



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – March 2011

STOP PRESS: ADDITIONAL TRAINS FOR FISHGUARD

WAG Deputy First Minister Ieuan Wyn Jones has announced that funding is to be provided for five additional trains (to run Monday-Saturdays) between Fishguard and Carmarthen.

Writing to the Assembly's Petitions Committee, the Deputy First Minister made the following key announcements:

- Arriva Trains Wales has produced a draft timetable which is workable. However WAG is seeking to develop alternative options with ATW, on which they will then consult the local community and user groups. This consultation will begin in April and last for two months.
- WAG will undertake a review of the services after the third year of the scheme to identify demand and passenger numbers, the nature of trips taken, and at that time will seek further community and user views.

Buses

Pembrokeshire County Council is beginning to install electronic display screens at bus stops, with two already 'under test' in Fishguard Square. These are part of a real time information system that the Council hopes will start working in early April. Initially they will display scheduled time before 'getting smart' and 'counting down' the vehicles to the stops. By the end of April they should be working properly. If they are successful the Council will be rolling out a few more around the County.

Community Transport

Fishguard Town Rider Service. A well attended meeting reviewed the Fishguard dial-a-ride service on 8th March at the Railwaymen's Club. Mary Smith gave an update on all the Town Rider services during the past year. There is a new vehicle for the Fishguard/Haverfordwest service and she would like to know what users think about it. WAG funding has been assured until March 2012, and PACTO will campaign for further continuation. When asked for their comments about the service there was agreement that the service is absolutely first class: punctual, with immaculate vehicles and top-rate, pleasant drivers. There was also universal praise for the helpful, friendly booking clerks.

Cycling

BikeMobility Launch. This exciting new project, described in last month's News Briefing, was officially launched at Withybush Showground, Haverfordwest on 23rd March. Guests on the day took the opportunity to try out the specialised and standard bikes in indoor and outdoor venues. Led by Pembrokeshire Greenways on behalf of the Council, the initiative forms part of the Haverfordwest Sustainable Travel Centre Project funded by the Welsh Assembly Government with support from Health Challenge Pembrokeshire, the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and the Countryside Council for Wales. For further information or to book a place on one of their taster sessions every Wednesday contact Rhian Higgins, Greenways Officer, on 01437 764551, or email Greenways@pembrokeshire.gov.uk. Rhian has asked us to correct the website given in last month's News Briefing to read www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/bikemobility.

Safe Routes in Communities

Pembrokeshire County Council has been notified by the Welsh Assembly Government that they were very happy with the Council's Safe Routes bids for Fishguard and Neyland, and the Council has been allocated the full amount requested for the schemes: £454k for Fishguard and £352 for Neyland, in total £806k for both schemes. Last year the Goodwick scheme received £465k, which means that Fishguard and Goodwick together will have benefited from an investment of £919k. Transportation Plans Officer Sue Lewis told the Forum that this is good news and was really unexpected in the current financial climate. She also expressed her sincere thanks for the cooperation of all those involved and the many expressions of support for the proposals. She will now issue the Community Travel Plan to Local Members and the Town Council as terms of reference to monitor the work. St Davids and Narberth will now begin to develop Safe Routes plans.

Public Transport Users' Committee for Wales (PTUC)

PTUC is a newly formed advisory committee responsible for providing advice to Welsh Ministers about strategic issues relating to public transport services in Wales; mainly to focus on solutions to:

- increase the appeal of public transport;
- promote social inclusion through public transport services;
- improve accessibility, safety and mobility of public transport services;
- encourage sustainable travel and support integrated transport and
- encourage a shift from using the private car to using public transport.

The Committee will meet 4 times a year, on a rotational basis in the four transport regions of Wales. A report on the Committee's inaugural meeting in Swansea on 24th March will be provided in the next News Briefing.

North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum - Annual General Meeting

The 11th Annual General Meeting of the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum was held on Tuesday, 16th March at Llwyngwair Manor in Newport.

The Forum's Annual report noted that, on the whole, the quality and range of bus and community transport services, as well as of the network of cycling and walking paths and routes, had been maintained to a commendable standard during the past year. The Forum was therefore deeply disappointed that it was unable to highlight any improvements to Fishguard's inadequate rail services.

The highlight of the meeting was a presentation by Graham Walter, General Manager of Traveline Cymru. Through its call centre, on its website, and through its text and mobile phone services, Traveline provides up to date, joined up, unbiased public transport information free of charge. Working with local authorities, regional consortia and other public funded bodies to promote sustainable travel options, Traveline Cymru helps people make informed travel choices. Further information is available by telephone on 0871 200 22 33 or online at www.traveline-cymru.info/ and www.traveline-cymru.info/bus-times-on-your-mobile-phone/.

Steve Hale, Cllr Judi Hartland, Peter Harwood, Sophie Hurst, Cllr Byron James, Cllr Michael James, Caroline Wilson, and Hatti Woakes were elected to serve on the Forum's Executive Committee for the forthcoming year. Special thanks for their contribution to the work of the Forum were extended to Cllr Rod Bowen and Michael Field who are standing down from the Committee.

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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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