

Agenda – Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee room 3 Senedd and video

Conference via Zoom

Meeting date: 25 February 2026

Meeting time: 09.30

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Hybrid

Private pre-meeting (09.15–09.30)

Public meeting (09.30–11.30)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions, and declarations of interest

(09.30)

2 General scrutiny of the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales

(09.30–11.30)

(Pages 1 – 49)

Ken Skates MS, Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales

Peter McDonald, Director of Transport and Digital Connectivity – Welsh Government

Alex Walters, Deputy Director Public and Integrated Transport – Welsh Government

Alison Thomas, Deputy Director Transport, Strategy & Policy – Welsh Government

Attached Documents:

Research brief – General scrutiny of the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and



North Wales

Paper – Welsh Government

3 Papers to note (11.30)

3.1 The Deposit Return Scheme

(Pages 50 – 56)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs in relation to the Deposit Return Scheme – Application for Deposit Management Organisation

Briefing note from the Wine and Spirit Trade Association to the Chair in relation to the impacts of the draft regulations and a Deposit Return Scheme with glass in scope in Wales

Briefing note from British Glass and the Trade Association for UK glass manufacturing to the Chair in relation to the Welsh Deposit Return Scheme regulations

3.2 Transport Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee

(Pages 57 – 58)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee in relation to the Transport Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee

3.3 The Aarhus Convention and its importance in Wales

(Pages 59 – 60)

Attached Documents:

Response from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs to the Interim Environmental Protection Assessor for Wales in relation to the Aarhus Convention and its importance in Wales

3.4 Interministerial Group for Net Zero, Energy and Climate Change

(Page 61)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs to the Chair in relation to the Interministerial Group for Net Zero, Energy and Climate Change

3.5 UK Government's Auction Round 7 for the contract for difference – Energy projects

(Page 62)

Attached Documents:

Letter from Bute Energy to the Chair in relation to the UK Government's Auction Round 7 for the contract for difference

3.6 Holyhead Port Storm Damage and Closure

(Pages 63 – 64)

Attached Documents:

Response from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales to the Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee in relation to Holyhead Port Storm Damage and Closure

3.7 The UK–Germany Treaty on Friendship and Bilateral Cooperation

(Pages 65 – 66)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee to the Chair in relation to the UK Germany Treaty on Friendship and Bilateral Cooperation

3.8 Petition P-06-1553 Increase investment and action in nature-based flood management to protect Welsh communities

(Pages 67 – 68)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Petitions Committee to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs in relation to

Petition P-06-1553 Increase investment and action in nature-based flood management to protect Welsh communities

- 4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 (vi) and (ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting**
(11.30)

Private meeting (11.30-12.30)

- 5 Consideration of evidence received under item 2**

(Pages 69 – 80)

Attached Documents:

Paper – Committee Legacy

- 6 Consideration of the Legislative Consent Memoranda on the Railways Bill**

(Pages 81 – 97)

Attached Documents:

Legal note on the Legislative Consent Memoranda on the Railways Bill

- 7 The UK-Germany Treaty on Friendship and Bilateral Cooperation**

(Pages 98 – 100)

Attached Documents:

Research brief – International Agreements: UK-Germany Treaty on Friendship and Bilateral Cooperation

Document is Restricted



Evidence paper from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales for General Scrutiny at the CCEI Committee

11/02/2026

Information provided to aid the Committee in advance of the Cabinet Secretary's attendance for General Scrutiny on 25 February 2026.

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Policy and Strategy

Wales Transport Strategy

1. The Wales Transport Strategy "Llwybr Newydd" was published on 10 March 2021 which seeks to shape our transport system in Wales over the next 20 years.
2. We continue to monitor delivery of the Strategy via the WTS monitoring framework. Of the 33 monitoring measures, 17 are showing improvement since the framework was launched. Progress has been made on transport decarbonisation, with notable increases in the number of ultra-low emission vehicles and publicly available electric vehicle charging points.
3. Our target for 30% of the workforce to work remotely on a regular basis has been exceeded and there have been improvements in journey satisfaction and accessibility of public transport. There are positive early signs of mode shift away from the private car to more sustainable modes.
4. We will be able to understand our position on mode shift more accurately once the preliminary results from the first six months of the Wales National Travel Survey are published in April 2026.
5. Six of the 33 WTS monitoring measures have declined since the framework was launched. These cover delay on both the road and public transport networks, and access to local services by sustainable modes. The remaining measures in the monitoring framework show no significant change, or don't yet have sufficient data to allow any conclusion to be reached. The results of the Wales National Travel Survey will help provide a fuller picture for 11 of the monitoring framework measures.

National Transport Delivery Plan

6. The National Transport Delivery Plan (NTDP) was published on 14 February 2023 which set out delivery against the priorities and ambitions in Llwybr Newydd. This includes the programmes, projects and new policies that we intended to deliver over the next five years.
7. Annex 2 of the NTDP set out 402 actions, grouped by theme and mode, that Welsh Government and its partners including Transport for Wales (TfW), Local Authorities, Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) and Trunk Road Agents planned to undertake between 2023 and 2027.
8. As of February 2026, the breakdown of actions completed, not yet commenced, in progress and not progressed are set out at Table 1:

Category	Number	Percentage
Completed	88	22%
Not yet commenced - start date not due	19	5%
In progress	159	39%
Not in progress	136	34%
TOTAL	402	

Table 1: number and percentage of actions by completion status

9. In delivering the NTDP, delays have arisen to due to factors including the need to engage with stakeholders, changes in funding settlements and technical challenges in implementation. These include:
- The need for a specific piece of work to be completed before another can start. For example, during the development of our Bus Reform plans, it became apparent that some actions to modernise ticketing arrangements would need to wait for the Bus Bill to come into force, as the franchising agreements would become the mechanism to compel franchisees to share their data with us. This means some actions will now not progress in this NTDP reporting period.
 - A change in approach to project funding; through the development of Regional Transport Plans (RTP) and modernisation of our transport grants to local authorities towards delivering each RTP, the prioritisation of projects may differ from the timescales and exact schemes specified in the NTDP. Each region is developing a programme of schemes which will be funded in the 2026-27 financial year, based on the priorities identified in their plans.
 - Changes in delivery priorities with non-devolved policy and delivery. Transport devolution is complex, with many of the decisions and, importantly, funding required being taken at UK Government for issues such as rail policy and delivery of projects on much of the Wales and Borders network. An example of this can be seen with the previous UK Government's decision not to fund electrification between Cardiff and Swansea, with means many actions in the plan which depended on this work are now not able to progress within this NTDP reporting period.

Regional Transport Plans (RTP)

10. On 28 October we published a [written statement](#) on RTPs. This confirmed that the plans for all four regions have now been approved, taking effect from the day of their approval. Each plan has been published by the Corporate Joint Committee which produced it; links to all four plans can be found here: [Regional transport plans: improving travel in your area | GOV.WALES](#)
11. To support the implementation of RTPs, we are modernising our transport grants to Local Authorities. From April 2026, we will combine several funding streams into a single Regional Transport Fund to help deliver the plans. Each region is developing a programme of schemes which will be funded in 2026-27, based on the priorities identified in their plans.

Highways

Highway investment

12. On 17 July we published a written statement setting out plans for our road network.
13. This included an update on the Welsh Governments 'Future Road Building Tests' which set out the circumstances in which Welsh Government would consider investment in roads. Having had the benefit of assessing how the tests have been used in practice since their first publication, we have updated the guidance to provide greater clarity and confidence for local authorities and transport professionals about when investment in the road network will be considered and how the guidance should be used in practice.
14. The revised guidance remains consistent with the intent of the original tests to ensure that we increase standards and build better roads, including by encouraging innovative new approaches. It has been incorporated into our Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG), which sets out the overall approach to developing and assessing transport proposals across Wales.
15. In June 2023, an independent review panel commissioned by the former Deputy Minister for Transport published 15 recommendations to improve the way maintenance was undertaken on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in Wales. Led by Matthew Lugg OBE and known as the "Lugg Review," the report highlighted the need to improve asset management and embed policy, such as the Wales Transport Strategy, in all work and planning involved in managing and maintain the network.
16. In response the Welsh Government accepted the recommendations and embarked on a New Approach to Road Maintenance. This involved improving all areas of maintenance and ensured that priority was given to the safety and maintenance of critical infrastructure. Major Asset Renewal and Multi Asset Scheme programmes have been established to address backlogs in maintenance and ensures work to improve the safety and serviceability of the network becomes more sustainable in the future.
17. Maintaining our existing infrastructure also means working to replace major infrastructure, ensuring the resilience of key routes for now and for future generations as the impact of climate change becomes apparent. A great example of this is on the A494, an important route linking North East Wales to the North West of England. We are now progressing through the statutory procedures and procurement process to replace the River Dee bridge with a view to progressing onto construction in late 2026/early 2027.
18. Alongside this we are also investing in enhancing our road network, improving access for people and freight. The opening of the A40 Llanddewi Velfrey to Redstone Cross Improvements, linking to the ports in West Wales, and the completion of the A465, demonstrates that the Welsh Government continues to

invest in roads. The new A465 will unlock economic growth in the Valleys and surrounding areas by improving access for businesses, logistics and tourism.

19. We continue to progress the development of options to improve the resilience of the crossings across the Menai Strait and have begun development work to provide a new junction on the A483 to support the Wrexham Western Gateway Development.
20. We are also refreshing our resilience studies for the motorway and trunk roads. This will ensure we have the evidence base to inform future investment decisions and to ensure our roads continue to play their role in delivering Wales' socio-economic and net zero policies. We will begin with studies of our busiest trunk roads: the A55, A494 and A483 in North Wales and the M4 in South Wales.
21. An additional £25m was invested in the SRN in 2025/26 which resulted in 65 miles of improved road surfaces, fixing and preventing over 30,000 potholes. The Local Road Network (LRN) also benefitted from the introduction of a Local Government Borrowing Initiative which enabled local authorities to fix or prevent around 171,000 potholes across 324 miles of local roads in Wales in 2025/26. This initiative will continue in 2026/27, helping to ensure hundreds of km of roads are improved.

Pavement parking

22. Pavement parking creates serious safety risks for all pedestrians, but particularly disabled people, older people, those with prams or pushchairs and young children. Ultimately, our goal is safer, more inclusive streets that work for everyone.
23. The UK Government has recently published its [pavement parking consultation](#) and set out the intention to give local authorities powers to act against unnecessary obstruction of pavements.
24. The Welsh Government supports this approach and we are in discussions with the UK Government on how it can be applied in Wales.

Unadopted roads

25. The unadopted road programme of improvements follows two similar previous programmes delivered during 2021/22 and 2023/24. Again for 2024/25 the initial interest was good with the level and value of Local Authority applications far exceeding the monies available.
26. As in previous years, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGGA), acting as programme manager, sought applications from all 22 Local Authorities (LAs). 10 applications were received with a total value of £1.325 million. The WLGGA and County Surveyor Society Officers evaluated the applications and recommended how best to allocate the available monies.
27. Of the 10 applications received, one application was deemed to be very expensive and did not represent the same value for money nor indeed collective benefits as the other schemes. It was recommended therefore that this scheme not be supported but that the other 9 applications be supported with a total value of £989k. The nine LAs supported were:

- Caerphilly
- Carmarthenshire
- Ceredigion
- Denbigh
- Gwynedd
- Merthyr Tudfyl
- Pembrokeshire
- Powys
- Rhondda Cynon Taf

28. Of the £989k allocated, a total of £752K was actually expended representing a 76% delivery of the available monies. Significant improvements have been achieved to different types of unadopted roads, demonstrating that unadopted roads come in different forms and require different solutions. At the end of the day, improving and adopting such roads is a great benefit for all the varied stakeholders.
29. It is pleasing to note that increasingly, partner organisations are showing a willingness to contribute their own resources to supplement or 'match fund' Welsh Government resources to deliver unadopted road improvements. A particular positive this year was a significant contribution from a housing association to the funding of a scheme that ultimately was of direct benefit to the association and its clients, as well as to the wider public.

Road Safety

20mph Speed Limit

30. The latest police-recorded collision data shows fewer collisions on 20mph and 30mph roads combined in the third quarter of 2025 when compared to the same quarter in 2023, which was the last quarter 3 period before the change in default speed limit.
31. A listening programme was setup to assist us in refining the guidance. Welsh Government took the feedback and worked in partnership with highway authorities and the County Surveyors' Society Wales to co-create guidance on setting 30 mph speed limits on restricted roads and other 20mph roads.
32. That guidance was published in July 2024 and provides a framework to support highway authorities to make the right decisions for local roads, particularly when those calls are finely balanced. It prioritises 20mph speed limits where pedestrians and cyclists frequently mix with vehicles, unless strong evidence supports that higher speeds are safe.
33. It also sets out that speed limit changes to 30mph are mainly expected on A and B roads, which are, generally, strategic routes through urban areas. In addition to clarifying place criteria terminology, the updated guidance provides criteria linked to road characteristics and movement, making it clear that any decision is an exercise for highway authorities of weighing benefits and disbenefits of setting a higher speed limit in the context of their transport specific but also wider statutory duties. The number of roads that are changed to 30mph in each of the 22 local authority areas, and on trunk roads, has been determined by via public consultations.
34. Local authorities have now published lists of roads they are going to propose changing to 30mph. Seven authorities have completed their TRO public consultation and out of the seven, three have implemented changes on the ground. A further three authorities are not planning to make any changes at all and the remaining 12 are yet to begin the statutory public consultations.
35. An independent evaluation of the 20mph policy has been commissioned to provide robust, evidence-based and impartial findings. It will assess how the policy is delivered, its impact on road safety, value for money, and wider benefits for health and communities. The evaluation will report in stages: an initial report this year, an interim report next year and a final report in 2029.

Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales

36. The Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales guidance is currently being updated to align with the national 20mph speed limit and broader Welsh Government policy.
37. Local authority officers, as Highway Authorities, are actively involved as key stakeholders in this process. The update has taken longer than initially planned. However, this extended timeline reflects the value of a collaborative approach, ensuring the guidance is both practical and effective.

38. Significant effort has been made to engage with Highway Authorities, listen to their concerns (particularly regarding the resources required to test the guidance) and adjust the programme as needed. Engagement workshops were held in October 2025 to test the draft guidance and gather feedback from highway authorities. The project team is currently reviewing this feedback to finalise the guidance.
39. The updated guidance will be for all highway authorities (Welsh Government for the strategic road network and local authorities for local roads), but it will not be mandatory.
40. Until the new guidance is published, the 2009 guidance remains extant. The decision on publication will rest with the new Government. If published, the guidance will inform a review of speed limits across the trunk road network, subject to funding.

Road Safety Framework

41. The Road Safety Partnership Plan 2025-2040 sets out a collaborative vision for transforming road safety across Wales. The Plan adopts the internationally recognised Vision Zero and is underpinned by the Safe System approach. The Plan aims to eliminate road deaths and serious injuries and reducing road related harms whilst fostering a transport system that is accessible, sustainable, efficient, inclusive and fair for all. The long-term incremental process requires sustained commitment, innovation, and partnership from stakeholders.
42. The Road Safety Partnership Group and Road Safety Partnership Board have been established. The Road Safety Partnership Plan has been approved by the Road Safety Partnership Board and preparations are being made to publish it in early 2026.
43. Work has begun to establish the Safe System Component Groups – Enhancing the Road Environment, Thriving Road Users, Improving the Fleet and Upgrading our Response. These groups will focus on developing ideas to progress road safety and propose suitable Safety Performance Indicators to present to the Partnership Group and Board for approval.
44. A data and analysts group and communications advisory group will support the three-tiered governance structure.

Climate change and decarbonisation of transport

Transport targets and commitments set out in Net Zero Wales

45. The Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2 Plan, published in October 2021, set out a comprehensive emissions-reduction pathway for the transport sector. The latest National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) data, published in June 2025, shows total transport emissions in Wales of 6.031 MtCO₂e in 2023, compared to 6.747 MtCO₂e in the 2019 baseline year, representing a 10.6% reduction.
46. Working collaboratively with the other UK nations, we have supported the delivery of the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) mandate and Vehicle Emissions Trading Schemes, the single most impactful carbon-mitigation policy across the UK. These schemes set annual ZEV sales targets for new cars and vans between 2024 and 2035. In 2025, battery electric vehicles (BEVs) accounted for approximately 23.4% of all new car registrations across the UK.
47. In November 2025, we launched 'Moving to Zero', a £1 million commercial vehicle decarbonisation programme.
48. We have invested £2 million to upgrade tunnel lighting, street lighting, and variable road signs to high-efficiency technologies, delivering both carbon and cost savings.
49. We are introducing the PAS 2080 framework across all major construction projects valued over £1 million, encouraging early collaboration with the supply chain to identify, manage, and reduce whole-life carbon.
50. The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) has been updated to align with the modernised Manual of Contract Documents for Highway Works (MCHW). These updates introduce low-carbon materials and construction methods into standard practice, significantly reducing embodied and operational emissions across SRN maintenance and construction projects.

EV Charging Strategy and Action Plan

51. In 2021, we published the Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Strategy and Action Plan, establishing a vision for an accessible, user-focused charging network by 2025 and committing to the delivery of 30,000 fast charge-points by 2030. While it is now highly unlikely that the 30,000 fast charge-point target will be met, there has nevertheless been significant growth in publicly accessible charge-points in Wales, increasing from 994 in October 2021 to 3,813 in October 2025.
52. The Welsh Government procurement framework for EV charging infrastructure, launched in autumn 2024, explicitly references the PAS 1899 accessibility standard. TfW played a key role in the development of the original PAS 1899 standard and the subsequent 2025 revision, helping to ensure accessibility requirements are embedded from the outset.

53. We have developed national EV charging infrastructure standards, ensuring safe, accessible, and reliable public charging across Wales.
54. Responsibility for delivery plans for charge-point installation currently sits with local authorities. From 2026–27, Corporate Joint Committees will assume responsibility for prioritising regional transport funding, while local authorities will retain responsibility for granting planning permission to charge-point operators seeking to invest in Wales.
55. We are working with TfW and the four local authorities currently undertaking trials to explore the role of cross-pavement charging solutions, particularly in improving access to affordable charging for households without off-street parking or private charging facilities.

Climate Adaptation and Transport Infrastructure

56. The Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales (2024) includes a dedicated Transport Adaptation Action Plan to address risks from flooding, extreme rainfall, heatwaves and coastal change. Key actions focus on strengthened cross-sector governance through a Transport Climate Adaptation Working Group, protecting vulnerable transport networks, and ensuring that transport planning and investment decisions are informed by robust, sector-specific climate projections.
57. TfW is delivering adaptation activity through its Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (CARP), which sets out governance, risk assessment and resilience measures across rail, bus and active travel networks. TfW is undertaking detailed climate risk and vulnerability assessments, with a particular focus on the Core Valley Lines (CVL), where flooding presents a significant risk to asset condition and service reliability. Enhanced weather monitoring, microclimate analysis and climate modelling are improving forecasting and operational response, while future climate projections are being embedded in the design of new and upgraded infrastructure. Annual progress reporting provides assurance on delivery, emerging risks and forward priorities.
58. On 28 January 2026, TfW published an update to its CARP alongside a progress report covering November 2023 to November 2025. These annual updates report against TfW's five strategic adaptation objectives, spanning governance, risk assessment, resilience measures and preparedness for extreme weather. They provide evidence of progress, highlight challenges, and set priorities for the coming year to strengthen organisational resilience to climate change.
59. TfW's approach is underpinned by evidence-led vulnerability assessments, including detailed analysis of weather-related incidents on the CVL, identification of flooding as a primary risk to infrastructure and services, and monitoring of localised microclimates through newly installed weather stations to improve forecasting, response and resilience. Future climate projections—covering rainfall extremes, temperature increases and sea-level rise—are used to assess long-term vulnerability and to apply appropriate climate change uplift in all new developments and enhancements.
60. Adaptation measures for key assets include evaluating flood risk across the CVL and testing more robust design approaches aligned with +2°C and +4°C warming

scenarios; preparing coastal networks, such as Cardiff Bay, for compound flooding risks through multi-agency collaboration; and developing operational plans to manage the impacts of future heatwaves on staff, passengers and asset performance. More broadly, TfW is embedding climate adaptation across governance frameworks, operational practices, maintenance and renewal programmes, and investment decision-making.

61. The Strategic Road Network (SRN) is already regularly impacted by climate hazards including flooding, heat, subsidence, erosion and wind and we are on the journey to adapting to the impacts of a changing climate.
62. The SRN has an aim to be resilient and adaptable to climate change and have a Climate plan already developed to set out steps to prepare the strategic road network for the potential impacts of climate change. The climate plan has the specific aim of an SRN which 'plans for the projected climate of 2050 and prepares for the possible climate of 2100' to align with the principles of UK's climate change risk assessment.
63. The SRN has a clear understanding of how current and future climate hazards may impact the network through a climate risk assessment and is in progress with delivering action to mitigate this risk. This is through updating asset management plans, adapting our procurement approaches, further researching our climate resilience, updating our monitoring practices and implementing mitigation.
64. We are already updating our infrastructure to develop a network which is resilient to future changes in the climate. An example of this is the A487 New Dyfi Bridge scheme which improved the resilience of the A487, the principal strategic south to north route along the west coast of Wales. Another example was the improvements to the A55 between Abergwyngregyn to Tai'r Meibion which was prone to flooding and caused disruptions and closures. Since the works have been completed, there has been no flooding incident on this section. The scheme also delivered several safety measures and the introduction of 4km of new and improved walking and cycling route which has seen a tenfold increase in usage.
65. We are working on embedding the Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales 2024 by delivering the actions set out in the transport action plan.

Public Transport and Integrated Transport

Delivery of integrated transport in Wales

66. Through TfW, we are working to deliver a modern, high performing and integrated public transport system in Wales.
67. Over the last few years, we have made significant strides with TfW to improve the TrawsCymru network across Wales. By the middle of this year, we will have deployed over 40 new Euro 6 buses onto the network and introduced new routes (T8 Linking Corwen and Chester, T10 linking Bangor and Corwen and the T51 linking Rhyl and Wrexham).
68. The recently opened bus interchanges in Cardiff and Porth are designed to facilitate seamless travel between transport modes, with further interchange schemes underway at key destinations include Milford Haven and Haverfordwest.
69. Our proposals for Bus Reform will enable us to further improve integration and choice for passengers right across Wales.

The implications of UK Government Rail Reform

70. The introduction of the UK Government's Railway's Bill will enable the biggest transformation of the rail sector in a generation, modernising and improving rail services and delivering a more integrated, accountable and passenger-focused railway.
71. We have been working closely with the UK Government to ensure that the Bill achieves the best deal for Wales. Thanks to our collaborative working, we have agreed the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretary of State for Transport and Welsh Ministers.
72. The Memorandum of Understanding will recognise the shared ambition to codify devolved responsibilities, funding arrangements and joint governance mechanisms. It will strengthen the accountability of the delivery of rail services across the Wales and Borders network.

Delivery of the rail franchise and both Welsh and UK Government infrastructure priorities and investment

73. Our over £1bn investment in the Core Valley Lines (CVL) is truly transforming travel for passengers.
74. Stations have been upgraded, track and signalling infrastructure renewed and Overhead Line Electrification installed. The electrification of the CVL will be completed in spring this year, with 170km of track powered by innovative discontinuous electrification.
75. The majority of TfW services are now operated by new trains thanks to our £800m investment in new rolling stock. These trains offer improved accessibility, capacity

and comfort for passengers and have helped TfW to deliver sustained performance improvements. TfW continue to make good progress with their rolling stock introduction programme and plan to introduce brand new tram-trains to the CVL from spring this year and Class 197 trains to the Cambrian line from Autumn.

76. Over 2.3 million journeys have now been made across the South Wales Metro using Pay-As-You-Go, which is TfW's fastest-growing ticketing product. PAYG makes it easier, faster and cheaper for passengers to pay for travel and will be rolled out in north east Wales from this spring. This is part of our vision for Network North Wales, which is already delivering significant benefits for passengers. Stations have been upgraded on the Wrexham – Liverpool Line, service frequency has doubled between Wrexham – Chester and positive progress has been made on proposals for a new station at Deeside and vital infrastructure upgrades at Padeswood. As part of the May 2026 timetable change, we will deliver a 50% boost in services on the North Wales Main Line – a major boost in connectivity.
77. TfW has delivered a step change improvement in performance and is now regularly the most reliable train operator in Wales. TfW recorded the biggest improvement in punctuality of all train operators in Great Britain between July and September last year and recorded a 10% increase in passenger journeys across the same period.
78. We have worked closely with the UK Government to secure £445m funding for rail in Wales. This will enable us to deliver major improvements now and, crucially, also includes significant funding to develop projects and build a strategic pipeline of enhancements. This is vital to demonstrate that Wales is investment ready and make the case for long-term, sustainable funding. This will be informed by an industry-led vision for rail in Wales, which will be published by TfW imminently.
79. We continue to support the UK Government's Access for All (AfA) programme which is delivering step free access to stations across Wales. AfA schemes have already been completed at Abergavenny, Llanelli, Cwmbran, Flint, Ludlow, Newtown and Treforest and we are working with the UK Government to deliver schemes at Tenby, Shotton and Ruabon.

Bus policy and delivery of bus reform

80. Earlier this month the Bus Services (Wales) Act 2026 received Royal Assent. The Act marks a generational change in the way bus services are run across Wales, moving from the existing de-regulated system to a predominantly franchised systems that places a duty on Welsh Ministers to deliver the Wales Bus Network Plan. It is a significant step change that aims to prioritise the needs of passengers. The reforms will take time, as they are complex and multifaceted – this is why we are rolling out the reforms on a regional basis, beginning in South West Wales in 2027.
81. As part of our bus reform agenda, we aim to also improve the quality and carbon footprint of the bus fleet, so we will be incrementally purchasing vehicles to replace the oldest fleet as we roll out franchising. Additionally, we will purchase strategic bus depots to aid the competitiveness of franchise procurement and deliver the infrastructure needed to support electric vehicles. A majority of depots will remain in private ownership.

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82. In September 2025 we introduced the £1 fares scheme for 16-21 year olds, extended to 5-15 year olds in November as a 12-month pilot. The scheme delivers on calls we have consistently received to improve our fares offer for young people and it has been successful so far – over 36,000 16-21 year olds have signed up for a My Travel Pass to access the scheme and over 2m journeys have been made so far. We will be evaluating the scheme to help the next government determine whether it should be extended in the future.
83. We will have invested over £600m in the bus industry during this Senedd term through our bus grants and concessionary fares, which represents by far the biggest investment in bus services of any contributor. We have also expanded the number of Fflecsi and Traws services across Wales during this Senedd term. We will continue to invest – the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Welsh Language increased the bus revenue budget by over 6% in the final budget for 2026/27 which will help maintain bus services ahead of franchising.

Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Reform

84. In 2023 we issued a [white paper consultation](#) on taxi and private hire reforms. The Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle (Wales) Bill was removed from the programme for Government in May 2024.
85. Welsh Government issued guidance to local authorities who licence the sector in 2021 to align policies and reduce inconsistent standards, we are aiming to publish revised guidance early 2026.
86. Driver training films are in production to improve customer service, disability and equality awareness and safeguarding awareness.

Active Travel

87. During this Senedd term, the Welsh Government delivered key aims of the Wales Transport Strategy by investing over £258 million in local authority active travel routes and facilities through the Active Travel Fund and the Safe Routes in Communities Grant. This investment also supported the Programme for Government commitment to expand travel options that encourage public transport use and increase walking, wheeling and cycling.
88. The Welsh Government has met its Programme for Government commitment to establish Wales-wide plans for comprehensive active travel networks. Following extensive public consultation, the second mapping cycle under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 was successfully completed, resulting in mapped existing and planned active travel networks totalling over 10,000 kilometres across Wales.
89. The National Transport Delivery Plan commitment to publish an Active Travel Delivery Plan in 2024 has also been fulfilled, and delivery of its comprehensive programme of actions is underway. Key achievements include the development and ongoing enhancement of a national promotional toolkit with an extensive bank of resources; the creation of an evidence-based route prioritisation tool; the establishment of a design hub within Transport for Wales to strengthen technical

support; and the launch of Academi Teithio Llesol to address skills and capacity constraints across the active travel sector.

90. Progress has also been made against the Programme for Government commitment to work with schools to promote active travel and road safety. The Welsh Government-funded Active Journeys programme typically engages with around 13,000 children each year and has increased active travel levels by 12%. The Walk to School programme, delivered by Living Streets, engaged more than 55,000 pupils in its first two years, achieving a 20% increase in walking, wheeling and cycling all the way to school for primary pupils, rising to 57% when park and stride journeys are included. In addition, over 330 Active Travel School Plans have been completed, and more than 200 business cases under the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme have been assessed against active travel criteria, in line with Wales Transport Strategy commitments.
91. The Welsh Government has also successfully trialled initiatives to reduce barriers to cycling uptake, most notably through the e-move scheme, which offered free medium-term e-bike and e-cargo bike loans across multiple locations between 2021 and 2024. A total of 708 medium-term e-cycle loans were provided to 652 beneficiaries across five locations, and the scheme also piloted a gender budgeting approach to better understand and address unequal access to cycling.
92. The Welsh Government is currently responding to the recommendations of the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee, published on 4 February, with a plenary debate scheduled for 25 February. The Review of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 is planned for publication on the same day.

Update on support for ports, and freight

Ports, Freight and Logistics

93. We have been working towards developing a Freight and Logistics Plan for Wales, as laid out in Llwybr Newydd, with preliminary work having been completed. The plan was originally due to be published in 2024.
94. The key priorities have been discussed through joint working and consultation with key stakeholders such as the Rail Freight Group, Road Haulage Association and Logistics UK. We originally agreed a delay in issuing of a full strategy and to work with industry to produce a shorter term, smaller scale Freight Action Plan.
95. We recognise that the plan is overdue, but with the closure of the port of Holyhead just before Christmas last year and its clear impact on the industry, it was imperative that we reacted to that priority and waited for the conclusion of the Irish Sea Taskforce (set up as a response to that closure) before starting on this plan.
96. As a result of the Irish Sea taskforce and the Debate on the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report: Holyhead Port Storm Damage and Closure - Initial Findings in July, it became apparent that stakeholders would prefer Government to publish a joint Freight and Logistics Plan, and Ports and Maritime Strategy. Following the conclusion of the Irish Sea taskforce meetings we issued a written statement on the recommendations. We decided that a combined port and maritime, freight and logistics plan would be preferable, given the strong links and interdependencies between the sectors.
97. As a result, one of the key recommendations of the Irish Sea Task force is for the Welsh Government to publish a set of priorities for a Port and Maritime, Freight and Logistics Plan before the end of Government term in preparation for the next Government. As part of that work, it will also establish a freight council and a truck stop mapping exercise for Wales which will be published by the end of this term of Government.
98. Preparatory work for the plan has already commenced. The Cabinet Secretary for Economy energy and Planning and Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales have agreed to a draft scope for the work, following internal consultation. This has been further refined following external consultation and feedback from key stakeholders and is currently being developed into a set of priorities. Before the end of Government term, we will publish this set of priorities in what we are now calling the Maritime and Logistics plan in preparation for the next Government. The published document will enable the next Government to clearly see what the priorities of the sectors are and be able to move them forward as the preparation work will be done.
99. We have also agreed to the recommendation to bring forward the creation of a new Welsh Logistics Council and commission consultants to undertake the mapping of current roadside facilities and frequently used Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) parking locations in Wales.

100. We are currently developing some preparatory work on the formation of what we are now calling the Maritime and Logistics Council (MLC). We see the MLC as a natural follow on from the Irish sea taskforce. We do expect there to be the flexibility and ability to make changes to the membership even after the first meeting. The MLC's remit is likely to be wide ranging therefore flexibility is key. We hope to be able to update Committee on the membership soon. We have aspirations for the new MLC to become a supportive driving force to help the next government deliver tangible benefits to the sectors.
101. We have commissioned 3rd party professional consultancy advice to undertake the mapping of current roadside facilities and frequently used Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) parking locations in Wales. This has been a strong focus and request from the logistics member associations, and we look forward to receiving the report which we have committed to publish once its completed. The report will cover a high-level assessment of existing EV charging facilities for all vehicles at lorry park sites and identify opportunities for additional charging facilities for further government consideration.

Decarbonisation pathway for road freight

102. In November 2025 we launched the Move to Zero / Symud i Sero programme, which is a further phase of work with the Zemo Partnership to take forward the original Zemo recommendations and decarbonise the commercial vehicle sector in Wales.
103. We commissioned the Zemo Partnership to review the policy options to decarbonise Wales' commercial vehicle sector – their report was published in March 2025.
104. Zemo concluded that the primary long-term pathway to decarbonising commercial vehicles in Wales will be electrification. However, this will take time and there are types of commercial vehicle operation where electrification may not currently be a viable option.
105. In these hard-to-electrify situations, low carbon fuels provide a near-term opportunity to decarbonise vehicles. There may be a role for hydrogen by the late 2030s. Zemo's report recommends a package of measures including action to facilitate partnerships, remove barriers, support innovation and educate operators.
106. The 'Move to Zero' programme builds on the momentum created by the Zemo report and progresses many of its recommendations. This will include wide-ranging activity to support the decarbonisation of both heavy and light duty commercial vehicles, with measures to encourage demand, facilitate access to finance and provide commercial vehicle operators with clear, impartial information.
107. The programme will also create a forum for Welsh Government to engage with key stakeholder communities in the Commercial Vehicle sector.

Last mile deliveries

108. The Universities of Cardiff and Leeds and the Welsh Government conducted a series of last mile delivery decarbonisation workshops in early 2025 with other representatives from academia and industry.
109. This work has helped with initial policy thinking, around setting a pathway for last mile deliveries decarbonisation. Its recommend that this work is taken forward by any incoming government with the priority of plotting a pathway to decarbonisation.

Governance, development and performance management of TfW

110. It has been another busy but successful year for the organisation and I welcome the scrutiny that the CCEI Committee has offered to both the Welsh Government and TfW. The recommendations of the Committee have proved invaluable in developing our governance of TfW including scrutiny of TfW's funding during the draft budget, the publication of KPIs, and development of the Performance Board.
111. Following the publication of the CCEI Committee's report on their pre-appointment hearing, I appointed Vernon Everitt as the Chair of TfW in the summer. I have published my letter to him highlighting my priorities for the role and I am pleased to see the Vernon's positive impact both on the organisation and with our stakeholders.
112. Your recommendations on TfW's draft budget contributed to the additional funding to deliver the bus franchising. This challenging and complex programme is now supported by a new joint sponsorship group attended by senior leaders from both organisations.
113. Finally, a new working group reporting to the Performance Board is being established for the new financial year to further interrogate, challenge, and develop the suite of performance and corporate KPIs to ensure that they are driving improvements and efficiencies across the organisation.

Huw Irranca-Davies

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

6 February 2026

Dear Huw,

Written Statement: Deposit Return Scheme – Application for Deposit Management Organisation

In your written statement of 27 November 2025, you confirmed the Welsh Government has formally proposed an exclusion for the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) in Wales under the UK Internal Market Act 2020.

We note that Welsh Ministers have previously stated to Senedd Committees that exclusions from the Act were not considered necessary for Senedd legislation to be fully effective, despite Senedd committees, including our own, coming to different conclusions.

While we welcome this change in approach, we are seeking further clarity on the process that the Welsh Government is now following in making this request for an exclusion. In particular, we would welcome information on the following matters:

1. The previous UK Government agreed a process with devolved governments for the consideration of exclusions in Common Framework areas. Can you confirm whether this is the process the Welsh Government is following?
 - If so, through which Common Framework is the Welsh Government seeking the exclusion, and when was it discussed at the relevant forum?
 - Has this matter been discussed at an Interministerial Group meeting? If so, which one and when?

- Does the process reflect any of the commitments made by the UK Government in its response to the review of the UK Internal Market Act, particularly regarding consideration of environmental protection impacts and benefits?
2. When does the Welsh Government expect the exclusion process to conclude and the necessary regulations made by the Secretary of State, enabling the Welsh Ministers to make the subordinate legislation needed to introduce a DRS in Wales?
 3. Will you commit to keeping this Committee, and other Senedd committees, updated on progress to ensure transparency and accountability throughout the process?

Separately, we would welcome an update on the expected timetable for the introduction of the second phase of the bans on single-use plastic products provided for in the Schedule to the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023. In particular, we seek confirmation of whether the Welsh Government intends to request an exclusion for the phase 2 products, in line with the approach taken in relation to the DRS.

In order to assist in our timely scrutiny of this matter, we would appreciate receiving a response by 20 February 2026.

I am copying this letter to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Hedges
Chair

The Deposit Return Scheme for Drinks Containers (Wales) Regulations (2026): WSTA View

Author: Wine and Spirit Trade Association

Date: 19 February 2026

Note: The WSTA, alongside our members, is reviewing the contents of the Draft Regulations, Explanatory Memorandum, and Regulatory Impact Assessment in full. Our full analysis will be shared in the coming days

Primary Issues:

1. Unique Identification:

[The UK Internal Market act exclusion](#) for the Deposit Return Scheme in Wales included a requirement to extend the *'proposed transitional period for single use glass (where a 0p deposit applies and no labelling requirements or targets apply) to October 2031 – this will provide industry with additional lead-in time to prepare for the introduction of glass in the Welsh DRS'*

Despite the zero-rating of the deposit for glass between 2027 and 2031, it is the WSTA's view that unique identification of products placed on the Welsh market will be required. This will be to ensure differentiation between the requirement for glass containers to pay DRS registration fees in Wales from 2027, and EPR fees in the rest of the UK.

2. Withdrawal from the Welsh Market:

Following discussions with industry businesses on the costs (and operational challenges) of supplying the Welsh market with a glass-in DRS, the WSTA estimates that up to 97% of SKU (stock-keeping units) could be withdrawn from the Welsh market.

3. Recycling Outcomes:

Wales has world-leading collection rates for glass existing kerbside collection (exceeding 90%). However, the regulations specify a target collection rate of 80% for glass by 2030. Introducing a glass-in DRS could pose significant costs to business (and potential mass market withdrawal), whilst jeopardising progress on glass recycling. Introducing a glass-in DRS could additionally undermine environmental aims by increasing vehicular emissions and incentivising a shift from sustainable glass to less recyclable packaging formats.

Regulatory Impact Assessment: Additional Concerns:

- The Regulatory Impact assessment (RIA) states *'there is no fraud risk on glass containers during the transition period'* (p.25). However, this may not be correct. Items in-scope of DRS in Wales (no EPR cost) will be identical to wine and spirit bottles sold across the rest of the UK (subject to EPR at £192 per tonne plus other costs). This incentivises misreporting, undermining the integrity of the UK's Internal Market.
- Re-labelling is not a one-off adjustment (as claimed in point 2.87 of the RIA). It requires year-on-year separation of stock. Therefore, labelling for a unique Welsh scheme is an ongoing cost (not a one-off as claimed by the Welsh Government). The Welsh Government appear to give no calculation for the separation of stock and cost of additional warehousing (across the supply chain, i.e. by producers, wholesalers, and retailers and in shipments). This is significant and is the main reason why, without significant changes to the design of the scheme, we estimate a 97% withdrawal rate for SKUs from the Welsh market.
- We agree with the Welsh Government that glass in a Welsh DRS *'gives rise to potential risks of fraud and supply chain disruption'*. However, the Welsh Government claim a *'phased approach to introducing a monetary deposit and labelling requirements mitigates these risks'* (p.6). This is incorrect, it does not mitigate - it simply delays risk while also creating confusion, and incentive for material substitution and fraud.
- Funding: It's Unclear whether Local Authorities are aware that there is no formula outlined in the regulations or explanatory memorandum to pay them to collect at the kerbside during the transition period 2027-2031. These payments are equivalent to approximately £300 per tonne of glass, for collection, sorting and reprocessing, equating to £2.25 million for 752,000 tonnes of glass recycled annually in Wales.
- Whilst the full WSTA analysis of the Explanatory Memorandum and RIA will follow, there are multiple references to a transition glass re-use as a core feature of DRS in Wales. This is despite the UK Internal Market Act exclusion stating that *'The UK government has been unable to agree a UKIM Act exclusion for this part of the proposal. Any future exclusion request for reuse will be considered by the UK government and devolved governments in the relevant Common Framework as set out in the review of the UKIM Act in 2025'*. Has the Welsh Government reviewed the role of glass re-use in DRS, acknowledging that a glass re-use scheme has not been permitted under UKIMA?

- [The WSTA briefing on glass re-use is available here](#)
- The RIA makes claims as to how a DRS in Wales will reduce costs and emissions. These include re-use, Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs), and digital (QR) labelling (p.25). The WSTA is reviewing claims with members but would dispute that all or most businesses can finance or take advantage of these opportunities before implementation. For example, QR labelling use is not widespread in the supply chain (especially among smaller businesses), and the cost of adopting outside of normal re-labelling cycles is significant.
- The RIA makes numerous comparisons to best practice from international Deposit Return Schemes. [See here WSTA briefing on the need to harmonise DRS scheme](#) - such as the approach taken in the EU and Australia.

WSTA Background:

The Wine and Spirit Trade Association (WSTA) represents c.350 businesses, with full market coverage from domestic producers to retailers. WSTA members include multi-national brands, importers, bulk bottlers/packers, logistics firms, warehouseers, and retailers (including major supermarkets, BWS specialists, and DTC retailers). Over 60% of WSTA members are SMEs, and over 40% are micro-businesses. The vast majority of WSTA members are onward suppliers to both the on- and off trade, often via indirect supply chains (such as wholesale).

In 2022, the UK wine and spirit industry contributed c.£76 billion in economic activity. The UK is a global hub for the trade – as the largest exporter of spirits and second largest importer of wine (by volume and value). In 2024, the UK exported the equivalent of 1.5 billion bottles of spirits (70cl) and imported the equivalent of 1.7 billion bottles of wine (75cl).

Contact:

Samuel Honey (Head of Government Affairs): samuel@wsta.co.uk

Freddie Joosten (Director of Sustainability): freddie@wsta.co.uk



British Glass

Date: 19th February 2026

**Paper to Note: Impact of Glass Beverage Packaging Inclusion in the Wales Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) For: Senedd Climate Change, Environment & Infrastructure Committee
Focus: British Glass concerns and industry risks relating to the Deposit Scheme for Drinks Containers (Wales) Regulations 2026**

1. Summary of British Glass position

British Glass strongly cautions that the inclusion of glass beverage packaging in the Welsh DRS, divergent from the rest of the UK, creates significant commercial, consumer choice, operational, and environmental risks.

Key issues:

- Separate treatment of glass beverage packaging risks fragmentation of the UK market, increased costs, and confusion for producers, retailers, and consumers.
- The lack of clarity caused by the regulations and their interaction with existing legislation i.e. packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) makes business and policy operation extremely difficult.
- The scheme risks unintended environmental impacts and may undermine established recycling systems, particularly closed loop recycling back into new glass products (remelt), and improvements to glass recycling in Wales, as well as the introduction of a glass reuse scheme.

2. Risks

2.1 Divergence from rest of UK creates commercial risks that will disadvantage Welsh consumers

Wales is the only UK nation opting to include glass beverage packaging. Despite no labelling requirements in the regulations, Producers will, in reality, need separate labelling for the Welsh market. This will result in all the following, to varying degrees.

- Additional costs for products in Wales, which will be passed onto consumers
- Significant delisting of products contained in glass packaging for sale into Wales, meaning less choice for Welsh consumers.
- Sourcing 'cheaper' glass beverage packaging imports that can absorb policy costs, reducing recycled content of the products, increasing their carbon footprint of those products, and displacing UK supply chains.
- Switching of products into plastic or other materials, many of which negatively impact on human health, the environment, and are less recyclable than glass.

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www.britglass.org.uk

Industry groups (UK Spirits Alliance Wine and Spirits Trade Association, Scottish Whisky Association) have been clear that these are not unfounded fears¹² British Glass mirrors these concerns and emphasises that clarity, consistency, and risk mitigation are urgently required before the regulations are passed.

2.2 Lack of clarity on glass financial producer obligations (2027–2031)

The published regulations leave many unanswered but critical questions:

- Will Producers face costs for DRS glass collection during the 0p deposit period? Given no money will be raised through unredeemed deposits, glass material value is low, and collection rates will likely be low, this cost would be significant.
- If glass is to exempt from packaging Extended Producer Responsibility under DRS from October 2027, why are Producers still paying pEPR fees now, unlike other metal and plastic beverage packaging in all UK nations that are exempt from pEPR fees?
- How will the system interact with existing kerbside collection? Will the Deposit Management Organisation (DMO) have to reimburse Local Authorities for collecting glass beverage packaging from the kerbside, and if so, how will this be calculated to ensure that glass producers do not continue to pay for both collection systems?
- Given the 0p deposit, an 80% return target for glass beverage packaging by 2030 is very high, will Producers face a fine if this is not met?

2.3 Impact on remelt, recycling systems, and Packaging Recovery Note markets

British Glass warns that the current design risks an erosion of the incentives for glass circularity in Wales.

- Waste reprocessors currently receive funding via Packaging Recovery Notes (PRN) that they generate under the pEPR system, however DRS products are outside of this and cannot produce PRNs. It is unclear how any UK glass processor can know which glass comes from Wales, or indeed how much of the glass is beverage packaging vs non-beverage packaging.
- This weakens incentives for high quality remelt, which underpins circularity for glass.

3. Conclusion - Until clear answers are provided on costs, remelt incentives, cross border trading, and obligations during the transitional period, the inclusion of glass risks damaging the competitiveness of Producers, reducing consumer choice, and undermining Wales' circular economy objectives.

¹ [A Wales-only glass DRS puts UK trade at risk - The Wine and Spirit Trade Association](#)

² [Wales facing 'mass withdrawal' over DRS glass go-ahead | News | The Grocer](#)

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru

SeneddLJC@senedd.wales

02 February 2026

Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement: Transport Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to notify you that I represented Welsh Government at the Transport Inter-Ministerial Group held on 5th November 2025.

This meeting was chaired by Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Scotland Government. A joint communique will be published [here](#) in due course.

We discussed three main topics: Road Safety, Decarbonisation of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), and the Vehicle Emissions Trading Scheme. We had a broad-ranging discussion about road safety which covered progressive licensing reform, national speed limits and medical fitness to drive. The development of the Northern Ireland Graduated Driver Licensing scheme was discussed and further information will be shared with the other nations. We also discussed the decarbonisation of HGVs and particularly recognised the need to collaborate on charging infrastructure that supports cross-border journeys. I am pleased that the Vehicle Emission Trading Scheme Memorandum of Understanding between the four nations has been agreed.

Finally, we discussed the data sharing across the four nations and acknowledged the work undertaken by officials in developing a Memorandum of Understanding and pro-forma for data-sharing.

I will be attending the next meeting of the Transport Inter-Ministerial Group due to be scheduled early in 2026 and chaired by a UK Government minister.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ken Skates AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet
dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for
Climate Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref HID-PO-079-26

Lynda Warren
Interim Environmental Protection Assessor for Wales

lyndamwar@gmail.com

10 February 2026

Dear Lynda

Thank you for sharing the IEPAW report on the Aarhus Convention in Wales for my consideration. In line with our agreement, I will publish a full response to the report by 5 March. I am, however, aware the two recommendations in the report relate to the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill. Given the timelines associated Senedd scrutiny, I thought you would appreciate early sight of my proposed response to the recommendations. I will, however, publish a full response to the recommendations in the Government response to the report.

Recommendation 1

We recommend that the Welsh Government ensures the Explanatory Notes to the Act include reference to judicial review and to intervention in proceedings in respect of the supplementary powers in Schedule 1, Part 9, paragraph 23.

Accept

It remains my view that the Bill provides the OEGW the power to apply for judicial review or apply to intervene in a JR. This is contained in the ancillary powers at paragraph 23 of Schedule 1. Whilst we clearly have a shared desire to ensure the OEGW is equipped with the powers it needs to operate effectively, I cannot agree with the concerns raised by this report that there is deficiency in the powers that enable OEGW to apply for or apply to intervene in a JR. To date, we have not received any evidence to suggest that this would be the case.

In particular, I am unable to accept the statement that “*Without express reference to judicial review there is a real danger that the courts will deny standing.*” Whilst this view has been expressed several times during the passage of the Bill, we have not been provided with any legal basis, case law nor legislation to substantiate this view. I acknowledge it is possible this position could be argued in court and is ultimately a matter for the courts as with any application for judicial review, but I consider there is substantial merit in the counterargument that the OEGW could be considered to have sufficient interest from a public interest perspective given its functions to oversee environmental law in Wales.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

However, I recognise the strength of feeling from both your office and certain stakeholders on this matter. I am, therefore, prepared to include a statement within the explanatory materials for the Bill that clarifies, in such a way so as not to limit those ancillary powers in respect of other matters, that applying for judicial review and / or intervention in proceedings are examples of activity which the supplementary powers provide by virtue of Schedule 1, Part 9, paragraph 23.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that the Welsh Government, in the next Senedd term, work with the MOJ to amend the Act to include express provision for the OEGW to apply for judicial review in urgent cases and to intervene.

Reject

As explained above, I consider such express provision to be unnecessary and have not received any credible evidence to corroborate the view that the court would deny standing to the OEGW because it has no such powers.

If the court refuses standing because there is no power to apply, then we would of course revisit this position and have necessary discussions with the MoJ. At the current time however, there is no evidence to suggest a correlation between a power to apply and the granting of standing to bring a JR.

I remain open to considering any evidence on this matter from you or stakeholders.

Yours sincerely



Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet
dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for
Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Agenda Item 3.4

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/our ref: HID-PO-080-26

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

Llŷr Gruffydd MS
Chair
Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

10 February 2026

Dear Mike, Llŷr,

I am writing further to my letter of 22 January 2026, and in accordance with the Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement, to report on the meeting of the Interministerial Group for Net Zero, Energy and Climate Change that was held on 26 January 2026.

The Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government has issued a Written Statement summarising the meeting. Ministers from the Northern Ireland Executive are due to chair the next Interministerial Group meeting. I will share the details with you once confirmed.

Yours sincerely,



Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Agenda Item 3.5



Re: Success for Wales in Auction Round 7 of the Contract for Difference

Annwyl Llŷr,

Today we heard which energy projects have been successful in the UK Government's Auction Round 7 for the Contract for Difference – the UK's primary mechanism to bring forward new energy projects at scale.

These projects will help shape an energy-secure future for Wales and the UK, leverage inward investment, and contribute to driving down energy bills for households, public services, and businesses.

I'm delighted to share with you that Twyn Hywel Energy Park – the largest Welsh clean energy project in the auction and Bute Energy's first to enter the auction - on the border of Caerphilly and Rhondda Cynon Taf has been awarded a Contract.

Auction Round 7 marks a positive step forward for Wales. Having been underrepresented in previous Auction Rounds, AR7 demonstrates the opportunity that's open to Wales to accelerate the transition to a clean energy system, and to leverage investment for people, places, and businesses.

Every successful energy project will help protect Welsh households, business and public services from volatile international energy costs; providing price stability and ending our reliance on imported gas.

It also marks a step closer to unlocking significant investment in people, places, and businesses in Caerphilly, RhCT, and across south Wales. Thanks to the extensive engagement and input from local communities and business over six years, we're confident that we can deliver real, lasting investment for communities and for Wales, and set a new standard for renewables developers in Wales.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to share an update on Bute Energy's portfolio, and the steps we believe need to be taken to maximise the value of energy infrastructure investment for the benefit of local communities and for Wales.

If you would value a discussion, please do let me know where and when would be most convenient for you.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yn gywir,

Martin

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Ein cyf/Our ref: KS/PO/83/2026

Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

CC: Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair
Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

12 February 2026

Dear Andrew

Thank you for your letter regarding the recent closure of Terminal 3 at Holyhead Port on 7th January 2026.

Port closures are always disruptive, and the duration of any closure has a significant bearing on the impacts felt by the local community and wider economy. I consider that the overall response to this incident in January was timely and organised. I spoke with the Port Authority following the brief closure (due to incident at Terminal 3) and will continue to do so on the basis of these conversations, I am currently assured of the integrity of the port and its services.

My announcement of the Irish Sea taskforce followed the temporary closure of Holyhead port following damage to its berthing infrastructure inflicted by Storm Darragh in December 2024. Members of the Irish and Welsh Governments, transport officials and stakeholders worked collaboratively on a systematic and thorough review of what had been learned.

As you know, the published recommendations outline how to achieve improved resilience, deliver better contingency plans that will protect connectivity for passengers and improve how disruption is managed. There is now a commitment from all of the Welsh Ports involved in the Task Force that, when dealing with an incident, they will inform Governments and the core taskforce membership group as quickly as possible and continue to share communication in a timely manner until normal operations resume.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

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Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The work of the taskforce was reflected in the response to the January incident, with the Port Authority communicating with key stakeholders and the Welsh Government in a timely manner, ensuring the effective dissemination of key information.

On 21 January the Port authority issued a confidential update on Terminal 5 to a small group of stakeholders, myself included. I am now able to share that the Port Authority's detailed structural engineering assessments have confirmed that remedial works are required, and upgrades will be undertaken to improve the resilience of the Port. Terminal 5, which was scheduled for significant resilience upgrades before the December 2025 incident, is due to receive a complete replacement of the fendering systems on both berths, involving the removal of 40-tonne steel panels and installation of large energy-absorbing cone systems supported by heavy-duty chains. The Port Authority will replace all 13 cones, chains and panels on both Terminal 3 and 5, additionally fitting hundreds of sacrificial zinc anodes to the underwater structure of both berths and central columns as part of the life extension.

The Port Authority is combining its remediation and enhancement work streams into a unified programme to make best use of the down time of Terminal 5. As a result, Terminal 5 will not be available before Easter 2026, however it is expected to be operational during the high-season period. Until then all services will continue to operate from Terminal 3. I have been reassured that new contingency plans have also been developed by the Port Authority to ensure the continuity of operations whilst only a single Terminal is open.

I understand that the Marine Accident Investigation Branch will report on both of the recent incidents in due course and that the Maritime and Coastguard Agency is due to conduct a port health check later this year under the Port Marine Safety Code, which will further independently assess the integrity of the Port and its services.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Ken Skates AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales

Delyth Jewell MS

Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International
Relations Committee

Llyr Gruffydd MS

Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

17 February 2026

Dear Delyth and Llyr,

UK-EU Germany Treaty on Friendship and Bilateral Cooperation

The Committee considered the latest international agreements laid in the UK Parliament under the *Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010*.

During our consideration of the UK-Germany Treaty on Friendship and Bilateral Cooperation, we considered that its contents may be of interest to your Committees. The Treaty includes cooperation in several reserved and devolved areas, including:

- International relations between the UK and Germany.
- Measures to promote people-to-people contacts, including the facilitation of bilateral school and youth exchanges.
- Climate, energy, nature, environment and agriculture. Climate and environmental joint work, both bilaterally and via the UN, sit alongside energy cooperation with a geographic focus on the North Sea.
- A commitment to explore a UK-Germany direct rail link.

On the role of the devolved governments, the UK Government's Explanatory Memorandum confirms that the Welsh Government was consulted on the agreement but no further detail is provided.

As such, we wanted to draw the agreement to your attention, in light of your respective interest in these areas.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Hedges". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Mike Hedges
Chair



Huw Irranca-Davies MS

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change
and Rural Affairs

Welsh Government

Tŷ Hywel

Cardiff Bay

CF99 1SN

CC Llyr Gruffydd MS, Chair, Climate Change, Environment and
Infrastructure Committee

18 February 2026

Dear Cabinet Secretary

**Petition P-06-1553 Increase investment and action in nature-based flood management to protect
Welsh communities**

The Petitions Committee met on 9 February and considered the above petition, submitted by Menna Roberts.

The Committee acknowledged the importance of the issues raised and the need to take action to resolve all the issues related to flood prevention and climate change. Parties would be setting out their position on climate change resilience and flood management in their manifestos. The issue has been scrutinised by the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee (CCEI), but there was nothing further the Petitions Committee could do on the petition at this point in the Senedd term other than highlight it with the you and CCEI. It had already been agreed to highlight flooding and water quality in the Committee's legacy report as a hot topic.

The full details of the Committee's consideration of the petition, including the correspondence and the actions agreed by the Committee can be found here: [P-06-1553 Increase investment and action in nature-based flood management to protect Welsh communities](#)

I would be grateful if you could send your response by e-mail to the clerking team at petitions@senedd.wales.

Yours sincerely

Carolyn

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



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Agenda Item 7

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

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