



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – February 2011

NPTF 11th Annual General Meeting

Llwyngwair Manor Newport, Wednesday 16th March 2011, 7.00pm for 7.30pm.

The meeting is open to the public - Refreshments available on arrival.

Keynote presentation by Traveline General Manager Graham Walter
"Traveline Cymru – Helping Partners to Deliver Public Transport Information".

Buses

Pembrokeshire Coastal Buses. A news release from Pembrokeshire Greenways states that budding bus users thinking of boarding one of Pembrokeshire's coastal buses can now 'try before they buy'. The County's five coastal buses have been filmed on their routes throughout the summer. Now the films can be accessed online so that potential passengers can view the County's spectacular scenery from the comfort of an armchair.

Pembrokeshire's coastal bus services have been designed and introduced by Pembrokeshire County Council, in conjunction with the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority, as part of the Pembrokeshire Greenways Project. The project aims to encourage people to leave their cars at home and access the countryside and coastal areas of the County by public transport.

Since they were introduced in 2000, the Poppit Rocket, Strumble Shuttle, Puffin Shuttle, Coastal Cruise and Celtic Coaster now carry over 70,000 passengers a year and, by operating on vegetable oil, are even more environmentally friendly.

To try before you buy, visit:

http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=83,1629,839,1038&parent_directory_id=646. If you do not have access to a computer you can get a DVD by writing to Pembrokeshire Greenways, Transport and Environment, County Hall, Haverfordwest SA61 1TP. Timetable details are available from any local Tourist Information Centre or at www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/transport (click on timetables) or phone Pembrokeshire County Council's transport unit on 01437 775227.

Community Transport

Bws y Bobol! A *County Echo* report has drawn attention to the need for support for the Bws y Bobol community bus service which has seen user numbers drop by 10% in the last year. Mary Smith from the Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations (PACTO) notes that the minibus, operated by Pembrokeshire Voluntary Transport (PVT), is used on a regular basis by the elderly groups in the district, but states that other community groups are not so active. She makes the point that any community group or not-for-profit organisation can use the minibus on a self-drive basis. All drivers need to be trained to a nationally accepted standard, and PACTO can help with this. Bookings and paperwork for the scheme are handled by the local co-ordinator Rebecca Thornton, but organisers are urging locals to get involved as volunteers to help out with the day-to-day running of the service. For more information or to offer help, contact Mary Smith on 01239 820997, Rebecca Thornton on 07531 310056, or Adrian Davies (PVT co-ordinator) on 01646 672144. To book Bws y Bobol call 07531 310056.

Fishguard Town Rider Service. A meeting to review the Fishguard dial-a-ride service will be held on Tuesday, 8th March, at the Railwaymen's Club, Brodog Terrace, Fishguard from 10.30 to 11.30. This service for elderly and disabled people has been running in Fishguard for the last 4 ½ years. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the organisers to tell about the take-up of the service, find out what people think about it and to discuss possible future developments. Please feel free to pass information about this meeting to anyone who might find the meeting of interest and kindly let the organisers know if you are able to attend by ringing 0800 783 1584. Town Rider passengers can book the Town Rider for a lift to and from the meeting - just call the above-mentioned telephone number to make your booking.

Cycling

The County Echo has reported that a new Bike Mobility scheme is up and running at Withybush Showground in the Brithdir Building. A range of 14 adapted adult and children's bikes of all shapes and sizes allow disabled people to enjoy cycling regardless of age or ability. There are also around 20 standard bicycles available for others to enjoy the benefits of this facility. Sessions are being held every Wednesday between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm. To help cover the cost of maintaining the bikes, a donation per session of £3 per adult and £2 per child (up to 16 years) is requested. To book a session contact Rhian Higgins on 01437 776313. More information is available on the Access Group's website: www.pembrokeshire-access.org.uk.

Ferries and Fishguard Harbour Developments

Stena Line Appointment. *The County Echo* also reports that Captain Ian Davies, former port and route manager, has been appointed route director for Stena Line with responsibilities for the company's services between Fishguard and Rosslare. Captain Davies notes that 'the port of Fishguard plays an important role in the economy of north Pembrokeshire as a gateway to and from Ireland' - adding that 'despite the economic downturn, Stena Line have invested over £1million on the route in the last 12 months. In conjunction with London based property company Conygar PLC, Stena Line is supporting the proposed marina and port development. Besides the core ferry business, we are looking to diversify, and this year, through 'Cruise Wales', we have been able to attract five cruise ship calls in July and August. This additional trade not only benefits the port but the whole of Pembrokeshire, bringing much needed additional tourists and their subsequent spend to the area'.

Harbour Development. Planning permission for a 180-space lorry park (with stores, showers and changing facilities) on a site to the east of Fishguard, has now been put forward to Pembrokeshire County Council for approval. The park will aim to alleviate any access and parking problems around the future marina and has been welcomed by local councillors. The plans for the marina project will incorporate hotel and leisure facilities as well as shops and housing with an extension of the harbour leading to greater berthing capabilities for commercial and industrial shipping.

The multi-million pound plan has been an ongoing project between ferry firm Stena Line and investment and development group Conygar. Conygar 'hopes and expects to be in a position to start development' on the complete project later in the year. A spokesman for the company added that the development was 'all systems go'.

Fishguard Trains Petition

The County Echo has also reported that the petition (organised by Sam Faulkner and Joanne Griffiths that backs the introduction of further trains to Fishguard and is currently under examination by the Welsh Assembly's Petitions Committee) has now attracted over 1,400 signatures. Sam has been advised by the Committee that the results of a refreshed business case for the extra trains was due in autumn last year and is now expected by the end of February. In the *County Echo* report Sam said 'We are grateful for all the help and support we've been offered by the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum, the Welsh Assembly Government and all the supporting businesses and establishments in the Fishguard area'. For more information on the progress of the petition, contact fishguard.railway@live.co.uk or visit the website petition.abergwaun@live.co.uk.

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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)

For further information, contact the Secretary, 2 Hill Terrace, Fishguard SA65 9LU
Tel: (01348) 874217. E-mail: info@nptf.co.uk. Website: www.nptf.co.uk.