

Wales

Transport in Wales is focused on four diverse regions ranging from the densely populated south east to the more sparsely populated rural areas, each with their own specific transport needs for which rail plays a significant part. Overall strategic direction is led by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) supported by four regional local authority consortia Sewta, SWWITCH, Tracc and Taith. Network Rail has excellent working relationships with WAG and the four consortia.

Sewta (South East Wales Transport Alliance) represents ten local authorities mainly encompassing the south Wales valley lines, a very heavily used suburban commuter network focused on Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan line, the south Wales main line, as far as Bridgend and the line to Maesteg, the line towards Gloucester as far as Chepstow and the line towards Hereford as far as Abergavenny. A number of key rail enhancements have been delivered to date and more are being delivered in the near future, mainly funded by WAG. Around 50 per cent of the population of Wales lives in the Sewta area. Strategic Routes covering the area are: Route 13 - Great Western Main Line, Route 14 - South and Central Wales and Borders and Route 15 - South Wales Valleys.

SWWITCH (South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium) represents the transport interests of Neath - Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. This encompasses the western end of the GWML into Swansea, the lines from Swansea to Fishguard, Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock, and the 'Heart of Wales' line as far as Sugar Loaf summit. The SWWITCH area is covered by Strategic Routes 13 - Great Western Main Line and 14 - South and Central Wales and Borders.

Tracc (Trafnidiaeth Canolbarth Cymru) represents the transport interests of Powys, Ceredigion, Gwynedd (Meirionnydd district) and is covered by Strategic Route 14 - South and Central Wales and Borders. The key route in the Tracc area is the Cambrian line, which will be the first line in the UK to be signalled by the ERTMS system.

Taith (Welsh for journey) represents the transport interests of Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flint and Wrexham. The key routes in the Taith area are the North Wales main line from Holyhead through Chester to Crewe, and the lines from Wrexham to Chester and Bidston, and are covered by Strategic Routes 14 (South and Central Wales and Borders) and 22 (North Wales and Borders).

The impact of rail links with England is common to all four regions with Trans European Transport Network (TEN) designation for lines from London Paddington to Cardiff and from London Euston to Holyhead. There are no north - south direct rail links wholly within Wales, with the two direct links known as the 'North and West' route and 'Heart of Wales' line passing through England and joining at Shrewsbury.

We are investing heavily in re-signalling the GWML from the Severn Tunnel area through Cardiff to the Swansea area. This facilitates the upgrade of the rail network to meet the needs of the 21st century.

Figure 4 Major schemes in Wales

| Project | Status |
|--|---|
| Newport station extra platform | Work to enhance capacity completed, wider station upgrade scheme in development |
| A programme of 42 platform extensions for the Valley lines | Work progressing – due for completion 2008/09 |
| Cardiff Queen St – Barry line capacity and performance enhancement | Work to be carried out during the Cardiff Area Signalling Renewal. |
| Cockett West – Duffryn West re-doubling | Undergoing feasibility work |
| Wrexham North – Saltney junction re-doubling | Undergoing feasibility work |
| Cambrian line | Provision of additional loops to facilitate an hourly train service and installation of the ERTMS in-cab signalling system. |

