



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – August 2012

Buses

Forthcoming service cuts. Pembrokeshire County Council is facing a cut of 27% in its Local Transport Services Grant (LTSG). Up until the present, this grant from the Welsh Government has provided the funding for the subsidy of over 80% of the county's bus services; including the 412 (Cardigan-Fishguard-Haverfordwest), the 411 (Fishguard-St Davids-Haverfordwest), the 404 (Strumble Shuttle) and the 405 (Poppit Rocket) services. With deep regret on the part of the local authority, this significant reduction in funding has necessitated the withdrawal of subsidy from some bus services, in particular Sunday services with a history of low patronage.

The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum shares the disappointment expressed by many in the community about the withdrawal of these services. Evidence and concern about the anticipated effects of these service cutbacks can be directed to:

- Paul Davies AM for Preseli Pembrokeshire (Paul.Davies@wales.gov.uk)
- Mid and West Wales Assembly Members: Rebecca Evans AM (Rebecca.Evans@wales.gov.uk), William Powell AM (William.Powell@wales.gov.uk), Simon Thomas AM (Simon.Thomas@wales.gov.uk), and Joyce Watson AM (Joyce.Watson@wales.gov.uk)
- Carl Sargeant AM, Minister for Local Government and Communities (Carl.Sargeant@wales.gov.uk)

Copies of this correspondence may be copied to Cllr Rob Lewis, Deputy Leader Pembrokeshire County Council and Cabinet Member for Transport (cllr.rob.lewis@pembrokeshire.gov.uk).

Bus Surgeries. Bus users had an opportunity to meet and discuss bus services with local transport operators, County Council transport officers and representatives from Bus Users UK-Cymru (Margaret Everson, Barclay Davies and Judi Hartland) at BUUK surgeries that were held this month in Fishguard (16th August) and Haverfordwest (17th August).

BUUK in Wales to Employ 3 Bus Compliance Monitors

- Full-time, with a salary in the range £20,100 to £25,200 p.a., plus expenses & 25 days' annual leave, plus public holidays.
- To monitor performance of the bus operators in Wales.
- Monitor B to cover Bridgend, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Swansea and parts of south Powys as necessary.
- Further information & the recruitment pack can be obtained from Bus Users UK Cymru, P.O. Box 1045, Cardiff CF11 1JE or by telephone on 029 2022 1370 during normal office hours. The recruitment pack can also be downloaded from www.bususers.org.
- Closing date for applications is Friday 14th September 2012.

-- The posts are to be funded by the Welsh Government --

Community Transport

New Minibus for Fishguard. Ruby, Pembrokeshire Voluntary Transport's new wheelchair-accessible minibus is now in service. The minibus will be available for use by community groups and non-profit organisations in the Fishguard area. Groups would normally provide their own driver, who should be MiDAS trained, but volunteer drivers are willing to help if needed. Membership fee: £10/group/year. Group use of minibus: Minimum charge £20 (includes the first 20 miles); 90p per mile thereafter. Mileage rate includes fuel, insurance and a contribution towards vehicle maintenance costs. For more information call Mary Smith on 01239 821095. Email mary.smith@pembrokeshiretransport.com or Barrie & Eleri Duggan on 01348 891295.

Trains

Arriva Trains Wales - Club 55 is Back. The promotion will run from 2nd September 2012 to 24th March 2013, with a Christmas break between 18th December 2012 and 4th January 2013. The last day for return travel before Christmas is the 17th December 2012. Three products are available, namely:

- £17.00 – Only available through Arriva's website, valid for travel Monday to Friday and at weekends
- £19.00 – Not valid for travel on any Friday
- £24.00 – Valid on any day if travel out or back includes a Friday

Senior and Disabled Railcard discounts apply at £1.00. All tickets are valid for travel on the outward date on the ticket and return within 8 days. Log onto www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk for full details, plus terms and conditions for excluded dates.

Clunderwen Station. CIS screens have been installed on both platforms, and National Station Improvement Programme funding is to provide improvements to:

- Widen the footway and provide parking on the access road leading to the southern side of the Station (works completed)
- Extend the footway from the highway junction down to the Station on the northern side (awaiting permission from Network Rail to proceed)
- Provide cycle racks at the Station (awaiting permission from Network Rail to proceed)
- Remove the single step up into the shelters (awaiting permission from Network Rail to proceed)

Fishguard Services. The Forum's evaluation of North Pembrokeshire train services is already providing a great deal of information. Copies of the questionnaire responses are being forwarded to Arriva Trains Wales, the Welsh Government's Rail Unit, the South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium, Pembrokeshire County Council transport officers, various elected representatives, the Public Transport Users Committee for Wales, and Passenger Focus. As the survey is ongoing, we haven't begun to analyse the responses yet. However, so far it is striking that the majority of responses from both locals and visitors regarding connections have been favourable. To date, locals have made more positive than negative comments about the train services and their journeys. In contrast, positive and negative comments about train services and journeys from visitors have been broadly equal.

Passenger Focus

Passenger Focus has started an e-newsletter for groups representing passengers. Initially they will be sending these on an ad-hoc basis, but in future they would like to make this a regular communication. In the first issue, Anthony Smith - Chief Executive, Passenger Focus, says "You'll see in our story on 'Connecting User Groups' that we have listened to your concerns about keeping in touch with each other. Please reply to us and let us know if you wish to be listed on our website and your preferred email address". The newsletter includes sections on: connecting with user groups, responses to items such as the Department of Transport's Rail Fares Review, Passenger Focus's Bus Passenger Survey, user group workshops, new and upcoming research, and rail franchise consultations. For more information log on to <http://email.passengerfocus.org.uk/passengerfocus/lz/lz.aspx?p1=0515262S88&CC=&p=0>.

Public Transport Users Committee for Wales (PTUC)

PTUC has welcomed the positive response of Welsh Government Minister Carl Sergeant to its report on the Provision of Public Transport Information. The report's main recommendations are aimed at improving information for passengers and helping them have confidence in using public transport as well as helping the disabled. The responsibility for turning the recommendations into reality rests on the local authorities and the Welsh Government, and the Committee looks forward to working with them in monitoring and reporting on progress.

Check the Committee's website, www.wales.gov.uk/topics/transport/public/ptuc, for more information about its work.

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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
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