



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – December 2012

Bus and Community Transport Services

During the month passengers inaugurated the St Davids dial-a-ride service on 14th December, and senior residents of St Dogmals arrived at the Ferry Inn for their Christmas lunch on Preseli Rural Transport Association's Green Dragon bus. Richards Bros has revised its bus schedules in order to provide an additional evening connection for passengers coming in on the 18.46 train service. From 7th January the Richards 413 bus will provide a connection around 19.00.

National Assembly for Wales: Enterprise & Business Committee - Integrated Transport Inquiry

To date the Committee has taken evidence from (1) Bus Users UK Cymru, Passenger Focus and SUSTRANS Cymru on 21st November; (2) the Wales Transport Research Centre and the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers on 29th November; and (3) the Community Transport Association Wales, Accessible Caring Transport, the Preseli Rural Transport Association, the Confederation of Passenger Transport, Lloyds Coaches and First Group on 5th December.

Key issues/topics that were raised and discussed during these meetings included:

- Questions about the Assembly's ability to deliver an integrated transport system under the current devolution settlement;
- The lack of common standards for the provision of transport information and problems with real-time information;
- The varied quality of buses and trains and the inconsistent provision of accessible vehicles;
- Fares, purchase of tickets and barriers to integrated, multi modal ticketing, and the use of concessionary fares on community transport;
- Relations between transport operators and between operators and government and the regional consortia;
- Interchanges between the various transport modes, timetable co-ordination and the timing of connections in rural and urban areas;
- The provision of user-friendly facilities at transport hubs, including toilet facilities, staffing levels and opening hours;
- Funding and tendering for bus services, commercial versus subsidised services, voluntary versus statutory quality bus partnerships, and franchising;
- The lack of clarity about the roles of bus and community transport services;
- Provision of cross-border transport services and provision of short and long-distance transport services;
- The effects of competition legislation/rules;
- Accommodation of cycles on buses and trains;
- Strategies to facilitate modal change from cars to public transport, cycling, walking;
- Regional transport consortia versus passenger transport executives or joint transport authorities;
- Transport policy in relation to health, regeneration, community development, etc.

At its next evidence session (10th January), the committee will consider submissions about Network Rail from Mark Langman (Wales Route Managing Director) and about Passenger Transport Executives/Integrated Transport Authorities from Jonathan Bray (Director of *pteg*).

See www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=4436 for full inquiry details, history and meetings.

See www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=1307 for Enterprise and Business Committee transcripts.

North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum: Train Service Evaluation Project

From the beginning of June 2012 the Forum has been carrying out an evaluation project - distributing a questionnaire designed to gather information about: (1) where passengers live, (2) the reasons they are taking the train, (3) their frequency of travel, (4) their experiences when connecting to other train services, (5) their views about the train services and their journeys, (6) their destinations, and (7) their 'passenger profiles'. Copies of the responses have been sent to the Welsh Government Rail Unit, Arriva Trains Wales, and to other authorities, bodies, groups, elected representatives and individuals with an interest in this matter.

Summary of the Initial Analysis of Responses, June - December 2012

During the period 200 responses were received from local residents. Although a great many questionnaires were given to visitors, only 74 responses were returned. As the number of visitor responses is insufficient to provide meaningful information about the views of this group, an analysis of these responses is not included in this report.

The following information emerged from an examination of the responses provided by local residents:

- Nearly three quarters (73%) of journeys were made by passengers who live in Fishguard and Goodwick. Just over a fifth (22%) were made by St Nicholas, Dinas Cross, Newport, Letterston and Mathry residents. The remaining 5% were made by residents of smaller communities even further away from Fishguard and Goodwick.
- Passengers travelled for a wide variety of reasons:
 - To visit family and friends (22%)
 - For work/business (18%)
 - To go shopping (14%)
 - For social, leisure and/or recreational reasons (11%)
 - To go on holiday (9%)
 - For day trips/short breaks (7%)
 - For medical appointments/visits (5%)
 - To attend meetings/conferences (4%)
 - For education (3%)
 - For convenience (3%)
 - For environmental reasons (3%)
 - Because of physical difficulties (2%).
- More than half (54%) of passengers were over 60 years old, 41% were between 20 - 60 years, and 5% were under 20 years. More than half (53%) were employed, and 45% were retired. Only 17 passengers indicated that they were 'in education'.
- Sixty-four percent of respondents reported that their journeys involved connecting to other trains, and most (98 or 77%) had positive experiences.
- Passengers made more positive (274) than negative (172) comments about train services and their journeys.
 - The top four positive comments were for: 'overall satisfaction with the journey' (69), 'staff attitudes and helpfulness' (48), 'punctuality and reliability' (35), and 'overall satisfaction with stations' (20).
 - The top four negative comments were for: 'insufficient room for all passengers to sit/stand' (34), 'poor frequency/timetable of trains on the route' (22), 'poor quality of rolling stock' (22), and 'poor connections with public transport' (20).
- Of the 520 destinations currently made by passengers, Cardiff (115), Swansea (75), Carmarthen (74) and London (70) were at the top of the list.

South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH): Proposed Rail Priorities

Proposed short, medium and long term rail priorities for the region were approved at a meeting of the SWWITCH Joint Committee on 7th December.

The Forum welcomes SWWITCH's support for Fishguard rail services with the inclusion in the short term group the priority to Preserve and enhance the Fishguard rail service: An improved service began in autumn 2011 followed by the re-opening of Fishguard & Goodwick Station in spring 2012. SWWITCH supports the preservation of service levels in order to maintain the behavioural change and modal shift which have occurred as a result of the improved connectivity'.

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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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