



## **The role of the third sector in developing and delivering an effective transport strategy for Wales**

**September 2020**

### **Background**

The Welsh Government has recently consulted on the scoping report for the Wales Transport Strategy and is due shortly to publish a draft strategy for consultation. Officials have been keen to engage with Transform Cymru and its members to share progress and we welcome the open dialogue we have had with them so far.

The purpose of this paper is to set out the role that the third sector could and should play in the development and delivery of the Wales Transport Strategy with a view to ensuring that the final strategy fully recognises the capabilities of the sector in developing and delivering an integrated transport network for Wales.

### **Role of the third sector**

In our response to the Welsh Government's consultation on the draft scoping report, we welcomed the recognition that the third sector has a key role to play in the Wales Transport Strategy but called for further detail of the Welsh Government's perspective of the role of the sector in their plans.

The third sector has a valuable role to play in supporting the Government to deliver its aims due to:

- the deep understanding of the needs of service users and communities;
- strong and trusting relationships with the people the public sector wants to reach;

- its ability to add value to the public sector offer in order to deliver improved outcomes; and
- the freedom and flexibility to innovate and deliver results.

We believe that the Wales Transport Strategy should work with the third sector to maximise capacity in the following areas:

1) Expert advice

The third sector organisations we represent have in-depth knowledge and expertise on service design, access and inclusion. Members represent those with protected characteristics and understand the barriers facing passengers when looking to access transport. In addition, there is a wealth of technical expertise across all transport modes. This expertise should be utilised in full to deliver a sustainable, accessible and inclusive transport network for Wales that supports all users regardless of background, ability or location.

**Case Study: Asthma UK & British Lung Foundation Wales: ‘Slowing down the rise in Air Pollution’.**

Recent campaigns and court actions by organisations have highlighted the problem of air pollution in Wales and the need to find solutions to improve the air quality in Wales. One of the actions was introducing a 50 mph limit on five major roads in Wales.

Asthma UK & BLF Wales held a public event with Bethan Sayed MS to discuss with her constituents the health impacts of air pollution and to explain in laymen terms the air quality reports on the road.

Through a PowerPoint presentation and detailed briefing material, we delivered a lecture expanding on the interim results of the report on the impact of the 50mph speed limits.

Several members of the public were shocked to learn that by slowing down the vehicle that they were reducing levels of air pollution for Port Talbot. The lecture presented that compliance will EU directives be met for Port Talbot between junctions 41 to 42 by 2021.

As a result of the session, the constituents understood that more needed to be done to improve air quality, and the lecture expanded on this by discussing several local mechanisms that could be put in place in their community. Many left informed and sought to respond to the Clean Air Plan consultation.

### **Case study: Traveline Cymru**

Traveline Cymru work in partnership with operators and local authorities to provide public transport information across Wales for bus, coach and train, as well as active travel information such as walking and cycling routes. This information is delivered via its bilingual contact centre, website and app.

With over 20 years' experience within the industry, regular engagement with customers through a diverse online panel and direct communication with a range of individuals and organisations online and face to face, Traveline Cymru delivers and develops its services with the needs of its customers at the forefront. The team are involved in collaborative projects to support the industry more widely, as well as innovatively building on and improving the essential resource that Traveline Cymru provides.

Traveline Cymru's agile response to the Covid-19 pandemic was vital in ensuring they seamlessly continued to deliver a high quality service for its customers.

## 2) Community engagement

The third sector has strong and trusting relationships with the communities we serve and as such, organisations are well placed to engage with transport users to develop solutions. Our experience tells us that whilst the Wales Transport Strategy is national, transport needs are hyper-local and the third sector should be mobilised to ensure local needs are recognised and supported to deliver transformation in services that connect all communities across Wales.

### **Case study: Living Streets Riverside (Cardiff) group**

Living Streets have developed a network of community groups such as the Riverside (Cardiff) group to facilitate local campaigning. The organisation brings people together in their local community to support action on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, making streets attractive, safe and healthy places.

Working with Cardiff Council, the group aims to make Riverside better for people who want to walk and cycle, aiming to make streets less congested, cleaner and more pleasant places to live, work and shop.

### **Case Study 3: ACORP - Finding ways to help communities during lockdown**

During lockdown, the Heart of Wales partnership couldn't continue their normal community conversations and activities so they rapidly set up a new grant fund of £10K to help communities along the tracks. The aim was to utilize resources to support the communities along the line and connect in a new way while face to face meetings aren't possible.

The Partnership Worked with 4 voluntary sector bodies to identify gaps in funding. They discovered that there was a lot of COVID- 19 funding already available, but there was a need for a flexible fund to support long-term resilience to cover rent, utility bills, etc., Small amounts go a long way and can make a big difference – up to £500 was offered to communities within 10km of one of Heart of Wales Lines stations. Bids were invited and it was hugely oversubscribed.

The anticipated impact of the project is it will deepen connections and understanding of the voluntary sector, small groups and local communities. Improved understanding of the role of the CRP and what they can offer. They will evaluate how they've helped strengthen communities in the long term and will circulate a report in April 2021 once projects have been delivered.

### 3) Transport provision

Third sector transport operators deliver accessible and inclusive services across Wales for those who face barriers to accessing mainstream transport. These services are an essential part of an integrated transport network and should be supported through the commitments set out in the Wales Transport Strategy. To ensure this can be done effectively, we need a clear definition of community transport and strategy for delivery and growth, developed in partnership with the sector.

### **Case study: Partneriaeth Ogwen, Dyffryn Gwyrdd / Green Valley Project**

Partneriaeth Ogwen's 'Green Valley' project delivers an electric community car scheme which is run off locally generated renewable energy. The project has been designed to help tackle poverty, address isolation and loneliness, and engage people in community-led projects. It can also help younger people or those with disabilities to access work.

A pilot scheme saw a vehicle used for a range of purposes including food and prescription deliveries during the pandemic. The project set up an online platform to sell local produce and delivered the food to local households in the community car. After a successful pilot, the scheme has secured £490,000 from the Rural Lottery Fund to continue and grow the scheme.

### **Case Study: Our Opportunity to Travel**

In the summer of 2018, after delivering a MiDAS training course for a group of volunteer drivers, the trainer and development manager of Dolen Teifi Community Transport, Rod Bowen, was approached regarding the lack of affordable and accessible community group transport in Ammanford, South Wales.

Rod was told that the main barrier that people in the Ammanford area face when trying to access social and other opportunities was not just the lack of a community transport service, but that there was a lack of affordable and accessible public transport in the first place, which only increased the need for community transport.

From there, Dolen Teifi began to consult with key individuals, community groups and other stakeholders in Ammanford to scope out a project which would fill a gap in community transport provision in the area. With support from the Community Transport Association's 'Connecting Communities in Wales' project, Dolen Teifi was able to secure funding for this project through the Big Lottery People and Places grant scheme.

### **Conclusion**

This paper sets out the role of the third sector in developing and delivering an effective transport strategy for Wales.

We ask that the Welsh Government ensures that the final strategy acknowledges the unique contribution the sector makes and set out a commitment to maximise opportunities where the sector can add value.