

M4 CEM Engagement Team
**M4 (Magor to Castleton) -
Corridor Enhancement Measures**
Strategic Stakeholder Workshop
Summary Report

April 2011



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



ARUP

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1 Executive Summary

This workshop was one of a number of engagement events held by the Welsh Assembly Government in early 2011. Participants were a mix of strategic stakeholders (from statutory consultees, like the Environment Agency and the Countryside Commission for Wales, to large Non-Governmental Organisations, transport bodies, and business groupings) with an interest in the M4 Corridor: Magor to Castleton. The purpose of the workshop was to inform participants about the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures programme and seek their views on Welsh Assembly Government's analysis of transport related problems, goals and aims to 2020 in the corridor, as well as any suggestions for additional problems, goals or aims.

Broadly speaking, participants did not disagree fundamentally with the list of problems, goals and aims put forward by Welsh Assembly Government but did add quite a few comments to them and proposed a number of additions.

Better 'joining up' was a theme which emerged strongly. Participants wrote about the need for integrated transport, joined up policies across different disciplines and better communication within and between travel organisations

Sustainable alternative modes of transport featured in all the discussions and there were calls for 'soft' measures to be included in a substantial way.

On a wider point, participants were divided on whether the overall aim should be a reduction in travel, or whether it was more about finding ways of managing current traffic levels and / or persuading people to travel more sustainably.

Another theme which ran through many of the comments was the need to distinguish between local and wider (regional or national) needs and effects. This was in relation to the role of the M4 as strategic or mixed strategic and local route, but also, for example to possible unintended consequences of improving access to sub regional services at the expense of local ones.

2 Introduction

In early 2011, as part of the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures engagement programme, the Welsh Assembly Government hosted a workshop for strategic stakeholders (large NGOs, transport bodies, business groupings) with an interest in the M4 Magor to Castleton transport corridor. The workshop was one of several events; more information about all the dialogue events that happened between January and March 2011 and about the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme can be found at

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/transport/roads/schemes/ewsouth/m4mctcip/?lang=en> .

This document is a summary report of the workshop – a full transcript of the worksheets and flipcharts produced at the workshop can also be found on the above website.

The workshop was designed facilitated by independent engagement specialists Catrin Ellis Associates.

3 Purpose of the workshop

The purpose of the workshop was to inform participants about the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures programme and to seek their views on the Welsh Assembly Government's analysis of transport related problems, and the goals to be achieved in order to address one or more problem. Having looked at the problems and goals, participants were also asked to turn their attention to the bigger picture, by considering the aims of the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme until 2020, and beyond.

As well as asking participants why they might agree or disagree or want to amend a particular problem, goal or aim, suggestions for additional problems, goals or aims were invited.

At this early stage in the process of talking and listening to people and stakeholders, the Welsh Assembly Government intend to understand any differences of opinion or emphasis about the problems to solve, and thereby to frame the scope of the M4 Corridor Enhancement Programme, by setting appropriate aims and goals. Hence, it was explained to participants that they were not being asked, at this stage, for suggestions for solutions to the transport problems. An opportunity to do this would come later in the year. However, quite a number of solutions were proposed; they have been noted and will contribute to the next stage of the work.

4 How participants' views were gathered

Participants were seated at nine tables of between four and six people, who together represented a range of views and perspectives. It was hoped that the deliberations at each table would stimulate insights that take into account a wide range of experiences and issues, and thus the feedback gathered would deliver a holistic understanding of the views of stakeholders.

To help the groups' focus, they used worksheets, which guided them through the Welsh Assembly Government's view of the transport related problems encountered within the corridor area, the goals to be achieved and the aims of the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme.

Groups were encouraged to comment on those problems, goals or aims which they considered to be of most relevance, or which are in their view most important or urgent. Hence, not all groups commented on all points presented.

The objective of the workshop was to gather views and information derived from a wide range of Local Government perspectives, and to begin to understand differences in opinion or emphasis compared to the material produced by the Welsh Assembly Government.

The groups were asked as far as possible to come to a collective view, however if there were strongly held alternative views in any group, they were encouraged to feedback more than one view on any given problem goal or aim. There was also an opportunity in the final question of the workshop evaluation form, for participants to express individual views, and send a message to Welsh Assembly Government about how the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures should be taken forward.

5 What participants thought of the workshop

Participants completed an evaluation form, telling us what they thought of the workshop, and of the briefing materials, which described and provided evidence to support the appraisal made by the Welsh Assembly Government about problems, goals and aims, sent in advance of the workshop.

All participants who responded thought the briefing material was quite helpful or very helpful.

Twenty of thirty three participants who answered rated the workshop overall 7/10 or higher, 20 out of 33 saying it had fully met its aims, while 11 said it met its aims only in part. One participant said the workshop had not met its aims at all. Some participants felt that what was missing from the workshop was an opportunity to deliberate on solutions, and details of what the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme will do, as well as quantitative data. Some expressed frustration about not being able to discuss solutions. 24 of 35 responses indicated they had found it easy or very easy to express their views (scores \geq 7/10). Reasons given as to why participants found it less than easy included the large size of the overall group, and the “obvious” nature of the materials under discussion.

The final question of the feedback form, which invited participants to give an individual message to the Welsh Assembly Government as it goes forward with the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme, generated a very wide range of comments. These are reproduced in full in section 9.

6 Transport problems

6.1 Comments on Welsh Assembly Government list of problems

Broadly speaking, participants agreed with much of Welsh Assembly Government’s analysis of the main transport problems in the corridor but there were a number of problems on which views differed.

- There was general agreement that the disruption caused by one off events such as accidents or severe weather (Problems 1, 9, 14) is a major problem and has knock on effects on local roads. This was seen to be exacerbated by the lack of suitable alternative routes. It was felt that there is room for improvement in how disruption is managed, such as better information for drivers, delivered in a timely manner. One group pointed out that disruption is also caused by heavy traffic due to a major event. Some people did not believe that flooding is a problem.
- Four out of the nine groups who commented on the statement about rising traffic levels (Problem 3) expressed doubt as to whether this is really true. The groups questioned whether the forecasts being used to identify this as a problem are reliable, and cited a complex picture of upward and downward pressures.
- Five out of the seven groups who commented agreed that the existing transport network acts as a constraint to economic growth (Problem 4). Of the

two groups who disagreed with the statement, one cited connectivity to markets and labour costs as bigger constraints to economic growth.

- Problem 5 stated that essential major maintenance on the M4 within the next 5-10 years will increase congestion problems. There seemed to be a general understanding among participants that all roads require maintenance, and in order to reduce disruption, major infrastructure programmes should be planned together, and alternatives considered. Two groups indicated that the original design of the M4 (lack of full width and continuous hard shoulder) is the real problem here.
- Problem 6 was about the inability of HGVs to cope well with congestion and was not felt to be a particular problem on this stretch of the M4.
- With respect to levels of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions (Problems 7 and 8) most groups that commented agreed that both are real problems. Participants did question whether the most influential factors in causing these problems had been correctly identified and suggested traffic on side and feeder roads also contribute to these problems.
- Some participants did not believe traffic noise from the M4 to be a problem for local residents (Problem 10), and one group said that there was a good provision of noise barriers. However, other groups did see it as a problem.
- The question of a “gateway into Wales” (Problem 11) was felt by several groups to need clarification. Some asked, for example, where is the gateway – at the border or in Wales itself? Is it a gateway to Wales, South Wales or Cardiff? One group said that the gateway was not just the road, but also the setting.
- Five out of seven groups that commented on whether the transport systems limits what Councils can do to develop their areas (Problem 12), broadly agreed with the statement. All seven interpreted the statement in a number of different ways.
- Several groups thought that accident rates had improved significantly (Problem 13) since the introduction of the 50mph limit and one group wondered whether it was still higher than the national average.
- All of the groups who commented, said that periodic problems on the M4 between Magor and Castleton can severely disrupt road travel within the wider South Wales area.

6.2 New problems

Participants were invited to consider whether there were any significant problems which were not yet covered by the Welsh Assembly Government analysis; a number were put forward:

- The mix of long distance and local traffic was put forward as a new problem by one group.
- Eight out of the 22 new problems related to a perceived lack of adequate / sustainable alternative modes of transport. Linked to this was a concern that transport options are not integrated.

- One group said that the silo thinking at the Assembly results in a disconnect between transport policy and major projects.
- Other new problems mentioned were removal of liquid pollution (e.g. fuel spillage), out of date information signs following an incident, poor journey time reliability and the cost to business if the M4 is shut.
- Some specific physical problems were put forward:
 - Variation in the number of lanes available on the M4 i.e. not consistently 3 lanes
 - Junction 28 (two different problems cited)
 - Too many junctions

7 Transport goals

7.1 Comments on the Welsh Assembly Government list of goals

There was broad agreement with most of the Welsh Assembly Government's transport goals for the corridor.

- Goal 1 was to 'make it easier and quicker to travel East-West in S Wales'. One group wanted to add 'safer' and two groups thought reliability was more important than speed. There was also a suggestion that faster traffic makes more noise, which would then contradict Goal 10. Goal 1 was linked by one group with Goal 8 on safety and Goal 12 which was about improving the travel experience into S Wales. Another group suggested adding visual biodiversity to Goal 12 and two groups commented that this goal needs to be more clearly defined.
- Goal 3 was to 'promote more effective alternatives to the M4' and received strong support. This was linked to Goal 6 on increased travel choice, which was also supported apart from one group who said that incentives should be increased, so that existing travel choices were more attractive.
- Goal 7 on access to key services garnered some support and also several comments relating to the wider picture. One group pointed out that other policies, such as health and education impact on transport demand and another group called for more joined up thinking and links made to the Welsh spatial plan and local development plans. This was echoed in a response to Goal 9 (see below).
- No-one disagreed with the aims of Goals 9 and 11 to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but the point was made that moving cars from one place to another just displaces the problem. A target which integrated with environmental health, the Local Development Plan and others was suggested.
- There were mixed views about Goal 4 on making 'best possible use' of the M4 and local road network. One group wondered whether this had not already been achieved and said that alternative routes should now be

considered and another thought the two were not compatible i.e. if the M4 flows well, then local roads will be gridlocked. In the view of one group, valley topography means the M4 is essential for local as well as strategic movement.

- The need to resolve local / long distance conflicts was noted by one group.
- One group made a broader point about all the goals, saying that they appeared to facilitate more travel rather than considering whether investment could reduce the need to travel, particularly by car.

7.2 New goals

12 new goals were put forward.

- Two new goals were to reduce the need to travel and three related to improved public transport.
- There was a goal to create an integrated transport system and another for better communication within and between travel organisations.
- Two new goals supported economic growth and one was to promote a better Wales.
- The road maintenance issue was picked up by a new goal which was for it to cause less disruption on the M4 and the travel experience was to be improved by increased biodiversity.
- In the feedback session, it was suggested that no measure should have a detrimental effect on the surrounding area and that solutions should be for the whole corridor.

8 Overall aims

8.1 Comments on Welsh Assembly Government aims

8.1.1 Aim 1: Social

Aim 1 was about accessibility to services. There was no disagreement as such with the aim, but one group felt it only applied to local road users and another group suggested that there was a risk that improving links to major economic and social centres could have a detrimental effect on local services.

8.1.2 Aim 2: Economic

No-one disagreed with this economic aim to support and encourage prosperity in the region and across Wales. It was noted that there was no reference to 'sustainable' or 'long term' prosperity and the issue of striking a balance between local and strategic travel was raised.

According to one group, delivering the economic aim should be the first priority.

8.1.3 Aim 3: Environmental

Again, there was no disagreement with this as an aim. There was a suggestion that the whole scheme should be subject to a full life cycle analysis. One group said that the aim should be recast using positive language such as ‘improve air quality’ and a statement that the scheme would make a ‘positive contribution to overarching Welsh Assembly Government goals to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and tackling the contribution of transport to climate change’.

8.2 New aims

Two of the seven new aims were about improving safety and another was about the impact of accidents on people’s lives being much more than economic.

The other new aims covered:

- Separation of local and national economic requirements
- Separation of local and long distance travel
- Ensuring a tie-in with the re-franchising of the Wales rail network by 2018
- Putting 3 lanes in the tunnels

8.3 New aims beyond 2020

Four new aims were proposed for beyond 2020. One was a ‘do nothing’ aim – allow congestion and peak oil to happen – people would reorganise their lives around them.

Another group wanted to move to a more sustainable transport system not reliant on oil and pollution.

One suggested aim was to consider alternative ways of funding transport improvements, such as road pricing, while one group proposed that measures should seek to reduce social inequality, such as more equal access to services.

9 Messages to the Welsh Assembly Government

Workshop participants completed feedback forms, which included an opportunity to send a message to the Welsh Assembly Government as they go forward with M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures. The messages are reproduced below but grouped under themes.

Integration and joining up

- Outcomes need to be integrated to deliver true sustainable development, well-being and environmental ambitions. These need to be opportunistically pursued.
- Look at the wider issue and integrate thinking.
- Think about the bigger picture as the “M4 corridor” could be too narrow an area to consider. Regional options that may initially “move” the problem

somewhere else and then (leave others to?) deal with these issues. Look at other parallel routes, consider active re-routing of traffic.

- Draw in other assembly policy areas to ensure holistic approach to goals and solutions – planning, social, health etc.
- Ensure integrated thinking of all modes. I am still reading reports that conflict: especially highways and rail. I am sure it can be done.
- Think about the big picture. We have an opportunity to improve the transport, logistical problems for the majority of people living in Wales!
- Talk to colleagues in other WAG departments. Be aware of wider WAG targets (air quality, sustainability etc) and how this scheme can contribute to WSP. SMART targets. Welcome new approach.
- Look at the big picture. The effect on Wales and in particular SE Wales including the valley
- Please recognise the clear link between infrastructure and the economy of Wales. A solution to the problems currently encountered needs to be found. Do not leave a legacy of inaction. The M4 is a critical part of the infrastructure

Other modes of transport / soft measures

- To ensure solutions are economically viable and due consideration is given to solutions to assist public transport (both road and rail) and improve safety.
- It is not just about the M4, it is about looking at how all modes are better used to minimise the impact. Planning policy is also a key part.
- More emphasis on Smart “soft” measures.
- Sustainable solutions – look at all issues such as ‘soft’ measures – personal and school travel plans, travel awareness – rail, train. Green solutions and biodiversity – make the road corridors/rail more pleasant to drive – wildflower banks, native deciduous trees, wildlife/SUDs ponds. Avoid impact on natural environment (pollution into River Usk, SSS, SAC)
- Think more about public transport options
- Investment in transport should be determined before budgets are allocated to modes of travel. Cost: benefits analysis shows walking and cycling schemes provide the highest value for money, road schemes only seem to have large benefits because they cost so much and are valued over 60 years where each second is valued equally and individually.

Communication and engagement

- Engagement with stakeholders has to continue, but must be expanded to include the general public, and not just those of us who are professionally involved with transportation.
- Second, to strengthen the engagement with SEWTA.
- More information needs to be made available to the public regarding what is happening with the M4 corridor.
- Carry on listening.

- Consultation = good. Involve all of your departments, especially the integrated transport and sustainability teams. This was not a very diverse mix of people. Was it representative of the SE Wales demographic?
- Needs to be better defined e.g. discussions crept between M4 specifically and broader integrated transport issues. Goals could have all been linked into 1. Problems badly worded and some could be made worse. Insufficient recognition of feeder road network and inability of agencies to communicate and plan.

Other

- Consider lorries in any planning for the economy of South Wales
- Motorway exit road structure combined with reduced speed limit has led to HGVs using centre lane for significant distances (and not left hand lane). Moving between lanes more difficult/dangerous. Traffic lights on roundabouts sometimes cause more problems than they resolve (e.g. J28).
- Do nothing! People will adapt to current traffic congestion and future oil shortages
- Any plans must be sustainable and future proofed so that they are not out of date before completion
- The congestion problem on the M4 will not go away until you:-
 - Deal with removing the 3 to 2 to 3 lane problem at the Brynglas tunnels OR
 - Introduce an alternative motorway in the Newport area!!!
- I work in a business located near J28 and there are many rumours circulating that J27 is to be closed. This is worrying. At peak times the amount of traffic travelling down the valley through Risca etc means that the J27 and J28 are at full capacity and heavily congested. Closing J27 would mean that J28 /Forge Lane would simply be transferred from J27. The whole city programme needs to consider local business users and not just travellers from further afield. 2) Please, please do something soon about the traffic lights on the J28 roundabout. The new sequencing causes such congestion for traffic leaving Newport – there will soon be a serious accident.
- Manage expectation better. Congestion at peak times is acceptable and should be about awareness not investment to resolve
- Remember the motorway was originally intended as an alternative route for through traffic avoiding local congestion. Perhaps we have lost sight of that principle.

Appendix A

List of Participants

A1 List of Participants

Bus Users UK (Wales)	Margaret Everson
Campaign Against Levels Motorway	Brenda Calver
Cardiff City Council	Peter Dawson
Confederation of British Industry Wales	Leighton Jenkins
Countryside Council for Wales	Dr S C Howard
Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation	Claudia Currie
Environment Agency Wales	Bill Purvis (Planning & Corporate Management)
Gwent Police	Julian Knight
Gwent Wildlife Trust	David Calver
Institution of Civil Engineers	Keith Jones
Junction 28 Group	Tania Cummins
Junction 28 Group	Lesley Evans
Junction 28 Group	Kathy Matson
Junction 28 Group	Alison Lewis
Junction 28 Group	Gerry Hallett
Monmouthshire County Council	Mark Youngman
Monmouthshire County Council	Alan Browne
National Express	Mike Lambden
Newport Access Group	Gwyn Kemp-Philp
Newport Unlimited	Gillian Otlet
Road Haulage Association	Geoff Dunning
Road Haulage Association	Simon Higgins
Road Haulage Association	Nick Payne
Royal Town Planning Institute South Wales Branch	Dr Roisin Willmott
RSPB	James Byrne
RSPB	Peter Jones
Severn Tunnel Action Group	Colin James
SE Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA)	Nicola Davies
SE Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA)	Deborah Stux
South Wales Chamber of Commerce	Martyn Evans
South Wales Fire & Rescue Service	Steve Price
South Wales Fire & Rescue Service	Dewi Jones
South Wales Police	Inspector Steve Davies
South-East Wales Economic Forum	Elizabeth Haywood
Stagecoach, R&W Services Limited	Richard Davies

Sustrans	Gwyn Smith
Welsh Assembly Government Traffic Wales	Jo Scott – Performance and Evaluation Manager
Wales Freight Transport Association	Gordon Telling
Wales Transport Research Centre	Professor Stuart Cole

M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Team

Welsh Assembly Government	Russell Bennett
Welsh Assembly Government	Mark Dixon
Arup	Richard Sanders
Arup	Allan Pitt
Arup	Ian Amos
Catrin Ellis Associates, Facilitator	Catrin Ellis Jones
Catrin Ellis Associates, Facilitator	Lynn Wetenhall
Catrin Ellis Associates, Facilitator	Helena Poldervaart

Appendix B

The focus of participant's deliberations – the Welsh Assembly Government defined Problems, Goals and Aims of the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme: Magor to Castleton

B1 The focus of participant's deliberations – the Welsh Assembly Government defined Problems, Goals and Aims of the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme: Magor to Castleton

Participants' dialogue centred on the material presented here.

Following a brief introduction to the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme, and the context of its development, there was a presentation about the Programme's Aims and how the WelTAG process (a technical appraisal process used by the Welsh Assembly Government) had been used to identify travel related problems in the M4 Corridor. Participants were asked to consider the problems identified and feed back their views. Next there was a presentation on how goals had been set, in order to address one or more of the problems identified. Participants in turn commented on these goals. Finally after having looked at problems and goals in detail, participants were asked to give some thought to the bigger picture and consider the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme's aims.

1 Main problems surrounding the M4 Corridor: Magor to Castleton

This material is taken from the report: 'Addendum to Welsh Transport Planning and Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) Planning Stage Report, Draft 1 Working Document May 2009'. It has been turned into 'plain English'.

The WelTAG process identified key problems as:

1. Difficulties maintaining adequate traffic flows on the M4 at times of temporary disruption (for example, following accidents, problems caused by severe weather, or during major events).
2. A greater volume of traffic uses the M4 around Newport than it was designed to accommodate, resulting in regular congestion at peak times.
3. Traffic levels are forecast to continue to increase, therefore problems 1 and 2 will worsen over time.
4. The existing transport network acts as a constraint to economic growth (for example, as freight companies see increasing delays in deliveries, they may decide not to invest in South Wales).

5. The M4 requires essential major maintenance within the next 5-10 years; this will involve prolonged lane and speed restrictions, thus increasing congestion problems.
6. HGVs cope badly with congestion as they take longer to get going again once they've stopped, thus adding to the congestion.
7. The congested, slow moving traffic on the motorway around Newport adds to air pollution problems.
8. Stop-start traffic movement on the M4 results in greater greenhouse gas emissions than free-flowing traffic.
9. The road and rail transport system in and around the M4 corridor is at increasing risk of disruption due to extreme weather events (for example flooding).
10. Traffic noise from the motorway is a problem for local residents.
11. WAG's aim for an improved gateway into Wales is not currently met by the M4 corridor.
12. The existing transport system limits what local Councils can do to develop their areas.
13. The current accident rates on the M4 between Magor and Castleton are higher than average for UK motorways.
14. The current problems on the M4 between Magor and Castleton at times have a significant knock-on effect, severely disrupting travel within South Wales.

2. WAG Transport Goals for the M4 CEM Programme

This material is taken from the report: 'Magor to Castleton. Addendum to Welsh Transport Planning and Appraisal Guidance (WeITAG) Planning Stage Report, Draft 1 Working Document May 2009'. It has been turned into plain English. The 'goals' (formally known as "transport planning objectives") set out the kind of results that the M4 CEM programme should try to achieve.

1. Make it easier and quicker to travel East-West in South Wales,
2. Improve transport connections to England, the Republic of Ireland and the rest of Europe on the international transport network.
3. Promote more effective use of alternatives to the M4, including other parts of the transport network and other modes of transport for local journeys around Newport.

4. Make best possible use of the existing M4 and local road network.
5. Make journey times along the M4 corridor more reliable.
6. Increase the level of choice for all people making journeys within the transport corridor between Magor and Castleton.
7. Make it easier for people to access key services as well as residential and commercial centres.
8. Improve safety on the M4 between Magor and Castleton.
9. Improve air quality in areas next to the M4 around Newport.
10. Reduce the disturbance to people of high noise levels, from M4 traffic between Magor and Castleton.
11. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions per vehicle and/or person kilometre.
12. Improve the travel experience into South Wales along the M4 Corridor.

3. Overall aims of the M4 CEM programme, 2011 - 2020

As a part of South East Wales' transport strategy, the M4 CEM programme focuses on the M4 and the immediately surrounding area, known as the M4 corridor. The programme is looking at how to improve the ability of the corridor to cope with current journey levels in an efficient way and enable more journeys to be made than are now.

There are 3 overall aims

Social: to make it easier for people to reach services such as shops, hospitals, leisure service [and places of work, by road, public transport, walking or cycling....

Economic: to support and encourage prosperity in the region and across Wales by delivering a more efficient transport network on this important economic gateway to South Wales

Environmental: to prevent and reduce negative effects of the M4 CEM programme on people and the environment and, where practicable, provide improvements to balance against them.

Appendix C

Pre-Meeting Briefing Papers

C1 Pre-Meeting Briefing Papers

Accompanying the invitation to participate at the workshop, participants were sent a short briefing paper - "M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme Briefing note". Participants who confirmed their attendance were sent a more lengthy document - "M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme Workshop Briefing Paper" describing the M4 Corridor Enhancement Measures Programme's Aims and why the Welsh Assembly Government were seeking to engage with stakeholders at this point, as well as presenting some of the evidence base describing some of the travel related problems encountered within the M4 Corridor Area. These can be downloaded from the Welsh Assembly Government Website:

www.wales.gov.uk/transport.