

Better journeys ahead: agreement secured to benefit Welsh passengers under Great British Railways

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New UK-Welsh rail agreement gives Wales a bigger say in services, working together to deliver better and more reliable journeys and with a commitment to providing bilingual customer information.

- new agreement between Westminster and Welsh Governments will underpin an improved railway for Wales and the English-Welsh borders, with Great British Railways (GBR) and Transport for Wales (TfW) working to deliver better journeys for passengers
- future rail decisions to be shaped in Wales for Welsh passengers and communities and underpinned by a commitment to bilingual customer information
- agreement follows the UK government's commitment to deliver Transport for Wales's estimated £14 billion long-term vision for the future of Welsh rail, to provide better and more frequent services for passengers across the country

Rail passengers travelling in Wales and the English borders will benefit from strengthened local decision making as the UK government today (25 March 2026) publishes an agreement with Welsh ministers setting out ways of working under Great British Railways.

The publication of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander and Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales Ken Skates marks a major milestone in the delivery of the government's bold rail reforms. The agreement also highlights both parties' commitment to deliver a simpler, better and more integrated railway for the Wales and English-Welsh borders area.

The agreement lays out how both governments will work together under GBR to deliver a passenger-focused railway, with clearly defined responsibilities and governance. This means Welsh passengers and those travelling across the English-Welsh borders will see quicker, more joined-up decisions about their railway, resulting in more reliable timetables, connections and improved day-to-day service performance.

GBR and Transport for Wales will plan services together, meaning passengers will experience smoother journeys, clearer bilingual travel information and improved links between rail, bus and active travel.

Transport Secretary, Heidi Alexander, said:

Under Great British Railways, the Welsh Government will have a new, strengthened role and a bigger say in how the railway is run for local communities to improve connectivity.

At its heart, this agreement is about improving passenger experience by aligning how both governments plan and manage rail services, including cross-border travel.

The agreement is a key part of GBR which, once established in 2027, will put passengers back at the heart of the railways to deliver a safe, sustainable and high-performing network. Where the previous system saw profits put before passengers, GBR will prioritise value for money for taxpayers and drive investment and consistently better experience for all rail customers.

GBR will run and manage the tracks and trains used every day – ending years of fragmentation to drive-up standards for passengers and make journeys easier and better value for money.

Key benefits for passengers, freight and communities in the Wales and Borders area include:

- clearer priorities shaped by both UK and Welsh ministers, ensuring decisions reflect what matters to passengers and communities in the country – such as performance, reliability and local connectivity
- more joined-up planning of rail services and infrastructure
- a commitment to ensuring relevant customer information is available for passengers in both English and Welsh
- decisions affecting passengers will be made with local input so issues are resolved faster and with a better understanding of community needs
- Transport for Wales and GBR will support easier connections between rail, bus and other forms of transport, making whole journeys simpler and seamless for passengers

Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales, Ken Skates, said:

This agreement outlines the strong partnership between our 2 governments to deliver for the people of Wales.

We have already seen the joint commitment to a generational investment in our railways and this agreement ensures even closer working as we deliver improved rail services for passengers.

Secretary of State for Wales, Jo Stevens, said:

This agreement between the UK and Welsh Governments means that decisions about transforming rail in Wales will put the needs of local communities front and centre.

It is backed by a generational UK government commitment to modernise Welsh rail, starting with building 7 new stations using the £445 million announced at the Spending Review.

We want to better connect people with the well-paid jobs we are creating across the country and drive economic growth

The MoU represents a significant step forward in the journey to deliver rail reform across Great Britain, and will help bring together track and train to ensure better passenger experience on the Wales and the English borders railway.

The agreement builds on the UK government's commitment to modernise Welsh rail, backed by at least £445 million for rail enhancements in both north and south Wales, fixing level crossings, building new stations, and upgrading existing lines.

Together, both governments will provide better and more frequent services for passengers across the country, and support 12,000 jobs across Wales.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/better-journeys-ahead-agreement-secured-to-benefit-welsh-passengers-under-great-british-railways>