or 800 metres) of a rail station where services run at least once per hour.

Freight paths are in place across the network. There are limited freight services along the mainline, but the route between Shrewsbury and Chester, and the Borderlands Line see several services a week to the sawmill, steel, and cement plants.

### What this means for the RTP

Whilst rail is not directly influenced locally, it is important that the RTP acknowledges measures to enhance the rail offer in North Wales. To enhance services, the key priorities for improvements are the Borderlands Line, increasing capacity at Chester Station, and increased service levels on the North Wales Main Line.

The RTP should consider the importance of connections to key centres such as London, Cardiff, Manchester (including the airport), Liverpool, Crewe, and Warrington (for Northern Powerhouse Rail).

The Plan should consider sustainable travel links to interchange facilities at rail stations.

Through the RTP we should seek opportunities to increase rail freight in North Wales.

## 4.4 Road Network

Trunk roads in North Wales are the responsibility of Welsh Government and are maintained by the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent (NMWTRA). The Trunk Road Network is shown in Figure 4.3 Maintenance and management of all other adopted roads area the responsibility of local authorities.



Figure 4.3 - The Trunk Road Network ([Our roads](#) | [Traffic Wales](#))

The main roads in North Wales mostly span east to west, especially along the North Wales coast. The busiest road in North Wales is the A55, the "North Wales Expressway", a dual carriageway primarily connecting Chester to Holyhead, along the coast of North Wales and passing Llandudno Junction, Conwy, and Bangor. It is one of Wales' most important roads that runs through to the port of Holyhead.

The crossing of the Menai to Anglesey, and the resilience of this route, is important both locally and strategically. Locally, although separated by the Menai Strait and in different local authority areas, towns on both sides of the Strait form a single economic area. Many people travel between locations across the Strait for employment and to access vital services such as education and healthcare as well as for leisure, shopping and entertainment opportunities.

Strategically, incidents on the Menai Crossings are particularly detrimental for freight operators who are accessing the port at Holyhead. Reliability and predictability of journey time is crucial for freight operators for whom deliveries may be time-critical, or time wasted on congested roads has a financial cost.

The A55 converges for a short distance with the A494 at Ewloe, from which the A494 runs to the North of Chester and the A55 to the South.

The A5 was previously the primary link between North Wales and London. The road crosses the Menai Suspension Bridge, but its importance has been superseded by the A55. Other roads transiting North Wales, from east to west include the A458 from Halesowen to Mallwyd, and the A494 from Dolgellau to Saughall.

The busiest north-south road travelling through the region is the A483 from Chester through Wrexham and onto Swansea via Oswestry, Newtown and Welshpool. Other major north-south roads include the single-carriageways of the A470 from Llandudno to Cardiff via the Conwy valley, and the A487 from Bangor to Haverfordwest via Caernarfon and Eryri.

The majority of the remaining highway network within the region are the responsibility of the relevant Local Highway Authority, in this case, the Local Authority. Significant changes planned for the Local Highway Network in the near future include the rollout of a 20mph speed limit along restricted roads.

## What this means for the RTP

Whilst seeking opportunities to encourage more people to travel by active travel and public transport, the RTP should acknowledge the importance of the road network to free movement around North Wales and seek to improve the resilience of this network. This is particularly important for crossings of the Menai, where incidents on the road network can isolate communities.

### 4.5 Electric Vehicles

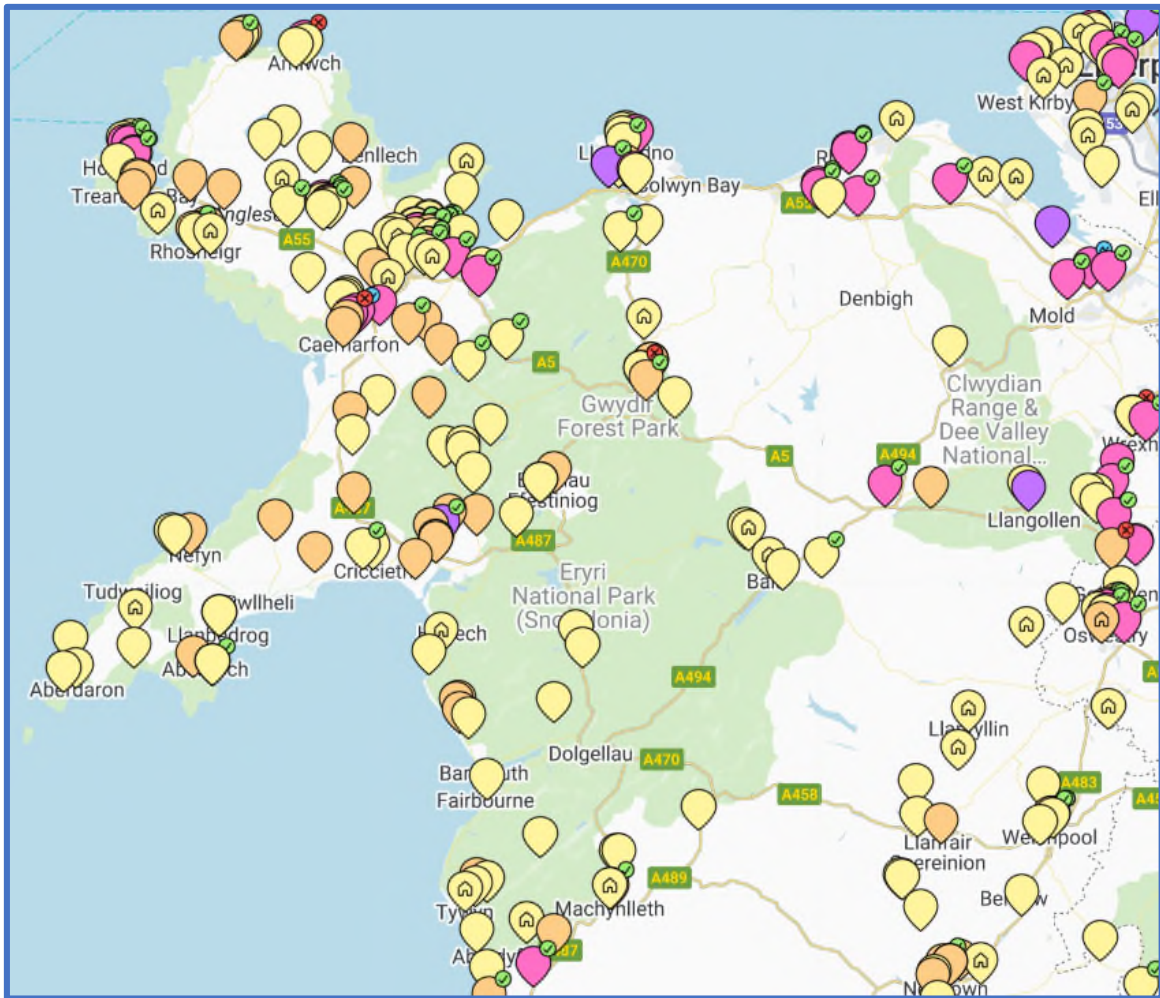
The number of plug-in vehicles is increasing across the UK, including in North Wales. This is likely due to an increase in environmental awareness, improved zero emission vehicle technology and improved understanding of electric vehicles. Table 4.2 summarises Government statistics<sup>11</sup> showing the number of plug-in vehicles, both privately and company owned, in each local authority area, with 7,106 such vehicles in North Wales.

Fuel	Anglesey	Conwy	Denbigh-shire	Flintshire	Gwynedd	Wrexham
Battery Electric	475	865	842	1,140	657	790
Plug-in Hybrid electric (diesel)	2	7	5	7	6	13
Plug-in Hybrid electric (petrol)	261	441	294	519	323	433
Range Extended electric	7	12	19	16	13	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>1,325</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>1,628</b>	<b>999</b>	<b>1,249</b>

**Table 4.2 - Plug-in Vehicles in North Wales**

There are a number of barriers to supporting the uptake of electric vehicles in North Wales. A network of charging infrastructure is required, and the roll-out of this is influenced by factors such as electrical supply capacity at sites, and the attractiveness of sites, particularly in rural areas, to private companies that supply and operate chargers. The current locations of EV chargers in our region are shown in Figure 4.4, taken from Zap Map.

<sup>11</sup> [Local area data: Electric vehicles and charging points \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/data-and-statistics/electric-vehicles-and-charging-points)



**Figure 4.4 - EV Charger Locations**  
 (Map of electric charging points for electric cars UK: Zapmap)

The uptake in EVs also requires the people of North Wales to be able, and choose to, use one. For many, the cost of EVs is currently prohibitively expensive.

### What this means for the RTP

The RTP needs to recognise the increasing use of plug-in vehicles in North Wales and seek opportunities to support further uptake. This could include car clubs and community transport.

### 4.6 Origin and Destination

Analysis of the origin, destination and purpose of trips made in North Wales is helpful to understand the reasons that people travel, and the movements that are made most frequently. Origin and destination (O-D) analysis is the study of where journeys start (their origin) and end (their destination).

Analysis of the origin and destination of journeys has been undertaken by Transport for Wales. This has been done using the North Wales Transport model, which separates the North Wales Region (and wider area) into different sectors.

The analysis considers the movements between and within sectors during a neutral weekday twelve-hour period (07:00 to 19:00). A trip to work from Prestatyn to Wrexham would have an origin

as Denbighshire Coast and a destination as Wrexham. The return journey would then count as a second trip with the origin as Wrexham and the destination being Denbighshire Coast.

A full breakdown of the O-D analysis and a map showing the sectors used for the model are shown in Appendix 2. The key findings from these figures are:

- By far the largest number of trips start and end within the same sector, suggesting there are a large number of shorter distance trips:
  - E.g. 151,921 within the Conwy Coast sector
  - E.g. 156,939 within the Wrexham sector
  - E.g. 98,466 within the Caernarfon/Bangor sector
- There are over 60,000 trips to Chester from North Wales per day, highlighting the importance of cross-border movements, particularly for the east of the region.
- There are 31,907 trips to the Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester, further emphasising the importance of cross border movement.
- The three sectors in North Wales that attract the most trips are:
  - Wrexham (233,637)
  - Conwy Coast (211,095)
  - Deeside (185,729)
- Rural sector journeys are mainly within sector and/or to nearest coastal sector.

The Origin and Destination analysis has also considered the quantum of trips made by car and the distance of those trips. Table 4.3 considers all trips within North Wales in the morning peak hour (08:00 – 09:00).

Distance	Car Trips (vehicles/hr)	Percentage of trips
0 - 5 km	41,987	26%
5 - 15 km	66,101	41%
15 - 25 km	27,185	17%
25 - 50 km	19,166	12%
50 - 100 km	5,912	4%
100 - 250 km	1,981	1%
250 - 500 km	131	0%
> 500 km	5	0%
Total	162,467	100%

**Table 4.3 - Distance of Car Trips in the Morning Peak Hour (all North Wales)**

As can be seen in the table, nearly 42,000 trips, or over a quarter of the trips made between 8am and 9am, are less than 5km in length. That is a distance of trip that could be made using active travel for many people.

Car use in morning peak hour to the three sectors that attract the most trips (Wrexham, Conwy Coast, and Deeside) is shown in Table 4.4. This shows that over 10,000 car trips per morning to just these three sectors are less than 5km each.

Distance	Wrexham		Conwy Coast		Deeside	
	Car Trips	Percentage	Car Trips	Percentage	Car Trips	Percentage
0 - 5 km	4,564	30%	3,374	28%	2,879	24%
5 - 15 km	6,137	41%	5,246	43%	5,712	48%
15 - 25 km	2,438	16%	1,642	14%	2,125	18%
25 - 50 km	1,327	9%	1,180	10%	954	8%
50 - 100 km	490	3%	514	4%	248	2%
100 - 250 km	109	1%	192	2%	65	1%
250 - 500 km	9	0%	6	0%	11	0%
> 500 km	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	15,074	100%	12,154	100%	11,994	100%

**Table 4.4 - Distance of Car Trips in the Morning Peak Hour to three largest destination sectors**

The modelling work also considers the reason that people make trips, and this is shown in Table 4.5. This shows the importance of facilitating trips for shopping, commuting and leisure on our transport network. The table also shows the percentage of trips for each purpose that are made by car, demonstrating the dominance of car travel.

Journey Purpose	Purpose Split	% of trips for
Work (commute)	19%	82%
Business (time/costs paid by employer)	6%	91%
Education	7%	67%
Shopping	30%	79%
Recreation	17%	76%
Holiday (day trip) if starting from home	5%	74%
Holiday (day trip) if not starting from home		87%
Other (not starting from home)	16%	84%

**Table 4.5 - Purpose of Journeys in North Wales**



## What this means for the RTP

There are strong links between the communities and economies of Northwest England and Northeast Wales. This is reflected in the number of trips across the border each day seen in the modelling work.

It is vital that the proposals for improving our transport network are reflective of the journeys that people make. However, the RTP should also consider less common movements that may currently be too difficult or inconvenient to make regularly.

Through the RTP we should seek to reduce the number of shorter distance trips that are made by car. This could also include consideration of delivery of services in a way that reduces the need to travel to a specific location.

## 5. Review of Problems, Issues and Opportunities

Through the Regional Transport Plan we will be setting out how to work towards a more effective, more sustainable transport network in North Wales. This must be done in the context of transport improvements making changes that improve people's daily lives.

Where our transport network does not currently adequately serve the people of North Wales and that this is contributing to poor outcomes, including:

- limiting access to employment,
- Limiting access to learning
- ill health,
- negative environmental impacts (noise, pollution, air quality, road traffic accidents) and
- social exclusion.

### 5.1 Asset Management and Maintenance

Asset Management is the work done by the local authorities to maintain the physical transport assets which make up the transport networks for which they have direct responsibility. The local highway network includes roads, footways, cycleways, bridges, street lighting, traffic signals, bus stops, street furniture and signs. This does not include the Trunk Road network, which was shown in Figure 4.4, as those are the responsibility of Welsh Government and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent.

A network of well-maintained transport infrastructure is key to supporting travel around North Wales, both for private car journeys but also for bus services and active travel journeys. All bus journeys and a large proportion of active travel trips take place on the highway. Highway defects such as potholes can be a more significant hazard for cyclists than other highway users.

The severe funding pressures that local authorities are faced with is impacting on the ability of authorities to adequately maintain the existing asset, and this poses a risk to successful delivery of the objectives of the RTP.

#### What this means for the RTP

The RTP must acknowledge the importance of maintaining and improving the highway infrastructure.

### 5.2 The Economy

The economic profile and industrial mix of North Wales is diverse. It is home to a busy port at Holyhead, which brings freight and passenger traffic flows across the region. The predominant flow of road-based freight within the region is east-west, along the A55 from Holyhead in the west to the A494 and the English border. There are also freight movements south from the A55, through Wrexham and towards the Midlands.

The Freeport in Anglesey will support the continued growth of the freight, logistics and other associated industries in North Wales.

There are several industrial estates that act as major employment centres, including Deeside and Wrexham, where manufacturing dominates. Public transport and active travel options to these employment centres are sometimes inadequate and do not facilitate sustainable commuting. This is,





in part, due to how these places have been designed with private vehicles as the main mode of access.

The plans for an Investment Zone in Wrexham and Flintshire will support the continued growth of the advanced manufacturing and the creative & digital sectors in this area.

Agriculture remains an important part of the economy in rural areas, which are often less well served by public transport, and levels of car ownership are high. Many farmers have diversified their business to supplement their income, branching out to provide tourism and visitor services such as accommodation, cafes, farm shops and outdoor activities.

North Wales is home to several energy-related developments. Wind and solar farms and hydroelectric or tidal power stations are emerging as major contributors to the region's economy.

The public sector is a major employer, particularly in the north-west of the region. The Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board alone employs 17,000 people. Higher and Further Education establishments include two universities - Bangor and Wrexham - as well as two large further education colleges, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, and Coleg Cambria.

Tourism is a significant contributor to the economy of North Wales, but it also contributes to congestion at weekends and during seasonal peaks. The location of tourism sites and lack of public transport options to travel to and from these locations results in significant reliance on private car travel. Some major attractions also suffer from illegal and inconsiderate parking due to excess demand for limited facilities, impacting local communities.

The region has the lowest economic inactivity rates of all the regions of Wales and the highest rates of economic activity, at 19.8%<sup>12</sup> and 77.3%<sup>13</sup> respectively. Despite this, there are economic challenges, such as the impact of seasonal fluctuations in tourism and pockets of deprivation and poverty.

### What this means for the RTP

The RTP must include plans for supporting the growth of the economy in North Wales, ensuring that we are planning our transport system that provides local people with access to good quality jobs and learning opportunities. We also need to ensure that we are improving transport links that support the growth of the rural economy.

## 5.3 Cross Border Travel


North Wales is the region in Wales with the largest number of daily cross-border movements to and from England. Improving cross-border public transport services should be a priority for the RTP.

The north-east of the region has strong connections to north-west England, with a larger daily Wales-to-England flow than along the M4 corridor. Being adjacent to the border means this sub-region has different travel patterns in terms of destinations, with a lot more cross-border travel. 18% of journeys from the eastern sub-region are cross-border, with the north-west of England - Merseyside, Manchester and Warrington - as a destination accounting for 15% of all journeys.

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<sup>12</sup> [Economic inactivity rates \(excluding students\) by Welsh local area and year \(gov.wales\)](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Economic activity rate by Welsh local area and year \(gov.wales\)](#)



Chester's proximity is important as a gateway for North Wales and has strong links to the north-east Wales economy. Therefore, suitable transport infrastructure and services to Chester are an important consideration.

There is also significant movement of people and goods between North Wales and the Midlands of England. Wrexham's proximity to places such as Shrewsbury and Oswestry leads to cross-border movement for employment and leisure.

Economic factors, notably job opportunities close to the border, influence the commuting patterns between North Wales and England. Better bus and rail options will bring more job opportunities within people's reach, both for those in North Wales and in the north-west of England, by providing access to major employment centres on both sides of the border.

### **What this means for the RTP**

The RTP must consider supporting further partnership working with authorities in north-west England and set out proposals for improvements to public transport and active travel that facilitate sustainable cross-border commuting.

## **5.4 National Park**

Eryri is Wales' largest National Park, covering a total of 823 square miles. The National Park is home to over 26,000 people, and the Welsh language is part of the day-to-day fabric of the area. Nearly 4 million people visit Eryri every year to explore the landscape and discover its extensive recreation opportunities.

The National Park Authority and its partners including Cyngor Gwynedd, Conwy County Borough Council and Transport for Wales are undertaking a significant amount of work to reduce the environmental and social problems associated with car use and parking in the Eryri area. To date, this includes measures to manage parking and an improved public transport offer for visitors to the National Park. This includes the Sherpa'r Wyddfa bus service, a park and ride linked with parking management at Pen-y-pass, and the enforcement of parking restrictions on roads. Further work is required to encourage a higher proportion of trips to the park to use sustainable travel options, including further improvement to services and infrastructure, public education, and more attractive integration with rail services.

A review undertaken by Partneriaeth Yr Wyddfa in 2020 identified Llanberis, Betws-y-Coed, Beddgelert, and Bethesda as 'gateway villages' to the National Park.

The Sherpa'r Wyddfa bus services provide a way of travelling sustainably once visitors have arrived in the National Park. These services have been developed to meet visitor demand, operating within and surrounding the Eryri National Park. The Sherpa'r Wyddfa services have their own brand and website, with operation supported by promotional leaflets, bus stop flags and social media content. This approach has been successful in driving increased patronage on these services.

In its Programme for Government (2021-2026), Welsh Government set out its intention to designate a new National Park in Northeast Wales based on the existing Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This would be a fourth National Park for Wales, and the first new such park to be established in Wales since 1957.

## What this means for the RTP

The RTP should consider facilitating reducing car use and minimising the impact of visitor car parking in Eryri. It should also acknowledge the proposed changes to the Clwydian Range.

### 5.5 Visitor Economy

Section 5.4 covered the importance to the economy of visitors to Eryri and the success of the Sherpa'r Wyddfa services, but the visitor economy is important in many other areas of North Wales.

The region's attractions include beaches, large areas of caravan parks, outdoor pursuits and historically significant sites. The close proximity of these attractions to large urban centres of Northwest England means a large volume of visitors to North Wales from these areas.

Coastal locations such as Prestatyn, Rhyl, Towyn, and Llandudno contribute a huge part of the North Wales economy and visitors to these destinations are part of the continued success or regeneration of those places. This creates a significant demand for public transport journeys by tourists across North Wales. Even if people arrive at a destination by car, they should be able to access attractions by active travel or public transport.

Many visitor attractions would benefit from the opportunity to improve public transport and active travel access, allowing more people to access these locations, including people without access to a car. This might involve seasonal shuttle buses from town centres or rail stations, cycle and e-cycle hire or improving signposting for public transport and active travel information.

## What this means for the RTP


The RTP must include plans for supporting the growth of the visitor economy in North Wales, ensuring that we are planning a transport system that provides sustainable access to the many attractors across the region.

### 5.6 Rural Communities

North Wales is home to many sparsely populated, rural and semi-rural areas. Travel patterns and transport services that will work effectively and efficiently are different in rural areas from urban areas. Even in rural areas, there are people who do not have access to a vehicle.

Many rural areas have an older demographic profile, for example, Conwy and Anglesey have the second and third highest percentages of people aged 65 years in Wales (27.4% and 26.4% respectively), and the area with the highest percentage of people aged 90 years and over is Conwy (1.5%). While many older people may view their car as an aid to independence and mobility, there are also those who may no longer wish to (or be able to) drive. Buses are therefore a lifeline for accessing goods, services, healthcare and social settings for those living in rural areas, and particularly for those without access to rail services.

Rural areas of North Wales, generally further south than the coast and including Ynys Môn, have significantly fewer regular public transport services. Many journeys made are local and of a short length, with about a third being less than 5km and more than two thirds being less than 15km. Most of these journeys are within the same local authority area or to a neighbouring area. Many journeys that start in rural areas have destinations in nearby urban areas. While journey lengths are longer in rural areas, this still represents a significant number of short trips.



Existing public transport services typically operate at relatively low frequencies, both in urban and rural areas, and have limited hours of operation. For example, only 29% of the population of North Wales are within walking distance of an hourly public transport service after 7pm<sup>14</sup>.

Journey times by public transport are often uncompetitive with cars, particularly in locations remote from the coastline. Low frequencies are a barrier to people regularly using public transport and encourage car ownership and use.

For people in rural areas who wish to walk or cycle, rural roads present several challenges:

- they can be narrow,
- motor traffic speeds can be high, and
- they may lack a footway and a cycle track.

This can create a hostile environment for cyclists and pedestrians, meaning that people are less likely to choose to travel by active modes, even for relatively short journeys to the neighbouring village or nearest larger settlement that has services and onward travel connections.

There is potential for longer distance routes which have benefit for local people's day-to-day travel, and for the visitor economy for leisure. Increased availability of e-cycles, combined with high quality infrastructure, could be a significant enabler for such longer distance travel.

Even with better rural options and services, the private car will continue to be important in rural areas. This means that there is a need to help people make the switch to electric vehicles, including access to charging infrastructure.

## What this means for the RTP

It is vital that the RTP proposes improvements to active travel, passenger transport and other sustainable mobility options in the rural areas of North Wales. This will facilitate a shift to more sustainable modes that are often currently not considered viable for people in rural communities. The RTP should consider integrated, frequent and high-quality rural transport services, and include enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure connecting rural communities. However, it is vital that RTP acknowledges that a shift to public transport or active travel is not possible for many rural journeys and should consider how to facilitate the switch to Electric Vehicles for those in rural areas who are more dependent on private car use.

## 5.7 Freight

The Port of Holyhead is identified by Future Wales<sup>15</sup> as a Strategic Gateway for international connectivity. The creation of a Freeport site on Ynys Môn, one of two in Wales, will further enhance Holyhead's role as an international gateway. This will play an important role in strengthening the North Wales economy and creating jobs for local people, but there may be further implications of increased freight movements in North Wales.

The Port of Mostyn also generates freight traffic, with much of its business now dedicated to the offshore renewable energy sector.

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<sup>14</sup> [Travel to work, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.wales/future-wales-national-plan-2040>



There is a lot of potential for rail freight in decarbonising freight and logistics networks in North Wales, with capacity for a significant increase, in the volume of freight carried on the North Wales Main Line.

On the Borderlands Line, Padeswood Sidings creates a significant barrier to increased freight movement, as well as enhanced passenger services.

There is currently little provision for road freight operators seeking a switch to cleaner fuels for their vehicles operating in North Wales, notably charging stations and hydrogen re-fuelling stations.

For more local deliveries, including those to town centre businesses and those deliveries that have resulted from an increase in online retail, there is a local environmental impact caused by emissions from and size of delivery vehicles.

Measures to reduce the impact of local deliveries on communities, including e-cargo bikes, area delivery and servicing plans, micro-consolidation centres, and delivery lockers at key locations such as transport and/or mobility hubs.

## What this means for the RTP

The RTP should seek to support the success of Holyhead and Mostyn ports and facilitate their future growth but set out a plan for ensuring the impacts of good movements is minimised. It should consider the role of rail freight and also how to encourage hauliers to switch to cleaner fuels. The RTP should also identify measures for reducing the environmental impact of local deliveries.

## 5.8 Menai Crossings


The resilience of the Menai crossings is vital to the continued success of Holyhead as a port, and for connections to Ireland. It is also a significant issue for the people of Anglesey who require access to services including hospitals on the mainland.

Holyhead is a strategically important port in the United Kingdom due to its location and transportation connections and is a major gateway for transportation between the United Kingdom and Ireland. Freight accessing Holyhead is required to cross the Menai.

More locally, Anglesey's proximity to Gwynedd has fostered a close relationship between the two areas. Ynys Môn and Gwynedd share deep economic, social and cultural connections and are Welsh language strongholds. There are also, therefore, a large number of local trips that use the Menai crossings.

There are a number of issues that affect the crossings and impact on both local and port traffic. These include:

- **Resilience** - Actual and perceived resilience issues with the crossings have a negative impact on the attractiveness of Ynys Môn for economic investment. Britannia Bridge closures have more significant consequences than closures elsewhere on the strategic road network.
- **High winds** - Britannia Bridge is vulnerable to high winds. At some wind speeds Britannia Bridge is closed to high-sided vehicles and lower driving speeds are advised.
- **Collisions and incidents** - There are a high number of collisions on the Britannia Bridge. Such incidents can cause restrictions or closure of the bridge.
- **Traffic flow** - The volume of traffic can lead to delay and congestion, and hence long journey times, especially during the summer tourist season. Delays can affect emergency vehicle response times.

- 
- **Public transport** - The communities on Ynys Môn are not well served by the rail network. This limits the potential for travel across the Menai by rail for work, health and other services. Currently, bus journey times are uncompetitive with the car which limits the potential to achieve mode shift. Overall, public transport does not provide a good level of service for crossing the Menai Strait.
  - **Active travel.** There are many local journeys under 5km in length that are currently undertaken by car but could be suited to active travel if suitable routes were available.

Events and closures of the bridges have a significant impact on people's ability to cross the Menai Strait to access employment, education, health and other services, and they make it difficult for emergency services and businesses to operate. A closure will typically also lead to congestion on the surrounding road network approaching both bridges. This is exacerbated by the roundabouts on both sides of the A55 at Junction 9.

The importance of the resilience of the crossings meant that the issue was considered in detail by the North Wales Transport Commission. Their recommendations to address the issue are summarised in Figure 5.1.



Figure 5.1 - North Wales Transport Commission Recommendations for Improving Menai Crossing Resilience<sup>16</sup>


## What this means for the RTP

The RTP needs to consider options for improving the reliability and resilience of the Menai crossing, this should include improving the resilience of the road bridges and enhanced sustainable transport options.

## 5.9 Digital Connectivity

Digital Connectivity can play an important role in reducing the need for people in North Wales to travel, and also in supporting us to make sustainable travel choices.

<sup>16</sup> [North Wales Transport Commission Improving the Resilience of Connections Across the Menai Strait \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/north-wales-transport-commission-improving-the-resilience-of-connections-across-the-menai-strait)



Better land use planning and improved digital connectivity will enable more people to work from home or to commute shorter distances to remote bases.

If we are to encourage more people to make sustainable choices for their journeys it is crucial that they have access to information such as public transport timetables and prices, and their walking and cycling options.



## 6. Roles, Responsibilities and Funding

### 6.1 Regional Collaboration and Strategic Planning

Four Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) have been set up across Wales. Corporate Joint Committees have powers relating to economic well-being, strategic planning and the development of regional transport policies. The North Wales CJC is, therefore, responsible for setting out the strategic vision and developing the RTP.

The members of the CJC are the executive leaders of the 6 Constituent Councils:

- Conwy County Borough Council
- Denbighshire County Council
- Flintshire County Council
- Gwynedd Council
- Ynys Mon County Council
- Wrexham County Borough Council

An Eryri National Park Authority Member acts as a member of the CJC only in relation to the Strategic Development Plan Function.

Under the CJC a RTP sub-committee is directly responsible for overseeing the RTP. The sub-committee is supported by officers from the six local authorities, with additional support from Transport for Wales.

The CJC is also responsible for the development of the Strategic Development Plan for North Wales, providing the opportunity to ensure that strategic planning and transport planning are aligned.

The North Wales Metro proposals have been developed by Transport for Wales under the governance of the programme's Strategy Board. This work will help to shape the strategic vision for transport in North Wales. The other key influence in shaping the future of our transport will be the findings of the North Wales Transport Commission. Work is ongoing by Welsh Government to identify a governance process for progressing these two programmes and how they interact with the CJC and its sub-committee.

### 6.2 Rail


The operation of the Wales and Borders rail franchise in Wales is a Welsh Government responsibility, via Transport for Wales. However, infrastructure planning and the funding of Network Rail in Wales remains reserved to the UK Parliament.

None of the responsibility for rail therefore sits with the CJC or local authorities in North Wales. However, the RTP provides an opportunity to set out local aspirations for rail services within a wider transport context. Local authorities and Transport for Wales have a role in facilitating sustainable travel connections to stations to improve integration of the transport network.

### 6.3 Local Bus

The Bus Services (Wales) Bill gave powers to create Welsh Franchising Schemes where a local authority can give bus companies the right to run some or all of the bus services in an area.

Transport for Wales is assisting the Welsh Government with proposals to reshape the way bus services in Wales are governed through local franchising. Bus operators would provide services



under contract, on behalf of local authorities. This will give local councils greater control over bus timetables, routes and fares, ensuring that they better meet local needs.

Proposals to transform the bus service network across North Wales are being developed by Transport for Wales in partnership with local authorities.

## 6.4 Active Travel

Key duties under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 are:

- for local authorities to produce maps of existing active travel routes and related facilities in their area and of the future and improved active travel routes and related facilities needed to create integrated networks for active travel
- requiring local authorities to have regard to those maps in preparing transport policies and to ensure that there are new and improved active travel routes and related facilities
- requiring the Welsh Ministers and local authorities to report on levels of active travel
- requiring the Welsh Ministers and local authorities, in carrying out certain functions under the Highways Act 1980, to take reasonable steps to enhance the provision made for walkers and cyclists and to have regard to the needs of walkers and cyclists in the exercise of certain other functions
- requiring the Welsh Ministers and local authorities to exercise their functions under this act so as to promote active travel journeys and secure new and improved active travel routes and related facilities

## 6.5 Responsibility of Local Authorities as the Highway Authorities

Local authorities are transport, highway, street-works and traffic authorities. This means that, along with the roles identified above, they have a responsibility for:

- highways construction
- highways maintenance
- maintenance of bridges and structures
- road safety
- public transport,
- community transport
- traffic management
- managing congestion
- coordination of utilities works

The local authorities also manage car parking in council run car parks and the enforcement of on-street parking restrictions at relevant locations. The authorities also work towards facilitating a shift to electric vehicles.

## 6.6 Funding

It is widely acknowledged that National policy for transport in Wales is ambitious, and there is a recognition that transport plays an important role delivering wider policies. However, pressures on both revenue and capital funding available to local authorities can make it difficult to deliver on those expectations.

The pressure to deliver towards these national transport priorities comes at a time when there is diminished resources across the public sector, to the extent that even fulfilment of basic operational requirements such as maintenance of the local road network can be difficult.

Delivering a step change in transport provision will require appropriate levels of funding.



Sources of funding that have traditionally been available for to local authorities to bid for include:

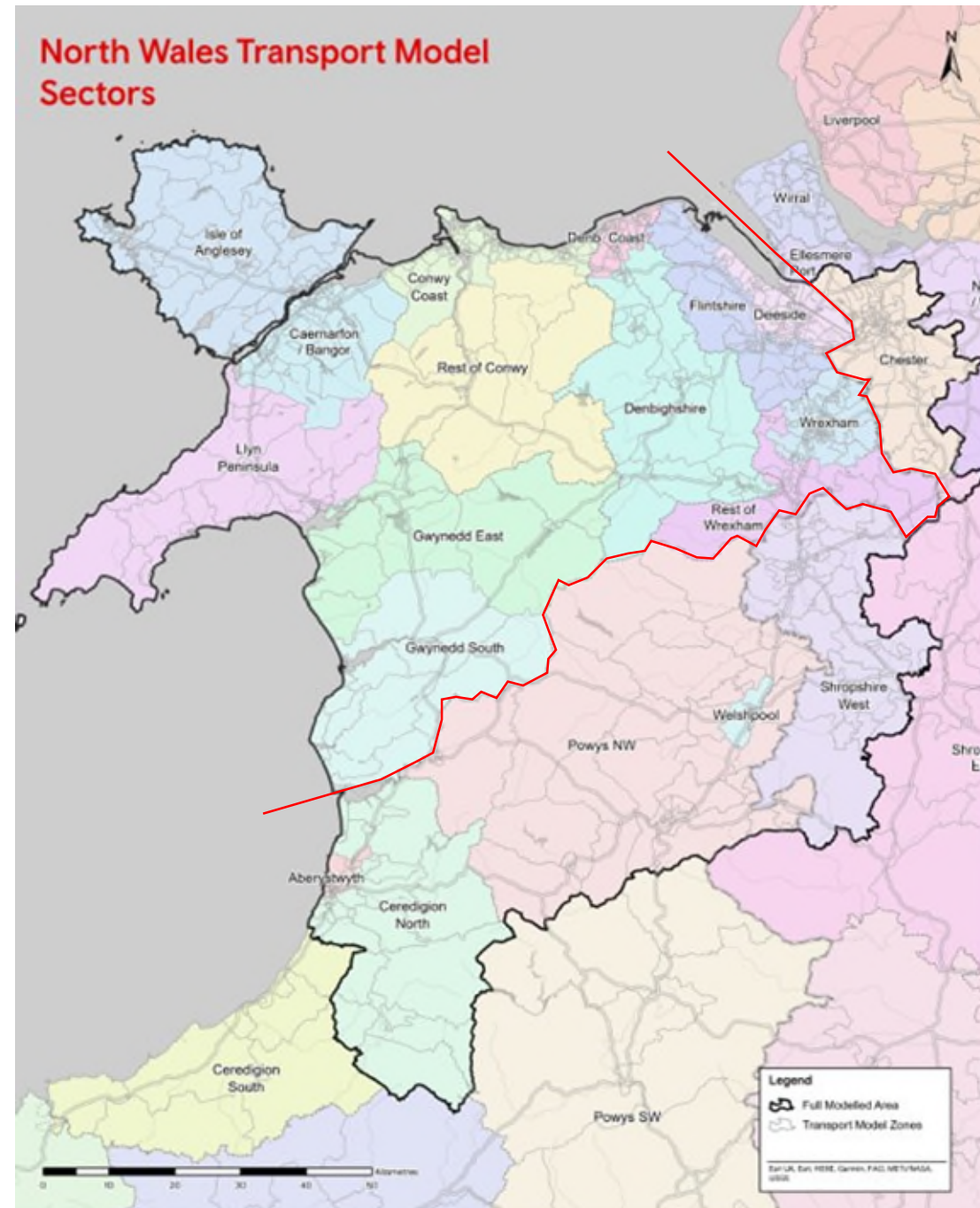
- Local Transport Fund (Welsh Government)
- Active Travel Fund (Welsh Government)
- Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles Transformation Fund (Welsh Government)
- Various now-ceased competitive bidding process from UK Government such as Levelling Up, Union Connectivity Development Fund, or Transforming Towns.
- Funding for Road Safety initiatives (Welsh Government)
- Resilient Roads Fund (Welsh Government)



## Appendix 1: Welsh Government's Key Points for RTP Development

1. We DO want the RTPs to be firmly focused on achieving modal shift.
2. We DO NOT want overly long documents written solely by consultants.
3. We DO want evidence of clear outcome-focused thinking.
4. We DO want you to use innovative approaches and technology in both developing and implementing the RTP.
5. We DO want you to draw on existing analysis and plans, including the work of the Transport for Wales (TfW) Geospatial and Strategic Transport Analysis unit (G-STAT).
6. We DO want you to work together as a CJC to produce the RTP.
7. We DO want you to follow the five ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
8. We DO want you to use creative ways to engage people to achieve modal shift.
9. We DO want you to include disincentives for car use as well as incentives for more sustainable travel.
10. We DO want the Strategic Development Plans and the RTPs to be developed together.

## Appendix 2 – North Wales Transport Model – Sectors and Origin and Destination Data



## Origin and Destination Data:

	Llyn Peninsula	Gwynedd South	Gwynedd East	Isle of Anglesey	Caernarfon / Bangor	Conwy Coast	Denb. Coast	Rest of Conwy	Denbighshire	Flintshire	Deeside	Wrexham	Rural Wrexham	Chester	Rest of Wales	Manchester & Liverpool	Midlands	The North	South East	South West	North Ireland
Llyn Peninsula	28,626	751	4,411	943	9,108	476	87	242	114	49	63	77	22	86	51	491	231	65	23	15	0
Gwynedd South	682	11,623	1,665	12	158	128	83	81	99	27	21	86	16	18	233	118	526	23	20	9	0
Gwynedd East	4,392	1,785	9,332	90	1,016	451	212	1,300	1,093	99	55	394	100	47	31	185	370	22	29	11	0
Isle of Anglesey	1,099	16	99	90,271	19,814	2,743	208	263	105	90	102	35	10	64	20	593	361	83	120	17	28
Caernarfon / Bangor	8,894	195	898	18,879	98,496	7,811	343	1,360	381	281	217	120	35	203	77	1,147	512	234	112	50	1
Conwy Coast	493	152	513	2,438	8,619	15,192	20,490	8,856	5,966	1,752	1,360	401	56	1,074	59	4,046	717	415	66	15	1
Denb. Coast	86	78	219	194	396	21,123	75,270	1,258	9,968	6,118	3,383	320	37	937	25	3,467	540	339	31	6	2
Rest of Conwy	258	86	1,272	243	1,562	9,586	1,480	8,113	1,194	189	188	183	75	39	26	345	391	55	28	10	0
Denbighshire	123	126	1,273	80	427	6,100	9,882	1,245	33,800	4,751	2,531	4,318	1,956	871	41	1,533	1,186	99	21	9	0
Flintshire	52	34	119	87	352	2,115	6,954	233	5,192	36,816	34,757	9,881	770	12,173	23	3,805	697	183	17	12	1
Deeside	61	32	97	89	258	1,782	4,152	253	2,965	35,503	89,660	7,144	491	34,420	24	8,188	1,215	296	77	22	0
Wrexham	99	105	453	28	146	436	392	227	4,550	11,615	7,527	156,939	16,731	12,054	78	6,856	11,059	500	51	48	1
Rural Wrexham	26	20	110	6	37	65	38	91	2,239	815	483	17,983	8,885	1,352	30	1,133	8,183	68	109	20	0
Chester	80	26	70	48	177	1,014	908	40	878	12,351	34,732	15,020	1,512	126,963	68	60,839	6,385	1,481	216	43	2
Rest of Wales	38	244	31	15	49	54	30	14	24	13	21	62	23	54	405	564	732	205	23	15	36
Manchester & Liverpool	478	152	255	508	1,229	4,202	3,977	413	1,858	4,041	9,040	7,717	1,192	63,938	715	46,721	8,453	1,496	714	221	124
Midlands	274	605	447	256	466	593	519	426	1,372	644	1,218	12,266	9,271	6,477	727	8,736	159,515	704	685	234	96
The North	73	30	29	73	225	415	411	58	108	161	282	591	70	1,648	241	1,661	603	0	0	0	66
South East	36	19	29	107	118	61	21	27	24	24	63	54	82	213	23	765	627	0	0	0	201
South West	10	11	10	16	50	15	3	12	8	10	24	44	21	50	16	237	249	0	0	0	47
North Ireland	0	0	0	24	2	3	1	0	0	1	1	3	0	2	23	67	58	68	180	39	0



# North Wales Regional Transport Plan

## Case for Change

### Annex 1 - Policy Context

(Draft)





# Case for Change

## Annex 1

### Policy Context

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document has been produced as an annex to the North Wales Regional Transport Plan. It summarises the national, regional and local policies that are influencing the development of the Regional Transport Plan.

## 2. NATIONAL POLICY

### 2.1 The Well-being of Future Generations Act<sup>1</sup>

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act was passed in 2015. It is aimed at improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It is intended to make public bodies think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This will help to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future.

The Act introduced seven well-being goals, which are shown in Figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1. - Well-being Goals

<sup>1</sup> [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015: the essentials \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)





Transport plays an important role in supporting the progress towards all seven of the well-being goal:

- **A Prosperous Wales** – through the development of a transport system that limits impact on climate change and provides people with access to education and employment.
- **A Resilient Wales** – through maximising opportunities to enhance biodiversity in transport corridors and developing a transport system that can adapt to future climate change.
- **A Healthier Wales** – by providing attractive active networks that encourage physical activity.
- **A More Equal Wales** – through providing access to the training, education, employment and other opportunities that enable to people to fulfil their potential.
- **A Wales of Cohesive Communities** – by providing attractive, viable, and safe connections to and between communities.
- **A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language** – through providing access to arts, sports, and recreation activities.
- **A Globally Responsible Wales** – by considering the impact on global well-being when considering changes to our transport infrastructure.

## 2.2 Future Wales – the National Plan 2040<sup>2</sup>

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 is Welsh Government’s national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of communities.

The plan sets out eleven ambitions for a Wales that transport is key to achieving. These are a Wales where people live...

- ...and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places
- ...in vibrant rural places with access to homes and jobs
- ...in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth
- ...in places with a thriving Welsh Language
- ...and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth
- ...in places where, prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted
- ...in places where travel is sustainable
- ...in places with world-class digital infrastructure
- ...in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution
- ...in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems
- ... in places which are decarbonised and climate resilient.

Policy 12 of the Plan is particularly relevant to the development of the Regional Transport Plan as it considers Regional Connectivity. This states that *“The Welsh Government will be investing*

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<sup>2</sup> [Update to Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 \(gov.wales\)](#)



significantly to improve active travel and public transport. This needs to be combined with the implementation of policies in Planning Policy Wales which require development to be directed towards sustainable locations and designed to make it possible for everyone to make sustainable and healthy travel choices for their daily journeys. It will also require planning authorities to refuse planning permission for car-dependent developments which would otherwise encourage car use and undermine sustainable travel.”

The Plan notes the importance of reducing the impacts of car use in Wales, and how this can be supported by:

- Developing active travel
- Improving public transport
- Then transition to low emission vehicles
- Developing infrastructure responsibly

The National Plan includes a Regional Strategic Diagram for North Wales that indicates the high-level priorities that Welsh Government have for our region and that the Regional Transport Plan should set out to support. This is shown in Figure 2.2.

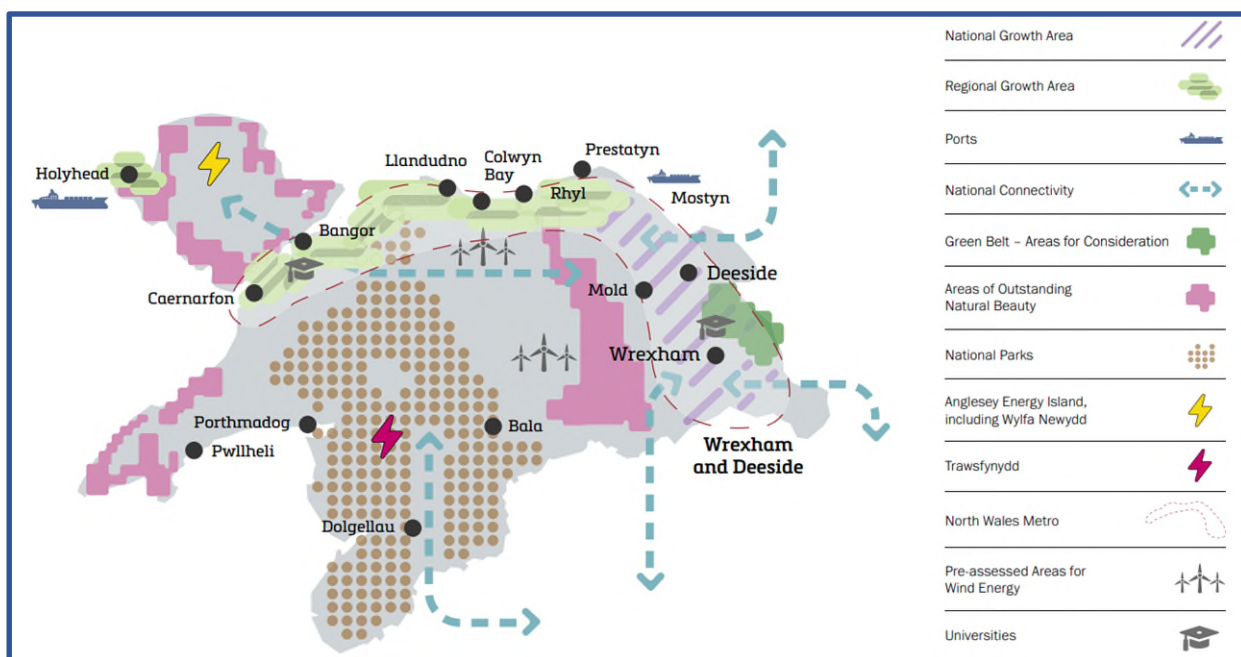


Figure 2.2 – Regional Strategic Diagram from National Plan

The Plan recognises two National Growth Areas in North Wales:

- **Wrexham and Deeside** – “Wrexham and Deeside will be the main focus for growth and investment in the North region. Strategic and Local Development Plans across the region must recognise the National Growth Area as the focus for strategic economic and housing growth; essential services and facilities; advanced manufacturing and transport infrastructure”
- **North Wales Coastal Settlements** – “The Welsh Government supports sustainable growth and regeneration in regionally important towns along the northern Coast. Holyhead, Caernarfon, Bangor, Llandudno, Colwyn Bay, Rhyl and Prestatyn will be a focus for managed growth and they have an important sub-regional role complementing the National Growth



Area of Wrexham and Deeside. Strategic and Local Development Plans should recognise the roles of these places as a focus for housing, employment, tourism, public transport and key services within their wider areas and support their continued function as focal points for sub-regional growth”

Policy 23 of the National Plan talks about the North Wales Metro, explaining that “the Welsh Government supports the development of the North Wales Metro and will work with Transport for Wales, local authorities and other partners to enable its delivery and maximise associated opportunities. The Welsh Government will work with local and regional authorities in North Wales and the North West of England to ensure the Metro and wider transport investments strengthen cross-border transport connections with improved transport links between the North, Chester, Liverpool and Manchester. Strategic and Local Development Plans must support the North Wales Metro. Planning authorities should plan growth and regeneration to maximise the opportunities arising from better regional and cross border connectivity, including identifying opportunities for higher density, mixed-use and car-free development around new and improved metro stations”.

### 2.2.1 Llwybr Newydd - The Wales National Transport Strategy<sup>3</sup>

The Wales National Transport Strategy has been in place since 2021. It sets out Welsh Government’s vision for how the transport system can help deliver the priorities for Wales, helping to create a more prosperous, green, and equal society. The vision and priorities of the strategy are shown Figure 2.3.

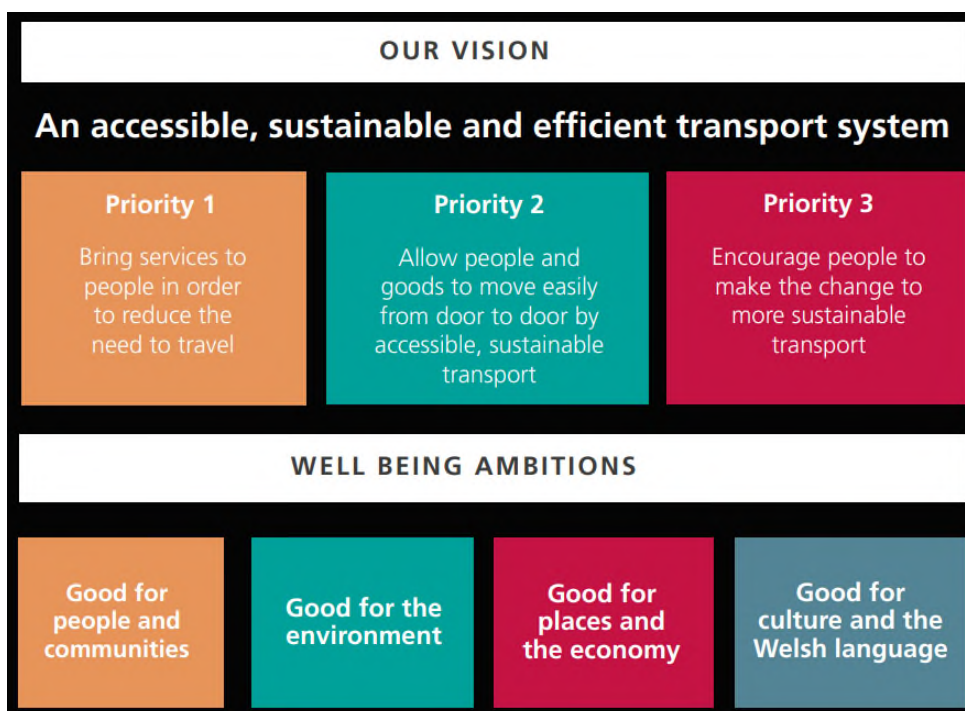


Figure 2.3 - Vision and Priorities of Llwybr Newydd

It is important that the priorities in Llwybr Newydd are at the forefront of thinking as policies and priorities for transport in North Wales are developed in the Regional Transport Plan. Of particular note is the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy that supports the delivery of the Priority 2: Allow people and

<sup>3</sup> [Llwybr Newydd A New Wales Transport Strategy 2021: full strategy \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/llwybr-newydd-a-new-wales-transport-strategy-2021-full-strategy)



goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable transport. The Hierarchy is shown in Figure 2.4.

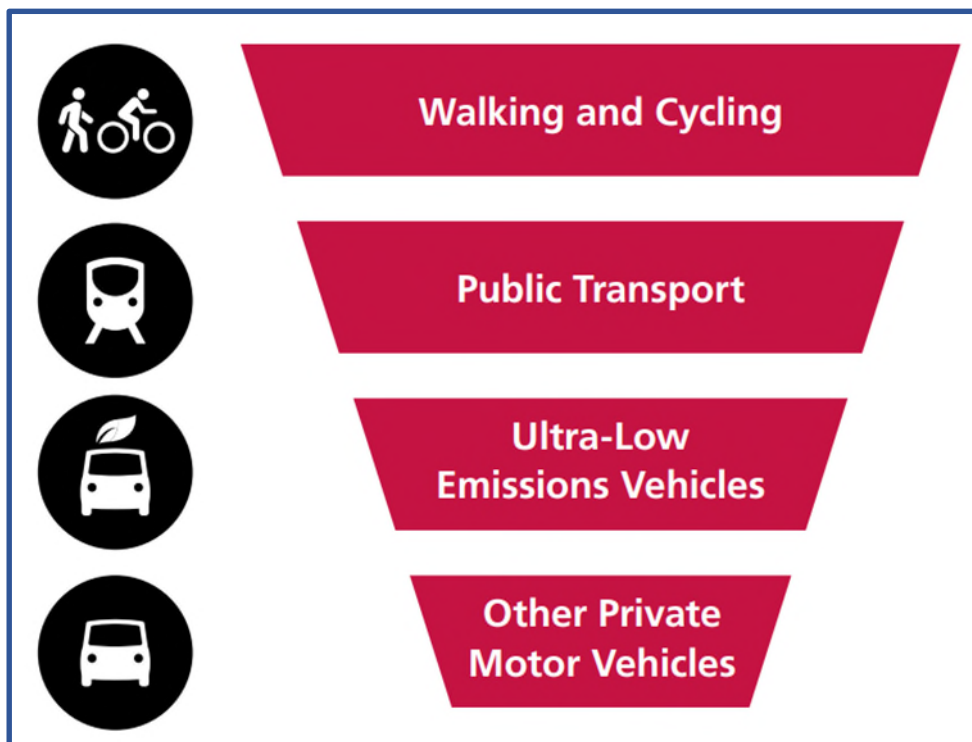


Figure 2.4 - Llwybr Newydd Transport Hierarchy

Llwybr Newydd includes the following statement regarding the development of Regional Transport Plans. “Regional Corporate Joint Committees will also prepare Regional Transport Plans for transport in their area. These will be shaped by Llwybr Newydd and aligned with Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 and the emerging regional development plans. Regional Transport Plans will include both policy and the supporting regional transport delivery plan.”

### 2.3 National Transport Delivery Plan 2022-2027<sup>4</sup>

This National Transport Delivery Plan (NTDP) sets out how Welsh Government will deliver against the priorities and ambitions set out in Llwybr Newydd – The Wales Transport Strategy. The NTDP includes the programmes, projects and new policies are intended to be delivered by 2027.

The interventions included in the Plan that have a specifically local significance for North Wales include those shown in Table 2.1.

Programme	Intervention	Timescale
Integrated Journey Planning and Ticketing	Extend PAYG across urban Metro regions (SE Wales, NE Wales and Swansea and the Bay)	2024-27
	Extend fare capping bus pilot to wider North Wales region	2023-25

<sup>4</sup> [National Transport Delivery Plan 2022 to 2027 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/national-transport-delivery-plan-2022-to-2027)



Programme	Intervention	Timescale
Rail	Access for all - programme of step free access; Abergavenny, Shotton, Newtown, Tenby, Flint, Cwmbran, Caerphilly, Ludlow, Llanelli, Barry, Treforest, Cathays.	2022-25
	Changing places toilet and tactile paving installations to be installed at Shotton.	2022-25
	Capacity improvements Shrewsbury - Wrexham (Gobowen Intermediate block signal)	2022-25
	Introduction of additional rail services: Machynlleth - Tywyn 2 tpd Sundays	2023-24
	Introduction of additional rail services: Tywyn - Pwllheli 4 tpd Sundays	2023-24
	Introduction of additional rail services: Llandudno Junction - Bangor 1 tph	2023-24
	Introduction of additional rail services: Llandudno Junction - Llandudno 2 tph	2023-24
	Introduction of additional rail services: Llandudno Junction - Chester 1 tph	2023-24
	Introduction of new Class 197 trains across North Wales, Cambrian and the Marches lines	2022-25
	Introduction of new Class 230 trains on Wrexham - Bidston	2023-24
North Wales Metro	Overall NW Metro strategic development including studies and analysis to inform future schemes	2022 - 27 and beyond
	Active Travel (Local Connectivity) Phase 1	2022 to 25
	Active Travel to Stations (Local Connectivity) Phase 2	2022 to 25
	Development	2022 to 24
	Active Travel to Stations (Local Connectivity) Phase 3	2023 to 26
	Wrexham Gateway Access and Movement Development	2022 to 27
	Bangor Gateway Station Area transport integration	2022 to 27
	Snowdonia Access Improvement	2022 to 27 and beyond
	Holyhead Transport Masterplan	2022 to 27 and beyond
	Further Public Transport Interchange hubs	2022 to 27 and beyond
	Study and development of potential park and ride and park and share opportunities to reduce low occupancy car journeys.	2022 to 25
	Delivery of projects from the low occupancy study and development project	2022 to 27
	Borderlands line capacity enhancements	2022 to 27 and beyond
	North Wales Mainline capacity enhancements	2022 to 27 and beyond
Deeside Station Detailed Design and Construction	2022 to 26	
Shotton Integrated Station	2022 to 25	
Transport Innovation (North and West Wales)	2022 - 27 and beyond	

Table 2.1 - National Transport Delivery Plan Interventions Specific to North Wales



## 2.4 Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2 (2021 to 2025)<sup>5</sup>

This document sets out Welsh Government's commitment to tackling climate change. It the Welsh Ministers' statutory duty to prepare and publish a report before the end of 2021 setting out their proposals and policies for meeting Carbon Budget 2 and sets Wales on a pathway to net zero emissions by 2050.

Meeting Carbon Budget 2 and setting Wales on a pathway to deliver net zero emissions by 2050 will require action in three broad areas for passenger and freight transport:

- Demand reduction and modal shift – how behavioural and societal shifts could reduce or change demand for travel.
- The technological options available and the uptake of transport with low or zero emissions.
- Improvements to fuel efficiency in conventional vehicles.

The document identifies a transport sector ambition statement, which is:

“We aim to reduce emissions from passenger transport by 22% in 2025 (from 2019) and 98% in 2050 through demand reduction, modal shift and the uptake of low carbon technologies.

Our aim is to reduce the number of car miles travelled per person by 10% by 2030 and to increase the proportion of trips by sustainable travel mode (public transport and active travel) to 35% by 2025 and 39% by 2030.

By 2025 10% of passenger car travel will be by zero emission car and 48% of new car sales will be zero emission, we will have a comprehensive network of electric vehicle charging points, and will also have transitioned a large proportion of our bus, taxi and private hire vehicles fleet to zero emission vehicles.”

Policies from the document that are relevant to the Regional Transport Plan include:

- Policy 30 – Enable people to work at or near to home
- Policy 31 – Increase trip mode share of active travel from a current estimated proportion of 27%<sup>55</sup> to 33% by 2030 and at least 35% by 2040
- Policy 32 – Increase trip mode share of public transport from a current estimated proportion of 5%<sup>56</sup> to 7% by 2030 and 13% by 2040
- Policy 33 – Reduce emissions from freight and logistics
- Policy 34 – Land use planning
- Policy 35 – Accelerate the uptake of zero emission cars and vans
- Policy 36 – Plan for and invest in EV charging infrastructure
- Policy 37 – Zero emission bus fleet
- Policy 38 – All taxis and private hire vehicles to be zero emission by 2028
- Policy 39 – Decarbonise the rail network
- Policy 40 – Zero emission HGVs

These are summarised in Figure 2.5.

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<sup>5</sup> [42949 Second All Wales Low Carbon Delivery Plan \(2021-2025\) \(gov.wales\)](#)

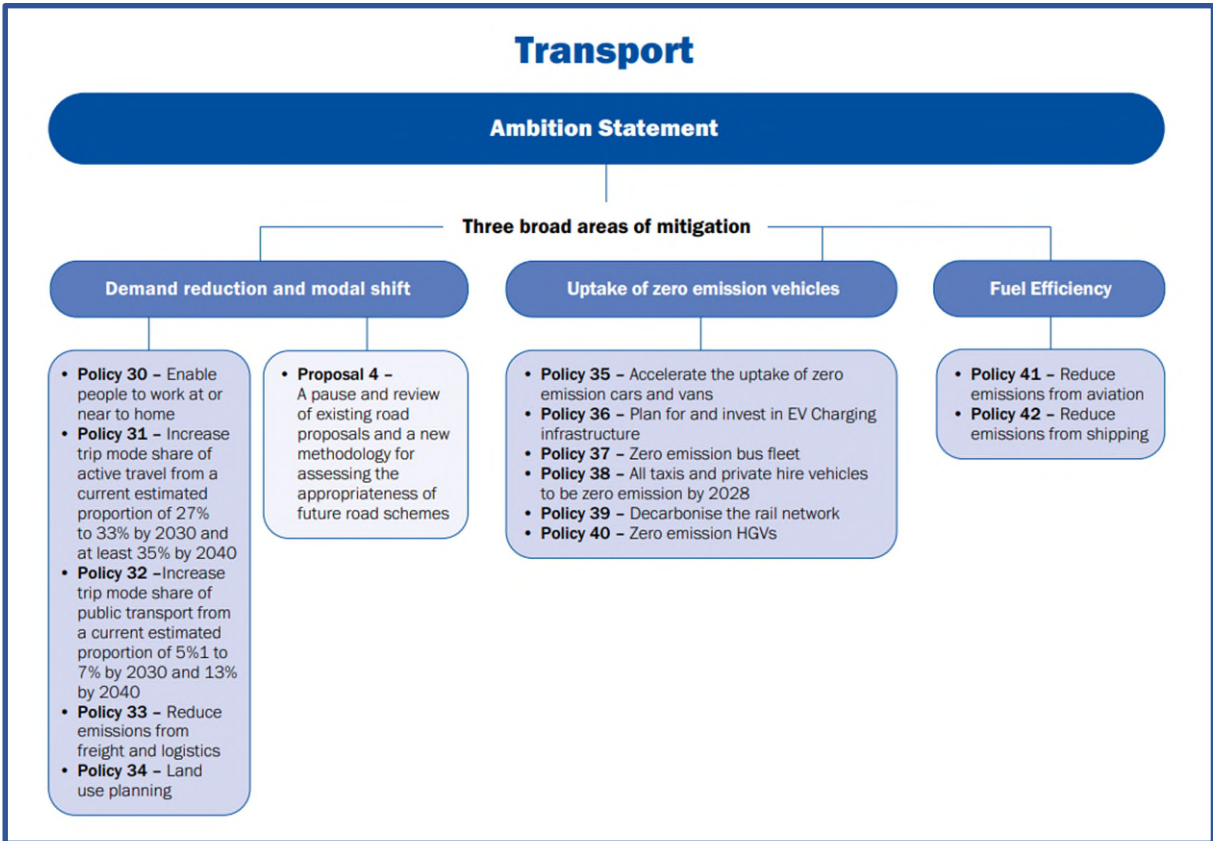


Figure 2.5 – Transport Policies from Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2

## 2.5 The Future of Road Investment in Wales

The Welsh Government set up a Roads Review Panel to review road schemes that are or were under development and to make recommendations for the future of road investment in Wales. The panel were asked to review 51 individual road schemes in the light of the Wales Transport Strategy ambitions and priorities, Programme for Government commitments and the second low carbon delivery plan, Net Zero Wales.

The Panel’s findings that are relevant to North Wales are summarised in Table 2.2.



Scheme	Summary	Recommendation
A487 RHIWSTAERDYWYLL	The scheme is intended to address defective safety barriers on the A487 at Rhiwstaerdywyll, just south of Cadair Idris.	Welsh Government could continue to support the A487 Rhiwstaerdywyll scheme, subject to more detailed consideration of the 30mph speed limit and barrier options. It is unlikely to be appropriate to progress the highway modification option. The safety benefit should be benchmarked against other safety schemes (including those in the Local Safety Schemes programme and on local authority roads), and the scheme should only proceed if it is among the best of schemes waiting for funding
A494 MAESGAMMEDD ROAD JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT	The scheme would involve modification to the junction of the A494 with Maesgamedd, an unclassified road north of the village of Gwyddelwern	The scheme should not proceed in its current form. The safety of the junction should continue to be monitored. Further options to reduce speed and improve the visibility splay at the existing junction should be developed if the collision record suggests that action should be taken.
A483 WREXHAM BYPASS JUNCTIONS 3-6 SCHEME	This scheme would make modifications to the A483 Junctions 3 to 6 around Wrexham. The first phase would include a relocated larger capacity junction at Junction 4 (A483/A525) and later phases would be smaller-scale modifications to Junctions 3, 5 and 6 including some active travel provision	The A483 Wrexham Junctions 3-6 scheme should not proceed as the case for change is not well-aligned with Welsh Government's aim to reduce car mileage. The scheme would increase private car capacity and carbon emissions. Welsh Government could consider providing support for an alternative approach to create an exemplar residential and employment development with low levels of car use.





Scheme	Summary	Recommendation
A487 LLWYN MAFON	This scheme is on a 1.7km section of the A487 north of Porthmadog	Welsh Government could continue to support the A487 Llwyn Mafon scheme, subject to more detailed development to ensure safety benefits to walkers, cyclists, equestrians and motorised road users; and subject to benchmarking against other safety schemes to demonstrate that the scheme is among the best of safety schemes waiting for funding
A494 LÔN FAWR RUTHUN/ CORWEN ROAD	The Lôn Fawr / Corwen Road Junction scheme would replace an existing Y-junction with a T-junction with a 90° angle to improve sight lines	The scheme should not proceed because the case for change is weak. The safety of the junction should continue to be monitored, and further options to reduce speed, or divert traffic to reduce conflicting movements should be considered if the collision record suggests that action should be taken
A483/A5 HALTON ROUNDABOUT	The scheme comprises modifications to the A483/A5 Halton roundabout lying to the north-east of Chirk. The changes involve increasing the diameter of the roundabout, creating additional lanes on approaches and around the roundabout, and signing improvements for active travel	The scheme should not proceed because the case for change is weak. The safety of the junction should continue to be monitored. Further options to reduce speed and improve safety should be developed if the collision record suggests that action should be taken.
A55 / A494 NETWORK RESILIENCE	The A55 / A494 is the main highway route across North Wales. The Network Resilience study covers the A55 between Holyhead on Anglesey in the west and the English border in the east. The study also includes the A494 between Ewloe interchange on the A55 and the English Border, and the strategic and tactical diversion routes for when the A55 / A494 may be closed.	The A55 / A494 Network Resilience Study should not proceed. The case for change is not well-aligned with Welsh Government's aim to reduce car mileage. The scheme would increase private car capacity and result in a mode shift from public transport to car travel, and this would undermine the target to increase sustainable transport mode share
A55 - JUNCTION 23 - 24 CORRIDOR STUDY	The WeITAG Stage 1 A55 Corridor Study (J23 - J24) examined a 5.5km length of the A55. Junction 23 is at Llanddulas and Junctions 23A and 24 are to the north and east of Abergele.	The A55 J23-24 Study should not proceed to the next stage because there are concerns surrounding this process being the most appropriate to deliver relevant safety and multi-modal transport benefits for this area.



Scheme	Summary	Recommendation
A55 EWLOE (J33B) TO A494 QUEENSFERRY INTERCHANGE	The WelTAG Stage 1 A55 J33b Ewloe – A494 Queensferry Interchange Study examined a 4km length of the A494, between A55 Junction 33b at Ewloe (where the A494 and A55 join) and the Queensferry Junction of the A494 south-east of Connah’s Quay	The A55 Ewloe (J33b) to A494 Queensferry Interchange Study should not proceed to the next stage because the case for change has not been made and there are concerns surrounding this process being the most appropriate to deliver relevant multi-modal transport benefits for this area.
A55 NORTHOP (J33) TO HOLYWELL (J32)	The proposed scheme would involve a 3km westbound climbing lane, 5.4km concrete central reserve barrier and consequent closure of two at-grade pedestrian crossings on the A55 between Junction 33 at Northop and Junction 32 at Holywell.	The A55 Northop (J33) to Holywell (J32) scheme should not proceed because the case for change is weak.
A55 EWLOE (J33B) TO RHUALLT (J29)	The WelTAG Stage 1 A55 Corridor Study (Junction 33b – Junction 29) examined a 22km length of the A55 between Junction 33b at Ewloe and J29 east of Rhualt.	The A55 Ewloe (J33b) to Rhualt (J29) study should not proceed to the next stage because the case for change has not been made and there are concerns surrounding this process being the most appropriate to deliver relevant safety and multi-modal transport benefits for this area
FLINTSHIRE CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT	The proposed preferred scheme emerging from the WelTAG Stage 2 work, ‘the Red Option’, is a substitute long distance dual-carriageway route for the A55 / A494. It would lie to the north and west of Connah’s Quay, mainly along the line of the A548. A new section of highway is also proposed to connect the A548 to the A55 at Northop Junction to the west of Connah’s Quay.	The scheme should not proceed. The case for change is not well-aligned with Welsh Government’s aim to reduce car mileage. The scheme would increase private car capacity and result in a mode shift from public transport to car travel, and this would undermine the target to increase sustainable transport mode share
A55 THIRD MENAI CROSSING	The scheme would involve construction of a new A55 bridge over the Menai Strait between Anglesey and Gwynedd, and re-alignment of the A55 between Junction 7 (on Anglesey) and Junction 10 (on the mainland)	The A55 Third Menai Crossing should not proceed. The case for change is not wellaligned with Welsh Government’s aim to reduce car mileage. The scheme would lead to increased traffic and carbon dioxide emissions, and a mode shift from public transport to car travel, inconsistent with the target to increase sustainable transport



Scheme	Summary	Recommendation
ABERGELE TOWN CENTRE CONGESTION IMPROVEMENTS	This scheme would involve construction of a link road or gyratory system in Abergele town centre. Some footways would be widened and some cycleways provided.	The Abergele Town Centre Congestion Improvements scheme should not proceed in its current form. However, Welsh Government could continue to support development of a scheme for Abergele town centre, if justified against other transport priorities, with a focus on enhancing active travel provision for the whole town in line with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy, and managing private car demand.
LLANDUDNO CONGESTION IMPROVEMENTS	The scheme is focused on A470 Conway Road and Links Roundabout in Llandudno.	Welsh Government could continue to support the Llandudno Congestion Improvements scheme, subject to further development in line with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy and consideration of the Panel's advice on the preferred approach at Links Roundabout.
CHESTER-BROUGHTON GROWTH CORRIDOR	The scheme involves construction of a dual or single-carriageway road with associated active travel and public transport infrastructure	Welsh Government should not provide further support for the development of the highway schemes proposed for the Chester Broughton Growth Corridor. These schemes would increase road capacity for private cars and encourage dispersed land-use patterns.
WARREN HALL	Mixed use development site	Welsh Government is advised to consider whether development of this site, and similar sites within its portfolio, would be compatible with meeting its aims around modal shift and decarbonisation.

Table 2.2 - Summary of Roads Review Panel Recommendations for North Wales

The Roads Review Panel also reported on a Llanbedr bypass separately. Welsh Government is now working with local stakeholders to take forward the recommendations of the roads review panel, including a package of sustainable transport measures, safety improvements, and a scaled-down road option.



## 2.6 Clean Air Plan for Wales<sup>6</sup>

The Clean Air Plan for Wales sets out proposals for reducing concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) around roads where levels are above legal limits in Wales. NO<sub>2</sub> is a pollutant of concern for human health. The proposal has put emphasis on a relatively small number of hot-spot areas, almost entirely coinciding with roadside locations in heavy traffic. The plan focuses action on five locations across Wales, with two of these in North Wales:

- A494 Deeside
- A483 Wrexham

## 2.7 Town Centre First<sup>7</sup>

Since the publication of Future Wales in 2021, Town Centre First has been a development plan policy requirement in Wales. It is also a cross cutting principle embedded in the Wales Infrastructure Investment Strategy. This means that town centres are considered first for the location of significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure, and public service facilities.

## 2.8 A Healthier Wales<sup>8</sup>

A Healthier Wales is the Welsh Government's plan for health and social care. There will be a whole system approach to health and social care, in which services are only one element of supporting people to have better health and wellbeing throughout their whole lives. It will be a 'wellness' system, which aims to support and anticipate health needs, to prevent illness, and to reduce the impact of poor health.

## 2.9 Noise and Soundscape Action Plan<sup>9</sup>

Welsh Government's Noise and Soundscape Action Plan acknowledges that "We need to create appropriate soundscapes, meaning the right sound environment in the right time and place." The sound of our transport system has been changing, and will continue to evolve over the course of the next few decades. Vehicles on our roads and railways are gradually going electric, which virtually eliminates the sound of their engines, while roads in built-up areas are adopting lower speed limits. These two changes will significantly reduce transportation sound levels in our villages, towns and cities. However, artificial sound must be added to electric vehicles at lower speeds for safety reasons, while noise associated with vehicles travelling at high speed, and excessively loud vehicles in particular, remains a challenge. There is also a risk of noise impacts arising from newer forms of transport such as electric scooters.

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<sup>6</sup> [40794 The Clean Air Plan for Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> Town centres: position statement [HTML] | GOV.WALES

<sup>8</sup> A Healthier Wales

<sup>9</sup> Noise and Soundscape Plan for Wales 2023 to 2028



## 2.10 UK Government - Union Connectivity Review<sup>10</sup>

Many of the issues and there are associated policies that are relevant to the Regional Transport Plan are devolved to Welsh Government. However, UK Government remains an important influencer, not just for non-devolved issues such as rail, but also as a funder and policy maker. One policy area that will influence transport in North Wales is the Union Connectivity Review.

The UK Government asked Sir Peter Hendy CBE to undertake a detailed review into how transport connectivity across the UK can support economic growth and quality of life in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The review was published in November 2021, and includes recommendations as to whether and how best to improve transport connectivity between the nations of the UK. The review identified a number of corridors as part of a proposed UKNET, a strategic transport network for the United Kingdom. These multi-modal corridors to assess the best infrastructure improvements to enhance connectivity and deliver jobs, growth, housing and social cohesion. Infrastructure improvements were assessed against the following criteria:

- Improve transport provision across the Union.
- Support economic growth and recovery across the whole of the UK.
- Help address economic and social inequalities across the whole of the UK.
- Support quality of life across the whole of the UK.
- Support the UK's commitment to be net zero by 2050.
- Take advantage of technological innovation.
- Be consistent with the UK Government's fiscal strategy.

The North Wales Corridor is one of the UKNET corridors identified in the Union Connectivity Review, as shown in Figure 2.6.

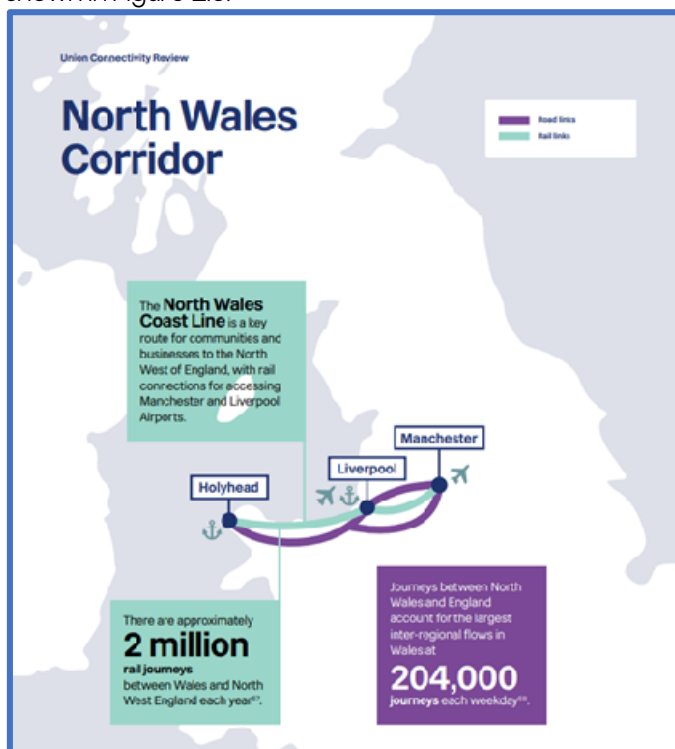


Figure 2.6 - North Wales Corridor Identified in the Union Connectivity Review

<sup>10</sup> (Union Connectivity Review (publishing.service.gov.uk))



The Union Connectivity Review (UCR) recognised that the area comprising North Wales and across to Liverpool and Manchester is a discrete economic area with significant interconnectivity and large numbers of daily cross border trips. A quarter of employees in this region cross the border between England and Wales for work. It is a key route for communities and businesses with connections to Manchester and Liverpool Airports and the island of Ireland via Holyhead.

As part of the UCR, the following opportunities for improvement on this corridor were identified:

- High levels of traffic on the A55, M56, M6 and M60
- Vulnerability of A55 during incidents, and lack of resilience
- Scheduling of ferries meaning HGVs come in waves
- Line speed and capacity on the North Wales Main Line and the Cheshire/Mersey area
- Opportunities to connect with HS2

The UCR included the following recommendation:

“The UK Government should: Work with the Welsh Government to undertake a multimodal review of the North Wales transport corridor, and develop a package of improvements focused on the North Wales Main Line (including better connectivity with HS2, and electrification), the A55, the M53, M56, and onward travel to and from the island of Ireland.”

## 2.11 UK Government - Network North<sup>11</sup>

Network North was launched by UK Government in October 2023 as a new approach to transport in the UK. It included the following commitment:

“We will also provide an unprecedented £1 billion investment to fund the electrification of the North Wales Main Line, bringing parts of North Wales within an hour of Manchester. We will oversee more punctual, reliable journeys on the 126-mile route between Crewe, Warrington, Chester, Llandudno and Holyhead, where ferry services run to Dublin.”

## 3. REGIONAL POLICY

### 3.1 North Wales Transport Commission

The Deputy Minister for Climate Change established the North Wales Transport Commission to provide recommendations to realise a sustainable integrated and multi-modal transport system in north Wales. The Commission assessed the problems, constraints and opportunities in the region and engaged with stakeholder groups to consider all possible interventions.

The Commission’s recommendations are structured around better networks for bus, rail and active travel that offer plausible alternatives to travel by private vehicle. The recommendations are balanced with an acknowledgement of the continued importance of the car in rural areas and actions that can be taken to make use of the private car more sustainable. There are also recommendations for freight, the visitor economy and achieving changes in behaviour. A summary of the recommendations made by the Commission is shown in Table 3.1.

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<sup>11</sup> [Network North: Transforming British Transport \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)



Topic Area	Recommendation
RAIL	Implement rail capacity improvements at and around Chester Station to enable electrification and five trains per hour, including one express service.
	Prioritise delivery of the North Wales Main Line Phase 1 infrastructure improvements between Crewe and Llandudno Junction to enable operation of five trains per hour, including one express service, and to reduce journey times.
	Deliver North Wales Main Line Phase 2 and 3 proposals to enable operation of five trains per hour, including one express service between Crewe and Bangor (Phase 2) and Holyhead (Phase 3), and to reduce journey times
	Deliver electrification of the North Wales Main Line in a phased manner consistent with the infrastructure development Phases 1 to 3. To be ready for electrification, development work must be undertaken, and a business case established.
	Remove the rail capacity constraint at the Padeswood Cement Works south of Buckley Station on the Borderlands Line.
	Implement infrastructure improvements on the Borderlands Line to achieve four trains per hour and reduce rail times, including two direct trains to Liverpool.
	Work with Liverpool City Region and Merseyrail to maximise the integration of services between the Borderlands Line and Merseyrail network.
	Provide a station in Deeside Industrial Park on the Borderlands Line with supporting active travel and public transport access to the station.
	Develop and implement proposals at Shotton Station to create a high quality and fully accessible interchange between the Borderlands Line and North Wales Main Line and to improve active travel and public transport access.
	Implement a signalling improvement scheme at Gobowen on the Shrewsbury–Wrexham–Chester Line and dual tracking between Wrexham and Chester to address capacity constraints to enable two passenger trains per hour and freight services to operate effectively and reliably.
	Continue to consider line capacity enhancements, increased service frequencies and train capacity enhancements on the Conwy Valley and Cambrian Coast Lines.
	Improve the allocation of the rail fleet in north Wales in the short term to ensure rolling stock meets user needs for the types of journey people are making and procure additional trains including an electric fleet for the North Wales Main Line in the medium term.
	Safeguard former rail lines from future development and develop walking and cycling routes along them where appropriate, with high quality bus services for the communities alongside them
	Consider locations for and methods to develop rail based light logistics freight services.
BUSES AND COACHES	We support the proposed legislative changes to allow bus services to be franchised and we recommend that local authorities and Transport for Wales prepare for and implement changes to bus services prior to and in preparation for franchising and that Welsh Government provides multiyear funding to support these services.
	We recommend the introduction of a network of regional coastal bus services with a frequency of two to four buses an hour extending into the evenings that link major settlements, employment sites and transport interchanges
	We recommend the introduction of a network regional rural bus services with an hourly service frequency extending into the evenings that link rural settlements and are operated by a fleet of buses that are comfortable for longer journeys.



Topic Area	Recommendation
	<p>We recommend the proposed Traws Cymru enhancements to routes, service frequencies and hours of operation are carried out in the short term.</p> <p>We recommend local bus networks are developed in preparation for franchising by Transport for Wales and local authorities working collaboratively with their communities and employers.</p> <p>We recommend making suitable pilot Fflecsi Dynamic Demand Responsive services permanent, and introducing additional Fflecsi services in other areas where experience from the pilot and other schemes suggest they would be a good complement to scheduled bus proposals. Schemes should be designed with local community involvement.</p> <p>We recommend that Transport for Wales and local authorities collaborate with communities, particularly in rural areas, to help fund and deliver community transport services that meet otherwise unmet need.</p> <p>We recommend a pilot is run and evaluated of a 'total transport services contract' that pools budgets and fleets to provide the services for education, patient, social services and community transport.</p> <p>We recommend that the current proposal for a coach service between Bangor and Carmarthen is progressed together with its required interchange infrastructure. In addition, we recommend a study is undertaken of other potential north-south and cross-border coach routes.</p> <p>We recommend that local highway authorities and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent (on behalf of Welsh Government) implement bus priority proposals and review proposed bus service improvements to identify and implement further required bus priority measures.</p> <p>We recommend making the Sherpa'r Wyddfa bus services permanent, provide long term funding for them and investigating how services can be integrated further with the wider bus and railway networks.</p> <p>We recommend the creation of a partnership where Sherpa'r Wyddfa and other public transport services can be supported by innovative sources of funding including parking revenues if available and appropriate</p> <p>We recommend an investigation of the benefits of seasonal and tourist bus services, like the Sherpa'r Wyddfa, in other locations in north Wales to support the visitor economy and promote integration with wider rail and bus networks.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">PROVIDING FOR ACTIVE TRAVEL</p>	<p>Priority should be given to the construction of junctions, crossings and other infrastructure that have the greatest potential for creating the most increase in use, these could be new or upgraded existing facilities. These may typically be in urban areas, but in rural areas enhancing safety and providing routes connecting smaller communities to larger settlements is important.</p> <p>We recommend that a North Wales Active Travel Unit is established to work with local authorities, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, Welsh Government Strategic Road Network division and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent to deliver active travel networks that are ambitious, in line with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy and are delivered at pace.</p> <p>We recommend that local authorities develop multi-year delivery programmes for their active travel schemes and engage all relevant departments in scheme development and delivery.</p> <p>We recommend that Transport for Wales's method for route prioritisation is adopted by</p>





Topic Area	Recommendation
	<p>local authorities and Transport for Wales s to target investment to maximise use of the active travel network.</p> <p>We recommend that high-quality active travel routes should be prioritised using Transport for Wales' prioritisation method to target investment to schemes that maximise volume of use of the network and link population centres with major employment sites</p> <p>We recommend a programme of works is instigated to implement changes to the existing highway network in urban areas to re-allocate road space and prioritise junctions for people walking and cycling</p> <p>We recommend planning and developing the rural network of routes that connect with National Cycle Network Route 5 on the north coast, and an inter-urban route between Deeside and Wrexham</p> <p>We recommend that routes forming part of the rights of way network are improved to a standard suitable for everyday active travel journeys where that would increase everyday active travel use</p> <p>We recommend implementation of Quiet Lanes by local authorities where this will help create a more extensive active travel network, and therefore the ability to designate Quiet Lanes in Wales should be formalised.</p> <p>We recommend that funding streams additional to the Active Travel Fund are investigated so that active travel routes can be developed to visitor attractions.</p> <p>We recommend that high impact active travel components of schemes paused by the Roads Review are developed in line with the Review Panel's recommendations</p> <p>We recommend that all bus and rail stations and interchanges are served by direct, high-quality pedestrian and cycle routes that have priority, and have more and better cycle parking</p> <p>We recommend developing methods to increase e-cycle ownership, including loan and grant schemes</p> <p>We recommend that a public cycle hire scheme is investigated in Wrexham and other locations, and community cycle hire schemes are investigated for other locations in the region.</p>
THE CAR AND ROAD TRANSPORT	<p>We recommend that parking strategy and standards and planning consents should ensure that new residential and non-residential developments provide sufficient electric vehicle charging points to meet future demand.</p> <p>We recommend increasing the number of car clubs through joint working with car club providers, including community car club providers, in urban and rural areas and at stations, in workplaces and at mobility hubs.</p> <p>We recommend that Welsh Government produces guidance for local authorities on developing a parking management strategy, including all types of on-street and off-street parking and advice on charging.</p> <p>We recommend development of a network of suitable heavy goods vehicle road-side facilities in the region.</p>



Topic Area	Recommendation
INTEGRATION	We recommend that Transport for Wales, local authorities and bus operators should work together ahead of bus franchising to develop and introduce timetables with increased frequencies and better interchange possibilities.
	We recommend the development of fully integrated ticketing across rail, bus, and where possible community transport, using a digital platform and app. Welsh Government and Transport for Wales should set up the necessary processes with timescales for delivery of a digital platform and app that provides this full integration, once franchising has been introduced.
	We recommend a maximum daily fare, supported by tap-on/off infrastructure for all bus and rail is trialled in north Wales to act as a pilot for a countrywide system.
	We recommend the introduction of reduced fares on public transport to make them more affordable and easy to use.
	We recommend placemaking and wayfinding at stations and bus stops that is undertaken in consultation with local and community organisations, including disabled people's organisations.
	We recommend that mobility hubs are created at rail stations, prioritising those that are redeveloped
	We recommend that park-and-ride sites should in general be provided only after active travel networks and cycle parking are developed and where the public transport leg is the longest part of the journey.
	We recommend joint working between transport service providers and tourist related businesses to develop a guest card that offers visitors a package of sustainable travel offers, attraction entrance and goods and services discounts.
PLANNING	We recommend Welsh Government reviews TAN18 guidance to ensure policy intent translates to implementation and that the review leads to inclusion of specific guidance on planning for active travel, provision for buses, and scale of provision of car parking
DIGITAL	We recommend support digital literacy schemes, such as the Digital Communities Wales programme, and would like to see campaigns to raise awareness of their existence.
BEHAVIOUR CHANGE	We recommend that Strategic Transport partnerships for organisational travel planning should be developed by the Welsh Government working with local authorities, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee and major employers in the employment areas in north-east Wales (Deeside and Wrexham) and north-west Wales (centred on Bangor).
	We recommend that employers in north Wales are given the option to sign up to a Healthy Travel Charter, following the south Wales model.
	We recommend that local authorities should expand their work with schools and parents to encourage and support sustainable travel for children, parents and staff.

Table 3.1 – North Wales Transport Commission Recommendations

If we are to ensure a consistent approach to transport policy in North Wales, it is important that the Regional Transport Plan seeks to align, where possible, with the finding of the Commission and is supportive of the delivery of the recommendations.



### 3.2 North Wales Joint Local Transport Plan 2015<sup>12</sup>

The current Local Transport Plan (LTP) covering the North Wales region was developed by Taith and adopted in 2015. The vision statement for the Plan is:

“The North Wales Local Authorities aim to remove barriers to economic growth, prosperity and well-being by delivering safe, sustainable, affordable and effective transport networks”

The LTP outcomes are:

- **Connections to Key Destinations and Markets:** Support for Economic Growth through an improvement in the efficiency, reliability, resilience, and connectivity of movement, including freight, within and between North Wales and other regions and countries (with a particular focus on accessibility to the Enterprise Zones and an improvement in the vitality and viability of towns and other key centres)
- **Access to Employment:** Providing inclusive and affordable access to employment and training (with a focus on the most deprived communities)
- **Access to Services:** Promotion of social inclusion and well-being through inclusive and affordable access to education, health services and other key services and facilities (with a focus on the most deprived communities)
- **Increasing Levels of Walking and Cycling:** for both necessary travel and recreation, by residents and visitors
- **Improved Safety and Security:** of both actual and perceived safety of travel by all modes
- **Benefits and Minimised Impacts on the Environment:** the potential for transport improvements to positively affect the local and global natural and built environment will have been maximised and negative impacts minimised, including adaptation to the effects of climate change.

The LTP also includes a set of high level interventions, which are shown in Table 3.2.

Higher Level Intervention	Description
Transport network resilience improvements	Improvements to key county corridors to remove/ improve resilience problems
Capacity and safety enhancements/ pinch-point improvements	Including schemes to increase network capacity or remove pinch points/ constraints on the county

<sup>12</sup> [North Wales Joint Local Transport Plan 2015 \(flintshire.gov.uk\)](http://flintshire.gov.uk)



Higher Level Intervention	Description
Integration with strategic public transport services	Schemes to improve access to rail stations including road access and bus services and interchange facilities, support for park and ride, walking and cycling routes and facilities
Improved links to Employment	Schemes to provide improved access to EZ's, ports, employment sites and town centres. May include car share sites, bus services, active travel measures as well as road improvements.
Access to services	Range of integrated transport measures to improve access to education, health, community, shopping and other services by public transport, walking and cycling as well as community transport, taxi, car share sites
Encouraging sustainable travel	Infrastructure improvements and promotional initiatives to increase levels of walking and cycling both for travel and for leisure as well as public transport. May include road and rail bridges/ crossings, cycle routes, footway/ footpath provision, safe routes to school, travel planning as well as road safety measures to assist vulnerable users

**Table 3.2 – LTP High Level Interventions**

The vision, outcomes and high level interventions from the LTP will be reviewed during the process of development the Regional Transport Plan. The LTP also includes a wide range of schemes and interventions for delivery. These proposed interventions will also be reviewed and updated in light of current wider policies.

### 3.3 Ambition North Wales and the North Wales Growth Deal<sup>13</sup>

Ambition North Wales is a strong partnership, comprising the six local authorities, two universities and two colleges, working on behalf of North Wales, with Welsh and UK Governments, to deliver against a future vision for economic prosperity.

The Portfolio Management Office has been established to deliver the Growth Deal, and support the regional ambitions for a stronger, more resilient, and sustainable future economy.

With £240m of capital (£120m each) committed by both Governments over the next 10-15years the Growth Deal is seeking to deliver a total investment of up to £1.1bn in the North Wales economy, create 3,400 – 4,200 net additional jobs and generate £2.0- £2.4 billion in net additional GVA. It is critical that new employment sites are well linked by public transport and accessible in order to encourage, enable and promote the modal-shift away from the private car.

The Growth Deal is working on projects to improve digital connectivity in areas of North Wales that is poorly served currently, a programme that will reduce some of the need to travel in the region. It is seeking to bring forward development at a number of sites across North Wales, all of which will require suitable sustainable transport access. Projects that are particularly notable for the Regional Transport Plan include:

<sup>13</sup> [Ambition North Wales | Growth Deal](#)



- **Holyhead Hydrogen Hub**, which will increase hydrogen energy security, reducing the dependence on imports and driving down carbon emissions, particularly in the transportation sector.
- **Holyhead Gateway**, which will enhance the port's capacity through land reclamation (creating new land from the sea) within the harbour. In doing this, the aim is to ensure the port can meet the increasing demands of both business and tourism visits to the region.
- **Responsible Adventure** will promote North Wales as a leading sustainable tourism destination. The project will prioritise environmental sustainability with a decarbonisation strategy which looks to provide a green alternative to moving its customers around sites and North Wales
- **Trawsfynydd**, which will deploy first-of-a-kind Small or Advanced Modular Reactors at the Trawsfynydd site to generate low carbon energy. Construction traffic is likely to be significant
- **Hydrogen Hub**, which will include the supply and use of hydrogen
- **Wrexham Gateway**, which will deliver approximately 7,000sqm of new office space as part of a development that also includes an interchange hub at Wrexham General Station
- **Western Gateway, Wrexham** will provide primary services such as power, telecoms and water for the development of employment and business premises at a site located near Junction 4 of the A483.
- **Warren Hall, Flintshire** will involve providing primary services such as power, telecoms and water to the site in Broughton, Flintshire, near the A55 expressway.
- **Connected Key Sites and Corridors**, which aims to enhance the reliability and quality of mobile services on the main roads and rail routes in North Wales, enabling full-fibre services to key commercial sites across the region.

### 3.4 North Wales Regional Economic Framework<sup>14</sup>

The North Wales Regional Economic Framework (REF) was developed by Welsh Government and Ambition North Wales. The mission through this REF is “to start creating innovative opportunities to ensure we protect and enhance our natural environment whilst also allowing communities to thrive. Building on our strengths and taking advantage of opportunities where they add value, beyond monetary value alone, to the region.”

The REF is based on the principles of a Wellbeing economy. The Wellbeing Economy means taking a different approach to developing the economy for North Wales. It is not simply about economic growth at any cost and requires a change of focus from growth alone, to sustainable growth, which protects and supports communities.

The REF is structured around three core themes:

- Social and Community Well-being, which considers Transport Connectivity, including cross border connectivity and ensuring access to public and active travel modes.
- Experience Economy, which considers realising the economic benefits of public realms within our towns, allowing residents and visitors to benefit from parks and open spaces, squares and tree-lined streets.

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<sup>14</sup> [North Wales regional economic framework \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/north-wales-regional-economic-framework)



- Low Carbon and Low Emission Economy, which includes hydrogen fuelling, EV charging, sourcing investment in new strategic transport links and to approach opportunities to achieve shifts to lower carbon transport modes.

### 3.5 North Wales Regional Energy Strategy<sup>15</sup>

The North Wales Regional Energy Strategy was developed by Ambition North Wales and Welsh Government. The overall objective of this strategy is to develop a strategic pathway identifying key interventions to deliver on the region's ambitions for decarbonising its energy system and ensure the region benefits from the transition. An Energy Vision scenario has been modelled to set out a potential decarbonisation route that will put the region on track to achieve a net zero energy system by 2050.

The vision for North Wales is "Delivering maximum local economic, social, ecological and wellbeing benefits from transitioning to a net zero economy and becoming a net exporter of low carbon electricity through cross-border and regional cooperation."

One of the four priorities of the strategy is "To achieve a shift to lower carbon transport".

To meet Welsh Government targets, and to be on track for net zero by 2050, North Wales needs to reduce emissions from its energy system by 55% by 2035. This requires a 55% reduction in road traffic emissions by 2035 compared to the 2017 levels.

The energy vision scenario modelling used in the strategy assumes a significant shift away from business as usual across domestic, commercial and transport energy usage by 2035. The transport assumptions of the modelled future vision include:

- 55% of vehicles driven in North Wales in 2035 are electric, equivalent to 7,000 more electric vehicles per year by the mid-2020s, peaking at 40,000 per year in the 2030s. This is to be facilitated by the deployment of 2,000 public EV chargers;
- 2,600 gas HGVs and 1,000 hydrogen vehicles;
- A 15% reduction in private vehicle mileage by 2035;
- A slowing of the growth in total number of vehicles on the road, facilitated by increased use of public transport and active travel.

These assumptions summarise the level of action required between 2020 and 2035 to be on track to achieve net zero by 2050. The energy modelling focuses on known decarbonisation technologies and actions that could be implemented by 2035 in order to demonstrate a potential decarbonisation route. The scenario is not intended to be prescriptive.

### 3.6 Anglesey Freeport<sup>16</sup>

The Welsh and UK Governments have approved Anglesey's bid to become one of the first Welsh freeports, providing a unique investment opportunity for businesses considering their future operations, as well as bolstering Anglesey's vibrant island economy and the prosperity of

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<sup>15</sup> [North Wales Energy Strategy \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/north-wales-energy-strategy)

<sup>16</sup> [Home-E - Anglesey Freeport](#)



communities across North Wales. Freeports are designated areas where trade and customs facilitations allow goods to be more easily imported, assembled, and exported. They also include tax sites, which encourage investment to take advantage of these opportunities, and stimulate local economic growth.

This means that goods entering the Anglesey freeport will not be subject to usual UK tax and customs measures until they enter the UK market – and if they are reexported, they will not be subject to the usual UK tax measures. This makes freeports highly attractive to investors looking to transit goods through the UK, but also seeking to maintain commercial competitiveness by not having to be caught up in the red tape of UK customs processes.

Anglesey Freeport is committed to delivering upon the Welsh and UK Government’s shared objectives around the broader freeport programme, including in ensuring the Freeport operates as a hub for global trade, innovation and investment, supporting local talent and embracing new employment opportunities.

Bringing a freeport to Anglesey provides the opportunity to cement Anglesey and the wider North Wales region as a hub of global trading excellence, helping to turbocharge regional growth and bring new, exciting jobs which deliver for people in North Wales.

The freeport on Anglesey will help to boost Holyhead trade by empowering traders to use the fastest route between Ireland and the European continent – the “land-bridge” from Holyhead to Dover – rather than longer, more inefficient, and costly shipping routes.

Analysis undertaken as part of the Freeport proposals indicates that the Anglesey Freeport could create 3,500 new jobs and potentially bring up to 13,000 jobs across Anglesey and North Wales over broadly over a 15-year period.

It is vital that the Regional Transport Plan considers proposals that support the successful implementation of the Freeport whilst supporting access to jobs and a likely increased freight movement to and from the port.

### **3.7 Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone**

In the November 2024 UK Government announced support for an Investment Zone in Flintshire and Wrexham, worth up to £160 million. The proposal is also supported by Welsh Government.

The Investment Zone will focus on advanced manufacturing and the creative & digital sectors. Notable large employers in these sectors currently located in North East Wales include Airbus, Toyota, JCB, Eren, Theatr Clwyd, Moneypenny, Hoya Lens, Sharp, Net World Sports, Kronospan, Hydro Wrexham and Ifor Williams Trailers.

The investment in this area will be supported by improved infrastructure and transport links and it is vital that the Regional Transport Plan reflects these investment proposals.

### **3.8 North Wales Metro**

The multi-million-pound North Wales Metro Programme will transform rail, bus and active travel services across North Wales. It will make it easier and faster to travel across North Wales and build



better connections with North West England. This will help create more opportunities for our communities and support inward investment for North Wales.

The Programme will also improve connectivity between North Wales and key destinations within the UK with links to HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail, helping to meet the decarbonisation agenda of both the Welsh and UK Governments.

Investing in the transport network in North Wales will help encourage us all to make better and more sustainable travel choices.

The Metro programme includes proposals to enhance rail services across North Wales. Plans are also being developed to improve railway stations across the region, making it easier to change between rail, bus and Active Travel. Metro projects also include a range of active travel schemes and improvements to bus services. The North Wales Metro Programme is summarised in Figure 3.1, which shows the strategic public transport infrastructure.



Figure 3.1 – North Wales Metro Summary (TfW)

### North Wales Metro - Rail

There are two large ongoing projects to improve rail services in North Wales. The first of these considers the Borderlands Line that connects Wrexham Central Station to Bidston in Wirral for onward connections into Liverpool.

The aspirations for this line include:

- A four train per hour service
- Direct connections into Liverpool City centre
- A one-hour journey time

Work is progressing to understand the potential of the new 777 battery trains to enable services into Liverpool City centre. Analysis of these proposals has suggested that service improvements on the Borderlands Line could see an increase of 676,000 rail journeys per year.





The other large rail workstream is looking at the North Wales Main Line (NWML). The vision for this line is:

- to have four trains per hour (4tph) operating along the NWML , along with one express train (to Cardiff or London) per hour
- to improve strategic connectivity
- to improve journey time

A phased delivery of the enhanced service levels is intended, and this is currently being investigated through study work.

Key to the delivery of improved service levels on the NWML and enhancing connections to Crewe are improvements to Chester Station. This will allow more through movements enabling service increases across both North Wales and North West England. Therefore, whilst this project is vital for North Wales, it is also important from a Union Connectivity perspective.

### North Wales Metro – Bus

Transport for Wales' aims for improving bus services are focused on four themes. These are:

- Make buses more attractive for everyday use by the people of Wales
- Better connected networks that allow people to realistically use buses for many journeys
- Better co-ordination, more regular timings, and more services in the evenings and at weekends
- Better integration between bus services, with trains, and better access on foot and by bicycle

Recent improvements that have been delivered in North Wales to make bus services more attractive include:

- The rollout of the 1bws ticket (one ticket across the vast majority of bus services in North Wales),
- Continuous review of the Sherpa Network in Eryri
- Launch of the Traws Cymru T8 service between Corwen and Chester
- Launch of fflecsi demand responsive services, including the zero emission electric service in Rhuthin.

### North Wales Metro – Active Travel

The Transport for Wales work to improve walking and cycling facilities is influenced by the following themes:

- Deliver a step change in provision for pedestrians and cyclists
- Encourage mode shift, in line with overall transport policy and the decarbonisation agenda
- Provide for existing users, but also encourage new users
- Support development and regeneration of town centres
- Engage with stakeholders

North Wales Metro work aimed at improving walking and cycling across the region includes:

- Station network plans developed for 11 stations
- WelTAG 2 studies complete for Holyhead and Bangor Station Gateways.



- Supporting gateway proposals at Wrexham General Stations
- Feasibility reports for walking routes to key attractors in Eryri
- Active Travel infrastructure designs for accessing Shotton Station
- Supporting new bridge linking Dolgarrog to the local station

Table 3.3 shows the ongoing North Wales Metro Programme work in financial year 2023/24.



Project	Deliverables
	North Wales Main Line WelTAG – Stage 3 for Phase 1 focus Llandudno Junction to Crewe
	Borderlands Outline design Padeswood Cement 777 decarbonisation and commercial requirements – recharging, stations
	Chester Capacity WelTAG 2 Chester Station capacity Stage B and Shotton review
	Station Network Plans – rolling programme to assist delivery Flintshire – 2 routes Shotton Stations – Active Travel crossing Gwynedd – 1 route Colwyn Bay station / town centre
	Bangor Gateway Progression through WelTAG3 (and associated feasibility option) Quick win progression in partnership with Station team and Cyngor Gwynedd (wayfinding in line with masterplan ambitions)
	Wrexham Gateway Feasibility study – severance – bridges to single option design Designs to complement the Wrexham Gateway revised Masterplan Progression through WelTAG 2
	Holyhead Improved Interchange Progression through WelTAG 3 on public transport interchange Allow quick wins to be identified Active Travel Study underway, Isle of Anglesey Levelling Up Fund scheme underway
	Eryri Sustainable Access Parking management measures – VMS/ Signage Strategy (Implementation) Masterplan on Llanberis site Active Travel route development
	Bus Network, Pilots Continuation of pilot schemes Sherpa, T10, T8 and bus improvement measure development work Pilot roll-out of Gwynedd reference network

Table 3.3 – 2023/24 North Wales Metro Programme



## 4. Local Transport Policies

The current Joint Local Transport Plan is referred to in Section 2.2.2 of this Case for Change. Alongside this, some of the six local authorities in North Wales have their own local strategies and policies for transport.

Flintshire County Council's Integrated Transport Strategy is summarised in Figure 4.1.

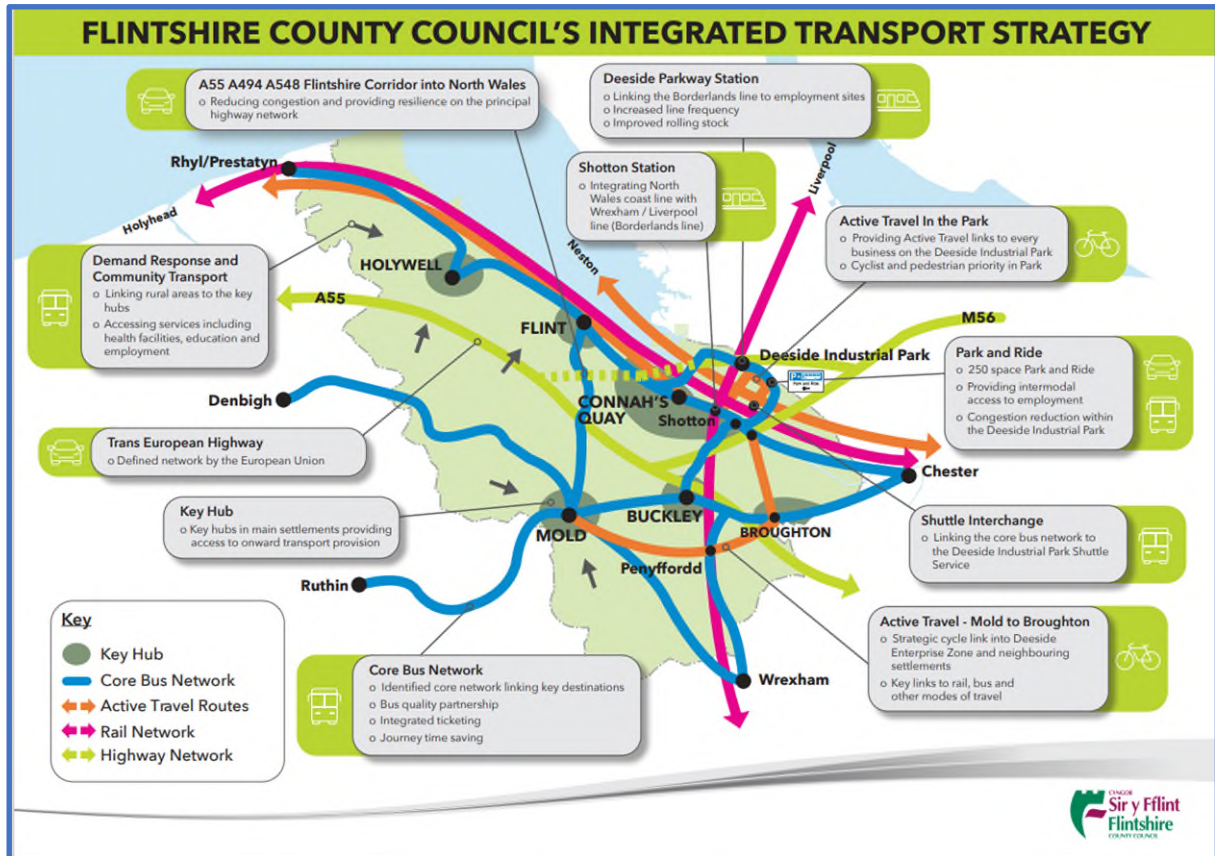


Figure 4.1 - Flintshire County Council's Integrated Transport Strategy

The principles of Flintshire County Council's approach to transport are closely aligned to national transport strategies and deeply rooted within the aims of the North Wales Joint Local Transport Plan (NWJLTP). Flintshire County Council's own Integrated Transport Strategy also aims to successfully integrate all modes of transport, whilst developing the individual demands of each. The strategy maintains and promotes at its heart, a sustainable, affordable and environmentally friendly public transport service, with links to all of Flintshire and the wider region.

The Higher Level Aspirations of Flintshire's Integrated Transport Policy are shown in Figure 4.2.

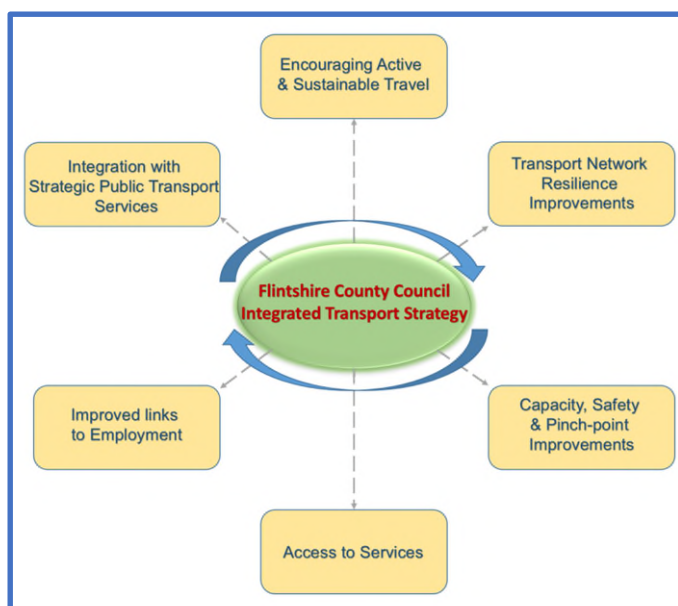


Figure 4.2 - Higher Level Aspirations of Flintshire County Council Integrated Transport Strategy

The key interventions identified to support the delivery of the Integrated Transport Strategy are:

- Active Travel
  - Deeside Industrial Park Shared Use Footway
  - Mold to Broughton Cycle Scheme
- Highway Network (note that this strategy pre-dates the publication of the Future of Roads Investment in Wales covered in Section 2.1.6)
  - A55 / A494 / A548 Flintshire Corridor into North Wales
  - A548 Connah's Quay to County Boundary
- Bus Network
  - B5129 Queensferry Roundabout to Denbighshire County Boundary - Bus Priority Measures
  - Deeside Industrial Estate - Park and Ride Zone
  - Bus Shuttle Interchange - Garden City
  - Countywide Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) on Core Network.
  - Demand Responsive Transport
- Rail
  - New Deeside Parkway Station
  - Improvements to Shotton Station.

## 5. WIDER LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICY

All local authorities in North Wales are responsible for delivering a wide range of services. Many of these services, and the policies and strategies that shape their delivery, are intrinsically linked to priorities for transport. These responsibilities include Climate Change, Growth and Regeneration, and Planning Policy.

### 5.1 Conwy County Borough Council

Conwy County Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. This declaration included the following:



“The Council declares a climate emergency and commits to ensuring that the county continues to be a lively, viable and sustainable home for our children and future generations.

The Council calls on the Welsh Government to commit to taking the positive steps needed to reduce carbon emissions and strive to create a carbon-neutral future “The Council calls on Welsh Government to provide the necessary support and resources to enable effective carbon reductions across Wales.”

The Economic Growth Strategy<sup>17</sup> in Conwy sets out five ambitions to grow Conwy’s economy. One of the cross-cutting themes of the Strategy is ‘Infrastructure that enables growth’, which proposes: *“All businesses rely on excellent connectivity and, working with regional partners, we will seek improvements in road and rail infrastructure, capacity and resilience to support business productivity - particularly if that investment improves the quality of links to Manchester and Liverpool airports”*.

The Conwy Local Development Plan<sup>18</sup> includes the policy below regarding the importance of sustainable consideration in spatial planning.

#### STRATEGIC POLICY STR/1 – SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT, DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY

Development will be located so as to minimise the need to travel. Convenient access via footways, cycle infrastructure and public transport should exist or be provided where appropriate, thereby encouraging the use of these modes of travel for local journeys and reducing the need to travel by private car and improving the accessibility of services to those with poor availability of transport. The Council will endeavour to improve accessibility and seek to change travel behaviour. This will be achieved by working with our partners to:

- a. Focus future development in the Plan Area in highly accessible locations, predominantly along the A55 and railway network within and on the edge of the Urban Development Strategy Area within the coastal belt in line with Policy DP/2 – ‘Overarching Strategic Approach’. All development proposals will be assessed against the Council’s Parking Standards as set out in Policy STR/2 – ‘Parking Standards’, mitigate travel in line with Policy STR/3 – ‘Mitigating Travel Impact’ and promote sustainable modes in line with Policy STR/4 – ‘Non-Motorised Travel’;
- b. Safeguard land to promote accessible communities that encourage integrated sustainable modes of travel in line with Policies STR/5 – ‘Integrated Sustainable Transport System’ and STR/6 – ‘Railfreight’. The Council will further improve public transport and promote sustainable modes and improvements to public transport services. Improvements to rail stations and bus stations will be sought to assist as interchanges between modes and promote sustainable travel behaviour. Development shall contribute towards these improvements where the need is required in line with the Policies DP/1 to DP/6. Improvement routes identified in the Regional Transport Plan for Conwy shall be safeguarded;
- c. Promote walking and cycling throughout the Plan Area as part of an integral and highly sustainable means of transport in line with Policy DP/4 – ‘Development Criteria’. The design and construction of walking and cycling facilities and infrastructure will be improved to make walking and cycling more attractive, direct and safe in line with Policy DP/3 – ‘Promoting Design Quality and Reducing Crime’. Quality and convenient pedestrian crossings will be promoted to facilitate safe and direct movement across busy roads. Development shall

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<sup>17</sup> [1c76a1\\_05524f66b9d240c6b10c881837adef9e.pdf \(conwybusinesscentre.com\)](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Conwy Local Development Plan 2007 - 2022: Section Four - Spatial Policies and Supporting Development Management Policies \(opus3.co.uk\)](#)



- contribute towards these connections and quality cycle parking where appropriate in line with The Development Principles and the Council's Parking Standards set out in Policy STR/2;
- d. Transport schemes which lead to improvements in accessibility will be supported in principle. In considering development proposals, the potential for more sustainable means of transport related to the uses and users of the development must be addressed, including the preparation of Travel Plans.

The LDP safeguards the following transport schemes:

- Llandudno Railway Station - Deliver a high quality sustainable transport interchange facility;
- Llandudno Junction - Improve integration and enhance access to the retail, leisure, entertainment and business areas through the creation of a new footbridge from Llandudno Junction Railway Station;
- Foryd Harbour - Promoting the Sustrans National Cycle Route 5 and a new connecting pedestrian/cycle bridge at Foryd Harbour in Kinmel Bay;
- Kinmel Bay - To promote a link road between Parc Hanes and Ogwen Avenue to improve overall access in the area;
- Former Vale of Clwyd Railway in Kinmel Bay - Safeguard as a route to promote improved community access;
- Wales Coastal Path Improvement Programme and the Conwy Rights of Way Improvement Plan - To improve accessibility to the coast and countryside for local communities and visitors;
- Colwyn Bay - Improved access between the town and the seafront as part of the Colwyn Bay Masterplan and coastal defence project

## 5.2 Denbighshire County Council

Denbighshire County Council's Corporate Plan<sup>19</sup> includes the theme 'A better connected Denbighshire', which envisions that "Denbighshire will be a place of thriving, cohesive and connected communities. This will mean having good road infrastructure and transport links, better digital connectivity, and social infrastructure to support personal and community well-being." It lists the following scheme priorities that are relevant for the RTP:

1. Maintain a quality road network, including:
  - £20m in resurfacing projects by 2027.
  - Replace Llanerch Bridge, in partnership with Welsh Government.
2. Working through the regional body, and within the context of the Wales Transport Strategy, we will enable people to access education, employment, services and activities by:
  - Improve transport services in Denbighshire's communities.
  - Developing a Sustainable Transport Plan, that makes travel and tourism within our county 'greener', including new Active Travel routes that encourage walking and cycling within and between communities.

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<sup>19</sup> [Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want | Denbighshire County Council](#)



3. Support our county's green infrastructure by:
  - Developing and installing a public network of electric vehicle charging points.
  - Exploring ways in which the council can encourage new housing developments to allow for electric vehicle charging and green spaces.

Denbighshire's Economic and Community Ambition Strategy<sup>20</sup>, adopted in 2013, noted several issues and challenges relating to transport that need to be addressed to ensure the right infrastructure for growth:

1. Transport infrastructure network has significant weaknesses, particularly for North-South road connections. Mainline rail services are restricted to the coastal North and are limited in frequency. The A55 trunk road provides good East-West connections but also risks by-passing Denbighshire's towns and communities. Congestion is an increasing problem. Significant investment in the strategic road network in and around Denbighshire does not currently appear as a priority in regional or national investment plans.
2. Public transport services are limited in more rural areas and fragmented across the county as a whole. Public transport does not currently represent a realistic choice for many residents as a means of travel to and for work. Journey times, particularly to destinations outside the County, can be long with only very limited direct services available to key employment locations.
3. Transport costs are increasingly expensive. Bus and rail fares are expected to rise faster than general inflation and fuel costs will continue to be affected by the volatile petroleum market. Changes to the subsidies available to bus operators risk both prices and coverage of bus services. Anecdotally, difficulty with travel arrangements is limiting the ability of businesses to recruit and residents to find suitable employment. Travel for work is also impacted adversely.

Denbighshire's adopted Local Development Plan<sup>21</sup> includes two objectives relevant that consider transport issues:

- The Local Development Plan will place emphasis on integrating land uses, such as, employment, housing, transport, with a view to reduce the need to travel and will promote sustainable transport.
- The Local Development Plan will make the best use of the County's two existing key transport corridors - the A55 trunk road and the North Wales Coast main railway line.

The LDP includes the following policy:

"Policy ASA 1 - New transport infrastructure Development proposals for the provision of new transport infrastructure and improvements to existing infrastructure facilities will be supported providing that the following criteria are met:

- a. there is a need and justification for the proposal on economic and/ or social grounds; and
- b. there are no unacceptable effects on the natural and built environment; and
- c. provision is made for safe access by all users, including cyclists, pedestrians and the mobility impaired.

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<sup>20</sup> [Economic and Community Ambition Strategy 2013 - 2023 \(denbighshire.gov.uk\)](https://denbighshire.gov.uk/economic-and-community-ambition-strategy-2013-2023)

<sup>21</sup> [Adopted Local Development Plan 2006-2021 \(denbighshire.gov.uk\)](https://denbighshire.gov.uk/adopted-local-development-plan-2006-2021)





The Council supports the following projects:

- Projects, measures or actions identified in the North Wales Regional Transport Plan;
- The use of suitable disused railway lines as recreational routes;
- Extension and improvement of cycle and walking networks in the County;
- Extension of the Llangollen railway from Carrog to Corwen.”

### 5.3 Flintshire County Council

The transport priorities that are considered in the Flintshire County Council Plan<sup>22</sup> are summarised in Table 5.1.

Theme	Priorities
Green Society and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting the use of public transport through the further development of the Council’s core bus network</li> <li>Promoting multi modal transport journeys and the development of strategic transport hubs</li> <li>Developing the County’s electric car charging network</li> <li>Promoting active travel and further developing the County’s walking and cycling network - by March 2023</li> </ul>
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing and delivering transport infrastructure improvements as part of North Wales Metro programme and the Council’s Integrated Transport Strategy</li> <li>Ensuring Flintshire strategic transport priorities are well-represented in the Regional Transport Plan from the forthcoming Corporate Joint Committee development</li> </ul>

**Table 5.1 - Transport Priorities from Flintshire Council Plan**

The Flintshire Local Development Plan<sup>23</sup> was adopted in January 2023. Policy STR5 covers Transport and Accessibility. It states that:

“Sustainable economic growth and development can only be delivered by the maintenance and enhancement of an integrated, accessible, usable, safe and reliable transport network. The development of Flintshire’s transport infrastructure therefore underpins the Council’s economic ambition and in turn, informs the provision of a sustainable pattern of development. Where appropriate new development and associated transport infrastructure should therefore:

- i. Facilitate accessibility to employment, homes, services, and facilities by locating development in places with access to integrated transport infrastructure, thereby reducing the need to travel;
- ii. Promote the implementation of an integrated transport solution in Flintshire, involving road, rail, bus, park and ride / share and active travel improvements;
- iii. Promote road and rail improvements to support Flintshire’s sub-regional role as a strategic gateway and hub;
- iv. Ensure that the local highway network either has, or can be upgraded, to provide capacity to accommodate sustainable levels of development;

<sup>22</sup> [Council Plan 2022-23 \(flintshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/council-plan-2022-23)

<sup>23</sup> [Local Development Plan - Flintshire](#)



- v. Facilitate improvements to the quality, attractiveness and availability of public transport options;
- vi. Provide walking and cycling routes, linking in with active travel networks and green infrastructure networks;
- vii. Adopt a sustainable approach to the design, function and layout of new development, including providing appropriate levels of parking;
- viii. Support the movement of freight by rail or water"

Policy PC5 also covers Transport and Accessibility:

"New development proposals must be supported by appropriate transport infrastructure, and depending on the nature, scale, location and siting of the proposal, will be required to:

- a. Incorporate good access to the more sustainable modes of travel, firstly by walking and cycling, secondly by public transport, then by low emission private vehicle and finally by private motor vehicle;
- b. not compromise the safe, effective and efficient use of the highway network and not have an adverse impact on highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation;
- c. where significant adverse effects upon the transport network arising from the proposed development are unavoidable, they must be mitigated by, for example, improvements to transport infrastructure and traffic management;
- d. provide appropriate levels of parking, servicing and manoeuvring space and in non-residential development, a minimum of 10% of parking spaces to have electric vehicle charging points;
- e. create well designed people orientated streets and make provision for people with restricted mobility including those with characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010;
- f. safeguard, enhance and expand the active travel network, particularly by means of improving connectivity to and from the proposed development."

Policy PC6 considers Active Travel:

"New development should ensure that people have access to employment, education, healthcare and other essential services and facilities. Proposals should wherever possible:

- a. provide appropriate walking and cycling routes being an integral part of the scheme and connecting the development with key destinations;
- b. provide infrastructure and facilities that promote walking and cycling such as signing, lighting, secure and convenient cycle storage and parking and where appropriate, shower and changing facilities;
- c. provide appropriate travel choice information relating to cycling and walking for all or part of journeys as part of Travel Plans;
- d. incorporate measures to reduce the dominance and speed of vehicles affording increased priority to pedestrians and cyclists;
- e. develop and enhance the Active Travel routes identified on the Integrated Network Map connecting communities to essential services including public transport, employment and education opportunities;
- f. incorporate existing public rights of way as an integral part of the design and layout of the development.

Policy PC7 considers Passenger Transport:

"New development proposals should seek to promote the use of passenger transport services and depending on the nature, scale, location and siting of the proposal, will be required to:

- a. ensure enhanced or new passenger transport facilities and services connecting communities to areas of opportunity including employment, education, health facilities, retail, leisure and social activities;



- b. ensure appropriate new highway infrastructure improvements that afford priority to bus based passenger transport over the private car;
- c. provide appropriate pedestrian and cycling infrastructure that improves connectivity to and from rail and bus stations;
- d. provide strategically sited park and ride infrastructure where appropriate, supported by attractive, frequent and reliable bus services on key bus routes, and
- e. promote and market public transport alternatives to the private car through travel plans.”

Through Policy PC10, the following transport schemes are safeguarded.

- A494(T) / A55(T) / A548 Northop to Shotwick Interchange Improvement;
- Plough Lane link road;
- A548 Greenfield to Ffynnongroyw;
- A5104 Penyffordd Station to Padeswood Junction;
- A494(T) Improvement Ewloe to River Dee

## 5.4 Cyngor Gwynedd and Isle of Anglesey County Council

A Joint Local Development Plan<sup>24</sup> is in place covering the areas of Gwynedd and Ynys Mon. Strategic Policy PS4 considers sustainable transport, development and accessibility:

“Development will be located so as to minimise the need to travel. The Councils will support improvements that maximise accessibility for all modes of transport, but particularly by foot, cycle and public transport. This will be achieved by securing convenient access via footways, cycle infrastructure and public transport where appropriate, thereby encouraging the use of these modes of travel for local journeys and reducing the need to travel by private car. The Council will endeavour to improve accessibility and seek to change travel behaviour. This will be achieved by working with our partners to:

1. Maintain an appropriate public transport service, recognising alternative ways of maintaining travel opportunities;
2. Maintain and improve stations, infrastructure and services on the main Railway Lines including access to disabled people and other rail-related improvements;
3. Where possible safeguard, improve, enhance and promote and public rights of way (including footpaths, bridleways and byways) and cycleway networks to improve safety, accessibility (including disabled people) by these modes of travel and to increase health, leisure, well-being and tourism benefits for both local residents and visitors;
4. Support schemes that will improve park and ride / share facilities for areas of employment, new development and freight transfer facilities;
5. Allocating or safeguarding land where appropriate to facilitate the key strategic transport schemes”

Beneath that, Policy TRA1 considers Transport Network Developments

“Improvements to the existing transport network will be granted provided they conform to the following criteria:

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<sup>24</sup> [Anglesey-and-Gwynedd-Joint-Local-Development-Plan-Written-Statement.pdf \(llyw.cymru\)](#)



- i. The choice of route and/or site minimises the impact on the built and natural environment, landscapes and property; and
- ii. Permanent land-take is kept to the minimum that is consistent with good design and high quality landscaping; and
- iii. In the case of cycle ways, park and ride schemes, roads and roadside service areas, the scheme will help to improve road safety; and
- iv. In the case of new roads a full range of practicable solutions to the transport problem has been considered and road enhancement provides the optimum solution; and v. In the case of roadside service areas, the scheme must adjoin the strategic road network, focus primarily on serving the needs of motorists, not impede the movement of strategic traffic and in line with Strategic Policy PS 15 not undermine retail provision in the Sub-Regional Centre, Urban and Local Service Centres or Villages.

Transfer Between Transport Modes In order to facilitate the transfer between transport modes and help to minimise travel demand and reduce car dependency, provided they conform to relevant policies in the Plan the following proposals will be granted:

- i. Improvements to existing rail and bus interchanges, including measures to facilitate access by active travel modes and disabled people with particular access needs;
- ii. Strategically located permanent park and ride facilities within or adjacent to Centres or in other locations close to the main highway network when it can be demonstrated that no alternative sites closer to the Centres are suitable, where customers are supported by frequent bus services between the facility and the destination;
- iii. Strategically located facilities within or adjacent to Centres for overnight lorry parking and freight transfer;
- iv. High quality driver and passenger facilities including but not limited to, seating, information, toilet facilities;
- v. Facilities for park and share in appropriate locations within or adjacent settlements on the strategic highway network;
- vi. Facilities within settlements for coach parking, taxis and passenger drop off;
- vii. Facilities for interchange with water-based transport.”

Schemes that were safeguarded in the LDP are:

- A487 Caernarfon to Bontnewydd
- Llangedfni Link-Road
- A5025 Valley to Wylfa and other transport infrastructure improvements associated with the new nuclear development at Wylfa Newydd, including improvements from Amlwch to Wylfa Newydd

Isle of Anglesey County Council adopted an EV Charging Action Plan<sup>25</sup> in 2022, which sets out the Isle of Anglesey’s ambitious plans in meeting the charging requirements of residents and visitors to the Island.

The Action Plan sets out the Council’s role as a leader and a facilitator:

- Leader:
  - Ensuring the Council’s fleet is carbon neutral by 2030

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<sup>25</sup> [Isle of Anglesey Electric Vehicle EV Charging Plan.pdf](#)



- Providing public charging at Council run services
- Applying for funding for workplace charging at employment sites where the Council owns the lease
- Facilitator:
  - Providing public information about the charging network and funding support and promoting workplace charging through the planning process
  - Creating a dedicated information page on the Council website and undertaking positive PR
  - Identifying opportunities for partnership working

## 5.5 Wrexham County Borough Council

In Wrexham, a Decarbonisation Action Plan<sup>26</sup> was adopted in 2021. It explains that investing in the transport network and expanding the Council's fleet of electric vehicles will also help in meet carbon reduction targets. At the same time, increasing the numbers of Electric Vehicle Charging (EVC) points that are installed across the County Borough, will reduce emissions from the council's fleet and business travel and encourage more people to invest in electric vehicles. Mobility and transport actions include from the Decarbonisation Action Plan are:

- Journeys made by our fleet vehicles – this includes all vehicles which the Council own or lease in order to carry out its functions (e.g. vans, refuse collection vehicles).
- Journeys made by the workforce for business reasons – where officers are required to travel throughout the county in order to perform their roles, we will consider opportunities to reduce overall mileage, as well as ways to ensure the journeys made do not generate carbon emissions.
- Transport services delivered to the public – whilst WCBC does not provide public transport, we will seek to use our partnerships to influence positive change within the sector, and consider ways to reduce carbon emissions from those services that we commission (e.g. school transport)
- Active Travel – improving our active travel infrastructure, and increasing the opportunities for safe walking and cycling routes will be essential to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles. In addition, there will be work to change habits and behaviours, so that more people consider active travel as their primary method of transport for key journeys.
- Street-lighting – ensuring energy efficiency of street-lights, and other assets in our communities

The Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan<sup>27</sup> was adopted in 2016 and sets out a vision that “Wrexham will be an attractive, distinctive and accessible 21st century town centre where people want to live, learn, work, visit and invest.”

One of the objectives of the Masterplan is “An Accessible Town”. The aim is ‘to ensure high quality access to and within the town centre by a range of modes, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, but maintaining high quality road access to the centre’. The actions and interventions to support this are:

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<sup>26</sup> [Appendix 1.pdf \(wrexham.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>27</sup> [Wrexham Town Centre Master Plan](#)



- Support a modal shift of transport to help deliver growth by supporting development that encourages the use of public transport, walking and cycling;
- Overcoming the barriers created by the inner ring road and railway line that inhibit connectivity to key destinations in particular the hospital, University, railway and residential suburbs;
- Develop a network of attractive, pedestrian friendly routes and spaces which connect across the town centre helping bind the various parts of the town together;
- Manage parking in scale and use to ensure its provision is sufficient;
- Ensuring that development interacts and respects public spaces in positive ways which enhance their attraction to pedestrians and enhances pedestrian mobility

The Access Actions and Interventions are summarised in Figure 5.1.

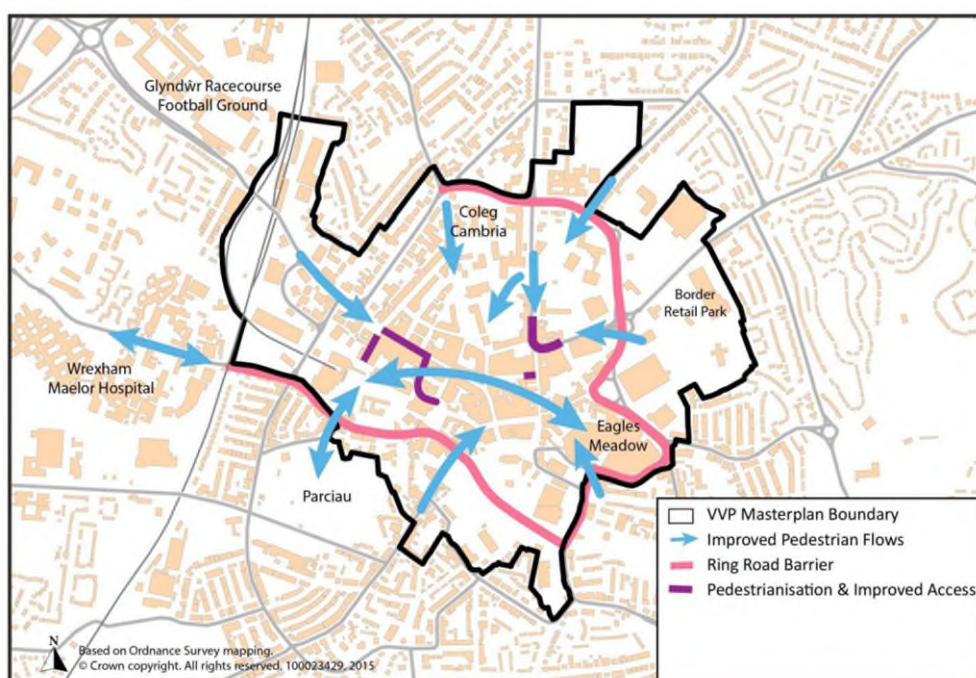


Figure 5.1- Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan Access Actions and Interventions

Wrexham County Borough Council are developing a Placemaking Plan<sup>28</sup>, which includes the following Vision Statement: “At the heart of our vision is changing the perception of Wrexham city centre, fully capturing the benefits of its city status and transforming it into a centre worthy of becoming a city of culture. We will attract new investment, increase visitors and create more opportunities to live and work. Our greatest asset is our community, and we will utilise this to make the centre more playful, sociable and entertaining for everyone”

Three of the objectives of the Plan are particularly relevant to the Regional Transport Plan:

- Climate Emergency - Support decarbonisation goals by making better use of existing infrastructure, repurposing buildings, introducing energy efficiency measures and micro-renewables, and encouraging greater use of walking, cycling and public transport.

<sup>28</sup> [Item 13.pdf \(wrexham.gov.uk\)](#)



- Access & Movement - Ensure that pedestrian movement within & on approach to the centre is safe, comfortable, inclusive, easy to navigate & attractive.
- Townscape & Environmental - Enhance existing & create new public realm & spaces to reinforce a coherent & authentic sense of Wrexham's identity & attract & encourage greater public use.

## 5.6 Eryri National Park Authority

The Eryri National Park Authority produces a Local Development Plan<sup>29</sup> that sets out factors to consider when evaluating planning applications and granting planning permissions. The factors are based on the qualities that need to be protected and enhanced within the National Park. These include:

- The natural beauty of the National Park
- The National Park's communities and culture
- The National Park's wildlife
- The National Park's heritage and history

Strategic Policy L of the LDP, on Accessibility and Transport, states that:

"The National Park Authority is committed to improving access to local facilities and reduce the need to travel especially by private car. Within the National Park walking and cycling, improved access to public transport and provision of facilities will be encouraged. Development will be supported where:

- i. The provision of services are located so as to minimise the need to travel.
- ii. There is convenient access via footpaths, cycle paths and public transport, thereby encouraging the use of these modes of travel for local journeys, reducing the need to travel by private car and improving the accessibility of services to those with poor availability of transport.
- iii. There is an improvement in accessibility for all, in particular disabled people.
- iv. Changes to the road network do not damage or cause detrimental effects to ProW, listed buildings or historic monuments or cause adverse effects to environmental designations. The highest priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the characteristic biodiversity of Snowdonia, particularly habitats and species designated under national and European legislation. Where possible, these improvements to the road network will feature provision for segregated pedestrian and cycling uses.
- v. It will reduce or remove vehicle traffic from within town centres and where possible from rural areas.
- vi. The natural environment of the park is not adversely affected.
- vii. Secure cycle parking facilities are provided where appropriate.

The National Park Authority will continue to support appropriate sustainable transport and community transport initiatives. The recreational routes identified on the proposals map will be safeguarded from development which would prevent their use as recreational routes. The track bed of the Corris Railway within the National Park will be safeguarded from other forms of development so that it may be reinstated as a railway. That part of the disused railway which runs from Trawsfynydd to Blaenau Ffestiniog which is within the National Park will be safeguarded from

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<sup>29</sup> [Cynllun-Datblygu-Lleol-Saesneg.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)



inappropriate development which would prevent the future use of the railway line as a transport corridor”

Visitor parking is a key consideration of the Eryri Local Development Plan, with the document stating that “The provision of car parks within the National Park is considered by the Authority to be adequate for the needs of the public. Car parks are provided by the National Park Authority and other Local Authorities in coastal, urban and mountain locations facilitating public access by private transport to these areas. Increasing the supply of car parking spaces in the face of concentrated seasonal and weekend demand is neither practical nor a sustainable use of land or an effective visitor management solution, especially viewed against the Authority’s objective of reducing dependency on the use of private motor vehicles. The Authority recognises that coach travel is an environmentally friendly more efficient and cheaper form of transport than private motor cars”





# North Wales Regional Transport Plan

## Case for Change

### Annex 3 - Stakeholder Engagement Plan

(Draft)





# Case for Change

## Annex 3

### Stakeholder Engagement Plan

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of the Engagement Plan

Arup has been commissioned by the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (NWCJC) to support the development of its Regional Transport Plan (RTP), which aligns with the shared visions and priority objectives of Llwybr Newydd, the Wales Transport Strategy.

In accordance with the RTP Guidance<sup>1</sup>, an Engagement Plan must be prepared in support of the RTP to show who will be involved in developing the RTP, how they will be involved, and any details of stakeholder engagement activities and public consultation.

The purpose of this working Stakeholder Engagement Plan is to set out the intended engagement and consultation milestones and timescales for the NWCJC RTP, including identifying key stakeholders and what activities will be undertaken during each stage. The plan is a live document and will be continually monitored and updated up to completion of the RTP.

This Engagement Plan has been prepared for the NWCJC to consider and decide on its approach, which will lead to an update in readiness for implementation of future engagement activities.

It was approved in draft at the CJC Transport Sub Committee meeting held 1 October 2024 and has been submitted to be approved in full by the same Committee on 16 December 2024. This Plan has been a live working document, and will inform all engagement and consultation activities in connection with the RTP.

## 1.2 Engagement Led Approach

Given the wide range of issues and interests related to the RTP, stakeholder engagement and public consultation will be critical to its successful development and implementation.

This Engagement Plan aims to help involve all relevant stakeholders and interested individuals and organisations, to seek and obtain their views and support in the progression of the RTP.

Through the Case for Change and this Engagement Plan, a number of individuals and organisations have been identified as key stakeholders for the RTP, and this Plan sets out how they will be communicated with according to their needs and requirements.

This Engagement Plan also outlines how we will engage to help ensure all groups of people including hard to reach groups are provided with the opportunity to participate, which will help involve representatives of North Wales society, culture, economy, and environment, and beyond. We will achieve this through a combination of:

- A core key stakeholder group overseeing the successful delivery of the Plan;
- Focused meetings to discuss topic specific issues and opportunities with members of the key stakeholder group;
- Briefing sessions and stakeholder workshops, to involve a wider range of individuals and organisations representing a wide range of interests pertinent to the Plan; and
- Public consultation to involve the wider community and hard to reach groups who may be affected by the RTP's possible outcomes.

Stakeholder mapping is provided in section 3 of this Plan, whilst the approach to engagement and consultation is set out in section 4 of this Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-07/guidance-to-corporate-joint-committees-on-regional-transport-plans-2023.docx>



We are encouraged to see examples of regional collaboration and involvement with a shared purpose of improving the well-being of the region through existing initiatives. As advocated by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 we will seek to collaborate and involve with those groups further to develop an even better understanding of regional and sub-regional issues, opportunities, and needs, in order to help add value and secure buy-in to the proposals within the RTP and ensure that the five ways of working are embedded in everything we do.

The NWCJC offers an opportunity for local authority collaboration at the strategic regional spatial scale. Whilst local interests will be at play, the RTP should help local officers and members develop and buy-into a shared regional vision and objectives for transport, crossing administrative boundaries.

We intend to unite the diverse stakeholder group with a common set of values, vision and objectives up front, to which we are all working and refer back to these throughout the process if and when opinion diverges.

By focussing attention more on the bigger picture and less on the pathway to get there, the chances of successfully obtaining advocacy are greatly increased. Additionally, this approach will ensure the consideration of the Well-being of Future Generations Act throughout the process in relation to its ways of working.

Collaborative working behaviours are considered an essential component for successful outcomes of the RTP and as such an approach to collaborative working will be agreed, along with more specific and tangible positive collaborative behaviours building on the terms of reference for the NWCJC.

It should be noted that we do not define 'collaboration' as unity or agreement, but the unique value created through bringing together differing perspectives and opinions to create debate, discussion, knowledge sharing and increased understanding, with a unique end result that encapsulates this diverse input.

We will therefore involve stakeholders in agreeing a vision and objectives for the RTP that will influence the possible interventions that could be progressed accordingly. This will help get early buy-in to the RTP preparation and later implementation stages.

The draft vision, SMART objectives<sup>2</sup> and cross cutting themes for the RTP have been developed collaboratively between the NWCJC, its members, Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government. They are presented below as key points of reference for the approach to stakeholder engagement.

### 1.3 Vision, Objectives and Cross Cutting Themes

The North Wales RTP Vision Statement is:

**North Wales will have a safe, sustainable, affordable, resilient, and effective integrated transport network that supports economic growth, prosperity and well-being.**

The North Wales RTP Case for Change initially set out 15 objectives that help underpin that vision, which the Welsh Government has considered and suggested amendments with support from Transport for Wales. Those have informed the development of four key SMART objectives, which establish targets and help ensure alignment between the RTP and the Llwybr Newydd priorities / well-being goals for the purposes of transport appraisal, as is required by the RTP Guidance (considered further in section 2 of this Plan).

The draft North Wales RTP SMART objectives are outlined below.

1. **Improve digital connectivity and local services:** We will enable 30% or more of people in North Wales to work remotely by 2030 through better land use planning and improved digital connectivity, which should reduce the overall need to travel and enable shorter trips better suited to sustainable modes.

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<sup>2</sup> Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound



2. **Improved accessibility and transport choice:** We will develop infrastructure and services that provide people with a choice about how they travel for each journey, and support sustainable economic growth through improved access to key settlements, employment, educational sites and tourist attractions. The accessibility of each key trip attractor should be improved, supporting the national mode share target of 45% of journeys to be undertaken by walking, cycling and public transport by 2040.
3. **Enable decarbonisation through transition to a zero-emission fleet:** We will develop supporting infrastructure and support incentives to enable at least 50% of motor vehicles and all public buses operating in North Wales to be zero emission by 2035.
4. **Enable Sustainable Economic Growth:** We will develop a resilient, safe, well-maintained, and efficient transport network that delivers sustainable economic growth by improving accessibility to existing and planned employment areas. At least 50% of households in North Wales will have an increased range of travel within 1 hour by public transport, supporting access to key employment sites and regional centres.

In addition to the RTP objectives, and based on initial feedback and discussion with the NWCJC, and informed by engagement with Transport for Wales and North Wales Local Authority officers, the following cross-cutting themes are considered critical for helping to achieve the vision and objectives:

- **Social value** - recognising that transport benefits extend beyond a narrow consideration of quantified journey time improvements. Recognising the social and well-being impacts and benefits that transport systems bring to communities is important, particularly for rural and socially isolated communities.
- **Equity** - equity or parity of transport options means ensuring that everyone in North Wales has fair access to transport options. It recognises that different people have different needs, particularly those belonging to disadvantaged groups, or those in rural communities.
- **Community led** - empowering local communities and advocacy groups to participate and take ownership of promotion and development of transport solutions, as well as operating community-based services.
- **Integration** - recognising that modal shift requires a holistic, integrated approach to journey planning, working across different modes and sectors to make it easier for people to travel door-to-door using sustainable transport modes.
- **Affordability** - acknowledging the challenges of delivery in the current financial and commercial context for the public sector and UK economy.



## 2. Guidance

In addition to the Engagement Plan fulfilling the aims and purposes outlined in section 1, the plan has also been prepared in line with the following guidance and initial NWCJC RTP documents.

### 2.1 RTP Guidance

The RTP Guidance states that before starting work on developing the RTP, the NWCJC should develop a 'Case for Change' and as part of this Case for Change, the CJsCs should develop an Engagement Plan.

The Engagement Plan should set out:

- Who will be involved in developing the RTP; and
- How they will be involved, including details of the formal consultation process and other engagement and involvement mechanisms.

RTPs are required to be developed collaboratively, drawing on knowledge and experience of previous local and regional transport plans. They are also required to be prepared in collaboration with key partners including the local authorities in the NWCJC and other partners including Transport for Wales, Welsh Government, and transport groups and operators in the private and third sectors across different transport modes. In addition to the public, who should be engaged with through a creative and innovative manner involving a diverse range of people.

### 2.2 NWCJC RTP: Case for Change

The NWCJC RTP: Case for Change sets out the aims and objectives of the RTP and identifies the key issues, challenges and opportunities the plan should consider in order to guide the development of an integrated transport network for North Wales.

Within the Case for Change document, its Table 6.1 identifies key stakeholders to be engaged including:

- The NWCJC;
- Eryri National Park as a NWCJC Member;
- Welsh Government;
- Statutory Bodies;
- Statutory Office Holders;
- Transport Operators;
- Economy and Tourism Groups;
- Transport User Groups;
- Freight Groups;
- Politicians;
- Environmental Groups; and
- The community.



The Case for Change also identifies when and how individual organisations should be engaged with and has been used to form the basis of the stakeholder mapping in section 3 and the engagement programme in section 4 of this Plan.

## 2.3 NWCJC RTP: Implementation Plan

The NWCJC RTP: Implementation Plan defines the tasks, resources and budget required to develop and deliver the RTP for North Wales.

The plan identifies several work packages required to develop the RTP including the need to develop a stakeholder management plan to agree the method of informing public and stakeholders of the RTP to ensure that the message is heard amongst as many residents as possible, with limited budget and minimising environmental impact. This Engagement Plan satisfies the requirements of the stakeholder management plan.

## 2.4 WeITAG Guidance

In addition to this Engagement Plan being prepared in line with the RTP Guidance, Case for Change and Implementation Plan, engagement must be undertaken and satisfied as part of the Welsh transport appraisal guidance (WeITAG) process.

WeITAG sets out that CJsCs should provide details of who has been consulted, summarise feedback and explain how comments have been taken into account. This should be based on an Engagement Plan and recorded in a Consultation Report, to be undertaken and satisfied as part of the WeITAG and Integrated Wellbeing Appraisal (IWBA) process.

WeITAG outlines that Engagement Plans should align with the five ways of working in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and it further states that the Engagement Plan should outline:

- Who you want to engage with;
- Why you want to engage with them;
- How you will engage with them;
- When you will engage with them; and
- What you will do with the feedback they provide.



### 3. Stakeholder Mapping

In order to ensure meaningful engagement for the RTP, the following stakeholders have been identified and will be engaged with throughout the RTP preparation period in line with the engagement activities outlined in section 4 of this Plan.

The table below builds on the key stakeholders identified within the NWCJC RTP Case for Change.

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders	Influence	Interest	Justification
Responsible authority	NWCJC Interim Chief Executive: Alwen Williams	High	High	The CJC and its constituent organisations are responsible for Plan development
NWCJC members	Chair: Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn Vice Chair: Councillor Mark Pritchard Councillors: Llinos Medi Huws Charlie McCoubrey Ian B. Roberts Jason McLellan Edgar Wyn Owen Iwan Jones	High	High	The CJC and its constituent organisations are responsible for Plan development
NWCJC Strategic Transport Sub-Committee	Adam Graham (Transport for Wales) David Hole (Ambition North Wales) Ruth Wojtan (Transport for Wales) Lynn Slaven (Ambition North Wales) Jack Latkovic (Ambition North Wales) Huw Percy Geraint Edwards Emlyn Jones Darren Williams Katie Wilby Dafydd Rhys Thomas Dafydd Meurig Goronwy Owen Edwards (Chair for 2024/25) David Bithell	High	High	Details can be found here: <a href="https://democracy.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=439">https://democracy.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=439</a>  Terms of Reference can be found here: <a href="https://democracy.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/documents/s41852/Appendix%201%20-%20Terms%20of%20Reference.pdf">https://democracy.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/documents/s41852/Appendix%201%20-%20Terms%20of%20Reference.pdf</a>





Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders	Influence	Interest	Justification
	Dave Hughes (Vice-chair of the Sub-committee for 2024/25) <sup>3</sup> Barry Mellor			
NWCJC Local Authority officers (including but not limited to transport, planning and economic development) (Advisory Group)	Isle of Anglesey County Council Conwy County Borough Council Denbighshire County Council Flintshire County Council Gwynedd Council Wrexham County Borough Council Eryri National Park Authority	High	High	The CJC and its constituent organisations are responsible for Plan development  It is particularly important that there is effective engagement with land use planning colleagues developing Strategic Development Plans
Key stakeholder group	NWCJC, Welsh Government, Transport for Wales	High	High	The CJC and its constituent organisations are responsible for Plan development. Welsh Government are responsible for review and approval of the plan. Transport for Wales is a key delivery partner.
Statutory Bodies	Natural Resources Wales Cadw	Medium	Medium	Input from environmental and heritage bodies will limit any detrimental impact
Business groups, economy and tourism Groups	Anglesey Energy Island Programme Anglesey Freeport Cwnmi Egino CBI Last Energy Llandrillo Menai North Wales Economic Ambition Board Wrexham and Deeside National Growth Area North Wales Regional Sports Partnership Food Innovation Wales North Wales Regional Skills Partnership Bangor University Wrexham University	Medium	Medium	Important to capture the view of those involved in the development and freight sector  Well-placed to advise on the role of the RTP in supporting economic growth

<sup>3</sup> Subject to replacement further to taking up another role



Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders	Influence	Interest	Justification
	Development Bank of Wales North Wales Ministerial Task Force North Wales Business Council Business Wales			
Community, Local Boards and Politicians	City and Town Councils, and Boards	Medium	Medium	These groups represent the views of their electorate and provide local knowledge.
Health and Well-being	NHS Wales Public Health Wales Future Generations Commissioner	Medium	Medium	Offices are crucial to ensuring that Well-being priorities are considered
Transport Bodies	North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Authority Network Rail Highways Agency Bws Cymru Roads Review Panel Bws Cymru Fflecsi Services Arriva Wales M&H Coaches Sustrans Freight Transport Association Road Haulage Association North Wales Transport Commission Roads Review Panel	Medium	Medium	Transport groups and operators are crucial to planning and delivery
Cross border	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority South East Wales CJC/CCR South West Wales CJC Mid Wales CJC	Medium	Medium	Cross border travel between North East Wales and North West England is important  The other CJCs in Wales have an interest in transport outcomes across Wales
Public	Any individual or other organisation	Medium	Low-medium	It is vital that the public have the opportunity to comment on the Plan.
Other likely interested parties	Heneb, Trust for Welsh Archaeology Design Commission for Wales Institute of Civil Engineers RTPI Cymru	Low-medium	Low-medium	Other potentially interested parties include professional bodies and advisors



Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders	Influence	Interest	Justification
	National Energy System Operator (NESO) National Infrastructure Commission Net Zero Industry Wales WLGA			



## 4. Approach to Engagement

### Engagement Programme

The Engagement Plan for the RTP will adopt a staged approach framed around the following key stages:

Stage	Period	Timescale
Stage 1: Initial draft RTP, Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) and Integrated Well-being Appraisal (IWBA)	Inception to Public Consultation	November 2023 - January 2025
Stage 2: IWBA (Statutory Assessments) Scoping	5-week IWBA (Statutory Assessments) Scoping exercise	October - November 2024
Stage 3: Public Consultation	Minimum 12-week Public Consultation	January - April 2025
Stage 4: Final draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA	End of Public Consultation and update to take into account any comments - submission of final draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA to the Welsh Government	April - May 2025
Stage 5: Publish RTP, RTDP and IWBA	Submission of final RTP, RTDP and IWBA - Welsh Government and ministerial approval as required	June 2025

Further information on the activities to be undertaken at each stage is provided within the following sections including the purpose of the activity, who will be involved, when and the approach to be taken.

This Engagement Plan is a live document and the planned engagement activities will be reviewed and refined throughout the engagement programme as necessary.

#### 4.1 Stage 1: Initial draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA

Stage 1 of the engagement programme will cover the period from inception to the public consultation exercise, including the preparation of the initial draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA.

Some activities in this stage have already taken place or are ongoing as outlined below.

##### 4.1.1 Stakeholder Workshops

Two Stakeholder Workshops were held online (Teams). A summary of the events is presented below:

##### Stakeholder Workshop 1

**Purpose:** To present and test the identification of key issues and focus areas linked to the available data and evidence base.

**Attendees:** NWCJC members and officers, Transport for Wales, Welsh Government

**When:** 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**Approach:** Workshop 1 presented the key evidence sources used to inform and identify issues and focus areas for the RTP, considering assessment and prioritisation methodologies, and a list of past, present and emerging policies, projects and schemes. This allowed for any gaps in knowledge to be highlighted by stakeholders, as well as suggestions.



## Stakeholder Workshop 2

**Purpose:** To present and test options for an appraisal framework, draft policies, programmes and projects.

**Attendees:** NWCJC members and officers, Transport for Wales, Welsh Government

**When:** 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024

**Approach:** The project team reported back on how the results of Stakeholder Workshop 1 helped shaped the emerging draft RTP including vision, SMART objectives, and long list of options for draft policies, programmes and projects at different geo-spatial scales. The project team presented the new policy direction and list of programmes and projects in draft for different focus areas, alongside initial appraisal and prioritisation. The stakeholder group were then tasked with identifying challenges, opportunities, and ideas pertinent to the suggested policy, programme and project long list. A spreadsheet of options was issued alongside presentation slides for comments after the meeting, with a deadline of Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

### 4.1.2 Ongoing Officer and Member Feedback

**Purpose:** To seek comments on emerging issues, evidence and information, draft policies, programmes and projects.

**Stakeholders:** NWCJC Local Authority members and officers (Advisory Group)

**When:** Throughout Stage 1

**Approach:** Briefings and feedback opportunities are ongoing and open throughout the initial draft stage of the RTP, RTDP and IWBA. The project team has provided briefings and outlined the emerging evidence, methodologies for appraisal and assessment, draft policies, programmes and projects. Opportunities at key milestones are provided for officers and members to ask questions and provide feedback, which the project team will consider as part of the development of the initial draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA.

### 4.1.3 RTP Sessions

**Purpose:** To discuss specific topics relevant to the development of the RTP, RTDP and IWBA and ensure consistencies and efficiencies between the CJsCs in the preparation of their regional plans.

**Attendees:** Welsh Government, Transport for Wales, and CJsCs

**When:** All Stages

**Approach:** Regular meetings have been held in a round table forum online (Temas). The NWCJC project team has provided updates on the status of the North Wales draft RTP and outlined its planned approach to development of the relevant documents and assessment. The meetings offer opportunities for the CJsCs to discuss potential consistencies and efficiencies in the preparation of their regional plans.

### 4.1.4 NWCJC and Transport sub-committee meetings

**Purpose:** Since the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022 the NWCJC members have met to discuss key issues and make decisions pertinent to governance, duties and requirements. This has included establishing a transport sub-committee to help oversee the development of the RTP.

**Attendees:** NWCJC members

**When:** All Stages

**Approach:** The NWCJC and subcommittee members will continue to meet on a regular basis to discuss and agree CJC business, and facilitate key decision making including on the RTP at its key milestones.



## 4.2 Stage 2: IWBA (Statutory Assessments) Scoping

**Purpose:** WelTAG requires IWBA and the RTP Guidance sets out how the RTP must be supported by IWBA. The IWBA must show how well-being has been considered in the RTP including social, environmental, economic and cultural well-being, and take into account the five ways of working advocated in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. It should also show how the RTP will contribute to other outcomes such as NetZero and equality. As a plan, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required, whilst other statutory assessments will be needed as outlined in the RTP Guidance, including but limited to Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). SEA and HRA both have their own legislation and regulations to be satisfied. As part of the preparation of the IWBA a scoping exercise must be undertaken in accordance with the relevant regulations, and feedback from the scoping exercise will inform the full IWBA and statutory assessments.

**Participants:** NRW and Cadw (the statutory consultees) and the NWCJC Local Authorities

**When:** October – November 2024 (5-week scoping period)

**Approach:** A IWBA (Statutory Assessments) Scoping Report will be sent to the competent authorities NRW and Cadw as statutory consultees, and shared with the NWCJC Local Authorities for comments for a 5-week scoping consultation period. The scoping exercise will be undertaken in accordance with the SEA Regulations and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Pre-screening Report will be appended to the IWBA (Statutory Assessments) Scoping Report. Comments will inform the RTP alongside full IWBA including statutory assessments as required.

## 4.3 Stage 3: Public Consultation

**Purpose:** Taking into account comment and feedback during Stages 1 and 2, a draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA will be published for a minimum 12-week public consultation carried out in accordance with the relevant statutory assessment regulations including SEA. The consultation will seek feedback from any individual or organisation with an interest in transport in North Wales. The consultation will also satisfy the requirements of the SEA Regulations etc with comments sought from statutory consultees as required.

**Attendees:** All groups (open to the public)

**When:** January – April 2025 (minimum 12-week period)

**Approach:** A minimum 12-week consultation period will run in Winter 2024-25 seeking views on the draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA documents. To make the participation as accessible as possible taking into account the broad geographic area, a virtual public consultation exhibition room will be created utilising Arup's Virtual Engage platform<sup>4</sup>. 'Attendees' will be able to access the virtual consultation room at any time of day during the consultation period to view information and provide their feedback. An online web browser-based portal (Virtual Engage) will allow the public to browse information display boards, the draft plans and consultation materials, as well as submit their comments using an online form.

The public will be able to have their say by responding to an online questionnaire (with questions to be discussed and agreed with the NWCJC in advance of launch). This approach will allow a wider demographic than that usually participates in consultation events including hard-to-reach groups.

Notification of the public consultation and virtual public consultation room will be signposted through social media feeds led by the NWCJC and its partners, and online news channels and the NWCJC website subject to agreement.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.arup.com/services/digital-solutions-and-tools/virtual-engage/>



In addition, email invitations will be sent out to stakeholders at the launch of the public consultation to invite participation and share the opportunity with their colleagues and other interested individuals and organisations.

Hard copies of materials and questionnaires will be made available for individuals unable to access online material, on request. A project email address and telephone number will be created to facilitate requests that will be shared with the NWCJC project leadership to action. This will also facilitate discussion over the phone for people who prefer more traditional methods of engagement.

In addition to the activities outlined above for members of the public, officer and member briefings will be arranged to provide key stakeholders with advance notice of the launch of the public consultation.

Consideration will also need to be given to the relevant Welsh Language Requirements. Consultation materials and questionnaires should be made available in both Welsh and English. Furthermore, any requests for Welsh language materials will be available and accommodated when appropriate. The public consultation materials will be bi-lingual, with translation services to be provided on request.

The collation of any responses from members of the public would be stored in line with relevant data protection policies, with a data protection statement to be provided by the NWCJC on the questionnaire etc.

Following the close of the public consultation, feedback will be analysed and summarised, with key themes and comments informing revised plan documents and assessments as appropriate.

## 4.4 Stage 4: Final draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA

**Purpose:** Activities will be undertaken to finalise the draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA prior to submission to the Welsh Government. These are described below.

**When:** April to May 2025

**Approach:** See below.

### 4.4.1 Consultation Report

A Consultation Report will be prepared to provide a summary of the engagement and consultation activities undertaken and feedback received during the Public Consultation and wider engagement programme. It will set out how comments have informed the final documents and assessments.

### 4.4.2 Officer and Member Briefings

Prior to the submission of the draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA to the Welsh Government, NWCJC officer and member briefings will be arranged to present the final draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA documents, and provide a summary of the feedback received following the public consultation and how this has been addressed.

### 4.4.3 Sub-committee approval (NWCJC sign off)

Prior to submission of the draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA to the Welsh Government, NWCJC and Transport sub-committee approval will be sought.

### 4.4.4 Presentation to Welsh Government

The NWCJC will offer a presentation to the Welsh Government on the final draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA alongside submission, to assist Welsh Government review and decision making.



## 4.5 Stage 5: Publish RTP, RTDP and IWBA

**Purpose:** Submission of the final draft RTP, RTDP and IWBA for the Welsh Government and ministerial approval.

**When:** June / Summer 2025

**Approach:** Once approved by the Welsh Government and ministers, the final documents will be published on the NWCJC website, and an email sent to all participants of the engagement activities and public consultation to notify them of the adoption and publication. The NWCJC may consider launch events alongside the publication to encourage awareness and involvement, seeking to support the implementation of the RTP and its RTDP. A Monitoring and Evaluation report will also assist ongoing engagement throughout the plan period.





## 5. Next Steps

Subject to NWCJC approval and allocation of a budget for this Engagement Plan, the details will be developed further with iterative updates made as necessary.