

£10 million boost for Wrexham transport plans

The significant investment and working with Wrexham Council will see a multi-model integrated transport system established which will be a major boost to the area.

The Cabinet Secretary shared the news following a visit to Wrexham General Railway Station where proposals for a transport hub are currently being developed. The plans at Wrexham General include better bus and active travel access as well as park and ride opportunities.

There will also be improved connectivity between Wrexham General and the main bus station. A review of the bus network to improve connectivity to key locations within and beyond the town centre will also take place and Welsh Government funding will be allocated to improving passenger experience at Wrexham Bus Station.

The Cabinet Secretary also announced a commitment to progressing with the development of solutions to improve Junctions 3 to 6 on the A483 to address congestion issues in the area.

Developments are continuing in Deeside too on plans to integrate the high and low lines at Shotton stations and develop a new Deeside Parkway. In partnership with Flintshire County Council, measures to improve bus and active travel connectivity are being advanced to actual delivery.

The developments are part of 'Moving North Wales Forward – Our Vision for North Wales and the North East Wales Metro' which details the Welsh Government's commitment to improving the transport network across the region.

A further important development is the commitment to establish a Transport for Wales business unit in North Wales to support the delivery of these projects.

Funding has also been secured from the UK Government to develop a business case to look at improving journey time and capacity along the North Wales main railway line and the Wrexham-Bidston route.

Ken Skates said:

"I'm delighted to announce £10 million of Welsh Government funding is being invested in Wrexham which will improve transport links and connect people to jobs and services.

"Work on modernising transport services and infrastructure in Wrexham and Deeside is moving at pace and our focus is now shifting from planning and development into delivery.

"I am committed to seeing an integrated transport system in the region that works for everyone. A system that will better connect people, improve the journey experience and provide a boost to the North Wales economy.

"My vision is about spreading prosperity and supporting economic development across all parts of the region including maximising opportunities from the Northern Powerhouse. It will not only deliver growth in our economy, but also achieve social, environmental, health and cultural benefits.

"Of course, better connectivity is a matter which goes beyond our boundaries as each day thousands of people cross either side of the border for work. As a result, I set up the Transport Steering Group which has brought key partners together from North Wales, Merseyside and Cheshire, and has already proved vital in ensuring our vision becomes a reality. I am also proposing to strengthen our presence in the region by establishing a Transport for Wales business unit to support with delivering our planned transport investments.

"The North East Wales metro is a significant part of our plans which will make it easier for people to travel using public transport and break the barriers which currently faces them doing so. Early next year I will be focussing on our investments in North West Wales.

"Over the coming years, the Welsh Government is investing hundreds of millions of pounds in transport infrastructure in North Wales which is a clear demonstration of our commitment to the area."

Cllr Samantha Dixon, Chair of Growth Track 360, the campaign for rail improvements for North Wales and Cheshire, welcomed today's announcement and said:

"This a huge step forward in bringing our ambitious plans to improve rail and access to rail services to fruition. These improvements will help deliver real benefits to residents and businesses and help unlock our cross-border economy. We will continue to make the case for Cheshire, Merseyside and North Wales to attract investment in our transport system."

Fall in absenteeism from primary schools over the last decade

[Official statistics released today](#) show that in 2016/17 overall absence remained at 5.1% and has been falling since 2006/07.

Kirsty Williams said:

“These figures are to be welcomed as they show absenteeism from our primary schools has fallen over the last decade.

“Once again, I want to thank pupils, parents and teachers for their hard work in achieving this. The fact is if our young people are going to achieve their full potential, going to school regularly and consistently is crucial.

“Despite the progress we have seen, we can’t afford to be complacent and we will continue to take action to improve attendance in our schools.

“Understanding the needs of individual learners and providing the right support at the right time is what can make all the difference. Indeed, the Pupil Development Grant evaluation published yesterday highlights the benefits of improved attendance for our disadvantaged learners.”

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[A significant deal to safeguard Wales’ fish stocks – Lesley Griffiths](#)

As part of the UK Ministerial negotiating team, the Welsh Government helped secure the deal at the EU Fisheries Council in Brussels which concluded in the early hours of this morning.

The Welsh Government secured deals to:

- avoid needless discards of sea bass and protect the interests of commercial and recreational fishers
- increase quotas for cod and plaice in the Irish sea, sole and cod in the Bristol channel while still meeting sustainability targets
- substantial increase quota for skates and rays.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“I would like to thank the commercial fishers and recreational angling representatives who have helped identify the key issues around sea bass and other key stocks in Wales. As a result, we were able to present a robust Welsh case to the Presidency and Commission, along with colleagues from the UK Government and other Devolved Administrations.

“We are committed to ensuring our natural resources are sustainably managed. This meaningful deal goes a long way to achieving that goal by securing a positive outcome for coastal communities whose economies and livelihoods depend so much on the sea while protecting our precious marine environment.

“As a Government, we are committed to the key principles of the Common Fisheries Policy and this week’s negotiations underline the importance of following sound science and evidence.

“Securing the right balance in the negotiations is always

challenging. This deal strikes the right balance between protecting the economic interests of small-scale fishers and recreational anglers with the need to move stocks toward the position where they can be fished sustainably into the future.”

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