



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – August 2011

LAUNCH OF ADDITIONAL FISHGUARD TRAIN SERVICES

The Welsh Government Minister for Local Government & Communities, Carl Sargeant AM, will launch the commencement of five additional trains to Fishguard on 12th September. The event will take place at Fishguard Harbour between 09:15 and 10:00.

The event is being delivered in association with the Welsh Government's partner organisations:

- The South West Wales Regional Transport Consortium (SWWITCH)
- Pembrokeshire County Council
- Arriva Trains Wales
- Network Rail
- The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum
- The Community Rail Partnership for South West Wales (All Points West).

Buses

Bus-Rail Connections. Although work has now commenced on the project to re-open Goodwick Station to provide parking and bus services for the new trains, the work will not be completed until some time after the new services have started. In the meantime arrangements are being made for bus connections to meet the trains at the Harbour station.

Electronic Real-Time Displays Launch. The new scheme was launched at the County Show on 16th August by County Councillor Deputy Leader Jamie Adams. The displays, which inform passengers of the actual expected arrival time of the next buses, have now been installed at 27 locations around the County, and around 40 buses on key routes have been equipped with GPS tracking to feed into the system. The system has been delivered with Welsh Government funding, together with assistance from partner agencies at SWWITCH, Traveline, local bus operators and contractors JMW Systems Limited.

Bus Use. Judi Hartland, Pembrokeshire representative with Bus Users UK Cymru, reports that buses have been busy during the summer, and that, locally, families and visitors seem to be using the buses quite a lot.

Community Transport

Fishguard Minibus Services. Pembrokeshire Voluntary Transport (PVT) is raising funds to replace "Millie", the minibus based in Fishguard, who is 'getting a little long in the tooth'. Activities include: (1) A bucket shake at Newport Street Market on Monday 19th September, 9am – 1 pm, and (2) A coffee morning at the Royal Oak, Fishguard with raffle and book and cake stall on Thursday 22nd September. Contact Mary Smith (01239 821095) if you can spare an hour to help with the Bucket Shake and Eleri Duggan (01348 891295) for tickets for the Coffee Morning.

The project has also been accepted by NatWest Community Force and is now active on their website, via the following link: <http://communityforce.natwest.com/project/2439>. From 26th September please support the project by voting online or on 0800 2100246. PVT is also applying to the Gannett Foundation for funding, and the application will include letters of support from the local community. Please support this project by writing a letter of support addressed to the PVT co-ordinator, Adrian Davies at Bayford, Freshwater East Road, Lamphey, Pembrokeshire, SA71 5JX, or, alternatively, bring them with you to the coffee morning. For more information contact Adrian on 01646 672144.

Preseli Green Dragon. The Dragon's new audio tours (available in English and Welsh) are going very well. The services operate from Bwlchgywynt to Crymych on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Community groups can book to go on the tour at other times by arrangement with the Preseli Rural Transport Association office on 0845 686 0242. PRTA Co-ordinator Caroline Wilson also reports that their Summer Services are being well used this year.

Bws y Bobol. Services are still running well. The minibus is available for use by community groups and non-profit organisations on the St David's peninsula. Groups normally provide their own driver, who should be MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) trained, but volunteer drivers are willing to help if needed. Membership fee: £5 / group. Group Use of minibus: Minimum charge £22 (includes first 20

miles - £1 per mile thereafter). Mileage rate includes fuel, insurance and a contribution towards vehicle maintenance costs. Concessions may be available. More information on 0800 783 1584; bookings on 07531 310056.

Goodwick Station

As reported in June a project has been set in motion to re-open the old Goodwick station to serve the additional Fishguard trains because this station would be more convenient for passengers arriving by car, bus, bike or on foot. The significance of the Goodwick project was highlighted in a *Modern Railways* report this month. After listing major projects such as the Reading remodelling, the Paddington Integrated Project and Crossrail (with electrification to Oxford, Newbury, Bristol and Cardiff to follow), the report continues:

"At the other end of both the route and the economic scale, another capital project is on the cards which could prove just as significant in its own way to the post-McNulty rail industry. The Fishguard Harbour branch, rebuilt by the Great Western Railway in the 20th century for express boat trains, has survived the decline of foot passengers on the Rosslare ferry but has only one service per day and another in the dead of night.

Five additional return workings per day are due to commence in September....No capital funding was set aside, however, to ensure convenient passenger access to the new services....Pembrokeshire County Council has long aspired to reopen the former Fishguard & Goodwick station as the centrepiece of a future transport interchange. It has put a rocket under those plans, in the hope that a temporary station will be constructed there by the autumn. In so doing, it has thrown down a gauntlet, challenging the rail industry to deliver a facility at minimum cost in almost the minimum timescale".

"Low cost is critical for Fishguard because capital funding has to be found 'in year', always a challenge for local government....Early completion is also important, because public perceptions of new rail services can crystallise in the first weeks".

New Fishguard Trains Designated as Experimental Services

A public notice in *The Western Telegraph* (31st August 2011) states that under the terms of the Railways Act 2005 Welsh Ministers may designate a new passenger rail service as experimental. **This is to allow the service's long-term viability to be demonstrated before it becomes permanent.** Exercising these powers the new Fishguard services have been designated as experimental services. The designation is for a period of three years beginning on 12 September 2011.

The significance of making full use of these new services is now abundantly clear, and the saying "Use It or Lose It" couldn't be more appropriate.

New Travel App from Traveline Cymru

Traveline Cymru launched the latest addition to its range of mobile services, with the introduction of its free iPhone app at this year's Eisteddfod in Wrexham. The bilingual travel app, which is the first of its kind to be produced in Wales and one of very few bilingual Welsh apps available through iTunes, will give travellers access to up-to-date public transport information while they are on the move. The app will allow 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 was unveiled by Traveline Cymru ambassador, Iolo Williams, who noted that it is free to download and easy to use. Jo Foxall, Marketing Manager for Traveline Cymru, added that all of the information from their website is on the app in a simple and easy format for people to access while they are on the go. The app, which is only the second of its kind in the UK, was developed by Trapeze Group Ltd and can be downloaded from the Apple Store. More information about the app is available on www.traveline-cymru.info, facebook, and twitter.

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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