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Cymru

**Future  
Generations**  
Commissioner  
for Wales

# **The Future Generations Report 2020: Executive Summaries**



**Let's create the future together**

# Transport

New ways of planning for transport and mobility in Wales are fundamental to the achievement of the well-being goals - particularly a Resilient Wales, a Prosperous Wales, a Wales of Cohesive Communities, a More Equal Wales and a Healthier Wales. Mobility is an important part of everyone's lives. If we get it right for our most vulnerable citizens, we will get it right for everyone, with a positive impact on our ability to reduce air pollution and meet carbon reduction targets.

Meeting the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 will provide travel options that are low or zero carbon, reducing air pollution and promoting environmental resilience. It will also help equalise opportunities for all and play a role in supporting healthy lifestyles, improving community cohesion, and creating a well-connected Wales.

## Policy Recommendations

**Welsh Government should set a national target for modal shift to enable people to adopt low carbon modes of travel over the next decade. This target should be linked to the milestones developed to support the national indicators.**

Welsh Government should...

Adopt an approach to transport planning that supports 20-minute neighbourhoods i.e. with good local, sustainable transport and active travel options.

Explore the potential of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) to provide flexible alternative transport solutions.

Allocate at least 50% of capital transport spend on improving bus and train services, providing long-term funding wherever possible.

Use financial and tax-raising powers to explore all levers to constrain current transport patterns and achieve ambitious modal shift including: increasing fuel duty and company car tax; restricting parking in city centres; and introducing a distance-based charge for driving within five miles in urban areas.

Fully integrate transport, housing and land use planning to minimise the need for people to travel.

Transport for Wales Rail Services should ensure it undertakes a comprehensive equality impact assessment at the planning and design stages for any new transport infrastructure. This should take into account access of current services, as well as understanding how new transport will affect the different mobility pattern requirements of different groups.

Explore the business case for introducing free public transport for young people in Wales.

For my process recommendations for both Welsh Government and Public Bodies, please see my full report or its individual chapters.



# Advice on setting well-being objectives for all public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government)

Please refer to the chapter on Setting Good Well-being Objectives, but in setting their objectives specifically in relation to transport, all public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government) should:

- Collaborate and involve a wider set of people to review and design well-being objectives such as bus and public transport users; walkers and cyclists; schools; local business; community groups and others. This could lead to public bodies understanding the broader benefits and steps they can take to improve all aspects of well-being through transport.
- Set well-being objectives on transport which are shaped towards meeting all the well-being goals, especially the goal of A Healthier Wales, A More Equal Wales and A Wales of Cohesive Communities.
- Clearly show how they are integrating their objectives on transport with their other objectives.
- Move beyond setting well-being objectives and steps that respond to the transport problems of today; and instead, use long-term horizon scanning to mould the way we may need to move in future.
- Set out clearly how their objectives on transport and mobility align with carbon reduction targets.
- Seek to change behaviour around mobility and consider connectivity in its widest sense, rather than simply improving infrastructure.

In setting their steps, public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government) should focus in the following areas and should:

- Move away from traditional transport planning (such as road infrastructure) and onto a combination of alternative solutions that support the reduction of carbon emissions.
- Commit as a public body and/or Public Services Boards to implement a Healthy Travel Charter in their area to encourage staff to use sustainable transport modes when travelling to work and within work. They should also encourage other local public bodies (not in the Public Services Board) and private businesses to sign too.



- Focus more on cultural and behavioural change by continuously promoting sustainable modes of transport and adopting strategies to discourage and restrict car use.
- Involve people to understand the reasons why they need to be connected to certain amenities and what would incentivise walking, cycling and using public transport.
- Seek to drive a modal shift and low carbon transport emissions in their own organisations as well as seeking to change public behaviour

**"We all have an interest, and a duty to future generations, to ensure that the benefits of mobility that we now take for granted, do not place an intolerable burden on our environment."**

Elliot Morley



## Where are we now? My assessment of Transport in Wales

**The decision not to proceed with the proposed M4 relief road demonstrated significant leadership and encouraging recognition of the need for urgent action to curb transport-related emissions.**

**Public bodies are focusing on reducing emissions from staff travel but need to go further.**

For example, ensuring their services are easily accessible by public transport and by considering transport-related emissions in the context of how they procure goods and services.

**Well-being objectives relating to transport and the steps taken to meet them do not match the ambition on carbon reduction.**

While appreciating that local authorities have statutory responsibilities to maintain a safe highway network and that buses also use roads, ten of the 37 well-being objectives on transport include improving road infrastructure or introducing new road schemes, missing the point of the Environment Act, the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Active Travel Act.

**Communities are working with public bodies to propose better solutions, such as the Magor Walkway station where the local community has developed ambitious plans to re-open their local railway station in order to address road congestion in the area, but this needs to go further to achieve modal shift that takes account of local need.**



**The Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance update in 2017 is a positive step taken by Welsh Government, but effective implementation is lacking.**

It should be used to identify the best mobility solution for an area, taking account of well-being goals and local objectives rather than be retrofitted to existing decisions to build new roads.

**Welsh Government are providing funding without checking whether the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance has been applied correctly and in the absence of an overview of the collective impact of schemes on carbon reduction.**

Currently 62% of capital transport funding in the updated Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan is for new roads, reinforcing the view that the starting point for the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance process is already defined by the funding that has been allocated.

**There is not enough progress being made on a number of key transport indicators such as carbon emissions and modal shift, and, in some cases, they are going backwards such as for active travel and air quality. This will inhibit Wales' ability to meet a number of well-being goals.**

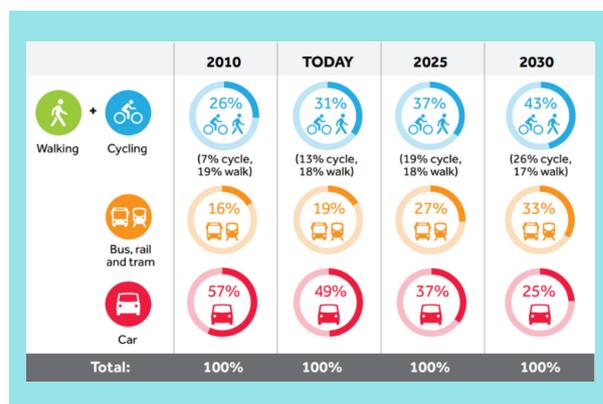
**Between 2003-2017 walking and bus travel has declined.**

Around 57% of those recently surveyed by RAC said that they would be willing to use their cars less if the quality of public transport improved.

**Travel by train has increased, but public satisfaction is a major issue.**

**Wales has one of the lowest per capita spend on public transport in the UK.**

This has decreased from £74.7 million in 2012-13 to £45.4 million in 2016-17.



**Implementation of the Active Travel Act is lacking. Around 24% of all car trips across the UK are under two miles, meaning that a large proportion of these trips could be done by walking, cycling or scooting.**

Welsh Government's target of getting 10% of people cycling once a week by 2026 is unambitious. Welsh Government need to adopt a more ambitious target. Following decades of investment, the modal share of cycling in the Netherlands is around 27% of all trips, with 24% of the Dutch population cycling every day.

**The current transport strategy has not been updated since 2008 and, therefore, Wales lacks a transport vision and strategy designed to meet its well-being goals.**

**Our current transport system is based on 20th century approaches to mobility and is not fit for future generations.**

In the medium-term, low carbon transit (including hydrogen cars and electric trains), could help us deal with some of our immediate challenges, such as carbon emissions and pollution.

**I have seen little evidence of public bodies, including Welsh Government, applying future trends and scenarios -**

such as the emergence of self-driving trains, hyperloop trains and delivery by drones - **to setting and meeting their well-being objectives on transport.**



**Some public bodies have started investing in improving electric vehicles charging infrastructure but more needs to be done.**

Positive progress includes work in the Gwent area. A project across the five Public Services Boards is providing the evidence for a regional approach to electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

**There are promising signs of public bodies making the connection between transport and wider well-being, but we need to see this across the board.**

In setting objectives, public bodies and Public Services Boards are recognising the importance of connectivity to other aspects of well-being; however, their interpretation of connectivity is still too focused on road transport as the mode. For example, some are recognising the need to connect communities but most objectives describe transport as a solution to connecting people with jobs, town centres or services, often ignoring the different needs of women, older people and disabled people. Few objectives and steps refer to other aspects such as education, housing, decarbonisation, community cohesion, digital connectivity and walking/cycling routes.

**Current transport planning decisions do not comprehensively reflect different travel patterns for different groups.**

There are often accessibility issues for people with disabilities and older people, especially on public transport, and lack of transport options has been shown to increase loneliness and isolation.

**We are not seeing transport decisions set within the context of placemaking, as required by Planning Policy Wales 10.** (Please see the section on Planning in Chapter 5 for more information).

Cardiff Public Services Board and the Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board have signed up to a [Healthy Travel Charter](#), containing commitments to support walking, cycling, public transport and ultra-low emission vehicle use. There are plans to extend the approach across Wales during 2020-21, starting with Gwent, Swansea Bay and North Wales. Over 20 major public sector organisations, including my office, have signed up to the Healthy Travel Charter to date.

[A Business Charter](#) has also been launched, with Higher and Further Education, and Third Sector Charters also in development.

[Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service](#) have introduced hydrogen-powered vehicles and electric bikes in the Neath Port Talbot and Swansea areas, enabling staff in those areas to move around more easily and reduce their carbon footprint.

[Monmouthshire](#) is a semi-rural county, where loneliness has a significant impact on people's health and well-being and where a lack of transport also limits the ability of people to access training and employment. [Monmouthshire County Council](#) has worked with Government Digital Services to find an innovative solution to address this issue.

[Transport for Wales](#) has ambitious plans to transform the provision of rail services across Wales, and Transport for Wales Rail Services plans to develop Community Transport Hubs, but this will take time, and we are unlikely to see the full impact for several years. However, the procurement exercise outlined how this would contribute to the seven well-being goals.



## Below are the areas I recommend that all public bodies, including Welsh Government, should focus on:

- Decisions on transport must reflect the climate emergency
- Achieve modal shift and reduce our reliance on cars
- Embracing technology
- Consider mobility as a route to wider well-being

For my full evidence, assessment, key findings and advice, please see the section on Transport in Chapter 5: Areas of Focus of the Future Generations Report.

