



**LDO's report November 2017
For the Cambrian Coast Rail Conference Committee.**



I have been in post since early September 2017, and this report refers to activities prior to my appointment and activities since that time. Prior to joining the world of Community Rail, I spent 5 years working as a Neighbourhood Partnership Officer with Cardiff Council where my role covered all aspects of Community Safety, Health and Well Being, Environmental Issues and Education and Employment so with a background in community engagement I bring with me a wealth of experience.

During this short time I have met with a number of partners, both funding and strategic to introduce myself and to discuss how we can continue working together in collaboration to ensure that work isn't duplicated work and that the best value is received for public monies.

Rail Franchising and Welsh Government support

I've recently attended a meeting with Arriva Trains Wales where we discussed the future of CRPs and how they might fit in with the next franchise and I am due to meet KeolisAmey and MTR Corporation (Cymru) Ltd in the next few weeks.

Surveys

The Cambrian Railways Partnership was delighted to work with the Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Liaison Committee and to commission a survey that was undertaken in spring 2017 as part of our grant from the Welsh Government. The surveys follow on from the success of the 2013 and 2015 surveys which resulted in improved services on the Cambrian Lines. The results of this survey are

being presented to Gareth Evans, Rail Economist for Welsh Government by the Committee November 17th 2017 at a meeting in Cathays Park.

201/2018 Promotional Campaign

The partnership received additional funding which allowed us to prepare a brand new tourist-focussed website which is now live, the web address is www.walesonrails.com and to produce further short films which we are looking to release February/March until early summer this year. The campaign will be exclusively based on social media platforms and based on the 2018 “Year of the Sea”.

2018 is “Year of the Sea” and in conjunction with Visit Wales, ATW, and various other key partners we are looking to put together a number of community engagement events throughout the year based on the various themes of each season with all events taking place within the Cambrian Coast, with some taking place on the train. More details will be available at the next meeting.

Bow Street Re-opening

I have recently attended a meeting with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and a number of other strategic partners regarding the re-opening of Bow Street Station following the UK Department for Transport (DFT) announcing the outcome of successful applications made to its New Stations Fund– funding which has been made available towards the capital expenditure cost of schemes to open new or re-open previously closed railway stations promoted by third parties in England and Wales.

The proposed scheme is a local and regional transport priority in the Mid Wales Joint Local Transport Plan 2015-2020 and will provide a public transport interchange with a new railway station, car and cycle parking facilities to enable passengers to access both bus and rail services and to car share from this location. The scheme also seeks to address local road safety concerns by providing a A487/ A4159 junction improvement with active travel facilities. The scheme will support and deliver potential economic growth opportunities and improved access to services and facilities located in and around Aberystwyth and North Ceredigion.

Whilst the project is currently in its design stage, it is on plan for completion during the summer of 2020.

2017-2018 Business Plan

The business plan for this current financial year was presented at the March 2017 meeting of the Cambrian Railways Partnership for approval by the funding stakeholders. The business plan was approved by the partnership and is currently being worked on.

Dementia Friendly Communities and Stations

As the new Cambrian Railways Partnership Development Officer, one of my key objectives is Community engagement, developing plans to expand the reach of the CRP to a wider range of groups including those socially disadvantaged.

Under this remit, I am currently working with strategic and funding partners at making The Cambrian Railway Line a Dementia Friendly Community in its own entity. This is a huge task and will take approximately 3 years to fulfil. However, I am looking to break this down and do it station by station, started with those manned stations, these initially will be, Machynlleth, Barmouth, Pwelli and Shrewsbury. This would make the Cambrian Railway Line the first Dementia Friendly Railway Line in the UK. There are currently a very small number of DF stations in Wales but I strongly believe this goal is achievable.

As we are in the design element of Bow Street, I have requested that whilst doing an Equality Impact Assessment for the re-opening of Bow Street I have asked if we could work with the Alzheimer's Society and make it a Dementia Friendly Station.

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