

Eluned Morgan AC/AM
Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

[REDACTED]
Great Western Railway
[REDACTED]@gwr.com

20 December 2017

Dear [REDACTED],

I have recently been appointed as the Welsh Government Minister with responsibility for the Welsh language. During my first few weeks in the post it has been brought to my attention a number of times that the first of a new fleet of Hitachi Class 800 trains purchased under the UK Department for Transport's £5.7bn Intercity Express Programme to serve the Great Western Railway service, will not include any bilingual signage, and the onboard technology will not make any announcements in Welsh. I am disappointed to learn of this and believe that a failure to provide such basic services in Welsh does not reflect the fact that the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 makes Welsh an official language in Wales. The Welsh Government is committed to promoting bilingualism and the use of the Welsh language, and wishes to ensure that its status as an official language is reflected across Wales.

The Welsh Government wishes to ensure that Welsh is seen and heard across Wales, including on transport infrastructures. Technological developments are constantly making it easier to provide information in more than one language. Providing services and information in more than one language is a norm in many European countries. As a large international transport operator I would be surprised if First Group have not gained experience elsewhere of providing bilingual services that they could learn from when providing services that cross the England / Wales border. Arriva Trains Wales has been successful in increasing its use of Welsh on train services and when providing information to customers on several platforms.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Eluned.Morgan@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Eluned.Morgan@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I am pleased to learn that you have been in discussions with the Welsh Language Commissioner recently, and I hope that this will lead to an improvement in the use your company makes of the Welsh language. I look forward to hearing from you on your plans to improve the use your provision of services in Welsh in future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Eluned Morgan', written in a cursive style.

Eluned Morgan AC/AM

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