



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – February 2012

North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum AGM

The Forum's 12th Annual General Meeting will be held in Llwyngwair Manor, Newport at 7.30pm. Coffee/tea will be provided before the meeting, from 7.00pm. Rhian Higgins, Pembrokeshire Greenways Officer, has accepted the Forum's invitation to give the keynote presentation about the work of Pembrokeshire Greenways in encouraging local residents and visitors, of all abilities, to access the coast and countryside by sustainable modes of transport through walking, cycling bus and train travel. Members of the public are always welcome to attend Forum AGMs.

STOP PRESS!

Free Bus Services to Fishguard Youth Centre for Goodwick Youngsters

The County Echo (2nd March) reports that Pembrokeshire County Council Youth Service is to fund free bus services to the Fishguard Popworks Youth Centre on Thursday and Friday nights. The report includes an approximate timetable for the journeys which call at Stop & Call, Harbour Village, Goodwick Square, Dyffryn and Fishguard Square. Contact Steve Lewis on 01437 776635 for more information about the Popworks Youth Centre and the bus programme.

Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative

Ministerial Plenary Session Announcements. In response to questions raised at the National Assembly Plenary Session on 8th February, Carl Sargeant AM, Minister for Local Government and Communities made the following statements:

- 'The Member raises a live issue regarding bus service operator grants and concessionary fares issues that I am well aware of. We are fully committed to supporting bus services, over and above the £69 million a year in support that we already give the industry in concessionary fares. I have asked for an urgent meeting with local authorities, transport consortia and bus operators to establish a way through this difficult process for them and for us, in terms of the economic situation in which we find ourselves'.
- 'I give the Chamber my commitment that I certainly will not be making any changes to the all-Wales scheme on concessionary fares'.
- 'I have written to all the affected concessionary travel community groups today to advise them that I will be seeking further dialogue with them to see how we can have a successful outcome for the delivery of concessionary fares and services for the people of Wales'.

Age Cymru News Release, 9th February. The Welsh charity reported that the Minister for Local Government and Communities, Carl Sargeant AM, that afternoon told the Cross-Party Group on Older People and Ageing that funding for the Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative will continue past March 2012 whilst an evaluation of individual schemes is conducted.

Concessionary Fares Petition. As of 29th February there were 471 signatures to the Community Transport Association's petition on the National Assembly Petitions Committee's website. Nearly a quarter (24%) of the signatures came from Preseli Pembrokeshire respondents, with another 9% coming from Carmarthen South and South Pembrokeshire respondents.

Train Services

Tales from Travellers. We continue to receive news about the journeys that are being made, or are going to be made, on the new Fishguard train services. For example:

- A young man from Fishguard (who does not have a car) applied for a job in a shop in Carmarthen, because he knew he would be able to get to work by train. He now

commutes to work, Monday to Friday, leaving on the first train in the morning and returning on the 18.29 service. He pointed out that the Pembrokeshire railcard makes his weekly commute around £30 which he thinks is brilliant!

- A retired Fishguard couple has taken the train to Carmarthen to go to the cinema.
- Two lads came off the 20:30 train one evening, having gone up to Cardiff on the 09:56 that morning - just because they could do this now!!
- A Fishguard resident was delighted to be able to travel to London by train from Fishguard and spend a few days with a relative who had just moved into a care home; much appreciating being able to leave Fishguard around 8.00 am and arriving in London by 1.00pm, and on the return journey, leaving London just before 1.00pm and getting home by 6.30pm.
- A Goodwick B & B reports receiving a booking from the north of England from guests who will be travelling here by train, and from other guests, coming by train in May.

Information improvements. A visitor to Carmarthen station noted that after the departure screen had come up with '19.30 ATW service to Milford, calling at Whitland, etc.', it concluded with 'connections to Fishguard Harbour at Clarbeston Road'. Another informant has found information about the new Fishguard and Goodwick station on these links: www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk/RouteMap/ and www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations/fgw/details.html.

Arriva Trains Wales 'Love Advance Fares'. Arriva Trains Wales (ATW) now offers a wider range of low cost Advance Purchase fares from West Wales to destinations including, for the first time, Cardiff, Shrewsbury and Gloucester. Tickets are generally available to book 12 weeks before the date of travel. Travellers with 16-25, Family & Friends, Disabled Person and Senior Railcards can get 1/3 off Advance Purchase tickets. Child discounts also apply. For further information and to purchase online check the ATW website: www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk/LoveTheTrain/. To purchase by telephone ring 08709 000 773 between 8am and 8pm (Monday-Saturday) or between 9am and 5pm on Sunday.

Goodwick Station

Work to re-open Goodwick Station continues apace. A Customer Information Screen is in place on the platform. The fencing contractor is on site, work on the station building has commenced, and the shelter will be going up soon.

On 16th February Sam Faulkner, Hatti Woakes, Cllr Huw George and Cllr Jamie Adams (Deputy Leader, Pembrokeshire County Council, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, and Deputy Chair of the South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium - SWWITCH) were interviewed about the re-opening of the station for radio and television by the BBC. While there they were able to see and discuss the plans for the new station with the Atkins contractors.

Public Transport Users Committee for Wales (PTUC)

PTUC held its most recent quarterly meeting in Tenby on 15th February. Mark Langman, Route Managing Director - Network Rail Wales, and Hatti Woakes gave presentations on Network Rail and the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum. The Forum presentation papers are may be consulted in Materials/Documents on the Forum's website: www.nptf.co.uk.

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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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