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CALM endorses *Transport fit for future generations* report

The Campaign Against the Levels Motorway supports the sustainable – and lawful – alternatives to the M4 Black Route published today by Wales' Future Generations Commissioner.¹

Rob Hepworth, Chair of CALM states “We welcome today’s report by the Commissioner. It gives the most convincing overall case ever produced against a motorway bypass severing the Gwent Levels. CALM asks every Welsh citizen to read it with an open mind – then decide if you want your taxes used to build it instead of cheaper and healthier alternatives. Surely we need a full Metro system and new infrastructure for cyclists and walkers.”

He concludes “The question is no longer about the feasibility of the Black Route. It is the wrong choice. CALM calls on the Wales Government to face up to that reality and embrace new solutions for the South Wales transport corridor. An urgent task for the next First Minister is to choose a better plan in line with the Commissioner’s report.”

Background: The evidence against the Black Route has been piling up throughout 2018. CALM estimates that its final costs could top £2 billion, compared with the Welsh Government’s latest estimate of £1.4 billion (which includes almost £200 million to repair unnecessary damage from driving the bypass through Newport Docks). As the Commissioner’s report demonstrates, the Black Route is incompatible with the need to address climate change seriously. In Wales we have ambitious targets to reduce carbon emissions a recent IWA report² has shown that we are already missing them because of our car-dependency. CALM supported IWA’s call for a radical plan to decarbonise our transport through public transport and active travel. Today’s FGO report shows the genuine alternatives to the Black Route are much better value for Welsh citizens’ money.

The experts assembled by Sophie Howe have exposed the flawed assumptions made by the recent Public Inquiry, which failed to examine **any** alternatives properly, in breach of Welsh legislation protecting the wellbeing of future generations. Today’s report found the case for building the Black Route relies on an absurd assumption that time savings to individual drivers of between 2½ and 5 minutes each day are worth **20 times more** than lowering carbon emissions, improving human health, reducing pollution and giving a fair deal for those on lower incomes. And that’s before any value is put on the unique wildlife and landscape of the Gwent Levels, and the ecosystem services it provides local people.

Note to editors: For further comment, please contact Rob Hepworth on 07507 162147 or rghepworth@gmail.com or Hugh Mackay on 07973 965930 or hugh.mackay@open.ac.uk

¹ *Transport Fit for Future Generations*, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, in partnership with the Centre for Transport and Society, University of the West of England, Sustrans and New Economics Foundation, September 2018.

² *Decarbonising Transport in Wales*, Institute of Welsh Affairs, June 2018

http://www.iwa.wales/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/IWA_Decarbonising_Transport-1.pdf



The **Campaign Against the Levels Motorway** is an alliance of local people and organisations formed to protect the Gwent Levels from the proposed M4 Relief Road and find better solutions to travel needs in south-east Wales.