

Review of compliance with the Code of
Practice for Statistics

Wales National Travel Survey: six-month results

Statistics producer: Transport for Wales
Report by: Office for Statistics Regulation

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The Office for Statistics Regulation

Statistics should serve everyone, helping enhance knowledge about every section of society and the economy, and people's place within them.

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) provides independent regulation of official statistics produced in the UK. Official statistics are statistics produced by Crown bodies and other organisations listed within an [Official Statistics Order](#), on behalf of the UK Government or the devolved governments. We help ensure that statistics serve the public good as public assets that are widely used to provide insight, inform understanding and shape action.

We aim to enhance public confidence in statistics produced by government by setting the standards that they must meet in [the Code of Practice for Statistics](#). We ensure that producers uphold these standards by conducting reviews of statistics against the Code. We also report publicly on system-wide issues and on the way statistics are being used, celebrating when the standards are upheld and challenging publicly when they are not.

Compliance review

A compliance review is a review of any official statistics (or [accredited official statistics](#)) to establish the extent to which they meet the standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value in the Code of Practice for Statistics. We might undertake a review with a view to accrediting a set of statistics (this type of compliance review is called an assessment), focus on a specific issue or involve a high-level check of ongoing compliance.

A range of factors determine the scope of and approach to a compliance review, including the type of statistics, their accreditation status, the producer history, the profile of the statistics and the reasons for initiating the review.

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Overview

At the time of this report, Transport for Wales (TfW) publishes the [Wales National Travel Survey \(WNTS\)](#) as official statistics in development.

The WNTS provides data about the travel attitudes and behaviours of people across Wales. The data will help to monitor progress towards targets in [the Wales transport strategy](#) and [Carbon Budget 2](#). The preliminary, six-month results are the first statistics to be published from this survey, with [the first annual publication planned for November 2026](#).

This report presents the findings and recommendations from our review of whether the statistics meet the standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value in [the Code of Practice for Statistics](#) (the Code).

Why we did this review

The WNTS is the first national travel survey for Wales since 2012. As such, substantial interest in the first annual findings is expected. [The Welsh Government's plans to improve regional travel](#) have also likely increased both local and national interest in the WNTS statistics.

TfW indicates [on its website](#) that it aims to seek accreditation for the WNTS statistics from the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) in the future. Due to TfW's aim to accredit the WNTS and the expected interest in the results, we agreed to review the preliminary six-month results (published in April 2026) against the Code and to provide feedback before the first annual WNTS publication.

Findings

- The statistics are presented in a clear, well-structured and impartial way, and important caveats are highlighted (for example, that the six-month data are not representative of a whole year). However, some of the graphs in the reports are difficult to read due to the amount of information in them and the three reports can be repetitive – the team plans to address this latter point for the annual publication.
- Users are clearly at the centre of the team's decision-making regarding these statistics – TfW [engaged with users](#) while developing the survey, has sought and received feedback on the six-month results publication, and has plans for future user engagement. The team is also attempting to form a working group of producers of other national travel surveys to share experiences and learning.
- TfW provides a large amount of documentation which, while supporting transparency, sometimes makes it difficult to find key information. Finding key

information was occasionally also challenging due to the structure and navigability of the website.

- Uncertainty in the statistics is clearly presented in the supporting tables in the form of confidence intervals. However, there is little communication of such uncertainty in the findings reports.
- We identified the following content that was either not included or would benefit from elaboration: the quality management approach; the roles of TfW and the National Centre for Research (NatCen), which collects the data; the weighting approach, including how it is applied to the days of completion for the two-day travel diary; and a pre-release access list for the statistics. The team plans to publish additional documentation with the annual report (for example, a technical report) that will include the missing information we identified.
- The statistics were published during the Senedd pre-election period, when there were restrictions on public-facing communications. The resulting lack of press releases or social media posts about the statistics likely limited the awareness of the statistics for potential users.

Our judgement

We conclude that the Wales National Travel Survey: six-month results are a strong set of official statistics in development. The statistics are presented impartially, and the team's user engagement is a particular strength. We were especially impressed by the production of the statistics as this is the first publication from the WNTS.

As these statistics are 'in development', the team appreciated that further work is needed before the statistics can be labelled as official statistics. Based on the findings of this review, we have identified four recommendations that TfW should address to further enhance the statistics' Trustworthiness, Quality and Value:

Recommendation 1: We support TfW's aim to review the findings reports in response to user feedback to make them more concise and accessible. To further enhance accessibility, the team should also review the presentation of the statistics in graphs and consider whether there are simpler, clearer ways to present the findings. TfW should also consider how to improve the navigability of its website and the supporting documentation to make it easier for users to access information they are interested in.

Recommendation 2: To support users' understanding of the accuracy of the statistics, TfW should review how it communicates uncertainty in the findings reports, such as using common terms like 'about' and 'approximately'. [OSR's guidance on presenting uncertainty](#) might be useful when addressing this point.

Recommendation 3: To be transparent about the approach TfW takes in producing and publishing these statistics, information about the following should be included in the additional documentation the team plans to publish with the annual report: the quality

management approach, the roles of TfW and NatCen, and the weighting approach. To improve the trustworthiness of TfW as an official statistics producer, the team should also publish a pre-release access list alongside the annual report, and act in line with other relevant pre-release access rules and principles.

Recommendation 4: To ensure that potentially interested parties are aware of the statistics and their value for answering important questions on transport in Wales, the team should consider how it can best promote the forthcoming annual WNTS statistics.

Next steps

We expect TfW to provide a public update on its progress in relation to our recommendations before the publication of its first annual report (provisionally pre-announced for November 2026).

In the longer term, we will be happy to discuss TfW's intention to pursue accreditation of the statistics.

