



# North Pembroke Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

## News Briefing – November 2009

### **Buses – SWITCH School Transport Project**

Owen Roberts, the Project's School Transport Officer for Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire, met with the Forum's Executive Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> November to report on project developments to date. As noted in an earlier News Briefing, the project aims to improve the delivery of school transport services across the region. Standard Incident and Operational Report Forms have been produced, and work is underway to develop common systems and procedures for undertaking risk assessments, monitoring and reporting, as well as a common code of conduct and pupil contracts. A training course for school transport drivers has been developed and is to be rolled out in the new year, and work is underway with regard to pupil training at both secondary and primary school levels. A pilot project is being undertaken to investigate the use of CCTV systems on school buses where there is a risk of behavioural problems.

### **Community Transport**

Responding to questions about the future of community transport during the Assembly Plenary Session of 4<sup>th</sup> November, Deputy First Minister Ieuan Wyn Jones, stated that current provision is being looked at, and proposals are being discussed with the Community Transport Association. Later this year, he will be looking to see whether there are ways in which community transport services can be improved, because he understands the needs of sparsely populated rural areas in particular. He will be working with the Minister for Rural Affairs to see how they can develop these services. At the same Plenary Session, Minister for Health and Social Services Edwina Hart announced that a review of patient transport services is to be completed for consultation by January 2010. Discussions with the Welsh ambulance service are being finalised, and they are preparing service pilot plans to be considered as part of the consultation.

### **Cycling and Walking Legislative Competence Order**

On 19<sup>th</sup> November the Deputy First Minister confirmed that the Welsh Assembly Government would back the National Assembly Enterprise & Learning Committee's proposed Legislative Competence Order (LCO) that could lead to a duty on local authorities to ensure the creation and upkeep of a network of pedestrian and cycle routes across Wales. This is the first LCO to be proposed by an Assembly Committee and also the first to come directly from the National Assembly's petitions process. The petition was presented by sustainable transport charity Sustrans and supported by BT Cymru, Royal Mail, BMA Cymru, Age Concern Cymru, NUT Cymru, NAHT Cymru, Play Wales, WWF Cymru, Groundwork Wales, Keep Wales Tidy, Council for National Parks, Cambrian Mountain Society, and Friends of the Earth Cymru. Further information can be found on [www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-committees-third-els-home.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-committees-third-els-home.htm).

### **Safe Routes in the Community**

Pembrokeshire County Council has been consistently successful in winning funds for Safe Routes in Communities schemes and in 2010 the projects will be Fishguard and Neyland. The purpose of the scheme is to gain funding to improve routes around the community to make it safer and more inviting for residents to walk and cycle rather than use a car; this is especially important for encouraging children on the school run and for everyone who would prefer not to drive. There will be a series of meetings in the new year to explain the process and hopefully build a small local group to work with the council and the community. Goodwick was the subject of the 2009 bid and we are expecting good news in the spring.

## Trains – Update on Proposed Fishguard Service Improvements

The Fishguard rail improvements have been discussed on four occasions in the National Assembly: (1-2) Preseli Pembrokeshire AM Paul Davies raised the matter in Questions to the Deputy First Minister on 4<sup>th</sup> November, as well as in his Short Debate on train services in West Wales on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Sam Faulkner and Joanne Griffiths (the organisers of the Fishguard Trains Petition) and Forum Secretary Hatti Woakes attended the short debate; (3) The extra Fishguard train services, as well as the proposal for a new station at Goodwick, were also referred to in a joint meeting of the Enterprise and Learning Committee and the House of Commons Welsh Affairs Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> November; (4) The Petitions Committee considered the Fishguard Trains Petition on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

Key points about the proposed Fishguard–Carmarthen shuttle services, timetabled to provide greatly increased connectivity by connecting with the mainline Milford Haven–Manchester service:

- The moderately priced improvements would provide a 'quick win' at a time when funds are going to be limited. The proposed services have a benefit to cost ratio of 2.36, demonstrating good value for money. The additional train services could be put in place immediately, as they do not depend on redoubling the line between Cockett and Dyffryn West (Paul Davies AM).
- Recognising that enhanced services would require additional funding, SWWITCH has written to the Deputy First Minister urging an early commitment to the enhancements. (SWWITCH written submission to the Enterprise and Learning Committee).
- As part of the work that we have done, we have developed a robust business case to demonstrate that improved services to Fishguard would increase both commuting opportunities and the wider use of rail... It is certainly cost-beneficial to undertake the services by themselves (Richard Workman, SWWITCH Lead Chief Officer).

Full transcripts of the Plenary proceedings can be found in Records of Plenary Proceedings on [www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber.htm). Transcripts of Enterprise and Learning Committee proceedings, etc. can be found under Agenda, Papers and Transcripts on the Enterprise and Learning Committee website: [www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-third-els-home.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-third-els-home.htm).

The Assembly's Petitions Committee considered the Fishguard Trains Petition for the first time on 24<sup>th</sup> November and noted the Chair's correspondence with both the Enterprise and Learning Committee and the Deputy First Minister. The Committee noted that the petition had been discussed by the Enterprise and Learning Committee and resolved to consider the transcript of that meeting prior to the next meeting of the Petitions Committee.

In his response to Paul Davies's Short Debate, the Deputy First Minister congratulated Sam Faulkner and Joanne Griffiths on their petition. He assured them that they very much understand the priority that they attach to the development of these services, and repeated the assurance that he had given that he will be looking very carefully at the proposals that are coming to him through SWWITCH.

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The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum is an independent voluntary group that works for the provision of an effective integrated transport system in the North Pembrokeshire area, promotes the benefits of public transport and works towards the greater use of public transport systems.

The Forum is a member of Bus Users UK Cymru, the Environmental Network for Pembrokeshire and the Pembrokeshire Rail Travellers Association.

The Forum's work is supported by:

Individual Members (£5 p.a.), Family Members (£8 p.a.) & Corporate Members (£12 p.a.)  
(Corporate members include town and community councils, transport operators, and groups, organisations and associations with a transport interest)

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