



North Pembroke Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – April 2015

First Great Western Update on its new Great Western Franchise

The new franchise, to be rebranded as Great Western Railway (GWR), will start next September and run until at least April 2019, covering the period of upgrades on the Great Western network, including Network Rail's electrification programme and the introduction of a new multi-billion pound fleet of intercity trains. First Great Western (FGW) is already working on the changes the new franchise will bring and holding briefing events with partners and stakeholders to update them about the new franchise.

On 20th March the Forum Secretary attended the Swansea update that included presentations by Bid Director Matthew Golton and Diane Burke, Director of Sales and Marketing. Points of relevance to West Wales included:

- New or updated trains in every area of the network, creating three million additional seats a year across the network, and free WiFi extended to all the train fleets.
- Faster trains between South Wales and London, cutting journey times into Cardiff by up to 14 minutes.
- 100 more customer-facing colleagues on long-distance trains, customer information improvements, improved PA systems and improved retail/ticketing systems, and provision of seat to seat trolley services.
- The morning ex-Carmarthen service will continue.
- They are talking to the Welsh Government (WG) and Network Rail (NR) with regard to the Pembroke Dock summer services after 2018.
- They are working with Arriva Trains Wales (ATW) re continued use of the Landore depot once the Maliphant depot for the new high speed trains comes into operation.

In the subsequent 'question and answer' session, the Forum Secretary drew attention to the needs of the large numbers of long distance rail-sail travellers from Ireland (through the Fishguard Harbour Ferry Port), as well as rail travellers from areas in West Wales, whose journeys involve connections with FGW services; in particular:

- Sufficient provision on rolling stock for large amounts of luggage, cycles, push chairs, wheel chairs, etc.
- Rail stations and bus stops = potential multi-modal hubs, not necessarily final destinations.
- Adequate up-to-date information within stations, on station platforms and on board trains about service connections and service disruptions.

Putting Passengers First: How will the Welsh National Transport Plan deliver?

The Welsh National Transport Plan, due to be published soon, sets out how the Welsh Government will deliver transport services, focusing on the five key priorities of economic growth, access to employment, tackling poverty, sustainable travel and safety, and access to services. A forthcoming Transport Focus (formerly Passenger Focus) conference will focus on how the plan will benefit passengers, how it will increase access to services and what more can be done.

The conference, to be held at Cardiff City Hall between 2 and 5pm on Wednesday 13th May, will be opened by keynote speaker Edwina Hart AM, Minister for Economy, Science and Transport, and will include speakers from across the transport industry. Following this there will be a networking reception, between 5 and 6.30pm where Superintendent Andy Morgan of the British Transport Police will talk about increasing public confidence in travelling.

The Transport Focus Board is also meeting in public on the morning of Thursday 14th May 2015 at the Thistle Parc Hotel. This is an opportunity to meet Board members and senior staff, and to learn more about the organisation's work. If you would like to attend either event or receive further details, please email michelle.calvert@transportfocus.org.uk

Swansea Bay City Region's Growth Strategy Report

The publication of 'A Growth Strategy for the Swansea Bay City Region', a report commissioned by the Swansea Bay City Region Board, was noted in a Cabinet Written Statement by Edwina Hart AM, Minister for Science, Economy and Transport, on 16th February this year. The report acknowledges the huge potential of the Swansea Bay City Region and proposes some foundations for a more prosperous future, including:

- Better use of existing assets.
- Attraction of new investment, people and activity to the region.
- Consideration of key projects that will enable transformational change.

The Minister expressed broad support for the report's direction, noting that further work and discussion is needed, adding that she has asked the Board, led by Sir Terry Matthews, to drive discussions forward within the region.

From the Forum's perspective the following points made in the report are particularly noteworthy:

- Among the initiatives intended to promote the growth and prosperity of the City Region: Poor connectivity within the region and with the rest of the country.
- The framework for the City Region must recognise the overarching need for the city and its umbilical cord to the wider region to be the focus of rejuvenation and renewal.
- Swansea does not have an extensive rail network feeding into the city and travellers have a poor sense of arrival.
- A step-change is necessary in the form of a high quality and functional rapid transport network.
- Enhance key strategic road and rail routes, together with development of strategies to make coastal visitor attractions more readily accessible.
- Swift and modern public transport for the city and City Region, enhancing access to employment and leisure opportunities.

For more information and to download the report visit:

<http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2015/swanseabaycityregionreport/?lang=en>

<http://gov.wales/topics/businessandconomy/policy/city-regions/swansea-bay-city-region/?lang=en>

Wales and Borders Rail Services: Future Franchise Specification

A seminar for rail interest groups on the future Wales and Borders Franchise specification will be held in Cardiff on 11th May. The Mid Wales Railways Implementation Group is hosting the event which is supported and funded by WG Transport Minister Edwina Hart AM. The agenda includes:

- James Price, Welsh Government Director General for Economy, Science and Transport. Keynote speech on rail priorities and then will participate in a Question & Answer session.
- Paul Salveson and David Edwards, Heart of Wales Line Forum. Railway community enterprise.
- Rhydian Mason, The Cambrian Railway. Local rail demand surveys and community engagement.
- Workshop sessions (to build on work in recent regional seminars for rail user groups organised by the Welsh Government).

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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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