



PEMBROKESHIRE RAIL TRAVELLERS ASSOCIATION.

Get out of Traffic and Into Training!

PLEASE Visit us at: www.pрта.org.uk

NEWSLETTER 77.

May-2008.

THIS ISSUE CALLS ON REQUEST AT:

<i>Editorial</i>	2
<i>Who Loves You Baby?</i>	2
<i>Results of the 3rd Annual PRTA Members Survey</i>	4
<i>2008 AGM: Chairman's Address</i>	9
<i>Editor's Notes</i>	11
<i>New Station</i>	12
<i>New Services</i>	13
<i>The Minister Answers His Critics</i>	13
<i>Fares Fair</i>	14
<i>Fishguard Rail Study</i>	16
<i>Pete Absolon's Favourite</i>	17
<i>Arrivas Report and Accounts 2007</i>	17
<i>Another Way</i>	18
<i>Taberna Inn Ad</i>	20
<i>Aims of PRTA</i>	21
<i>The People</i>	21
<i>Contacts</i>	22
<i>Call to Action</i>	23
<i>Join Us</i>	23

EDITORIAL.

It was good to praise our operating company Arriva Trains Wales in my address to the Annual General Meeting as outgoing chairman. Many of us were despairing when this company was awarded the Welsh franchise with safe pair of hands National Express being consigned to history. I remember contrasting the staff uniform of the new company with Wales and Borders traditional outfit unfavourably in the first weeks. How wrong we were! - ATW have turned out to be a better, more efficient outfit than anybody realised – cutting journey times to Cardiff and having the confidence to get rid of all National Express's " get there on time" hanging around at Swansea and Carmarthen recovery time on Westbound services that they padded their timetables with. We had been bought up to believe that it was impossible to obtain additional rolling stock to cope with peaks in ridership but ATW , through their closer links with a sympathetic WAG have managed to be flexible as all lines on our network have seen. Well done! Success breeds success they say and we now look for the company to spend a little more money on its inner cleaning regime – those members who travel to the South of England and are familiar with South West Trains with its white internal walls and chewing gum gob free carpets know that it doesn't have to be the way it is! Surely keeping the inside spic and span saves money in the long run with internal refits occurring at longer intervals?

Having continually drawn attention to the government in Westminster's poor approach to rail it is depressing to note that there appears to be no change. Minister Kelly has recently stated the governments desire for a third runway and sixth terminal at Heathrow – this is despite proven evidence in France and Spain that high speed rail can replace short haul flights that the Heathrow expansion is needed for. Alastair Darling , when in the hot seat stated that high speed would have to be considered 3 years ago – we are still waiting.

WHO LOVES YOU BABY?

Arriving late at the Newsagents to get a copy of the Sunday Mail I was disappointed and had the S Telegraph as a substitute. On

turning to the Travel section I found Tony Robinson's Top Ten Train Trips and guess what? – he loves PRTA –

10. SWANSEA – PEMBROKE DOCK

Hoorah for the Pembrokeshire Rail Travellers' Association! What a magnificent organisation. It's produced a series of booklets that outline some of the walks you can enjoy starting at stations on this line. This has been a happy discovery for me, as I've always had a soft spot for Pembrokeshire and the Pembrokeshire Coast Path in particular.

Get off at Whitland and you can walk to Narberth via the Iron Age fortified settlement of Llanddewi Gaer, or to Clunderwen, eight miles away via "25 stiles, 1 boardwalk, 3 footbridges, 2 sets of sleepers, 8 gates and a kissing gate". You can wend your way from Tenby to Saundersfoot through woodland, wetland, fields and open lanes, or you can go from Penally to the next station, Manorbier, along the coast path, watching out for peregrine falcons, fulmars, oystercatchers and if you're lucky a grey seal or two.

But don't forget the instructions: "If you want to leave the train at one of these stations, let the guard know when you start your journey. If you want to board the train at one of these stations give a hand signal to the driver in good time." It's like travelling back in time, isn't it?

When you finally arrive in Pembroke, Barafundle Bay is only a few miles away. It's one of the cleanest, most unspoilt beaches in Britain, with bright yellow dunes, shiny sand and crystal clear water... and no ice-cream vans.

■ Further information from Arriva Trains Wales (www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk).

Some of Robinson's selections are a little surprising but its very rewarding to see that our efforts are valued.

1. London – Whitstable
2. Cambridge – Lowestoft

3. *Bristol temple Meads – Weymouth*
4. *Carlisle – Newcastle*
5. *The West Highland Line*
6. *Leicester – Ely*
7. *Manchester – Derby*
8. *Edinburgh – Dundee*
9. *Shrewsbury – Aberystwyth*
10. *Swansea – Pembroke Dock*

RESULTS OF THE 3rd PRTA RAILUSER SURVEY.

COMMENTARY

This years survey reflects the greater ridership that regular travellers will have noticed over the last year – 25% of respondents used the train weekly or fortnightly. Accessing the station and parking difficulties remain about the same with 84% considering parking arrangements good or OK although resistance to access by bus lessened with 87% [up from 72% now saying they'd access by bus if it was timed conveniently. Arriva gets a vote of confidence – not a single member considered their service worse and 57% thought it better or much better – up from only 29% last year. In contrast 1st Great Western scored only 5.6 down from 7.7 out of ten in respondents assessments – for ATW the figures had risen from 5.3 to 6.6. Despite all this 86% thought public transport would get worse – up from 52% last time. Our timetablemaster will surely be pleased to see that the number of members obtaining timetable and fare information from the Association has risen sharply. Last years increasing internet trend was not maintained. The appreciation of the price of tickets sharpened with 60% of members this year considering that fares as far as Cardiff were economically friendly – up from 50% but beyond there to England and North Wales 91% considered them expensive or a rip off – up from 75%. All contributors considered advance purchase tickets about right – 100%. Detailed results below QV [see editorial]

Very many thanks to all those members who took the time and trouble to fill out our railuser survey, respond to our questions about the dinner and walks and sent it in with their subs for 2008 – its YOUR survey and YOUR Association – thanks again. We asked the same questions as last year and some new ones – here's what you thought:

I TRAVEL BY TRAIN:

	2007-2008	2006-2007
<i>Weekly/ Fortnightly</i>	25%	18%
<i>Monthly/quarterly</i>	38%	61%
<i>Six monthly/ Yearly</i>	25%	10%
<i>Rarely</i>	12%	8%
<i>Never</i>	Zero	4%

I GET TO THE STATION

<i>On Foot</i>	30%	32%
<i>By Car</i>	55%	50%
<i>By Bus</i>	5%	11%
<i>By taxi</i>	10%	7%
<i>By bicycle</i>	ZERO	ZERO

I CONSIDER STATION PARKING

	2006-2007	2007-2008
<i>Good</i>	80% [includes OK]	84%[inc OK]
<i>OK</i>		
<i>A Problem</i>	14%	12%
<i>Insecure</i>	5%	4%

<i>Haverfordwest</i>	<i>Capacity- are users travellers?</i>	<i>Capacity- are users travellers?</i>
<i>Milford Haven</i>	<i>No mention</i>	<i>insecure</i>
<i>Whitland</i>	<i>No mention</i>	<i>capacity</i>
<i>Kilgetty</i>	<i>No mention</i>	<i>No facility</i>

IF A BUS PICKED UP NEAR YOUR HOUSE AND STOPPED AT YOUR STATION COORDINATING WITH THE RAIL SERVICE WOULD YOU USE IT TO CATCH THE TRAIN?

2007-2008	2006-2007
<i>YES 87%</i>	<i>Yes 72%</i>
<i>NO 13%</i>	<i>No 28%</i>

I USE LOCAL BUSES

	2006-2007	2007-2008
<i>Frequently</i>	21%	27%
<i>Rarely</i>	29%	20%
<i>Occasionally</i>	33%	47%
<i>Never</i>	21%	6%

I USE NATIONAL EXPRESS.....

Rarely : 22%

Occasionally:28%

Never: 50%
This question not asked last year,

CONSIDERING 2006 ARRIVA TRAINS WALES HAVE SERVED ME:
Results for 2006-2007 – last year we asked whether ATW were better or worse than the previous operator Wales and Borders.

A Lot Better:	15%	For 2007-2008:	7%
Better	14%		:50%
The Same	38%		:43%
Worse.....	34%		ZERO
A Lot worse	ZERO		ZERO

I RATE ARRIVA TRAINS WALES OUT OF TEN
I RATE FIRST GREAT WESTERN OUT OF TEN

2007-2008	2006-2007
ARRIVA TRAINS WALES 6.6	5.3
FIRST GREAT WESTERN 5.6	7.7

I EXPECT PUBLIC TRANSPORT TO GET BETTER / WORSE [in
2005-2006 this question continued....over the next five years]
2007-2008 2006-2007

BETTER	14%	48%
WORSE	86%	52%

When voting Better one member commented "It can hardly get worse"

WHERE DO YOU GET TIMETABLE INFORMATION?

	2006-2007	2007-2008
station	26%	16%
PRTA	19%	32%
Library	11%	4%
NRES	6%	4%
Timetable	11%	16%
Internet	14% includes phone	12%
Phone	See Above	ZERO
Travel Agent	3%	4%
German Rail website	3%	8%
ATW	6%	4%

Economically Friendly: 50% FOR 2007-2008: 60%
Expensive: 42% 30%
A rip off: 8% 10%

**BEYOND CARDIFF TO ENGLISH &
 NORTH WALES DESTINATIONS**

Economically friendly: 25% FOR 2007-2008: 9%
Expensive: 50% 55%
A Rip Off: 25% 36%

I CONSIDER ADVANCE PURCHASE FARES

About Right: 93% FOR 2007-2008: 100%
Expensive: 7%

*Average rating for the PRTA Newsletter was slightly down:8.6
 against 8.8 out of 10 last time. .*

*No members responded regarding electronic membership 83% had
 had no difficulty with this category of membership last time.*

Other comments by members were:

**BRIEFLY NOTE THE TOP ITEM IN YOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT
 WISHLIST**

In order of mentions:2006-2007

- *More trains to Fishguard*
- *Connections that work*
- *No standing/more seats*
- *Less cancellations*
- *Improve reliability*
- *Reinstate through trains on the Pembroke and Tenby line*
- *Better early morning connections from England westbound*
- *More evening buses*
- *Buses to coordinate with trains*
- *Reopen line from Carmarthen to Aberystwyth*
- *Better integrated fare structure between different operating
 companies*
- *Better overall journey co-ordination – less hit and miss at TOC
 boundaries.*

2007-2008

* *Tighter/ better connections[between Milford & Pembroke
 Dock]*

* *Punctuality*

- * *Cleaner coaches*
- * *More leg room*
- * *Reduction in delays*
- * *Reasonable fares*
- * *Reliability*
- * *More trains#*
- * *Better bus into bus connections*
- * *All Wales bus timetable*
- * *Seat side luggage storage*
- * *More trains to Fishguard*
- * *Simple fare structure*
- * *Convenient inter modal transfer*
- * *More trains at cheaper fares*

92% OF RESPONDENTS WERE PRTA MEMBERS.

2008 AGM Chairman's Statement

Guy Hardy who stood down at the AGM addressed the meeting. 2007 has been like the curate's egg – good in parts. The year opened with the steering group setting parameters for the Fishguard study which subsequently went on to yield a positive report for additional trains to Fishguard. This has met with a disappointing response from Pembs CC and SWWITCH who are rather sitting on their hands than promoting the additional trains involved. Another set back was our realisation that the Real Ale Rail Trail really should have cover to protect the Association from litigious trailers – the committee is still working on obtaining some umbrella cover through joint stakeholders. Malcolm Howitt our liaison officer at ATW retired in the middle of the year. He was confident that he would be retained on a part time basis but this turned out to be misplaced optimism and with an eye on the bottom line he was not replaced. Mike Hurley who will be familiar to long time members has taken over the stakeholder liaison role – we were very sorry to see Malcolm go but are confident that we shall maintain our close relationship with the train operator through Mike. Arriva continue to perform well with 99.8% reliability and 94.3% on time performance on the West Wales Network. The Association was pleased to note that the regular interval service works well and the company has gone a long way

to solve capacity issues on the Pembroke Dock line. The results of our 2007-2008 passenger survey reflect the improved experience that passengers have been getting over the period. ATW still need to get their internal cleaning regime onto a higher target – comparing the interior of passenger stock in Wales with South West Trains shows how far ATW lag behind with the SWT white interiors spotless with no chewing gum gobs trodden into the carpets at all. By comparison with ATW First Great western still leaves a lot to be desired with their performance and DfT micromanagement resulting in two fare strikes in England. Under BR's Inter City branding one could set your watch by Paddington trains at Swansea – this isn't possible today although the figures have showed some improvement lately. 2007 saw the departure of our Community Rail Officer Mark Youngman who has taken a new position with Monmouth County Council – we sent him off with a framed certificate from the Association to remind him of his time here. No replacement has been appointed and it is hoped that when this occurs the steering committee for the CRP will have different parameters. SWWITCH is developing their submission for the WAG transport strategy – the committee has been somewhat underwhelmed by the consortia's approach to rail. Their failure in particular to appreciate the value of the Swansea District line preferring very expensive redoubling at Gowerton probably indicates the disparity in the interests of the rural West LAs and Swansea and Port Talbot in the East.

The Association continued to provide its membership with concise, accurate, detailed information and advice on train times and ticket prices and the latest survey reflects the value that members put on this information especially the Pembrokeshire Fares Book. Generally one does not need to have statistics to know that ridership on the West Wales Network has grown substantially – just riding the trains is sufficient. The association will need to have a close watching brief on overcrowding issues on trains and within car parks.

I would like to thank the secretary for all his hard work – especially on the station guides and the ale trail, and welcome back David Watts after a long spell when he was unable to attend meetings while nursing his wife. I thank David for all his input on fares and timetables and the Association was very sorry to learn of the sad loss of his wife Anne. I am grateful to the webmaster David Harries who ensures that our website is up to date – it is an excellent advert for our activities. Last but not least the membership secretary and treasurer, Robert Best who unstintingly ensures that members get the news. I thank the committee – Alan

& Irene Grieve for their work and liaison with our elected representatives.

Finally I would like to mention the appalling vacuum in transport policy coming out of London – pricing people off the railways and pricing people off the roads while getting congestion beaten by driving on the hard shoulder on the motorways is hardly mind blowing – members of the Association should take a leaf out of Friends of the Earth – “Think global – act local”

Watching the Polar Express cartoon film at Christmas I was struck by advice given by the conductor to his boy passenger who has just alighted after viewing Santa. “ One thing about trains – It doesn’t matter where they’re going – what matters is deciding to get on” - it seems like more and more people are deciding to get on in our patch – the Association must strive for more and better trains at the right money for our members and Pembs residents generally.

Guy Hardy stepped down from the chairmanship due to geographical delinquency and was replaced by Brian Morgan – the new vice chairman is Robert Best – Guy continues to edit the Newsletter.

Editor’s notes

Remember Stobart lorries? They were the ones you nearly drove off the road in your car whilst trying to see if the driver really had a tie on. Now they’re into rail – they’ve introduced Stobart Pullman – unfortunately its not from West Wales –take a look at www.stobartpullman.co.uk for the trips available. The drivers apparently don’t wear ties now!

The English got their universal bus passes on April 1st [previously only within the local authority area] but the bus operators are threatening to withdraw some services unless they receive more compensation for the free rides. Meantime in Wales fare hikes have been introduced to cover the massive increase in the cost of road fuel. The western Mail reported that 2 services in Pembs had been withdrawn. Several papers ran articles about mega long bus journeys to coincide with the greater availability of the English bus passes – mostly as a relaxed eccentric travel means. Members can click on the bus only box at the traveline site on the net but this writers experience is anything over 100 miles would be such a grueller as not to be attractive in any way.

Stock exchange pundits on the Times were advising investor caution on transport companies in Feb – quoting the reduction in travel which came about during the last recession – we seem to be on the cusp of requiring additional capacity here but [for the transport funders!] the recession, if it comes, could be timely!

A new British comedy film has attracted the attention of ASLEF – it is a story about a tube driver who's killed two people with his train and only needs to get another to retire on 10 years salary - he goes out to bribe an alcoholic to commit suicide – whoopee - hilarious! The film's called Three And Out. ASLEF have been picketing its premiere and challenging the lead actor over whether this is indeed suitable for comedy.

News that overcrowding on 1st Great Western's Cardiff – Portsmouth Harbour service was to be alleviated by switching coaches from the ATW franchise caused consternation in Cardiff – the 10 rail coaches were destined to increase frequencies and battle overcrowding on the Valleys network. Improvements paid for by taxpayers in Wales to accommodate the improvements by altering the infrastructure are destined to be unused.

RDS – The Railway Development Society [Railfuture] recently held a face to face meeting with IW Jones – The Welsh Assembly transport minister – your Association's views were represented.

Have you got a flask in your house? – travelling up to Cardiff recently I was considerably underwhelmed to find that 2 coffees from the on board trolley gave hardly any change from £3 – NatX always maintained that the catering on trains cost them plenty of money – but if the prices get too high riders will bring their own.

The Welsh Highland Railway is apparently on track to open back into Portmadoc in Spring 2009 – a great fillip for those of us who didn't think we'd live to see it! Trains from Carnarvon will run into an enlarged Festiniog station and the Cob is to be widened to accommodate extra tracks – through running to Blainau Festiniog will be possible but the disparity between the two railways loading gauges due to the FR tunnel. It is not decided how the pattern of trains will run vis a vis the WHR's other station adjacent to ATW's station in Portmadoc – hopefully seamless changes off the coast line will be facilitated – stay tuned.

NEW STATION

On March 19th a new station at Llanharan was opened on the South Wales main line – constructed at the outrageous price of £4million it replaces one closed in the 60s and was funded by Objective 1 money from the EU and a grant from the WAG – it follows the Ebbw Vale line reopening which was postponed from the end of last year because of track quality. Both the line and the new station are boosting ridership. Rhodri Morgan 1st minister said that the new station was “ part of our drive to combat climate change”

NEW SERVICES

Two new express services serving London started this year. Grand Central connecting the North East of England is run by our old friend Tom Clift –lately managing Director of Valley Lines. The writer understands that the initial ridership has been up to expectations.

Closer to home and started only in April is the Wrexham and Shropshire Railway – a new operation based in Wrexham General that offers express services from there to London Marylebone. Somewhat hamstrung by existing rail companies who are anxious not to encounter competition W&S services are only bookable to and from London. They serve: Wrexham General, Ruabon, Chirk, Gobowen, Shrewsbury, Wellington, Telford Central, Cosford and Tame Bridge Parkway [where? – I understand this is somewhere roundabout Bescott] there are also restricted calls to Wolverhampton and Banbury. The new service is price competitive and has already attracted proposals by Virgin to provide a Shrewsbury – Euston service. This latter would be able to compete on time very well. Connections at Shrewsbury for Aberystwyth could do with some improvement but the new service could be worth looking at if you use the Aber – Richards bus link down the coast to access rail arather than the West Wales network.

THE MINISTER ANSWERS HIS CRITICS...

Ieuan Wyn Jones the WAG deputy first minister and minister for the economy and transport received a mauling in the Western Mail following the announcement of £118 million for transport grants for 2008-2009. In the previous year rail had amounted to 26% of grants and this was now reduced to 7 – a reduction of 67%. IW Jones replied that the grant was the part funded through local authorities and the WAG had decided that it was much better for them to go straight to Network Rail the grant represented only 20% of transport funding. He outlined new coach services by 2011 + spending on the Cambrian line, Newport and Wrexham as rail items – apparently there are 22 schemes for improving North South road links.

FARES FAIR?

A new pricing structure for UK rail tickets has some benefits, but it doesn't tackle 3 key problems: complexity, high prices and inflexibility.

Unfortunately simplifying rail fares will do little to address the fundamental problems of the cost of travel by train. Sure there are a few nuggets of good news in today's announcement. There will be fewer daft names used by different companies for the same product, making the system more comprehensible for passengers bemused by the array of ticketing categories. There will now only be three types of ticket – advance, off peak or anytime. Just to add a bit of complexity, the advance ticket category is being introduced next month, the other two in September.

The other improvement [?] is that all advance fares will be sold on the basis of a single leg, which means there will be no need to buy returns and the price of each leg will be made clear. In fact some train operators have already adopted this policy. But none of this even makes a stab at the fundamental need for a simplification that would create a rational system of charging rail passengers for their journey. There are three problems with it: complexity, high prices and inflexibility.

The complexity arises from the fact that the system is partly regulated, and partly free for all. So season tickets and savers, which will now be called off peak, are controlled and can only rise by the retail price index + 1% annually. The train operators are totally at liberty to set the fares on other services. They have

responded to this freedom by creating a host of reductions on tickets bought in advance, leading to a Ryanair type market with fares dependent on how tickets are selling on that particular train. However, the operators refuse to consider lowering the extremely high fares on peak time trains, arguing that this would cost them money and increase overcrowding, even though there is strong evidence that peak fares on long distance trains are far too high and deter people from taking the train.

The difficulty in trying to sort this mess out is that if the government tried to regulate all fares, then many of the cheap deals would be lost. On the other hand, by not intervening, the complexity is off putting for passengers.

Add in the third element, inflexibility, which results in the fleeing of passengers who cannot specify a particular train they want to take. The difference in price between an advance and an off peak fare, let alone anytime one, can be a factor of 5 or 6. Moreover if someone buys an advance fare, and misses the train, the ticket is completely void and they have to pay the full fare to travel, which effectively means they pay twice for one journey as no account is taken of the money already spent. It is that type of unpleasant approach, redolent of a monopoly, that gives the operators a bad reputation.

British Rail did not always have a very enlightened fares policy, but at least there was some rationale to its pricing structure. The private operators who pocket all the revenue from the fare box, are only in the business of maximising their income. Until the government is ready to recognise that the railways are a public service, the fares system will remain a complete mess, bemusing and confusing passengers. Contrast this with most European countries which have simpler systems that mostly offer far cheaper deals

Christian Wolmar/ Guardian blog

It will be interesting to see if we pay more after these simplified tickets are introduced. ATOC pledged no price increases when the change was announced. Many commentators were voicing fears that train operators would take the opportunity to raise income when the changes come – the privatised railway is about raising value for shareholders. Buying advance purchase tickets that are not refundable should give purchasers some food for thought –

just getting to the station, being delayed by traffic and missing the train doesn't make the journey cheap – if you still have to make it.

FISHGUARD RAIL STUDY

The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum reported to its membership at the recent AGM held in Letterston – your editor is a member of the steering group – NPTF's take on the situation is accurate.

Responding to concerns that the inadequate frequency of rail services to Fishguard Harbour does not meet the travel needs of the local resident community or visitors to the area, the South West Wales Community Rail Partnership commissioned a £30,000 feasibility and business case study to look at the provision of enhanced passenger rail services to Fishguard and the possible re-opening of stations on the line. The study was also to examine the role that enhanced services could play in attracting visitors to the area outside the main tourist season and assisting integrated travel within the county, by means other than the private car, during people's visits. Jacobs Consultancy was selected to carry out the 6-month long study, and the Pembrokeshire Rail Travellers Association and the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum were represented on the study's management group. Following the collection of relevant data from Arriva Trains Wales and the South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH), a consultation programme sought the views of a wide range of stakeholders. In July the management group approved a preferred option of shuttle services between Fishguard and Carmarthen, connecting with the existing main line service. The timetable was designed to meet the needs of local residents, visitors to the area, and the conventional and fast ferry services. The group also supported the proposal to re-open Goodwick Station. The study findings were then referred for comment to the Welsh Assembly Government's Rail Unit. Once the Unit's comments have been received the Management Group will be re-convened to consider them. In September SWWITCH representatives expressed support for the shuttle services when presenting evidence to a meeting of the National Assembly's Enterprise and Learning Committee which looked at Planning for Future Railway Provision in Wales. In the 19th February 2008 Plenary session at the National Assembly, the First Minister was

asked if he could ensure that the Assembly Government's investment in rail services places a priority on services west of Swansea, to improve both frequency and speed. The Minister responded that services through to Fishguard are currently being examined by the South Wales West Integrated Transport Consortium. It is hoping to provide more rail services between Carmarthen and Fishguard to cover local requirements.

PETE ABSOLONS FAVOURITE.....

FOR ENTHUSIASTS ONLY!If you see someone with a notebook, pen and stopwatch [or two] on your train, looking out of the window, timing the mileposts as they go, it might be me. Train performance is an absorbing subject, how the different trains perform on different lines, how performance matches schedules, how trains are regulated when they are behind time, how performance of one kind of train compares with another, and so on. Is this something that might appeal to you as you wile away long journeys? The Railway performance Society was formed for people like us. It produces a quarterly journal, holds meetings in various parts of the country, keeps a database of fastest logged timings between each pair of stations in the UK, does a spot of consultancy, and runs a website. I realise that I have now been a member for close on 30 years, and still look forward to receiving the latest RPS quarterly mailing. More info at www.railperf.org.uk - Pete Absolon

ARRIVA'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2007

Arriva's results showed turnover at the rail division up from £253.9 to £322.4 million profit, however was down from £12.3 to £7.5 - "it has been an exciting year of progress which has translated into a strong financial performance, particularly after absorbing increased fuel prices and substantial bidding costs for three UK rail franchises". Among the divisional highlights were - Bus profit up 16%/ excellent improvements in operational performance and customer satisfaction at Arriva Trains Wales. In his interim management statement at the end of April the

Chairman said "The outlook for 2008 is positive and we are confident of substantial revenue and earnings growth during the year"

ANOTHER WAY

Further to the previous article on car clubs – with petrol forecast to get to £1-50/ litre May be its time to look at something

different.

Rural Car Clubs



Recent research by the Countryside Agency (2000) found that transport is the single most important concern of people living in rural areas.

→Traffic growth on rural roads is now greater than in urban areas.

→A number of studies have identified transport as a major barrier to social inclusion in rural areas.

The Government's Rural White Paper (2000), in addressing these twin challenges of reducing social isolation and reducing car dependency, cites car clubs as a practical solution, with funding available through the Countryside Agency's Rural Transport and Parish Transport Grants.

" A more potentially attractive measure I have yet to see. It ought to one of our highest priorities"

(Peter Headicar, Reader in Transport Planning, Oxford Brookes University talking about car clubs in solving rural transport problems at Rural Transport Conference June 2001)

Rural car clubs -In 2004 Carplus completed a rural car club programme in partnership with Sustrans and the Countryside Agency, who funded the project. The programme set up 10

pilot projects in a wide cross-section of rural areas to learn whether they could be a success and collate best practice. Some were concentrated on one town, while others cover a number of smaller communities.

How does a car club work? -Cars can be booked for as little as an hour. They are usually located at designated parking bays within a ten-minute walk of where members live or work. This works well in urban neighbourhoods, and generally translates well to market towns. In less densely populated areas, community co-operation, creativity in how the club operates and existing informal networks provide solutions for members getting access to the cars.

Car clubs are more likely to be successful in areas where there is a reasonably dense population to ensure a viable membership and easy access to cars and where there are public transport links and some local amenities to ensure private car ownership is not essential. However, other key factors are emerging that are important to the success of clubs in less obviously viable areas. There are many lessons which have been learnt which are summarised [here](#) and explained in more detail in the final project report.

Case studies

The [Moorcar](#) club in Ashburton, Devon, launched in September 2002. By late 2006 the club had expanded to run seven cars serving four towns in the area. It operates like a conventional car club but on a smaller scale. Operated by a dedicated co-operative, it aims to supplement the limited public transport available. Alongside the car club, Moorcar also runs a ride share system. [Hourcar](#) in Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, was established in 2004 operating cars running on biodiesel. This innovative community co-operative is expanding along the Calder Valley serving several small towns. The club received funding to buy a 5th vehicle at the end of 2006. Hourcar also encourages ride sharing among its members.



More detailed case studies are available from Carplus

please [email us](#)

Further Information

- ➔ [Rural Car Clubs report](#): The Countryside Agency 2004
- ➔ [Local Transport Plans - a better deal for rural areas](#) : The Countryside Agency
- ➔ [Rural Transport Futures](#) - Transport solutions for a thriving countryside: Transport 2000
- ➔ [Rural travel statistics](#) Access to local services for households without a car
- ➔ Gray D. [Rural Transport: an overview of key issues](#). (Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen)

TABERNA INN

Herbrandston, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, SA73 3TD

- *Good food, real ale, pleasant conversation -*
- *Restaurant, bistro, lounge or bar -*
- *On coast path and bus routes -*
- *B&B from £18 pppn -*
- *Private functions by arrangement -*

Open: M i d d a y - c l o s e e v e r y d a y

*Food: 12-2 and 6-9 except winter S u n d a y e v e n i n g s , b o o k i n g
a d v i s a b l e*

Telephone 01646 693498 email: taberna@inn01.freeserve.co.uk
 Website: <http://taberna.mysite.freeserve.com>

Advertisement. – The Taberna is in the Good Beer Guide for 2007

AIMS of PEMBROKESHIRE RAIL TRAVELLERS ASSOCIATION:

1. *To Press for improvements to rail and associated bus services in
The area West of Carmarthen.*
2. *To encourage greater use of the current services*
3. *To assist in the improvement of the railway environment in particular at stations*
4. *To liase with other pro – rail organizations.*

THE PEOPLE.

CHAIRMAN. Bryan Morgan, Bulford Road, Johnston 01437890642

VICE CHAIRMAN: Robert Best - below

SECRETARY: Pete Absolon 01646 693498

taberna@inn01.freeserve.co.uk Taberna Inn, Herbrandston Milford Haven Pembrokeshire

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY & TREASURER: Robert Best

11, Warwick Road, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire

woblats1@aol.com

WEBMASTER: David Harries 01646 661340 dandh@f2s.com

TIMETABLEMASTER: David Watts 01646 692752

davidgwynwatts@aol.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Guy Hardy 07967253963

cawdronhardy@gmail.com–

COMMITTEE: Keith Bowskill; Pembroke; Allan Grieve; Neyland, Erene Grieve; Neyland. Des & Pam Brown – Tenby

CONTACTS.

Arriva Trains Wales, St. Marys House, Penarth Road, Cardiff
 08456061660
Customer.relations@arrivatrainswales.co.uk ticket sales
 08709000773 www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk
 National Rail Enquiries 0845 7484950 Welsh language 0845
 6040500
 Disabled Assistance 0845 3003005
 British Transport Police 0800 405040 LOCAL police 0845 3302000
 Cycling on rail 0870 9000772
 Lost Property 0845 6061660
 UK Traveline for bus information 0870 6082608
www.internet.xephos.com uk all modes journey planner
www.bahn.de timetable planner pan Europe German railways but
 in English!
 Milford Travel. Charles Street, Milford Haven 01646 692268
 Milford Station Office [open mornings] 01646 693460
 Traintracker – for current running info 0871 2004950
 Transport for London 02072221234
 Great Western Ticket Line 0845 7000125
 Great Western On Line Ticket Sales www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk
 Great Western group travel 0845 7413777
 Great Western Plus Bus www.plusbus.org.uk check add -on fares
 Virgin Trains www.virgintrains.co.uk
 Wessex Trains www.wessextrains.co.uk
 National Rail Information www.nationalrail.co.uk
www.transport-direct.org.uk public transport info
 GNER Info/ticket sales www.gner.co.uk 0845 7225225
 Europacar – UK car rental 01133882429
 Pembrokeshire County Council – for bus timetable info 01437
 764551
 National Express 0870 5808080
 Richards Bros 01239 613756 www.gobybus.net
www.richardsbros.co.uk
 Silcox Buses 01646 683143 www.silcoxcoaches.co.uk
 North Pembrokeshire transport Forum hatti@woakes.demon.co.uk
 First Cymru buses 0870 6082608 www.firstgroup.com
 Central Trains www.centraltrains.co.uk
 Pembrokeshire County Council Greenways 01437 776313
greenways@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Friends of the Earth www.foepenfro.org.uk
 Festiniog/ Welsh highland Railways www.festrail.co.uk 01286
 677018
 Beacons Bus 01873 853254 www.visitbreconbeacons.com
 Carmarthenshire County Council – transportation
publictransport@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
 Freedom of Wales Flexipass 0870 9000777
www.walesflexipass.com
 Great Western Customer Relations
customer.relations@gwt.firstgroup.com
 Pembrokeshire Rail Travellers Association www.prta.org.uk
 Bus users UK www.bususers.org
 Acorn Travel 01348 74728 www.acorntravel.com
 Trans Wales Bus – www.trawscambria.info
 South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium: SWWITCH
www.swwitch.org.uk
www.Seat61.com –a useful site for overseas rail travel
 Llandrindod Wells Booking Office – Kelsham Hannah 01597822053

CALL TO ACTION

Seen any vandalism lately? – seen any graffiti
 operators? – people behaving suspiciously around the
 railway?

**DIAL 0800 405040 - HELP THE RAILWAY
TO TAKE CARE OF ITSELF**

###This is especially important now: the price of scrap metal has
 reached enormous heights and cable and other thefts are plaguing
 the track maintainers daily.

JOIN US

Fees are: £4 electronic [all communication electronically] £7
 standard[MAIL]/Corporate and Group: £5 electronic[all
 communication electronically] £10 standard [mail] [50% AFTER
 July 1st] No joining fee.

NAME

ADDRESS.....

.....

.

POST

CODE.....EMAIL.....

TELEPHONE.....MOBILE.....

Membership Type [circle] Individual – Electronic/Standard

Corporate –Electronic/Standard

Make cheques payable to PEMBROKESHIRE RAIL TRAVELLERS ASSOCIATION

SEND PRTA INFO to my friend.....

.....

Cut or Xerox this and send to the membership sec[above] with the appropriate fee.

PRTA: A voluntary lobby for public transport since 1989.



