



# North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

## News Briefing – November 2010

### Buses

Bus Users UK (BUUK) Cymru. At the last BUUK Cymru quarterly meeting there were no complaints against Pembrokeshire County Council, Richards Brothers or Silcox. Because many people travel to the north from Pembrokeshire, BUUK is now looking at bus services between Cardigan and Aberystwyth. Although timetable information is better, throughout the year changes to the timetables continue to be made without informing passengers. Connections at Synod Inn also continue to be a problem, with different numbered buses coming out of northern locations.

Bus Surgeries. BUUK Cymru and TrawsCambria held a combined BUUK surgery and TrawsCambria consultation in Haverfordwest on 19<sup>th</sup> November. Between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm members of the public had an opportunity to talk about their bus services to representatives from Pembrokeshire County Council, First Cymru, Richards Brothers, Silcox Coaches and BUUK, as well as with the TrawsCambria Network Manager.

Members of the Forum's Executive Committee attended the surgery and raised the following issues:

- The need to promote the importance of existing bus routes because of possible funding cuts in future;
- Incorrect information on the electronic bus arrivals display at the Haverfordwest bus station: the changed half-term services have not been removed and the regular services restored; and
- Problems with the bus/rail connections at Haverfordwest Station with regard to the Arriva Trains 09.23 departure and the 18.36 arrival.

The Forum was subsequently informed by Pembrokeshire County Council's Public Transport Scheduling Officer that the electronic data at the Haverfordwest bus station is from Traveline (based on the actual registrations) and that the matter was being looked into.

Lack of Information about Bus Stops – Use of Public Transport by Young People. The Forum's Executive Committee has often discussed the use of public transport by high school pupils and has recently identified possible disincentives for those who live in rural areas:

- Young people may be unfamiliar how the 'hail and ride' system operated by bus services works;
- They may be unsure about where buses stop if there are no bus shelters or bus stop road markings.

The Committee believes that young people would be more confident about travelling on buses if they have been educated about the system and then encouraged to 'give it a go'.

### Community Transport

Preseli Green Dragon Services. Co-ordinator Caroline Wilson reports that:

- The Friday Newport dial-a-ride (operating since April) has been discontinued due to lack of interest.
- As a result of passenger demand and with funding from the Big Lottery grant, the new Gwaun Valley dial-a-ride service will continue to operate during the winter. The service leaves Fishguard at 10.00 and runs along the Gwaun Valley to Newport. On request it will also offer transport to/from Gellifawr, Brinberian,

Bwlchgwynt and New Inn. The bus leaves Newport on the return journey at 11.30. It is very important to note that, as this is a dial-a ride service, people must ring 0845 686 0242 to book their seat on the minibus.

- Patronage is growing on the Sunday evening service to Theatr Mwldan.

Bwcabus services. On 18<sup>th</sup> November the Forum's Executive Committee met with Steve Pilliner, Carmarthenshire County Council's Transport Manager, and had a most informative presentation and discussion about Bwcabus services. Bwcabus is providing improved transport in areas within Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion by integrating a demand-responsive 'feeder' bus service with the timetabled-fixed 460-bus route (a direct hourly service between Cardigan and Carmarthen). There is also a new timetable to provide connections with train services and other services in Carmarthen and Cardigan. For more information about Bwcabus: telephone 01239 801601 or view: [www.traveline-cymru.info/bwcabus/](http://www.traveline-cymru.info/bwcabus/).

## **Trains**

Overcrowding. Regrettably, the Forum has seen a considerable increase in the number of complaints from passengers about serious overcrowding on the trains that leave Swansea for west Wales at 17.05; particularly on two-carriage trains. This has had an extremely distressing impact on regular commuters from North Pembrokeshire, as well as on holiday makers and accommodation providers who have made arrangements to collect their guests at the Haverfordwest railway station.

Fishguard Trains Petition. In the September News Briefing, it was noted that the Assembly Petitions Committee considered the petition once more on 28<sup>th</sup> September. Following its last consideration of the petition in June the Committee wrote to the Deputy First Minister asking when the Rail Forward Programme would next be reviewed.

The Deputy First Minister responded that the business case for additional trains to Fishguard was being refreshed and he expected to receive the findings in the autumn. His first priority was to continue delivering projects within the Rail Forward Programme contained in the National Transport Plan. New proposals that can demonstrate strong policy outcomes, as well as good value for money, should be considered for inclusion in future iterations of the Plan. While he has no plans to fundamentally review the Plan, he is open to including new projects subject to the business case and affordability and he looks forward to receiving the refreshed business case for additional Fishguard services.

The Committee then agreed to write to the Deputy First Minister, asking to be informed about the refreshed business case once it has been received.

On 26<sup>th</sup> November the Forum Secretary received a message from Team Support for the National Assembly's Petitions Committee stating that they have been told to expect a response from the Deputy First Minister shortly and hope to consider the petition at the Committee's next meeting in January.

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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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