



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – January 2017

Buses

New LINC Project. This 3 year project involves the creation of a new demand responsive transport service (Bwcabus) in Pembrokeshire that will commence on 20th February 2017. The new service will replace existing rural bus services operating in the mid-east of the County and will provide additional travel opportunities for people living in the rural areas. Carmarthenshire County Council are the lead authority for the project, and it has contracted Richards Bros to run the services.

Monday to Friday, 7am to 6:30pm and on Saturday from 9am to 5pm buses on the fixed routes will take passengers to connections with buses to Haverfordwest, Fishguard, St Davids, Cardigan and Narberth. As well as providing the existing fixed services, Bwcabus will also provide flexibility in between the fixed routes for customers. Phone 01239 801601 and book travel anywhere within the zone.

Wales Bus Summit. The Welsh Government, local authorities, bus service providers and users met in Wrexham on 23rd January to discuss how best to develop an improved, more sustainable bus industry for Wales. Remarks ahead of the meeting by Economy Secretary Ken Skates included these points:

'This Bus Summit is an opportunity for us to...define what we want our bus services to deliver...In my eyes, that means a top quality and sustainable service, one that can drive forward our economy and our communities to greater prosperity. It means a service which works for both rural and urban areas, young and old and promotes and enables independent living, all whilst ensuring value for money for the tax payer'.

Community Transport

Green Dragon Scooter Scheme Update. Caroline Wilson, Green Dragon Bus Manager, reports that after their successful funding bid to the Prince's Countryside Fund more scooters are coming into the scheme. Scooters are available at the moment, and those who are interested should get in touch sooner rather than later. Once the weather starts improving the scooters will be in high demand. Remember that the scheme pays for CBT (Compulsory Basic Training), all safety gear, insurance and the scooter. All that scooter users have to pay is a returnable deposit(conditions apply) and £35 a week. Email the office at admin@greendragonbus.co.uk (providing your email address and telephone number) or ring 01239 698 506 or 0845 686 0242 and talk to Cat or Caroline. Or 'Leave a message – we will get back to you'.

Memorial to the Goodwick Station Cat

A *Western Telegraph* report by Becky Hotchin (16th January) noted that 'The fabled feline lived at the station in the years following World War One. She slept in the signal box and was devoted to station guard Peter Williams, of Seagull Cottage, whom she visited when the signal box was closed...She was credited with keeping the station rat free, seconded to Mathry station, and was praised in the Great Western Railway magazine...Last year the (North Pembrokeshire Transport) Forum installed a replica memorial to the station cat and commissioned local sculptor, Darren Yeadon, to make a sculpture to go with the commemorative plaque. The cat sculpture, made of local Preseli bluestone, has been installed below the memorial plaque and was publicly unveiled at Fishguard and Goodwick Station last Saturday, January 14. Forum secretary, Hatti Woakes, paid tribute to all those who had worked so tirelessly to reinvigorate the formerly derelict station and increase train services to the area; those who are now maintaining the station and the new services and the late Ken Williams, who provided a tremendous amount of background information about the station cat'.

Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum Workshop

The workshop, set up to discuss potential solutions to improving access to outdoor recreational sites and experiencing recreational activity, was held at the Haverfordwest Leisure Centre on 9th January and attended by representatives from the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum. Group discussions were aimed at building on survey findings that had identified barriers to outdoor adventure recreation, sharing best practice and discussing issues, and specifically focusing on perception, logistical and physical barriers.

Points about transport that were raised included: Public transport (and lack of), Accessible transport – improved and increased, Experience ends when they get home, not when the activity ends, Have links on provider websites to transport services, Accessible information - what is available, and Accessibility for other impairments - not just wheelchair users.

Rail Service Consultations and Inquiries

National Transport Authority (Republic of Ireland) Rail Consultation. The possible closure of the Gorey-Rosslare Europort route is among other routes suggested for closure in *The Rail Report 2016* (National Transport Authority). The report also points out that the Gorey-Rosslare Europort line closure would impact on a large number of passengers; the national rail network also plays a key role in sustaining and growing tourism, a key sector in the Irish economy; and a significant reduction in the ability to travel by rail would be likely to impact negatively on how the country is viewed by international tourism markets and how strongly it can compete with other destinations for tourist travel.

In its consultation response the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum stated that the unique significance of the cross-border transport that is provided and facilitated via Rosslare Europort and Fishguard Harbour is that it provides a connection between Europe, the United Kingdom and Ireland that facilitates economic activity, employment and travel to work, tourism and other leisure activities, as well as social and familial interaction.

As a consequence, the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum takes the view that the suspension of the Gorey-Rosslare route should not be considered because of the negative and far reaching effects on cross-border transport that would result on both sides of the St George's Channel/the Irish Sea.

Wales and Borders Rail Franchise Inquiries

National Assembly Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee. A Stakeholder Event will be held on Thursday 9th March from 12:00-14:00, at the Gateway Education and Arts Centre, Chester St, Shrewsbury, SY1 1NA. If able to attend - RSVP: SeneddEIS@assembly.wales by 20th February 2017. If you would like to submit a short paper to assist the inquiry (no more than four sides of A4) please send your views to: SeneddEIS@assembly.wales by 20 February 2017.

An Online Survey provides key stakeholders with the opportunity to inform the Committee about their priorities for rail services in Wales. The Committee will use the contributions as it takes evidence and makes recommendations to feed into the Welsh Government's negotiations. The survey can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/rail-metro>.

The Inquiry Consultation notes that the Committee is looking at: (1) The effectiveness of the Welsh Government's approach to the development, procurement and delivery of the rail franchise and South Wales Metro, including key risks and how they can be mitigated; and (2) Priorities for the franchise specification and Metro delivery to ensure rail services meet the needs of current and future travellers throughout the franchise area, and deliver value for money for both passengers and the taxpayer. Visit: www.senedd.assembly.wales/mgConsultationDisplay.aspx?ID=250 for further information. Submissions should be sent to: SeneddEIS@assembly.wales by 23 February 2017.

Parliament Welsh Affairs Committee Wales & Borders Rail Franchise Inquiry. The Inquiry report was published on 20th January. The Committee has urged the Welsh and UK Governments to put an end to long-term underdevelopment in the Welsh rail network. This includes taking steps to secure modern rolling stock and replacing some of the oldest train carriages in the UK. The findings come ahead of the Welsh Government being given the power to decide the operators of the next Wales and Borders rail franchise, beginning in 2018. To download the report *visit* www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/welsh-affairs-committee/ and then, under What's on > **Current Work** > [Inquiries](#) Click on Wales and Borders rail franchise.

Walking – Tiffo's Walks

After reading about 'Wellies not Included' in our previous New Briefing, Mike Williams sent a link to Tiffo's Walks (<http://tiffo.eu/>) - 'Dog Walks in Pembrokeshire and Elsewhere', with or without a dog. The home page reveals that Tiffo is a Lagotto Romagnolo who lives in Pembrokeshire with his humans Lena and Mike. Together they have found a lot of walks and want to share them with others on this website. This is going to be a long project. There are a lot of walks to describe. Please use the contact form if you try a walk and find we have made mistakes. Other comments are very welcome, and if you have other walks to suggest, please let us know.

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'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)

For further information, contact the Secretary, 2 Hill Terrace, Fishguard SA65 9LU
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