



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – June 2011

Buses

Simon Rees, Pembrokeshire County Council's Public Transport Scheduling Officer, reports that real time information displays are being spread out at bus stops throughout the county. At the time of reporting there were 29 screens, linked to GPS (Global Positioning System) devices on buses. Forty-four buses are being fitted with this equipment. The May Pembrokeshire Bus Timetables booklet is out. With finances under pressure, the Council has had to make minor efficiency cuts, particularly in evening services, mainly in the south of the county.

Community Transport Forum for Pembrokeshire

Introduction. The Forum was held in Letterston Memorial Hall on 14th June, with Cliff Richmond running an emergency evacuation training session before the meeting got under way. Attendees heard updates on the services provided by Country Cars, Cars for Carers, the Town Rider, Preseli Rural Transport Association's Green Dragon minibuses, the Fishguard PVT bus, Bws y Bobol and the coastal buses.

Hospital Transport in Pembrokeshire. Peter Llewellyn provided a report on the Hywel Dda pilot project on Non Emergency Transport. In Pembrokeshire a Social Care vehicle has been established at Withybush Hospital since August 2010, with all referrals channelled through the Welsh Ambulance Services Liaison Supervisor. This service is available over the lunchtime period and from 5.00 pm on a daily basis Monday to Friday. Since its introduction 579 patient journeys have been undertaken to the end of March 2011 - the majority of these journeys have been to support hospital discharge. Future plans include the introduction of a new booking system for all appointments, using current community transport resources to support Day Units / Day Hospitals and Outpatient activity, the introduction of a brokerage role to organise out of county transport for Hywel Dda residents, and closer links between community transport and dialysis units across Hywel Dda.

Wheels to Work. Mary Smith reported on the findings of a study to research the difficulties people in Pembrokeshire face in getting to work. A number of issues were identified:

- Public transport does not run early or late enough to enable people to reach training or employment.
- The hospitality, care and health sectors that employ large numbers of people are particularly affected by transport barriers, because of shift working patterns.
- There is poor communication between the transport and employment / training sectors in Pembrokeshire
- Transport planners and other stakeholders have little real understanding of the difficulties of travel to work as most have their own personal transport
- Whilst most employers are aware of the difficulties their staff face in getting to work, only large organisations are proactive in trying to help.
- Most of the SMEs interviewed felt that it was not their problem to help people travel to work; a number were unaware that there is a transport problem in Pembrokeshire.

The research established that the issue of transport to work went far beyond a single solution (Wheels2work). It is recommended that stakeholders should work together to agree upon and deliver a range of possible solutions. These would include improving, promoting, and developing existing schemes - Switch2Share, Bike2Work and existing on-demand transport, which all involve relatively low costs, or costs that can be covered by users of the schemes.

Cycling

A new and innovative Eco Taxi service is starting up in St Davids. Driver Joe Sutherland will operate the service from Oriol y Parc, daily whenever possible, with a minimum service every Tuesday and Thursday during the day and on Friday and Saturday evenings. The distinctive rickshaw taxi can take two passengers at a time, and Joe's pedal power will allow him to carry them up to four miles around the St Davids area. The service operates a 'pay what you think the journey is worth' system, up to a maximum of £25 per hour. More information is on <http://pembrokeshirecycletours.blogspot.com>, or call 07866 280367.

Trains

Timetable Changes. Commuters report problems with afternoon and evening bus/rail connections at Haverfordwest railway station following changes to two train services in the May timetable: the new departure times of 13.39 and 17.36 from Cardiff.

- The first train arrives in Haverfordwest at 16.06, 11 minutes after the 15.55 departure of the 411 bus to St Davids and 1 minute after the 412 bus to Fishguard/Cardigan.
- The second train arrives in Haverfordwest at 20.09, 24 minutes after the 19.45 departure of both the 411 and 412 buses.

All Points West Community Rail Partnership. Our Community Rail Partnership was awarded the 'Training and Development of People' award by the Chartered Institute of Transport and Logistics Wales at the 2011 National Transport Awards in Cardiff on 27th May. The CRP has also had a grant approved by ACoRP (the Association of Community Rail Partnerships) to produce a brand new booklet for the schools Train Training programme. This booklet will be designed to inform and raise awareness of the railways for children mainly in the 8 – 11 age group.

Fishguard Trains Petition. After consideration of a final update to the petition at its meeting of 21st June, the National Assembly's Petitions Committee agreed to close the petition and produce a closure report.

Goodwick Station. At its 10th June meeting, the SWITCH Joint Committee was informed that Pembrokeshire County Council Officers have met with the Welsh Government (WG), Network Rail and Arriva Trains Wales to examine possibilities for re-opening Goodwick Station to provide a more convenient and accessible interchange. Although the former station building is in an advanced state of decay and is unusable, the platforms are reasonably intact and relatively low cost options for creating a viable temporary station are currently in development. The Council (which owns all the land up to the platforms) is developing a design and costs for creating appropriate access and car parking. Funding has been secured for a feasibility study that will include track and platform surveys, and designs will be developed for consideration by Network Rail. The county council will also look at the possibility of providing car parking at the rear of the old station together with nearby bus stops.

On 24th June an update from Pembrokeshire County Council in *The County Echo* stated that the old station building is to be demolished, as the building has been declared dangerous by the council's structural engineers. The site is currently the subject of a feasibility study looking at the possible re-opening of the station. If the study concludes that it should re-open, the council has said that a suitable replacement will be provided. The consultation into the timetable for the new services has now ended, and a finalised timetable is expected to be announced next month.

Walking

A new website, www.walkingpembrokeshire.co.uk, provides information about the wonderful variety of walks in the County. Walkers can choose from easy, moderate or demanding walks, family walks, as well as walks with the coastal buses. With the help of an interactive map, residents and visitors can see what the County has to offer. As the website says 'Why not start by exploring our towns with a series of short walks, some starting not far from your very own doorstep'.

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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