



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – September 2009

Buses – School Transport Project

The South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH) has been awarded £668,500 by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), via the Welsh Local Government Association, to fund this 3-year project.

Objectives include: (1) Delivery of a safe school transport system for young people; (2) Creation of a better transport experience for children and young people; (3) Building a hearts and minds approach to the use of buses to encourage modal shift; and (4) Demonstrating an effective collaborative working across the four constituent authorities within the SWWITCH region.

Developments so far: (1) A standardised risk assessment methodology, with independent audits, is to be implemented from November; (2) Standard report forms now make it easy for operators who work in more than one local authority to keep records of incidents; (3) A training course, aimed specifically for drivers and passenger assistants working on school transport, will be delivered to all those working within the SWWITCH region; (4) A pilot programme looking into the use of CCTV on school buses has recently begun. For more information contact Owen Roberts, School Transport Development Officer for Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire on 01437 775222 or at Owen.Roberts@pembrokeshire.gov.uk.

Community Transport - Pembrokeshire Minibus Match

Minibus Match is a scheme designed for community groups and not-for-profit organisations in Pembrokeshire, meeting the needs of groups who would like to borrow minibuses. Minibus owners can also become members of Minibus Match by lending their minibuses to other members.

- Borrowers benefit from: (1) Cost-effective minibus travel; (2) Access to a range of minibuses including wheelchair accessible vehicles; and (3) A central one-call booking system.
- Lenders benefit from: (1) A contribution towards running expenses and fuel costs of their minibus; and (2) Free publicity.
- Everyone benefits from: (1) MiDAS training; (2) Advice on minibus use; and (3) Access to a pool of MiDAS trained drivers.

Requests can be made on 0800 783 1584 (open from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday).

The Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations (PACTO) has developed the project. Funding has been received through the Big Lottery Fund and the Rural Development Plan for Wales 2007-2013 which is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and the European Union.

Safe Routes in Communities & Cycling and Walking

The Forum has written a letter of support for Pembrokeshire County Council's bid for funding for Safe Routes proposals for Goodwick and Monkton. The proposal for Goodwick includes: improvements to road crossings and footpaths, provision of pedestrian crossings, as well as a 20mph zone for the Stop and Call road by Goodwick Community School. The National Cycle Track along the Parrog is to be improved, in addition to the provision of a shared use path along the disused railway from the Parrog to the existing permissive path at Dyffryn.

Trains

Plaid Cymru Survey. Plaid has passed on the results of the train service survey that it carried out at the Pembrokeshire County Show in August. The survey consisted of two questions: *Do you*

think that rail services to and from Pembrokeshire need to be improved? Yes/No, and If 'yes', what improvements would you like to see put in place? 118 people participated in the survey, and 114 (97%) responded that they thought that rail services to and from Pembrokeshire needed to be improved. Main findings included:

- 82 (76%) thought there should be more trains to and from Pembrokeshire
- 47 (45%) mentioned more trains at specific times of the day
- 20 (19%) would like to see more direct routes
- 17 (16%) would like to see cheaper prices
- 12 (11%) would like to see more carriages and/or seating and/or better toilet facilities

Fishguard Trains Petition. The purpose of this petition, launched by 15 year old Moylegrove residents Sam Faulkner and Joanne Griffiths, is to make rural North Pembrokeshire better connected. A regular daily service to Carmarthen could allow easier access to and from towns and villages in North Pembrokeshire to Haverfordwest (changing at Clarbeston Rd. or Whitland), Swansea, Cardiff and beyond. The service would also open up North Pembrokeshire, a region that relies heavily on tourism, to holiday makers and day trippers. BBC Wales Today reported on the petition on 28th September. A video of the broadcast is on the BBC South West Wales website at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/wales/south_west/8272451.stm. The petition can be signed on line at www.moylegrove.co.uk/signhere, by phone on 07748 478094, and by email at petition@moylegrove.co.uk.

SWWITCH

Regional Transport Plan. The SWWITCH Plan has been submitted to the Assembly and will be available on the SWWITCH and Local Authority websites in October. In the light of the extensive stakeholder participation in the development of the RTP and the need to continue work and engage as SWWITCH moves into the delivery stage, the consortium plans to launch the plan at a stakeholder event early in November.

National Transport Plan. The September meeting of the SWWITCH Joint Committee considered and approved a detailed draft response to the plan. Points of particular interest included:

- Disappointment in the delay in setting up the Public Transport Users Committee
- The need for more revenue funding to ensure public transport, community transport and walking and cycling schemes are delivered and monitored effectively
- Disappointment that rail service improvements west of Swansea are not included
- With regard to more sustainable modes of transport, the need for more national leadership on issues related to demand restraint, behavioural change and contentious areas like the growth of air travel
- Concern about the future integration of the NTP and RTPs, bearing mind the final NTP will not be available until the end of the year or early 2010
- Concerns about the wider consideration of the concessionary fares scheme and the management of the ever increasing budget (and thus the potential budget cuts elsewhere in transport)
- Lack of evidence of widespread engagement with stakeholders or WeITAG appraisal of schemes that were considered and discarded (and why)
- Non-prioritisation or costing nor any indication of which schemes take precedence or where there are synergies between schemes and between capital and revenue expenditure.

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)

For further information, contact the Secretary, 2 Hill Terrace, Fishguard SA65 9LU
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