



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

July News Briefing, 2021

Community Transport

PACTO

The Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations (PACTO) was established in 2004 to bring together, strengthen and represent the community transport sector in Pembrokeshire. It is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee.

Its current workplan has the following priorities:

- To achieve a comprehensive and sustainable network of affordable and high quality community transport facilities, accessible to all, that are well known and well used by the people of Pembrokeshire.
- To enable to most elderly, disabled and isolated members of our community access services and opportunities, through the provision of a volunteer Bus Buddy support.
- To create a system to facilitate lift-sharing across rural Pembrokeshire, mitigating costs for car-owners and providing communities with access to services, activities and opportunities, day and night, which were otherwise out of reach.
- To provide transport from hospital and settling at home, for people at risk of hospital admission because they have no means of getting home

Its most recent AGM on 5th July included a review of community transport activities in Pembrokeshire in 2020 and an update on the current situation. All Community Transport services in Pembrokeshire are back up and running now, with the exception of the Take Me Too! liftsharing scheme and the Cars 4 Carers service.

For further information, please contact our Community Transport Development Officer on: 01437 776550 or visit www.pacto.org.uk/about.php.

Trains

1. Community Rail Partnerships

The overall purpose of Community Rail Partnerships is to encourage greater use of rail services through increased participation of local communities in their rail line and, by a range of activities surrounding their station, to provide economic, social and environmental benefits to the region's residents and visitors.

For the Region South West Wales Connected Community Rail Partnership has been seeking to fill the following posts: 1. Community Rail Officer, 2. Administration and Social Media Manager, and 3. Projects Officer. Visit <https://www.southwestwales.co/> for further information. The application deadline is 9am 16th August.

2. Railway Infrastructure in Wales

The UK Parliament Welsh Affairs Committee's report on the state of rail infrastructure in Wales (First Report of Session 2021-22) was published on 14th July. To consult the full report Visit <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/849/railway-infrastructure-in-wales/publications/>.

The report covers: The case for upgrading rail infrastructure in Wales, Management of rail infrastructure, Funding and The implications of Covid-19.

Key Points of Relevance to North Pembrokeshire and South West Wales

1. Summary

- Millions of passengers rely on the network for commuting and leisure.
- The network links small towns to our nation's capital, connects Wales to the major cities of Great Britain, and binds together communities that cross the border with England.
- In the year prior to the pandemic (2019/20) there were 29.9 million rail journeys in Wales.

2. The case for upgrading rail infrastructure

- Vis-à-vis the role electrification can play in the decarbonisation agenda, 'the decision to cancel the electrification of the Great Western mainline from Cardiff to Swansea was short-sighted and regrettable'.
- The report calls on the UK Government 'to bring forward, before the end of 2021, new proposals that would include completing electrification on the mainline between Cardiff and Swansea'.

3. Management of rail infrastructure

- Should there be any further devolution of rail infrastructure in Wales, there is a 'need to accelerate the delivery of infrastructure projects in Wales, and support for an all-Wales approach to integrated transport'.
- 'Wherever responsibility for infrastructure management resides, the successful delivery of projects would still rely on strong, interdependent relationships between multiple organisations based on both sides of the border'.

4. Funding

- The Committee noted that the UK Government's own analysis has concluded that HS2 will produce an economic disbenefit for Wales and recommends that HS2 should be reclassified as an England only project.
- Using the Barnett formula, Wales' funding settlement should be recalculated to apply an additional allocation based on the funding for HS2 in England.

5. The implications of Covid-19

- 'We are emphatic that Covid-19 should not be used as a pretext for halting investment which, in the long term, would only further cement the car as the transport mode of choice in Wales'.
- 'Instead, we argue that this should be an opportunity for the Department for Transport, Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and Network Rail to take stock and consider the role of rail Wales's future transport network'.

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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