



# North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

## News Briefing – July 2017

### Buses

#### 1 Bwcabus Launch

The new Bwcabus service, launched at the Wolfscastle Country Hotel on 5<sup>th</sup> July, is operated by Richard Bros on behalf of Carmarthenshire County Council (CC) as part of LINC (a collaborative project between Welsh Government (WG), Carmarthenshire CC, Ceredigion CC and Pembrokeshire CC).

#### The Pembrokeshire area Bwcabus services:

- The fixed 313, 413, 430, 642, 643, 644 and 645 routes connect to the main line services to places such as Fishguard, Haverfordwest, Cardigan and Narberth. These services are available for all to use. The timetables can be found on <http://www.richardsbros.co.uk/local-bus-services/>
- The demand responsive service of new, fully accessible buses (tailored to the needs of passengers) operates in response to pre-booked journey requests between local towns and villages within the zone. Passengers register prior to using this service.
  - Registration is free. Phone the call centre on 01239 801 601. You will be asked to provide some basic details which will only be used in conjunction with the provision of the service.
  - The booking line is open 7 days a week 7am – 7pm. The service operates Monday to Friday 7am – 6.30pm and Saturday 9am – 5pm. Book before 7pm if you would like to travel the next day before 2pm. Book by 11.30am if you would like to travel after 2pm that afternoon. Bookings can be made a month in advance.

For Frequently Asked Questions visit the project website: [www.bwcabus.traveline-cymru.info/useful-info/](http://www.bwcabus.traveline-cymru.info/useful-info/)

#### 2 Free Weekend Bus Travel Across Wales

This new pilot, launched on 8<sup>th</sup> July by the Welsh Government (WG), will apply to all buses on the TrawsCymru network and run every weekend until at least May 2018. The scheme does not apply to services on Bank Holiday Mondays. It is hoped that the scheme will act as a catalyst for bus travel in Wales, boosting not only the number of passengers but also wider use of the TrawsCymru routes.

This free service is subject to availability, and additional funding has been provided to local authorities to ensure that operators are able to deploy more buses to meet increased demand if necessary. Provisions have also been made to reimburse the operators of other local bus services should they experience any reduction of passengers as a result of the pilot.

It is hoped that the initiative will not only benefit passengers, but also provide a boost to destinations and tourist attractions, both directly on the route and beyond. WG will use the pilot to help build a better understanding of how reductions of this nature affect the wider demand for public transport before deciding on its future beyond May 2018.

### Trains

#### 1 The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum

The Forum works for the provision effective integrated transport, promotes the benefits of public transport and works towards the greater use of public transport.

The Forum supports objectives that:

- Provide for the greater integration and interchange between different modes of transport;
- Put in place transport services that meet the needs of individuals and communities; and
- Promote economic development and social inclusion through the further development of an affordable, accessible transport system which meets user needs and works to remove access and mobility barriers for all transport users.

#### 2 Work for Additional Fishguard Train Services

In 2000 the old Fishguard and Goodwick station was a dilapidated wreck, and only two trains per day called at the Fishguard Harbour station - to connect with the mid-day and mid-night ferries. It was

obvious that the extremely limited train service did not fit well within a multi-modal transport mix, and the Forum immediately began working for the provision of additional train services.

### 2.1 Establishment of the current Wales and Borders Rail Franchise

- The Forum’s proposals for additional trains were discussed with bidders at meetings in Fishguard.
- There were no changes to the Fishguard Passenger Service Requirement in the new franchise.

### 2.2 The 2004 Fishguard Train Services Survey

- The purpose of the survey was to ascertain the views of those travelling to or from Fishguard and the North Pembrokeshire area. A total of 245 responses were received from local residents.
- Key findings:
  - 80% rated the Fishguard train service as very poor or poor.
  - More than half never used the train or used it on very few occasions; yet all but four respondents provided examples of enhancements that would attract them onto the train or cause them to travel by train more often.
  - ‘More regular, convenient services during the day’ topped the improvements they called for.
  - London, Cardiff and Swansea were the top destinations to which respondents currently travelled or would like to travel by train from Fishguard.

### 2.3 The Welsh Government 3 year trial of 5 additional trains to Fishguard

- Working together, the Forum, Welsh Government and Arriva Trains Wales set up the trial services, designed to provide services that met the needs identified in the survey: 3 trains departing in the morning and 2 arriving in the evening, an addition to the mid-day and mid-night boat trains.
- The new services commenced operation from Fishguard Harbour in September 2011. In May 2012 the reopened Fishguard and Goodwick station (a SWWITCH Regional Transport Capital Project, carried out by Pembrokeshire CC) significantly enhanced transport facilities for passengers.
- In August 2014, Transport Minister Edwina Hart gave the go-ahead to continue the additional rail services.

### 2.4 Passenger Usage Estimates: Stations at Pembrokeshire ferry ports and Fishguard & Goodwick

|      | FGW    | FGH    | FGW + FGH | PMD    |
|------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 2007 |        | 29,049 |           | 35,758 |
| 2008 |        | 24,755 |           | 41,128 |
| 2009 |        | 24,838 |           | 39,446 |
| 2010 |        | 23,746 |           | 41,432 |
| 2011 |        | 30,832 |           | 45,650 |
| 2012 |        | 38,828 |           | 48,612 |
| 2013 | 12,072 | 35,520 | 47,592    | 47,686 |
| 2014 | 17,062 | 29,404 | 46,466    | 45,232 |
| 2015 | 19,874 | 26,522 | 46,396    | 47,378 |
| 2016 | 19,946 | 22,646 | 42,592    | 46,710 |

Source: ORR – the Office of Rail & Road

- By increasing services to 7 trains per day and reopening Fishguard & Goodwick station, passenger numbers for the Fishguard port area are now close to those for Pembroke Dock.

## 3 The Way Forward

In conclusion, it is hoped that these positive outcomes to Fishguard and North Pembrokeshire will be maintained and even enhanced in the next Wales and Borders Rail Franchise. Ongoing identification and elimination of any disincentives to future support and growth in the use of public transport in the area will play an important part in ensuring that the number of both local and ferry passengers does not diminish if services fail to meet their needs.

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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’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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