



# North Pembrokehire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

## News Briefing – August 2009

### Buses

New 344 Timetable. Simon Rees, Public Transport Scheduling Officer, has provided information about a forthcoming change in the timetable for this service. The service was re-tendered earlier in the year and was one of the few services in the County that were rationalised in that exercise - in this instance due to low patronage on two of the four journeys on the timetable. Passenger feedback indicated that the reduced timetable gave passengers less choice on the length of visit they could make to Haverfordwest. In response to the feedback, the return journey has been re-timed by one hour to allow a longer visit, whilst still maintaining the ability for the vehicle to operate a school transport route either side of the service route. The new timetable will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

### Community Transport

Bws y Bobol. Community Transport Link Worker Mary Smith reports that the pilot Bws y Bobol service to Fishguard's Friday Friendship Circle is going very well. Mary attended the Fishguard Show promoting the Minibus Match scheme. Rebecca Thornton, from the Bws y Bobol committee, reports that they are linking up well with Minibus Match, and others are making use of the minibus when it is free.

Community Transport Summer Buses. Caroline Wilson (Preseli Green Dragon Co-ordinator) and Rhian Higgins (of Pembrokehire Greenways) say that it's not too late to take a trip on the two summer services: the Preseli Hills Bus between Crymych, Rosebush and Bwlch Gwynt on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and the Bloomfield Bus Sunday service to Lawrenny, Landshipping and the eastern Cleddau. Both services will run until the end of September.

Pembrokehire Greenways. Pembrokehire Greenways teamed up with Pembrokehire Community Transport at the County Show to promote services funded through the Rural Development Plan. Greenways also launched its new Puffin character, and its 'name the Puffin' competition drew lots of people to the stand. The two joint winners will receive their prizes at the official naming launch on 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

CTA-Wales Secondment. Debbie Johnson, Community Transport Development Officer with PACTO (Pembrokehire Association of Community Transport Organisations), has been seconded to Community Transport Association Wales as Strategic Developments Officer. The secondment is for two days per week and will last until the end of March 2010.

### Ferries

Fishguard Harbour. In a recent news release Stena Line confirmed that it is planning a major redevelopment in Fishguard to bring in bigger and more modern ferries. Route Director Vic Godwin said: "Options being considered include the upgrade of the single tier, single width ramp to a double tier ramp, or the construction of another berth and ramp at another location in the harbour coinciding with reclamation that would create additional standage. The Port of Fishguard is also earmarked for a marina development which is supported by the Crown Estate, the Welsh Assembly and Pembrokehire County Council as part of their plans for economic regeneration in the region." A feasibility study has satisfied Stena that the marina plans will not interfere with plans to expand the port and that the two developments will complement each other.

HavenLink. Rhian Higgins has informed the Forum that the service has been doing very well in its second year of operation. Patronage has been excellent, with full capacity on 8 out of 10 journeys.

## Trains

Faber Maunsell Report - West of Swansea Rail Network. The final report of this study, commissioned by the South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH), can be consulted on the consortium's website: [www.swwitch.net](http://www.swwitch.net) under SWWITCH Projects > SWWITCH Studies.

The document reports that during the study process a number of options were appraised, and the evidence suggests that the introduction of the enhanced Fishguard service to/from Carmarthen would produce a net positive impact on the economic case and therefore should be included in any preferred option package. This supported the conclusions of the Jacobs Fishguard Rail Study.

The Jacobs study identified a preferred option of 5 trains per day, operated by a class 153, and a new station at Goodwick. A Benefit:Cost Ratio (BCR) of 2.36 was reported by Jacobs for this option, thus demonstrating good value for money for any WAG investment in the scheme. The enhancements have been included in Faber Maunsell's preferred option.

South West Wales Community Rail Partnership. Community Rail Officer Alex Owen organised a meeting in Herbranston on 11<sup>th</sup> August with Ben Davies (Arriva Trains Wales' Stakeholder Liaison Manager) and representatives from the Pembrokeshire Rail Travellers Association and the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum. A wide range of topics were discussed, including the proposal for enhanced Fishguard services, bustitution during engineering works, problems with booking train tickets, limited Sunday services, rolling stock, and bus-rail connections.

Mike Richardson (member of the SWWITCH Officer Working Group) and Alex Owen will be presenting an update on the Partnership at the SWWITCH Joint Committee meeting in Parc y Scarlets, Llanelli, at 1300hrs on 4<sup>th</sup> September. Members of the public may attend as observers.

The SWWITCH website notes that the Partnership Objectives are: To assist in the promotion and development of the rail network in South West Wales between Swansea, Milford Haven, Pembroke Dock and Fishguard Harbour for the benefit of local residents, businesses and visitors through the development of local community based partnership initiatives. And concludes with "Watch this space for news and details of our new look and new website!"

## SWWITCH

Regional Transport Plan. Following the Joint Committee's approval of the Regional Transport Plan (RTP) at 5th June, all four constituent Councils have now adopted the Plan which must be submitted to the Assembly by the end of September 2009. The Plan will be available on the SWWITCH and Local Authority websites in October. The Assembly Government will appraise the four Consortium RTPs during the autumn, with a view to formally approving them by early in 2010. Delivery of the RTP programme should begin from April 2010.

Fourth Annual SWWITCH Conference. The Conference will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> September at the Dylan Thomas Centre in Swansea and will include presentations on Travel Plans, and the National and Regional Transport Plans, as well as workshops on 'Rail Points West', 'Marketing Carshare Schemes' and 'Behaviour Change'. The winners of the SWWITCH Travel Plan Awards will also be announced.

National Transport Plan. The September SWWITCH Newsletter urges organisations that have not yet commented on the plan to please do so, as it will shape investment in Wales for years to come. It is up to stakeholders to try and influence the scale and direction of investment. Please send comments to WAG by Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

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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, the Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services 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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