

Passenger Focus
Sharing Best Practice Workshop – Wales
1 June 2012
Cardiff

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Senior Officer for Wales
Bus Users UK Cymru



Bus Users UK Cymru

Who are we?

- The only body that represents the views of bus users in Wales
- Independent
- Non political
- Not affiliated to any bus operator
- 100% funded by the Welsh Government



Our people

Margaret Everson	Senior Officer for Wales
Barclay Davies	Officer for Wales
Greg Varney	Powys
Hywel Jones	Carmarthenshire
Joyce Porter	Mid Wales
Joyce North	North East Wales
Jim Maggs	Swansea/Neath/Port Talbot
Judi Hartland	Pembrokeshire
John Richards	North Wales Central
Paul Harley	South East Wales
Tudor Thomas	Cardiff



How do we represent the passengers' views?

- We give presentations on behalf of the bus passenger at various forums around Wales
- We give advice to bus operators on how best to reply to complainants
- We organise Bus User surgeries around Wales bringing the passenger, potential passenger, bus operator and local authority together so that the passengers' voice can be heard
- We advertise the best in information provision in order to spread best practice through the industry
- We produce a Good Practice Guide which is available on the website: www.bususers.org



We facilitate information exchanges between passengers, potential passengers and the people who provide their services



Bridgend



Cardiff



Caerphilly



Aberystwyth



Carmarthen



Swansea



Passengers have the same basic requirements no matter what the mode

- Accessibility for disabled people
- Accessibility for people with pushchairs
- Accessibility for people with visual and audio problems
- Punctuality
- Value for money
- Frequency and reliability
- Information on their chosen mode
- Access to healthcare



What makes the difference to passenger choice?

- Information
- Marketing
- Bus stop management
- Enforcement of bus lanes
- Provision of facilities for passengers



We listen and we hear

Through our surgery programme and complaint handling roles, we become acutely aware of what makes people fed up with bus services and what they like about them



Guiding principles for bus user groups

- The group should be self-supporting
- Ensure you are focused on the aims and objectives of the organisation. It is easy to be sidetracked by individuals' issues, which may be valid or may have an adverse effect on the wider community if implemented.
- Develop good relationships with relevant bus operators and local authority officers; much more can be achieved by working with these organisations than having a confrontational approach.



Guiding principles

- Aim to become 'stakeholders' in any local consultations processes. With local authorities, this should include major changes to the level of local bus service provision and the development of the Local Transport Plan.
- Bus companies are not always good at consultation; if there are local customer panels ensure you have representation on them: if not, suggest something is formed.
- Ensure that involvement with local councillors relates purely to local bus users' issues: beware of getting sucked into political issues.
- When issues arise with local bus services, encourage members to keep written records (eg of late running, buses failing to run, specific instances of unacceptable driver behaviour etc) and build up a body of evidence; statements such as 'the bus is always late' need to be backed up with evidence of what is actually happening.



Guiding principles

- Invite the local bus companies and local authorities to address your meetings on at least two occasions per year; ensure you have relevant questions for them, and open meetings to the general public. Encourage operators and local authorities to attend meetings to address the public when major service changes are to be introduced. Strong chairing is essential and however difficult the issues ensure that due respect is maintained by all parties.
- Develop good relationships with individuals in the local press. Be prepared to be helpful to them so that you can expect them to be helpful to you when you need it
- A website is helpful for getting greater exposure
- Use of email for communication with members will minimise costs and reduce administration



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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Organisation shall be:-

- to foster discussion and understanding between the suppliers, subsidisers and consumers of bus services
- to make representations on behalf of bus users at whatever level may be appropriate
- to co-operate with other bodies having similar aims
- to take all such action as may further these aims



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