

Wales reveals figures from festive crime crackdown

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More than 400 people were ejected from stations across Wales during the festive season, as part of a joint operation between British Transport Police and Transport for Wales to keep passengers safe.

Operation Genesis, which focused mainly on Fridays and Saturdays over the Christmas period, saw an increase in high-visibility patrols on trains and at stations, as well as covert policing to target issues including sexual harassment, anti-social behaviour, and alcohol-related disorder.

The aim of the operation, which ran between 1 December and 1 January, was to prevent crime, as well as provide reassurance and personal safety advice to passengers.

Reasons for being refused travel included being too intoxicated, refusing to wear a face covering, and antisocial behaviour.

In all, 44 arrests were made as part of the operation, with 10 of these for drunk and disorderly offences. Friday 17 – Saturday 18 December was the busiest weekend in terms of recorded crime, and Cardiff Central station saw the highest number of arrests during the operation with 22.

Passengers were also reminded of the need to wear a face covering when using public transport, unless they had an exemption. Over 5,000 interventions were made and nearly 200 people were directed to leave services for refusing to wear a face covering.

PC Tomos Van Praet, from British Transport Police, said: “The safety of passengers and rail staff is our main priority, which is why we teamed up with Transport for Wales to ensure everyone could enjoy the festive period safely.

“Rail is one of the safest ways to travel – but, we see how alcohol can really affect people’s judgement and after a few drinks people often take greater risks, which can lead to very serious consequences. To prevent any serious incidents, we asked people who were too intoxicated to sober up before coming back to travel.

“We will continue to work closely with our rail industry partners to keep passengers safe in the new year. As ever, you can text 61016 if you experience any issues or need our assistance on the railway.”

Leyton Powell, Transport for Wales’ safety and sustainability director, said: “We’re immensely grateful for the work of the British Transport Police in helping keep the Wales and Borders rail network safe, and the vast majority of rail passengers for their co-operation over the festive period.

“We’ll be continuing to work collaboratively with BTP in 2022 in order to ensure passengers continue to travel safely, particularly in light of the emergence of the Omicron variant of Covid-19. We’re working with BTP to remind passengers that wearing a face covering while on public transport remains the law in England and Wales, unless exempt, and a face covering must also be worn whilst in enclosed stations.”