

Motion to initiate action with other bodies to improve public transport along the Cambrian Line

Proposed by: Cllr Alison Davies

Seconded by: Cllr Ben Gwalchmai

Background

Easter School Holidays 28th March – 12th April. Half term 23rd – 31st May. Bank Holidays: 3rd & 6th April, 4th & 25th May

May Upgrades: *Between May 8 and May 22, the railway was completely closed between Machynlleth and Shrewsbury, with buses replacing trains.*

Rolling Stock Issues: *The promised rollout of new Class 197 trains has faced continued delays, leaving the mid-Wales route heavily reliant on older, legacy trains. This has resulted in occasional, unannounced partial cancellations and delays when multiple trains require urgent mechanical repairs. TfW plan to introduce new trains in September following staff training.*

In principle one would have expected public transport to have been fully operational over the holiday periods; however, this was not the case. Here are some examples:

1. Several trains were cancelled on 25th May due to the heat affecting the lines
2. Trains that did run had too few carriages and were very crowded.
3. Trains that did run had no air conditioning and only two transoms per carriage
4. No public buses run from Shrewsbury to Welshpool on Bank Holidays
5. Buses that used to call via Berriew to Welshpool no longer do so, therefore students electing to attend Shrewsbury College, or workers cannot catch the bus to Welshpool and on to Shrewsbury for study or employment.

Welshpool prides itself on welcoming visitors and along with other Mid Wales towns sees tourism as an intrinsic element of our economic vitality. Along with our 'normal tourism' we are delighted, and proud to be selected as a starting venue for the Tour de France 2027. We know that this has already attracted a large number of bookings for accommodation, and that many people who follow cycling choose to utilize public transport.

The repeated problems and lack of any holistic approach to public transport in Mid Wales is likely to have a significantly detrimental effect on this international attraction and the legacy impact on Welshpool and the surrounding tourist economy.

It is vital that public transport provision in Mid Wales meets the needs of local people and visitors and reaches this challenge with some alacrity, to ensure local benefit throughout 2027, having to a large extent 'missed the boat' for 2026

Proposal

Communicate with Welsh Government via Senedd Members, Powys and Ceredigion County Councils and Councillors; Community and Town Councils along the Cambrian Line; Cambrian Line and Welshpool Rail Users; PAVO; and Mid Wales Tourism.

Advise them of our concerns and request that, together, we initiate much stronger pressure to achieve public transport provision in Mid Wales that meets the needs of local people and visitors.