

NETWORK NORTH WALES

A vision for a transformed
transport network for
North Wales



TRAFNIDIAETH CYMRU
TRANSPORT FOR WALES



Rhwydwaith
Gogledd Cymru
Network
North Wales



Mae Trafnidiaeth Cymru yn eiddo i
Lywodraeth Cymru
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“Through Network North Wales, Metro is go”

FOREWORD

Ken Skates

Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales

Through Network North Wales we will transform travel for the people of North Wales and its border communities.

For too long, North Wales has been left on the sidelines while transport improvements are conceived, funded, developed and delivered elsewhere. Our geography and demographics; the way people live, work and lead their lives is unique to our region and it calls for a bespoke solution.

So we need to be ambitious, we need to think beyond the current political and economic cycle. And we need a plan that's made here in North Wales. Imagine the potential: turn up and go rail and bus services linking North Wales to the economic centres of northwest England, unlocking job opportunities, and providing public transport connectivity in communities that were left behind by the transport planners of the past. We'll look to connect with the Northern Arc, from Holyhead to Hull.

Integrating rail and bus services for the first time we will build a network, with Metro at its heart, that is within reach and a network that connects people to the places they need to be, efficiently and reliably.

In 2018, we started the process of upgrading the entire TfW fleet – that cascade is nearing completion, and the vast majority of passenger journeys are now on modern and comfortable new trains – particularly here in North Wales and the Borders.

But we're not stopping there. More services. More new trains. A better railway for North Wales and delivered

at an unprecedented pace. Network North Wales also means that 'Metro is go'.

Crucially, our vision for Network North Wales extends beyond just rail. The rail and Metro links we're proposing aren't an isolated entity but a piece of the wider puzzle, part of a seamless travel experience across the region and operating in harmony with bus services through a unified timetable and a single, straightforward ticketing system.

One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket.

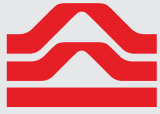
This is about much more than just the next twelve months, five or even ten years.

Network North Wales is not merely a collection of projects; it is a testament to our belief in the potential of this region. It is a declaration that North Wales will no longer be an afterthought, but a leader in sustainable and integrated transport.

As we move forward, let us remember that this is not just about lines on a map, timetables on a screen or simply steel and concrete.

It is about the lives of the people we serve, the businesses we support, and the future we are building.

With a bold enough vision, and when you don't hold back on your ambition for change, you can achieve incredible things.



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North Wales

Multi- billion investment

NETWORK NORTH WALES

A multi-billion-pound investment vision to deliver an integrated, high-frequency public transport network for North Wales, with Metro at its heart, connecting to Merseyside, Cheshire and the North of England beyond. Network North Wales will connect people to jobs, opportunity, community, and a better quality of life.

Through Network North Wales, we'll build a network to maximise opportunity across our cross-border region, with Metro at its heart. Starting immediately, we will introduce new and improved stations and services, integrated to bus networks, to connect homes to our business parks and town and city centres. Working in partnership, we will address the increasing congestion frustrating growth and opportunity across our region.

Metro is go means:

- Investing in infrastructure so that there can be more frequent rail services
- New rail connectivity, particularly between North Wales and Liverpool
- New bus and coach routes
- Investing in electrification technology (bus and rail) to lower public transport CO² emissions
- New and improved railway stations on the network
- Easier to use ticketing systems

North Wales and surrounding regions have huge potential to be unlocked, and our ambition is a network that is fundamentally better: better connected, more accessible and brimming with opportunity. We have already delivered significantly for South Wales with the South Wales Metro. Building on the £800m investment in new trains, the majority of which are already serving the North Wales region, now is the right time for North Wales to get the same level of ambition.

Our vision is to create a transport system that is sustainable, accessible, and efficient, ensuring that it meets the needs of all our communities.

The North Wales economy supports a population of 700,000 with a GVA of over £15bn. We are committed to delivering a transport network that builds on this; supporting economic growth, enhancing social inclusion, and protecting our environment.

We need a distinct and enduring vision for North Wales and its public transport network. It should outlast any single minister, government or economic and political circumstances. Working together, we'll deliver our ambitious plans that take us to 2035 and beyond.



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THE VISION

0-6 MONTHS

- Stand up of Network North Wales Programme Team and opening of Wrexham hub
- Package of Network North Wales development work commences
- Community and local authority Engagement on level crossing closures
- Revised Memorandum of Understanding with Liverpool City Region towards commercial Heads of Terms
- Partnership agreement on funding arrangements for Padeswood
- Strategy for introducing more new trains
- Formal renaming of Borderlands line to Wrexham to Liverpool line
- Explore opportunities to improve connectivity between North Wales and London

6-12 MONTHS

- Delivery of station improvements on Wrexham to Liverpool line
- Progress case for change for Deeside Station and explore opportunity for a temporary station
- Double frequency of train services between Wrexham and Chester
- 50% more TfW services on North Wales main line
- New bus services to provide access to employment in Wrexham and Deeside
- Pay as you go roll out commences in North East Wales
- Roll out of Metro and Network North Wales branding on trains, at stations and on buses
- T13 bus service commences Rhyl to Wrexham via Ruthin and Denbigh
- Key gateway station development work
- Llandudno to Liverpool direct services

1-3 YEARS

- Padeswood upgrade – unlocking freight and passenger capacity
- Reliable two trains per hour services on Wrexham to Liverpool line
- Complete development work on electrification (including smart electrification)
- Improve safety and access at Buckley station



Locked down






5 YEARS

BY 2035

BEYOND

- New railway stations including connecting Deeside Industrial Estate
 - Improve connectivity to Manchester Airport
 - Consistent rail timetable pattern for North Wales Mainline
 - Introduce more new trains
 - Preparation work for North Wales electrification
 - Gobowen Signal upgrade to increase capacity on the Marches line
- North Wales mainline electrified with cascade of new rolling stock
 - Chester station enhanced to unlock capacity
 - Develop innovations for improved connection between Wrexham General and Central stations
 - Four trains per hour between Wrexham and Liverpool
 - Enhanced connectivity to Liverpool South Parkway
 - Complete the redoubling between Wrexham and Chester
 - Further increase in services on North Wales main line
 - Significant accessibility improvements at stations including level boarding
- Metro style services to all stations south of Wrexham to Gobowen from Crewe
 - Tram-train connection to key settlements
 - Improve journey times between North and South Wales by developing Shotton Chord
 - New stations north and south of Wrexham, including A55 Parkway
 - Enhanced connectivity to Warrington Bank Quay
 - Marches line resignalling and electrification
 - Northern line connections (Wrexham to Leeds)

Some development work already undertaken, further work required

Early stage thinking 





GROWING THE ECONOMY

Network North Wales is a multi-billion-pound initiative that needs to be ambitious, challenging ourselves to provide a solution that considers the unique way people live and travel throughout the region. Only by thinking in this way can we truly unlock the region's true economic potential.

Network North Wales, with Metro at the centre, is designed to build a network that enhances connectivity, accessibility and opportunities. Building on the £800m investment in new trains in Wales, the majority of which are already serving North Wales, now is the right time to set our ambitions higher.

Our vision is to create a transport system that is sustainable, accessible, and efficient, ensuring that it meets the needs of all our communities. The North Wales economy supports a population of around 700,000 people, with £15.3bn gross value added (2021) (Source: ONS). And we want to help this grow. We are committed to delivering a transport network that underpins the ambitions across the region; supporting economic growth, enhancing social inclusion, and protecting our environment.

Core features include a set of significant investments in the North Wales Main Line and Wrexham to Liverpool Line, including providing more frequent stopping and express services on the North Wales Mainline and direct services between Wrexham and Liverpool, with new stations and fully decarbonised rail services on both routes.

This is expected to:

- Support up to 2,100 full time equivalent jobs during infrastructure construction
- Stimulate a £54m present value increase in output associated with net employment impact over ten years
- Stimulate a £220m present value increase in output associated with wider economic impacts over a 60-year period

(Source: Arup work commissioned by TfW)

Through priorities such as the Northern Arc, broader investments in transport infrastructure will connect Welsh communities to major economic hubs like Liverpool and Greater Manchester, supporting the



growth of the Deeside Industrial Park and fostering regional development. Enhanced public transport connectivity will further bolster economic activities and development. Improved links through to Chester and beyond would also enhance connectivity to HS2 and wider economic opportunities.

Our ambition for Network North Wales will establish transport hubs where rail services will link with other modes of transport to better connect our communities, including unlocking the previously untapped economic opportunity of Bangor gateway.

Further enhancement of the Traws network through the new T13 Service will see better connections to employment and other opportunities for the communities of Rhyl, Denbigh, Ruthin, and Wrexham.

Proposed Investment Zone funding will see significant improvements to bus services that provide access to both Deeside Industrial Park and Wrexham Industrial Estate. This is expected to see an increase of 73% in residents (that's 69,000 people) who are within a 45-minute bus journey of high-quality jobs on Deeside.

In Wrexham, proposed Investment Zone bus improvements are expected to more than double the population who can reach jobs on the Industrial Estate (with immediate effect) within 45 minutes by bus (25,800 up to 62,000 people).

(Source - WSP work commissioned by TfW)

We need our network to be fundamentally better: better connected, more accessible, and full of opportunity.

In collaboration with the Welsh Government, local authorities, industry partners, and the UK government, Network North Wales aims to transform the region into a modern, integrated, and prosperous area, driving significant economic growth, creating jobs, improving regional connectivity, and supporting environmental sustainability.

Connecting people and improving their quality of life – to build a modern, sustainable and connected Wales.





WORKING ACROSS BORDERS

We have a once in a generation opportunity to unlock the North Wales corridor's potential. Network North Wales, with Metro at its heart, positions us to drive prosperity across North Wales, bringing economic integration and enhancing opportunities for businesses and communities throughout North Wales and into the North of England. When we work together, the possibilities are endless.

The Northern Arc economies are strong with major opportunities to build on existing strengths and to scale up activity in emerging and high value sectors. By working together with government, business, education and civil society, we'll foster collaborative projects and boost the regions potential. By tapping into this regional growth, we can connect our communities in North Wales to endless opportunity.

Growth in the Northern Arc matters not only to the North of England, but to North Wales and the wider UK. Improved infrastructure across the north of England will leverage its industrial ecosystem and innovation assets by improving connectivity and allowing for the easier movement of goods and people. By tying this in with Network North Wales and Metro, we can achieve significant growth for the North Wales region, connecting people to this previously untapped economic potential, from Holyhead to Hull.

We continue to work on ambitions to improve connectivity across the region and across Wales and the borders. Taking a multi-modal approach to reducing journey times, improving interchange facilities at key stations, offering integrated bus and rail ticket and increasing services, including ambitions to increase frequency of trains on the North Wales Main Line and Wrexham to Liverpool route, enhancing connectivity between key locations.

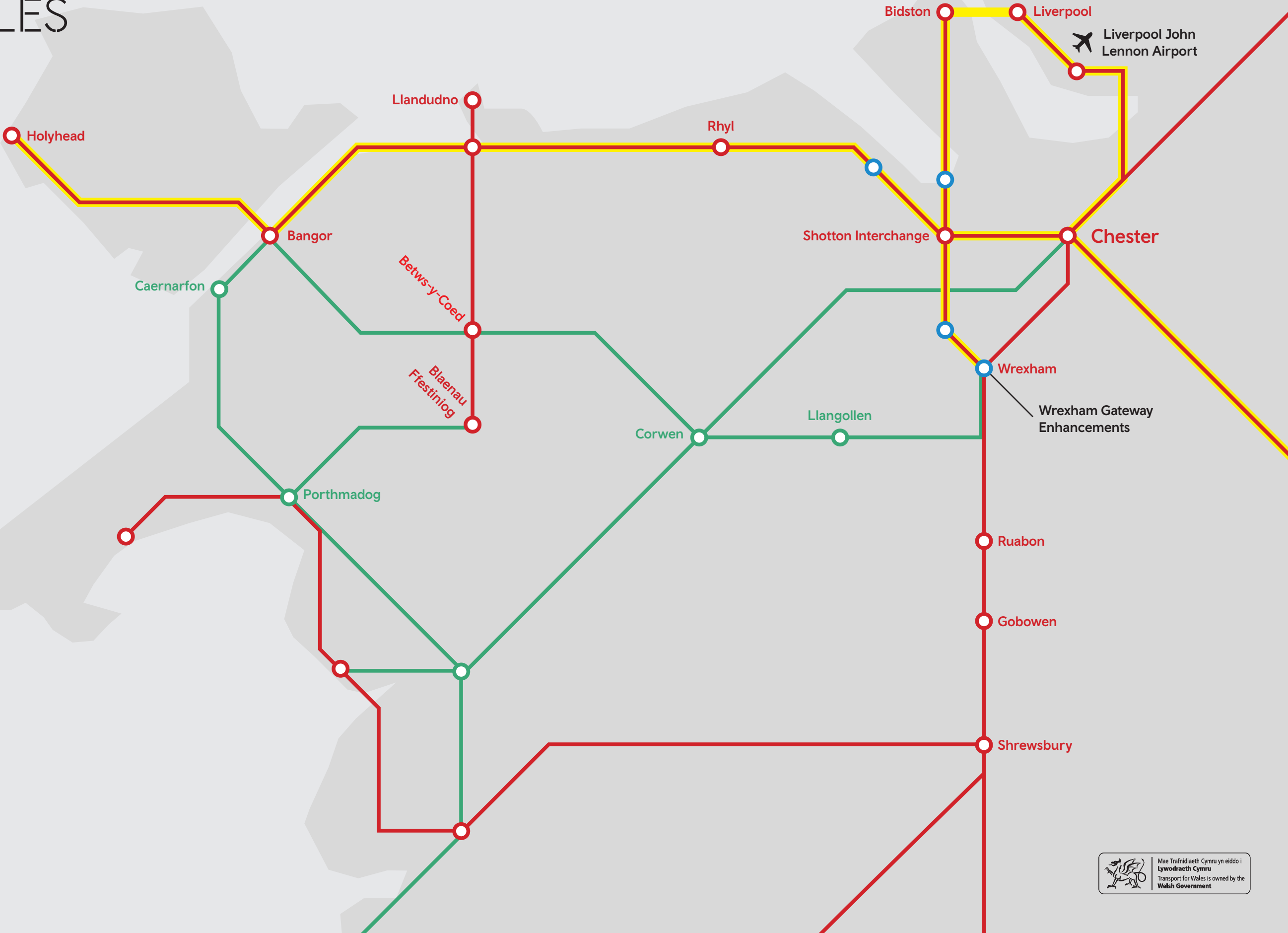
By improving the infrastructure in North Wales, we can connect people to opportunities like never before, linking our communities, business parks and town and city centres to the Liverpool City Region, Greater Manchester region and beyond to the Northeast. With the right approach to cross border working, we have an incredible opportunity to improve the lives of millions of people, providing equitable access to work, creating new jobs, and unlocking economic growth for generations to come.





NETWORK NORTH WALES

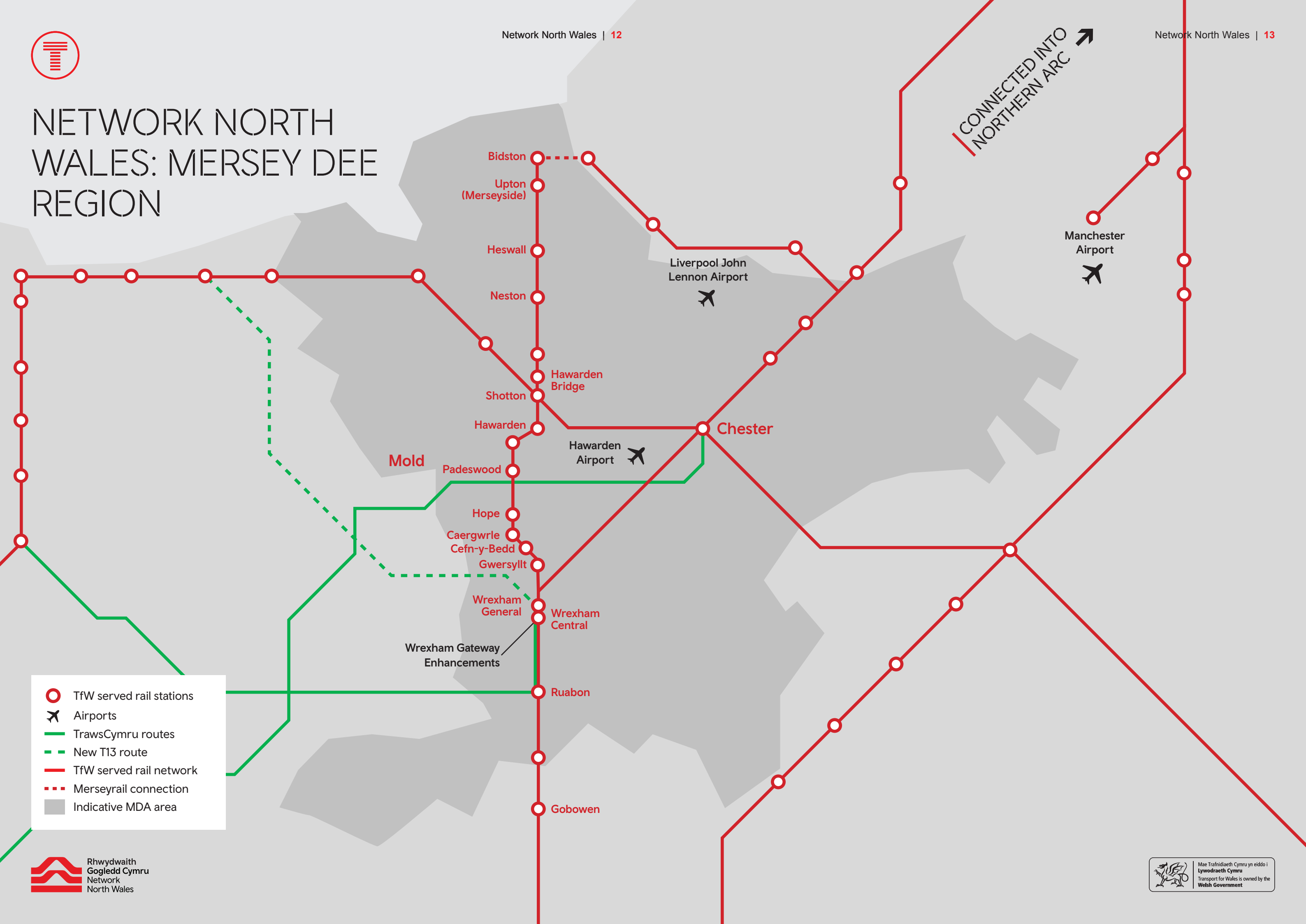
Working together, we'll deliver our ambitious plans that take us to 2035 and beyond, with rail enhancements, integrated bus services and easy, convenient ticketing driving forward our vision for Network North Wales and Metro, a vision that outlasts any minister, government or economic and political circumstance.



- TfW served rail stations
- New rail stations
- Airports
- TrawsCymru routes
- TfW served rail network
- Electrification and level crossing enhancements



NETWORK NORTH WALES: MERSEY DEE REGION





IMMEDIATE DELIVERY PRIORITIES

Our immediate delivery priorities will see us begin the journey of unlocking the north's potential. These funded priorities outline the steps we'll take in the short term to deliver for communities throughout the region. When we say we're going to deliver for the people of North Wales, we mean now.

Our immediate priorities will establish the foundation for improvements throughout the region for generations, paving the way for our development priorities which will see us continue this trend of growth throughout North Wales.

Upgrading the Wrexham to Liverpool line

Upgrading the Padeswood sidings to unlock the potential of the Wrexham-Liverpool Line, enabling increased frequency and future direct services to Liverpool. Supporting increased rail freight and growth in industrial output.

Bus enhancements

Delivering an enhanced bus network connecting people, business and communities in Wrexham and Flintshire, bringing forward the benefits of bus reform.

50% increase in TfW services on North Wales main line

Removing level crossings on the North Wales coast mainline to enable a 50% uplift in TfW rail services; making communities safer.

Wrexham to Liverpool station improvements

Delivering a programme of targeted station improvements at key stations on the Wrexham to Liverpool Line.

New TrawsCymru T13 service

A brand new TrawsCymru service operating between Rhyl, Ruthin and Denbigh.

Pay-as-you-go ticketing for North Wales

Making travel easier on the Wrexham - Liverpool Line.

Wrexham to Chester

Doubling rail frequency between the social and economic hubs of Wrexham and Chester and providing connections to North West England at Chester and West Coast Mainline at Crewe.



IMMEDIATE DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Our development priorities will give us the foundation to deliver the longer term vision for Network North Wales and Metro. These will complement and align with the Regional Transport Plan, Growth Deal, plans for the Strategic Road Network as well as key cross-border initiatives including Northern Arc.

New stations development

Develop new stations with priorities including improving access to Deeside Industrial Park and other key settlement and employment sites.

North Wales Access Improvement Fund

Further development of Access for All schemes at Shotton and Ruabon, and other opportunities to improve access across the whole of Network North Wales.

Further Metro development

Work to facilitate a direct rail connection through the Mersey Tunnels, connecting Wrexham to Liverpool Central working with Liverpool City Region.

Chester capacity

Work to unlock additional capacity and interchange for rail services travelling through Chester, particularly for services to North Wales Mainline connecting into the Northern Arc.

Marches line enhancement plan

Develop an integrated plan, incorporating track and train, to improve frequency and connectivity along this key rail corridor.

North Wales main line enhancement plan

Develop an integrated plan, incorporating track and train, to improve frequency and connectivity along this key rail corridor. Connecting with Northern Arc.

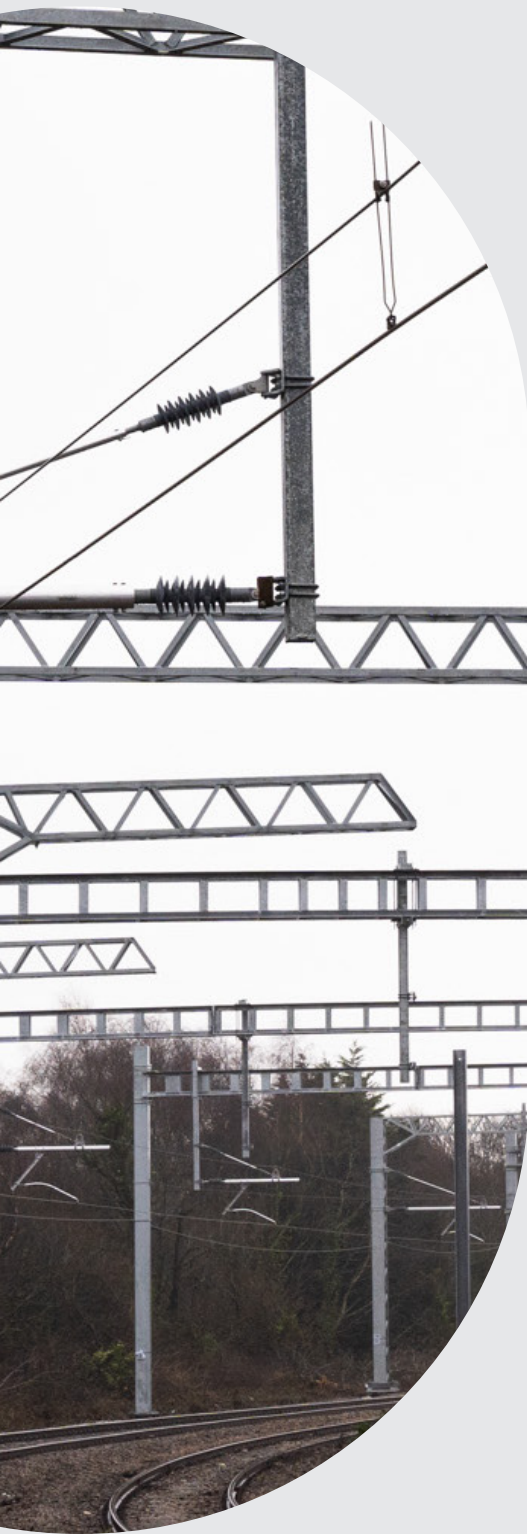
Electrification Innovation Fund

Develop further plans to electrify the rail network in North Wales, including implementation of smart electrification technologies.





ELECTRIFICATION INNOVATION



Our vision for Network North Wales extends beyond short-term interventions. Electrification of the North Wales mainline remains our ultimate ambition and is at the heart of our vision for the future of transport in the region. It would link the North Wales mainline to the West Coast Main Line and provide improved access to London, Chester, Bangor, and Holyhead, reducing journey times and improving services for customers across North Wales and beyond.

Learning from the work that has been completed in the South Wales Valleys, it's vital we do the groundwork to understand what electrification in North Wales could and should look like, now and for future generations.

With support from the new Electrification Innovation Fund, collaboratively Transport for Wales and Network Rail will work to develop a proposal for the North Wales Coast Electrification which is the next evolution of this - smart electrification.

This uses discrete lengths of electrification to provide the dynamic power and charging facilities needed to support hybrid trains, combining traditional electrification with state-of-the-art battery technology. This, teamed with Network Rail's low-cost innovations, can significantly lower the cost and disruption of electrification and make an affordable proposal for North Wales.

We have proved that this way of decarbonising the network can save the public purse millions of pounds, avoiding the need to rebuild bridges or lower the track through tunnels, work that is incredibly disruptive as well as expensive. We'll look to build on these principles and provide further innovation and savings for North Wales rail infrastructure.



PAY AS YOU GO



Customers love the convenience of pay-as-you-go ticketing, and we're always looking for ways we can expand this technology across our network. We're looking at how we can launch pay as you go for our North Wales customers. We're not just planning or making promises, we're acting.

At the heart of Network North Wales, Metro will revolutionise travel throughout the region and pay as you go technology is just the beginning. Integrated ticketing and a high frequency turn up and go service model will revolutionise the region's economic landscape, connecting people to work, creating jobs and ensuring everyone has access to opportunity.

Metro is about realising our economic potential and we won't hold back on our bold ambition for the future. Throughout North Wales and the borders, almost all passenger journeys are now on brand new or completely refurbished trains. When we promise improvements for passengers, we mean it.

Our ambitious plan for pay as you go is at the centre of our vision for Metro. A truly transformed customer experience, supporting improved access to public transport in the region.

Pay as you go ticketing will make travelling on our network easier than ever. It's a flexible way of travelling that doesn't require customers to purchase a ticket before they travel, simply tapping in and out at the start and end of their journeys. Most importantly for our customers, pay as you go fares give customers confidence that they are getting the best value fare for their journey.

With a clear vision and when you don't hold back on your ambition for change, you can achieve incredible things.





T NETWORK

Mission

ONE NETWORK
ONE TIMETABLE
ONE TICKET
ONE TEAM

Network North Wales is underpinned by our vision for One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket, One Team.

Through the T Network, we're taking multi modal travel to a whole new level, with a whole product approach, thinking about the entire journey for our customers, however they chose to travel with us.

Functional and easy to use, the T Network will comprise of trains, buses, walking, wheeling and cycling. One timetable to plan your journey and one ticket to get you from A to B.

To improve transport throughout North Wales, Network North Wales and Metro will deliver a public transport network coordinated at a local and regional level, in alignment with the regional transport plan and complemented by our ambition for national transport transformation in Wales. We'll integrate our modes of transport, making public transport a viable option for our communities throughout North Wales, unlocking its economic potential and improving vital cross border connectivity.

We want to give people the freedom and choice to decide how they travel. One timetable will coordinate services, integrating services throughout North Wales for the first time. Through bus franchising, we will simplify ticketing with one ticket across bus and train.

It will be a network for all. A network that will be open, affordable and accessible – an unstoppable force for unlocking potential throughout North Wales.

Our approach with Network North Wales will be a catalyst to drive these changes for decades, aligning us with our national goals to transform transport throughout Wales. This approach is years in the making. We know the best integrated transport networks have a simple, functional way of letting people plan, pay for and travel door to door.

We're confident we have the right principles for building a transport network fit for Wales's future, unified by the T icon. Whenever you see it, you'll know it's a beacon for reliable transport, no matter how you're travelling.



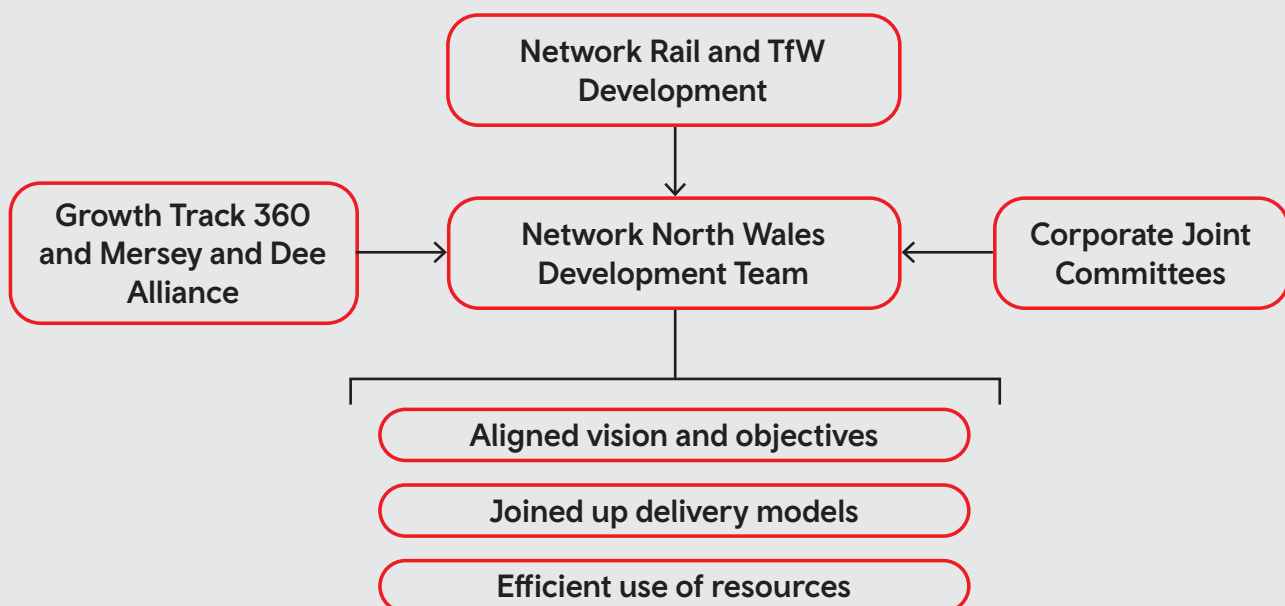
DELIVERING AS ONE TEAM

Incredible things happen when we work together. To bring our vision for Network North Wales to life, we'll collaborate with Network Rail to align our goals and deliver a unified approach to transport across the region. This joined-up delivery model will ensure efficient use of resources, enabling us to deliver cost-effective solutions for the people of Wales and beyond.

Our vision extends across North Wales and into the North of England, connecting communities with key economic hubs and strengthening links with the rest of the UK.

Investing in our future today will unlock opportunities for generations to come. By driving economic growth, improving the passenger experience, and enhancing infrastructure we can build a transport network that meets modern needs. Through targeted investment and multimodal integration, we will create a resilient transport network that supports communities, boosts business, and enhances cross-border connectivity.

Together, we can deliver more connected, reliable, and sustainable transport - that benefits both our people and our environment.





WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY



With Network North Wales and Metro, we're developing a clear plan for the improvements we intend to make up to 2035 and beyond. As part of that development, as we begin our work on designing transport change in the region, we'll focus on capturing the views of those that live, work and visit the region.

To build a public transport system that truly reflects the needs of the people we serve, we know we must actively connect with and listen to communities who may currently be excluded from, or underserved by public transport.

Working closely with our partner organisations, stakeholders, communities, customers and members of the public, we'll establish what transport could look like up to and beyond 2035 by:

- Actively engaging regional communities to understand existing barriers to sustainable travel choices and what they need to easily travel in and around North Wales
- Clearly presenting our ideas and inviting people to provide their views, opinions and feedback
- Engaging local stakeholders – those that represent sectors such as education, health, tourism and leisure, and people with protected characteristics – to better shape our plans.

We'll make giving this input as easy as possible via an online engagement platform but will also host in person events and ensure regular and open community and stakeholder conversation.

