



## Cledrau Cymru - Wales on Rails

Food & Tourism

### MAKING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ACCESSIBLE

With over one million international tourists visiting Wales each year, navigating the various routes, railways and roads can be fairly confusing. Having already worked on a project that connected the national railways to the 12 Welsh heritage railways called the Great Little Trains of Wales, Wales on Rails set about building a bigger brand that could not only make life easier for the independent traveller, but promote sustainable transport whilst doing so.

The project aimed to provide both visitors and local people with a comprehensive guide to multi-modal public transport in the form of an online interactive map that allows travellers to plan a specific journey, with suggestions of places to stay, eat and visit along the way.

Travellers are able to research the route they want to use and what they want to experience, with downloadable itineraries. The comprehensive guide provides a positive travel experience for travellers and encourages safe, sustainable and scenic adventures throughout Wales.

### BENEFITS OF THE FUNDING

Wales on Rails secured an initial funding of £74,000 from the Tourism Product Innovation Fund, which is a revenue fund supported by the Welsh Government's Rural Communities Rural Development Programme.

This funding enabled the collaboration with BWA, a design and communications agency based in Hay-on-Wye, who developed the online map alongside Jo Quinney, the Wales on Rails project manager.

The website features a card for each station or bus stop, with additional cards for attractions, things to do and interesting information. The cards are the jewel in the crown of the website, on a mobile or laptop you can flick through the cards and be inspired by all the amazing images and stories that Wales offers.





There are hundreds of cards available to choose from, giving more freedom and choice to the traveller. The map includes all of the Wales on Rails rail routes and connecting bus routes. Each route has a further map which shows all the stations or bus stops and connecting routes.

The maps and cards are all live and available to use interactively on the Cledrau Cymru - Wales on Rails website. The cards are being added and updated on an ongoing basis, with new itineraries regularly being created with limitless room for engaging and inspiring content.

Funding also enabled the project to conduct research on the possibility of introducing a Welsh version of the Oyster Card (Cockle Card) with validity on different forms of transport. The research looked at how a pass might be operated, marketed and named as well as looking at the challenges and opportunities that a tourist pass might bring.



## THE FUTURE'S BRIGHT...

Looking to the future, the website will be continually updated and expanded with fresh new travel itineraries, whilst also looking to expand and promote the brand further.

"These days when you travel somewhere, you have the whole world at your fingertips as you can Wikipedia or google anything, but what we've done is picked the brains of local experts such as the community rail officers, to curate the best experiences and connect you to the amazing heritage and culture we have here in Wales. The aim of the online map is to inspire travellers to come to Wales or explore their local area using public transport, for a more sustainable tourist adventure.

"The relationship between Wales on Rails and the community rail officers has been vital to the success of the project, and we will look to continue their collaborative approach by building on their relationship with Community Rail Partnership whilst also encouraging other tourism attractions to promote sustainable travel in the area. Discussions are already underway to also collaborate with Transport for Wales on developing a similar guide for walking routes stemming from railway stations.

"The abiding legacy has been the collaboration between the Wales on Rails and the Community Rail Officers. This legacy will hopefully provide a funding model which can carry this project on for the coming years. The climate crisis and rising fuel costs means that finding sustainable ways to travel and enjoy being a tourist are more important than ever."

Jo Quinney, Wales on Rails project manager