



North Pembroke Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

September News Briefing, 2021

Senedd Climate Change, Environment & Infrastructure Committee, 16th September Priorities for the sixth Senedd. Focusing on active travel and public transport

Witnesses: Christine Boston, Director of Sustrans Cymru and also representing Transform Cymru; Josh Miles, Director of the Confederation of Passenger Transport Cymru; and Scott Pearson, Chair of the Coach and Bus Association Cymru.

Points Made During the Meeting

1. General

- Transport and energy are in the top three highest emitting sectors that need to be tackled in response to climate change.
- The out-of-town retail model was built on car dependency... if we want to make modal shift and if we want to reduce that car dependency, we need to stop making those sorts of planning decisions.
- Make sure that the requirements of users of public transport and active travel are represented.
- The return of passengers to public transport has been relatively weak. Some reluctance from older passengers—concessionary fare pass holders.
- People don't make journeys from station to station, they make journeys from door to door.

2. Buses

- Need to start thinking about how we have a smooth transition so that all the good work that's been done over the last 18 months to protect the bus network continues and we don't end up with a shrinking network because of falling patronage levels after that.
- The bus strategy and legislation that Welsh Government is developing will be a key issue for the committee. Scrutiny going forward would be really beneficial.
- The demand-responsive transport or Fflecsi services work exceptionally well in rural areas to feed into normal services.

3. Cycling and Walking

- On the cycling and walking issue, we see bus as part of active travel. You walk to a bus stop, you walk from a bus.
- Ensure that the first and last mile have been considered. Make it easier for people to walk and cycle and connect in that way.
- Loads of bike parking, opportunities to hire cycles.
- When you get to your destination, take the cycles on that mode of transport - where that's possible, good walking and cycling access to the station.

Transport for Wales (TfW)

1. Outline Dates for Additional Train Services, News Release. 24th September 2021

- Regarding the additional train services TfW wanted to introduce over the next three years, some original dates have had to be revised because of the impact of COVID-19 over the last 18 months.

- TfW has also confirmed that it will deliver on all additional services originally announced in 2018.
- The revised plans are for Cardiff to Cheltenham, Heart of Wales Line, Liverpool to Llandudno, Extension to the current Manchester Airport to Llandudno service, Aberystwyth to Shrewsbury, and Hourly service between Liverpool and Shrewsbury.
- TfW remains committed to further developments connected to the South Wales and North Wales Metro projects and additional services from West Wales to Manchester.
- TfW also supported the public consultation for the Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro that is currently being considered by the Welsh Government, (n.b. Improved services to Fishguard Harbour were included in the consultation proposals).

For the full news release *Visit* <https://news.tfw.wales/news/transport-for-wales-outline-dates-for-additional-train-services>.

2. Stakeholder Zoom Workshop (MID & SW), 20th September

- The workshop included a presentation of TfW's plan for the introduction of additional services to the rail timetable across the Wales and Borders network over the next three years.
- Participants asked questions and provided feedback about the plans. Feedback about Fishguard services was provided during the meeting by the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum's Secretary.

North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum (NPTF)

Updated User Views About Fishguard Rail Services

1. Introduction

- At the end of September a request for updated user views about Fishguard timetables was emailed to individuals, businesses and other groups on several local mailing lists. Information was provided by over 20 respondents.

2. Overarching Remarks

- With a revised and improved timetable more people would use the railway system.
- Schedules meet the public's needs, otherwise people will be forced to carry on using their own transport.
- Push the part that rail travel can play in facilitating more sustainable travel.
- Through train services are more convenient for disabled travellers.

3. Rail Service Categories

Timetables:

- Increase Sunday trains (in line with weekday trains).
- Bus connectivity to rail services is very important.
- More train services at weekends especially in the evenings.

Rolling Stock:

- Upgrade rolling stock.
- For long-distance journeys: seat reservations, large tables, good legroom, sufficient toilet provision and comfortable seats.
- More carriages, especially on the services to the ferry, and school holiday periods.

3.3 Journey Categories (in alphabetical order)

- Commuting
- Family visits, travelling to help children with child care
- Going to medical appointments, visits to patients in hospital

- Going to meetings
- Going to the theatre, sports events
- Holidays
- Shopping
- Shift work
- Weekend city breaks, also to Pembrokeshire

A Special Report from Sophie Hurst - Preseli Venture Eco Lodge and Adventures

1. Weekend breaks – Fridays and Sundays

- The travel time is very important as people are travelling many hours for just a 2 night break – these Friday and Sunday trains must have good connections to London so the journey time is kept to 5 hours maximum. Also allow 15 minutes change in Swansea, as too short a connection time means connections are often missed with huge inconvenience for customers.
- Consideration for visitors making weekend breaks from London and parts of England. Visitors prefer to leave their home station lunchtime/early afternoon in order to reach Fishguard for early evening. The priority is for the 18.45 or similar time arrival into Fishguard.
- As a secondary but less important train for visitors I would also suggest an arrival into Fishguard at around 4.00/4.30.
- Departing for home after a weekend visitors again like to leave early afternoon so the current existing 14.20 departure from Fishguard works perfectly, allowing people to reach their homes early-mid evening on the Sunday.
- There are also visitors who want to stay later on a Sunday, so if there were to be more trains on a Sunday I would suggest a later afternoon train departing around 5.00/5.30 would be extremely useful as well, with connections onwards from Swansea and Cardiff if possible.

2. Mid-week holidays to Fishguard and North Pembrokeshire

- For our business, and for many other visitors, travel on a Sunday is very important, and visitors often arrive into Fishguard on a Sunday from London and England.

3. Preferred train times – Arrivals into Fishguard

- Sunday – From London arriving into Fishguard mid or late afternoon is very helpful. So a later train in the afternoon than the current boat train. This train could bring new visitors in around 4.30/5.00 and take the end of the weekend people away around 5/5.30.
- This would ensure 2 afternoon trains arriving and 2 afternoon trains departing – the current early afternoon train and a new later afternoon service.
- Friday - We would like to see a departure from Fishguard during the early part of the afternoon, about 2.30 which would tie in with an early afternoon arrival as well. Most important is the early evening arrival bringing weekend visitors around 6.30.
- For business trips - The most important comment I have is for early morning trains that allow business travellers to get into London as close to lunchtime as possible. For example a 7.00am departure arriving into London around 12.00 midday.
- Its very important to have the main visitor times on services from London and Bristol etc. that are fast: 5 hours, or at the most 5.5 hours, from London. Longer journey times put people off.

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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