



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – January 2009

Buses

Bus Users UK Cymru.

The organisation's Officer for Wales, Barclay Davies, has chaired a group looking into access to public transport by people with sensory impairment. The group will be presenting its findings to Ieuan Wyn Jones, WAG Deputy First Minister, by the end of January.

Local area representative Cllr Judi Hartland reports that there were no complaints about Richards Brothers services in the latest BUUK Cymru's data base report. The organisation's Annual General Meeting will be held at Venue Cymru in Llandudno on Saturday 25th April 2009.

Pembrokeshire County Council. The Council is in the process of re-tendering all of the County's local bus services that are financially supported by the authority; approximately 85% of the local bus services operating within the County. Transport Strategy Officer Ceri Davies reports that the tendering process has gone well, with the Council able to achieve its objectives of increasing the number of routes operated with low-floor buses, improving the quality of buses used, providing better connection times with train services and enhancing services for a number of communities. The new contracts will commence in April 2009 with a new timetable booklet to be published and distributed in mid March 2009.

New Buses. Ceri Rees also reports that Pembrokeshire County Council has placed an order for 4 Optare Solo buses, converted to run on recycled vegetable oil, to be delivered in March 2009. These new vehicles will be low floor and wheelchair accessible and will be used on the Coastal Bus Network. Officers are also investigating the possibility of fitting cycle racks to the rear of the vehicles.

Community Transport

Future funding for the Town Rider services. Funding for these pilot services (provided as part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative) ends in March, and no decisions have yet been taken about the future of the services. This is a matter of grave concern as the services have been extremely well received, making a huge difference to the way that people get around and bringing dignity and independence to those who were previously unable to make use of their concessionary passes.

Town Rider Meeting. There will be a Fishguard and Goodwick Town Rider Sounding Board meeting on Tuesday 24th February at 2.00 pm in the Railwayman's Club, Brodog Terrace, Fishguard. This will be a chance for passengers and anyone else with an interest in the service to discuss the service and future plans.

Bws y Bobol. The new services are getting established. Between starting the service in September and the end of December, the minibus has made 32 journeys, carrying 578 people. There have been 12 bookings for January, and the next drivers MiDAS training session is scheduled for 21st January.

Cycling

Pembrokeshire Greenways notes on its website that Pembrokeshire is a cyclist's paradise, with quiet country lanes, woodland trails and traffic free routes to everyone to enjoy. Cyclists continue to enjoy this pastime during the winter months, and information on family cycling and day rides, cycle touring on the Celtic trail, cycling holidays and mountain biking can be found at:

<http://www.pembrokeshiregreenways.co.uk/content2.asp?Page=Cycling&Language=ENG>.

Pembrokeshire Greenways Water Transport

Following the success of last summer's water transport pilot along the Milford Haven Waterway and the lower Cleddau Estuary Pembrokeshire Greenways has decided to develop the service for summer 2009.

The aim of the service is to provide the missing link between the Coastal Path walks at Dale and Angle in addition to connecting the towns and villages along the Milford Haven waterway and the lower Cleddau Estuary including Neyland, Hobbs Point and Milford Haven. As bikes can be taken on board, Havenlink is ideal for exploring the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail, which includes part of the National Cycle Network, passing through Milford Haven and Neyland.

The service is also designed to complement the Puffin Shuttle and Coastal Cruiser Bus services, which form part of the Coastal Bus network.

Last summer the service was operated by Rudders on a 12-passenger vessel, which ran for three days a week over a 12-week period and carried an average of 9 passengers per journey. During 2009 it is hoped that the timetable and capacity of the service can be improved.

Milford Haven Port Authority commissioned the service with support from Pembrokeshire Greenways, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority, PLANED, the South West Wales Tourism Partnership and the Sustainable Development Fund. Information about the 2009 timetables will be provided in the local press, the TICs and on the Rudders Boatyard website: www.ruddersboatyard.co.uk.

Rail

South West Wales Community Rail Partnership. The Community Rail Officer's post has been advertised: a fixed term contract of 2 years (20 hours per week). The successful post holder will work in partnership with the South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH), Arriva Trains Wales, Network Rail, local and regional economic development and tourism interests, local communities and businesses to promote, facilitate and co-ordinate improvements to local stations and train services west of Swansea. Ceri Rees has reported that there have been 49 responses to the advertisement. SWWITCH, along with a representative of Arriva Train Wales, will shortlist the candidates, with the intention to interview in early February.

Rail Guides. The Pembrokeshire Rail Travellers Association is producing up-to-date rail guides for each of the Pembrokeshire railway stations. These can be accessed (and copies printed) from its website: www.pрта.org.uk. These useful guides contain timetables, journey times to various destinations, sample fares and information about bargains, ticket sales, bus connections and taxi services. Information is also provided about station car parking and the guides include a wide range of useful telephone numbers and websites.

South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH)

Regional Transport Plan

Following the formal consultation last summer, which resulted in almost 80 written responses being received, a Provisional Regional Transport Plan was submitted to WAG in December 2008. The revised date for submission of the finalised RTP is now the end of September 2009.

As its final RTP submission has to be approved by all four member councils, SWWITCH aims to finish the plan by June 2009.

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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 specialist advisor to the Pembrokeshire Community Transport Strategic Partnership and a member of Bus Users UK, the Environmental Network for Pembrokeshire, Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services 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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