

Research report

Independent national passenger watchdog

Welsh routes

Passengerfocus
putting passengers first

In March 2008 Passenger Focus carried out a survey with 2632 passengers on four routes serving Wales; 829 on the Cambrian line, 665 on the Marches line, 528 on the Valley Lines and 610 in South West Wales. The survey was undertaken to understand passengers' views on current services on the route and on potential changes and improvements. The findings were used to inform our submission to Network Rail's Wales Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) consultation, as well as the regional transport plans and rail development schemes.

The research

- The survey was undertaken by Continental Research on behalf of Passenger Focus.
- Questionnaires were distributed to passengers on board trains.
- Passengers could either complete the survey on the train and return it to the interviewer, or return it in a prepaid envelope.
- The survey was carried out from 1 to 15 March 2008.
- To ensure a representative sample, shifts were carried out at weekday peak and off-peak times as well as weekends.
- The data from the four routes have been combined to present the overall findings, except where specified.



How passengers currently use the routes

- A third of passengers (31%) used the route to commute to or from work/education. 58% were travelling for leisure and 9% for business purposes.
- The top three stations at which passengers

boarded were Cardiff Central (11%), Aberystwyth (10%) and Shrewsbury (8%).

- Nearly half (48%) of all passengers were travelling on the route for the first time when surveyed, while 20% had used it

six or more times in the previous two weeks.

- 46% walked to the station, while a smaller proportion travelled by public transport (23%) or by car (27%).

What passengers want

Important facilities to have at the station:

- Accurate visual information as to when trains will actually arrive (50%)
- Toilets (45%)
- Accurate announcements on arrival and departure times (37%)
- Staff at the station (36%)

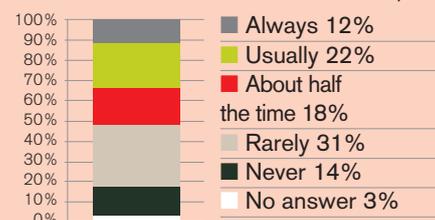
(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as passengers were able to select multiple options.)

46% of passengers were interested in buying tickets which were valid for five journeys.



How frequently passengers bought on-board refreshments

(Note: this question was only asked on the Cambrian and Marches routes)



- 38% of passengers on the Cambrian and Marches line would be likely to use the on-board buffet service if it served hot food.

Replacement bus service

(Note: this question was only asked on the South West Wales route and Valley Lines route.)

- 43% of passengers using the routes had travelled on a replacement bus service in the last 12 months.
- Of those who used the service, 53% considered the information provided about the replacement bus service insufficient, mainly due to late advice and the lack of information on the journey time.
- 39% had not received adequate assistance changing to/from the bus, as no directions were given.

How the bus service compares to the train for

	Better than train (%)	Worse than train (%)
Size of seats	10	44
Legroom space	9	52
On-board toilet	4	47
Space for luggage	4	55
Accessibility	5	47

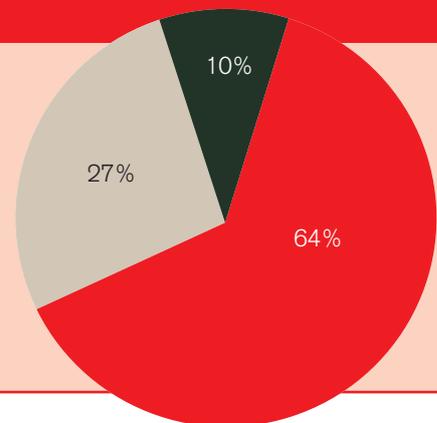
What passengers think about proposed changes to services

Nearly two thirds (64%) of passengers expressed a preference for faster services rather than additional station calls. Of those passengers who wanted a faster service, 14% would need the journey reduced by 15 minutes to make a worthwhile difference. However, 56% said their journey time would have to be reduced by more than 15 minutes to make a difference.

(Note: This question was not asked on the Valley Lines route.)

Passengers were asked which of the following options they would prefer:

- Trains that call at all stations
- No answer
- Faster journeys between major towns on this route with fewer intermediate station stops



Note: percentages exceed 100% due to rounding.

What passengers think of services

Percentage of passengers fairly or very satisfied with different aspects of the service

Personal security at the station	50%
Being able to get a seat	72%
Value for money on price of ticket	46%
Length of time the journey was scheduled to take	60%
Punctuality/reliability of the train	67%
Frequency of the trains on the route	49%
Ease of getting to/form the station	65%
Provision of info about times/platform	67%
Personal security on train	58%
Ticket buying facilities	63%