

TrawsCymru passenger numbers travelling in the right direction

The First Minister announced funding for a trial of free weekend travel on the Traws Cymru bus network in March 2017. Data covering July 2017 to March 2018 shows the scheme has generated an additional 133,391 passengers on weekends across the TrawsCymru network or an increase of 65.49%, compared to the equivalent period in 2016-17.

TrawsCymru is the Welsh Government funded, long-distance bus network for Wales comprising a number of routes, the latest of which connected Aberystwyth with Carmarthen and Port Talbot before continuing on to Cardiff.

Before the end of 2017, Ken Skates announced additional funding to local authorities to enable them to introduce a package of improvements to the TrawsCymru bus and coach connections linking Aberystwyth with Carmarthen, Swansea and Cardiff.

Following feedback from passengers, the service introduced a modern wheelchair accessible high floor coach on the daily Aberystwyth to Cardiff long distance service, which provides a more comfortable journey for longer distance passengers, complemented by the introduction of a shorter route which offers quicker 'end to end' journey times.

The service operates a more comfortable long distance coach equipped with coach style seating, on board toilet and free WiFi.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

"The trial of free weekend travel on the Traws Cymru bus network has certainly shown some excellent early results. Passenger numbers are up and we are getting more people using buses on the network across Wales.

"This is great because it encourages more people into the habit of using buses, helping us support other routes across Wales.

"When you look, for example, at the benefit of the investment we've made to strengthen services between Aberystwyth and Carmarthen, Swansea and Cardiff the numbers tell a very clear story – more people are using the services and that's good for the communities and the economies along those routes.

"We listened to passengers and introduced coaches onto this key route, and we significantly reduced journey times. Along with the additional stop in Port Talbot, this long-standing service added more value to already vital public transport links to and from rural Wales, giving passengers extra choice on this key strategic route.

“Our improvements seem to have made the difference for our passengers. This has easily exceeded projected passenger growth figures of 20% on TrawsCymru weekend services, which were predicted at the start of the trial.

“These figures across Wales are encouraging and I hope we see further improvements in the future.”