



# North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

## News Briefing – December 2011

### Community Transport

Fishguard Town Rider Service Meeting. There will be a meeting to talk about the future of the Town Rider service on Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> January. The meeting will be held in the Llain Las Residents Lounge, Plas y Fron, Fishguard SA65 9LZ, from 10.30 - 12.00. Tea/coffee will be served from 10.00.

The meeting will provide an opportunity for people to have their say about the service. Those who plan to attend are asked to email [Debbie.Johnson@pembrokeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Debbie.Johnson@pembrokeshire.gov.uk), [mary-pacto@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mary-pacto@hotmail.co.uk) or call 0800 783 1584. You are free to pass on the invitation to anyone else who might find the meeting of interest. Those who are unable to attend the meeting are invited to email Debbie or Mary or call them if they wish to pass on their comments.

### Cycling - The 'Bike It' Project

'Bike It' is a national scheme, delivered by Sustrans, which aims to increase the number of children cycling to school. 'Bike It' officers work with the pupils to set in place the knowledge, skills and enthusiasm necessary so that 'Bike It' can continue long after the officer moves to other schools. The December SWWITCH Newsletter reports that the project, which has been operating for 3 years in Neath, Port Talbot, Conwy and Cardiff, is now expanding into Pembrokeshire.

The project will be working with the County Council's Road Safety and Transport Strategy Teams as part of Haverfordwest's Sustainable Travel Centre Project. Initially 9 schools have been selected to be 'Bike It' schools, and this will increase to 12 in the New Year. During the first year the project aims to work closely with each school supporting them to promote and demonstrate cycling as a safe, fun and popular activity. The plan is to extend the project to Fishguard and the north for the following year.

### Fishguard Train Services

Following recent correspondence about information problems regarding the Clarbeston Road - Fishguard connection for the train that arrives in Fishguard at 20.30, Arriva Trains informed the Forum on 24<sup>th</sup> December that the ex 17.39 Milford Train from Cardiff has now been configured to show 'Change at Clarbeston Road for a connection to Fishguard Harbour' in the text on summary of departure and next train indicator boards. They have also configured the P.A. for station systems to add the same at the end of the pre-announcements for this service.

### Goodwick Station

In a news release, Pembrokeshire County Council has announced that the former Fishguard and Goodwick station is on track to reopen next March. The Council has cleared the site and demolished the former station buildings, and officers have finalised designs for car parking at the rear of the old station together with nearby bus stops. Meanwhile a specialist railway team from Atkins has completed track and platform surveys and developed designs for consideration by Network Rail.

Following discussions between the County Council, the South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH), the Welsh Government, Network Rail and the train operator Arriva Trains Wales, funding has been secured with the aim of reopening the station by March 2012. Councillor Jamie Adams, SWWITCH Voting Member and Deputy Leader for Pembrokeshire County Council, said improvements to rail services west of Swansea were not only a priority for Pembrokeshire but for the South West region as a whole. He added 'The re-opening of the station will be a positive step for the communities of Fishguard and Goodwick and help attract passengers onto the new enhanced rail services.'

## Network Rail

Network Rail has submitted its proposals to re-double the rail line between Duffryn West Junction and Cockett West Junction and replace the Loughor viaduct to Carmarthenshire County Council. The £40m scheme, jointly funded by Network Rail and the Welsh government, is designed to cope with rising passenger numbers in west Wales, which could increase by 20% by the end of the decade. Mark Langman, route managing director for Network Rail Wales, said the scheme promised to bring huge benefits to areas such as Swansea, Llanelli, Carmarthen, Fishguard and Milford Haven. He added that there would be shorter journey times and better connections that could potentially remove around 300,000 trips from road to rail. The new services are planned to open in 2013.

## Things That Discourage Use of Public Transport

During recent months, the Forum has been increasingly made aware of things that are turning people away from using public transport. This has always been a matter of concern, particularly for those with mobility and disability issues; but is now increasingly an issue connected to economic and environmental concerns. To be fair, recognition of these concerns is now widespread, as are the efforts to do something meaningful about them.

Access. The increasing use of a wide variety of wheelchairs and scooters presents challenges to transport operators, as users require access to transport that meets their daily needs. The latest versions of Arriva Trains Wales booklets 'Making Rail Accessible: Policies and Practice' and 'Making Rail Accessible: Helping Older and Disabled Passengers' (valid from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011) provide details about current policy and practice. To download either document from the home page of [www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk](http://www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk), click on 'Travelling with Us', then on 'Assisted Travel'.

Information. Other issues still require further attention. For example, concerns described in a Disability Wales presentation at a recent meeting of the Public Transport Users Committee for Wales (7<sup>th</sup> December, Cardiff), included: information signs at stations/bus stops that may be too high, with poor colour contrast, not available in required aural or visual formats, hard to read at night or simply not provided at all. Disabled friendly information about 'home to town centre' public transport services is lacking; while suitable transport (such as the Town Rider) just isn't available.

Buying a Ticket. Some of those now turning to public transport for economic and/or environmental reasons have contacted the Forum about problems they have experienced when trying to purchase tickets online at short notice, particularly when they are directed to collect their tickets from a station ticket vending machine. Online searches for information about the location of ticket vending machines have not produced any results. As it seems that the nearest ticket vending machine is located on the platform at Carmarthen railway station, passengers have told the Forum that they are concerned about the price they might be quoted when purchasing their tickets on the train.

## Traveline Cymru

The December SWWITCH newsletter reports that 'Traveline Cymru has added a brand new offer to its range of mobile services, with the introduction of a free application for Android phones. The bilingual app joins an already successful app for iPhone and a suite of other mobile services giving travellers access to up-to-date public transport information. It is the first of its kind to be produced for Android phones in Wales and one of very few bilingual Welsh apps available.

The app contains far more information than traditional free applications, allowing people to plan their journey, find nearby bus stops and bus routes, locate park and ride sites, view regular travel alerts and disruptions and access contact details for bus and rail companies. The app can be downloaded from Android Market and more information about it is available on [www.traveline-cymru.info](http://www.traveline-cymru.info) or follow mascot, Traveline Tim on Facebook, and Twitter.

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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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