

SHREWSBURY ABERYSTWYTH RAIL LIAISON COMMITTEE

REPORT 6A



1. Introduction

Following a meeting with Welsh Government held at Cathays Park on Friday 17th November this summary has been prepared and should be read alongside **Report No 6.**

2. The Customer Service Survey

The main points from Report no 6 with regards to the customer service survey are as follows:

- i) A slight decrease overall in satisfaction with the business traveller satisfaction rising (mainly to the free Wi-Fi provision now on most trains).
- ii) The main issues from a passenger perspective is the overcrowding of many trains.

3. Cambrian Line Passengers

The main points from Report no 6 with regards to the passenger survey are as follows:

- i) **Journeys**
17% are local (under 30 mins), 20% medium (31-60 mins) and 63% longer journeys.
- ii) **Tickets**
30% are purchased on the train, 27% at a station, 35% online and the remaining 8% from other locations (i.e. Tourist Centre in Welshpool)
- iii) **The regular traveller**
Those regularly travelling by train has risen from 37% in 2013 to 68% today.
- iv) **Age profile**
The younger traveller has increased in train usage from 28% in 2013 to 36% today.

4. Ancillary information

Other relevant information is noted below:

i) **Trains terminating at Shrewsbury**

There is an issue with a number of trains terminating at Shrewsbury (from both Birmingham and the West) with passengers having to change between trains which then return back to where they have just come from rather than completing their journey.

ii) **Trains**

The capacity of trains is often less than demand and trains need to be strengthened.

iii) **Busy days**

There are days (often a weekend) when the trains are busy where the trains are reduced in size to accommodate other activity elsewhere (i.e. rugby internationals in Cardiff) leaving the stock available to the Cambrian Lines reduced.

iv) **The Business Traveller**

There is now Wi-Fi on most trains which is well received.

There is however a need for more working power points to support the use of computers, iPads and mobile/smart phones.

5. Train capacity

From the survey result it is clear that on the main Shrewsbury Aberystwyth Line there is a need for an hourly train service through the day with a strengthening of passenger seating provision.

There are two main trains which are missing from the current timetable which are:

- a) 08.30 ex Shrewsbury toward Aberystwyth
- b) 16.30 ex Shrewsbury toward Aberystwyth
(to ease the 17.30 by giving an earlier train for shoppers)

From the survey results it is clear that on the Coast Line many trains in the out of season month are adequate; however the trains are extensively overcrowded during main tourist season. Hence the suggested train patterns in the recommendations.

6. Demographics of main towns

The information on demographics is gained from the Census 2011, local knowledge and research.

Town	Welshpool	Newtown	Machynlleth
Population	6,720	13,450	2,235
Homes	3,012	5015	1,033
Population aged 60 plus	32%	31%	28%
Long term unemployed	0.7%	2.15%	1.2%
Households without a car or van	31%	34%	29%
Population registered as long term disabled	24%	8%	24%
Owner occupied	54%	48%	54%

Welshpool has a tourism base where 45% of its retail spend is from those stopping on their way to other destinations. (i.e. half way between the West Midlands and the West Coast).

7. Passenger usage

The schedule in Report no 6 (at 6.3) has been revised to give both percentage and numerical results and is set out at appendix A.

8. Recommendations

From the evidence base set out in Report no 6 the following recommendations are put forward:

- i) There is a need for a full hourly train service on the main Shrewsbury Aberystwyth Line.
- ii) There is a need for a better Sunday service provision along the Coast.
- iii) There is a need to have the ability to strengthen trains to meet increased demand.
- iv) There is a need for infrastructure improvements at:
 - a. Welshpool – better all-round facilities (particularly for the disabled passenger)
 - b. Caersws – improved car parking
 - c. Machynlleth – improved car parking
 - d. Dovey Junction – better waiting room provision
 - e. Aberystwyth – longer canopy of the station area

9. Train timetables

The following alternative train configurations are suggested to meet the demands on the both the main and coastal Cambrian Lines:

Option	Details
1	<p>a) A 2 hourly 4 car unit train service through to Aberystwyth.</p> <p>b) A 2 hourly 4 car unit train to Barmouth where two cars remain which are picked up by the 2 car unit returning from the north.</p> <p>c) A 4 car unit stabled at Machynlleth to provide a service to Aberystwyth linking with the Barmouth train.</p>
2	<p>a) A 2 hourly 4 car unit train service through to Aberystwyth.</p> <p>b) A 2 hourly 2 car unit train service along the Coast.</p> <p>c) A 2 hourly 2 car unit train service from Machynlleth linking with the Aberystwyth service.</p>

10. Other documents

The documents to support the information contained in the summary are:

- Cambrian Rail Reports no 1 to 5
- Cambrian Rail Report no 6
- The Welshpool Town and Community Plan

R A Robinson FRIC FSLCC
Secretary

Appendix A

Numerical Figures for table 6.3 in Report no 6.

	%age	%age	%age	Numerical	Numerical	Numerical
Purpose	2013	2015	2017	2013	2015	2017
Commuting	9%	11%	9%	189	325	346
Holidays	17%	19%	24%	357	562	924
Leisure	45%	44%	39%	946	1302	1501
Business	16%	14%	9%	336	414	347
Medical	5%	4%	1%	105	118	39
Education	8%	7%	18%	168	207	693
Other	0%	1%	0%	0	30	0