

Section 4.6a

Title: Draft 1 Travel to Work

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1. Overview

Travel to work or commuting patterns refer to residents working in their home authority, total people working in an authority, and people commuting in and out of an authority. There is also the matter of how far workers commute and where they commute from and to.

Figure T1 shows the average distance commuted to work on 27 March 2011. Across the local authority areas in the Gwent region, this ranged from 13.4km in Torfaen to 21.9km in Monmouthshire. In Blaenau Gwent, the average distance commuted to work was 15.3km. This compared with an average of 16.7km for Wales.

Figure T1

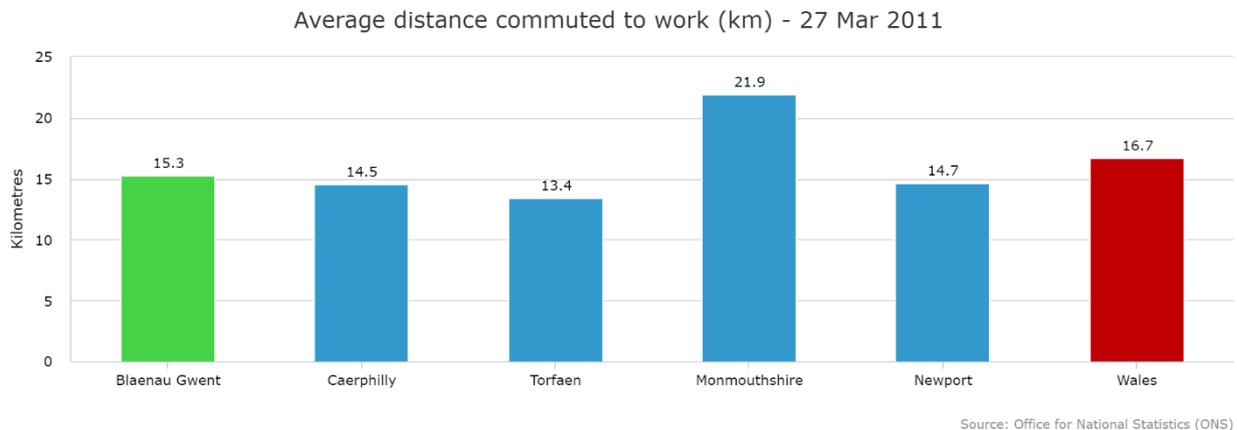


Figure T2 shows the average distance commuted to work over the period 29 April 2001 to 27 March 2011. It shows that the average distance has increased for both Blaenau Gwent and Wales with increases of 4.4km and 1.9km respectively. This represents the biggest relative increase in average commuting distance (by 40.1%) of 22 local authorities (12.6% for Wales) and the 5th highest in the whole of England and Wales.

Figure T2



	Blaenau Gwent	Wales
29 Apr 2001	10.9	14.8
27 Mar 2011	15.3	16.7

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

2. Story behind the data

Total Travel Distance

Figure T3 shows that between 2001 and 2011 the total distance travelled to work (Blaenau Gwent workers aged 16-74) increased from 2.5 million km to 3.7 million km, just over a 50% increase (the biggest relative increase in Wales).

Over the same period there was an increase of 1,808 commuters, from 22,809 to 24,617. This represents an increase of almost 8% commuters in Blaenau Gwent. For Wales, this was a 23% increase in overall travelling distance involving over 1.1 million commuters. There are obvious environmental issues associated with the additional commuting such as increased carbon footprint and air pollution.

Figure T3:

Travel to Work, Blaenau Gwent Residents (workers aged 16-74)	<u>2001</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>absolute change 2001-2011</u>	<u>% change 2001-2011</u>
Total distance (km) commuted to work	248,846	376,347	127,501	51.2
Number of residents commuting to work	22,809	24,617	1,808	7.9
Average distance commuted to work (km)	10.9	15.3	4.4	40.1

Source: <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

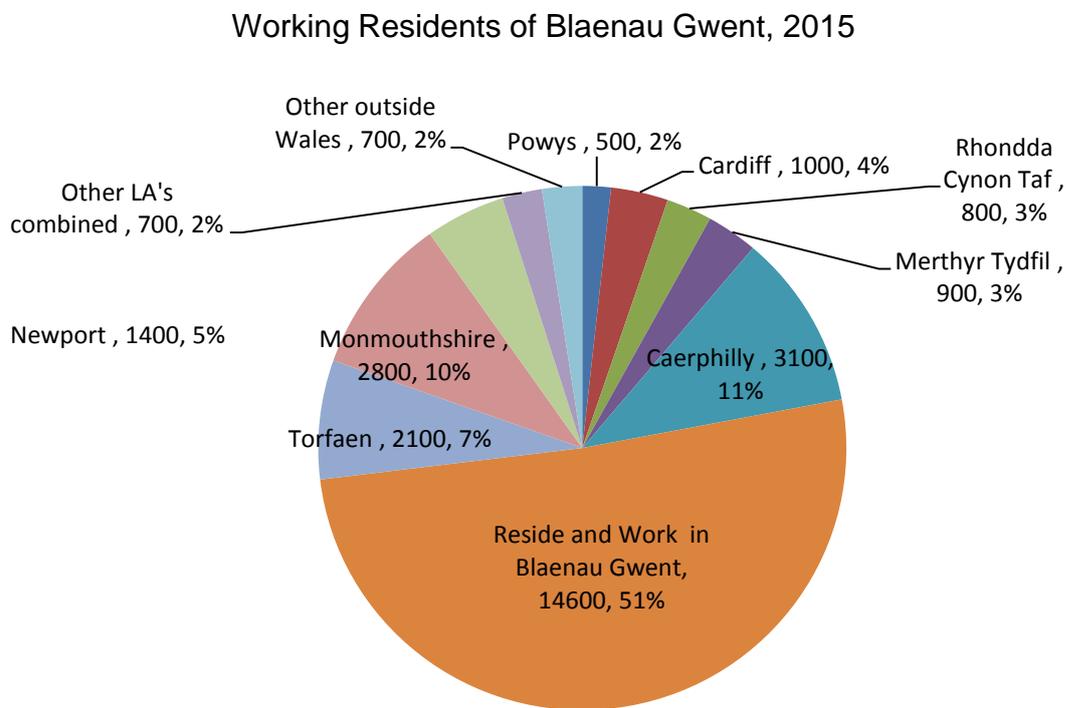
Working Residents

Out of the 28,600 working residents in Blaenau Gwent in 2015, 14,000 or 49% commuted out the authority. This is the third highest percentage in Wales and only slightly below the level of the Vale of Glamorgan (52% and Caerphilly (51%), which are both neighbouring local authorities to Cardiff. The average commute out of an authority in Wales was 32%.

Destination of Working Residents

Figure T4 shows further detail relating to the destination of working residents of Blaenau Gwent in 2015. Caerphilly, Monmouthshire and Torfaen are the main destination of Blaenau Gwent commuters travelling outside of the authority, accounting for 11%, 10% and 7% of commuters respectively. Cities as a destination account for a relatively low number of Blaenau Gwent commuters. Only 5% travel to Newport and 4% to Cardiff, while numbers for Swansea are too low to report due to sample error margins (and is grouped with 'Other LA's combined').

Figure T4:



Out of the 20,100 people working in Blaenau Gwent in 2015, 5,500 or 27% commute into the authority. This is the thirteenth highest percentage in Wales and equal to the average commute into a local authority for Wales.

Working Residents and Workers in Blaenau Gwent

Figure T5 shows the commuting pattern for Blaenau Gwent, between 2001 and 2015.

The number of working residents increased from 25,700 in 2011 to 28,600 in 2015, with year on year increases over this period. However, little relative change, a 2% increase, has been seen long term since 2001 when there were 28,000 working residents in Blaenau Gwent.

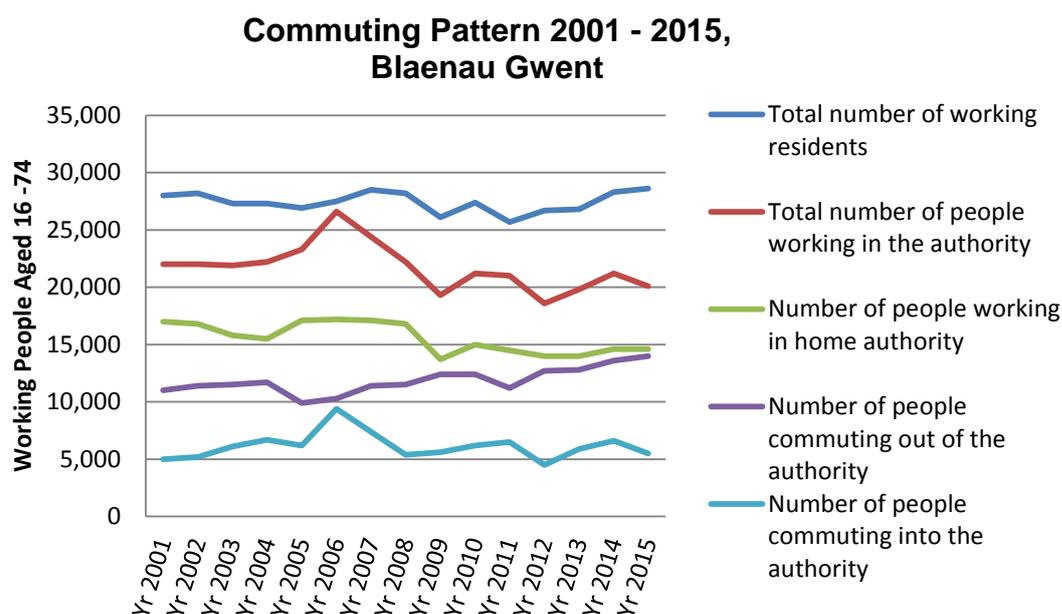
In contrast, a notable change in commuting patterns has been seen over this period but particularly since 2006. At this time the total number of people working in the authority experienced a sudden peak to over 26,000 people. Following this a downward trend continued to 2001 leaving just over 20,000 working in the authority.

Patterns show a downward trend in people commuting into the authority and an upward trend in people commuting out of the authority. This infers less employment availability in Blaenau resulting in particular, a 3,000 increase in commuters out of the authority since 2001. In 2015 this represents almost half of the resident workforce.

If current trends continue, the number of working residents will show a modest increase achieved by an increased number having to commute out of the authority. This will mean that more residents commute out of the authority than work in it.

A continuation of current trends also means a decline in the number of people commuting into the authority contributing to a further decline in the total number of people working in the authority.

Figure T5:



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

3. What we know from engagement



During the Blaenau Gwent We Want Engagement exercise, the partnership undertook and attended numerous engagement activities and events throughout the borough to gather people's views.

Residents also took part via the Blaenau Gwent We Want Facebook page and partnership websites. Links to an online questionnaire were also distributed to many residents known to the partnership, such as members of the Blaenau Gwent Citizen Panel.

Residents were encouraged via the methods above to answer a range of questions that sought to capture:

- Citizen values, aspirations and priorities;
- Citizen needs – insight into the needs they and their communities encounter within daily life and what the best solutions may be and
- Citizen assets –what people can and already contribute themselves such as self-care, citizen and community action and volunteering.

These questions were:

Q1. What do you think is special about BG?

Q2. What things are important to you to live well and enjoy life?

Q3. What would make BG a better place?

Q4. What can you do to help make BG a better place?

Approximately 1,000 residents were engaged with (across all groups) during the engagement phase providing more than 2,600 'statements' in response to the 4 questions mentioned. Statements were categorised within a main theme and also a topic area.

Relatively few respondents identified transport in terms of travelling to work as an issue. Where this was raised respondents stated

“Better links to work” and “Especially places of employment e.g. Rassau Ind Est and Garnlydan Inst Est” would make Blaenau Gwent a better place.

However, a notable number of respondents identified transport as a view to achieving the “Blaenau Gwent We Want” but without specifying the context. Therefore, it is not possible to accurately gauge residents option in this respect.

The National Survey for Wales estimates that in 2014 the usual mode of transport used by people in Wales to get to a job was mainly by car, 76% and an additional 5% for those with lifts from family and friends. More people walked, 16% compared to 10% who caught the bus or train. A further 4% of people used a taxi. (Note that numbers total more than 100% due to sampling error estimates).

More people travelled by car from rural areas, 82% compared to urban areas, 74%. Little variation was seen between gender.

4. What we know from existing research

The 2011 Census Analysis - Method of Travel to Work in England and Wales Report reports that Blaenau Gwent had the highest proportion (83.3%) in England and Wales of people travelling to work via 'car/van/taxi/motorcycle' (as opposed to public transport, cycling, walking, working from home). In Wales as a whole 75.2% of workers travelled by 'car/van/taxi/motorcycle'.

ONS 2011 Census Analysis - Method of Travel to Work in England and Wales Report (2013)

Research to date has mainly focussed on information sourced from the Local Government Data Unit and other public domain sources. Further research will be conducted depending on the priorities set by the Public Service Board on the 21st March 2017 to inform the response analysis element

5. What this tells us about Well-being in Blaenau Gwent

Even though the average distance commuted to work in Blaenau Gwent in 2011 was slightly less than the Wales average Blaenau Gwent commuters experienced the biggest percentage increase in commuting distance between 2001 and 2011 in Wales and the 5th highest of all local authorities in England and Wales.

In 2015 almost half of working residents in Blaenau Gwent commuted out of the authority, the third highest in Wales. The main destinations were Caerphilly, Monmouthshire and Torfaen with cities attracting a

relatively small percentage of the authority's commuters. In 2015 commuters into the authority accounted for less than a third of people working in Blaenau Gwent, which is equal to the average commute into an authority in Wales.

A significant fall in the number of people working in the authority has been seen since 2006 with less people commuting in and more people commuting out of the authority, which infers less availability of employment locally. The number of working residents of Blaenau Gwent in 2015 is similar to that of 2001, achieving this by an increased number of commuters outside the authority, generally having to travel further for work.

If current trends continue there will be a modest increase in working residents but with more than half of these having to commute out of the authority. There will also be further decreases in the number of people working in the authority with a reduction incoming commuters.